UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT COMPUTER FILES
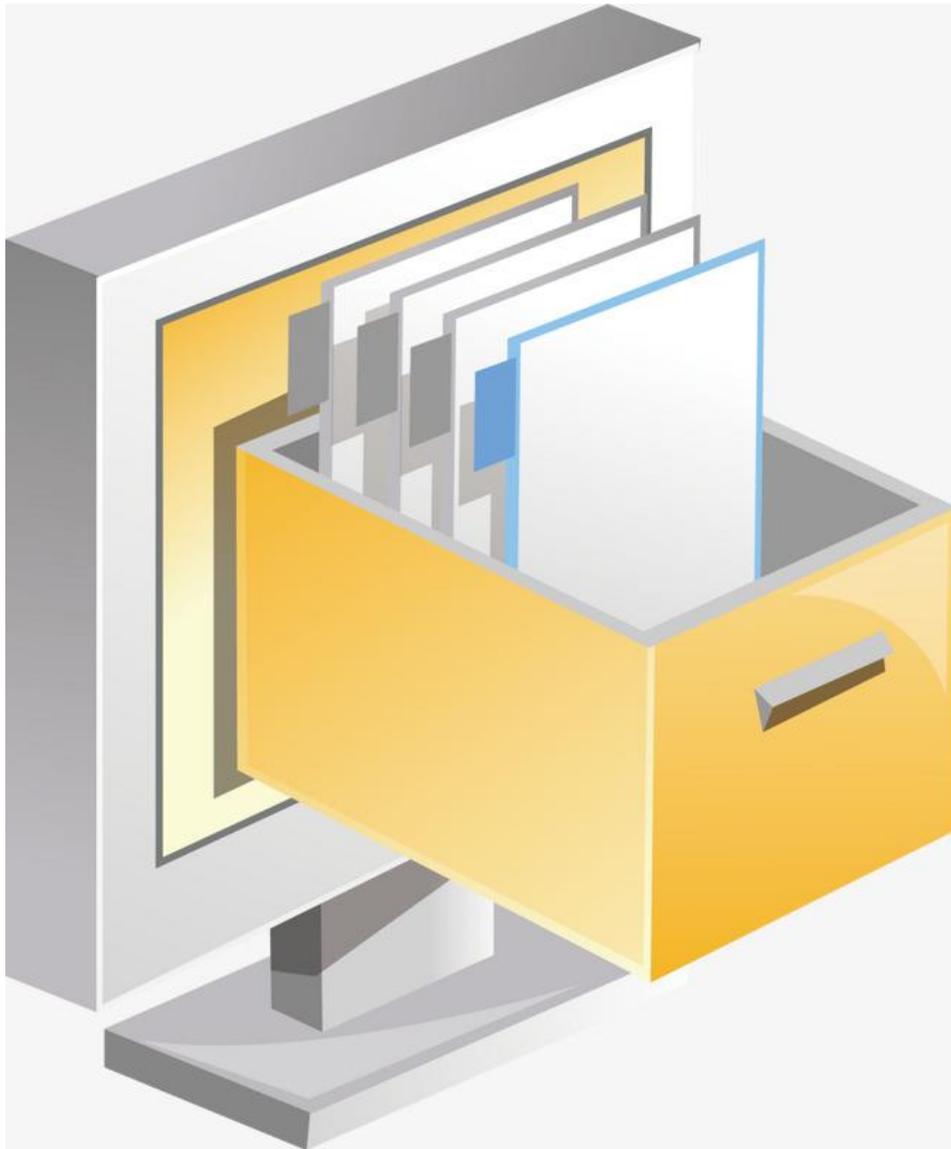
Contents

FILES ON A WINDOWS COMPUTER

FILES ON A MAC

FILES ON A WINDOWS COMPUTER

MANAGING DOCUMENTS, FILES AND FOLDERS

Your computer puts information at your fingertips. Over time, however, you might have so many files that it can be difficult to find the specific file you need. Without a good organizational method, all your files are lumped together in one place. This is the equivalent of shoving all your files into one filing cabinet. Just like a physical filing cabinet, your computer files can benefit from better organization.

Keeping your files organized provides many benefits. First, you can more easily find the folder or file you want. Second, you can keep your disk running in good shape by periodically weeding out old files. Good file management does not take that long and involves just a few key ideas.

