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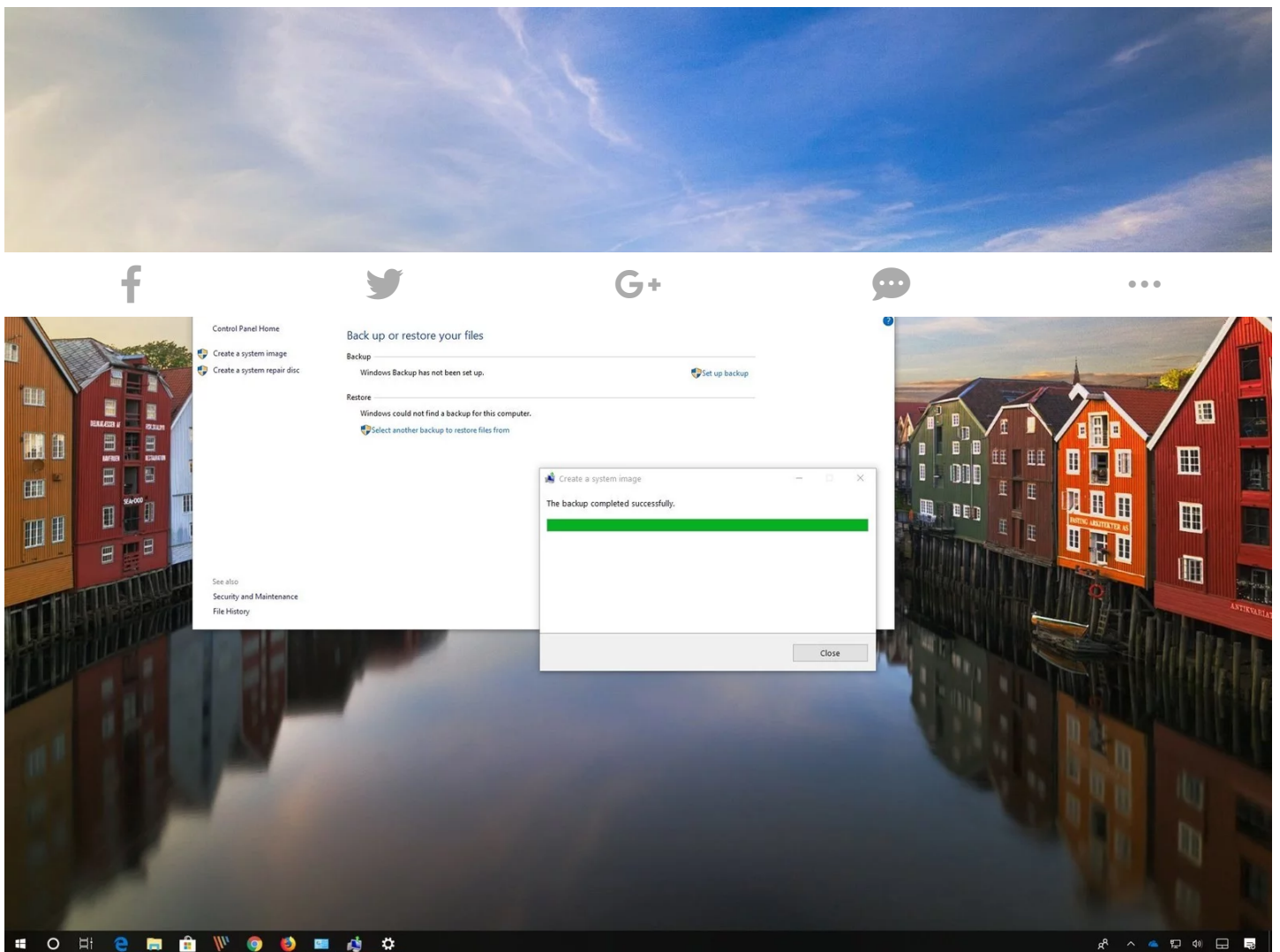
SYSTEM AND DATA PROTECTION

How to make a full backup of your Windows 10 PC

A full backup is crucial to safeguard your system and files, and in this guide, we'll show you the steps to create one using the Windows 10's System Image Backup tool.

MAURO HUCULAK 10 Apr 2019

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A backup of your entire system is your best strategy against hardware failure, software issues, and malware that can not only damage your installation but more

importantly corrupt your files. If you don't proactively create regular backups, you could end up losing important documents, irreplaceable photos, and custom configurations that you may have spent hours setting up.

On Windows 10, there are a lot of ways to create a backup, which can range from manually copying your files to external storage, to storing files securely in the cloud, to using third-party backup solutions. However, if you don't want to use third-party tools or messy manual methods, you can also create a full backup using the built-in legacy System Image Backup tool.

A system image is a copy of everything stored on your device, including the Windows 10 installation, settings, apps, and your files. The primary benefit of this method is that you can use it to restore your entire system from hardware or software problems in minutes using the same or different drive.

In this Windows 10 guide, we'll walk you through the steps to create a full backup that includes all your custom settings, apps, and files using the built-in system image tool.

- Windows 10 System Image Backup feature notice
- How to create a System Image Backup on Windows 10
- How to restore a System Image Backup on Windows 10



windows 10 system image backup feature notice

Starting with Windows 10 version 1709, Microsoft is no longer maintaining the System Image Backup feature. You can still use the tool to create backups, but in the future, it may stop working. Also, as a deprecated feature, the company can decide to remove this tool in future releases completely.

This guide aims to help you create a full backup while the feature is still available to create temporary backups, or to backup older releases of Windows 10 or older versions, such as Windows 8.1 or Windows 7.

If the time comes when you're no longer able to use this feature, it's recommended to switch to a third-party solution. If you're not sure, you can check this guide with six effective ways to back up your PC.

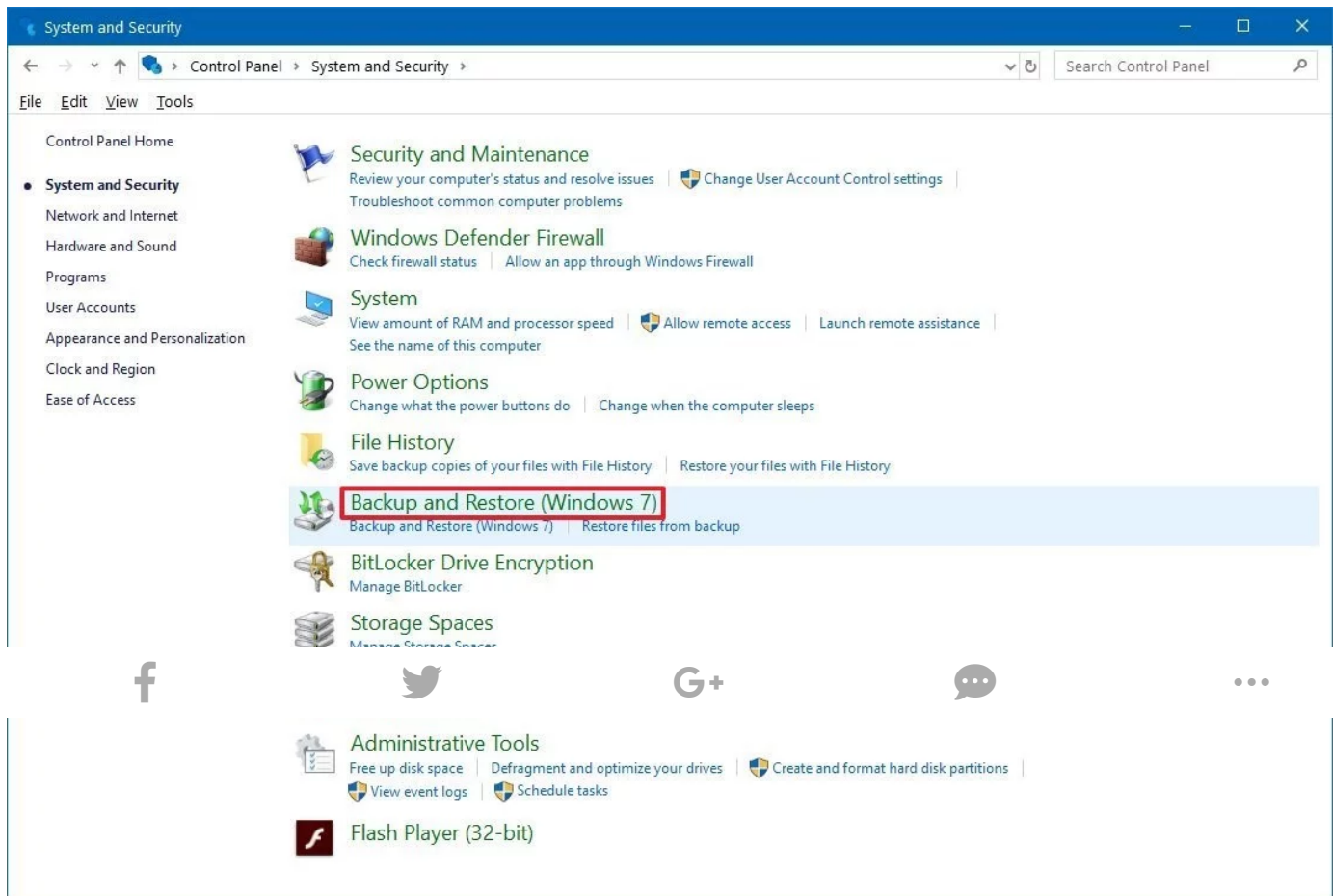
How to create a System Image Backup on Windows 10

