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# Step by Step

## Windows® 7

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*Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox*  
*Online Training Solutions, Inc.*

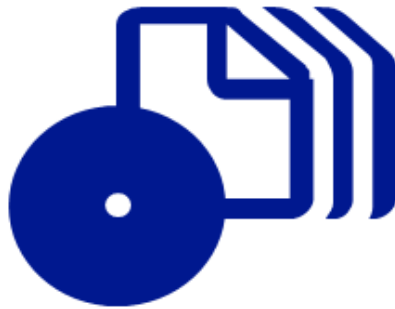


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# **Windows® 7**

Step by Step

**Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox  
Online Training Solutions, Inc.**

**PUBLISHED BY**

Microsoft Press

A Division of Microsoft Corporation

One Microsoft Way

Redmond, Washington 98052-6399

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2009932323

ISBN: 978-0-7356-2667-6

Printed and bound in the United States of America.

10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 QGT 7 6 5 4 3 2

Distributed in Canada by H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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**Acquisitions Editor:** Juliana Aldous Atkinson

**Developmental Editor:** Sandra Haynes

**Project Editor:** Rosemary Caperton

**Editorial Production:** Online Training Solutions, Inc.

Body Part No. X15-74141

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## About the Authors



**Joan Preppernau** has worked in the training and certification industry for 13 years. As President of Online Training Solutions, Inc. (OTSI), Joan is responsible for guiding the translation of technical information and requirements into useful, relevant, and measurable training and certification tools. Joan is a Microsoft Certified Trainer (MCT) and Microsoft Certified Application Specialist (MCAS) in Microsoft Office 2007 and Windows Vista, a Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist (MCTS) in Windows Vista, and the author of more than two dozen books about Windows and Office (for Windows and Mac). Joan lives in Bartonville, Texas, with her husband, Barry, and their daughter, Trinity.

**Joyce Cox** has 25 years' experience in the development of training materials about technical subjects for non-technical audiences, and is the Vice President of OTSI. She is the author of dozens of books about Office and Windows technologies and developed the *Quick Course* series of computer training books for beginning and intermediate adult learners. She was the first managing editor of Microsoft Press, an editor for Sybex, and an editor for the University of California. Joyce and her husband, Ted, live in downtown Bellevue, Washington.



## The Team

This book would not exist without the support of the entire OTSI publishing team:

- Jean Trenary, who managed the project
- Charles Preppernau and Rob Carr, who reviewed the content for technical accuracy
- Jaime Odell, who copy edited and proofread the text
- Kathy Krause, who acted as a reader advocate and indexed the book
- Lisa Van Every, who laid out the book in InDesign and created the eBook
- Jeanne Craver, who processed the graphics
- Marlene Lambert, who compiled the index and pitched in wherever necessary
- Susie Carr, who created the companion CD

We're especially thankful to the people at home who make it possible for our team members to devote so much of their time and attention to our projects.

Thanks also to the many people at Microsoft Press and Microsoft Learning who supported this book through its inception, creation, and release, including Rosemary Caperton, Sandra Haynes, and Juliana Aldous.

## Online Training Solutions, Inc. (OTSI)

OTSI specializes in the design, creation, and production of Office and Windows training products for information workers and home computer users. For more information about OTSI, visit

[www.otsi.com](http://www.otsi.com)

# Introducing Windows 7

Windows 7 is the computer operating system we've all been waiting for!

This latest version of the Windows operating system provides a deceptively simple computing experience; deceptive because on a Windows 7 computer, you can perform more—and more advanced—computing operations than ever before.

One of the first things you might notice about Windows 7 is the elegant look of the user interface. If you're accustomed to working with Windows Vista, you'll find a refined and enhanced interface with only a few new navigational features to learn. If you have been using an earlier version of Windows, you'll find there have been significant changes, and will quickly appreciate the high-quality visual effects of the Windows 7 interface. Windows 7 includes several new features that utilize the Aero functionality introduced with Windows Vista. Features such as animations, translucent glass window frames, Windows Flip, Windows Flip 3D, Aero Peek, and Aero Shake provide an amazing desktop computing experience.

Beneath the attractive and efficient interface lies a powerful yet unobtrusive operating system. Windows 7 operates very efficiently, so your computing experience is faster than ever before—you'll particularly notice this if you upgrade your computer from Windows Vista. Security features that were introduced with Windows Vista have been refined to maximize usability and minimize interruptions.

A new view of the file storage structure, called a *library*, gives you access to multiple storage locations from one window. Locating files, programs, and utilities has never been easier, and various tools and gadgets make it simple to do the things you want and need to do with your computer. Certain programs that were formerly installed with Windows, such as the e-mail management program known, in its various versions, as Windows Live Mail, Windows Mail, or Outlook Express, have been removed from the operating system to concentrate Windows 7 resources on managing your computer. These programs are now available to all Windows users as part of the Windows Live family of programs.

You might have purchased a new computer with Windows 7 pre-installed or you might have already upgraded your existing computer from another operating system to Windows 7. If Windows 7 is already running on your computer, you can skip most of the information in this section. For readers who are still in the planning stages, this section provides information about the editions of Windows 7 that are available and the process of installing Windows 7 on a computer that is running Windows Vista, Windows XP, or another operating system.

## Windows 7 Editions

Windows 7 is available in six editions, although not all editions are available to all people. Three editions are commercially available for installation on a desktop or notebook computer. These standard consumer editions of Windows 7 are as follows:

- **Windows 7 Home Premium** This edition is designed for the average home computer user. It contains an impressive set of features, including the following:
    - The stunning Aero user interface, which provides an enhanced visual experience with features such as transparent window frames, extended color schemes, live preview thumbnails, and artistic desktop decoration
- Tip** Aero-driven features function only on computers that meet minimum hardware specifications. See “Minimum System Requirements” later in this section.
- New Aero-driven window-management techniques such as Aero Peek, which turns open windows temporarily invisible so you can see the computer desktop, Aero Shake, which minimizes windows you’re not working with so you can concentrate on a specific task, and Snap, which quickly sizes windows to fit specific areas of the desktop
  - New navigation features, including libraries and jump lists
  - Support for simplified home networking with homegroups, and for the secure sharing of files, printers, and media among multiple computers
  - Windows Search technology, with which you can quickly locate files, programs, and messages on your computer
  - Desktop gadgets and familiar applications such as the Calculator, Paint, WordPad, Windows Fax And Scan, and Windows Media Player 12
  - Windows Media Center, with which you can watch television programs (if your system includes a TV tuner) and DVD movies, display and manage pictures, and listen to music from multiple sources
  - Security features, including User Account Control (UAC), Action Center, Windows Update, Windows Defender, Windows Firewall, and Parental Controls
  - Backup for system images and files, and the Previous Versions and System Repair Disc features
  - Support for 32-bit and 64-bit hardware

**Tip** With Windows 7, the Home Basic Edition is not the most basic commercially available edition. As confusing as it might sound, the most basic edition of Windows 7 that you can purchase for installation on a desktop computer is Home Premium.

- **Windows 7 Professional** This edition is designed for the average business user. It includes all the features of Windows 7 Home Premium plus support for network domains, automatic backups to network locations, and Remote Desktop. It also includes Windows XP Mode, which you can use to run older programs in a virtual Windows XP session on your Windows 7 computer (if your hardware supports virtualization).
- **Windows 7 Ultimate** This edition is designed for the user who wants to have all the capabilities of Windows 7 available outside of an enterprise installation. It includes all the features of Windows 7 Professional, plus Windows BitLocker Drive Encryption, BitLocker To Go drive, and support for 35 languages.

Three editions of Windows 7 are available only for specific devices or markets. These limited-distribution editions are as follows:

- **Windows 7 Starter** Designed specifically for small portable computers, such as netbooks and mini notebooks. This edition includes all the core Windows 7 features but, by eliminating some of the flashy Aero interface features, it requires less memory.
- **Windows 7 Enterprise** Available only to Microsoft Volume Licensing customers. This edition includes every Windows 7 feature, as well as support for the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (a tool used for central management of computers in very large organizations).
- **Windows 7 Home Basic** Available only in “emerging markets” such as Mexico, India, and the People’s Republic of China, and not in countries defined by the World Bank as having high-income economies, such as Canada, Denmark, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This edition includes most of the core Windows 7 features, including a subset of the Aero interface features.

**See Also** For information about World Bank, country classifications, and the countries currently assigned to each classification, visit [www.worldbank.org/](http://www.worldbank.org/).

The exercises in this book cover the features of Windows 7 that you are most likely to use at home and at work. Graphics depict the Windows 7 Ultimate user interface.

**Tip** If you want to upgrade to a different edition of Windows 7, the Windows Anytime Upgrade feature makes this an easy process. To learn about the available upgrade options, click the Start button, type *upgrade* in the Start menu Search box, and then in the Programs section of the search results list, click Windows Anytime Upgrade.



## Minimum System Requirements

To install Windows 7 and work your way through the exercises in this book, your computer must meet certain specifications.

### Windows 7

To run Windows 7, including the Aero desktop experience features, your computer needs to meet the following minimum requirements:

- 1 gigahertz (GHz) or faster 32-bit (x86) or 64-bit (x64) processor
- 1 gigabyte (GB) of system memory (RAM) for 32-bit systems; 2 GB for 64-bit systems
- 16 GB of available hard disk drive space for 32-bit systems; 20 GB for 64-bit systems
- Support for DirectX 9 graphics with Windows Display Driver Model (WDDM) 1.0 or higher driver and 128 megabytes (MB) memory (to enable the Aero theme)
- Internal or external DVD drive
- Monitor with minimum 1024 × 768 screen resolution
- Keyboard and mouse or compatible pointing device
- Internet connection for product activation, accessing online Help topics, and any other Internet-dependent processes

Some features of Windows 7 work only if you have the hardware or network connections to support them. For descriptions of the system requirements for specific features of Windows 7, visit [windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows7/products/system-requirements/](http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows7/products/system-requirements/).

### Step-by-Step Exercises

In addition to the hardware and Internet connection required to run Windows 7, you will need the following to successfully complete the exercises in this book:

- Any version of the Windows 7 operating system
- Access to the following peripheral devices:
  - Printer
  - Speakers
  - Microphone
  - External storage device
- At least 21 MB of available hard disk space for the practice files

If your existing computer runs Windows Vista, it should be able to run Windows 7, and you'll probably notice a significant increase in computing speed. If your existing computer runs Windows XP, it might be able to run Windows 7, but likely won't support Aero.

If you have questions or concerns about whether your existing computer will support Windows 7, you can install the Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor from

[www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/get/upgrade-advisor.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/get/upgrade-advisor.aspx)

The Upgrade Advisor generates a list of any known compatibility issues between Windows 7 and your computer, including the peripheral devices connected to it.

## Identifying Genuine Windows Software

Counterfeit software floppy disks, CDs, DVDs, and packaging might look the same as or similar to the authentic software. A genuine retail copy of a Microsoft software product (one not acquired with the purchase of a computer or through the Microsoft Volume Licensing program) is distributed on an edge-to-edge hologram disc featuring a holographic image printed directly on the disc rather than on a sticker. Each product has a Certificate of Authenticity sticker on the top of the retail package and an orange product key label on the installation disc case. The front of the disc features

- A copper hologram with a clean, wavy outer edge and/or a feathered edge that transitions smoothly to a silver color at the outer edge of the disc.
- A high-resolution, three-dimensional hologram of the Windows logo, in which the flag appears to wave when you tilt the disc.
- A security patch located at the bottom of the disc, in which the word *Microsoft* changes to the word *GENUINE* when you tilt the disc.

The back of the disc features a detailed hologram on the inner mirror band, containing the words *Microsoft* and *GENUINE*.

**See Also** You can see samples of counterfeited software from around the world at [www.microsoft.com/howtotell/](http://www.microsoft.com/howtotell/). To verify whether your copy of Windows 7 is genuine, run the Windows Genuine Advantage validation tool available from that site.

Pirated software is often distributed preloaded on the hard drive of a used computer, as part of a software bundle; through street vendors; or through auction Web sites, spam e-mail messages, and downloads from Web sites other than those located within the microsoft.com domain. The easiest way to avoid counterfeit software is to purchase it from a reputable reseller, or directly from the Microsoft Store, which you can visit at [store.microsoft.com](http://store.microsoft.com).

## Installing Windows 7

You can convert a computer to the Windows 7 operating system by using either of the following methods:

- Upgrade an existing computer that runs Windows Vista to Windows 7. Upgrading retains your installed programs and stored files.
- Perform a clean installation of Windows 7 on a computer that runs Windows Vista, Windows XP, or another operating system. A clean installation removes all installed programs, files, and settings.

### Performing a Clean Installation of Windows 7

The simplest way to convert an existing computer system to Windows 7 is to perform a clean installation. This process takes about 30 minutes and requires very little interaction. It does, however, remove all programs and files from your computer, and it configures all your settings to the Windows 7 defaults.

If your existing computer runs Windows XP or anything other than Windows Vista, the only way to “upgrade” the computer to Windows 7 is by performing a clean installation.

Before you start the installation process, you can take the following steps to move programs, files, and settings from your existing operating system to Windows 7.

1. Create a list of the programs that are installed on your computer and decide which programs you’ll need on your Windows 7 computer. Ensure that you have the installation discs or installation points and product keys for the necessary programs.  
**Tip** If you use Adobe programs or other programs that limit the number of times you can use a product key, deactivate the program installation to make that instance of the product key available for your Windows 7 computer.
2. Use Windows Easy Transfer to create a transfer file containing your existing files and settings:
3. After ensuring that you will have access to the programs, files, and settings you will need to have available on your Windows 7 computer, insert the Windows 7 installation disc into your computer’s DVD drive and follow the onscreen directions. Select the Custom installation option to perform a clean installation of Windows 7.
4. Install the necessary programs, and then use Windows Easy Transfer to transfer the saved files and settings to the Windows 7 computer.

## Using Windows Easy Transfer

You can use Windows Easy Transfer to transfer files and settings to a different computer or to a new operating system installation on the same computer. You can transfer the following types of files and settings from a computer running Windows XP, Windows Vista, or Windows 7 to a computer running Windows 7:

- Folders and files
- E-mail settings, contacts, and messages
- Program settings
- User accounts and settings
- Internet settings and favorites

You can transfer files, but not settings, from a computer running Windows 2000 to a computer running Windows 7.

You can transfer information directly from one computer to another by using an Easy Transfer Cable (a USB cable that connects the two computers). You can create a portable transfer file on a DVD, CD, external hard drive, or USB flash drive; or you can save the file to another computer on your network.

**Tip** While transferring settings to or from a computer, you can't use the computer for other purposes. Because the transfer can take several hours, you can't start the process from a portable computer that is running on battery power; you must first plug it in.

To begin the transfer process:

1. Log on to your computer as an administrator.
2. On the Start menu, click All Programs, click Accessories, click System Tools, and then click Windows Easy Transfer.
3. Follow the instructions in the Windows Easy Transfer wizard to specify the transfer media or method, the information you want to transfer, and the password for recovering that information.
4. If you're transferring files and settings via removable media, start Windows Easy Transfer on the second computer, and click Continue Transfer In Progress.
5. Provide the information requested by the wizard. When prompted to do so, insert the transfer disc into the second computer, select the destination drive, enter the password, and then click Next.

The files and settings transfer to the new computer.

## Upgrading to Windows 7

Upgrading is the process of replacing your computer's operating system with a newer version without disturbing the programs installed on your computer, your personal preferences and settings, or existing information such as documents, spreadsheets, and data files. You can upgrade to Windows 7 only from Windows Vista.

Although upgrading to Windows 7 should not affect your personal files and settings, it is always a good policy to back up important files before upgrading. The time and effort it takes to back up files and settings will likely be far less than the time and effort required to re-create the same information.

**See Also** For information about backing up files and settings on a computer running an earlier version of Windows, consult *Windows Vista Step by Step*, by Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox (Microsoft Press, 2007) or *Microsoft Windows XP Step by Step*, by Online Training Solutions, Inc. (Microsoft Press, 2005).

To begin the upgrade process, insert the Windows 7 installation disc into the computer's DVD drive, follow the onscreen directions, and select the Upgrade installation option.

**Tip** To ensure that you're getting the latest Windows 7 files, select the option to stay online during the installation.

**See Also** After you upgrade the operating system, follow the process we describe in "Updating Windows System Files" in Chapter 1, "Explore Windows 7" to ensure that you have any Windows 7 drivers that are available for your computer and peripheral hardware.

## Activating Windows

When you upgrade your computer's operating system to Windows 7, or the first time you start a new computer, you are prompted to activate your copy of Windows.

Each copy of Windows 7 must be activated within 30 days of the first use. After that grace period expires, you will not be able to use all the functions of Windows. You can activate Windows over the Internet or by telephone. Until you activate it, Windows will periodically prompt you to do so. You don't have to give any personal information about yourself or your computer during the activation process.

**Tip** If you are asked to *register* after activating a product, the information you provide might be used to send you marketing materials. Registration is optional; activation is not.

The goal of Windows Product Activation is to reduce a form of software piracy known as *casual copying* or *softlifting*, which is the sharing of software in a way that infringes on the software's license terms.

You can locate your Windows activation status at the bottom of the System window of Control Panel.


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### View basic information about your computer

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**Windows edition**

Windows 7 Ultimate  
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**System**

Rating: **2.0** Windows Experience Index

Processor: AMD Athlon(tm) 64 Processor 3400+ 2.39 GHz

Installed memory (RAM): 1.00 GB (895 MB usable)

System type: 32-bit Operating System

Pen and Touch: No Pen or Touch Input is available for this Display

---

**Computer name, domain, and workgroup settings**

Computer name: Work-PC Change settings

Full computer name: Work-PC

Computer description:


Workgroup: WORKGROUP

---

**Windows activation**

Windows is activated

Product ID: 00428-321-7001042-70567 Change product key

  
[Learn more online...](#)

*The System window provides current information about your computer system, including its activation status.*

If your copy of Windows has been activated, *Windows is activated* appears in the Windows Activation area at the bottom of the window. Otherwise, the time remaining in the grace period appears, with a link to complete the activation process.

## The Perils of Piracy

Windows Product Activation is a security measure instituted by Microsoft to help prevent the use of unlicensed copies of Windows. Software piracy—the illegal reproduction and distribution of software applications—is a multibillion dollar industry. The Sixth Annual BSA and IDC Global Software Piracy Study, commissioned in 2008 by the Business Software Alliance ([www.bsa.org](http://www.bsa.org)) concluded that the worldwide software piracy rate had risen to 41 percent, representing over \$50 billion in lost revenue.

The counterfeit software manufacturing industry stifles the potential growth of the high-tech industry and contributes to loss of tax revenue. Software piracy is also harmful to its users, for these reasons:

- Unlicensed software is not eligible for technical support or product upgrades. When you attempt to install a product update or service pack from the Microsoft Web site, your system or software is tested to verify whether it's licensed.
- Abuse of software licenses can result in financial penalties and legal costs, as well as a bad reputation for you or your company. Individual company executives can be held criminally and civilly liable for the copyright infringements of individuals within their organizations.
- Pirated software can contain harmful viruses with the potential to damage individual computers or entire networks.

Windows 7 has a built-in piracy protection system—if certain conditions alert it to the possibility that you are running a pirated copy, most Windows 7 functionality will shut down, and you won't be able to create or save any files until you activate your copy of Windows.

**See Also** For more information about software piracy, visit [www.microsoft.com/piracy/](http://www.microsoft.com/piracy/).




# Features and Conventions of This Book

This book has been designed to lead you through all the tasks you are most likely to want to perform on your Windows 7 computer. You can also use the book as a reference guide. The following features of this book will help you look up specific information:

- **Detailed table of contents** Get an overview of which topics are discussed in which chapters.
- **Chapter thumb tabs** Easily locate the beginning of the chapter you want.
- **Topic-specific running heads** Within a chapter, quickly locate the topic you want by looking at the running heads at the top of odd-numbered pages.
- **Glossary** Look up the meaning of a word or the definition of a concept.
- **Detailed index** Look up specific tasks and features in the index, which has been carefully crafted with the reader in mind.
- **Companion CD** Install the practice files needed for the step-by-step exercises, and consult the additional resources on the CD, including a fully searchable electronic version of this book.

You can save time when you use this book by understanding how the *Step by Step* series shows exercise instructions, buttons to click, and other information. These conventions are described in the table on the next page.

<b>Convention</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>SET UP</b>	This paragraph preceding a step-by-step exercise indicates the practice files that you will use when working through the exercise. It also indicates any requirements you should attend to or actions you should take before beginning the exercise.
<b>CLEAN UP</b>	This paragraph following a step-by-step exercise provides instructions for restoring your system before moving on to another topic.
<b>1</b>	Blue numbered steps guide you through step-by-step exercises.
<b>2</b>	
<b>1</b>	Black numbered steps present instructions for performing procedures that you might need or want to carry out on your own. These optional procedures are not among the book's exercises.
<b>2</b>	
<b>See Also</b>	These paragraphs direct you to more information about a given topic in this book or elsewhere.
<b>Troubleshooting</b>	These paragraphs explain how to fix a common problem that might prevent you from continuing with an exercise.
<b>Tip</b>	These paragraphs provide a helpful hint or shortcut that makes working through a task easier, or information about other available options.
<b>Important</b>	These paragraphs point out information that you need to know to complete a procedure.
<b>Keyboard Shortcut</b>	These paragraphs provide information about keyboard shortcuts that are helpful for carrying out the task at hand or related tasks.
Ctrl+Home	A plus sign (+) between two key names means that you must hold down the first key while you press the second key. For example, "press Ctrl+Home" means "hold down the Ctrl key while you press the Home key."
	The first time you are told to click a button in an exercise, a picture of the button appears in the left margin.
<b>Program interface elements</b>	In exercises, the names of keys, such as ; program elements, such as buttons, commands, windows, and dialog boxes; and files or folders that you interact with are shown in boldface type characters.
<b>User input</b>	In exercises, anything you should type is shown in blue boldface type.

# Using the Practice Files

The companion CD included with this book contains the practice files you need to complete the book's exercises. The following table lists these practice files.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>File</b>
Chapter 1: Explore Windows 7	None	None
Chapter 2: Manage User Accounts	Accounts	Angelic.jpg
Chapter 3: Manage Your Network	Networking	Share Me!.txt
Chapter 4: Navigate Windows and Folders	Navigation	Apple Spice Junction Menu.pdf FrostKing1.docx FrostKing2.docx FrozenBranch.jpg IceBerries.jpg Iceskatesmed.png IcyLeaves.jpg License.doc License.txt Readme.txt Recipe1.docx Recipe2.docx Scoops.gif Sflakemed.png Skiermed.png SlickStump.jpg Smanmed.png StrausOrganicIceCream.jpg StreetSign.jpg Trinity1.jpg Trinity2.jpg

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>File</b>
Chapter 5: Manage Folders and Files	Structure	Narrations folder (empty) Photographs folder (empty) Presentations\Background.jpg Presentations\TagTemplate.pptx Videos\HouseHome.wmv AlbumSlides.pptx Bamboo.docx Bamboo1.jpg through Bamboo3.jpg BookBeat.docx BookSales.xlsx CakePlate.jpg Cat.jpg ColorSlides.pptx ComparisonShop.docx Costs.xlsx Crow.jpg FabricSpecial.docx FengShuiSlides.pptx Figurine.jpg Frog.jpg Introduction.wav JournalSlides.pptx Lady.jpg LoanPayment.xlsx MusicBox.jpg OrgSlides.pptx PlanningSlides.pptx Procedures.docx RoomMakeover.docx SalesMtgSlides.pptx TagAnnounce.docx TagIntroduce.docx TeaPot.jpg Welcome.docx YinYang.png

Chapter	Folder	File
Chapter 6: Connect to the Web	None	None
Chapter 7: Work with Web Pages and Sites	None	None
Chapter 8: Manage Internet Explorer	None	None
Chapter 9: Change Visual Elements	Visual	Arizona01.jpg through Arizona10.jpg
Chapter 10: Change System Settings	None	None
Chapter 11: Work with Programs	Programs	MakeOver.docx MusicBox.bmp
Chapter 12: Set Up Hardware Devices	None	None

In addition to the practice files, the CD contains resources that will enhance your ability to get the most out of using this book and Windows 7, including the following:

- *Windows 7 Step by Step* (this book) in eBook format
- *Before You Call Tech Support: Windows 7 Troubleshooting Tips* in XPS format and PDF format
- Links to online resources, including Microsoft Learning Snacks, technical support resources, and an online survey
- Links to online installation points for Adobe Reader and the Microsoft XPS viewer

**Tip** The XPS Viewer is installed with Windows 7, so you will need it only to view XPS-format files on Windows XP and Windows Vista.

**Important** The companion CD for this book does not contain the Windows 7 operating system. You should purchase and install that operating system before using this book.

## Installing the Practice Files

You need to install the practice files in the correct location on your hard disk before you can use them in the exercises. Follow the steps below:

**Note** If for any reason you are unable to install the practice files from the CD, the files can also be downloaded from the Web at <http://www.microsoftpressstore.com/title/9780735623057>.

1. Remove the companion CD from the envelope at the back of this book and insert it into the CD drive of your computer.  
An end-user license agreement appears. To use the practice files, you must accept the terms of the license agreement.
2. If the end-user license agreement does not appear, click the Start button, click Computer, double-click the icon for your CD drive, and then double-click the StartCD executable file.
3. Review the end-user license agreement. To accept the terms, click Accept, and then click Next.  
A menu appears with options related to the book.
4. Click Install Practice Files.
5. Follow the instructions that appear.  
The practice files are installed to your Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS folder.
6. After the practice files are installed, click Finish.
7. Close the Step By Step Companion CD window, remove the companion CD from the CD drive, and return it to the envelope at the back of the book.

## Locating the Practice Files

When you install the practice files from the companion CD that accompanies this book, the files are stored on your hard disk in chapter-specific subfolders of your Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS folder. Each exercise is preceded by a paragraph that lists any files needed for that exercise and any preparations you need to make before you start working through the exercise, like this:



**SET UP** You need the Angelic image located in your Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS\Accounts folder to complete this exercise. Open Control Panel, display the User Accounts window, and then follow the steps.

You can browse to the practice files in Windows Explorer by following these steps:

1. Click the Start button, and then click Documents.
2. In your Documents library, double-click Microsoft Press, double-click Windows7SBS, and then double-click the specific chapter folder.

You can browse to the practice files from a dialog box that includes a Navigation pane by following these steps:

1. In the Navigation pane, click Documents.
2. In your Documents library, double-click Microsoft Press, double-click Windows7SBS, and then double-click the specific chapter folder.

## Removing and Uninstalling the Practice Files

After you finish working your way through the exercises in this book, you can free up hard disk space by uninstalling the practice files. The uninstall process deletes the practice files that were installed in your Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS folder and its chapter-specific subfolders, but it does not delete any additional files you created while working through the exercises.

Follow these steps to uninstall the practice files:

1. Display Control Panel in Category view.
2. In the Programs category, click Uninstall A Program.  
The Programs And Features window opens.
3. In the list of installed programs, click Windows 7 Step By Step, and then on the toolbar at the top of the window, click Uninstall.
4. In the message box asking you to confirm the deletion, click Yes.

To remove files you created while working through the exercises, start Windows Explorer, browse to the files, and select and delete them.



# Information for New Computer Users

Windows 7 is the latest version of the Windows operating system. Windows is the most widely used operating system in the world. (Other operating systems you might have heard of are Linux, UNIX, and Mac OS X.) The operating system basically acts as an intermediary between you and your computer, between the computer and the hardware devices connected to it, and between the computer and the software programs you run on it. For your computer to work, Windows 7 must do the following:

- Translate commands that you provide into code that tells the computer what to do and how to do it.
- Coordinate interactions among its components, such as receiving input from the keyboard and mouse, locating programs and files, and displaying output on the monitor.
- Enable your computer to communicate with other computers and with peripheral devices, such as printers, scanners, and external hard drives.
- Interact with programs installed on your computer.

Windows 7 presents its tools, commands, and information storage structure through a graphical user interface (commonly referred to as a *GUI*). Graphical user interfaces enable you to interact with a computer by clicking items on the screen instead of having to type precise sequences of commands, and include the following types of components:

- **Pointing device** A device such as a mouse that controls a pointer with which you can select objects displayed on the screen.
- **Desktop** The basic display area on top of which you can work with windows, icons, menus, and dialog boxes.
- **Window** A frame, usually resizable, within which the computer runs a program or displays a folder or file.
- **Icon** A visual representation of a program, folder, file, or other object or function.
- **Menu** A list from which you can give an instruction by clicking a command.
- **Dialog box** A fixed-size window in which you refine instructions by typing information or selecting from the available options.

The programs you purchase and install on your computer *run on Windows 7*, meaning that they call on the operating system whenever they need to work with your computer's components or with peripheral devices. They also build on the interface provided by the operating system to communicate with you. This relationship allows the programs to concentrate on their specialized tasks, such as word processing or performing calculations in a spreadsheet or locating and displaying Web sites on the Internet, while the operating system handles the basic behind-the-scenes tasks.

If you are new to computing, or haven't worked on a Windows computer before, you might be unfamiliar with some of the terms that we use in this book, so we'll briefly cover them here to bring you up to speed.

**See Also** For information about terms mentioned in the book but not explained in this section, see the Glossary at the end of this book.

## Your Mouse

A mouse is a pointing device with which you control the location of the on-screen pointer and click, drag, or select on-screen items to carry out tasks. A standard mouse includes two buttons—the primary button and the secondary button—with different functions. By default, the left button is the primary button and the right button is the secondary button, but you can switch them. In this book (other than in the exercise where you switch the button functions), references to the left button mean the primary button, and references to the right button mean the secondary button.

**See Also** For information about switching the primary and secondary mouse buttons, see “Changing the Way Your Mouse Works” in Chapter 12, “Set Up Hardware Devices.”

Here's a summary of the standard actions you perform with a mouse:

- **Pointing** Moving the mouse so that the on-screen pointer is over the item you want to work with. Pointing to an on-screen item usually displays a ScreenTip containing information about that item.
- **Clicking** Pointing to an on-screen item and pressing and releasing the primary mouse button once. Clicking an on-screen item usually selects the item. Clicking a hyperlink displays the link target.
- **Double-clicking** Pointing to an on-screen item and pressing and releasing the primary mouse button twice in rapid succession. Double-clicking an on-screen item usually starts or opens the item. Slowly double-clicking a file or folder activates the file or folder name for editing.

- **Right-clicking** Pointing to an on-screen item and clicking the secondary mouse button once. Right-clicking usually displays a menu, called a *shortcut menu* or *context menu*, listing actions you can perform with the item you right-clicked. You invoke an action by clicking it on the shortcut menu.
- **Dragging** Pointing to an on-screen item, holding down the primary mouse button, moving the mouse until the pointer or item is in the location where you want the item to appear, and releasing the mouse button. You can also drag through multiple on-screen items to select them.
- **Right-dragging** Pointing to an on-screen item, holding down the secondary mouse button, moving the mouse until the pointer or item is in the location where you want the item to appear, and releasing the mouse button. Right-dragging displays a menu of actions you can perform with the item you dragged.

