

Unit 7 : Sharing and Accessing Network Resources, Files and Folders in Windows

Whether and to what extent you can use file sharing and network browsing on your machine and in your network highly depends on the network structure and on the configuration of your machine. Before setting up either of them, contact your system administrator to make sure that your network structure supports this feature and to check whether your company's security policies permit it.

Lesson 1 : Sharing Network Resources in Windows

1.1. Learning Objectives

On completion of this lesson you will be able to describe:

- ❖ The shared network resources.
- ❖ The process of sharing and accessing the network resources.

1.2. Introduction

Fortunately, when it comes to sharing resources on the network, Windows Vista come with quite a few options that enable you to share what resources you want and to control how others can access those resources. Network sharing in Vista begins by configuring the basic sharing options, of which there are five in all: general file sharing, public folder sharing, printer sharing, password-protected sharing, and media sharing.

1.3. Activating File and Printer Sharing

In the Network and Sharing Center's Sharing and Discovery section, the File Sharing setting covers general file and printer sharing. If the current setting is Off, follow these steps to activate file and printer sharing:

1. Click the downward-pointing arrow to the right of the File Sharing setting to expand the setting.
2. Select the Turn On File Sharing option, as shown in Figure 1.1. This will allow other people on the network to access your shared files and printers.
3. Click Apply. The User Account Control dialog box appears.
4. Enter your UAC credentials to put the new setting into effect.

Activating File and Printer Sharing

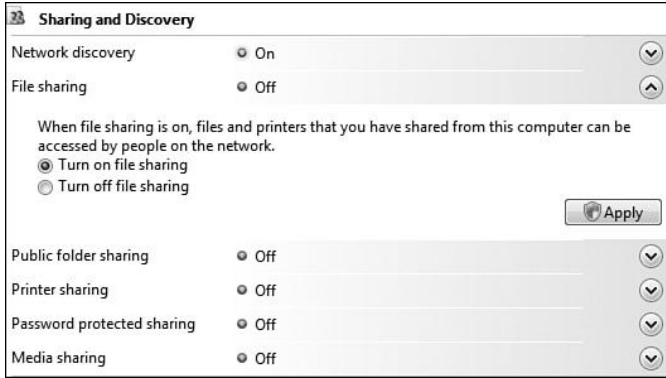


Figure 1.1: Expand the File Sharing setting, and then activate the Turn On File Sharing option.

1.4. Sharing the Public Folder

The Public Folder Sharing setting covers sharing the Public folder. If the current setting is Off, here are the steps to follow to activate sharing the Public folder:

1. Click the downward-pointing arrow to the right of the Public Folder Sharing setting to expand the setting.
2. Select one of the following options (see Figure 1.2):
 - ❖ **Turn On Sharing So Anyone with Network Access Can Open Files.** Select this option to share the Public folder, but allow network users only to read files in that folder. (That is, users can't create new files or change existing files.)
 - ❖ **Turn On Sharing So Anyone with Network Access Can Open, Change, and Create Files.** Select this option to share the Public folder, and allow network users to read, edit, and create new files in that folder.

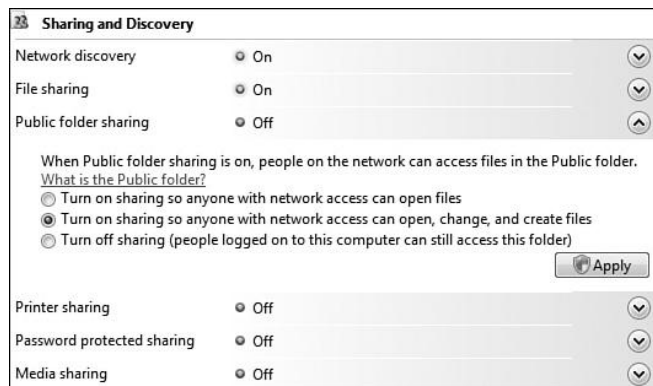


Figure 1.2: Expand the Public Folder Sharing setting and then activate one of the options to turn on sharing of the Public folder.

3. Click Apply. The User Account Control dialog box appears.
4. Enter your UAC credentials to put the new setting into effect.

1.5. Activating Printer Folder Sharing

The Printer Sharing setting covers sharing the Printers folder. If the current setting is Off, follow these steps to activate sharing for the Printers folder:

1. Click the downward-pointing arrow to the right of the Printer Sharing setting to expand the setting.
2. Select the Turn On Printer Sharing option, as shown in Figure 1.3. This will allow other people on the network to access your Printers folder.