Although you can save a backup to a network location or a secondary drive, the best option is still to use removable storage, which you can quickly disconnect and store in a

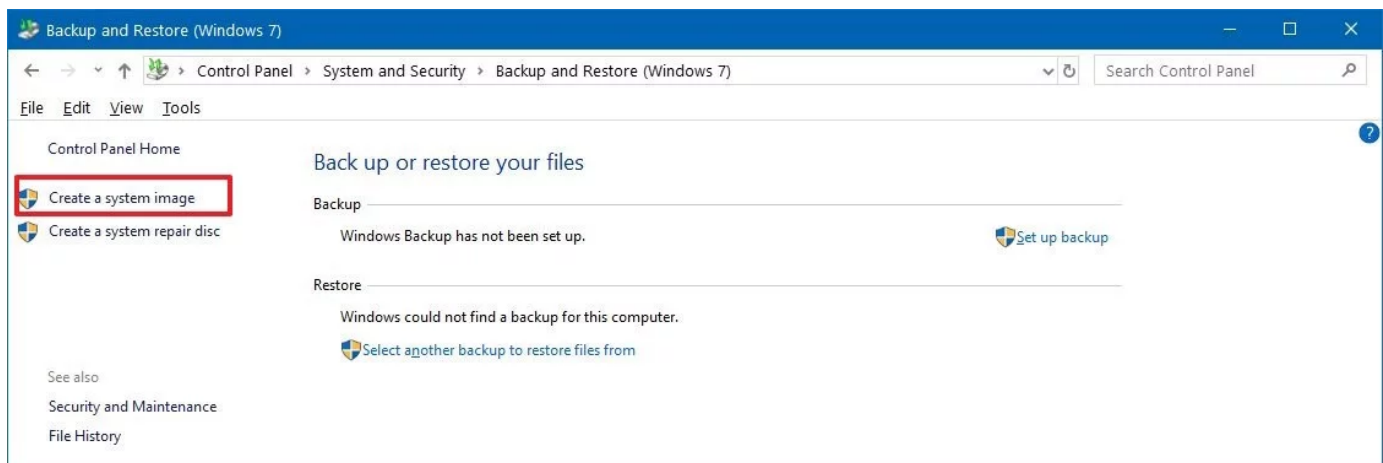
safe place.

To create a full backup of your computer using the system image tool, use these steps:

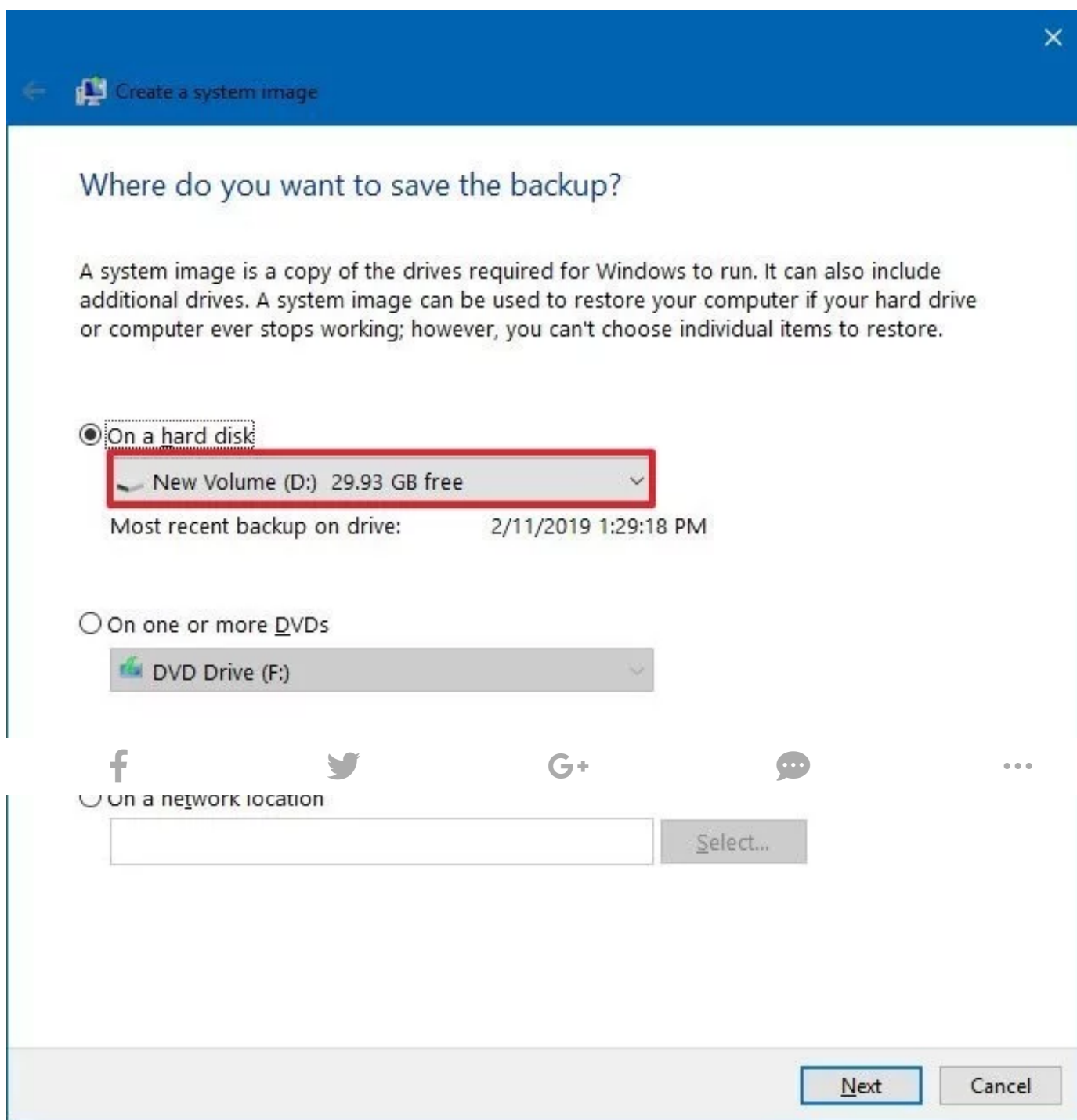
1. Open Control Panel.
2. Click on System and Security.
3. Click on Backup and Restore (Windows 7).



