

Most of your tasks in Windows 7 will involve working with information stored on your computer. This tutorial briefly explains how information is stored in Windows 7. It also introduces you to one of the most useful programs for managing information in Windows—the Windows Explorer.

Windows 7 was designed for *file sharing*. What that means is that each person who logs onto the computer will access his or her own files, folders, fonts, Internet bookmarks, desktop pictures, and so forth. These files cannot be accessed by any other user, except for an administrator. Your computer may be configured to access Public folders. Public folders are used to share files with others using the same computer or other computers on a network. If your computer log-on is for “generic” or “guest,” you will not have sharing privileges with others, unless your instructor has set up a sharing folder.


## Libraries

Windows 7 includes libraries to help you organize files and folders. The default libraries are:

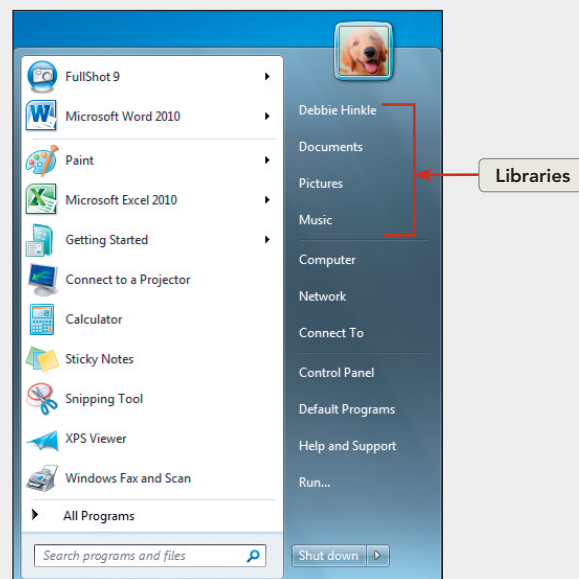
- Documents
- Music
- Pictures
- Videos

You can customize the list of libraries by creating your own personal libraries to store files and folders.

To open a library:

1. Click the Start button  to display the Start menu. A list of libraries appears on the right pane of the Start menu. Your computer may display different libraries from those shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**  
Start Menu



2. Click in a blank area of the desktop to close the Start menu.

**NOTE**

By default, file extensions are not displayed. To display file extensions, click the Start button, and choose Control Panel. Click Appearance and Personalization. Locate the Folder Options group, and click the link to Show hidden files and folders. Display the View tab, and then clear the Hide extensions for known file types check box.

## Files and Folder


The basic unit of storage in Windows is called a *file*. The documents you create and use, as well as the programs you use, are all files. These files are stored in *folders*, which can contain other folders as well as files.

File names in Windows may include up to 255 characters, including spaces. A file name also has an extension, which identifies the type of file. For example, the extension “.docx” identifies a file as a Word document. The extension is separated from the file name by a period (often called a “dot”), as in “Birthday.docx.” The following characters cannot be used in a file name:

\ / ? : \* “ > < |

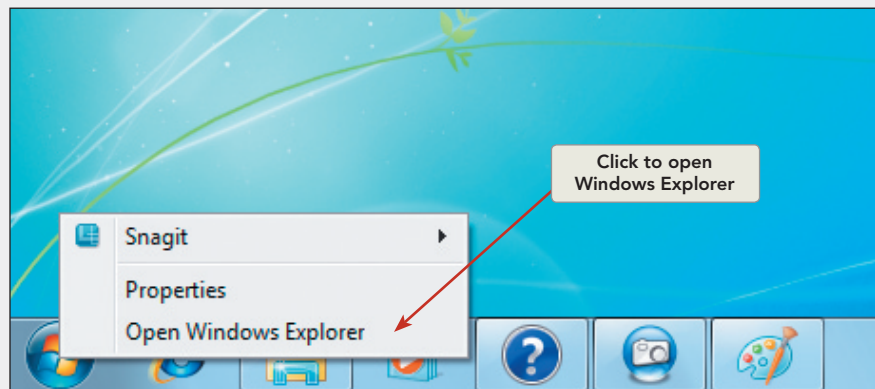
## Starting Windows Explorer

One of the most useful tools in Windows 7 for managing folders and files on your computer is Windows Explorer. This program displays folders and files and allows you to browse through all your computer’s drives and folders in a single window. You can also use it to see the contents of other computers on your network.


