

Friendly Folders & Files

Part Three Different Types of Files



Introduction

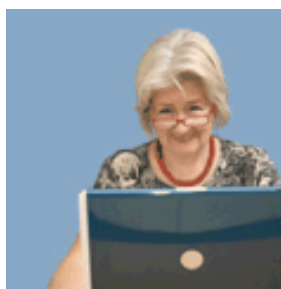
Dear Friend,

Welcome to The Web on Wheels' Friendly Files & Folders, Part Three in this series! In this section, we look at how many different file types computers use, what part of the file name indicates those file types, the fact that we should never change the file type ourselves, and a quick, easy quiz that'll help you practice what you've learned. You may return to the exercise in the future to do a quickie brush up on knowing your way around your computer.

Our main goal in this series is to help you to gain confidence with your computer's filing systems, and make it into a useful everyday tool, rather than thinking of it as something rather frightening. Believe it or not, if you go through these Guides slowly and carefully, you will become confident in finding files on your computer, understanding how your computer organises files and folders, types of files, creating folders, and organising your personal files and folders the way you like.

Since organising files on your computer is so important, we think you'll benefit from doing the exercises at the end of each part in this series. If you complete all the exercises, you'll be far more confident and practiced in these concepts, and we'll send you a Certificate of Achievement as a reward for all your hard work.

Remember, it's our goal to help you grasp these sometimes daunting concepts. If you've hit a roadblock and you're not sure what to do, don't hesitate to call Viv on: (03) 9787 7500 or via email: info@thewebonwheels.com.au



Part Three of this series introduces the many different types of files out there and how they're used by different programs. Simple and straightforward, we'll empower you to just look at a particular file and know, "oh that file is a word processing document, so I'll open it up in my word processing program", just by looking at the last few letters in the file name.

By the end of this chapter, you'll take an easy quiz and email me your answers, showing how confident you've become with file types. Enjoy!

Part Three

Different Types of Files

For Part Three, learning about file types is very simple, and very important to know. Each file has three or four letters at the end, appearing after a dot, e.g. my_letter_to_aunt_shirley.doc the “doc” part indicates what type of file you’ve got. And wasn’t that simple? Every computer file has a dot and three letters that follow the file’s name. Remember from Part Two, you’re able to name files whatever you wish. However, we must add one important point: you must not change the letters appearing after the dot, since the computer needs to read those in order for your computer programs to properly open the file – and for the correct program to open the file properly.

Here's what we'll cover in Part Three:

1. Where Do I Figure Out What Type of File This Is?
2. Many of the Most Common File Types You May Encounter
 - o doc, txt, rtf – word processor
 - o xls – spreadsheet
 - o pdf – a scanned document
 - o jpg, gif, png, bmp, tif – pictures or images
3. Which Programs Commonly Handle Which Files?
4. EXERCISE 3: Quick Quiz on File Types, an Easy ‘A’

Let's jump right in!

1. Where Do I Figure Out What Type of File This Is?

Recall that in Part Two, we learned how to name files in a way that's easy to remember. Now let's talk about what part of a file name the computer does control!

Remember:

What Is a File?



myrecipes.xls



Letter_to_Aunt_Shirley.doc

A file is a collection of information such as a letter to Aunt Shirley, a picture of your best friend, or a recipe for chicken soup.

Think of a file on a computer as a piece of paper on your desk. You know how letters are normally on white sheets of paper, whilst photos are on thick, glossy paper, whilst recipes tend to be on smaller index cards? Well, the same goes for files on your computer... these files, or pieces of paper, look different, so for your computer to understand how to read that particular shape, colour and size of paper, (the amount of information and the format or appearance of that information on the computer file), it must know what type of file it is.

Where Do I Find the File Type?

The part of a file name the computer needs in order to understand what to do with the file, is the part that comes after the dot. To a computer, this is what a file's name means:

filename.filetype

The letters that come *before* the dot are what **you use** to recognize and remember what's in the file.

The letters that come *after* the dot are what the **computer uses** to know what's in the file.

2. Many of the Most Common File Types You May Encounter

We know that there are many different types of files – indeed there are hundreds of the. But most of these we will never use. For our series, we'll just be looking at the ones that you will commonly use or create (by saving) on the computer: pictures, spreadsheets, and letters. For each of these types of files, the computer has a three-or four letter code that goes after the dot.

What's the reason for the three or four letters? It tells the computer which programs can access that file and interpret it so you can see that file displayed correctly on the screen.