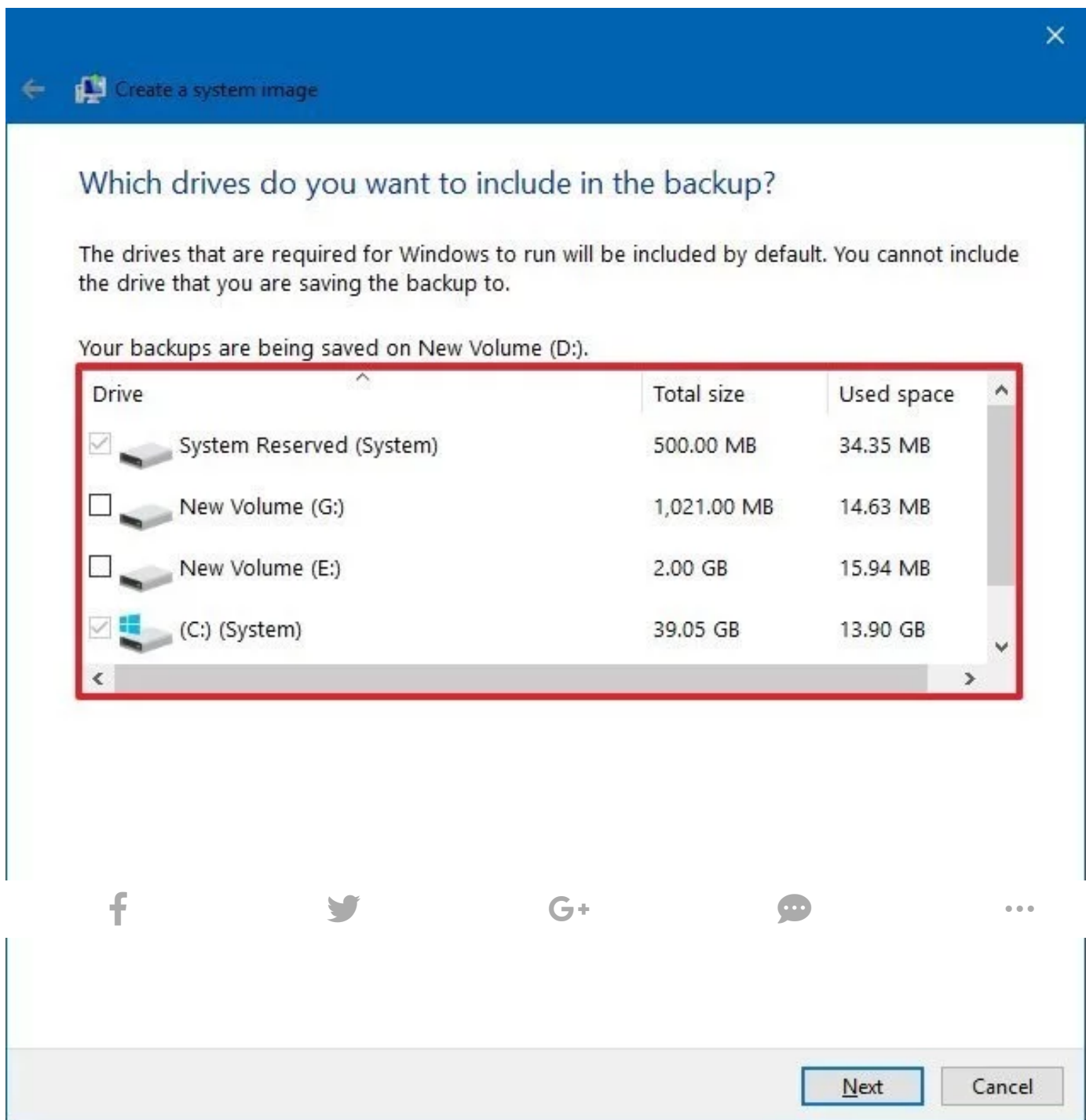
4. On the left pane, click the Create a system image link.



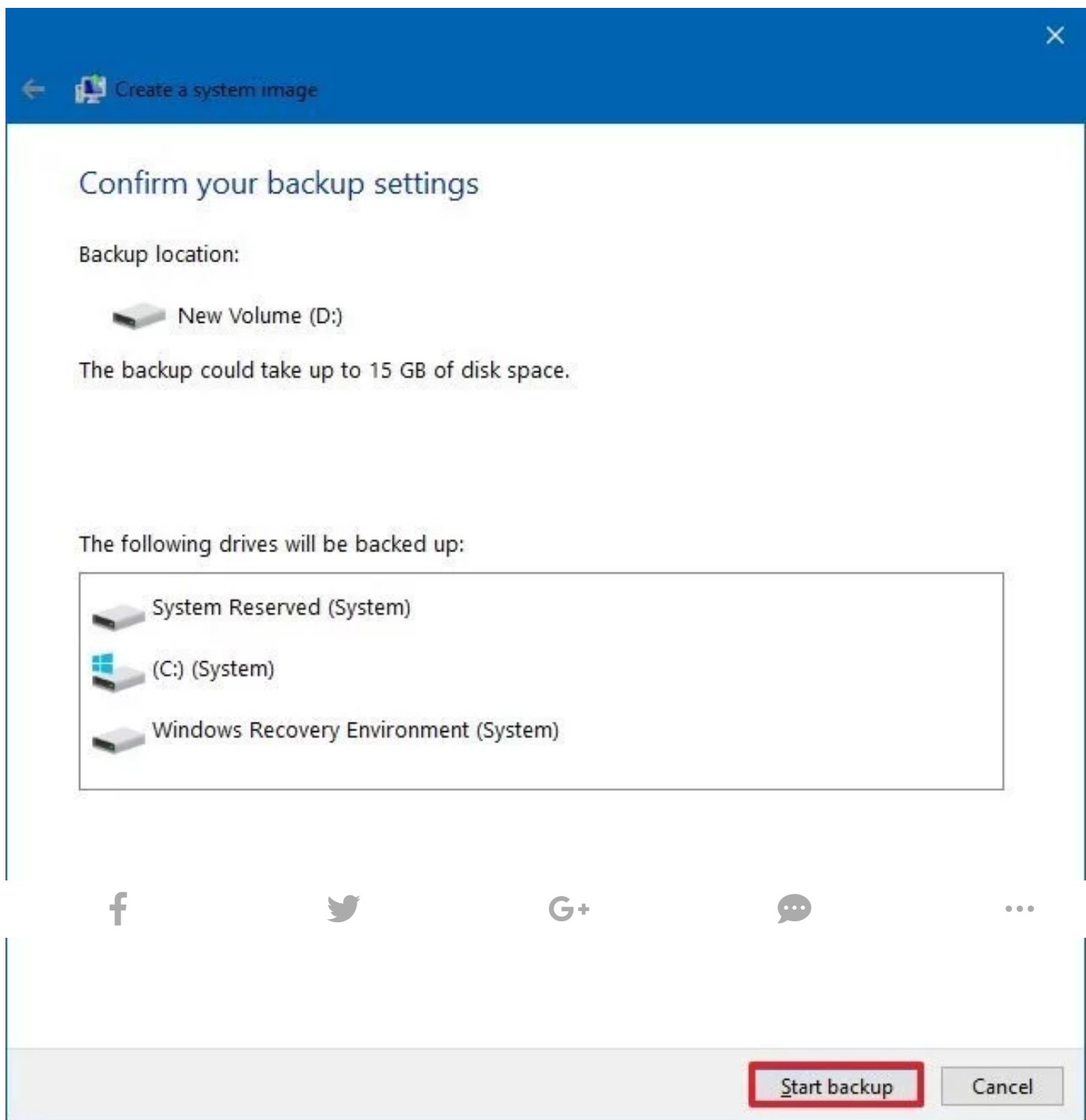
5. Under "Where do you want to save the backup?" select the **On a hard disk** option.
6. Using the "On a hard disk" drop-down menu, select the location to save the backup.



7. Select any additional drives that you may want to include in the backup.



8. Click the Next button.
9. Click the Start backup button.



Once you complete the steps, the tool will proceed to create a backup of your device, including everything on the main hard drive as well as system reserved partitions and other drives that you may have selected.

The tool uses the "Shadow Copy" technology that allows the creation of backups while files are open and applications are running, which means that you can continue to work on your computer during this process.

As the process completes, you'll see a prompt asking you to create a system repair disc, which you can use to restore a backup in case that your device isn't able to start correctly. However, you can skip this option, because you can use a bootable USB flash drive to access the recovery options.

The last thing left to do is to disconnect the external drive with the backup and store it in a safe place.

