Note Pad

for Android

Trevin Beattie

Copyleft © 2011–2025 Trevin Beattie

Note Pad for Android is distributed under the terms of the Gnu Public License, version 3.0.

> **[Encryption code]:** Copyright © 2000-2013 The Legion of the Bouncy Castle Inc. (`http://www.bouncycastle.org`)
>
> Permission is hereby granted, free of charge, to any person obtaining a copy of this software and associated documentation files (the "Software"), to deal in the Software without restriction, including without limitation the rights to use, copy, modify, merge, publish, distribute, sublicense, and/or sell copies of the Software, and to permit persons to whom the Software is furnished to do so, subject to the following conditions:
>
> The above copyright notice and this permission notice shall be included in all copies or substantial portions of the Software.
>
> THE SOFTWARE IS PROVIDED "AS IS", WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE AND NONINFRINGEMENT. IN NO EVENT SHALL THE AUTHORS OR COPYRIGHT HOLDERS BE LIABLE FOR ANY CLAIM, DAMAGES OR OTHER LIABILITY, WHETHER IN AN ACTION OF CONTRACT, TORT OR OTHERWISE, ARISING FROM, OUT OF OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE SOFTWARE OR THE USE OR OTHER DEALINGS IN THE SOFTWARE.

Some of the images used by the program are reproduced from work created and shared by the Android Open Source Project and used according to the terms described in the Creative Commons 2.5 Attribution License.

This manual and other images used by the program were created by Trevin Beattie and are shared according to the terms described in the Creative Commons 3.0 Attribution-ShareAlike License.

Table of Contents

1 The Basics 1
- 1.1 Device Compatibility 1
- 1.2 Permissions 1
- 1.3 Adding Notes 1
- 1.4 Editing Notes 1
- 1.5 Deleting Notes 1

2 Categorizing Notes 3

3 Private Notes 5
- 3.1 Lost Password 6

4 Exporting and Importing 12
- 4.1 Exporting Notes 12
- 4.2 Importing Notes 15

5 Known Bugs 19

1 The Basics

Note Pad was designed to be simple and intuitive, so you should be able to get started writing notes without using this manual.

1.1 Device Compatibility

The application is designed for compatibility with Android 12 (Snow Cone) but also runs on Android 2.2 (Froyo) through 14 (Upside-down Cake) which should cover 98.6% of Android devices on the market as of February 2025. (It has been tested on Gingerbread, Ice Cream Sandwich, Lollipop, Marshmallow, Oreo, Quince Tart, Tiramisu, and Upside-down Cake.) Support for newer Android devices is planned.

1.2 Permissions

When installing the NotePad app or when using certain features, Android may ask you to grant permission for the app to access some system-level functions. The permission the app requests is:

- Write files to external storage (Marshmallow or earlier). The app uses this on older Android devices when you export your NotePad data to a file for backup or transfer. In Android 6 (Marshmallow), this is only needed if you select a backup file location outside of the app's private folder. In Android 7 (Nougat) and later, this permission is not required since the app uses Android's Storage Access Framework.

1.3 Adding Notes

To add a new note, press "New", then start typing the note.

When finished writing the note, press "Done". The first line of the note is shown in the notes list.

1.4 Editing Notes

To make changes to an existing note, tap on the note heading. After editing the note, press "Done".

If you want to discard your changes to the note, press the Back button. The app will ask you to confirm whether you want to discard the changes. If you pressed Back by accident, you can press "Cancel" to return to editing your note.

1.5 Deleting Notes

If you no longer need a note, there are two ways to delete it. Tap the note heading to enter the editor.

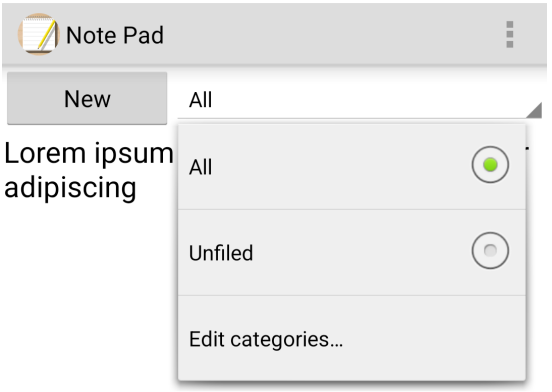
The first way is to press Details . . . → Delete.