Your mouse might also include a third button, scroll wheel, tilt wheel, or roller ball that provides additional methods of moving the pointer around the screen and clicking. On a portable computer, you might use an alternative pointing device, such as a touch pad, a pointing stick (a small rubber button in the center of the keyboard of a portable computer), or a Tablet PC pen.

## Your Keyboard

Most people use a keyboard to input information into their computers by typing letters, numbers, and symbols, or to give commands by pressing function keys or key combinations. Standard U.S. keyboards have 101 keys; there are also smaller keyboards, keyboards with different key configurations, and variations with special-purpose keys for performing such actions as:

- Starting your default Web browser or e-mail program.
- Searching the Internet by using your default search engine.
- Displaying the Windows Help And Support window.
- Playing, pausing, stopping, and otherwise controlling audio and video recordings you play on or through your computer.
- Increasing or decreasing the volume of audio playback.
- Putting the computer into Sleep mode.

These special-purpose keys are very convenient and can save you a lot of thinking and clicking time. Look at your keyboard to ascertain whether it includes any of these extra keys. They're usually located on the left or right side or along the top edge of the keyboard, and they are often labeled with universal symbols, such as an envelope for the e-mail program, a globe or home icon for the Web browser, speakers for volume control, a moon for Sleep mode, and the standard symbols for playing, pausing, skipping, or stopping media playback.

## Windows

Windows 7 displays information in windows. A window can either fill the entire screen or occupy only part of the screen. No matter what its size, each window uses the following components to display information about the window contents and to manage the window:

- **Title bar** Located at the top of the window. The title bar might tell you the window's purpose, the name of the program running in the window, and/or the name of the file open in the program. You can maximize or reduce the size of a window by double-clicking its title bar. When a window is not maximized, you can move it on the screen by dragging it by its title bar.
- **Window-management buttons** Located at the right end of the title bar.



- You click the Minimize button to collapse the window into a button on the Windows Taskbar (called *minimizing* the window).



- When the window fills the entire screen, you click the Restore Down button so that the window occupies only part of the screen (called *reducing* the window).

**Tip** When the window occupies only part of the screen, it is surrounded by a frame. You can drag the edges of the frame to change the size of the window.



- When the window occupies only part of the screen, you click the Maximize button so that the window fills the screen (called *maximizing* the window).

The Maximize and Restore Down buttons share a position on the title bar; only one button appears at a time.



- You click the Close button to close the window. If the window contains a program or file, closing the window might also exit the program or close the file.

**See Also** The title bar of a folder window also contains navigation buttons, the Address bar, and the Search box. For information about these title bar elements, see "Understanding Files, Folders, and Libraries" in Chapter 4, "Navigate Windows and Folders."

- **Menu bar and/or toolbar** Located below the title bar. A menu bar provides drop-down lists, called *menus*, of the commands you click to give instructions regarding the contents of the window. A toolbar displays visual representations of the commands as buttons you click.

**See Also** For information about menus and toolbars, see “Understanding Files, Folders, and Libraries” in Chapter 4, “Navigate Windows and Folders.”

- **Status bar** Located at the bottom of the window. This bar provides information about the contents of the window, and sometimes about on-screen elements you point to or click.
- **Vertical and horizontal scroll bars** Located on the right side and at the bottom of a window when it is not big enough to show all its contents. You use the vertical scroll bar to move the contents up and down within the window, and the horizontal scroll bar to move the contents from side to side, as follows:
  - Clicking the arrow at either end of a scroll bar moves the contents one line or column at a time.
  - Clicking directly on the scroll bar on either side of the scroll box moves the contents one “windowful” at a time.
  - Dragging the scroll box on the scroll bar moves the contents in larger increments.

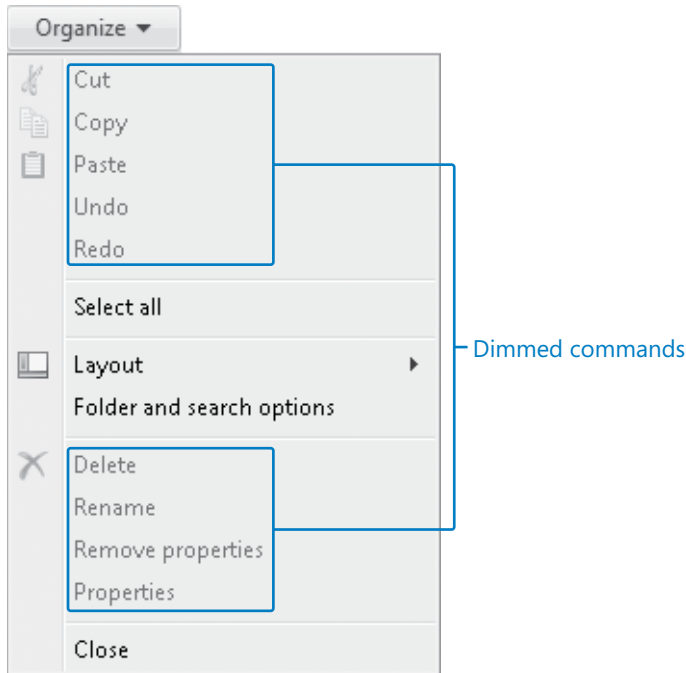
The position of the scroll box in relation to the scroll bar tells you where you are in the contents. For example, when the scroll box is in the middle of the scroll bar, the window is displaying the portion of its contents located about halfway through.

**See Also** For information about sizing, moving, and arranging windows, see “Working with Windows” in Chapter 4, “Navigate Windows and Folders.”

## Commands, Buttons, and Keyboard Shortcuts

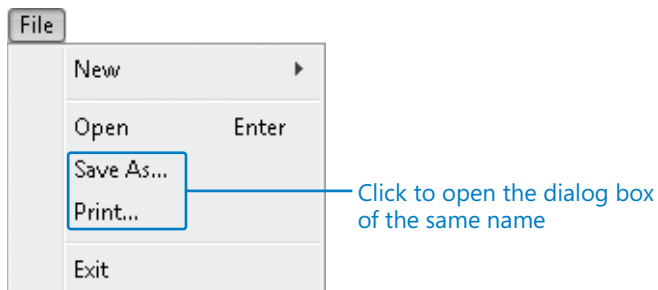
You can give instructions to Windows 7 by clicking a command on a menu, clicking a button on a toolbar, or pressing a key or combination of keys on the keyboard. Commands and buttons provide visual clues to tell you how to use them.

- Commands are dimmed if they are unavailable for use under the current circumstances. Buttons might be dimmed, but in Windows 7, buttons are usually not displayed if you can't use them.



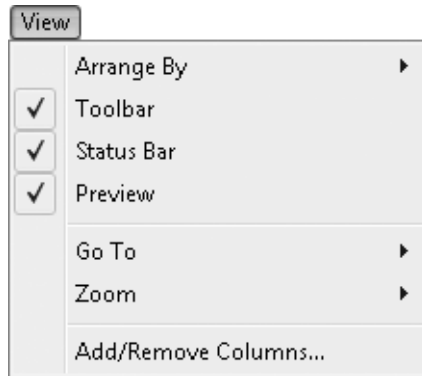
*Commands on menus and in dialog boxes, and buttons on toolbars, are dimmed when they're not available for use.*

- If a command or button name includes an ellipsis (...), clicking the command or button opens a dialog box so that you can provide information Windows needs to perform the task.



*An ellipsis following a command or button name indicates that you will need to supply additional information to complete the operation.*

- If a command can be turned on or off, a check mark appears to the left of the command name in the menu when it is turned on. Clicking the command then turns it off and removes the check mark.

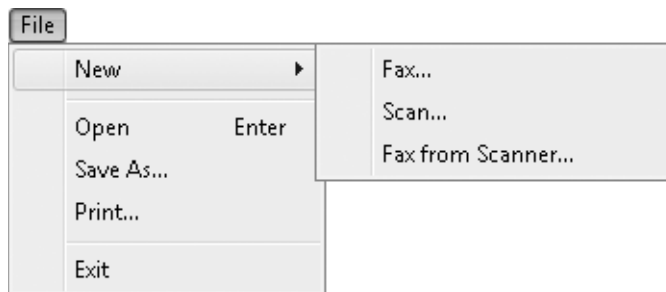


*A check mark indicates that the adjacent command is turned on.*

A small round circle to the left of a menu item indicates the selection of one of a group of mutually exclusive options.

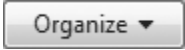
**Tip** On some menus, if a command has a toolbar button equivalent, the button's icon appears to the left of the command name.

- If a command is accompanied by a right-pointing arrow, clicking the command displays a menu of options for refining the command.



*An arrow to the right of a command name indicates that clicking the command will display a submenu of options.*

- Some buttons include one of two types of downward-pointing arrows:

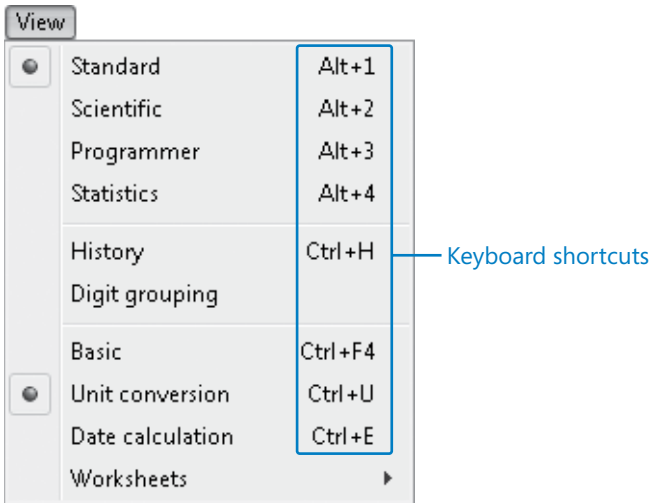


- If the arrow is part of the button, clicking the button displays a list of options.



- If the arrow is separate from the button, clicking the button invokes the default option and clicking the arrow displays a list of options. Clicking an option in that list makes it the default for the button.

If your hands are on the keyboard, you might find it more convenient to give commands by using keys or key combinations, called *keyboard shortcuts*, than to relocate one hand to the mouse. Keyboard shortcuts are available for many Windows commands (and also for many program-specific commands). Throughout this book, we provide information about keyboard shortcuts related to the topic being discussed. You can also find keyboard shortcuts for commands on some menus.



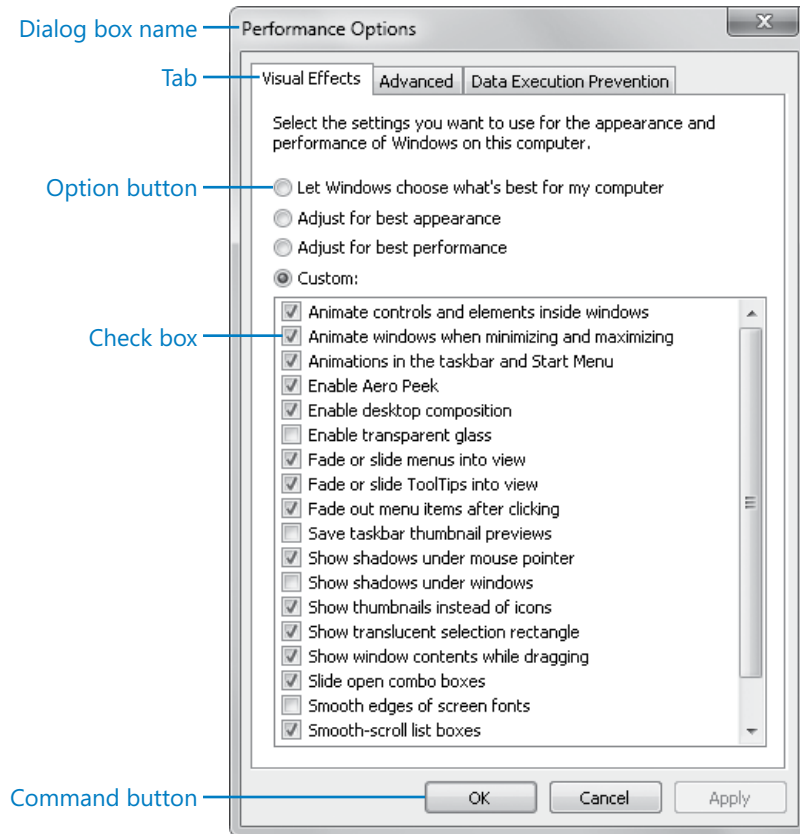
A key combination to the right of a menu command indicates the keyboard shortcut for the command.

**Keyboard Shortcut** For a full list of Windows 7 keyboard shortcuts, search the [Windows Help And Support Center](#) for “keyboard shortcuts.”



## Dialog Boxes and Message Boxes

If Windows 7 or the program you are working with needs information from you in order to carry out the command, it might display a different window or a dialog box to gather that information. The window or dialog box might present only one set of options, or it might include several sets of options presented on tabs.



*Clicking a tab below the dialog box title bar displays the corresponding set of options.*

Regardless of whether Windows requests the information in a window or a dialog box, you can provide the information in consistent ways by using these common components:

- **Check box** A square box representing an independent option or one of a group of non–mutually exclusive options.
  - Clicking an empty check box selects the associated option; a check mark appears inside the box to indicate that the option is *selected* or *turned on*.
  - Clicking a box that contains a check mark removes the check mark to indicate that the option is *deselected*, *cleared*, or *turned off*.
- **Command button** A button that initiates an action. Most dialog boxes have at least two command buttons: an OK button that carries out the command, and a Cancel button that cancels the command. Clicking either button also closes the dialog box. Other buttons might be available, such as the Apply button that applies changes without closing the dialog box.
  - If a command button label includes an ellipsis (...), clicking the button opens another dialog box.
  - If a button label includes two greater-than signs (>>), also called *chevrons*, clicking the button expands the window or dialog box to reveal more options or information.
  - A dark border indicates the active button; you can press Enter to implement that command.
- **Link** Hyperlinked text that initiates an action. When you point to a link, it becomes underlined, and the pointer changes to a hand. Clicking a link might open another dialog box or window, or it might take you to information stored on your computer or on the Web.

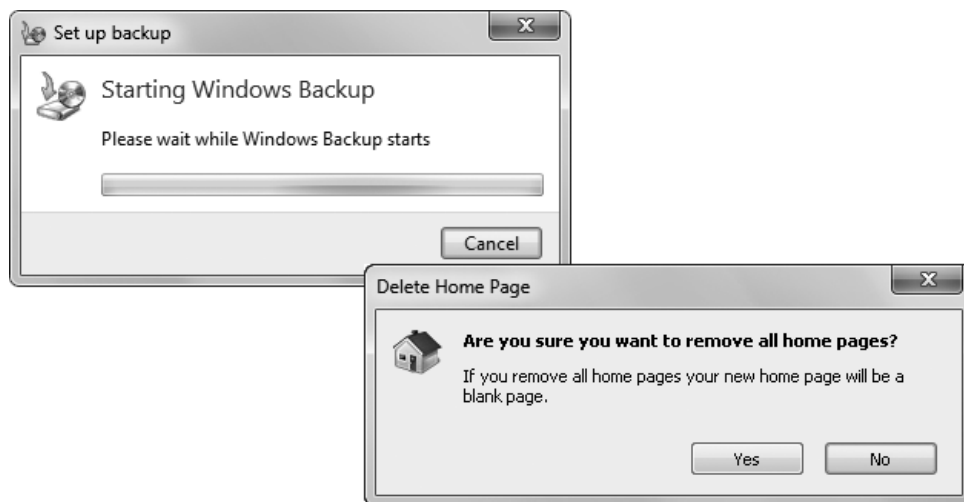
- **List box** A box containing a list of options.
  - A list box might contain multiple options from which you can select one or more than one.
  - A drop-down list box appears as a single-line box with an arrow at the right end. Clicking the arrow displays a drop-down list from which you can choose one option.
  - A combo box is a text box combined with a drop-down list box. In a combo box, you can either type information or select an option from a list.

Regardless of the format of a list box, you select an option by clicking it. (To select multiple options in a list box, select the first option, press the Ctrl key, and select the additional options.) In a list box, selected options are highlighted; in a drop-down list box or combo box, the selected option appears in the box.

- **Option button** Sometimes called a *radio button*. A small circle representing an option that can be either selected or not selected. Option buttons represent mutually exclusive values for a setting; one and only one option must be selected. When you click an option or its button, a dot appears in the circle to indicate that the option is selected. Clicking another option or its button removes the dot from the previously selected option.
- **Slider** An indicator on a horizontal or vertical bar representing a range of values for a setting (such as speed, brightness, or volume). To change the setting, you drag the slider or click to either side of it on the bar.
- **Spin box** A box with a pair of up and down arrows at its right end. Clicking an arrow moves through a list of suggested values (usually numbers) for a setting. You change the value either by clicking one of the arrows or by selecting the existing number and typing a new one.
- **Text box** A box in which you can enter text, such as a file name. To replace an existing entry in the text box, drag over or double-click the entry to select it and then delete it, or type new text to replace the selection.

**Tip** You can move between dialog box components by clicking them with the mouse or by pressing the Tab key.

When Windows 7 is performing a lengthy action or cannot carry out a command you have chosen, or if an action is potentially risky (such as deleting files), a message box containing information or a warning appears. You can click OK or Yes to acknowledge the message or confirm that you want to proceed in spite of the warning. Click Cancel or No to close the message box and cancel the operation.



*Windows 7 displays messages and alerts you to the consequences of some commands.*

**See Also** Depending on the type of user account you have, before Windows 7 carries out an action that affects your computer system, it might display a User Account Control (UAC) dialog box. For information about UAC, see the sidebar "Understanding User Account Control" in Chapter 1, "Explore Windows 7."

# Getting Help

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this book and the contents of its companion CD. If you do run into problems, please contact the sources listed below for assistance.

## Errata & Book Support

If you find an error, please report it on our Microsoft Press site:

1. Go to [www.microsoftpressstore.com](http://www.microsoftpressstore.com).
2. In the Search box, enter the book's ISBN or title.
3. Select your book from the search results.
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5. Click View/Submit Errata.

You'll find additional information and services for your book on its catalog page. If you need additional support, please e-mail Microsoft Press Book Support at [mspinput@microsoft.com](mailto:mspinput@microsoft.com).

If for any reason you are unable to install the practice files from the CD, the files can also be downloaded from the Web here:

<http://www.microsoftpressstore.com/title/9780735623057>.

Please note that product support for Microsoft software is not offered through the addresses above. For software assistance, visit [support.microsoft.com](http://support.microsoft.com).

## Getting Help with Windows 7

If your question is about Windows 7, and not about the content of this Microsoft Press book, your first recourse is the Windows Help And Support system. This system is a combination of tools and files stored on your computer when the operating system was installed and, if your computer is connected to the Internet, information available from the Windows Web site.

You can find Help information in several ways:

- You can display a ScreenTip containing information about an item on the screen by pointing to the item.
- You can open the Windows Help And Support window by clicking Help And Support on the Start menu.
- You can click links in many dialog boxes and Control Panel windows to display the Windows Help And Support window with the linked topic already displayed.

To practice getting help, you can work through the following exercise.



**SET UP** You don't need any practice files to complete this exercise; just follow the steps.

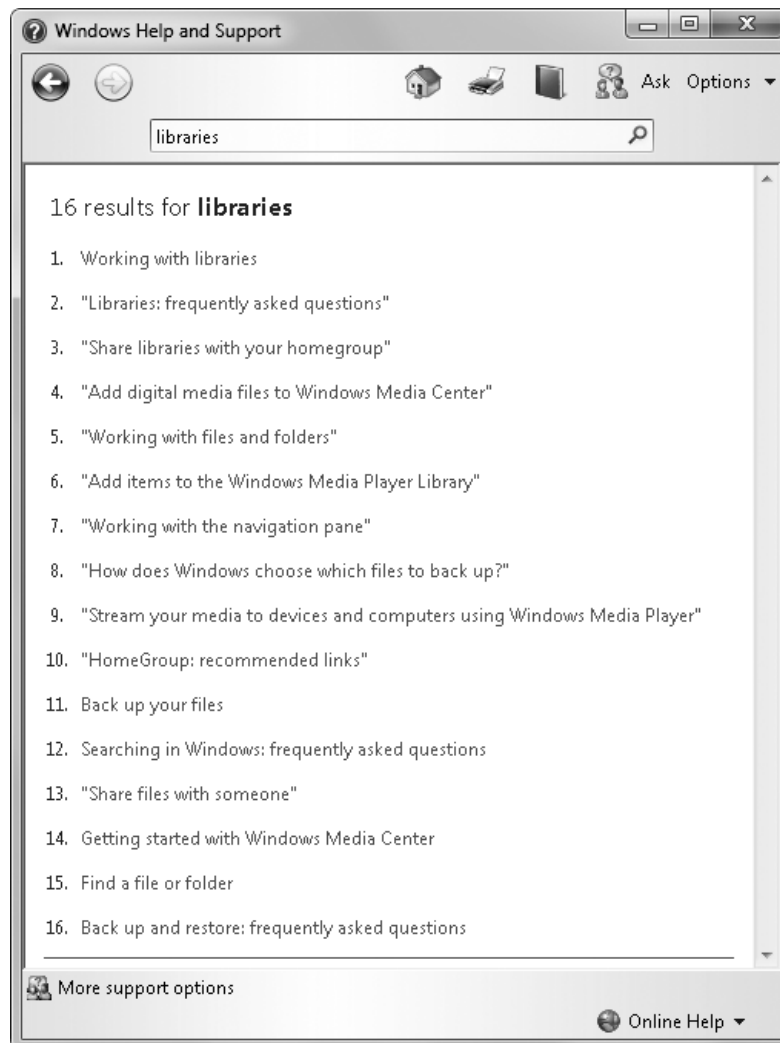
1. On the **Start** menu, click **Help and Support**.

The Windows Help And Support window opens.



2. In the **Search Help** box at the top of the window, type **libraries**, and then click the **Search Help** button or press **Enter**.

Help displays a list of topics related to libraries.

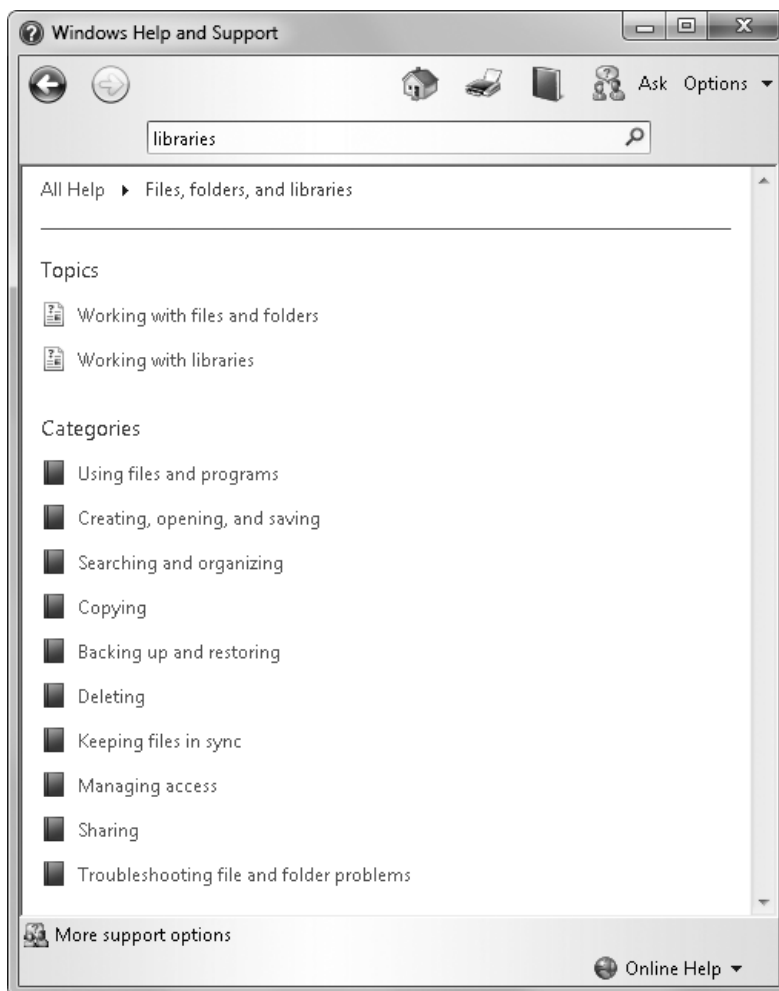


*The Windows Help topics related to libraries.*

You can click any topic to display the corresponding information.



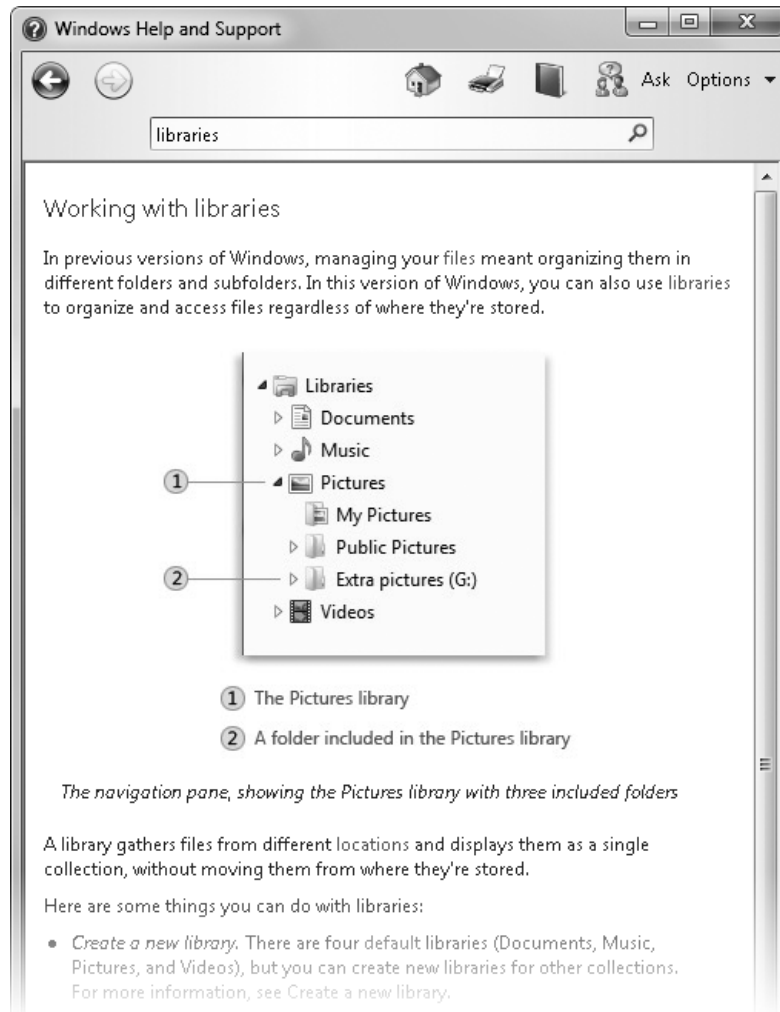
3. On the toolbar, click the **Browse Help** button.  
The contents of the Help file appear, organized by category.
4. Click **Files, folders, and libraries**.  
The topics in that category are listed, along with any subcategories.



*The contents of the Files, Folders, And Libraries category.*

5. Click the **Working with libraries** topic.  
Windows Help And Support displays the topic.  
**Tip** Clicking a green word or phrase displays its definition. Click away from the definition box to close it.





*The Working With Libraries topic.*



6. Read the topic, and click any blue links that interest you to jump to related topics. Then click the **Back** button one or more times to return to the **Files, folders, and libraries** category.

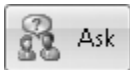
7. Click the **Creating, opening, and saving** category, and then click the **Save a file** topic.

The title of each of the topic's subtopics is shown in bold text and preceded by an arrow.

8. At the top of the topic, click **Show All**.

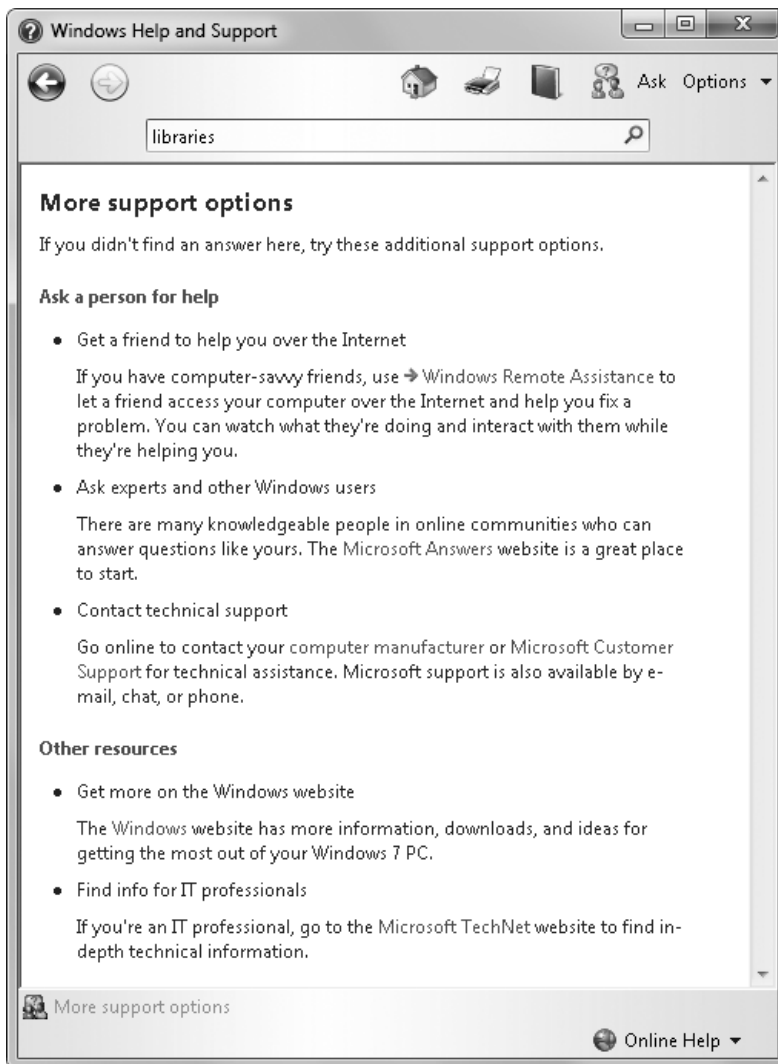
The two subtopics expand to display hidden auxiliary information, and the Show All button changes to Hide All. You can display or hide an individual item by clicking it.

**Tip** You can print the displayed topic by clicking the Print button on the toolbar. If the topic contains subtopics, they will be printed only if they are displayed.



9. On the toolbar, click the **Ask** button.

The Windows Help And Support window displays suggestions of other ways to get help.



*Several alternative support resources are available.*



10. In the upper-right corner of the **Windows Help And Support** window, click the **Close** button.

## More Information

If your question is about Windows 7 or another Microsoft software product and you cannot find the answer in the product's Help file, please search the appropriate product solution center or the Microsoft Knowledge Base at

[support.microsoft.com](http://support.microsoft.com)

In the United States, Microsoft software product support issues not covered by the Microsoft Knowledge Base are addressed by Microsoft Product Support Services.

