

# File Management with Windows 7

## What is File Management?

A file is simply a collection of data stored in a way that the computer can read it. Every command you give to a computer involves using some sort of file. When you start up a word processing package you are running a program, and you will need to be able to save the information that you input into a file. Subsequently you may wish to make further changes so you need to know where to find the saved file, and perhaps you'll want to print it out or copy it from a hard disc onto a pen drive/memory stick. We are going to introduce two options for seeing and organising your files, namely using the *Documents* folder and *Windows Explorer* (simply *Explorer*, from here on).

## Seeing what is on your Computer

Select the **Documents** option from the **Start** menu.

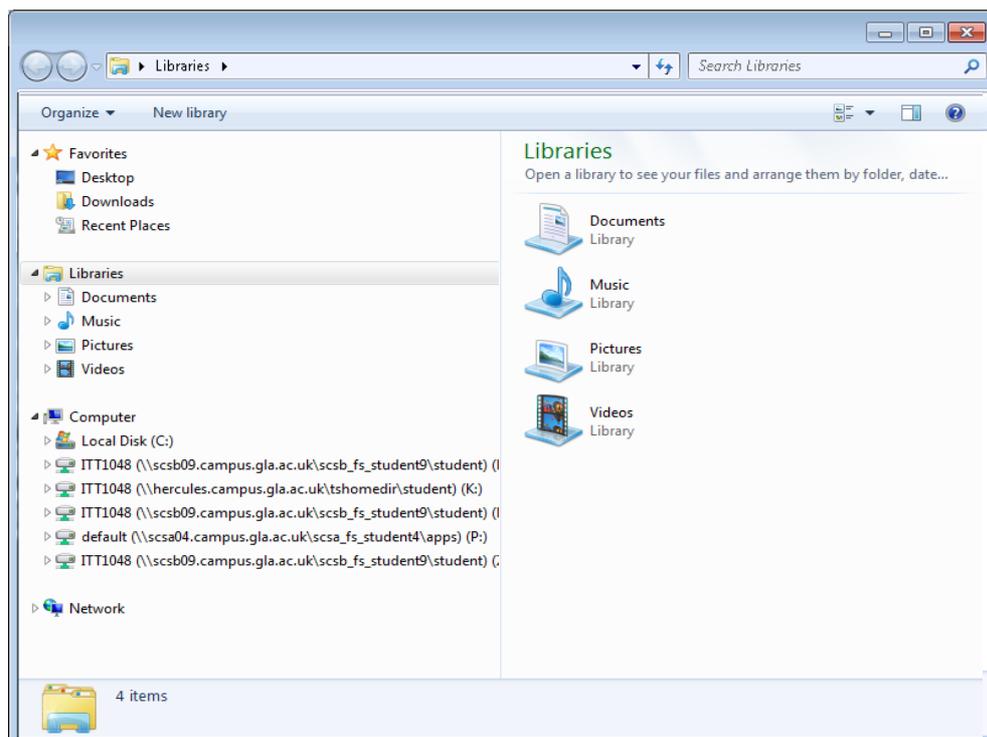
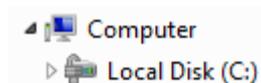
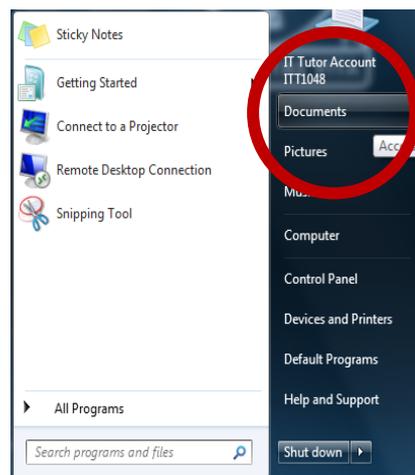
A window appears showing various icons, which include the drive letters for disc drives where files can be stored.

**Note: Documents** is the default storage area whenever you save a file on a PC. On campus PCs this will always be linked to a network *drive*.

A *drive* is a device for storing and reading data. It contains a disc or discs on which the data is stored as files.

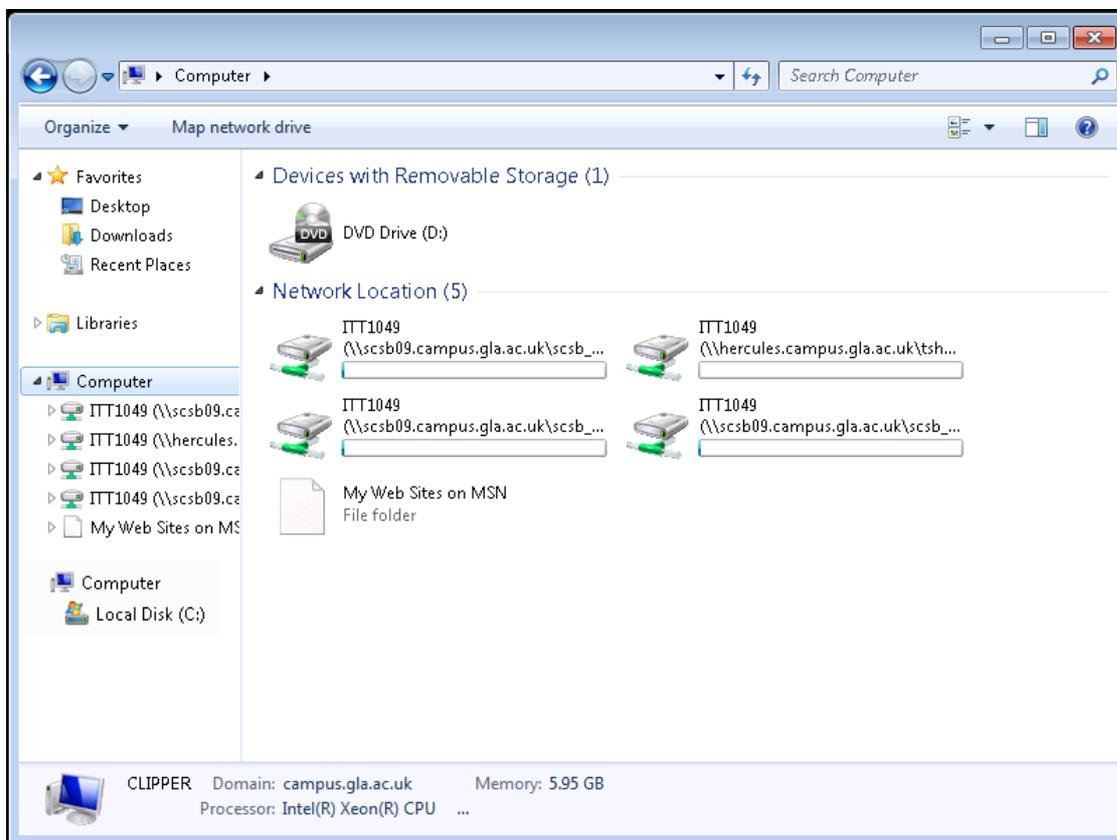
Drive **C:** is the computer's in-built hard disc and **D:** a **DVD/CD-Rom** drive.

