

Using Snapshots in VirtualBox

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Original version: Taylor Gibb



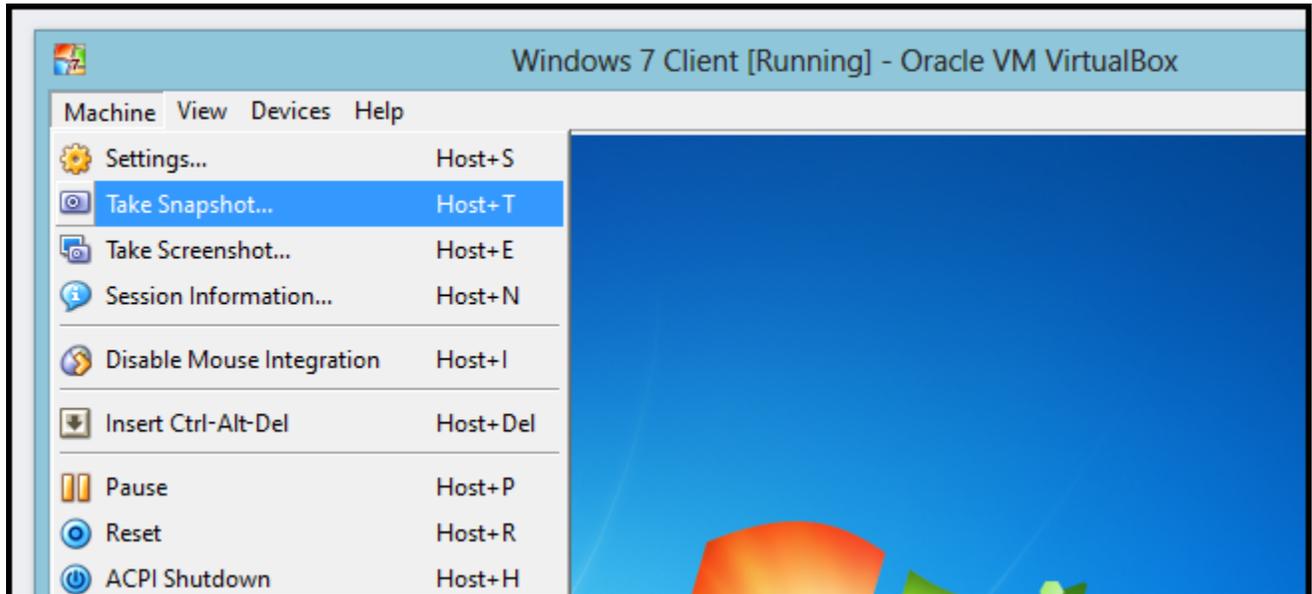
Snapshots are a massive time saver when you are testing settings and configuration for your testing.

The basic idea of a snapshot is that you setup your virtual machine exactly how you want it, take a snapshot, and then you can make any changes you want. You could even install something awful, because it doesn't matter – all you have to do is roll back the snapshot, and your virtual machine will be exactly how it was before.

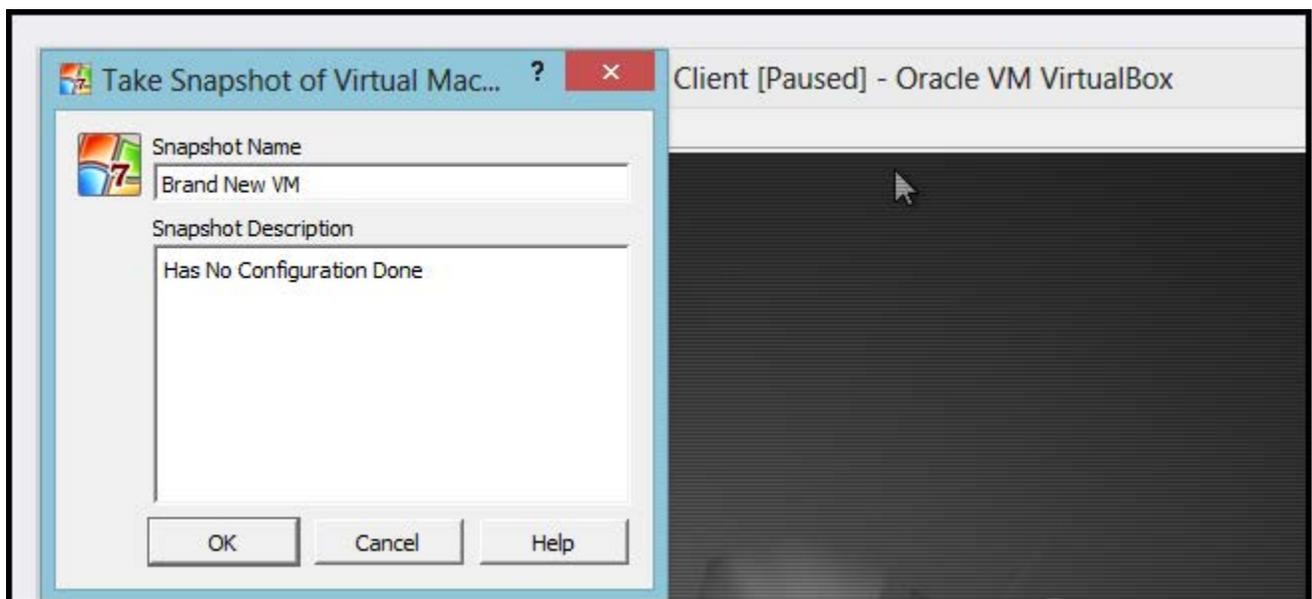
It's the perfect way to do a bunch of testing and figure things out, without breaking your setup. Plus, it's a virtual machine, so you could always reload it anyway.

