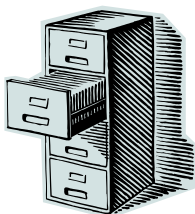


Creating, Manipulating and Using Files and Folder

A filing cabinet comparison.



Your hard drive is the cabinet, partitioned drives are the drawers, the drawer sub-divisions are the folders and individual documents in the folders are the files.

Why bother with divisions and sub-divisions for data? My desktop computer has 29 folders under Documents alone. One folder "Computer" has 212 files and 4 sub folders, another folder has 2 files. If the average number of files per folder is, say, 40 then there are 1160 files. Try looking through all of those to find a file whose title you are not sure of! And that is but one folder.

What is the internal layout of a typical hard drive

Look first at My Computer. Usually there is an icon with that name on the desktop so double left click on that.

What will be shown are three main sub-divisions:

Files stored on this computer. Usually sub-directories of Shared Documents, and Documents for each named user.

Hard disk drives. Always C plus any other partitions such as D and E with their size and free space shown, plus any other hard drives wired in to the computer.

Devices with removable storage. Such things as your A drive floppy disc if fitted and DVD/CD drive or drives, To this will be added removable drives from time to time.

Exploring a hard disk drive.

Double left click on C drive and it will open to show you its contents.

This is the drive that houses the operating system with all of its complexities. It will also hold all of the data that you create unless you have partitioned the drive into two or more partitions.

When C drive opens you will see a series of folders; usually a folder is depicted as a partly opened yellow file holder. Look at the names of the folders and one will be Program Files. Double left click on that and it also will open to show you a lot more folders, most of which will have familiar name of applications that you use, such as "Internet Explorer".

Double click on Internet Explorer and this will open to show a number of folders and some files. Note that the files do not have a yellow file folder icon.

In Win XP we are now actually working in an application which is part of the XP operating system called Windows Explorer (NB. NOT Internet Explorer). Windows Explorer can be found in Start.> Programs (or All Programs)>Accessories where well down the list you will find Windows Explorer. Right click on it and select Send to>Desktop(create shortcut) Click on that and a Windows Explorer icon will appear on the desktop. Click on that icon and you will launch Windows Explorer directly.

How Folders and Files are presented on the screen

By default Windows XP shows most files and folders as an icon with a name but it can be set to show more information.

Generally in a window of My Computer or Windows Explorer where folders



and files are listed there will be an icon named Views . Click on the arrow beside it and try out each view to get one that suits you.

Also while folders are shown with very little information, if you right click on the folder name and select Properties, you will find the size of the folder and the number of files in it.

Depending on how you set up your Folder Options you may also see the extension indicating the type of file, eg. .doc, .xls, .jpg. These are respectively a Word document, an Excel spreadsheet and a picture in jpg format. It is useful to have this information showing for all files so that you can quickly identify the type of file it is. Microsoft default, however, hides this. To show file types, go to Start>Control Panel>Folder Options and click on the View tab. If there is a tick in the box next to "Hide extensions for known file types" click inside the box and the tick will be removed and file types will be visible the next time you open an appropriate window.

Manipulating files and folders

If the blue pane is showing to the left of details pane and you click on a folder name or file name so that it is highlighted you will see a range of options that you can use. If you click on a folder you will get one range of options. If you click on a file you will get a different range of options depending on the type of file, eg. word file, picture or music.

If you wish to you can change the Blue Pane to a view of the structure of the whole computer by clicking on Folders (next to Views).

Creating a new folder

Select the folder that you want a new folder to be as a sub-folder, eg. C:\Documents in My Computer or in Windows Explorer is to have a new sub-folder. First, highlight (select) Documents and then go to the File menu and left click. In the menu options that appear, click on New and select Folder. If the details of what is in Documents is not showing double left click on Documents to show the detail. There should be folder box called New Folder. Either right click on the name New Folder and select Rename or change to the blue pane and select "Rename this folder".

Type in the new name of the folder eg. Family letters. Click anywhere away from the folder and the name Family Letters should be in the list of folders.

You also proceed in the same way if you want to place a sub-folder under Family Letters, eg. Henry, except that this time you would go to File>New after having selected the Family Letters folder.

Copy

To copy a file or folder to another location.

Click on the file or folder that you want to copy.

Method 1. If the Blue pane is showing click on "Copy this File (or Folder)". A dialog box will open so that you can indicate the place that you want to copy to. Click on the plus sign to open that folder and keep doing so until you come to the place you need (usually a folder). Click Copy at the foot of the dialog box and the task will be done.

Method 2. Make sure that the hierarchical structure is showing in the left pane and not the Blue pane, see "Manipulating..." above. Right click on the file that you want to move and select Copy from the menu. Highlight the place where you want to copy the file to and go to Edit menu and click Paste.

Move

Method 1. As for Copy Method 1 but select "Move this file" instead of Copy.

Method 2. Find the file or folder you want to move. Make sure the destination for the file or folder you want to move it to is visible in the left pane. Holding down the left mouse button, drag the file to its destination.

Rename

Method 1. With Blue pane showing, click in the right pane on the file or folder that you want to rename. In the Blue pane select "Rename this file" (or folder). In the right pane the folder that you selected will appear inside a box. Type a new name in front of the old one and delete the old name taking care to leave the extension, eg **.doc**, unchanged. Click away from the original position and the new filename will be in place.

Method 2. Right click the name of the file that you want to change and select Rename from the menu. Then follow the same procedure as for Method 1.

E-mail

Select the file and click "E-mail this file" in the Blue pane. Your default browser will open with the file already shown as an attachment.

Print

Select the file and select "Print this file" from the Blue pane and the file will be printed by your default printer.

Divide Very Large Folders

Searching for a file in a very large folder can be tedious. Sometimes a lot of the data held in a file is reference material that needs to be looked at only rarely.

A possible way to do this is to create a new folder, say "Tax Old" and move all files before a certain date to that folder leaving current data more easily found. You could, of course, create a folder for each year Tax 1999, Tax 2000, etc.

Delete to Recycle bin

Select a file and select Delete this file from the Blue pane and it will be sent to the Recycle Bin. Or, right click on the file and select Delete from the menu.

What happens when you add an external hard drive

If you connect an external hard drive it will appear in My Computer under Hard Drives just as if it was an installed drive. Any of the actions that have been mentioned above can be carried out in the same way

If the external drive has been off and is then switched on, a dialog box will open asking what you want to do. The most useful option to select is "Open folder to view files using Windows Explorer".

What happens when you add a USB jump drive

You may use them in the same way as an external drive except that they will appear in My Computer as a device with removable storage and the drive will be allocated a drive letter, eg.F.

Duplicating Folders/Files on an External Hard drive

You can use an external hard drive or a partition of your internal hard drive to duplicate any of your data. This is a form of backing up and you do not need to use a backup program but your files will not be compressed and will take up more space.