Backup and Restore a RootsMagic Database

This Magic Guide covers:

A. Who should backup their RootsMagic files and why?
B. What is a backup file?
C. When do I backup my RootsMagic file?
D. How do I remember to make a backup and keep them straight?
E. How do I manually backup the file?
F. Where should I store my backup?
G. How do I backup files to my flash drive or external hard drive?
H. How can I make a backup to Dropbox?
I. How do I Restore a Backup (.rmgb) File?

A. Who should backup their RootsMagic files and why?

EVERYONE needs to make backups! One of the biggest fears and heartaches of any family historian is losing their records due to a computer crash, user error, file corruption, or natural disaster. Think about how much time you have invested in your database, and how long it would take to re-create that database from scratch. With a current backup copy of your file, you can restore the file and get back to work in a matter of minutes. Without a backup, there is sorrow, discouragement, and hard work.
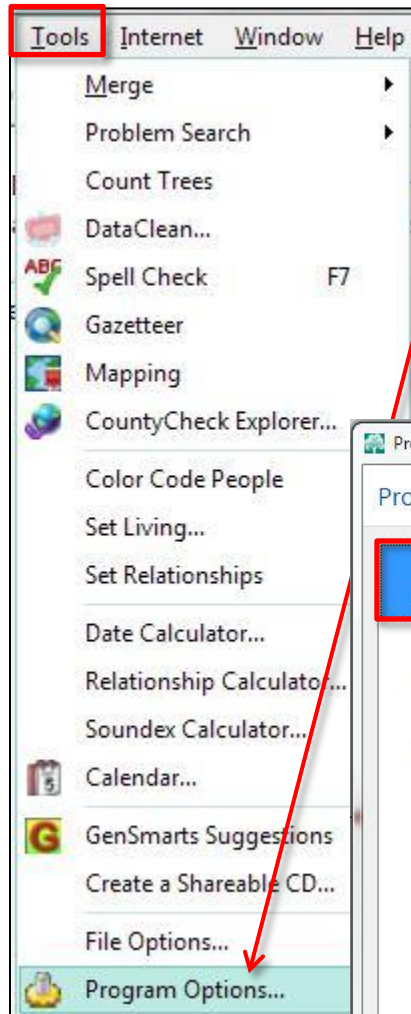
B. What is a Backup File?

A backup is a compressed copy of your RootsMagic database which has an .rmgb extension. It is less likely to become corrupted when emailed or transferred to another computer than a database (.rmgc) file. A backup is better than a GEDCOM file because it is an exact copy of your database with no potential loss.

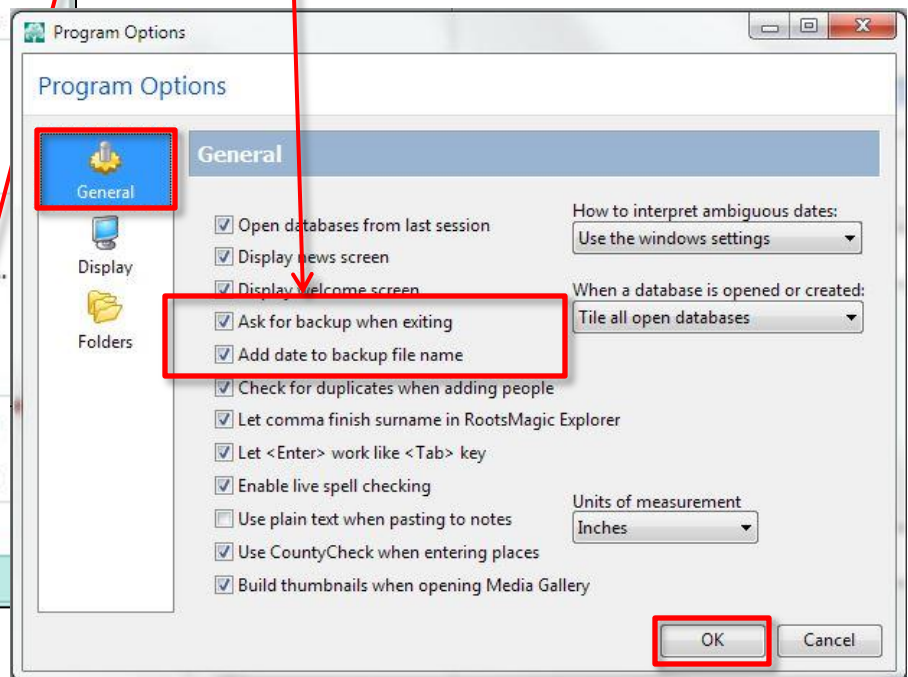## C. When do I backup my RootsMagic file?

It is best to get into the habit of creating a backup each time you exit the program after changes have been made. When you have been working in RootsMagic for several hours at a time, stop and make a backup at whatever point you would hate to have to recreate your work. If your computer suddenly failed or you made a bad mistake and need to "undo" it, the backup is worth its weight in gold. It is also advisable to make a backup before making major changes to your file by merging, using Compare File, DataClean, etc.