Taking a Snapshot

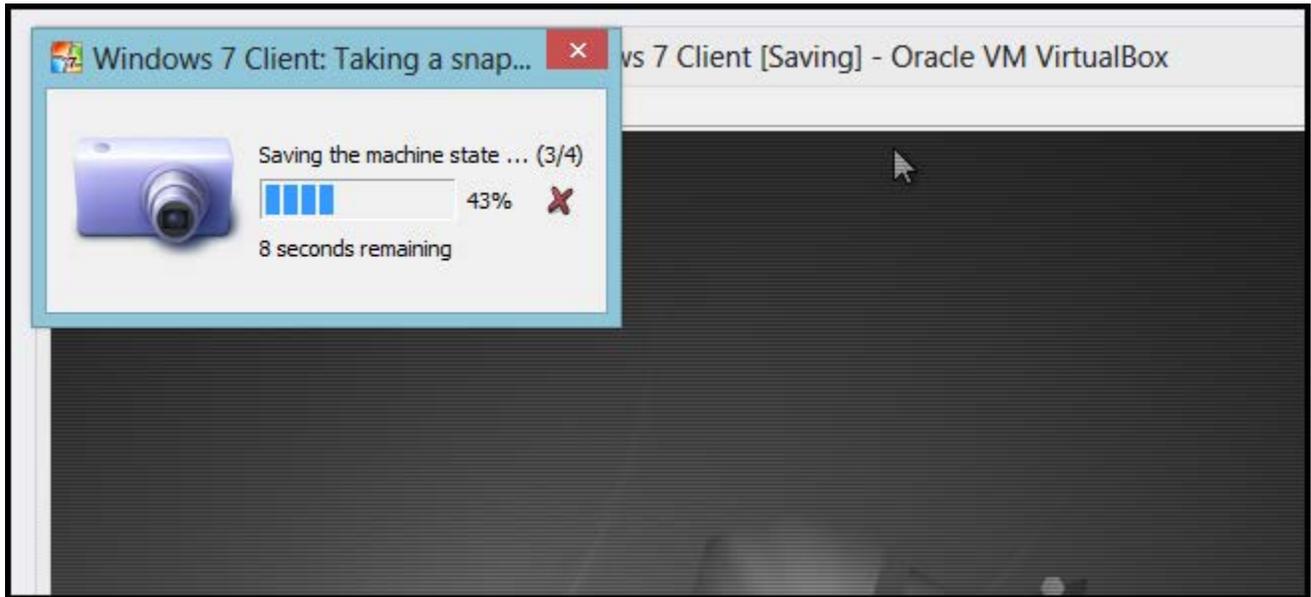
Taking a snapshot in VirtualBox is actually very easy, and when done can save massive amounts of time. To get started open up your Virtual Machine and click on the Machine menu item, then select Take Snapshot...



Since we will be snapshotting a clean install you will need to give your snapshot an intuitive name and description to remember this.

