



Bug-Bytes

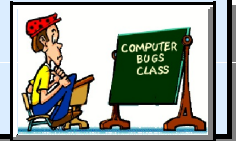
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TRANSFER FILES FROM COMPUTER TO COMPUTER

IT IS EASIER THAN YOU MAY THINK



There are many software and hardware methods used to transfer files between computers. We will look at some of the more popular ways of doing that.

HOME NETWORK - INTERNET CONNECTION SHARING: You can do Internet Connection Sharing (ICS) via an Internet cable strung between networked computers, or with a wireless Internet connection. Windows XP makes creating such connections fast and easy.



NIC

The ICS method uses an inexpensive Network Interface Card (NIC) in each computer and a CAT5 cable to connect to nearby computers. The wireless method requires a wireless interface card, an access point, and a router. If you have cable internet, you may already have a router. When you network computers, you can share files, share printers, and share a single Internet account. This is a very fast, inexpensive, and easy way to transfer files between computers.

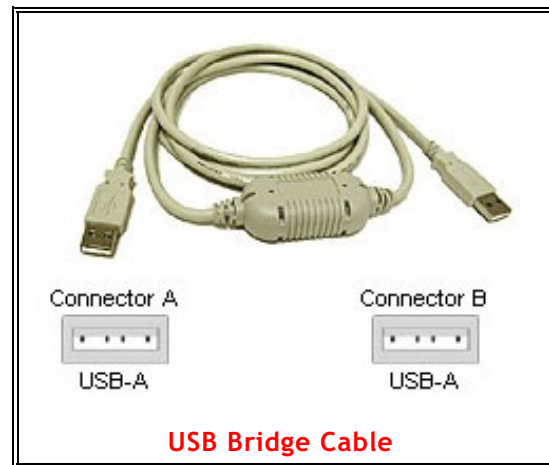
DIRECT CABLE CONNECTION

A quick and easy way to transfer files between two PCs is to use a direct cable connection. You will need to buy either a USB cable (see bridge cable below), parallel port cable, a null serial modem cable, or a crossover cable.

USB BRIDGE CABLE: One very easy method is to use a six-foot USB bridge cable strung between two computers. This method requires a USB connection in each computer and it works very well. However, file transfers are much slower than by network cable.

See www.tigerdirect.com and search for "bridge cable." A bridge cable is a cable with a special chip in the middle of the cable and a USB A connector on each end. The cable

ships with software that facilitates file transfers in a split window. The cable is plug-and-play compatible. To use a bridge cable do a one-time software installation and then just plug the cable into an available USB slot in each computer. Whenever you want to transfer files, click on an icon to open the software.



USB Bridge Cable

USB EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE: An elegant (but expensive) file transfer method is to use a USB or Firewire connected external hard drive. This method is very effective if your computers cannot be networked, such as for a work and a home computer. The hard drive can be used to backup files on both computers, and to share files in both locations. It is portable. Windows automatically recognizes the drive when it is plugged into a USB port. You use Windows Explorer to transfer files to and from the drive.

BURN TO CD OR DVD

With CDs holding 650 to 700MB and DVDs holding 4.7 GB, it is easy to transfer files between computers using inexpensive CDs or DVDs. Just burn the files you want to transfer on one computer and read them and save them on

another computer. This is a form of the old “sneaker net” that walks files between computers. With today’s huge hard disks and large files, it is no long practical to use floppy disks to transfer files. However transferring files to

Zip disks, other hard disks, CDs and DVDs works well.



UNDERSTAND FILENAME CONVENTIONS

NEW USER TIPS

One of the first things that new users need to understand is the difference between the types of computer files on their computer and how those files are named. Files have a name followed by a period (called a dot), followed by a three-letter extension as in Filename.ext. File names can be any combination of letters and symbols except for the following symbols that are reserved to Windows <>|!* /. As a general rule, it is best to stay with letters, minus, and underscore _ . Use only one period as in myfile.ext. Don’t use blank spaces in your file names. It works for some software but can cause problems in data files. Instead use this_is_my_file_name.ext or this-is-my-file-name.ext.

