



Working with Files and Folders

Use the Windows Explorer (not to be confused with the Internet Explorer), Understand File names, Selecting a file, Opening Files, Renaming Folders and Files, Creating Folders and files Delete a file, Restore a file, Copy a file, Move a file, Removable Storage, Understanding extensions, Changing File Associations, Show and Hide extensions

Using the Windows Explorer + .

The Windows Explorer allows us to explore and manipulate files and folders. You can open the Windows Explorer by right clicking on the **Start** button and then selecting *Explore* from the options list, or by using the keyboard shortcut  + .

The menu and toolbar options for the folder viewer window have changed drastically from Windows XP to Windows 7. We are going to be using the parts that work similar. Screen shots will be on the next page.

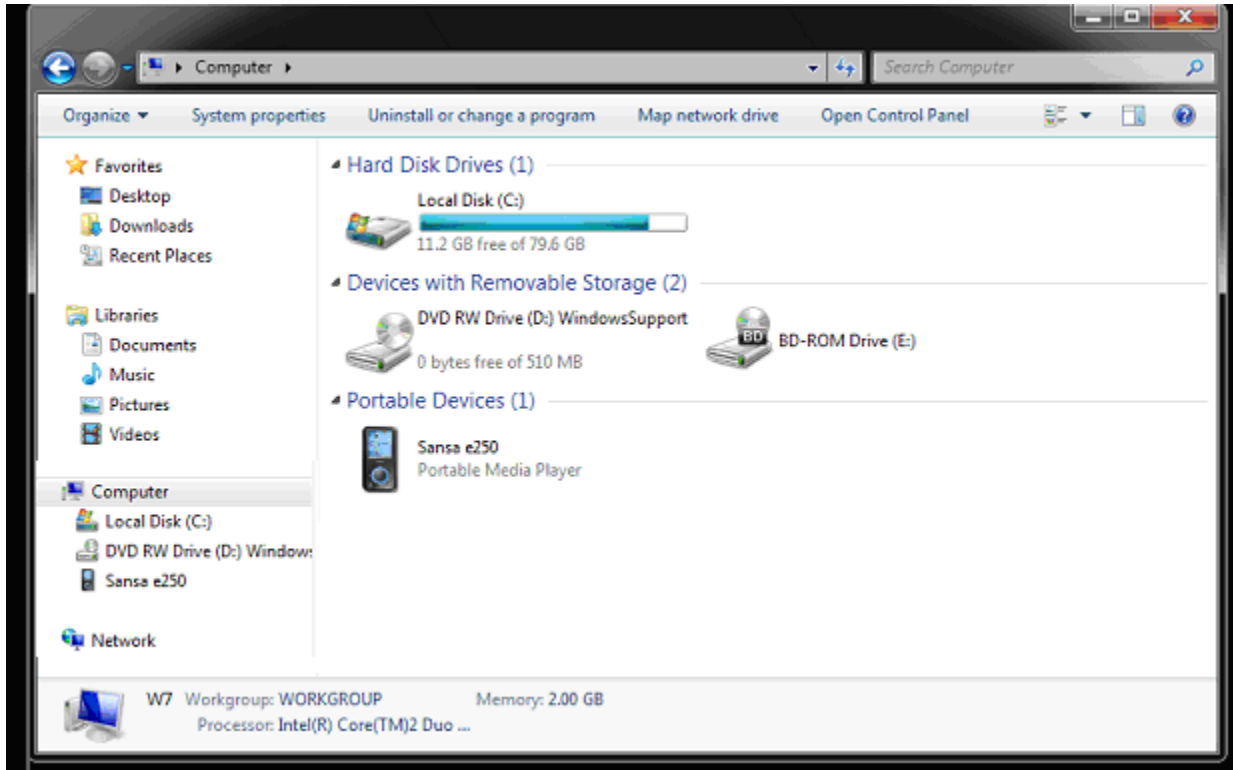
If you click on the **My Computer** or **Computer** icon in the folder options that will show the real physical devices and physical locations. These physical locations will be the path to the document. File names will be discussed later.

The user document storage has changed on each of the operating systems we have in this classroom. In XP the area will be called *My Documents* in Window 7 or the *Libraries/Documents* and in Windows Vista the area will be Username/Documents.

