

## Synchronizing the Zyzzyva Data Directory Between Multiple NASPA Zyzzyva (Desktop / Laptop) and NASPA Zyzzyva Mobile Installations

This document provides step-by-step instructions on how to set up data synchronization between multiple installations of **NASPA Zyzzyva (NZ)** on your desktop / laptop computers and/or **NASPA Zyzzyva Mobile (NZM)** on your phones and tablets.

Data synchronization lets you preserve your study data (cardboxes, quiz statistics, and saved quizzes) across multiple devices and use quizzes created in NZ on your mobile device running NZM, where the choice of search conditions is more limited. It also serves as a cloud backup in case of loss or damage to your devices.

In most cases, users have an existing desktop / laptop installation with valuable data before installing the mobile app (or installing the computer application on another device). In this scenario, it is important to synchronize all of your installations before doing any quizzing in your new one, as outlined in these instructions. The key point is to make sure that your “good” data aren’t overwritten in the process of synchronizing all of your devices’ data directories.

Please note that the NZ computer application has changed in version 3.4.0 to be more like the NZM app in how it manages data synchronization. Please update your NZ installations to version 3.4.0 or later before following these instructions, to make the job simpler.

These instructions use the term “**active**” to describe sync with Dropbox cloud storage that’s operated directly by Zyzzyva, and “**passive**” to describe sync that is operated in the background by an installed Dropbox computer application without Zyzzyva’s assistance. The computer application now supports both models, while the mobile app supports only active sync.

1. If you do not have a personal Dropbox account, create one at [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com) — then skip to Step 4. (For Zyzzyva’s purposes, their free “Basic” 2-GB personal account will do nicely.)
2. Visit your Dropbox cloud storage by browsing to [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com). Look for a folder named **Apps** and a subfolder **Apps/Zyzzyva** in your personal

Dropbox storage. If no such folder exists, you have no “old” Dropbox data directory, so skip to Step 4.

3. Your existing data directory on Dropbox was probably created by either the NZM app or the old (pre-2021) Zyzzyva iOS app. Peruse the files under ***lexicons*** and ***quiz/data*** for old, large files that you no longer need, and delete them; you probably have newer data in your Windows / macOS / Linux computer’s data directory that you will want to sync here, and syncing obsolete data files will waste storage space on all devices once they’re synced.
4. Choose one, depending on the type of device where you have just installed Zyzzyva software (that is, the one that doesn’t yet have your “good” data):

- a. Open the new installation of NZM on your mobile device. In its *Settings* tab, under *Data Synchronization*, touch *Link to Provider*, touch *Dropbox*, and then follow the instructions to link NZM to an app folder named **Apps/Zyzzyva** in your Dropbox cloud storage, using your personal Dropbox account identity. Do not sync at this time.

This step ensures that you have a Dropbox app folder at that exact location that the cloud service knows belongs to its “Zyzzyva” client app.

Note: The *Sign in with Google* button does not work in this specific situation, due to Google restrictions.

- b. Open the new installation of NZ on your computer. In its *Preferences* dialog, in the *General* section, under *Data Directory*, look for a popup box marked *Zyzzyva synchronizes data with provider*. (If it’s there, you have a newer version that can do active sync; if not, uninstall that older version and install the newest one.) Choose *Dropbox*, then click *OK* to save your preferences, and then follow the instructions to link NZ to an app folder named **Apps/Zyzzyva** in your Dropbox cloud storage, using your personal Dropbox account identity. Do not sync at this time. This step ensures that you have a Dropbox app folder at

that exact location that the cloud service knows belongs to its “Zyzyva” client app.

*Note: Creating an **Apps/Zyzyva** folder manually will not work, as Dropbox will reject it as not belonging to the “Zyzyva” client app and create a separate one when Zyzyva’s active sync tries to link to it. If this step has created a cloud folder named **Apps/Zyzyva (1)**, then Dropbox has rejected the existing folder; unlink your new installation from Dropbox, delete both folders (or rename them in the event that one contains old data that you want to keep and bring back later), and then repeat this step until one **Apps/Zyzyva** folder is established in your Dropbox cloud storage.*

5. On the computer that has your existing “good” data directory, update NZ to the latest version, giving you the option to use Zyzyva’s active sync as an alternative to passive sync operated by an installed Dropbox application.

*Note: If you’re a frequent Dropbox user on this device, you may be happy with letting it sync your Zyzyva data directory on its own, but the option to switch is there.*

In its *Preferences* dialog, in the *General* section, under *Data Directory*, click *Change...* to open the *Data Directory Wizard*. It will analyze your current setup and ask you several questions to figure out the right preferences, including whether you want Zyzyva to sync your data or let Dropbox do it, and where to put the local copy of your synced data directory. When the wizard is finished, click *OK* to save your preferences; NZ will restart if you’ve changed the data directory location.

6. Now, it’s time to get this existing NZ installation synced with Dropbox. First, open NZ and make sure that you can access your “good” data. Next:
  - a. If you chose active sync (operated by Zyzyva):  
Choose the *Sync Now* action in the toolbar or the *Sync* menu, to start syncing your data directory with Dropbox. Pay attention to any conflict messages that might appear. Watch for the sync to complete.

b. If you chose passive sync (not operated by Zyzzyva):

Make sure that you have installed the Dropbox application, that it is running, that it has synced the **Apps/Zyzzyva** cloud folder with wherever you have configured that application to sync its files — usually a folder named **Dropbox** in your user account's home directory, i.e., **~/Dropbox** or **%UserProfile%\Dropbox** — and that NZ's preferences are set to use that folder as its data directory. Watch the Dropbox application's status window until you're sure that it has completely synced your data to cloud storage.

7. Once the Dropbox sync of Step 6 is complete, open your new installation of NZ or NZM. (If you haven't yet linked it to Dropbox, do so now as described in Step 4.) Use its *Sync Now* action or *Sync* button to begin syncing the "good" data from your Dropbox cloud storage down to your mobile device. You will see alerts about data synchronization conflicts because some files exist both on Dropbox ("remote") and on your device ("local"). Say *Yes* at the first prompt (to say that remote data is valid for syncing where there is conflict), then *No* at the second prompt (to say that local data is not valid for syncing in those cases), and then *Yes* to proceed with the sync. This will take a few minutes; say *Yes* if asked to continue waiting and keep Zyzzyva in the foreground (active) until you see the count of items to sync count down to zero.

If this initial sync is cut off, perhaps because the mobile OS unloaded the NZM app, you can restart the sync and it will pick up where it left off.

You have now synced your data across all three locations (the computer with your "good" data, your new installation, and Dropbox). Sync will be incremental from now on — so, much faster.

8. From here on, on all devices where Zyzzyva is actively operating the sync relationship, be sure to "sync down" from the cloud when you start and "sync up" when you are done.

*Note: Don't do this on any NZ installations configured for passive sync, because an installed Dropbox application is doing the sync in the background.*

There are options in NZ's *Preferences* dialog and NZM's *Settings* tab that you can enable to make active sync happen automatically when you start or quit Zyzzyva. Always be mindful of when sync is happening, so that one device can finish before the next starts, and thus prevent sync conflicts.