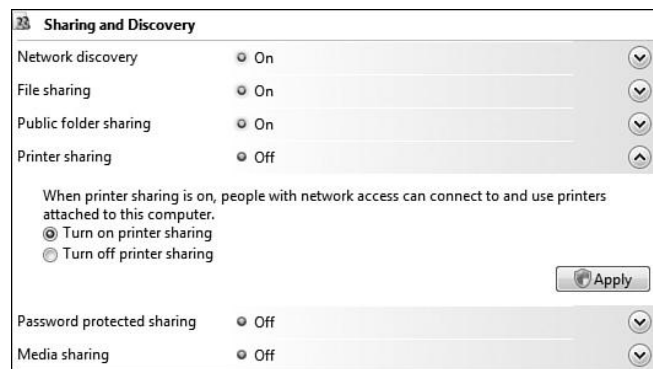


Figure 1.3: Expand the Printer Sharing setting and then activate the Turn On Printer Sharing option.

3. Click Apply. The User Account Control dialog box appears.
4. Enter your UAC credentials to put the new setting into effect.

1.6. Using Password Protected Sharing

The Password Protected Sharing setting covers sharing with password protection. That is, when you turn on password protected sharing, only people who know the username and password of an account on your computer can access your shared resources. If the current setting is Off, follow these steps to activate password protected sharing:

1. Click the downward-pointing arrow to the right of the Password Protected Sharing setting to expand the setting.
2. Select the Turn On Password Protected Sharing option, as shown in Figure 1.4.
3. Click Apply. The User Account Control dialog box appears.
4. Enter your UAC credentials to put the new setting into effect.

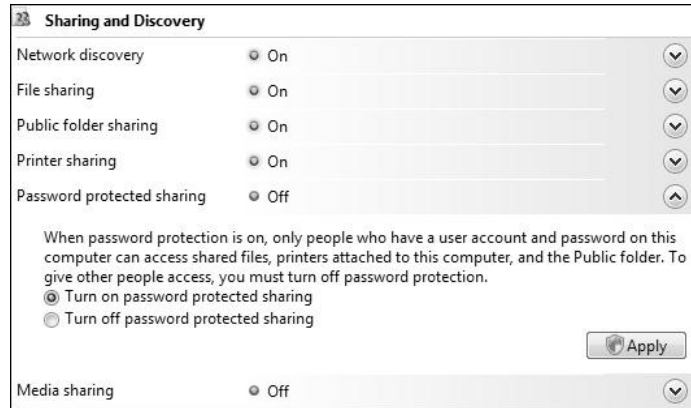


Figure 1.4: Expand the Password Protected Sharing setting, and then activate the Turn On Password Protected Sharing option.

1.7. Using Public Folder Sharing

If you have the Public Folder Sharing setting turned on (see “Sharing the Public Folder,” earlier in this lesson), you can use the Public folder to share files or other folders with the network. This is often the easiest way to share resources with the network because you only have to worry about one shared location, which keeps your life simple and makes it easier for other people to find what you’re sharing. To get to the Public folder, follow these steps:

1. Open any folder window.
2. Click Folders to display the Folders list.
3. At the top of the list, click Desktop.
4. Double-click the Public icon.
5. Figure 1.5 shows the default Public folder, which includes half dozen subfolders: Public Documents, Public Downloads, Public Music, Public Pictures, Public Videos, and Recorded TV.



Figure 1.5: The Public folder and its subfolders offer a simple way to share files and folders with the network.

1.8. Creating User Accounts for Sharing

If you activated the Password Protected Sharing option (see “Using Password Protected Sharing,” earlier in this lesson), you have to do one of the following:

- ❖ **Set up separate accounts for each user that you want to access a shared resource.** Do this if you want to assign each user a different set of permissions, or if you want the usernames and passwords to match each user’s local username and password.
- ❖ **Set up a single account for all remote users to use.** Do this if you want to assign the same set of permissions for all users.

Here are some notes to bear in mind for creating users who will access your computer over a network:

- ❖ Windows Vista does not allow users without passwords to access network resources. Therefore, you must set up your network user accounts with passwords.
- ❖ The usernames you create do not have to correspond with the names that users have on their local machines. You’re free to set up your own usernames, if you like.
- ❖ If you create a user account that has the same name and password as an account of a user on his or her local machine, that user will be able to access your shared resources directly.

