Lesson 3
Windows File Management

Computer Literacy BASICS: A Comprehensive Guide to IC^3, 5th Edition

Morrison / Wells / Ruffolo

Objectives

- Describe how Windows stores files.
- Identify parts of the File Explorer window.
- Use File Explorer to navigate folders on your computer.
- Copy, move, delete, and rename files.
- Create and use shortcuts.
- Search for files.
- Identify file types.

Words to Know

- application file
- Clipboard
- contextual tab
- data file
- disk
- drive
- executable file
- file attribute
- file path
- file system
- file type (file format)
- folder
- library
- pin

Words to Know (continued)

- Recycle Bin
- removable media
- root directory
- shortcut
- subfolder
- system file
- tag
- USB drive

Understanding How Windows Stores Files

- A *file* is a collection of data stored together.

- Files are stored in *folders*, which are containers for related files, and on *drives*, which are storage devices.

- Drives contain certain types of *disks*, which are storage media, including removable media and hard disks.

Understanding How Windows Stores Files (continued)

- **Removable media** are disks that you insert or attach to a computer, such as **USB drives** (also called flash drives and thumb drives) and digital video discs (DVDs).

- The term *hard disk* refers to a disk installed in the system unit that can store many gigabytes of data economically.

- An **external hard disk** is contained in a removable drive that you can attach to your computer.

Understanding How Windows Stores Files (continued)

- Windows names the drives on the computer by assigning each drive a letter.

- The hard drive containing the operating system is named drive C by default.

- The remaining drives can have any other letter from D to Z, followed by a colon (:).

Hard drive C

DVD drive D

USB drive E

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FIGURE 3–1

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Understanding How Windows Stores Files (continued)

- Windows organizes the folders and files in a structure, or hierarchy, called a *file system*.

- At the top of the file system is the *root directory*, which is where Windows stores system files and folders.

- These folders contain other folders, called *subfolders*, in which you can store your own files.

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Understanding How Windows Stores Files (continued)

Root directory (C:)

