

Backing Up Databases in FileMaker Server

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NOTE: IS&T recommends that [IS&T Managed Servers](#) be used for hosting FileMaker databases.

Only experienced server administrators should attempt to do so, particularly where databases with sensitive data and/or mission critical functions will be housed. The following web page offers MIT-specific configuration recommendations to help mitigate against security risks in the FileMaker hosting environment. In a changing computing landscape these recommendations in no way offer a guaranteed maintenance or risk-free hosting environment.

The instructions here are provided for those managing their own FileMaker servers.

If you are using IS&T's managed hosting service, you do not need to worry about scheduling backups; this is all handled for you. Accessing backup files and performing custom ad hoc backups can be requested through filemaker-support@mit.edu.

Standard Backups with FileMaker Server

Backing up your FileMaker database(s) with FileMaker Server is a two-step process:

1. **Create a local backup of the database(s) in FileMaker Server**
You can create a scheduled task in FileMaker Server to create a backup copy of the database, which it stores locally on the host machine.
2. **Back up the local backup externally**
Local backups made by FileMaker Server could be lost in the event of a system failure (such as a hard drive failure), so you must also save the backup copy to an external location in order to protect your data. This can be done using the TSM backup service, or you can save it to another storage location, such as an external hard drive or another machine.

Step 1: Create a backup schedule in FileMaker Server

FileMaker Server comes with three default backup schedules: Hourly, Daily, Weekly. The Daily schedule is enabled by default. You can enable, disable, or modify any of these default schedules. You can also create custom backup schedules by doing the following:

1. Start the Admin Console and go to **Schedules**
2. Click on the calendar button in the upper-right, and select **Create a Schedule**
3. Select **Back Up Databases** and click **Next**
4. Select the databases or folders that you'd like to include in the backup and click **Next**
5. Specify the location of the Backup Folder. Click **Validate**, and ensure that the status says "Valid Path"
6. Specify the number of backups you'd like to keep
7. Check the box for "**Verify backup integrity**" (optional, but recommended), modify any other settings as desired, and click **Next**
8. Choose a backup frequency, and modify the schedule details, if desired, then click **Next**
9. Specify a name for this scheduled task, and click **Next**
10. If you would like to receive notification of failed backups, check the **Send email notification** box, and enter the email address you would like to receive those notifications, then click **Next** (Note: You must [configure SMTP](#) in order to use this feature)
11. Click **Finish**

Step 2: Copy the local database backups to a different location

With FileMaker Server creating local backups, the second step is to have a backup service copy those backups to another location. MIT's backup service for enterprise servers is TSM. For information on TSM, including how to register and how to back up your data, refer to <http://ist.mit.edu/backup>.

Important notes on TSM configuration:

1. Make sure that your TSM backup **includes** the backup folder specified in your FileMaker Server backup task.
2. Make sure that your TSM backup **excludes** the directory that contains the live hosted database files. Attempting to back up the live files, rather than the copies created by the FileMaker Server backup, could result in data corruption. You can find the location of this folder in the Admin Console > Database Server pane > Folders tab.

Progressive Backups with FileMaker Server

FileMaker Server also has a progressive backup feature. While this can be useful in certain situations, it does not replace the need for regularly scheduled backups as detailed above.