



BUG-BYTES

THE MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF *COMPUTER BUGS*

VOL. 9, ISSUE 02

FEBRUARY 2010

HOW TO CREATE A HYPERLINK



A hyperlink is a text shortcut that is linked to a particular web page. For instance www.computerbugs.cc is a hyperlink. When you double click on a hyperlink it opens your browser to the web page shown by

the address in the text. Normally, hyperlinks are in blue underlined text.

When you include a hyperlink in an e-mail message you save your recipient the trouble of retyping the address in their browser to view the page that you want to share with them. When they double click on the hyperlink the page opens for them.

It is simple to create a hyperlink. Type the address to the page that you want them to see including the www. Then at the end of the address press the spacebar. The address that you typed is then automatically converted into a hyperlink. Open your e-mail program and try it.

For instance, type www.computerbugs.cc/news.htm . I usually add a space after the hyperlink and then a period if the hyperlink is the end of the sentence. Otherwise, sometimes the punctuation mark is included in the hyperlink by mistake and it may not open.

To test this, create a test message in your e-mail program and send it to yourself. Include one or more hyperlinks. Note how easy it is to do this and how convenient it is to open the web pages indicated by your hyperlinks.

EASILY CONVERT MEASURES

Use your favorite search engine to convert common measures from one measure to another. Do so in plain English as illustrated by the following examples:

- ◆ Convert kilometers to miles
- ◆ Convert millimeters to inches
- ◆ Convert acres to hectares

- ◆ Convert Fahrenheit to Centigrade
- ◆ Convert gallons to tablespoons
- ◆ Convert grams to ounces



1 gram = 0.0352739619 ounces

- ◆ Conversion calculator (sample site below)
- ◆ <http://www.onlineconversion.com/>
- ◆ If you wish, you can input a specific term to convert such as 100 yards to miles.

100 Yards = 0.05681818182 Miles

- ◆ Teaspoons in a fluid ounce
- ◆ **1 fluid ounce = 6 teaspoons**
- ◆ You can shorten your search term to eliminate the word convert. For example, just type liters to gallons.
- ◆ Liters to gallons
- ◆ As you will see when clicking on the following link, there are many conversion types available.
- ◆ <http://www.unit-conversion.info/power.html>
- ◆ You can even do currency conversions.
- ◆ Isn't it amazing what you can do with your computer?
- ◆

HOW TO BACKUP YOUR REGISTRY

While it is best to leave editing your Windows registry to experts, it is a very good idea to periodically **do a full backup of your registry.**

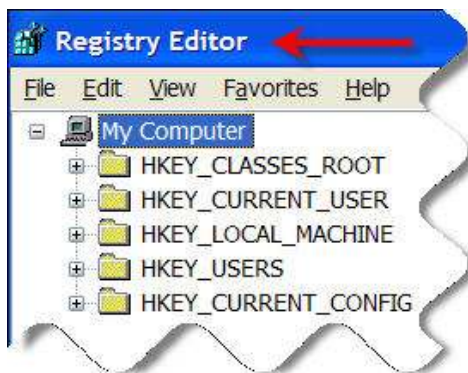
The Windows registry is a database that contains user, hardware, and software settings needed by the operating

system. The current registry took the place of a plethora of old INI files (initiation files) that stored configuration files. Such files could be found sprinkled willy nilly all over a hard drive. Today, the registry pulls all of that information together into one place.

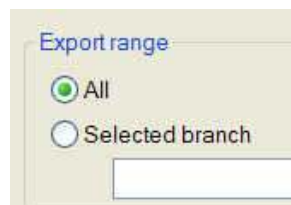
If you have maintained a fairly up-to-date backup copy of the registry, it can sometimes be used to restore your computer when all else fails. In an emergency, and only in an emergency, you can overwrite a corrupted registry by double clicking on the backup copy of the registry. There are two kinds of registry backup. A full backup and a backup of only a selected branch of the registry.

To back up the registry follow these steps:

Click on Run in the Startup Menu and type regedit. In Vista, just type regedit in the search box. The following dialog box opens. Click on My computer to select the top of the directory tree.



