

FREE STORAGE ON THE WEB--PART 7

by

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This is the seventh installment in our series about storing files for free on the Internet.

FREE BACKUP AT "IDrive"

This month, Liz and I obtained a free storage account at "IDrive" (pronounced "eye drive").

Their Web site is located at
<http://www.idrive.com>

"IDrive" is an Internet-enabled software application that you download and install onto the hard drive of your computer. You then configure this software to tell it which local files to back up and how often they are to be backed up to your account at IDrive's secure Web site.

"IDrive" works with both a dialup Internet connection or a broadband Internet connection. "IDrive" offers both free and non-free accounts. Their free account is called "IDrive Basic".

The key features for a free account are:

Total storage space = 2 Gigabytes

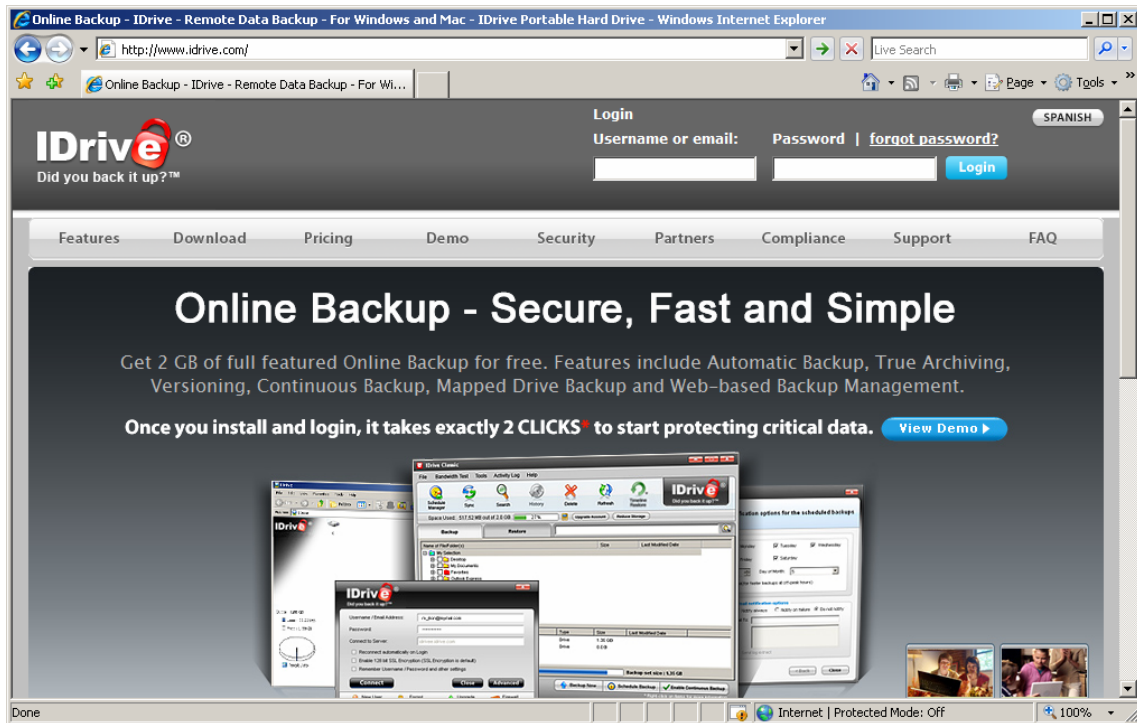
Maximum single file size = 2 Gigabytes

Maximum monthly bandwidth = not stated on "IDrive" Web site

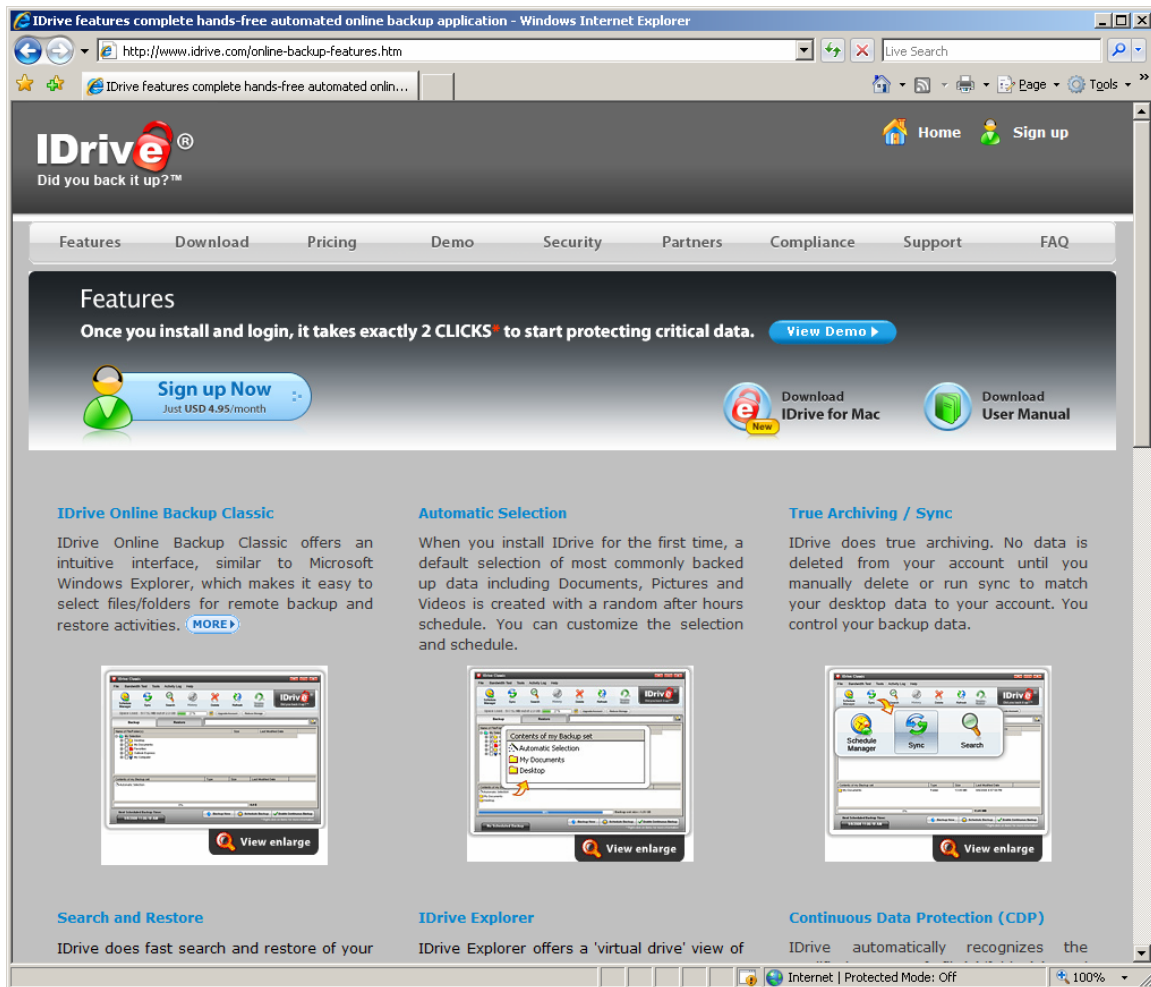
The maximum monthly bandwidth is the total amount of data that you (and others that you designate) upload to, and download from, your free account.

"IDrive" does not limit the types of files that you can store.

The home page of the "IDrive" Web site looks like this:



The state-of-the-art features of IDrive's free backup service are shown at <http://www.idrive.com/online-backup-features.htm>



Some of their most impressive features are:

They store up to 30 versions of each file that you tell them to back up; you can go back to a version of a file based on the time and date that it was backed up either automatically by them or manually by you.