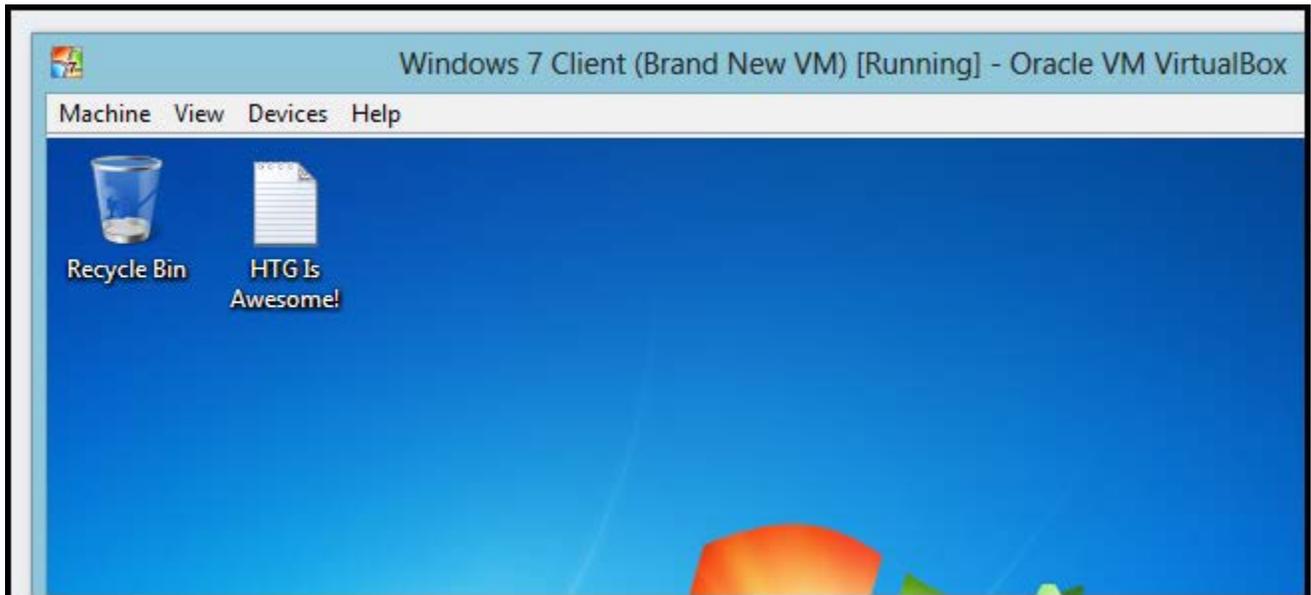


The virtual machine will then dim out periodically while a point in time snapshot is taken.

