

Using the Cloudstore Desktop App - Windows

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Lösung (öffentlich)

Installation and configuration of the Desktop App

Important: Please always use the new URL [1]<https://datashare.tu-dresden.de> starting from 25. September 2023.

The desktop app is offered free of charge by the Nextcloud developers and can be obtained from the [2]official website.

When starting the software for the first time, a login procedure must first be performed on the ZIH Datashare server.

Screenshot: Start page when opening the Nextcloud Windows app for the first time

For this purpose, "<https://datashare.tu-dresden.de>" must be used as the server address.

Screenshot: Entering the server address

Before the connection can be established, the appropriate access must be granted.

Screenshot: Granting account access

Afterwards the software asks for the <ZIH-Login> (lower case, without addition "@tu-dresden.de" etc.) and the corresponding password.

Screenshot: Entering the ZIH account data

Under "Local folder", the drive path of the folder that is to be synchronized with the ZIH Datashare must be selected.

Screenshot: Setting synchronization behavior and destination folder

In addition, a selection can be made as to which data (with or without confirmation) should be synchronized.

Screenshot: Advanced selection of folders to synchronize.

After the folder has been successfully connected to the ZIH Datashare, it will be synchronized for the first time.

Screenshot: App interface after first synchronization

Using the desktop app

The status of the desktop app can be found as a small icon in the menu bar of the respective operating system. A click on it shows the current status of the synchronization. All files stored in the ZIH Datashare can also be saved offline or shared via the explorer, shared with other ZIH accounts or get deleted.

By clicking on the account name in the upper left corner of the program window it is possible to log out the active account, add more accounts, or delete accounts.

Screenshot: Account and program settings drop-down menu.

A click on "Settings" leads to the current overview of the status of the synchronization and the storage capacity. The "Add folder synchronization" button can be used to create additional folders to be synchronized. It is possible to select which subfolders are to be synchronized.

Screenshot: Nextcloud settings with overview of synchronized folders and storage usage.

In this way, it is possible to make data from the [3]online storage available split across different locations on the hard disk. It should be noted that this function is only available if the data is synchronized and stored locally.

Screenshot: Split Nextcloud folders in File Explorer.

The "General" and "Network" buttons, at the top right of the Nextcloud settings window, can be used to specify further configurations of your Nextcloud application.

Screenshot: General app behavior settings

For slower network connections, limiting the upload and download bandwidth can be useful to avoid generating too much traffic.

Screenshot: Network settings

File view

The file view is done via the Windows Explorer. Under the previously defined path, you will now find the Cloudstore folder.

Screenshot: Appearance of synchronized Nextcloud folder in Windows File Explorer.

Alternatively, you can jump directly to the cloudstore folder via the folder icon at the top right of the program interface. The button to the right opens a drop-down menu that takes you directly to the online storage (selection: "Files"), or to the activity history of the online storage (selection: "Activity").

Screenshot: Drop-down menu in the Nextcloud program interface with links to the synchronized folder in the file explorer, as well as to the online storage.

Creating and uploading files

The Desktop app is used via the file manager under Windows. Files or folders copied to the synchronized directory are automatically synchronized with the ZIH cloudstore and marked accordingly with two blue arrows. The actions "Cut" and "Delete" also work as usual.

When the synchronization is complete, the following symbolism appears:

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A cloud means that the file or folder is available virtually, so no physical disk space is consumed. The files are only downloaded when they are used. Alternatively, "Right-click mouse ► Nextcloud ► Open in browser" can be used to open the file online.

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A green check mark (✓) means that the file or folder is also stored locally. This is advantageous if you want to work offline.

It is always possible to mark files & folders for offline or virtual storage via "Right-click ► Nextcloud ► Make always available locally" or "Right-click ► Nextcloud ► Free up local space".

Screenshot: Setting local file availability via Windows Explorer.

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This assignment can be made by "right-clicking ► Availability" on the desired resource alternatively also via the "Nextcloud Settings" window, provided that the resource is a folder.

