

## SHAREPOINT · STORAGE GUIDE

# SharePoint version history: where your storage is really going

Version history is one of the biggest hidden storage costs in SharePoint. The default keeps 500 major versions of every file with no expiry, and every version counts against your quota. Here's how to check it and trim it safely.

## At a glance

|                          |                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Default org setting      | Manual: 500 major versions, no expiry                                                                        |
| Storage                  | Every version counts against the storage quota                                                               |
| Automatic setting        | All versions for 30 days, hourly for 30-60 days, daily for 60-180 days, weekly after that, up to the 500 cap |
| Microsoft's example      | Roughly 94-96% less version storage than count limits                                                        |
| Changing the org default | Affects new libraries only, not existing ones                                                                |
| Trimmed versions         | Permanently deleted, they bypass the recycle bin                                                             |

## Do this, in this order

1

### Check the current organisation default

See whether you're on Manual or Automatic, and the limits.

**WHERE** SharePoint admin centre > Settings > Version history limits

2

### Measure before you change anything

Generate a version storage usage report for your biggest sites, then run a what-if analysis. Microsoft has tutorials for both ("Generate Version Usage Report" and "Run What-If analysis").

**WHERE** Microsoft Learn > Plan version storage

3

### Set Automatic for new libraries

Choose Automatically, then Save and Confirm. Or in PowerShell:

**WHERE** `Set-SPOTenant -EnableAutoExpirationVersionTrim $true`

4

### Apply it to existing libraries, site by site

Sync each library's limits to the site setting and trim to match. Start with the sites using the most storage.

**WHERE** `New-SPOSiteManageVersionPolicyJob -Identity $siteUrl -SyncListPolicy -TrimUseListPolicy`



5

### Trim existing versions with the automatic algorithm

Track progress, and stop the job if something looks wrong.

**WHERE** `New-SPOSiteFileVersionBatchDeleteJob -Identity $siteUrl -Automatic`

6

### Set tighter limits for heavy media

Audio and video versions are big. Microsoft documents file-type limits (PowerShell only), for example 100 versions and 30 days for audio and video.

**WHERE** `Set-SPOTenant -FileTypesForVersionExpiration @("audio","video") ...`

### Watch out for

- Trimmed versions are **permanently deleted** and bypass the recycle bin. Make sure you have a backup (Microsoft names Microsoft 365 Backup) if you might need them.
- Changing the org default doesn't touch existing libraries or existing versions.
- Retention policies and eDiscovery holds override library limits. Versions get an expiry stamp instead.
- The admin centre won't accept fewer than 100 versions or 30 days. APIs can, and Microsoft warns that risks data loss.

### Checklist

- |                                                       |                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Org default checked          | <input type="checkbox"/> Storage report run on top sites   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What-if analysis done        | <input type="checkbox"/> Automatic set for new libraries   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Top sites synced and trimmed | <input type="checkbox"/> Media file-type limits considered |

### Sources

- Version history limits - [learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/document-library-version-history-limits](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/document-library-version-history-limits)
- Plan version storage - [learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/plan-version-storage](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/plan-version-storage)
- Set default org version limits - [learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/set-default-org-version-limits](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/set-default-org-version-limits)
- Trim existing versions - [learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/trim-versions](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/trim-versions)

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- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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