

Chapter 2: Window Explorer

1.Starting Windows Explorer	WD-1
2.The Windows Explorer Window	WD-1
3.Changing the Current Folder I Displaying Contents of a Folder	WD-2
4.Opening and Closing a Folder	WD-2
5.Creating a New Folder	WD-3
6.Selecting a File or Folder	WD-3
7.Viewing Icons in the Contents Area	WD-3
8.Selecting Multiple Names (Files and/or Folders)	WD-4
9.Copying a File (and/or Folder)	WD-4
10.Moving a File (and/or Folder)	WD-5
11.Deleting a File/Folder	WD-5
12.Renaming a File or Folder	WD-6
Revision Exercises	WD-7
Practical Exercises	WD-7


CHAPTER 2: WINDOWS EXPLORER

Windows Explorer is an application program included with Windows that allows the user to view the contents of the disk drives, the hierarchy of folders on the computer, and the files and folders in each folder. It also allows you to organize the files and folders on the computer by copying, moving and deleting the files and folders. You are also allowed to create a folder, rename a file or folder, and even open a file by using Explorer.

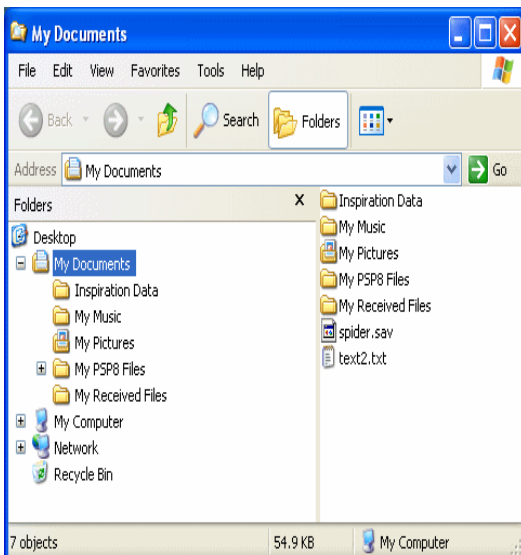
A file is a collection of data or information that is treated as a unit by the computer (Williams & Sawyer 2005). To facilitate users, the files are electronically organized in groups called folders. A folder is a collection of files and other folders (subfolders).

1. Starting Windows Explorer

Among the many ways to open the Windows Explorer window are:

1. Right-click the **Start** button or **My Computer** icon, and choose **Explore**.
2. Press  + **E** keys.
3. Click **Start**, choose **Run**, and type **explorer** in the dialog box.
4. Choose **Windows Explorer** from the **Start** menu.
5. Double click any of the standard icons and click **Folder** on the toolbar.

2. The Windows Explorer Window





The icon on the title bar in Figure 2.1 identifies the window as Window Explorer window. The title, in this case My Computer, indicates that probably you opened the window using the My Computer icon. The Explorer window has a menu bar, toolbar(s), address bar and status bar. The address bar shows the current folder.

The window area is divided into two main areas separated by a vertical bar, as shown in Figure 2.1. The left side or panel, identified by the **Folders** title, contains a hierarchy of folders on the computer. The right side shows the contents of the current folder.

Figure 2.1

The **Folders** area shows a graphic representation of the organization of the major parts of your computer. This representation of organization is called a **hierarchy** or **tree**. Subfolders are folders listed below its main folder name in an indented manner. Files can be stored in a drive, a folder or a subfolder.

The  in front of a folder name indicates that all of its subfolders are displayed in the hierarchy. Clicking the minus sign will **collapse the folder**, removing the indented subfolders from the hierarchy of folders. The minus sign changes to a plus sign.

A plus sign  to the left of a folder name indicates the folder consists of one or more subfolders that are not visible in the tree. Clicking the plus sign will expand **the folder**, displaying its subfolders and changes to a minus sign.

If no plus or minus sign is in front of a folder, the folder does not contain any subfolder. For example, the My Music folder in Figure 2.1 has no subfolder since no plus or minus sign precedes its icon.

The **Contents area** displays the contents of the selected item in the Folders area. It displays the subfolders and/or files in the selected item. Always check the address bar to see if you are at the correct folder. The status bar displays the number of objects and items shown in the Contents area and the current folder name.


3. Changing the Current Folder | Displaying Contents of a Folder

Changing current folder is necessary when you want to work with the contents of a folder, either to move, copy or delete a file or files. Changing the current folder is the same as opening a folder. Check the address bar or status bar to see if you have changed to the correct folder.

4. Opening and Closing a Folder

Opening a folder in order to see its contents can be done in some ways.