With the introduction of Windows 95,

Microsoft allowed us to use more than eight characters in the filename plus three in the extension. From Windows 95 on you can use up to 256 characters, but there is little reason to use than many characters.

Computer files fall into two major categories. There are program files and data files. Program files are not meant to be read by users. They are written in computer language understood only by your computer and are used to perform specific tasks on your computer. As a general rule, unlike data files, program files are not changed by the user (aside from being updated from time to time). Program files have extensions such as exe, com, dll.

Data files are created by the user in applications such as a word processor, notepad, spreadsheet, database, and photo editing programs. They change often. Some of the more popular data files are txt, doc, wpd, xls, wks, qpw, jpg, gif, tif and htm.

Go to <http://filext.com/> to see a list of file extensions. Explore by letters of the alphabet to get a feel for what is available. You might want to bookmark the address for filext.com for later use.

Do not create your own file extensions. Use the standard ones so your computer can find the files at a later date.

REFINE YOUR SEARCH TERMS

USE A FORM OF COMPUTER SHORTHAND

Old hands at computing know what “Star-Dot-Star” means, but it is Greek to less experienced users. “Star-Dot-Star” is and asterisks followed by a period, followed by an asterisk. That shorthand, used in the search field, tells your computer to look for any word (the first asterisk), and for any file extension (the last asterisk). See the screen shot at the right. You can insert known letters and a question

mark to further refine your search term. A question mark says “look for any character in that space.” Let’s see how this information can be used to help you to find files without getting everything but the kitchen sink.

By default, Windows uses the first method (Star-Dot-Star) whenever you enter a word as the search criteria in *All or part of the file name* field. It

then displays every file that has that word, or part of that word, in its name. The only limiting

factor is where you tell it to look for the files. In the screen shot example, it only looks on the C drive. However, you can change that so it looks every-



where on your hard disk.

For instance, let's say you want to find only those files that begin with the letter A and that are DOC files (Microsoft Word file). Perhaps that is all that you remember of the filename. You would enter A*.doc and click on the Search button. The term you enter is not case sensitive. You can use a mixture of upper and lower. This is handy since we tend to use an uppercase letter when starting a sentence.

Notice what is happening here. By using the appropriate shorthand terms wisely, we return only those files that meet our criteria. For example, since we know we are looking for a docu-

ment file, and that it is a Word document, we entered DOC as the exten-

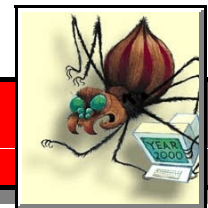


sion (filename.extension). The extension is a computer abbreviation for the type of file

Alternatively, you can use the "Other search options" in Windows XP, or something similar in earlier versions of the OS. Choose which type of file you want-picture, document, all files and folders, or computers and people.

If you are searching for a data file, limit the search by specifying one of the time sensitive options (within the last week, past month, within the past year, or don't remember).

The first method returns far fewer false positives. However, the second method is more intuitive.



HOW TO REMOVE A COMPUTER VIRUS OR WORM

HELP FOR WHEN YOU HAVE A VIRUS OR WORM

BACKGROUND

The best protection against getting a virus (a piece of code that corrupts your computer but cannot run independently) or a worm (a program that can run independently without user intervention) is to use a good anti-virus program. That means having the program always on in the background, and keeping the anti-virus signatures up to date.

However, attacks by virus and worm writers are getting much more ingenious. Not so long ago, the common wisdom was that you could not get a virus if you did not open e-mail attachments and you scanned floppy disks while transferring files. However, some of the latest attacks do not require you to open attachments. For instance, they look for computers that are vulnerable to attack – computers that are not protected by a router with

a firewall, or by a software firewall, and which have not been regularly updated to patch security holes in the operating system.

ANTI-VIRUS PROGRAM

Set AV program options to download AV updates "Daily."

