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Thunderbird Move Mail / Settings From Desktop Computer To Laptop

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Q. How do I move my Thunderbird email client settings from Debian Linux desktop to a new Ubuntu Linux laptop? I've installed Thunderbird on Ubuntu Linux but not able to find any import or export option. How do I move settings?

A. Make sure Mozilla Thunderbird is not running. You need find out your profile directory / folder. Open terminal and change directory to ~/.thunderbird:

**UNIX**

[1]

[2]

```
$ cd ~/.thunderbird
```

Type ls command to see the profile directory:

```
$ ls
```

Sample output:

```
appreg  iz80591g.default  profiles.ini
```

The path is usually ~/.thunderbird/xxxxxxx.default/ (xxx is random character; in above example it is iz80591g.default directory). You can copy iz80591g.default using network (scp command) or USB pen. Insert USB pen and copy iz80591g.default to pen drive:

```
$ cp -avr iz80591g.default /media/disk/
```

You can also use GUI tools. Open file manager by clicking on Places > Home Folder > Hit CTRL+H to display hidden file. Go to .thunderbird > highlight all files and folders in it. Copy the files to the desired backup location.

A note about Windows XP / Vista profile location

The path is usually %AppData%\Thunderbird\Profiles\xxxxxxx.default\ . Open command prompt and type command to find out your path:

```
cd %AppData%\Thunderbird\Profiles\  
dir
```

Windows GUI method

Alternatively, click on Start > Run > Type the command:

```
%appdata%
```

Press [Enter] key > Open the Thunderbird folder.

A note about Mac OS X

The path is usually ~/Library/Thunderbird/Profiles/xxxxxxx.default/. Open a terminal and type the command to find out your path:

```
cd ~/Library/Thunderbird/Profiles  
ls
```

OS X GUI method

Open your home folder > Select Library folder > select the Thunderbird folder.

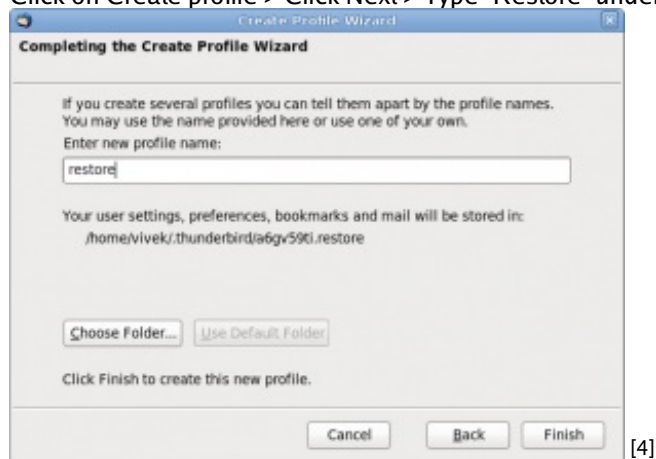
How do I restore the profile?

To restore the profile on laptop, open a terminal and type the following command (make sure Thunderbird is not running):

```
$ thunderbird -profilemanager
```



Click on Create profile > Click Next > Type "Restore" under new profile name > (note down the folder location) Finish:



Finally Click on Exit.

Copy the files from USB pen

Open a terminal and type the command:

```
$ cd ~/.thunderbird/
```

Run ls command to see the folder noted when you created your restoration profile. Run cd command on the folder:

```
$ cd xxxxxxxx.restore  
$ cp -avr /media/disk/iz80591g.default/* .
```

Alternatively, you can highlight and copy all files using Places > Home Folder method.

Start the thunderbird and you should see all your old emails including settings.

Further readings

- [How To Manage Profiles](#) [5]

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[5] How To Manage Profiles: <http://www.mozilla.org/support/thunderbird/profile>

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