Drive **E:** is usually available for other portable storage, such as USB pen drives.



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If you are using a computer that is part of a cluster, you may also see an icon like this, indicating a *networked drive*. This means the physical drive has a different location from the computer that accesses it.



The **Documents** window above shows all the internal and external drives available on a computer.

This is also identified by a letter; on university campus computers, this is usually **H**, **K** or **M**. Placing the mouse cursor over the drive icon will display drive information. To see the files stored on a drive, double click on its icon.



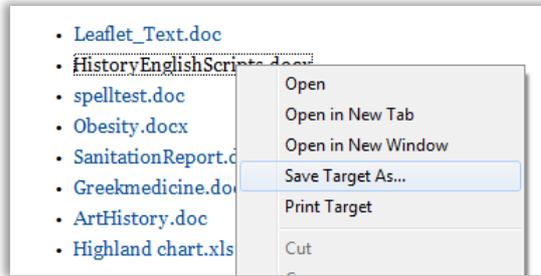
It is important to understand that files you save while logged on to the **CSCE on campus** or via **CSCE Remote** will be stored by default in your **Documents** library which is in a network storage area on campus.

You should never attempt to save anything to the **C:** drive on a CSCE computer. You will not be able to find it again even when you log on to a CSCE computer. Anything you save to your **Documents** library (on your **H**, **K** or **M** drive) will be available to you from any CSCE machine on campus or via **CSCE Remote**.

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## Storing and Accessing Files

Files can be stored on your computer in two ways. They can be added from another source, e.g. downloaded from a web site or they can be copied from an external source, such as a disk or USB pen drive.



To save a file from a web page, **right-click** with the mouse on the file name.

In the menu that appears, select **Save Target As** (or in some browsers **Save File As**) and save to your **Documents** folder.

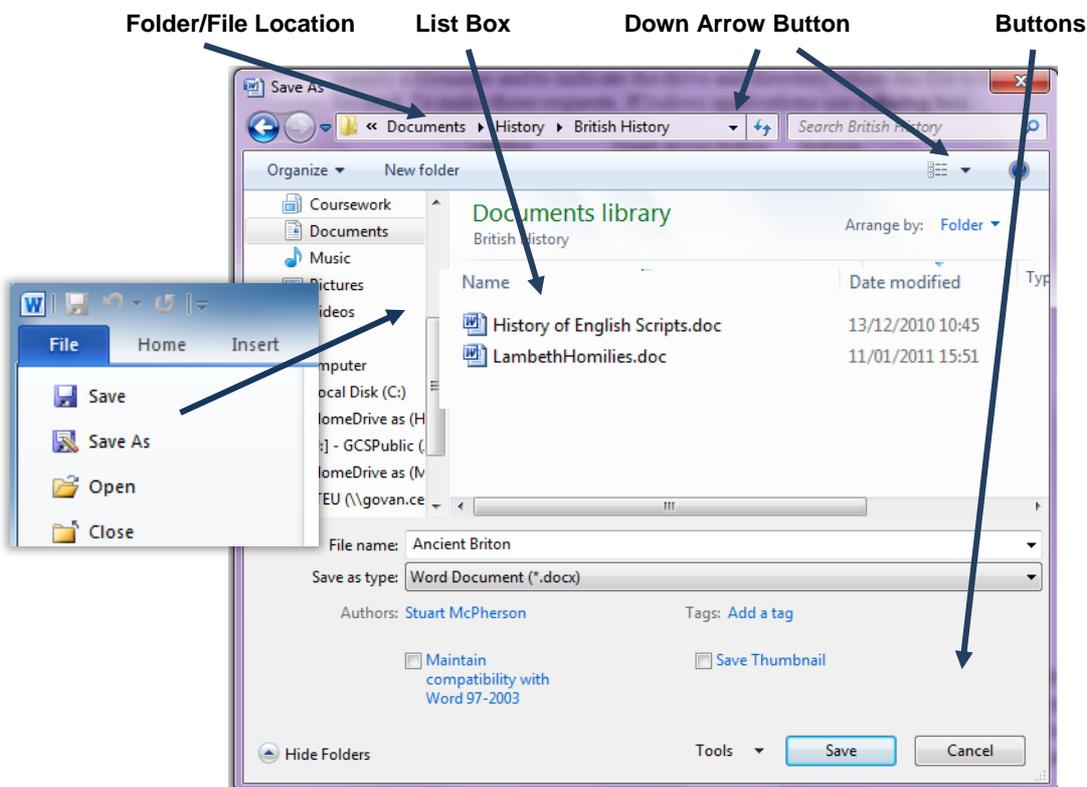
A USB Pen Drive is attached to the USB port of a PC, after which it can be treated like any other drive on your PC. You can copy files to or from it by simple drag and drop or by using copy and paste in your **Documents** folder.



When you have finished using the USB Pen Drive, make sure to click on the **Safely remove USB Mass Storage Device** option on the **Taskbar** before removing it.

Files are also stored on your computer when you save a file, for instance when you save text that you typed in a word processing program.

To save a file click **Save** on the **File** tab and in the dialog box that appears type a filename. Then press **Enter** or click the dialog box's **Save** button.