The second is to delete all of the text of the note, then press Done. The app removes any empty note.

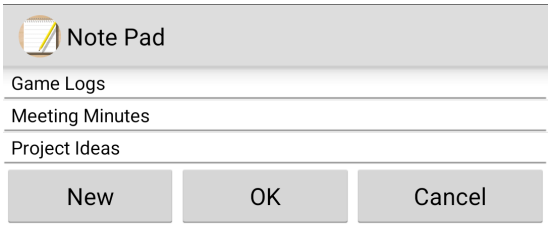
2 Categorizing Notes

Each note can be assigned to a different category, allowing you to organize your notes.

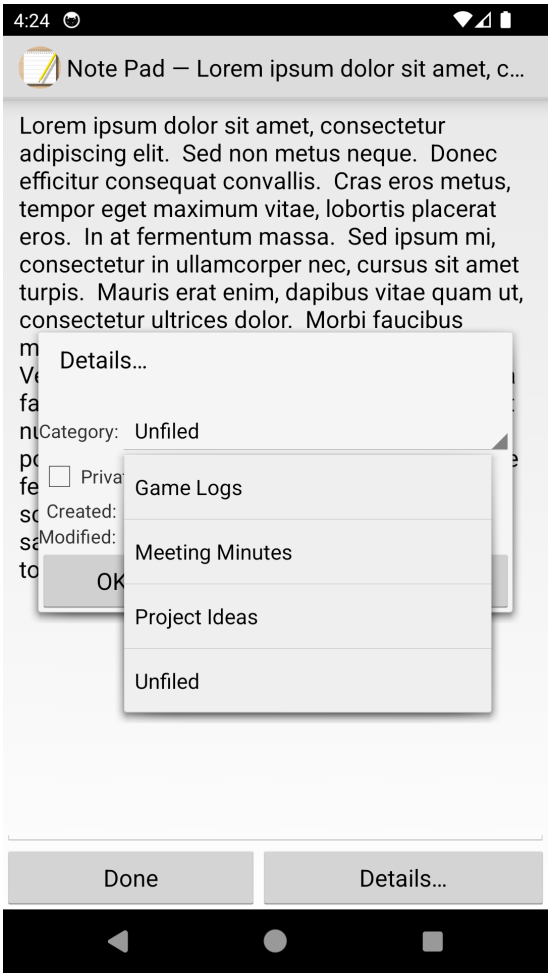
When the application is first installed it comes with just one category, “Unfiled”, and all new notes will be in this category. To add new categories, open the category drop-down list next to the “New” button, then select “Edit categories. . .”.



From the next screen, press “New” to make a new line in the category list, then enter the name of the category right on that page. Repeat for every category you want to create. You can also change previously entered categories on this page. When finished, press “OK” to save the new category list, or “Cancel” to discard your changes.



