

File management skills tutor

[The importance of file management](#)

File locations

[Viewing and accessing drives](#)

[Saving files](#)

[Deciding where to save files](#)

[When not to use the U: drive](#)

[Using folders to organize files](#)

[Finding misplaced files](#)

The importance of file management

Modern computers are capable of storing literally trillions of pieces of information. That's a lot of information! With just a little understanding of how to save files, your chances of being able to locate a file you saved greatly increases.

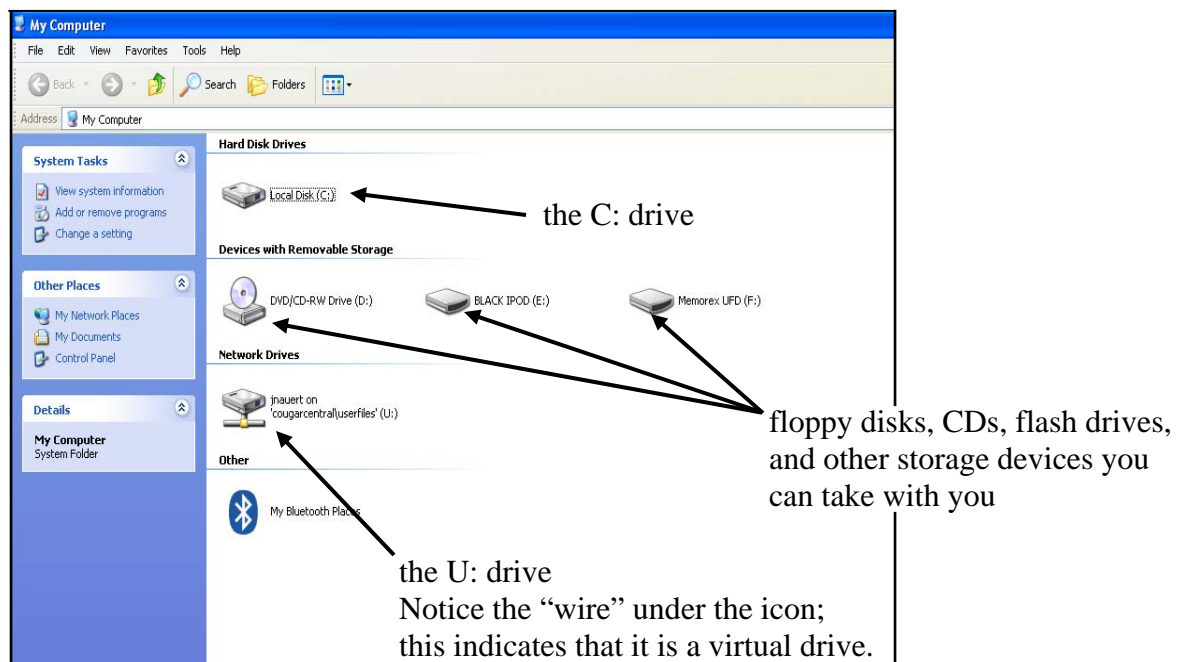
File locations

Files can be stored on many different drives or locations on your computer. Different letters identify the different drives. Although letter assignments may vary from computer to computer, the chart below shows common letter assignments.

Drive letter	Drive location
A:	Floppy drive, if any.
B:	Reserved for a second floppy drive, if any.
C:	Hard drive.
D:	CD or DVD drive, or second hard drive.
E: F: etc.	Additional CD/DVD drives, USB flash drives and/or memory card readers, as needed, in the order in which they were connected.
U:	"User drive". This is not actually on your computer. Instead, it is space assigned to your account on the server that you can access from any computer (on campus) when you log into your account.