You create a new user account in Windows Vista by following these steps:

1. Select Start, Control Panel to open the Control Panel window.
2. Under the User Accounts and Family Safety icon, click the Add or Remove User Accounts link. The User Account Control dialog box appears.
3. Enter your UAC credentials to continue. Vista displays the Manage Accounts window.
4. Click Create a New Account. The Create New Account window appears.
5. Type the name for the account. The name can be up to 20 characters and must be unique on the system.
6. Activate either Administrator (to add the user to the Administrators group) or Standard User (to add the user to the Users group).
7. Click Create Account. Vista creates the new account and returns you to the Manage Accounts window.
8. Click the account you just created. The Change An Account window appears.
9. Click the Create a Password link. Vista displays the Create Password window.

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10. Type the user's password in the New Password and Confirm New Password text boxes.
11. Use the Type a Password Hint text box to type a reminder for the user in case he forgets the password.
12. Click Create Password.

1.9. Sharing a Resource with the File Sharing Wizard

By default, Windows Vista comes with the File Sharing Wizard activated. This is a simplified sharing feature that removes some of the complexity from sharing folders and files. However, it also removes much of the power and flexibility of sharing, so Vista also enables you to turn off the File Sharing Wizard. It will be shown in the next section. So that you can compare the two methods, here are the steps to follow to use the File Sharing Wizard to share a folder or file:

1. Select Start, and then click your username to open your user profile folder.
2. Click the folder you want to share. If you want to share a subfolder or file, instead, open its folder, and then click the subfolder or file.
3. Click the Share button in the task pane. Vista launches the File Sharing Wizard, which asks you to choose the user accounts you want to share the item with.
4. Type the username and click Add.
5. Repeat step 4 as necessary to share the folder or file with other users.
6. For each user you added, assign a permission level by clicking the downward-pointing arrow and selecting one of the following (see Figure 1.6):

Reader	This is the default level, and it means the user can only view the shared file or folder and open its contents. The user can't create, change, or delete anything.
Contributor	This level means that the user can add new files to the shared folder, and that the user can make changes to or delete any file that the user has added to the folder.
Co-owner	This level means that the user can create new items, and that the user can make changes to or delete any item.

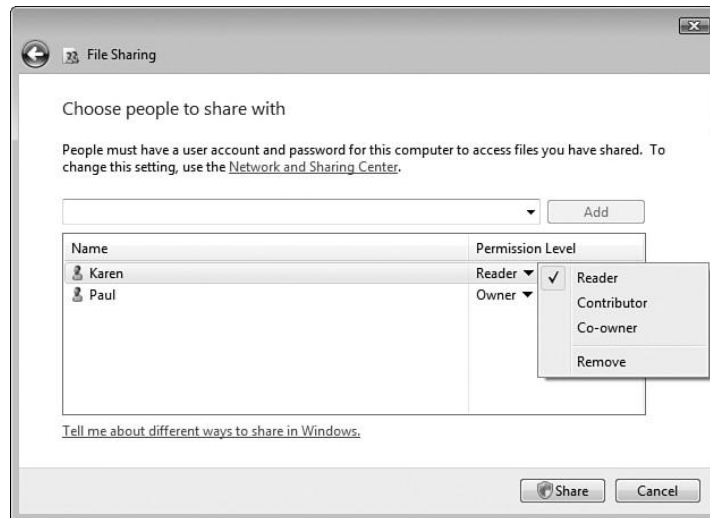


Figure 1.6: The Sharing Wizard asks you to choose the permission level for each user.

1. Click Share. The User Account Control dialog box appears.
2. Enter your UAC credentials to continue. The File Sharing Wizard sets up sharing for the file or folder.
3. If you want to send an email to the users to let them know the folder or file is shared, click the E-mail link; otherwise, click Done.

If you no longer want to share a folder or file, you can change the sharing using either of the following methods:

- ❖ **To remove a user from the sharing.** Follow steps 1 through 3 in this section, and then click Change Sharing Permissions to display the list of shared users. Click the permission level for the user you want to work with, and then click Remove.
- ❖ **To stop sharing the folder or file entirely.** Follow steps 1 through 3 in this section, and then click Stop Sharing.

1.10. Viewing Your Shared Resources

After a while, you might lose track of which folders you've shared. You could look through all your folders to look for those that have the Shared icon attached, but that's too much work, and you could easily miss some shared folder. Fortunately, Windows Vista offers a couple of easier methods. Open the Network and Sharing Center and then use the following two links at the bottom of the window:

- ❖ **Show Me All the Files and Folders I Am Sharing.** Click this link to open the Shared By Me search folder.

