File Management: My Computer and Explorer
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Version

1

FILE MANAGEMENT

My Computer and Explorer

Ministry of Education Headquarters
Lusaka, Zambia

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Introduction

This in-house course has been developed to increase your knowledge of popular applications software and to provide you with the skills to accomplish your day-to-day work activities more efficiently. The design of the course is based on the assumption that you have completed the course prerequisites.

This manual has been compiled to support and to enhance the instructor's lecture during class as well as to serve as your personal reference when you return to your office.

Manual Conventions

Throughout this manual reference is made to various components of the software. Command buttons, menus, and menu options appear in boldface type, for example, **OK** and **File**. Keystrokes appear in boldface italic type, for example, ***Ctrl + V*** and ***Enter***. When possible, the words *select* and *choose* have been used in this manual to allow you the option of using either the mouse or keyboard.

For your assistance, ample space along the left margin has been provided to allow room for notes relevant to the topic discussed. We also include notes of importance (), mouse-based shortcuts (), keyboard shortcuts (), cautionary notes (), and work notes ().

Course Objectives

After this course, you will have the skills necessary to:

- ✓ *Start Windows Explorer and My Computer.*
- ✓ *Identify the components of the Windows Explorer window.*
- ✓ *Identify Windows Explorer and My Computer Toolbar buttons.*
- ✓ *Select resources, drives, folders, and files.*
- ✓ *Identify folder and file icons.*
- ✓ *Create folders and subfolders.*
- ✓ *Delete folders, subfolders, and files.*
- ✓ *Access the Recycle Bin.*
- ✓ *Locate and restore deleted folders and files.*
- ✓ *Empty the Recycle Bin.*

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Lesson

1

Starting Windows Explorer and My Computer

In this lesson, you will learn the skills necessary to:

- ✓ *Start Windows Explorer and My Computer.*
- ✓ *Identify the components of the Windows Explorer window.*
- ✓ *Identify Windows Explorer and My Computer Toolbar buttons.*

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Starting Windows Explorer

Windows Explorer is a file management tool that enables you to view, copy, and move files and folders; format disks; and perform other tasks related to file management.

How to Access Windows Explorer:

Step 1. From the **Taskbar**, point to the **Start** button.

Step 2. Right-click and choose **Explore** from the **Shortcut** menu.

Windows Explorer and My Computer allow you access to the same list of resources. The difference is what each can display in a single window. Windows Explorer can display all resources and their contents in a single window. My Computer can display only the contents of the selected resource in a single window. To view multiple resources in My Computer, you would need to open multiple windows.

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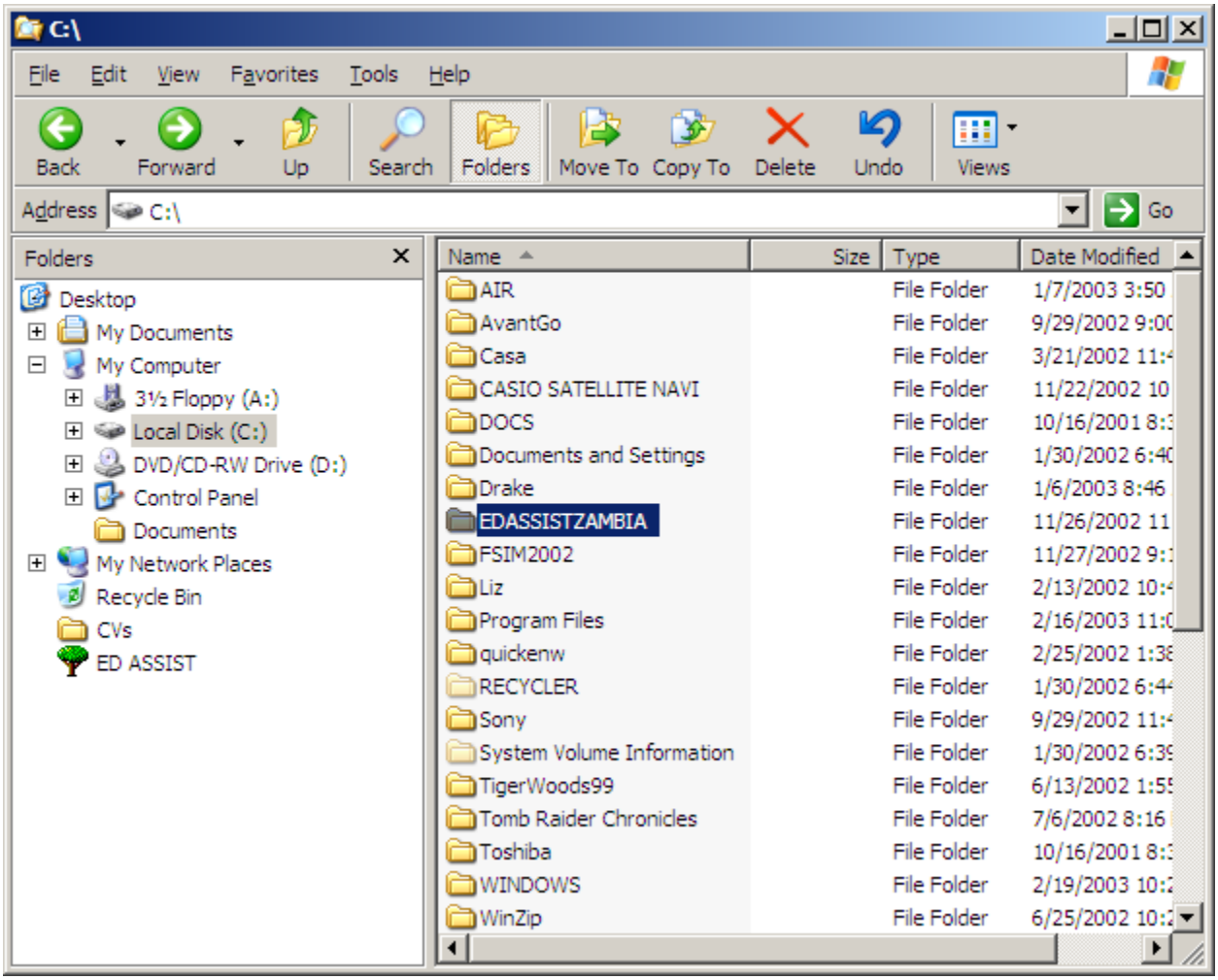
Components of the Windows Explorer Window

The Windows Explorer displays your available resources in a single window split into two panes, or viewing areas. The folder pane, located on the left side, displays a tree that includes objects representing all available resources, including files, folders, network resources, and peripherals such as printers and modems. The file pane, located on the right side, displays the objects for the selected resource. These objects can be accessed by double-clicking on them.

