

Windows Explorer: Managing Your Files

This tutorial will present "how to" information and practice exercises on the following operations in **Windows Explorer**:

[Finding Files](#)

[Saving Files](#)

[Copying Files](#)

[Moving Files](#)

[Deleting Files](#)

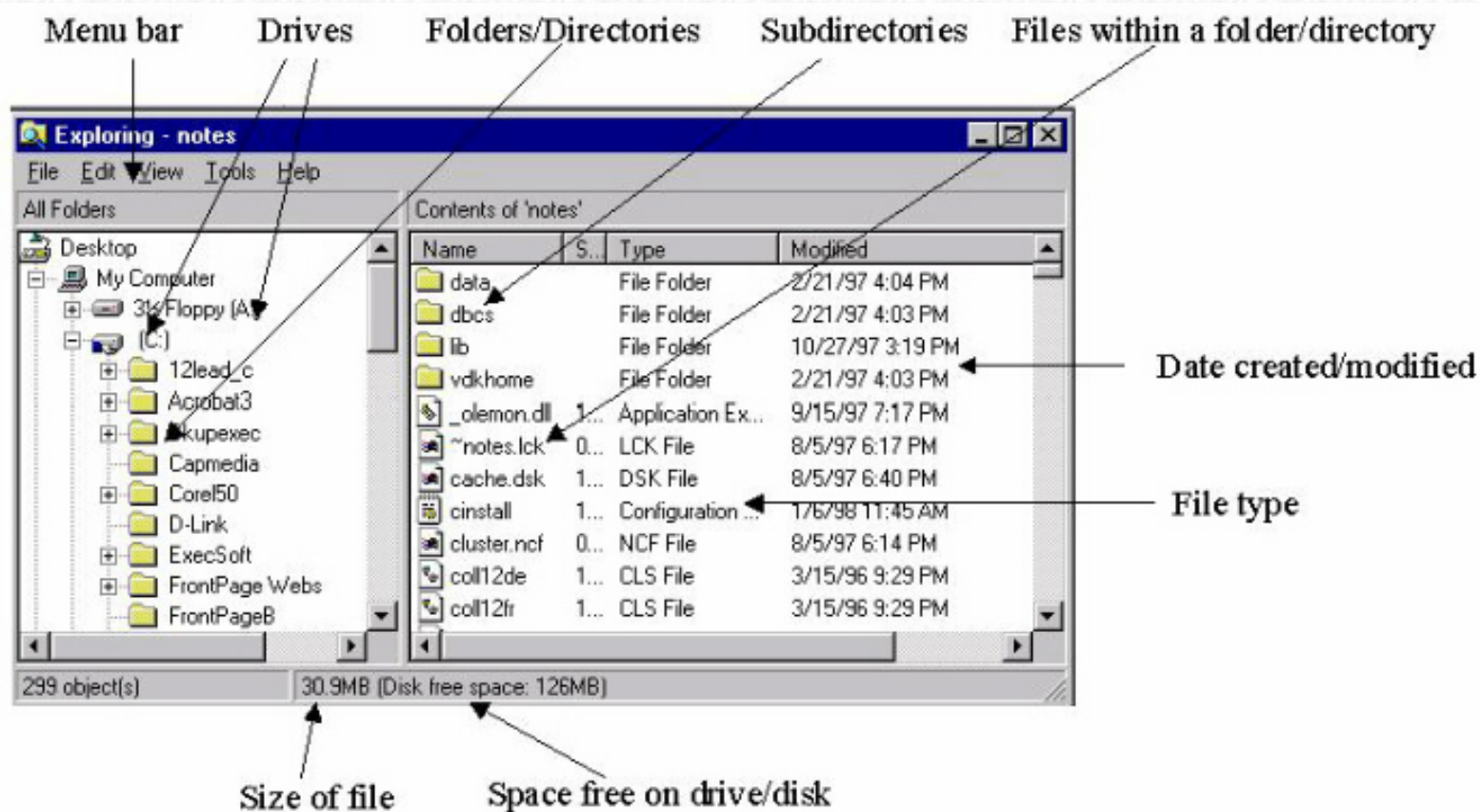
[Creating Folder Directories](#)

Before learning how to Find, Save, Copy, Move, Delete files, etc. let's take a look at one of the most useful tools to help you manage your files. The program is called **Windows Explorer**. As you learn about file management in the steps to follow, refer to the image below of Windows Explorer. Notice the identification of the parts of Explorer below.

You may want to print this tutorial to have at your side as you go through it. Or you can go through the practice exercises with 2 windows open -- your Explorer window and your browser window. To do this, open both windows. Then at the bottom of the screen right click on the task bar and choose 'Tile Vertically'. Now the 2 windows are side by side for you to follow the directions in the tutorial while you perform the exercises in Explorer.