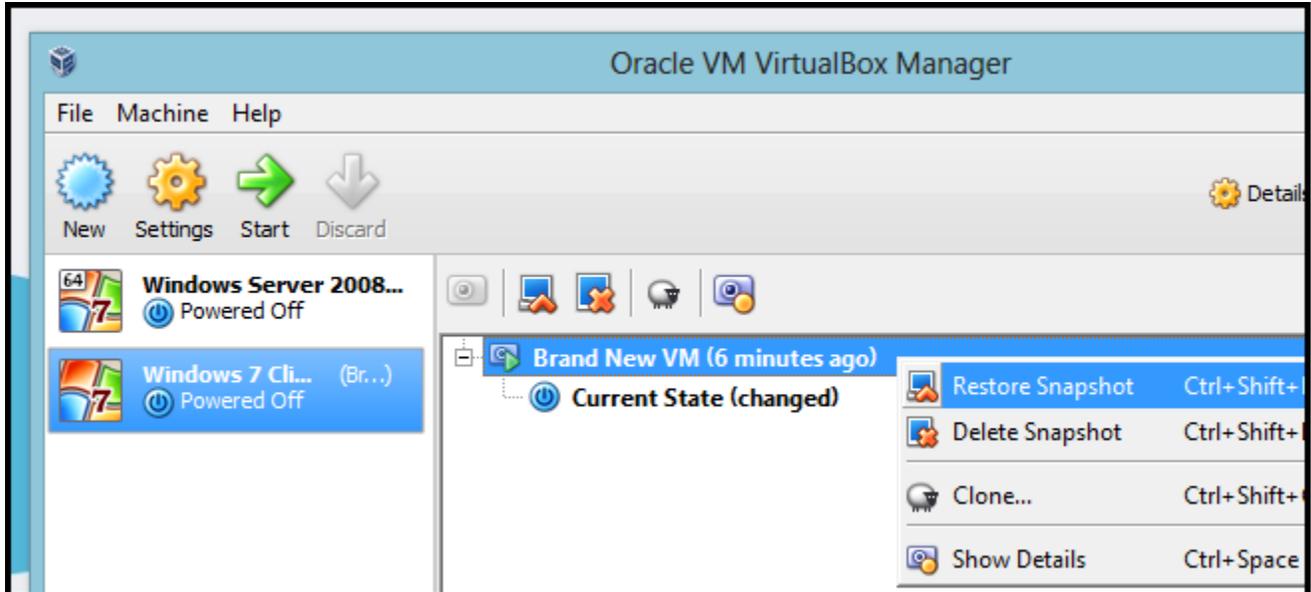


Reverting To a Snapshot

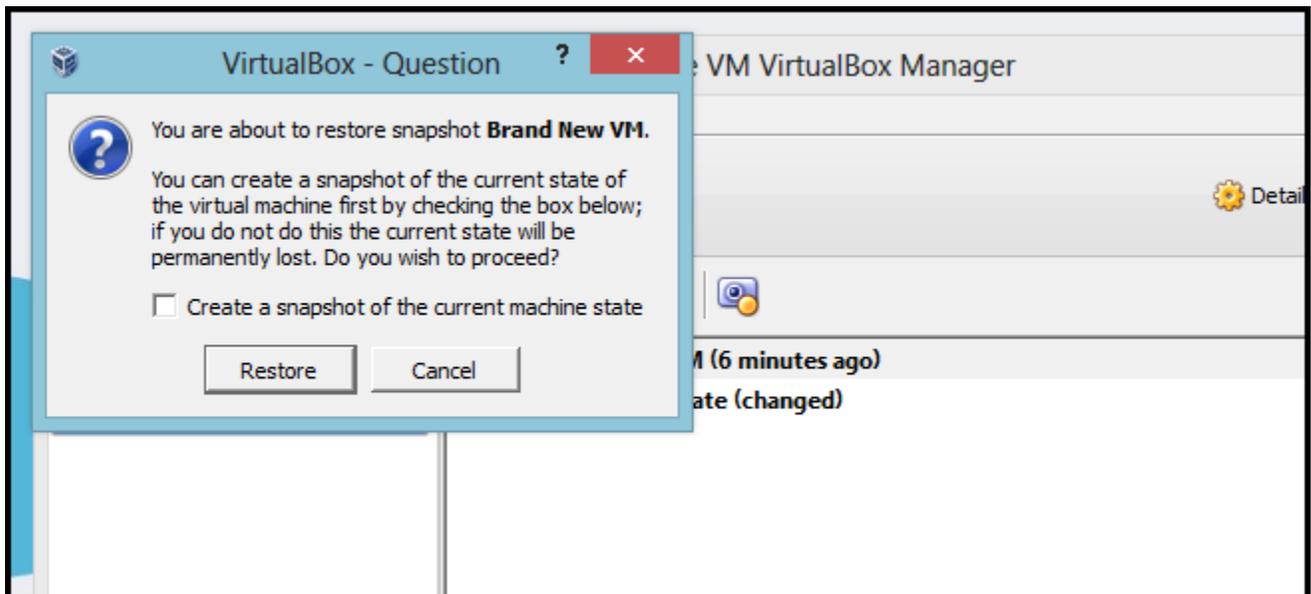
The purpose of reverting to a snapshot is so that you can go back in time to a particular state, in our case a clean state just after we installed the OS. Since we can only do this when the virtual machine is not on, go ahead and shut it down.