Location-specific software support options are available from

[support.microsoft.com/gp/selfoverview/](http://support.microsoft.com/gp/selfoverview/)

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The survey is short, and we read every one of your comments and ideas. Thanks in advance for your input!

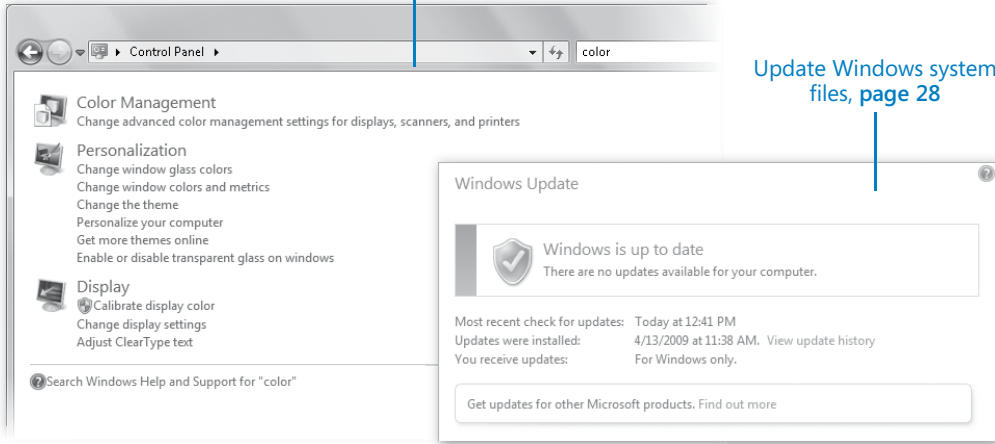
## Stay in Touch

Let's keep the conversation going! We're on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MicrosoftPress>



# Chapter at a Glance

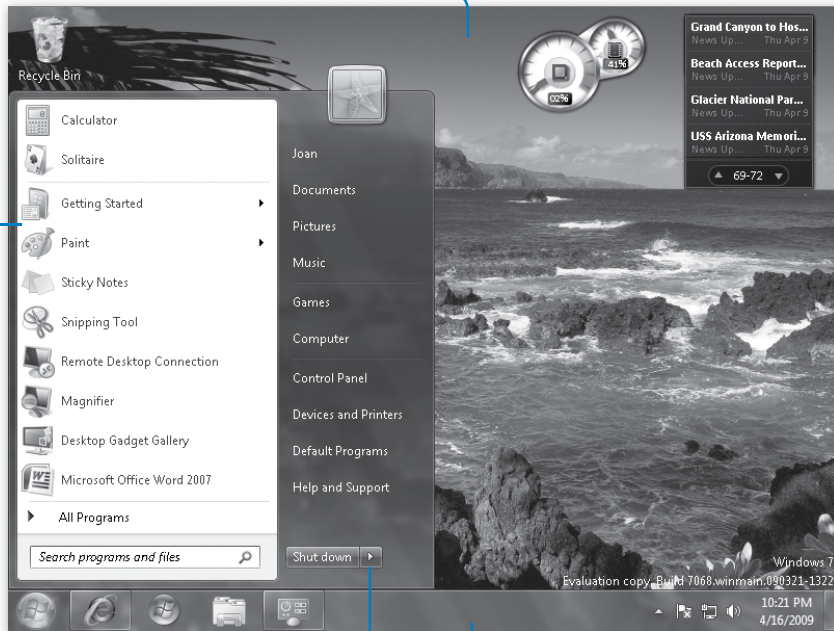
Explore Control Panel, page 18



Update Windows system files, page 28

Explore the desktop, page 5

Use the Start menu, page 8



End a computing session, page 36

Use the Windows Taskbar, page 15

# 1 Explore Windows 7

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## In this chapter, you will learn how to

- ✓ Log on to Windows 7.
  - ✓ Explore the desktop.
  - ✓ Use the Start menu.
  - ✓ Use the Windows Taskbar.
  - ✓ Explore Control Panel.
  - ✓ Find information about your computer system.
  - ✓ Update Windows system files.
  - ✓ End a computing session.
- 

This chapter will help you quickly become familiar with the Windows 7 user interface and the tools you'll use to interact with your computer's operating system.

Each time you turn on your computer, it goes through a startup process during which it loads the system files necessary for you to interact with your computer and for your computer to interact with other devices, such as the monitor, keyboard, and mouse. When the startup process is complete, you log on to Windows 7 by providing identification information that uniquely identifies you to the system. After you log on, Windows 7 presents a working environment individually tailored to your preferences. The process might sound somewhat complicated, but in actual practice, it's quite simple.

When you first set up your computer, or if it's been a while since you used it, it's a very good idea to check for and install any updates released by Microsoft to keep your system running smoothly. You can configure Windows 7 to update itself with available updates at regularly scheduled intervals (provided your computer is on). By setting up automatic updating, you can be sure that your computer system always includes the most current features and security tools.

When you finish working with your computer, you can either shut down the computer entirely or leave it running in various ways. For example, you can log off from Windows 7 to end your computing session, lock the computer to restrict access to your session, or put the computer into Sleep mode to conserve power.

In this chapter, you'll learn the basic skills needed to work on a Windows 7 computer and to complete the exercises in this book. You'll learn about logging on to and off from Windows and explore tools you can use to control the computer. You'll practice using these tools to locate your computer's hardware and operating system specifications, and then ensure that your installation of Windows 7 is absolutely up to date.

**Practice Files** You won't need any practice files to complete the exercises in this chapter. See "Using the Practice Files" at the beginning of this book for more information.

**Important** Before you can work through the exercises in this book, you must have Windows 7 already installed on your computer, and you must know your user account name and password (if your user account requires one).

## Logging On to Windows 7

The process of starting a computing session is called *logging on*. After you turn on the computer and it goes through its startup processes, the Windows 7 Welcome screen appears. The appearance of the screen and the exact process to log on to Windows depends on whether more than one user account has been created on your computer, and whether your account is protected by a password.

- If there is only one account, and it is not protected by a password, Windows might bypass the Welcome screen entirely and log you on. If the Welcome screen displays your user account name and picture, click the picture to log on to Windows.
- If there is only one account, and it is protected by a password, the Welcome screen displays your user account name and picture and a password box. You enter your password and then press Enter or click the Go button to log on to Windows.
- If there are multiple accounts, the Welcome screen displays the user account names and pictures for all the active user accounts. You click your user account picture and, if your account is password protected, enter your password to log on to Windows.

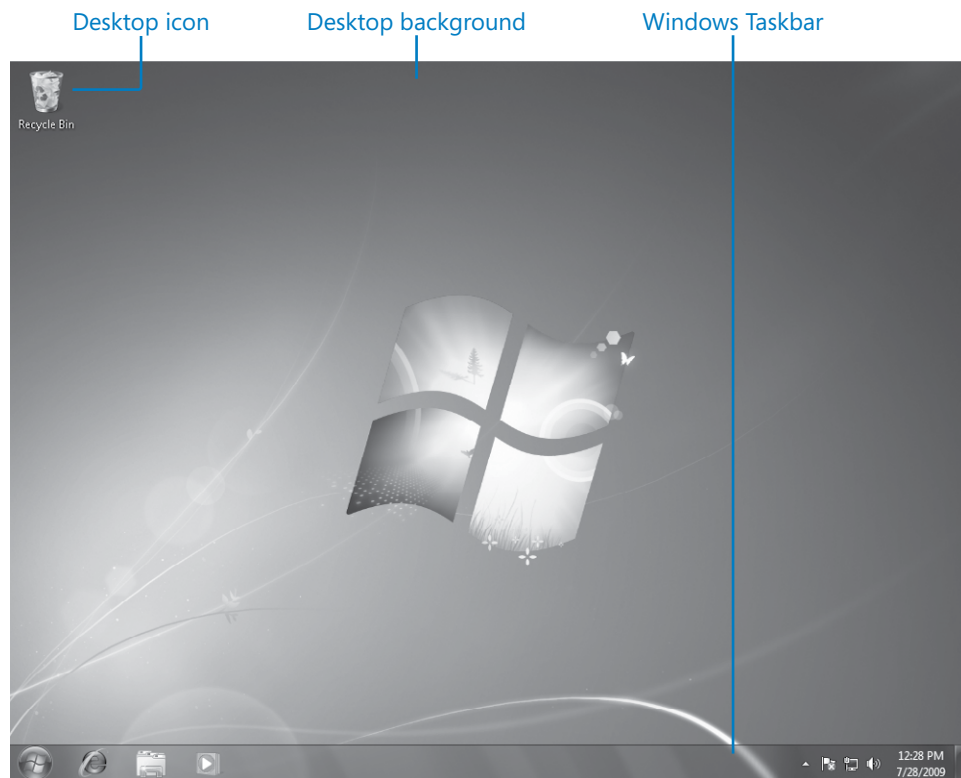
**Tip** When you assign a password to a user account, you can specify a password hint. Then if you enter your user account password incorrectly, Windows displays the password hint to help you correct your error.

After you log on, Windows 7 loads your user profile and then displays your working environment. Known as the *desktop*, this environment reflects settings you make to personalize Windows. The first time you log on to a computer, Windows also sets up a file structure specific to your user account, which might take a few extra seconds.

## Exploring the Desktop

The desktop background you see the first time you log on to Windows 7 might be the default Windows 7 desktop background, which depicts a stylized Windows logo on an organic blue background, or, if you purchased your computer with Windows 7 already installed, the computer manufacturer (also called the original equipment manufacturer, or *OEM*) might have specified a brand-specific desktop background. In either case, you can change the background to one of the many beautiful photographs or artistic renderings that come with Windows 7, to a solid-colored background, or to one of your own photos or graphics. With any background other than a solid color, you can have the background switch to a different image as often as every 10 seconds.

**See Also** For more information about desktop background options, see “Modifying a Theme” in Chapter 9, “Change Visual Elements.”

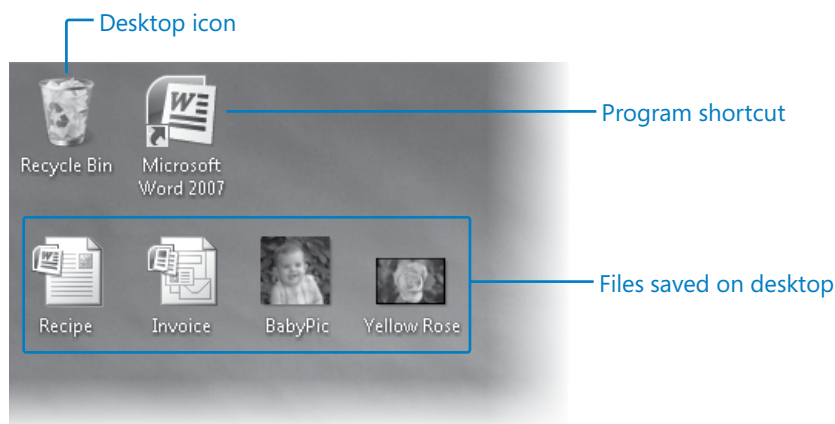


*A typical Windows 7 desktop, with the default background.*

**See Also** If you're new to computing, refer to “Information for New Computer Users” at the beginning of this book for an explanation of basic terminology you will encounter throughout this book, as well as instructions for working with user interface components.



Depending on your Windows 7 settings and the programs installed on your computer, you might have one or more icons on your desktop. Windows 7 assigns an icon to every type of item on your computer to make it easier to identify files, storage locations, and programs. The icon might represent a file type (such as a document, a text file, or a database) or storage component (such as a folder, hard disk drive, or CD drive); or it might indicate the default program for opening a file. This visual representation can make it easier to find a file or program you're looking for. When an icon represents a link, or shortcut, to an item stored somewhere else, an arrow appears in its lower-left corner.



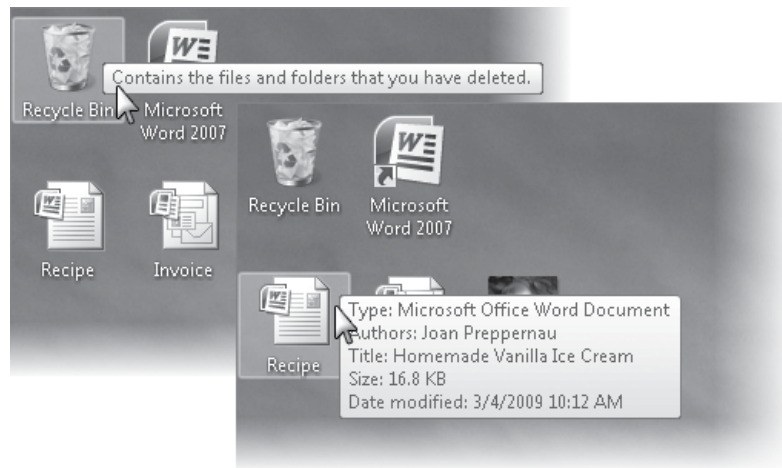
*An icon can represent an item stored in the current location or elsewhere.*

There are six standard desktop icons representing Windows elements; you can turn the display of these on or off. The only desktop icon that is displayed by default on a standard Windows 7 installation is the one that represents the *Recycle Bin*, which is where Windows temporarily stores files you delete. When the Recycle Bin is empty, the icon depicts an empty trash can; after you delete items (and until you empty the Recycle Bin), the icon depicts pieces of paper in the trash can. You can recover deleted files from the Recycle Bin, or you can empty the Recycle Bin and permanently delete the files to free up space on your hard disk.

**See Also** For information about Windows desktop icons, see “Creating Shortcuts” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.” For information about managing the Recycle Bin, see “Deleting and Recovering Folders and Files” in the same chapter.

The manufacturer of a new computer might have installed programs—either trial or full versions—on it. To bring these programs to your attention, the manufacturer might have placed shortcuts to them on the desktop, along with links to “offers” (advertisements) for products and services you can purchase. It’s not unusual to purchase a new computer and find 20 shortcuts already on its desktop the first time you start it up.

Another way icons might appear on your desktop is if you save or move files or folders there. For example, if you download a program or other file from the Internet that you'll need to use only once, you might save it on your desktop so that you can quickly find it, use it, and then delete it. When you install a program on your computer, you often have the option of creating a shortcut to it on the desktop. (Some installation programs automatically create a desktop shortcut, but others give you the courtesy of choice.) If you created desktop shortcuts before upgrading your computer operating system to Windows 7, your existing desktop shortcuts are still available after you upgrade.



*Pointing to an item on the desktop displays a ScreenTip indicating its function or properties.*

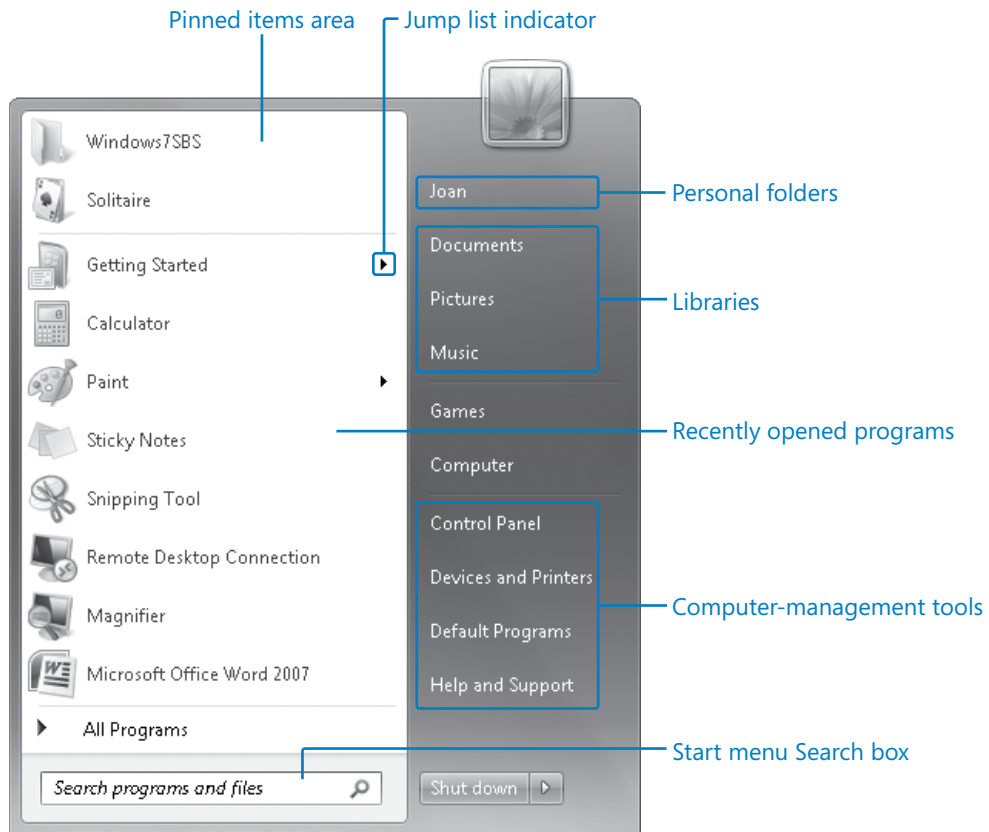
Below each icon on the desktop is the name of the item it represents. If the name is too long to fit onto two lines, it is truncated by an ellipsis (...) when not selected and displayed in full when you click it, or sometimes when you click the desktop. When you point to an icon, a ScreenTip containing identifying information appears. Pointing to a program shortcut, for example, displays the location of the file that starts the program. Pointing to a file displays the file name, type, size, and modification date. You can start a program, open a folder or file, or jump to a network location or Web site by double-clicking the associated icon or shortcut.

**Tip** You can create your own shortcuts to programs, to specific folders or files, to other computers, or to Web sites, on the desktop or in any other folder. You can delete an item from the desktop as you would from any folder. When you delete a shortcut, however, you aren't actually deleting the linked program, folder, or file—only the link to that item.

**See Also** For information about creating desktop shortcuts, see "Creating Shortcuts" in Chapter 5, "Manage Folders and Files."

## Using the Start Menu

The Start menu is your central link to your computer's programs, management tools, and file storage structure. You open the Start menu by clicking the Start button at the left end of the Windows Taskbar, or by pressing the Windows logo key (the keyboard key, usually located to the left of the Spacebar, labeled with the Windows logo). The Windows 7 Start menu looks similar to that of earlier versions, and features the vertical folder expansion introduced in Windows Vista.

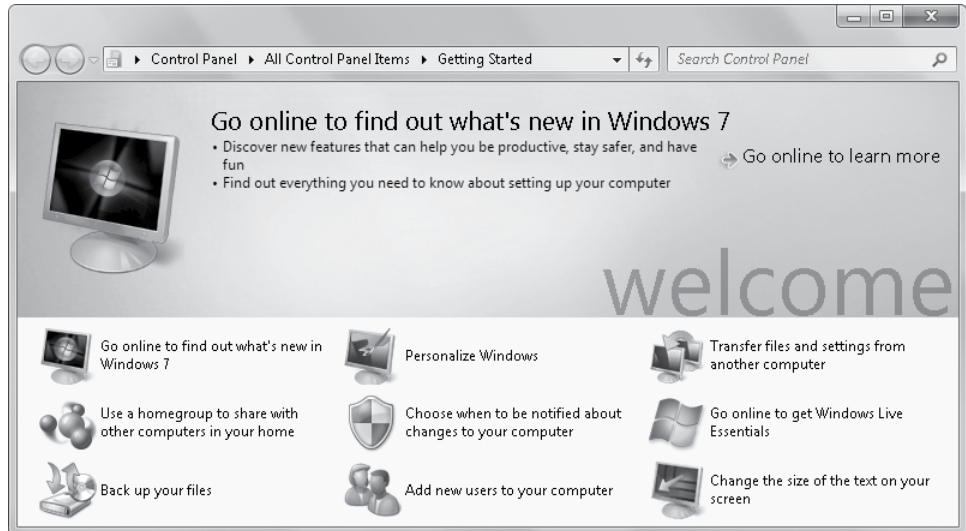


*The Windows 7 Start menu.*

**See Also** For information about customizing the Start menu, see “Modifying the Start Menu” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

## Quickly Getting Started

Clicking the Getting Started link on the Start menu displays the Getting Started window of Control Panel. (Pointing to the Getting Started link displays a jump list of the same items.)



*The Getting Started window of Control Panel contains links to some of the tasks that you are likely to want to perform when setting up a new computer.*

If you're familiar with Windows, you might want to jump right in and start working from this window. If you're uncertain about these tasks, or want to learn more about how the associated functionality works in Windows 7, you might prefer to read about them in this book before taking action.

In this book, we cover the common startup tasks in a logical order and provide step-by-step instructions for completing them in the manner that is appropriate for your situation.

From the Getting Started window, you can also link to online information about Windows 7, and download useful programs from the Windows Live Essentials Web site.

## Exploring the Left Pane of the Start Menu

The left pane of the Start menu provides efficient access to programs and other items installed on your computer.

### Pinned Items Area

You can quickly access specific programs, folders, or files by inserting links to them in the pinned items area at the top of the left side of the Start menu. This area is not visible until the first time you pin an item to it.

**See Also** For information about pinning and unpinning Start menu links, see “Creating Shortcuts” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.”

### Recently Opened Programs List

The recently opened programs list displays links to the last 10 programs you started. You can adjust that number, or remove the list entirely.

The first time you log on to Windows 7, the list displays links to some of the new and improved programs that come with Windows 7, such as Windows Media Center, Sticky Notes, the Snipping Tool, the Calculator, and Paint. The programs that appear here might vary depending on the edition of Windows 7 running on your computer and any programs installed by the computer manufacturer.

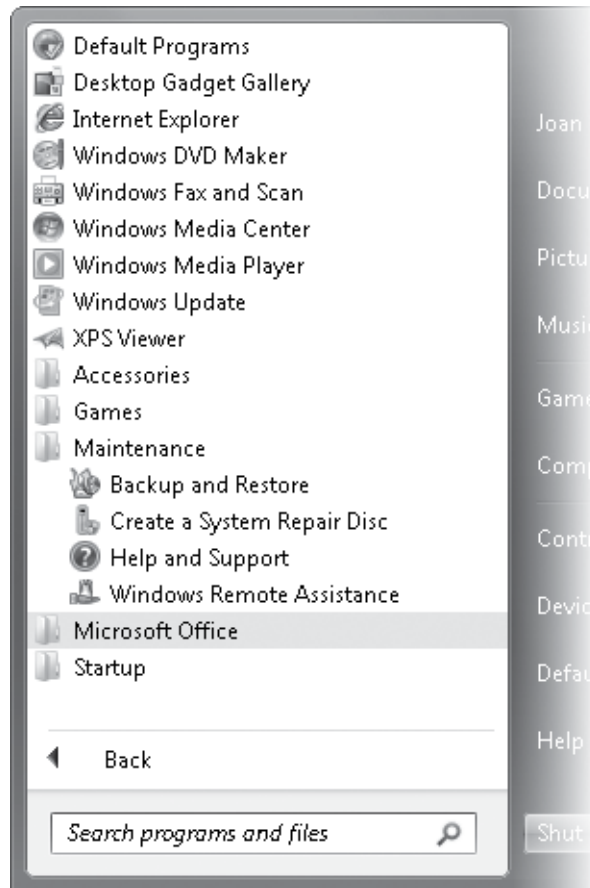
**See Also** For information about the different editions of Windows 7 and how they are addressed in this book, see “Introducing Windows 7” at the beginning of this book.

### All Programs Menu

The All Programs menu provides access to most of the programs and utilities installed on your computer. These include programs installed as part of Windows 7, programs installed by the computer manufacturer, and programs you have installed. (Most program setup utilities add a program link to the Start menu.)

You display the All Programs menu by pointing to or clicking All Programs at the bottom of the left pane of the Start menu. Some programs are available from the menu itself, and some are grouped in folders. Clicking a folder expands it to make its programs accessible. If you want to close the All Programs menu without starting a program, you can point to or click Back to return to the standard Start menu.

In a default installation of Windows 7, the programs and utilities that are not available from the root of the All Programs menu are grouped in these folders:



*On the All Programs menu, new programs are highlighted to bring them to your attention.*

- **Accessories** This folder includes links to the following programs and utilities: Calculator, Command Prompt, Connect to a Network Projector, Connect to a Projector, Getting Started, Math Input Panel, Notepad, Paint, Remote Desktop Connection, Run, Snipping Tool, Sound Recorder, Sticky Notes, Sync Center, Windows Explorer, and WordPad. Also included are the Ease Of Access, System Tools, Tablet PC, and Windows PowerShell subfolders.

**Tip** On a Tablet PC, the *Tablet PC* folder appears directly on the All Programs menu.
- **Games** This folder includes links to the games that come preinstalled with Windows 7, to the Games Explorer window, and to the Game Providers page of the Microsoft Web site, from which you can download additional games.

- **Maintenance** This folder contains links to the following preventive maintenance tools: Backup and Restore, Create a System Repair Disc, Help and Support, and Windows Remote Assistance.
- **Startup** This folder contains links to programs that you want to start automatically with Windows 7.

We'll explore many of these programs and utilities in this book.

## Jump Lists

In earlier versions of Windows, a right-pointing arrow next to a link or menu item indicated that additional options for that entry were available. This functionality has been expanded in Windows 7 to create a very useful feature called *jump lists*.

On the Windows 7 Start menu, pointing to (not clicking) a right-pointing arrow next to a program name in the recently opened programs list or the pinned items area displays a list of files recently opened with that program, of related tasks, or of common actions you can perform within that program. For example, pointing to WordPad in the recently opened programs list displays a list of the WordPad documents you've recently been working with. You can "jump" to a specific file or task by clicking it in the jump list.

## Start Menu Search Box

In the lower-left corner of the Start menu, you'll find one of the greatest treasures of Windows 7—the Start menu Search box. This feature made our Top 3 Favorite Features list when it was introduced in Windows Vista, and it's still right up there—the time savings it provides are just amazing.

The first thing to note about Start menu Search is that it's immediately available regardless of what you're currently doing on your computer. Simply click the Start button—or press the Windows logo key if your keyboard has one—and the Start menu expands with the cursor already active in the Search box. Then type any characters in the Search box, and Windows immediately displays a list of programs, Control Panel items, files, documents, music, videos, and e-mail messages containing that string of characters, grouped by category. As you type more characters, Windows refines the search results almost instantly.

You can open any item that appears in the search results by clicking it, or you can open the folder containing that item by right-clicking the item and then clicking Open File Location. To view more information about documents and messages matching the search term, click See More Results (at the bottom of the list) to open the Search Results In Indexed Locations window. This window displays the file type icon (or, for certain

types of graphics, a thumbnail of the actual graphic), name, location, date, and size of each item in the search results. For documents and HTML files, the first 150 or so characters of the file's content appear in the window. The search results remain available in the window until you close it.

**See Also** For more information about Start menu Search, see "Exploring Control Panel" later in this chapter. For information about efficient search techniques, see "Finding Specific Information" in Chapter 4, "Navigate Windows and Folders."

## Exploring the Right Pane of the Start Menu

The right pane of the Start menu is divided into three sections whose contents can vary depending on the Start menu properties you specify.

- The top section provides quick access to file storage locations. It displays your user account picture and name, and links to the Documents, Pictures, and Music libraries. Clicking your user account picture displays your user account settings. Clicking your user account name displays all your personal folders (the Windows folders specifically associated with your user account). These include the Contacts, Desktop, Downloads, Favorites, Links, Saved Games, and Searches folders as well as your Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos folders.
- The middle section provides access to games installed with Windows 7 and to the Computer window, from which you can access all the devices attached to your computer or network. This section can also display links to your Internet Explorer Favorites menu, to a list of the 15 files you have most recently worked with, to a window that displays the contents of your computer, and to a window that displays the computers, programs, folders, and files you can access on your network.
- The bottom section provides access to computer-management tools. It can display links to existing network connections, to the Control Panel window from which you can access all the Windows 7 system settings, to the default settings for opening various types of files and media, to the Devices And Printers window, and to Windows Help And Support.

By default, clicking an item in the right pane of the Start menu opens the corresponding folder window. Some items can alternatively be displayed as menus, to give you even faster access to files and commands.

At the bottom of the right pane of the Start menu, the Power button and Shut-down Options menu provide options for ending your computing session.

**See Also** For information about the Power button and the Windows 7 shut-down options, see "Ending a Computing Session" later in this chapter. For information about Start menu links and menus, see "Modifying the Start Menu" in Chapter 10, "Change System Settings."





## Quick Access to Windows Functionality

The Windows logo key is located to the left of the Spacebar (between the Ctrl and Alt keys) on most keyboards. It is labeled with the Windows logo, which resembles a waving flag. On currently manufactured keyboards, the Windows logo on the key is inside a recessed circle. This makes the key easier for keyboard users to locate. Similarly, many keyboards incorporate raised bars on the “home keys” (the F and J keys on an English-language keyboard) to enable keyboard users to quickly locate the “home position” (the correct placement of hands on the keyboard) by touch.

Pressing the Windows logo key alone or in combination with other keys enables you to move around and work with Windows without using a mouse or other pointing device. In Windows 7, the Windows logo key enables functionality including that shown in the following table.

Keyboard shortcut	Function
Windows logo key	Open or close the Start menu
Windows logo key+B	Select the first icon in the notification area of the taskbar
Windows logo key+D	Minimize all open windows
Windows logo key+E	Open the Computer window
Windows logo key+F	Open the Search window
Windows logo key+G	Select or move between desktop gadgets
Windows logo key+L	Lock the computer
Windows logo key+M	Minimize all open windows
Windows logo key+Shift+M	Redisplay the windows
Windows logo key+P	Display the Projection controls
Windows logo key+R	Open the Run dialog box
Windows logo key+T	Select or move between taskbar buttons
Windows logo key+U	Open the Ease Of Access Center window
Windows logo key+X	Open the Windows Mobility Center (portable computers only)
Windows logo key+Spacebar	Make all open windows temporarily transparent (Aero-capable computers only)

**Keyboard Shortcut** You’ll find other keyboard shortcuts throughout this book. For a full list of keyboard shortcuts for Windows 7 and for the Windows 7 programs and utilities, search Windows Help And Support for “keyboard shortcuts.”

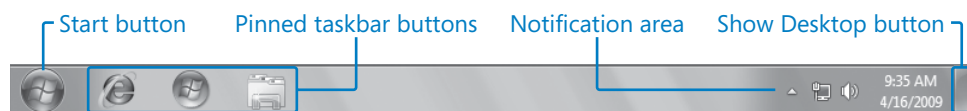
## Using the Windows Taskbar

The taskbar that appears, by default, across the bottom of your screen is your link to current information about what is happening on your Windows computer. In Windows 7, the taskbar functionality has been significantly upgraded. The default taskbar is twice the height that it was in previous versions of Windows, so you can more clearly see its contents. The Start button still appears at the left end of the taskbar, and the time and date still appear near the right end. However, what appears between them has undergone a transformation. Larger icons, improved grouping, thumbnail window previews from which you can view and work with window content, and the ability to move taskbar buttons where you want them all contribute to the increased usefulness of this feature.

