

Online collaborating: Using Google Drive

Part two: using multiple Google accounts

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In this 'Tips & Tricks' document I will try to help you out if you use more than one Google account. For instance if you have both a private and a work Google account.

Summary:

try Odrive (www.odrive.com) or MultiCloud (www.multicloud.com) as a file management and synchronizing system across multiple accounts and/or multiple cloud services

try Kiwi for Gmail if you are looking for a desktop application with which you can use multiple Google accounts (max. six accounts), if you do not use other cloud services, like Dropbox, or want to keep them separate from your Google Drive(s).

Below you will find the longer explanation.

Google does not make things easy

Unfortunately, Google does not make things easy. Google Drive does not provide a built-in option to use multiple accounts simultaneously.

For those of you who are used to having multiple gmail email addresses:

Note that there is a difference between *gmail* accounts with the sole purpose to email, and *google* accounts (that can be based on a gmail address) for other purposes, like using Google Drive. If you use gmail to email then it is possible to open multiple gmail accounts simultaneously. For Google Drive and other Google products this is not possible. Then you need a work-around.

Email

If you only use gmail to email, you see the option 'Add account' (in Dutch: 'Account toevoegen') in the upper right corner of your browser screen.



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Google+ profiel – Privacy

Mijn account

Account toevoegen

Uitloggen

I think you know it, if you use multiple gmail accounts.

Other purposes, like using Google Drive

So simple as it is for emailing, so difficult it is for other purposes. Google does not provide this option. So, you need a work-around.

Because I am a fervent user of multiple Google accounts/ gmail email-addresses myself, I did some internet searching. I will share the results with you. Hopefully this helps you too.

There are several programs that you can use. I will discuss the most important ones (with the purpose of accessing multiple google accounts at the same time):

- 1) Odrive
- 2) Insync
- 3) MultCloud
- 4) Koofr
- 5) Kiwi for Gmail

Odrive, Insync, MultCloud and Koofr are cloud storage synchronization clients. Kiwi works somewhat different, and is a Gmail desktop application. If you are interested in more technical specifics, I encourage you to look on the internet yourself. In this document I will keep it practical.

1) Odrive (www.odrive.com)

Odrive aggregates all your cloud accounts into one system. One password, one application.

If you are looking for a straightforward, practical tip: use Odrive - especially if you use more than one cloud service. Or if you want to access all your Google Drive accounts in a Windows explorer-like way.

I installed Odrive and it works for me.

Odrive has several *advantages*:

-Odrive not only supports Google Drive, but other cloud services as well, like Dropbox and Microsoft OneDrive. So, you can put all your cloud services under Odrive, and then have one place from where you can access your Dropbox files, Onedrive files, and the multiple Google Drive account files you might have. If Google Drive is not the only cloud service you use, you should consider to give Odrive a try.

-You can only sync the folders and files you use, instead of syncing everything (selective synchronization)

-The desktop client runs on Windows and Mac, but Linux is also possible.

Possible disadvantages:

A possible setback could be that maybe you need a fast internet connection for Odrive to work smoothly. Since I have that myself, I experienced no trouble.

As with all syncing services quickly repetitively creating and deleting files might cause some delay, because of course it takes some time to keep your files synchronized.

But actually I haven't noticed any actual disadvantages so far myself.

Simple comparison

I compared Odrive and Insync. They do pretty much the same, but Odrive is much cheaper.

Odrive offers a (limited) free account. Pricing options for premium accounts can be found on their website, and start at \$ 8,25/month.

Insync has a free trial period of 15 days. After that, you need to pay € 29,99 *per Google account*. That adds up, if 'multiple' really means multiple, like for me.

So, that killed Insync for me as a serious option.

2) Insync (www.insynchq.com)

Just as Odrive, Insync supports logging into multiple accounts of the same service (like Google), and also supports logging into (multiple) accounts from different services (like Google and Dropbox and ...)

Insync can convert Google Docs to Office docs. But you do not need Insync for that, because Google Drive offers this as well.

3) MultiCloud (www.multcloud.com)

Besides Odrive and Insync there are more cloud synchronization services. Two of these that I find worthy to check out in greater detail are MultCloud (www.multcloud.com) and Koofr (koofr.eu).

I have not tried MultCloud or Koofr myself yet, but MultCloud apparently offers similar functionality as Odrive. MultCloud does not limit the number of accounts per each service provider that you can add. Pricing is also similar, compared to Odrive (about \$ 8,00 a month). So MultCloud looks like a real alternative for Odrive to me.

4) Koofr (koofr.eu)

Koofr is another alternative. Besides offering cloud storage, it is also possible to connect your other cloud accounts, including multiple Google Drive accounts. The number of supported cloud services is much more limited than at MultCloud or Odrive. Koofr so far only supports Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive and Amazon Drive. With MultCloud or Odrive you can add over 30 different cloud services, including several photo sharing services, like Flickr or Instagram. See the specifications of each service to find out if it is possible to add a specific cloud account.

5) Kiwi (www.kiwiforgmail.com)

Kiwi is software that provides desktop integration: it runs Google services in a desktop app. This means that you can use gmail and Google Drive (and other Google Apps) on your desktop PC, without having to open your internet browser.

Kiwi wants to make Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides look and feel as much like Microsoft Office as possible. You can create desktop shortcuts for all main tasks, like creating new documents or write a new email.

Features are, amongst others:

- * Ability to use Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides as native, windowed desktop applications within Kiwi for Gmail
- * Launch Google Docs, Sheets and Slides directly, not through Gmail
- * Open documents in their own windows for multi-tasking across applications and multiple accounts
- * Open recent documents, quickly access Google Drive files and apps across multiple accounts

The Kiwi for Gmail lite version is free, but allows you to use only a single gmail account. If you buy the premium version, you can add max. 6 accounts. The premium version costs about \$ 9,99 a year, although the official Kiwi for Gmail website does not provide pricing details.

If you download Kiwi for Gmail Lite, the program initially installs as a 30-day trial of the premium edition, which enables you to work with up to six Google accounts and the full complement of G Suite apps. If you decide not to buy the premium version at the end of the trial period, you will drop back to the free version, which only allows one Google account. You will also be limited in the use of apps in the free version.

If you only want to use multiple google accounts simultaneously, and are not interested in connecting other cloud services as well, and you always work from the same PC or laptop, you might Kiwi for Gmail give a try. If you use public computers, a desktop applications is not helpful of course.