The practice exercises are marked with a computer icon.



Accessing Windows Explorer

To access your Windows Explorer:

1. Click on Start, Programs, Windows Explorer
2. Size the window for your desired viewing. You can also size each of the vertical windows within the larger one to see all the information

Parts of Windows Explorer

Try to think of the structure of this file management tool as a filing cabinet with folders inside of filing drawers, etc. This concept is represented in Explorer with a "tree" type of appearance -- directories come off main drives; files come off directories, etc.

On the left side of your Explorer window are the folders in your chosen drive. The Explorer view begins with Desktop, followed by My Computer, and lists all your drives, followed by other folders or programs contained within the Desktop and My Computer.

Your directory structure is indicated by the indentation levels in Explorer's left pane. On the right side are the files and folders that are contained within the folder you select at left. Your selected folder appears to be open, with its contents spilling out into the right panel.

A minus sign on a folder means that it is fully expanded. A plus sign on a folder means that more files are contained inside it than are visible.

When you want to see details of your files (i.e. size, date created/modified), click on 'View', 'Details'. When you just want to see a list of files, click on 'View', 'List'.



Practice Exercise

Practice moving around in the Explorer window by

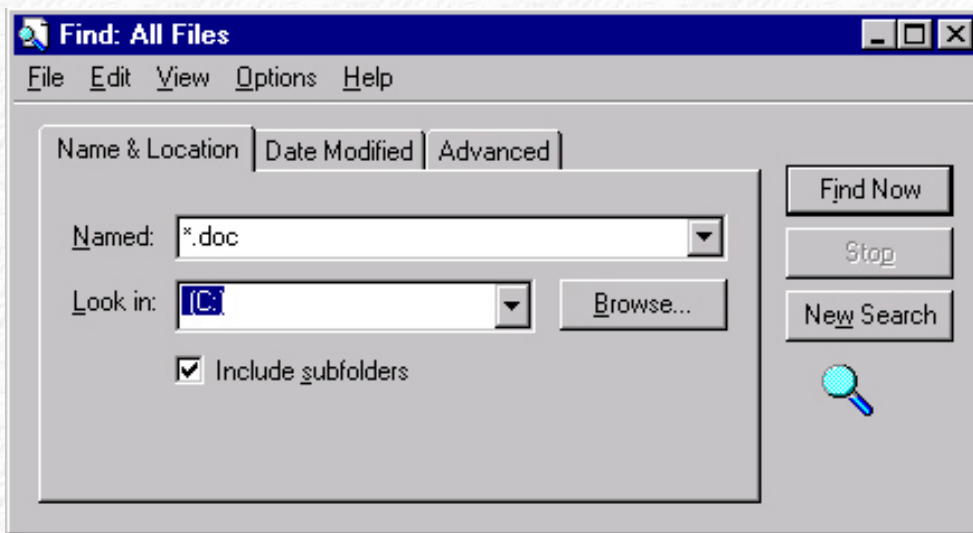
- clicking on the folders on the left side to see how the subfolders and files are displayed on the right side of the window.
- Use the scroll bars in the windows to navigate.
- Click on the items on the menu bar to see the options provided.
- Identify in your Explorer all the items identified above.

Finding Files

If you save a file and then can't remember what you named it or where it was saved, you can search for the file using the Windows **Find** feature. Windows 95 allows you to locate files based on file name, a portion of a name, date, and/or the text included in a file. To conduct a search, you can

- use your START menu and choose FIND, Files and Folders, or
- click on Tools on the menu bar and choose Find, Files or Folders, or
- right click My Computer, and choose FIND.

The Find dialogue box comes up which looks like the image below.



Using a basic search, you indicate the file name or a portion of the file name (if you don't know it all) and search either your entire computer, or any drives or directories that you choose.

Here are some examples of ways of searching:

- You saved a Word document to your hard drive [C:] but you can't remember the name or where it was saved (but would recognize it). The syntax for entering into the 'Named:' box would be ***.doc** (this says show all files with a .doc extension)
***.ppt** (this says show all files with a .ppt extension)
- You want to find the file called 'budg-req. but you only remember part of the name -- 'budg'. The syntax would be **budg*** (this says show all files beginning with budg).
- In the 'Look in:' box, click the Browse button and click on [C:] so that the search will start from the main level or root of the c: drive.
- Then click on 'Find Now' to start the search

Your search results screen will list the file or files which match your criteria. The screen functions like a window in Explorer or My Computer. Here you may open, delete, move, and copy files.