A lot of changes can be made in a very short time, so backup frequently & add a letter to the filename (after the date) to denote your work throughout the day.
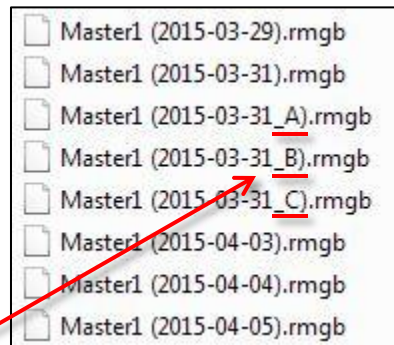
D. How do I remember to make a backup and keep them straight?

1. To receive a reminder to back up your file each time you close the program go to the "Tools" menu and select "Program Options".

2. On the "General" tab, make sure that "Ask for backup when exiting" and "Add date to backup file name" are checked.
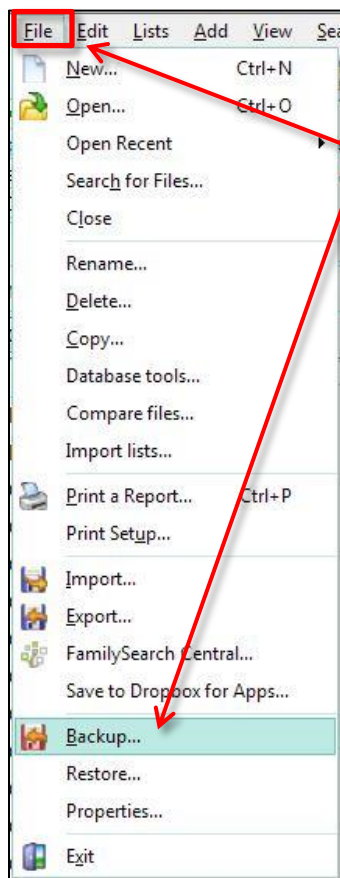
3. Click "OK".

By default each RootsMagic backup has the date assigned to the file name (YYYY-MM-DD).
Without adding the date, each backup will overwrite the previous backup. Adding the date allows you to have multiple backups going back in time, and it will be easier to see which backup is the most recent. It's not unreasonable to keep several years of backups archived as there may be times you need to return to an earlier version.
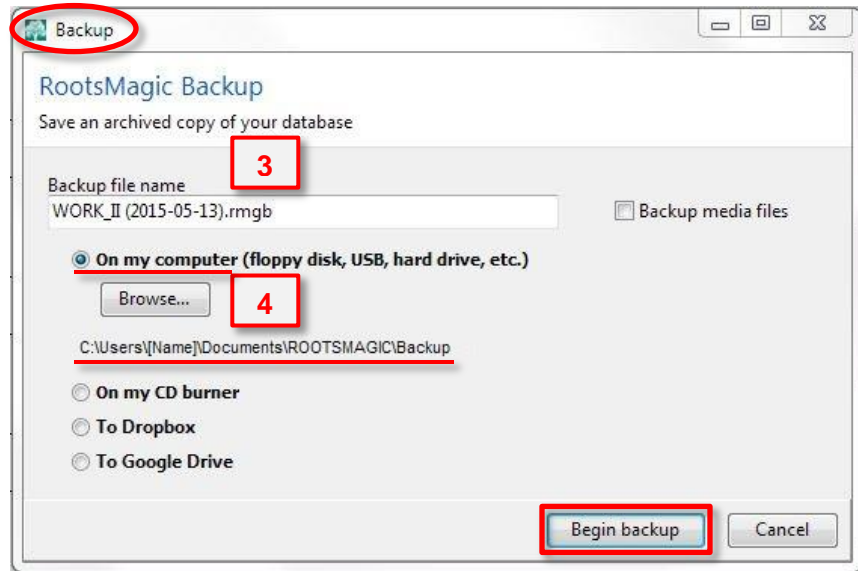
Master1 (2015-03-29).rmgb
Master1 (2015-03-31).rmgb
Master1 (2015-03-31_A).rmgb
Master1 (2015-03-31_B).rmgb
Master1 (2015-03-31_C).rmgb
Master1 (2015-04-03).rmgb
Master1 (2015-04-04).rmgb
Master1 (2015-04-05).rmgb

NOTE: Remember to manually add a letter to the date if you do more than one backup on the same day.

E. How do I manually backup the file?

File   Edit   Lists   Add   View   Sea
New...   Ctrl+N
Open...   Ctrl+O
Open Recent
Search for Files...
Close
Rename...
Delete...
Copy...
Database tools...
Compare files...
Import lists...
Print a Report...   Ctrl+P
Print Setup...
Import...
Export...
FamilySearch Central...
Save to Dropbox for Apps...
Backup...
Restore...
Properties...
Exit

1. Before making significant changes to your file, or while working for extended periods, we recommend that you make a backup. Simply click on the "File" menu and select "Backup".

2. The "Backup" window will open.

Backup

RootsMagic Backup
Save an archived copy of your database

3
Backup file name
WORK_II (2015-05-13).rmgb   ☐ Backup media files

◉ On my computer (floppy disk, USB, hard drive, etc.)
Browse...   **4**
C:\Users\[Name]\Documents\ROOTSMAGIC\Backup
◉ On my CD burner
◉ To Dropbox
◉ To Google Drive

Begin backup   Cancel

3. The file name is listed.

4. The default is set to save "On my computer". The path to where the backup file will be saved is also displayed.

5. Click "Begin backup".

F. Where should I store my backup?

Once you have made a backup (.rmgb) to your hard drive, it is good practice to make an additional backup somewhere else. You can back up your file to an external hard drive, flash drives, or CDs. You can also backup your file to the "cloud", which will give you access to your backup from another computer or when you are away from home.