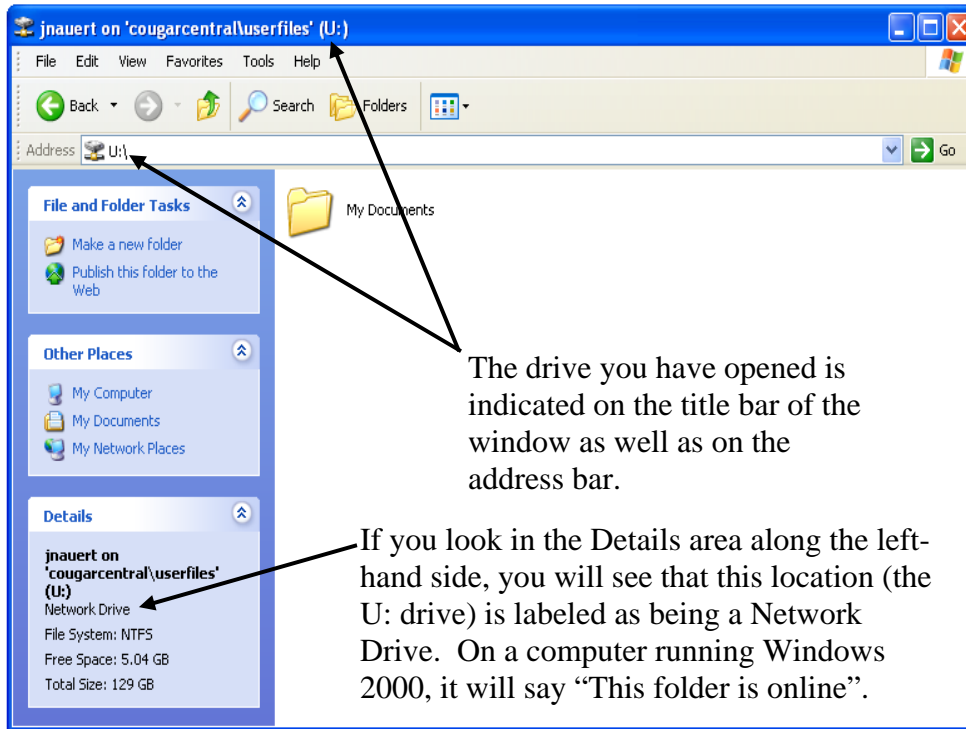
Viewing and accessing drives

In order to see all of the drives accessible to your computer, go to **Start → My Computer**, or double-click on the My Computer icon on your desktop, if there is one.