There are several ways in which you can open Windows Explorer. One way is to click the Windows Explorer button  on the taskbar.

A second way is to point to the Start button , and right-click. A shortcut menu displays and includes the option Open Windows Explorer.

**Figure 2**  
Start Button Shortcut  
Menu



Another way to open Windows Explorer is to use the Start menu.

1. Click the Start button  on the taskbar.
2. Choose **All Programs**.
3. From the All Programs submenu, choose **Accessories**.
4. From the Accessories submenu, choose **Windows Explorer**. The Windows Explorer folder appears.

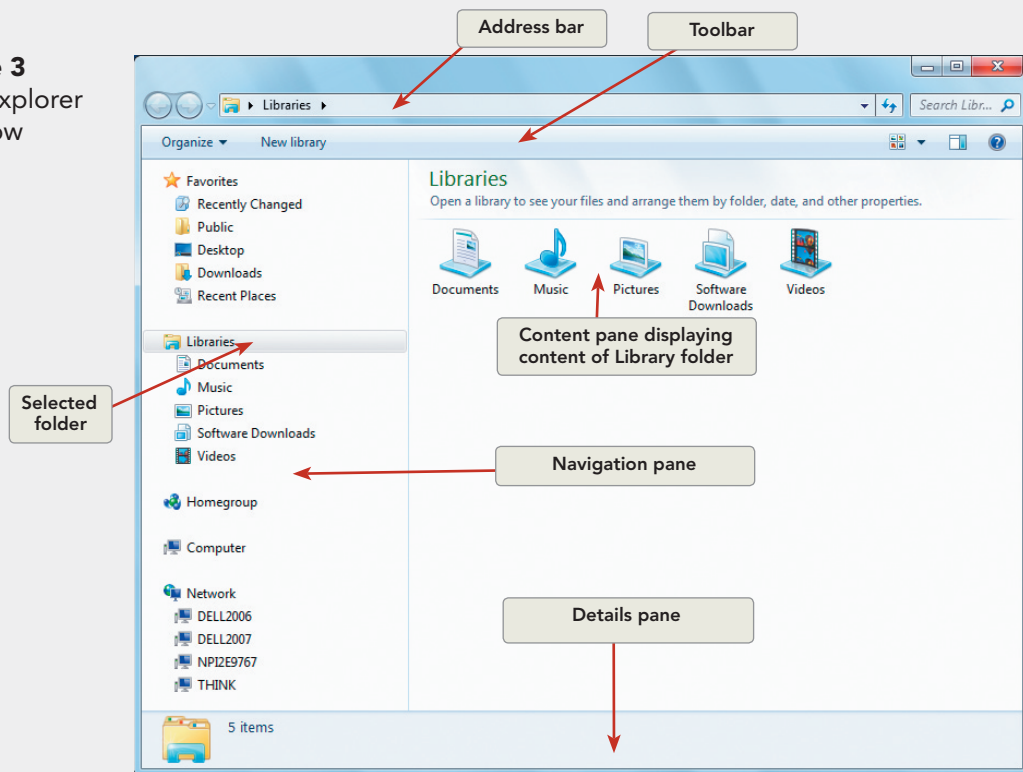
On some installations, you may not find Windows Explorer located in Accessories. In that case, do this:

1. Click the Start button.
2. Key **Explorer** in the Search box.
3. Click **Windows Explorer** under the Programs heading. The Windows Explorer window displays.

## The Windows Explorer Window

Windows Explorer is divided into panes: The left pane is the Navigation pane, and it shows the hierarchy of computers, drives, and folders. Each drive is identified by a letter. For example, the hard drive on your computer appears as Local Disk (C:). The right pane shows the contents of the item you click on the left pane. The Details pane at the bottom of the window displays information about a selected folder or file.