System folder

System folder

System folder

Subfolder Subfolder

Subfolder Subfolder

Subfolder Subfolder

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FIGURE 3–2

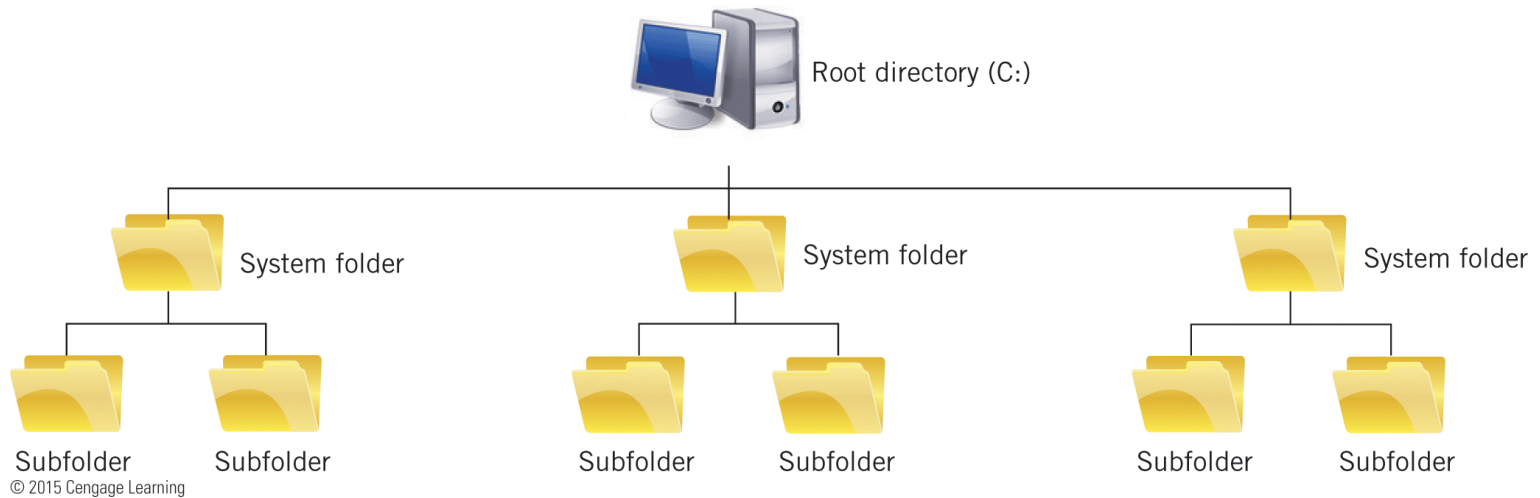**Morrison / Wells / Ruffolo**

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Using File Explorer

- ***File Explorer*** is the Windows 8 file management tool you use to organize your files.
- File Explorer displays the contents of your computer, using icons to represent drives, folders, and files.
- Windows provides four folders for your personal files: Documents, Music, Pictures, and Videos.
- The Desktop folder provides access to system resources such as the Recycle Bin.
- The Download folder is for files you download, or copy from the Internet.
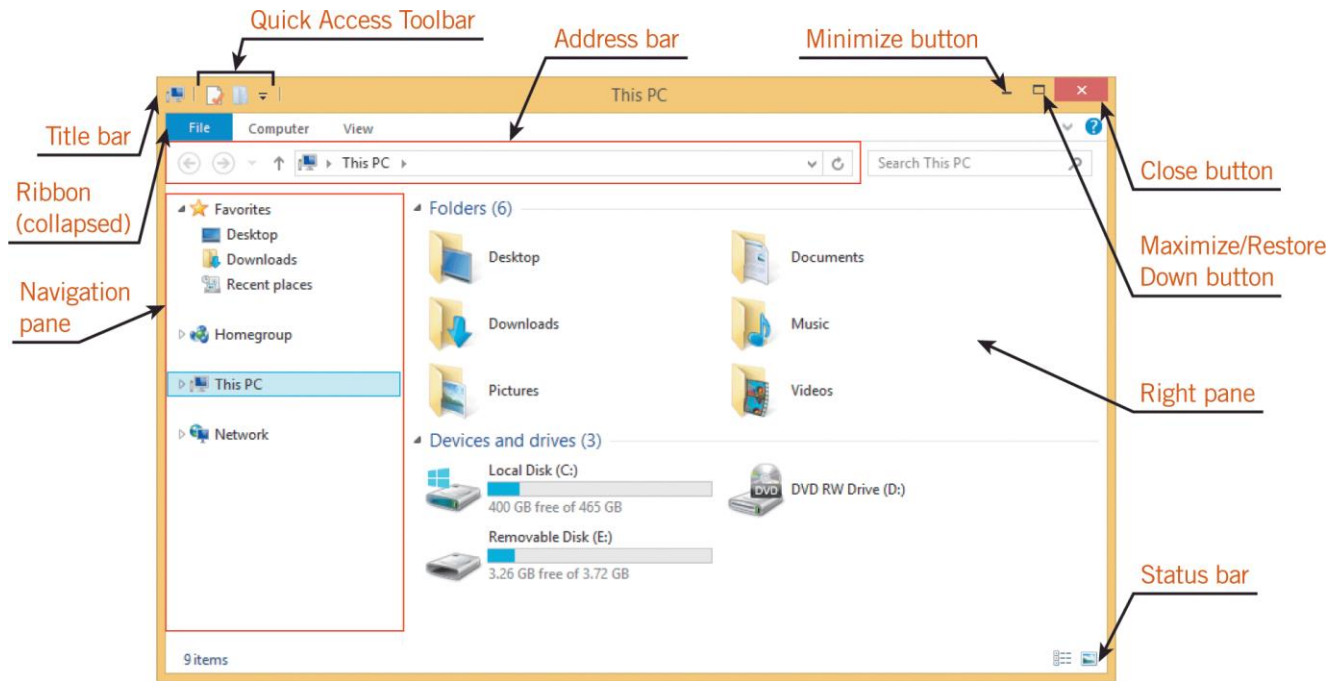
Using File Explorer (continued)

FIGURE 3–3

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Using File Explorer (continued)

- **Folder Navigation**
- To work with files and folders, you can use the Navigation pane.
- When you select a folder in the Navigation pane, the contents of that folder appear in the right pane.
- To view the subfolders contained in a folder, you click on the expand icon.
- You click on the collapse icon to hide the folder's subfolders.
- You can also double-click any device, drive, or folder in the right pane to display its contents.

