

Making File Management Easy with Windows Explorer

With the *Windows Explorer* program in Windows 98/2000/XP you can view and manage your files, folders, and drives. The following sections explain file organization and give step-by-step instructions for viewing folders and files, creating folders, moving and copying files or folders, working with the Recycle Bin, and more.

Understanding File Organization

Understanding file names and organization will make using your computer less stressful and more efficient. This knowledge will help in managing

- ▶ files on your local hard drive or a network drive,
- ▶ files shared through e-mail attachments,
- ▶ files shared through FTP (File Transfer Protocol), and
- ▶ files put on the Web server for your Web site.

Files are organized by using folders (directories) on a physical location — just like paper documents within folders in file cabinet drawers.

File

Each letter, slide show, spreadsheet, or database you create is stored as a file. Every file saved has a *filename*. You can use multiple words for the filename; for example, *Letter to Sam*. Do NOT use special characters, \ / : * ? " < > | .

Every file also has a three-letter *extension*, assigned by the Windows system, that associates it with a specific program. For example, a WordPerfect complete file name would be *Letter to Sam.wpd* and a Word file name would be *Letter to Sam.doc*.

Folder

You can store or organize similar types of files within a folder. You create as many folders and subfolders as you need. Folders organize the files in a logical manner, like using manila folders inside hanging folders to organize paper documents in a file cabinet drawer. A good place to put your folders and files is in the “My Documents” folder on your local hard drive — to provide easy backup.

Disk drive

The physical location where folders and files can be found. A disk drive name consists of a single letter and a colon.

- Drive A: = First floppy disk drive
- Drive C: = First hard disk drive
- Drive D - Z: = optional drives (2nd hard drive, CD-ROM or DVD drive, ZIP drive, and network drives)

Path name

The complete name of your file on a computer actually includes the *path* name. A path simply describes where a file is located on your computer or the network. The path name lists the drive (such as the hard disk, floppy disk, or CD-ROM) and folder that contains your data file. When you use the Recycle Bin or Find/Search feature, you will see the path name listed for each file.

Complete path and file name examples:

C:\My Documents\Letter to Sam.wpd

A:\picture of john.jpg

V:\7PKP\newsletter\Sept.rtf (see Figure 1 for picture of folder structure)

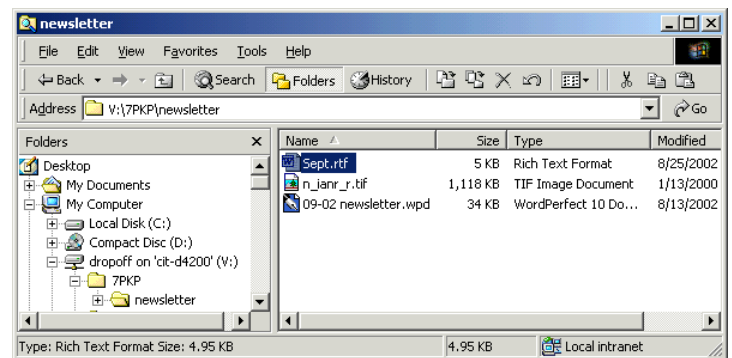


Figure 1. Sample screen from Windows Explorer showing connected drives (under My Computer) and folders on a network server. The Contents pane on the right shows the list of files within the newsletter folder.

Viewing Folders and Files

To start Windows Explorer, click on the Start button and select Programs. In Windows 98, next click on Windows Explorer to start the program. In Windows 2000 & XP, click on Accessories, then Windows Explorer. Or, you can use a shortcut to open the Windows Explorer program — right-click on the My Computer icon on your Desktop and choose *Explore* from the Shortcut menu.

NOTE for Windows XP users: To see the My Computer icon on the desktop, you may need to change the Start menu to the “Classic” view. Right-click on the Start button and select *Properties* from the Shortcut menu. Select “Classic Start Menu” and click the OK button.

The *Explorer* window has two panes: the “Folders” pane, on the left, showing you all connected drives (under My Computer) and folders on one drive and the “Contents” pane, on the right, showing the contents of the selected drive or folder (see Figure 1 above). To *expand* the view of a drive or folder in the “Folders” pane, click on the + symbol next to it and you will see more detail in the hierarchical

view. To see the contents of a folder, click once on the name or folder icon.