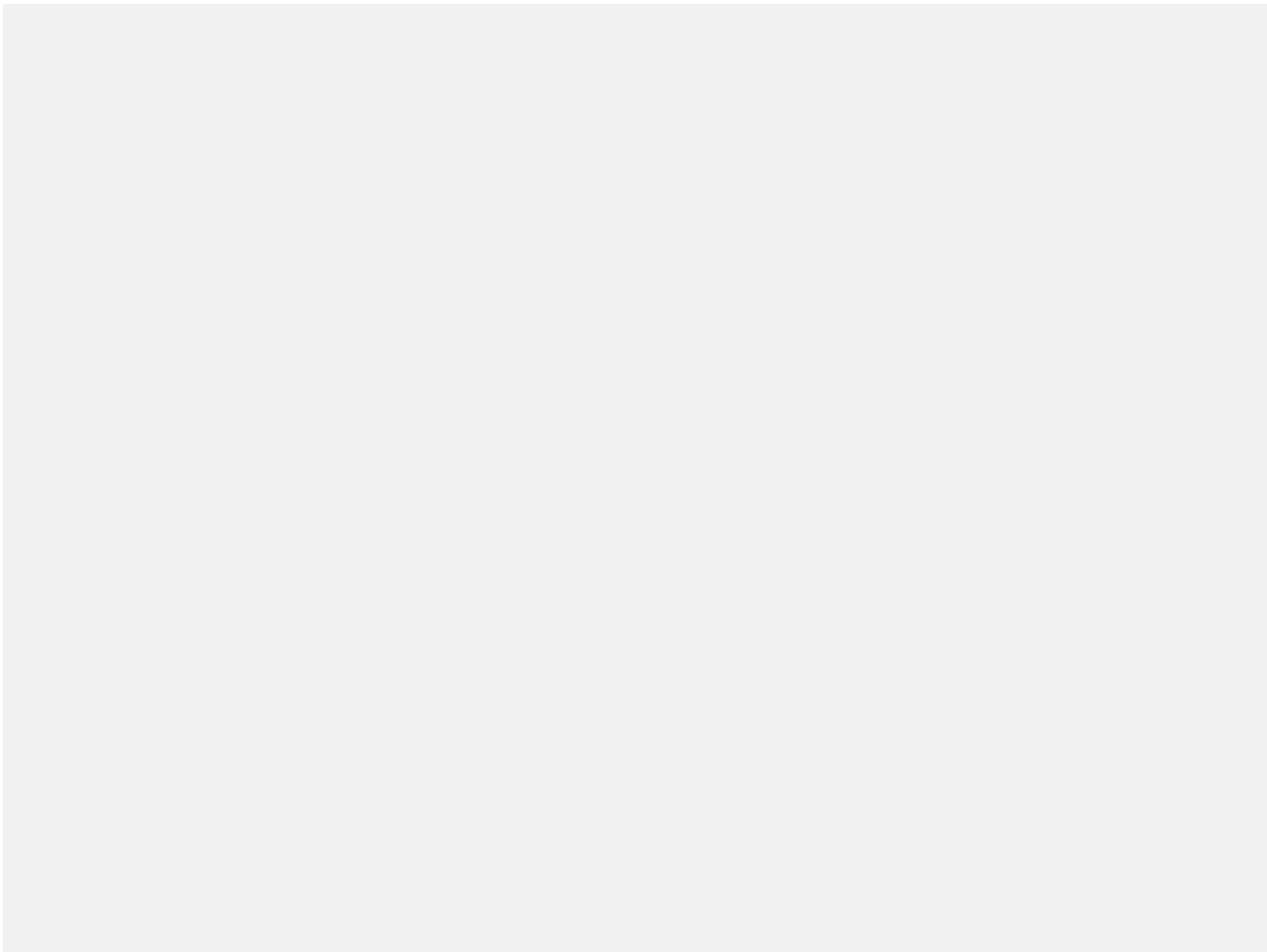
How to restore a System Image Backup on Windows 10

If the unexpected happens and you can't start your computer, or you're in the process of changing the main hard drive, to restore your device from a previous backup, use these steps:

1. Connect the backup drive to your computer.
2. Connect the disc containing the system repair files (or Windows 10 USB bootable drive) to your device.
3. Restart your computer.

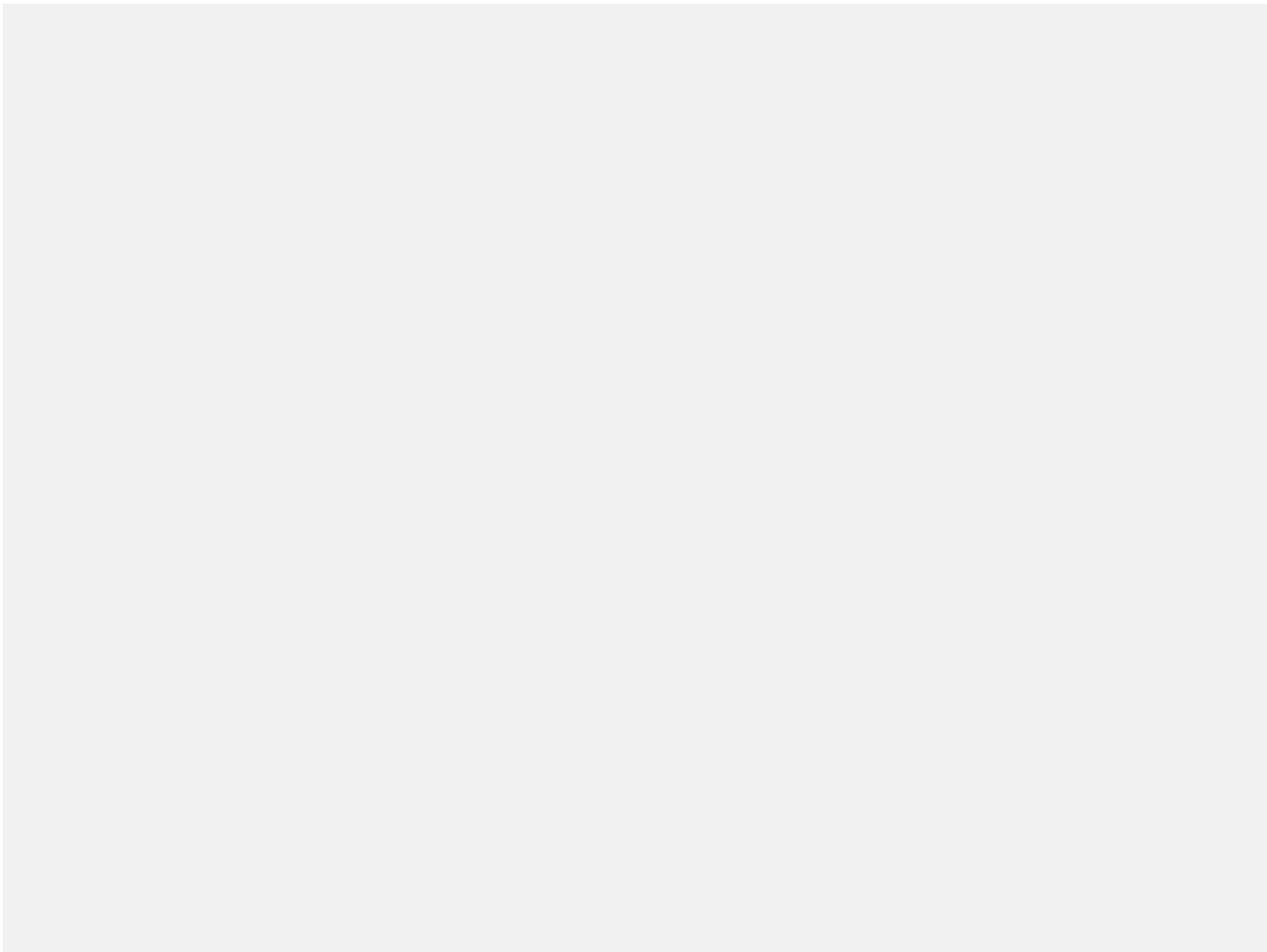
Quick tip: If your device isn't booting into the Windows Setup wizard, you'll need to change your system's BIOS settings. This process typically requires hitting one of the function keys (F1, F2, F3, F10, or F12), the ESC, or Delete key as you boot your computer. However, these settings will vary by manufacturer, and even by model. So make sure to check your PC manufacturer support website for more specific details.