Practice Exercise

Practice using this tool by doing the following:

- Open Explorer by clicking Start, Programs, Windows Explorer.
- Open the **Find** program by clicking on Tools, Find, Files or Folders.
- In the 'Named:' box, type *.*.doc
- In the 'Look in:' box click Browse and select C:
- Click on Find Now.

You should see all the documents with the .doc extension on your C: drive (hard drive).

When you find a file you are searching for, you can double click on the file name and it will launch the application and open your file.

Saving Files

Although Windows Explorer is not used for saving files, this operation will be covered here, as it involves the need to be familiar with the directory structure of Windows in order to know where to save or retrieve files when using applications.

When saving any document, using any application, you will follow these steps:

1. When you are ready to save a file, click on 'File', 'Save As'
2. When the 'Save As' dialogue box comes up, click on the little triangle button at the end of the 'Save in:' box to display

your drives.

3. Scroll to the drive letter (C: or A:), then double click on the folder (directory) to which you wish to save the file. You will then see that folder pop into the 'Save in:' box.
4. In the 'File name:' box below, enter your choice of a filename.
5. In the 'Save as type:' box, you notice that the application being used is already in the box. If you wish to save the file as another file type (i.e. *text only*, etc.), click the little triangle button at the end of the box to select.
6. Lastly, click on the 'Save' button.



Practice Exercise

Perform the following steps to save a file:

1. Open your word processing program (you do not have to really type anything unless you wish).
2. Click on 'File', 'Save As'.
3. In the 'Save in:' box, click on the triangle and go to (C:).
4. Find the Temp folder and double click on it. It will pop into the box.
5. In the 'File name:' box, type 'test_doc' (no parens)
6. Click on the 'Save' button
7. Now close the program and open it up again.
8. Click on 'File', 'Open', and follow the same procedure as above to locate the file.
9. When you locate it, double click on the file to open it into your word processing program.
10. You have now completed the exercise and can close your program.

NOTE: When retrieving files with extensions other than the application's extension, you will need to click on 'All Files' in the 'Files of type:' box to see and select your files. For example, WORD automatically puts the file extension .doc after the filename. If, for example, you are using WORD and you saved a file with the name 'smith.let'. When you click on File, Open you will need to select 'All Files' in the 'Files of type:' box to see that file because just the files with the .doc extension will be showing in the file list.

Copying Files

You can use several methods for copying (and moving) files:

- right clicking,
- clicking a toolbar icon,
- clicking edit, copy on the menu bar,
- pressing 'control c' on your keyboard, or
- dragging your files to another location. As you gain more experience and confidence, you will probably use the dragging option more frequently. Initially, you may prefer the other options.

Basically when copying files from one directory or drive to another, you are going to select the file, then use one of these methods to copy it to another location.



Practice Exercises

Try the following ways to copy files using the different methods:

RIGHT CLICKING

- Put a disk with at least 3 expendable files to play with in your A: drive.
- Open Windows Explorer
- Click once on [A:] to reveal all the files on your disk (A: drive).

- Right click on one of the files and choose **copy**.
- On the left side click on C: and navigate down to the Temp folder.
- Right click on Temp and choose **Paste** (left click).
- Check it by double clicking on the Temp directory folder to see it displayed on the right side

MENU BAR

- Click once on a file on your disk (A:), on the menu bar choose edit, copy.
- Navigate to the directory folder where you wish to place your file(Temp). Select it by clicking on it once.
- On the menu bar choose edit, paste.
- Check it by double clicking on Temp to see it displayed on the right side.

KEYBOARD

- Select a file on you A: drive (disk) by clicking on it once, press Ctrl C (hold down control while you press the letter c). Then release it--you have just copied it.
- Navigate to the directory where you wish to place your file (Temp). Select it by left clicking on Temp once.
- Press Ctrl V (hold down control while your press v).
- Check it by double clicking on Temp and see it displayed on the right.

DRAGGING

NOTE: *You need both directories visible to use this option. Or you can open up Explorer again and move the windows around for good viewing.*

- Then in one window locate the file to be copied .
- In the 2nd window scroll to the desired target drive and folder so that it is visible.
- Then click and hold the left mouse button on the file in the first window and drag it to the 2nd window to the desired folder:
 - a) if copying it to the same drive, hold down the letter C on your keyboard while you drag it. (Remember: C for copy!)
 - b) if copying to a different drive, just drag it.(Windows 95 automatically copies rather than moves to different drives.)

Drop it precisely on the folder to which it will go. A small box will be visible around the selected folder, so that you can drop it within that folder.

If you miss, check the folders above and below your selected folder to see if the file landed there. Otherwise, you may have to search to locate it.