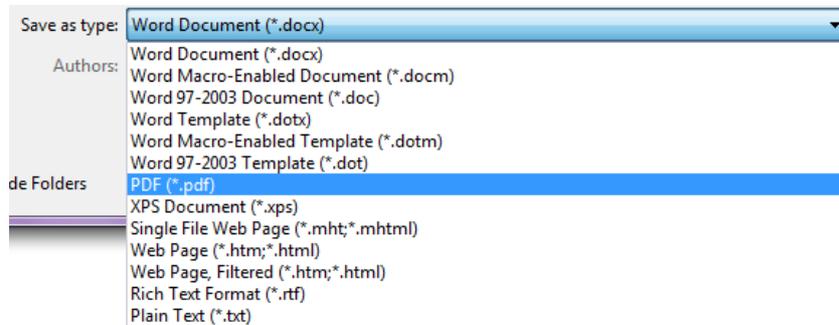


When you save a file you should give it a suitable name, typing in the **File name** box.

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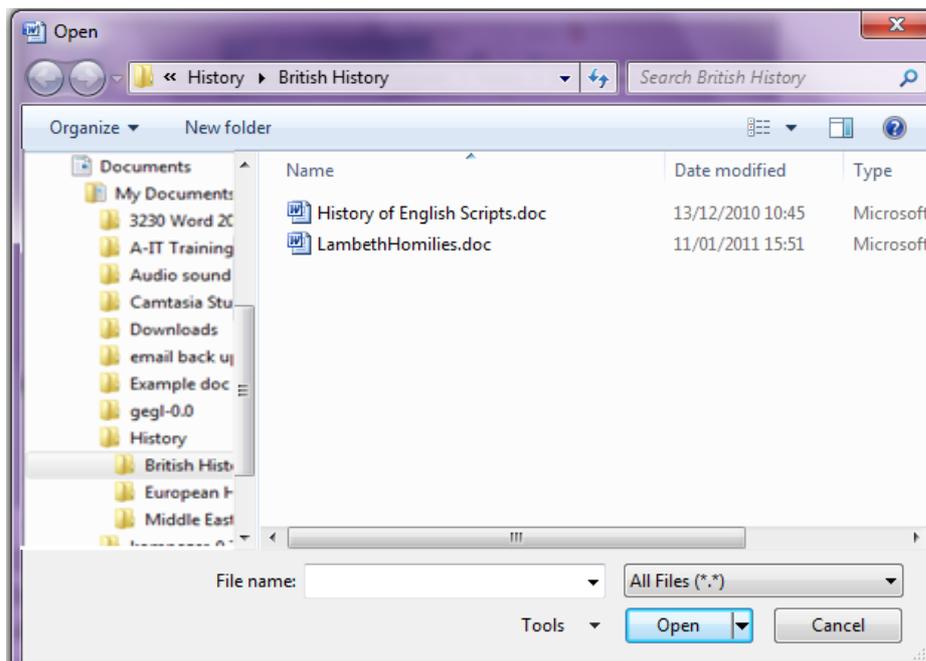


You can save in various formats. We'll use the example of an *MS Word* document: here the default is \*.docx (default formats for other applications are discussed later in this document).



To save in other format, click on the **Down-Arrow** button by the **Save As type** box and a list of file types will be displayed for you to select from.

To open a file click **Open** on the **File** tab and in the dialog box that appears search in the folders for the file, select it and then click **Open**. The **Open** dialog window is very much like the **Save** window, except that you have an **Open** button instead of a **Save** button.



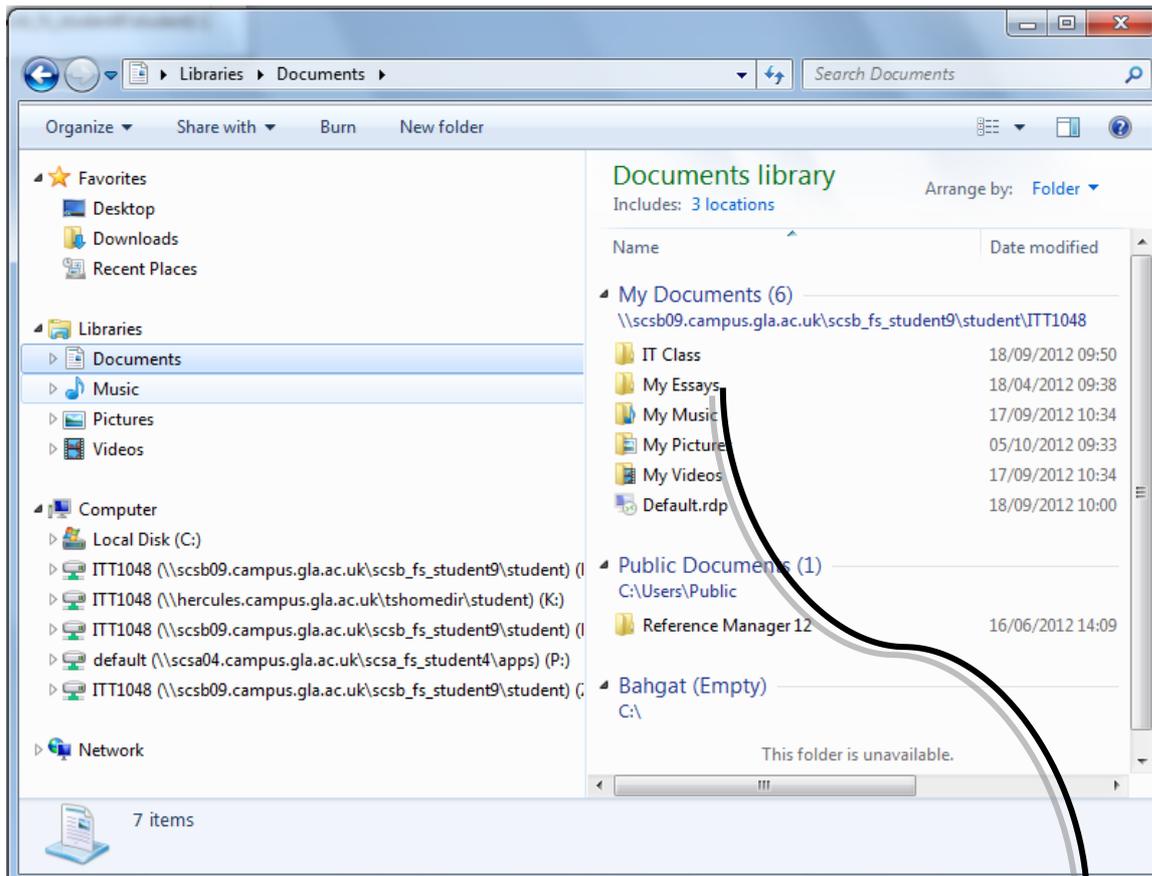
Different folders can be selected from within the main **Documents** folder. You open a folder by double clicking on it – or by clicking on the little **arrow symbol** (▷) beside each folder displayed in the left hand side panel. Note that in the above image the track to a folder named **British History** is shown.

