zBackup

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1

① A circle with a solid blue background is the text associated with a pointer on the picture above it.

② Whereas a blue circle with a white background is text associated with the picture but does not have a pointer.
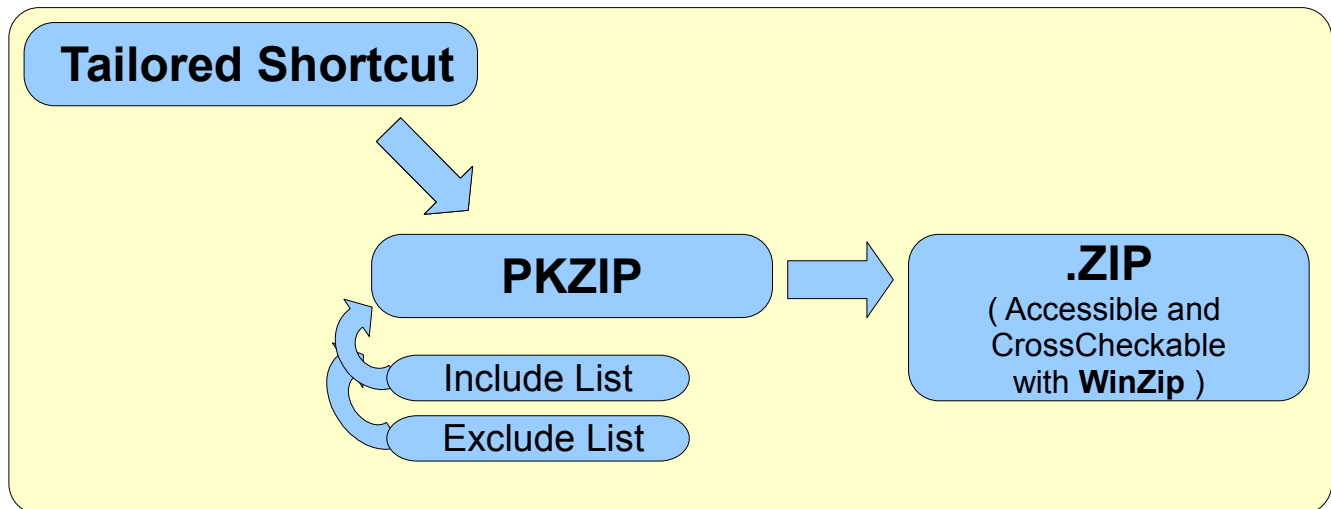
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1 – Introduction

zBackup is very simple but very effective backup system with so many advantages that it rallies backup systems costing hundreds of pounds.

Tailored Shortcut

PKZIP

Include List

Exclude List

.ZIP
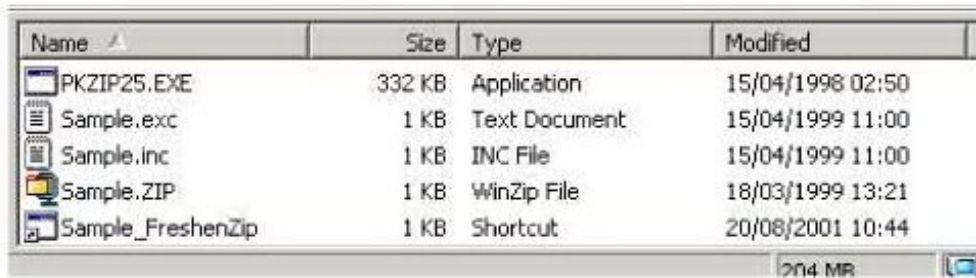(Accessible and CrossCheckable with **WinZip**)

ZBackup grew out of necessity to organise backups for specific projects, having multiple backups on the one machine for different projects.

zBackup extracts information from specific locations and combines them into one ZIP file in an organised and effective manner. It automates PKZIP and introduces you to all the benefits of one of the best compression tools available.

One of the biggest benefits is the incremental backup system. This means that you can have many generations of files in many different backups and you can choose which files of which backup you wish to restore should the need arise. The backup files are in standard WinZip format and this makes the analysis of the backups very easy.

Although it uses 'off the shelf' packages, it is the way that these packages are tied together that provide a very powerful and flexible backup system.

Download the five files

Name	Size	Type	Modified
PKZIP25.EXE	332 KB	Application	15/04/1998 02:50
Sample.exc	1 KB	Text Document	15/04/1999 11:00
Sample.inc	1 KB	INC File	15/04/1999 11:00
Sample.ZIP	1 KB	WinZip File	18/03/1999 13:21
Sample_FreshenZip	1 KB	Shortcut	20/08/2001 10:44

204 MB

Create a new directory and call it (presumably) '**Backup**' (though you could choose another name), and download the five files below into it.

