Dropbox – Getting Started

Dropbox is a technology that lets you store, work on, edit and share documents in a place you (and others of your choice) can get at. First of all, think of all the places you do or could work. In your place of employment, anywhere in your home (if you have a wireless router). Anyplace your smartphone or iPad can access the internet.

Now, imagine that place, (where you are storing some of your documents), allows you to share some (or all) of these files with a colleague or a group. Imagine everyone in your group (or specific individuals) being able to work on, edit and save files that all of you may be working on.

That's what Dropbox is all about. It's like having your own personal file server where you can store and share some or all of the files of your choice. It's like you, and colleagues of your choice, able to share a working space electronically (in "the cloud") and all of you can work on these files anywhere desired.

- You've spent some hours writing a piece for your work but someone else needs to get it before you have time to drive it to work. If that file is too large to email, you can save it in this shared place the other person can get at. All that without having to get in your car and drive the thumb drive or CD you saved it on over to their office.

You can get set up your own free Dropbox account and start sharing work on the same files within minutes. A great manual on using the program can be downloaded at:

http://www.makeuseof.com/pages/download-using-the-magic-pocket-a-dropbox-guide

If you are interested in using your own Dropbox, print out this document and the manual in the link just above this paragraph.

One way to get started with Dropbox and setting up your own account is to respond to an invitation to share a folder (or file) from someone who already has a Dropbox account. Someone who is sharing a segment of their Dropbox for collaborative purposes may have sent you this to help you in this task. How to accept a Dropbox invitation and set up your own Dropbox account is what follows:

Accessing a Dropbox Invitation

In this example, Philip has a Dropbox account and has created a shared folder called "Nativity." The receiver of this invitation to access a Dropbox folder is invited to a Dropbox folder named "Nativity." If you were sent an invitation to share in this folder on Philip's Dropbox, you would receive an invitation like this:
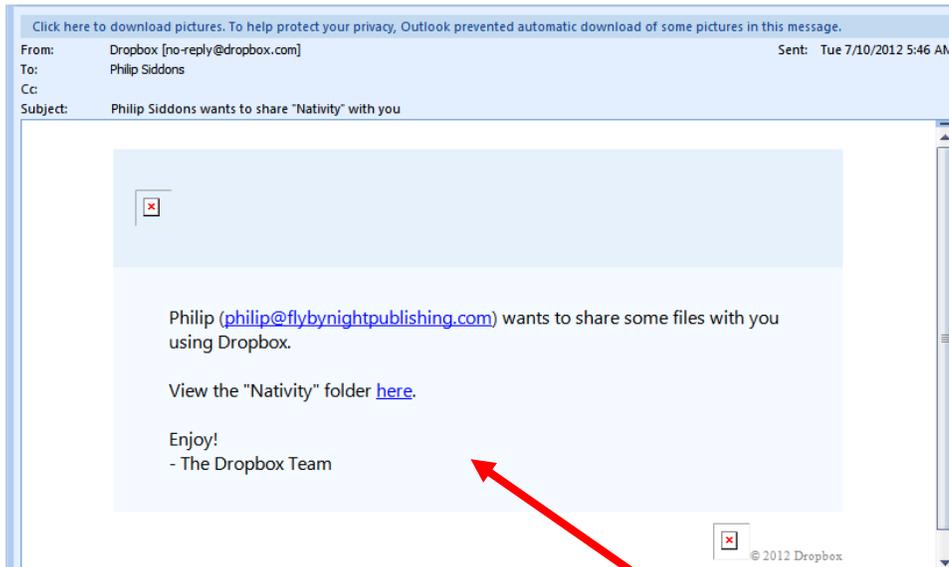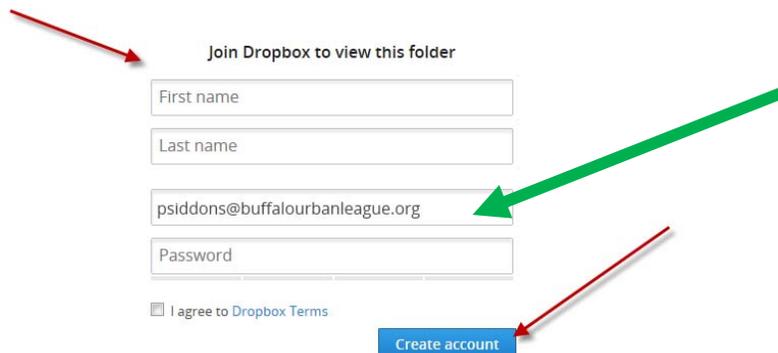

Click on the underscored link (shown above) named **here**.