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## Finding Files on your Computer

As you save and download files your filestore will grow until you will find it difficult to find things unless you learn how to search for and organise your files.

The image below shows the contents of an area dedicated to your personal filestore, your **Documents** (on your **Home** drive). **Note:** there are some extra folders here, created by the user. We'll look later at how this is done. Within this area are a number of icons: each icon represents a different type of object.



The most common icon you see looks like a paper document wallet, and this represents a **folder** into which can go files and other folders.



Now when you **select** a folder, a large icon appear on the status bar which gives you more information about it. In this example the folder is empty – the icon tells you this without opening it.



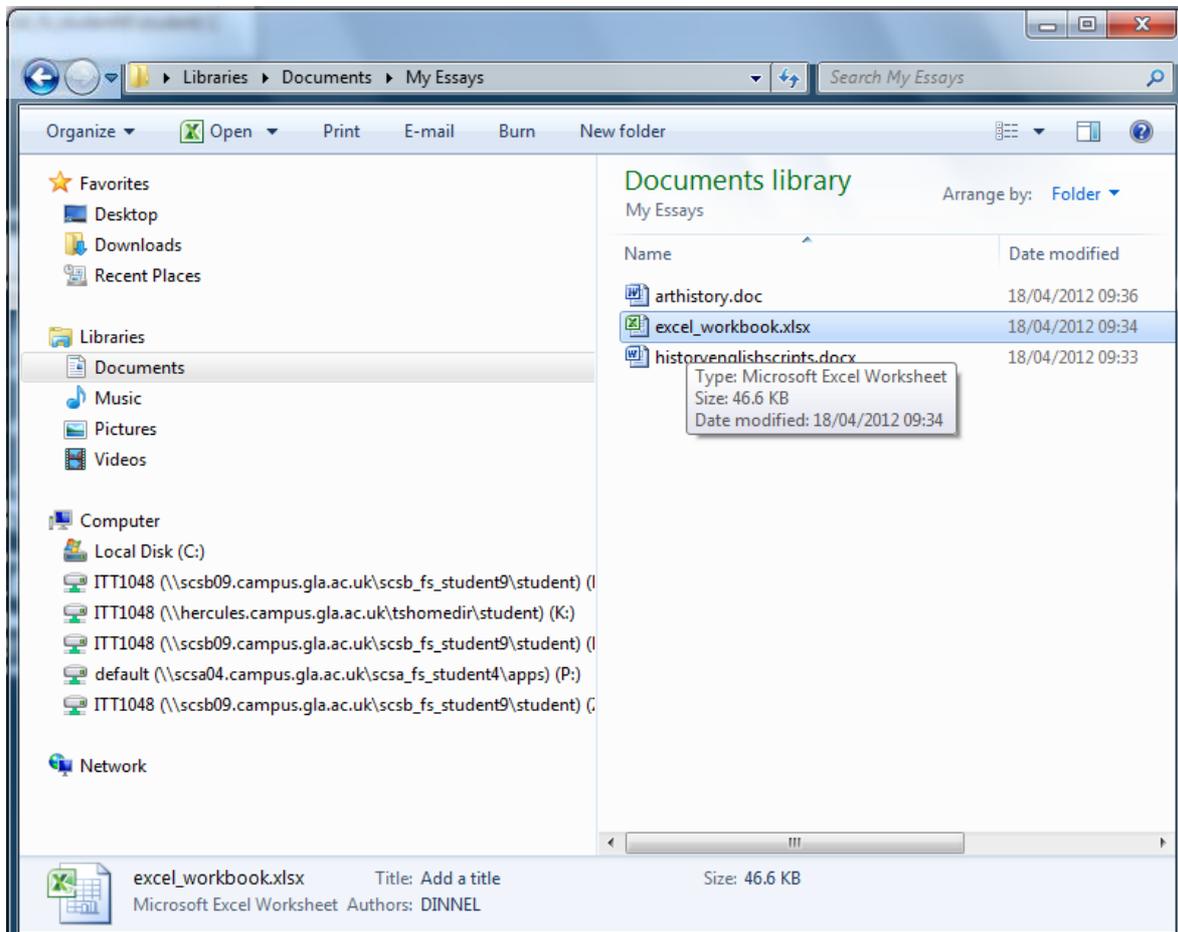
This icon is also used when your are viewing the contents of a folder (with none of the contents selected) to indicate you are ‘looking inside’ the folder.

A folder which contains files displays, on the status bar, the icon to the right of this paragraph. To see the contents of a folder, double click on the folder in the main window.