**See Also** For information about changing the size of the taskbar and the taskbar buttons, moving the taskbar to another location, and adding toolbars to the taskbar, see “Modifying the Taskbar” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

The Show Desktop button appears at the far right end of the taskbar. (If you’ve used previous versions of Windows, you’ll notice that the button appearance has changed significantly.) Pointing to the Show Desktop button makes all the open windows transparent so that you can see the desktop. Clicking the button once minimizes all currently open windows; clicking it again redisplay the windows.

**Keyboard Shortcut** Pressing the Windows logo key+D has the same effect as clicking the Show Desktop button.



*The default Windows 7 taskbar.*

**Tip** The Quick Launch toolbar that was available on the taskbar in previous versions of Windows is, by default, not displayed in Windows 7 because you can now pin programs directly to the taskbar. If you miss this feature, you can display the Quick Launch toolbar by adding the hidden `AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Internet Explorer\Quick Launch` folder, located in your personal folder structure, to the taskbar.

## Taskbar Buttons

To the right of the Start button, buttons for starting Internet Explorer, Windows Explorer, and Windows Media Player are pinned to the Windows Taskbar. Almost any action, such as starting a program or opening a file, dialog box, or Control Panel window, adds a corresponding, temporary button to the taskbar. These taskbar buttons, which by default

are larger in Windows 7 than in previous versions of Windows, are identified by their program icons. When multiple files or windows of the same type are open, they are stacked under one taskbar button.

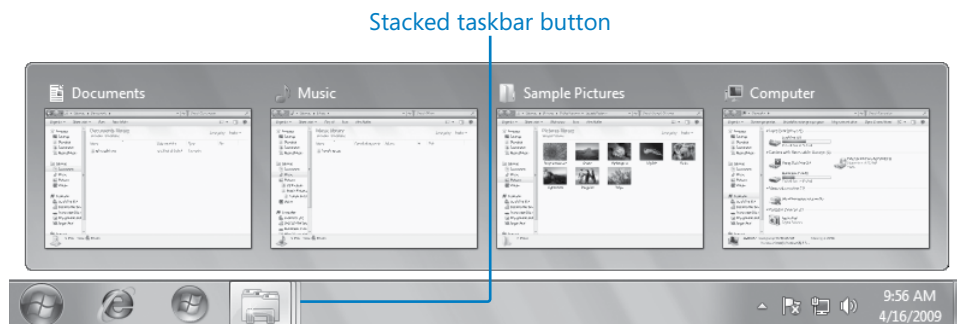
**Tip** Windows Explorer windows stack under the pinned Windows Explorer button, and Web pages stack under the pinned Internet Explorer button.

**See Also** For information about pinning and unpinning taskbar buttons, see “Creating Shortcuts” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.” For information about displaying multiple taskbar rows or small taskbar icons, see “Modifying the Taskbar” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

The number of taskbar buttons you can fit on each row of the Windows 7 taskbar varies depending on your screen resolution and whether the taskbar is displaying large icons or small icons. When there are more buttons than the taskbar can display, a scroll bar appears so that you can get to hidden buttons. The following table provides examples of the taskbar capacity:

Screen resolution	Buttons per row (large icons)	Buttons per row (small icons)
800 × 600	10	15
1024 × 768	15	22
1280 × 1024	20	29
1600 × 1200	26	39

Pointing to a taskbar button displays thumbnails of each open window of that type. You can switch to a window by clicking its thumbnail. Pointing to a thumbnail temporarily displays that window and makes all other windows transparent, so you see only the selected window and the desktop. (If the window was minimized, it appears in its most recent location.) Pointing to a thumbnail also causes a Close button to appear in its upper-right corner, so you can close the window without making it active.



*Large, grouped thumbnails make it easier to manage multiple open windows.*

**Keyboard Shortcut** You can use keyboard shortcuts to minimize, maximize, close, and switch between windows. For more information, see “Working with Windows” in Chapter 4, “Navigate Windows and Folders.”

Right-clicking a taskbar button displays a shortcut menu of related files and commands. The list varies depending on the type of item the taskbar button represents. For example:

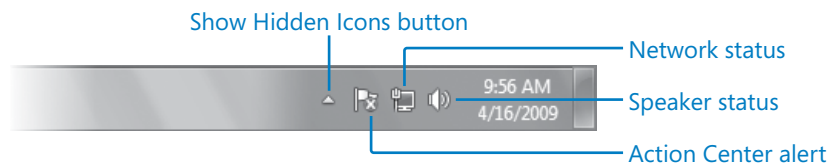
- Right-clicking the Internet Explorer taskbar button displays your Internet Explorer browsing history so that you can access a recently visited Web site directly from the taskbar.
- Right-clicking the Windows Explorer taskbar button displays a list of windows you frequently open.
- Right-clicking the Windows Media Player button displays a list of tasks related to the media that is currently accessible on your computer.
- Right-clicking a running program’s taskbar button displays a list of files recently opened with that program, and gives you the options of pinning that program to the taskbar and closing all the open program windows.

The shortcut menu for every taskbar button includes links to start the associated program and to remove the button from the taskbar.

**Tip** You can rearrange buttons on the taskbar by dragging them.

## Notification Area

The notification area at the right end of the taskbar displays information about the status of programs, including those running in the background (programs you don’t need to interact with), as well as links to certain system commands. Some notification icons and system icons are hidden by default, and you can choose to hide others that you don’t actively want to monitor.



*The notification area displays information about programs and your computer system.*

**See Also** For information about displaying and hiding notification area icons, see “Modifying the Taskbar” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

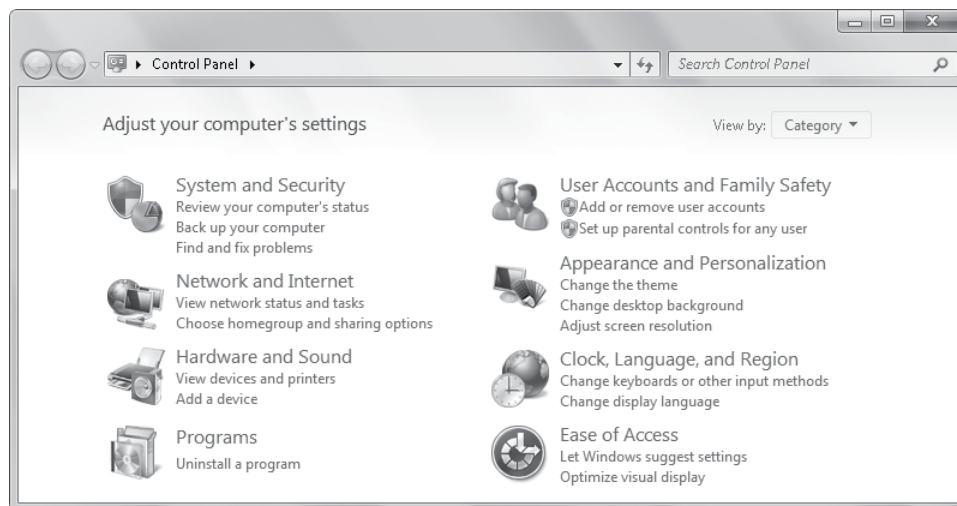
## Exploring Control Panel

Control Panel is the central location from which you can manage all the aspects of your Windows 7 operating system: how it looks, how it works, how it communicates, and so on. When you open Control Panel, it's displayed in a unique instance of Windows Explorer; the taskbar button representing Control Panel and the various Control Panel windows appears on the taskbar independent of the Windows Explorer taskbar button.

### Control Panel Categories

In Windows Vista and Windows XP, Control Panel offered two views: Category view and Classic view. To help guide users to the correct Control Panel item, Category view described the tasks you might want to perform. Classic view provided direct access to the Control Panel items, and retained the look and feel of the Windows 2000 Control Panel. (In Classic view, you had to know or guess which item to use.)

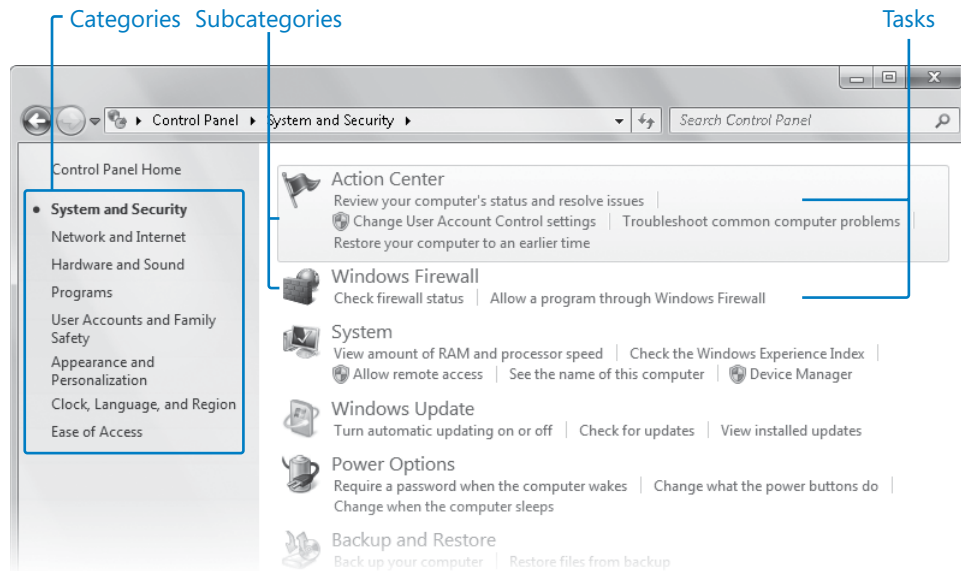
In Windows 7, you can choose from three views of the Control Panel window—Category view, Large Icons view, and Small Icons view. Category view is the default. In this view, Control Panel items are divided into eight categories:



*In Category view, links to the most common tasks are available under the category name.*

The most common tasks within each category are listed below the category name so that you can go directly to the window or dialog box in which to perform that task.

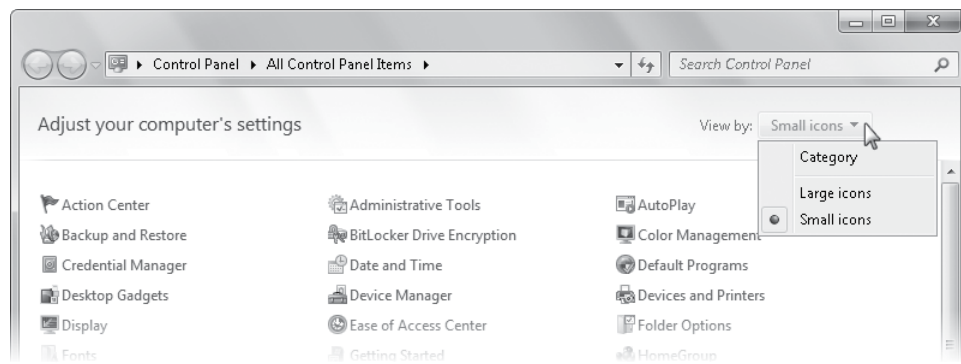
Alternatively, you can browse through a category to the windows, dialog boxes, and tasks related to that category.



*Within a Control Panel category, clicking a subcategory opens that item's window; clicking a task jumps to a specific command center available from the item's window.*

## Accessing Individual Control Panel Items

From Control Panel, you can access more than 40 individual controls—windows and dialog boxes—with which you manage specific aspects of your computer system. Clicking Small Icons or Large Icons in the View By list displays the All Control Panel Items window.



*Small Icons view of the All Control Panel Items window displays links to every Control Panel window or dialog box.*

In Small Icons view or Large Icons view, the All Control Panel Items window displays the following items, which are common to all Windows 7 installations:

- Action Center
- Administrative Tools
- AutoPlay
- Backup and Restore
- BitLocker Drive Encryption
- Color Management
- Credential Manager
- Date and Time
- Default Programs
- Desktop Gadgets
- Device Manager
- Devices and Printers
- Display
- Ease of Access Center
- Folder Options
- Fonts
- Getting Started
- HomeGroup
- Indexing Options
- Internet Options
- Keyboard
- Location and Other Sensors
- Mouse
- Network and Sharing Center
- Notification Area Icons
- Parental Controls
- Performance Information and Tools
- Personalization
- Phone and Modem
- Power Options
- Programs and Features
- Recovery
- Region and Language
- RemoteApp and Desktop Connections
- Sound
- Speech Recognition
- Sync Center
- System
- Taskbar and Start Menu
- Troubleshooting
- User Accounts
- Windows CardSpace
- Windows Defender
- Windows Firewall
- Windows Update

Other Control Panel items might also be available, including controls with which you manage specific hardware components, software programs, and peripheral devices. Throughout this book, we will discuss many of these controls and how you can use them to manage your computer.

**Tip** The Control Panel view you choose remains in effect until you choose another, even if you log off of Windows 7.

## Different Ways of Opening Control Panel Items

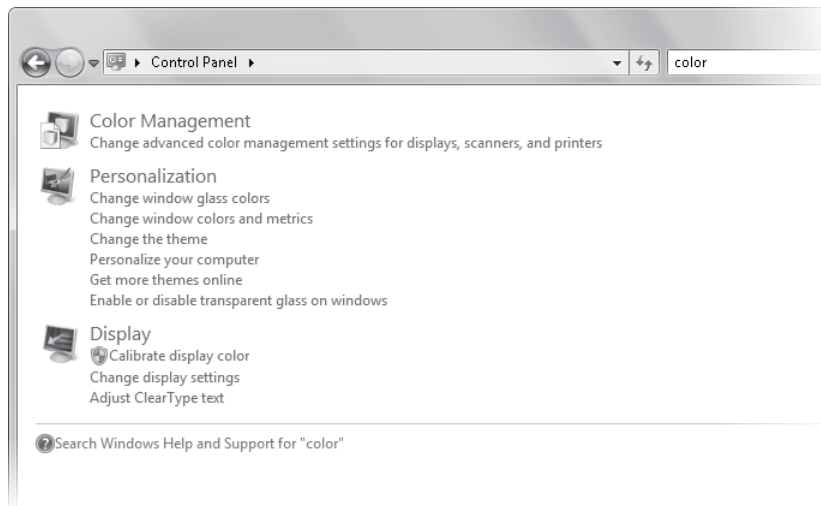
As you gain experience with Windows 7, you'll learn the Control Panel items to use to perform common management tasks. You can access controls in other ways than navigating through the Control Panel categories, such as the following:

- If you're not certain of the specific name of a Control Panel item, you can browse a list of all the items in the All Control Panel Items window to locate the one you want.

To display individual Control Panel item icons in the All Control Panel Items window, click Small Icons or Large Icons in the View By list in the upper-right corner of Control Panel. Then simply double-click the Control Panel item you want to open.

**Tip** You can return to the original Control Panel view by clicking **Category** in the View By list.

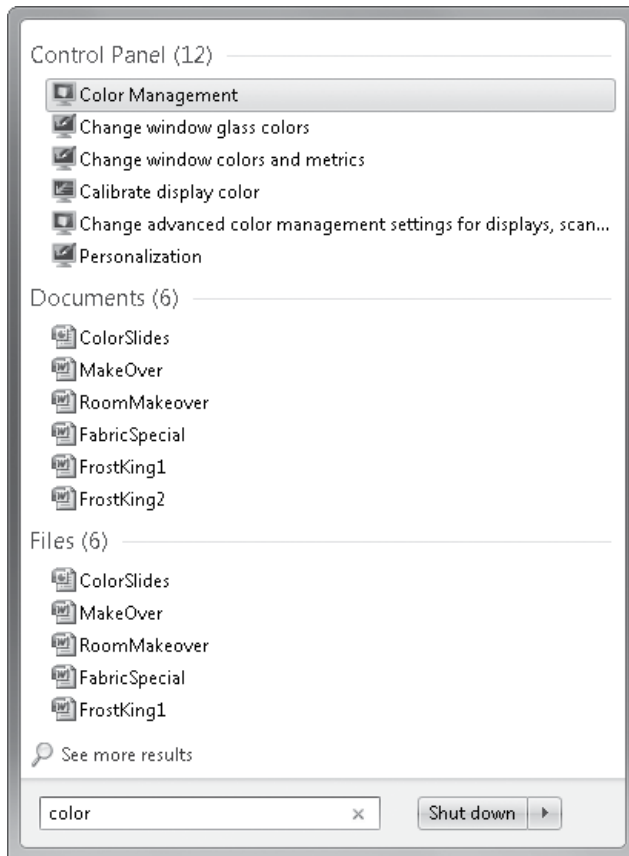
- If you know part of the name of the Control Panel item you want to open, you can locate it from Control Panel by entering it in the Search box at the right end of the Control Panel window title bar.



*Typing part of an item name in the Control Panel Search box displays items matching your entry so that you can choose the one you want.*



- The simplest method of opening a Control Panel item is directly from the Start menu, by typing part of the item name into the Start menu Search box.



*As you enter characters into the Start menu Search box, the Start menu displays a list of matching items.*

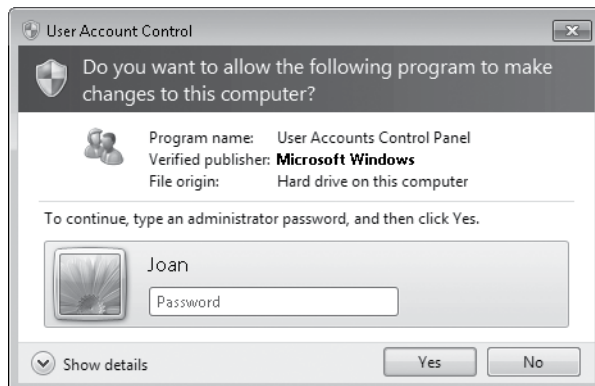
**See Also** For more information about searching, see “Finding Specific Information” in Chapter 4, “Navigate Windows and Folders.”

## Understanding User Account Control

User Account Control (UAC) is a security feature first introduced with Windows Vista. The intention of UAC is to enable you to log on to and operate the computer with a more secure standard user account. When you want to perform an operation that could pose a security risk, UAC requires that you enter an administrator account password before it proceeds. This system offers a greatly increased level of security, especially to computers that are not protected as part of a network domain.

**Important** We'll talk about UAC in depth in Chapter 2, "Manage User Accounts." What you need to know now is that your computer responds differently to commands marked with a security icon, depending on whether you are logged on with an administrator or standard user account and which UAC security level is currently selected.

When UAC is turned on, as it is by default, clicking a command that requires administrator approval opens the User Account Control dialog box.



*When you're logged on as an administrator, Windows requests only that you acknowledge the security prompt; you don't need to enter your password.*

To continue with the restricted operation:

- If you're logged on as a standard user, click one of the administrator accounts, enter its password, and then click Yes.
- If you're logged on as an administrator, click Yes.

**Important** In this book, we assume that you are logged on as a standard user and that User Account Control is set to Default. Under these conditions, the User Account Control message box appears only when a program tries to make changes to your computer, and not when you make changes to Windows settings, as you'll be doing when working through the exercises. If User Account Control is set to Always Notify and a User Account Control message box appears, you'll need to provide the requested credentials or acknowledgment.

## Finding Information About Your Computer System

Sometimes you'll want or need to locate information about your computer system, such as the processor speed, amount of memory, or edition of Windows. The System window of Control Panel displays information about your computer hardware and operating system, in the following categories:

- **Windows edition** This section contains information about your operating system including the version (such as Windows 7), edition (such as Home Premium), the most recently installed service pack (if a service pack for the operating system has been released) and, depending on the installed edition, a link to the section of the Microsoft Web site from which you can upgrade your edition of Windows.
- **System** This section provides the computer's Windows Experience Index base score (a number from 1.0 to 7.9), the processor type (such as Intel Pentium 4) and speed (such as 2.80 GHz), the amount of onboard random access memory (RAM) that is available, the system type (32-bit or 64-bit), and whether pen input or touch input is available through the computer monitor. This section might also provide information about the manufacturer and model of the computer.
- **Computer name, domain, and workgroup settings** This section displays the computer name (and a description if one exists) and the network domain or workgroup the computer belongs to. If your computer belongs to a homegroup, that information is not shown here.  
  
**See Also** For information about connecting your computer to homegroups, workgroups, and domains, see Chapter 3, "Manage Your Network."
- **Windows activation** The section displays the Windows activation status and product ID, or if Windows hasn't yet been activated, provides an online activation link.

The computer manufacturer may provide additional information, such as support contact information or links to associated hardware and software vendors, in the System window.

**Tip** You can quickly display the System window by right-clicking Computer on the Start menu and then clicking Properties.

The Windows Experience Index base score shown in the System window is not a cumulative rating; it is the lowest of the individual ratings scored by the following five system components:

- Processor speed
- Installed RAM
- General desktop graphics capabilities
- Three-dimensional gaming graphics capabilities
- Primary hard disk data transfer rate

The highest score available for a Windows 7 computer is 7.9 (updated from 5.9 in Windows Vista, to take advantage of improvements in available processor, graphics, and hard disk technologies). Higher scores may be introduced as necessary to keep up with hardware advances.

**See Also** For more information about the Windows Experience Index, see “Rating Your Computer’s Hardware” in Chapter 12, “Set Up Hardware Devices.”

In this exercise, you’ll open Control Panel and locate information about your computer system. In the process, you’ll learn different methods of accessing Control Panel items.



**SET UP** You don't need any practice files to complete this exercise. Log on to your Windows 7 computer, and then follow the steps.



1. At the left end of the **Windows Taskbar**, click the **Start** button.

The Start menu expands.

2. On the right side of the **Start** menu, click **Control Panel**.

The Control Panel window opens.

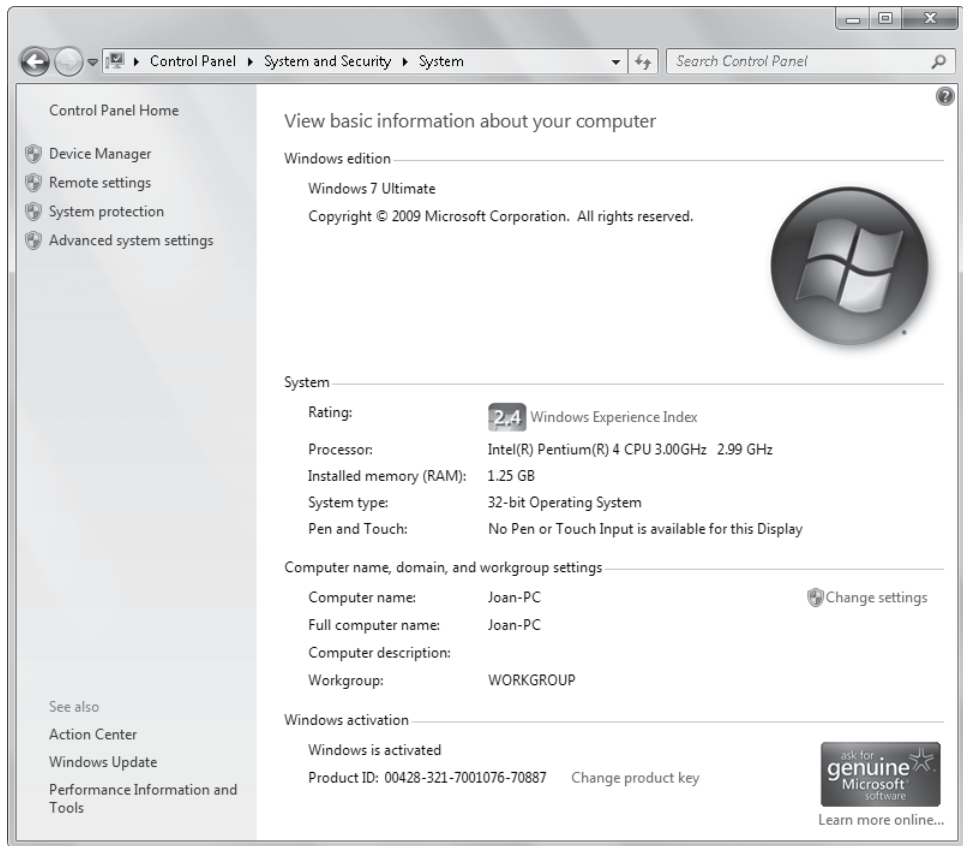
**Troubleshooting** If Control Panel opens in a view other than Category view, click **Category** in the **View By** list before continuing.

3. Click the **System and Security** category.

**See Also** For information about some of the security features of Windows 7, see “Updating Windows System Files” later in this chapter; “Understanding User Accounts and Permissions” in Chapter 2, “Manage User Accounts;” and “Configuring Power Options” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

4. In the **System and Security** window, click the **System** subcategory.

The System window opens.



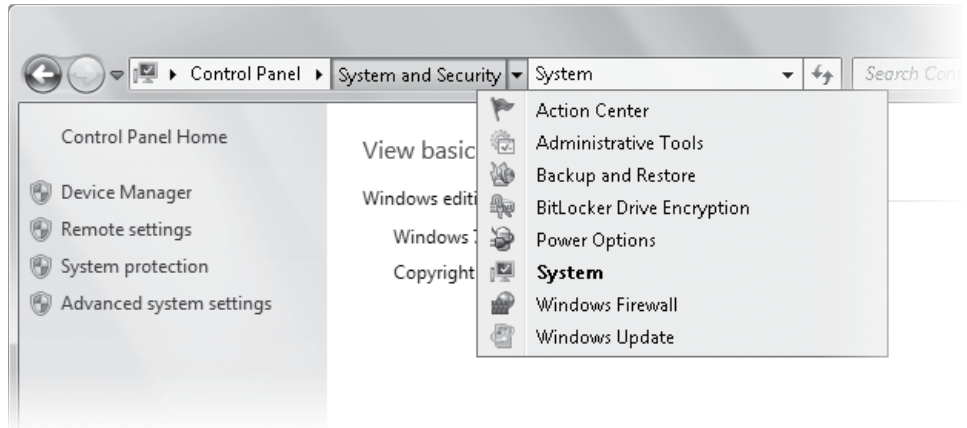
*In the System window, you can view information about your computer and access related tools and Control Panel items.*

5. View the information about your computer that is displayed in the right pane of the **System** window.

The left pane of each Control Panel window contains links to related tools at the top, and to related Control Panel items at the bottom. You can return to Control Panel by clicking the Control Panel Home link at the top of the left pane, but for the purpose of learning how to navigate through Control Panel, we'll use a different method, which involves working with the path displayed in the Address bar above the panes. This path shows the route you have taken to get to the displayed window—in this case, the System window.

6. In the **Address bar**, click the arrow to the right of **System and Security**.

A list of the System And Security subcategories appears, with System (the current window) displayed in bold.



You can open any subcategory window by clicking it in the list.

7. In the list, click **Action Center**.

The path in the Address bar changes, and the Action Center opens.

8. In the **Address** bar, click **System and Security**.

You return to the System And Security window.

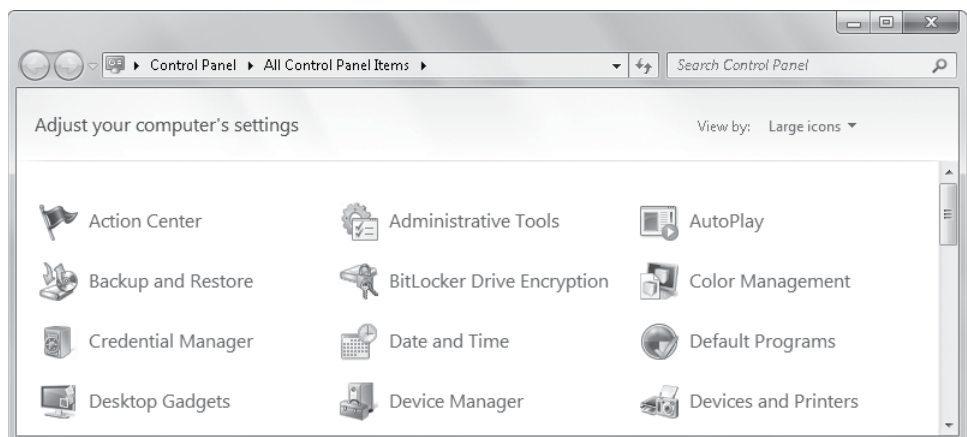


9. If **Control Panel** appears at the left end of the path shown in the **Address** bar, click **Control Panel**. Otherwise, click the left-pointing chevron to the left of the first item in the path, and then in the list that appears, click **Control Panel**.

You return to the Category view of Control Panel window.

10. In the **View by** list, click **Large Icons**.

Control Panel displays large icons and names for the individual subcategories.



In Large Icons view, the icons provide visual clues to the purpose of each control.

11. Scroll the **All Control Panel Items** window to locate the **System** item, and then click it.

The System window opens. Note that although this is the same window that opened after step 4, the path in the Address bar reflects that you accessed the window from the All Control Panel Items window.

12. In the **Address** bar, click the arrow to the right of **All Control Panel Items**.


An alphabetical list of the items appears.

13. Without clicking away from the list to close it, point to the arrow to the right of **Control Panel**.

The list of Control Panel categories appears.

14. In the **Address** bar, click **Control Panel**.

You return to the Control Panel home page.

 **CLEAN UP** Click the **Close** button to close the Control Panel window before continuing to the next exercise.

## Updating Windows System Files

When you upgrade to Windows 7 or purchase a Windows 7 computer, the operating system files are the ones available when your Windows 7 installation media was created or when Windows was installed. Whenever necessary, Microsoft releases updates to Windows (and to other products), either to provide additional functionality or to protect your computer from new security threats. It's important to install these updates as soon after their release as possible.

Windows Update is a utility that scans your computer, confers with the Microsoft Update online database, and recommends or installs any updates that are available for your operating system, your Microsoft software programs, or your hardware. Quite apart from knowing that you have the "latest and greatest," by using Windows Update, you can be sure that your computer is updated whenever necessary.

## Types of Updates

During the Windows 7 installation process, your computer is automatically configured to install updates. (If you upgraded to Windows 7 from a previous version of Windows, Windows Update retains your previous settings.) Updates are classified as follows:

- **Important updates** These increase the security or reliability of the operating system and Microsoft software products.
- **Recommended updates** These address non-critical problems, and help enhance your computing experience.
- **Optional updates** These do not address specific Microsoft software problems. They might include software add-ons or drivers for third-party hardware.

With the default settings, Windows Update collects the version numbers of your operating system, Web browser, and other installed software, as well as information about the hardware devices that are connected to your computer, at 3:00 each morning. It then proactively contacts the Microsoft Update site, compiles a list of updates that are available for your system, downloads any available Important or Recommended updates for Windows and Windows programs (even for Windows Update itself), and installs them.

**Tip** When the update process is complete, Windows Update discards the version and ID information that it collected from your computer.

## Completing an Update

Some updates require that you restart the computer to finish the installation, because files can't be updated while they're in use. If you don't restart the computer immediately after installing an update that requires a restart, Windows Update displays a reminder message. From the message box, you can restart the computer or dismiss the message for 10 minutes, 1 hour, or 4 hours. If you don't postpone the reminder, Windows Update counts down to a restart time. If you don't interrupt the countdown, Windows saves auto-recover copies of open documents, shuts down running programs, performs any other tasks necessary to safely shut down the computer, restarts the computer, and displays a message that it has done so.



