

NAME:

Google Drive

LOGO:



HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT:

On the right side of this page, you will see a list of topics covering this software from multiple angles. These aspects are common to all the apps we have studied and described in detail in the following pages.

You will need a basic knowledge of the software to understand some of the points made in this document.

We have analysed five more online software whose reports are available on our website: www.trendss.eu

USEFUL LINKS:

WEBSITE:

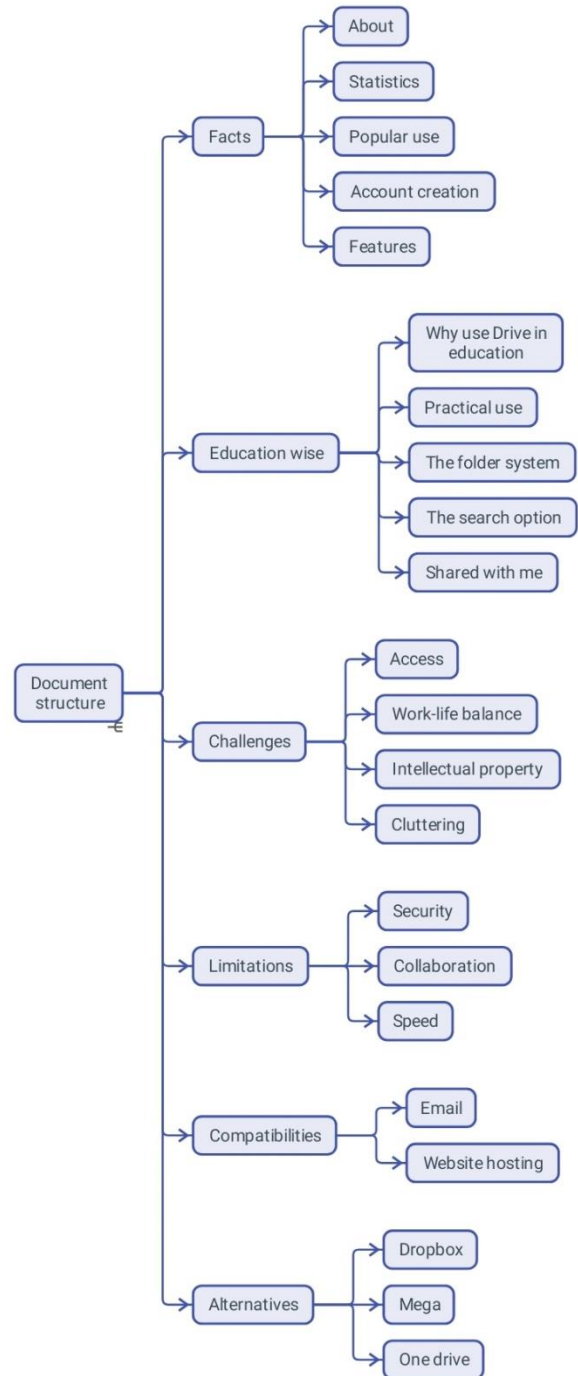
<https://www.google.com/drive/>

PLAY STORE:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.docs>

WIKIPEDIA:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Drive



FACTS

ABOUT

Google Drive is a cloud-based storage service that allows users to upload and access files (on Google's servers), synchronize files across devices, and share files. In addition to a web interface, Google Drive offers apps with offline capabilities for Windows and macOS computers and Android and iOS smartphones and tablets. Google Drive encompasses Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides, as part of the Google Docs Editors office suite that permits collaborative editing of documents, spreadsheets, presentations, drawings, forms, etc. Files created and edited through the Google Docs suite are saved in Google Drive.

STATISTICS

Some interesting stats about this app:

- Used by a billion people worldwide (as per the company statement from 2018)
- Available in 130 countries
- Under the Google Workplace solution, Drive can store: 30GB, 2TB or 5TB of files
- As of May 2017, over two trillion files had been stored on Google Drive.



POPULAR USE

Drive is a cloud storage service and is compatible with most devices. It has emerged as a popular way to store files for personal or professional use.

The basic plan is free and comes with 15GB of storage to use as you please. The paid plans increase the storage space but don't provide more features than the free one. Besides storage, Drive enables the viewing of different types of documents. Editing is also allowed with some limitations.

ACCOUNT CREATION

Drive account is created automatically when you sign-up for Google's email service or a Google account for Android-based smartphones.

You can access Drive in the following ways:

- By downloading the app from Play Store
- Via the Google Chrome web browser
- Via other browsers, from your Gmail account.

FEATURES

Drive has an array of features and functions as a Suite of apps users need. You will find Docs for text documents, Sheets for table data, Forms for surveys, and Slides for presentations. The Drive service is an expansion of Docs and Sheets apps, developed in 2006 and eventually turned into a standalone service with uses such as:

STORING & ORGANIZING

Uploading files to Drive is as simple as dragging and dropping them from your hard drive into the browser window. The service has the option to replace or keep different versions of the same uploaded document.

VIEWING & EDITING

Drive's desktop and app versions allow you to view many types of file formats for text, image, video and audio. It also allows you to edit some of the most well-known file formats, add annotations or notes, and configure access parameters, for example, by selectively permitting different users based on their email addresses. In the case of rich-text documents like Docs, you can track the editing process and monitor all the changes that have been made to a file.

SHARING

When you add a file to your Drive, it is private by default. You may choose to make it public by getting a link for it from the file settings. Another option is configuring restrictive access to a selected few or assigning different privileges.

In addition to Google apps like Docs, Sheets, Forms, etc., which are standalone products and come integrated with Drive, you can find an array of third-party apps that enhance the experience.