Some external hard drives and cloud services automatically sync copies of your files from your computer. Check into services such as Mozy, Carbonite, Backblaze and Dropbox, but don't let them fool you into a false sense of security. Auto backup services save a copy of your database file (.rmgc), but there will be times you need to restore your file from a backup (.rmgb), especially if the database is corrupted. Backup files won't be there when you need them unless you also save them to these storage areas. You can do it manually, or you can set up these backup systems to automatically sync both your database (.rmgc) and you backup (.rmgb) files, from your computer's hard drive to their storage area.
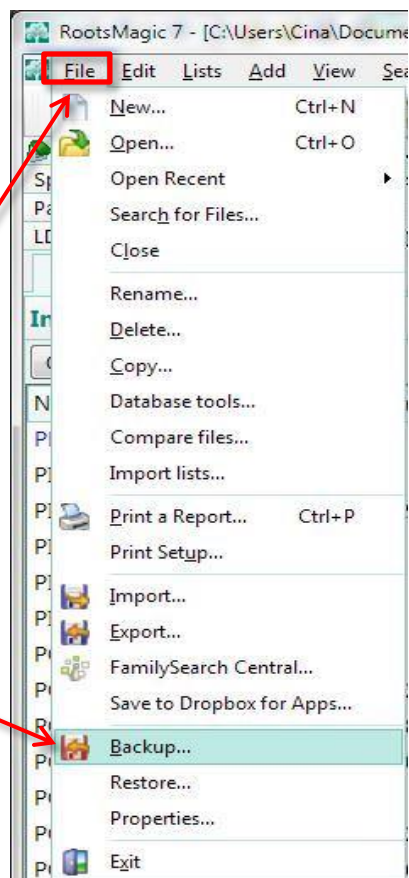
Web based email services, such as Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. can also act as a cloud service. Simply email your backup (.rmgb) to yourself and access it later from anywhere.

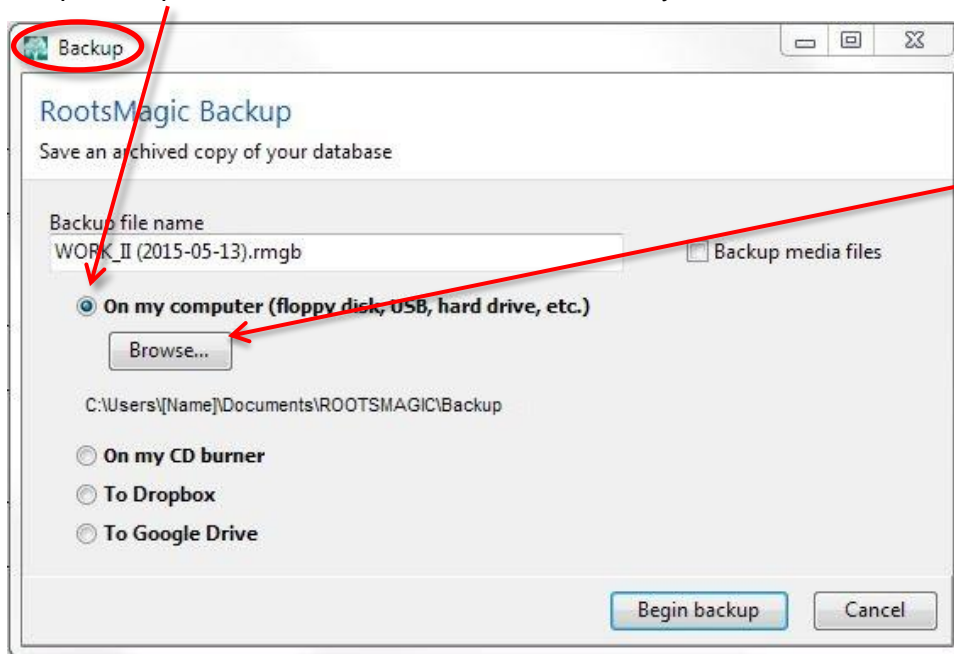***If you haven't made a backup of your RootsMagic database, stop and do it now!***