## Windows Update Options

The frequency, time, and independence of the Windows Update utility are your choice. You can access Windows Update from the Start menu, from Control Panel, or from Windows Help And Support. The options are to have Windows 7 do one of the following:

- Download and install updates automatically.
- Download updates and notify you when they are ready to be installed.
- Check for updates and notify you when an update is available.
- Check for updates only when you manually initiate the process.

**Important** If your computer is connected to a network domain, your network administrator might control the installation of updates.

The default setting in Windows 7 allows you to install updates whether you're logged on as an administrator or as a standard user. You can choose to restrict the installation of updates to administrators only.

Automatic updating is very convenient if you don't want to bear the responsibility of remembering to manually update your system, or if you want to be sure updates are installed as soon as they become available. The default update settings make the automatic update process reasonably unobtrusive—but they are effective only if your computer is usually on and online at 3:00 in the morning.

**Tip** The default Windows 7 Sleep mode options allow scheduled programs such as Windows Update to bring your computer out of Sleep mode to check for, download, and install available updates according to your Windows Update settings. For more information, see "Configuring Power Options" in Chapter 10, "Change System Settings."

When an update has been downloaded and is ready to be installed, Windows Update alerts you in one or more ways:



- When any type of update is ready, a Windows Update icon appears in the notification area of the taskbar.



- When an Important update is ready, a security icon appears on the Power button on the Start menu. You can't shut down your computer without first installing the update.

In addition to updating Windows system files, you can update other Microsoft products and featured programs through Windows Update. When not already selected, these options are available from the box at the bottom of the Windows Update window:

- **Get updates for other Microsoft products** To have Windows Update monitor availability of updates to Office and other Microsoft programs, click the Find Out More link. This opens the Microsoft Update site. At the bottom of the page, select the I Accept The Terms Of Use check box, and then click Install.
- **Additional Windows Update options are available** Windows Update can notify you when featured updates and programs are available. To invoke this option, click the View Options link and then, in the Windows Update message box, click Turn On This Option.

In this exercise, you'll check update settings, install available updates, and set up the computer to periodically install critical updates.



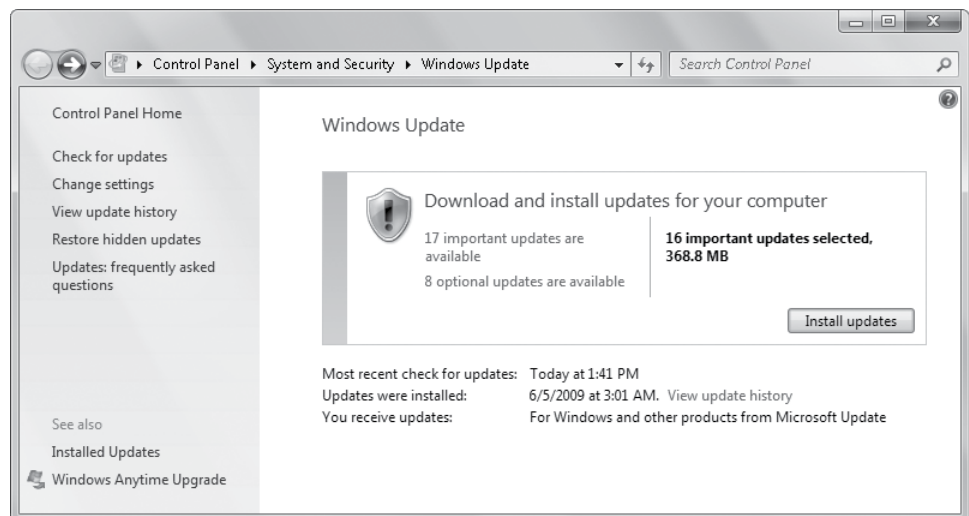
**SET UP** You don't need any practice files to complete this exercise; just follow the steps.



1. Click the **Start** button, click **All Programs**, and then click **Windows Update**.

Windows Update displays information about your computer's current update status, when it most recently checked for updates, when it most recently installed updates, and the scope of updates your computer receives from Microsoft Update.

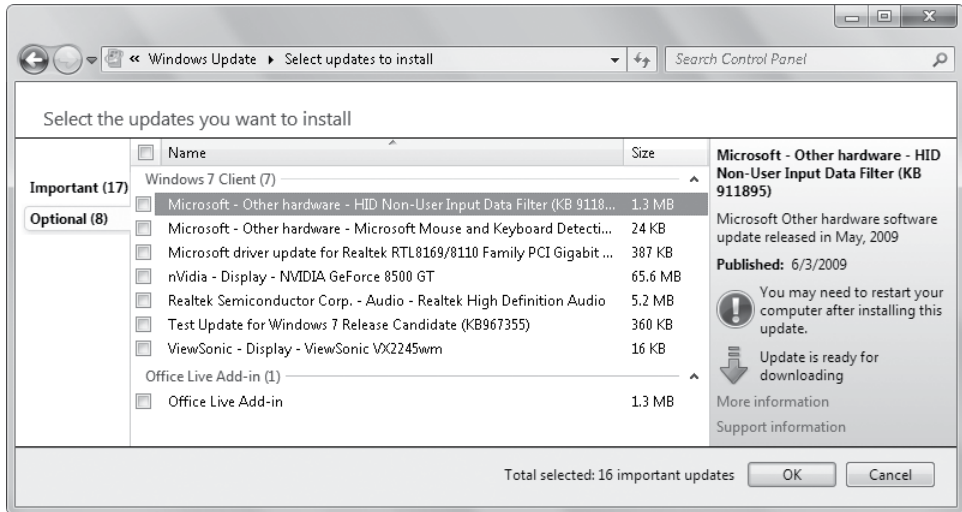
If your computer is up to date or only optional updates are available, a green bar and security shield appear at the left end of the update status pane. If Important or Recommended updates are available, the bar and shield are yellow or red.



*The color of the bar and shield indicates your Windows Update status: green means that all available Important updates are installed.*

2. If a link to available updates appears in the status box at the top of the **Windows Update** window, click it. (If there are multiple links, click any one.) Otherwise, skip to step 6.

The Select Updates To Install page displays the selected category of updates that are available for your computer.



*On the Select Updates To Install page, you can display the description of each available update and select whether to install it.*

In the left pane of the Select Updates To Install window are tabs for each level of available updates. Clicking a tab displays the updates of that type in the center pane. Clicking an update (not its check box) in the center pane displays its description in the right pane. Selecting an update's check box selects that update for installation.

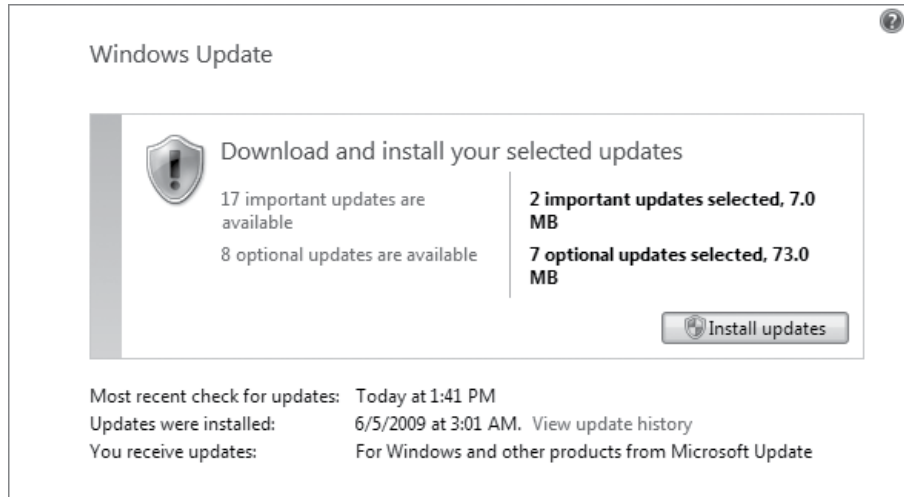
Important updates are automatically selected for installation. You can choose to not install an update by clearing its check box, but unless you have a very good reason to wait, we recommend that you install Important updates as soon as possible.

**Tip** If administrator permission is required to install an update, the Windows security icon appears on the Install Updates button.

3. Select the check boxes of the updates you want to install, and then click **OK**.

Windows Update prompts you to begin the installation process.

**Tip** You can select all the updates in the center pane by selecting the check box to the left of the Name column header.

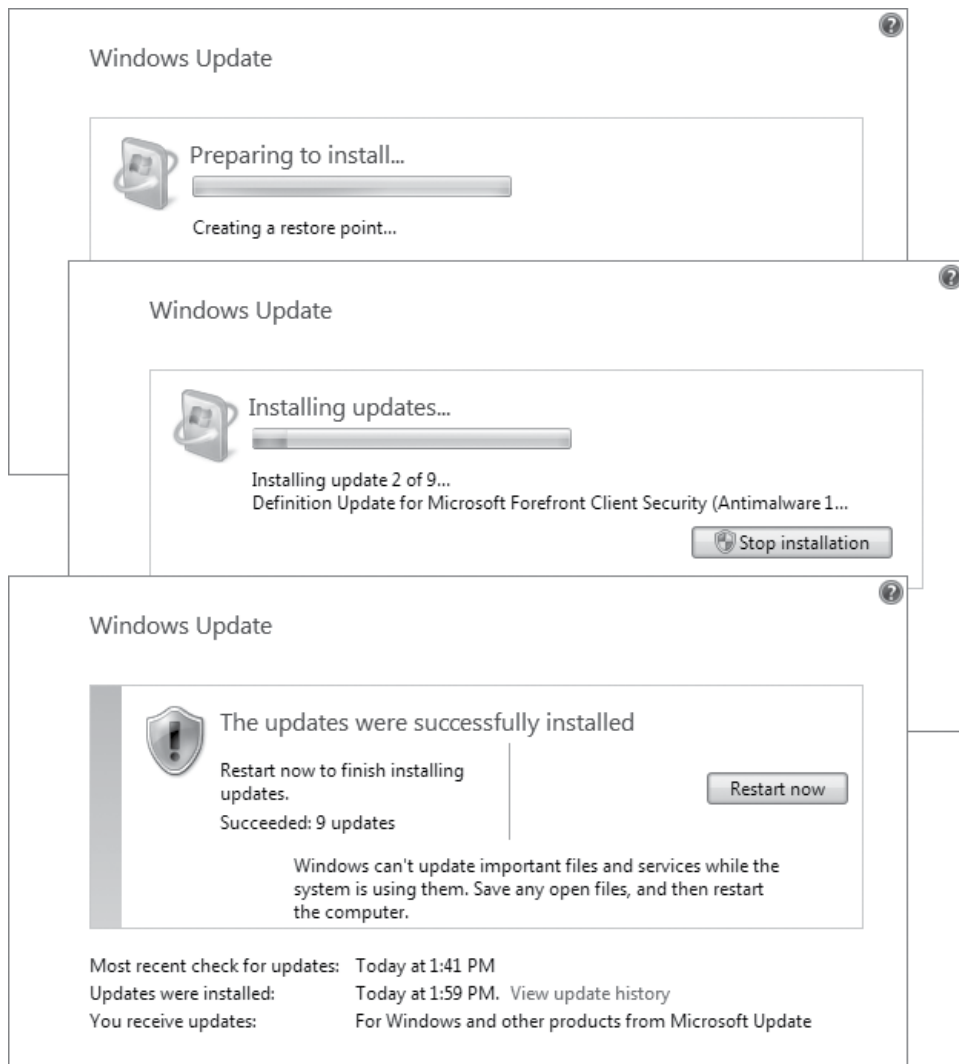


*Windows Update is ready to download and install the selected update.*

4. In the **Windows Update** window, click **Install updates**.

**Troubleshooting** Some software program updates require that you agree to the licensing terms and conditions of the program before you can install the update.

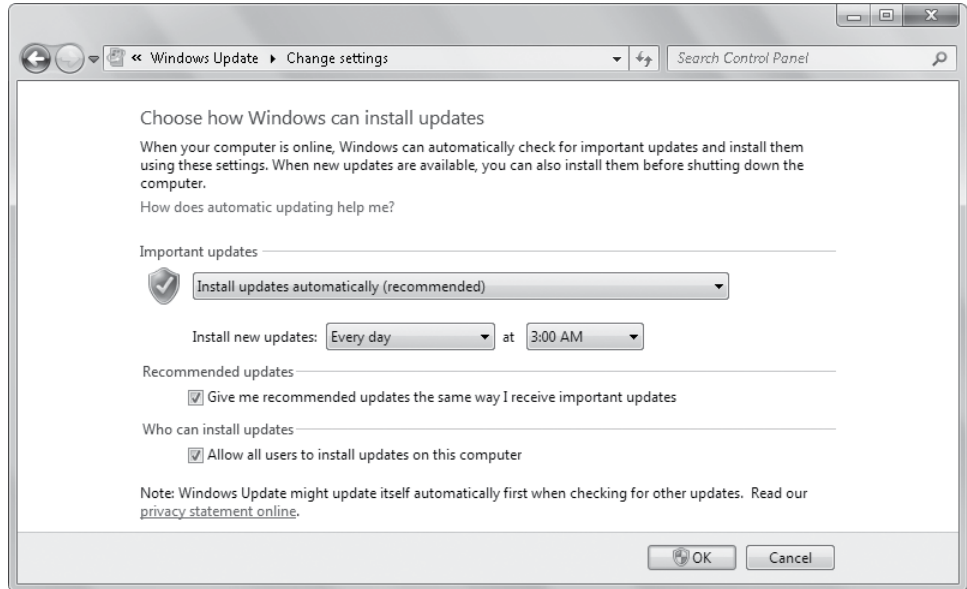
A progress bar reports on the update activities as Windows downloads the selected update(s), creates a restore point, and then installs each update.



*Windows Update downloads and installs the selected update.*

5. If Windows 7 prompts you to restart your computer, close any open files, and then click **Restart now**. Windows will complete the configuration of installed updates before and/or after restarting the computer. After your computer restarts, log on, and then repeat step 1 to return to Windows Update.

6. In the left pane, click **Change settings**.



*In the Change Settings window, you can change the frequency, time, type, and scope of automatic updates.*

7. In the **Important updates** section of the **Change Settings** window, if **Install updates automatically** is not already selected in the first list, select it now.
8. In the two lists to the right of **Install new updates**, click a frequency and a time at which your computer will usually be on and online.

It's best to select a time outside your core work hours—say at the beginning or end of your workday—when connecting to the Internet and installing updates won't impact your ability to work by monopolizing your computer's resources.

**Tip** If you prefer to have more control over the update process but still enjoy the benefit of automatic updates, select the **Download Updates But Let Me Choose Whether To Install Them** option. With this option, Windows 7 downloads available updates to your computer and displays the Windows Update icon in the notification area. You can click the icon to review and approve or reject the installation of each update.

9. Select or clear the check boxes in the **Recommended updates**, **Who can install updates**, and **Featured update notifications** sections to reflect the way you want Windows Update to function on this computer. Then click **OK**.

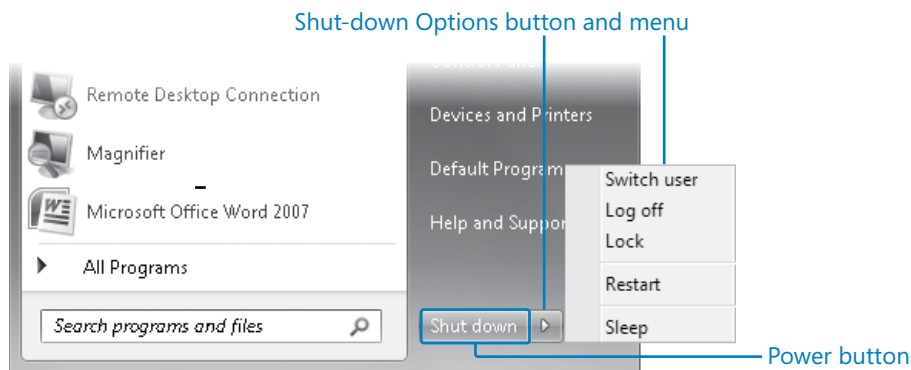
Windows Update saves your changes.

**✘ CLEAN UP** Close the Windows Update window.

## Ending a Computing Session

If you are going to stop working with your computer for any length of time, you can safeguard your information and save power in a number of ways. Although not all the options actually turn off the computer, they are referred to collectively as *shut-down options*, and they are available from the Shut-down Options menu located in the lower-right corner of the Start menu.

By default, clicking the Power button (labeled *Shut Down*) starts the process of shutting down the computer. Clicking the Shut-down Options button (to the right of the Power button) displays a list of the other available shut-down options.



By default, clicking the Power button invokes the Shut Down command. Click the Shut-down Options button to display other options for ending your computing session.

**Tip** The shut-down option currently assigned to the Power button does not appear on the Shut-down Options menu.

**See Also** For information about changing the Power button behavior, see “Modifying the Start Menu” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

The shut-down options include the following:

- **Log off** If you’re finished working on a computer that you share with other people, you can end your Windows 7 session (but not affect other users’ sessions) by logging off. You must save your files and shut down all running programs before you log off; if you don’t, Windows 7 will close any open windows and exit programs, possibly losing unsaved data in the process.

**See Also** For information about multiple concurrent user sessions, and about the Switch User shut-down option, see the sidebar “Switching Quickly Among Users” in Chapter 2, “Manage User Accounts.”

- **Lock** If you want to prevent passersby from seeing what you're working on, you can lock the computer, which displays the Welcome screen and requires that you log on to your account to resume. Locking is most effective when your user account is protected by a password; otherwise, anyone can click your user account picture on the Welcome screen to unlock the computer and access your information.

**Keyboard Shortcut** You can lock the computer by pressing the Windows Logo key+L.

**See Also** For information about configuring a screen saver to lock a computer, see "Implementing a Screen Saver" in Chapter 9, "Change Visual Elements."

- **Restart** After installing certain programs and program updates, it is necessary to restart the computer to complete the update of system files that are in use. You might also find, at times, that restarting the computer helps to resolve a technical difficulty.

**Troubleshooting** If your computer seems to be operating unusually slowly, or you're experiencing technical problems that seem related to the operating system rather than to an application, try restarting your computer. Restarting clears the system cache—an area in memory where Windows 7 stores information it might need to access quickly—and frequently resolves minor issues..

- **Sleep** If you're going to be away from your computer, conserve power and protect your work by putting your computer into Sleep mode. When you do, Windows 7 saves any open files, records their state and the state of any running programs in memory, and then puts your computer into a power-saving mode. When you "wake up" the computer, usually by moving the mouse or by pressing the Enter key or the computer's power button, Windows 7 needs only a few seconds to come out of its power-saving state and retrieve information from memory. Then it does one of the following:

- If your user account is not password protected, resumes your previous computing session, exactly as you left it.
- If your user account is password protected, displays the Welcome screen.

**Troubleshooting** Some video card drivers don't support Sleep mode. If the Shut-down Options menu doesn't include the Sleep option, update your video driver. A Hibernate shut-down option is available on computers that don't support Sleep mode. Hibernate is similar to Sleep, except that it saves open files and the state of running programs on your hard disk instead of in memory, and then completely turns off the computer. When you awaken the computer, Windows 7 retrieves information from the hard disk and restores your previous computing session.

Putting your computer into Sleep mode conserves power and keeps your work quickly available. When a desktop computer is sleeping, it uses approximately 10 percent of the power required to run normally. When a mobile computer is sleeping, it uses approximately 2 percent of its battery power per hour.



**See Also** For information about configuring your computer to automatically enter Sleep mode after a period of inactivity, see “Configuring Power Options” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

- **Shut Down** If you need to turn off your computer entirely—for example, to install hardware or to move a desktop computer—you do so by shutting down the computer. Shutting down closes all your open programs and files, ends your computing session, closes network connections, stops system processes, stops the hard disk, and turns off the computer. This option appears by default on the Power button.

**See Also** For information about specifying which shut-down option appears on the Power button, see “Modifying the Start Menu” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

In this exercise, you’ll lock and unlock your computer, put it into Sleep mode and wake it up, log off from Windows 7, and then shut down the computer.



**SET UP** You don’t need any practice files to complete this exercise; just follow the steps. Windows will prompt you to save and close any open files during the shut-down process.



1. On the **Start** menu, click the **Shut-down Options button**, and then on the **Shut-down Options menu**, click **Lock**.

The Windows 7 Welcome screen appears, displaying only your user account. The word *Locked* appears under your user account name.

2. If your account is password protected, enter your password in the **Password** box, and then press the **Enter** key. Otherwise, click your user account picture.

Your previous computing session resumes.

3. On the **Shut-down Options menu**, click **Sleep**.

Windows saves your file and program information and then puts your computer into a power-saving state. The hard disk stops spinning, but the power light on the computer itself is still on, either steadily or blinking slowly.

4. Depending on your hardware, either move the mouse, press **Enter**, or press your computer’s power button to wake up your computer.

The Windows 7 Welcome screen appears on the screen.

**Troubleshooting** If you don’t know which method to use to wake up your computer, try them in the order given. If none of these methods work, consult your computer’s manual or the manufacturer’s Web site.

5. If your account is protected by a password, enter your password in the **Password** box, and then press **Enter**.

Windows logs you on to your user account.

6. On the **Shut-down Options menu**, click **Log Off**.

If no programs are running on your computer, Windows 7 logs you off. Otherwise, Windows 7 displays a list of running programs and open files.

7. If you don't have any unsaved work, click **Force log off** to complete the process and display the Welcome screen. Otherwise, click **Cancel** to return to your computing session; then save and close open files, shut down running programs, and click **Log Off** again on the **Shut-down Options menu** to complete the process.

The Windows Welcome screen appears.



8. In the lower-right corner of the Welcome screen, click the **Power** button.

**Troubleshooting** If any other user accounts are logged on to the computer, Windows 7 gives you the opportunity to cancel the shut down process. If you shut down a computer while people are logged on to it, they could lose data in open files or running programs.

Windows 7 shuts down all computer processes and turns off your computer.

**✖ CLEAN UP** If you're ready to continue your Windows 7 experience, start your computer and log on to Windows; then continue to the next chapter.

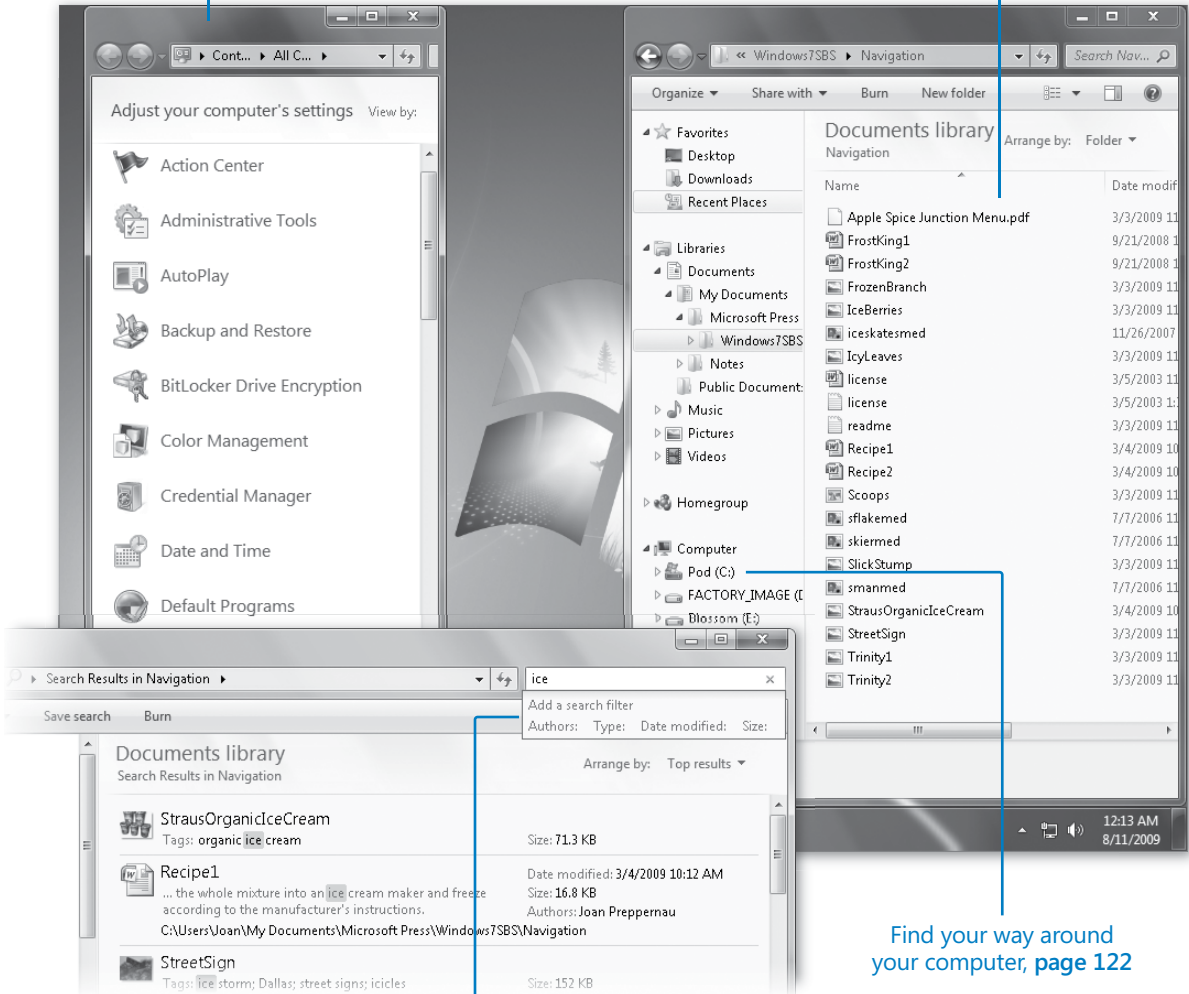
## Key Points

- You start a computing session by logging on to Windows.
- Each computer user has an individual user account. Each person using a computer logs on to the computer with his or her own user account.
- To maintain security, log on as a standard user. You'll enjoy the most secure computing experience when you log on to your computer as a standard user and keep the User Account Control feature turned on.
- Your Windows environment preferences are linked to your user account. When you log on to Windows 7, it looks and works the way you want.
- Your primary interactions with the Windows 7 operating system are through the Start menu, the Windows Taskbar, and Control Panel.
- It's important to keep your computer up to date with the most current security updates. Windows Update makes it easy to do this automatically or manually.
- You end a computing session by logging off from Windows. You can log off and leave the computer running, or you can log off as part of the process of shutting down.
- You can save power without closing files and exiting programs by putting your computer into Sleep mode.

# Chapter at a Glance

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Understand files, folders, and libraries, page 115



Find specific information, page 134

Find your way around your computer, page 122

# 4 Navigate Windows and Folders

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## In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- ✓ Work with windows.
  - ✓ Understand files, folders, and libraries.
  - ✓ Find your way around your computer.
  - ✓ Connect to network resources.
  - ✓ Find specific information.
- 

To simplify the way you work with files on your computer, Windows uses a hierarchical storage system to organize information on your computer in a way similar to the way you would organize information in an office. Instead of organizing pieces of paper in cardboard folders in filing cabinets, you organize electronic files in electronic folders on the storage disks accessible to your computer.

You use Windows Explorer to look at the folders and files stored on your computer. With earlier versions of Windows, the Windows Explorer window could display the contents of only one folder at a time. With Windows 7, you can look at the contents of multiple folders in one window, by adding the folders to a library. This new feature allows you to easily access files while still maintaining an organizational system.

No matter how organized you are and how skillful you become at working with libraries, sometimes you might not remember where you stored a particular file. No problem! Windows 7 includes powerful search features that can help you almost instantly locate files and other information on your computer.

In this chapter, you'll first learn how to size, arrange, hide, and otherwise manage windows on your desktop. You'll learn about the standard file storage structure Windows 7 uses, and about the types of files you'll find on your Windows 7 computer. Then you'll explore the Windows 7 file storage structure. You'll also experiment with searching for files by using the different search methods that are available.

**Practice Files** Before you can complete the exercises in this chapter, you need to install the practice files specified in “Using the Practice Files” at the beginning of this book to their default location. The practice files you will use to complete the exercises in this chapter are in the Navigation practice file folder.

## Working with Windows

As the name of the Windows operating system indicates, most of the information you view on your computer is displayed in a window. Files open in program windows (windows that host the program controls), and folders open in Windows Explorer windows (windows that display the folder contents). Regardless of the content they display, all windows share certain common characteristics and can be manipulated in the same ways. You can change the appearance of windows by using controls built into their frames, as well as controls available from the desktop and from the Windows Taskbar. Windows 7 provides many new window-management controls that are very cool as well as useful.

**See Also** For more information about the features of folder windows, see “Understanding Files, Folders, and Libraries” later in this chapter.

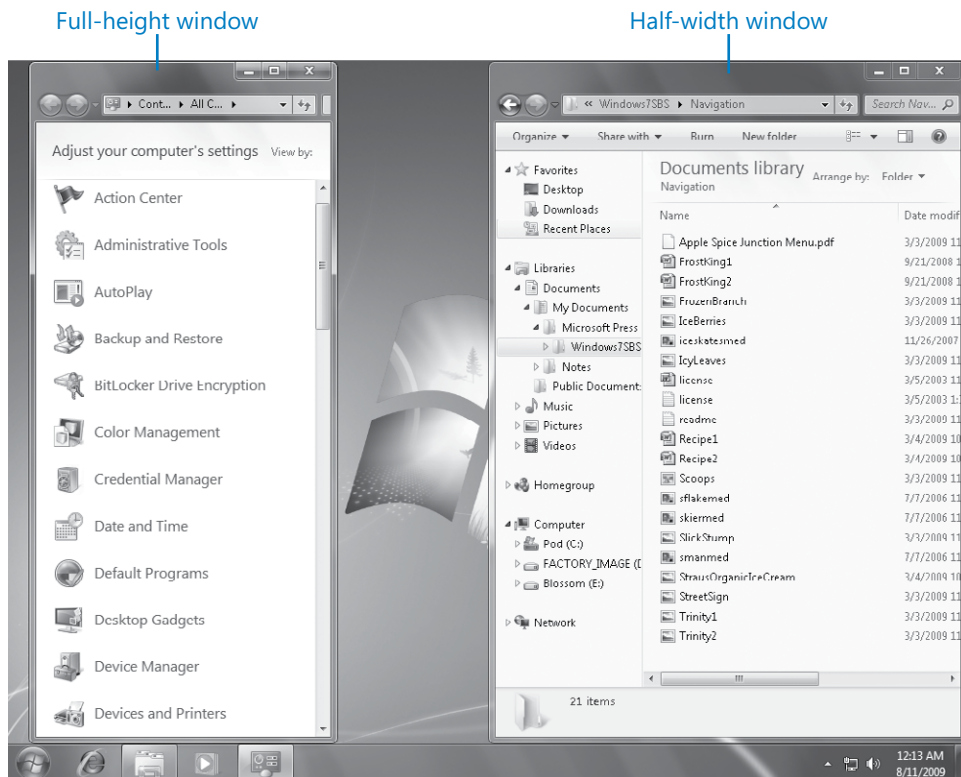
### Sizing, Moving, and Arranging Windows

You can minimize, maximize, restore, or close a window by clicking the buttons at the right end of the title bar. Additionally, you can use the following techniques to change the size or position of an individual window:

- To change the location of a window, but not its size, drag it.  
**Tip** To drag a window, point to its title bar, press and hold the mouse button, and then move the mouse.
- To change only the height of a window, drag the top or bottom border of its frame.
- To maximize the height of a window without changing its width, drag the top border of its frame to the top edge of the screen or the bottom border of its frame to the bottom edge of the screen.
- To change the width of a window, drag the left or right border of its frame.
- To simultaneously change the height and width of a window, drag any corner of its frame.

