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# Freeing Up Capacity On An SSD With NTFS Compression

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 By [Manuel Masiero](#), [Achim Roos](#) NOVEMBER 30, 2011 9:00 PM

## 11. Should You Compress Data On Your SSD?

Activating NTFS compression is worthwhile on high-end computers with fast multi-core processors because you can squeeze more storage space from an SSD without compromising the [system performance](#) significantly. Our comparison to powerful compression tools like 7-Zip shows that NTFS compression isn't very aggressive and it excludes important Windows system files. Thus, it's not designed to extract every last bit of capacity that might otherwise be available.

But it's precisely this approach that ensures the processor is not too heavily loaded. Users with a modern dual- or quad-core CPU should not notice the additional load incurred by enabling compression. Due to the generally lower [performance](#) available from notebooks, the same wouldn't necessarily hold true on mobile systems. Depending on the hardware, compression could both impact speed and take away battery life as a result of a higher processing load.

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Backup tools should have no problems with compression, since the feature has already been integrated in NTFS for more than a decade, and is consequently well known to the [developers](#) of imaging software. We can't give you an overarching go-ahead, but we did run backups of our compressed system partition using Acronis True Image Home 2011 without any problems at all.



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Despite moderate compression rates, NTFS compression does indeed conjure up some much needed free SSD space. On our test system, it gave us back an impressive 12.5 GB. This is a [benefit](#) to small SSDs, in particular. If you're only talking about a 60 or 100 GB drive, reclaiming more than 10 GB is huge. Owners of large SSDs should keep NTFS compression in mind too, though. So long as you have a fast-enough processor, there's no reason to *not* consider enabling it.

Ultimately, the amount of capacity you free up depends on the type of [data](#) you're compressing. Most media is already compressed, so there isn't much savings available there. However, compressible files like server logs and Excel data will yield a lot more space.

There's one more point to consider, though. With information being compressed on the fly, you're consuming more of an SSD's available write cycles than if you were writing the files uncompressed. This could have negative implications on the drive's endurance. Although we're not necessarily concerned about larger SSDs, models with less capacity inherently have lower endurance ratings. Thus, NTFS compression could conceivably affect their useful lives more significantly.

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