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# Backing up MT4

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*Top software and utilities you might look at (free and otherwise)*

Screen Prints – Great for keeping records - Free
Sticky Notes – Great for adding notes to screen prints - Free
For Backing Up – Top little backup program (paid-for but there is a limited free version.)
Drop Box – Free or paid cloud storage
Google Drive – More free or paid cloud storage
Windows Briefcase – An aged but still useable file sync utility built into Windows.

# Backing up MT4

# Introduction.

The object of this document is to show you how to save or backup a copy of your MT4 installation so that you can restore it to another computer (or the same one) if your machine gets damaged, lost, stolen or virused.

It will normally only take a few minutes to download a new MT4 install from your broker, log into your account and be 'up and running', However it may take quite a lot longer to re-create templates, profiles and all the personal settings and configurations just the way you like them. Plus if you didn't keep a copy of your Experts and Indicators you may have to go looking for them again.

The backup we will look at here will save you all that extra time and effort.

> You will be able to restore onto a new/repaired/spare machine in a few minutes (literally) so that it will be in exactly the same state as when you backed it up – your Stoch will still be at 8.3.3, your TDI will still be your favourite colours and at exactly the height up the screen you like it, your candle clock will still sit exactly as you want it in the corner of your choice. All your indicators, scripts and experts will be in place and ready to rock 'n roll.

## Even better yet though,,,,,,

> If you decide to go the 'whole hog' and back it up every week all your 'bigger picture' Fibo's, SR levels and trend lines will also be pretty much up to date as well, that might save you even more time.

Along the way you will see that there are a variety of other advantages to doing this that can save you time and effort in a number of different ways.

> Nothing on these pages requires anything more than a basic level of competence with the Windows operating system.
> It is all 'entry level' stuff.
> You will not need any tools or software other than a memory stick and things that are already included with Windows – and which you should already be familiar with.
> It's all free.
> If your computer runs an account with <u>your money</u> in it you really ought to know this stuff.
> Really, Yes, that means YOU.

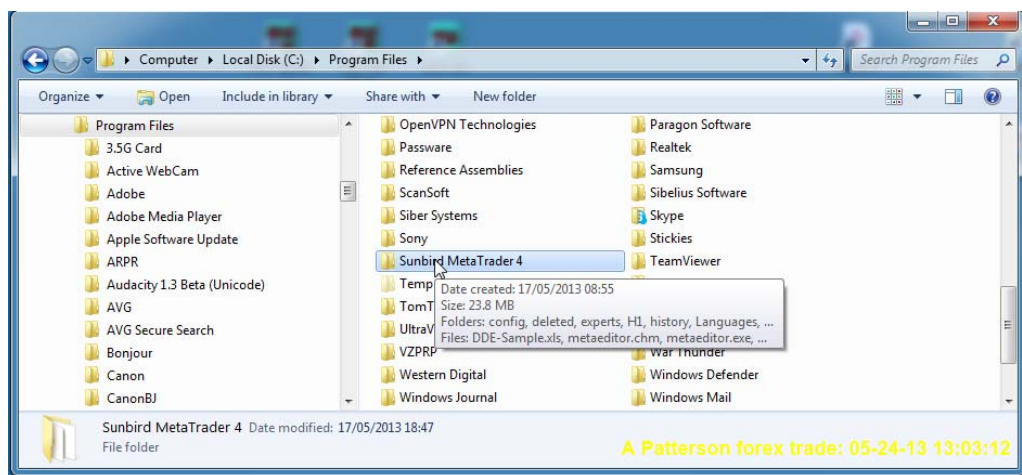<span style="color:red">**HOWEVER before you start  ,,,,,,**</span>

<span style="color:red">**Nothing in this document requires you to delete or damage or adversely affect any file on your computer BUT bear in mind that you will be playing with your trading software and you should double check everything you do to make sure you are doing what you think you are doing.**</span>

# Backing up MT4

**Preliminary notes,,,,,** Not very interesting but you might just want to read them.

When you download and install a new MT4 programme onto your computer you will normally see a bunch of folders and files appear in the 'c:/program files/.......MT4'   folder,



