FILE MANAGEMENT

1. Introduction

A computer stores a large amount of information such as documents, pictures, videos, music, programs, and school work. To keep this information organised and easy to find, users need to know how to **create, store, organise, rename, copy, move, and delete files and folders**.

The process of organising and managing files and folders on a computer is called **File Management**. Good file management helps users find information quickly, avoid losing important work, and keep the computer's storage organised.

For example, instead of saving all school work in one location, a learner can create a folder called **School Work**, and inside it create separate folders such as **Computer Studies**, **Mathematics**, and **English**.

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2. Meaning of File Management

File Management is the process of **creating, organising, storing, naming, copying, moving, protecting, and deleting files and folders on a computer or other storage device.**

Example

A learner may organise their Computer Studies work as follows:

```
Documents
└── School Work
    └── Computer Studies
        ├── Notes
        ├── Assignments
        ├── Projects
        └── Pictures
```

This makes it easier for the learner to locate a particular piece of work.

3. File Management Terminologies

3.1 File

A **file** is a collection of information stored on a computer and given a name.

Examples include:

- `Computer_Studies.docx`
- `My_Picture.jpg`
- `Lesson_Notes.pdf`
- `Music.mp3`
- `School_Report.xlsx`

A file can contain text, pictures, sound, video, or other types of information.

3.2 Folder

A **folder** is a container used to store and organise files and other folders.

For example:

```
School Work
├── Computer Studies.docx
├── Mathematics.docx
└── English.docx
```

The folder **School Work** contains three files.

Simple example

Think of a **folder as a physical file folder** in an office. Instead of keeping papers in it, a computer folder keeps digital files.

3.3 Subfolder

A **subfolder** is a folder created inside another folder.

For example:

```
School Work
├── Computer Studies
├── Mathematics
└── English
```

Here, **Computer Studies**, **Mathematics**, and **English** are subfolders of the **School Work** folder.

3.4 File Name

A **file name** is the name given to a file so that it can be identified.

Example:

```
Computer_Studies_Notes.docx
```

Here:

Computer_Studies_Notes → File name

.docx → File extension

A good file name should clearly describe what the file contains.

Good examples

- `Form_2_File_Management_Notes.docx`
- `Term_1_Assignment.pdf`
- `Grade_12_Project.xlsx`

Poor examples

- `New Document.docx`
- `Work1.docx`
- `ABC.docx`

3.5 File Extension

A **file extension** is the part of a file name that normally appears after the final dot (`.`). It indicates the type or format of the file.

Examples:

Extension	File Type
`.docx`	Microsoft Word document
`.xlsx`	Microsoft Excel workbook
`.pptx`	PowerPoint presentation
`.pdf`	Portable Document Format
`.jpg`	Image
`.png`	Image
`.mp3`	Audio
`.mp4`	Video
`.txt`	Text file
`.exe`	Executable program

Example

```
Computer_Studies.docx
                    ↑
              File extension
```

3.6 Drive

A **drive** is a storage location used by a computer to store files and folders.

Examples include:

- Local Disk (C:)
- Data (D:)
- USB drive
- External hard drive

Example:

```
C:
└── Users
    └── Student
        └── Documents
```

3.7 Storage Device

A **storage device** is a physical device used to store digital information.

Examples include:

- Hard Disk Drive (HDD)
- Solid State Drive (SSD)
- USB flash drive
- Memory card
- External hard drive

3.8 Path

A **path** shows the location of a file or folder on a computer.

For example:

```
C:\Users\Student\Documents\School Work\Computer Studies
```

The path tells us where the **Computer Studies** folder is located.

Think of a path like an address

Just as a house has an address that tells you where it is located, a file has a path that tells the computer where it is stored.

3.9 File Explorer

File Explorer is a Windows program used to view, organise, manage, and access files and folders.

Using File Explorer, a user can:

- Create folders

- Open files
- Copy files
- Move files
- Rename files
- Delete files
- Search for files
- View storage devices

In Windows 11, File Explorer can be opened by clicking its icon on the taskbar or using:

Windows Key + E

3.10 Create

To **create** a file or folder means to make a new one.

For example, a learner can create a folder called:

```
Computer Studies
```

Inside it, the learner can create another folder:

```
Assignments
```

3.11 Open

To **open** a file or folder means to access its contents.

For example, double-clicking:

```
Computer_Studies.docx
```

may open the document in Microsoft Word.

3.12 Save

Saving means storing changes made to a file so that the work can be used later.

For example, after typing an assignment in Microsoft Word, a learner should save it.

Shortcut:

```
Ctrl + S
```

3.13 Save As

Save As allows a user to save a file with a different name, location, or format.

For example:

```
Assignment.docx
```

can be saved as:

```
Computer_Studies_Assignment.docx
```

3.14 Copy

Copying means making a duplicate of a file or folder while keeping the original in its original location.

Example:

```
Original File
      ↓
    COPY
      ↓
Duplicate File
```

Keyboard shortcut:

```
Ctrl + C
```

3.15 Paste

Pasting places a copied or cut file or folder in a new location.

Keyboard shortcut:

```
Ctrl + V
```

Example

```
Documents
    │
    └── Assignment.docx
              ↓
            Copy
              ↓
USB Drive
    │
    └── Assignment.docx
```

The original file remains in **Documents**.

3.16 Move

Moving means transferring a file or folder from one location to another.

