

To view the content of that file you could rename it - e.g. `test` - place it under `~/.config/dconf/` and then have `dconf` read/dump the settings from that file. By default, `dconf` reads the *user-db* found in `$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/dconf/` :

A "user-db" line specifies a user database. These databases are found in `$XDG_CONFIG_HOME/dconf/` . The name of the file to open in that directory is exactly as it is written in the profile. This file is expected to be in the binary `dconf` database format. Note that `XDG_CONFIG_HOME` cannot be set/modified per terminal or session, because then the writer and reader would be working on different DBs (the writer is started by `DBus` and cannot see that variable).

As a result, you would need a custom profile that points to that particular db file - e.g. `user-db:test` and then instruct `dconf` to dump the data (using the custom profile) via the `DCONF_PROFILE` environment variable:

```
cd
cp /path_to_backup_dconf/user ~/.config/dconf/test
printf %s\n "user-db:test" > db_profile
DCONF_PROFILE=~/.db_profile dconf dump / > old_settings
```

The result is a file (`old_settings`) containing the settings from your backed up `dconf` file, e.g.:

```
[org/gnome/desktop/interface]
font-name='DejaVu Sans Oblique 10'
document-font-name='DejaVu Sans Oblique 10'
gtk-im-module='gtk-im-context-simple'
clock-show-seconds=true
icon-theme='HighContrast'
monospace-font-name='DejaVu Sans Mono Oblique 10'
```

```
[org/gnome/desktop/input-sources]
sources=@a(ss) []
xkb-options=@as []
```

```
[org/gnome/desktop/wm/preferences]
num-workspaces=4
titlebar-font='DejaVu Sans Bold Oblique 10'
```

.....

You could then remove those files:


```
rm -f ~/.db_profile ~/.config/dconf/test
```

and load the old settings into the current database:

```
dconf load / < old_settings
```

If you want to dump only specific settings just provide the path:

```
DCONF_PROFILE=~/.db_profile dconf dump /org/gnome/desktop/
[/]
num-workspaces=4
titlebar-font='DejaVu Sans Bold Oblique 10'
```



but note that for each path you should have a different file and when you load it you should specify the path accordingly:

```
dconf load /org/gnome/desktop/wm/preferences/ < old_wm_se
```



Also note that, due to upstream changes, older `dconf` databases might contain paths, keys and values that are invalid in newer versions so full compatibility between db-files created by different versions of `dconf` isn't always guaranteed. In that case, you would have to inspect the resulting `old_settings` file and manually remove or edit the entries that are invalid before loading it into your current database.