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Hi everyone, I would like to know the difference in meaning between "to save something to" and "to save something on/onto" in the context of technology. Here are a couple of example sentences: 1. Save the file to the hard disk. 2. You can save the data on/onto your hard disk. Thanks in advance, Jorge

To is a preposition of motion (compare "towards") -> Save the file to the hard disk. -> the files go to (in the direction of) the hard disk. On is a preposition of place - You can save the data on your hard disk - it tells you where you can save the data. Onto is a preposition of motion and place. - You can save the data onto your hard disk - It extends "to" to include the place. I wonder if the following conclusions are correct:- I can use "save to" to indicate the (logical) path where the file is saved. E.g. "Save the photo to 'My Documents' ". - I can use "save on" to indicate the physical device where the file is saved. E.g. "Save the photo on the camera/phone/computer/i-pod". If I say "Save the photo/document/audio TO/ON the computer/phone/camera/ipad", do they both mean the same? If I say "Save the photo/document/audio TO/ON 'C:\Windows' ", do they both mean the same? Hi everyone, I would like to know the difference in meaning between "to save something to" and "to save something on/onto" in the context of technology. Here are a couple of example sentences: 1. Save the file to the hard disk. 2. You can save the data on/onto your hard disk. Thanks in advance, Jorge

With "save", in the context of electronic files, the prepositions "to", "on", and "onto" essentially communicate the same thing. However, their specific meanings are not the same. Save the file to your hard disk. < With "to", this means the destination is your hard disk. The preposition "to" shows movement, either physical or abstract. The file goes in the direction of your hard disk, which is the destination. We automatically understand that, if the file goes to your hard disk, it's going to be on your hard disk, as well. If we bring this to the physical world, we find it works the same way. I'm going to the store. < Of course, you're not just going in the direction of the store. When you get to the store, you're going to go in the store. Generally, "to" tells us that something goes in a particular direction, and if something goes in a particular direction, then we usually understand there is a destination. And a person, or something such as a file, is going to be in a place, on a place, or at a place. \_\_\_\_\_ Save it on your hard disk. < "On" tells us that you are going to use the disk as a location to store the file. Because a disk is a surface, we understand that a disk is a surface that supports files. We use "on" for surfaces, and a surface supports something. A disk is an abstract surface. We cannot see the file on the disk. However, we know that the file is, there, on the disk. Of course, we can see a disk if we take apart a computer, but we cannot see a file -- unless it's on our desktop, as well, and we click on it. If we speak of a file being saved on a disk, we also understand, without having to say it, that the file was saved to the disk first. A file can only be on a disk if it was moved to a disk first. If we bring this to the physical world, we find it works the same way. Put the file on the filing cabinet, and I'll find a place for it later. < A filing cabinet top, which is a surface, can support a paper file in the physical world just as a disk can support an electronic file in the abstract world. We can store a paper file in a filing cabinet drawer, as well. Let's go to the football field or the soccer field. < We understand that when someone is going in the direction of a football field or a soccer field, they will eventually be on the field. Someone arrives at the football field, and then is on the football field. Why else would anyone go to a football field? If someone is attending a football game, then, obviously, they are not going to be on a field. They are going to be sitting in the audience. However, if it's the middle of the day, for example, and someone says, "Hey let's go to the football field!", we know that this does not simply mean "go in the direction of the football field". They first arrive at the football field, and then they will probably walk onto the football field. \_\_\_\_\_ Save it onto your hard disk. < This means "cause the file to move from where it is now to a hard disk". This is a compound word, and the meaning of "on" and the meaning of "to" remain the same. It just might seem a bit confusing because "on" is first and "to" is second in "onto". What's really happening is that the file moves in a direction first "to", and then remains on a hard disk, which is then its location. So we might think that the preposition should be this: "to-on". But it's not. We find "onto" works the same way in the physical world. Let's move these file boxes onto the porch.