

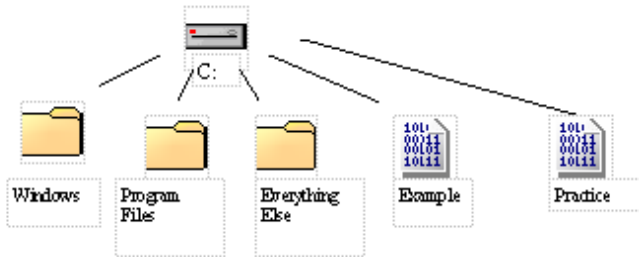
Getting Started: Your Files

Overview

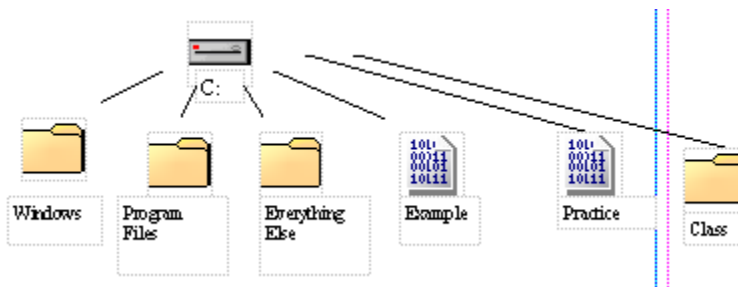
Files contain all of the information that makes your computer useful. From small documents to the application files that make programs run, everything within a computer requires files. The ones we're concerning ourselves with today are the files we create and work with.

File Structure

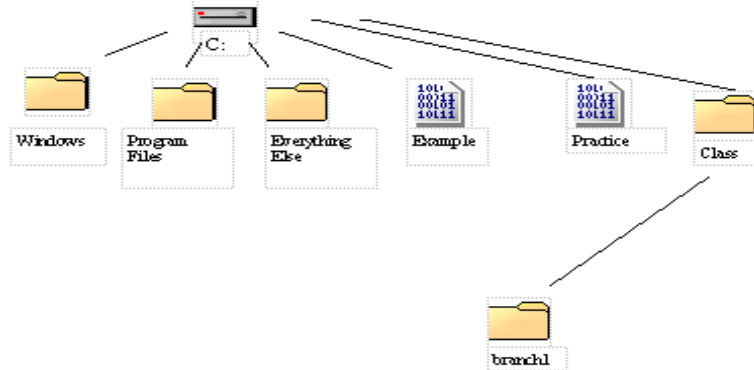
To be able to get the most out of our computers we need to understand how the files it uses are stored and how they relate to each other. This is important whether you're installing, running, or deleting an application. We'll go step by step through creating directories and moving files to hopefully make it clearer how these things are arranged.



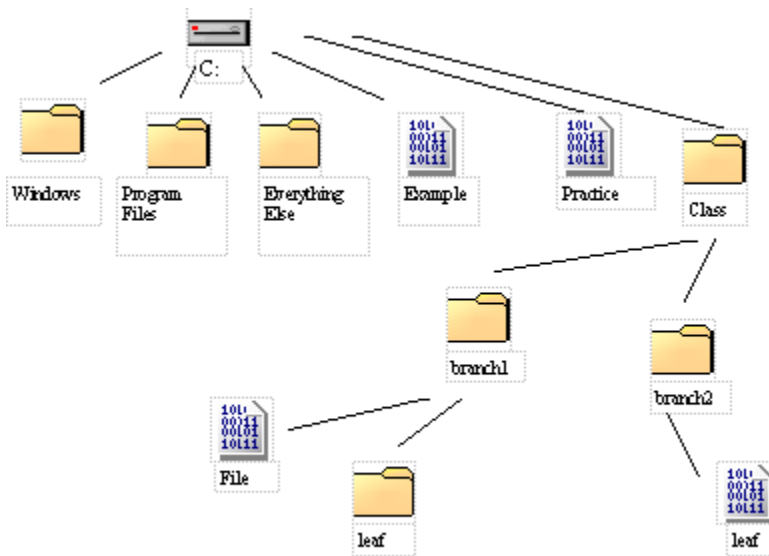
Here we have a diagram of a hard drive with 3 folders (also called directories): Windows, Program Files, Everything Else; and 2 Files: example, practice. You see how C: (called the *root* drive) has five branches, each one going to one of the objects mentioned above. Lets look at how the image will change if we add another folder, named "class" to the root drive.



