



## Guide 3

# Clean your computer and your Drive



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# 1. Understanding

## Understanding the impact of files

Anything stored on your computer **consumes memory and power** and can slow it down, especially if these files are stored on your desktop. Sorting, tidying and deleting will free up space on your computer and therefore also improve its performance. [Source](#)

The key to deleting data on your computer is to **extend the life of your device**. The more space you conserve on your computer, the less it will slow down and the more you will be able to make the software and operating system updates required for it to function properly. Because the manufacturing footprint of hardware accounts for 78% of the carbon footprint ([Source](#)), it is fundamental to find mechanisms to care for your equipment to extend its life.

*How much of the carbon impact do you think computers have on all digital equipment?*

Computers account for more than 37% of the carbon impact (over the entire life cycle: manufacture to end of life) of all terminals. Telephones come second with almost 23%, followed by televisions at 14%. [Source](#)

Similarly, what is stored in the cloud is not immaterial: the **data is stored in data centres**, which consume energy.

Alternatives to reduce the ecological impact of data centres exist. For cooling systems, instead of using gas or coal, it is possible to use renewable energy. Or, it is possible to reuse the heat produced by data centres to heat public buildings or facilities. [Source](#)

## Measure your impact

To find out the impact of cleaning your data,

### If you are on a company server or personal computer:

Before starting, create a temporary folder named "**CyberCleanUp**", and drop the files to be deleted into it as you go along. You will then just have to **measure the size of this folder** at the end of your operation.

### If you are on the cloud :

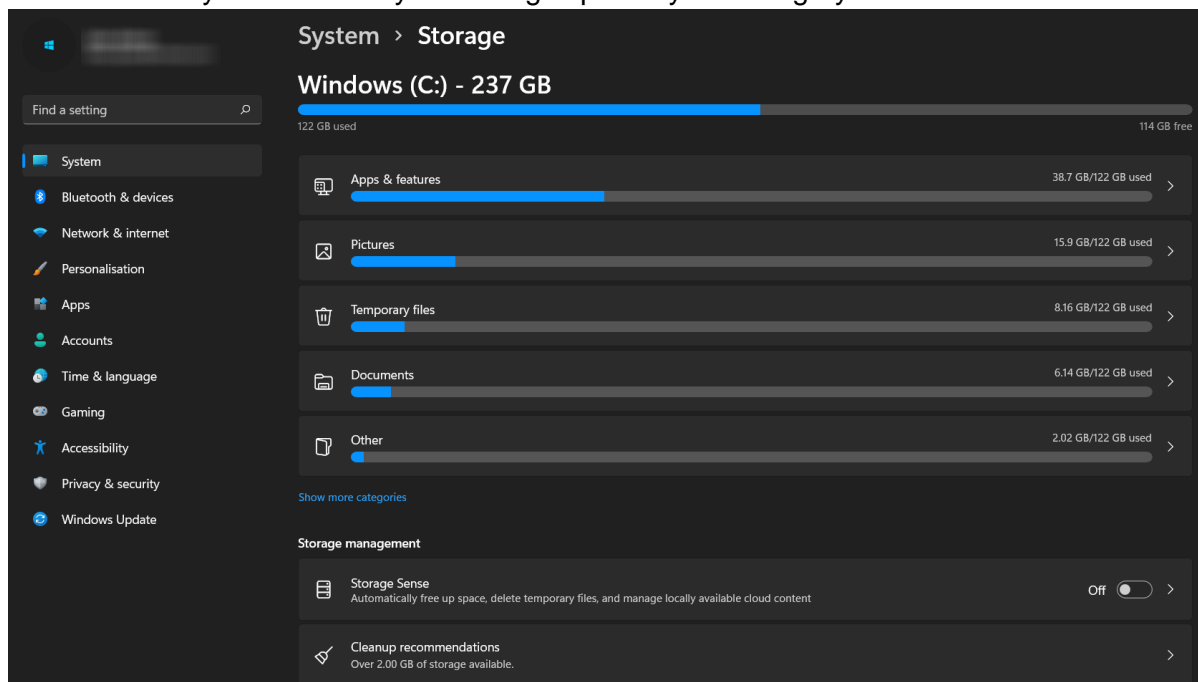
You will need to **record the size of storage** used **before and after** the cleanup to make a comparison. You can also take this measurement on your computer as an additional measure if you wish.



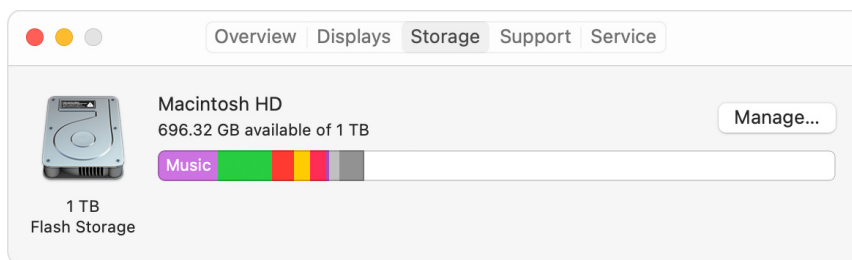


## #1 On your computer

On **Windows 10** : Go to “Start” > “Settings” > “System” > “Storage”.  
The list shows you the use of your storage space by file category.