**Tip** You cannot resize a maximized window by dragging an edge of its frame; you must first restore the window to its non-maximized state.

- To maximize the height and width of a window so that the window fills the screen, drag it until the mouse pointer touches the top edge of the screen, or click the Maximize button.
  - To resize a window to the maximum height and half the screen width, drag it until the mouse pointer touches the left or right edge of the screen. When you release the mouse button, the window expands to fill half the available horizontal space.
- Tip** You can use this technique to compare the contents of two windows; simply drag one to the left and one to the right.
- To restore a maximized or half-width window to its original size, drag its title bar away from the edge of the screen, or click the Restore Down button.



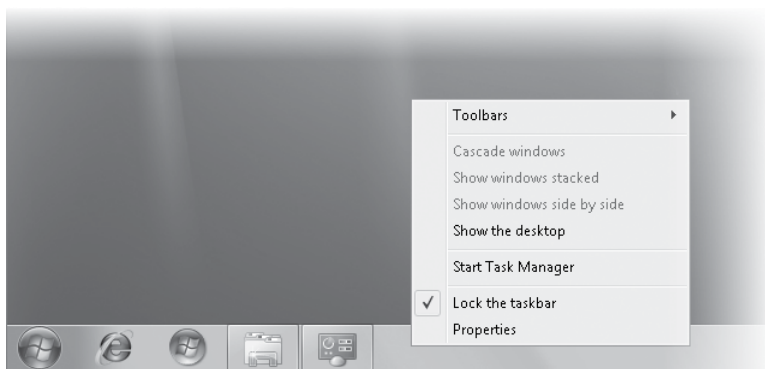
You can automatically resize windows by dragging them to an edge of the screen.

**Tip** When you resize a window by using a dragging technique, the change isn't permanent until you release the mouse button. When you drag a window to the top, left, or right edge of the screen to resize it, an outline representing the resized window appears. If you don't want to resize the window to match the outline, simply drag away from that location before releasing the mouse button.

You can use the keyboard shortcuts shown in the following table to work with the open window.

Press this	To do this
Windows logo key+Up Arrow	Maximize the window
Windows logo key+Down Arrow	Resize the window from maximized to its original size or from its original size to minimized
Windows logo key+Home	Minimize or restore all other windows
Windows logo key+Left Arrow or Windows logo key+Right Arrow	Snap the window to the left or right edge of the screen
Alt+Tab	Switch between open windows

Right-clicking the taskbar (not a taskbar button) displays a shortcut menu of commands you can use to manage all the open windows as a group.



*The taskbar shortcut menu includes four commands for manipulating open windows.*

You can arrange all currently open windows by clicking the following commands:

- **Cascade windows** This command displays the windows on top of each other, with the title bar of each window visible and the contents of only the top window visible.
- **Show windows stacked** This command displays the content of all the windows arranged in a grid, with more windows stacked vertically than horizontally. For example, eight windows are arranged in two columns of four.
- **Show windows side by side** This command displays the content of all the windows arranged in a grid, with more windows stacked horizontally than vertically. For example, eight windows are arranged in four columns of two.
- **Show the desktop** This command minimizes all the windows.

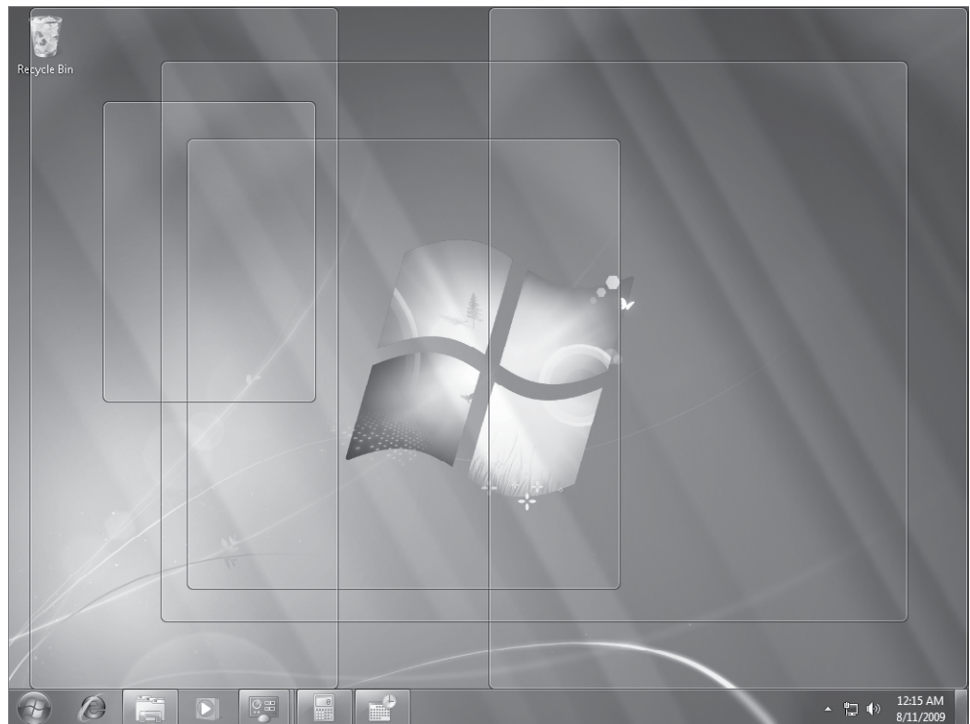
In every arrangement, the open windows are sized similarly, regardless of their size before you arranged them.

**See Also** When windows are arranged, an Undo command appears on the taskbar shortcut menu. For information about other the taskbar shortcut menu commands, see “Modifying the Taskbar” in Chapter 10, “Change System Settings.”

## Hiding and Displaying Windows

In addition to the Show The Desktop command on the taskbar shortcut menu, you can use the following techniques to control the display of multiple open windows:

- Pointing to the Show Desktop button at the right end of the Windows Taskbar makes all the open windows temporarily translucent so that you can see through them to the desktop. The taskbar, desktop shortcuts, and gadgets remain visible. This new feature is called Aero Peek, and is one of the features that works only on hardware that supports Aero functionality.



*The effect of pointing to the Show Desktop button, located at the right end of the taskbar.*

**Keyboard Shortcut** You can peek at the desktop by pressing the Windows logo key+Spacebar.



- Clicking the Show Desktop button minimizes all the open windows. Clicking it again returns the windows to their previous sizes and locations.
- Shaking the active window minimizes all other open windows. To shake a window, point to its title bar, press the mouse button, and wiggle the mouse. To shake a window when you're working on a portable computer that has a touch pad, point to its title bar, and then wiggle your finger on the touch pad.

In this exercise, you'll experiment with the Windows 7 window-management techniques.

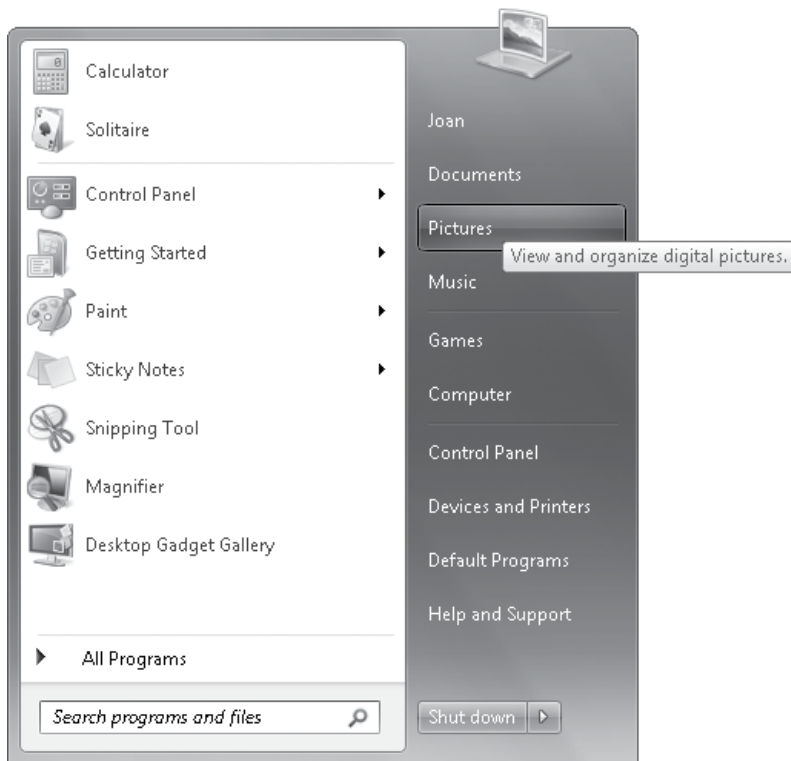


**SET UP** You don't need any practice files to complete this exercise. Log on to Windows 7, and then follow the steps.



1. Click the **Start** button. At the top of the right pane of the **Start** menu, point to **Pictures**.

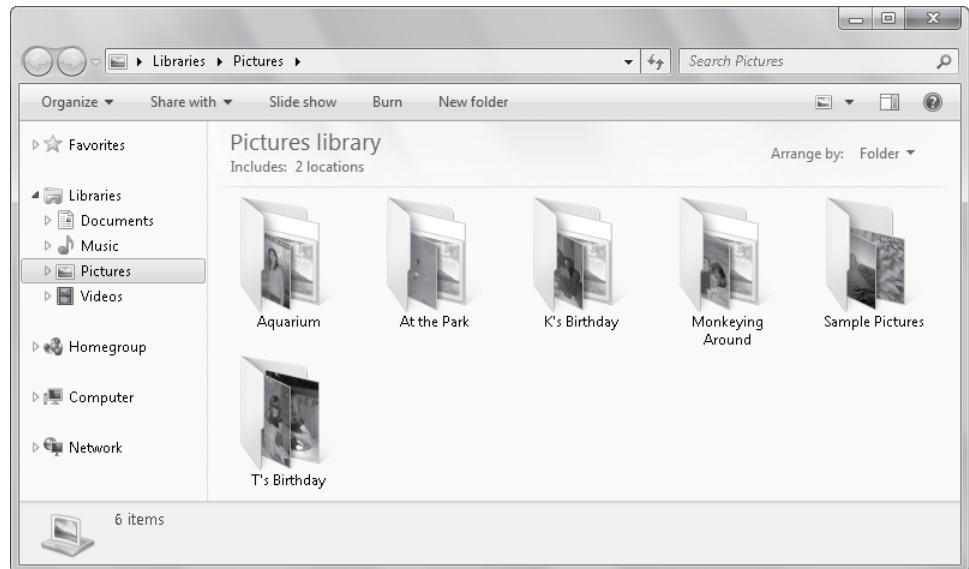
The icon at the top of the Start menu changes from your user account picture to a representation of a stack of pictures, and a ScreenTip displays a description of what will happen when you click the button.



*You can open common windows from the right pane of the Start menu.*

2. On the **Start** menu, click **Pictures**.

The Pictures library opens in Windows Explorer.



*The Pictures library displays the contents of your personal Pictures folder and the Public Pictures folder.*

**See Also** We'll discuss libraries in "Understanding Files, Folders, and Libraries," and work with Windows Explorer in "Finding Your Way Around Your Computer," both later in this chapter.



3. If the **Pictures** window is maximized when it opens, click the **Restore Down** button, near the right end of the window title bar, so that the window fills only part of the screen.

**Tip** The second button from the right end of a window title bar is the **Restore Down** button when the window fills the entire screen, and the **Maximize** button when it does not.

4. Drag the **Pictures** window by its title bar until the mouse pointer touches the top edge of the screen, but do not release the mouse button.

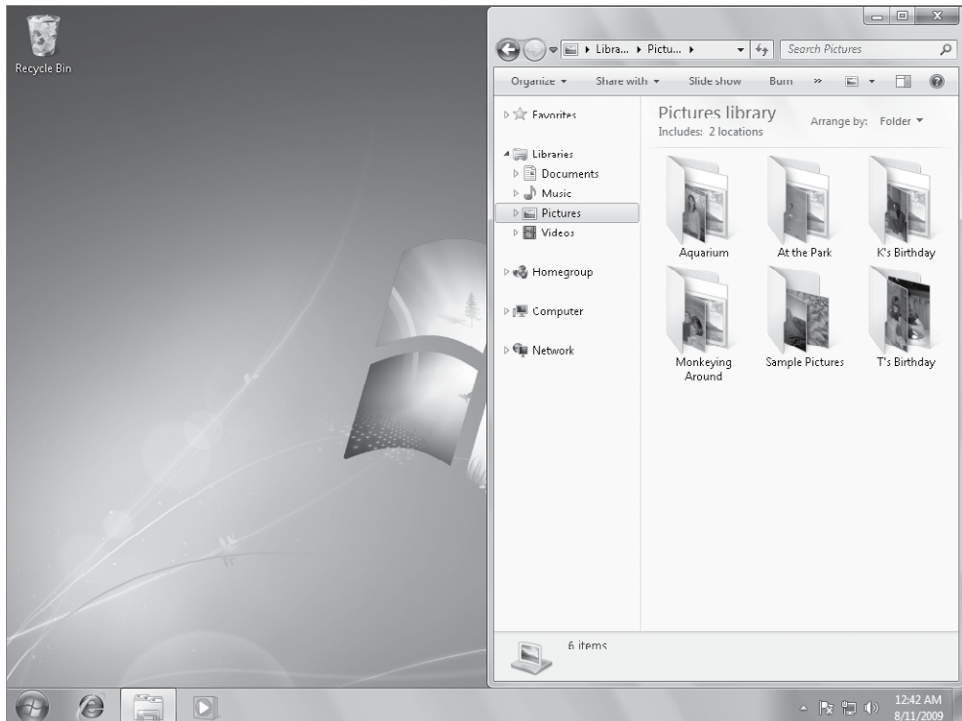
An outline of a maximized window appears, indicating the effect of releasing the mouse button in that location.

5. Release the mouse button.

The window size maximizes to fill all but the taskbar area of the screen.

6. Drag the window away from the top edge of the screen.  
The window returns to its previous size.
7. Drag the window by its title bar until the mouse pointer touches the right side of the screen.

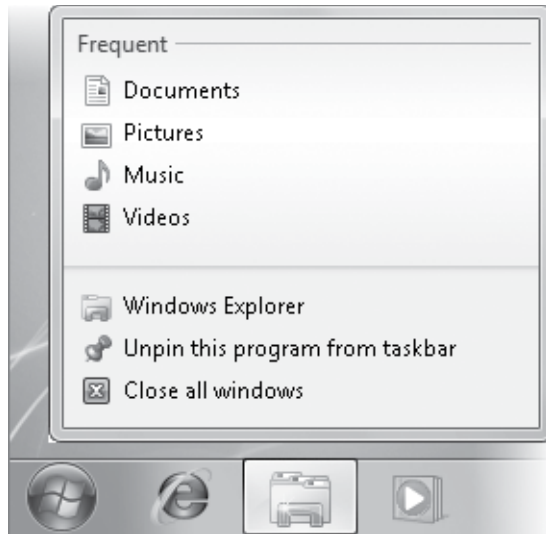
When you release the mouse button, the window fills the right half of the screen.



*The effect of dragging a window to the right side of the screen.*



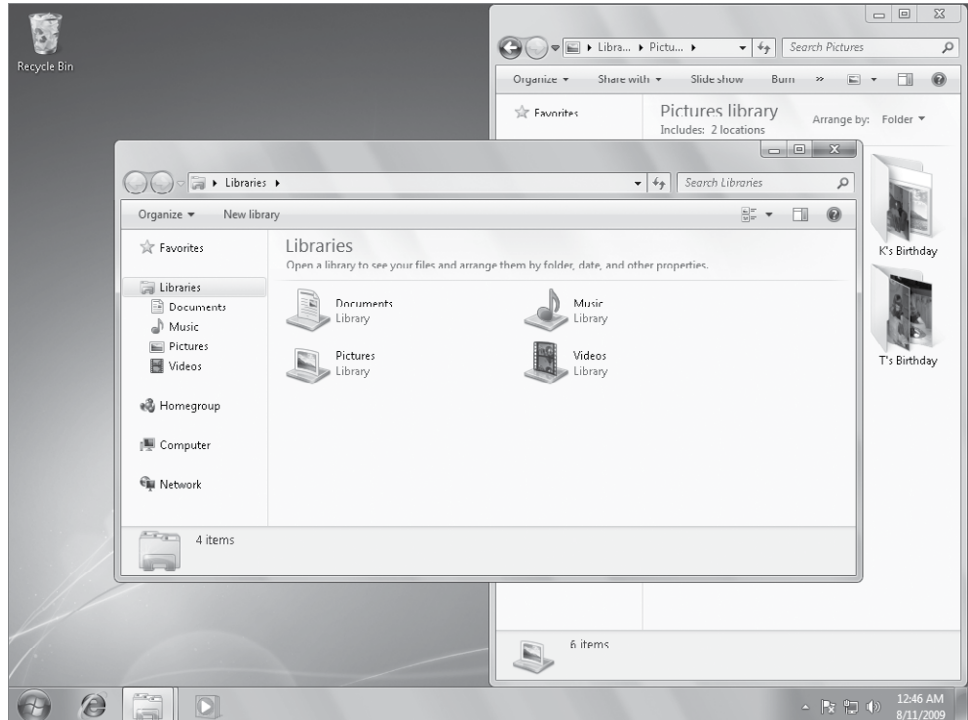
8. On the taskbar, right-click the **Windows Explorer** button.  
The Windows Explorer shortcut menu appears. From the shortcut menu, you can open a new Windows Explorer window, or you can open a folder that you frequently access.



*The Windows Explorer shortcut menu.*

**9.** On the shortcut menu, click **Windows Explorer**.

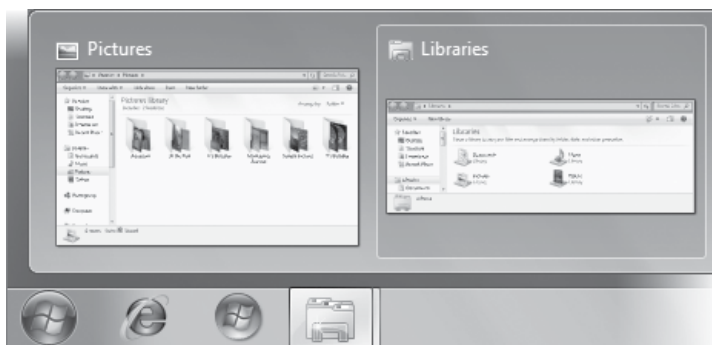
Windows Explorer opens a new window.



*If you don't specify a folder, Windows Explorer displays the Libraries folder when it starts.*



10. At the right end of the taskbar, point to the **Show desktop** button.  
The open windows become transparent.
11. Click the **Show desktop** button.  
The open windows disappear.
12. Click the **Show desktop** button again.  
The windows reappear.
13. Point to the **Libraries** window title bar, hold down the mouse button, and then wiggle the mouse to shake the window.  
The Pictures window is minimized under the Windows Explorer taskbar button.
14. On the taskbar, point to the **Windows Explorer** button.  
Thumbnails of the available Windows Explorer windows appear in a thumbnail pane above the taskbar button.



*In the thumbnail pane, a blue background indicates the active window.*

15. Point to the **Libraries** thumbnail, and then click the **Close** button that appears in its upper-right corner.  
The Libraries window closes.
  16. If the Windows Explorer thumbnail pane has closed, point to the **Windows Explorer** taskbar button again. Then point to the **Pictures** thumbnail.  
The Pictures window appears temporarily when you point to its thumbnail.
- Tip** You can use this technique to quickly check the content of a window without activating it.

17. In the **Windows Explorer** thumbnail pane, click the **Pictures** thumbnail.  
The Pictures window opens on the right half of the screen.

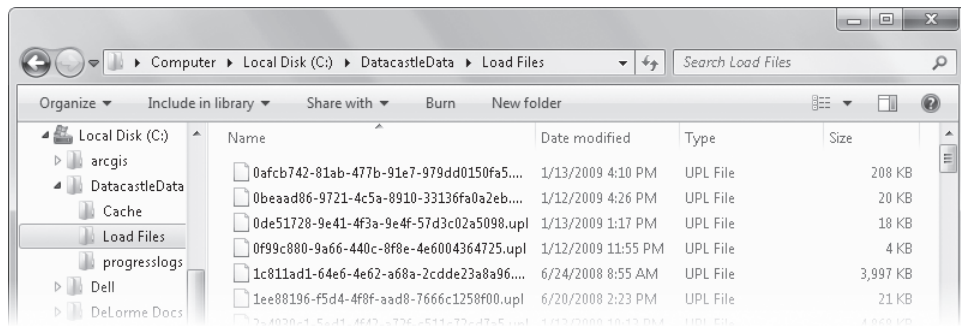


18. At the right end of the **Pictures** window title bar, click the **Close** button.

**CLEAN UP** Close any open windows before continuing to the next exercise.

## Understanding Files, Folders, and Libraries

Files associated with programs and tools, as well as the files you create to contain your information, are stored in a hierarchical structure of folders on hard disk drives and other storage devices (such as CDs, DVDs, or USB flash drives). You can look at a representation of this storage structure by displaying the contents of the available drives in Windows Explorer.



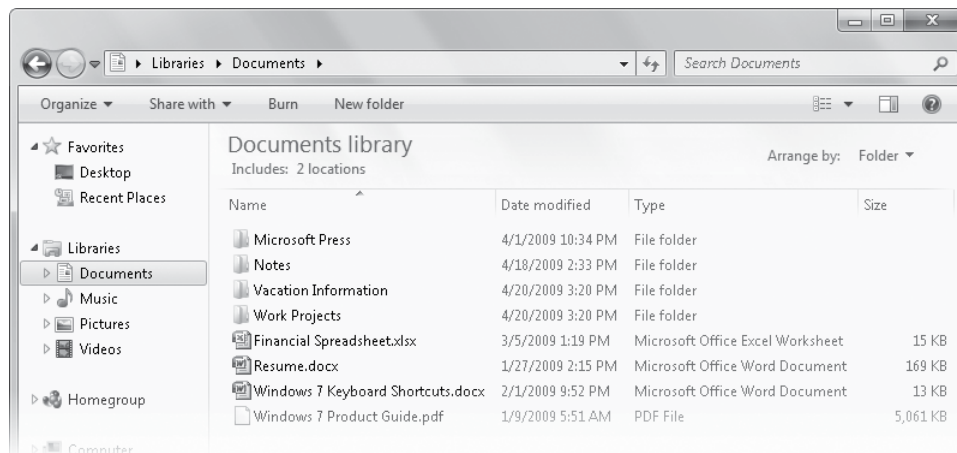
Files are stored on each disk drive in a series of hierarchical folders.

**Tip** This graphic displays the contents of a folder in Details view. You change the way folders and files are depicted in the Content pane by selecting a view from the Views list. For more information, see “Viewing Folders and Files in Different Ways” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.”

Each drive is identified by a letter, and in some cases by a description. Your computer’s primary hard drive (the one where the operating system is installed) is almost always identified by the letter C. (By tradition, the letters A and B are reserved for floppy disk drives, which have been superseded by higher-capacity storage media and seem to be becoming quite rare.) If your computer has additional hard drives, they are assigned the next sequential letters, followed by any removable media drives.

**Tip** You can't assign a specific drive letter to a local drive in Windows Explorer, but you can name each drive. For information, see "Changing the Computer Name" in Chapter 10, "Change System Settings." You can assign a letter to a local drive in the Disk Management console, and you can assign a drive letter to a shared network folder or drive when you connect to it. For information, see "Connecting to Network Resources" later in this chapter.

In Windows Explorer, you can display a collection of related files and folders in a library. Libraries are virtual folders that aren't physically present on the hard disk but that display the contents of multiple folders as though the files were stored together in one location. The top-level view of a library displays the files and folders stored at the top level, called the *root*, of all the folders included in the library.



*The Documents library displays all the folders that are included in your personal Documents folder and the public Documents folder, as well as the files and folders stored in the root of those folders.*

The default Windows 7 installation includes four standard libraries—Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos. Each of these libraries includes your corresponding personal folder and the corresponding public folder. In addition to the standard libraries, you can create your own libraries, and a folder can belong to more than one library. For example, suppose you are working on a Fall Promotion project for a client, Contoso Pharmaceuticals. If you create one library that displays all the folders of your current projects and another library that displays all the folders associated with Contoso, you can include the Fall Promotion folder in both libraries.

**See Also** For more information about how to make any default or custom library available to other users or computers on your network, see "Working with a Homegroup" and "Sharing Files on Your Network," both in Chapter 3, "Manage Your Network."

## File Types

There are many different types of files, but they all fall into these two basic categories:

- **Files used or created by programs** These include executable files and dynamic-link libraries (DLLs). Some of these files may be hidden (not shown in a standard folder window view) to protect them from being inadvertently changed or deleted.

**Tip** When files are hidden you can't select or delete them, or delete the folder structure they're stored in; a folder might appear empty, but if it contains one or more hidden files, you cannot delete it. You can choose to display and work with hidden files, folders, and drives by clicking that option in the Folder Options dialog box, which is discussed in "Viewing Folders and Files in Different Ways" in Chapter 5, "Manage Folders and Files."

- **Files created by you** These include documents, worksheets, graphics, text files, presentations, audio clips, video clips, and other things that you can open, look at, and change by using one or more programs.

The files installed with a program and those it creates for its own use are organized the way the program expects to find them, and you shouldn't move or remove them. However, you have complete control of the organization of the files you create (such as documents and worksheets), and knowing how to manage these files is essential if you want to be able to use your computer efficiently.

## Windows System Folders

When Windows 7 was installed on your computer, it created three system folders:

- **Program Files folder** Most programs (including the programs and tools that come with Windows 7) install the files they need in subfolders of the Program Files folder. You may have the option to choose a different folder, but there's rarely a reason to do so. After you install a program you shouldn't move, copy, rename, or delete its folders and files; if you do, you might not be able to run or uninstall the program.
- **User account folder** The first time you log on to the computer with a new user account, Windows 7 creates a folder for that user account in the Users folder. The user account folder contains 12 subfolders, which we refer to in this book as your personal folders. Eleven of your personal folders are visible in your user account folder: Contacts, Desktop, Documents, Downloads, Favorites, Links, Music, Pictures, Saved Games, Searches, and Videos. One folder is hidden—the AppData folder that contains information about your user account settings for Windows and for programs that you use. As you work on your computer and personalize Windows, it saves information and settings specific to your user profile in these folders.



**Tip** You can display your personal folders by clicking your user account name that appears at the top of the right pane of the Start menu.

In addition to the user account–specific folder for each user account that is active on the computer, the Users folder also contains a Public folder, the contents of which are accessible to anyone logged on to the computer. The Public folder contains nine subfolders. Six of these are visible: Documents, Downloads, Music, Pictures, Recorded TV, and Videos. Three hidden subfolders—Desktop, Favorites, and Library—contain information about settings that are common to all user accounts on the computer. If you want to make files available to anyone who logs on to the computer, you can store them in the public folders rather than your personal folders.

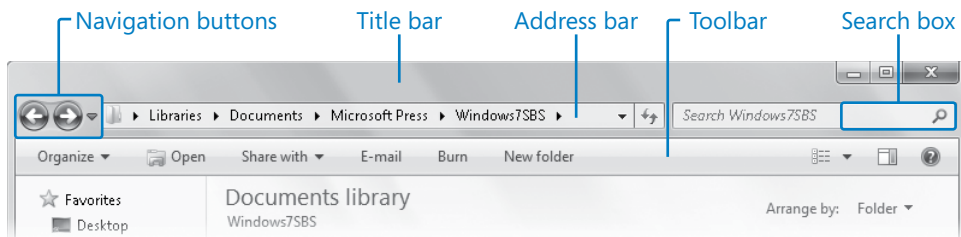
**Tip** To clearly differentiate your personal folders from the public folders, Windows 7 refers to your personal folders as My Documents, My Music, My Pictures, and My Videos, and to the public folders as Public Documents, Public Music, Public Pictures, and Public Videos. The default Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos libraries include the corresponding personal and public folders.

- **Windows folder** Most of the critical operating system files are stored in this folder. You can look, but unless you really know what you are doing, don't touch! Most Windows 7 users will never need to access the files in the Windows folder.

**Troubleshooting** If you upgraded your computer from an earlier version of Windows, the Windows folder from the earlier version might still remain on your computer. However, it will have been renamed to Windows.old during the upgrade process to avoid confusion.

## Folder Window Features

In Windows Explorer, every folder window displays two consistent elements: the title bar and the toolbar; you can't hide either of these elements.



*All folder windows include the title bar and toolbar.*

The title bar always contains the following tools for moving around and for locating information:

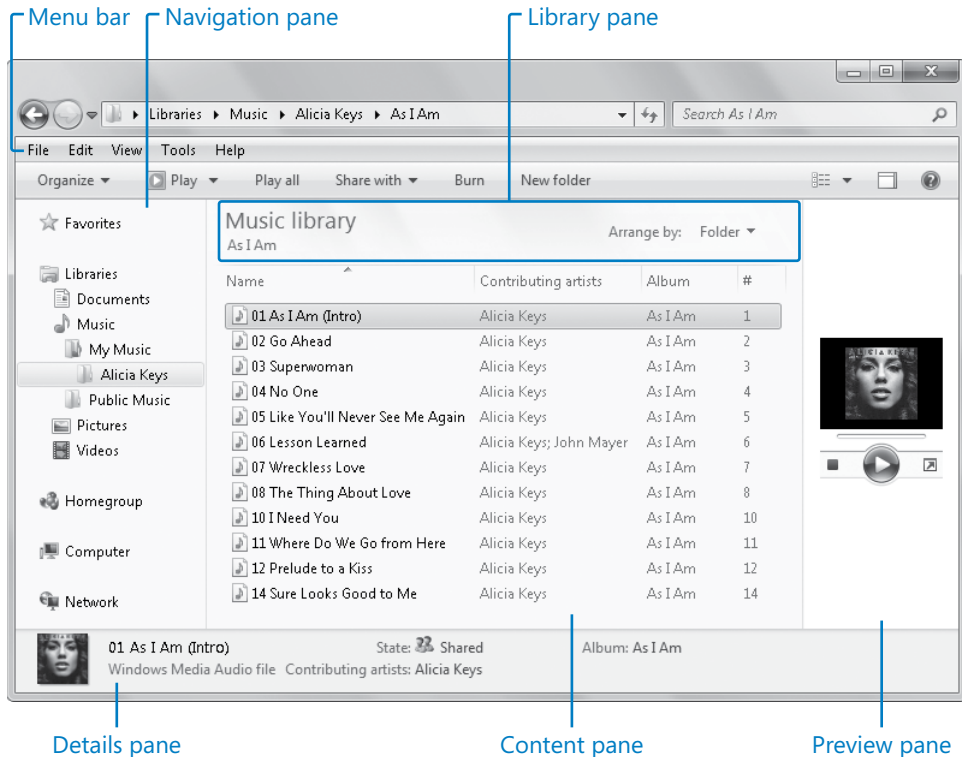
- **Navigation buttons** The Back and Forward buttons move between previously visited window content, rather than up and down in the storage folder hierarchy. The Recent Pages button (the arrow to the right of the Forward button) displays a list of folders you have viewed; you can return to any folder by clicking it in the list.
- **Address bar** Beginning on the left with the icon representing the item type, the Address bar displays the path from one of the primary navigation groups (Computer, Control Panel, Homegroup, Libraries, Network, Recycle Bin, or your user account folder) to the folder whose contents are currently displayed in the folder window.
  - If the entire path doesn't fit in the Address bar, a left-pointing chevron appears next to the folder icon.
  - Clicking the arrow or chevron next to the folder icon displays a menu of common storage locations and any path locations that don't fit in the Address bar.
  - Clicking the folder icon displays the path to the folder from the root of the storage drive (sometimes referred to as the absolute path) or, for system folders, to the primary navigation group.
  - Clicking the arrow that appears after a folder name displays a list of its sub-folders and certain high-level folders; you can switch to another location by clicking it in the list.
- **Search box** From the Search box of any folder window, you can quickly search for letters, words, or phrases occurring in the name or content of any file in that folder.
  - Type a search term in the Search box to immediately filter the folder contents. The Search Results list displays the names of files containing the search term and, for most file types, a content snippet and the absolute path to the file. Within the file name and the visible content snippet, the search term is highlighted.
  - Click the Clear button (the X) at the right end of the Search box to clear the search results and return to the folder window contents.