However what you won't see are the other files that get installed into other places in your Windows install, (particularly in the registry,, and don't even ask me about that - Google it if you feel inclined). *Nb. Other search engines are available and can also be used for this purpose.*

When you backup the contents of your MT4 install folder you will not be able to include the other files that are scattered about the registry and Windows system.
We make a fresh install to set up these files and settings within Windows before restoring our own MT4 -  confused yet? Stick around a bit longer,,,,,,

Right, lets assume it's Sunday evening, you've just done all your 'Bigger Picture' work and you want to back up your MT4 onto a memory stick in case your house burns down while you're in the pub, which is definitely where you ought to be on a pleasant summer evening.

Suddenly you realise the memory stick could also get wrecked if something 'misfortunate' occurs in your trouser pocket/handbag during the evenings merrymaking.
So we shall also save a copy securely to the 'Cloud' (Google drive, DropBox or similar).

# Your first backup.

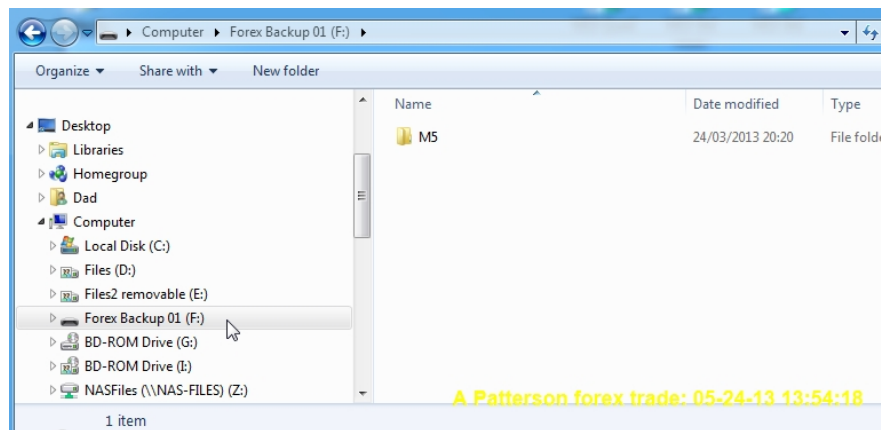In brief - we are going to copy and paste the complete install folder onto separate media.

