

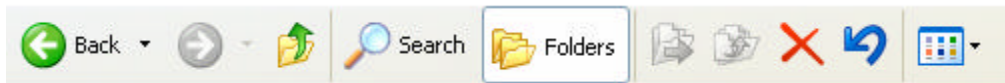
Using Windows Explorer

Understanding how to use Windows Explorer is essential if you use computers. Explorer is a program that is primarily used to find computer files and related information. You can use Explorer to copy, move, or delete computer files. Explorer can also be used to launch software or diagnose problems when things do not work correctly. Care should be used when using Explorer. Deleted or moved files can lead to missing data and sometimes in extreme cases leave a computer inoperable.

What are files? A File is a grouping of data that is saved to a storage device for loading into the computer memory. When loaded into memory a file will execute an instruction or provide data for a running program that understands what the data means. A file is much like a song on a CD or a movie on a DVD. In fact, songs on a CD or movies on a DVD are computer files. That is why computers can play and copy music and movies.

Explorer can be launched from two places. Double-Clicking the **My Computer** icon on your desktop will open up Explorer. You may also Right-Click on the Start Button on the lower-left of your screen and select **Explore**.

When Explorer opens up the tool bar will look something like this:



The most important button is the **Folders** button. When you click that a left-side folder panel will open to show you the drive and folder structure your computer has.

The **Search** button will open a window on the left that enables you to search for a file(s) based upon a name or part of name for that file. If Explorer finds the file(s) with the search criteria, the files and locations will be displayed in the right-side pane. This is great when you forget where you saved a file.

The Toolbar button on the far right is used to select the view format of the files you are looking through. If you are looking for pictures or images select the **Thumbnail** choice. If you are just trying to find other type of files using the **List** or **Details** selections.

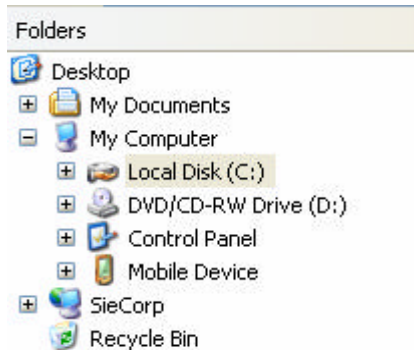
File names look something like this: My Essay.doc Payroll.exe X45ty.dll

The letters on the right are called extensions and are important to view. These three letters tell Windows and you what kind of file each file is. Normally Explorer will **NOT** display these extensions. To tell Explorer to show extensions go to the **Tool** menu and select **Options**. On the **View** Tab select "**Hide Extensions of known file Types**." Make sure the check box is **UNCHECKED**. Push **OK** to save these options.

Below is a list of just a few common types of Windows files. There are hundreds of more types, but this is a start

- .doc .wpd Word Processing Document

- .xls Excel Spreadsheets
- .ppp PowerPoint Presentations
- .bmp .tiff .jpeg Various image or picture formats
- .mdb .dbf .mdf Various database files
- .exe Programs (do not delete or move these)
- .com Programs (do not delete or move these)
- .dll Programs (do not delete or move these)
- .sys System (do not delete or move these)



We feel that it is important for you to see how everything is laid out. On the left side of Explorer you will see something like this. This figure shows you the basic root file structure on your Computer. My files on this computer will be on the Local Drive (C:) Even the **My Documents** folder is on the C: drive. See if you can find it in the C:\Documents and Settings file folder. Our computers are part of a network. See the SieCorp network. If I double click on it and have security clearance I can go out and search and explore my whole network for folders and files.

When you double click on a folder, it normally opens up another layer of folders or files. This is called “drilling down”. You are going deeper and deeper into the folder/file structure. Use the Previous (1st) or Up (3rd) tool bar buttons to return to the previous folder/file level.

At any level of the Folder/File structure you can add a folder. Go to the **File** Menu and Select **New** then **Folder**. A folder will appear in the Panel on the right. You may type in its name. You can delete a folder or file by select the item and pushing your **Delete** key. Be careful deleting anything.

Try right clicking on folders and files. Right-clicking reveals all sorts of commands and properties to Explore. Remember, changing names, moving or deleting anything can be damaging if you do not know what you are doing.

If you need access to a server on you network, it is normal to MAP a drive. To map a drive got to the Tool menu and select “Map a network drive”. If you have the authority, find a drive on a computer you want to regularly access and select it with a letter that is not being used. Use letters in the Alphabet large that F: Most computers use A: B: C: D: E: & F:

- The programs and files that comprise the Windows operating system are in **C:\Windows** or **C:\WNNT**. Look but do not touch.
- Most application programs such as MS Word are in **C:\Program and Files**. Look but do not touch.
- Most of the documents you create are in the **C:\Documents and Settings** folders under a folder named after your user name.

Your desktop is just a fancy cover to Explorer. When an item shows on your desktop, it is normally directly linked from your desktop to a file buried somewhere in your file structure. If you right-click on an Icon, under **Properties** it may show you what and where you are clicking. Every user, even on the same computer can have a different desktop look.

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