**See Also** For more information about locating files and folders, see “Finding Specific Information” later in this chapter.

Unlike the title bar, the toolbar can vary based on the contents of the folder displayed in the folder window. The buttons on the toolbar represent context-specific commands for working with the folder and its content. For example, the buttons change for compressed folders (.zip files) or if you select one or more files. When more buttons are available than can be shown, chevrons (>>) appear at the right end of the toolbar; clicking the chevrons displays a list of other commands.

**See Also** For information about compressed folders, see the sidebar “Compressing Folders and Files” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.” For information about selecting files, see “Moving and Copying Folders and Files” in the same chapter.

In addition to the title bar and the toolbar, the layout of a folder window includes other standard and optional components. You can display and hide many folder window components.



Typical folder window components.

In addition to the title bar and toolbar, these components are available for every folder window:

- **Menu bar** If you prefer to manage the display of content by clicking commands on menus rather than using the toolbar buttons and column headers, you can display a traditional menu bar at the top of the window, between the title bar and the toolbar. (The menu bar is not open by default.)
- **Navigation pane** This vertical pane is open by default on the left side of the window. It displays a hierarchical view of the computer's storage structure, as well as the storage structure of any available network, organized in five groups: Favorites, Libraries, Homegroup, Computer, and Network. You can browse to folders on your computer or network by clicking locations in this pane.
  - To display the contents of a folder, click the folder name.
  - To expand a folder in the Navigation pane, point to the pane, and then click the white arrow that appears to the left of the folder.
  - To collapse an expanded folder, click the black arrow that appears to its left.

You can resize or close the Navigation pane to provide additional working space in the folder window.

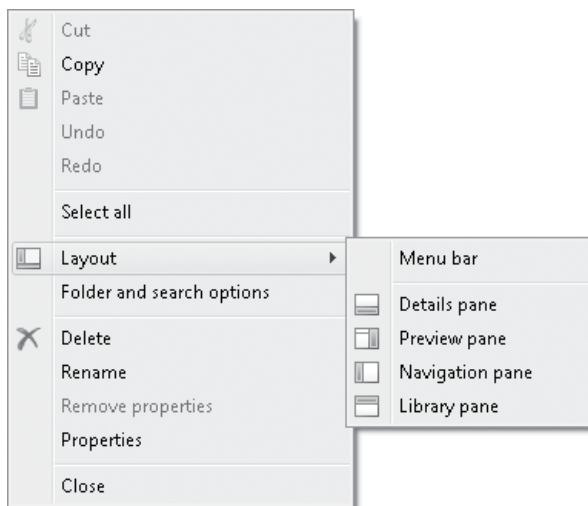
- **Content pane** This primary pane displays the contents of the selected folder as a textual or iconic list. You can't close the Content pane.
- **Details pane** This pane is open by default at the bottom of the window. It displays information about the selected folder or file. You can resize or close it.
- **Preview pane** This vertical pane is closed by default, but when open, it appears on the right side of the window. It displays a preview of the file selected in the Content pane. The Preview pane can display the contents of image files, Microsoft Word documents, Microsoft Excel workbooks, Microsoft PowerPoint presentations, PDF files, and other common file types. When the Preview pane is open, it is resizable.

**Tip** When you display the contents of a library, the folder window also includes a horizontal Library pane above the Content pane. The Library pane details the arrangement of the contents and the number of folders included in the library.

## Displaying and Hiding Panes

Each pane of a window displays a specific type of information. You can display and hide window panes to show or hide information, or to change the amount of space available in the Content pane. For example, if your folders typically contain many files and you are adept at navigating in the Address bar, you might want to turn off the Navigation, Detail, and Preview panes so that the Content pane occupies the entire folder window. To display or hide any window pane, click Organize on the toolbar, point to Layout, and then click the pane you want to change.

**Keyboard Shortcut** You can display or hide the Preview pane by clicking **Alt+P**.



*You control which window panes are visible.*

**Tip** You can change the size of a pane by pointing to its border and dragging in the direction you want to increase or decrease its size. This technique is useful if you want to display more information in one pane without closing the other panes.

## Finding Your Way Around Your Computer

You view all the drives, folders, and files that are part of your computer's storage system, as well as those on any computers you are connected to through a network, in Windows Explorer.

You can start Windows Explorer in several ways; for example, you can:

- Click the Windows Explorer taskbar button to start Windows Explorer and display the Libraries folder.
 

**Keyboard Shortcut** Press the Windows Logo key+E to start Windows Explorer and display the Computer folder.
- Click any of the folder links in the right pane of the Start menu.
  - Click your user account name to display your personal folders.
  - Click Documents, Pictures, or Music to display the corresponding library.
  - Click Computer to display the hard disk drives and storage devices available to your computer.
- Right-click a folder in the left pane of the Start menu, and then click Open or Explore to display the folder contents in the Content pane and the path to the folder expanded in the Navigation pane.
- Double-click a folder on the desktop or in any window to display the folder contents in the Content pane.

**See Also** Windows Explorer also displays the hardware devices (such as monitors, printers, and cameras) connected to your computer—both directly and over a network. For information about working with hardware, see Chapter 12, “Set Up Hardware Devices.”

You can navigate through the folder hierarchy on each drive, displaying the contents of folders within folders until you find the file you want. This navigation process is called *browsing*. However, you don’t have to browse to find the programs, tools, and information you need in your daily work. You don’t even have to know precisely where things are stored, because Windows 7 provides a system of links that you can use to navigate directly to its settings and tools, to programs, and to certain classes of information. You have already seen evidence of this link system with the icons on the desktop and the links on the Start menu, but links are also used in other key components of Windows 7, which we will explore here and in other topics of this book.

**See Also** For more information about browsing drives and networks, see “Sharing Files on Your Network” in Chapter 3, “Manage Your Network.”

To explore your computer’s storage system, you can use the Computer window as a convenient entry point. The devices represented in the Computer window are divided into groups. Internal hard disk drives (those physically installed in your computer) and external hard disk drives (those connected to your computer by a cable) are shown first, followed by internal removable storage drives (floppy disk, CD, and DVD drives) and external removable storage devices (such as USB flash drives), and then storage locations

you access through a network connection. For each drive or device, the total storage space and available storage space are given, both as actual measurements and visually as a colored progress bar. The length of the progress bar indicates the portion of the total storage space that is in use. The default bar color is aqua; when less than 10 percent of the storage space on a disk or device remains available, the bar color changes to red.

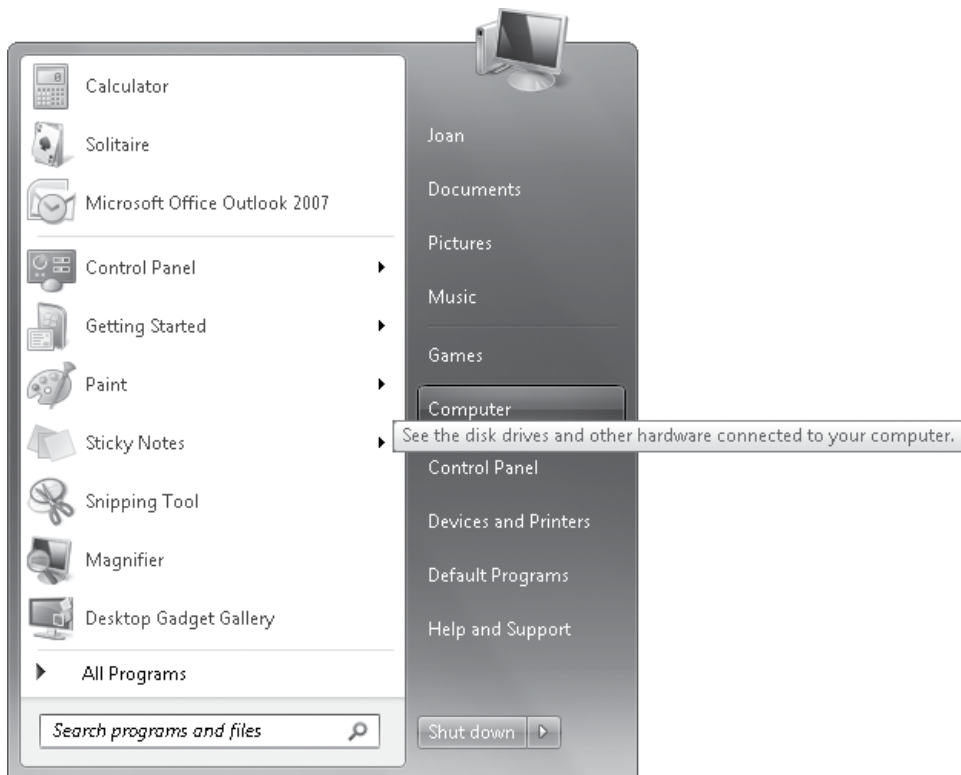
**Tip** The Computer window displays only groups that contain storage devices; if a group isn't active it isn't listed in the window.

In this exercise, you'll explore the storage structure of your computer and learn different ways of getting to the information stored on your computer.

➔ **SET UP** You don't need any practice files to complete this exercise; just follow the steps.

1. In the right pane of the **Start** menu, point to **Computer**.

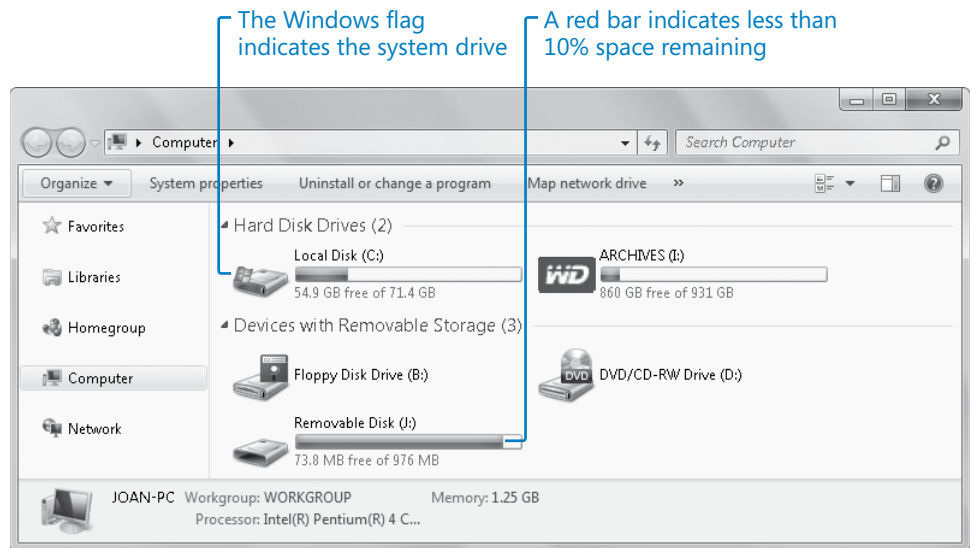
The Start menu icon changes from your user account picture to a representation of a computer system, and a ScreenTip displays a description of what you can do from the Computer window.



*You can open the Computer window to display information about your computer's storage devices.*

2. On the **Start** menu, click **Computer**.

The Computer window opens in Windows Explorer.



In the Content pane of the Computer window, icons identify each drive or device type.

**Troubleshooting** The Content pane of your Computer window will display the number and types of drives your computer can access and will probably not be identical to the pane shown here.

From this window, you can navigate through the storage structure of your computer in four ways: by double-clicking locations in the Content pane, by expanding locations in the Navigation pane, by clicking locations in the Address bar, or by searching for files and folders from the Search box.

3. If any groups in the **Navigation** pane are expanded to display their contents, collapse them by pointing to the pane and then clicking the black arrow that appears to the left of the group's name.
4. If the drives and devices shown in the **Content** pane of your **Computer** window are represented by words or icons in a different way than shown in our graphic, click the **Views** arrow on the toolbar and then, in the **Views** list, click **Tiles**.
5. In the **Navigation** pane, expand the **Computer** group.



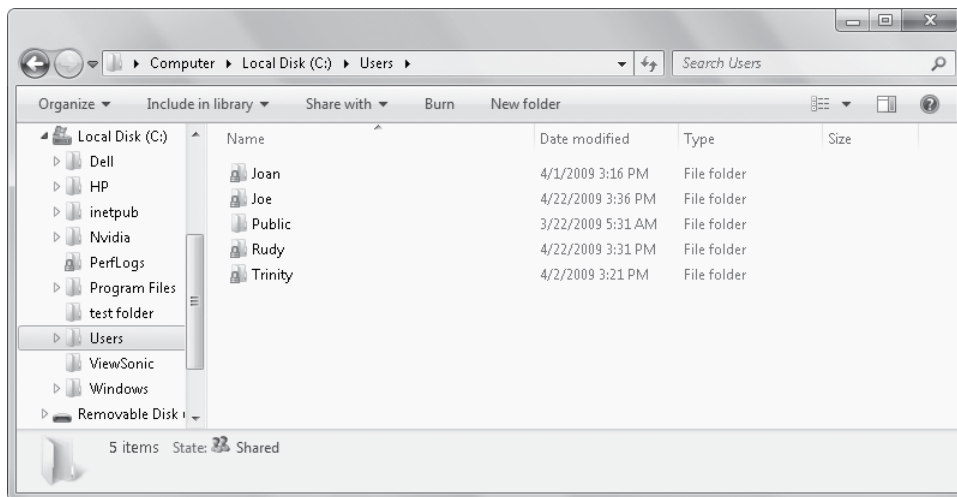
The group includes the storage disks and devices currently available to your computer, as well as any media drives that contain media.

**Important** Clicking any drive, whether internal or external, in the expanded Computer group displays the contents of the top level of the drive's storage structure, called the **root**, in the Content pane. The root of a drive often contains system files and folders that should not be modified or moved in any way.



6. In the **Navigation** pane, expand **Local Disk (C:)**, and then in the list of folders that appears, click **Users**.

The Users folder window opens.



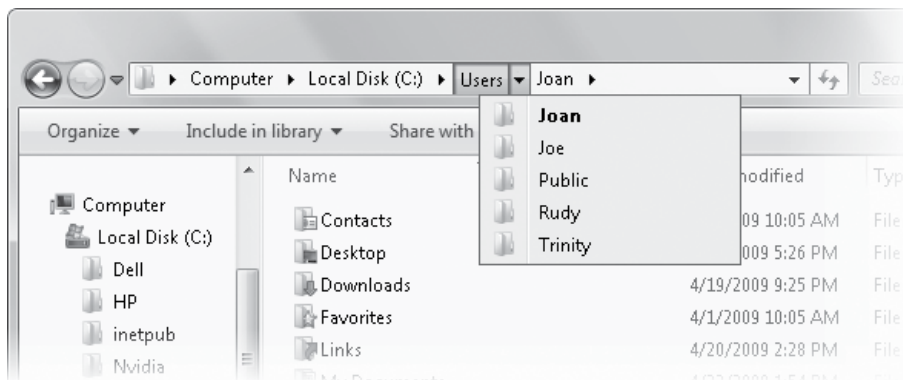
The Users window displays folders for each active user account on the computer.

7. In the **Content** pane, double-click the folder corresponding to your user account name.

The Content pane displays your personal folders, other than the hidden AppData folder.

8. In the **Address** bar, click the arrow to the right of **Users**.

A list of user account folders appears.



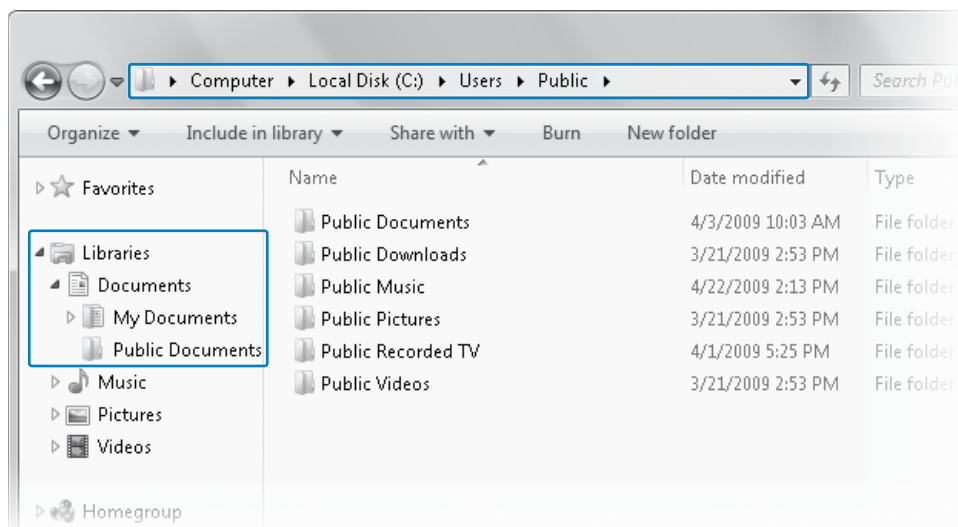
In the list of user account folders, bold text indicates the folder in the path to the current location.

9. In the list of user account folders, click **Public**.

The Content pane displays the folders available to all users of your computer, and to network users with permission to connect to your computer.

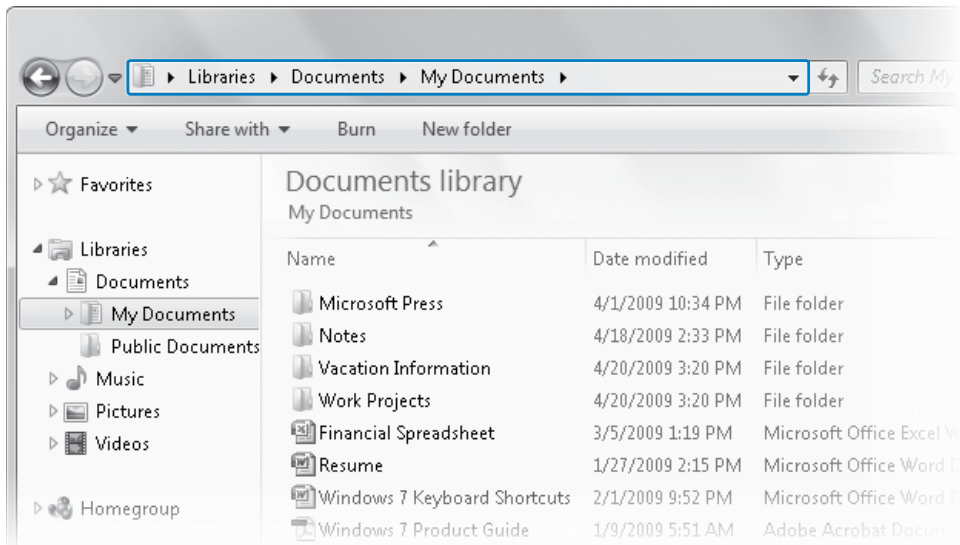
**See Also** For information about connecting to other computers on your network, see “Connecting to Network Resources” later in this chapter.

10. Point to the **Navigation** pane, and click the black arrow to the left of **Computer** to collapse the group. Then click the white arrow to the left of **Libraries** to display the available libraries.
11. In the **Navigation** pane, click the white arrow to the left of **Documents**.  
The Documents library expands.



*You can reach the Public Documents folder from the Libraries group in the Navigation pane, as well as by browsing to it through the computer's folder structure.*

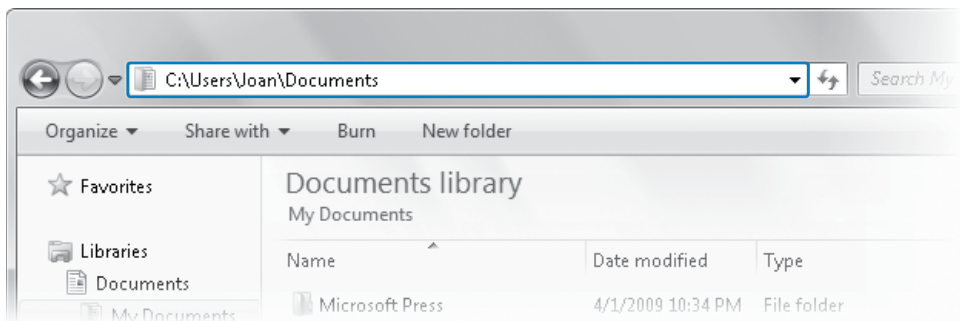
12. In the **Navigation** pane, under the **Documents** library, click **My Documents**.  
The Content pane displays the contents of the My Documents folder.



Because you accessed your personal documents folder from the Libraries group, the Library pane appears above the Content pane, and the Address bar displays a library icon and a path beginning with Libraries.

The highlighting is removed and the Address bar contents are now more visible.

- At the left end of the **Address** bar, click the library icon that precedes the folder path. Then press the **End** key or click an empty area of the **Address** bar.



Clicking the folder icon displays the absolute path of the current location.

Notice that the actual name of your personal documents folder is Documents, not My Documents. The name *My Documents* is used in the library to distinguish your Documents folder from the Public Documents folder.

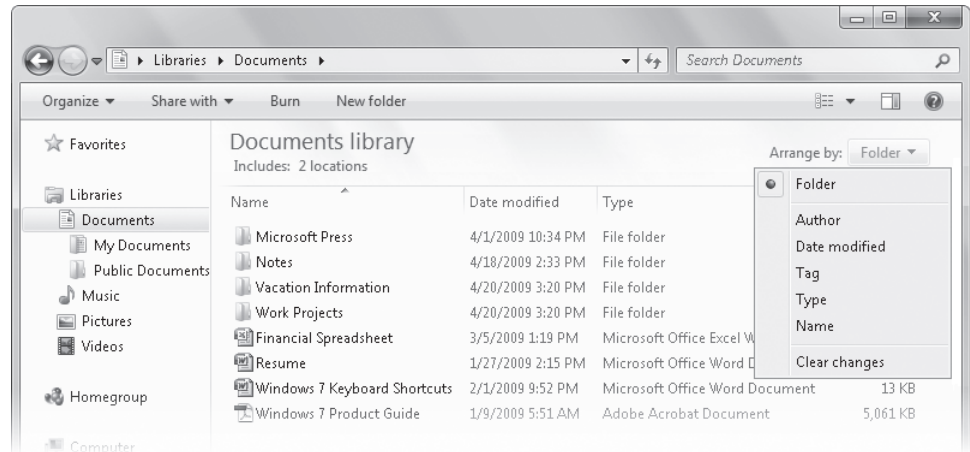
- In the **Navigation** pane, click the **Documents** library.

The contents of all the folders included in the Documents library, both personal and public, appear in the Content pane.

**Tip** If there are no folders or files in your Public Documents folder, the content shown in the Content pane won't change.

15. In the **Library** pane, click the button to the right of **Arrange by**.

The Arrange By menu appears.



You can view library contents arranged in folders; grouped by author, date modified, tag, or type; or listed in alphanumeric order by file name.

16. Try the different arrangements to see how each displays files and folders.

**✘ CLEAN UP** Close the Documents window.

## Connecting to Network Resources

If your computer is connected to a work network or to a home network, you might want to access folders that are located on other computers on the network.

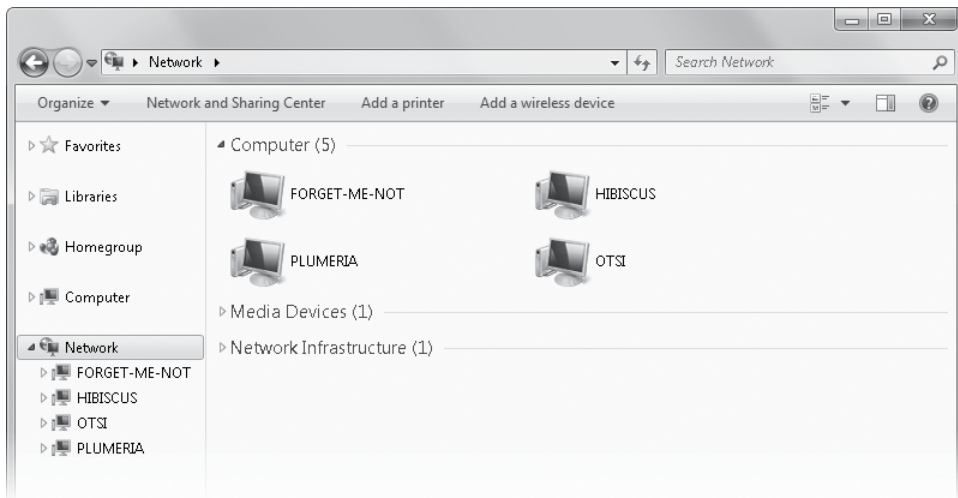
**See Also** For information about sharing folders and drives, see “Sharing Files on Your Network” in Chapter 3, “Manage Your Network.”

### Navigating to a Shared Folder

In Chapter 3, “Manage Your Network,” you learned how to share files, folders, and drives with other people on your network, either by sharing them with homegroup members (computers), if your computer is part of a homegroup, or by sharing them with all or selected network users (people). You also learned about sharing files by placing them in public folders, and how to control whether public folders are visible to other network computers.

If your computer is connected to a network, you can use Windows Explorer to navigate not only to drives and resources on your own computer, but also to drives and resources across your entire network.

You can view files, folders, and drives that other network users have shared with you in the same way that you view information on your own computer. Open the Computer window and then, in the Navigation pane, click the Network group. The Network window shows all the computers that are currently available through the network that your computer is connected to.



*The Network window.*

Navigate to shared resources on the computers by expanding the Network group computers and their folders in the Navigation pane, or by double-clicking computers and folders in the Content pane.

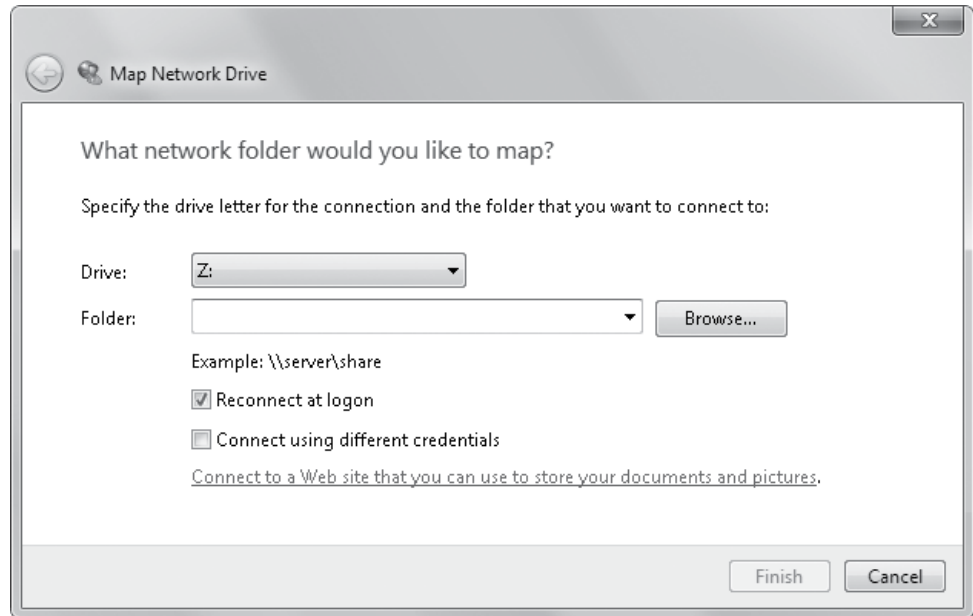
## Mapping a Network Drive

If you want to access a specific network drive or folder on a regular basis—for example, if you frequently connect to a shared external hard drive—you can map the drive in Windows Explorer to make it more easily available. When you map a drive, you assign it a local drive letter so that it appears along with other available storage devices and locations when you view the contents of your computer. You can map a drive for the duration of the current computing session, or instruct Windows to reconnect to that drive every time you log on.

To map a drive:

1. On the Start menu, click Computer.
2. On the Computer window toolbar, click Map A Network Drive.

The Map Network Drive wizard starts.



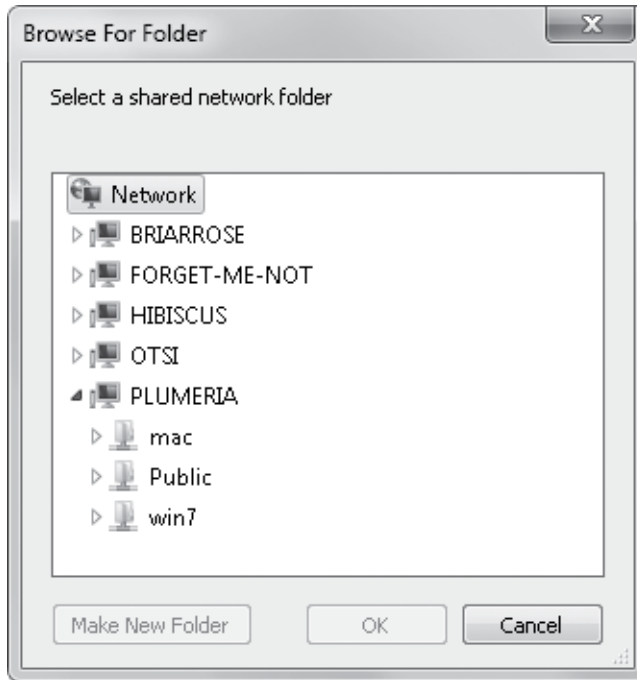
*If you haven't previously mapped a drive, the wizard suggests "Z" as the drive letter for the drive you're mapping.*

3. If you want to change the letter that represents the mapped drive when viewing your computer contents, click the Drive list, and then click the letter you want.
4. If you know the UNC path to the drive or folder you want to map, type it in the Folder box, and then skip to step 8.
5. To browse to the drive or folder you want to map, click the Browse button.