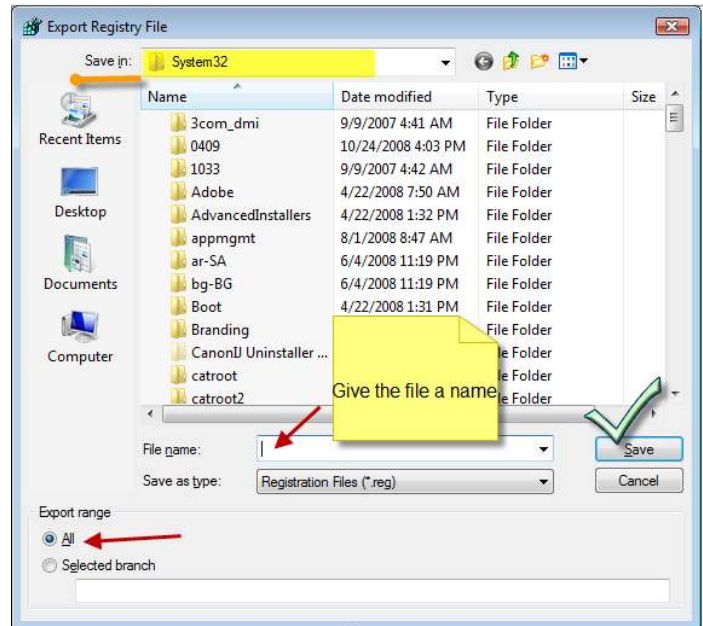
Click on File, Export. Select the option to backup the entire registry (All). Select where you want the file stored.



Click on the Save button to create the backup. You're done! Navigate to where you stored the file to be sure that you saved the backup there. The file that you created will have the filename you gave it and end with the three letter extension, ".reg". Registry filenames all end with a period and reg.

DANGER!

Never double click on a registry file unless you intend for the file to replace all or part of your registry. The act of double clicking on a registry file says to replace



all of the existing registry file, or just a branch of it, depending on what was backed up.

HOW TO MAXIMIZE AND MINIMIZE WINDOWS



To minimize an open window do one of the following: Click on the minus sign in the upper right corner of the open screen. Click on the plus sign to maximize the screen. Minimize reduces the size of the open window. Maximize returns it to its full size. Alternatively, right-click on the bar at the top of your screen. Pick minimize or maximize from the drop down dialog box. It is your choice.

HOW TO CREATE OE SUBFOLDERS

Your Outlook Express inbox may become unwieldy due to the accumulation of messages there. If your inbox becomes too big, it is hard to find particular messages stored there.

First, consider deleting messages that you no longer need or want. That will help you get your inbox down to a manageable size.

Next consider creating subfolders in which to store similar types of messages. For example you might create

a subfolder called “Keepers” for general messages that you think are worth keeping. Another folder might be for video files that you think are great and would like to view them from time to time. You can have as many or as few subfolders as your want.

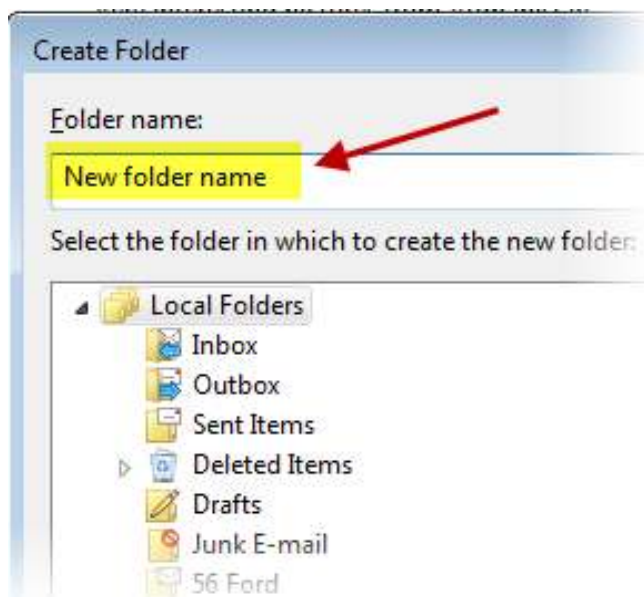
By subfolder, I mean a folder that shows up under your main folder called Local Folders. Subfolders show up in outline form indented under the main folder, or under whichever folder you select. For instance, Inbox, Outbox, and Sent Items are all subfolders of Local Folders. If you mistakenly select a subfolder, then your new folder will appear under the subfolder that you selected.

To create a subfolder of Local Folders, right-click on Local Folders. Select New Folder. Give it a name.

HOW TO MOVE OR COPY FILES TO SUBFOLDERS IN OE OR MAIL

Open Outlook Express. Do you see a folder list at the left of your screen? If you do not see the list, then click on View, and select the folder list from among the options.

The article at the left relates to the folder list and how you can create new folders. Once you create the folders that you want it is easy to copy or move messages from one folder to another. There are two simple methods. One is drag and drop. The other method uses the copy or move command. I will illustrate both methods.



