# Windows® 7
# Step by Step

by Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox

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# Windows 7 Step by Step
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# 2   Navigate Windows and Folders

Excerpted from *Windows 7 Step by Step* (ISBN 978-0-7356-2667-6) by Joan Preppernau and Joyce Cox

**In this chapter, you will learn to**

- ✓ Work with windows.
- ✓ Understand files, folders, and libraries.
- ✓ Find your way around your computer.
- ✓ 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 contents of your computer's storage system. 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 use the Windows 7 navigation tools to explore the file storage structure. You'll experiment with different ways of displaying information and learn how to find information. You will also experiment with searching for files by using the different search methods that are available.

> **Practice Makes Perfect!**   The practice files you will use to complete the exercises in this chapter are in the *Navigation* practice file folder. See "Using the Practice Files" at the beginning of this book for information about installing and locating the practice files.

# 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 to 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 to 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 use the keyboard shortcuts shown in the following table to work with the active 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 |

> **Troubleshooting**   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.
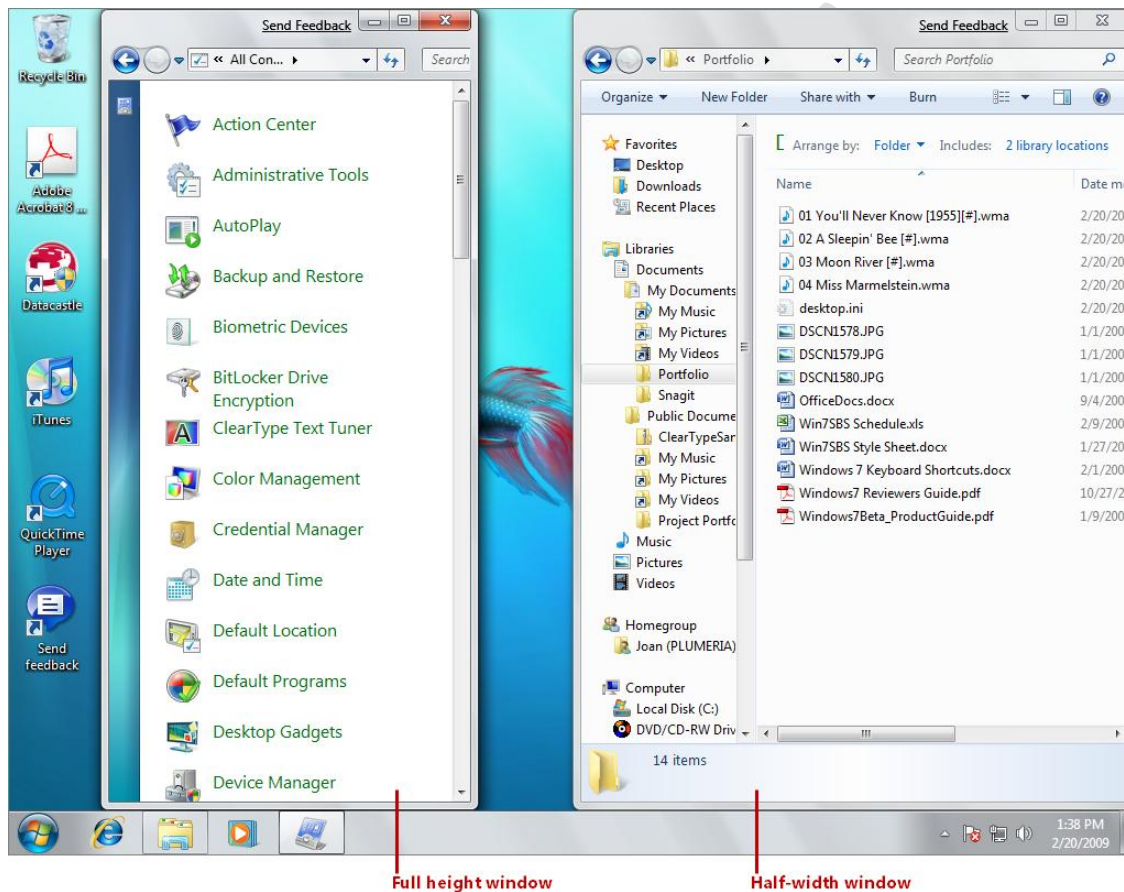


*You can automatically resize windows by dragging them to an edge of the screen.*

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.
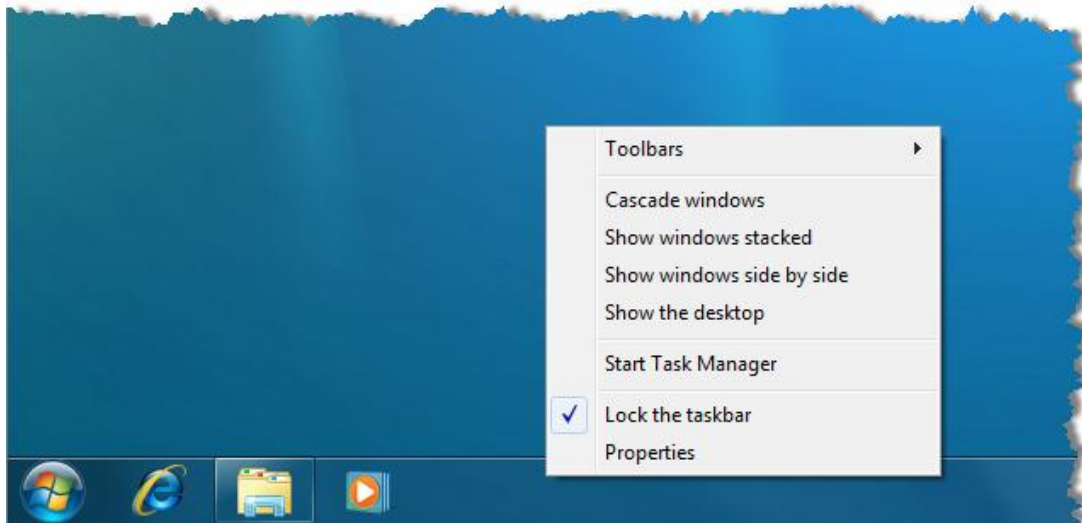


*The taskbar shortcut menu includes four commands for manipulating open windows.*

You can arrange all currently open windows (not minimized 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    For information about other commands on the taskbar shortcut menu, see "Modifying the Taskbar" in Chapter 7, "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.

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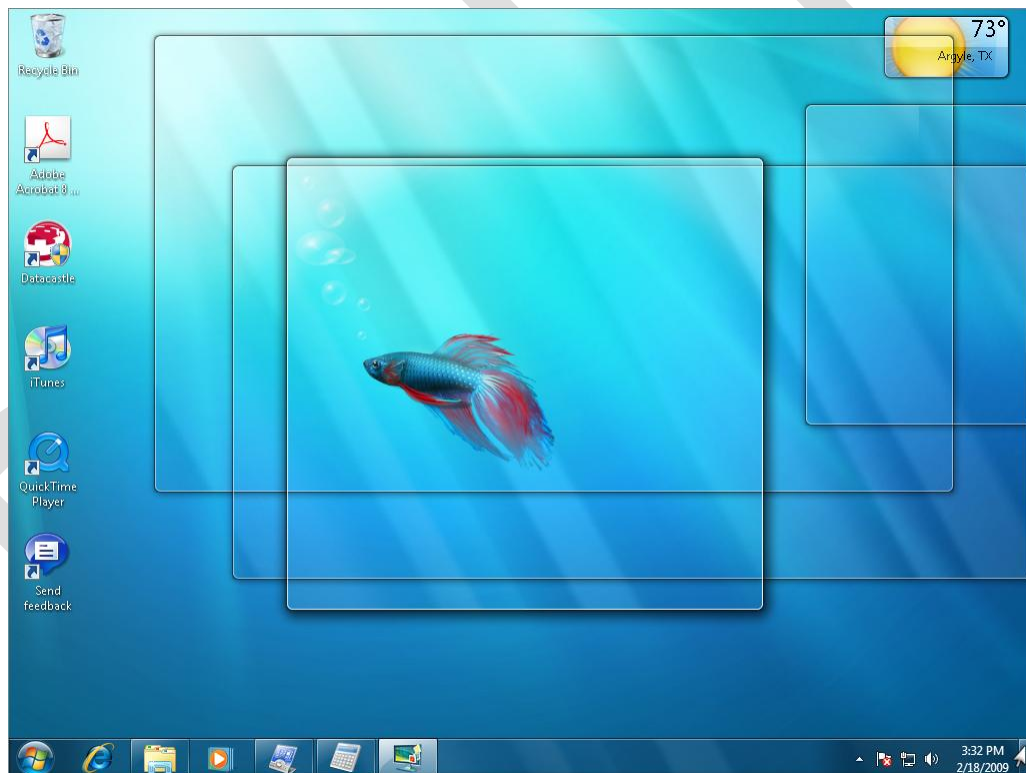


*The effect of pointing to the Show Desktop button, located at the right end of the taskbar.*