**Figure 3**  
Windows Explorer  
Window





The right pane of your Windows Explorer window might look different from the one shown in Figure 3. Windows Explorer enables you to control the way in which files and folders display in the right pane. The icons might be sized differently, or the contents of the folder might be arranged in a column format, showing such details as file type, date, and size.



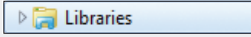
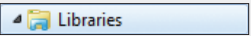


### NOTE


You can hide and display the panes in Window Explorer by clicking the Organize button and choosing Layout. A checkmark appears beside each pane that displays in the Windows Explorer window.

Any folder in the Navigation pane can be expanded to display its content or collapsed to hide the contents. You will see one of two icons to the left of folders in the Navigation pane. The white, open arrow to the left of a folder  Libraries indicates that the folder is collapsed. Click the arrow to expand the contents of the folder. Once a folder is expanded, the icon to the left of the folder changes to a black, solid arrow  Libraries.

Click the arrow to collapse the folder. Practice expanding and collapsing libraries and folders by following these steps:

1. Click the Windows Explorer button  on the taskbar if necessary to display Windows Explorer.
2. Locate and click **Libraries** in the Navigation pane. The Content pane displays the contents of libraries.
3. Locate and double-click the **Pictures** folder. The contents of the Pictures library displays.
4. Double-click the **Sample Pictures** folder to display the contents.
5. Click to select **Computer** in the Navigation pane. Notice the arrow  to the left of Computer.
6. Click the white arrow  to expand the contents of Computer. The white arrow changes to a black arrow.
7. Click the black arrow  to collapse the contents of Computer.

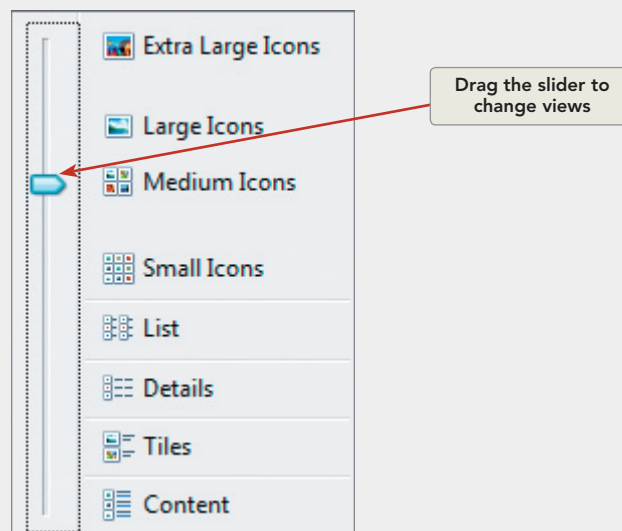
## View Files and Folders

There are several views for displaying files and folders. Use the Views button  to select one of the following options:


- Extra large icons
- Large icons
- Medium icons
- Small icons
- List
- Details
- Tiles
- Content

When you click the left side of the Views button, you cycle through five views (Large icons, List, Details, Tiles, and Content). Click the arrow on the right of the Views button to display the list of views, and use the slider to select a view.

**Figure 4**  
Views List



Practice changing the Windows Explorer view by following the steps listed below:

1. Open **Windows Explorer** if necessary.
2. Locate and click the arrow on the right side of the Views button .
3. Drag the slider to **Extra Large Icons**.
4. Display the list of views, and change the view to Small Icons. Notice the change in the appearance of the icons.
5. Switch the view to **Details**. The Details view displays files and folders in a horizontal list with the name, date modified, type, and size properties.
6. Change the display to **List**.



#### NOTE

You can also change the view by right-clicking the Content pane, and choosing View. A submenu displays with view options.