You will be asked to create a (free) Dropbox access account. You can see, (below, green arrow), that because you opened the invitation in the email account that you did, it will be your email reference for your new Dropbox account.

Once you type in your first and last name and make up a password (for this Dropbox account), click on the Create account button.

Philip would like you to view 'Nativity'

Join Dropbox to view this folder

Admin

Buffalo Urban League

psiddons@buffalourbanleague.org

•••••••••

So-so ⓘ

☐ I agree to Dropbox Terms

Create account

Here is the first name created but you could simply put in your real name

Here is the last name created but you could simply put in your real name

This is the email address used to start this Dropbox account

This is where the password was created that will be used to log into the Dropbox account.

After you've completed your new account information, click on this **Create account** button.

Once you successfully create a (free) Dropbox account (in order to access the shared folder(s) to which someone has invited you, you get this welcoming screen:

ⓘ Get free space!   Admin Buffalo

Dropbox

Hi Admin, welcome to Dropbox!

Here's how to access the folder that Philip has shared with you.

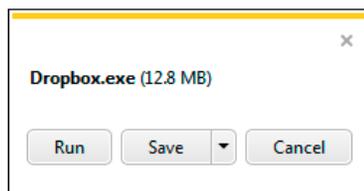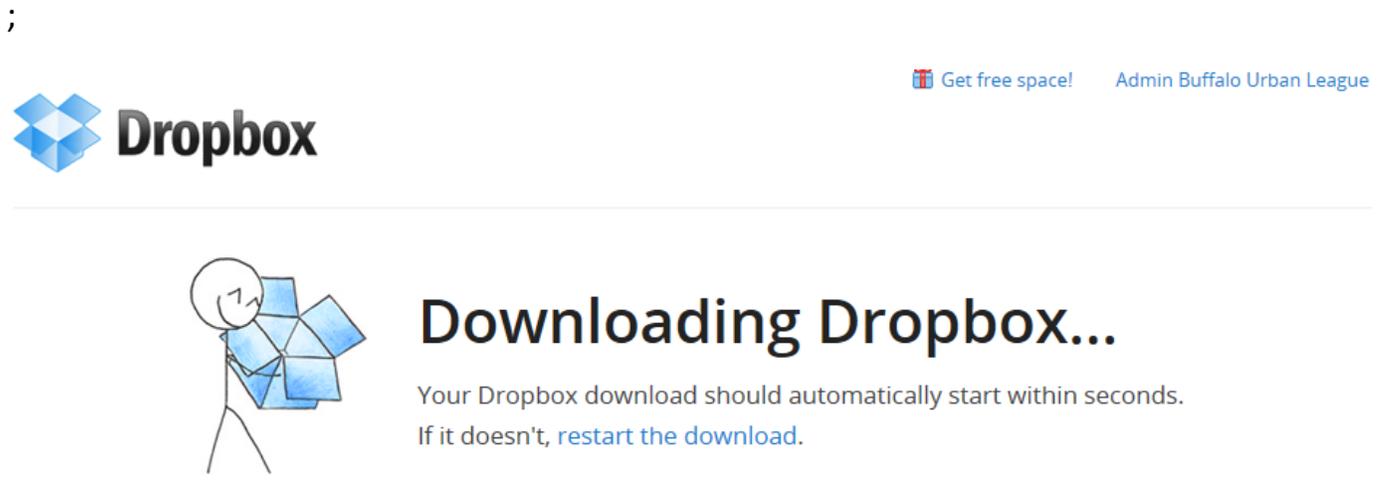**Download Dropbox**

Works with Windows, Mac, Linux, and Mobile

The Dropbox desktop application automatically puts the folder on your computer.

Access the shared folder 'Nativity' from anywhere using the Dropbox website.

Install Dropbox on your other computers. The shared folder will then automatically sync to all your computers.

