

Computers Confuse Me

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How to zip and unzip files and folders

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What is a zip file

A zipped file is a file that contains multiple other files or folders. Two main advantages to a zip file is the ability to combine multiple files into one file and the ability to compress the size of a file or folder, taking up less space on a hard drive. Two common uses for zip files are sending large or multiple files through email and to archive old files freeing up space on your hard drive.

How to zip a file or folder

Windows XP or later

If you're running Windows XP you should start by placing all of the files you would like to zip into one folder. Create the new folder wherever you would like (i.e. MyDocuments) by right clicking and choosing New>Folder. Right click on this folder and choose Rename to rename the folder. After copying and pasting all of the files you would like to zip into this new folder, right click on the folder and choose "Compressed (zipped) Folder" from the "Send To" menu.



Now you should see a new file created with the same name as your folder, the file will have a .zip file extension and probably an icon that looks like a folder with a zipper on it. This will be the zip file that contains all of the other files from within the original folder.

Non Windows XP

If you don't have windows XP and your operating system does not have it's own utility to create a zip file you will need to download a free program like [7-zip](#). Download the software using the "download link" for the non beta version at the top of the page, most likely the 32-bit version. Once downloaded install the application by double clicking the file.

To prepare your file(s) to be zipped you should place them all within one single folder. To do this create a new folder by right clicking in a folder of your choosing (i.e. MyDocuments) and

selecting New>Folder. You can rename this folder by right clicking on it and choosing Rename.

Now that the software is installed and all of your files are in a single directory run the 7-zip application using the "7-Zip File Manager shortcut under Start>Programs>7-Zip. Click on the folder we created above and drag it into the blank space of 7-zip. When the new window opens choose Zip from the "Archive Format" drop down list and adjust the others settings to your liking. Once complete press ok and your zip file will be created with the same name as the original folder.

How do I un-zip a file or folder

Un-zipping a file or folder is pretty easy. With Windows XP or higher you can just right click on the .zip file and choose "Open With">"Compressed (Zipped) Folder". Highlight all of the files or folders in the folder that opens by holding the ctrl key and tapping the a key. Right click on the highlighted files and choose copy. Navigate to the folder where you'd like to place the files and right click and choose paste. All set, now you can close the zipped file window and delete the .zip file if you'd like.

If you don't own Windows XP you can use a program like 7-zip. Download and install the software using the instructions found in the first paragraph under the "Non Windows XP" section above.

After installing 7-zip you can right click on the .zip file and choose "7-zip">"Extract Files...". Choose the location you would like to copy the files and then press ok. That's it, you can now delete the original .zip file if you'd like.

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