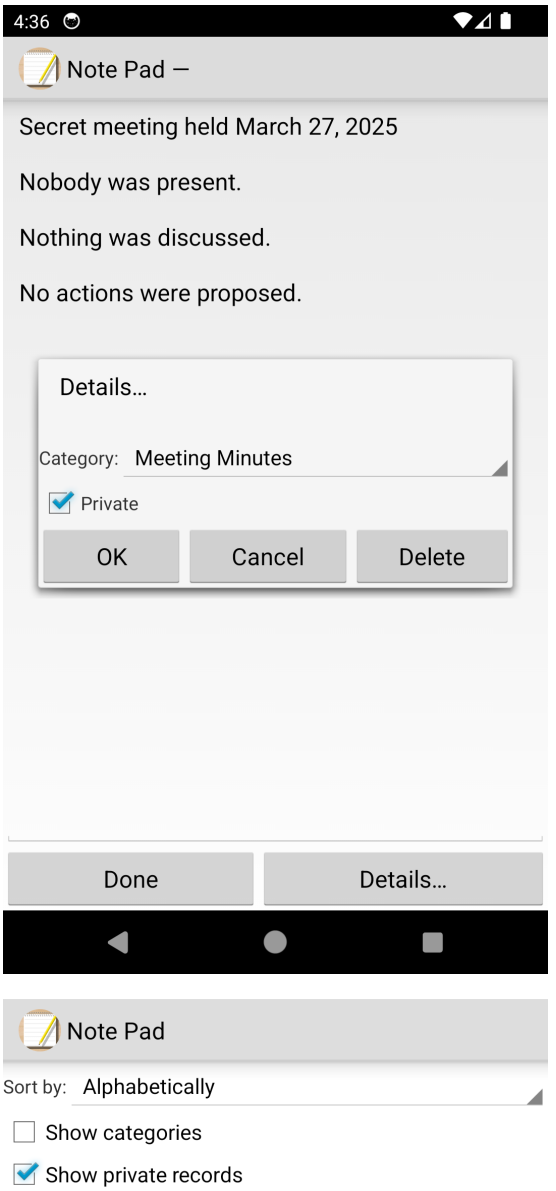
Now when you create or edit a note, you will have the option of changing the category it is assigned to by going to the “Details. . .” dialog.



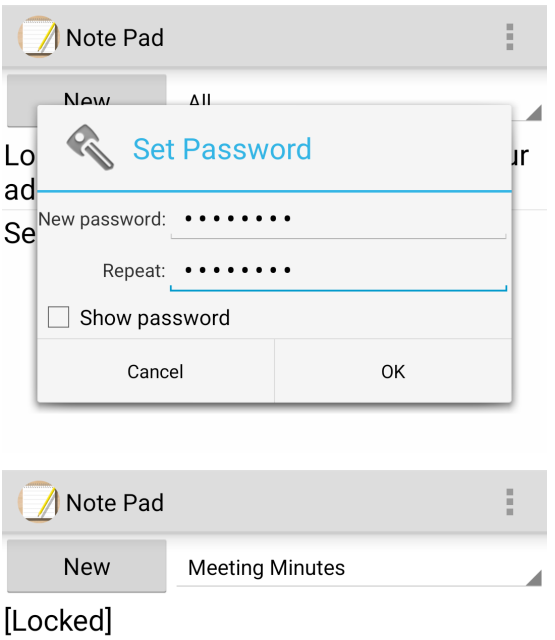
On the note list, open the category drop-down and select one of your custom categories to show only the notes in that category. New notes will default to the currently selected category. If you select "All", then notes from all categories will be shown.

3 Private Notes

Notes can be marked as “Private”, in which case they are normally hidden in your list of notes unless you turn on “Show private records” in the application settings. To make a note private, open the “Details. . .” dialog from the note editor and check the “Private” box.



You can add an extra layer of security to your private notes by setting a password from the application's main menu. After setting a password, all of your private notes will be encrypted and will show up as "[Locked]" in your note list and you will not be able to edit them until you enter your password in the application settings. When you exit the application, it forgets your password so that the private notes become locked again the next time anybody opens your Note Pad.



