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Google Drive vs Dropbox: Which cloud storage is better?

In a head-to-head matchup, it's hard to place a bet on Google Drive vs Dropbox. Both are great cloud storage (<https://www.jotform.com/what-is-cloud-storage/>) services with plenty of space and free options for those who don't need enterprise-level cloud storage.

They both offer a lot of common features, including backing up files to the cloud, syncing files across devices, and letting you share your files with other people. At first glance, they seem to be the same service, just from different companies.

However, Google Drive and Dropbox do have their differences. If you're wondering which is best, you'll want to dive deeper into how they sync, back up, and share your files — not to mention their varying security measures. Here's a look at how they stack up against each other in five key areas.

Just so you know

You can collect photos, videos, and other file uploads via custom online forms and send them to Dropbox

(https://www.jotform.com/dropbox/?utm_medium=jotform_blog&utm_source=https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_campaign=cta).

or Google Drive

(<https://www.jotform.com/integrations/google-drive?>

[utm_medium=jotform_blog&utm_source=https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_campaign=cta](https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_medium=jotform_blog&utm_source=https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_campaign=cta)).
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Security

Both Google Drive and Dropbox offer two-factor authentication and encrypt your data when it's in transit — from the cloud storage service to your device, and vice versa. However, Dropbox uses a stronger version of encryption to keep your files safe when they're being stored — Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) 256-bit encryption. The U.S. National Security Agency has approved this encryption standard to protect information that has been classified top secret.

Google Drive only uses 128-bit encryption for data at rest (in storage).

Security winner: Dropbox

Free storage

If your primary use for Google Drive or Dropbox is free storage, Google Drive is the clear winner. Google Drive offers 15 GB of free storage, while Dropbox only gives you 2 GB. However, you can get an extra 500 MB of storage space for every friend you refer to Dropbox, for a maximum of 19 GB of free storage space.



You've got 15 GB of free storage

Your storage is shared across Google Drive, Gmail, and Google Photos. Manage your storage by freeing up space – or get more storage with Google One.

[Get more storage](#)

2.78 GB of 15 GB used



STORAGE DETAILS

	Google Drive	0 GB	[icon]
	Gmail	2.76 GB	[icon]
	Google Photos	0.02 GB	[icon]

One caveat about Google Drive is that if you use Gmail, Google Photos, or other Google products, you could very easily burn through those 15 GB before you know it.

Free storage winner: Google Drive

Paid storage

When you need more than the 2 GB or 15 GB that Dropbox and Google Drive offer, respectively, you can upgrade to paid storage. Dropbox's plans start at \$11.99 per month for up to 2 TB of storage, or \$9.99 per month if you pay annually. When you upgrade to paid storage with Dropbox, you also get features like Dropbox Smart Sync, which lets you access your cloud files from your desktop without saving them to your hard drive, and mobile offline folders so you can sync folders to your mobile device and access them without an internet connection.

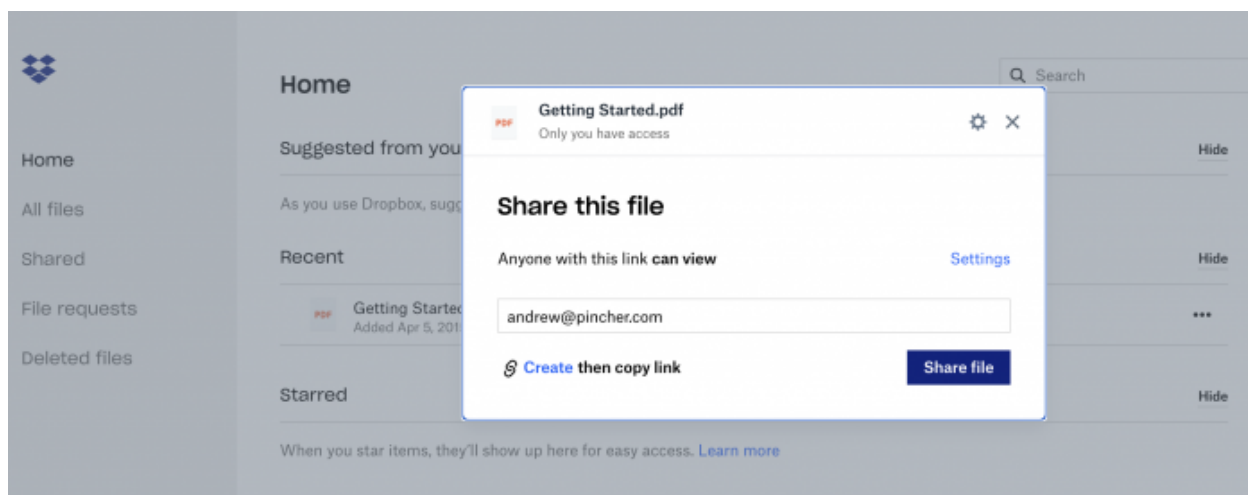
Google Drive's pricing plans

To get 2 TB of storage with Google Drive, you have to upgrade to Google One, a subscription service. Google One does cost less — \$99.99 per year vs Dropbox's \$119.88 per year.