G. How do I backup files to my flash drive or external hard drive?

1. Plug your flash drive or external hard drive into your computer.

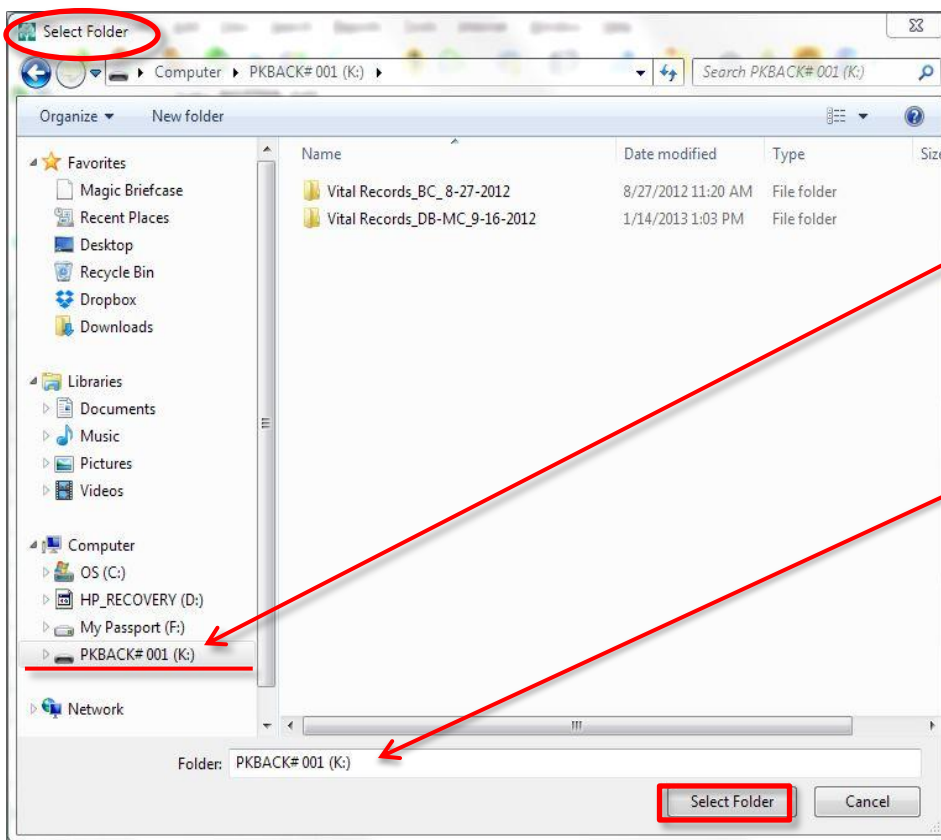2. Click the "File" menu in RootsMagic and select "Backup".

3. On the "Backup" window, check to see WHERE the file will be saved. With the "On my computer" option selected, the file will be saved to your hard drive.

4. If it is NOT set to save to the correct drive letter, click the "Browse" button.

5. A new window will open so that you can select the folder where you want to save your backup.
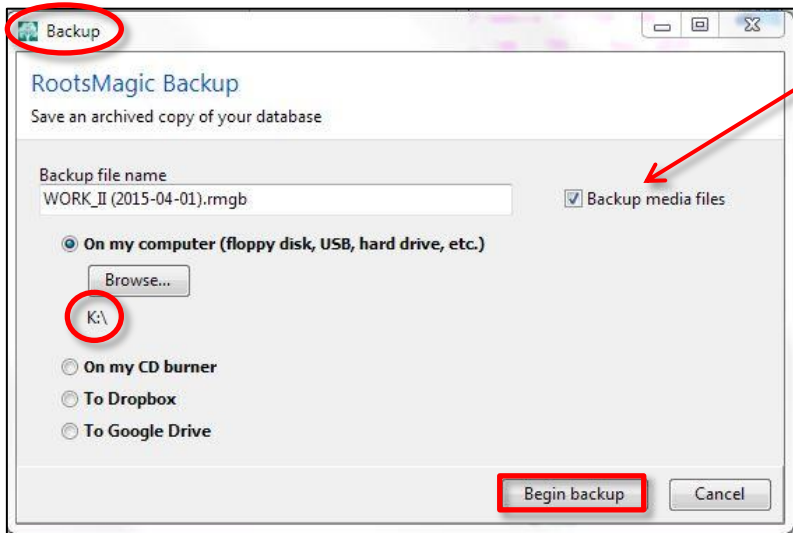

6. Find the "drive" that represents your flash drive or external hard drive. Click to select it.

In this example, the drive letter is K:

7. The drive will be displayed in the "Folder:" field.

8. Click the "Select Folder" button.

9. You will be returned to the "Backup" screen, where you will see the drive for your flash drive.

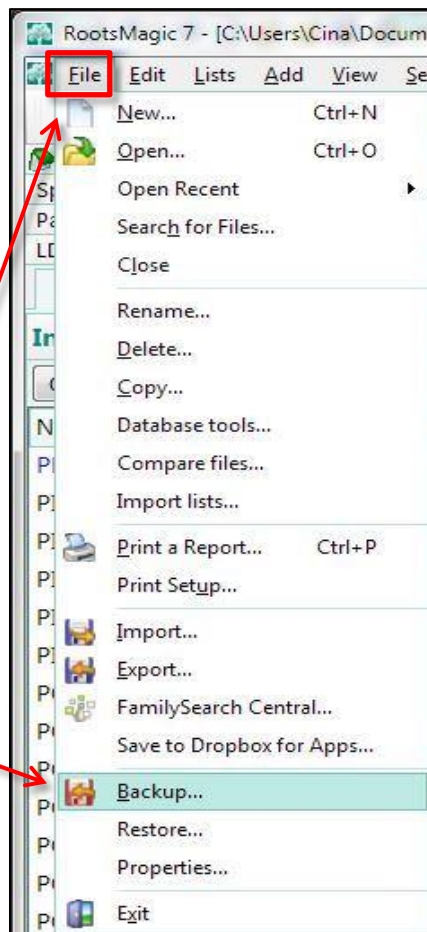10. Beginning with RootsMagic 7, you can backup your file with the media.

Because media files take up a LOT of room, you would ONLY use this option periodically!