You can access and download your backed up files either using their software or by logging into your account at their Web site.

Their optional "Continuous Data Backup" feature backs up any of your chosen data files that have been changed every 10 minutes.

Their optional "IDrive Explorer" offers you a virtual drive in Windows Explorer/My Computer that looks and acts like a drive on your computer.

They have "IDrive" software for both Windows and Macintosh computers.

To sign up for your free account, scroll down and click on the "Sign up Now" button that is under "IDrive Basic".

The screenshot shows the IDrive website's pricing page. The browser title is "Subscription Plans offered by IDrive online backup service - Windows Internet Explorer". The URL is "https://www.idrive.com/pricing.htm". The page features the IDrive logo and a navigation menu with links for Features, Download, Pricing, Demo, Security, Partners, Compliance, Support, and FAQ. A "Sign up" button is visible in the top right corner.

The main content area is titled "Pricing Plans" and includes a "Subscribe online for an IDrive account" section with two bullet points: "Ideal for individuals and small businesses" and "Create and manage multiple accounts".

There are two main plan sections:

- IDrive Basic:** Offers 2 GB of backup space absolutely free without any catch. It is best suited for individuals and families. An option to upgrade to the IDrive Pro version is available depending on requirements. A "Sign up Now" button is located below the description.
- IDrive Pro:** Ideal for small and medium businesses or individuals with very large backup needs. It offers 150 GB* of storage space for personal use.

The IDrive Pro section includes two tables:

IDrive Pro for Personal Use

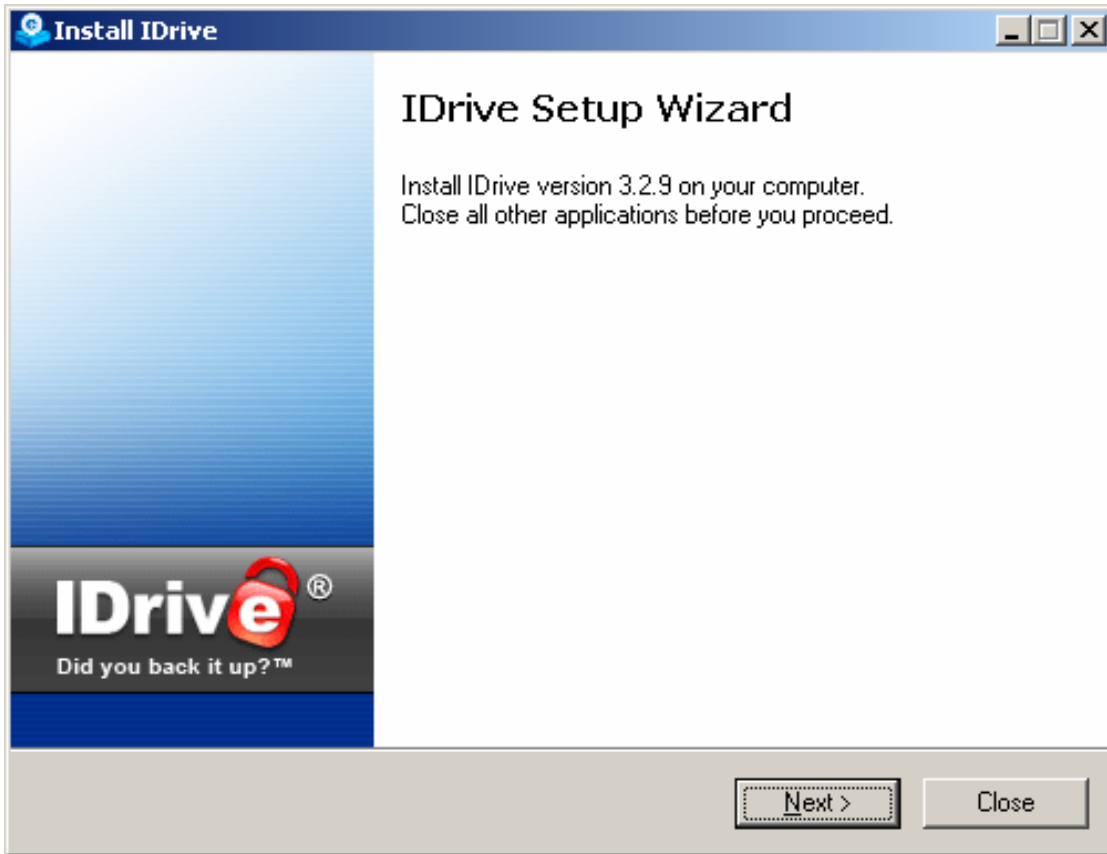
Storage Space	Monthly Rate	Yearly Rate
150 GB*	USD 4.95	USD 49.50