Screenshot: Setting local file availability via Nextcloud app settings.

File sizes

Datashare allows uploading files up to 30 GByte. The time limit for uploading a file is 10 hours. However, limits are also set by the operating system. For example, you cannot manage files larger than 2 GB with 32Bit operating systems.

Deleting and restoring files

Deleting files is done in Windows Explorer as usual via "Mouse right-click ► Delete", or via the "Delete" key. The deleted files are only moved to the recycle bin of the computer if they were stored locally (see section [4]"Creating and uploading files"). In any case, deleted files, whether available locally or virtually, will be moved to the Recycle Bin of the [5]online storage. Via the option "Deleted files" at the bottom of the left side of the screen, they can be accessed and restored.

Files are kept in the trash for a maximum of 30 days and up to a maximum of half the user's quota, and are permanently deleted when one of the limits is exceeded.

Sharing files or folders (also password protected)

Another important functionality of Datashare is sharing files or folders with other people. You can share files/folders with individual TUD members or external users, but also with a group and protect them with a password.

With a mouse right-click on the file, or folder, and then "Nextcloud ► Share options", a menu appears in which the sharing can be set up step by step.

The person then sees the share in the "Shared" folder. Content you shared yourself can be viewed online in the browser under the "Shares" menu item on the left side of the screen.

Screenshot: Accessing the sharing options via Windows Explorer.

Sharing with TUD members: Screenshot: Selection of users with whom files should be shared. Screenshot: Setting access rights and setting an expiration date for file sharing.

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The first available field can be used to enter the first and/or last name or the mail address of a TUD member with whom the file is to be shared.

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Setting access rights: It can be selected whether the person may edit the file himself, create a new version, delete it and in turn share it with other people. In this way, any number of people can be given access to a file or folder. The sharing can also be cancelled here.

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In some cases, it makes sense to set a time limit for the release - for this purpose, you can also set an expiration date here.

Sharing with non-TUD members:

If the target person is not a member of TU-Dresden, the link can be shared using the "Share link" function in the sharing options. The link can then be sent to the person in question via various channels (e.g.: e-mail).

Allow upload by external person:

A special case is the upload of files by external persons (not members of the TU Dresden). Since external persons do not have a ZIH login, the exchange/upload takes place via a folder of a TUD user. These TUD users are therefore also legally responsible for the data of the external persons (see also [6] Terms of Use Cloudstore).

To create an approval for sharing, a new folder should be created. In the sharing options for this folder (see [7] Sharing files or folders), another option "Allow upload and editing" appears. This function should not be used without password protection and the password should not be communicated in the same way as the link (e.g. mail for the link, phone for the password).

Screenshot: Setting access rights and setting an expiration date, as well as password for file sharing via the "Share link" option.

By clicking on the link, the user will first be asked for the password:

Screenshot: Password prompt for shared links.

The contents of the shared Datashare folder will then appear, with the option to download or upload files.

Screenshot: View shared files via a called shared link.

Conflicts with editing files at the same time

Datashare is not optimized for simultaneous editing of files - for that, you should rather use the ZIH service [8] Sharepoint.

When two clients (e.g. laptop and PC or two different users in a shared directory) synchronize files via Datashare, then the user(s) simultaneously modify the same file on their local system.

The first client then synchronizes its modified file with the Datashare server. When the second client now also wants to synchronize, he notices that the file on the server is no longer the original file that he had synchronized before the change. Therefore, he creates a so-called conflict file on the server: 'filename_conflict-date'. Only the second client sees this file. The users are responsible for resolving the conflict (e.g. inserting the changes of the second into the first version of the file).

[1] <https://datashare.tu-dresden.de>

[2] <http://nextcloud.com/install/#install-clients>

[3] #online storage

[4] #Verfügbarkeit

[5] #online storage

[6] <http://cloudstore.zih.tu-dresden.de/impressum/>

[7] #Teilen

[8] <http://tu-dresden.de/zih/dienste/service-katalog/zusammenarbeiten-und-forschen/groupware/sharepoint>