●  Clicking the Show Desktop button minimizes all the open windows under their taskbar buttons. Clicking it again redisplays the windows in 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**    Log on to Windows 7 before beginning this exercise. No practice files are necessary for this exercise; just 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.
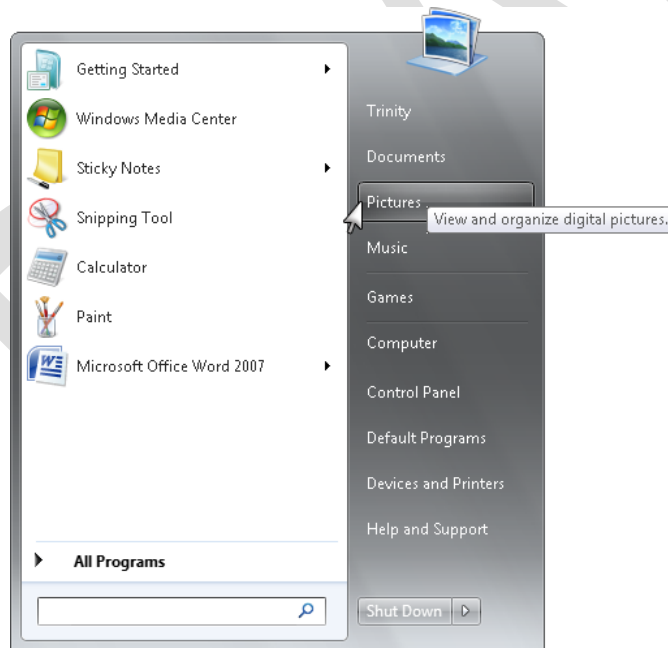


*You can open common windows from the right pane of the Start menu.*

2.   On the **Start** menu, click **Pictures**.
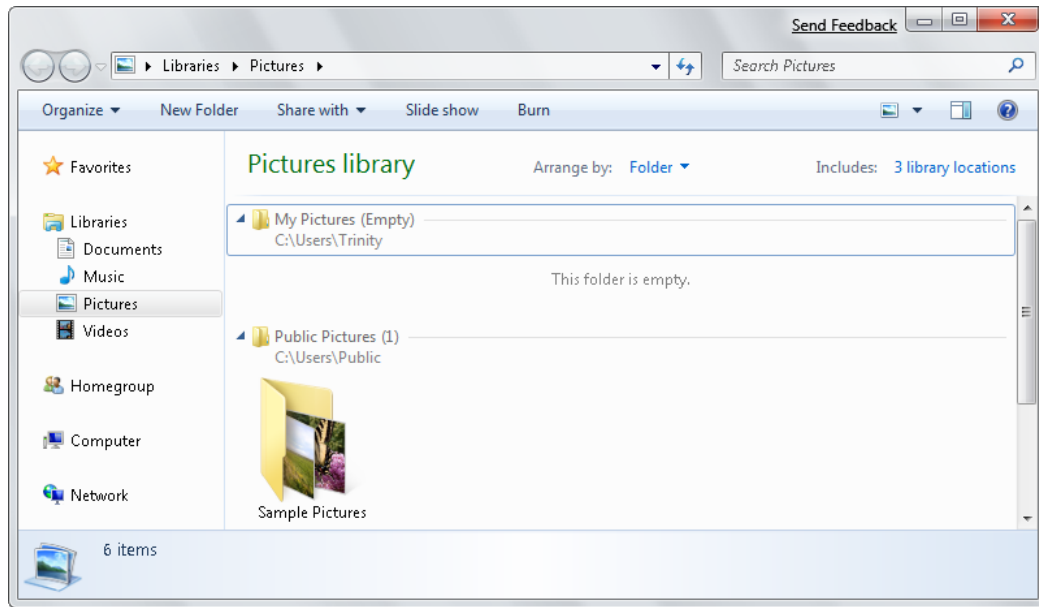
*Clicking Pictures on the Start menu opens Windows Explorer and displays the contents of the Pictures library.*

**See Also    We'll discuss libraries in "Understanding Files, Folders, and Libraries," and work with libraries 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.

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

5.  Drag the window's title bar away from the top edge of the screen.

    The window again fills only part of the screen.

6.   Drag the window's title bar until the mouse pointer touches the right side of the screen.

The window fills the right half of the screen.
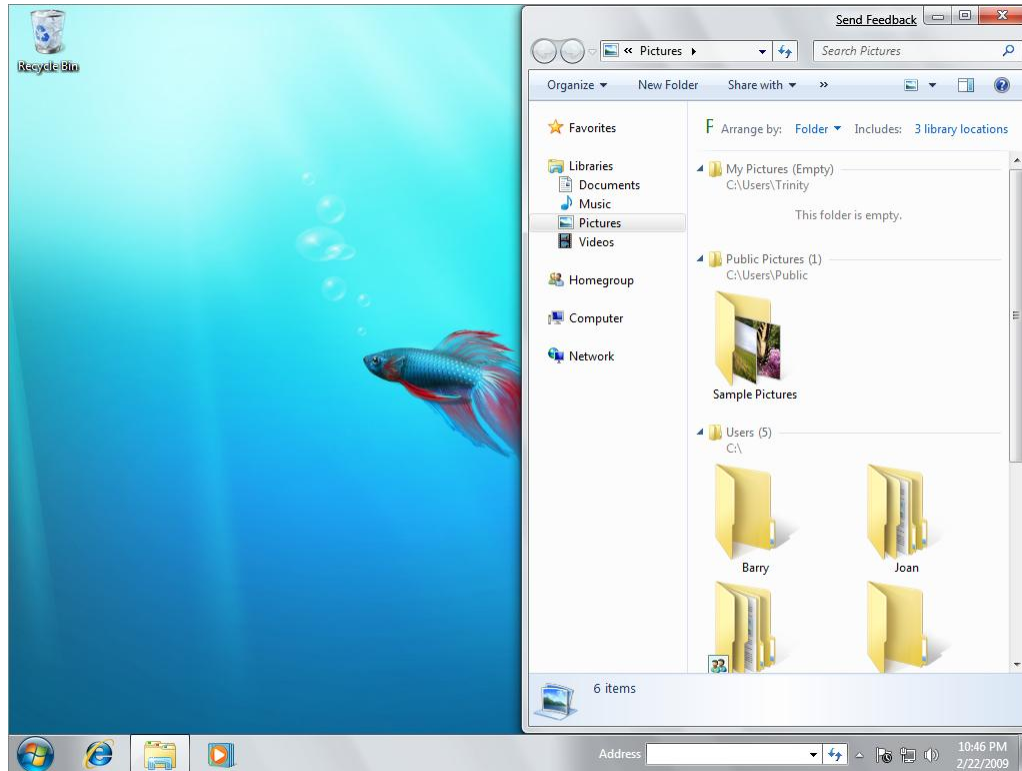


*The effect of dragging a window to the right side of the screen.*

7.   On the taskbar, right-click the **Windows Explorer** button.

> **See Also    We'll discuss and work with Windows Explorer in "Finding Your Way Around Your Computer" later in this chapter.**

*From the Windows Explorer shortcut menu, you can open a new Windows Explorer window or open a folder that you frequently access.*

8.   On the shortcut menu, click **Windows Explorer**.
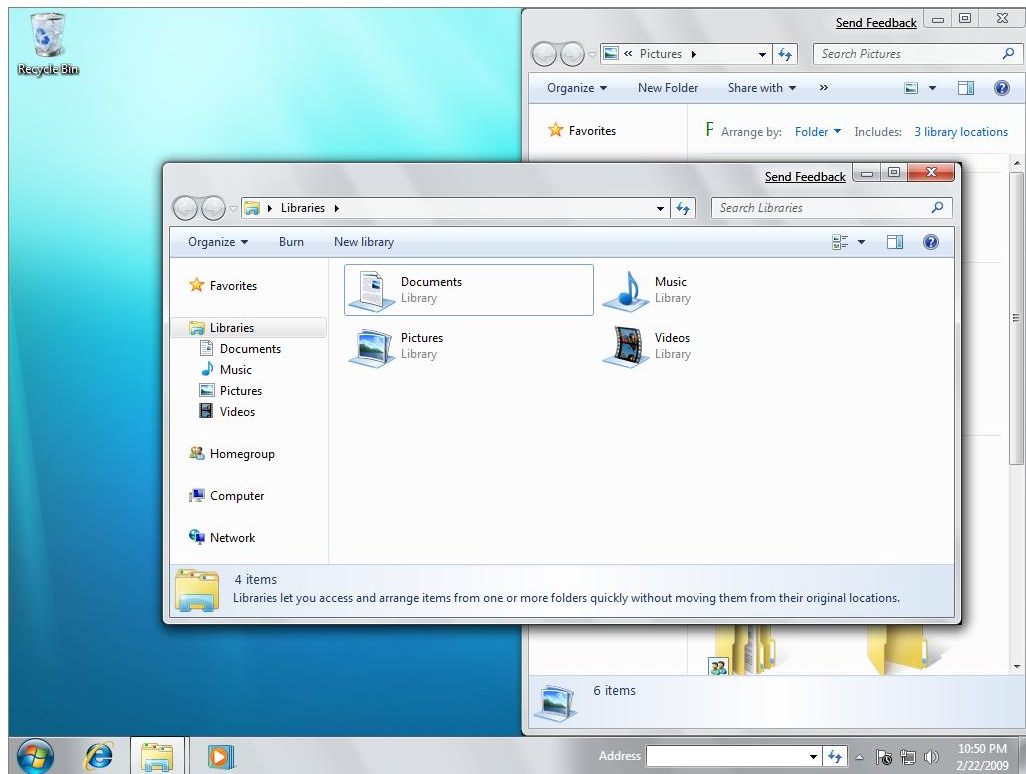
*If you don't specify a folder, Windows Explorer displays the Libraries folder when it starts.*

9.    At the right end of the taskbar, point to the **Show desktop** button.

      The open windows become transparent.