Let’s say I want to move a message to the Drafts folder. In the drag and drop method I would click on the message holding down the left (primary) mouse button and drag it to the Drafts folder. I would then release my finger from the left mouse button to “drop” the message on the Drafts folder.

Alternatively, I could right-click on the message and select to Move or Copy the file to the folder of my choice. A drop down menu would display the folder list and I could choose which folder to use for the copy or move.

Copy leaves the file in its current folder and creates a copy in the target folder. Move transfers the file from the current folder to the new folder. No copy is left behind in the old folder.

If your folder list is very long then the next method will make it easier to move messages to folders deep in your folder list.

With OE or Windows Mail open, right-click on the toolbar (the bar that starts with Create message). Select to customize the toolbar. From the list on the left pick either Copy To or Move to, or both of them. Click the Add button to add those icons to the toolbar.

When you want to move or copy a message, click on the appropriate icon on the toolbar. The Folder List will open making it easy for you to see all of your folders without scrolling. Select the folder you want and your message will be copied to it, or moved to it depending on which function you picked. Practice doing this a couple of times to get the feel for how easy it is to do this.

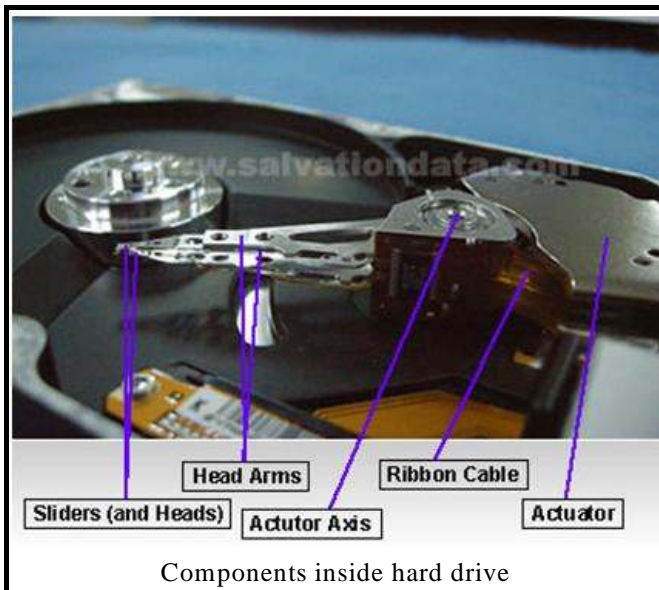
HOW TO RECOVER FILES

THE GOOD NEWS AND THE BAD – BY ALAN BURT

The good news is that if you have just some misplaced files, accidentally deleted files, or accidentally reformatted your hard drive, you can probably recover those files. Your chances of recovery are best when you immediately attempt recovery. That is before you overwrite the areas where your data is stored with new data. The bad news is when you wait too long to attempt file recovery, or especially if your hard drive fails due to mechanical problems. Failures include the following:

- ◆ Dropped an external hard drive on the floor.
- ◆ Dropped a laptop computer on a hard floor or pavement.

- ◆ Catastrophic failure of your hard drive where the arms inside contact the spinning disks (scrape the platters inside). Normally, the arms of your hard drive ride on a fine cushion of air just above the surface of your hard drive platters.
- ◆ Mechanical failure of the drive (motor, bearings, or electronics)
- ◆ Malware infections.
- ◆ The computer is very old and the hard drive is worn out/



It is a known fact that all hard drives will eventually fail. It is not a question of whether that will happen; it is only a question of when the drives will fail. It is like death and taxes. Most drives have very high mean times to failure statistics (average time until first failure). However, you could be one of those unlucky people for whom the drive fails much earlier in the life of your computer. If you are lucky, your hard drives will perform flawlessly for the useful life of your computer, or for as long as you own it. Whichever comes first.

Sources of lost files:

- ◆ Accidentally deleted files or reformatted drives.
- ◆ You saved files but you don't know where that might be stored.
- ◆ Moved files (dragged) to a different folder from what you intended

Your hard drive is composed of a stack of glass disks. Typically they act as a substrate for a very fine coating of iron oxide. The disks are read by moving arms that "seek" the data magnetically encoded there.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DELETE FILES?