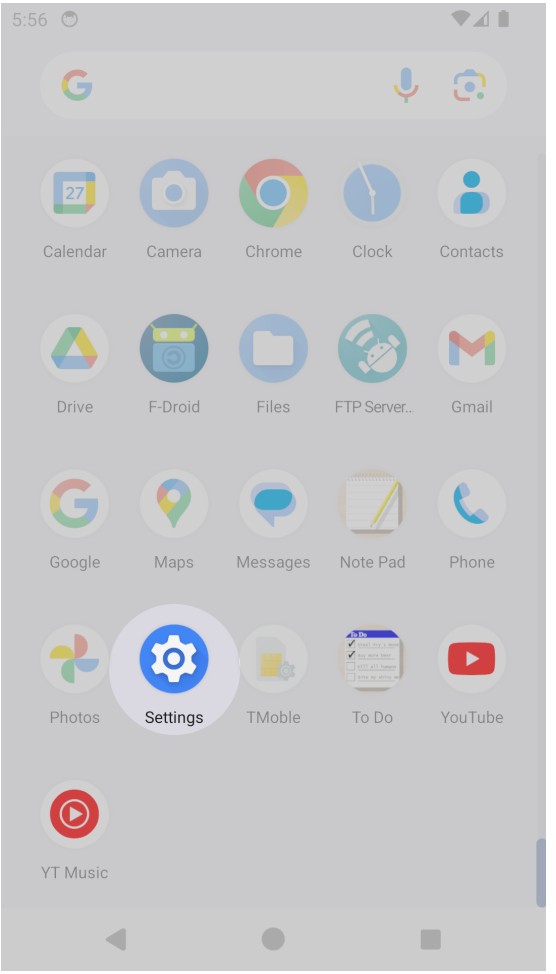
Important! If you have not entered your password in the application settings and you mark a note as Private, it will *not* be encrypted. If you want to encrypt a new note but have not entered your password yet, simply save it, enter your password in the application settings, open up your new note and save it again.

You can remove your password and un-encrypt your private notes by choosing "Set Password" from the main menu, enter your old password, but leave the new password blank.

3.1 Lost Password

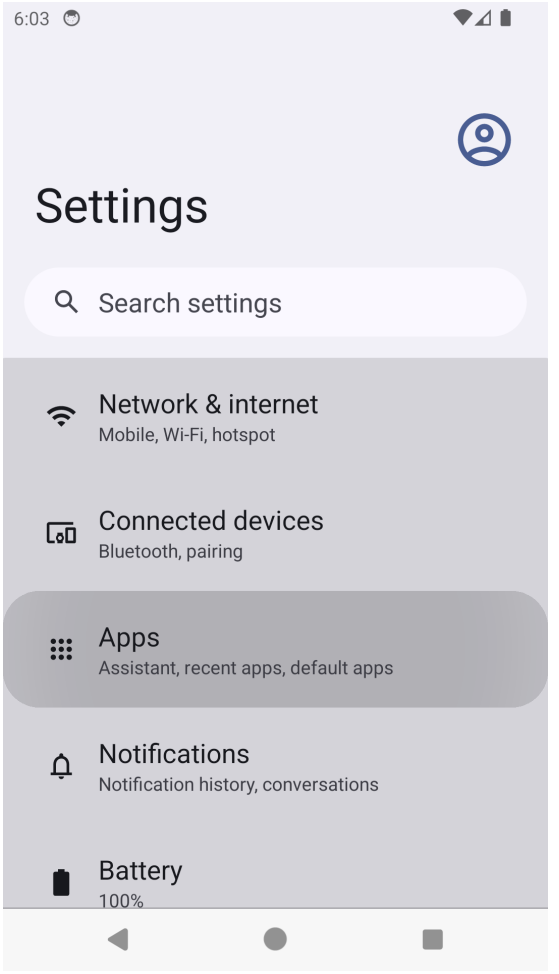
If you have set a password and later forget what it was, you will not be able to access your encrypted private notes. The only way to recover from this situation and reset your password is to erase the application data.

1. If you have any private notes which were *not* encrypted (because they were created without a password,) change them so they are not private.
2. Export a backup copy of your Note Pad data, but *do not* include private notes.
3. Exit the Note Pad application, and open up the Android Settings.