EDUCATION

WHY USE DRIVE IN EDUCATION

It is becoming increasingly important to store your files somewhere and have them with you wherever you have internet access. For example, students working on their assignments or homework no longer have to be tied to their desktop every time someone needs access to a file or a course.

Your files are saved and organized in one place and are accessible anytime, anywhere, by anyone you choose. The mobile app can help you do that as well.

Being a general app, Drive is compatible with several other apps, encouraging users to use it in different workflows. Most app developers don't put restrictive guidelines regarding the integration of Drive with

the services that they are providing. Thus, knowing the core app well can help you find your way of integrating it into your particular workflow.

At present, Google apps stand to gain the most by integrating Drive and connecting to its features, as it encourages collaboration. Docs, Sheets, and Slides files can all be edited by multiple users simultaneously.

PRACTICAL USE

THE FOLDER SYSTEM

As is the case with working on a computer or in any file cabinet, files are organized in folders with respect to their content, or as per user-defined criteria. In Drive, every file should be assigned to a folder so you can easily keep track of them. You can create a folder in several ways:

- by using the +New button in the upper left corner on the desktop/browser app
- by right-clicking in an empty area of the screen inside the window
- by tapping the '+' button on the lower right corner of the screen on the mobile

One of the first things you do in Drive is to set up the file and folder structure. Like on a hard drive, the file structure has to be well organized to help you easily locate your files.

Being attentive to naming and colour code is very helpful:

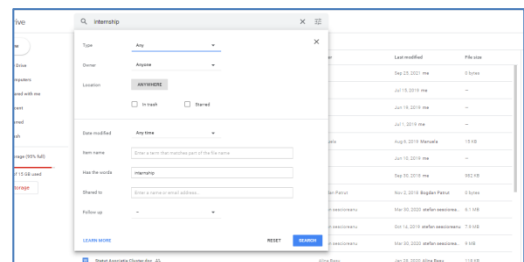
- Naming - organizing files in folders can work better if the names are indicative of the files' content or consistent with any other criteria you have defined. Sometimes files come with weird names that need to be changed in line with the content.
- Color code - in addition to naming, files and folders can have different colours that help you track them in your Drive. How you assign colours may have a significant impact on the speed at which you navigate through your document library.

THE SEARCH

Drive is a Google product, and naturally, it is powered by a handy search engine that makes it easy to locate files if you don't remember where you put them.

The search bar lets you search using the following of criteria:

- Keyword: words or groups of letters that are part of the file name
- Extension: the file type



- Owner: the account that created the file
- Date modified: when was the file last modified

You can sort the search results by using some of the same criteria mentioned above: owner, date and size. You can also search for images by what they depict, even if the file name is not indicative of the content.

SHARED WITH ME

This section is for files owned by other accounts and shared with you. Based on the level of access you have to these files, you can:

- View: only see the document
- Comment: view the document and comment on it
- Edit: make changes to the document, organize the file or edit it.

CHALLENGES

1. Access

Sometimes, material designed for different uses or meant to be shared with a different audience can pose logistic problems. Keeping track of the access you give to users can be difficult if you don't have a reliable system in place. Drive gives you different ways to configure and enable access: to some, to all, for a given timeframe, with editing privilege, etc. Using these options in an orderly fashion can help you avoid unintentionally sharing or leaking data.

Giving access can sometimes mean editing rights. Exercising due care and caution while using the features available here is vital to the overall safety of your material library. In some cases, users who don't have a Google account will not be able to view materials stored on Drive, and this too should be taken into account.

2. Work-life balance

Keeping your life out of your professional work can be hard sometimes. In the case of storage, this can be seen as having personal files in the same place as work-related ones. Going through them, finding something or not sharing private things can be a challenge.

In this case, it is best to keep separate accounts: one for personal matters and one just for work.

3. Intellectual property

4. The files you store on Drive can be viewed by Google without your consent. This is valuable information for the company as it is selling personalized ads. These types of files should ideally stay on your local harddrive.

5. Cluttering

Drive's free account offers a limited amount of space in the free account. The 15GB you have for storage can fill-up quite fast, especially if you store large files like video clips. Moreover, this

storage is also used by other Google apps such as GMail. Thus, emails with large attachments will eat away into the remaining space that you have at your disposal on Drive. Third-party services like drivestats.io help you visualize your data to better monitor, organize and clean up your Drive.

LIMITATIONS

1. Security

Files from unknown sources, like some of those shared over Drive, can be infected with viruses. Drive virus scanner only works for files under 100MB. You are duly prompted by Drive before downloading larger files. It is best to scan these types of files after downloading.

2. Collaboration

When used by a large group of people simultaneously, some documents can be harder to track even if users have different privileges. In this regard, you will have to carefully pick the users who can edit/comment and those who can only view the documents.

3. Speed

Low downloading/uploading speeds and latency are a byproduct of the simultaneous use of the platform by millions of users worldwide. It can be problematic when you have bigger files or work with many files at a time.

COMPATIBILITIES

Name	Description
EMAIL	Drive and Gmail are sharing the same storage space.
WEBSITE HOSTING	To host a website online you either have to pay a hosting service or have your own server. Cloud-based storage is great because you can host a website for free on a service like this and Google Drive is a viable option. Even if websites on WordPress or PHP are not compatible you get to benefit from Google's security and are not restricted by any bandwidth limit.

ALTERNATIVES

Name	Description
Dropbox	With less free storage space and faster display of file contents, Dropbox is often seen as a better alternative to Drive, though both apps serve the same purpose.
Mega	The service provided by Mega has the same amount of space in the free plan – 15GB. The files stored here are less secure than on Drive.
One Drive	Produced by Microsoft, this app ranks lower than Drive in many aspects. One of them is the slower web interface. Not logging in for one year will automatically close your account.