# Houk Consulting How-To Guides:
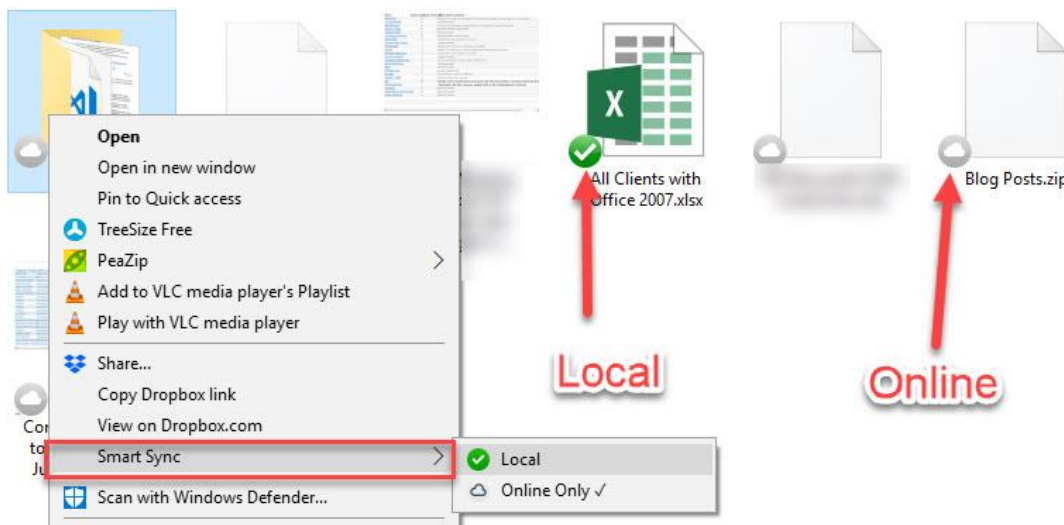# How to Use Dropbox's Smart Sync Feature

Dropbox's new Smart Sync feature lets you manage all the files in your Dropbox account from your desktop without syncing them to your PC and taking up space. You can learn more about its benefits in our article on Smart Sync.

All Dropbox Business users, which includes your account on your company's Dropbox, have access to Smart Sync.

## Using Smart Sync

With Smart Sync, you're in control of which folders sync and which stay online only. Open the **Dropbox** folder on your computer. If you right-click a folder or file inside Dropbox, you can highlight **Smart Sync** and choose **Local** or **Online Only**.

- **Local** downloads the file to your PC. This means you'll always have access to it, but it will take up space on your PC.
- **Online-only** will show the file in your Dropbox, but it won't download to your machine until you open it. You can still move, rename, and preview these files, however.
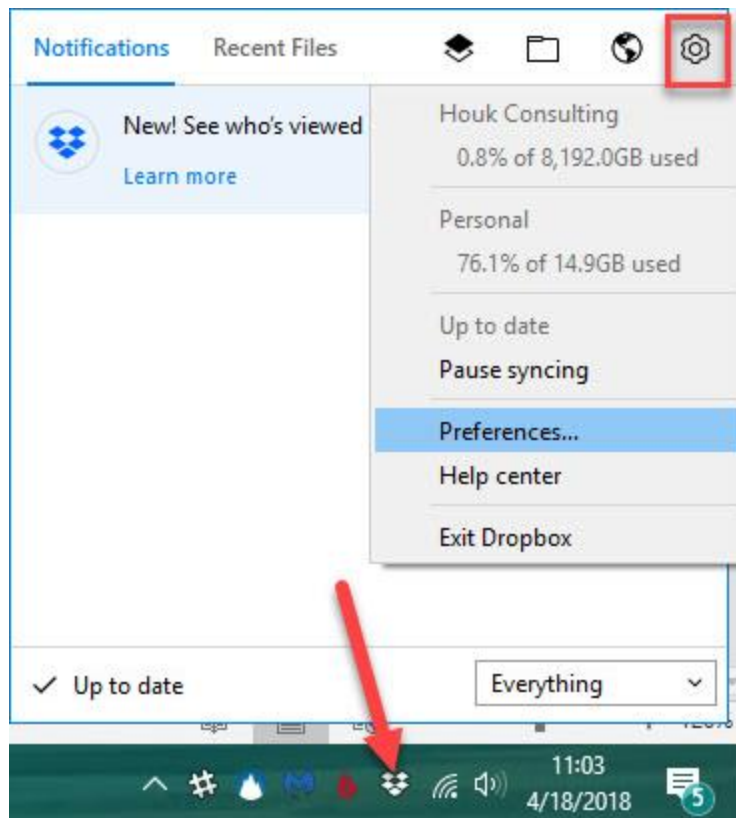


