

Creating Manual Backups

Regular backups are essential when running a Valkey deployment, especially if you're using it for persistent workloads. While Elestio provides automated backups for managed services by default, you may still want to create manual backups before major configuration changes, retain local archives, or test automation workflows. This guide covers several methods for creating Valkey backups on Elestio via the dashboard, CLI, or Docker Compose. It also explains retention strategies and automated backups using cron jobs.

Manual Service Backups on Elestio

If you're using Elestio's managed Valkey service, the simplest and most reliable way to perform a full backup is through the Elestio dashboard. This creates a snapshot of your current Valkey dataset and stores it in Elestio's infrastructure. These snapshots can later be restored directly from the dashboard, which is helpful when testing configuration changes or performing disaster recovery.

To trigger a manual Valkey backup on Elestio:

- Log in to the [Elestio dashboard](#).
- Navigate to your Valkey service or cluster.
- Click the Backups tab in the service menu.
- Choose **Back up now** to generate a manual snapshot.

The screenshot shows the Elestio dashboard for a Valkey service. At the top, there's a header with the Valkey logo, service status (Running), and actions like 'Open terminal', 'Delete cluster', and 'Add node'. Below this is a navigation bar with tabs: Overview, Nodes, Backups (highlighted with a red box), and Audit. The main content area is titled 'Manual local backups' and contains a 'Back up now' button (also highlighted with a red box). Below the button is a table with columns for Data Size, Backup Time, and actions (Restore, Delete, Download). The table shows one backup with a size of 255, a time of 2025-07-04 13:21:42, and a 'Download' button (highlighted with a red box). At the bottom, there's a section for 'Automated snapshots' with a plus icon.

Data Size	Backup Time	Restore	Delete	Download
255	2025-07-04 13:21:42	Restore	Delete	Download

Manual Backups Using Docker Compose

For Valkey instances deployed using Docker Compose (e.g., in Elestio self-hosted environments), you can create manual backups by copying the internal persistence files RDB snapshots and optionally AOF logs.

Access Elestio Terminal

From the Elestio dashboard:

- Go to your deployed Valkey service.
- Navigate to **Tools > Terminal** and authenticate.

Locate the Valkey Container Directory

```
cd /opt/app/
```

This is the standard project directory on Elestio-managed hosts where your **docker-compose.yml** file resides.

Trigger an RDB Snapshot (Optional)

By default, Valkey creates periodic snapshots based on configuration. To force an immediate one:

```
docker-compose exec valkey valkey-cli SAVE
```

This generates a **dump.rdb** file in the container's **/data** directory.

Copy Backup Files from the Container

Use `docker cp` to extract the RDB snapshot file (and AOF if enabled) to your host machine:

```
docker cp $(docker-compose ps -q valkey):/data/dump.rdb ./backup_$(date +%F).rdb
```

If AOF persistence is enabled (appendonly yes in **valkey.conf**), back it up as well:

```
docker cp $(docker-compose ps -q valkey):/data/appendonly.aof ./appendonly_$(date +%F).aof
```

You now have point-in-time backups that can be restored later.

Backup Storage & Retention Best Practices

Valkey backup files can be small (RDB) or large (AOF), depending on data size and write frequency. It's important to manage them properly.

Recommendations:

- Use clear, timestamped names like `valkey_backup_2025_06_24.rdb`.
- Store backups off-site or in the cloud (e.g., S3, Backblaze, or a secure remote server).
- Retention policy: Keep 7 daily, 4 weekly, and 3–6 monthly backups.
- Automate old backup cleanup with cron or shell scripts.
- Optionally compress with `gzip`, `xz`, or `zstd`.

Automating Valkey Backups (cron)

To automate Valkey backups, use cron to schedule daily backup tasks on Linux servers. This helps maintain consistency and reduces the chance of human error.

Example: Daily Backup at 3 AM

Edit your crontab:

```
crontab -e
```

Add the following entry:

```
0 3 * * * docker-compose -f /opt/app/docker-compose.yml exec valkey valkey-cli SAVE && \
docker cp $(docker-compose -f /opt/app/docker-compose.yml ps -q valkey):/data/dump.rdb
/backups/valkey_backup_$(date +%F).rdb
```

Make sure `/backups/` exists and has write permissions for the cron user.

Optional Compression + Upload

You can compress the file and upload it to cloud storage in the same cron job:

```
gzip /backups/valkey_backup_$(date +%F).rdb
rclone copy /backups/ remote:daily-valkey-backups
```

Backup Format and Restore Notes

Format	Description	Restore Method
dump.rdb	Binary snapshot of full dataset	Stop Valkey, replace dump.rdb, and restart the container
appendonly.aof	Command log (if enabled)	Stop Valkey, replace AOF file, and restart the container

To Restore a Backup

See [Elestio’s Redis restore guide](#), which applies to Valkey as well:

- Stop Valkey:

```
docker-compose down
```

- Replace the backup file in your volume mount (e.g., /data/dump.rdb or appendonly.aof).
- Restart the service:

```
docker-compose up -d
```