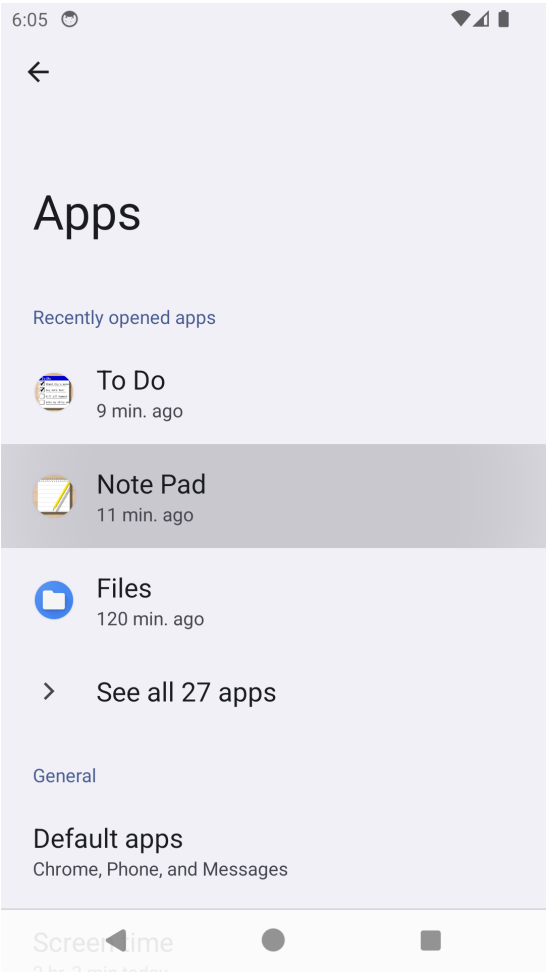


(The following sequence may vary depending on your version of Android.)

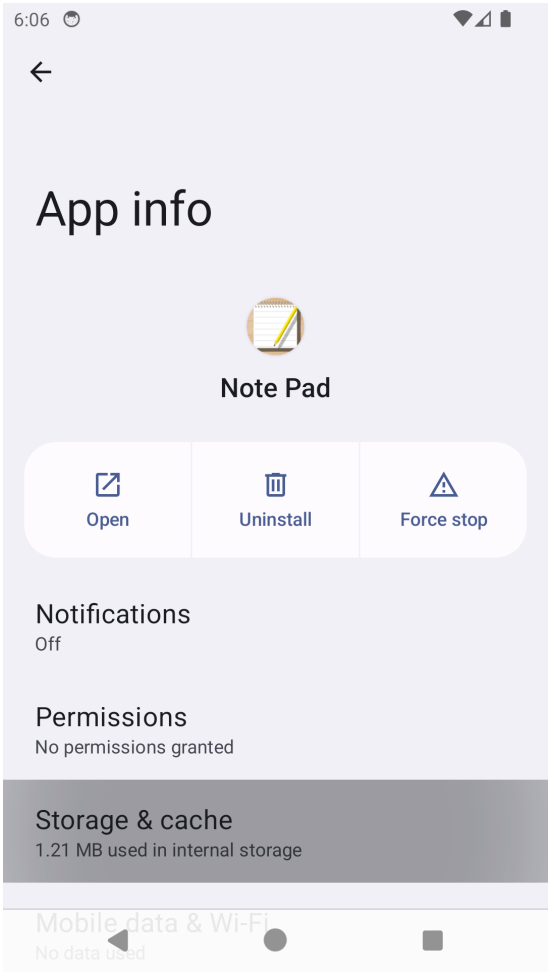
4. Choose “Apps”



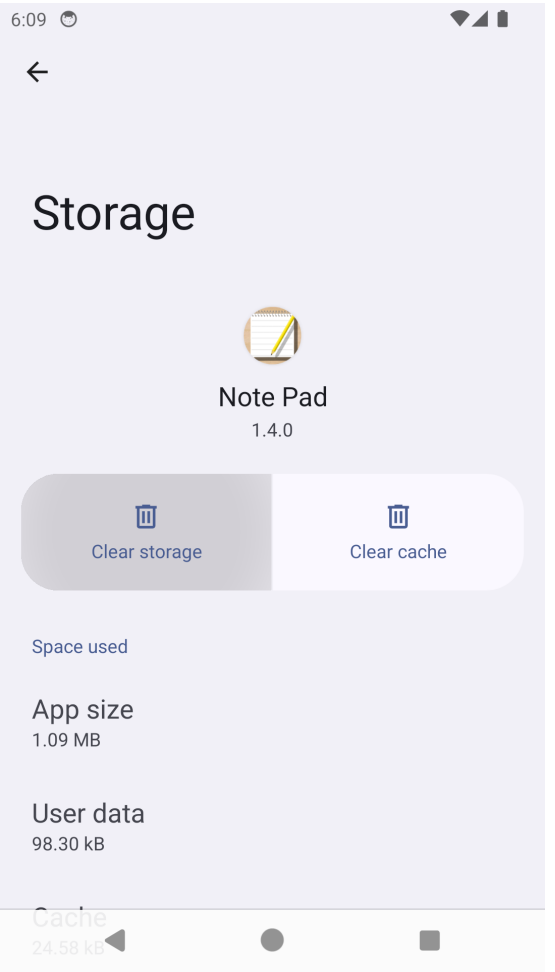
5. Choose “Note Pad”



