**Cloud computing**: It allows you to store your files and folders in a “cloud” area on the Internet, allowing you access to all of your files and folders wherever you are in the world – but you do need a physical device with Internet access to access it.

**Mobile computing**is taking a physical device with you. This could be a laptop or a mobile phone or some device which enables you to [telework](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommuting) – working wherever you go because of the small size of the device you’re using.

Either way, there will be some drawbacks. I’m not going to focus on the positives too much, simply because being able to do work shouldn’t have to be a positive thing, rather something we should just be able to do without any concern.

Focusing for the time being on mobile computing – let’s face it, even for non-students it generally means lugging a laptop around with you. You have to open it up, turn it on, plug it in to the mains, get the wireless settings sorted – by the time you’ve done all that faffing around you have to get something else done. For the lucky ones, you can use a [Blackberry](http://www.blackberry.com/) or a handheld device to work with. Even then the buttons are tiny, and months of living off nothing but sausages, crisps (chips), chocolate and beer, you’ve gained so much wait you mash the keypad with your finger because they’ve become huge and fat.

[Cloud computing](http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web/article3874599.ece?openComment=true) isn’t that much better. Sure, you can have all your files synchronised between devices so wherever you go, you’ll always have access to your files, but the technology doesn’t fully exist yet. It’s getting there, but it’s slow and temperamental, difficult to use and often the average user (even me, an advanced user) gets confused as to where the files are actually stored and/or where else they are stored. Even though you don’t need to carry round a laptop with you, you still need some physical device to access your service which almost defeats the point anyway. Having everything in your very own secure cloud so you can access anything anywhere is put back by the fact you have to find a computer to use anyway.

In my opinion, [get a search application installed](http://blogs.zdnet.com/Bott/?p=466) and just use a flash drive. You can hold up to 2GB-4GB on even the cheaper ones, you do need a computer to use it but at least you can fit everything you need to physically store your files in your pocket.