On **Mac** : Allez dans le menu “Apple” > “About” > “Storage”. A diagram shows you the use of your storage space by file type.



## #2 On the Cloud

### On OneDrive

Through [the OneDrive sync app](#) on your computer: Click on the blue One Drive icon, then click on “Settings” > “Manage storage”. You will access the storage metrics.



Open your OneDrive - Belgian Institute for Sustainable IT

Open your Belgian Institute for Sustainable IT folder

Settings

View online

Pause syncing

Manage storage

Get help

Send feedback

Close OneDrive

Open folder View online Help & Settings

Site settings ▸ Storage Metrics ⓘ

Site collection 1022.08 GB of free space out of 1024.00 GB

(Page 1 / 1)

Type	Last name	Total size↓	% parent	Site Quota %	Last modification
Documents		1.9 GB	99.73%	0.19%	02/14/2022 00:42

**Through the website** : Click on the wheel at the top right to open the "Settings" tab, then click on "Options" under "One Drive settings". A new page will open: on the left, click on "Manage storage".

OneDrive Search everything

Options

Manage storage

Plans and upgrades

Office File Formats

Personal Vault

Tagging

Notifications

Device backups

Restore your OneDrive

Search

Manage Storage

Storage Summary

Total used

1.98 MB used of 5 GB

What's taking up space?

Your current plan(s)

Settings

OneDrive settings

Options

Upgrade

English (United States)





## On Google Drive

### For individuals :

On Google Drive, click on your profile picture, top right, then on "Manage your Google account"

Go to "Payments and subscriptions" and then "Storage space associated with your account". The storage of each tool can be viewed and managed from this space.

All you have to do now is click on "Free account storage space".

You will have access to all of your Google data and [various tools to clean it up](#).

**Bulky items**  
You can free up to 12.2 GB

Category	Files	Size
Emails with large attachments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IMG_20210912_023432.jpg</li> <li>IMG_20210609_024826.jpg</li> <li>IMG_20210609_024822.jpg</li> <li>IMG_20210609_024710.jpg</li> <li>IMG_20210609_024714.jpg</li> <li>IMG_20210512_163944.jpg</li> <li>+ other attachments</li> </ul>	Review and release 364.8 MB
Large files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 files (2 audio, 2 PDF)</li> </ul>	Examine and release 3.4 GB
Large photos and videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 items (2 photos, 2 videos)</li> </ul>	Examine and release 8.5 GB

### For Gsuite et Workplace users :

- You can see the space occupied on the left side by your files.
- To get more details about the largest files, you can click on "Storage Space".

Espace de stockage		Sauvegardes ⓘ
Fichiers occupant de l'espace de stockage Drive		Espace de stock ↓
	documents.zip	3,47 Go
	webinar_usages_numeriques_enjeux_climatiques.mp4	627,6 Mo
	swisstransfer.zip	216,2 Mo
	Plaquette-WCUD-Collectivités-2021-1.pdf	2,9 Mo

Now that you know the weight of your files, you are **ready to take action!**





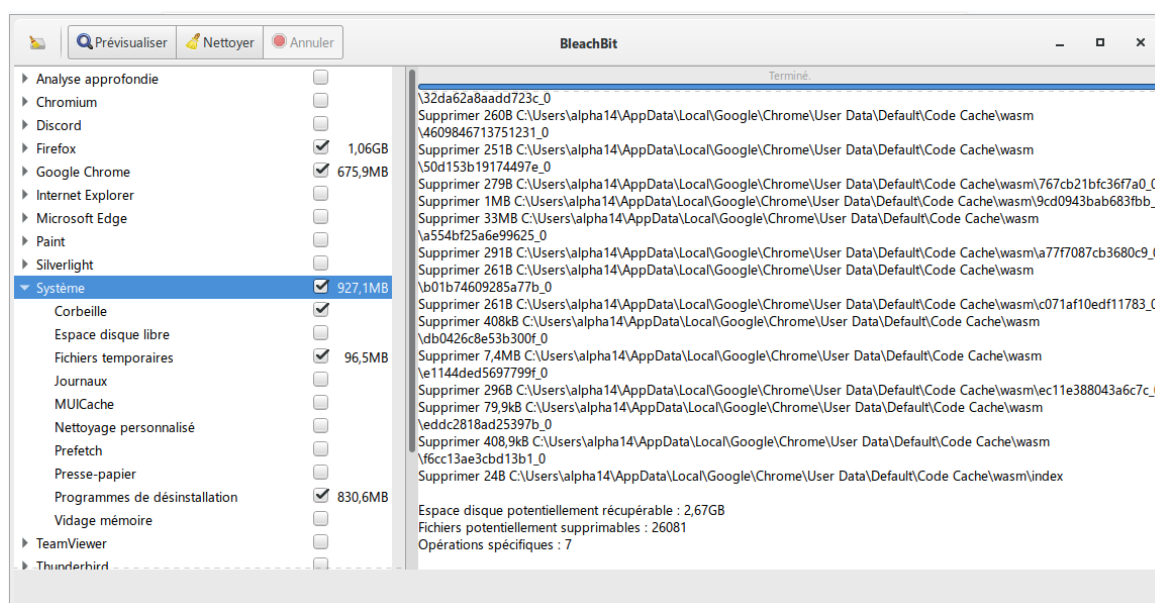
## 2. Taking action

### Clean your files : step by step

#### #1 Clean your temporary files (local)

Before starting with the serious stuff and sorting your files, a little clean-up is necessary. On most computers, a number of programs use and create temporary data. This data is inherent to software and operating systems, so you have no interest in cleaning it up manually.