- ❖ **Show Me All the Shared Network Folders on This Computer.** Click this link to open a folder window showing your computer's shared folders and printers.

1.11. Viewing Your Shared Resources

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- ❖ **Show Me All the Files and Folders I Am Sharing.** Click this link to open the Shared By Me search folder.
- ❖ **Show Me All the Shared Network Folders on This Computer.** Click this link to open a folder window showing your computer's shared folders and printers.

1.12. Exercise

1.12.1. Multiple choice questions

- a. UAC stands for
 - (i) User Administration Control
 - (ii) User Account Control
 - (iii) Unified Account Control
 - (iv) User Account Configuration

- b. What to do if you want to assign the same set of permissions for all users?
 - (i) Set up a single account for all remote users to use.
 - (ii) Set up an account for every remote user to use.
 - (iii) Set up multiple single accounts for all remote users to use.
 - (iv) None of the above

- c. In which permission level the user can create new items, and that the user can make changes to or delete any item.
 - (i) Reader
 - (ii) Co-Owner
 - (iii) Contributor
 - (iv) All of the above

1.12.2. Questions for short answers

- a) What to do to remove a user from the sharing?
- b) What is public folder sharing?
- c) What to do to stop sharing the folder or file entirely?

1.12.3. Analytical questions

- a) How can you create a user account in Windows?
- b) Explain in detail the user access permission level.

Lesson 2 : Enabling Offline File Features

2.1. Learning Objectives

On completion of this lesson you will be able to describe:

- ❖ The offline file features in different version of windows.

2.2. Introduction

Offline Files allows you to keep using network files, folders, and applications when disconnected from the network. To users, this is transparent; offline, they'll have the same access permissions to the files and folders that are available when they're connected to the network. Best of all, when they reconnect, all the changes they've made to those files will be made to the files on the network, via offline file synchronization

If you work with files on a network, you can make the files available offline so you can access them even when your computer is not connected to the network. This is especially useful if you use a laptop to connect to a workplace network.

When you make a network file, or all files in a network folder, available offline, Windows creates a copy of the file or folder on your computer. This is called an offline file. The next time you disconnect from the network, you'll still be able to open, modify, and save the file the same way you would if you were still connected. And when you do connect to the network again, Windows will automatically sync the offline file on your computer with the corresponding file on the network to update it.

2.3. Configuring Offline Files in Windows XP

Three steps are involved in setting up your or your user's Windows XP Professional computer to use Offline Files:

Configuring Offline Files in Windows XP

1. Enable the Offline Files feature.
2. Make one or more files or folders available offline.
3. Configure Offline Files settings to control caching options and disconnection response.

2.3.1 Enabling Offline Files

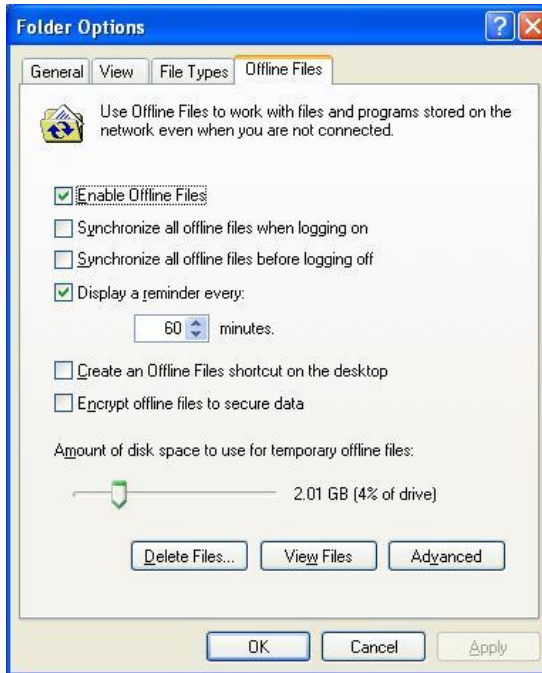
Before you can make any content available offline, you must enable the use of Offline Files on your computer.

1. Click on the Start button and open My Computer.
2. Select the Tools menu at the top of the window and Click Folder Options.
3. Select the Offline Files tab.

Important

Before you begin Offline Files configuration, ensure that Fast User Switching is disabled on the client. To do so, open the Control Panel and select User Accounts. From the list of tasks presented, choose Change The Way Users Log On Or Off and clear the Use Fast User Switching check box.

Check the box to enable Offline Files. This page is also used to configure Offline Files settings, which will be discussed in the next section.