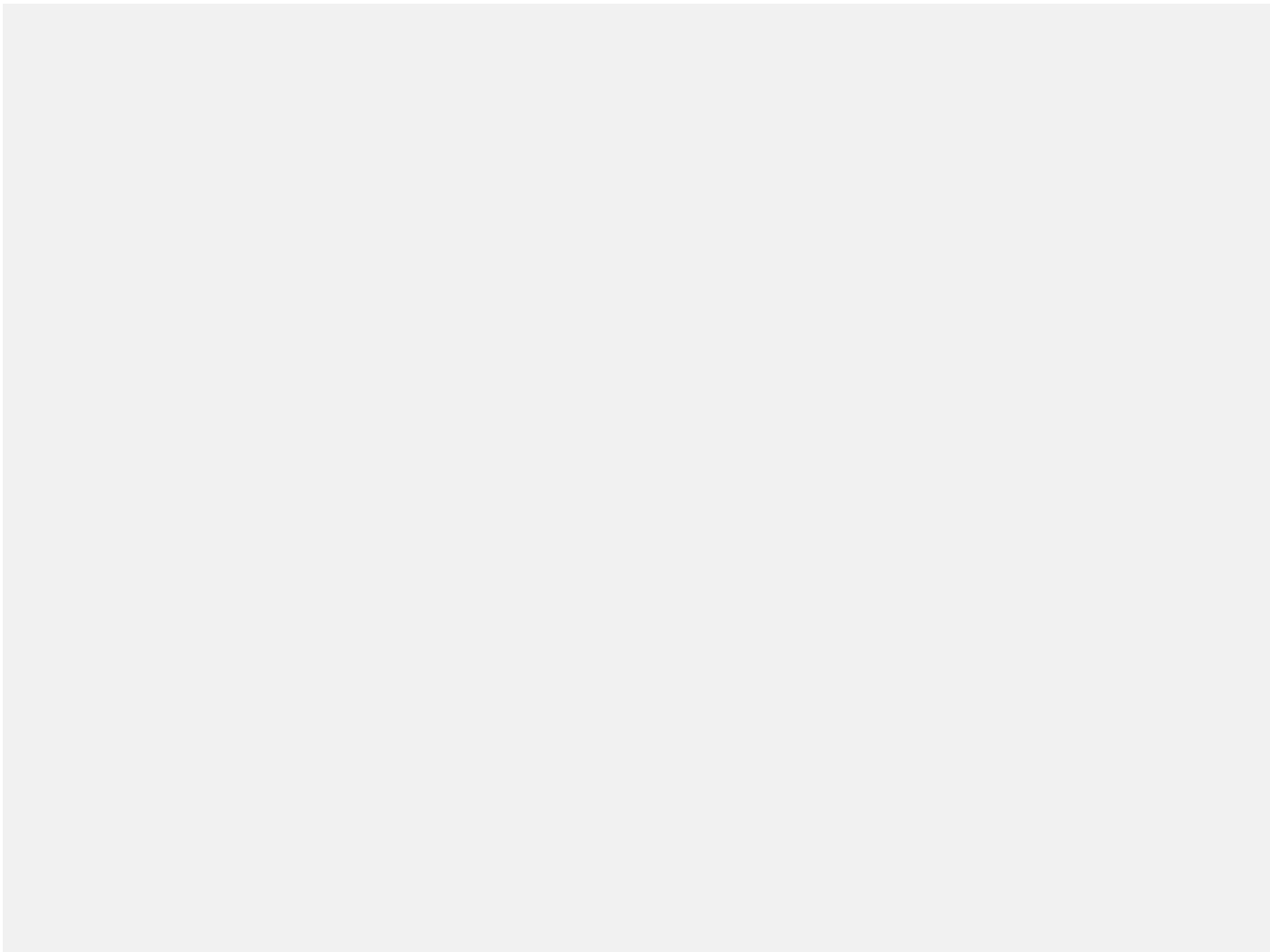
5 Click the Download your computer link at the bottom left corner