You can use tools like Bleachbit, to take care of it for you (<https://www.bleachbit.org/>). This handy program will find all those files that take up space on your computer.



When you launch the program, go to "System" then check the box "Temporary Files" and "Uninstall Programs".

Depending on your browser (Firefox, Chrome) you can check the box "Cache" and "Optimise databases".

Once you have made your selection, you can press "Preview" to get a preview of what will be processed.

All you have to do is click on "Clean" to start the procedure.

This software has many features, we encourage you to look at the additional options in detail depending on your installed programs.



## #2 Organise your files

Reorganising your files will help you **to identify the files that are really useful to you** and will therefore make sorting easier. You can sort by time period, project, file type or any other criteria relevant to you.

If you are at **work**, don't forget to respect the **rules of document retention** in force, in particular by relying on the **GDPR** rules for personal data, or, in a **collective**, to evaluate the notion of administrative or historical interest of the document before considering its deletion:

Open each file and ask yourself if it is useful to you. If not, go to the **CyberCleanUp folder** (or the recycle bin if you are on the cloud).

## #3 Sorting photos, videos and audio files

Multimedia files (photos, videos, audios) may be heavier, but often what takes up space are duplicates, and files you no longer consult. There's only one way to sort it out, give yourself a "Memories" session!

Identify blurred photos and failed videos and delete them. If you have photographed or filmed several times at the same time, **keep only the best shots!** Do the same for audio files (music or recordings).

## #4 Awareness and measuring

When sorting your files, you have moved them to the CyberCleanUp folder or to the Recycle Bin. It is time to open this folder to analyse the **type of files** deleted. Perhaps this will give you some ideas for better management in the future?

It is time to take note of the **total weight** of the files to be deleted by simply "Right-clicking" / "Properties" on the temporary "CyberCleanUp" folder you have created.

Don't forget to **delete the folder** and then **empty your recycle bin!**

If you are on the **cloud**, or if you have not created a temporary folder on your computer, you will first have to **permanently delete** the items in your recycle bin and then re-check the value of your storage used to **calculate the difference** with your initial measurement.



## Checklist

- Clean your temporary files
- Organise and sort your files
- Sort your photos et videos
- Analyse the type of files deleted
- Measure the deleted data (before or after emptying the recycling bin)

**Congratulations! You've cleaned up your drive and your computer!**

## 3. Going even further

Now that you have cleaned up your files, would you like to keep your storage space clean all year round? Here are some tips to help you better manage your future files.

- **Name your files well** so that they are easy to find. You can put dashes between words, specify the date or version of the document.
- **Run a regular disk cleanup** to remove unnecessary system files.
- **Keep only the essentials on the cloud** and only enable sync on the necessary folders on your various devices.
- **Regularly clean up your obsolete data**
- **Take care of your computer:** turn off your computer regularly and for all laptops use a reinforced sleeve when transporting it.
- **Update applications regularly:** When developers update applications, it often adds new features, protects against security threats, and reduces resource usage. Regular updating will be beneficial. However, it is better to update manually in order to keep control of your applications. It's also a good time to be aware of applications that you no longer use and that continue to consume data and space on your phone.
- **Reduce notifications from your applications:** this tip is primarily intended to allow you to better focus on your current tasks by avoiding distractions. For the planet, this is a little extra: these notifications, known as "Push", are generated by requests that run almost continuously in search of new information. They therefore consume energy. Beyond the energy consumption of networks and servers, notifications also contribute to reducing your battery life.







## Sources

- <https://www.planetoscope.com/electronique/230-energie-consommee-par-les-data-centers.html>
- <https://librairie.ademe.fr/cadic/2351/guide-pratique-face-cachee-numerique.pdf>
- [https://www.arcep.fr/uploads/tx\\_gspublication/etude-numerique-environnement-ademe-arcep-volet02\\_janv2022.pdf](https://www.arcep.fr/uploads/tx_gspublication/etude-numerique-environnement-ademe-arcep-volet02_janv2022.pdf)

## Crédits

- Cover image : <https://fr.freepik.com>
- <https://digital-cleanup-day.fr/>
- <https://cyberworldcleanupday.fr/>

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World CleanUp Day : <https://www.worldcleanupday.org/>

Digital World CleanUp Day (international website): <https://www.digitalcleanupday.org/>

ISIT-BE: Belgium: 7, Joseph Stevens street | 1000 Brussels - <https://isit-be.org/>



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