You will need a **memory stick** or **external drive**, you could also **burn to a CD** if you want.
If you want to **backup to the Cloud** you will need a **Google drive** or **DropBox** or similar, the free versions of these will have enough space to keep you going for ages.
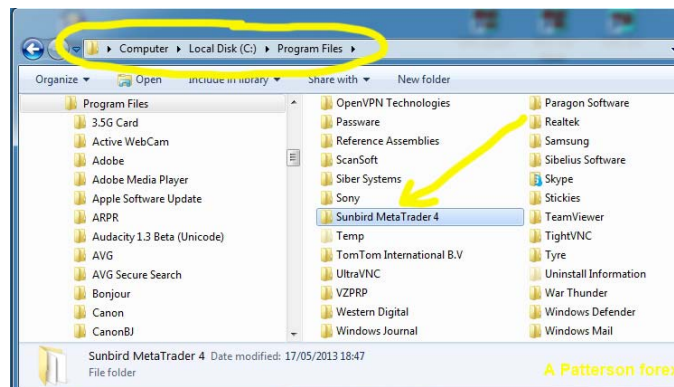
Here we go,, it's dead simple;
If you're familiar with copying and pasting from Windows Explorer feel free to skip ahead, if your not familiar with it print this and take it slow the first time, it's not difficult.
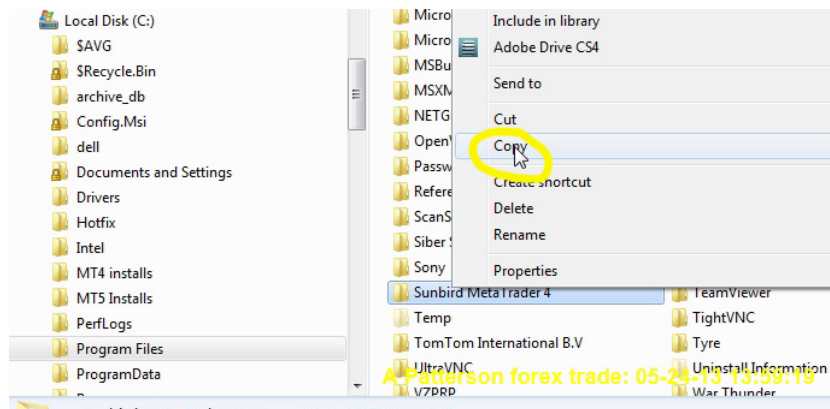
1. **Connect your backup device** (memory stick etc) and open a **Windows Explorer** window to view the contents (**Windows Key + E**).
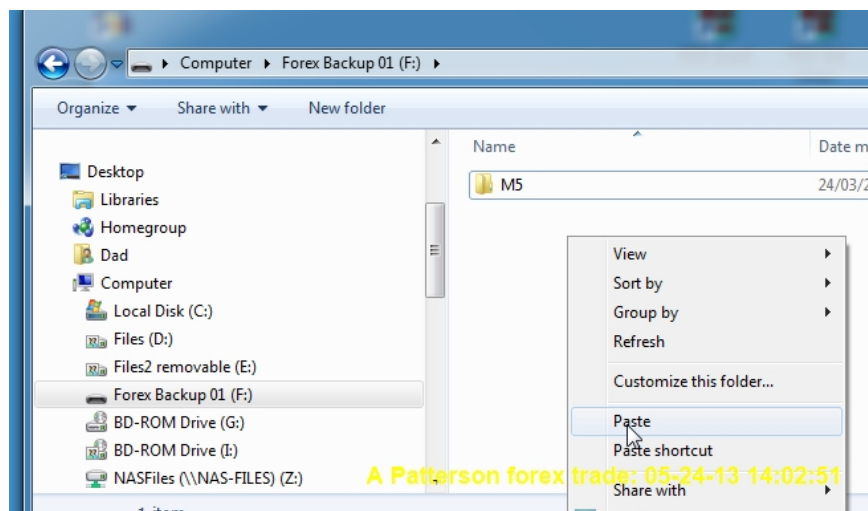


2. Leave that window open and do the following;
3. Open a new Windows Explorer window and navigate to your MT4 installation on your 'C' drive. If you're not sure where it is, do one of the following;
   a. For Win 7 - **right-click** the desktop icon and select 'Open file location'
   b. For Win XP – right click the desktop icon and you will look for 'target location' or similar.
   c. Open Windows Explorer (**Windows Key + E**) and navigate to 'Program files' in your 'C' drive.  In **Program Files** you will find a folder you should recognize as your MT4 install, it will probably have your brokers name on it and MetaTrader 4 or MT4.
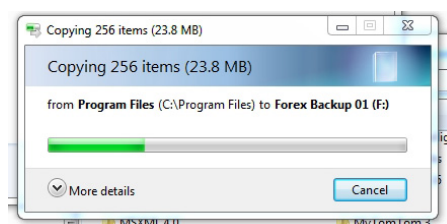
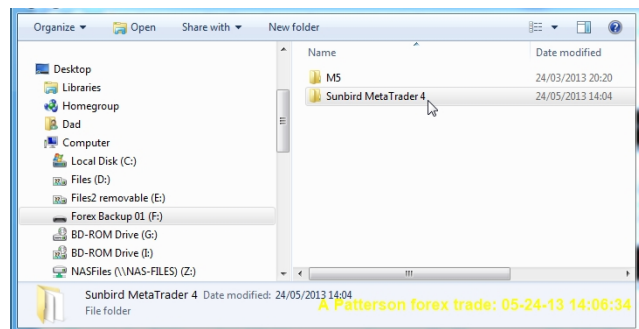**Right click** on the MT4 install folder and select **Copy**



Go back to the other Windows Explorer window showing your memory stick, **right click** in the **empty space** and select **Paste**,,,



You will get the normal progress bar,,,,,

Followed by something like this,,,,,



You can **double click** this folder and the one in the other window and make sure that the contents look the same.
The reason for this really is to make sure you have done 'copy and paste' not 'move' or 'cut',

**TIP**.
MT4 installs range from a few 10's of megabytes to several hundred Megabytes depending how much history and other stuff has accumulated in them so make sure you have enough room on your backup device.