10.   Click the **Show desktop** button.

      The open windows disappear.

11.   Click the **Show desktop** button again.

      The active windows reappear.

12.   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.

13.   On the taskbar, point to the **Windows Explorer** button.
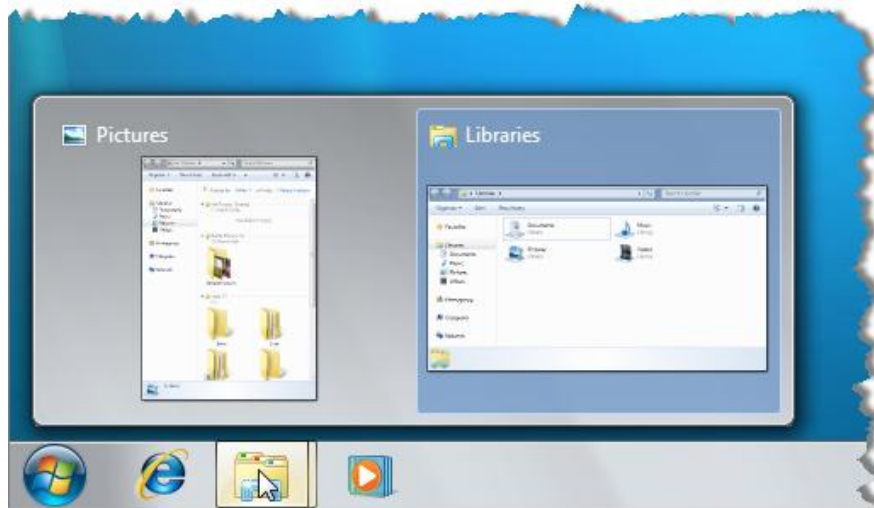


*Thumbnails of the open windows appear in a thumbnail pane above the taskbar button, with a blue background indicating the active window.*

14.   Point to the **Libraries** thumbnail, and then click the **Close** button that appears in its upper-right corner.

The Libraries window closes.

15.   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 temporarily appears when you point to its thumbnail.

> **Tip**   You can use this technique to quickly check the content of a window without activating it.

16.   Point to the **Windows Explorer** taskbar button, and then click the **Pictures** thumbnail.

The Pictures window opens on the right half of the screen.

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

# 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.
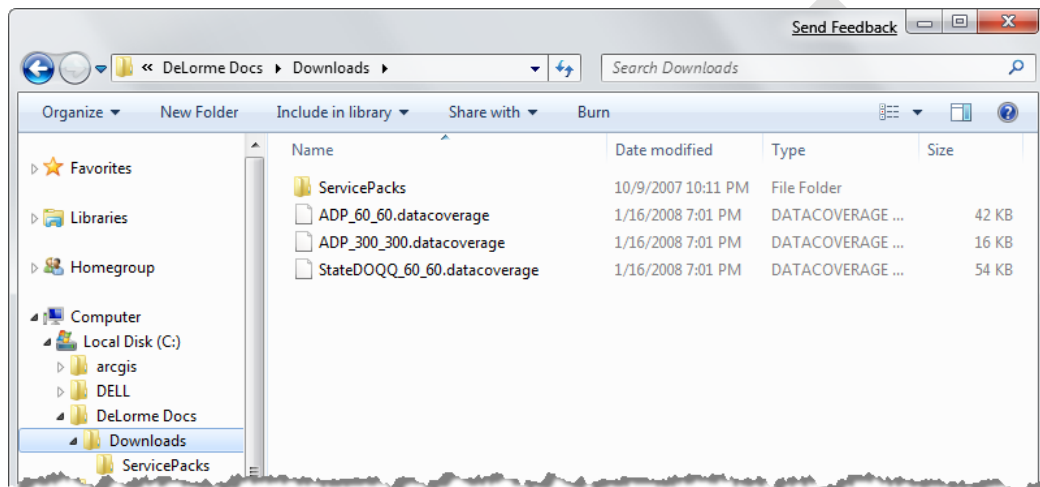


*Files are stored on each disk drive in a series of hierarchical folders.*

> **Tip**    This graphic displays the contents of the *Downloads* 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 4, "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 are rarely installed in computers these days.) 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 drive, but you can name each drive. For more information, see "Changing the Computer Name" in Chapter 7, "Change System Settings."

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 folders included in the library and the files stored at the top level, called the *root*, of any of those folders.
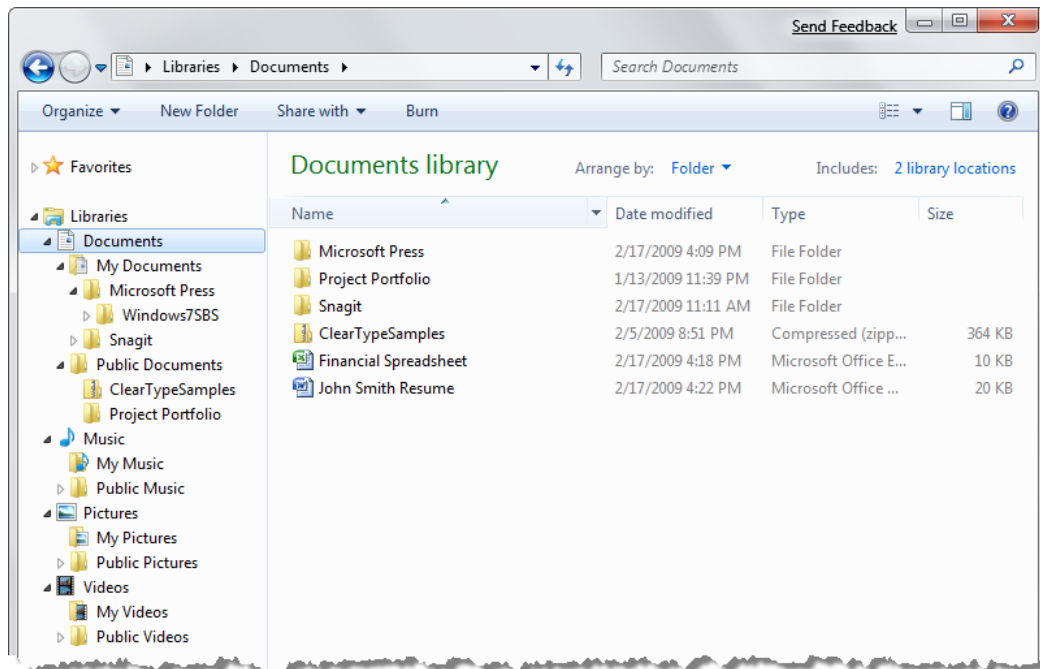


*The Documents library displays all the folders that are included in your personal Documents folder and the*

*public Documents folder, as well as the files 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 "Sharing Resources with a Homegroup" in Chapter 14, "Work with Shared Resources."**

## 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 view in Windows Explorer) to protect them from being inadvertently changed or deleted.

> **Tip**   Hidden files can't be selected, and the folder structure containing them can't be deleted; a folder might appear empty, but if it contains one or more hidden files, you cannot delete it. You can choose to display 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 4, "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. When you install a program, you are often given the opportunity to designate a different folder. After the program is installed, you shouldn't move, copy, rename, or delete the program folders and files; if you do, the program will probably not run, nor will you be able to uninstall it.

●  User account folder  The first time you log on to the computer with a new user account, Windows 7 creates a folder for you within the *Users* folder that contains 12 subfolders: *AppData*, *Contacts*, *Desktop*, *Documents*, *Downloads*, *Favorites*, *Links*, *Music*, *Pictures*, *Saved Games*, *Searches*, and *Videos*. This user account–specific folder and its 12 subfolders contain the information that defines your user profile. As you work on your computer and personalize Windows, it saves information and settings specific to your user profile in these folders.

In addition to the user account–specific folder for each user of 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: *Desktop*, *Favorites*, *Library*, *Public Documents*, *Public Downloads*, *Public Music*, *Public Pictures*, *Public Videos*, and *Recorded TV*. 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*. These folders are included in the default *Documents*, *Music*, *Pictures*, and *Videos* libraries, along with the *Public Documents*, *Public Music*, *Public Pictures*, and *Public Videos* 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.
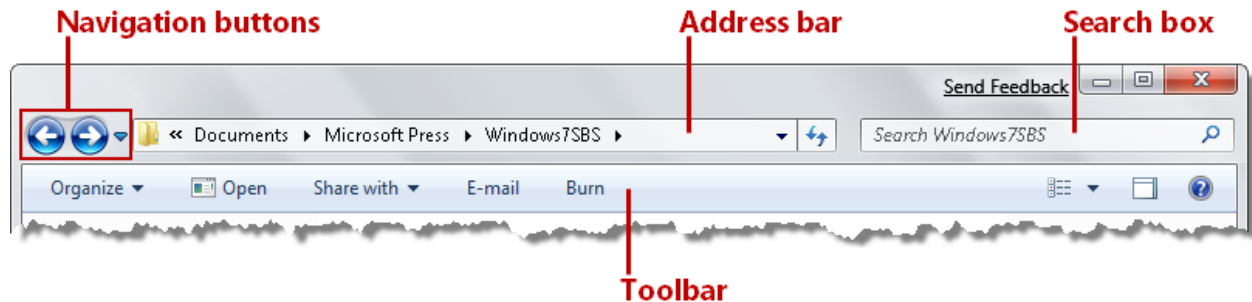


*All folder windows include the title bar and toolbar.*

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 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 friendly path to the folder whose contents are currently displayed in the folder window.