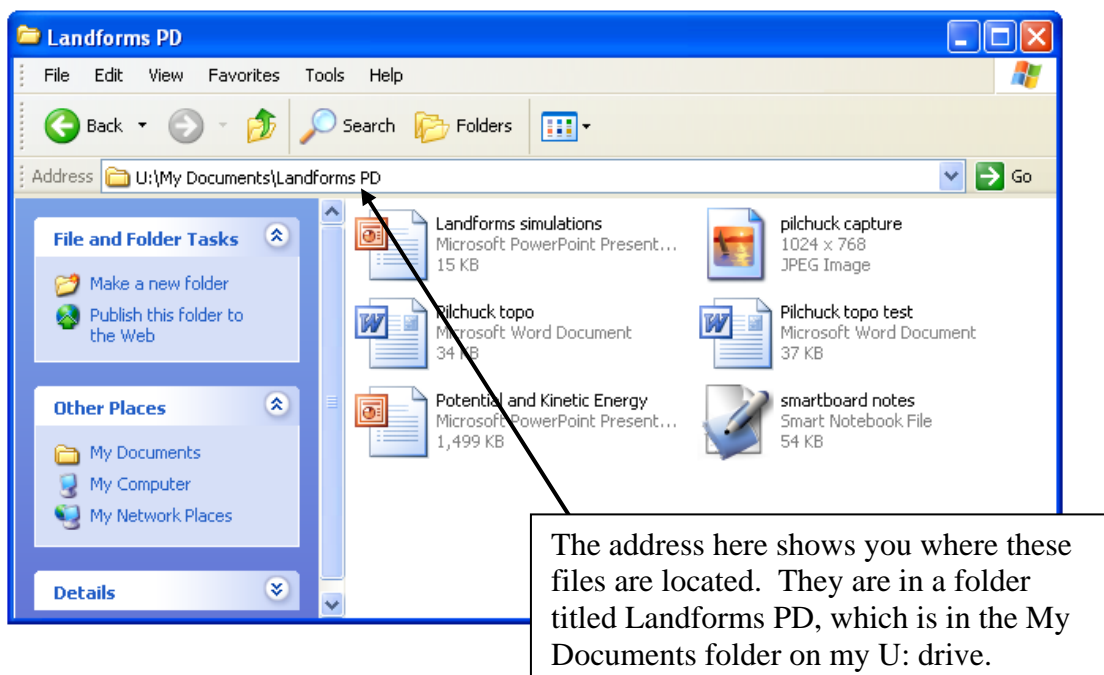


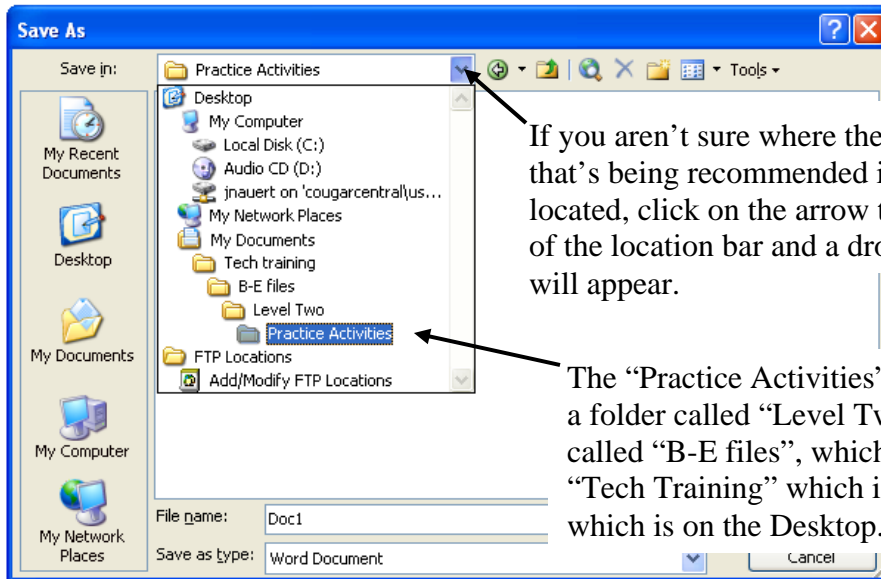
The C: drive will be listed under Hard Disk Drives. Floppy disk drives, CD/DVD drives, USB flash drives, memory cards, etc. will be listed under Devices with Removable Storage. The U: drive is listed under Network Drives and will appear as “yourusername on ‘cougarcentral\userfiles’ (U:)”. It is possible to have other network drives other than just the U: drive.

To open any drive, just double-click its icon. The window will change to show the contents of the drive you have opened.



As you open folders within the drive, the address bar will continue to show you which drive you are on.





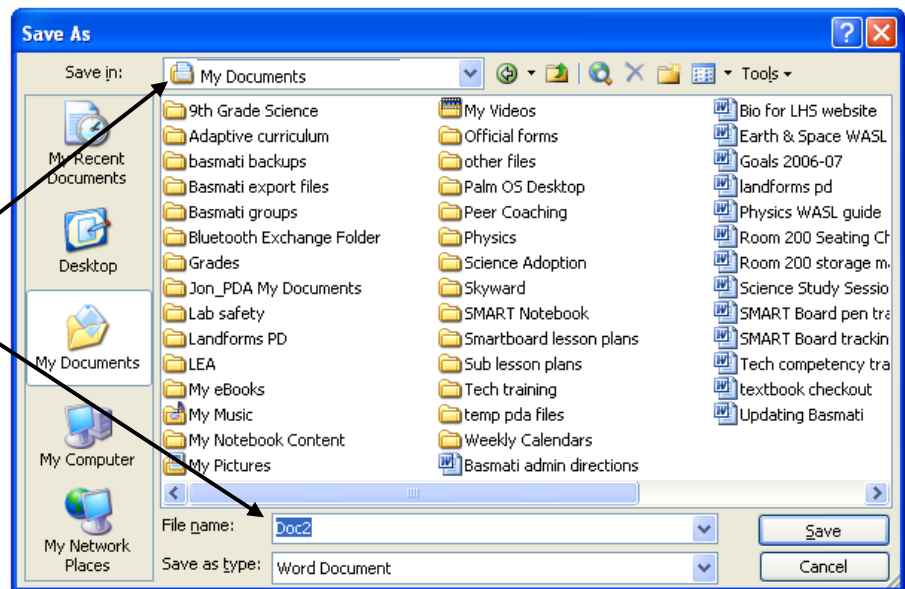
If you aren't sure where the folder that's being recommended is actually located, click on the arrow to the right of the location bar and a drop-down list will appear.