The following is the Windows Explorer window displaying all available resources:



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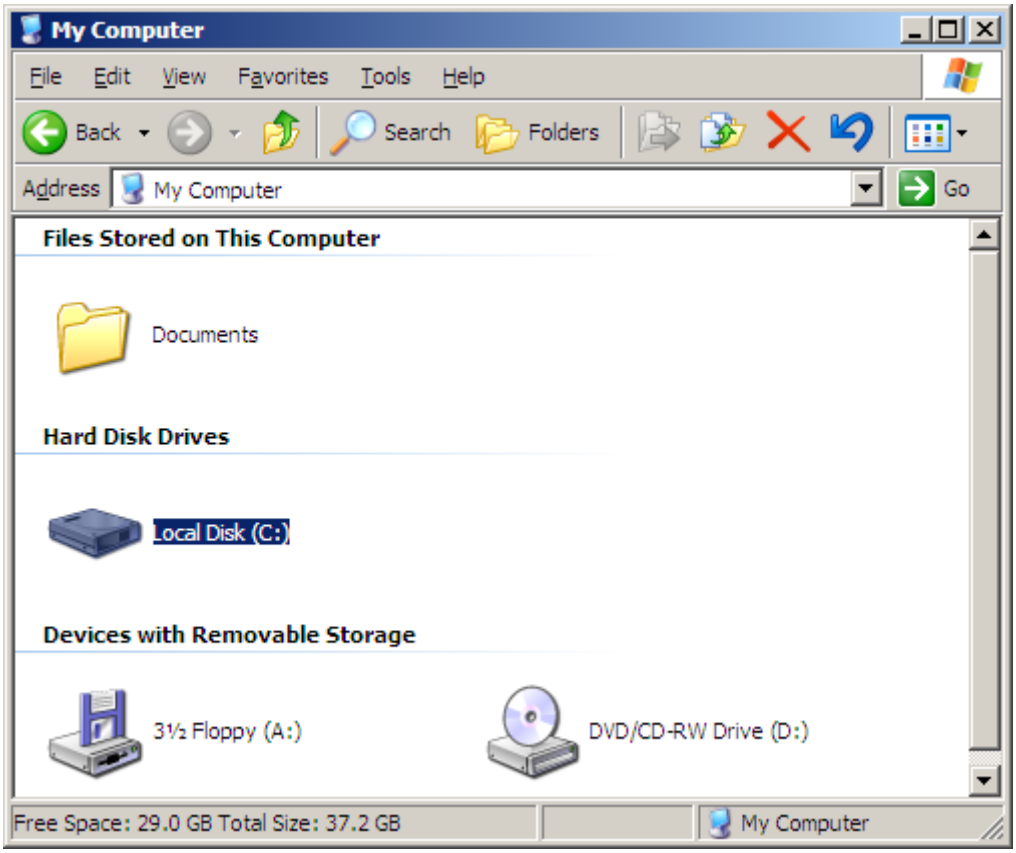
Starting My Computer

You can use My Computer to view and quickly access any resources available to your computer, such as folders and files located on your hard drive, diskette drive, or any network drive to which you have access. The My Computer window also displays an icon for the Control Panel, Printers, and Dial-Up Networking. Any of the objects can be accessed by double-clicking on them.

How to Access My Computer

Step 1. From the **Desktop**, double-click on the **My Computer** icon.

A window similar to the following will appear:



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Windows Explorer and My Computer Toolbar

Windows Explorer and My Computer come with toolbars which contain shortcuts to frequently used functions.

Windows Explorer and My Computer Toolbar	
Button	**Description**
Back	Displays the previously viewed resource location (i.e., previously viewed drive and directory).
Forward	Displays the next viewed resource location. The Forward button is only active once the Back button has been used.
Up	Moves up one level in the directory tree.
Search	Select criteria to look for on your PC.
Folders	Duplicates the selected file(s).
Move To	Cuts and moves selected items to a specified location.
Copy To	Places the previously cut or copied files in the selected location.
Delete	Removes the selected folder(s) or file(s).
Undo	Reverses the last action.
Views	Changes the contents of the File Pane to view folders and files as large icons, small icons, in a list format, or with detailed information.
Address	Displays the current location viewed in the File Pane. Type another location in the Address bar and press enter to change the contents of the File Pane.

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Lesson

2

Using Folders and Files

In this lesson, you will learn the skills necessary to:

- ✓ *Select resources, drives, folders, and files.*
- ✓ *Identify folder and file icons.*
- ✓ *Create folders and subfolders.*

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Selecting Drives and Resources

Windows Explorer provides access to all available resources, including network and local resources. Through Windows Explorer, you are able to see the contents of your hard drive and network drives, view your available printers, change settings using the Control Panel, and view deleted files using the Recycle Bin.

How to Select a Resource:

Step 1. From the **Address** drop-down list, click to select the appropriate resource.

or

From the **Folder Pane**, click to select the appropriate resource.

In the Folder Pane, clicking once on a resource will display its contents in the File Pane. Double-clicking on a resource will display its subfolders in the Folder Pane.

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Identifying Folder Icons

In Windows, file management is based on files and folders. Folders can store other folders, as well as files, and can be created, renamed, moved, copied, and deleted, just like directories.

Windows Explorer displays folders in several different ways. The different views are designed to assist you in navigating your way through Explorer. The table below outlines the different displays and a description of each.

Folder Icons	
Icon	**Description**
EDASSISTZAMBIA 2001 2002	Contents of the folder are displayed in the File pane.
EDASSISTZAMBIA	Contains subfolders which have not been revealed in the Folder Pane. Click on the plus sign to view the subfolders in the Folder Pane.
EDASSISTZAMBIA 2001 2002	Contains subfolders which have been revealed in the Folder Pane. Click on the minus sign to remove the subfolders from view in the Folder Pane.
DOCS	Contains either files or nothing at all. Does not contain any subfolders.