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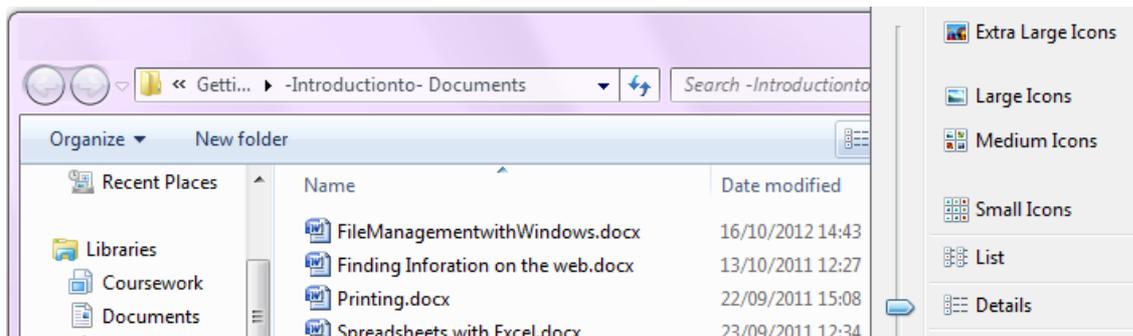
For instance we may look inside the **My Essays** folder seen in the above image. Here we can see that there are three files stored within the **My Essays** folder, and from the icons we can tell that two are word processed document created with *Word* and one is a spreadsheet file created with *Excel*. Later on we'll expand on the names given to these files.



When you **select** a file within a folder, a large icon appear on the status bar which tells you what kind of file it is. In this example the icon on the status bar tells you that it is an *Excel* workbook file. You will notice that the icons within the folder beside the file names are miniature versions of the large icons shown on the status bar.



You can change how files are displayed by choosing an option from the **View** menu.



Here the **Details** view has been chosen showing a tiny icon and details **like Date modified**.

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Default view on many computers is **Large** or **Medium** icons; some are shown below.



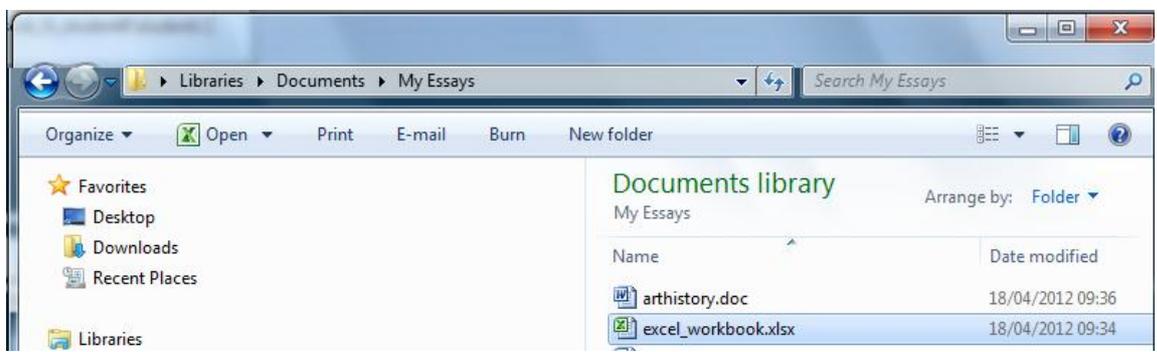
Here are some typical icons you will often come across: these are the icons for the main Microsoft Office file types. If you are unsure what type of file an icon represents, select the file and information about it will be shown on the status bar alongside the large icon.

Another way of identifying a file is by its extension – in some of the earlier examples above you will have seen the *Excel* file has the extension **.xlsx** and *Word* files have the extension **.docx** which are typical *MS Office 2007-2010* application files.

Extensions are used to help recognise the **file type** (i.e. the sort of data which the file contains); if the program, which you are using, cannot recognise a file it will not be able to use the data in it. Files with an extension **.exe** are usually programs, which you can run, whilst those with **.docx** are usually documents created by *MS Word*.

There are many file types and corresponding extensions. Below is a table of some of the most common you will come across:

Text files	Presentation files	Data files	Image files
<b>.docx</b> <i>MS Word</i>	<b>.ppsx</b> <i>PowerPoint Slide Show</i>	<b>.xlsx</b> <i>Microsoft Excel</i>	<b>.bmp</b> bitmap image
<b>.txt</b> plain text file	<b>.pptx</b> <i>PowerPoint Presentation</i>	<b>.accdb</b> <i>Access Database</i>	<b>.gif</b> or <b>.jpg</b> Common formats for images
<b>.rtf</b> rich text file			

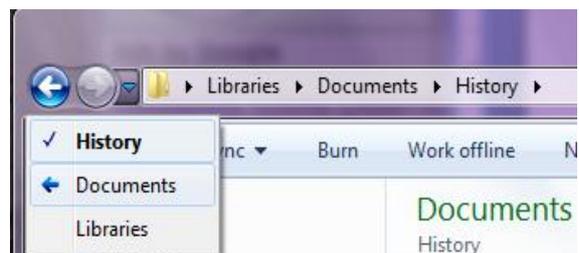


Note the buttons at the top of these windows. The **Back** button allows you to return to the previous view – for instance from “My Essays” back to the main **Documents** window. The **Forward** button takes you forward, so you can switch back and forth between two areas.



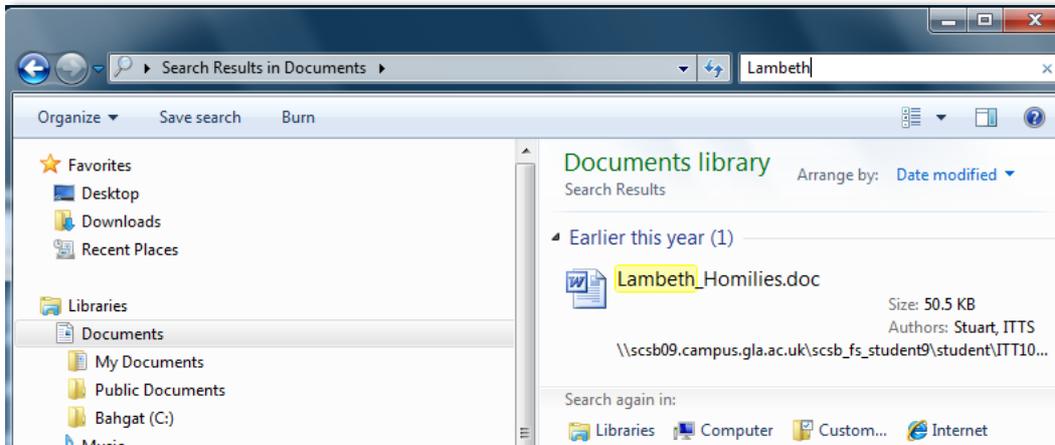
If you click on the little **down-arrow** beside the **Back** or **Forward** you will see a menu of all the **folders** you have viewed recently.