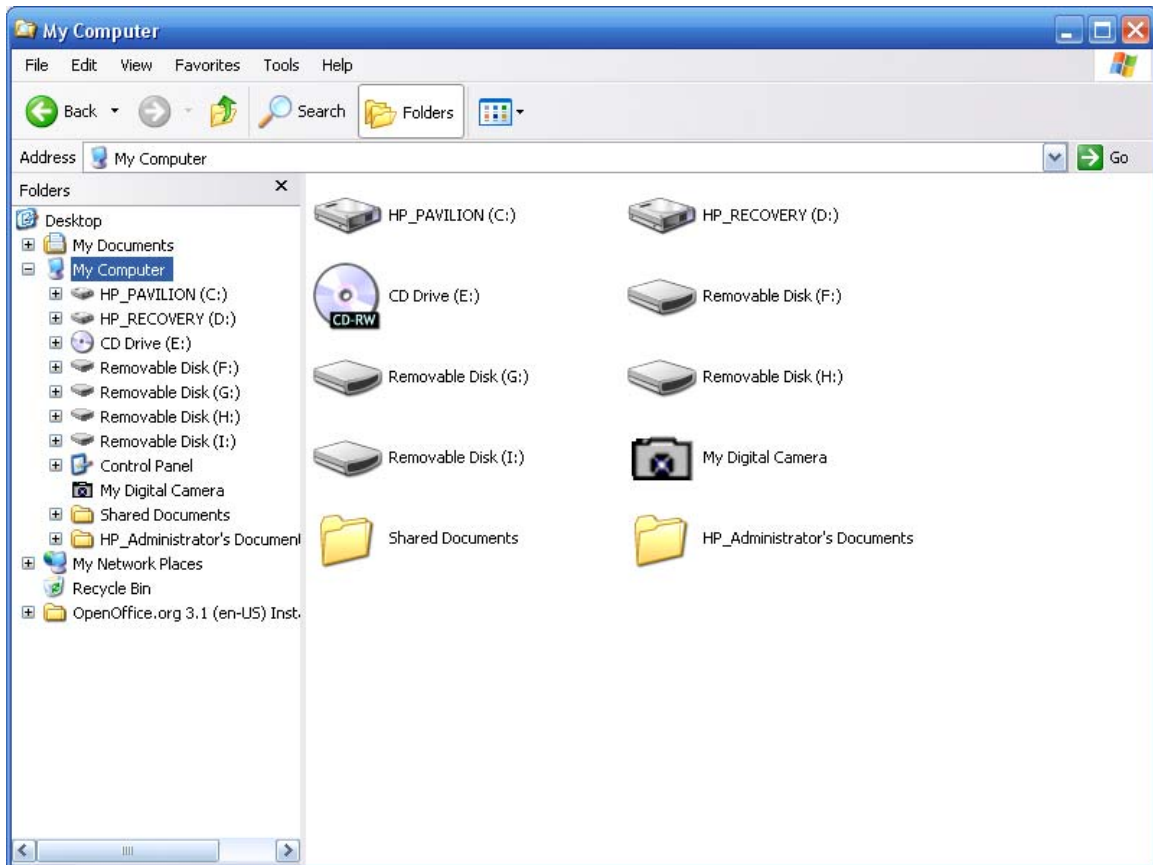
These document storage locations are pseudo locations. The actual path for these areas will change for each user account. For example, the actual path to My Documents in XP will be C:\Documents and Settings\username where the user name will change for each user account. **Libraries** are much more complicated. They default to location is C:\Users\username but more locations can be added.

An excellent video on Libraries can be found here
<http://www.top-windows-tutorials.com/windows-7-tutorial7.html>

On any operating system, the **My Computer** folder will bring up the real physical devices and physical locations. These physical locations will be the path to the document. File names will be discussed later.



Windows Explorer on Windows 7



Windows Explorer on Windows XP

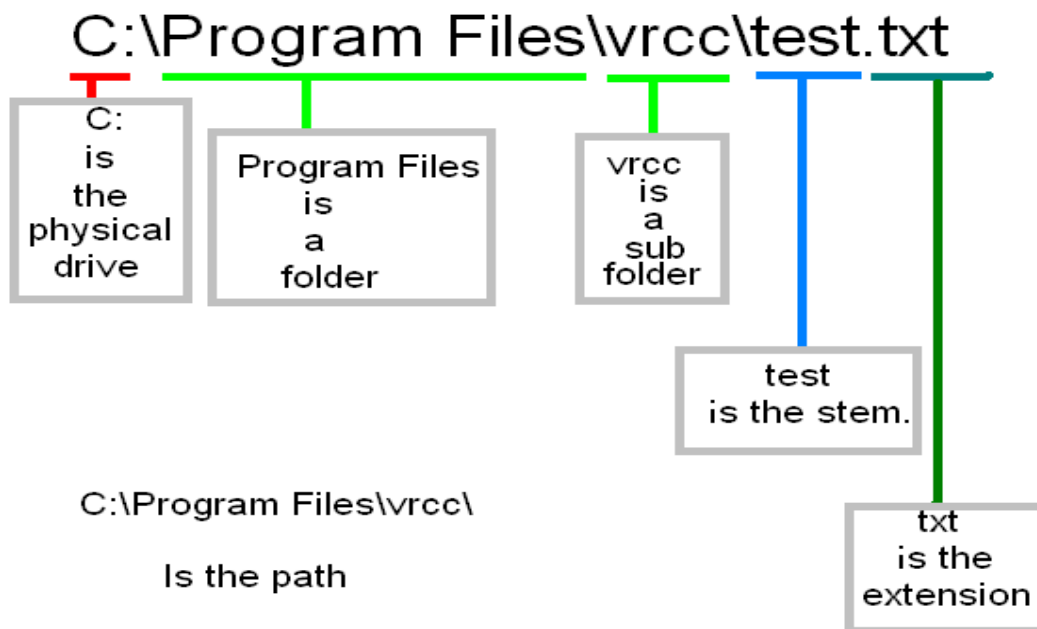
Understanding file names

Every file on your computer has a unique filename, that describes exactly where it is. The file name has a physical drive letter, and a folder structure on that physical drive, that shows the location on that physical storage unit.