1. Click the folder (at its name icon) in the Folders area. You may have to collapse or expand a folder before clicking.
2. Double-click the folder in the Contents area.
3. Change the address in the address bar.

When you open a folder, the folder icon will be shown as an open folder  in the Folders pane. Opening a folder will automatically closes the previous opened folder.

5. Creating a New Folder

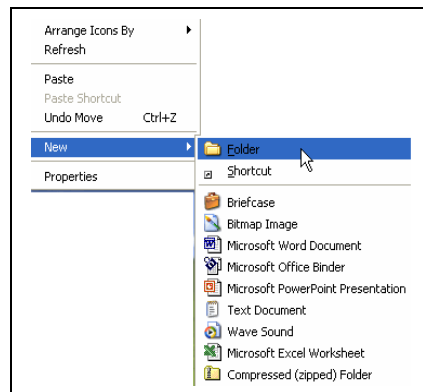


Figure 2.2

Before you create a folder, make sure the current folder is where you want the folder to be. It can be at a drive or another folder. If not, change to the desired folder.

Some of the ways to create a folder are as follows.

1. File/New/Folder.
2. Point to any blank area in the Contents area, **right-click** (to get shortcut menu). Then select **New**, and choose **Folder** (Figure 2.2).

A new folder icon is displayed with the name shown in a text box as . This means that you can rename the folder if you wish. (Refer to **Rename a File or Folder** topic). Press Enter key or click anywhere in the window to confirm the name given.

6. Selecting a File or Folder

A file is shown only in the Contents area and identified by its name. To select a file:

1. Check the current folder -must be where the file is. If not, change it.
2. **Click** at the file name or its icon **at the Contents** area. The name will be highlighted (in a colored box).

Note: Selecting a folder is the same as selecting a file.

7. Viewing Icons in the Contents Area

You can view the icons in the Contents area in many different ways to suit your need. The **List** view lists all the content of the selected folder preceded by small icons, allowing you to easily see many of the contents of a folder. The **Details** view also lists the contents preceded by small icons, together with detailed information about the item. The **Icons** and **Tiles** view displays the contents preceded by larger icons, by which you can see basic information of every item in the **Tiles** view. The **Thumbnails** and **Filmstrip** view displays the miniature version of picture files contained in the open folder.

You can see the view type provided by your Windows Explorer and choose one that you need from:

1. The **View** pull-down menu
2. The shortcut menu when you right-click in the Contents area.

8. Selecting Multiple Names (Files and/or Folders)

If the names are contiguous, i.e. the names are listed next to each other:

1. Click the first name you want to select.
2. Hold down the **Shift** key and click the last name that you want to select. All items in between, including the first and last name, are highlighted.

If the names are noncontiguous, i.e. the names are separated by other names you do not want:

1. Click the first name you want to select.
2. Holding down the **Ctrl** key, click each of the names you want to select.

9. Copying a File (and/or Folder)

When copying a file, you must know several details/information:

- a) Where is the source drive and/or source folder (from where)?
- b) What is the filename?
- c) Where is the destination (to where)?

You can copy from one location to the same location, but the new file will be given a new name. A file can also be copied from one location to another location (different drive or different folder of the same drive), and the new file will have the same name as the source file. Make sure both the source and destination folders are shown on the left side. If not, you may have to expand certain folder or drive.

Below are five ways to copy a file from the source folder to the destination folder.

1. Dragging the selected filename from the right area to left panel. While dragging, the icon and its name are dimmed. At the left side, drag the filename with the pointer beside the destination folder so that it is highlighted. Release 'the left mouse button.
Note: When dragging a file from one drive to another folder in the **same drive**, Explorer automatically assumes that you will be **moving** the file. You have to hold down the **Ctrl** key to change the pointer shape to indicate copying.
2. Using the **Edit** menu: select the file (from where and which file); choose **Edit** then **Copy**; select the destination location (in the left side); choose **Edit** then **Paste**
3. Using the **Copy** and **Paste** buttons on the toolbar; similar to the Edit menu.
4. Using the **shortcut** menu (by right-clicking at the filename) --**Copy** and **Paste**.
5. Right drag the filename from the right area to the destination folder (in the left panel); release mouse button; and choose **Copy** from the shortcut menu.

Note: A Copying... dialog box will appear to show what and from where to where the copying is done. You may get a Confirm File Replace dialog box asking if you want to change the contents of file in the destination to the contents of the source-only **if** the filename already exists at the destination. You may copy several files only from one location to a different location.