TIP: You can copy several files at a time by

- **Left clicking on 1 file, hold down the 'Ctrl' key while you select the other files**
- **Release the Ctrl key and on any one of the selected files drag to desired location.**



Practice Exercise

Perform these copy maneuvers:

1. Click on A: to reveal your files on the right side.
2. Right click on one of the files and choose **Copy**.
3. On the left, scroll down to the Temp folder, right click on it, choose **Paste**. See how easy!
4. Repeat the same steps, but this time select the file and click on Edit on the menu bar, then perform the **copy and paste**.

Now let's try another copying maneuver. You are going to copy several files from one drive to another using 2 windows:

1. Open Windows Explorer
2. Open Windows Explorer **again**
3. On the task bar at the very bottom of the screen, find an open spot, right click in that space and choose '**Tile Windows Horizontally**'. Now you have 2 windows open.

4. In the top window, click on A: to reveal your files on the right side.
5. In the bottom window, click on C: and scroll to the Temp folder.
6. In the top window, select 3 files by
 - Left clicking on 1 file, hold down the 'Ctrl' key while you select (left click) 2 other files. Now you see 3 highlighted (selected) files.
7. Release the Ctrl key and on any one of the selected files drag to the bottom window to the Temp folder. All 3 files were copied.

Moving Files

The process of moving files from one place to another is essentially the same. When right clicking, or choosing Edit from the menu,

- Select your file.
- Choose **cut** instead of copy
- Then go to the drive or directory where you want to move the file and select **paste**.

*Note: Dragging files **only copies** files -- they remain in 2 places. Also, remember you can move multiple files in the same manner as described under 'Copying Files'.*



Practice Exercise

Try moving a file by doing the following:

1. On the left, click on A: to reveal your files on the right side.
2. Right click on one of the files and choose **Cut**.
3. Then scroll to your Temp directory on the left, right click on Temp and choose **Paste**.
4. Now click once on that same file in the Temp.
5. Click on Edit on the menu bar and choose **Cut**
6. Now click on A: and on the menu bar choose Edit, **Paste**.

Deleting Files

Deleting files and folders is easy - almost too easy. Here again, you have several options:

- select the file or folder and click the *delete* icon on your toolbar
- select the file or folder and press the *delete* key (del)
- right click the file or folder and choose *delete*.
- drag the file and drop it in the *recycling bin* on your desktop

Unless you have indicated in the *recycle bin* that you wish all files that you delete to be permanently deleted, and unless you are on a floppy drive, deleting will merely send your files to the *recycle bin*, from where you can permanently delete them later.

WARNING: *When you delete a folder, you delete all files in that folder. Before deleting a folder, be sure that it does not contain files you wish to keep!*



Practice Exercise

Try deleting files by doing the following: *be sure these are your "play" files that can be trashed!*

1. Close one of the Explorer windows if still open.
2. Click on A: to reveal your files on the right side

3. Left click on one of the files to select it
4. Press your **Delete** key on the keyboard.
5. Now select another file on A:
6. Copy that file to your Temp directory (according to instructions above)
7. Double click on the Temp folder to see the file
8. Now left click on that file to select it
9. Drag the file to the 'Recycle Bin'. *Remember, that file is not really gone yet. You can retrieve it. But once you empty the Bin, it is history!*

Remember, only files deleted from your hard drive can be retrieved from the Recycle Bin.

How to Create Folder Directories

Create folders by performing these steps:

1. Open Windows Explorer -- Start, Programs, Windows Explorer
2. If your window is small you may need to enlarge it (maximize it or drag the right lower corner).
3. To create a folder (directory) on C: click one time on C: (on left) to highlight/select it.
4. Go up to the menu bar at the top and click on 'File', 'New', 'Folder'.
5. A folder box appears on the right. Type your desired folder name. and click Enter.
6. On the menu bar at the top, click 'View', 'Refresh' and now you will see your new folder on the left.

NOTE: Sub folders can be created under already established folders in the same manner. On the menu bar, click one time on the folder and click 'File', 'New', 'Folder'.



Practice Exercise

Practice creating folders by doing the following:

1. Open Windows Explorer
2. Scroll the left side scroll bar up until you see [C:] and click once on [C:]
3. Go up to 'File' on the menu bar and choose 'New', 'Folder'
4. Replace 'New Folder' with 'Downloads' and hit Enter. Now when you download something from the Web, you can put the file in this directory.
5. Click on [C:] again and make another folder called 'Coursework'.
6. Now click once on the 'Coursework' folder and create a folder with the name of one of your courses (example n308). You may want to create another folder for another course. Now you can see how this works to organize your files!