Many years ago **PKZIP** used to be shipped free of charge on floppy disks with magazines, I have included that version available on link below …

(The most recent version is only a 30day trial.
  So quite often the mantra - '**Old is Beautiful**' is very valid.)

PKZIP25.ex_   I have changed the extension of the file to '.**ex_**'
                               to allow you to download it more easily –
                               Please change the extension back to '**.exe**' to use it.

Sample.exc   **Exc**lusion List

Sample.inc   **Inc**lusion List

Sample.ZIP   An empty ZIP file (into which to start storing stuff)

Sample_FreshenZip.lnk   The ShortCut that calls PKZIP with the correct
                               parameters and references all the other files.
                               You will need to edit – by Right Clicking it - See later.

When you download these files their READ-ONLY attribute is set, but this isn't a problem because when you are editing the files you will want to change the names as you save them.

Downloading of WinZip

For handling the Zip File within the windows environment you can use the manager within Internet Explorer or the separate package called **WinZip.** (Zip files are so universal that you won't have any trouble accessing them)

Again **WinZip** is now available only on a 30-Day trial - but used to be available indefinitely with a message popping up at the beginning of each session. I have versions of

WinZip81.exe	1.8M	Dec 2003	(although these dates might be the
WinZip90.exe	2.3M	March 2004	date I downloaded the software
WinZip100.exe	3.7M	Nov 2005	rather than the initial release date)

Not sure which of these is which; as I was so impressed with WinZip that I signed up to become a paid up member.

The Include and Exclude Lists

First lets have a look at the Include and Exclude lists. The first grey box contains part of the Include list for backing up our core machine. (you will have to tailor your own to suit your own needs.)

Typical Include List

```
REM  /--------------\
REM  | Include  List |   Project  - Extensa20xx
REM  |  for PZIP25  |   Filename - Extensa20xx.INC          1
REM  \--------------/
REM
H:\Backup\*.??c                                     2
H:\backup\licences.txt
c:\Documents and Settings\GregMcCormack\Desktop\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\AllertonEPS\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\AllertonEPS-Software\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\AllertonEPS-Software\EQIC_FullAccess_2302\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\AllertonEPS-Software\EQIC_Instructions\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\Bookkeeping\Instructions\Source\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\Bookkeeping\DownloadSection_3285\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\Cahill_Tiscali\*.*
G:\MyWebSpace\Downloadables\*.*
H:\AllertonEPS\Business\*.*
H:\AllertonEPS\CustomerAccounts\*.*
H:\AllertonEPS\Customers\*.*
H:\Backup\Outlook_Archive.pst
H:\Greg\*.*
H:\Greg\Addresses\*.*                               3
H:\Greg\agencies\*.*
H:\Greg\crditcrd\*.*
H:\Greg\CV_and_Jobs\*.*
H:\Greg\CV_and_Jobs\Letters\*.*
H:\SARAH\*.*

REM   Add others as needed ...
```

Typical Exclude List

```
*.EXE
*.ZIP
*.COM
*.LNK
*.TMP
*.BAK
*.~*
~*.*                                    4
REM   Add others as needed ...
```

1   First thing to do is to choose the names to suit your Backup requirements
[our Computer Name is Extensa and it is followed by the year – so Extensa2009 is a typical backup filename, that gets added to during the year. And then becomes the final version at the end of the year.]

2   It is a good idea to include the Backup Include and Exclude lists
This is an example of using '?' as individual wild card characters. Both the Include (.INC) and the Exclude (.EXC) lists end with a C – hence the '.??C' format.