You should know that once you have a Dropbox account of your own, you can upload files from any computer you use (that can access the internet) and choose to share one or more files with one or more people of your choice. Amazingly, you can access and work on any file you place in your Dropbox folders from any computer, including desktops, laptops, iPhones, smartphones and iPads. These files stored in your Dropbox folders will synchronize across all computers you have accessing them.

To download and install the Dropbox application on your computer, click on the Download Dropbox button.	

You initially get this screen:

;
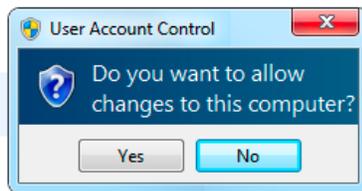
Follow through with the installation:
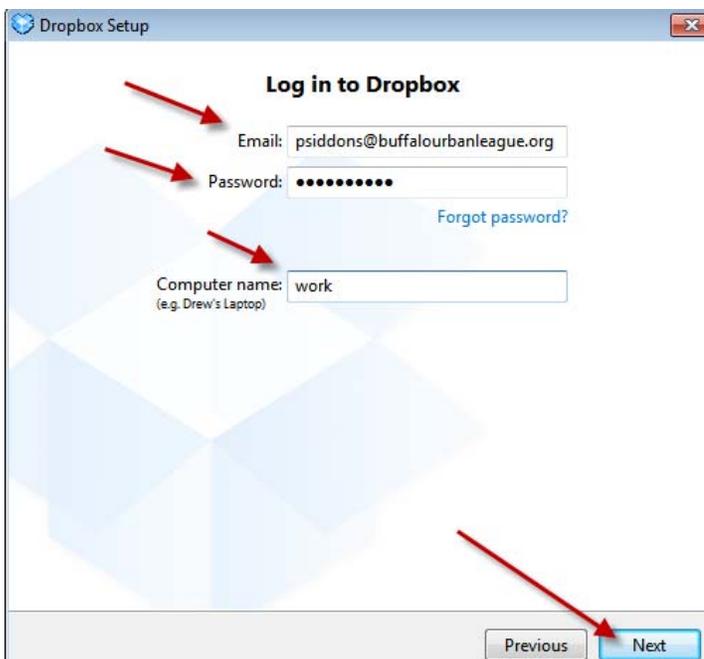

It will install:
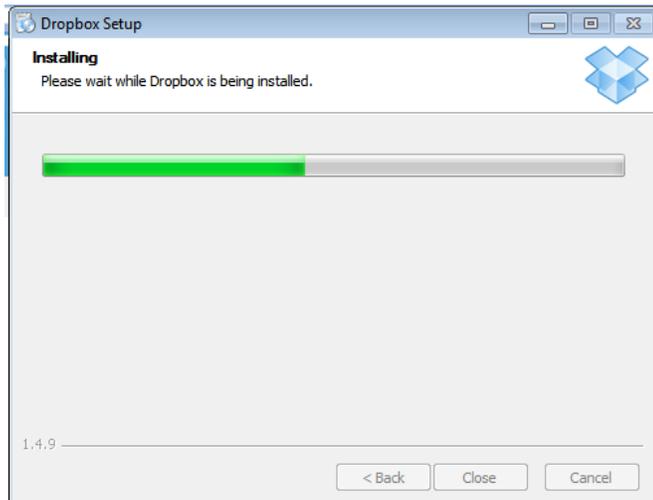
At this screen, since you already signed up for a (free) Dropbox account, choose as shown here and click on the Next button.