When you delete files, the process is far different from what you might picture in your mind. Deleting a file is not like erasing words on a sheet of paper with an eraser. The data in your file is recorded as ones and zeros on your hard drive and the data may be widely dispersed all over your hard drive. The Master File Table (MFT) tells your computer where all those bits and pieces are stored so that the arms of your hard drive can seek the data wherever it is located. When you delete a file all that happens is that your computer changes the first letter of the filename in the Master File Table to a question mark. That tells your operating system that the spaces occupied by that file are now available for other data to be written there. The data is still there occupying the same space until it is overwritten, or until you empty your recycle bin with the file in it.



Speaking of the recycle bin, it acts as your safety net. That is, the recycle bin collects deleted data giving you a chance to change your mind when you delete a file. If you quickly discover that you made a mistake you can open the recycle bin and restore the file to your hard drive. However, once you empty the recycle bin (purge it) with your deleted file in it, it is gone. You can possibly recover the purged file using special file recovery software, such as Recuva (pronounced recover). See <http://www.recuva.com/>

To restore a file that is still in the recycle bin, open the recycle bin. Right-click on the file you want to restore, and click on restore. The file will be restored to your hard drive.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU HAVE NOT BACKED UP YOUR DATA?

If you have not backed up your data and you have to pay a data recovery service to recover your data you are in for a rude shock. Recently two friends of Computerbugs members had to go to a data recovery service. They were told it would cost from \$700 to \$1,500 to recover their data. Presumably, this step was only necessary because (a) they did not backup their data, or did not have current backups and (b) their hard drives suffered catastrophic failures, perhaps just from old age.

HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST DATA LOSS?

Buy a hard drive (internal or external) to store data backups. Keep the backups current. The cost of a backup hard drive is minuscule compared with the cost of having to restore important data using a data recovery service. If you need to restore a file or files and you have a backup, then you lose no time in restoring those files. However, if you have to pay an outside recovery service, you are out both significant cash and a loss of time while the data is painstakingly restored bit by bit.

It takes only a moment to hookup an external USB hard drive to your computer. You don't even have to open your computer's case. Thus, if you wish, you can hookup your external backup drive only when you want to backup your data. Better yet, you can use one of the new one-button backup drives. They are designed so whenever you want to backup all of your data, you just push a button on the drive and it does the rest.

Here is one source for data recovery with some good additional information:

<http://www.datarecoverylabs.com/index.aspx?agent=google&k=DRSS>

Take care not to drop your computer, and to shield it from hard knocks.

Keep your computer well ventilated. Keep the insides of your computer dust free. Remove any dust curls from the front vents of your computer. Excess heat shortens the life of hard drives.

Make it a habit to frequently save your important data files with variation of the filename. You can append a change of version number such as Bug-Bytes-01, 02, etc. That way, if something goes wrong, you only lose what you typed between versions. You may be able to set how many minutes elapse between the time that your word processor, or other program, automatically saves copies of your work.

Periodically defragment your hard drive(s) to keep your data more closely together.

LEARN HOW TO USE DATA RECOVERY SOFTWARE

Before you need data recovery software experiment with a free program, such as Recuva™ so that you know what you can and cannot expect from the soft-

ware. Backup the Recuva program to a thumb drive so it will be available if you accidentally delete a partition.

The following screen shots demonstrate that the recovery process is not daunting for lost files.

Limit your search to the type of files that you want to recover.

Determine, if you can, where the files are probably saved on your hard drive. See the second screen shot below labeled Location. Note that you can recover files from your digital camera media card or from an iPod with Recuva as well as files on your hard drive(s).

Start the search for your files. Choose the deep scan option if your previous scan did not turn up your lost



files.

Select only the files that you want to recover. Click the recovery button. The deed is done.

LESSONS LEARNED

Backup your data and keep the backup current. Attempt recovery of lost files as soon as possible. Use a recovery program such as Recuva to recover your data.

