

Using SFTP to gain remote access to your PSEF files

SFTP is secure file transfer protocol. It behaves in much the same way as the standard FTP (file transfer protocol) we currently offer for remote file access, except that all data sent or received during an SFTP transaction (including the password you use to login) is encrypted so that nobody else can see it. Due to security considerations, PSEF has decided to stop supporting the use of regular FTP for remote file access and replace it with SFTP. This document will explain how to use the new protocol.

The first thing you will need to use the SFTP protocol is an SFTP client. A Windows SFTP client called FileZilla can be downloaded from <https://psef.purdue.org/members/private/ftp-client/>. The remainder of this document will assume you are using this client.

Once you have FileZilla installed, start the program and click on File -> Site Manager. Then click the button labeled New Site. In the Servertype selection box, select SFTP using SSH2. In the Host box, type in psef.purdue.org. The Port box should say 22. If it doesn't, change it to 22. From the Logontype box, select Normal and type in your PSEF username in the space underneath. Once all these values are filled in, click on the Connect button on the bottom of the Site Manager window. When prompted for your password (if you didn't fill it in before), use your PSEF logon password. The first time you connect it will ask you if you want to cache the server key. Select Yes. After you use this client the first time, you can just select the site you previously defined from the Site Manager window and click connect. You do not have to define a new site every time you connect to the service. For your convenience, a screenshot of how the setup should look is included at the end of this document.

If you have properly completed all the steps up to this point, you should now be connected to the PSEF server and ready to transfer files. In the middle of the program window, there should now be two windows, one on the left which says Local Site and one on the right which says Remote Site. The right window shows files in your personal home directory on the PSEF server. To download one of these files, right click on it and select download. The left window shows files on your computer. To upload one of these files, right click on it and select Upload. Uploaded files are placed in whichever folder is currently open in the Remote Site window, and downloaded files are placed in whichever folder is currently open in the Local Site window.

If you wish to upload or download files from your team's directory instead of your personal home directory, you can also do that. In the right (Remote Site) window, double click on the folder whose name appears to be simple two periods until you cannot go any higher. At that point you should see a folder labeled 'psef'. Double click on that folder, and then double click on your team's folder from the resulting list.

Please remember that standard Windows file permissions apply to the SFTP transaction as well. This means that you will not be able to upload to folders or overwrite files that are not owned by you or your team, and you will not be able to download or view other people's private files, such as things in their home directory.

Any questions about this setup should be sent to ftp@psef.purdue.org. Thanks.