Paid storage winner: Google Drive

File sharing features

Both Google Drive and Dropbox let you share files and folders. They're pretty much the same when it comes to granting permissions or sharing links. However, Dropbox does edge out Google Drive when it comes to securing your shared files. You can set passwords on shared files in Dropbox so that only people who have that password can access them. You can also set an expiration date for sharing, and after the date passes, the file-sharing link won't work.



File sharing on Dropbox

Dropbox also makes it a little easier to share files directly from Windows Explorer or Mac OS Finder. Both let you right-click on a file or folder to share it via email, but Dropbox also adds a “Copy Dropbox link” option that you can paste into an email or a Slack channel, for example. When someone joins or leaves your team, you can promote anyone to owner status of the files, and the owner can then remove someone entirely from accessing the files.

File sharing winner: Dropbox

Pro-Tip

Sign up for a [free Jotform account](https://www.jotform.com/signup/?utm_medium=jotform_blog&utm_source=https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_campaign=cta_free)

[. \(https://www.jotform.com/signup/?utm_medium=jotform_blog&utm_source=https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_campaign=cta_free\)](https://www.jotform.com/signup/?utm_medium=jotform_blog&utm_source=https://www.jotform.com/blog/dropbox-vs-google-drive/&utm_campaign=cta_free)

to create powerful online forms in minutes — with no coding required.

Syncing

Google Drive and Dropbox use different methods for syncing, which affects sync speed. While both automatically save files, Google downloads and uploads the entire document to sync it. This can result in delays if you’re trying to access the latest version of the document from another device. Additionally, if you lose your internet connection while Google is syncing your files, you could lose the work you’ve done.

On the other hand, Dropbox syncs changes to a file in blocks. It's much faster and, if you're using collaboration features in Dropbox, the changes appear more quickly for everyone. You also don't have to wait as long if you want to access the latest version of your file on another device.

Syncing winner: Dropbox

	Google Drive	Dropbox
Free storage	Until 15 GB	Until 2 GB
Security (for data at rest)	128-bit encryption	256-bit encryption
Pricing (for 2 TB)	\$99.99 (annual)	\$119.88 (annual)

Winner

In the battle of Dropbox vs Google Drive, the best cloud storage service (<https://www.jotform.com/blog/cloud-storage-for-small-business/>) is Dropbox, by a nose. It just edges out Google Drive based on security, but its slightly easier file sharing and faster syncing also make it a better service, particularly for those who collaborate on a lot of documents.

This article is originally published on Feb 06, 2020, and updated on Dec 08, 2021



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8 Comments:



Tom

January 1, 2022 at 5:05 PM

i think one thing that's missing here is the storage SHARING features and google ecosystem.

Google lets you family share storage with 4(?) others. Dropbox require you to pay X\$ extra

Photos backed up via Google Photos to the drive are far easier to browse and access. Dropbox simply cannot match all the functionalities of Google Photos when it comes to browsing photos/identifying people/organizing photos by trip/location

Noisy

March 27, 2021 at 11:14 AM

Yes, Dropbox syncs files much faster than Google Drive. You can also prioritize which file you want to sync first, and choose which file or which folder you only want to be available in the cloud to save disk space, with only right click. So, yes, it is more expensive than Google Drive, but it performs better, and it has more useful features.

SquireO

February 25, 2021 at 11:09 PM

Google uses 256AES Encryption for stored data at rest.

Look for yourself:

Google uses the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) algorithm to encrypt data at rest. All data at the storage level is encrypted with AES256 by default, with the exception of a small number of Persistent Disks created prior to 2015 that use AES128

Davis

December 19, 2020 at 10:00 PM

I use both Google drive and Dropbox. A very important feature of Dropbox was not mentioned in the article. All data files that change over time should be stored in Dropbox. You get 30 days of every version of your file. So if you can change a file 10 times every day and if you can go to Dropbox.com and search for your file and retrieve bases on date and time. Nothing is more valuable than this feature!

Lange

August 8, 2020 at 2:52 PM

Dropbox pricing is way over rated compared to other cloud providers. 9usd a month, with no possible lower space. Used it for 10 years, till I found out how google drive works. Way cheaper. Now I pay 2usd a month, for what I need. 100GB. 2TB is overkill and no need to pay 9usd for so much more than I need. Dropbox is not developing as others are. Dropbox is a simple overpriced product left to nothing.

Kunal Joshi

June 29, 2020 at 3:29 AM

Google just disabled being able to add shared folders to your drive, effectively destroying its utility for most users. In the light of this I strongly recommend editing the 'Syncing' and 'File Sharing' bits of this article. And also your tagline, because where Dropbox might earlier have been ahead by a nose or a hair, it is now ahead of google drive by miles

Čuka

June 13, 2020 at 1:42 PM

And what about searching by text from pdf doc. In Dropbox without problems but in Drive...

jim sturtz

May 24, 2020 at 7:08 PM

i have several cloud accounts. is there a program/app/service that will allow me to sync them all together and dedup them?

thanks.

jim

[View Answer \(https://www.jotform.com/answers/2344996-i-have-several-cloud-accounts\)](https://www.jotform.com/answers/2344996-i-have-several-cloud-accounts)

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