

## Cloud Storage Explained

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What is “cloud” storage? The cloud is out in cyberspace on the Internet. According to [howitworksdaily.com](http://howitworksdaily.com): “Cloud storage involves **stashing data on hardware in a remote physical location**, which can be accessed from any device via the Internet.” Depending on what ecosystem one lives in, certain cloud storage services come to mind immediately: Apple = iCloud; PC= OneDrive; Chromebooks/Android = Google Drive. Dropbox is also another well-known cloud storage service since it’s been around since 2007.

Cloud storage is different from cloud backup. Cloud storage services are great for storing files and photos to one or more locations in the cloud so files can be accessed from any computer, tablet, or smartphone and shared with others. Cloud backup is a way to have continuous online backups for all your files in case they need to be restored. Backup is a topic for another article. This short article is about cloud storage options for data and photos.

There are so many new options for cloud storage in 2021. Some are free up to a certain amount of storage, then there is a monthly or yearly charge. Choosing one (or more) cloud storage options may be based on which ecosystem you use (Apple, PC, Google/Android) as well as price, security, features, sharing ability, and other factors. Maybe all that’s needed is to have an “extra” backup of photos and important documents in case of fire or computer/phone/tablet failure. Review the pros and cons of each cloud service for what fits best for your needs.

In doing research for this, the cloud storage options that came up most often in a Google search of “best cloud storage 2021” include: Apple iCloud, Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive/Photos, DropBox, iDrive (not an Apple product), BackBlaze, pCloud, and Carbonite, among many others. Links to several “best of” articles with pros/cons/cost are on [oakmont-learning.org](http://oakmont-learning.org) tech articles page along with this article.

In the Oakmont age group, photos tell the stories of our lives and are possibly the most important electronic files. Photo storage is a bit different when looking for “best of” sites. If taking smartphone photos, one is likely using automatic cloud storage based on type of smartphone: Google Photos for Androids and iCloud for iPhones. But there are other photo storage options: Microsoft OneDrive, Amazon Photos, DigiBoxx (a company in India), DropBox, and FlickrPro. A link to an article on these photo alternatives is also on the OTLC web site.

Check out OTLC resources on our web site [www.oakmont-learning.org](http://www.oakmont-learning.org) along with clickable links to cloud storage reviews referenced in this article.