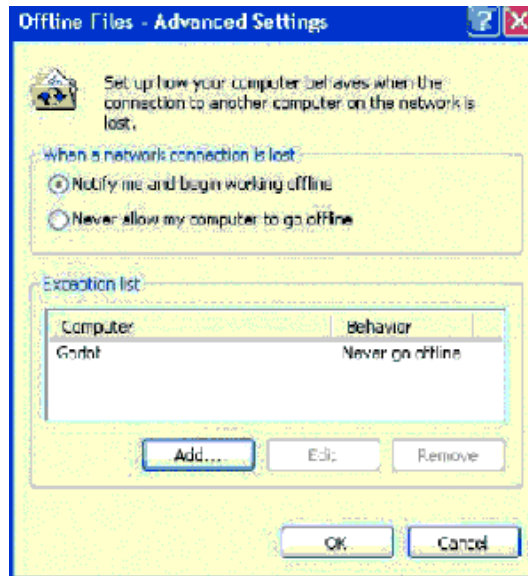
2.3.2 Configuring Offline Files settings

You can use these buttons:

- ❖ Delete Files: Use this button to remove selected offline files from the local computer. (This doesn't delete those files from the network location.)
- ❖ View Files: Use this to view the contents of the Offline Files folder, which shows all files that have been made available offline, along with their type, synchronization information, availability, access, location, size in KBs when last modified, and the status of the server.
- ❖ Advanced: With this, you can choose what will happen if you're working online (connected to the network) and the connection is lost. Your choices are to have the system notify you that you're offline and allow you to continue working with network resources offline or to never

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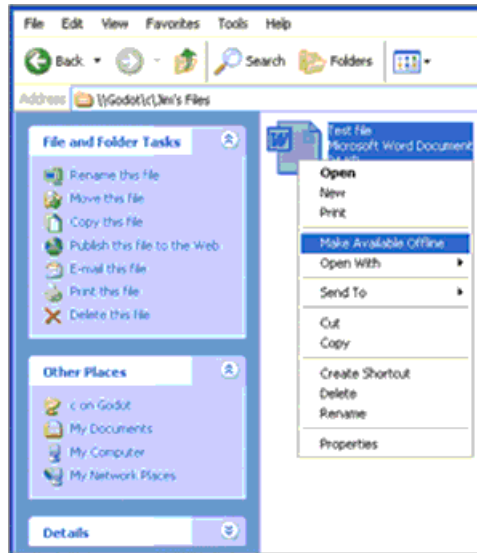
On the Offline Files tab click on the Advanced button to reach the Advanced Settings page, where you can create an exception list and designate the behavior when a particular server gets disconnected. For example, in Figure below, the default behavior when a network connection is lost is to notify and begin working offline, but if a connection to the computer named Godot is lost, the setting specifies that this computer should not go offline.



2.3.3 Making files and folders available offline

To make a file or folder available offline, it must first be shared.

1. Right-click the folder and select the Sharing option from the pop-up menu.
2. Click on the Share This Folder radio button to create the share. It's important to note that you cannot share an individual file—you must share a folder or drive. However, when you share a folder, the files inside that folder are shared, and you can then individually make any of those files available offline.
3. After enabling Offline Files, all you have to do is navigate to the selected shared file or folder in My Computer or My Network Places, highlight the file or folder name, either select the File menu or right-click the file or folder, and choose Make Available Offline.



2.3.4 Using Offline Files

After you've set up the computer to enable Offline Files and made the selected files or folders available offline, other users can connect to the offline files and work with them over the network and then continue working with them after the connection between your computer and theirs is broken.

2.3.5 Working offline

If Offline Files is configured to display a balloon notification, when the network connection is broken, the user will see an Offline Files icon appear in the status area to the right of the taskbar buttons on the Windows XP taskbar.

When the network connection is restored (for example, when you plug your laptop back into the docking station or plug a live Ethernet cable into its PC Card NIC), the status-bar information will change, and modifications that you have made to offline files since the disconnection will be updated to the network files automatically.