If a folder is closed, double-clicking on it will cause the folder to expand and display its subfolders in the Folder Pane. If a folder is open, double-clicking on it will cause the folder to close and remove any subfolders from view in the Folder Pane.

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Identifying File Icons

Each file type is designated by an icon which represents the application associated with the file. For example, documents created in Microsoft Word will display the same icon.

File Icons	
Icon	Description
	File is associated with Microsoft Access
	File is associated with Microsoft Excel
	File is associated with Microsoft Word
	File is associated with Notepad.
	File is not associated with an application.

Double-clicking on a file will cause the associated application and selected file to open.

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Selecting Folders and Files

Folders and files can be selected individually or in groups. To open, copy, move, rename, or delete a folder or file, it must be selected first.

It is possible to open, copy, move, and delete multiple folders and files simultaneously. If several folders or files need to be renamed; however, they must be renamed individually.

How to Select a Folder or File

Step 1. From the **Folder Pane** or **File Pane**, point to the desired folder or file.

Step 2. Click the left mouse button.

How to Select Multiple Folders or Files in Sequence

Step 1. From the **File Pane**, ensure that the desired folders or files are in view.

Step 2. Using the mouse, point to the upper, left corner of the desired selection.

Step 3. Press and hold down the left mouse button.

Step 4. With the left mouse button held down, drag to create a box that surrounds the desired files.

Step 5. Release the left mouse button.

Multiple folders can only be selected in the File Pane.

It is also possible to use to Shift key to select multiple files in a sequence. Click on the first file in the sequence, hold down the Shift key and click on the last file in the sequence.

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How to Select Multiple Folders or Files in Random Order

Step 1. From the **File Pane**, point to the desired folder or file.

Step 2. Click once on the first file.

Step 3. Press and hold the ***Ctrl*** key.

Step 4. With the ***Ctrl*** key held down, click once on each remaining file.

Step 5. Release the ***Ctrl*** key.

Multiple folders can only be selected in the File Pane.

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Creating Folders and Subfolders

To facilitate organization of files, create folders and subfolders on your local or network drives.

How to Create a Folder or Subfolder:

Step 1. From the **Windows Explorer** dialog box, select the drive or folder in which you want to create the new folder.

Step 2. From the **File** menu, select **New**.

Step 3. From the **New** submenu, select **Folder**.

The following will appear:

Step 4. In the **New Folder** text box, type the desired name for the new folder.

Step 5. Press **Enter**.

or

Click anywhere outside the newly created folder.

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Viewing Multiple Drive and Folder Locations

By default, Windows Explorer displays the contents of a single drive or folder. It is possible to open Windows Explorer multiple times and view the contents of several drives and folders simultaneously.

How to Open Multiple Instances of Windows Explorer

Step 1. Point to the **Start** button and right-click.

Step 2. Choose **Explore**.

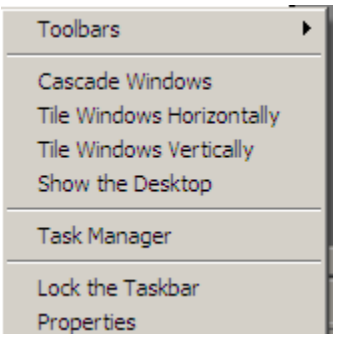
Step 3. Repeat Steps 1 through 2 for each instance of **Windows Explorer** that should be open.

How to View the Contents of Multiple Drives or Folders Simultaneously

Step 1. From the **Taskbar**, point to a blank area.

Step 2. With the tip of the mouse pointer on a blank area, right-click.

The following menu will appear:



Step 3. From the **Shortcut** menu, choose **Tile Windows Horizontally**.

or

Choose **Tile Windows Vertically**.

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Lesson

3

File Management

In this lesson, you will learn the skills necessary to:

- ✓ *Understand and display file name components.*
- ✓ *Display file information.*
- ✓ *Sort the file list.*
- ✓ *Copy, move, and rename folders and files.*
- ✓ *Find a file by name, date, and content.*

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Understanding File Names

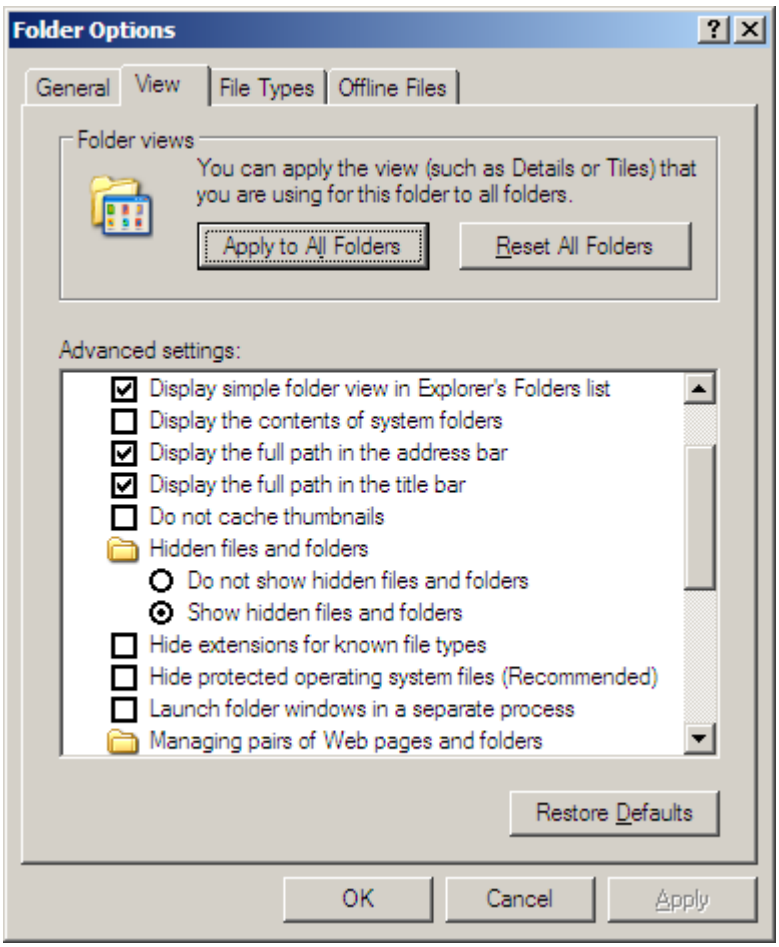
File names are composed of three parts: the file name, the separator (the period), and the extension. By default, Windows Explorer does not display the file extension.