As you log in to Dropbox, you'll (of course) fill in your email, your password

It will give you a chance to name the computer you're on (like "work" or "home" etc.)
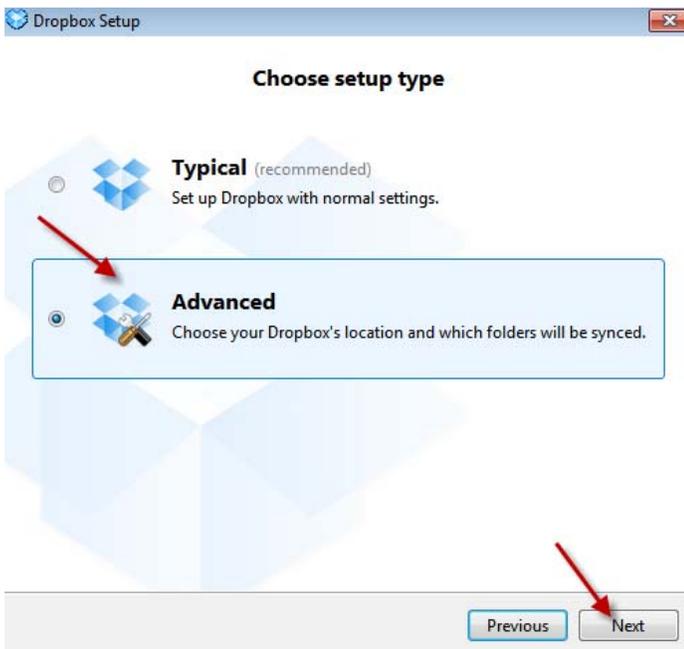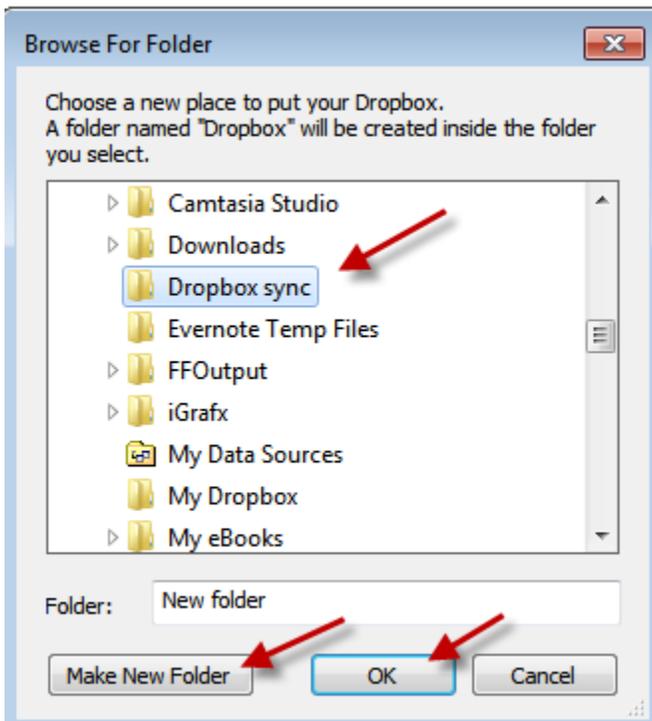
Click on the Next button.

