

Using Windows Explorer

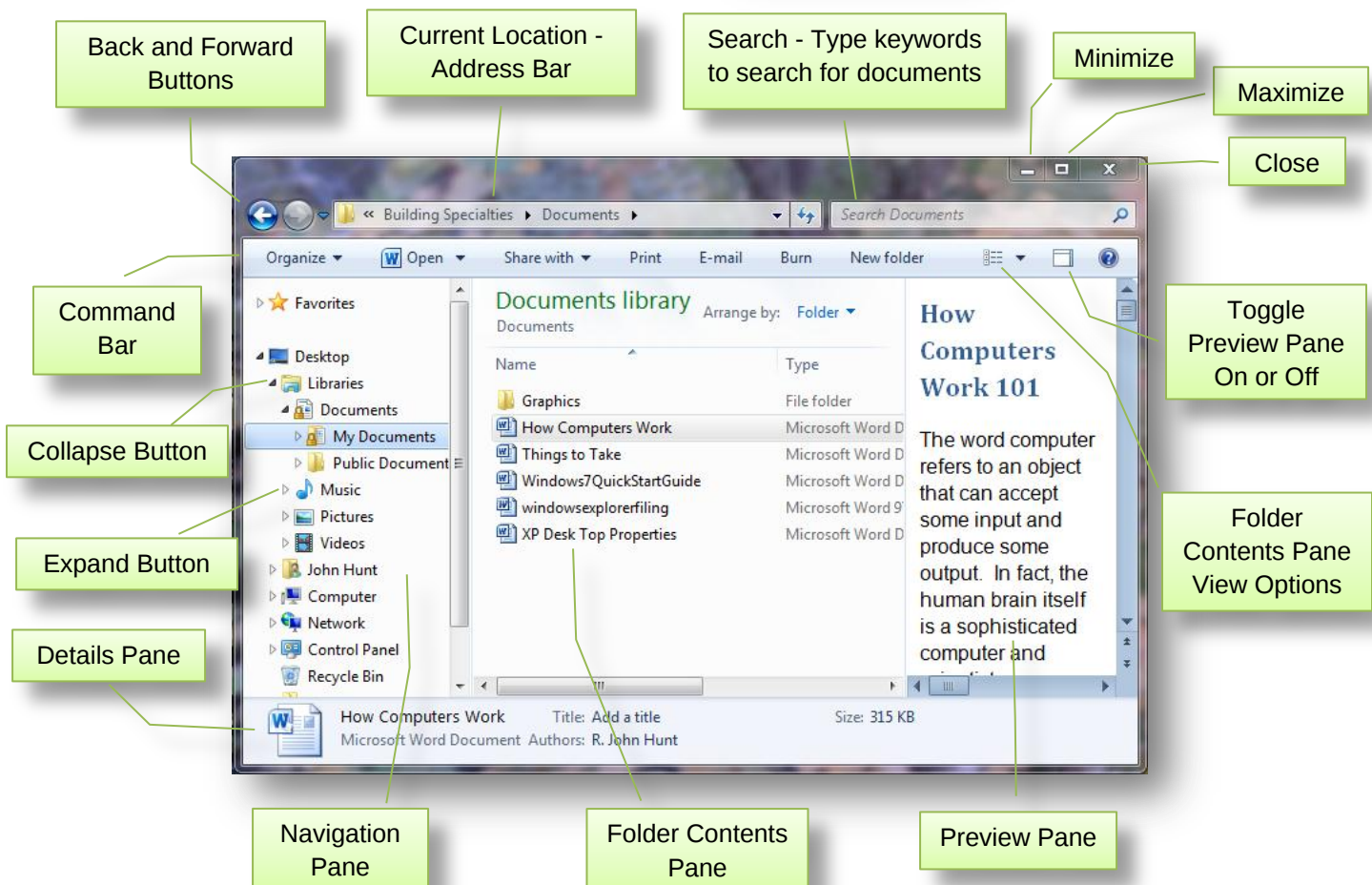
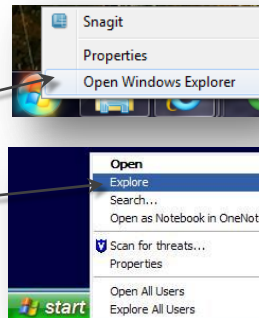
Windows Explorer displays the hierarchical structure of files, folders, and drives on your computer. It also shows any network drives that have been mapped to drive letters on your computer. Using Windows Explorer, you can copy, move, rename, and search for files and folders. For example, you can open a folder that contains a file you want to copy or move, and then drag the file to another folder or drive. Think of it as one really big filing cabinet.

An understanding of how your folders and files are organized on your computer, will simplify such tasks as navigating to a file, renaming it, or moving it to a new location. It will even help saving a new file because you will know how to navigate to the exact location for the file.

Opening Windows Explorer

While there are several ways to open **Windows Explorer**, there is a common, easy way on computers running either **Windows 7** or **Windows XP**.

1. **Right** click on the **Start** button.
2. In **Windows 7**, from the right click menu select **Open Windows Explorer**.
3. In **Windows XP**, from the right click menu select **Explore**.