How to Display MS-DOS Extensions

Step 1. From the **Tools** menu, choose **Folder Options**.

Step 2. From the **Folder Options** dialog box, choose the **View** tab.

The following dialog box will appear:



Step 3. From the **View** tab, remove the check from **Hide extensions for known file types**.

Step 4. Choose **OK**.

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File Information

By default, Windows Explorer displays only the file name in the File Pane. You can adjust this to display more complete information regarding your files.

File Display Options	
Option	**Description**
Thumbnails	Displays items as icons in the file pane.
Tiles	Displays the items in a tile layout.
Icons	Displays a small icon representing the associated application with the file name displayed below. The contents of each folder are displayed vertically.
List	Displays a small icon representing the associated application with the file name displayed to the left. The contents of each folder are displayed horizontally.
Details	Displays a small icon representing the associated application, the file name, size, and date and time the file was last saved.

How to Change the Display

Step 1. From the **View** menu, choose the desired option.

or

From the **Views** button on the toolbar, choose the appropriate option.

To attain the same result in My Computer, follow the steps as outlined above.

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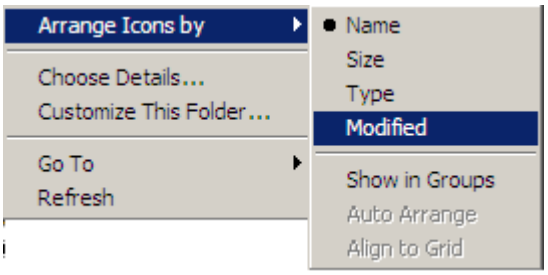
Sorting the File Pane

By default, files are displayed in ascending alphabetical order. It is possible to sort the file list by name, type, size, and date.

Sort Options	
Option	**Description**
By Name	Contents are sorted in ascending order based on folder and file names.
By Type	Contents are sorted in ascending order based folder and file extensions.
By Size	Contents are sorted in ascending order based on the size of the files.
By Date	Contents are sorted in descending order based on when the files were last modified.

How to Sort the File Pane

Step 1. From the **View** menu, choose **Arrange Icons**.



Step 2. From the **Arrange Icons** submenu, choose the appropriate option.

If the Details view has been selected, choose the appropriate column heading to sort the contents of the File Pane

In the File Pane, right-click on the blank area, and from the Shortcut menu, choose Arrange Icons

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The type of file is designated by the extension of the file name. For example, Excel files utilize .xls as the file extension

To attain the same result in My Computer, follow the steps as outlined above.

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Copying Folders and Files

In Windows, file management is based on files and folders. Folders can store other folders, as well as files, and can be created, renamed, moved, copied, and deleted.

As a file management tool, the Windows Explorer allows you to copy folders and files to different locations on your hard drive, to a network drive, or to a diskette.

Copying files to another drive, folder, or diskette is one way to share files with other users while maintaining the originals. In addition, it is a good security measure. You can use copy as a means of keeping duplicate or back-up copies of important files in a directory designated for back-up files or on a diskette.

Points on Copying Folders and Files

- ✓ *When you copy folders or files using the mouse, the mouse pointer displays a plus ( ) sign.*
- ✓ *If you want to copy more than one item, hold the Ctrl key while selecting the items to be copied.*
- ✓ *When copying a file to a new location, the file listed on the Documents menu still points to the original file location.*

How to Copy a Folder or File Using Menus

Step 1. From the **Windows Explorer** dialog box, select the drive or folder which contains the desired folder or file.

Step 2. In the **Folder Pane** or **File Pane**, select the desired folder(s) or file(s).

Step 3. From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Copy To** button.

Steps Continue on Next Page

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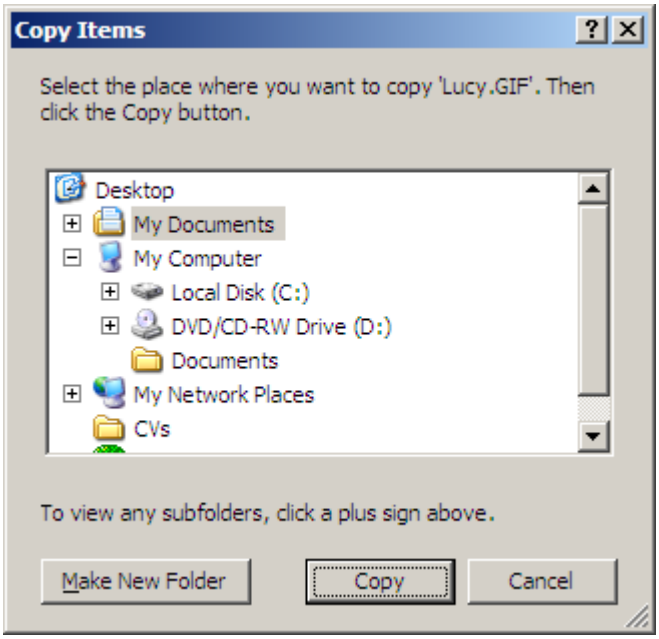
The following dialog box will appear if you choose Move To:



Step 4. In the **Folder Pane**, select the destination drive and folder(s).

or

In the **Address** text box, type the desired location and press Enter.

Step 5. From the **Shortcut** menu, choose **Paste**.

or

From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Paste** button.

How to Copy a Folder or File By Using Click and Drag

Step 1. From the **Windows Explorer** dialog box, select the drive or folder which contains the desired folder or file.

or

In the **Address** text box, type the desired location and press Enter.

Steps Continue on Next Page

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Step 2. In the **Folder Pane** or **File Pane**, select the desired folder(s) or file(s).

Step 3. Press and hold the ***Ctrl*** key and the left mouse button.

or

Press and hold the right mouse button.

Step 4. Drag the mouse to the new location.

Step 5. Release the ***Ctrl*** key and the left mouse button.

or

Release the right mouse button and choose **Copy Here** from the **Shortcut** menu.

To attain the same result in My Computer, follow steps similar to the steps outlined above

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Moving Folders or Files

As a file management tool, Windows Explorer allows you to move folders and files to different locations on your hard drive, to a network drive, or to a diskette.

When files are in their final form, you may want to move them from the working directory to a directory designated for final drafts.