The "Practice Activities" folder shown here is inside a folder called "Level Two", which is inside a folder called "B-E files", which is inside a folder called "Tech Training" which is inside My Documents, which is on the Desktop.

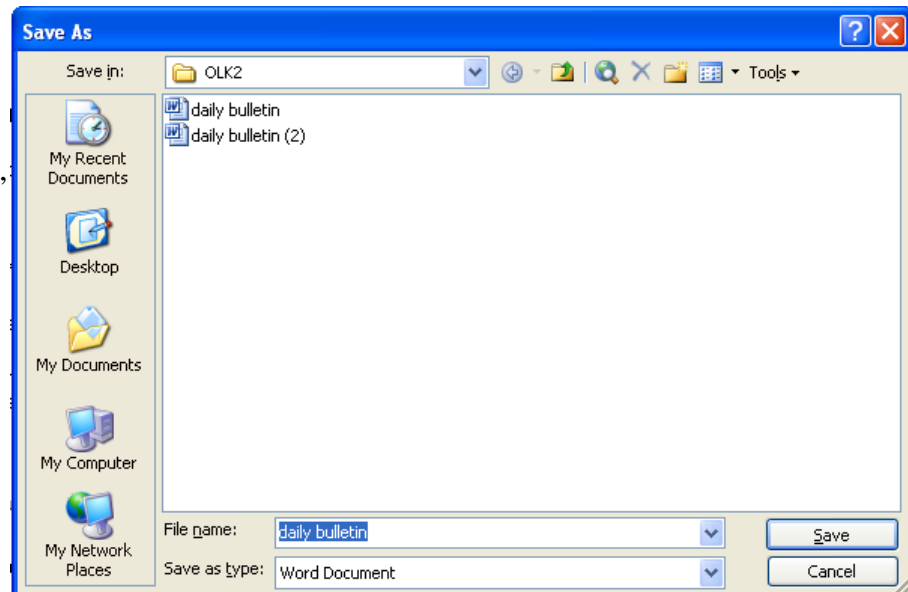
Saving files

Different programs work slightly differently when saving, but most are similar to what is shown below for Microsoft Word. It is important to actually look at the Save dialog box, rather than just clicking on the Save button. The first time that you save a file, the computer needs to be told what you want the file to be called and where you want it to be saved. If you don't tell it these things, the computer needs to guess where to put things and what to call them. Sometimes it does a good job, and other times it does not.

Word wants to save this file in the My Documents folder, which is good, but it wants to call it "Doc2".



Word knows that this file, which was sent as an email attachment, should be called “daily bulletin” but it wants to save it in the OLK2 folder. Will you be able to find that folder later?



Deciding where to save files

When you save a file in your My Documents folder on the desktop of your computer at school, it automatically gets saved to your U: drive. This is the best place to save the vast majority of your school-related work, for a variety of reasons. The U: drive is accessible from any networked computer on campus, giving you greater flexibility in accessing your files. Also, the U: drive gets backed up regularly, so in the event of an emergency, it may be possible to retrieve lost files. Work saved on the C: drive (the hard disk drive) may be irretrievably lost if your computer experiences a hard drive failure.

On the other hand, when you delete a file from the U: drive, or from a removable storage medium (such as a flash drive or floppy disk), it is truly deleted, unlike files deleted from the C: drive which just get transferred to the Recycling Bin.

Note: Chances are that your home computer does not have a U: drive or other network drives. There, you will most likely be saving work to the C: drive.

When not to use the U: drive

Digital photos and sound files (such as iTunes, Windows Media, or mp3 files) take up a lot of memory. For example, a large, high-resolution photo taken with a digital SLR camera at highest image quality can be 15 MB or more, while an album in iTunes format can easily be over 40 MB. Storing such files on the server eats up a lot of space, and can lead to bandwidth problems that make everyone’s computers run slow. It is better to store large files of this sort in limited quantities on your C: drive or on removable media such as CDs or flash drives.

Finding a misplaced file

Sometimes, you may forget where you saved a file. Windows has a Search function to locate these missing files. To access it, go to Start → Search.



There are several different options of how to search. The on-screen directions are pretty user-friendly.

