

Work with Shared Files and Folders

After you have set up file sharing, you'll want to become familiar with managing specified drives, files, and folders when you're using the other computers on your network. This article gives you a brief look at your file-management options.

For starters, the computer whose files and folders you want to share must be turned on and logged on to the network. If the computer is in sleep mode, it cannot be accessed from the network unless its network adapter has Wake-On-LAN capability, which allows a remote user to awaken the computer to gain access. The Microsoft PCI adapter has such a feature.

You can use My Network Places (Microsoft Windows® XP) or Network Neighborhood (Windows 2000 and Windows 98) to view and access shared files and folders on your network.

If you map a shared folder or drive to a drive letter on your computer, you can also use My Computer or Windows Explorer to view shared resources. In Windows Explorer, you can copy, move, rename, and search for files and folders.

To map a shared folder or drive to a drive letter

1. In Windows Explorer or My Computer, click the **Tools** menu, and then click **Map Network Drive**.
2. Browse to the location of the network resource you want to map, and then click **OK**.
3. Select a drive letter, and then click **Finish**.

Managing files on a remote computer

You can manage shared files or folders on a remote computer just as you do on your local computer. You can view shared files and folders in My Network Places or Network Neighborhood, or, if you have mapped the drives or folders, in My Computer or Windows Explorer. Depending on the share access level of the files and folders, you can select files and delete them, or move them from folder to folder on the remote computer, just as you would files on your own computer. You can also create, rename, move, or delete folders on the remote computer.

To copy files or folders between computers, locate them in Windows Explorer. Then you can either perform a copy-and-paste operation from the remote computer or simply copy the file or files to the second computer by dragging them to the desired location.

Working on files on a remote computer

You can open and work on a shared file from the remote computer as long as the program that created the file is installed on the remote computer. To open the file, double-click it in My Network Places or Network Neighborhood. If you have mapped the folder or drive containing the file to a drive letter on your computer, you can also open the file by clicking **Open** on your program's **File** menu.

You can work with a file just as you would on your local computer. However, the remote computer's settings and the program's settings might be different from those on the original computer, causing inconsistencies.

Working on a file over a network can make the remote computer run slowly, as well as tie up valuable network resources. It's a good idea, therefore, to copy the file to the remote computer to work on it, and then copy it back to the original location when you are done.

Note Working with a local version of the file can cause version-control problems if another user opens and works on the shared file while you are working on a local version. Be sure to set up and follow good file-access and -management practices with the other users in your workgroup.

To save a file that is on another computer, simply click **Save** when you are done working with the file. To save it to your computer, or a different name or location, click **Save As**, browse to the desired location, enter the file name, and click **Save** or **OK**.