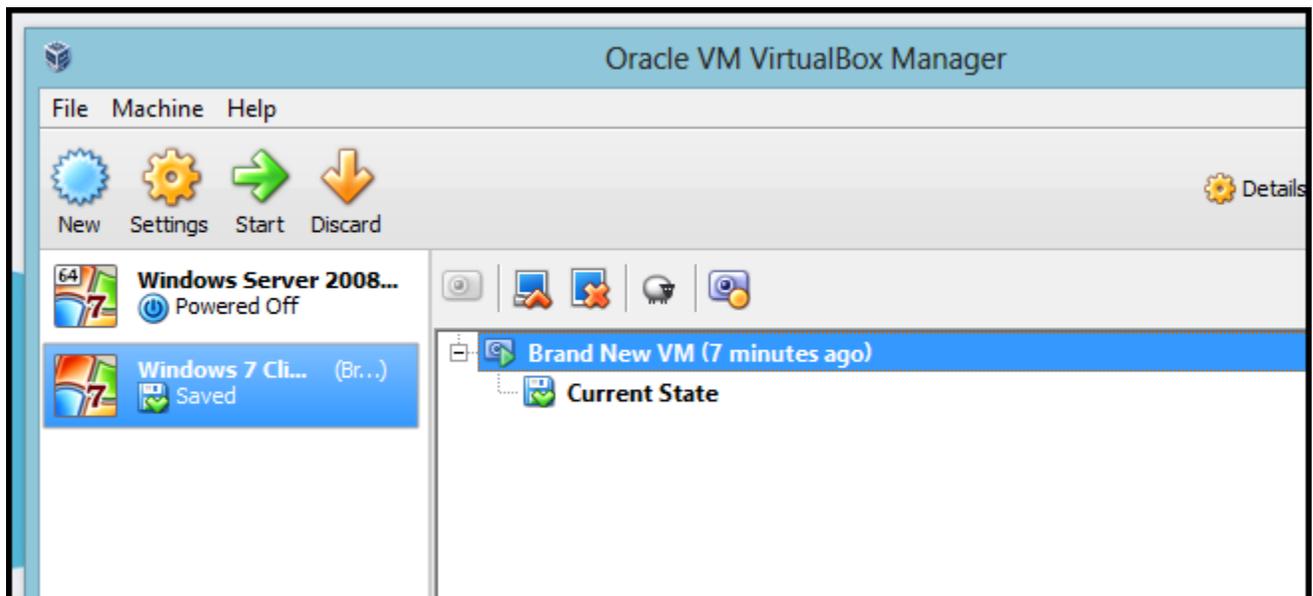
Then select your virtual machine from the list and switch over to the snapshots view. Here you will see a list of the various snapshots you may have taken. To restore to a snapshot simply right click on it and choose Restore Snapshot From the Context Menu.



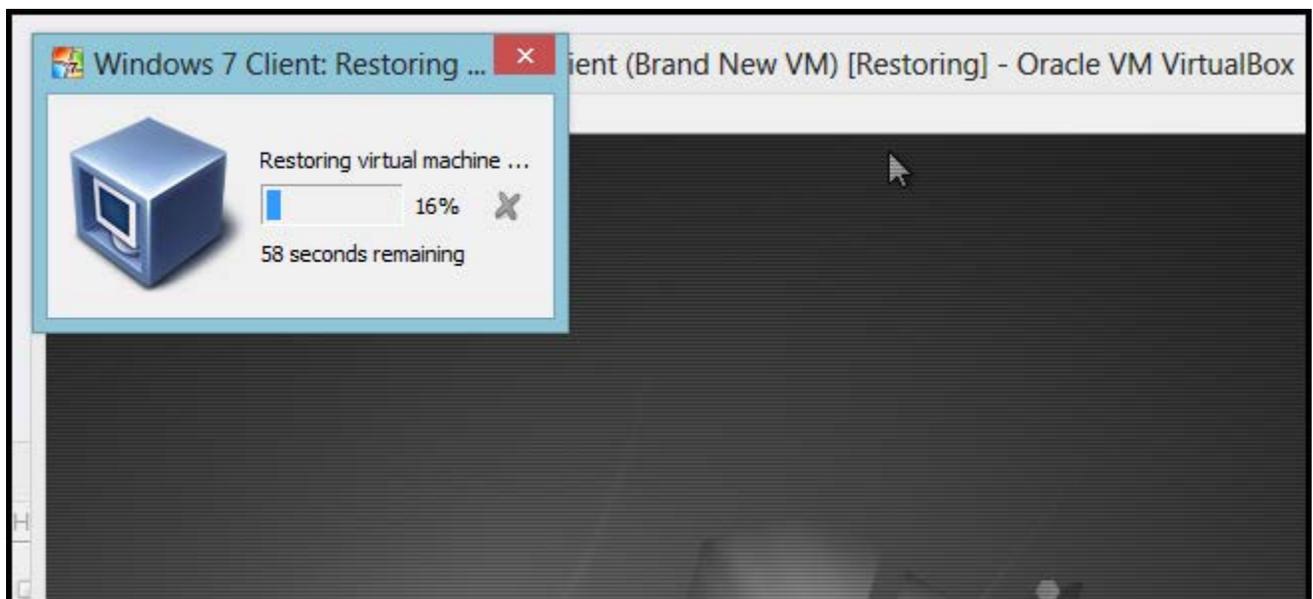
For most situations you are going to want to uncheck the option to create a snapshot of the virtual machine current state. The reason being is that you will normally want to restore when you have broken something, there's no point in taking a snapshot of a broken configuration.



You will then see that the “Current State” will become the same as the snapshot you selected to restore to.



Now when you power on the virtual machine you will see the virtual machine quickly reverting itself.



Always remember that without snapshots, it would be nearly impossible, so remember to use them and save yourself countless hours. That’s all there is to it.