    ● Clicking the arrow that appears after a folder name displays a list of its subfolders and certain high-level folders; you can switch to another location by clicking it in the list.

    ● Clicking the icon displays the absolute path to the folder from the drive.

- **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 Files and Folders" in Chapter 4, "Folder and File Organization." 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 components.
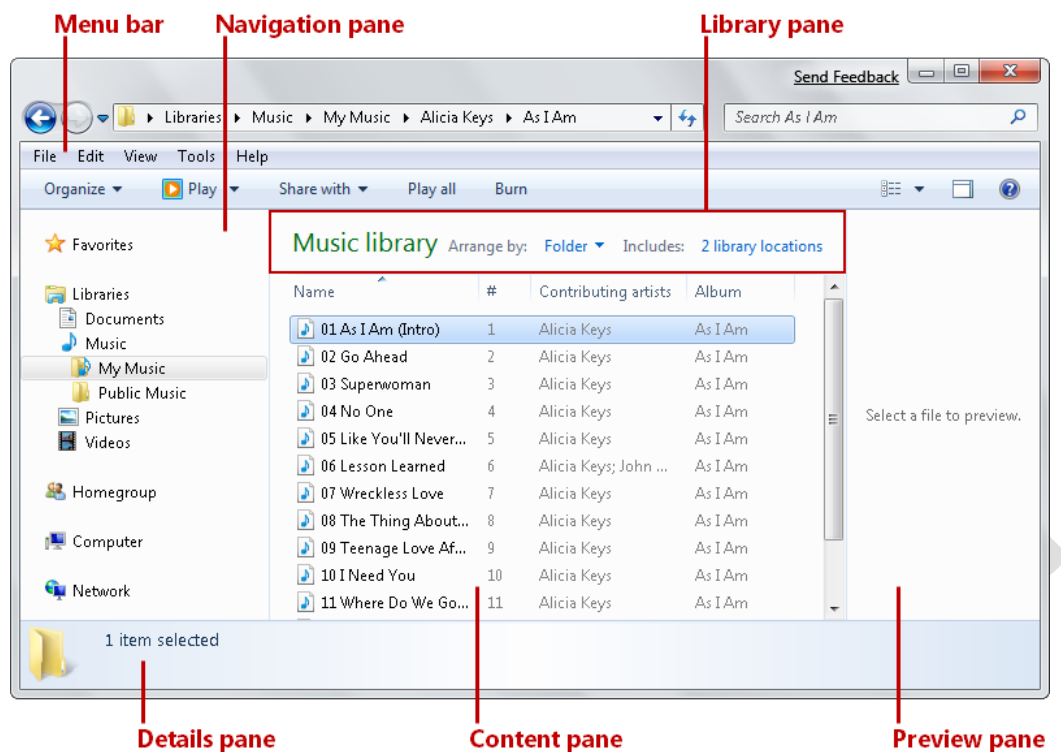


*Typical folder window components.*

For every folder window, these features are available:

- 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 the Menu bar at the top of the window, below the title bar.

- 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 Office Word documents, Microsoft Office Excel workbooks, Microsoft Office 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.
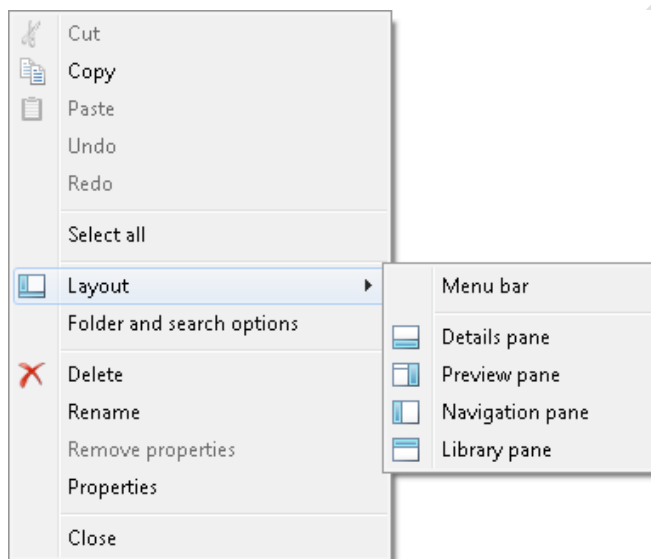


*You control which window panes are visible.*

**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 the Content pane without actually 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 (or press the Windows logo key+E) to start Windows Explorer with the *Libraries* folder displayed.

- Click any of the folder links in the right pane of the Start menu.

    - Click your user account name to display the *Libraries* folder.

    - 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 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.

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 "buckets" 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 "Connect to Local Network Resources" in Chapter 14, "Work with Shared Resources."**

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 logical 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). 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.

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.

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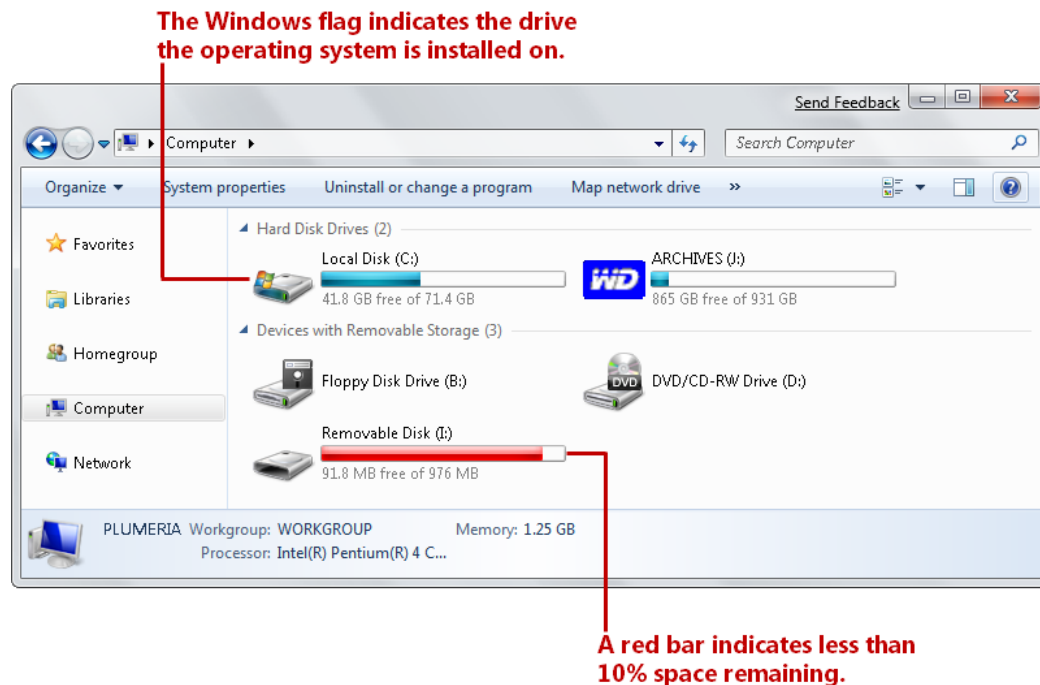**SET UP**   No practice files are necessary for this exercise; just follow the steps.

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.
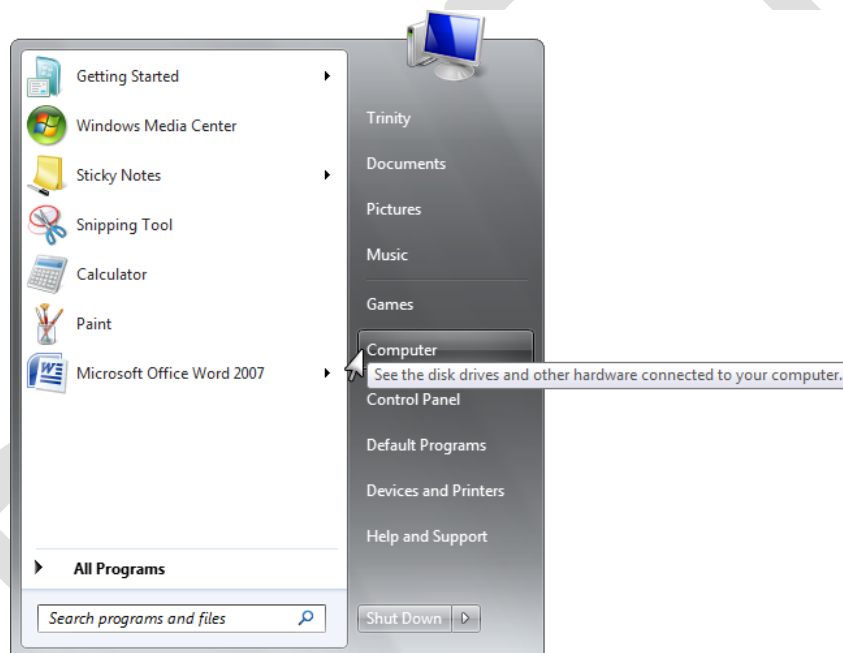


   *You can open the Computer window to display information about your computer's storage devices.*