6. Select “Storage & Cache”



7. Press the “Clear storage” button, and confirm that you really want to do this.

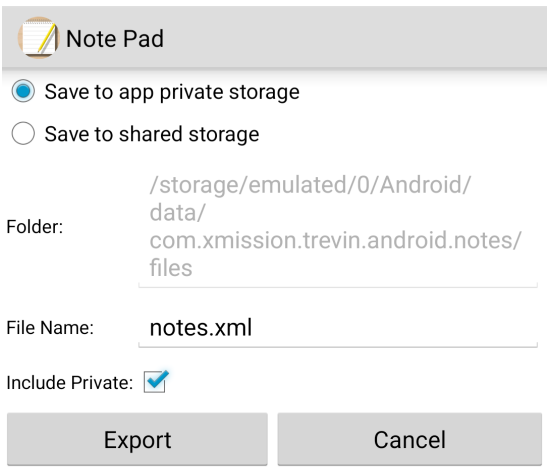


8. Exit all the way out of the Android Settings, and go back to the Note Pad application. It should now be empty.
9. Import the file you had previously backed up.
10. If you had any notes which were private but not encrypted, change them back to private.
11. Set a new password. Make sure you remember this one!

4 Exporting and Importing

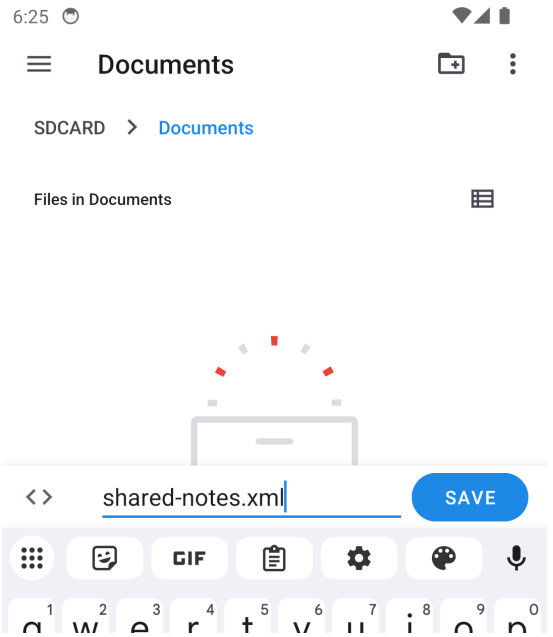
4.1 Exporting Notes

In order to protect against the loss of data on your Android device, you should periodically make a backup copy. First, if you have set a password for your private notes make sure you have entered the password in the "Settings" to unlock them. Then in the main menu select "Export Data" to save all of your notes to a file on your device.