IDrive Pro for Business

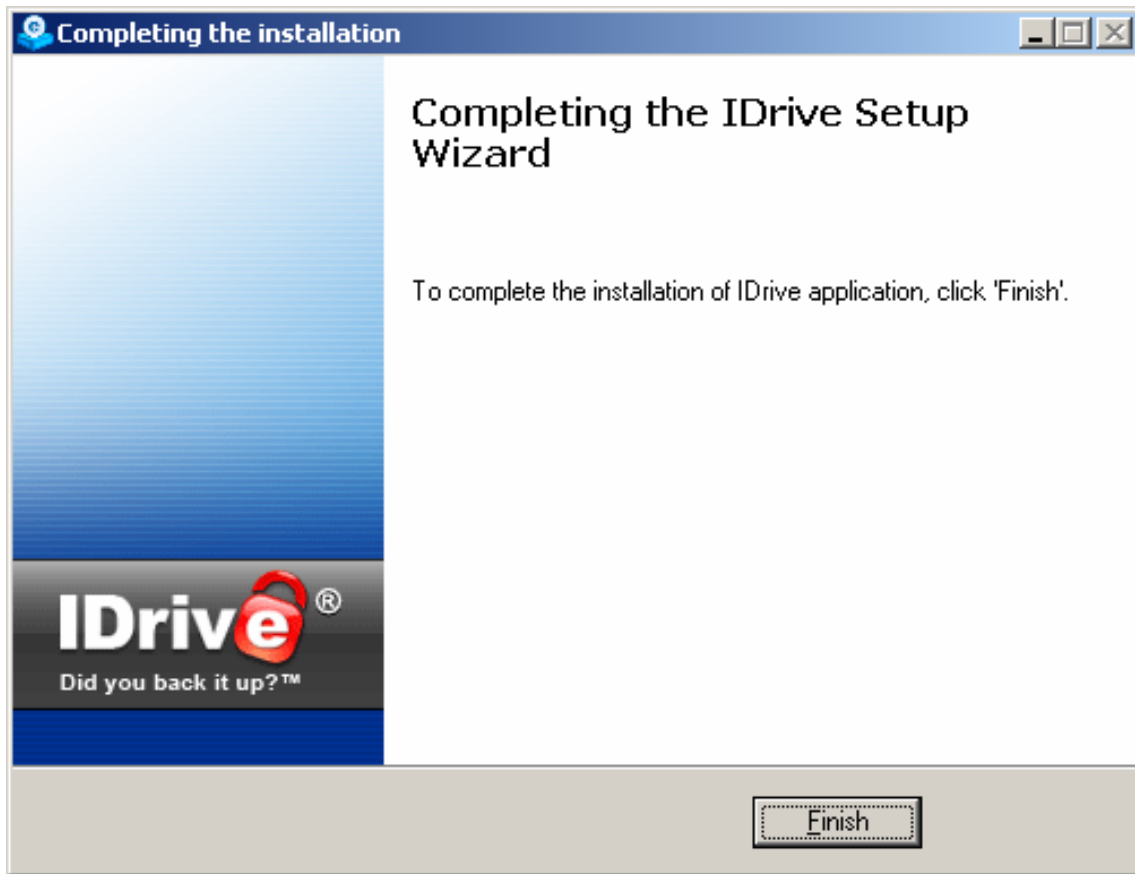
Storage Space	Monthly Rate	Yearly Rate
50 GB	USD 9.95	USD 99.50
100 GB	USD 19.95	USD 199.50
500 GB	USD 49.95	USD 499.50