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

---

**The Windows flag indicates the drive the operating system is installed on.**



**A red bar indicates less than 10% space remaining.**

*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, contract 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 your computer's storage disks and devices, 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**.
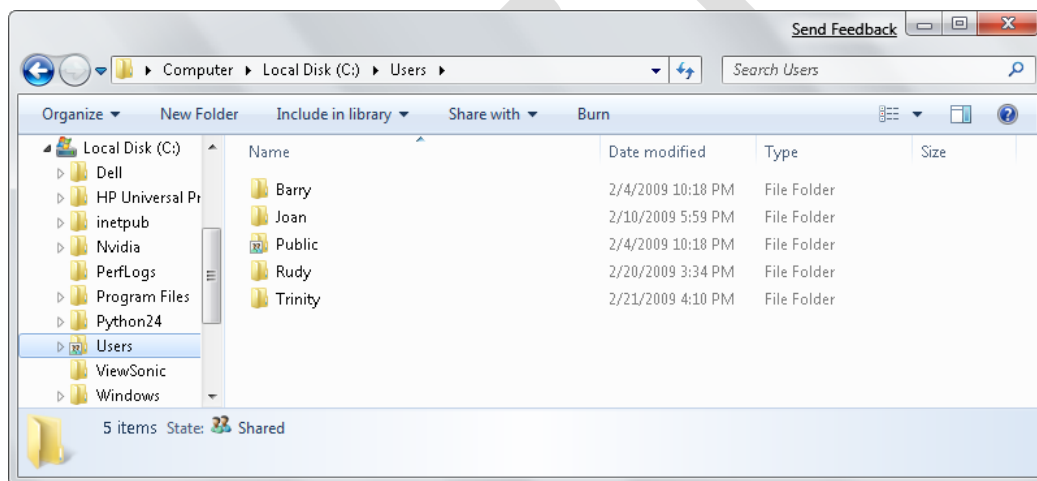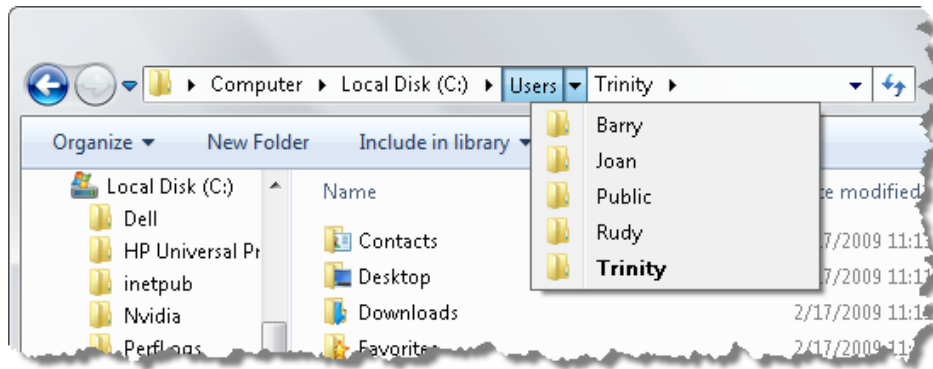


*The Users window displays folders for each active user account on the computer.*

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

Your personal folders are listed in the Content pane.

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

*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 folders available to all users of your computer are listed in the Content pane.

10.  Point to the Navigation pane, and click the black arrow to the left of **Computer** to contract the group. Then click the white arrow to the left of **Libraries** to display the available libraries.

11.  In the **Libraries** group, expand the **Documents** library.
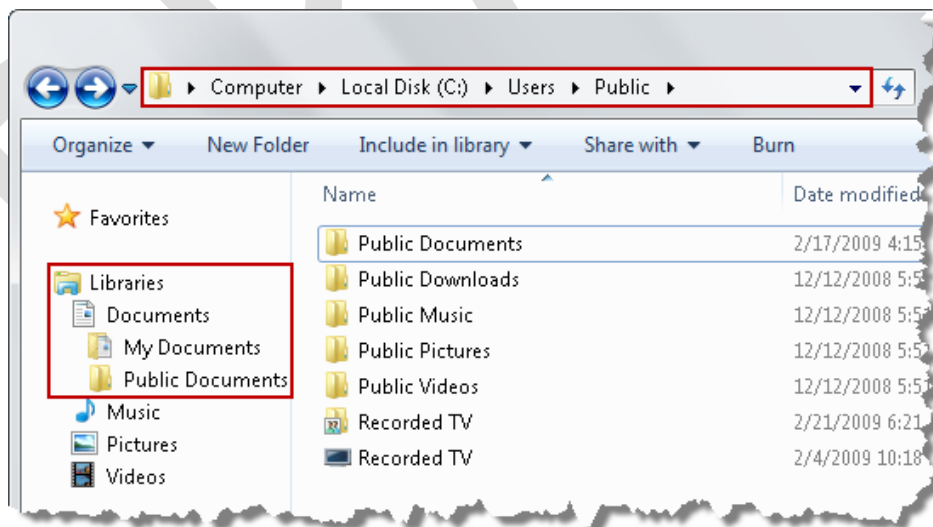


*You can reach the* Public Documents *folder from the Libraries group in the Navigation pane, as well as by browsing to it through the computer's folder structure.*

12.  In the Navigation pane, under the **Documents** library, click **My Documents**.
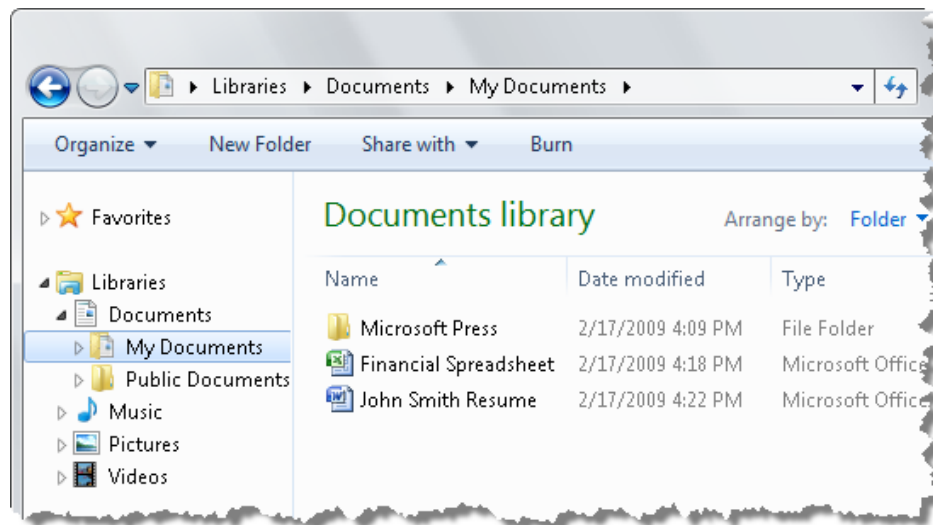


*Because you accessed your personal documents folder from the Libraries group, the Library*

*pane appears above the Content pane, and the Address bar displays a library icon and a path*

*beginning with Libraries.*

13.  At the left end of the **Address** bar, click the library icon that precedes the folder path, and then press the **End** key or click an empty area of the **Address** bar to remove the highlight and make its contents more visible.
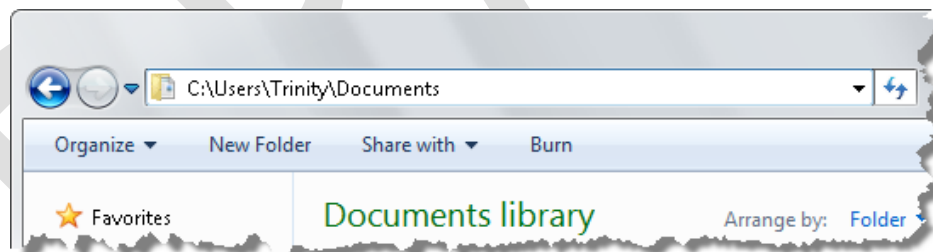


*Clicking the folder icon displays the absolute path of the current location.*

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

14.  In the Library pane, click **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 contents of your Content pane won't change.

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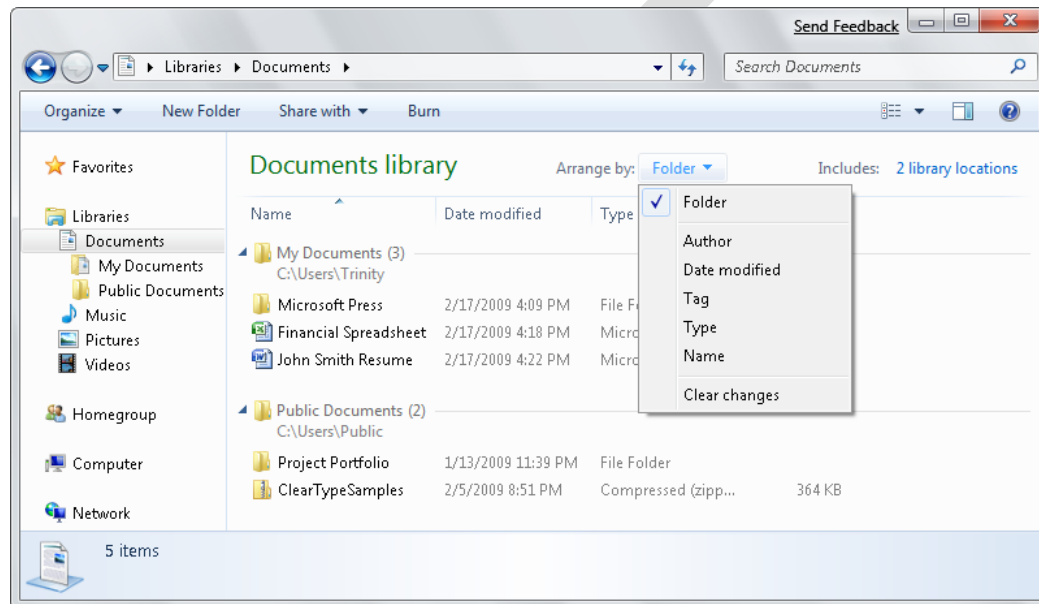