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Using File Explorer (continued)

- **Folder Navigation (continued)**
- A *library* displays similar types of files together, no matter where they are stored, so you can access them easily.
- In contrast, a folder stores files in a specific location.
- A *contextual tab* contains options related to your current task or location.

Using File Explorer (continued)

- **Navigating to Your Data Files**
- The *file path* indicates where a file is stored on your computer by leading you through the folder and file organization to your file.

Removable Disk (E:) ▶ Module 1 ▶ Lesson 3 ▶ Basics.docx

- – *Removable Disk (E:)*—The drive name
- – *Module 1*—A top-level folder on drive E
- – *Lesson 3*—A subfolder in the Module 1 folder
- – *Basics.docx*—The full filename of the file

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Using File Explorer (continued)

- **Changing View Settings**
- Using File Explorer, you can view the contents of a folder in eight ways: Extra large icons, Large icons, Medium icons, Small icons, List, Details, Tiles, and Content.
- To change the File Explorer view setting to any one of the eight views, you use the View tab on the Ribbon.
- To switch to Details view or Large icons view, you can use the view buttons on the status bar.

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Using File Explorer (continued)

- **Changing View Settings (continued)**

FIGURE 3–7

FIGURE 3–8

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Lesson 3
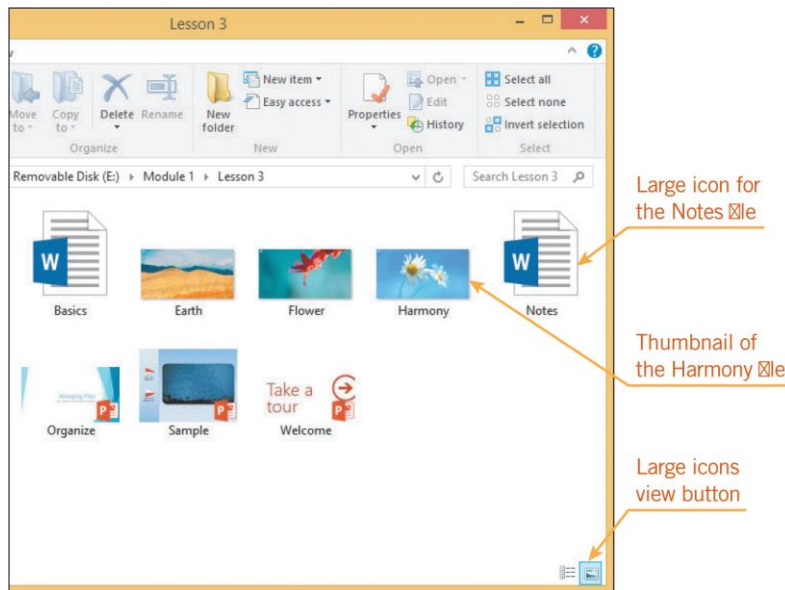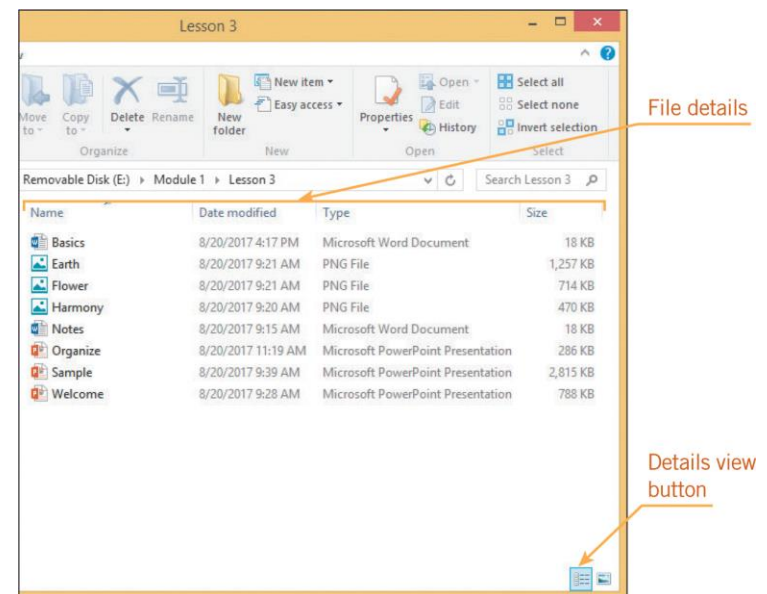
Managing Files