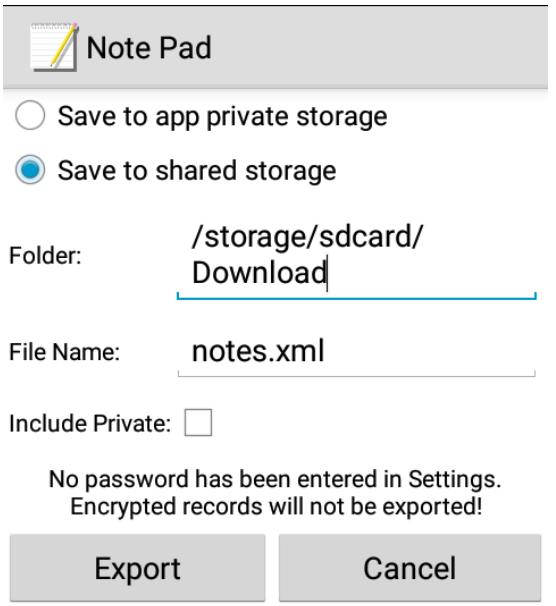
You can choose where to save the file and what to name it, but by default it is saved to your the app's private storage area on your device. The export dialog shows the location of this storage, which can vary depending on your version of Android — for example: `/sdcard/Android/Data/com.xmission.trevin.android.notes/files`.

If you select "Saved to shared storage", you have the option to save it anywhere supported by Android's Storage Access Framework if running Android 7 (Nougat) or newer. You will need to enter the name of the export file you wish to save, ending in `.xml`.



After pressing "Save" you will return to the app's Export screen.

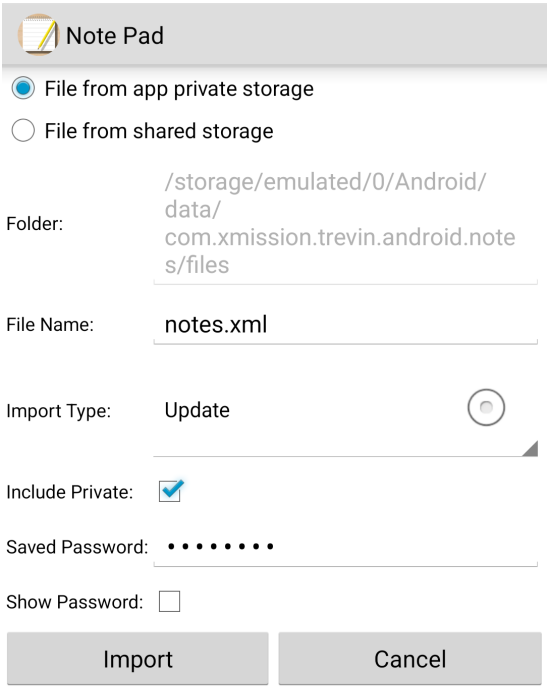
If you are using Android 6 (Marshmallow) or older, selecting "Save to shared storage" will change the folder to the device's default `Downloads` directory. You can change the location by typing it in, but be sure the location is accessible.



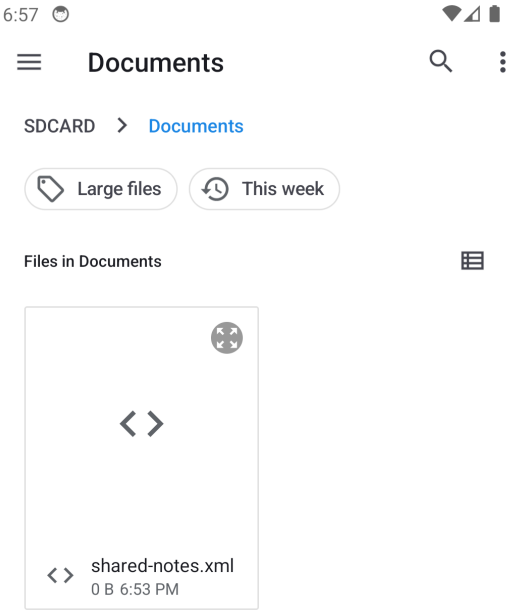
If you wish to include private notes in the exported file, be sure the "Include Private" box is checked. You can also export just the non-private notes by leaving this box unchecked. When ready, press "Export". The app will show a progress bar as it writes the notes out (if it takes long enough) then return to the list.

4.2 Importing Notes

When you need to restore notes from your backup file, select "Import Data" from the main menu and select or enter the location of the file to import. If you are importing the notes you previously saved to the app's private storage area, you will need to enter the same name that you gave the exported file.