*You can view library contents arranged in folders; grouped by author, date modified, tag, or type; or listed in alphabetic order by file name.*

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

**CLEAN UP**   Close the Documents window.

# 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.

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 data files on your computer—program names, common tasks, documents, music, videos, graphics, local copies of e-mail messages, Web pages stored in your recent history or Favorites list, and other information. 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. When you enter a search term, Windows looks for the term in the index instead of searching the actual files on your hard disk.
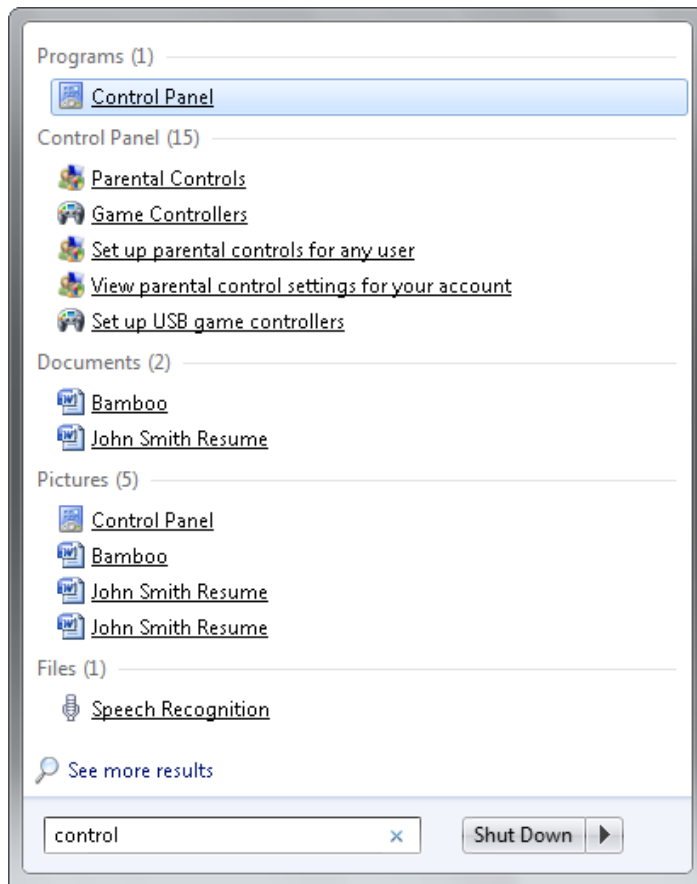
*Typical search results.*

> **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 encryptions solution, such as Microsoft BitLocker.
> For information about BitLocker, see the sidebar "Protecting Data by Using BitLocker" in Chapter 9, "Manage Security."

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 File Properties" in Chapter 4, "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.
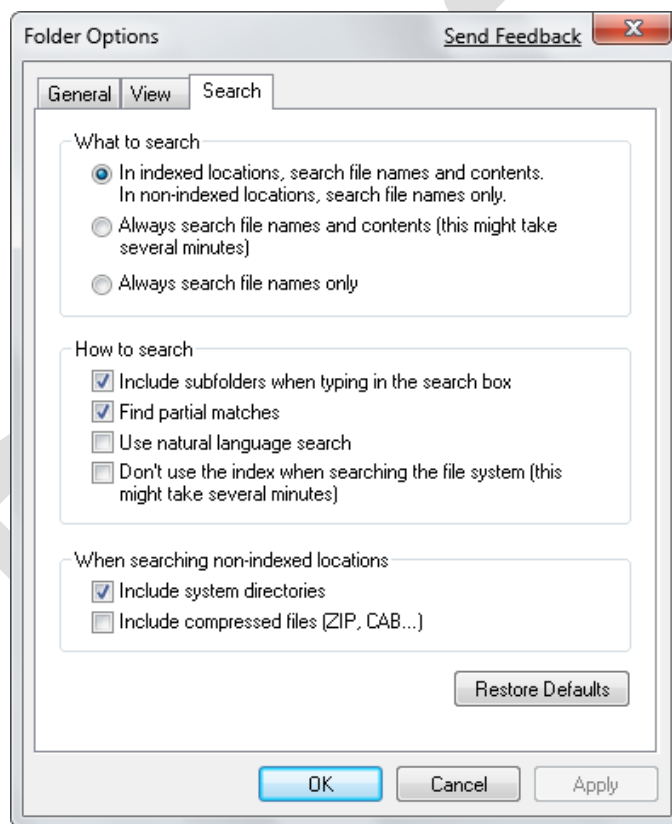


*On the Search tab of the Folder Options dialog box, you can make simple changes to search settings.*

You can specify whether Windows Search returns results from file contents as well as 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 but have, for example, a common root; and other options related to the standard Windows Search scope.
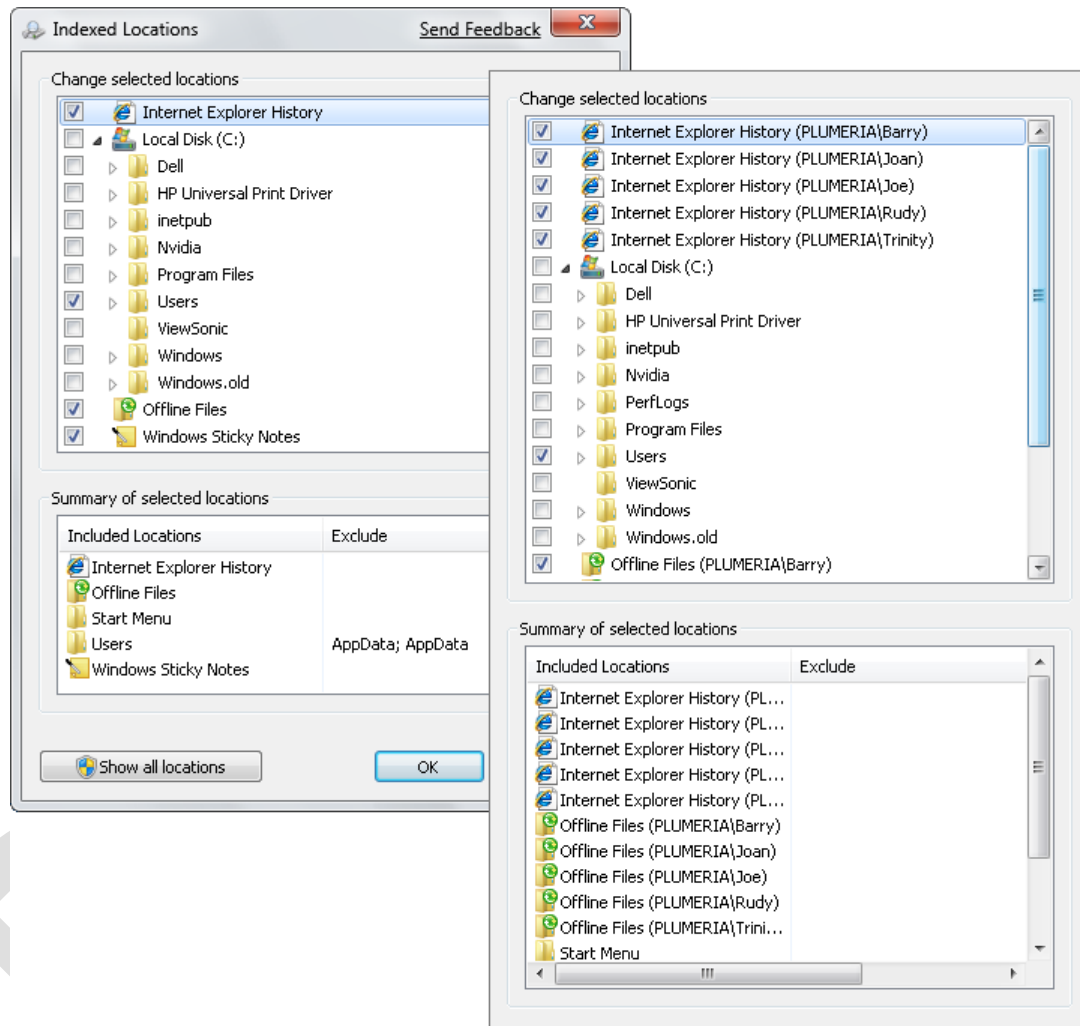


*In the Indexed Locations dialog box, you can view simple or expanded versions of the locations included in the search index.*

