

Use several machines

Secretbase joins your computers together: the one that stays on at home, a spare one, one at a friend's. Paired machines list each other's apps, publish on each other, keep backup copies of each other's apps, and update together.

Quick start

- 1 Install Secretbase on both computers (see the Setup guide).
- 2 On the first one, run `secretbase machines add`. It shows a line to run on the other one.
- 3 On the other one, run that line: `secretbase machines join <address> <code>`.
- 4 Run `secretbase machines` to see both machines and their apps.
- 5 Publish on the other machine with `secretbase publish <folder> --on <name>`.

What you need

- A second Linux computer with Secretbase installed, anywhere: in the same house or far away, on another Tailscale account too. Nothing changes on your router.
- One free public address on each machine (with the free Tailscale address, one of its three), unless the online dashboard or an access token already uses one.

Pair two machines

On the first machine, run `secretbase machines add`, or open the dashboard's **Machines** page and click **Make a pairing code** under **Add a machine**. The code looks like ABCD-EFGH and works once, for 10 minutes.

On the other machine, run the whole line it shows, as yourself, without sudo. Or, on its **Machines** page under **Join a machine**, type the address in **Its address** and the code in **Pairing code**, then click **Join**. It says: "Paired with < name >. Both machines now list each other."

Adding and joining are done on each computer itself. A paired machine can publish, see, follow, take offline, delete, set keys for, back up and restore apps on the other. It can never read a key's value, see the recovery key, change backup places, make tokens or sign in to anything. Each machine keeps a record of every call.

See all your machines

The **Machines** page, on the computer and in the online dashboard, lists every machine with its version, free public addresses, free memory, and apps with their state and address. In a terminal: `secretbase machines`.

Publish on another machine

In the dashboard, choose under **Where**: **This computer**, one of your machines, or **Any machine with room**, then drop the folder. In a terminal, add `--on <name>` :

```
secretbase publish ./my-site --on <name>
```

`--on` also works with `status` , `logs` , `delete` , `offline` , `online` , `backups` , `backup` and `restore` . The app runs on that machine, at that machine's address.

`--on any` picks for you: an app that already exists stays where it is; a new app goes to the machine with a free public address and the most free memory. When this computer is full, Secretbase names a machine with room and the line to run.

Keep backup copies on another machine

On the computer, open the dashboard. In **Settings** > **Backups**, click **Add a place**, choose **Keep copies on another machine**, pick the **Machine** and click **Keep copies there**. Or run `secretbase places add-machine <name>` .

Copies on another machine protect against **Deleted by mistake**, **Disk dies** and **Machine dies**. When that machine is in another building, they protect against **House fire or theft** too: turn on **Keep backups here (it's somewhere else)** next to it on the **Machines** page, or run `secretbase machines elsewhere <name> on` .

Every copy is encrypted before it leaves this computer; the other machine keeps it but can't open it. Its **Machines** page shows "Keeps < size > of backups from < name >" with **Delete**.

Bring an app back onto a new computer

When a computer dies, install Secretbase on a new one, pair it with the machine that kept the copies, and bring the apps back with the old computer's recovery key. The "Back up your apps" guide shows how, from the dashboard or with `secretbase recovery-key enter` and `secretbase restore --list` .

Update every machine at once

Click **Update all machines** on the **Machines** page, or run `secretbase update --all` . Each machine installs the newest genuine Secretbase release from the site it was installed from, this computer last, and the page shows each result.

Remove a machine

Click **Remove** next to it on the **Machines** page, or run `secretbase machines remove <name>` . It says: "Removed < name > . It removed this computer too." New copies stop going to it; the copies it already keeps stay until you delete them there.

If something goes wrong

- "That pairing code is wrong, used or expired": make a new one with `secretbase machines add`. A new code, or restarting Secretbase, cancels the old one; 5 wrong tries stop it.
- "Other machines can't reach this one: it has no free public address": delete an app on that machine to free one.
- "Can't reach the machine < name > ": check that it is on and online.
- "< name > doesn't accept this machine any more": the two clocks must agree within 5 minutes. Check both clocks, or remove the machine and pair again.
- "None of your machines has a free public address for a new app": delete an app on one of them.
- The other machine was off when you removed it: it still lists this computer until you remove it there too.
- Machines update themselves only after a one-line install: "This computer can't update itself" means install the new version there once with the one-line command.