This saves you having to click many times to reach an earlier folder.

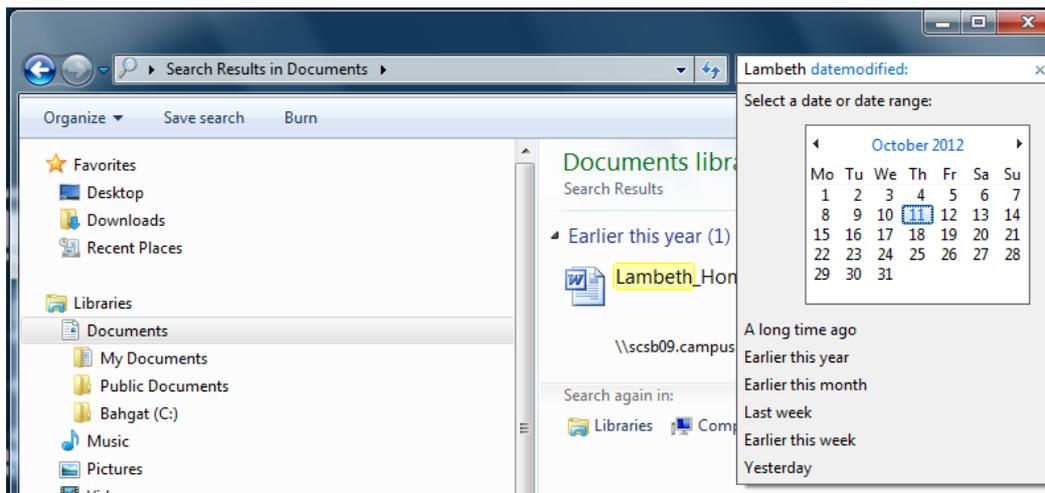


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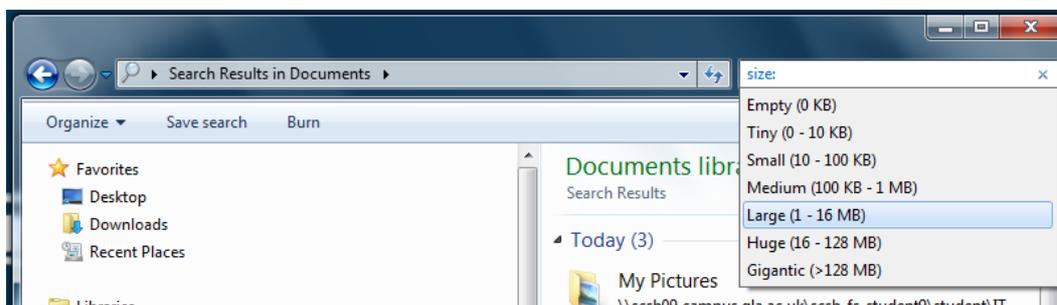
If you are not sure where a file is, using the **Search** option lets you enter details of a file and search for it by clicking the spyglass icon. In the example shown below we see a search on a part of a file name; the file has been found and displayed along with its location.



You can also check for files created or updated within a certain period by selecting the filter **Date modified**.



As you can see from the above illustration you can select a general period (e.g. **Earlier this month**) or a specific period by date using the **Calendar** option.



Another option is Size. You wouldn't use this when searching for a specific file. But if you, for instance, were clearing out old files to make space you might want to see the biggest files.

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Getting rid of the larger files that were no longer wanted would create the most space.

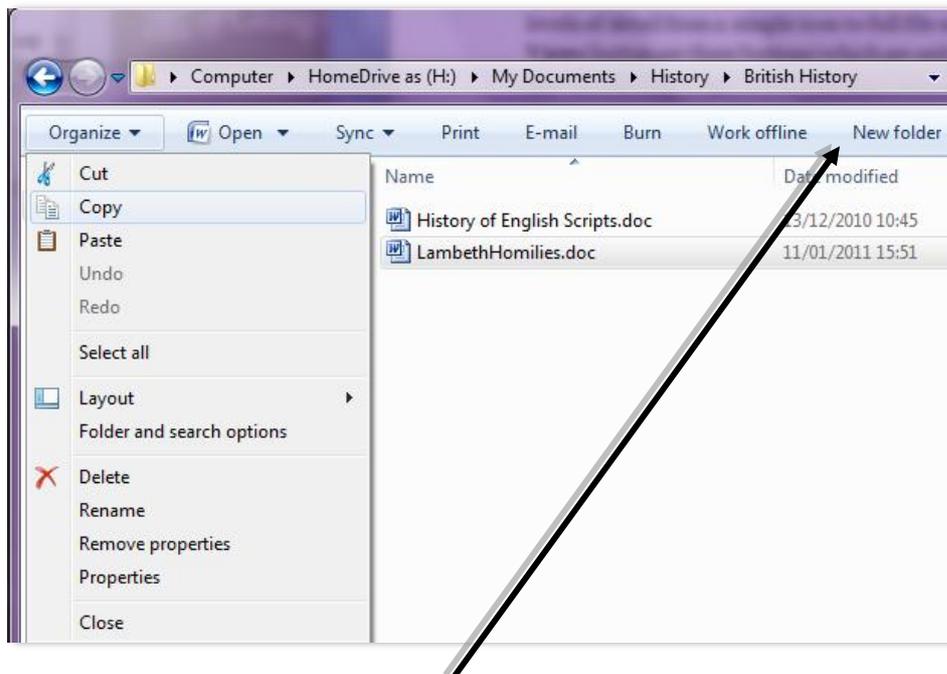
What if you are looking for a file from months ago and although you know it's subject/topic you can't remember what it was named? To be sure of finding such files you need to keep your folders organised. This is done using the options found in the **Organize** menu.

## Organising your files

It is up to you to decide how to organise your files, just as you would do if you were putting paper documents into folders, which are stored in a filing cabinet. The cabinet drawers will be labelled in some way to help you find a file quickly. Similarly in your computer storage you should store work for a particular topic in an appropriately named **folder**.