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
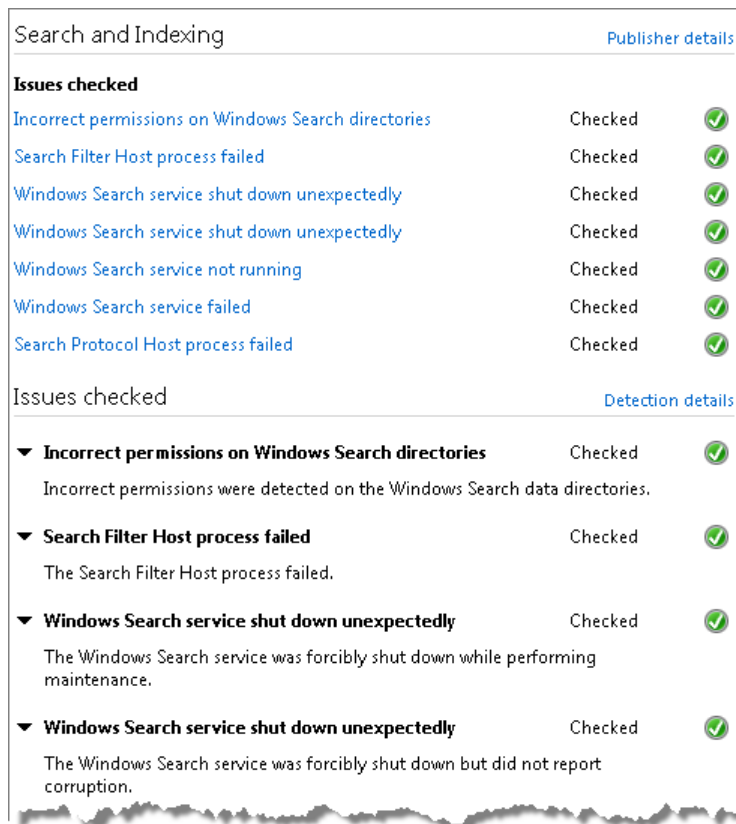
file. The Search And Indexing troubleshooter will guide you through a simple troubleshooting process to determine what changes need to be made so that the search results meet your expectations. To start the Search And Indexing troubleshooter, open the Indexing Options dialog box from the Control Panel All Items window and click Advanced. Then, on the Index Settings tab of the Advanced Options dialog box, click Troubleshoot Search And Indexing.
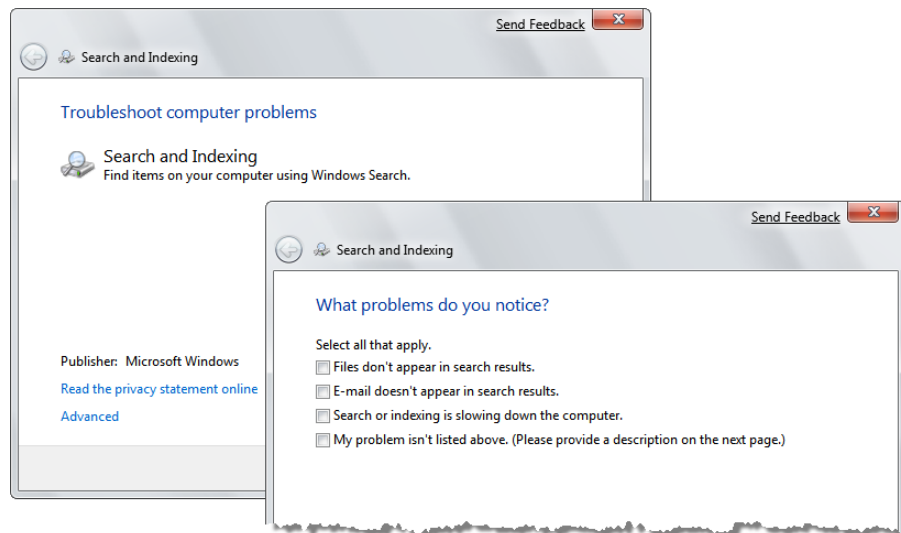


*The Search And Indexing troubleshooter.*

**Tip**    Windows 7 has about two dozen built-in utilities, referred to as *troubleshooters*, which guide you through the processes of resolving various problems. For information about the available troubleshooters, see "Troubleshooting Common Computer Problems" in Chapter 11, "Solve Problems."

You can identify the type of problem you're having or simply have the troubleshooter check your computer against a list of common issues.

*The Search And Indexing troubleshooter results.*

If you have administrator permission, you can also do the following from the Advanced Options dialog box:

- 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 will 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.
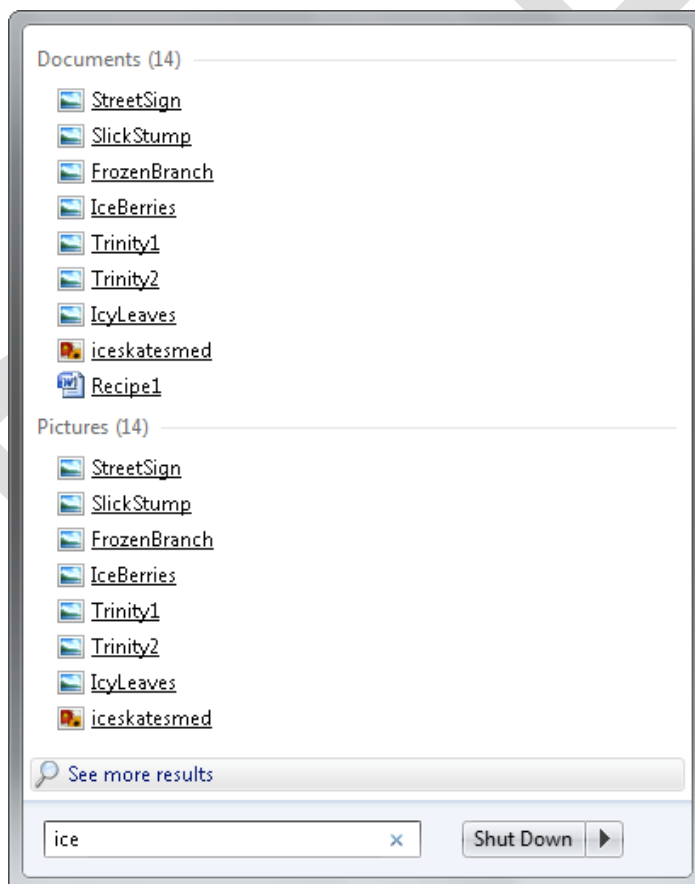
> **SET UP**   Use the practice files located in the *Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS\Navigation* folder.

1.   Click the **Start** button.

The Start menu opens with the insertion point 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 programs, files, folders, and e-mail messages stored on your computer and displays as many related items as will fit on the Start menu.*

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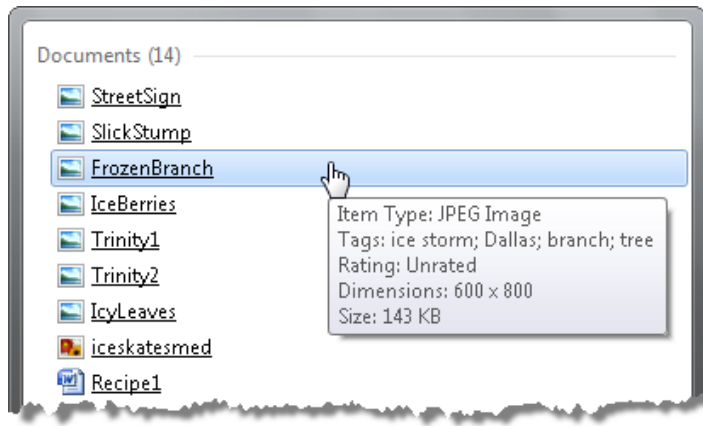