Points on Moving Folders or Files

- ✓ *Moving a folder or file physically moves the folder or file to another location.*
- ✓ *When a folder is moved, all subfolders and files that reside in it are moved as well.*
- ✓ *If a file is moved to a new location on the same drive, the Documents option on the Start menu will find the file in its new location. If a file a moved to a different drive, the Documents option on the Start menu will not be able to find the file in its new location.*

How to Move a Folder or File Using Menus

Step 1. From the **Windows Explorer** dialog box, select the drive or folder which contains the desired folder or file.

or

In the **Address** text box, type the desired location and press Enter.

Step 2. In the **Folder Pane** or **File Pane**, select the desired folder or file.

Step 3. From the **Shortcut** menu, choose **Cut**.

or

From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Move To** button.

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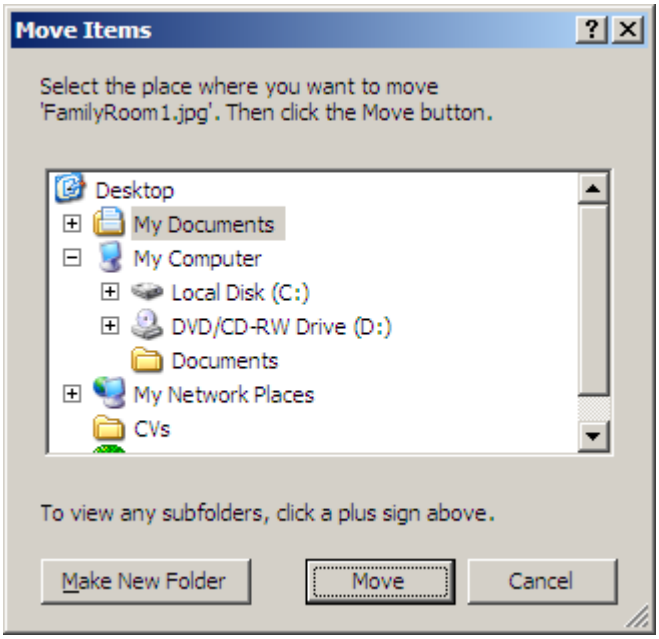
The following dialog box will appear if you choose Move To:



Step 4. In the **Folder Pane**, select the destination drive and folder(s).

Step 5. From the **Shortcut** menu, choose **Paste**.

or

From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Paste** button.

How to Move a Folder or File By Using Click and Drag

Step 1. From the **Windows Explorer** dialog box, select the drive or folder which contains the desired folder or file.

or

In the **Address** text box, type the desired location and press Enter.

Step 2. In the **File Pane**, select the desired folder(s) or file(s).

Steps Continue on Next Page

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Step 3. Press and hold the ***Alt*** key and the left mouse button.

or

Press and hold the right mouse button.

Step 4. Drag the mouse to the new location.

Step 5. Release the ***Alt*** key and the left mouse button.

or

Release the right mouse button and choose **Move Here** from the Shortcut menu.

To attain the same result in My Computer, follow steps similar to the steps outlined above.

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Renaming Files

As a file management tool, Windows Explorer allows you to rename folders and files.

How to Rename a Folder or File

Step 1. From the **Windows Explorer** dialog box, select the drive or folder which contains the desired folder or file.

or

In the **Address** text box, type the desired location and press Enter.

Step 2. In the **Folder Pane** or **File Pane**, point to the folder or file to be renamed.

Step 3. From the **Edit** menu, choose **Rename**.

or

From the **Shortcut** menu, choose **Rename**.

Step 4. In the **Folder** or **File Name** text box, type the desired name.

Step 5. Press **Enter**.

or

Click anywhere outside the newly created folder.

You can quickly rename a folder or file by selecting it, pressing F2, and entering a new folder or file name

When renaming files from Windows Explorer, you must type the appropriate file extension. For example, when renaming Excel files, ensure that the file has an .xls extension. If an extension is missing, it may not be recognized by the associated application

To attain the same result in My Computer, follow the steps as outlined above

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Searching for Folders or Files By Name

You can locate a specific folder or file using the Windows Search function. When performing the Search, you must specify where the search should begin and if it should include all subdirectories.

The Search function uses two wildcard characters to structure its search. The table below outlines the wildcard characters, a description of each, and example of a search with results.

Wildcard Characters			
Wildcard	**Description**	**Search Criteria**	**Search Results**
*	Represents several characters in an unknown number of sequential spaces in a file name.	*.xls	india.xls sales.xls
?	Represents a single unknown character in the same location in the file name.	gr?y.wpd	gray.wpd grey.wpd

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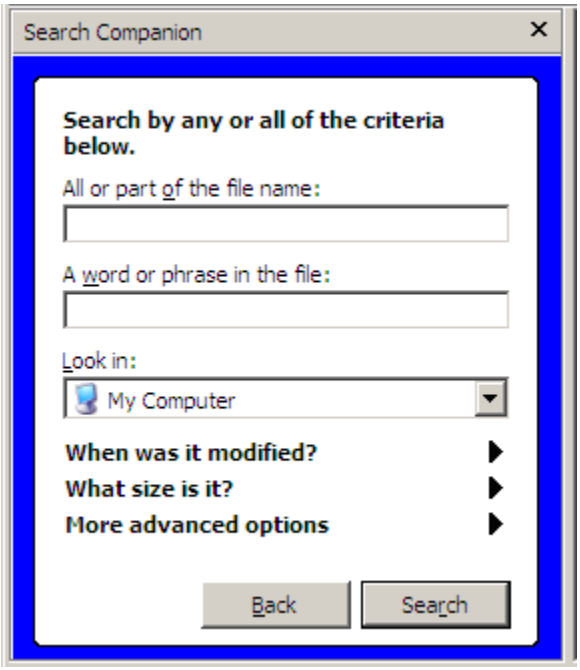
How to Find a Folder or File By Name

Step 1. From the **Toolbar** menu, choose **Search**.

The following dialog box will appear:



Step 2. In the **File Name** text box, type the find statement, using wildcards as needed.

Step 3. In the **Phrase in the file** text box, type any portion of text contained in the file, if necessary.

Step 4. In the **Look in** text box, type the drive and folder from where to find should begin, if necessary

or

Choose the **Dropdown** list button to location the desired drive and folder.

Step 5. Choose the **Search** button.