Windows offers special locations for data files, such as My Documents or Libraries, that persuade users to store their documents in a location segregated from system files and program files. These locations are pseudo locations that represent a more complicated physical location.

Windows usually limits file names to 260 characters. But the file name must actually be shorter than that, since the complete path (such as C:\Program Files\filename.txt) is included in this character count. This is why you might occasionally encounter an error when copying a file with a very long file name to a location that has a longer path than its current location.

You can't use any of the following characters in a file or folder name: \ / ? : * " > < | because they have a special meaning to the operating system



Changing the file View

You can configure how Windows displays the file in the folder by changing the file view. This enables you to see icons or the details of each file.

In Windows Vista or Windows 7

1. Open the folder containing the files you want to view.
2. Click the View ▼ to open the Views list
3. Click on the view you want.

In Windows XP

1. Open the folder containing the files you want to view.
2. Click on the View
3. Click on the view you want. (Thumbnails, Tiles, Icons, List or Details.)

Selecting a File

Whether you want to rename a file, move several files to a new location, or delete some files, you first need to select the files that you want to work with.

Although this exercise is specifically about selecting files, the technique for selecting folders is exactly the same.

SELECT A SINGLE FILE

1. Open a folder containing the file
2. Click on the icon

SELECT MULTIPLE FILES

1. Open the folder containing the file
2. Click on the icon of the first file you want to select.
3. Hold down the **CTRL** and click each of the other files you want to select.

SELECTING A GROUP OF FILES

1. Open the folder containing the files.
2. Position the mouse pointer slightly above and to the left of the first file in the group.
3. Click and drag the mouse pointer down and to the right until all the files in the group are selected.

SELECT ALL THE FILES

In Windows Vista or Windows 7

1. Open the folder containing all the files
2. Click on Organize
3. Click Select ALL

In Windows XP

1. Open the folder containing the files
2. Click Edit
3. Click Select all

Note: A quick way to select all the files in a folder is to press **CTRL+ A**

To Open a file

1. Double click on the Icon (the picture associated with the file)

To Rename a file

1. Double click on the file name of the file
2. A text box appears around the file name.
3. Type the new name you want to use for the file
4. Press Enter

Create a new Folder

You can create new files and folders directly within the file folder. The types of files and folders you can create will depend on the programs installed on a computer.

1. Right click on an empty area of the folder.
2. Select *New* from the list of options
3. Select *Folder* from the list of options
4. Type in the folder name
5. Press **Enter**

UNDO

There is an undo option on the menu that will undo the most recent change. The undo command can undo a rename, a move, a copy, a change as long as the explorer window is open.

1. Right Click on the white space (empty area) of the file.
2. Select *Undo* from the menu. The Undo option will show what the undo will undo.

Note: Pressing **Ctrl+Z** will undo the last step.

Deleting a file

When you have a file that you no longer need, rather than leaving the file to clutter your hard drive, you can delete it.

Make sure that you only delete those documents that you created yourself, or that have been given to you by someone else. Do not delete any of the system files or any files associated with your programs, or your computer may behave erratically or crash.

1. Open the folder that contains the file you want to delete.
2. Select the files that you want to delete.
3. Right click on the file, and then click on *Delete* from the menu that appears.

Note: Pressing the **Delete** key on the keyboard would also delete the selected file.

Restoring a file from the Recycle Bin

If you immediately realized you deleted a file in error, you can use the undo command from the menu to fix the situation. However if you've already closed the explorer session, there is still a chance of recovering a file or folder from the recycle bin days or even weeks later.

If you delete a file from the hard drive, Windows stores the deleted file in a special folder called the *Recycle Bin*. The deleted files remain in the Recycle Bin, until the Recycle Bin is emptied.

Note: Files that are deleted from removable storage do not go to the Recycle Bin.



1. Double-click on the Recycle Bin icon.
2. Click on the file you want to restore
3. Click *Restore this item*.

The file disappears from the Recycle Bin and reappears in its original folder.

Copying a file

You can make an exact copy of a file, which is useful if you want to make a backup of an important file on a removable file such as a diskette, USB drive, CD, DVDs, or SD cards..

The operations here can be performed on a single file, or a group of files or folders.

1. Open the folder containing the file you want to copy
2. Select the files to be copied
3. Right click on one of the selected files
4. Select **Copy** from the menu
5. Open the folder where you want to place the copy.
6. Right click on the white space in the destination folder
7. Select Paste from the menu

Note: you can use the keyboard shortcuts **Ctrl+C** for copy and **Ctrl+V** for paste.