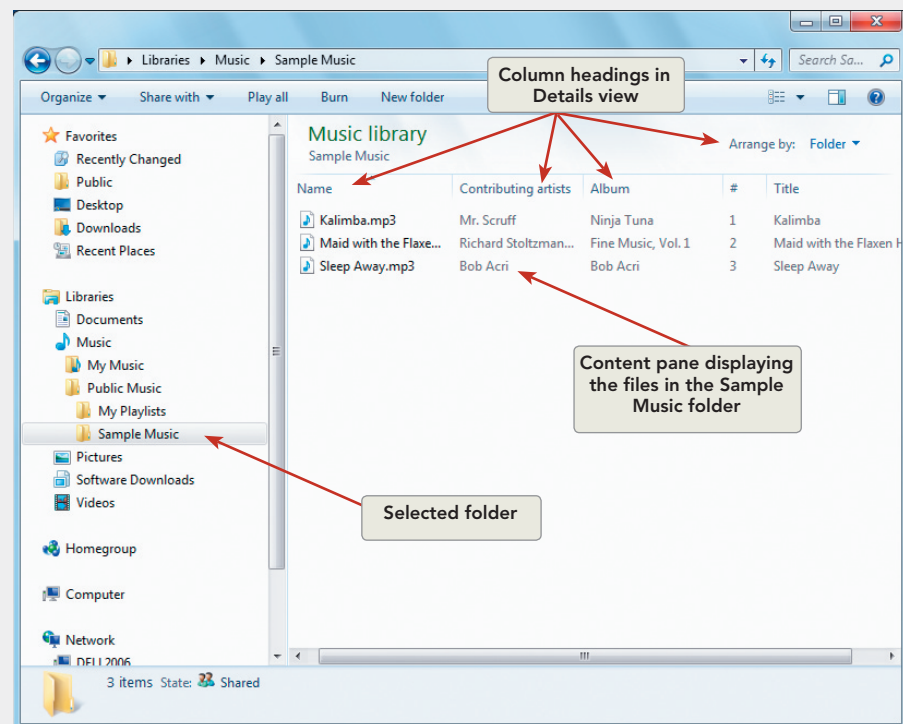
## Sort Folder Content

The Details view is used to arrange files and folders. By default the content of a window is displayed in alphabetical order. Subfolders appear before individual files in the list of folders and files.

To sort items in a window:



1. Locate and click the **Libraries** folder in the Navigation pane. The Content pane displays the contents of the Libraries folder.
2. Switch to **Details** view.
3. Locate the Music library in the Content pane, and double-click **Music library** to display its contents.
4. Double-click the **Sample Music** folder to view the contents.

**Figure 5**  
Details View

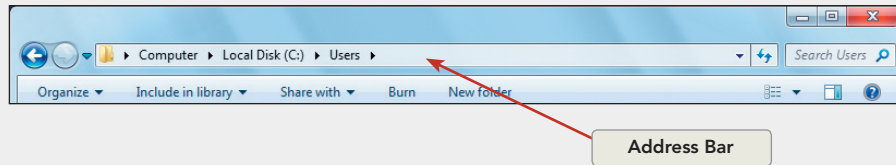


5. Locate the Album column heading, and click **Album** to alphabetize the list of files by album.
6. Click the **Name** heading to alphabetize the list by name. The files are listed in ascending order. Click the **Name** heading again to display the files in descending order.






## Using the Address Bar

The Address Bar appears at the top of the Explorer window and displays the path of your current location. You can use the Address Bar to change your location. Use the Back button  and the Forward button  to visit previously opened folders and libraries.

**Figure 6**  
Address Bar



Practice navigating using the Address Bar:

1. Open **Windows Explorer** if necessary.
2. Click **Computer** in the Navigation pane. The Address Bar displays Computer.
3. Click the arrow  to the right of Computer, and click **Local Disk (C:)**. The path listed in the Address Bar now includes Local Disk (C:), and the Content pane lists folders for the hard drive.
4. Click the arrow  to the right of Local Disk (C:), and choose **Users**. Notice the change in the Address Bar and the Contents pane.
5. Click the arrow  to the right of Users, and choose **Public**.
6. Click the Back button  to return to the previous level.
7. Click the Forward button  to return to the Public folder.
8. Close the Windows Explorer window.