Depending on your version of Windows and changes you have made to the View option, you will see your files and folders shown in different ways. Figure 1 above shows the *Windows Classic* look with the “Details” View option. To get the Classic look,

- ▶ in Windows 98, uncheck the *as Web Page* option on the View menu.
- ▶ in Windows 2000, select Tools > Folder Options from the menu. Then select the *Use Windows classic folders* option in the “Web View” section (second set of options) in the General tab area. Next select the View tab and check (turn-on) the option to *Display the full path in the address bar*.
- ▶ Windows XP requires no changes.

The preferred Contents pane view is the *Details* option because you see the Name, Size, Type (program association), and Modified (date and time) properties for each file and folder. To see the *Details View*: Choose View > Details from the menu bar.

To make Windows use this view option as your default, you need to make one more change. Go to Tools > Folder Options and select the View tab in the dialog box. Then uncheck (turn off) the option to *Remember each folder’s view settings*.

The default listing in the Details view is alphabetical by Name. The column headings are active buttons that you can click to sort the listing in different orders. Click on any column heading once to list in ascending order and again to list in descending order.

TIP: In the *Details* view, Explorer can automatically adjust all the columns to fit to the width of the text. Click anywhere in the Contents pane, then hold down the <Ctrl> key and press the <+> Plus key on the numeric keypad.

NOTE: The default setting of Windows Explorer is to NOT display the three-letter extension of the file name. You don’t need to see the extension because in the *Details* view, the file “Type” column tells you the program associated with the file. If you want to see the file extension name, go to Tools > Folder options. In the dialog box, select the View tab and select *Hide file extensions for known file types* to turn it off (uncheck).

Managing Files and Folders

To create a new folder:

1. Select the location for the folder. For example, select the “My Documents” folder to create a subfolder within My Documents. Putting all your files in folders under My Documents will make it easier and quicker to make backups. (See Figure 2 below for an example of subfolders within the My Documents folder.)

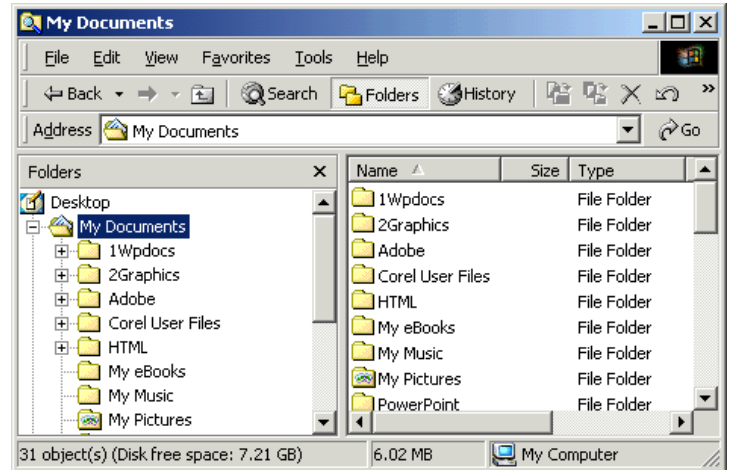


Figure 2. Example of data folders within the My Documents folder.

2. Choose File > New > Folder from the menu bar. Or, right-click on a blank area of the Contents pane and choose New > Folder from the Shortcut menu.
3. Type in a folder name and press the <Enter> key.

You can move or copy files by using the Cut/Copy/Paste procedure you are used to using in your word processor. There are also other ways to move or copy files and you can find information on those options in the Help index.

TIP: There are two ways to select multiple files or folders.

- ▶ To select consecutive files or folders, click the first item, press and hold down the <Shift> key, and then click the last item.
- ▶ To select files or folders that are not consecutive, click the first item, press and hold down the <Ctrl> key, and then click each additional item.

To move files or folders:

1. Select the file(s) or folder(s) to move.
2. Choose Edit > Cut (or click on the Cut button on the Toolbar or right-click on a file or a folder to move and choose Cut from the Shortcut menu).
3. Select the destination folder.
4. Choose Edit > Paste (or click on the Paste button on the Toolbar or right-click on the destination folder and choose Paste from the Shortcut menu).