- To organize files, you group similar files together in a folder, preferably a subfolder in one of the Windows default folders, such as Pictures or Documents.

- Separate files into subfolders depending on the purpose or subject matter of the files, and then organize the subfolders from the top down.
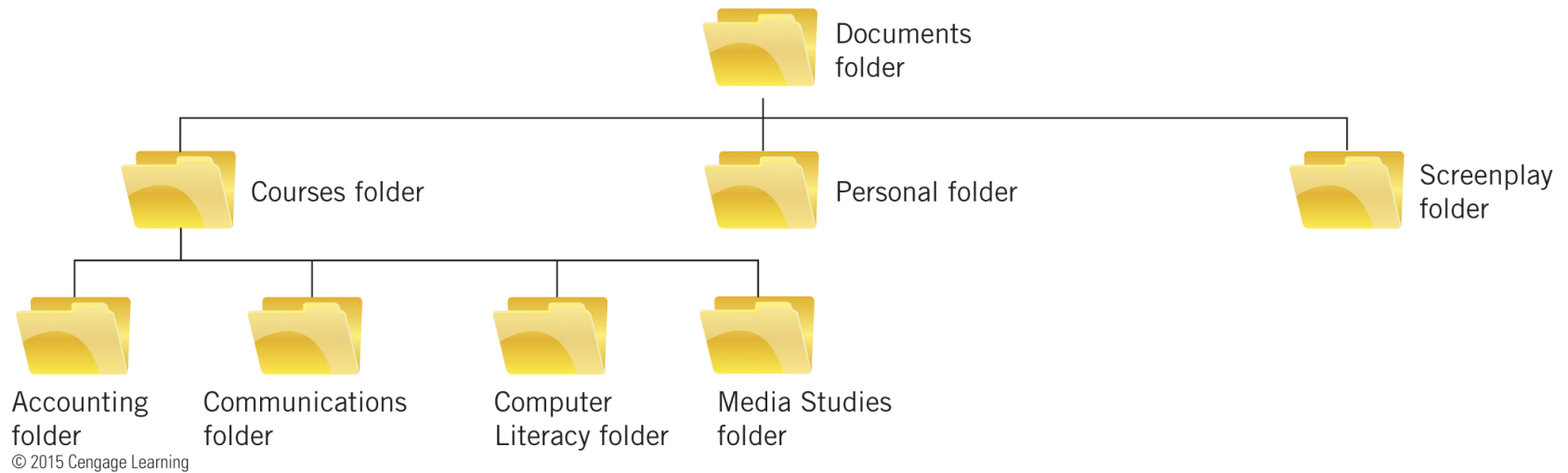
Managing Files (continued)

Documents folder

Courses folder

Personal folder

Screenplay folder

Accounting folder

Communications folder

Computer Literacy folder

Media Studies folder

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FIGURE 3–9

Managing Files (continued)

- **Creating Folders**
- Before you create files, you use File Explorer to create folders to contain the files.
- You can use three methods in File Explorer to create folders: the Home tab on the Ribbon, a shortcut menu, and the Quick Access Toolbar.
- A *shortcut menu* is a menu that appears when you right-click an object on the screen.
- Shortcut menus list commands you can use with the object you right-clicked.