After you complete the signup process, click on the "Download" button to download and install their free software:

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the IDrive website's sign-up confirmation page. The browser's address bar shows the URL https://www.idrive.com/idrivee/jsp/ide_confirmfree.jsp. The page header includes the IDrive logo with the tagline "Did you back it up?™" and a "Home" link. A navigation menu contains links for Features, Download, Pricing, Demo, Security, Partners, Compliance, Support, and FAQ. On the left, there are "Related links" for Login Now, Tech Support, FAQs, Resources, and a User Manual (PDF). The main content area is titled "Sign up Confirmation" and features a yellow warning icon. The text reads: "Thank you for choosing IDrive. Your account has been created as per your request. You can start using IDrive now!" Below this, it states: "The IDrive Basic plan will allow you to backup/store only 2 GB of data. You can upgrade to the IDrive Pro plan anytime. To get started with using your IDrive online backup account, download the IDrive application from the link below and install." A prominent "IDrive Online Backup" button with a "Download" link is centered on the page. At the bottom, there is a "Refer Friends - Get 10GB Free!" promotion with details about sharing the service and getting additional free backup space. The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Done" and "Internet | Protected Mode: Off".



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When asked, enter in your "Username or E-mail address" and your password:



IDrive[®]
Did you back it up?[™]

Username or Email Address:

Password:

Connect to Server:

Reconnect automatically on Login

Enable 128 Bit SSL Encryption (SSL Encryption is default)

Remember Username / Password and other settings

Connect **Close** **Advanced**

 New User Sign up  Forgot Password  Upgrade Account  Firewall Guidance

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Encryption key

Default encryption key
IDrive will set an encryption key to encrypt all data backed up to your account

Set my own encryption key (Recommended)
Remember and enter this key to access your backed up data. For the safety of your own backup data, do not share this with anyone else.

Set your encryption key:

Confirm your encryption key:

 **Continue** **Close**

Then click on "Continue".

Welcome to IDrive

To safeguard your critical data automatically, the following folders are backed up by default:

- ✓ Desktop
- ✓ Documents
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Pictures
- ✓ Videos

The above folders are backed up with the scheduled time set to a random 'off-peak hour'.

[Edit my Backup Set](#)

[Edit schedule parameters](#)

[Bandwidth Test](#)