## Copying Files and Folders

You can use Windows Explorer to manage files and folders on your computer. Common management tasks include copying files or folders, moving files or folders to new locations, renaming files or folders, deleting unneeded files or folder, and creating new file folders.



### NOTE

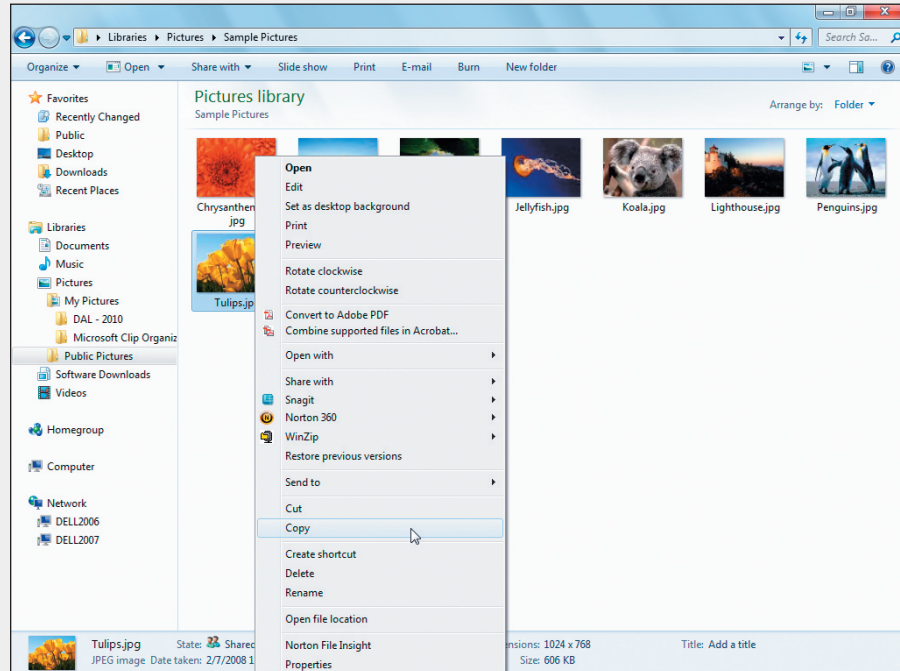
You might have to click several folders in the hierarchy to finally display the folder containing the file you wish to copy.

To copy a file or folder from one location to another, do the following:

1. In the Navigation pane, click the folder icon containing the file you wish to copy. The files within that folder appear in the Content pane.

2. Locate the file in the right pane and right-click the file name. A shortcut menu appears.

**Figure 7**  
Copying files Using  
the Shortcut Menu



#### TIP

You can select multiple files to copy. When files are adjacent to one another, select the first file, press and hold **[Shift]**, and click the last file. All files between the first and last files will be selected for copying. To select nonadjacent files, select the first file, press and hold the **[Ctrl]** key, select the remaining files, and then click. You can select all files by clicking the Organize button on the toolbar and choosing Select All. The keyboard shortcut to select all files is **[Ctrl]+[A]**.

3. Select **Copy** from the shortcut menu.
4. In the Navigation pane, locate the folder to which you will copy the file. Right-click the folder icon. A shortcut menu appears.



#### TIP

Use the open arrow and the scroll bar to adjust the viewing area if the folder isn't displayed.

**NOTE**

The cut, copy, and paste commands are available in the Organize menu.

- Choose **Paste** from the shortcut menu. The file is copied to the new folder. The file is now located in both the original location and the new location.