For example:

```
Downloads
    │
    └── Assignment.docx
              ↓
            MOVE
              ↓
School Work
    │
    └── Assignment.docx
```

Unlike copying, the original is no longer in the previous location.

Keyboard shortcuts:

`Ctrl + X` → Cut

`Ctrl + V` → Paste

3.17 Rename

Renaming means changing the name of a file or folder.

For example:

```
Document1.docx
       ↓
Computer_Studies_Notes.docx
```

Renaming helps users identify files easily.

3.18 Delete

Deleting means removing a file or folder from its current location.

In Windows, a deleted file is normally moved to the **Recycle Bin**.

Keyboard shortcut:

`Delete`

3.19 Recycle Bin

The **Recycle Bin** is a special location in Windows where deleted files are temporarily stored.

A user can:

- Restore a deleted file
- Permanently delete a file
- Empty the Recycle Bin

Example

```
File
 ↓
Delete
 ↓
Recycle Bin
 ↓
Restore OR Permanently Delete
```

3.20 Search

Searching is the process of finding a particular file or folder on a computer.

For example, if a learner has forgotten where they saved a file called:

`Computer_Studies_Notes.docx`

they can use the Windows search facility to find it.

3.21 Sort

Sorting means arranging files and folders according to a particular order.

Files can be sorted by:

- Name
- Date modified
- Type
- Size

For example:

```
Assignment.docx
Computer.docx
English.docx
Mathematics.docx
```

3.22 File Size

File size refers to the amount of storage space occupied by a file.

Common units include:

Unit	Meaning
Bit	Smallest unit of digital information
Byte (B)	8 bits
Kilobyte (KB)	About 1,000 bytes
Megabyte (MB)	About 1,000 KB
Gigabyte (GB)	About 1,000 MB
Terabyte (TB)	About 1,000 GB

For example:

```
Assignment.docx      250 KB
Photo.jpg            2 MB
Video.mp4            500 MB
```

3.23 Backup

A **backup** is an extra copy of important files kept in another location in case the original files are lost, damaged, or accidentally deleted.

For example:

```
Computer
   │
   ├── Original Assignment
   │
   └── Backup → USB Drive
```

Backups can be stored on:

- USB flash drives
- External hard drives
- Another computer
- Cloud storage

3.24 Cloud Storage

Cloud storage is a service that allows users to store files on remote computers (servers) accessed through the Internet.

Examples include:

- Google Drive
- OneDrive
- Dropbox

Cloud storage can allow users to access their files from different devices when they have the necessary Internet connection and account access.

3.25 File Compression

File compression is the process of reducing the size of one or more files to save storage space or make them easier to transfer.

A common compressed file format is:

```
.zip
```

For example:

```
School_Work
     ↓
Compressed
     ↓
School_Work.zip
```

3.26 File Organisation

File organisation refers to arranging files and folders in a logical and systematic way so that they can be easily found and managed.

Example of good organisation

```
School Work
│
├── Computer Studies
│     ├── Notes
│     ├── Assignments
│     └── Projects
│
├── Mathematics
│     ├── Notes
│     └── Assignments
│
└── English
      ├── Notes
      └── Assignments
```

This is better than putting all files in one folder.

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4. Common File Management Operations

The main operations performed during file management include:

Operation	Meaning
Create	Make a new file or folder
Open	Access a file or folder
Save	Store changes made to a file
Copy	Make a duplicate
Move	Transfer to another location
Rename	Change the name
Delete	Remove a file or folder
Search	Find a file or folder
Sort	Arrange files according to criteria
Backup	Make an extra copy for safety
Compress	Reduce file size

5. Importance of File Management

Good file management is important because it:

1. Makes files easy to find.
2. Saves time when looking for information.
3. Prevents unnecessary duplication of files.
4. Helps protect important information.
5. Reduces the possibility of losing work.
6. Makes storage devices organised.
7. Makes it easier to create backups.
8. Helps users identify files easily.
9. Makes sharing and transferring files easier.
10. Helps users make better use of storage space.

6. Good File Management Practices

A computer user should:

- Give files **meaningful names**.
- Create **separate folders** for different subjects or activities.
- Avoid saving everything on the Desktop.
- Regularly **back up important files**.
- Delete files that are no longer needed.
- Avoid creating many unnecessary copies of the same file.
- Keep related files together.
- Organise files into appropriate subfolders.
- Check the location before saving a file.
- Use cloud storage or external storage for important backups where appropriate.

7. Example of a Well-Organised School Computer

A learner could organise school work as follows:

```
Documents
└── School Work
    ├── Computer Studies
    │   ├── Notes
    │   ├── Assignments
    │   ├── Projects
    │   └── Practical Work
    ├── Mathematics
    │   ├── Notes
    │   └── Assignments
    ├── English
    │   ├── Notes
    │   └── Assignments
    └── Science
        ├── Notes
        └── Assignments
```

This structure makes it easy to locate a particular file.

For example, to find a Computer Studies assignment, the learner follows:

```
Documents
   ↓
School Work
   ↓
Computer Studies
   ↓
Assignments
   ↓
Computer_Studies_Assignment.docx
```

8. Summary

File Management is the process of organising and controlling files and folders on a computer or storage device. It involves activities such as **creating, saving, naming, copying, moving, searching, organising, backing up, and deleting files**.

A good computer user should develop the habit of keeping files **properly named, organised, and backed up**. Good file management saves time, reduces confusion, protects important work, and makes information easier to access.

Key idea to remember:

A file stores information, while a folder is used to organise files and other folders.