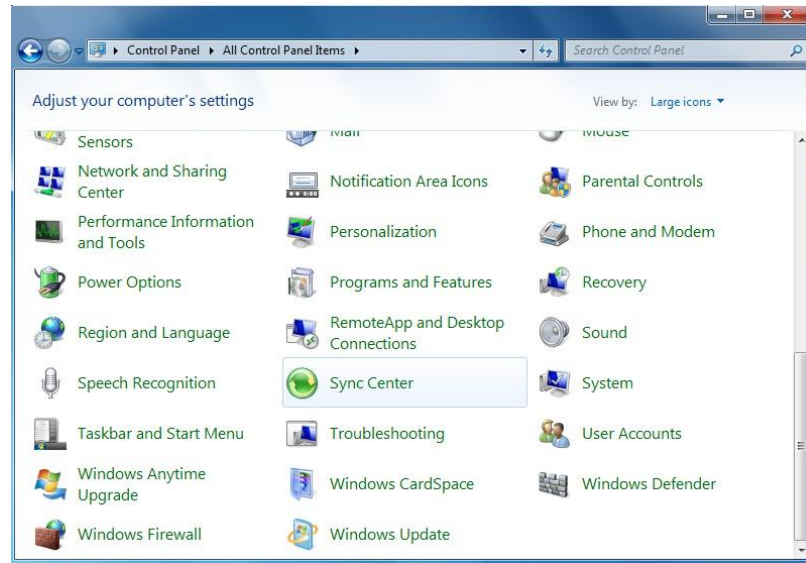
2.4. Configuring Offline Files in Windows 7 or 8

You must be logged in as an administrator to be able to do the steps in this article. The steps are as follows:

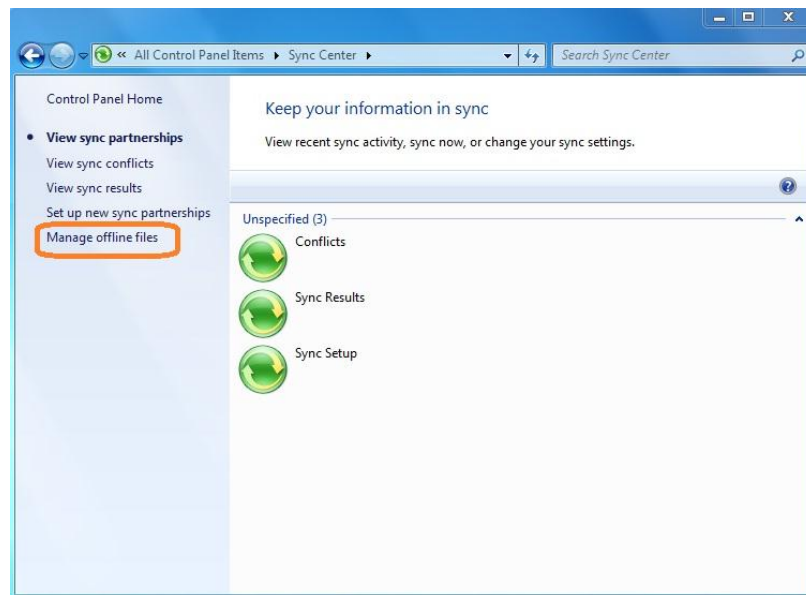
1. Open the **Control Panel (icons view)** in **Windows 7** or **Windows 8**, and click/tap on the **Sync Center** icon. (Screenshot below)

Configuring Offline Files in Windows 7 or 8

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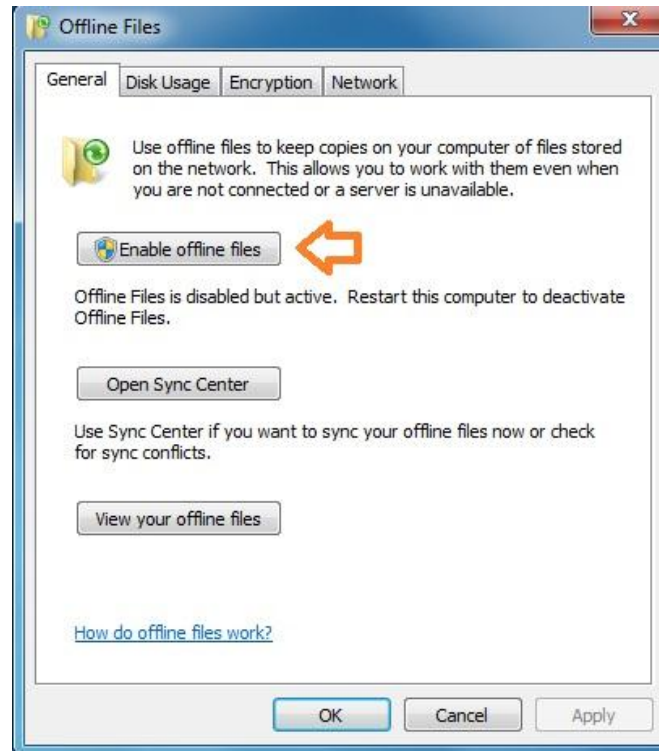