You'll see a green check next to everything that's synced locally, and a white cloud icon next to everything that's online-only. Double-click an online file to open it just like you would normally, and Dropbox will seamlessly download and open it for you. Note that for especially large files, this may take a few moments.
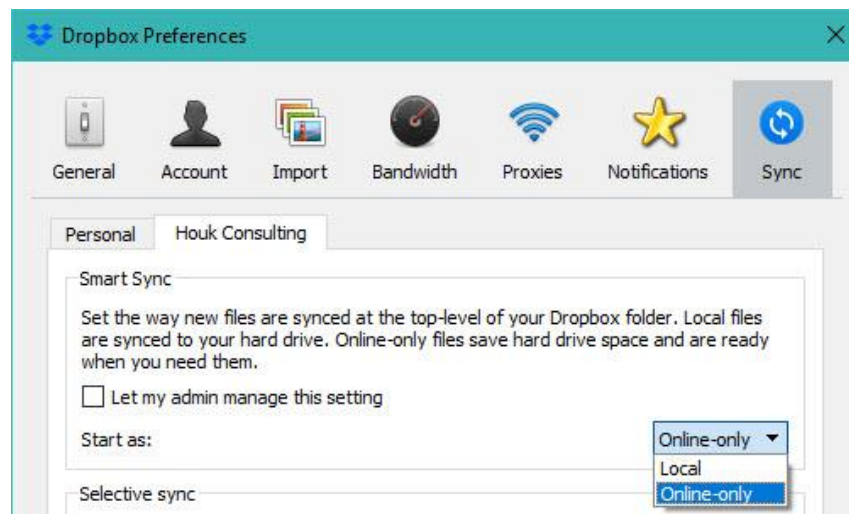
You can experiment with Smart Sync and find what works best for you. In most cases, keeping files online-only by default and then syncing them as needed should work fine. Just remember that if you'll be without internet access for some time, you should sync files you want to work on beforehand.

## Setting Online-Only or Local as Default

Find the Dropbox icon in your System Tray (at the bottom-right corner of your screen). You may need to click the small arrow icon to show all icons if you don't see it. Click the icon, then click the gear in the upper-right corner of the resulting panel and choose **Preferences**.
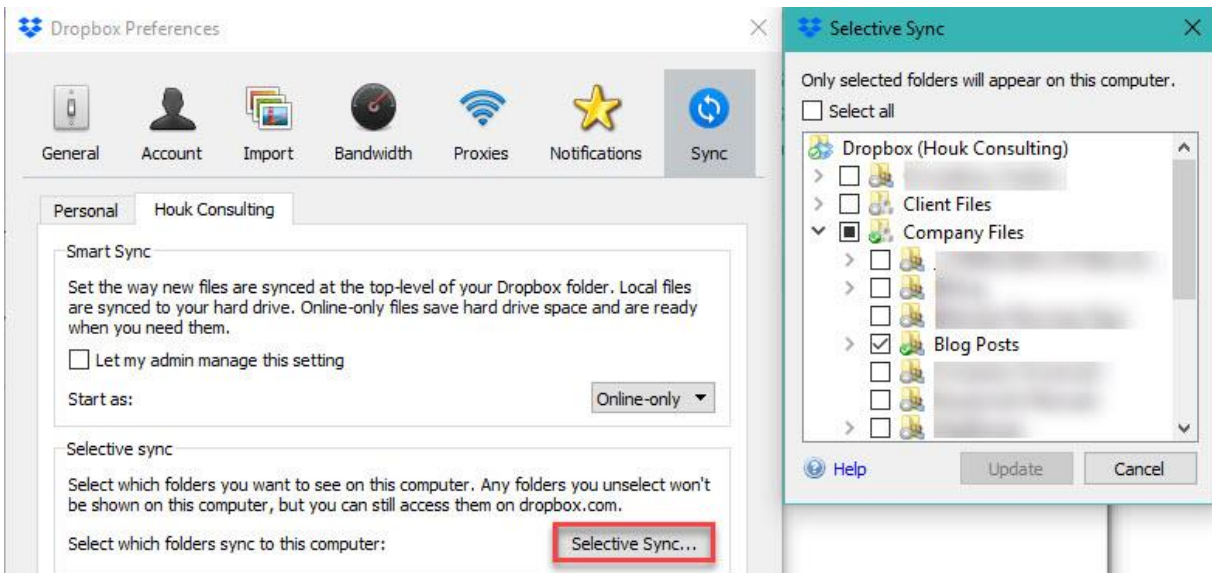
You'll see a new **Dropbox Preferences** window. Select the **Sync** tab and you should see a section labeled **Smart Sync**. Here, you can select between **Local** and **Online-only** as the default for new files.



