Preview a Factorio map before starting a new factory

Choose a Factorio map in the local game’s map-generation screen before scheduling a new season on your hosted server. A preview lets the group review its starting area without replacing the live factory. You need a matching local game version and the same content and mods planned for the server.

Keep the current factory out of the experiment

Record the live save name and startup selection, then leave them unchanged while you compare candidates. Create local test saves with distinct names such as `season_candidate_a`. Do not reuse the production filename or upload over the existing archive.

Agree what matters to the group: starting resources, water access, terrain or enemy pressure. A larger resource setting can change the intended challenge. Write a short candidate checklist instead of adjusting sliders until the preview merely looks attractive.

Generate and record a candidate

1. Open a new game in the same Factorio version and intended mod set. Confirm which expansion content you have enabled.
2. Choose a preset and inspect its settings before changing individual values. In Space Age, the official map-generator documentation notes that presets affect Nauvis.
3. Enter a candidate seed or generate one. Use the preview controls to inspect the starting area and nearby resources.
4. Record the seed and export the map exchange string. Keep the entire string, including its enclosing markers.
5. Create a separate local save and play a short sample with the group’s intended settings. Check for an overlooked starting constraint that the overview did not reveal.

Understand what the string preserves

A map exchange string describes map-generation settings. It does not carry your factory’s buildings, player inventories or completed research. Sharing that string is useful for comparing a fresh map, but it is not a substitute for the actual save archive when preserving progress.

Keep the game version, enabled content and mod list beside the string. A seed number on its own is a poor record of a modded candidate. Avoid promising that a future release will reproduce the same terrain from an old note without checking it.

Approve the candidate before cutover

Ask another group member to import the recorded exchange string into a matching local installation and compare the preview. Confirm that they obtain the intended candidate. Have players review the short sample save if starting conditions are important to the season.

Only after approval should you plan the hosted-server change. Take a completed backup of the existing factory, keep its original save archive and agree a rollback window. Use a distinct new save name and have support confirm the template’s selection process if the panel does not expose it.

If the candidate disappoints, discard that local experiment and create another. The existing service needs no rollback because you did not change it. Retain the approved string and settings with your season notes so later staff can explain how the map was chosen.

Related CloudExa help

- Back up game files before making changes
- Schedule backups and check retention
- Open a support ticket

Official references

- Factorio map preview and generation settings
- Factorio map exchange string format

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