The Browse For Folder dialog box opens, displaying a list of the computers that are available on your network.

6. Click the white arrow to the left of a computer name to display a list of shared folders on that computer.

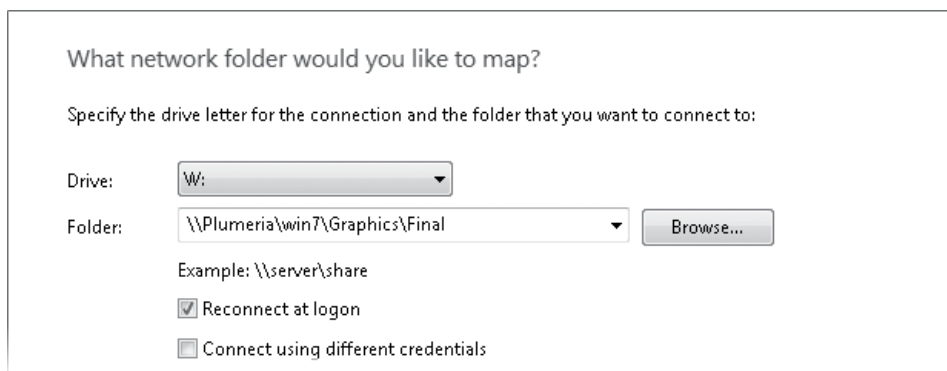
If a computer doesn't have any shared resources, the arrow disappears; otherwise, the arrow color changes to black to indicate that the computer folder is expanded. You can hide the content list for any folder by clicking its black arrow.



*If public folder sharing is turned on for a computer, its Public folder appears in the shared folder list.*

7. Click the computer that hosts the folder you want to map a drive to. If necessary, expand the shared folder to display its subfolders. When the folder you want to map to is selected, click OK.

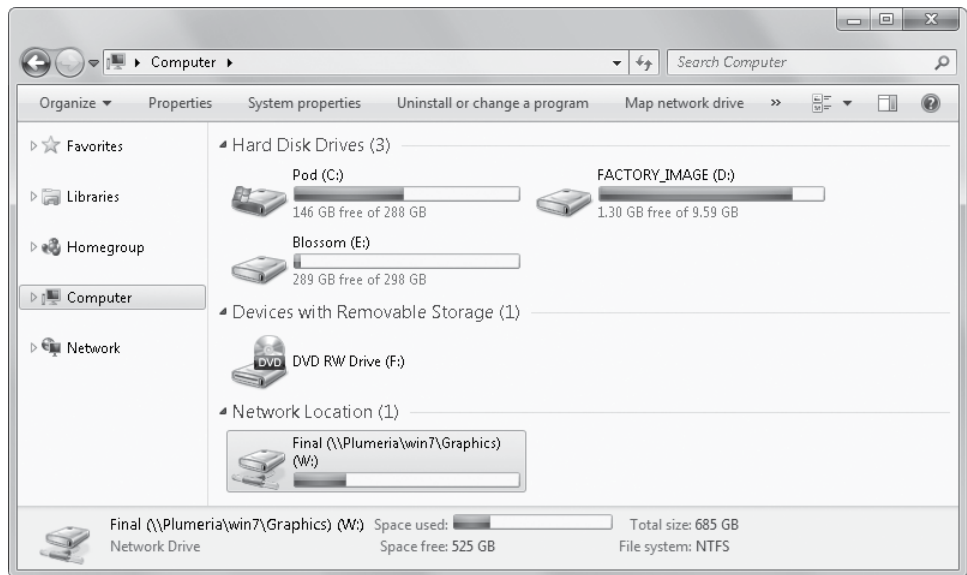
The UNC path to the folder appears in the Folder box.



*You select the drive letter that will represent the shared folder's connection to your computer.*

8. If you want to connect to the mapped drive only until the end of the current Windows session, clear the Reconnect At Logon check box.
9. If the user account you log on to your computer with doesn't match the user account you need to log on to the computer hosting the shared folder, select the Connect Using Different Credentials check box.
10. In the Map Network Drive window, click Finish.  
Windows connects to the shared folder and opens it in a folder window.
11. In the Navigation pane of the folder window, click Computer.

The mapped drive appears in the Network Location area of the Computer folder window.



*The mapped drive also appears when you expand the Computer group in the Navigation pane.*

To remove a mapped drive, right-click the drive in the Computer window, and then click Disconnect.

**Tip** If you connect to a specific network drive from time to time but don't want or need to map a folder to it, you might find it useful to create a desktop shortcut to the folder or to add it to the pinned items area at the top of your Start menu. For more information, see "Creating Shortcuts" in Chapter 5, "Manage Folders and Files."

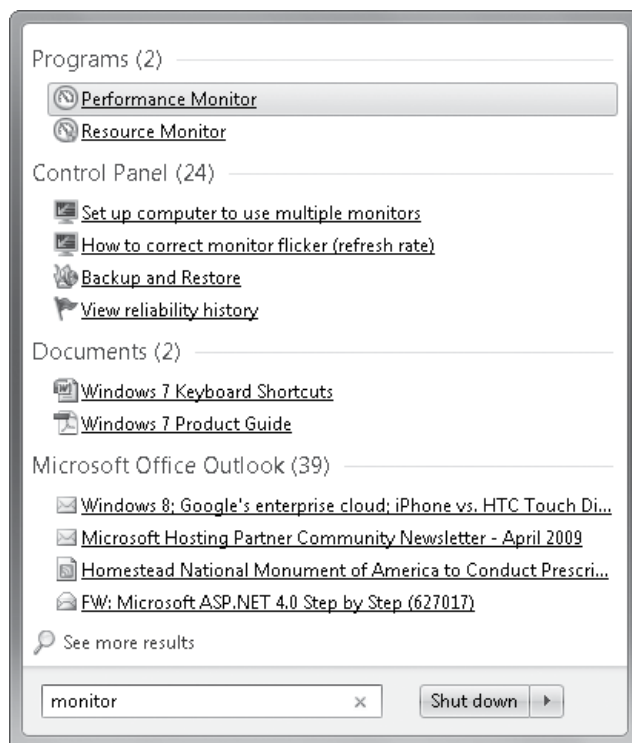


## Finding Specific Information

Recent advancements in online and computer search technology have made the instant location of information and files so simple that it's easy to forget how tedious tracking down the same items would have been in the past. The Windows Search technology that is built in to Windows 7 is quite simply excellent. We touted the search capabilities in Windows Vista as one of its top three features, but the Windows 7 search engine is better.

### Windows Search

Using Windows Search, you can find programs, files, messages, and message attachments on your computer almost instantly. You don't need to know the name or location of the file or item you want to find; simply type a word or phrase in the Start menu Search box to display a list of matching items, organized by type. To restrict your search to the contents of a specific folder (and its subfolders), display the folder in Windows Explorer and enter your search term in the Search box in the upper-right corner of the window.



*Search results are divided into categories. Click any category heading to display a list of all the search results in that category.*

How does Windows Search find items so quickly? Behind the scenes, Windows Search maintains an index of all the key words in, and associated with, the files stored on your computer—program names, common tasks, and the file names and content (when possible) of documents, audio and video recordings, images, e-mail messages, Web pages, and other data files. Windows Search automatically indexes the most common file types (such as Word documents, text files, and e-mail messages) and doesn't index file types you are less likely to search (such as operating system files). For certain types of files (such as PowerPoint presentations), Windows Search indexes the file properties and the file content, but for others (such as PowerPoint slide templates) it indexes only the file properties. (It does not include the system files; such an index would be huge and would slow down the search process.) When you enter a search term, Windows looks for the term in the index instead of searching the actual files on your hard disk.

**Tip** By default, Windows doesn't index encrypted files because a search by another computer user could reveal the encrypted data. You can add encrypted files to the search index if you first put in place a full-volume data-encryption solution, such as Windows BitLocker Drive Encryption. For information about BitLocker, see *Windows 7 Step by Step Deluxe Edition*, by Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox (Microsoft Press, 2010).

If a simple search from the Start menu Search box or the Search box in a Windows Explorer window doesn't locate the item you are looking for, you can perform more advanced searches in the Search Results folder. Your search criteria can include the date a file was created, its size, part of its name or title, its author, and any tags you might have listed as properties of the file.

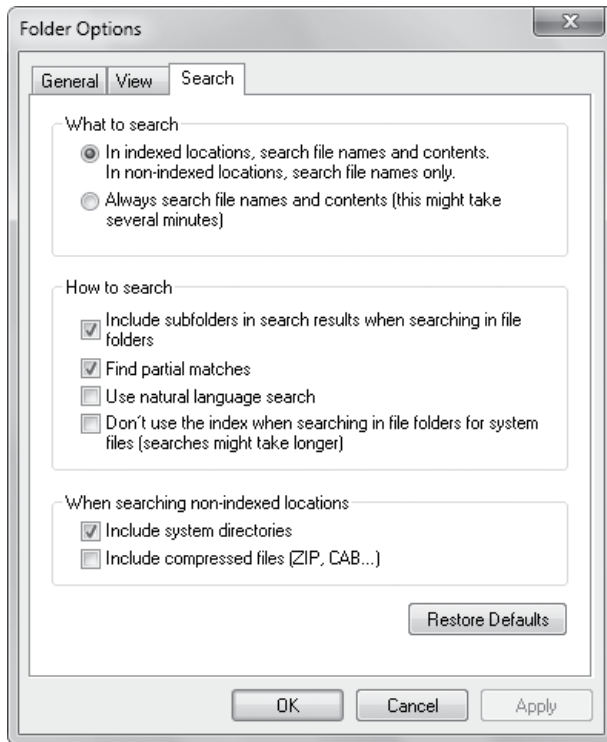
**See Also** For information about file properties, see "Working with Folder and File Properties" in Chapter 5, "Manage Folders and Files."

You can save a set of search parameters so that you can display updated results at any time. Saved searches are added to the Favorites group in Windows Explorer and are also available from your personal Searches folder.

## Windows Search Parameters

You can change which file types and locations are included in the Windows Search index at any time. You can change the search settings in the following places:

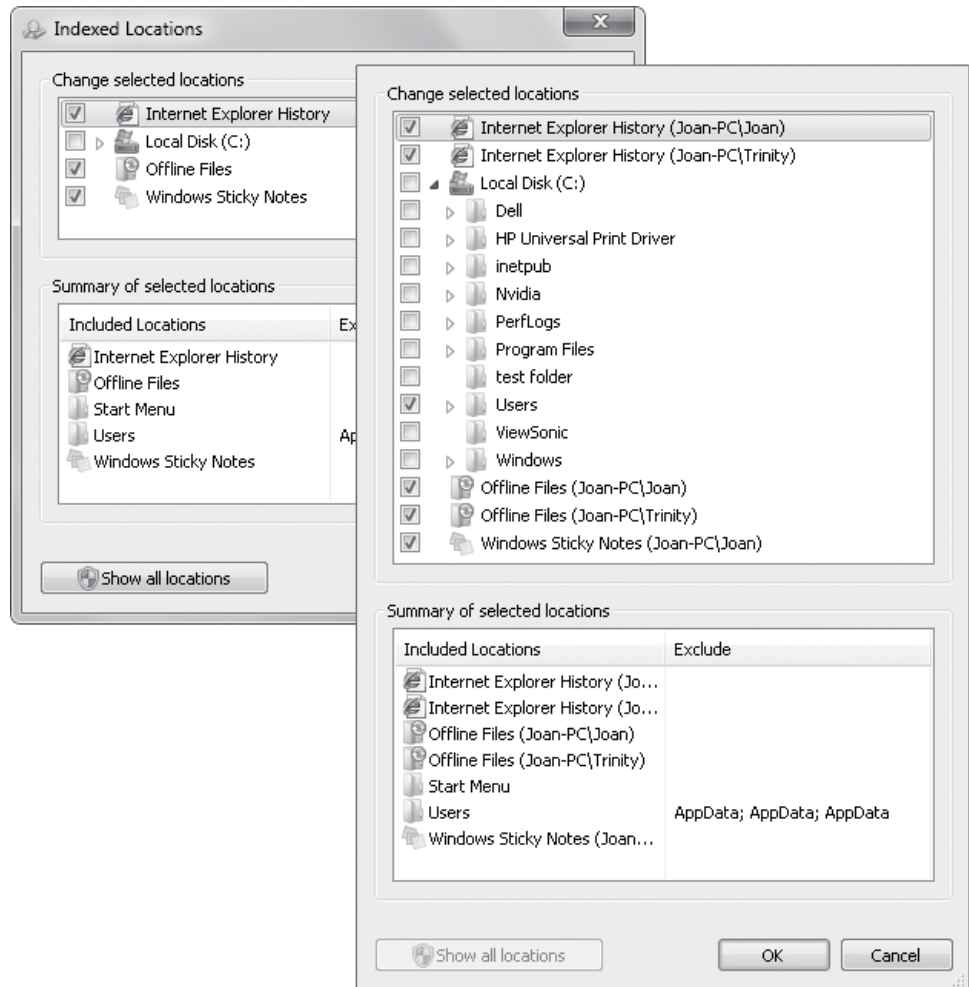
- **On the Search tab of the Folder Options dialog box** You can open the Folder Options dialog box by clicking Organize on the toolbar of any Windows Explorer window and then clicking Folder And Search Options on the Organize menu.



*On the Search tab of the Folder Options dialog box, you can make simple changes to search settings.*

You can specify whether Windows Search returns results from file contents as well as from file names; whether results of folder-specific searches include files located in subfolders; whether a search returns results that don't exactly match the search term (for example, returning results containing rocker as well as rocking); and other options related to the standard Windows Search scope.

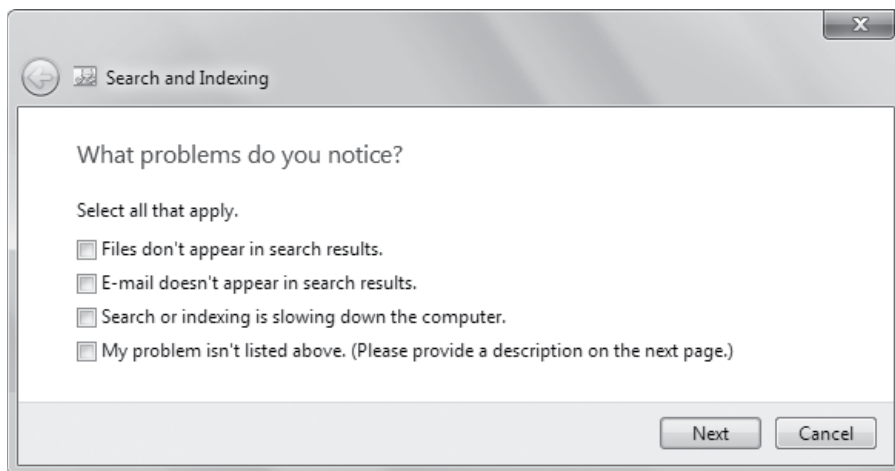
- **From the Indexed Locations dialog box** You can open the Indexed Locations dialog box by displaying Control Panel in Large Icons view or Small Icons view, clicking Indexing Options, and then clicking Modify in the Indexing Options dialog box.



*In the Indexed Locations dialog box, you can view simple or expanded versions of the locations included in the search index.*

In the Change Selected Locations list, you can select or clear the check boxes of specific folders to indicate which ones should be included in the search index.

- **The Search and Indexing troubleshooter** If Windows Search isn't finding specific files that you search for, the file type or location might be out of the current index scope, or in rare cases, there could be a problem with the index file. The Search And Indexing troubleshooter will guide you through a simple troubleshooting process to determine what changes need to be made so that the search results meet your expectations. To start the Search And Indexing troubleshooter, open the Indexing Options dialog box from the Control Panel All Items window and click Advanced. Then, on the Index Settings tab of the Advanced Options dialog box, click the Troubleshoot Search And Indexing link.



*The Search and Indexing troubleshooter.*

**Tip** Windows 7 has about two dozen built-in utilities, referred to as *troubleshooters*, that guide you through the processes of resolving various problems. For information about the available troubleshooters, see *Windows 7 Step by Step Deluxe Edition* by Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox (Microsoft Press, 2010).

You can identify the type of problem you're having or simply have the troubleshooter check your computer against a list of common issues. After running the troubleshooter, click the See Detailed Results link to display a list of everything the troubleshooter checked.

Potential issues that were checked Detection details

**Incorrect permissions on Windows Search directories** *Issue not present*  
When permissions on the Windows Search data directories are set incorrectly, the search service might not be able to access or update the computer's search index. This can result in slow searches or incomplete search results.

**Search Filter Host process failed** *Issue not present*  
Problems with the Search Filter Host might indicate errors in the Windows Search service, which can cause searches to fail or return incomplete search results.

**Windows Search service shut down unexpectedly** *Issue not present*  
When the Windows Search service is forcibly shut down while performing maintenance, searches might fail or return incomplete search results.

**Windows Search service not running** *Issue not present*  
When the Windows Search service is not running, searches will return incomplete search results.

**Windows Search service failed** *Issue not present*  
When the Windows Search service fails, searches will return incomplete search results and you might not be able to search for files.

**Search Protocol Host process failed** *Issue not present*  
Problems with the Search Protocol Host process might indicate errors in the Windows Search service, which can cause searches to fail or return incomplete search results.

**Search and Indexing** Publisher details

**Potential issues that were checked**

Incorrect permissions on Windows Search directories *Issue not present*

Search Filter Host process failed *Issue not present*

Windows Search service shut down unexpectedly *Issue not present*

Windows Search service not running *Issue not present*

Windows Search service failed *Issue not present*

Search Protocol Host process failed *Issue not present*

Potential issues that were checked Detection details

*The Search and Indexing troubleshooter details.*

From the Advanced Options dialog box, you can also do the following things that require administrator permission:

- Include encrypted files in the index.
- Add a type of file to the index.
- Change the indexing level for a type of file.
- Change the location of the index file.
- Restore the default settings.
- Rebuild the index file from scratch.

**Tip** If you have a lot of data on your computer, rebuilding the index file can be a very lengthy process, and is not one you would want to undertake without good reason.

In this exercise, you'll quickly locate items on your computer. You will then use advanced criteria in the Search Results folder to look for other files and will open the Preview pane to help identify the correct file.



**SET UP** You need the practice files located in your Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS\Navigation folder to complete this exercise.



1. Click the **Start** button.

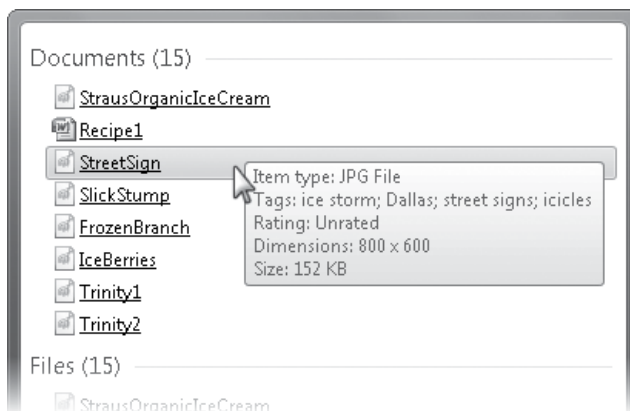
The Start menu opens with the cursor blinking in the Start menu Search box.

2. In the **Start** menu **Search** box, type **ice**.

As you type the search term, Windows filters the program files, folders, and e-mail messages stored on your computer.

3. Point to each file in the search results in turn.

A ScreenTip displays the properties of each file you point to.



*The properties shown in a ScreenTip vary based on the file type.*

If you get in the habit of entering properties for your files, this handy trick can help you quickly identify the file you want.

**See Also** For information about file properties, see “Working with Folder and File Properties” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.”

4. At the bottom of the search results list, click **See more results**.

The Search Results In Indexed Locations window opens, displaying the full list of results. You can change the view and sort the files the same way you would with any folder.

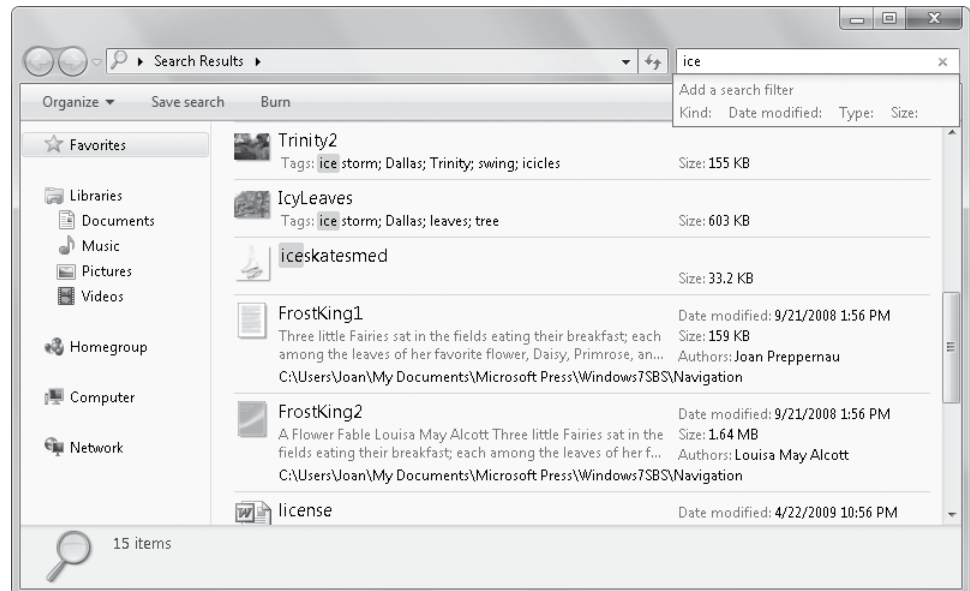
**See Also** For information about sorting and filtering folder contents, see “Viewing Folders and Files in Different Ways” in Chapter 5, “Manage Folders and Files.”

5. Scroll the center pane to view all the search results.

In the center pane, file properties and content matching the search term are highlighted. If no highlighting is visible in the search results shown, the matching content is further into the file than the snippet shown. Your search term appears in the Search box located in the upper-right corner of the window.

6. Click in the **Search** box to the right of the word *ice*.

The Add A Search Filter list appears.



*From the Add A Search Filter list in the Search Results window, you can quickly filter search results by common properties.*



7. At the right end of the **Search** box, click the **Clear Search** button.

The Search Results In Indexed Locations window displays the cumulative results of recent searches.

8. Close the **Search Results in Indexed Locations** window.

9. On the **Start** menu, click **Documents**.

The Documents library opens.

10. Navigate to your **Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS** folder and display its contents in the Content pane.



11. In the upper-right corner of the folder window, click in the Search box displaying **Search Windows7SBS**.

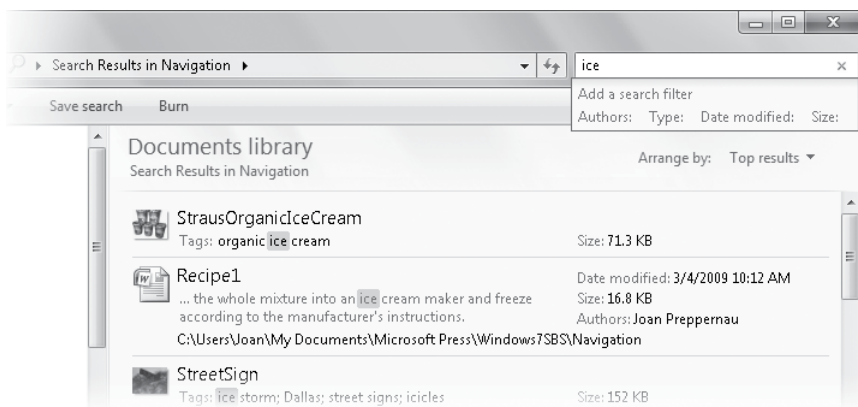
A list of previous search terms appears.

12. In the list of previous search terms, click **ice**.

The Search Results In Windows7SBS window displays the files in the Windows7SBS folder that match the search term.

13. Click in the **Search** box, after the word *ice*.

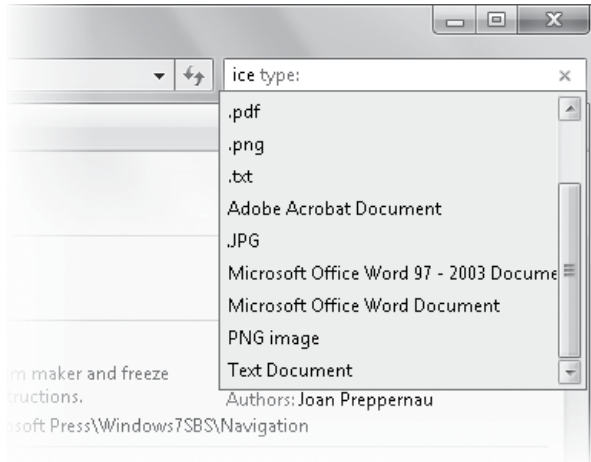
The Add A Search Filter list appears below the search term, with options appropriate for searching in a library.



*You can enter search filters directly in the Add A Search Filter box or select properties from the list.*

14. In the **Add a search filter** list, click **Type**. Then scroll the list to see the results.

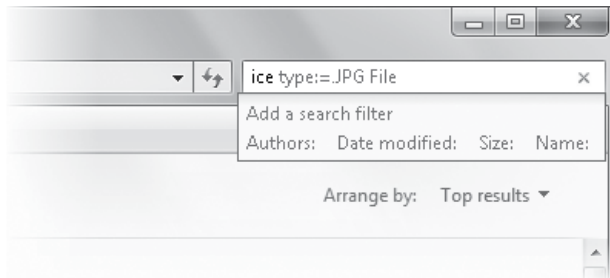
The word *type* appears to the right of the term in the Search box to indicate which filter will be applied to the search results.



When filtering a list by file type, you can choose from the file extensions or the corresponding file type descriptions represented by the search results.

**15.** In the **type** list, click **.JPG**.

The search results change to reflect the filters you've applied.

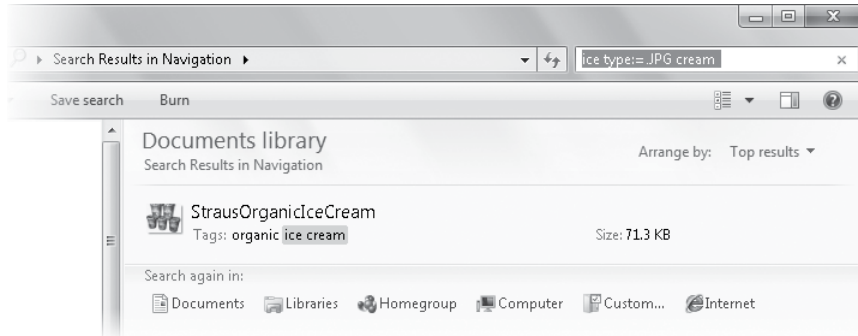


The current filters are shown in the Search box, and the filter list changes to include additional options.

**16.** In the **Search** box, after **.JPG**, type **cream**.

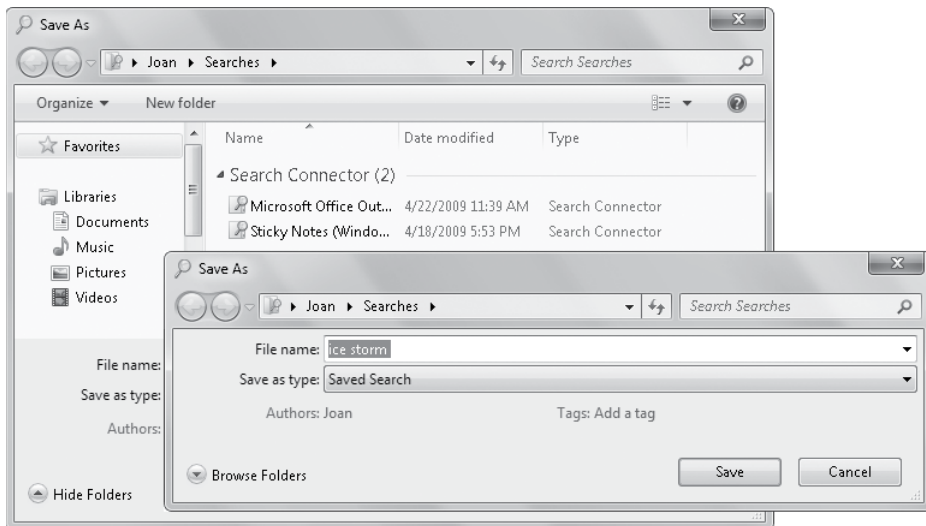
The results list displays one file that matches all the search criteria.

**Tip** You can use wildcard characters to locate files that include your search term in the middle of another word.



You can change the scope of a search by clicking any of the locations in the Search Again In list at the bottom of the search results.

17. In the **Search** box, select and delete **type:=.JPG cream**. Then type **storm**.  
The search results display photographic images taken after an ice storm.
18. On the toolbar, click **Save search**.  
The Save As dialog box opens.



In its Browse Folders state, the Save As dialog box displays the content of your personal Searches folder.

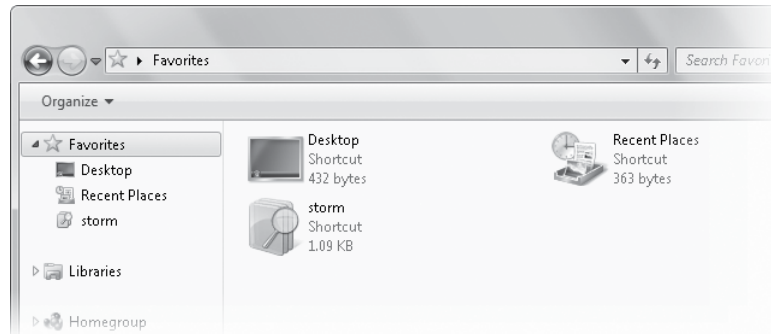
**Tip** You can display or hide the Navigation and Content panes in the Save As dialog box either by clicking Browse Folders or Hide Folders, or by dragging the bottom border of the dialog box to resize it.

19. In the **Save As** dialog box, click **Save** to accept the default name and save the search in the Searches folder.

The folder window now displays the contents of the new Searches\ice storm folder.

20. At the top of the **Navigation** pane, expand the **Favorites** group.

The Navigation pane and Content pane display the contents of the Favorites group.



*The saved search is available in your Favorites group.*

You can display up-to-date search results for the term *storm* at any time by opening the saved search from the Favorites group.

**✘ CLEAN UP** Close the Favorites window.

## Key Points

- All windows share common characteristics. You can work with them in standard ways, such as by sizing, moving, arranging, and hiding them.
- Files are organized on your computer in a hierarchical storage structure.
- Windows Explorer provides several ways to move around your computer's storage system. Becoming familiar with them will increase your ability to quickly navigate to specific files.
- You can quickly locate information on your computer by entering a search term in either the Search box on the Start menu or the Search box in the upper-right corner of a folder window.
- You can refine a search by filtering the search results, for example, to show only files of a specific type.

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