Moving a file

You can move a file to a new location.

This operations here can be performed on a single file, or a group of files or folders.

1. Open the folder containing the file you want to copy
2. Select the files to be moved
3. Right click on one of the selected files
4. Select **Cut** from the menu
5. Open the folder where you want to move the file to.
6. Right click on the white space in the destination folder
7. Select **Paste** from the menu.

Note: you can use the keyboard shortcuts **Ctrl+X** for cut and **Ctrl+V** for paste.

Tip. Having two explorers windows open can help those of us who are easily distracted.

Note: Files can be managed by dragging too. If you drag a file from one physical device to another, it is treated as a copy. If you drag files from one folder to another on the same physical device, it is treated as a move, and the files disappear from the original directory.

Removable Storage Devices

There are lots of kinds of removable storage devices such as diskettes, SD Cards, CDs, DVDs, USB drives . **The number one rule when using these types of devices is that all programs using these files MUST be closed before the media is removed.** With a USB device, there will be a little eject icon in the notification area. Use the ejection button to make sure that all files on this device are closed.

USB Drives.

A USB drive is a very convenient way to store data. Its very easy to use and compatible with all current Windows computers. Any application can open, read and write files on the drive.

1. Plug the drive into a usb slot and wait for Windows to detect the new hardware
2. Close any Windows that open up.
3. You can now do any kind of file operations you want.
4. Close any application that are using files you have stored on the USB drive.
5. Close any windows that are viewing the contents of the USB Drive
6. Click on the EJECT icon in the notification area of the task bar
7. Select the USB Drive
8. Wait for a message that says it is now safe to remove the drive
9. Unplug the USB Drive

SD Cards

An SD Card is the type of memory card in your digital camera. A few of our computers have SD Slots that make it very easy to see your pictures on the big screen and mail them. We also have an SD to USB adapter in the file cabinet if those computers are in use.

CD's and DVD's

Computers these days usually come with a CD or DVD writer. CD's and DVD's are inexpensive and can store a lot of data. A CD can store 650MB worth of data and a DVD has a 4.7GB. A DVD writer can write both CD's and DVDs. A CD writer can only write CDs. There are two types CD-R and CD-RW. The -RW stands for rewritable, the -R write once. DVD media hasn't been standardized so there are "minus" – and "plus" compatibility issues. Make sure you know what kind of media can be written on with your DVD writer.

The methods for writing musical CD's and video DVD's are different than the methods for creating data DVDs. When working with data CDs or DVDs there are two types of formatting Live and Mastered. There are many software applications to write to CD's and DVD's that make the process pretty easy but Windows XP, Vista and 7 offer native mastering, and Windows Vista and Windows 7 offer native Live File Systems too. When you use the Mastered format, files are stored in a "staging area" until you decide to burn the disc. Discs formatted with the Live File System option work like a USB flash drive or floppy disk, meaning you can copy files to disc immediately without having to burn them. When you use the Live File System format with rewriteable discs such as CD-RW and DVD-RW, you can also erase unwanted files from a disc to recover space, which is not possible with Mastered discs. On the other hand, Mastered discs are more compatible

with older computers, previous versions of Windows, and other devices such as CD and DVD players.

This is the Mastered method of writing a data CD

1. Place new CD in CD burner (CD drive)
 2. Close any windows that might open
 3. Organize or locate file/folders to be burned to CD
 4. Select files/folders to be burned to CD
 5. Right click on selected item(s)
 6. On menu: point to "send to"
 7. On sub menu that appears choose: CD drive
 8. Left click message that appears in lower right of screen that says:
"You have files waiting to be written to the CD"
 9. In window that opens click on **"Write these files to CD"**
 10. You should see icons with a down pointing arrow on them. These waiting to be written (burned) to CD
 11. Follow the instructions in the windows wizard that appears and your information will be copied to the CD
 12. Label the CD appropriately so that you will know what information is now on it
- *** Note the method for writing AUDIO CDs is different.

Understanding Extensions

A file name extension is a set of characters that helps Windows understand what kind of information is in a file and what program should open it. It is called an extension because it appears at the end of the file name, following a period. In the file name test.txt, the extension is txt. It tells Windows that this is a text file that can be opened by programs associated with that extension.