2. In the left pane, click/tap on the **Manage offline files** link. (see screenshot below)



3. **To Enable the Use of Offline Files:**
NOTE: *This is the default setting.*
 - a. Click/tap on the **Enable offline files** button. (see screenshot below)

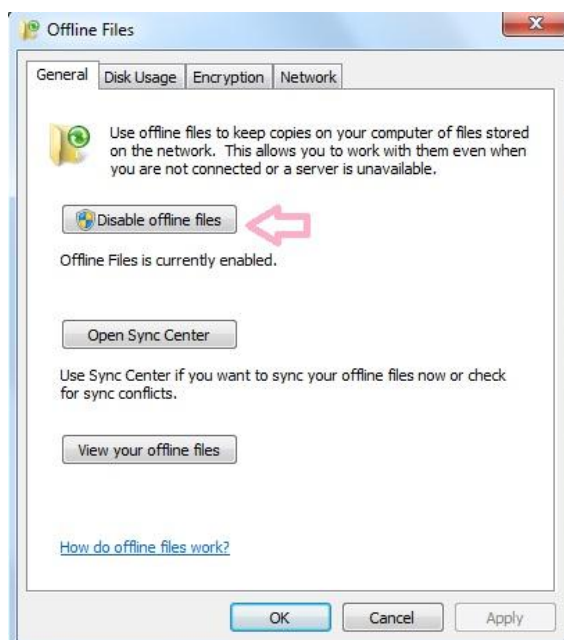
Sharing and Accessing Network Resources, Files and Folders in Windows



- b. If prompted by **UAC**, then click/tap on **Yes**.
- c. Click/tap on **OK**.
- d. Go to step 5.

4. To Disable the Use of Offline Files

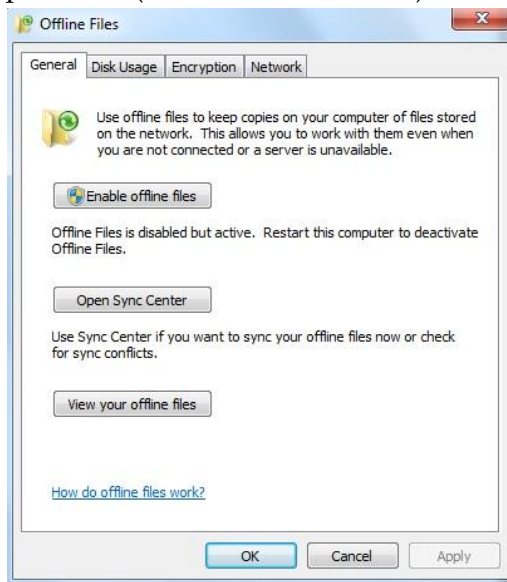
- a. Click/tap on the **Disable offline files** button. (see screenshot below)



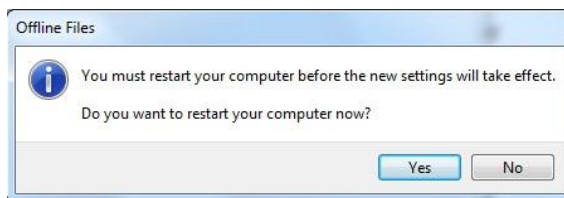
- b. If prompted by **UAC**, then click/tap on **Yes**.

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- c. Click/tap on **OK**. (see screenshot below)



5. Click/tap on **Yes** to restart the computer. (see screenshot below)
WARNING: *This will restart the computer immediately. Be sure to save anything that you have open first.*



If you enabled Offline Files, then all you need to do now is to make the network files or network folders you want to be **always available offline**.

2.5. Exercise

2.5.1. Multiple choice questions

- a. Before you begin Offline Files configuration, ensure that Fast User Switching is
 - i) disabled on the client.
 - ii) disabled on the server.
 - iii) enabled on the client.
 - iv) enabled on the server.
2. How many types synchronization are available?
 - (i) Three
 - (ii) One
 - (iii) Two
 - (iv) Four

2.5.2. Questions for short answers

- a) What does happen when you make a network file or all files in a network folder available offline?
- b) What is an offline file?

2.5.3. Analytical question

- a) How can you synchronize offline files? Explain.
- b) What is caching option? How can you active this?

Lesson 3 : Accessing Network Resources Using My Network Places

3.1. Learning Objectives

On completion of this lesson you will be able to describe:

- ❖ Definition of network place.
- ❖ The process of creating, accessing and removing the network place.
- ❖ The contents of My Network Places.