File Types for Letters

Let's take a look at a letter we wrote to Aunt Shirley. For sample purposes, let's say we've named the file: `lettertoauntshirley`.

Here are a few of the different types of files a letter to Aunt Shirley may look like. Remember, what comes after the dot is computer-ese and should not be changed.

`lettertoauntshirley.doc`
`lettertoauntshirley.txt`
`lettertoauntshirley.rtf`
`lettertoauntshirley.wpd`
`lettertoauntshirley.pdf`



When you're in "My Computer" the icons for letters look like the little pictures displayed above.

In actuality, they're all the same letter we wrote to Aunt Shirley, but the part that comes after the dot indicates to the computer which software program it should use to open your letter. To open the right program, we'll cover that in a short while.

File Types for Recipes and Other Collections of Information on a Spreadsheet

Spreadsheets have columns and rows and are often referred to as a 'chart.' If you've got a lot of recipes, you may have a spreadsheet that organises your famous recipes into categories like desserts, appetisers, salads, and soups. Your spreadsheet may have a column that indicates the recipe's title, and a column next to it that represents what type of meal the recipe makes. The most common file type for spreadsheets is `.xls`

Let's take a look at our famous recipes file. For sample purposes, let's say we've named the file `myfamousrecipes`.

Here are a few of the different types of files that hold a chart of recipes may look like. Remember, what comes after the dot is computer-ese and should not be changed.

myfamousrecipes.xls
myfamousrecipes.csv
myfamousrecipes.wks
myfamousrecipes.pdf



When you're in "My Computer" the icons for spreadsheets look like the little pictures displayed.

In actuality, they're all the same chart of columns and rows that we use to organise our famous recipes, but the part that comes after the dot indicates to the computer which software program it should use to open your recipes. To open the right program, we'll cover that in a short while. Let's move on to images and photos.

File Types for Photos and Images and Graphics

Whether you take the photos or your friends do, you'll surely come across files that have little or no words and are simply a picture, whether a photo or a piece of clipart to decorate an invitation or brochure.

Let's take a look at a photo of our family. For sample purposes, let's say we've named the file myfamilyphoto.

Here are a few of the different types of files a photograph of your family may look like. Remember, what comes after the dot is computer-ese and should not be changed.

myfamilyphoto.jpg
myfamilyphoto.gif
myfamilyphoto.tif
myfamilyphoto.bmp
myfamilyphoto.png
myfamilyphoto.pdf



When you're in "My Computer" the icons for pictures look like the little pictures displayed here.

In actuality, they're all the same picture you took of your family last Christmas, but the part that comes after the dot indicates to the computer which software program it should use to open your photo. Additionally, for pictures, the file type indicates how the coloured dots are organised in the photo. To open the right program, we'll cover that in a short while.

3. Which Programs Commonly Handle Which File Types?

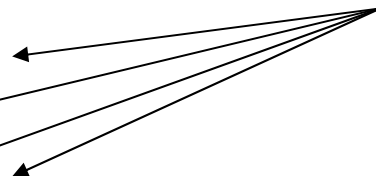
Different programs handle different types of files. If you've ever opened the wrong sort of file for a particular program, normally what you see is a bunch of boxes or weird characters which you can't understand at all. This is because the program you've opened, for some reason, is not reading the file correctly. Most of the time, it's because you're trying to open the wrong sort of file for the program you have open.

If you see all those weird characters, ask yourself, am I using the proper program for viewing this file? If you're not sure, go through this section whenever you come across this challenge.

Which Programs Can Open My Letter to Aunt Shirley?

Dear Aunt Shirley needs another letter, and you want to print it out and send it. So now that you've located the correct file on your computer, what program will you use to open it? Look at the letters following the dot.

lettertoauntshirley.doc
lettertoauntshirley.txt
lettertoauntshirley.rtf
lettertoauntshirley.wpd



Microsoft Word opens up: doc, txt, and rtf files.

Adobe WordPerfect opens up: wpd, txt, and rtf files.

Notepad and WordPad and TextEdit open up: txt and rtf files.

Adobe Reader opens up: pdf files.

Oftentimes, when you double-click on a file, the proper program will start up automatically and furthermore that program will automatically open up the file you've chosen. It's so lovely when that happens, but in the scenarios in which it doesn't, use this Part Three as a reference.

Which Programs Can Open My Recipes Spreadsheet?