If all is well you have made a backup!! Yea, Yippee, pub time, drinkypoos, etc etc.

You now have a copy of your MT4 install with all the indicators, configuration, tweaks and and other personal preferences you've spent ages fiddling with so they're just right.
When you restore this to a computer you will have MT4 exactly the same as when you backed it up.

You can save the MT4 backup to more or less any sort of media.

You can readily save it to the Cloud by creating a folder in a cloud drive such as DropBox or Google drive and dropping it in there.
Personally I put mine into a password secured ZIP file if it's going into the cloud, I don't think you can password protect a ZIP file created in Windows so you may have to download a free (or paid) zip utility if you want to password protect it.
*\*\*If I'm wrong on that, I'm sure someone's going to let me know – to be honest I don't think I've ever used the built in Windows zip tool!!*

So once you cut through all the waffle that's pretty simple, yes?

A backup is no use if you don't know how to restore it though is it,,,,,,

# Restoring your backup.

Ok, predictably enough, when you get back from the pub you notice your house has sadly burned down. No worries though, you made a backup of your MT4 so life continues almost uninterrupted. Hurrah!!
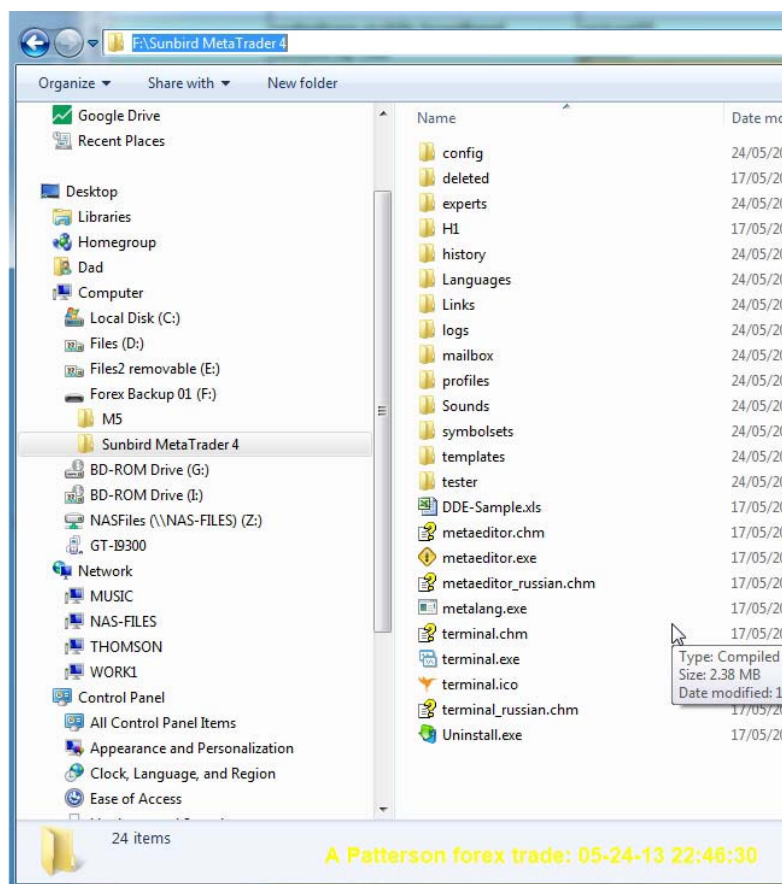There were no unfortunate 'trouser accidents' in the pub either so you don't even have to get your backup from the cloud, really - when you look at it - it's turning into quite a good day after all.  ☺

Ok then, now the scene is set we can deal with restoring MT4 onto the laptop which is coincidentally and conveniently in your car.

