

PERSONAL TECH

Unhitching the PC From OneDrive

Tech Tip

By J. D. BIERSDORFER JUNE 16, 2016

Q. *How do I make all my files stop automatically downloading to the OneDrive in Windows 10 Home Edition? Can I just get rid of OneDrive? I never use it.*

A. OneDrive, Microsoft's cloud-storage service that synchronizes files on your PC with its online servers, is part of the Windows 10 operating system and cannot be fully uninstalled. If you prefer to keep your files stored on your computer, you can turn off the automatic syncing function and hide the program from view so you do not have to use it or even see it in the Windows File Explorer.

To start disengaging OneDrive from your system, right-click its icon in the taskbar (or press and hold the icon on a touch-screen computer) and select Settings from the menu. If you do not see the double-cloud OneDrive icon, click the taskbar's upward-pointing arrow to open the menu of hidden icons, locate the OneDrive icon and right-click it from there.

Once the OneDrive Settings box is open on the screen, click through its tabs to disable its syncing functions. On the Settings tab, turn off the checkboxes in the General area. On the Auto Save tab, set the drop-down menu options next to Documents and Pictures to This PC Only, and turn off the checkboxes for storing photos, videos and screen shots online.

On the Account tab, click the Unlink OneDrive button. (Users who wish to keep files currently stored online on OneDrive but remove copies of those files from the

PC should click the Choose Folders button on the Account tab, turn off all the checkboxes next to file and folder names, click the O.K. button — and then go back into the Settings box and click the Unlink OneDrive button on the Account tab.) If you see a box welcoming you to OneDrive, just close it.

Once you have stopped the files from syncing, you can hide the OneDrive icon in the File Explorer. Click the File Explorer icon in the taskbar to open the window and right-click the OneDrive icon. Choose Properties from the menu, click the General tab and click the box next to Hidden in the Attributes section. Finally, go back to the Notifications area of the taskbar, right-click the OneDrive icon and choose Exit to remove it there.

Personal Tech invites questions about computer-based technology to techtip@nytimes.com. This column will answer questions of general interest, but letters cannot be answered individually.