Lesson 3

Managing Files (continued)

- **Creating Folders (continued)**

New folder button on the Quick Access Toolbar

New folder button on the Home tab

New folder

FIGURE 3–10

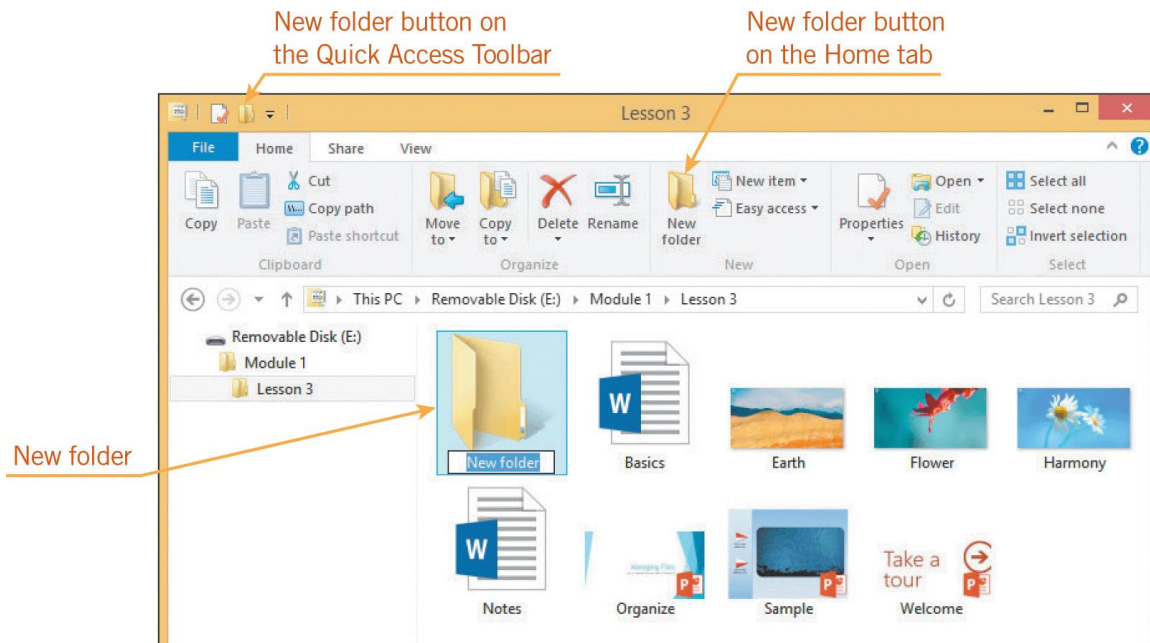**Morrison / Wells / Ruffolo**

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Managing Files (continued)

- **Copying and Moving Files and Folders**
- To organize files into folders, you can copy or move the files.
- *Copying* places a duplicate of a file in a new location.
- *Moving* removes a file from its current location and places it in the destination folder.
- File Explorer provides several methods for copying and moving files and folders.
- Some methods use the *Clipboard*, which is a temporary storage area for files and information.

Managing Files (continued)

- **Copying and Moving Files and Folders (continued)**

TABLE 3–2

METHOD	TO COPY	TO MOVE
Shortcut menu	Right-click a file or folder, click Copy on the shortcut menu, right-click the destination folder, and then click Paste.	Right-click a file or folder, click Cut on the shortcut menu, right-click the destination folder, and then click Paste.
Keyboard shortcut	Click a file or folder, press the Ctrl+C keys, click the destination folder, and then press the Ctrl+V keys.	Click a file or folder, press the Ctrl+X keys, click the destination folder, and then press the Ctrl+V keys.
Home tab	On the Home tab, in the Organize group, click the Copy to button, and then click a location or click Choose location to open the Copy Items dialog box and navigate to the destination folder.	On the Home tab, in the Organize group, click the Move to button, and then click a location or click Choose location to open the Move Items dialog box and navigate to the destination folder.
Drag	If the destination folder is on a different drive, drag a file or folder to the destination folder.	If the destination folder is on the same drive, drag a file or folder to the destination folder.
Right-drag	Using a mouse, point to a file or folder, press and hold the right mouse button, and then drag the file or folder to a new location. Release the mouse button, and then click Copy here on the shortcut menu. (You cannot use this method on a touchscreen.)	Using a mouse, point to a file or folder, press and hold the right mouse button, and then drag the file or folder to a new location. Release the mouse button, and then click Move here on the shortcut menu. (You cannot use this method on a touchscreen.)