Method 1 - safe and secure, puts everything back for a permanent setup.
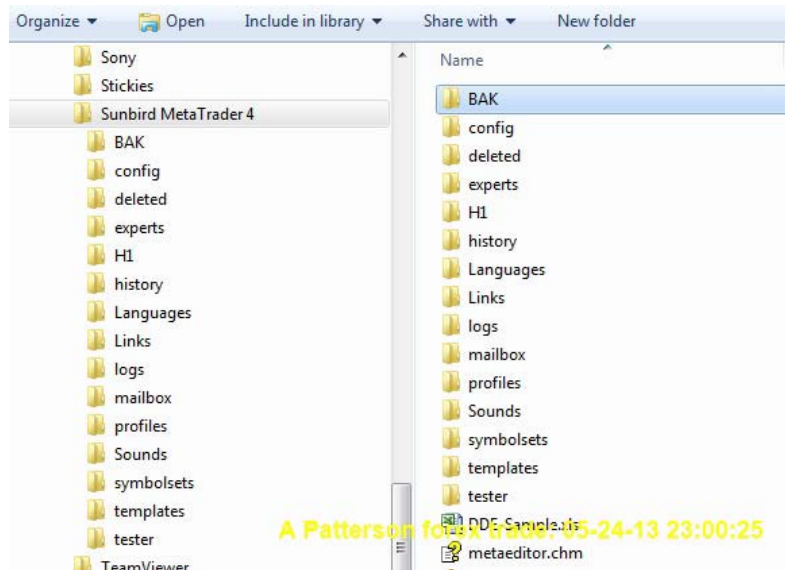Method 2 – if you're in a rush and need to close a trade etc. go here

- Download a fresh MT4 from your broker and run it once, cancel any registration and login screens then close MT4. (we do this to install the files that reside elsewhere in windows as per earlier in this document).
- Plug in the memory stick with your backup on.
- Open the memory stick to view the contents of the previously backed up MT4 folder
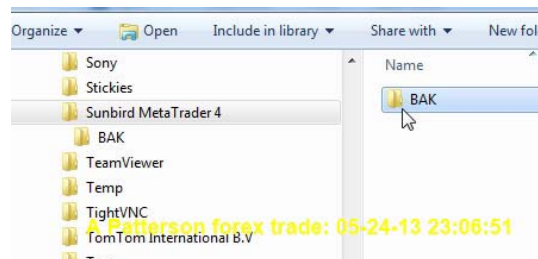


- Leave the window open and navigate to your brand new install. (C://program files/etc) as per earlier in this document, **before you do anything else double check and make sure it is the brand new install**.

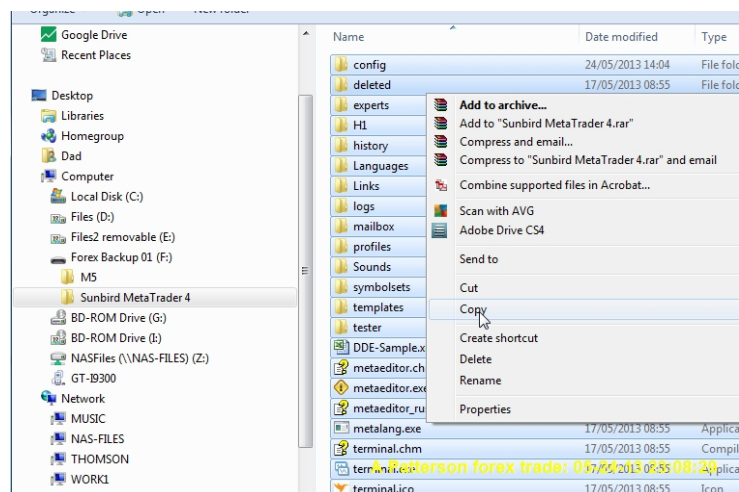- Create a new folder in the containing MT4 folder and name it something like 'backup' I always use the generic name 'BAK' for this purpose.
- Select the rest of the contents of the MT4 folder and move them into this new folder. (Right click - CUT and Paste)
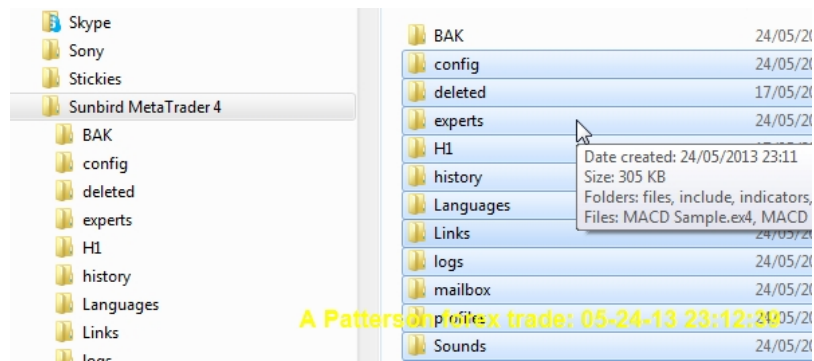