11. Click the "Begin backup" button. A backup (.rmgb) copy of your file will be created and stored on your flash drive.
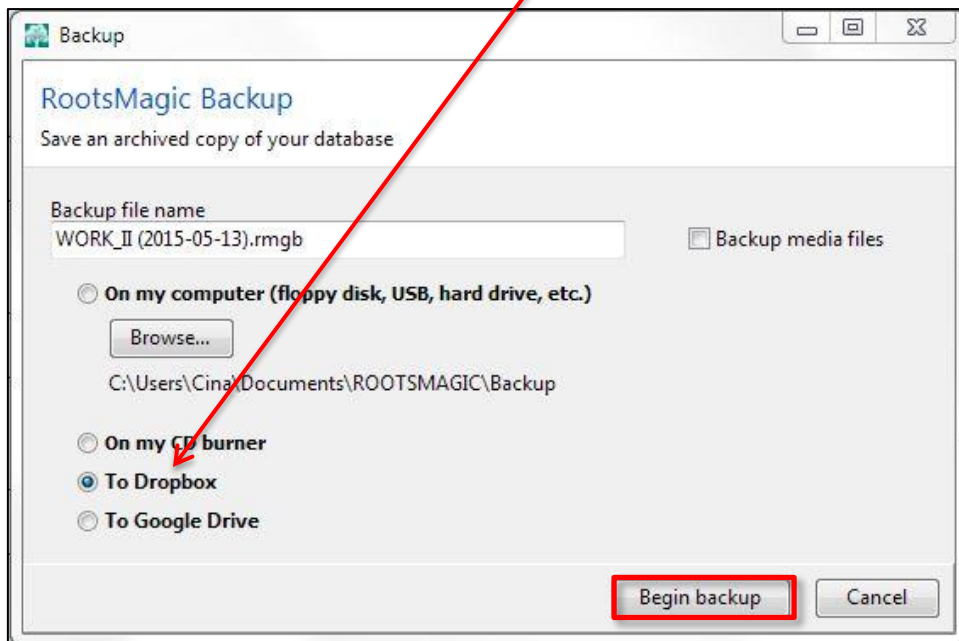
H. How can I make a backup to Dropbox?

To save your backup file to Dropbox, you must have a Dropbox account. If you do not have a Dropbox account, you can set one up by going to https://www.dropbox.com/ Make a note of your login information (email and password).
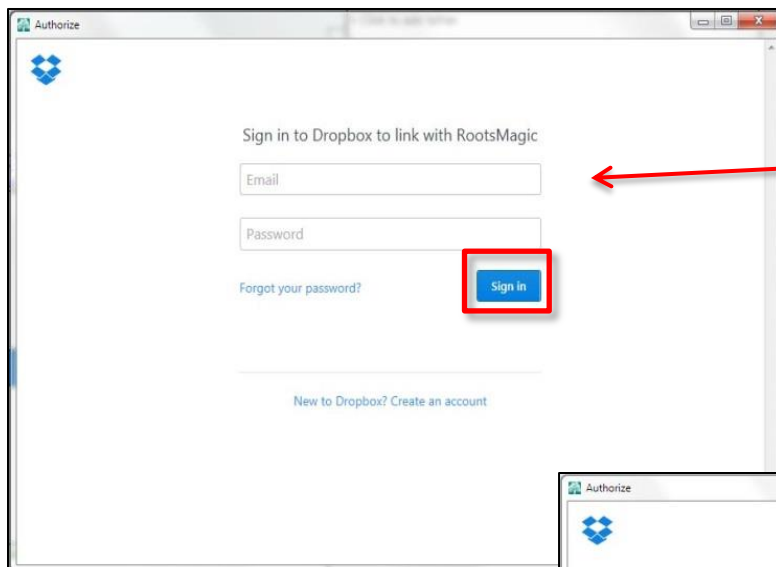
1. Click on the "File" menu in RootsMagic and select "Backup".

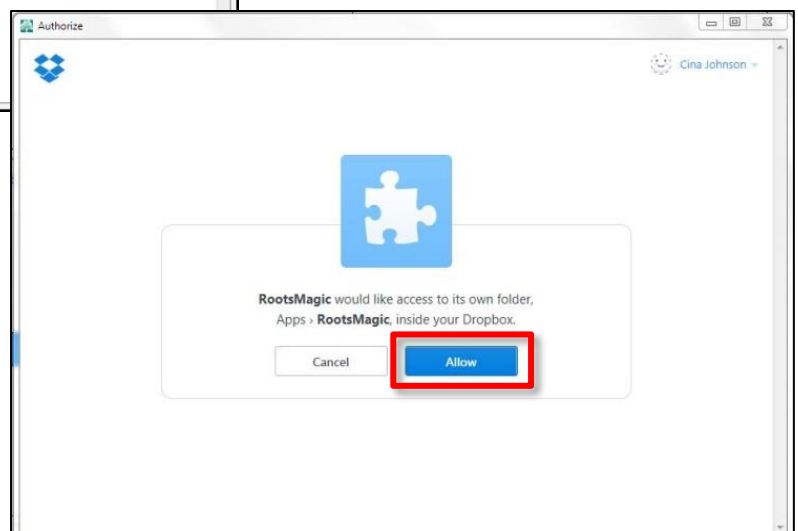2. On the "Backup" window, click the "To Dropbox" option.
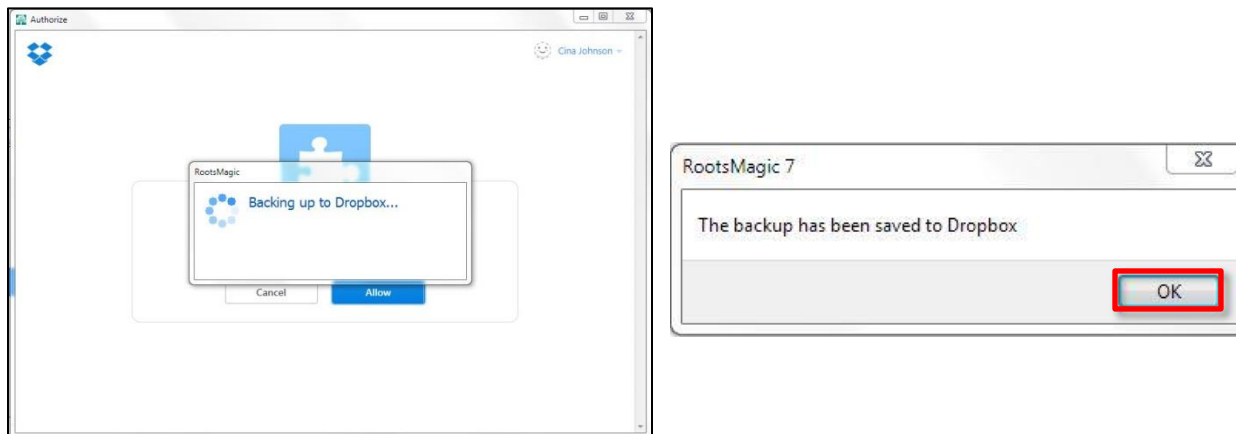