*Pointing to a file in the search results displays its properties.*

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 File Properties" in Chapter 4, "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 4, "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*.
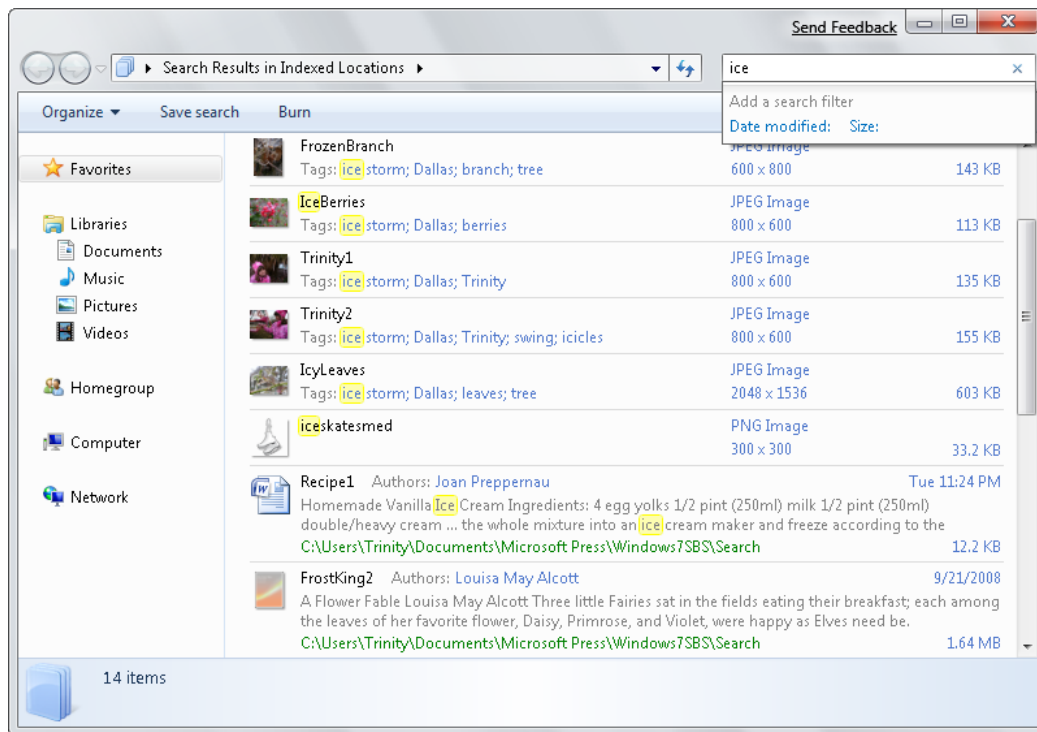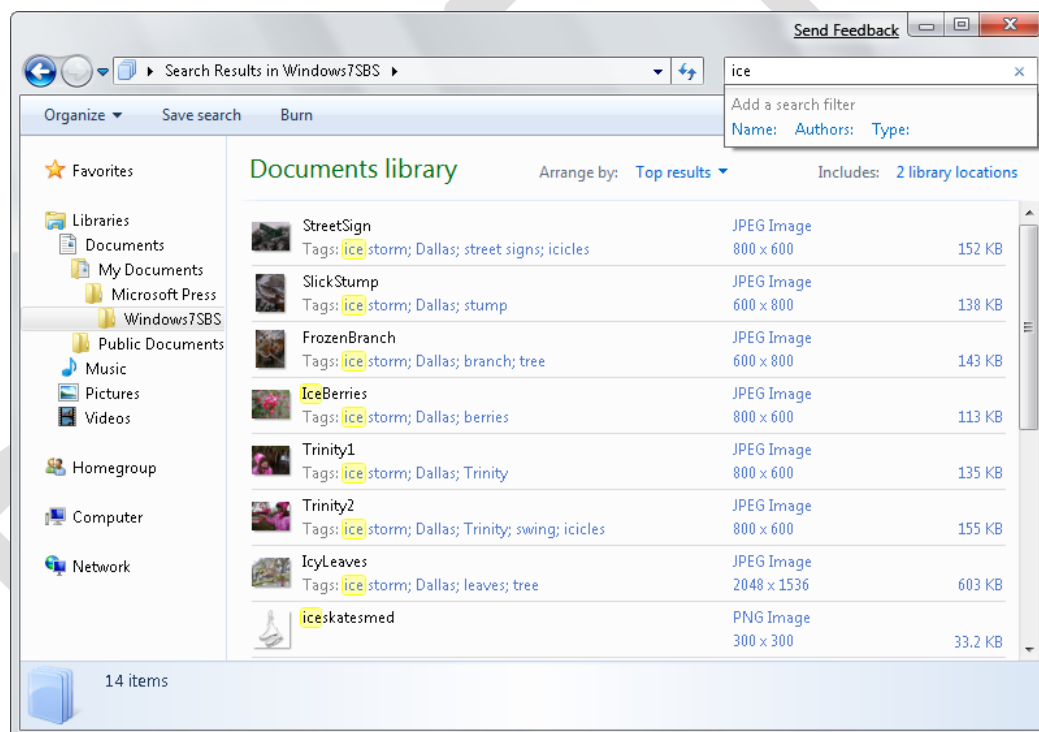
*From the Add A Search Filter list, you can quickly filter the search results by the file modification date or size.*

> **Tip**   You can display the Add A Search Filter list for any active search results window by clicking in the Search box.

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.     Under Libraries in the Navigation pane, expand the Documents library so that your *My Documents\Microsoft Press\Windows7SBS* folder is visible, and then click that folder to display its contents in the Content pane.

11.     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 indicates that you can filter the search results for a specific folder by Name, Author, and Type.*

14.    In the **Add a search filter** list that appears below the search term, click **Type**.
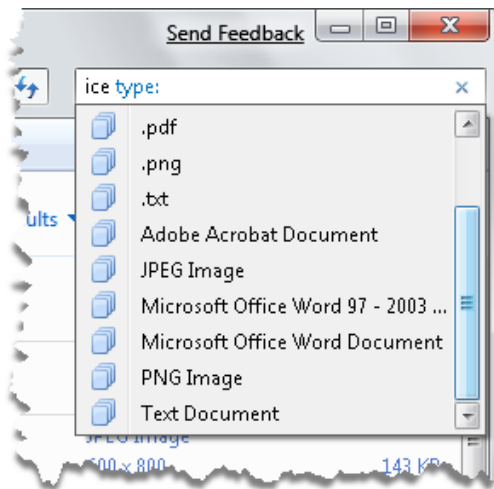


*When filtering a list by file type, you can choose from the file extensions or the corresponding file type descriptions represented by the search results.*

15.    In the **type** list, click **JPEG Image**.
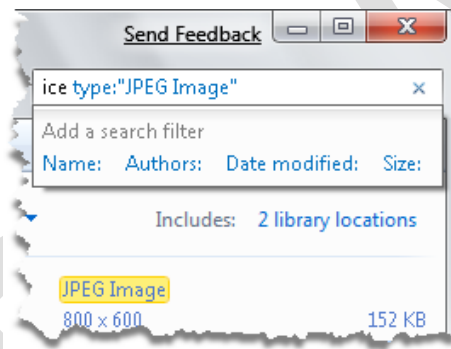


*The search results change to reflect the filters you've applied, the current filters are shown in the Search box, and the filter list changes to include additional options.*

16.    In the **Search** box, after *"JPEG Image,"* type **cream**.
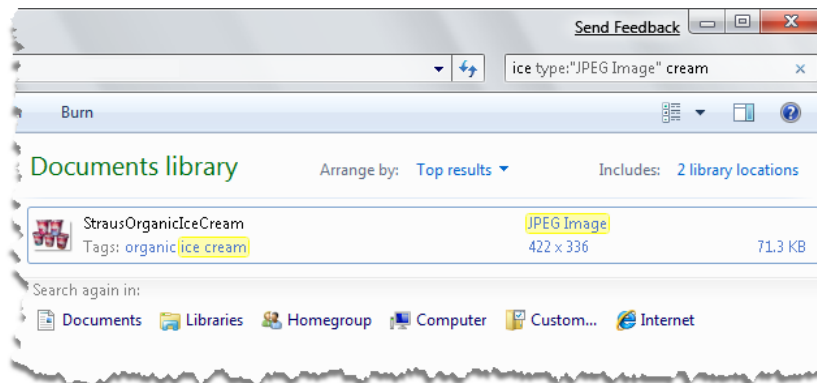
> **Tip**    You can change the scope of a search by clicking any of the locations in the Search Again In list at the bottom of the search results.

17.    In the **Search** box, select and delete **type: "JPEG Image" cream**. Then type **storm**.

The search results display photographic images taken after an ice storm.

18.    On the toolbar, click **Save search**.
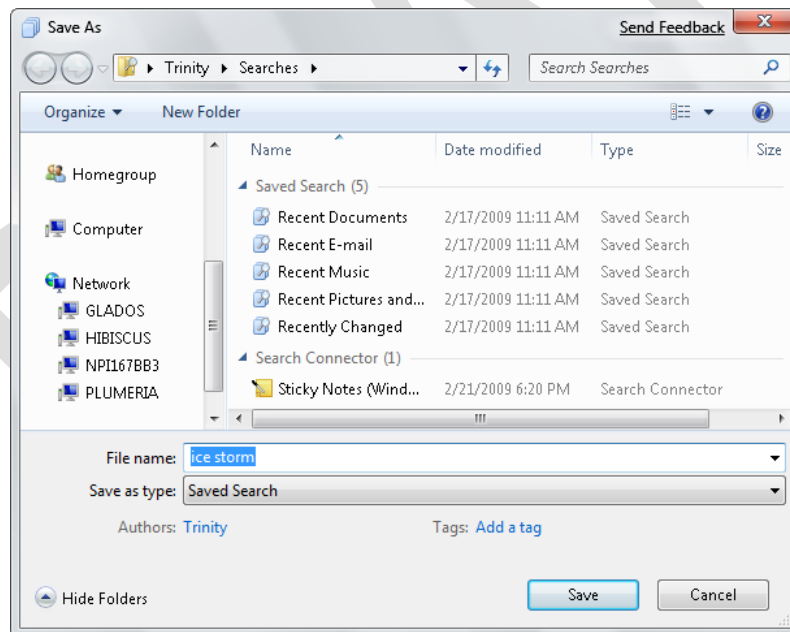


*In your personal* Searches *folder, Windows 7 has saved several default searches that it uses to quickly recall lists of your recently accessed files.*

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, click the arrow to the left of **Favorites**.
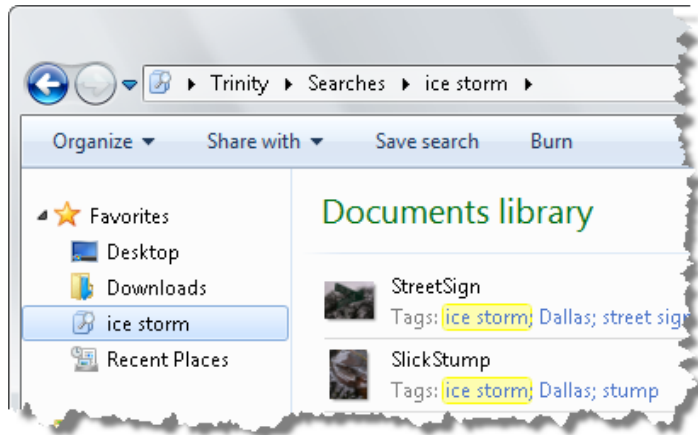


*The saved ice storm search is available in your Favorites group.*

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

**CLEAN UP**   Close the ice storm window.

# Key Points

- All windows share common characteristics that you can manipulate 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 the Search box on the Start menu, or 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.