10. Moving a File (and/or Folder)

Similar to copying a file, you need to know the source location (drive and/or folder), source file, and the destination location. You can move from one location to a different drive or different folder of a drive; the new file will have the same name as the source file. Make sure both the source and destination folders are shown on the left side. If not, you may have to expand certain folder or drive.

Below are 5 ways to move a file from the source folder to the destination folder.

1. Dragging the selected filename from the right area to the destination folder in the left panel; then release the left mouse button.
Note: When dragging a file from one drive to another folder in another drive, Explorer automatically assumes that you will be copying the file. You have to hold down the Shift key to change the pointer shape to indicate moving.
2. Using the Edit menu: select the file (from where and which file); choose Edit then Cut; select the destination location (in the left side); choose Edit then Paste
3. Using the **Cut** and **Paste** buttons on the toolbar; similar to the Edit menu.
4. Using the **shortcut** menu.
5. Right drag as in copying a file, but choose **Move** in the shortcut menu.

Note: A Moving... dialog box will appear to show what and from where to where the copying is done.

Caution: Before copying or moving a file, make sure that no file of the same name as the source file exists at the destination. If one exists and you answered yes in the Confirm File Replace dialog box, you will change the contents of the file already existing in the destination. Therefore, its original content will be lost.

11. Deleting a File/Folder

When you delete a file or folder from the hard disk, e.g. drive C, the computer will throw it away into the Recycle Bin. The item may be restored (put back at its original location). However, if you delete an item from a removable disk like the diskette (drive A) or USB disk, the item will be permanently deleted (It is not put into the Recycle Bin and cannot be restored). Deleting a folder will delete all of its contents.

Five ways to delete a file/folder are listed below:

1. Dragging the selected file to the Recycle Bin (on the desktop or in the Folders pane of the Explorer window).
2. Choose **File** menu then **Delete** command.
3. Using the Delete button on the toolbar.
4. Using the shortcut menu, Delete.
5. Right-drag instead of dragging.

Note: A Confirm Delete dialog box will appear indicating what will be deleted and asking you to confirm the deletion.

To permanently delete an item from the hard disk, press **Shift** while deleting it.

12. Renaming a File or Folder

You can change the name of a file or folder whenever you see a text box appear at its name. There are four ways to rename.

1. **Click twice** at the name.
2. **File/Rename.**
3. Use shortcut menu, choose **Rename.**
4. Click at the name, press **F2.**

If the name is highlighted in the text box, typing a new character will automatically delete the name in the box (to replace with a new name). To edit the name, press an arrow key to move cursor or insertion point to the location to type, and then type the new character. Press Enter key when done renaming.

A file has a **filename**. Windows and Windows-based programs allow you to use long folder and filenames (up to 255 characters). The possible characters in a filename are:

letters A to Z

digits 0 to 9

and special characters: usually the _ (underscore)

Spaces are allowed in names, but the following characters are NOT allowed: \ / : * ? " < > |

A file may have a file extension, usually to indicate the type of file. It can be up to three characters in length and separated from the filename by a period. Some application software will automatically give a file extension. For example, a document created by using Microsoft Word usually has a **.doc** extension. Naming a folder is the same as a file though a folder generally has no extension. The same restriction regarding characters also applies to filename extensions.

Revision Exercises

- a) List down 5 ways to start Windows Explorer.
- b) Using Windows Explorer is a quick way to view, copy and move all files and folders between drives and folders because it provides a _____ (tree- like) structure.
- c) The _____ pane in Windows Explorer displays drives and folders in a tree-like structure.
- d) The _____ side displays the contents of the current folder.
- e) Dragging a file to a destination in the same drive automatically _____ the file.
- f) Dragging a file to a destination in another drive automatically _____ the file.

Practical Exercises

- a) Create a WordPad file named *Input* in My Documents folder which contains the following text lines: *Input Devices:*
Keyboard, Mouse, Joysticks, Touch screens, Scanners
- b) Create another Word Pad file named *Monitor* in the same location which contains the following text lines: *Monitors:*
Cathode-ray Tubes, Flat Panel Monitors
- c) On a floppy disk, create two folders named *Input* and *Output*.
- d) *Copy the Input* file to the *Input* folder.
- e) Move the *Monitor* file to the *Output* folder.
- f) Rename the *Monitor* file in the floppy disk to *Output*.
- g) *Open the Output* folder.
- h) Print the screen by pressing the Print Screen key on your keybQoard and then paste the C image in MS Paint program. Save on your floppy disk as' Exercise_2h.jpg.
- i) Delete the *Input* file from My Documents.
- j) Close Windows Explorer.