3.2. Introduction

My Network Places is the utility for browsing network resources (places) in Microsoft Windows ME, Windows 2000 and newer Windows operating systems. Network resources include:

- ❖ shared file folders on other computers
- ❖ networked local printers
- ❖ Web links (URLs)

My Network Places can be accessed from the Windows Start menu (or through My Computer). Launching My Network Places causes a new window to appear on the screen. Through this window, you can add, search for and remotely access these network resources.

3.3. Searching for Network Resources

To browse a list of available network resources, choose the "Entire Network" option in the left-hand pane of My Network Places. Then, in the right-hand pane, several options may appear for the kinds of networks available to browse. Choose the "Microsoft Windows Network" option to browse resources available locally. Each local computer found in My Network Places will be listed under its Windows workgroup name. In home networking, all computers should be set to use the same Windows workgroup, otherwise they will not all be accessible through My Network Places.

Network Resources

3.4. Add a Network Place

The "Add a network place" option can be found on the left-hand side of the My Network Places control window. Clicking this option brings up a Windows "wizard" that guides you through the steps to define a network resource. Here you

can specify the location of the resource by entering a Web link (URL) or a remote computer / folder name in the Windows UNC format.

The Add a Network Place wizard allows you to give descriptive names to the resources you add. When finished with the wizard, an icon similar to a Windows shortcut icon appears in the resource list. Along with the resources you manually add to My Network Places, Windows will sometimes automatically add other resources to the list. These are places on the local area network (LAN) you frequently access.

3.5. Removing Network Places

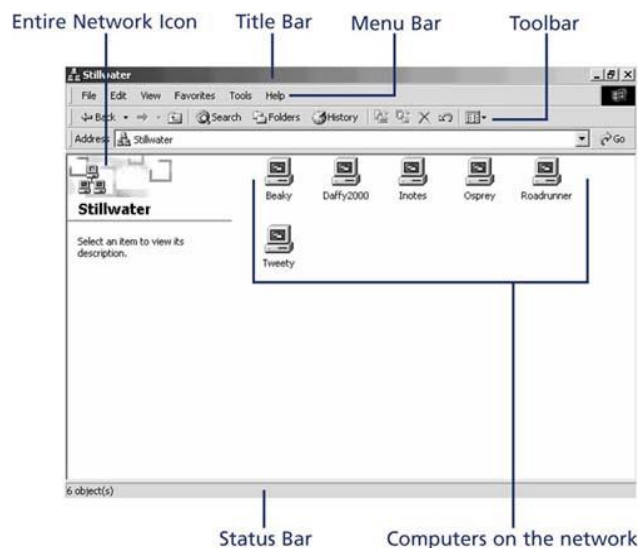
Removing a network resource from the My Network Places list works as in Windows Explorer. The icon representing any network resource can be deleted as if it were a local shortcut. During a delete operation, no action is taken on the resource itself.

3.6. View Network Connections

The My Network Places task pane contains an option to "View network connections." Choosing this option launches the Windows Network Connections window. This is technically a separate feature from My Network Places.

3.7. Accessing My Network Places

When you connect to a network drive, you add a whole new set of folders and files—not to mention other resources—to your working environment. After connecting, you can remain connected to that network while you work and can even access other servers and resources if required.



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Figure 3.1: Computers are identified by their names. In this example when you double-click a computer, you can see which (if any) resources are shared and available.

To open My Network Places, click the My Network Places icon on your desktop (see Figure 3.1). If the My Network Places icon does not appear, your computer is not configured for networking. You should contact your Network Administrator.

3.8. Closing My Network Places

You close My Network Places just as you close any other window in Windows 2000, by selecting **File, Close** from the window menu or by clicking the **Close** button (**X**) in the upper-right corner of the My Network Places window. Closing My Network Places does not log you off of the network.

3.9. Exercise

3.9.1. Multiple choice questions

- a. In home networking, all computers should be set to use the same _____, otherwise they will not all be accessible through My Network Places.
- i) Windows Workstation
 - ii) Windows Workgroup
 - iii) Windows Server
 - iv) Windows Client
- b. The My Network Places window contains
- (i) one Contents pane
 - (ii) two Contents pane
 - (iii) three Contents pane
 - (iv) zero Contents pane

3.9.2. Questions for short answers

- a. What are the network resources?
- b. What to do to browse a list of available network resources?

3.9.3. Analytical questions

- a) Explain the addition process of network place.