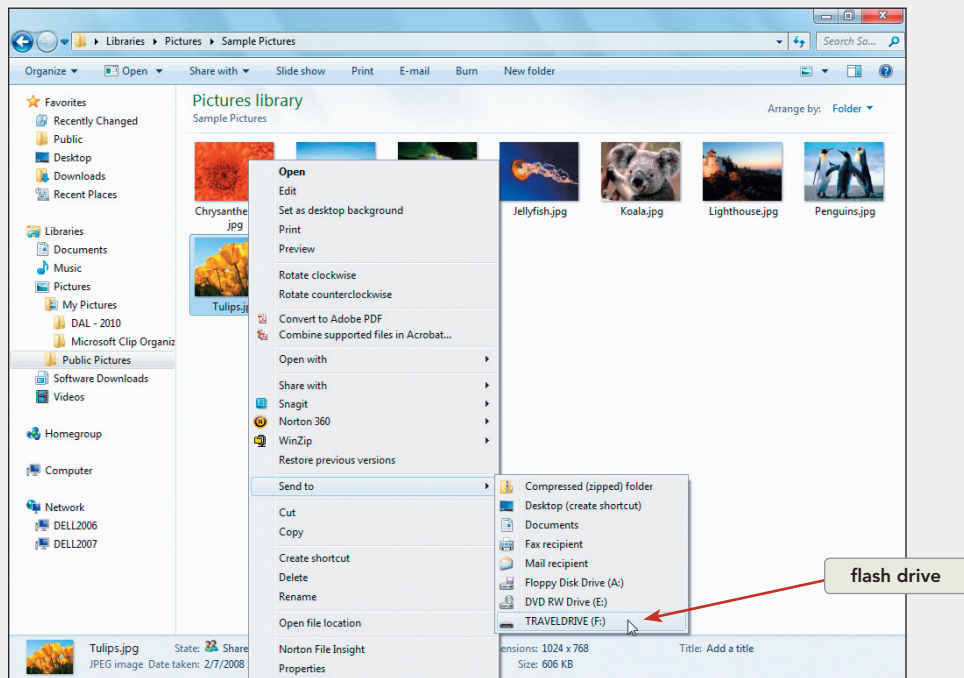
## Copying Files to Removable Storage Devices

To transport a file from school to home, you will typically need to copy the file onto a removable storage device. A flash drive is a common device for transferring, storing, and sharing files.

To copy a file from your school computer to a flash drive:

- Insert a flash drive. In the Navigation pane, click the folder containing the file you wish to copy. The files within that folder display in the Content pane.
- Locate the file in the right pane, and press the right mouse button. A shortcut menu appears.

**Figure 8**  
Copying Files to a  
Flash Drive

**TIP**

You can select multiple files to copy to a flash drive. When files are adjacent to one another, select the first file, press and hold **(Shift)**, and click the last file. All files between the first and last files will be selected for copying. To select nonadjacent files, select the first file, press and hold the **(Ctrl)** key, select the remaining files, and then click.



3. Choose **Send To** from the shortcut menu.
4. Choose the appropriate drive letter for the flash drive from the submenu. The file is copied to the flash drive.

**NOTE**

You might have to click several folders in the hierarchy to finally display the folder containing the file you wish to move.

**TIP**

You can select multiple files to move. When files are adjacent to one another, select the first file, press and hold **[Shift]**, and click the last file. All files between the first and last files will be selected for moving. To select nonadjacent files, select the first file, press and hold the **[Ctrl]** key, select the remaining files, and then click.

**TIP**

Use the white arrow symbols and the scroll bar to adjust the viewing area if the folder isn't displayed.

## Moving Files and Folders

You can also move files or folders from one location to another. This process is very similar to copying a file to another location. However, rather than choosing Copy from the shortcut menu when you right-click the file, you choose the Cut command.

To move a file or folder from one location to another, take the following steps:

1. In the Navigation pane, click the folder containing the file you wish to move. The files within that folder appear in the Content pane.
2. Locate the file in the Content pane and press the right mouse button. A shortcut menu appears.
3. Select **Cut** from the shortcut menu.
4. In the left pane, locate the folder to which you will move the file. Right-click the folder. A shortcut menu appears.
5. Choose **Paste** from the shortcut menu. The file is moved to the new folder. The file is located only in the new location. It has been moved from the original location.

Files can also be moved using the drag-and-drop method:

1. In the left pane, click the folder icon containing the file you wish to move. The files within that folder appear in the right pane.
2. Locate the file in the right pane, and select it.
3. Hold down the left mouse button, and drag the file to the left pane. Position the pointer over the desired folder. The folder is highlighted.
4. Release the mouse button when the desired folder is highlighted. The file is moved from the original location into the highlighted folder.

