

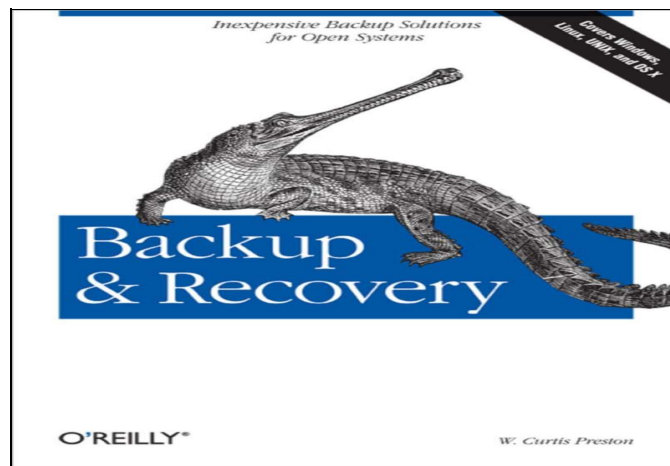


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## Book review: Backup & Recovery by *W. Curtis Preston*

By Jeremy Turner

Linus Torvalds once wrote on linux.dev.kernel, “Only wimps use tape backup: *real* men just upload their important stuff on ftp, and let the rest of the world mirror it ;)”. While his humorous comment might not be feasible for most, the topic of backing up important files (along with recovering them) is very crucial to any person or business. One excellent book which covers this topic is *Backup & Recovery* by W. Curtis Preston and published by O’Reilly. The book covers not only specific solutions but methodologies as well. It is a very complete and detailed look at the whole process of data backup and recovery.



The cover of Backup & Recovery

*Backup & Recovery* is very well written. In the usual O’Reilly style, the book has a nice serif font which is easy to read. There are several figures and notes which really help the reader in understanding the text. Screenshots are very helpful, illustrating some of the GUI tools for different platforms. Additionally, a very nice feature was the inclusion of different anecdotes in the realm of backing up and recovering data from administrators in the field. Not only can we learn from the text itself, but we can also learn from the stories of others of what not to do.

**Any system or database administrator would be very pressed to find a better book on the topic of backup and recovery**

## The contents

*Backup & Recovery* weighs in at a medium size of 760 pages. It is laid out in six different parts, and 24 different chapters. The book contains information on everything from philosophy (the “what” and “why”), free software solutions, commercial software solutions, hardware options, bare-metal recovery on Solaris, GNU/Linux, Windows, HP-UX, AIX, and Mac OS X, database backups (Oracle, Sybase, DB2, SQL Server, PostgreSQL, MySQL), Exchange, and VMware.

## Book review: Backup & Recovery by W. Curtis Preston

More specifically, the book goes into detail on a few free software packages including Amanda, BackupPC, and Bacula. The discussion of commercial software packages doesn't include any names, but rather issues to discuss and research before buying. The bare-metal recovery chapters are very helpful for cases when you need to get a machine with a blank hard drive up and running again. In addition to backing up crucial data, there needs to be a plan in place to get systems up and running as soon as possible.

Relational databases play a huge part of data storage, and as such, a plan needs to be in place for backup and recovery. The book covers several free software databases, and a few popular commercial solutions that run on both free software and non-free software operating systems. Two interesting chapters include the backup and recovery of Exchange and VMware.

The book concludes with a chapter about data protection. This departs from the "nuts and bolts" of how to backup, and visits the "why" and "what" of backup. What you backup depends on the nature of your business, and the risks involved with backup and archival processes. In this age of internet communication, archives and backups are used as evidence in legal actions and the repercussions of these might need to be considered.

## Who's this book for?

The book would be very ideal for someone who is interested (or required) to learn about backup and recovery. The broad nature of platforms would appeal to any IT professional. Any system or database administrator would be very pressed to find a better book on the topic of backup and recovery.

## Relevance to free software

The book discusses both free and non-free software backup solutions, and also discusses backing up both free and non-free areas (filesystems and databases). The book spends a number of pages on free software solutions, but does recognize that some commercial products may be better suited for certain non-free software areas.

## Pros

You should buy *Backup & Recovery* because you need a respected and thorough resource on the topic. The anecdotes of horror stories add a wonderful break to the rest of the text.

## Cons

The text might be better suited for business users as opposed to home users. Additionally, newer GNU/Linux users might want to do some extra reading to understand some of the concepts.

|             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Title       | Backup & Recovery |
| Author      | W. Curtis Preston |
| Publisher   | O'Reilly          |
| ISBN        | 0596102463        |
| Year        | 2007              |
| Pages       | 760               |
| CD included | No                |

FS Oriented 9/10

Over all score 9/10

**In short**

## Biography

Jeremy Turner (/user/21" title="View user profile.): Jeremy Turner enjoys freelance writing when given the opportunity. He often plays system administrator, hardware technician, programmer, web designer, and all-around nice guy. You contact him by visiting his web site (<http://linuxwebguy.com/>).

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