HOW TO REMOVE A VIRUS THAT GETS THROUGH YOUR DEFENSES

Regrettably, your anti-virus (AV) program may not be able to automatically remove every virus or worm, at least not right away. It takes a little time for the vendor to identify the virus and to come up with a suitable way to combat it.

If your AV program detects a virus, go to the report tab to learn how your AV program handled the virus. In some cases, the software will be able to remove the virus or to quarantine it

(move it to a safe spot). In other cases, it will tell you what virus you have, but it will require you to go to the vendor's web site to download a special tool to remove it.

If your software is unable to automatically remove a virus or worm, search for it by name on your vendor's web site. Then carefully follow the instructions, step-by-step to remove it. Don't put off taking care of any problem that you detect so the problem doesn't get worse. Good hunting.

If you have DSL or internet cable, consider setting your AV program to automatically download the latest updates. That way, you always have the latest software and signatures. Similarly, set your computer to automatically download Windows Critical Updates.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN AV PROGRAM AND YOU SUSPECT A VIRUS?

You really like to flirt with danger, don't you? Not having an AV program is like closing the barn door after the horse got out. However, if you

don't have an AV program here is what you can do.

Go to www.symantec.com, click on the free Symantec Security Check, Go, Virus Detection, Start. If you have a virus, the program will identify it for you. Symantec may also offer a free

virus removal tool for that particular virus. While you are on the Symantec web site, run the free Security scan to see whether or not your computer is vulnerable.

HOW TO CANCEL A PRINT JOB AND MORE

YOU CAN CANCEL PRINT JOBS THAT ARE IN THE PRINT QUEUE



From time to time you may discover that you want to cancel a job that is currently printing, or one of the many jobs that are in the print queue. When you attempt to print more than one job, each job is added to a queue awaiting printing. Perhaps you just noticed that the job coming out of the printer contains an error or some other problem.

Click on Start, Control Panel, Printers and Faxes (or something similar in your version of the operating system), and double click on the name of the printer that you are using. If you have more than one printer listed, pick the one that shows one or more jobs above the line that says "Ready." The other printers will show "0". A dialog box will open that lists each job waiting to be printed. You can cancel any on job, or all of them.

To make things easier for yourself in the future, in the Control Panel, right click on Printers and Faxes and create a shortcut. Drag the shortcut either to your desktop or to the Quick Launch area of your taskbar. That way, when-

ever you need to cancel a job, the printer dialog will be just a click away.

Alternatively, check to see if your printer has a stop or cancel button to eject your current job. The button will not take care of multiple jobs in the print queue, but it will cancel the current job.

PAUSE

If your printer mysteriously stops printing, check to see if you inadvertently put your printer in the pause mode. Don't be surprised if you see a long list of the same print jobs. That is a sure sign that the printer is **paused**.

Use the print dialog to put your printer back online. It will say "Ready" when it is online.

ARE YOU EXPERIENCING POOR QUALITY OUTPUT?

Inkjet: Poor quality output may be a sign that your print head needs cleaning, or that you are running out of ink.

Right click on the Printers and Faxes icon, Maintenance (or a similar tab).

Many printers provide a built-in routine to check your nozzles and to clean your print heads. Usually, that is all it takes to get your printing back up to snuff.

Are you getting strange colors in your color printout? That is a good sign that one of the colors in your color ink cartridge ran out before the others. Replace your color cartridge or individual ink tank for the missing color. The normal colors are black, cyan (blue), magenta (red), or yellow.

WHAT IS THE PROPER WAY TO HANDLE MY INKJET CARTRIDGE?

Before opening a new cartridge, shake it to redistribute the ink. You will get better results.

Always handle your inkjet cartridge(s) with care. Never touch the copper printhead components with your hands. Keep ink in the cartridge at all times to prevent the print nozzles from drying out.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH - [WWW.PCWEBOPEDIA.COM](http://www.pcwebopedia.com)

What does that strange computer word mean?

Whether you are a brand-new computer user or a very experienced user, it is hard to keep up with computer terms. Let www.pcwebopedia.com help demystify computer terms for you. Search by word or definition, or by computer category.