Having the capacity to store all one's files could have become a problem as better cameras tend to produce larger files and the uptake of video cameras produce even larger ones. We tend to keep more emails and to store more tunes, all of which demand more space. The editing of pictures or video needs yet more space.

Fortunately storage options are keeping pace. The form of storage has changed and the capacity of the storage media has increased rapidly even as the cost has fallen.

Floppy discs were originally introduced in the early 1970s. They were 8 inches wide and thin enough to be floppy, hence the name. They were supplanted in the late 1970s by 5¼ inch floppies and these in turn were replaced by 1987 by a popular, pocket sized, 3½ inch version that wasn't really floppy because it had a stiffer, plastic sleeve, but known as a floppy just the same.

There was a gradual progression of floppies ending with the "Double Density" version with a capacity of 1.44Megabytes (MB). They are (just about) available today, but if you want to use them you would have to buy a floppy drive specially, as a modern computer would not normally include one. It is honoured by being pictured in the icon for the Save button on many tool bars.

…The information on a floppy is stored magnetically onto the disc material. For backing up data one would often have to use sets of floppies to hold all the information. Today they are not large enough to hold a modern digital photograph and would be useful just for documents or other small files.

…1982 saw the introduction of CDs (Compact Disc) into general use for storing and playing music. In a few years it was available for storing computer data, typically 700MB (equivalent to over 450 floppies) The CD data is stored as a physical code of pits and flats. The higher capacity of the CD eroded the usefulness of floppies.

In 1995 the DVD (Digital Versatile Disc) appeared with a storage capacity of 4.7 GB (over 3000 floppies) on a single side or layer.

In recent years external hard disc drives have been increasing their capacity and reducing their cost. A 3TB drive can be bought for under £100. Its capacity is around that of 2.1 million floppies. Consider the storing and management the sheer bulk of so many floppies. At their cheapest floppies cost about 30p each. (that's about £208,000 per TB!)

New computers come with DVD drives and USB ports. USB flash drives, in turn, are getting bigger and cheaper. In the last two years the cost per Gigabyte has fallen from £5 to less than 50 pence.

You should buy only enough for you current needs as by the time you need more, the cost might have reduced considerably.