Your Computer – A Filing Cabinet

In an office, important files are maintained in file cabinets. Each cabinet can contain multiple drawers. Each drawer contains folders. Each folder is organized in some logical order within the drawer. Each folder contains other folders or the files. For organizational purposes, everything on your computer is also reduced or segmented into very specific parts and locations. Your PC also consists of drives which can be compared to the drawers of a filing cabinet. These drives can be Hard Drive(s), CD-ROM drives, external drives, flash drives, and so forth. Within each Drive, there are hundreds, and potentially thousands of Folders and Files. These files and folders are organized much the same way as in a filing cabinet. Much of this organization is determined by you.

What are the Computer's Folders and Files

Folders:

A **Folder** is very similar to a folder in a file cabinet. Inside each of the Folders, there may be more sub-folders, or **Files**. Folders are a great way to keep you organized on different projects that you may be involved with. For example, you might have a Folder for all of your documents, and another for all of your spreadsheets. Furthermore, you may have sub-folders within these to keep those documents even more organized.

Files:

Each individual document and spreadsheet within a folder is known as a **File**. Files are the items that you are able to view and to work on if desired. An example would be the images you download from your digital camera; or a Word document that you've created.

What's inside all these folders?

When you open **Windows Explorer**, you will see two sections; on the left a **Navigation Pane** and on the right a **Folder Contents Pane**. In **Windows 7** you can also display a third section, the **Preview Pane** which will be on the far right.

The **Navigation Pane** displays your drives and folders. This layout is called a tree, as it closely resembles a tree with all of the 'branches'. To the left of each of the drives is a small [+] (WinXP) or [▶] (Win7) symbol. These are known as the **Expand** symbol. Clicking on the expand symbol will show you all the folders that are stored on that particular drive. Some of these folders themselves will also have the [+] or [▶] expand symbol next to them. This means that there are sub-folders contained within that particular folder.

When you click on the expand symbol, it will open the folder to display its contents and change the [+] to a minus [-] or the [▶] symbol to a [▣]. These symbols are known as the **Collapse** symbols. They indicate that the folder has been opened. If you click the [-] or [▣] collapse symbol, then the open folder will close and return it to the [+] or [▶] expand symbol.

When you expand or open a folder, the **Navigation Pane** displays all the sub-folders that are contained within the folder that you are currently viewing. **Note:** Only folders are displayed in the Navigation Pane.

Example:

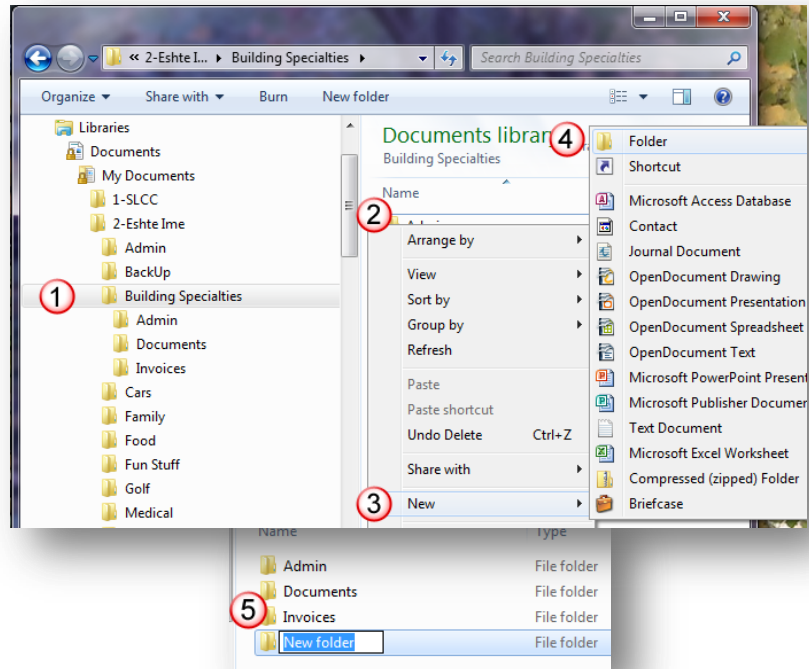
Let's view the contents of the **My Documents** folder. Generally speaking, this folder is contained on the **C:** drive (hard drive) of your PC. Locate your **C:** drive in the **Navigation Pane**, click the expand symbol next to this drive—remember, if it's already opened, it will have a collapse symbol next to it. From the folders listed in the **C:** drive, locate the **My Documents** folder. Click on the folder itself, not the Expand symbol next to it. This will display the contents of the **My Documents** folder in the **Contents Pane**. Now you can see all of the sub-folders and files in **My Documents**.

Managing Folders

As your computer's filing system grows it will become necessary to know how to manage folders. You will need to **Create New Folders**, **Delete Folders**, and **Move or Copy Folders**.