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Managing Files (continued)

- **Deleting Files and Folders**

- You should periodically delete files and folders you no longer need.

- You delete a file or folder in File Explorer by deleting an icon.

- When you delete a file from a hard disk, Windows removes the file from the folder but stores the file contents in the Recycle Bin.

- The ***Recycle Bin*** is an area on your hard disk that holds deleted files until you remove them permanently.

- You can retrieve a file from the Recycle Bin; but after you empty the Recycle Bin, you can no longer recover the files it contained.

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Managing Files (continued)

- **Renaming Files**
- Filenames should reflect the contents of the file.
- The main part of a filename can have up to 255 characters.
- You can use spaces and certain punctuation symbols in your filenames, but not the symbols / \ : * ? < > or | because these characters have special meanings in Windows.

Lesson 3

Managing Files (continued)

- **Renaming Files (continued)**
- Keep the following guidelines in mind as you name files:
  - Use descriptive names—Use filenames that are long enough to be meaningful, but short enough to be read easily on the screen.
  - Do not change the file extension—If you change the file extension, Windows might not be able to find a program to open it.
  - Follow a pattern—Use a consistent naming scheme that is clear to you.

Managing Files (continued)

- **Creating Shortcuts**
- In Windows, a *shortcut* is an icon or a tile that provides a quick way to perform an action such as opening a folder or a file.
- You can create a shortcut in two places: on the Start screen and on the desktop.
- You can add, or *pin*, a folder to the Start screen, where it appears as a tile.
- You can create shortcuts on the desktop to access drives, folders, files, Web pages, applications, or other computer resources.

Lesson 3

Managing Files (continued)

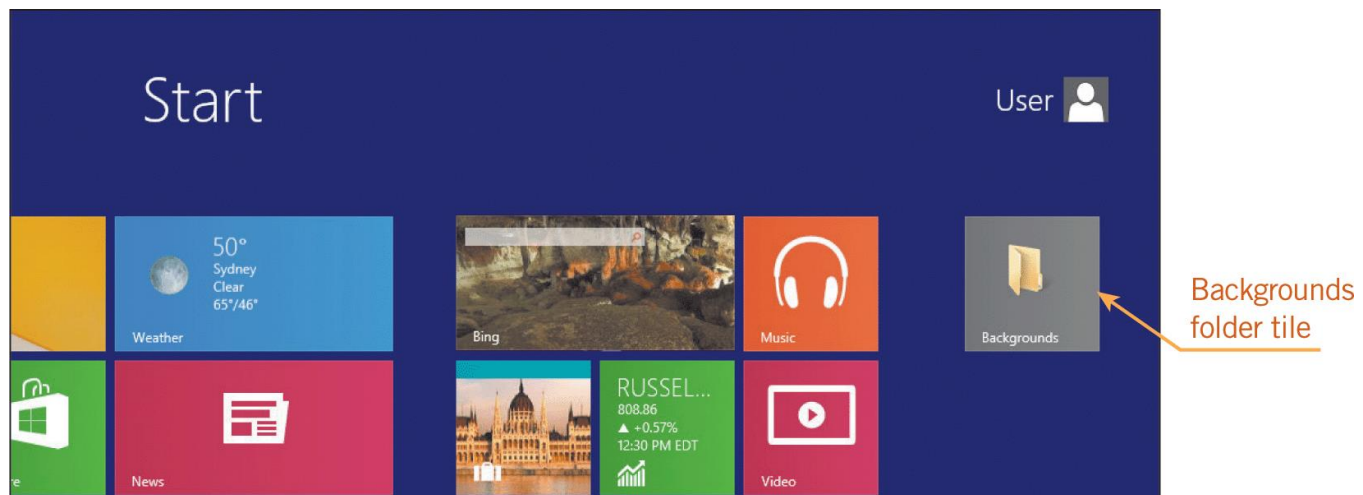- **Creating Shortcuts (continued)**

FIGURE 3-14

Lesson 3

Managing Files (continued)

- **Searching for Files**
- If you are not sure where a file is stored, you can use the Search box in File Explorer to find a file.
- Start typing text associated with the file into the Search box. Windows searches for the file by examining the names of the files displayed in the current folder and files in its subfolders.
- If Windows finds a file whose filename contains a word with the search text you specify, it displays that file in the File Explorer window.