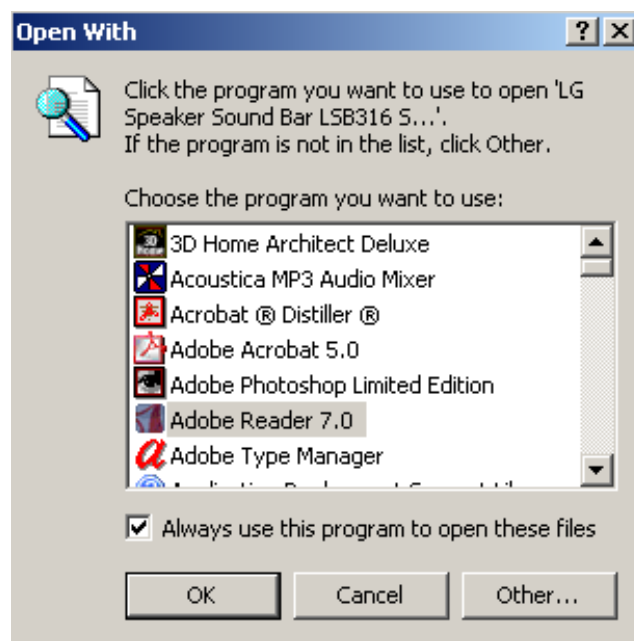
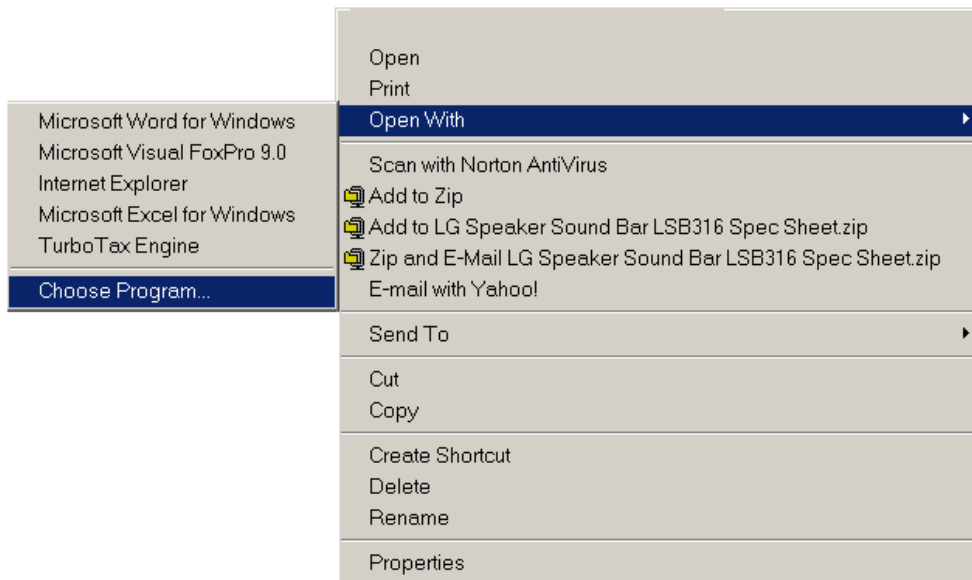
Changing the file association

Fixing or changing a file association is very simple. For example, if you accidentally associated .pdf files with a program that cannot open them, you can change the association back to Adobe Reader (or another PDF reader that can open them). Simply follow this procedure:

If you're using Windows 2000, or Windows XP

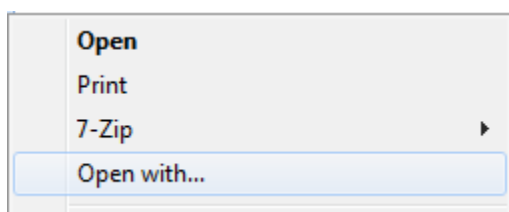
Right-click the respective file, for example a PDF file.

Select > *Open With* from the right-click options.