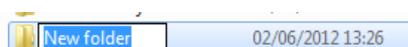


Keeping your work organised is best done using the **Documents** window options. Before doing anything with a file or folder you must select it by clicking on it once with the mouse. On the bar above the panel displaying the folders and files buttons are a number of **Option** buttons and menus (some of which are only active if a file is selected). The most important for our purposes are **Organise**, **Burn** and **New Folder**.

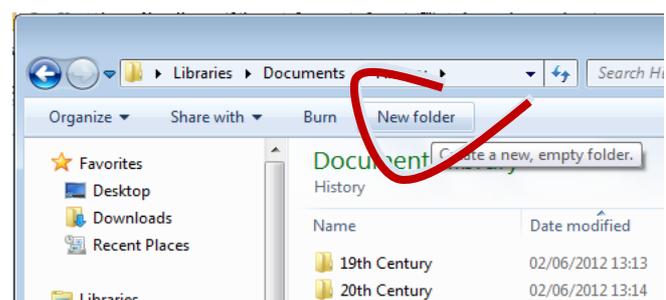


We'll look first at the **New folder** option that allows you to create a new folder wherever and whenever you want.

To add new folders, click on the **New folder** button in the **Documents** window.



The new folder appears with its default name selected: overwrite this to rename it.



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**Note:** when you **Save** a file you can also create a new folder for it at the same time. Then you save directly into the new folder.

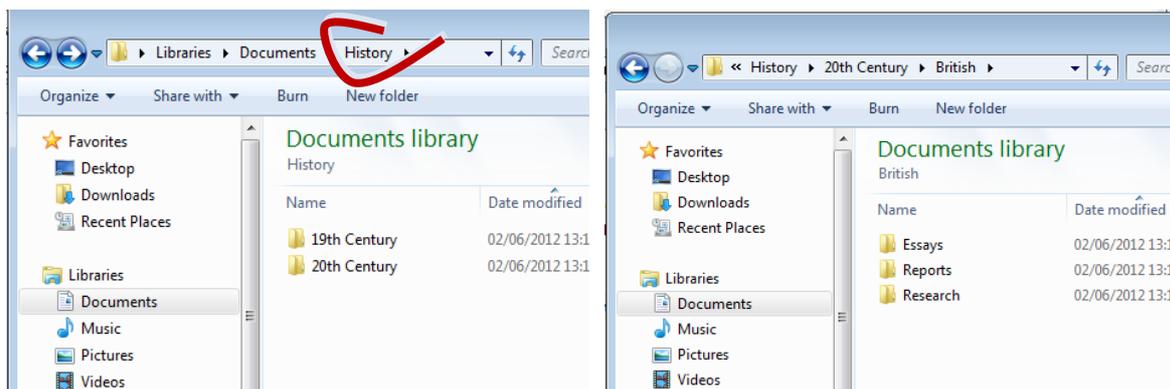


**Folders** can be nested in a hierarchical arrangement, so that top-level folders can contain sub-folders, and so on down to individual files. This helps you find things and it also keeps related material together.

Keep your files organised and *use sensible names* for them – if you don't do this you may have trouble finding files you want later on. All your work files should be held in your **Documents** folder but within it you should create new folders to place files into and organise them.



In the example shown here, a student has created a folder in their **Documents** folder, named *History*.



Inside this folder are sub- folders representing different aspects of the main subject. Remember: you should give files suitable names too, for instance don't just name your file, e.g. *essay1* name it *History\_essay1\_semester2*.

We'll look now at the **Organise** menu which allows you to **Delete**, **Rename**, **Move** or **Copy** a file. The **Undo** and **Redo** options are in this menu as well.

### To Delete a folder:

- Check there are no files you wish to keep in the folder.
- If there are any files you wish to keep, and you still wish to delete the folder, move these files to another folder.
- Select the folder you want to delete then select **Delete** from the **Organise** menu (or click the delete key on the keyboard).
- Confirm that you want the folder deleted by clicking on **Yes**. This moves the folder, and any contents, to the **Recycle Bin**.

Remember that the Recycle Bin is a holding place for deleted files and that these files are not actually deleted from the computer until you empty the

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Recycle Bin. (To do this double-click the **Recycle Bin** icon, and select **Empty Recycle Bin** from the **File** menu.)

This means that you can get back folders that you have accidentally deleted. However if you need to free up disc space the Recycle Bin should be cleared out from time to time.

### **To copy a file:**

- Select the file you want to copy.
- Select **Copy** from the **Organize**▼ menu.
- Choose and open the folder where you want to place the copy.
  - You also have the option of creating a new folder to store the copy:
  - Simply click the **New folder** button.
  - Give the new folder a name and press the **Return** key. Open the new folder.
- Select **Paste** from the **Organize**▼ menu. The file will be copied into the folder.

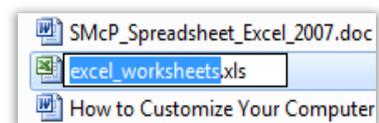
You can **Move** files in a similar fashion

### **To Move a file:**

- Select the file you want to move.
- Select **Cut** from the **Organize**▼ menu.
- Choose and open the folder where you want to place the file.
  - You also have the option of creating a new folder to store the copy:
  - Simply click the **New folder** button.
  - Give the new folder a name and press the **Return** key. Open the new folder.
- Select **Paste** from the **Organize**▼ menu. The file will be moved into the folder.

To rename a file, select it in the **Documents** window and choose **Rename** from the **Organize**▼ menu.

The file name will be highlighted and you simply type over it with the new name you want to give it. *Remember to keep the same **extension** for the file name!*



If you copy files, create suitable names for the copies, so that you can tell them apart easily. But don't change extensions or the application with which the file was created will not be able to read it any more.

To **delete a file**, select it by clicking on its name and then choose **Delete** from the **Organize**▼ menu or click on the **Delete** key. If you mistakenly delete a file, you can retrieve it by choosing **Undo** from the **Organize**▼ menu. Alternatively, you can open the **Recycle Bin** and select the file you wish to retrieve, then click on the **Restore** button.

