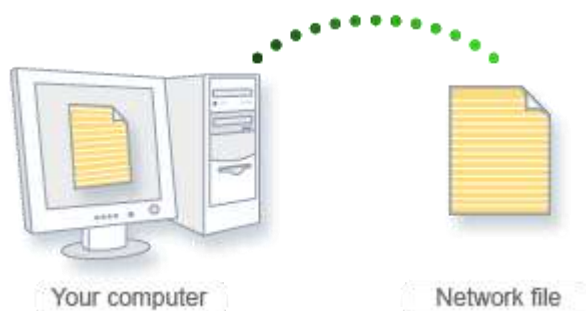


Understanding offline files

Introduction

If you've ever needed to access important files stored in a shared folder on your network but couldn't because the network connection was unavailable, then you can understand the need for offline files. Using offline files, you can access files stored in shared network folders even when the network copies are unavailable. You can do this by choosing the network files you want to make available offline, which automatically creates a copy of the network files on your computer. These copies of network files that are stored on your computer are called offline files. Windows will automatically sync your offline files for you and open them whenever the network versions are unavailable.

You can access network files when you can connect to the computer where the network files are stored



Reasons to use offline files

Offline files offer several advantages to anyone who works with files stored on shared network folders. By working with offline files, you can:

- Protect yourself from network outages. When you use offline files, it doesn't matter if your network goes down or the network folder you are accessing becomes unavailable. If either occurs, Windows will automatically begin accessing the offline copies of files stored on your computer instead of the files on the network folder, and you can continue working without interruption.
- Work with files while you are away from the network. When you disconnect from the network, you normally lose the ability to access any files stored on the network. But with offline files, you can disconnect from the network and

still have copies of all the network files you have made available offline. This can be particularly useful if you travel with a mobile PC.

- Easily sync with network files. Anytime you want to sync with the latest version of files in a network folder, offline files lets you do so with the click of a single button.
- Boost your efficiency when working over a slow connection. When you are connected to your network with a slow connection, working with files on a shared network folder can be inefficient and slow. Offline files insulates you from this problem by allowing you to easily switch to working with offline copies of your network files at any time.

Keeping your offline files in sync

When you select a network file or folder to make available offline, Windows automatically creates a copy of that file or folder on your computer. Anytime you re-connect to that network folder, Windows will sync the files between your computer and the network folder. You can also sync them manually at any time.

Here are are some tips:

- If you are working offline and make changes to offline files from a network folder, Windows will automatically sync any changes you made to the files the next time you connect to that network folder.
- If you are working offline while someone else changes files in a shared network folder, Windows will sync those changes with the offline files on your computer the next time you connect to that network folder. If you have also changed the files since you last connected to the network folder, a sync conflict will occur and Windows will ask you which version you want to keep.
- You can resolve these and other sync conflicts by using Sync Centre.
- If Windows encounters a problem when trying to sync offline files between your computer and a network folder (for example, if the network folder you are trying to sync with is unavailable), a sync error will occur.

How to setup offline files.

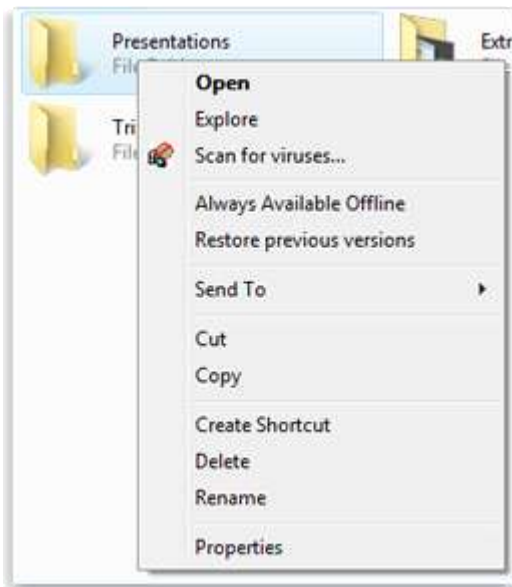
Enable offline files if you want to work with files that are in a network folder. A copy of the file on your hard drive will be synchronized with the network copy as soon as you are back at work or you regain your network connection.

- Open Offline Files by clicking the Start button, clicking Control Panel, clicking Sync Center, and then clicking Manage Offline File.
- Click the Enable Offline Files button.

To be able to work with a file offline, you first need to make it available offline.

- Locate the network file or folder that you want to make available offline.
- Right-click the file or folder, and then click Always Available Offline.

The next time you try to access this file or folder, you will be able to open it even if the network version is unavailable.



The next time you try to access this file or folder, you will be able to open it even if the network version is unavailable.

Notes

- To confirm that the file or folder is now available offline, right-click the file or folder again, and make sure that a check mark appears next to Always Available Offline.
- If you don't want a network file or folder to be available offline any longer, right-click the file or folder, and then click Always Available Offline to clear the check mark next to the command.

Sometimes you might want to work with the offline files stored on your computer rather than the files stored on the network. This can be a good idea if you have a slow network connection, for example.

- Open the network folder that contains the files you have made available offline, and then, on the toolbar, click Work offline. This button appears only if you have already made this folder available offline.
- When you are finished working with the files offline and want to begin working with the files in the network folder again, click Work online on the toolbar. This will sync any changes you have made offline with the files on the network.

Offline files turn on automatically if you lose your network connection. A copy of your file is copied to your computer, and once your network connection is re-established, the two copies will be synchronized. To find out if you're working offline, do the following.

- Open the network folder that contains the file you are working on.
- Check the Details pane at the bottom of the window for the status. If the status is offline, you are working with a copy of the file on your computer. If the status is online, you are working with the file on the network.

If you work with offline files in many different folders, you may want to view all of them without opening each folder individually. Here's how to view all your offline files at once.

- Open Offline Files by clicking the Start button, clicking Control Panel, clicking Sync Centre, and then clicking Offline Files.
- Click the General tab, and then click View your offline files.

Windows syncs your offline files for you automatically, so that when a network file is changed, the offline copy stored on your computer is also updated, and vice versa. But Windows does not sync your files continuously. Sometimes it is helpful to sync your offline files right away, such as if you are about to disconnect from a network and want to be sure you have the latest versions of files stored on the network.

- Open Sync Center by clicking the Start button , clicking Control Panel, then clicking Sync Centre.
- Click the Offline Files sync partnership, and then, on the toolbar, click Sync.

Tip

If you only want to sync the contents of a specific folder, open the folder that contains the files that you want to sync, and then, on the toolbar, click Sync. To sync an individual file, right-click the file, and then click Sync.