The Search function can be accessed directly from the Start menu

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Finding a Folders or Files By Date

The Find feature does not limit your search capabilities to folder or file name patterns only. It is possible to apply a date criteria when searching for a missing folder or file.

Date criteria can be used in conjunction with the name and location of the file.

Date Search Options	
Option	**Description**
Don't Remember	No date limitation is applied to the find. This is the default option.
Find all files created or modified during previous days	Find will only display those files created or modified within the specified numbers of days range.
Find all files created or modified during previous months	Find will only display those files created or modified within the specified month range.
Find all files created or modified during previous year	Find will only display those files created or modified during the last year.
Find all files created or modified between specified dates	Find will only display those files created or modified within the specified date range.

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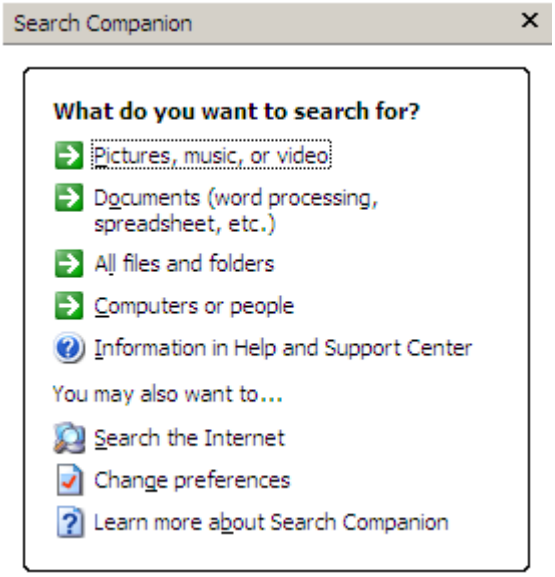
How to Find a Folder or File By Date

Step 1. From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Search** button

The following pain will appear



Step 4. Select **All files and folders**.

Steps Continue on Next Page

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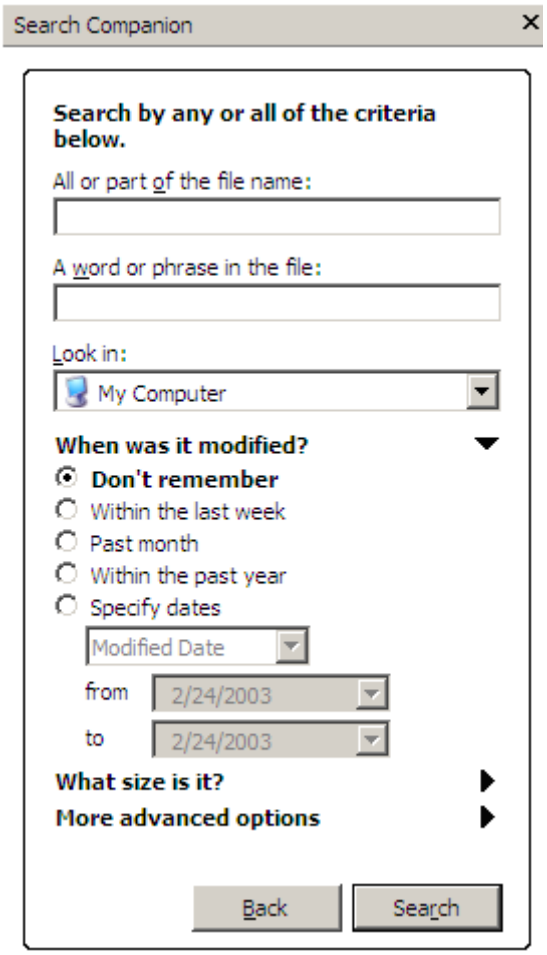
The following pain will appear



Step 5. Choose the **Specify dates** radio button and enter the dates to search on in the fields.

Step 6. Choose the **Search** button.

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Searching for Folders or Files By Type or Size

The Search function also allows you to search by the type of file and the size of the file. The options located within the Advanced tab can be used in conjunction with the name and location of the file and any date criteria.

Advanced Find Options	
Option	Description
Of type	Select the missing file type. For example, WordPerfect or Excel.
Size is	Designate either the minimum or maximum size of the missing file.

How to Find a Folder of File Using the Advanced Tab

Step 1. From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Search** button.

Step 2. Select the **What size is it?** menu.

Step 3. Select the **More advanced options** menu.

Steps Continue on Next Page

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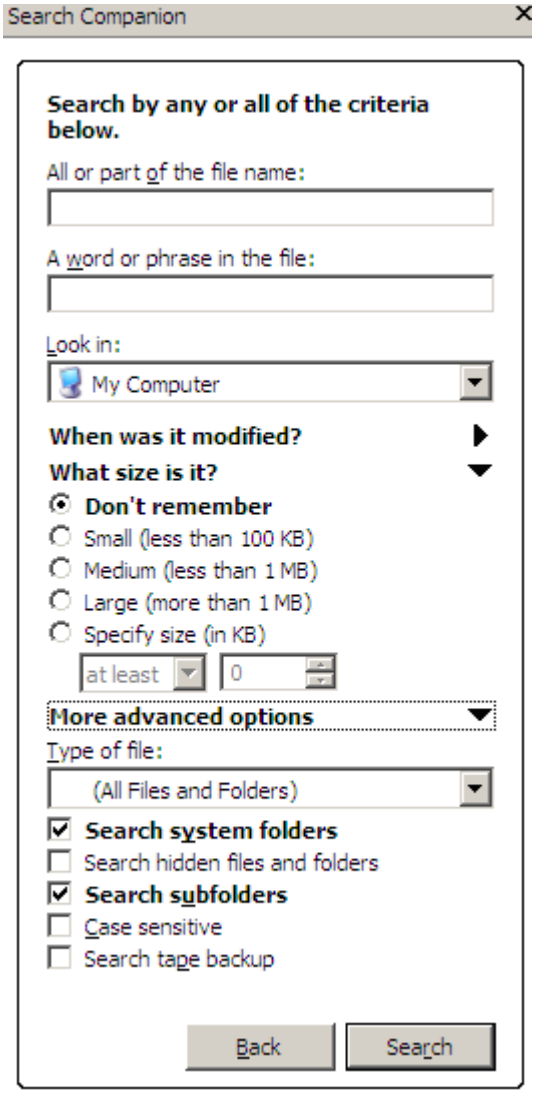
The following dialog box will appear:



Step 4. Choose the appropriate options for size and file type as necessary.