Click the Troubleshoot option

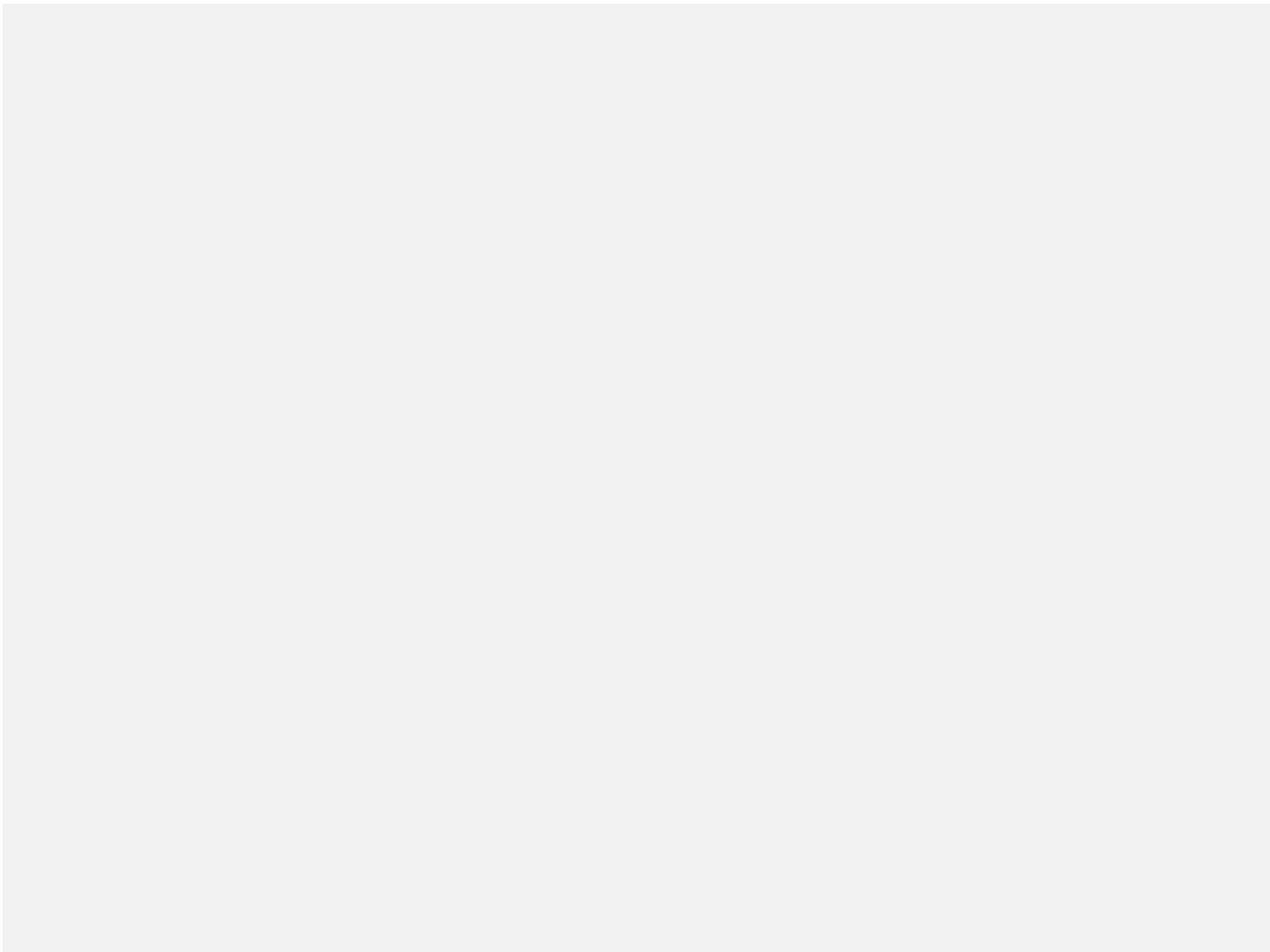




7. Click on Advanced options.

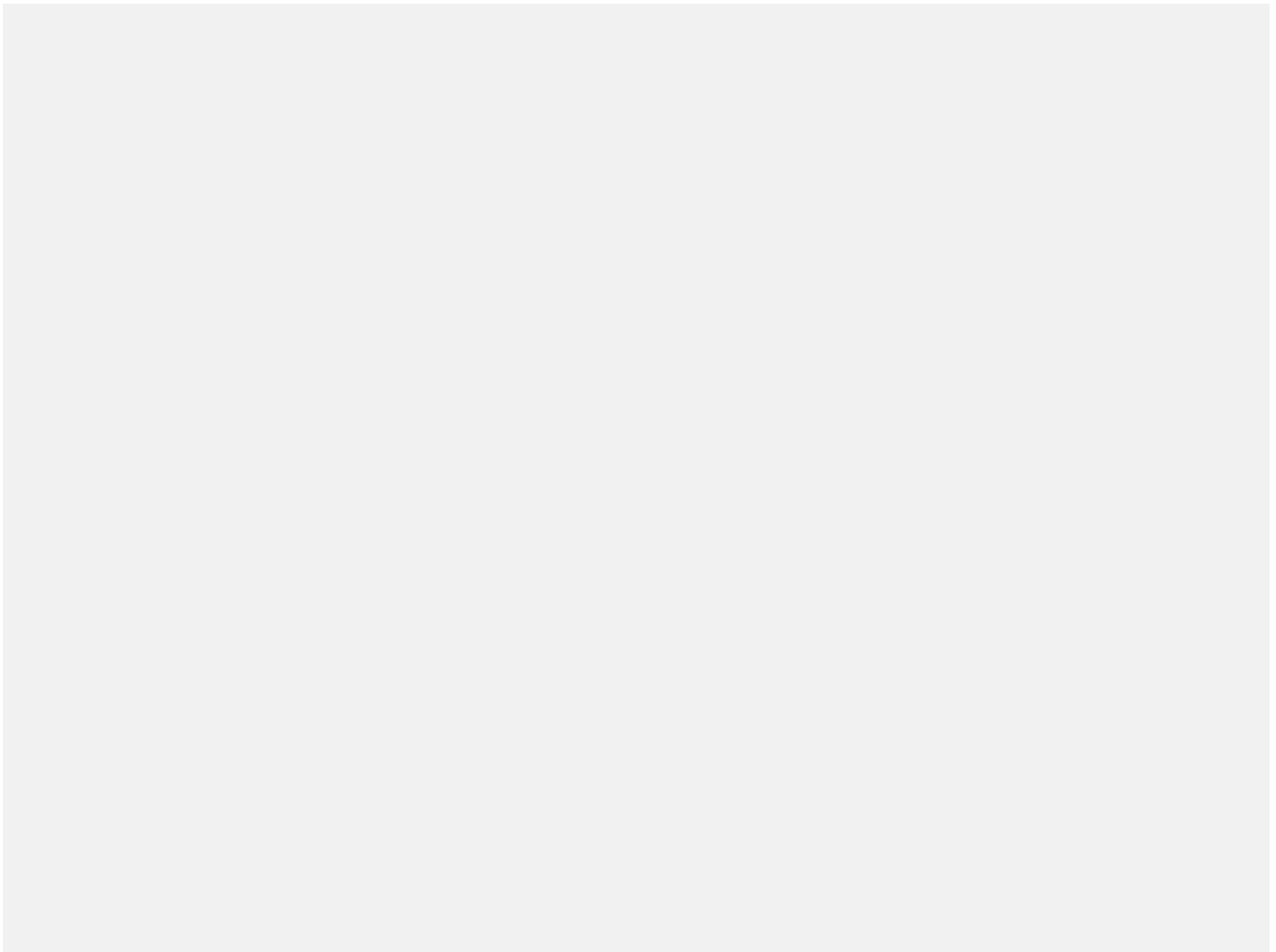


8. Click the System Image Recovery option.

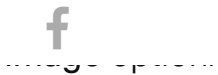


Click on Windows 10 as the target operating system



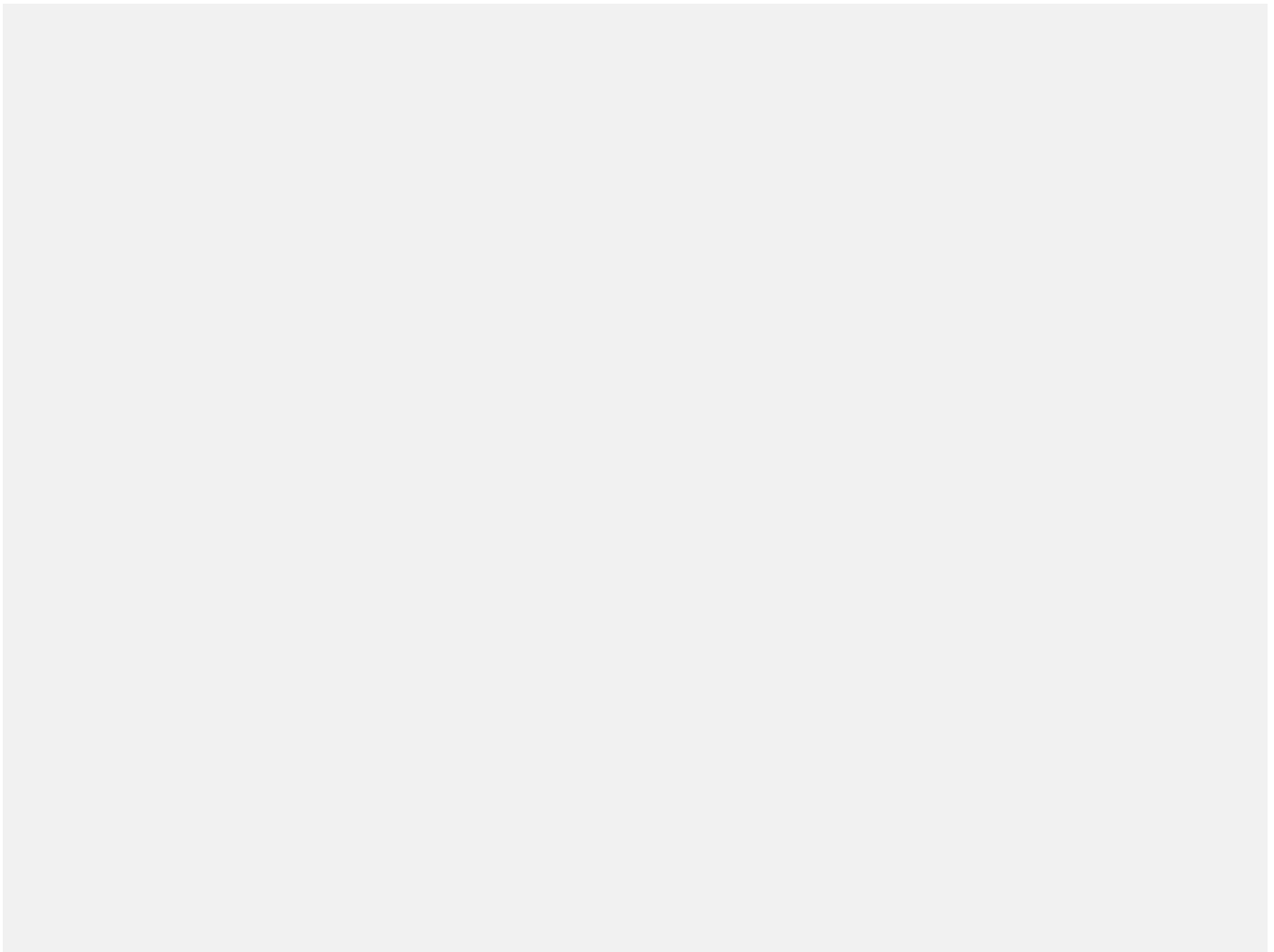


10. On the "Re-image your computer" page, select the Use the latest available system



Quick tip: You can use the "Select a system image" option, if you have multiple backups, and you're trying to restore an older copy.