You see how another branch has been added to our *file tree* to accommodate this new folder. Now let's open that new folder and add a folder named "branch 1" within "class". Now the image looks like this:



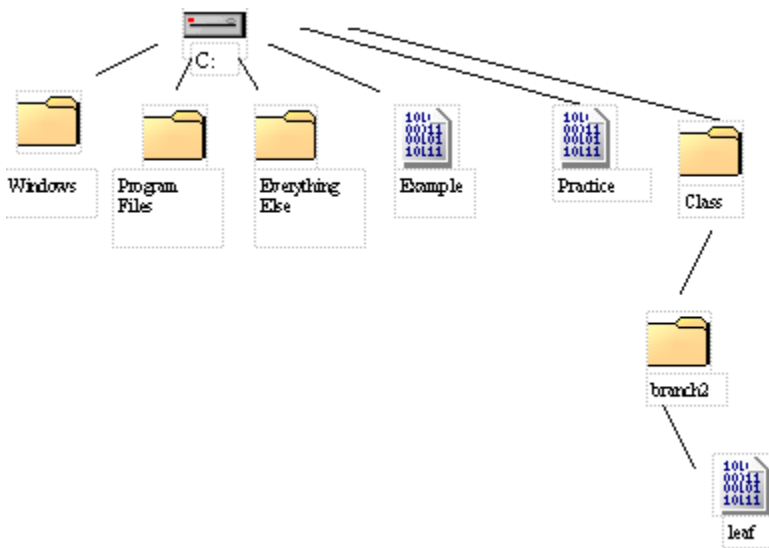
Now you can see an example of descending branches. To make the example clearer we'll continue adding files and folders till the diagram looks like this:



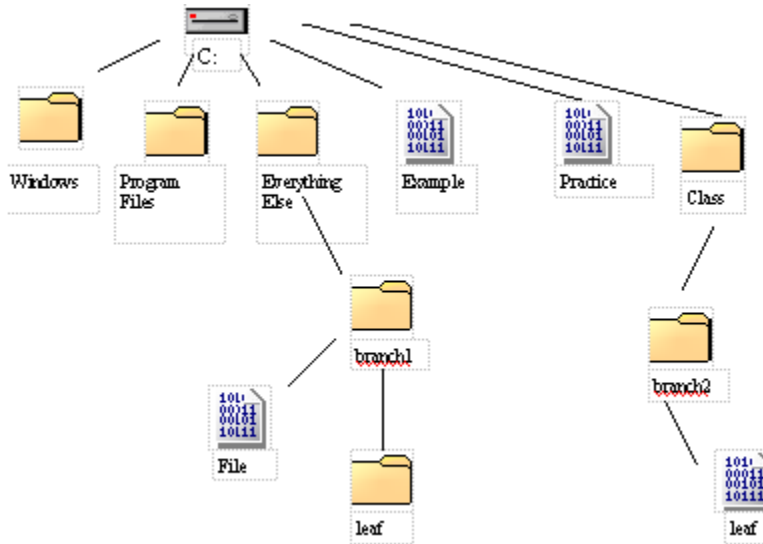
Now if we were to delete the folder

c:\class\branch 1

we would see how all the branches attached to "branch 1" are also deleted:



Similarly, if we move instead of deleting it we can see how all the folders branches and leafs are also moved.



Drives

Different drives inside our computer represent different physical or logical storage systems. Here is a quick summary of drive options:

- Hard Drive/Local Drive/Hard Disk – A physical drive located inside of the computer
- External Drives – Optical drives, disk drives, USB drives
- Network Drives – Storage on shared locations
- Cloud Drives – A local representation of a space reserved for you on the world wide web

Libraries

Windows provides default locations for documents, images, videos, and downloads. In earlier versions of Windows these were called “My Documents”, “My Pictures”, etc. Windows 7, 8, and 10 simply refer to the locations as libraries and describe them by their contents. These libraries provide a default location for browsers and other applications to store media.

Storage/Backup

To protect against possible lost files you can create a secondary copy of them. There are a number of possible options for safe storage:

- External Hard Drive
- Optical Drive
- Cloud Storage

Management

Copy/Cut/Paste

First, select the item you want to copy or cut:

- If it's a file in a folder that you want to copy (to duplicate) or cut (to move) into another folder, click on the file to select it. To select multiple files at once, hold down the Control (CTRL) key (on Windows) or the Command key (on older Macs, it's the Apple logo; on newer Macs, it's this curly-do: ⌘) while clicking the other files.
- For images, right-click on the image, then click on "Copy" or "Copy Image" depending on the application.
- If you want to copy some text, highlight it by clicking just before the first letter you want to copy, hold down the mouse button while dragging your mouse to the right, and then releasing after you have selected your text.

Delete/Restore

File deletion is a way of removing a file from a computer's file system.

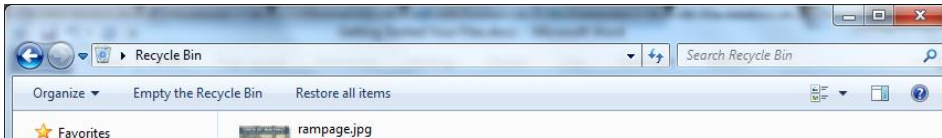
The reasons for deleting files are

- Freeing the disk space
- Removing duplicate or unnecessary data to avoid confusion
- Making sensitive information unavailable to others

To delete a file left-click it and click the delete button on your keyboard or right-click the file and select delete from the menu that appears. You will either be asked if you want to permanently delete the file or if you want to send it to the recycling bin, depending on what kind of disk you're deleting from.



If the file deleted was sent to the recycling bin it can be resorted by double clicking the recycle bin icon on the desktop (shown above), right clicking the file in question, and selecting restore. Note how the recycle bin appears to have crumpled paper in it when there are files available to restore. Also be aware that restored files will go back to their original location.



Rename

Right-click on the file you want to change and select rename. Be careful not to change the extension if it is shown.