Let me see the bandwidth at my present location

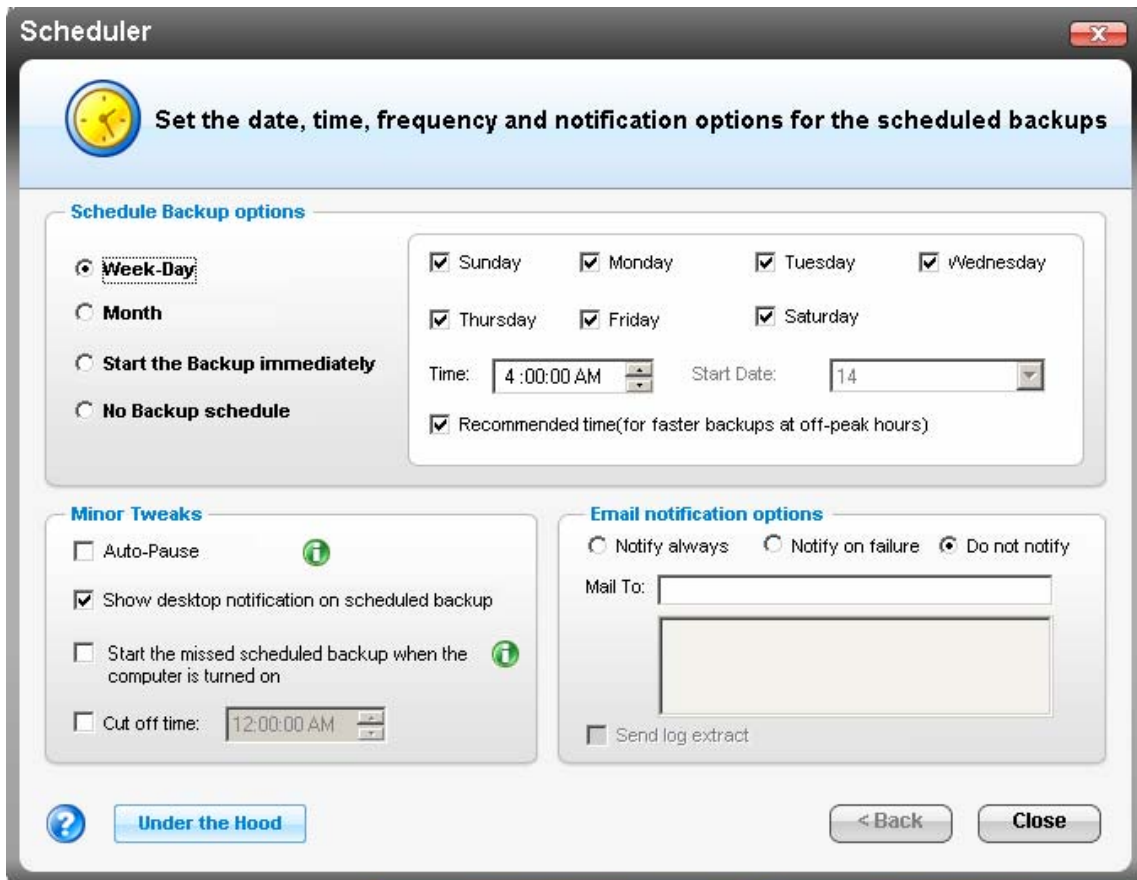
Let me edit the items I need for my backup by selecting/deselecting the files/folders

