

Find lost files with Scalpel

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As a system administrator, part of your responsibility is to help users manage their data. One of the vital aspects of doing that is to ensure your organization has a good backup plan, and that your users either make their backups regularly, or else don't have to because you've automated the process.

However, sometimes the worst happens. A file gets deleted by mistake, a filesystem becomes corrupt, or a partition gets lost, and for whatever reason, the backups don't contain what you need.

As we discussed in [How to prevent and recover from accidental file deletion in Linux](#), before trying to recover lost data, you must find out why the data is missing in the first place. It's possible that a user has simply misplaced the file, or that there is a backup that the user isn't aware of. But if a user has indeed removed a file with no backups, then you know you need to recover a deleted file. If a partition table has become scrambled, though, then the files aren't really lost at all, and you might want to consider using [TestDisk](#) to recover the partition table, or the partition itself.

What happens if your file or partition recovery isn't successful, or is only in part? Then it's time for [Scalpel](#). Scalpel performs file carving operations based on patterns describing unique file types. It looks for these patterns based on binary strings and regular expressions, and then extracts the file accordingly.

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[3] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/98>

[4] <https://www.redhat.com/sysadmin/find-lost-files-scalpel>