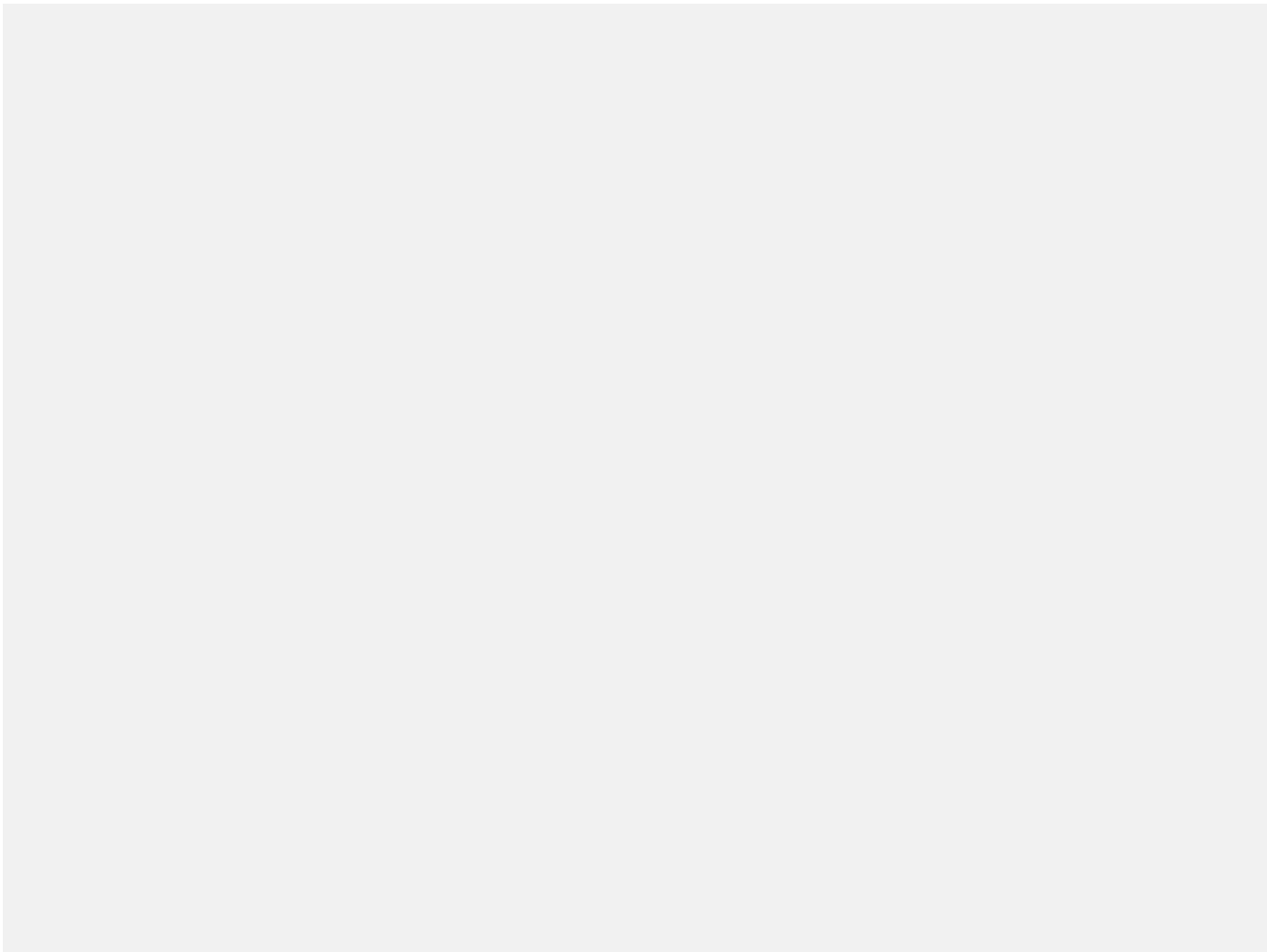
11. Click the **Next** button.



12 If you're restoring a full backup to a new hard drive, you can also carefully select the



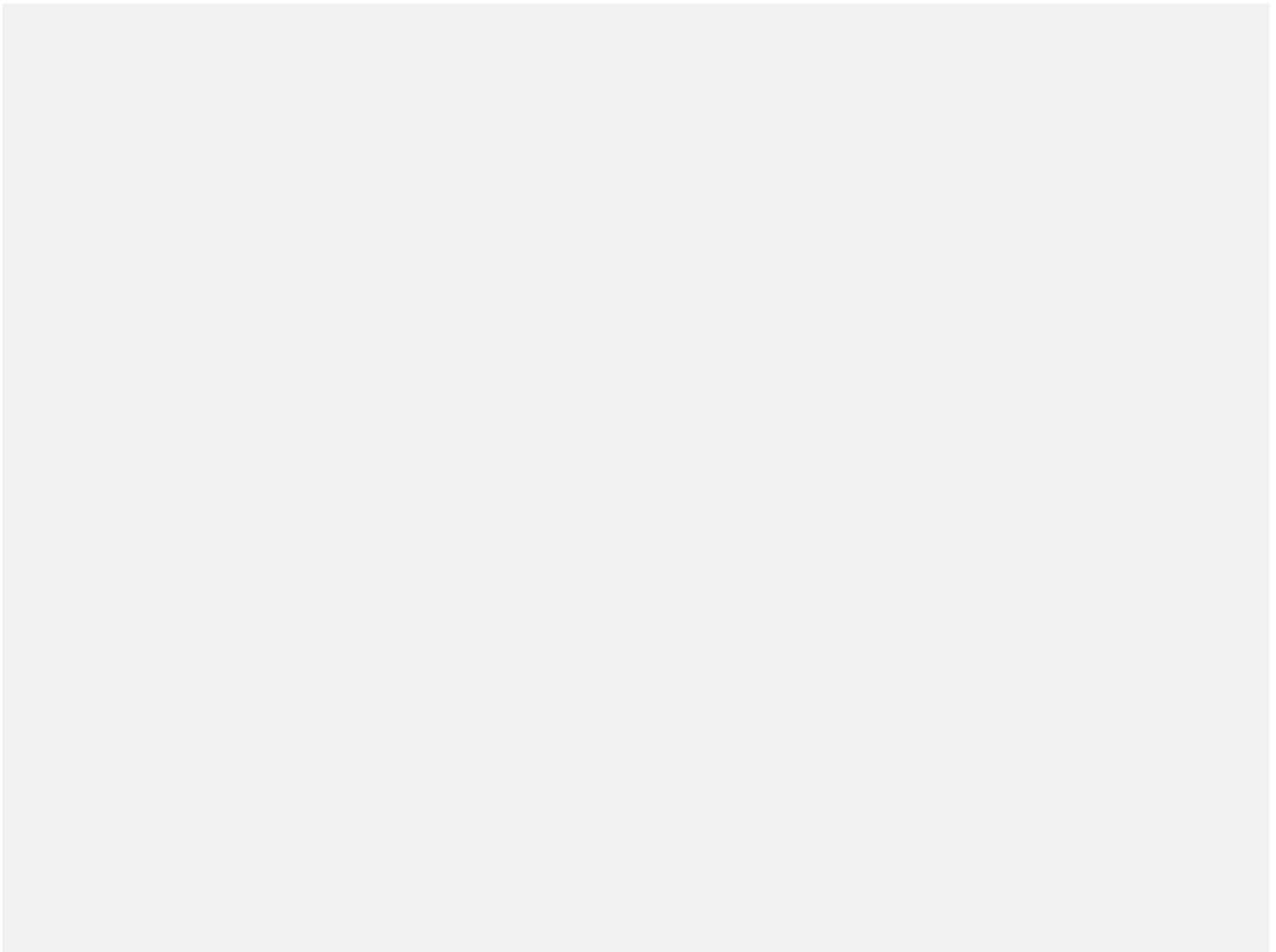
... and you can also select the specific files and folders you want to restore.



13. Click the Next button.



14. Click the Finish button.



15 Click the Yes button



After completing the steps, the recovery will begin. The time to finish the restoration will depend upon the amount of data and your hardware configuration. Also, any interruptions or failure may prevent the recovery to complete successfully making your computer unbootable, as such avoid disruption of any kind and make sure your computer is connected to a battery backup. Or in the case of a laptop, make sure the device is plugged into a power outlet before proceeding.

If it's been a while since the last time you created a full backup, it's recommended to go to **Settings > Update & Security > Windows Update**, and click the **Check for Updates** button to download the latest security patches.

Wrapping things up

A System Image Backup can come in handy in many scenarios. For example, if you're about to upgrade to a new release of Windows 10, creating a copy of your entire system can help you go back to a previous version and even recover your files if something goes wrong. In addition, it's recommended to create backups regularly in case you need to quickly recover from system or hardware failure, malware, or other problems.

