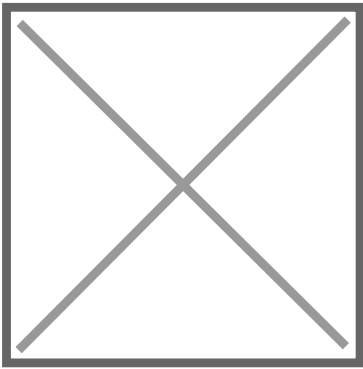


# NextCloud

/ JUL 31, 2022

Nextcloud is a server software suite designed to be a do-it-yourself privately-hosted replacement for. *Note: I'll strike out anything which turns out to be deficient in its claim.*

- Google Drive/Amazon Drive/Microsoft Teams file storage and syncing
- Signal/WhatsApp texting communications
- Life360 location tracker
- Microsoft teams/Skype voice and video chatting
- Google Calendar, tasks, keep and the small office apps
- Google/Microsoft documents



The idea is that this is all do-it-yourself, so few apps come configured; you set it up the way you want to use it.

Here are the ways you interact with Nextcloud, one the server is built and ready to go (see the technical section below for that information).

1. Web Browser: Just go to your web address. Mine is <https://cloud.kf7k.com>
2. Desktop: use the [Nextcloud Desktop client](#) to designate which folders you want to sync, and the app will keep your desktop directories and those on Nextcloud the same, for as many desktops as you wish.
3. Mobile apps come in two classes:
  1. Major apps:
    1. Nextcloud Files: this is where you view and upload files to the server, and set up sync for your photos folder
    2. Nextcloud Talk: for all communication.
  2. Minor apps:
    1. Nextcloud Deck: for your tasks list
    2. NextScan: scan documents using your phone camera
    3. Overland (iOS) or several other apps in Android for phone tracking.

4. KeePass for password storage (I don't trust the built-in password app, yet. You'll need to build your storage file using the KeePass app on your phone or desktop, then open or modify it in Nextcloud).
5. Password (Nextcloud password manager has an app and browser add-on, but I like KeePass because I can add a big work function to make opening it take a few seconds, making it less attractive to brute-force attacks).
6. Nextcloud Notes (Android) or Own notes (iOS) for notes and distraction-free writing.

But the fun is when you use Nextcloud together, to share, collaborate, communicate.

Here are the fun apps I have running on my install:

1. Dashboard: a welcome screen with the latest changes
2. Files; all your files, as well as a folder that everyone shares, which I've loaded up with audiobooks, old comics (Marvel mostly), old pulp magazines (all viewable in the web app), all my CD albums, the videos the kids took when they were young, stuff like that.
3. KeeWeb: a KeePass password manager (create your files on your phone or computer, then move them to Nextcloud to manage them there).
4. Talk: group texting, audio, and video calling.
5. Contacts: import .vcf to populate
6. Calendar: I'm still figuring out how to share a calendar; haven't played with it much.
7. Audio player, for playing audio files.
8. Analytics: if you have data, this app will draw it for you.
9. Cospend: a sharable budget and bills manager.
10. Deck: the task manager
11. Notes: like Google Keep.
12. Music: playing the albums
13. PhoneTrack: a Life360-like app to track locations. You need Overland GPS Tracker (iOS) or one of many Android apps to do this. It's really not as convenient as Life360, though. But it's private.
14. Forms: for making polls, private and public.
15. External links: I have links to my stuff, Ethan's website, and Lily's.
16. Maps: plots the locations of people (from your contacts' addresses) and where your photos were taken.
17. Cookbook: a private cookbook. You get links from recipe websites and this imports the recipes, lets you edit them, and organizes them.
18. Diary: simple, distraction-free daily writing/diary/journal/tracking.
19. Passwords: along with the Nextcloud Passwords app, lets you store your passwords on the server. I can't read them as an administrator, and they are protected by 256-bit encryption, but I don't trust them yet.
20. Tasks: not as fancy as Decks, but better integration with other Nextcloud apps, like the calendar.

Other things it will do that don't have a menu item at the top of the screen:

1. Libre-office document creation and editing.
2. Mind map creation and editing.
3. Will work with RAW camera images.
4. Keeps deleted files safe until they time out (30 days) or you delete them.
5. Keeps previous versions of a file if you need to go back.
6. Reads .EPUB books, .CBZ/.CBR comics, and .PDF files in-browser.
7. Lots of group sharing options.
8. Markdown editor for most text files and notes: markdown is the new simple standard for formatting, the way .rtf used to be.
9. View PhotoSphere files.
10. View DICOM medical image files.
11. Has a small CMS built in, which I have yet to configure, but you can build your own websites inside Nextcloud.
12. You can delete your own account when you want.

Other apps I can add if requested can be seen at the apps website, <https://apps.nextcloud.com/>. If you want to try one, let me know! They are easy to install and remove.

---

#### Technical information:

My Nextcloud is installed in a Ubuntu Server 22.04 hosted as a virtual machine (6-core) inside Hyper-V using a mirrored ReFS drive. I back up the file to a NAS each week, just in case.

To install Nextcloud I got the Ubuntu Server live .ISO and when I got to the preconfigured apps, added Nextcloud. It's in a Snap. I used [this](#) for the initial configuration. Skip the https part if you want http only.

I went through many iterations and installations before going back to this easy one. It's not perfect, as I can't install other things to help, like php-imagick or ffmpeg to help with media conversion tasks. And the Collabora server never worked for me, though I never tried hard.

The best installation I has was the Nextcloudpi image for the RPi4. That worked really well, but it ran on slow hardware.

The hardest part was getting my domain name to point directly to ports 80 and 443 on the server without interrupting all my other web servers. Routers are no good at sorting hostnames to different boxes (why is this? It seems so easy to do), they can only redirect ports. I use Cloudflare, and they bailed me out with their tunneling access option to access my other servers so Nextcloud gets my 80 and 443 ports directly.

---

Revision #1

Created 7 April 2024 19:40:42 by bruce

Updated 7 April 2024 19:40:57 by bruce