This is when my next scheduled backup would occur

Let me edit my backup schedule

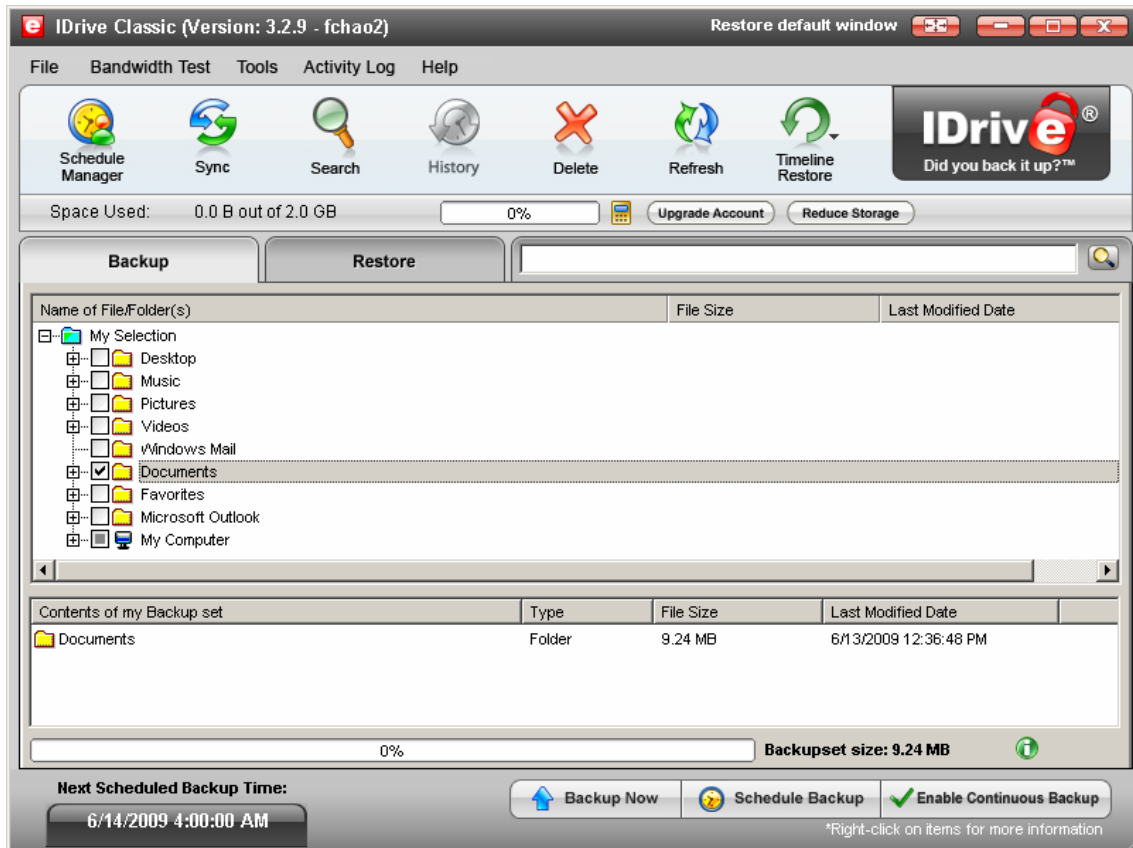
The screenshot shows the IDrive software interface. At the top, there's a 'Welcome to IDrive' header. Below it, a list of folders to be backed up is shown with green checkmarks: Desktop, Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos. To the right, a 'Bandwidth Test' button is highlighted with a yellow callout box. Below the folder list, there are three buttons: 'Edit my Backup Set', 'Edit schedule parameters', and 'Bandwidth Test'. The main window displays a 'Backup' tab with a file selection tree under 'My Selection'. The tree includes Desktop, Music, Pictures, Videos, Windows Mail, Documents, Favorites, Microsoft Outlook, and My Computer. A yellow callout box points to this tree with the text 'Let me edit the items I need for my backup by selecting/deselecting the files/folders'. Below the tree, a table shows the 'Contents of my Backup set' with columns for Name, Type, Size, and Last Modified Date. The table lists Desktop, Music, Pictures, Videos, and Documents. A progress bar shows 81% completion. At the bottom, the 'Next Scheduled Backup Time' is 5-31-2009 08:00 AM, with a yellow callout box pointing to it saying 'This is when my next scheduled backup would occur'. To the right of the time, there are buttons for 'Backup Now', 'Schedule Backup', and 'Enable Continuous Backup', with a yellow callout box pointing to 'Schedule Backup' saying 'Let me edit my backup schedule'.

Select the frequency and schedule that you want the IDrive software to back up your data files.

