

# Beginning Windows Vista

## Lesson 7

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## Lesson 7 – Vista and Files

### Introduction

This lesson we review how to retrieve, copy and move, files or folders. And we discuss the Windows Vista file structure.

### Exercise 7 — Retrieving Documents and Accessing Files

#### Retrieving a Previously Saved Document

##### First Method

1. Open the WordPad application by clicking on the desktop shortcut or go to All Programs, Accessories and click on WordPad.
2. Click the Open icon on the WordPad toolbar. The resulting dialog box is similar to the Save As box because to open an existing file you must provide the computer with the same information, i.e. the file name and its location. Notice the Title Bar says “Open”.

3. This part gets a wee bit tricky because Vista tries to be helpful by setting the default folder location in the “Open” Address Bar to wherever the last user opened a WordPad file. If you do not see the Documents folder in the Address Bar, you may have to click on a location in the Navigation Pane or on one of the down-arrows next to the folder name in the Address Bar to locate your Documents folder. Your instructor can guide you here.
4. Click on My First File<sup>1</sup> to highlight it, and then click on the Open command button. Notice that your file is now displayed and ready for printing or editing.
5. Close WordPad.

### Quicker Method

Another way to access any document is to go directly to where it is filed. Try this:

1. At the Desktop open the Beginning Vista folder.
2. Double click on My First File.rtf and notice that WordPad opens with My First File already loaded.

### File Extensions

How did the computer know to open My First File with WordPad instead of some other application? The trick is in the **file extension**. Notice that the computer added something to the end of the file name, i.e. My First File.rtf. The period and the three letters “rtf” are the file extension<sup>2</sup>. File extensions let the computer know what kind (or format) the file is — in this case it is a Rich Text Format (rtf). When you click on a rich text file the computer knows to open it with WordPad. Some other file extensions that you may encounter are:

- .doc = a Microsoft Word document
- .pdf = Portable Document Format — a “universal” document form.
- .bmp = an image file (photo or other artwork)
- .jpg = another image file (photo or other artwork)
- .exe = an application (or program) file such as WordPad.
- .mp3 = an audio (music) file
- .wmv = a video (movie) file

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<sup>1</sup> My First File should have been saved in Documents in Lesson 5.

<sup>2</sup> If your home computer doesn't show the file extension refer to Appendix A.

There are other extensions unique to each format, but too many to list here.

### Saving an Existing Document

Having initially used Save As to give your document a name and a place, you do not need to use it the next time as long as you plan to use the same name and location. For example, if you make some changes to My First File, you can save it back to the hard drive by clicking on the Save icon on the WordPad tool bar (it looks like a floppy disk). In fact, after using “Save As” once to name and locate your document, it’s a good idea to click on Save every few minutes while you’re working just in case a power failure or some other problem comes along in the middle of your work.



If you forget, the computer will even remind you to save a modified document before closing the application. Try this exercise:

1. Open your My First File document (it may reside in your Beginning Vista folder). Make some changes to the text.
2. Now click on the X in the upper right corner of WordPad to close the application.
3. Notice that a popup window appears asking if you want to save the changes before closing WordPad. Click on “Yes” to save your changes or “No” if you want to discard them and retain your original version.

### Introduction to the Vista Filing System

Keeping track of files is a major function of the Windows Vista operating system, and it does this with the Windows Explorer program. This program permits you to store, retrieve, delete, move, and copy files and folders of various types on all storage devices connected to the computer. **Navigating** throughout your computer is an essential skill, and you use Windows Explorer to view folders such as Computer, Documents, Pictures and others to “see” and control the contents of the hard drive, the DVD/CD drive, thumb drives and other devices.

An overview of your computer and its contents is presented in the Computer window as described in the earlier lessons, and you have already used this facility to access files on the hard drive. Let’s explore a bit more.

Double click on the Documents folder to view its contents. Click once on the file My First File.rtf to select or highlight it. Notice that the properties of the file are displayed in the Preview Pane.

### **Moving and Copying**

Perhaps the simplest way to move or copy files or folders is to use the drag and drop method. Here's one way to move a file.

1. With the Documents window open point at My First File.rtf, drag it into the Navigation pane until the Picture folder becomes highlighted and drop it on the Pictures folder.
2. Notice that My First File.rtf has disappeared from the Documents window. Suppose, however, that this was a mistake and you want the file back. Click on the Organize action button on the Command bar and select Undo and the file will be restored.
3. At the Navigation Pane click on Pictures to open that folder. You should see a sub-folder named Sample Pictures. Drag the Sample Pictures folder into the Navigation Pane and drop it on Documents.
4. Return to Documents either by clicking on it in the Navigation Pane or by clicking on the Back arrow next to the Address Bar and note that the Documents folder now contains the Sample Pictures folder. Drag it back to the Pictures folder where it belongs.
5. Repeat step 1, but hold the Ctrl key down while you drag and drop on the Pictures folder. Notice that a large plus (+) sign appears as you drag. This informs you that you are copying the file, not moving it. Notice that My First File.rtf remains in the Documents folder.
6. Open the Pictures folder and note that it now has a copy of My First File.rtf. While there, let's delete it. Click once on it to select the file. Then click on the Organize button and select Delete (or simply press the Delete key on the keyboard). Confirm the delete and the file will disappear.