- Which will then look like this,,,,,



- Go back to your backup device and select ALL the contents of the backup folder, right-click and click 'Copy'

- Paste the contents into the Folder on your 'C' drive like so;-



- Close all Explorer windows and run the MT4, put in your account password and you're ready to once again bring the worlds financial markets to their/it's knees.

# Some tips.

1. A cut down version of MT4 can be downloaded for android and Apple devices. This is probably the best way of having an alternative way to close trades in a hurry or keep an eye on them.

2. When you download a new MT4 from your broker you may have to use an 'installer' which is a small programme downloaded before the actual MT4 download. The general instruction with these is to select 'run' when the option appears to 'run' or 'save' the file. <mark>If you select 'save' instead you can re-use the installer as often as you like to download more installations without having to go through your brokers website.</mark> This can save time and hassle.

3. Having numerous MT4's installed means you can use and test multiple different methods if you want to and keep your setups all nice and separate. Having multiple installs on your computer won't degrade the performance but running too many at once will.

4. If you really don't have a life you can colour code all your icons and arrange them nicely. It's just amazing what you can waste your life doing while you're waiting for a candle to close.



5. If you want to make icons like these you'll need an icon editor, this is the one I use. It's totally free and an excellent piece of software. *** the link above takes you to the CNET download site, this is a genuine download but if you don't read the windows as they appear during the download process it will try to install trash toolbars and other crud onto your computer – the original programme creators site seems to have disappeared. At the time of writing the link on this page is tested and good, you just need to read and tick the correct boxes. ***

6. If you have a sort of standard basic template that you tend to use on all your setups you can save it as something like 'my basic.tpl' and copy it into all your new installs, mine has the candle clock, spread, Large Round Numbers, and few other bits. 'just saves a few minutes messing about. Templates are located in the Templates folder of your MT4 install, there is no problem copying them in and out of different MT4 installs.

7. having a basic install saved in the same way as a backup can save you the bother of reconfiguring extra fibo levels, experts and scripts in a new install.

8. You can copy the entire 'experts – indicators' folder from one install to another, although you will have to restart MT4 for them to compile. Again, just saves a bit of time.

9. MT4 has a 'Sounds' folder you can add your own personalised effects (as WAV files) to liven up your trading day. Another product of too much time to spare though really I suspect.

10. Save screenshots of your trades for reference and study later. You can make notes directly onto the window or better still use notepad or a sticky notes programme, the contents will save with your screenie and you can delete the actual note after.
11. **Save your screenie with the brokers trade reference number as a filename**, that way finding the screenie that goes with the trade is, as our American friends might say - 'a snap', although actually, it's not a 'snap' - it's a 'doddle'.