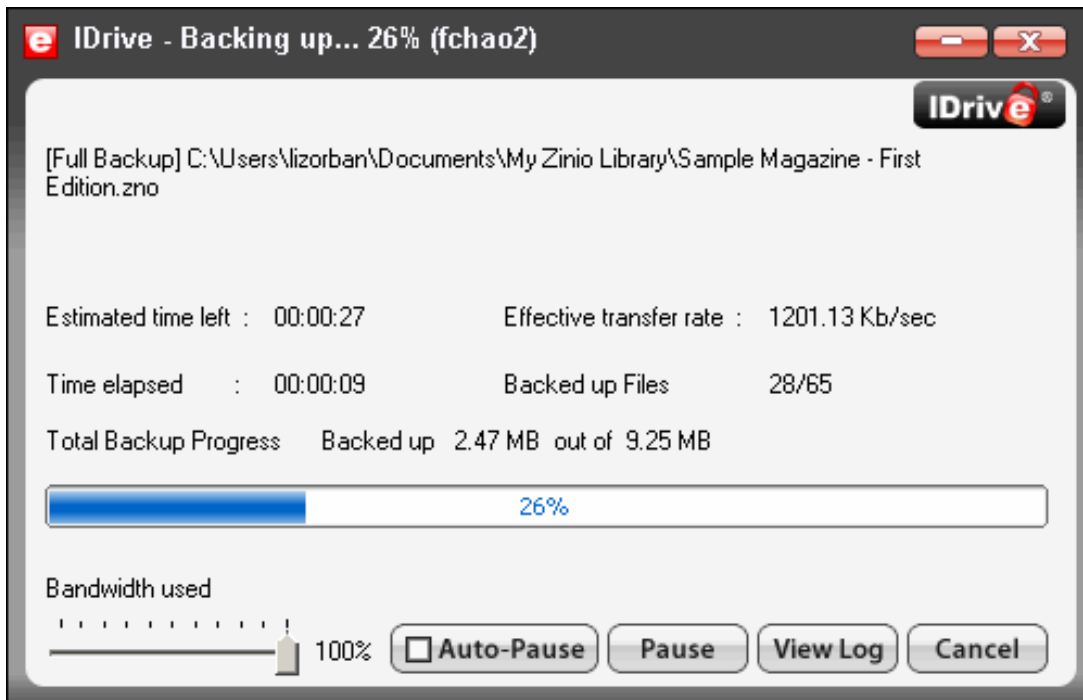


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Select the folders of your local hard drive(s) that you wish to have IDrive back up.
Your "Backup Set Size" is shown near the lower right hand corner of the "IDrive Classic" window. Do not let the "Backup Set Size" get above 2 Gigabytes, if you want to keep your IDrive account free of monthly charges.

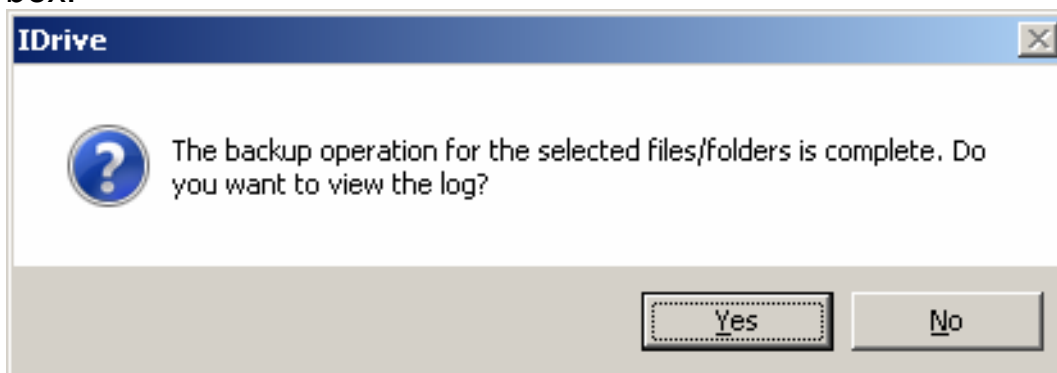


Click on the "Backup Now" button to do a "manual backup" of your data files.
The files and folders that you selected will be backed up to IDrive's Website.



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When your backup is finished, you will get the following message box:



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Click on "Yes" to view the log file to make sure that all of your selected files and folders were backed up successfully.

The detailed user manual for "IDrive" is located at

http://www.idrive.com/ide_usermanual.pdf

It is well-written and worth keeping around in paper format.

Use this manual to learn about the various ways that you can restore backed up files from IDrive's Web site to your computer's hard drive.

Let me know if there are any online file storage services that you are particularly fond of and we will describe them in future articles in this series.

If you have any questions or problems, I can be contacted by the following methods:

1. Send me e-mail at: fchao2@yahoo.com
2. Send "snail" United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to

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Or sell your computer and take up hiking instead !!