Step 5. Choose the **Search** button.

The Find function can be accessed directly from the Start menu

To attain the same result in My Computer, follow the steps as outlined above

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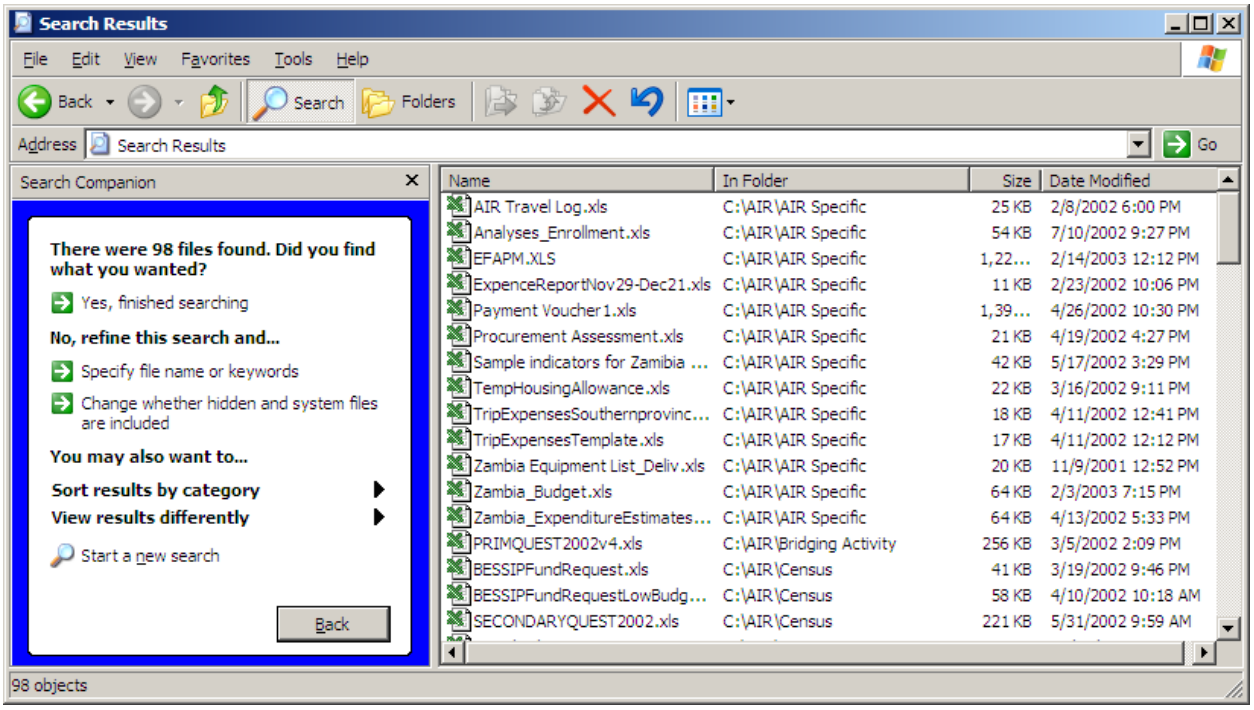
Reviewing the Find Results

The Find feature returns the results of the find in the bottom portion of the Find dialog box. The results are composed of the file name, location, size, type, and modification date and time. From the Find dialog box, you can perform various actions such as copy, move, delete, or rename. If you see the desired file in the list, double-click to open the associated application with the file displayed.

Below is an example of the results of a search for files with the .xls extension.



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Lesson

4

Deleting and Undeleting Folders and Files

In this lesson, you will learn the skills necessary to:

- ✓ *Delete folders, subfolders, and files.*
- ✓ *Access the Recycle Bin.*
- ✓ *Locate and restore deleted folders and files.*
- ✓ *Empty the Recycle Bin.*

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Deleting Folders and Files

From Windows Explorer you can delete files. If you select a folder, that folder and its contents will be selected and deleted. Pay close attention to the confirmation prompts.

Points on Deleting Files

- ✓ *It is possible to select multiple folders or files using the Shift or Ctrl key. The Shift key allows you to select a continuous group of folders and/or files. The Ctrl key allows you to select a non-continuous group of folders and/or files.*
- ✓ *When deleting multiple files, the Confirm File Delete dialog box offers two affirmative response options: Yes and Yes to All. When Yes is selected the Confirmation File Delete dialog box reappears for each file selected; whereas, when Yes to All is selected the confirmation feature is discontinued while the remaining files are deleted.*
- ✓ *Files deleted from diskettes or network drives do not appear in the Recycle Bin.*
- ✓ *To permanently delete a file or folder, hold down the Shift key and then choose Delete. Doing this will bypass the Recycle Bin.*

How to Delete a Folder or File

Step 1. In the **Folder Pane**, select the drive and folder(s) which contains the desired folder or file.

Step 2. Select the folder or file to be deleted.

Step 3. From the **Toolbar**, choose the **Delete** button.

or

Press the **Delete** key.

Step 4. From the **Confirmation** dialog box, choose **Yes** to remove the folder or file.

or

Choose **No** to cancel the delete function.

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How to Delete a Folder or File Using the Recycle Bin

Step 1. In the **Folder Pane**, select the drive and folder(s) which contains the desired folder or file.

Step 2. Point to the folder or file to be deleted.

Step 3. Press and hold the left mouse button.

Step 4. With the left mouse button held down, drag the mouse to the **Recycle Bin**.

Step 5. Release the left mouse button.

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Accessing the Recycle Bin

When you delete a file in Windows, it is not deleted instantly. Rather, it is placed in the Recycle Bin. The Recycle Bin, which is located on the desktop, is a storage area used to hold deleted objects. Although no longer visible on your desktop, deleted objects are not actually deleted from drives or folders until you empty the Recycle Bin.

The Recycle Bin provides quick access to information about deleted objects, including original location, date of deletion, and file type and size. Most importantly, the Recycle Bin provides the ability to restore deleted objects to their original disk location. Files deleted from diskettes do not appear in the Recycle Bin. They are deleted directly from the diskette.