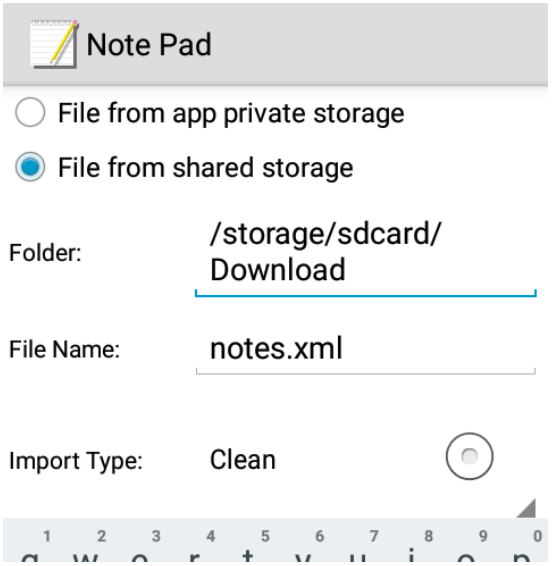


If you are importing notes from a file in shared storage, select "File from shared storage". On Android 7 (Nougat) or newer, you can browse through the available storage folders to find the `.xml` file with your saved notes.



When you select the document you will return to the app's Import screen.

If you are using Android 6 (Marshmallow) or older, selecting "File from shared storage" will change the folder to the device's default `Downloads` directory. You can change the location by typing it in, but you will need to know in advance where the file is located; the app doesn't provide a file browser.



Next, select the type of import you wish to perform. The choices are:

- "Clean": Use this when importing a backup file to a new device, or if you need to undo all changes which have been made since the file was exported. This will erase all of your notes and categories before importing notes fom the file.
- "Overwrite": This option will restore all notes from your backup file — even if the title has changed — but leave any new notes in the application alone.
- "Update": This option will only import notes from the backup file whose modification time is newer than the corresponding note in the application database. Use this if you want to keep your notes on multiple devices, to synchronize changes between the two. If you update a note on both devices and then try to synchronize them with an update, the earlier changes will be lost in favor of the later ones.
- "Merge": This option will import notes from the backup file which have the same category and title as the corresponding note in the application database, *if* it has a newer modification time, similar to an Update. However if the note in the backup file has a different category or title, or it does not exist in the application database, it will be added.
- "Add": This option will add all notes from the backup file as new notes, regardless of duplicates. This should be used if you created different sets

of notes on separate devices and want to copy the notes from one to the other.

- "Test": This option simply parses the backup file and reads all of its notes without importing any. Use this if you need to verify the integrity of your backup file, particularly if you have manually edited it or had it created by a different application.

If you had set a password for your private notes when they were exported, you *will* need that password when you need to import those encrypted notes back in to the application. This may be different than your current password. **Important! Do not forget the password you had when you made the backup file.** Without thet password, it will be practically impossible to recover your private notes; however you may still restore all of your non-private notes by un-checking "Include Private" on the Import form.

If you have not entered your password in the application settings when you attempt to import a backup file, the import form will warn you that any private notes imported will not be encrypted. You may either cancel the operation to enter your password in the settings and then try again, or go ahead and import the data and then re-encrypt the private notes later. To encrypt them afterward, either open up and save each private note individually, or choose "Set Password" from the main menu and change the password. *(You can change it to the same password if you wish.)*

5 Known Bugs

The following bugs are known to exist in version 1.3.1 (build date 2025.03.16) of Note Pad. If you encounter any other bugs, please go to my project page on GitHub to report them:

`https://github.com/Typraeurion/Android-NotePad/issues`

- It is not possible to delete the last remaining category in the category list.
- The amount of notes that can be imported from a previously exported file is limited by the amount of memory available to the application. If you find that the application dies when importing a file, try splitting the file into two or more smaller files, copying the '`<Metadata>`' and '`<Categories>`' sections into each file, and import them separately.
- When importing a backup file, the progress bar may not update properly.

The following bugs were in the 1.3.0 release (built 2015.05.10) but have been fixed as of 1.3.1 (built 2025.03.16).

- If you press the back button while editing a note, all changes are discarded without warning.