Understanding File Types

- A computer can contain three categories of files: system files, application files, and data files.
- **System files** are those necessary for running the operating system.
- An **application file** is part of an application, such as a word-processing application, and it is a necessary file for running the software.
- A **data file** is one you create when working with an application.
- Many system and application files are **executable files** that perform tasks automatically when you open them.

Understanding File Types (continued)

TABLE 3–3

CATEGORY	COMMON FILE EXTENSION	OPERATING SYSTEM OR APPLICATION
System files	.dll, .ocx, .sys	Windows
Application files	.bat, .com, .exe	Windows
	.app, .osx	Mac OS X
	.bin	Linux, Mac OS X, Windows
	.out, .run	Linux
Data files		
Media	.avi, .mov, .mp4	Video application
	.jpg, .png, .tif	Graphics application
	.mp3, .m4a, .wav	Sound application
Office documents	.doc, .docx	Microsoft Word
	.mdb, .accdb	Microsoft Access
	.ppt, .pptx	Microsoft PowerPoint
	.xls, .xlsx	Microsoft Excel
Simple text	.rtf, .txt	Text editor
Other	.htm, .html	Web browser
	.pdf	Portable document reader or editor
	.zip	File compression utility

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Summary

In this lesson, you learned:

- The characteristics and capabilities of a computer's internal hardware components directly influence computer performance.

- You store files in folders, which are containers for related files, and on drives, which are storage devices. You use folders to organize your files on a drive.

- A computer can store folders and files on different types of disks, including removable media and hard disks. Before your computer can access a removable disk, you must insert the disk into a drive, which Windows names by assigning it a drive letter.

Lesson 3

Summary (continued)

- Windows organizes the folders and files in a computer in a hierarchy called a file system. At the top of the file system is the root directory, which is where Windows stores system files and folders.

- The file management tool in Windows 8 is called File Explorer. You use File Explorer to display files and folders, navigate the Windows file system, and perform other file management tasks.

Summary (continued)

- To navigate a computer with File Explorer, you click expand icons in the Navigation pane until you find the folder that you want. Then, you click the folder icon in the Navigation pane to view the folders and files it contains, which are displayed in the right pane.

- A file path is a notation that indicates where a file is stored. A file path includes the drive name and letter, folder and subfolders, and the full filename.

Summary (continued)

- A full filename includes the main part of the filename, a dot, and the file extension, which is usually three or four characters that identify the file type.

- Using File Explorer, you can view the contents of a folder in eight ways, including Details view, which lists details about each file, and Large icons view, which displays a preview of the file's content if the file includes graphics.

Summary (continued)

- To organize files, you group similar files together in a folder, preferably a subfolder in one of the Windows default folders. Separate the files into subfolders depending on the purpose or subject matter of the files, and organize the subfolders from the top down.

- After creating folders and subfolders according to your file organization, you can copy and move files into the folders using several methods. Some methods use the Clipboard, which is a temporary storage area for files and information that you copy or move from one place and plan to use somewhere else.

Summary (continued)

- You should delete files and folders you no longer need to stay organized. When you delete a file from a hard disk, Windows removes the file from the folder but stores the file contents in the Recycle Bin until you remove them permanently.

- The names of folders and files should reflect their contents, and can contain up to 255 characters, except for certain characters that have special meanings in Windows.

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Summary (continued)

- In Windows, a shortcut is a quick way to perform an action such as opening a folder or a file. You can create shortcuts on the Start screen and on the desktop.

- To find a file using File Explorer, you click the Search box and then start typing text associated with the file, such as a word in the filename.

Summary (continued)

- The three categories of files on a computer are system files, application files, and data files. A system file is one necessary for running the operating system. An application file is a necessary file for running the application. A data file is one you create when working with an application.

- You should be able to recognize common files types and their file extensions so you know which files to avoid (system and application files), and to identify applications you can use to open files.

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