To copy files or folders:

1. Select the file(s) or folder(s) to copy.
2. Choose Edit > Copy (or click on the Copy button on the Toolbar or right-click on a file or a folder to copy and choose Copy from the Shortcut menu).
3. Select the destination location (for example, a different disk drive).
4. Choose Edit > Paste (or click on the Paste button on the Toolbar or right-click on the destination folder and choose Paste from the Shortcut menu).

TIP: If you are copying files or folders to a disk or CD to make a backup, you may want to check the total size of the files to make sure they will fit on the disk. After selecting the files or folders, right-click on any selected item and choose Properties from the Shortcut menu. In the Properties dialog box you will see the information on the number of files, number of folders, and total size of all selected items. Click OK. Copy your files if there is enough room on the disk.

To rename a file or folder:

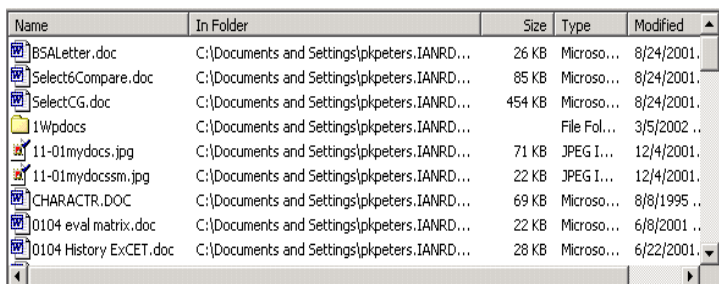
1. Select the file or folder to rename.
2. Choose File > Rename from the menu bar (or right-click on the file or folder name and choose Rename from the Shortcut menu).
3. Type the new file or folder name in the text box.
4. Press <Enter> key.

To find a file:

If you don't remember where a file is located, you can use the *Find* feature in Windows 98 and the *Search* feature in Windows 2000/XP.

Windows 98

1. Choose Tools > Find > Files or Folders from the menu bar. This will open a separate window.
2. Enter part of the file name in the "Named" text box.
3. If you want to search the entire hard drive, make sure the "Look in" box is showing (C:).
4. Click the Find Now button. (See Figure 3 below for a partial listing of files and folders found using "doc" as the search criteria. The files/folders will be listed in alphabetical order within folders.)



Name	In Folder	Size	Type	Modified
BSALetter.doc	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	26 KB	Microso...	8/24/2001.
Select&Compare.doc	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	85 KB	Microso...	8/24/2001.
SelectCG.doc	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	454 KB	Microso...	8/24/2001.
1Wpdocs	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...		File Fol...	3/5/2002 ..
11-01mydocs.jpg	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	71 KB	JPEG I...	12/4/2001.
11-01mydocssm.jpg	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	22 KB	JPEG I...	12/4/2001.
CHARACTR.DOC	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	69 KB	Microso...	8/8/1995 ..
0104 eval matrix.doc	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	22 KB	Microso...	6/8/2001 ..
0104 History ExcET.doc	C:\Documents and Settings\pkpeters.IANRD...	28 KB	Microso...	6/22/2001.

Figure 3. This sample screen shows a partial listing of files and folders found using "doc" as the search criteria. The files/folders will be listed in alphabetical order within folders.

Windows 2000/XP

1. Click on the Search Button on the Toolbar. The Search pane will replace the Folders pane.
 - a. In Windows XP, select "All files and folders."
2. Enter part of the file name in the "Search for files or folders named" or "All or part of the file name" text box.
3. If you want to search the entire hard drive, make sure the "Look in" box is showing (C:).
4. Click the Search Now button. (See Figure 3 below for a partial listing of files and folders found using "doc" as the search criteria. The files/folders will be listed in alphabetical order within folders.)

The search results list can be sorted by any column. Click on the column heading once to list in ascending order and again to list in descending order. To move a file from the old folder to a new folder, follow the instructions under "To move files or folders." To open a file to look at its contents, double-click on the file name.

NOTE for Windows 2000/XP users: Use the Back button on the Toolbar to go to the previous list of files. You will need to click on the Folders button on the Toolbar to see your list of drives and folders again in the left pane.

TIP: You can also find or search for a file by its content or search by a date range without a file name. See the Help information for details.

To delete a file(s) or folder(s):

1. Select the file(s) or folder(s) to be deleted.
2. Press <Delete> key (or right-click on the file or folder to be deleted and choose Delete from the Shortcut menu).
3. Click **Yes** in the *Confirm File Delete* dialog box to put the file in the Recycle Bin.