What happens when you drag files or folders changes depending on where you drag it. The following table (copied from the Windows Help facility) explains what happens. Read it carefully and note, for example, that if you drag a file to a different storage device (say, from the hard drive to a thumb drive) the file is *copied* not *moved*. And you didn't have to hold the Ctrl key down to do it!

### Dragging Files

When you drag a file	This is what happens
Into a folder on same hard disk	The file is moved to the destination folder.
Into a folder on a different hard disk	The file is copied to the folder on the destination disk.
Into the Navigation pane (left pane) of a folder	Nothing. You can't add files to the Navigation pane.

### Dragging folders

When you drag a folder	This is what happens
Into a folder on same hard disk	The folder is moved to the destination folder.
Into a folder on a different hard disk	The folder is copied to the folder on the destination disk.
Into the Navigation pane of a folder	A link to the folder is added to the Navigation pane, and the link is then available from the Navigation pane of every folder.

### Homework 7

ÿ Review Lesson 7 and read through Lesson 8

## Appendix A – Displaying File Extensions

Vista's default setup hides file extensions. To “unhide” them proceed as follows:

1. Open a folder such as Documents. At the Command Bar click on “Organize” and then select “Folder and Search Options”.
2. Click on the View tab at the top of the Folder Options dialog box.
3. Uncheck the “Hide extensions for known file types” box and click on OK.

You should now see the file extensions attached to the file names.

## Appendix B – Storage Devices

The following table lists the several types of storage devices found on most of today's computers.

<b>Drive Type</b>	<b>Capacity in Bytes*</b>	<b>Type of Storage</b>
Hard Disk (Fixed, non-removable)	Typically 40 or more Gigabytes (billion bytes)	Magnetic — Read/Write much like a tape recorder.
Compact Disk (CD) (Removable)	Typically 700 Megabytes (million bytes)	Read Only — Most CD's can be recorded once and then read many times (like a music CD or phonograph record). But most of them cannot be erased and used again.
Floppy Disk (Removable)	1.44 Megabytes	Magnetic — Read/Write like the Hard Disk, but with a significantly reduced capacity.
Flash Memory (Removable)	Typically 128 Megabytes up to 4 Gigabytes (4000 MB)	Solid-State — A unique device that uses micro-chips to store information.

\*A “byte” is roughly equivalent to a single character such as a letter or digit. A megabyte is equivalent to about 100 pages of text, and a gigabyte to something like 100,000 pages of text.

Why all the different types? Good question, but it has a simple answer: They serve different purposes. The Hard Drive is an essential part of the computer because it not only stores files (documents) that you create, but it also stores all

of the software programs needed by the computer to perform its functions. It has a massive storage capacity because today's computer programs are very large — many of them using several hundred megabytes. Also, the hard disk is fixed inside the computer — you cannot remove it and take it to another computer like you can with all of the other types.

CD's are relatively large capacity storage devices typically used to distribute software programs to your computer. Also, if so equipped you can "burn" (i.e. "record") CDs with, say, digital picture albums or music files and send them to friends or relatives who can then insert them in their computers and "see" the pictures or files you have sent. You can also backup (i.e. save) critical files on a CD and place it in a safe place should something happen to destroy files on your hard drive. Most computers also come with a sound system, and you can play music CDs by simply inserting them into the computer's CD drive.

Floppy Disks are beginning to disappear due to their limited capacity, but they remain a simple, cheap way to transfer files from one computer to another.

The Flash Memory devices are fast replacing floppies because they are removable and have a large capacity but are small and very easy to use. They are used to move files from computer to computer and to serve a backup function.

The so-called **Drive Letters** are an arbitrary assignment used within the computer structure to identify individual drives. Thus, the Hard Drive is typically referred to as "Drive C:" Drive letters always have a colon (:) appended to them. The sequence of drive letters may vary depending on how a computer is equipped. Here are typical drive letter assignments.

<b>Drive</b>	<b>Description</b>
A:	Floppy Disk
B:	Second Floppy Disk (if present)
C:	Hard Disk
D:	CD Drive (or 2 <sup>nd</sup> hard disk if present)
E:	CD Drive if 2 <sup>nd</sup> hard disk present, or perhaps a DVD (video disk) drive, or one of the Flash Memory devices mentioned above.