

## #19 - How to Change to a New FTM Version

*Don't burn your bridges before the chicken hatches!*

Common wisdom dictates a careful approach to begin using a new system – especially when using the new means that it is no longer possible to access the data with the old.



*You might need to go back before the new bridge functions properly.*

**The main idea is to make a copy of the tree in the new format from a backup made by the old version.** New FTM versions can “Restore” from backups made by earlier versions and in the process do not alter the backup file. Thus the backup tree can be restored by the old version if necessary. Additionally, the actual older version tree is untouched and can continue to be accessed by the older version. **To minimize confusion, it is helpful to place the new trees in a different folder from the earlier version.** The steps outlined below are applicable for changing to any new Family Tree Maker version (or any other software). Simply installing the newly downloaded software and opening the existing tree will work – BUT, the ‘bridge’ will have been burned and the tree can no longer be opened with the previous FTM version.

### PREPARATION – IMPORTANT – WITH THE CURRENT VERSION FTM 2019

1. Be sure all media are present for each tree. Check “Find missing media” (Media workspace, Media menu).
2. Compact each tree and sync with Ancestry (if linked).
3. **Make a complete backup of each tree with the current version (including media, sync capability).** These will be restored by the new version to create a tree in the new format.
4. Close the open tree before final exit from the old version of FTM. This prevents the new version of FTM from automatically trying to open a tree when launched for the first time.
5. [Optional but recommended by Dick.] Set up new data folder for trees in the new version. This keeps trees that use different versions separate from each other.

### DOWNLOAD THE NEW SOFTWARE VERSION

6. Using the download URL link supplied by Software MacKiev, download and save the new software version file to the computer (“Downloads” folder is a good location). This will be an “exe” file such as FTM2024.exe for windows and a “dmg” file for Macs.
7. [Optional.] Copy the downloaded exe file to a USB flash drive or external drive as a protection backup. Generally its size will be about 700MB (= 0.7 GB) and will easily fit onto any flash drive. This can be used to install FTM to a replacement or second computer without having contact the publisher and download again.

### INSTALL THE NEW SOFTWARE VERSION

8. Double-click the icon or name of the downloaded new version (remember where, right?) to install the software.
9. It will not delete, uninstall or replace the current version. Both the new and the old FTM versions can continue operate independently of each other.

### STARTUP THE NEW SOFTWARE VERSION

10. Launch the new software and resist the urge to immediately open a new tree.
11. Set default folder in Tools -> Options to the new folder set up for the new version – optional step 5 above.
12. As the list of previously opened trees actually points to the old version tree files, it is a really important to “Remove from This List” each tree that initially shows in the new version as it avoids unnecessary conversion of old trees.

### FIRST TIME TREE USE WITH NEW VERSION

13. **Using “Restore” from the File menu, select the backup tree file (‘ftmb’) from the old version data folder (click ‘Open’ button) and then in the “Name for Restored File” window select the new data folder location and adjust the name for the new version file (click ‘Save’ button).** This can be the same as the old version tree or something different. It doesn't have to match the name of the linked Ancestry tree, but it is a good idea.
14. Wait for file conversion to complete and then check the box to “Restore link to online tree” to allow the new tree version to automatically resume linking.
15. Check for missing media, then open the Places workspace and then Compact file (Tools menu) with backup and perform extended analysis.
16. Begin working with new tree, syncing, etc.