TIP: Deleting a folder also deletes all files in that folder.

To restore deleted file(s) or folder(s) while in Windows Explorer:

If you deleted the wrong file, select Edit > Undo from the menu bar. The Undo menu item will show the last function performed and if it isn't the "Delete" option, you need to select multiple Undo's to get to the Delete choice. This retrieves the file and places it in the original folder it was deleted from.

NOTE: The Undo option only works for the current session in the Windows Explorer program. After you exit Windows Explorer, you will need to use the Recycle Bin to restore deleted files or folders. Please see the next section.

Using the Recycle Bin

The **Recycle Bin** acts as a temporary storage area for files deleted from your local hard drive. The Recycle Bin does NOT keep a copy of any file or folder deleted from other locations (diskette, ZIP drive, or network drive).

Deleting a file or folder to the Recycle Bin does not permanently delete the file from your local hard drive. The Recycle Bin allows you to restore deleted files. To permanently delete the file and regain some hard drive space, you need to delete the file(s) from the Recycle Bin.

To restore deleted file(s) from the Recycle Bin:

1. Open the *Recycle Bin* outside of Windows Explorer by double-clicking on its icon on the Desktop.
2. Select the file(s) to be restored.
3. Choose File > Restore from the menu bar (or right-click on the file or folder to be restored and choose *Restore* from the Shortcut menu).

To delete a file(s) from the Recycle Bin:

1. Select the *Recycle Bin* icon inside Windows Explorer or open the Recycle Bin on your desktop.
2. Select the file(s) to be deleted. NOTE: The column headings in the Recycle Bin are active buttons, so you can sort the files to list the way it is easiest for you to work with them.
3. Press <Delete> key (or right-click on the file or folder to be deleted and choose Delete from the Shortcut menu).
4. Click **Yes** in the *Confirm File Delete* dialog box.

To delete all files at one time from the Recycle Bin, use the *Empty Recycle Bin* option:

1. Choose File > Empty Recycle Bin.
2. Click **Yes** in the *Confirm Multiple File Delete* dialog box.

Creating and Using Shortcuts

To create a desktop shortcut to Windows Explorer:

You can quickly create a desktop shortcut or QuickLaunch shortcut to this program or other programs. The default QuickLaunch toolbar is a section of 3 or 4 icons on the Taskbar next to the Start button. You only need to click once on these icons to open the program.

1. Click on the Start button and select Programs.
2. Find your program name. Right-click and hold and drag to the desktop or QuickLaunch area and release. (When you drag the program name to the QuickLaunch area you will see an I-beam that allows you to place the icon in the sequence you want.)

3. In Windows 98/2000, choose *Create Shortcut(s) Here* from the Shortcut menu. In Windows XP, choose *Copy Here* from the Shortcut menu.

NOTE for Windows XP users: If you don't see the QuickLaunch icons on the Taskbar, right-click on the Taskbar and select Toolbars > QuickLaunch from the Shortcut menu.


To create a desktop shortcut for a frequently used file:

1. In Windows Explorer, right-click and hold on the file name.
2. Drag it to the desktop and release. NOTE: Windows Explorer needs to be running in a smaller window, not maximized, so you can see the desktop.
3. Select the *Create Shortcut(s) Here* option.

When you double-click on the shortcut icon you will open the program and the file at the same time.

Keyboard shortcuts

These keyboard shortcuts simplify various operations and give your hand a rest from using the mouse. Here's a list of selected shortcuts and their effects.

 Windows key = Display Start Menu (and taskbar, if it isn't visible)

Use the arrow keys to move up and down the menu and to move to the right (open sub-menus). Use the Enter key to make a selection.

Windows key + E = Start Windows Explorer
Windows key + F = Find/Search files or folders
Ctrl + Windows key + F = Find a computer

These shortcut keystrokes work in all Windows programs:

Alt + F4 = Exit the program
Esc = Cancel (in menus and dialog boxes)
Ctrl+A = Select all
Ctrl+C = Copy
Ctrl+X = Cut
Ctrl+V = Paste
Ctrl+S = Save current document with same name
Ctrl+Z = Undo

If you want a list of additional keyboard shortcuts, click on the Start button and then select Help. Use the Search feature to look for *keyboard shortcut*.