3. Click the "Begin backup" button.

4. The Dropbox login window will open. Enter the email address and login password you created with Dropbox.

5. Click "Sign In".

6. An "Authorization window will open to let you know that RootsMagic wants to access Dropbox. Click "Allow" to proceed.

7. You will see the "Backing up to Dropbox…" window, followed by a confirmation window so that you know that the backup was completed successfully.

8. Your backup was put into Dropbox > "Apps" folder > "RootsMagic" subfolder. (Dropbox\Apps\RootsMagic)

9. Click "OK" on the confirmation window to close the window and return to RootsMagic.

10. Backing up to Dropbox uploads your file to the Dropbox server. It can take longer depending on the backup size and your internet speed. Media will require additional upload time.

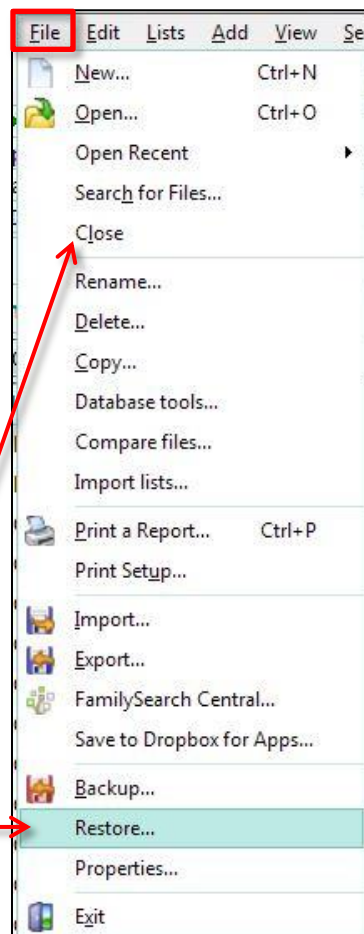## I. How do I Restore a Backup (.rmgb) File?

If you make a mistake while changing something in your file, or should the file become corrupted in some way, you can return the file to a previous state by restoring it from a backup.
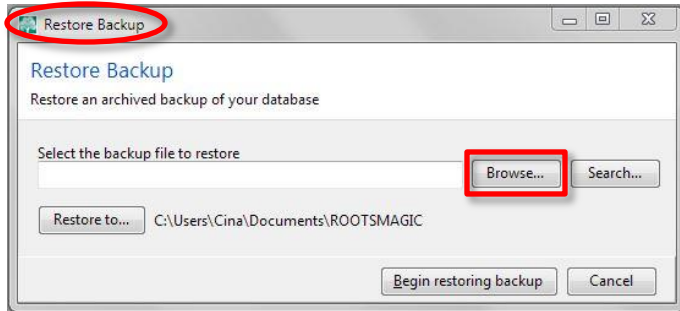
NOTE: Work that was entered between the time that you made this backup and when you restored it will be lost. You will need to redo this work. This is another reason to make frequent backups.