Keep in mind that the size of your Dropbox account has nothing to do with the size of the Dropbox account of the person sharing their material with you (from their own Dropbox account). For now, just pick the 2 GB (free) size. Know that you can upgrade your account later, anytime, to any size you want. (I happen to be using a 100 GB size and pay about $100 a year.
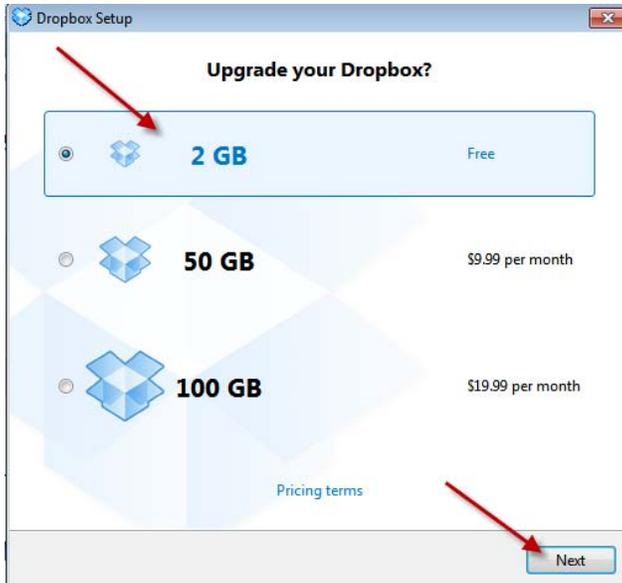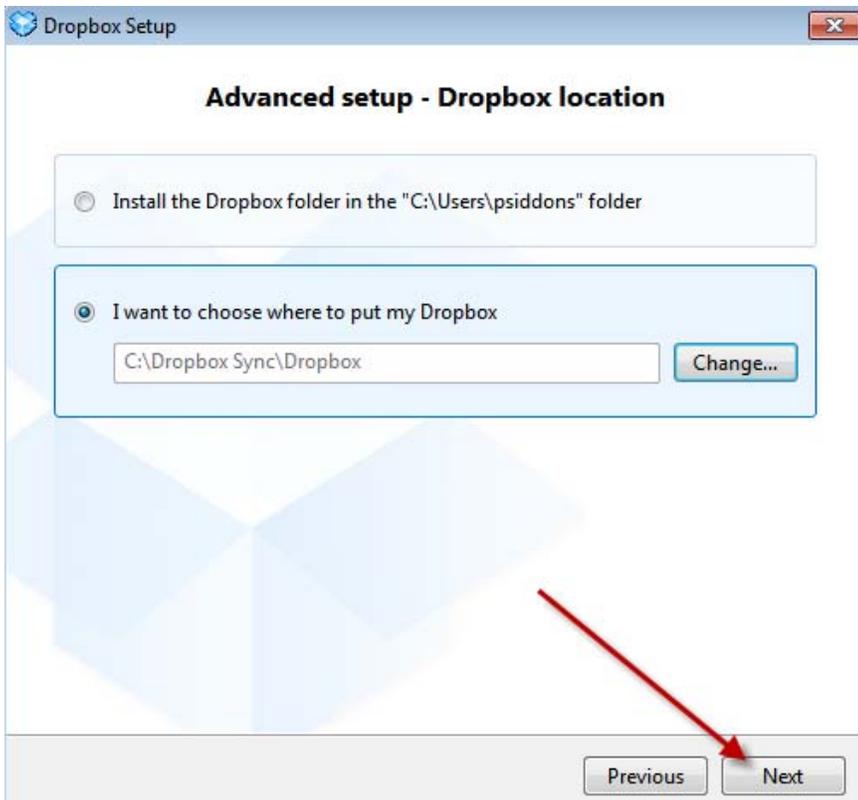

Choose the Advanced option (because you want to choose where you want the Dropbox folder to reside on your computer) and then click on the Next button.
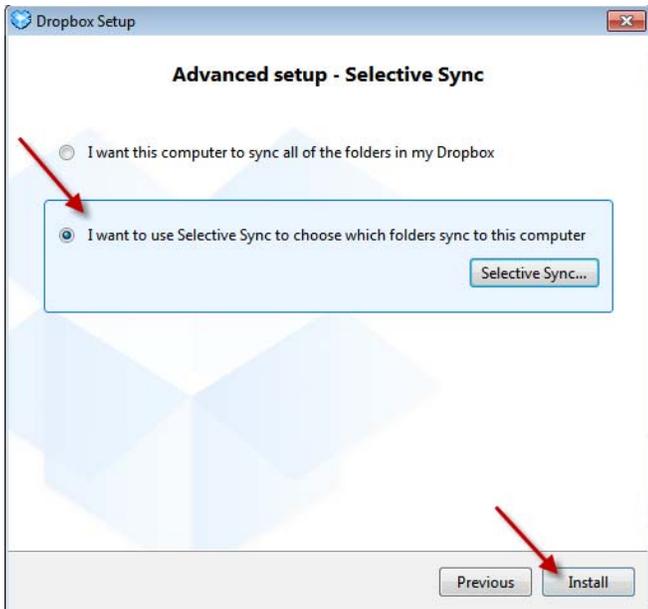
Having chosen Advanced, I browsed to my C drive and picked the Make New Folder button (on bottom left) and named the new folder: "Dropbox sync."

A summary screen appears, showing what you've just done. Click on the Next button.

Pick the Selective Sync option and click on the Install button

Here, you can click on Next (to take a tour) but for now, I'll just click on Skip Tour.

With **Open my Dropboxb folder now** selected, click on the **Finish** button.