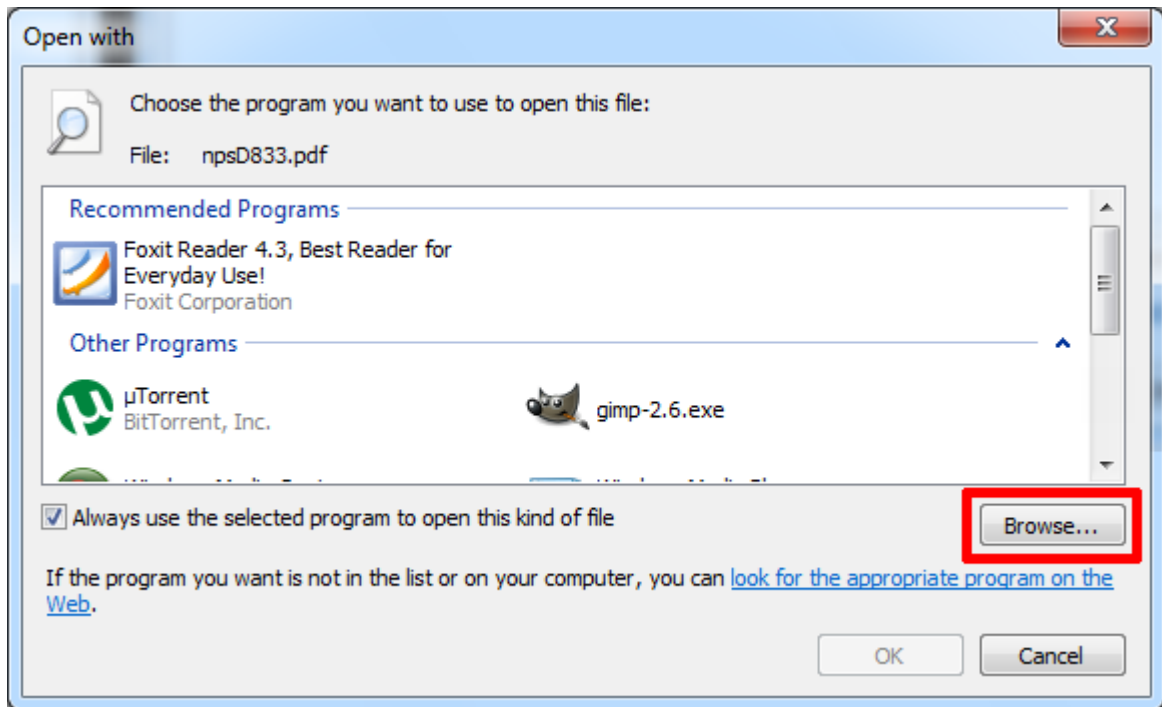


If you're using Windows Vista, or Windows 7

Right-click the respective file, for example a PDF file.
Select > *Open With* from the right-click menu.



The > *Open with* window will open and now you can either pick a program from the list of > *Other Programs* or click the > *Browse...* button and find the application you want to open this file type with.



- If you want to make the change permanent, check the box next to > *Always use the selected program to open this kind of file*.
- Finally, click > *OK* and, given you checked the respective box, all your PDF files should now open with the program of your choice.

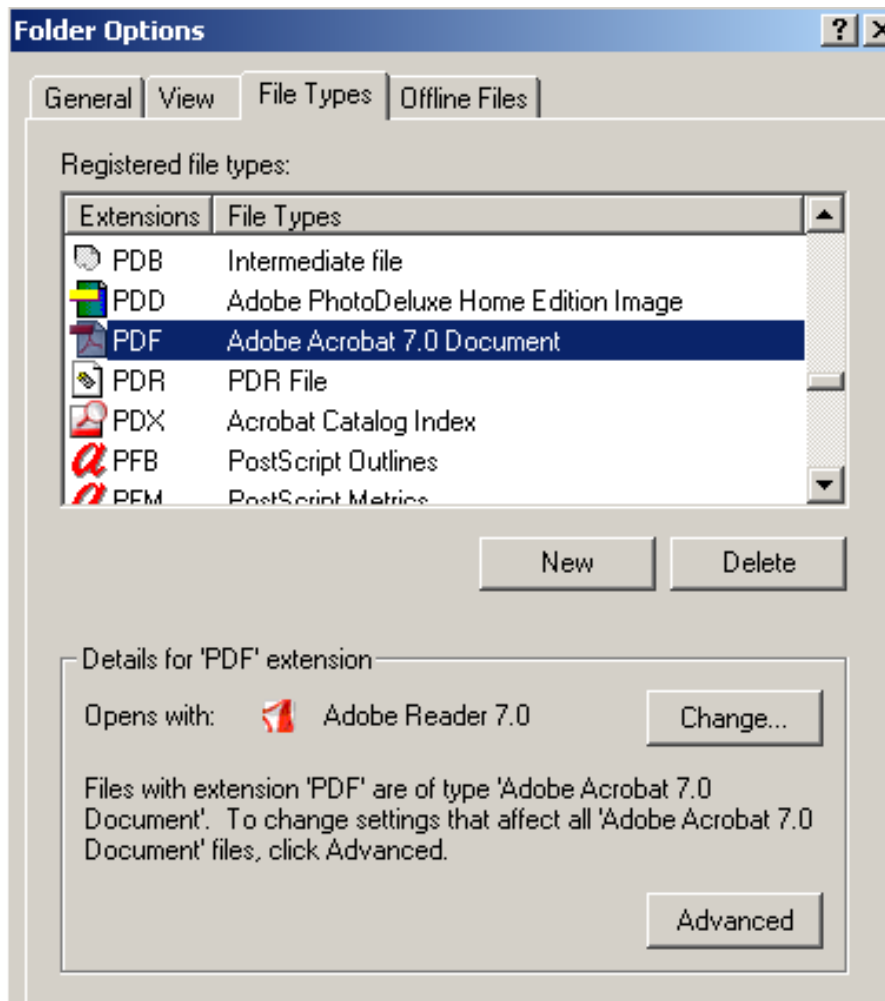
Getting an Overview of all the extensions on your computer.

If you're using Windows 2000, or Windows XP

If you want to get an overview of all file associations on your computer or change several at once, you can go to > *Start* > *Control Panel* > *Folder Options*

Then select *File Types* tab and then scroll down the list of Registered file types.

