

Video – Restore Points (6 min)

Let's talk about backing up your computer, and restore points in particular, and what you can do with a restore point. Restore points are cool for two reasons. One, you can run System Restore and restore your computer system to a previous time, when your system worked. This will not delete, or change your user documents, but it will restore system settings, registry settings, and system files that might have become corrupted, or altered, or changed. Now, if you do wish to restore your user documents, you can also use a restore point using previous versions, which is also known as "shadow copies", to restore individual files and folders to a previous version, contained within a restore point.

Let's take a look at how this works. I'll go down to the Start menu, right-click on "Computer", go to "Properties", from this window I'll click on "System protection", and this opens the System Protection tab within the System Properties window. From here, I can run the System Restore utility and restore my system to a restore point, not affecting my user documents, but restoring my system to a previous time. I can also configure my restore settings, manage disk space, and delete restore points here. I can also create a restore point.

Right now, my protection settings are such, that my (C:) drive, which is my system drive, I have system protection on, I can configure that, and I'll raise the Max Usage to 3%. Right now, the settings are "Restore system settings and previous versions of files". I'll click "OK". Under my (E:) drive, right now system protection is off. I'll click "Configure", and since this isn't my system drive, I'll choose "Only restore previous versions of files". I'll change the Max Usage also to 3%, and click "OK". From here, I can now create a restore point. I'll click the "Create" button, put a name for my restore point, with the date, and click "Create". "The restore point was created successfully." I'll press "Close", and now I can click on "System Restore", and let's take a look here. "Next"... and there is my restore point, "9-7-15", it's a manual restore point, notice there is a previous restore point the last time I ran Windows updates, and I can click "Show more restore points" for any other previous restore points saved in the system. I'll click "Cancel". And I'll click "OK", and I'll close this window.

Now, what I'll do is, I'll go to My Documents folder, and in My Documents folder, you can see that I have two text documents, an image file, and the "putty" executable program. I'll go into "document1", and I'll add some text. "This is document 1 - "Now I am "changing it." And I'll save this file, "File" > "Save". And then for "document2", I'll take it and drag it to the recycle bin, and then empty the trash. So, I've altered "document1", and altered "document2" by deleting it. So, the documents have been changed. I'll go into "document1" here, right-click on it, go to "Properties", look at previous versions, and you can see that there is a previous version of the file located on a restore point. If I want, I could highlight this, and restore it to this previous version. I'll click "Cancel". Now, to restore "document2", what I'll need to do is, I'll go to my (C:) drive, and then access "Users", and then "student", which is my student account, and then I'll right-click on the "My Documents" folder. I'll go to "Properties", and you can see there is the "Previous Versions" tab. Under "Previous Versions", I have the previous versions of this folder. If I want to, I can restore the entire folder, or I can double-click on the folder, and there you see the contents of the folder at this point in time, and there is "document2.txt", which I can restore by opening, and saving to the My Documents folder. I'll close this... and go back to My Documents folder, and there is "document2" restored. So, as you can see, restore points are useful for system restore, restoring your system to a previous time, or recovering files and folders using previous versions.