

Keep Your Device Free From Duplicate Files

Digital storage is cheap – that's why we end up with duplicate photos, songs, emails & various other files on our computers and phones. **Hitesh Raj Bhagat & Karan Bajaj** show you how to fix it



Emails

Outlook

A small utility called 'Outlook Duplicate Items Remover' from www.vaita.com is an all-in-one tool for Outlook. Not only does it search for duplicate mails, but goes a step ahead and finds duplicates within contacts, calendar, tasks and notes. The duplicates are not immediately deleted – they are simply moved to a separate folder for inspection and deletion.

Thunderbird

Thunderbird's free 'Remove Duplicate Messages' add-on scans through your subfolders at a speed of 1000 messages per second. You can set it to scan and show you duplicates or just delete them directly without any intervention. While deleting the duplicates, you also get the option to retain the bigger/smaller, read/unread, first/last found email.

Online

If you're using an online email client like Gmail or Yahoo, the best way to find duplicates is to set up IMAP with a local email client (like Outlook or Thunderbird). With IMAP, your online mail syncs locally with your PC. Then, you can use the previously mentioned 'Remove Duplicate Messages' for Thunderbird or 'Outlook Duplicate Items Remover' (ODIR) for Outlook.



Files & Folders

Windows

Head to www.nirsoft.net and download the free 'SearchMyFiles' application. The app is also portable – copy it to a USB flash drive and use it on any Windows computer. SearchMyFiles is essentially a replacement for the Windows search bar but adds multiple search features in an easy-to-use interface. The application has a dedicated duplicate file search mode that lets you search specified folders for duplicate files (you can also choose the type of file you want to search for). After scanning, it shows you duplicate files in a separate window – you can delete the files, securely delete or just view the files.

Mac

Mac OS X's finder window lets you search for files based on various criteria. Open a finder window and just type the asterisk (*) symbol into the search box. Once the results (which includes everything on your MAC) come up, you can sort them by 'kind'. This will place similarly sized items together by name – then you can easily see and remove the duplicates. You can also download the free 'Duplicate File Searcher' from www.duplicatefilessearcher.net. It offers advanced search options with a graphical user interface to find and remove duplicate files quickly.

Music

iTunes has a built-in duplicate finder. Open your music library in iTunes and click on the File menu from the top bar. Click on the display duplicates and iTunes will show them in the library. You can then choose to remove the duplicates from the library as well as delete them from the hard drive. Another option is to use 'dupeGuru' Music edition application (www.hardcoded.net) that lets you scan folders. Once a scan is complete, it shows songs on the basis of size, duration, bitrate and a percentage – indicating how similar two songs are. You can then choose to delete the 'dupe' files or move them to another folder to check before deleting. It's available for Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. The free version lets you delete 10 songs at a time – the limitation can be removed by making a small donation on the website.

Photos

If you take lots of digital photographs, it's likely that you'll end up with a lot of duplicates. But you may also end up with scores of photos that are very similar – such as when using a camera's burst mode. Try VisiPics for Windows (www.visipics.info). It has an easy-to-use interface, works with multiple formats (including Tiff and RAW) and has the ability to compare images in different formats and with different resolutions. The duplicates can be renamed, moved to another folder or directly deleted. You can also download the popular Picasa from Google (<http://picasa.google.com>, available for Windows, MAC and Linux). Once all the images are imported by Picasa, go to tools > experimental and select the option to show duplicate files. It will then show you all the duplicate files in your library – you can delete them immediately or move them to a different folder.

Contacts

If you need to find and merge duplicate contacts in your Gmail account, it's easy – just go to the contacts section by clicking on the small triangle near the Gmail logo on the upper left of your screen. Then, click on 'More' and 'Find & Merge Duplicates'. You'll need to review the suggested merges before any action can be done. If you have an Android device which does not sync contacts with Gmail, simply get either of the free apps 'Duplicate Contacts' or 'Contact Remover'. Backup your contacts before making sweeping changes. iOS users can get an app called 'Contacts Duster' (US\$ 1.99). A free version is also available, but it only shows you a graphical representation of your contacts (including the number of duplicates) – to actually merge them, you need to get the full version anyway.