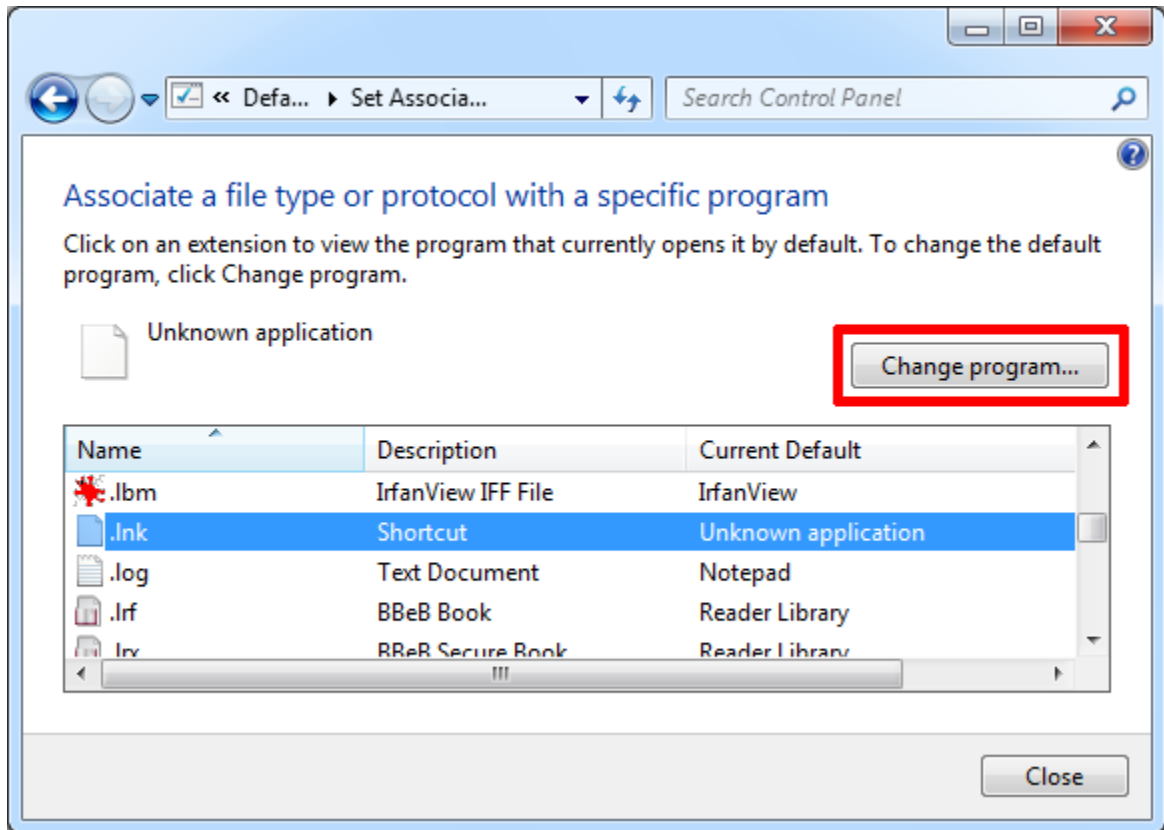
Here you can browse all file types. Click on > *Change...* to pick a new tool to open the respective file type.



Every program that's installed on your computer is designed to open one or more particular file types, each of which is identified by a file name extension. If you have more than one program on your computer capable of opening a file type, then one program is set as the default. The *Change* button can change the program that automatically opens a type of file.

If you're using Windows Vista, or Windows 7

If you want to get an overview of all file associations on your computer or change several at once, you can go to > *Start* > *Control Panel* > *Programs* > *Default Programs* > *Associate a file type or protocol with a specific program*. Here you can browse all file types. Click on > *Change program...* to pick a new tool to open the respective file type.



Note that .lnk files should not be associated with a specific program (unknown application) and hence you cannot fix a broken .lnk file association this way!

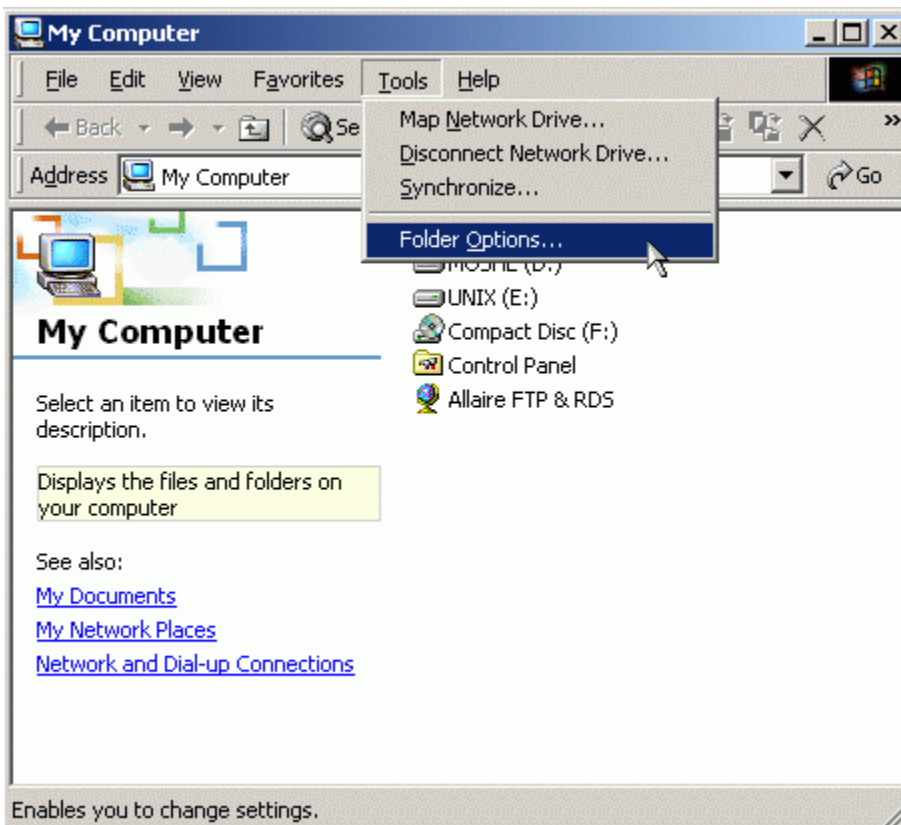
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Showing and hiding Extensions