3   If you want to (and you will want to) include sub-directories then you need to specify them specifically.
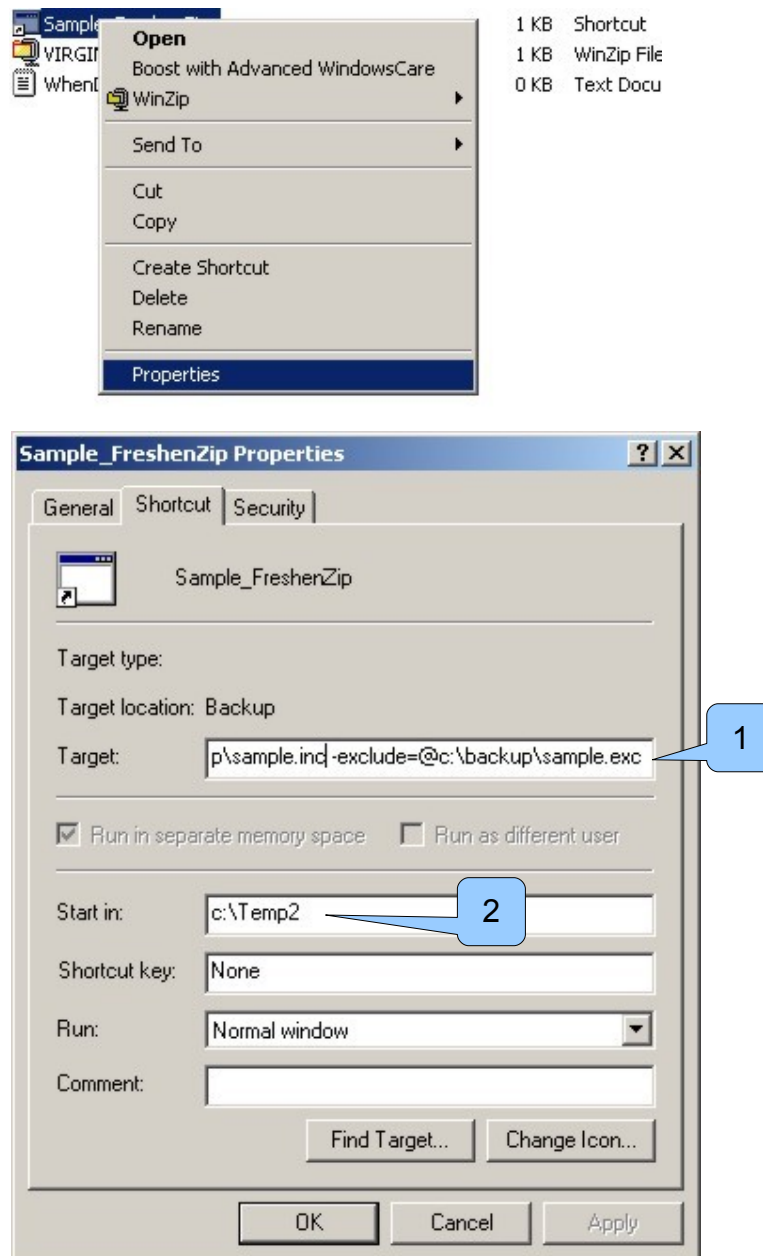
4   The '~' is a symbol that is used to prefix temporary files – we have chosen not to include temporary files in our backup.

The ShortCut file

The ShortCut is the glue that sticks all the parts together.

The best way to do this is to change the name of the shortcut file that you were recommended to download from Page 3, then edit it.

To edit a shortcut, **right click** your mouse, choose '**Properties**'.

① This is where you define the details of the shortcut - more details on the next page.

② Make sure that the 'Start in' directory is available.

Looks mighty complicated all joined up – but if you break it down you can see the individual parameters and how they hang together.

Details

```
e:\backup\Pkzip25.exe
      -after=01012009
      -bef=01012010
      -path=full
      -add=update
      e:\backup\Sample
      -include=@e:\backup\Sample.inc
      -exclude=@e:\backup\Sample.exc
```

- Calling the executable with the **correct path**
- only identifying files changed AFTER a certain date
- only identifying files changed BEFORE a certain date
- store the whole path
- 'update' – if it exists refresh it, if not 'add' it
- store the files in this ZIP file
- Include list
- Exclude list

Joining everything up makes it look like this

```
e:\backup\Pkzip25.exe -after=01012009 -bef=01012010 -path=full -add=update e:\backup\Sample
    -include=@e:\backup\Sample.inc -exclude=@e:\backup\Sample.exc
```

So typically you would have to change the **Drive letter**   and the word '**Sample**' to suit your specific requirements.

Other Details

Incremental Backup

Every time we want to freshen our backups - All we do …

Using the Windows Explorer ; click on the ZIP file, Ctrl-C (Copy) and then Ctrl-V (Paste it) and it creates a new copy of the file in the same directory, we then click on the shortcut which will perform the backup. We then end up with two versions of the backup, the current one and the one just prior to the current one. This means that if we have accidentally backed up a file that was recently corrupted then we have always got the previous backup to which to resort.

Most information is lost as a result of human error rather than disk failure or any other hardware failure – This is your simple backup system that protects you from all those mishaps - a good but simple backup system.

Other Backup systems ...

This backup system rates very highly compared with others. If you look at the backup system that comes with Win2000 (for example) the compression is very poor, it's father, grandfather status is confusing, it can't backup files that are resident on other machines and it is overly complicated.