Your Windows Explorer program opens, showing your Dropbox on your computer. Notice, on the left column Dropbox appears in the Favorites AND as a redundant folder on the drive (in this case, drive C) where you told it to be installed. Since you are starting off by standing IN your Dropbox folder, you see (in *Explorer's* right column) the contents of your dropbox. Notice, in this case, that the shared folder "Nativity" (that your colleague is sharing) isn't open yet.
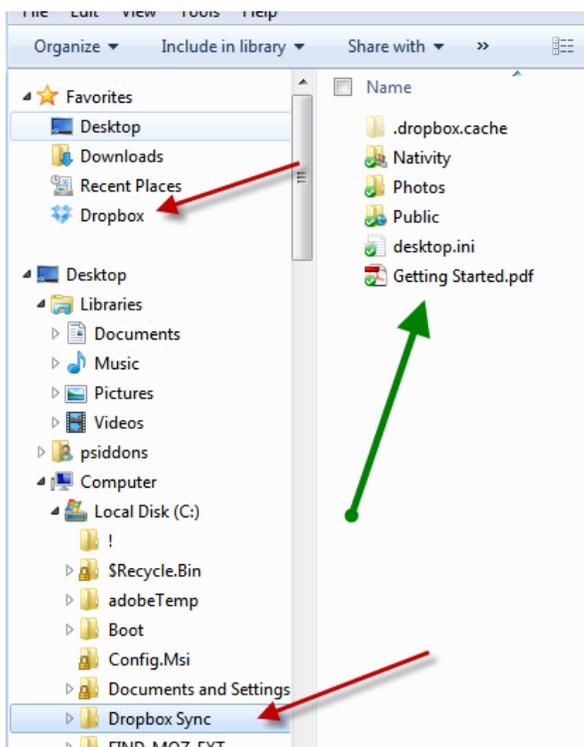
Once you open up your Dropbox folder and go into the (in this case, the shared "Nativity" folder), you see two little files in it to the right. All you need to know is that if you (or your colleague) saves a file (and later edits it) in this (say, "Nativity") folder, it can be accessed, edited, printed, deleted or anything by anyone sharing this folder from now on.

This folder, then, is a powerful shared space you and others can use for collaborative work.
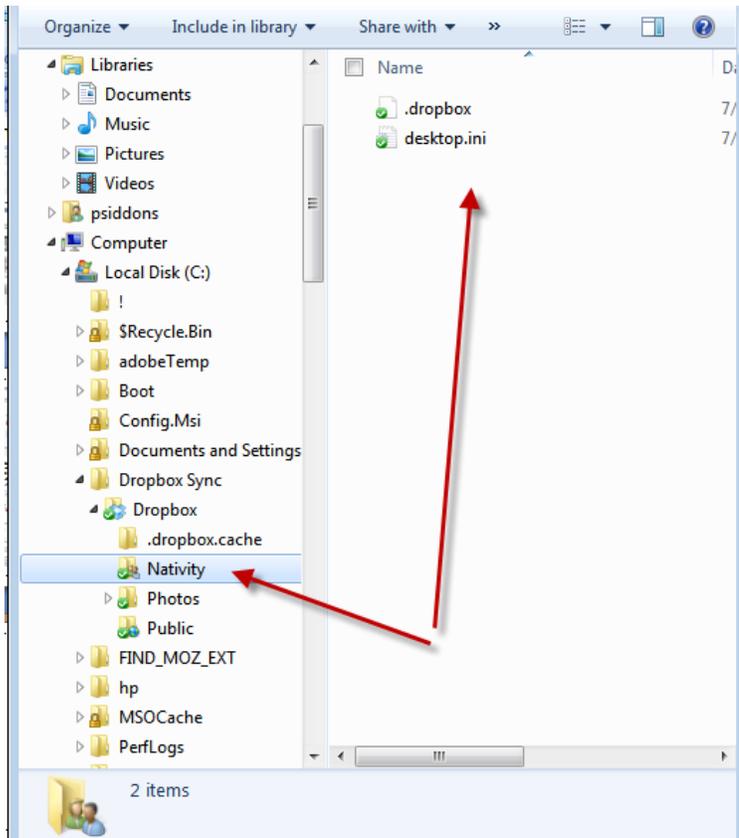
One last thing; if you want to work on Word or most any other files from an iPad (which is the Apple Operating System), you can do it. Just get the iPad application called **Cloud On**.