1. You must close any currently opened database in order to restore a file. Click on the "File" menu and choose, "Close". RootsMagic will remain open, but the database file will be closed.
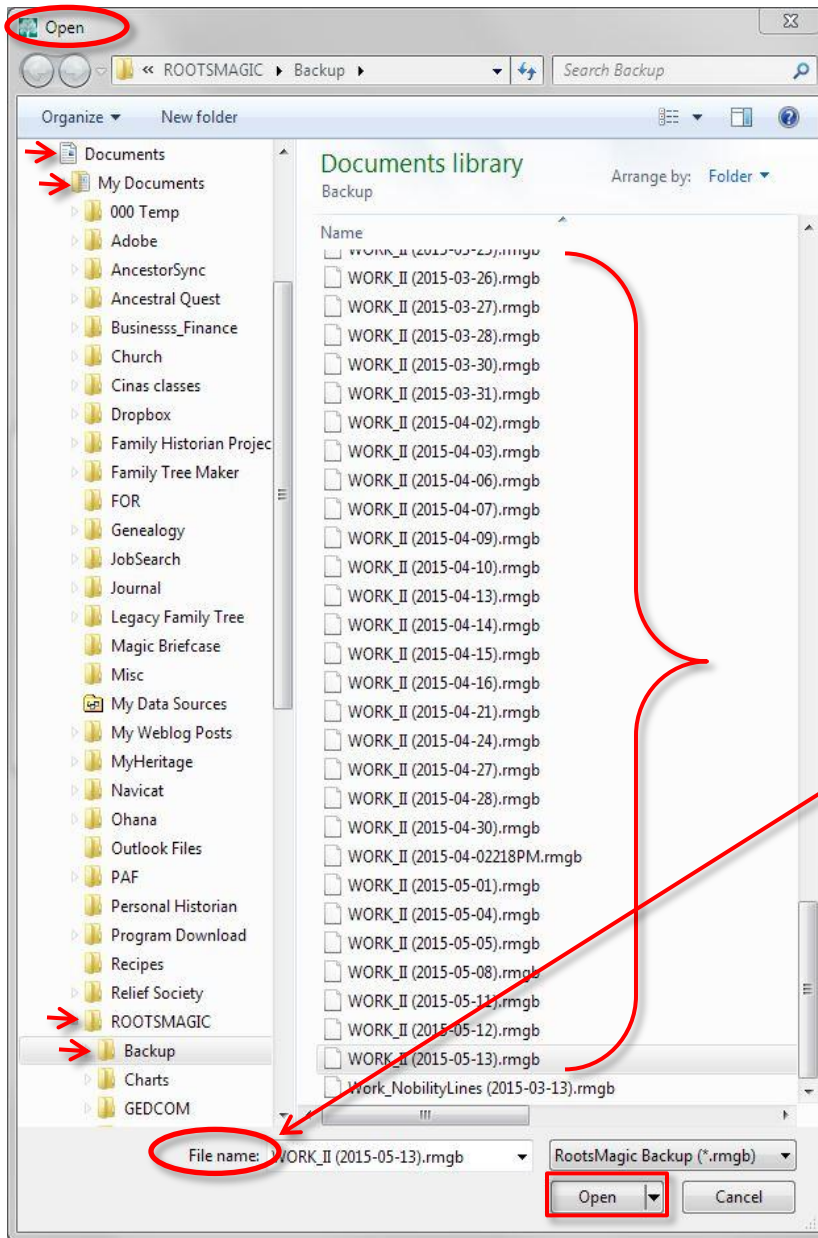
2. Click on the "File" menu again and click "Restore".

3. The "Restore Backup" window will open.

4. Click the "Browse" button to find your backup file.

5. The "Open" file window will be displayed.

In this example, the backup files can be found by going to Documents >
* My Documents >*
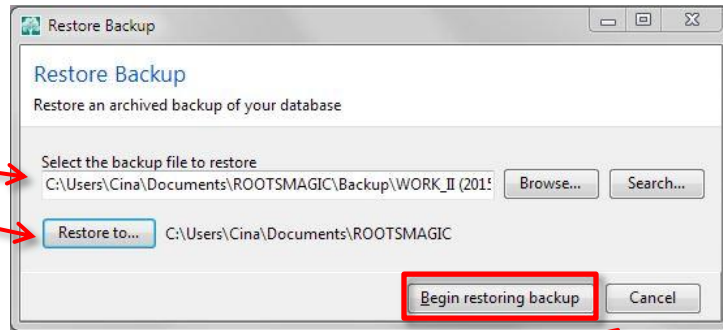*   ROOTSMAGIC >*
*   Backup >*

6. Highlight the file that you want to restore.

7. You will see the file name in the "File name:" field.

8. Click the "Open" button to finalize your selection and close the window.

9. You will be returned to the "Restore Backup" window where you can see the path to the file you chose to restore.
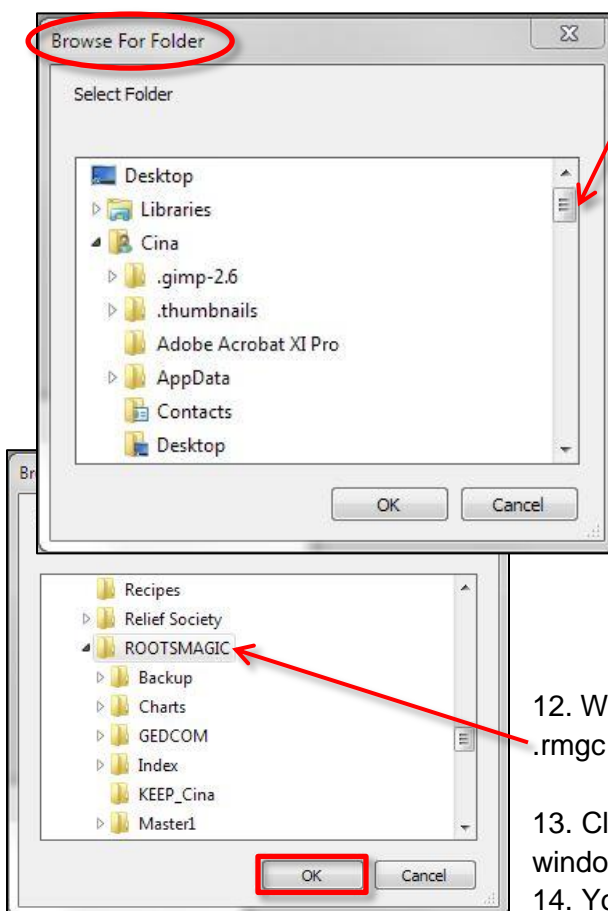
10. The "Restore to…" button will show the location where the file will be restored.
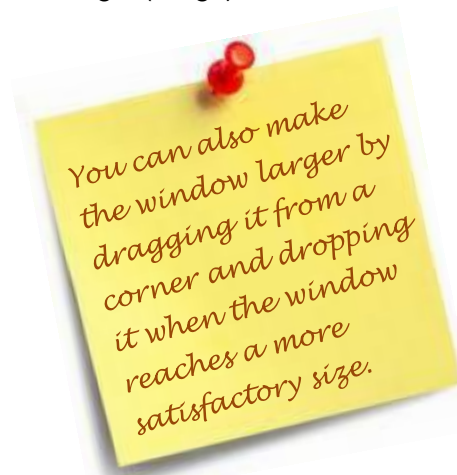
- If the RootsMagic (.rmgc) file will be restored to the correct folder, click the "Begin restoring backup" button.
- If you want to change the location, click the "Restore to…" button.