If you're not sure which you'd like, you can check the **Let my admin manage this setting** and you'll use the setting that your Dropbox administrator has selected.
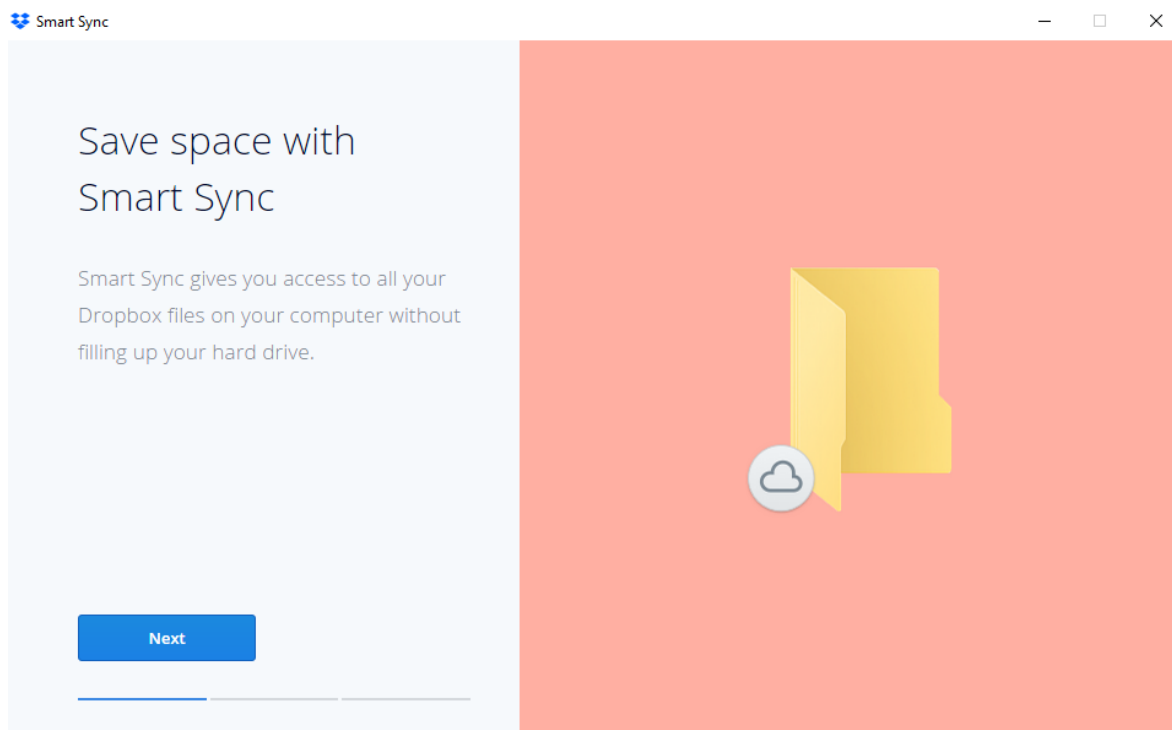
## Check Selective Sync
Note that if you're using Smart Sync, you may want to confirm that you're syncing all folders to your Dropbox. Still on the **Sync** tab, click the **Selective Sync** button and you can choose the Dropbox files you want to sync to your PC. Choose **Select all** to sync them all.
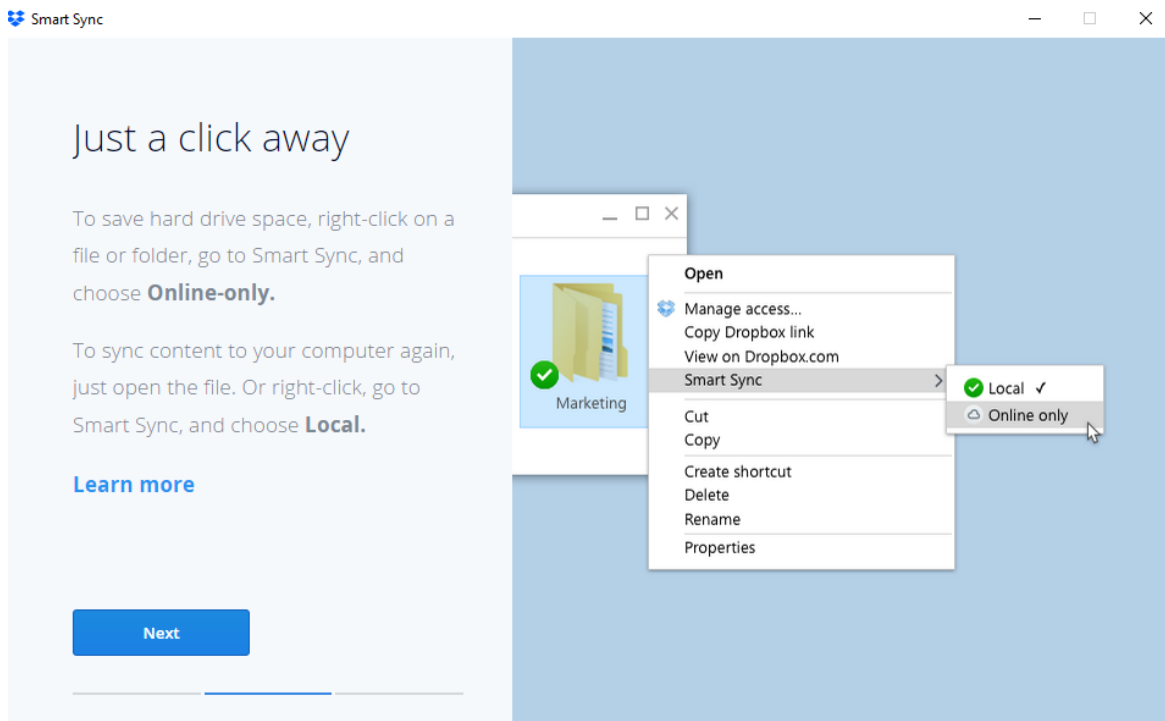
Combining syncing all your files with the **Online-only** option in Smart Sync means you'll be able to see everything in your Dropbox without taking up much hard drive space. Dropbox will only download a local copy when you open a file.

## Dropbox's Smart Sync Notification

When you first use Dropbox after it's updated to include Smart Sync, you might see a notification attached to its System Tray asking you to configure it. You'll first see this image; click **Next** to get started with the walkthrough.



Next, you'll see an example of changing the Smart Sync status of a folder like we covered above. Click **Next** again.

Finally, if you've set up Selective Sync and aren't syncing all your folders to your PC, you'll see an option to make everything online-only with Smart Sync. We recommend clicking **Make online-only** here as discussed above.