To Create a New Folder:

1. In the **Navigation Pane**, navigate to and click on the folder that will contain the new Folder.
2. In the **Folder Contents Pane**, right click on an empty area.
3. From the right click menu, **Hover** the mouse pointer over **New**. This will open a second menu.
4. From this menu, select **Folder**. This will create a new folder within the folder you selected in step one.
5. The new folder will be labeled **New Folder**. Simply start typing to change the label to a different name.

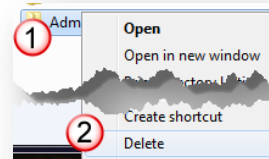


To Delete a Folder



Note: When a folder is deleted, all the folders and files it contains are deleted as well.

1. **Right** click on the folder to be deleted.
2. From the right click menu, select **Delete**.



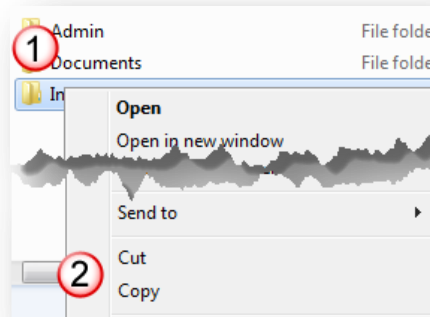
To Move or Copy a Folder

There are two quick ways to Move or Copy a folder to a new location. **Note:** When moving or copying a folder, all of its contents are moved or copied too.

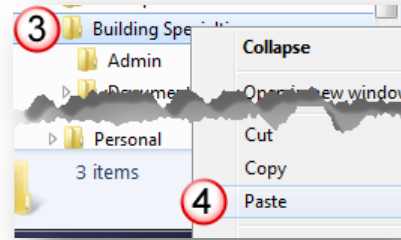
Hint: It is sometimes easier when moving or copying folders to have two instance of **Windows Explorer** open.

#1 – Cut or Copy and Paste Method:

1. **Right** click on the folder to be copied or moved.
2. From the right click menu select **Cut** to **Move** the folder to the new location.
Select **Copy** to create a **Copy** of the folder at the new location.

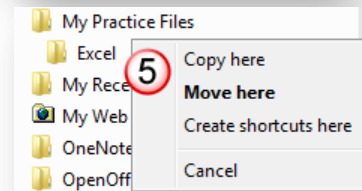
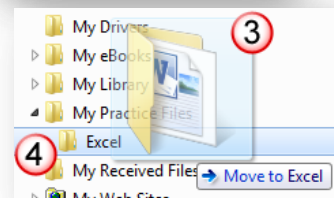
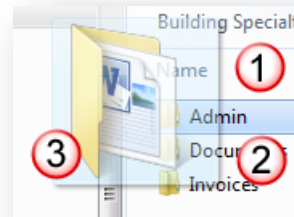


3. Navigate to the new location.
This could be another drive or another folder. Then **Right** click on the drive or folder.
4. Select **Paste** from the right click menu.
Note: The **Paste** option will not be in the menu if there is nothing to paste.



#2 – Drag and Drop Method:

1. Navigate to the folder to moved or copied.
2. **Right** click on the folder and hold the right mouse button down.
3. Still holding the right button down, move the mouse to **drag** the folder to the new location. This can be a different drive or another folder.
4. As you hover the pointer over a drive or folder, it will become highlighted. When the destination drive or folder is highlighted, release the right mouse button to **drop** the folder in the new location.
5. A new menu will display. If you are **moving** the folder to the new location, select **Move here**. If you want to **copy** the folder to the new location, select **Copy here**.



Managing Files

It is important to know your computer contains two different types of files.

- Program or System Files

Program files are the programs that you run on your computer. System Files are files that are used by your computer to make it function.

- Data Files

Data files contain information that was created by the Program files. These might include documents, photos or images, and music.

Typically, the general computer user does not need to open program or system files. It is important however, to know how to find and open data files. Also, it is important to know how to copy, move, and delete data files.

Finding and Opening Files

To **Find and Open** a file:

1. Open Windows Explorer and in the **Navigation** pane navigate to the drive where the file is stored.
2. Open the drive's contents by clicking on the **Expand** button.
3. Navigate to the folder that contains the file and click on the folder.
4. The contents of the folder are now displayed in the **Folder Contents** pane. Navigate to the file.
5. Open the file by double clicking on it. You can also right click on the file and select **Open** from the menu.

Move or Copy a File

Moving or copying a file is similar to moving or copying a folder. You can use the cut or copy and paste method. Or you can drag and drop. Remember that using the **right** mouse button will give you the option of copying or moving the file. See the section on moving and copying folders for specifics.

Selecting More Than One File

When moving or copying files, it is possible to do multiple files at once. To select more than one file do the following:

1. Navigate to the files to be moved or copied.
2. To select consecutive files:
 - a. Click the first file.
 - b. Move to the last file, hold down the **Shift** key and click on the file. All the files between the first and last will be selected.
3. To select nonconsecutive files:
 - a. Click on the first file.
 - b. hold down the **Ctrl** (Control) key and click on those files to be selected.
4. To select all the files in a folder:
 - a. Click on the first file.
 - b. On the keyboard press **Ctrl** and **A** keys together (Ctrl + A).