I hope you agree with me on these issues and find it a very useful tool to add to your toolkit. One thing is for sure - once you start using it - you'll realise it's flexibility and compression capabilities and with that comes it's power.

PKZIP parameters ...

For users who want to know more detail and one possibility might be to explore the recursive delving into sub-directories. [We have retained the need to specify sub-directories in our Include List; for two reasons, firstly it keeps more control of the quantity of information being stored, but secondly and more importantly we think there is an error in PKZIP.EXE because we couldn't get it to work. But if you would like to delve into the internals of PKZIP then feel free]

Here is associated HTM file that comes with version PKZIP25.

NOTES

We think the people at PKWARE got themselves tied in knots with the order of the Date - they say it looks at the current settings of the host machine to know whether it is DDMMYY format   or   the American format   MMDDYY   - you'll just have to work it out by trial and error. (or avoid the complication - as we do by specifying four year characters YYYY) - Suck it and see – in this regards don't trust what PKZIP2.5 documentation says.

The 'path=full' is the most useful mode as it will not dive into subdirectories (unless you have specifically identified in the INCLUDE List).

The main attribute to pay attention to '-ADD'   setting this to 'UPDATE' is by far the best mode to use it in, UPDATE will ADD a file if it doesn't already exist and will only update it if the date of the file stored in the ZIP file is older than the one you are wishing to backup.

Additional information can be found in the PKZIP help file - Please remember that this information associated with PKZIP2.5,   in terms of the zBackup very little more of it is relevant than is detailed above.

Things to consider if it doesn't work as you expect ...

The DOS shell provided by Win95 and Win98 can only refer to files (including directories) in their 8.3 format, thus the directory 'Program Files' appears as 'Progra~1' when listed using the DIR command from the DOS shell. I know this isn't a problem in WinNT, Win2000 and therefore presumably isn't a problem in subsequent Windows platforms. You can check out whether you are going to get into this difficulty by opening a DOS shell and typing 'CD PROGRAM FILES' from the root directory - if you can get into the directory then the version of DOS that Windows provides can handle long filenames. Otherwise you'll have to find out the format of all filenames and directories that you are going to use as defined from within the DOS shell and change your INC file accordingly - referencing the 'c:\Program Files' directory as 'c:\Progra~1' instead.

If you suspect the date attributes are presenting a difficulty then remove them and see if you are still getting the problem.

If you are still having problems then point your INC file to just one file, and make sure that you can capture that one file into the Zip file.

If you need further advice then contact us by email including your INC and EXC lists and SHORTCUT (you can just copy and paste - using CTRL-C and CTRL-V) and we'll try and give you some help.

It's History ...

We have ZIP files going back into the 80's and started using a suite of BAT (batch files for DOS) to create ZIP files in 1991. I realised the benefits of an automated backup system back then. Nowadays the use of the Shortcut does away with the need for the suite of BAT files. The INCLUDE and EXCLUDE list functionality of the PKZIP command makes it far more powerful that can be immediately realised making PKZIP (and this backup procedure) as relevant today as it was then..

Elaborating on the advantages

During the introduction it was considered more important that we get across the detail and the method of the backup system rather than delving into the advantages too much.

We have already mentioned it is a very simple but powerful system – we hope that you are now in a position to agree about it's simplicity. Now we can expand on the power and flexibility of the system.

• It can be configured in any way you like and a single zip file can be copied to remote machines, or tape backup systems, so that you can end up with many backup copies spread over many machines, thus minimising the chances of lost data. **[This is an important issue – backing up into ZIP files – or any other backup system – if the stored data resides on the same machine as the one you are working on – then there is no protection from mechanical failure OR fire OR theft of the machine. - Copy the resultant ZIP file elsewhere OR store a CD copy in the garden shed – for example]**

• You can also have different backups for different elements of your work – you could have a 'Home2009' Zip file and individual project backup files for work.

• There is also a checking facility within Winzip that will check the integrity of the resultant ZIP file. This is a **major benefit** - you have Winzip checking the functionality of PKZIP - two different packages cross checking with each other. **[There is no point having a backup system that produces a corrupt or inaccessible result (or only accessible by an obscure means) - zBackup produces a very accessible end result whose integrity is cross checked by another manufacturer's software.]**

• Network mapped drives can be included in your Include List and thus zBackup can collect (collate) information from different machines – making sure that the most up-to-date is always stored.

We hope that you now agree with us that zBackup is very worthy of your consideration as your main means of backing up your valuable data.

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