Microsoft defaults to extensions not being visible. There is a huge difference of opinion among users as to whether they should be visible or not. Usually, file name extensions should not be changed because you might not be able to open or edit the file after doing so. If the file name extensions are visible, and you go to rename a file, there is a danger of accidentally changing the file extension. Windows will warn you that changing the file name extension might cause the file to stop working properly.

If you're using Windows XP

1. On your desktop, open **My Computer**. If you don't see My Computer, then open any folder.
2. Select the **Tools** menu, & then select **Folder Options**

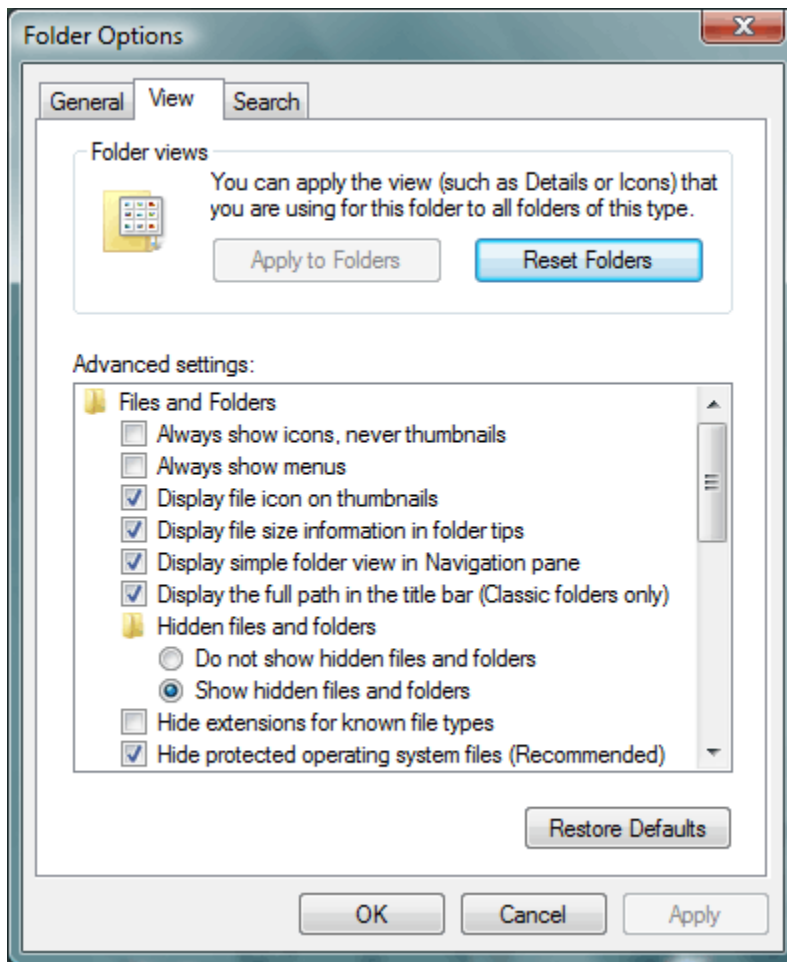


3. In the **Folder Options** windows, click on the **View** tab.
4. Uncheck the box next to **Hide file extensions for known file types** (Note that I have checked and unchecked other boxes that may not apply to you. If you would like to make your View tab resemble mine below, go right ahead; however, it is not necessary if all that you wish to do is reveal the "dot 3" file extension.).

5. Click **OK** to close the **Folder Options** window.
6. Close the **My Computer** window.

If you're using Windows Vista or 7

1. Click on the **Start** button > **Control Panel** > **Appearance and Personalization** > **Folder Options** (Two thoughts: [1] Boy, Vista is a lot more complicated than earlier versions of Windows! [2] You can always use the Search box on the Start menu & just search for "Folder Options" there, which may be the easiest option.)
2. In the **Folder Options** windows, click on the **View** tab.
3. Uncheck the box next to **Hide file extensions for known file types**.



4. Click **OK** to close the **Folder Options** window.

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