Note: If the backup (.rmgb) file contains media files you will receive a message asking if you want to "Restore media files?" Select "No" to restore the database but not the images. Select "Yes" to restore both the database and media files. The location where you restored your backup will now contain a new subfolder called "Media". All of the MediaTags in the database will be changed to link to the images within the Media folder.
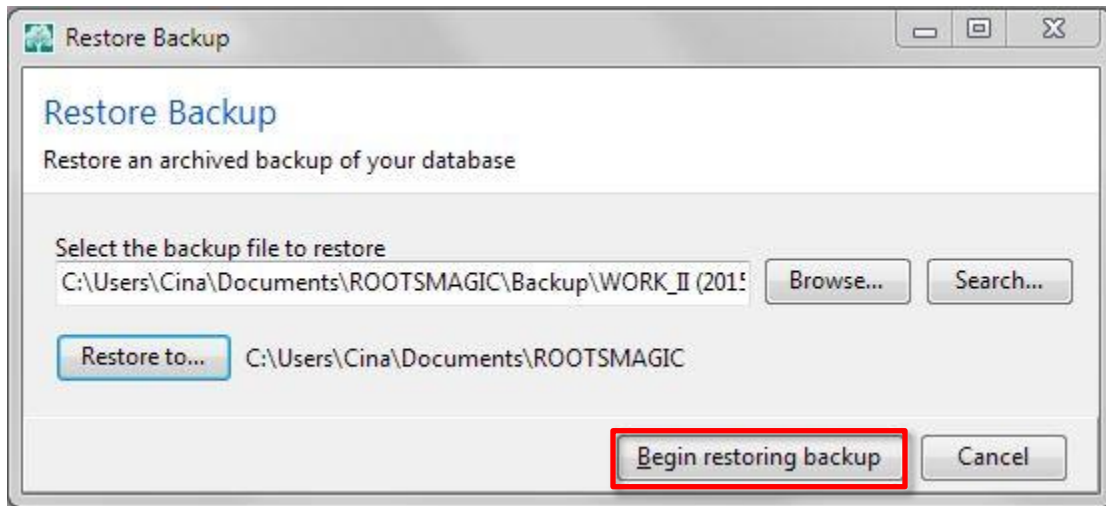
11. The "Browse For Folder" window will open. Use the slide bar on the right of the window to find the folder where you want your RootsMagic (.rmgc) file to be stored.

You can also make the window larger by dragging it from a corner and dropping it when the window reaches a more satisfactory size.

12. When you find the folder where you want your .rmgc file stored, click on the folder to highlight it.
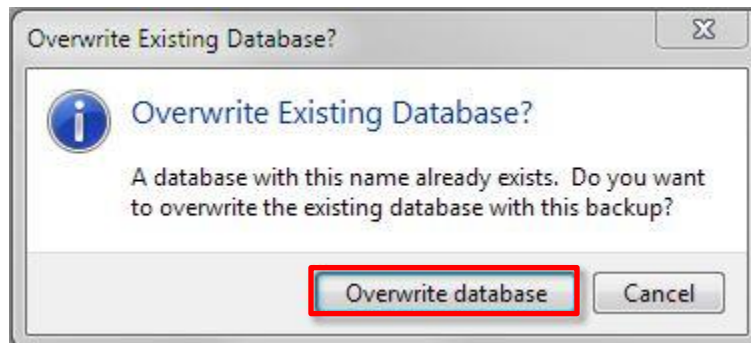
13. Click "OK" to finalize your choice and close the window.

14. You will, once again, be returned to the "Restore Backup" window.

15. Click the "Begin restoring backup" button.

16. If you already have a file with that name and in the same folder, you will receive a warning. Restoring the file will overwrite the current file with this file. You can change the "Restore to…" location if this is not what you planned to do.

17. Click "Overwrite database" to allow the backup to be restored.

Your file is now restored to an earlier version. Check it to make sure that it works correctly and redo any work that may have been lost.