12. [This](#) free screen capture tool is the best one I've found, I use it all the time.
13. Because backing up MT4 is a very basic procedure you can partially automate it using the **Windows Briefcase**, you can use the Briefcase in a cloud drive which makes it a bit more useful. For information on the Briefcase (all Windows versions since '98 I think,) go to Help and Support on your PC and type 'using briefcase' as a query.
14. If you're too proud to use an aged windows utility to do your backing up there are a mass of offerings available online. Most of the free ones are 'sort-of-ok' and probably quite adequate for our very simple needs. I use '[GoodSync'](#), partly because it's in a league of it's own as a simple backup tool but mainly because I make someone else pay for it. (I'm cheap as well as easily bored, easily amused and lazy)
15. ==Statistics and probability (which we're all quite good at - hopefully) indicate that if your backup isn't dead easy and at least partially automated you probably won't do it, years of experience in the industry lead me to vouch for the truth of that too==.
16. If you have an older version of MT4 on your computer as an installer file (MT4 etc.exe) you can use this instead of downloading a new one, 'chances are though that as soon as you run it, it will want to do an update which takes just as long as downloading a new one, so its up to you - it's all 'swings and roundabouts', use whichever method works for you at the time you need to do it.

17. Multi screen setups are often saved as 'Profiles' – the Profiles folder in MT4 – or individual items in it – can be copied to new installs. This can save a lot of setup time.

<div align="center">Maybe for emergencies only.</div>

A couple of scenarios to think about,

You've just opened a trade and your broadband goes down and you're not sure if you got the stop loss on in time.
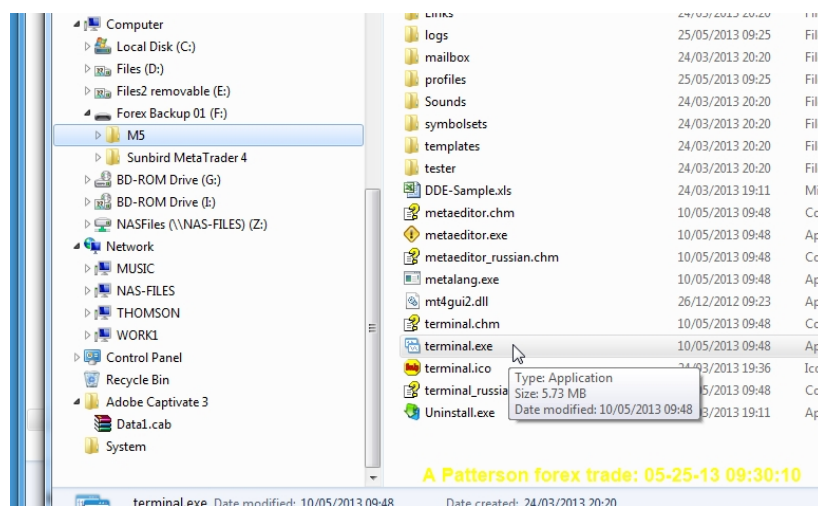You've just arrived at a friends house to watch a film or something and you see on the news that the Federal Reserve Bank has been stolen or there's a crisis in the Euro area.

In any  event you may want to very quickly remove a trade, create a trade or adjust something and you don't have access to your software.

The **best** solution is to have a smartphone or tablet with a mobile MT4 installed ([tips](#))

If that isn't practical for whatever reason you could consider the following, but don't actually go anywhere near a valued account with it until you've checked it out thoroughly.

1. You can plug your backup memory stick (external disk) into a computer with internet access and do the following.
2. Navigate to the backed up installation and find the file **terminal.exe** and double click it,



3. MT4 will open (probably quite slowly) and ask for you password.

Once you are logged on you can do whatever you need to do.

<div align="center">**WARNING**.</div>

I have tested this with practice accounts and everything <u>seems</u> to work properly, at least for the <u>emergency</u> killing of a trade.
This method may or may not be secure – I don't know.
If the logon password is retained in the backup copy then that backup copy gives unrestricted access to your MT4 account.
I believe different brokers can configure their MT4 offerings differently, how this might affect things - I don't know.
You should definitely change you password after accessing your account from someone else's computer.

I keep this idea in mind for emergency use only, I would not use it under other circumstances, if I was not totally sure of the result having done my thing with it I would also phone my broker to check what was going on.

You need to check this out on a practice account if you are interested in the idea and assess the risk for yourself to see if it is acceptable to you, I make no warranty as to the safety or security or wisdom of using this method, I propose it solely as an idea for you to explore for yourself.

The contents of your restored MT4 install folder are going to look something like this,