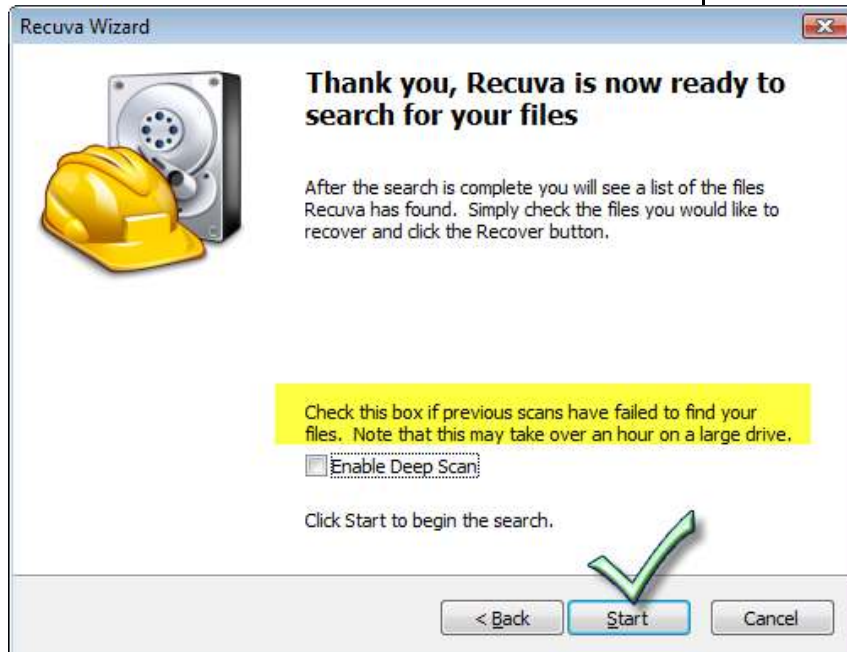
If possible, buy a backup hard drive. This increases the probability that if need to you can recover your lost data. Your data will be kept entirely separate from your Windows files. Choose between installing an internal hard drive for your data or an external hard drive. The

advantage of the external hard drive is that you don't have to open your computer case to install it.

If you are comfortable opening your case, then an internal drive will be out of the way. The price of new hard drives are very low with lots of reserve capacity.

with an external USB hard drive it is as simple as plugging the drive into an available USB port. If you have run out of USB ports, you can inexpensively add a USB hub with more ports.

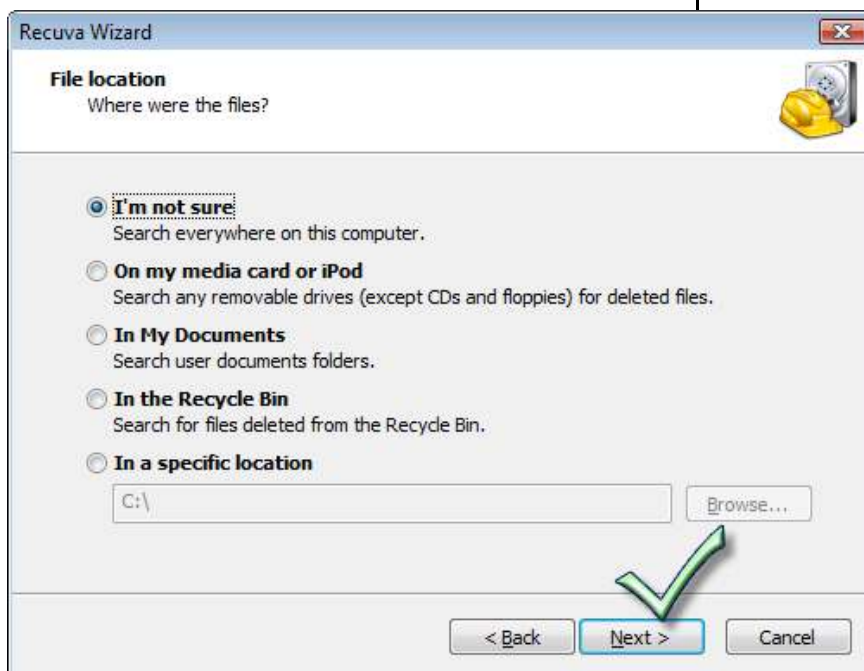
Practice recovering test files before the need arrives. You will be glad that you did that.



TROUBLESHOOTINGS EASIER WITH WINDOWS 7

Both computer maintenance and troubleshooting are much easier with Windows 7. Just click on the white flag symbol in the notification area at the right of your taskbar. Then click on Open Action Center and review the information on the Security and Maintenance tabs. If you do not see the symbol, type Action Center in the Search field after clicking on the Windows Start Logo.

If you already have your own backup solution, click on the button to turn off the backup setup notice.



Note that all hard drives will fail at some time including from very old age. Protect yourself by using a backup hard drive or drives if possible. For example,

Under maintenance, view your reliability history. Like me, you may discover that there were some problems that you didn't know were there. Click on check for solutions link to fix some problems and to get answers about other problems. The whole process is better organized and it works better than it did in Vista.

For instance, for me Win 7 discovered that some Internet Explorer add-ins were causing problems. It told me which add-ins were involved and had a button I could click on to fix those problems. Neat and simple.

Click on the Security or Maintenance tab for a status report about your computer. If you do not see a particular problem, click on the Troubleshooting link. You will be surprised at how helpful that can be.

From Action Center you can also view performance related information.