

WINDOWS EXPLORER

One of the most useful and dangerous programs on your PC is called Windows Explorer. This program allows the user to locate, move, copy, rename, create, and delete files and folders. The program is dangerous because in unskilled hands it can render Windows inoperable. However, if you are involved in file manipulation, whether for managing your MP3 collection or for backing up your accounting data, it is essential for you to learn this tool.

To start Windows Explorer, click Start>All Programs>Accessories>Windows Explorer. My preferred method for doing this is Window Key – E, press and hold down the Window key between Ctrl and Alt, tap E.

When the Windows Explorer starts up, there are two main windows in it, right and left. Across the top you will see File Edit View Favorites Tools Help. Below that you may see a row of buttons, it depends if they are turned on or not.

In the left windows, you will see at the top Desktop. Below that are usually My Documents, My Computer, My Network Places, Recycle Bin, and possibly other folders that you have on your Desktop. This is a pictorial representation of the way your PC is setup. The plus signs next to each of these tell you that there are sub-folders below. Click on the plus sign next to My Computer and you will see the plus sign turn to a negative and it expands the tree of items in My Computer. Click it again and the tree collapses and the negative turns positive.

Across the bottom of the Windows Explorer, there is a status bar, I use this thing all the time. If it is not there, click on View (at the top) and put a check mark next to Status Bar.

When you click on an item in the left window, its contents are shown in the right window. If you click on My Computer, you will see your drives show up in the right window. You can double-click on your C: drive (your primary hard drive) in the right window to see its contents OR you can just single click on the C: drive in the left window and the contents will show up on the right. You will see a bunch of folders and maybe some files there. Don't just start dragging things around in here, this is dangerous territory.

Single-click on My Documents in the left window. Click on File, go down to New, then click on Folder. A new folder will show up in the right window, highlighted and waiting for you to type a new name for it. Call it Sean's Test or whatever else you like, then double-click on it. Right-click in the right window and click New, and select New Text Document, then give it a name. When you double-click on this, Notepad will come up and let you enter straight text, but note that this is not a word processor. To delete the new folder and the text document in it, you can just click on the folder and either right-click delete it, or press the delete key.

Never left-drag, always right-drag, it gives you the option of cancelling!

If you have question or comments, I can always be reached via email sean@intrex.ca or join our forums at <http://intrex.ca> for more in-depth conversations.