However, there are at least a few caveats to consider using this particular tool. For instance, you have to be proactive in making backups, as you can only restore your system and files since the last full backup you created. Any data, settings, and apps created, changed, or installed after the backup won't be recoverable through this process.

In addition, this is a feature designed to recover your entire system, not to restore files, settings, and applications individually. If you want to keep an up-to-date copy of your files, you should think about using the system image tool in combination with [File History](#) or [OneDrive](#).

Also, System Image Backup is now a deprecated experience on Windows 10, which means that while you can still create backups, the feature may suddenly stop working or it can be removed in future releases.

More Windows 10 resources

For more helpful articles, coverage, and answers to common questions about Windows 10, visit the following resources:

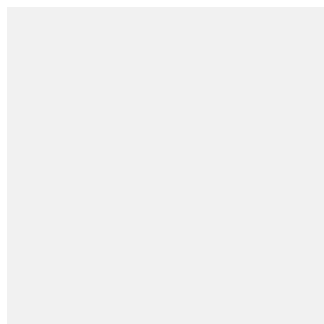
🔖 [Windows 10 on Windows Central – All you need to know](#)

🔖 [Windows 10 help, tips, and tricks](#)



Mauro recommends all these affordable accessories

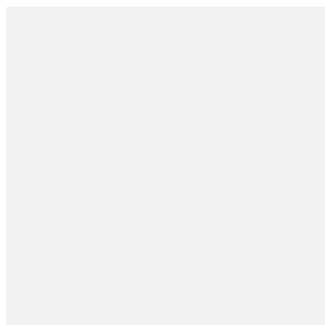
Hi, I'm Mauro Huculak, Windows Central's help and how-to guru. I wrote the post you're reading now, and I know the Windows OS inside and out. But I'm also a bit of a hardware geek. These are some of the affordable gadgets on my desk today.



[Logitech MX Master Wireless Mouse \(\\$72 at Amazon\)](#)

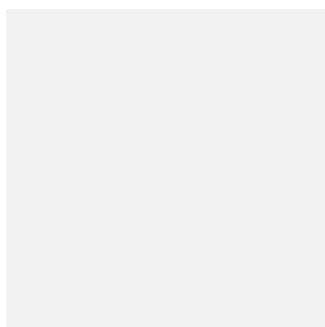
I know mice, and this is the one I use every day. The MX Master is a wireless high-precision mouse that's very comfortable to use and has many great features, including

the ability to connect with multiple devices, an infinite scroll wheel, back and forward buttons, all of which you can customize.



Ktrio Extended Gaming Mouse Pad (\$12 at Amazon)

If you spend a lot of time typing, your palms and mouse will leave tracks on your desk. My solution was to start using gaming mouse pads, which are big enough for you to use the keyboard and the mouse comfortably. This is the one I use and recommend.



You could just use a regular light bulb in your office, but if you want to add some ambient lighting with different colors, an RGB LED strip is the way to go. This one is Mauro-approved.

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OH DEAR

Microsoft removes ability to install Office directly from the Microsoft Store on Windows 10

Users are no longer able to install Office directly from the Microsoft Store, and are instead being redirected to the old classic installer.



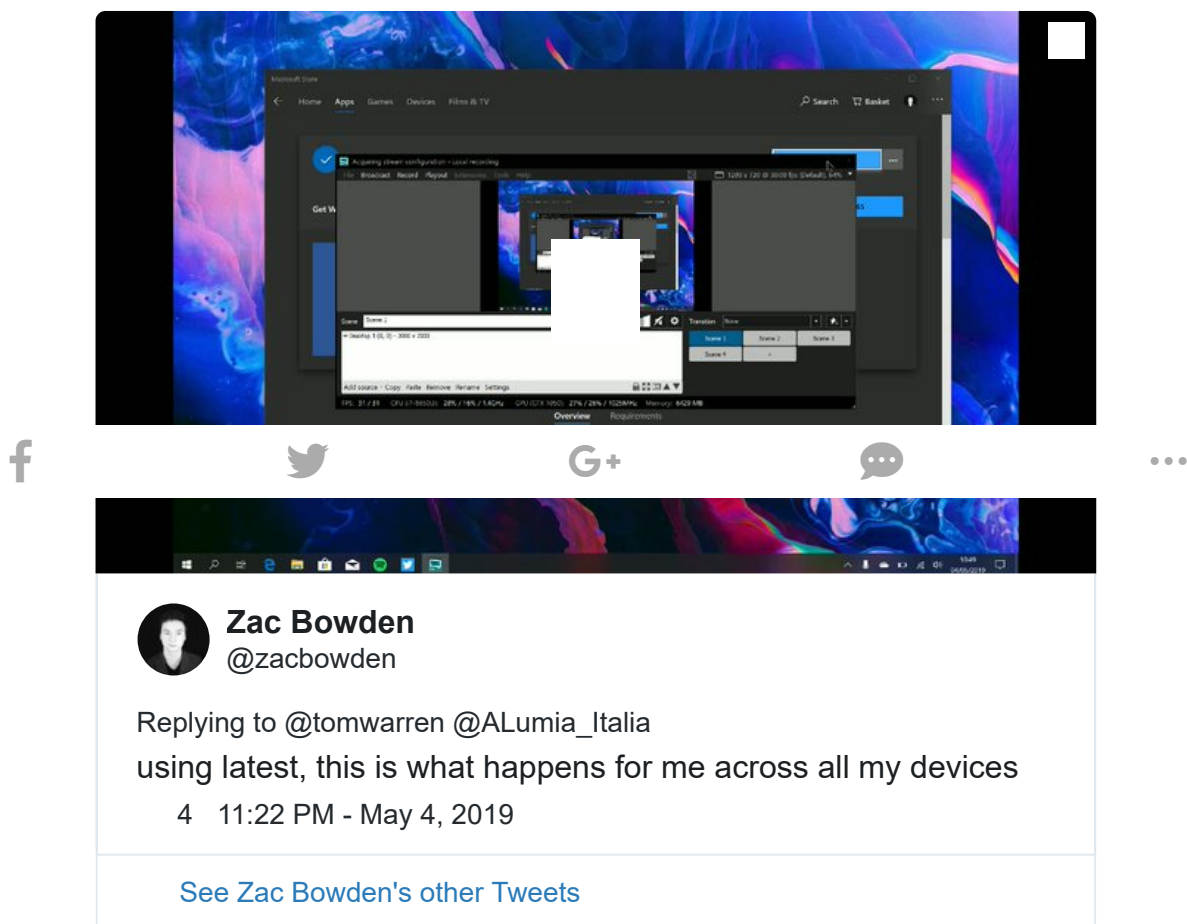
Over the last few weeks, users attempting to download Office applications from the Microsoft Store on Windows 10 have been unable to do so, and instead, are being redirected to the Office website which would then automatically download the classic installer. Naturally, many have been frustrated with this, as downloading from the Microsoft Store directly comes with benefits such as automatic updates through the Store, the ability to choose which Office apps you want installed, and more.

But with the classic installer, known as "click-to-run," users have to install all Office products by default and have updates handled through Office's own updater. I much prefer being able to install Office from the Microsoft Store because of these reasons, so not being able to do so over the last couple of weeks has been incredibly frustrating.

Unfortunately, it appears this change is deliberate, according to a Microsoft spokesperson:

“ People will continue to be able to find Office in the Store. If the Office image isn't already preinstalled, they will be directed to <https://account.microsoft.com/> to install it.

The Office apps are still listed in the Store, and they still have "install" buttons on their app pages. But the install button no longer installs the app directly unless your PC came with Office, and instead takes you to the Office website to download the classic Office installer. This experience isn't great and ultimately undermines the whole point of the Microsoft Store. I want the Store to handle all my apps, and now I can't do that with Office.



For Windows 10 S users, the classic installer now runs fine with S mode enabled, just as the Microsoft Edge Insider Preview installer does. So this change applies with S mode enabled too. I've asked Microsoft about why it's made Office no longer installable from the Store and will update this article once I hear back. In the meantime, what was your preferred way of installing Office?

 [Windows](#) [Microsoft Office](#)

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500M Consumers Reached Yearly

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