You've got another recipe to add to your famous collection. So now that you've located the correct file on your computer, what program will you use to open it? Look at the letters following the dot.

myfamousrecipes.xls
myfamousrecipes.csv
myfamousrecipes.wks
myfamousrecipes.pdf



Microsoft Excel opens up: xls and csv files.

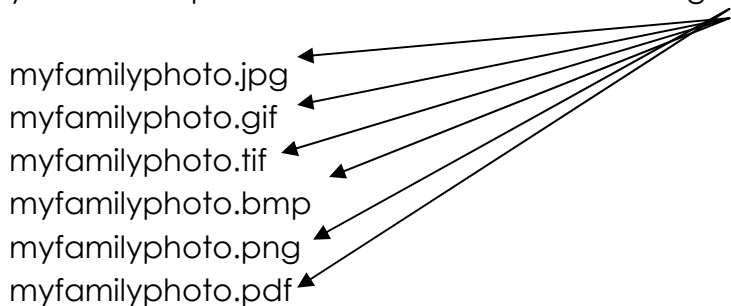
Lotus Notes and/or Lotus 1-2-3 open up: wks and csv files.

Adobe Reader opens up: pdf files.

Oftentimes, when you double-click on a file, the proper program will start up automatically and furthermore that program will automatically open up the file you've chosen. It's so lovely when that happens, but in the scenarios in which it doesn't, use this Part Three as a reference.

Which Programs Can Open My Letter to Aunt Shirley?

You've got another picture from your friends or family, and you want to view it. So now that you've located the correct file on your computer, what program will you use to open it? Look at the letters following the dot.



Honestly, there are so many types of programs out there that will open up an image file such as a photograph. The computer industry's standard program for viewing photos and images is Adobe Photoshop. However, many of our cameras come with photo viewing programs (software) and there are plenty of image editing programs out there that do exactly what Photoshop does. If you've got a program on your computer that we don't list below, just do a bit of trial and error and try selecting different programs and see what works for you.

Adobe Photoshop opens up: jpg, gif, tif, png, and pdf files.

Microsoft Paint opens up: bmp files.

Adobe Reader opens up: pdf files.

NOTE: Most digital cameras automatically create a jpg file when a photo is taken, so once you've uploaded files from your camera onto your computer, you'll see they're all the jpg file type.

Oftentimes, when you double-click on a file, the proper program will start up automatically and furthermore that program will automatically open up the file you've chosen. It's so lovely when that happens, but in the scenarios in which it doesn't, use this Part Three as a reference.

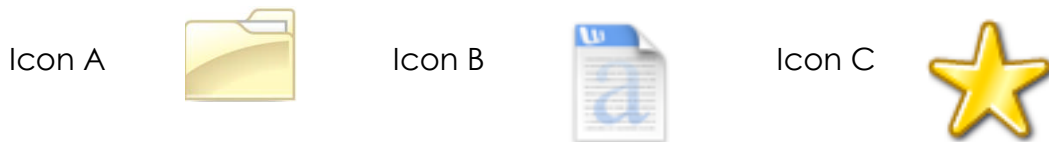
5. EXERCISE 3: Quick Quiz on File Types an Easy 'A'

So go ahead! Put this Part Three into practice!

1. Which of the following file types could be a family photograph?

familyphoto.xls
thisisthefamilyphoto.txt
familyphoto.jpg

2. Which of the following icons is a file?



3. What file type could be any one of these: a photo or a spreadsheet of recipes or a letter to Aunt Shirley? (Hint: this file type appears in all three sets of common file types)

pdf
txt
csv

Now, send me an email: info@thewebonwheels.com.au or call on: (03) 9787 7500 to tell me your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3!

I'd love to hear from you and see how it's going so far. I'd also like to congratulate you and send you a certificate at the end of this series on Friendly Folders and Files.

Part Three Summary

Congrats! You've finished Part Three: Different Types of Files

You've made it! Now you know what those funny three letters are that appear behind the dot of a file name. Cheers! Just a short time ago, if I asked you to tell me what sort of program might open up a jpg photograph, you wouldn't know. Now you're a pro at figuring out what sort of information is in each file type and which program will be able to read each file type. Most importantly, you'll be able to do this in the future too. Remember, you may always come back to this lesson any time to review common file types and what sort of file they are and which program will allow you to view the file.

This concludes our 'Friendly Files and Folders' series.

If you would like more help, or one-on-one coaching, please call Viv on: (03) 9787 7500 or email: info@thewebonwheels.com.au