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## **Portable Storage Media**

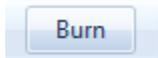
PCs allow you to save data to different types of portable storage medium, which allow you to transfer files between computers which are not connected by a network: e.g. transfer files between your home computer and one on campus. Some PCs in the university clusters allow you to write to an R/W CD or DVD. CDs can hold as much as 750 megabytes of data and DVDs from 4.5 Gigabytes of data and upwards.

Another storage medium is the **USB Pen drive** (also known as memory stick, flash drive, etc.) which can hold from 1 Gigabytes of data up to 256 Gigabytes. These can be used with any PC that has a USB port. These can hold more memory than a DVD and are more durable; on the other hand they are easy to lose and can present security problems.

## **Read/Write CD**

You can save files to a writeable CD by copying using your **Documents** window or *Windows Explorer*. (Right-click on the **Start** button and choose **Open Windows Explorer**).

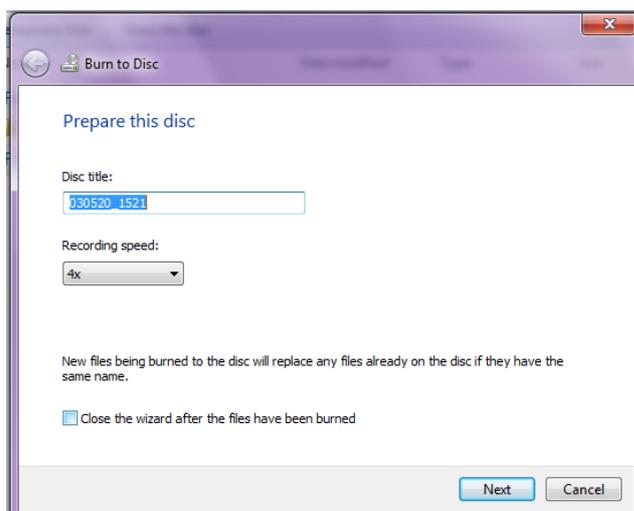
To begin the process, insert your CD into the **D:** drive and open the **Documents** window or *Windows Explorer* to access the files you want to copy.



Select the files and then click the **Burn** button.



The **D:** drive will be shown and temporary copies of the files to be burned will be displayed. Click **Burn** and the following window will appear.

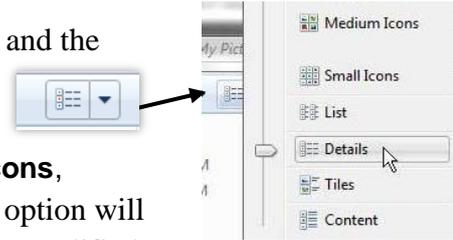


Click **Next** and the burning process will begin. When finished, **don't forget to remove the CD from the PC** – especially if you're using a Campus PC!

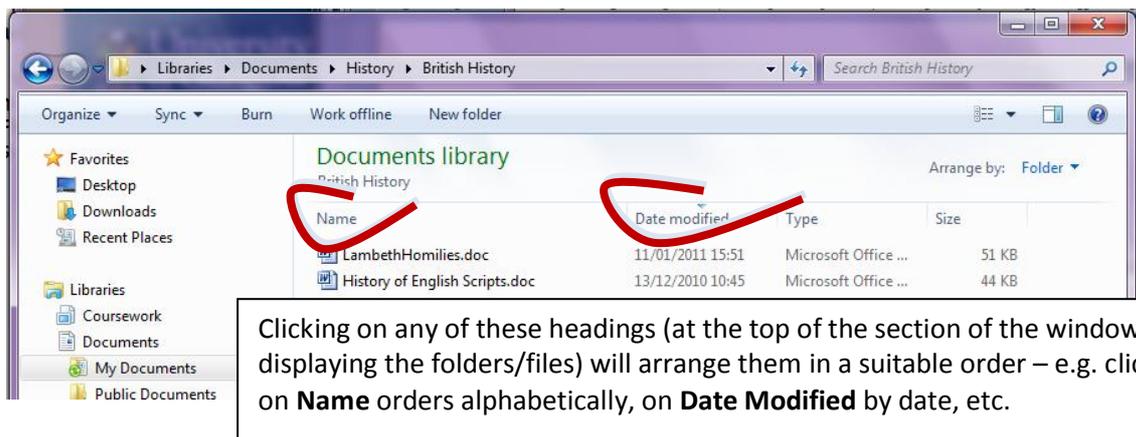
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## Examining and Running Files

The way in which the files and folders are presented to you, and the amount of information given about them, can be changed.



To do this, select the **View** menu and choose from **Large Icons**, **Medium Icons**, **Small Icons**, **List** or **Details**. The **Details** option will display the name, size, type and the date that the file was last modified.



Knowing when it was last used helps you identify the latest version of a document of which you may have multiple copies as backups, all with rather similar names.

A file can be **run** straight from the *My Computer* or *Explorer* window. You can do this by double-clicking on it or by right-clicking and selecting **Open**. If the file is a program (usually with an **.exe** extension) it will run. If it is a data file, such as a word processing document, it will open the application it needs, then open itself. This will only happen successfully if the application is already on your computer. Thus, double-clicking on a word processing file will only open the file if you already have the word processing software installed.

Some files will already be pre-set to open this way, but sometimes you may wish to open other file types. To do this, first click on the file you wish to open, then select **Open With** from the **File** menu and select the appropriate application from the list displayed. You should make sure the **Always use this program to open this file** box is ticked if you expect to be using this file type regularly.

## Backing up Files

Backing up files is very important. Even though computers nowadays are very reliable, accidents can occur - and human error is always possible. You should always keep a backup of any file you create. When working on a file, you should back up at regular intervals so that, if anything goes wrong, you will only have lost a few changes.

At university if you store files on a networked file server, which you will do when you save to **Documents** on a campus networked PC, backups will automatically happen at regular intervals. So if you do accidentally delete files they may be able to retrieve copies from

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routine backup servers.

You can't depend totally on the network back up, however. Back-ups are made regularly throughout the day but there might be a system failure just before a back-up is due and you could easily lose as much as an hour's work – if you haven't been making your own regular backups. Make more than one backup of files that are important, and keep them in different places. And, if you back up to portable storage (e.g. disc or USB pen drive) **don't forget to remove it from the PC and put it in safe place.**