



Disk Recovery Tools

Even the best-protected systems are vulnerable to data loss

No matter how well you protect your systems, every computer system is vulnerable to data loss. Although most organizations' servers are typically well protected by backup schemes, only the most sophisticated schemes provide up-to-the-second data protection. Many organizations don't have a comprehensive backup mechanism in place even for desktop systems that store information that's crucial to business processes, and the cost of recreating lost data can be very high. The disk recovery tools that this Buyer's Guide lists can help prevent the disaster of workstation and server data loss.

Disk data loss results from power outages or equipment problems (e.g., defective RAID or IDE controllers) or human factors (e.g., unintentional file deletion or hard disk formatting, virus and worm attacks). The first rule of data recovery is to avoid writing data to the drive or partition that contains the data you need to recover. When you modify data on the affected partition, the disk clusters that contain the deleted data can be reallocated, permanently destroying the original data contents. Before using any of the products listed, you should stop all activities that might write to the volume you want to recover. For servers, you might want to stop users from accessing shares.

You can run the products in this Buyer's Guide from a bootable recovery disk or CD-ROM—you don't have to install the product on the affected volume. The products will trigger a graphical operations console in which you can view and restore the damaged data.

Each product provides the ability to recover data lost by file and partition deletions and by hard disk corruption. Although each product has its own unique feature set, you should evaluate certain criteria before you select a tool. Keep in mind the supported OS. Most tools provide support for Windows XP, Windows 2000, Windows NT, Windows Me, and Windows 9x systems. For server recovery, verify that the product supports the server version of your OS. Some of the listed disk recovery tools also support Linux and UNIX file-system recovery.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Buyer's Guide summarizes vendor-submitted information. To find out about future Buyer's Guide topics or to learn how to include your product in an upcoming Buyer's Guide, go to <http://www.winnetmag.com/buyersguide>.

Look for the ability to either create boot disks or run from a bootable CD-ROM. Most of the products support recovery from IDE, EIDE, ATA, and SCSI hard disks and floppy disks. Some products also support data recovery for RAID volumes. Some offer support for removable media such as Zip and Jaz drives and even SmartMedia cards.

Almost all the products support multiple file systems, such as FAT, FAT32, NTFS, and NTFS 5.0 (NTFS5). However, for a complete Win2K recovery scenario, make sure that the product supports some of the newer Win2K disk features, such as basic and dynamic disks, NTFS compression, alternate

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data streams, sparse files, and Unicode filenames. Also look for essential recovery features, including the ability to recover deleted files and deleted or damaged partitions, to restore volumes and replace the Master Boot Record (MBR), to recover from formatted drives, to support large disks, and to recover files to different destinations, such as working folders, Zip drives, or remote FTP locations. Almost all the listed vendors provide downloadable demos to let you preview your lost data without actually recovering it, letting you determine before you buy the product whether the software will be able to recover data in your situation.

Data recovery isn't always possible even with the best of tools. For tough cases in which the tool alone can't recover data, many of the featured vendors also provide advanced data recovery services.

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Contact Information	Product Name	Price	Description
Acronis 650-875-7593 877-825-0953 http://www.acronis.com	Acronis RecoveryExpert	\$29.99	Recovers lost or deleted partitions from disk; supports all Windows and Linux file systems; features automatic and manual recovery mode selections; independently boots from a CD-ROM or disk, so you can recover partitions even if your OS fails to boot
	Acronis PartitionExpert 2003 (ships with Acronis Recovery-Expert for free)	\$49	Can create, copy, move, and resize partitions; recovers lost or deleted partitions; supports all Windows and Linux file systems; independently boots from a CD-ROM or disk, so you can recover partitions even if your OS fails to boot
AlphaOmega Soft 425-748-5077 http://www.alphaomegasoft.com	FinalData Standard	\$79.95	Offers complete data recovery for all Windows OSs; you don't need to install software before data loss or damage occurs; recovers from all damage scenarios including virus attack, accidental or deliberate deletion, and formatting problems
	FinalData Plus	\$119.95	Same as FinalData Standard but includes permanent file termination and clean history of cache and cookies
	FinalData Premium	\$199.95	Same as FinalData Standard but includes permanent data termination and the ability to repair Microsoft Office files
LC Technology International 727-449-0891 http://www.lc-tech.com	FILERECOVERY Professional	\$99.95	Recovers data from severely damaged hard disks; can find lost partitions, boot sectors, and other file-system components; compatible with all Microsoft file systems, including compression and the Encrypting File System (EFS) in Windows XP and Windows 2000
Ontrack Data Recovery 952-937-5161 800-872-2599 http://www.ontrack.com	EasyRecovery Professional 6.0	\$499 per license (varies according to type of license)	Offers data recovery, file repair, and disk diagnostics; supports XP, Win2K, Windows NT, Windows Me, Windows 9x, Windows 3.x, and DOS; can recover data from IDE/ATA/EIDE hard disks, SCSI drives, floppy disks, Zip and Jaz removable media, and digital media; can restore and repair Office files
QueTek Consulting 713-722-0584 866-722-0584 http://www.quetek.com	File Scavenger	\$39.95	Offers a disk-based utility for NTFS volumes to recover deleted files, reformatted or damaged partitions, and inaccessible hardware and software RAID volumes; supports file compression, dynamic disks, alternate data streams, sparse files, Unicode filenames, and transparent handling of bad disk sectors; supports XP, Win2K, and NT systems
Stellar Information Systems sales@stellarinfo.com http://www.stellarinfo.com	Stellar Phoenix for NTFS	\$199	Recovers data for NTFS and NTFS5 file-system volumes after data loss caused by a virus, human error, partition loss, software corruption, or sabotage; recovers from NTFS drives created on XP, Win2K, and NT; recovers deleted files and folders even after you empty the Recycle Bin or press Shift+Del; recovers data from deleted partitions or formatted logical drives and missing or lost folders; recognizes and preserves long filenames when restoring files and folders
Total Recall 702-566-3737 800-743-0594 http://www.totalrecall.com	VirtualLab for Windows	\$99	Recovers data caused by formatting, partition damage, virus or directory destruction, and other data loss problems; recovers files from the Recycle Bin; works on all Windows file systems; can rescue data from hard disks, camera cards, Zip and Jaz drives, floppy disks, RAID (dynamic and physical arrays), and other devices that Windows can assign a drive letter to; comes with a built-in chat client for accessing product help
Winternals Software 512-330-9130 800-408-8415 http://www.winternals.com	Disk Commander	\$299 for a single license	Recovers damaged or deleted files and salvages data from corrupt drives, even on unbootable systems and reformatted drives; repairs partition table, MBR, and boot sector errors; can recover data from NTFS, FAT, and FAT32 volumes on XP, Win2K, and NT systems