**NOTE**

You can only move a file from one location to another on the same disk when using the drag-and-drop method. If the target location is a different disk, a copy is made. You can also use the drag-and-drop method to copy a file by pressing the **[Ctrl]** key and holding down the left mouse button when selecting the file to copy.

**TIP**

If you mistakenly delete a file or folder (and you haven't emptied the Recycle Bin), you can restore the file or folder by opening the Recycle Bin window, right-clicking the item you want to restore, and choosing Restore from the shortcut menu.

## Deleting Files and Folders

You can use the **Delete** key or the **Backspace** to delete a selected file or folder, or you can choose Delete from the shortcut menu. When you delete a file or folder, it is placed in the Recycle Bin.

To delete a file or folder:

1. Locate the file or folder. A folder can be located in the Navigation or Content pane. A file will always be in the Content pane.
2. Right-click the file or folder.
3. Choose **Delete** from the shortcut menu.

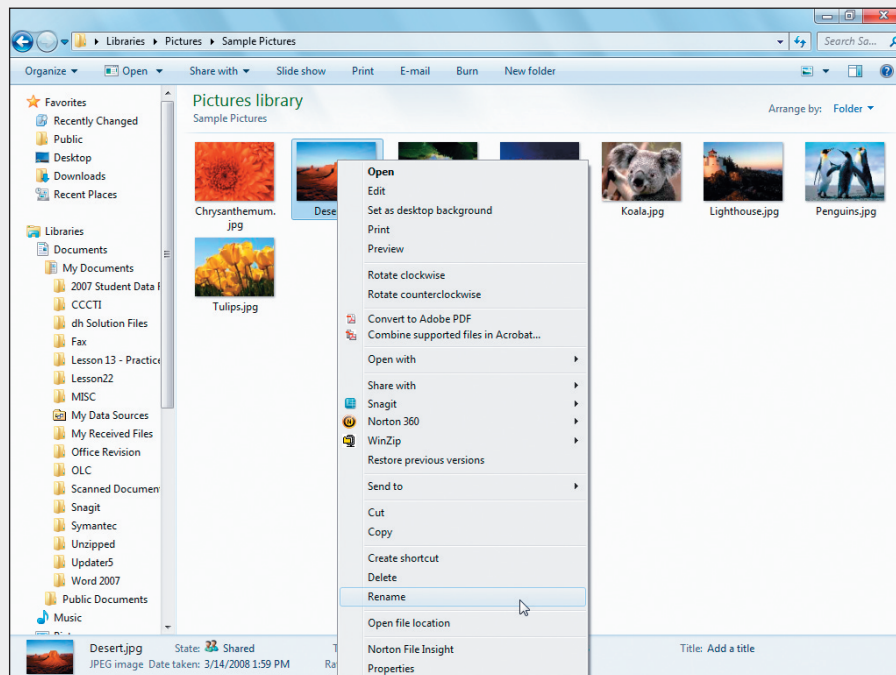
## Renaming Files and Folders

A common file management task is renaming files and folders.

To rename files and folders:

1. Locate the file or folder, and press the right mouse button. A shortcut menu appears.
2. Choose **Rename** from the shortcut menu.

**Figure 9**  
Renaming a File





3. Delete the old file name.
4. Key the new file name, and press **Enter**.


## Creating New Folders

Creating folders is a necessary part of file management. They are like folders in a file cabinet. Some people like to use many folders, with a few items in each one. Others use fewer folders with many files in each. You will develop your own system, but try to be consistent in your folder structure. Consistency makes it easier to locate files.

To create a new folder:

1. Select (highlight) the disk or folder in the Navigation pane where you want to create the new folder.
2. Click the New Folder button  on the toolbar. A new folder appears in the Navigation pane and the Content pane with the text “New Folder” selected.
3. Key the folder name, and press .

To create a new folder on the desktop:

1. Right-click anywhere on the desktop. The shortcut menu appears.
2. Click **New**, then click **Folder**. A new folder appears on the desktop.
3. Key the folder name, and press .