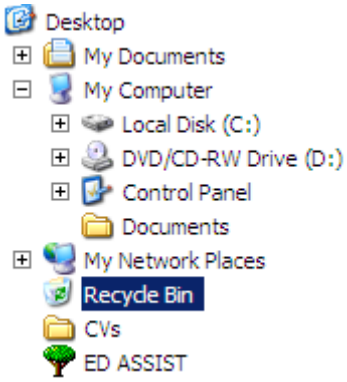
The Recycle Bin can be found on the Desktop and in Windows Explorer.

How to Access the Recycle Bin

Step 1. From the **Desktop**, double-click on the **Recycle Bin** icon.

or

From the **Windows Explorer** window, select the **Recycle Bin** from the **Folder Pane**.



Files deleted from diskettes or network drives do not appear in the Recycle Bin

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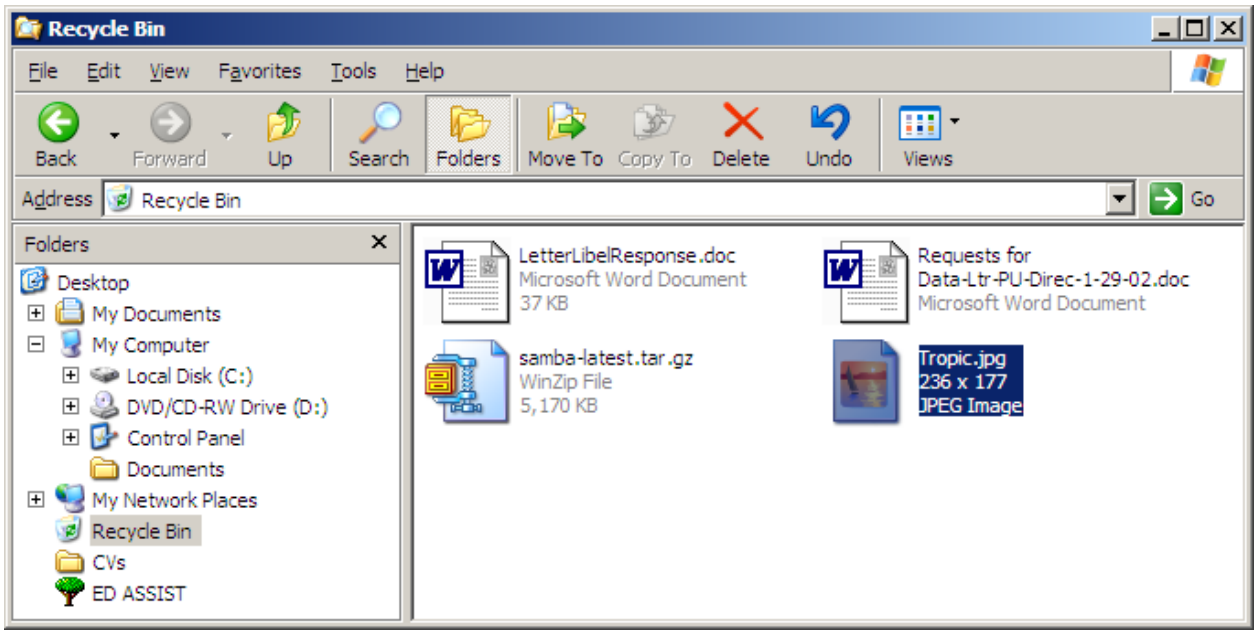
Deleted Folders and Files

You can retrieve deleted folders or files from the Recycle Bin. When an object is retrieved from the Recycle Bin, it is automatically returned to the disk location from which it was initially deleted.

How to Restore a Folder or File

Step 1. From the **Recycle Bin** dialog box, select the file to restore.



Step 2. From the **File** menu, select **Restore**.

To restore more than one object from the Recycle Bin, press and hold down the Ctrl key, select the desired objects, and from the File menu, choose Restore.

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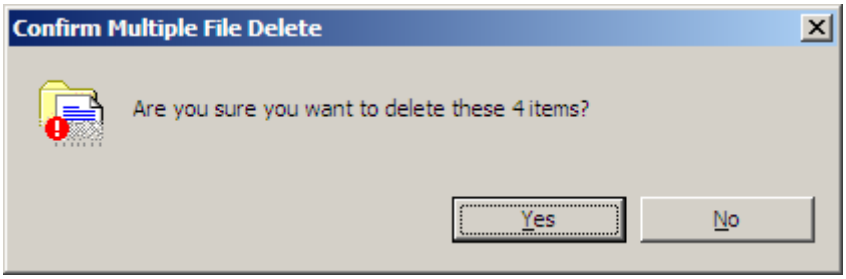
Emptying the Recycle Bin

The Recycle Bin is a storage area used to hold objects that were previously deleted. To permanently remove all the objects in the Recycle Bin and, therefore, remove all deleted objects from a drive, you must empty the Recycle Bin. The Recycle Bin should be periodically emptied to maintain hard disk space.

If a file or folder is incorrectly emptied from the Recycle Bin, it cannot be recovered. The Undo function located in the Edit menu will restore the selected file or folder to its original location, it does not recover the lost item.

How to Empty the Recycle Bin

Step 1. From the **File** menu, select **Empty Recycle Bin**.



Step 2. From the **Confirmation** dialog box, choose **Yes** to remove all objects from the **Recycle Bin**.

or

Choose **No** to cancel the function.

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Lesson

5

Windows Keyboard Shortcuts

FUNCTION	KEYBOARD SHORTCUT
Choose a running application from the Switch box	**Alt+Tab**
Move from one application or folder in an open window to another in an open window	**Alt+Esc**
Opens a new document within a Windows application	**Ctrl+N**
Saves an active document in a Windows application	**Ctrl+S**
Accesses the Print dialog box in a Windows application	**Ctrl+P**
Closes the active document within a Windows application	**Ctrl+F4**
Closes the active application or Windows 95	**Alt+F4**
Opens the help contents	**F1**
Copies the selected text, objects or files	**Ctrl+C**
Cuts the selected text, objects or files	**Ctrl+X**
Pastes text, objects or files from the Clipboard	**Ctrl+V**
Turns bold on and off.	**Ctrl+B**

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FUNCTION	KEYBOARD SHORTCUT
Turns italic on and off.	**Ctrl+I**
Turns underline on and off.	**Ctrl+U**
Rename selected file	**F2**
Display alternate context menu for selected object of file	**Ctrl+Right-Click**
Delete without putting objects of files in the Recycle Bin	**Shift+Delete**
Display shortcut menu for selected item	**Shift+F10**

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