To help you keep your documents organized, Windows gives you **File Explorer**. To access the File Explorer you can search for it:
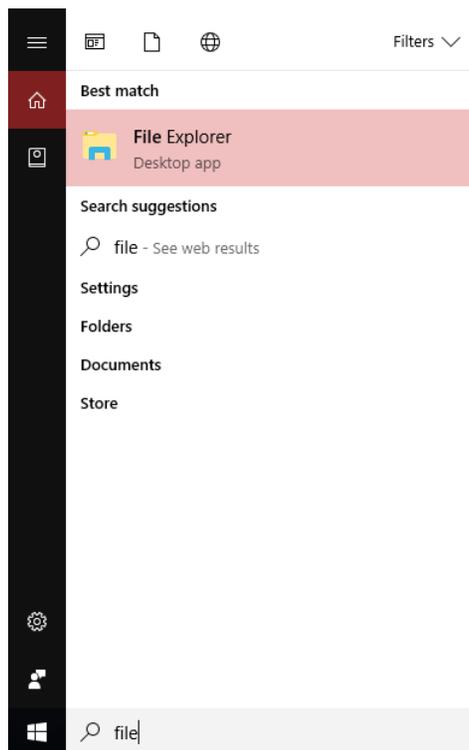
FILE EXPLORER

Windows sets up several special folders. These include Downloads, Desktop, Documents and Pictures. As you can see below, documents on this computers are all stored in specific folders:
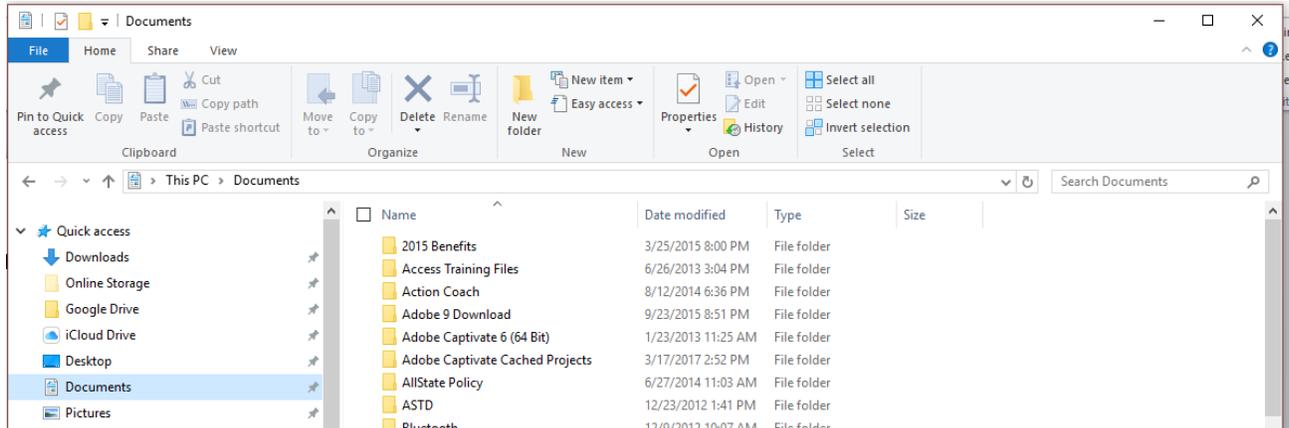
The folders appear in alphabetically order, but you can click on the Date Modified Heading to sort by date descending order:
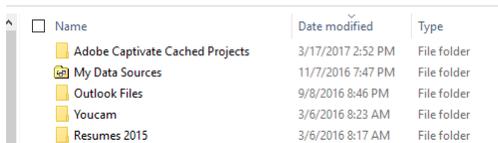
Click the heading again to sort by date ascending order:
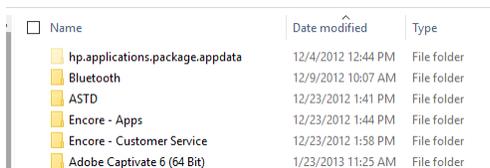
The most effective way to organize your files is to create a folder structure that fits how you use your computer. For example, you might have folders within Documents for:

Finances: Documents related to your budget and taxes

Home: Records relating to home maintenance and improvements

In File Explorer, on the Home Tab of the Ribbon, there are icons to help you manage your files. Click **New Folder** to create a folder and name it:
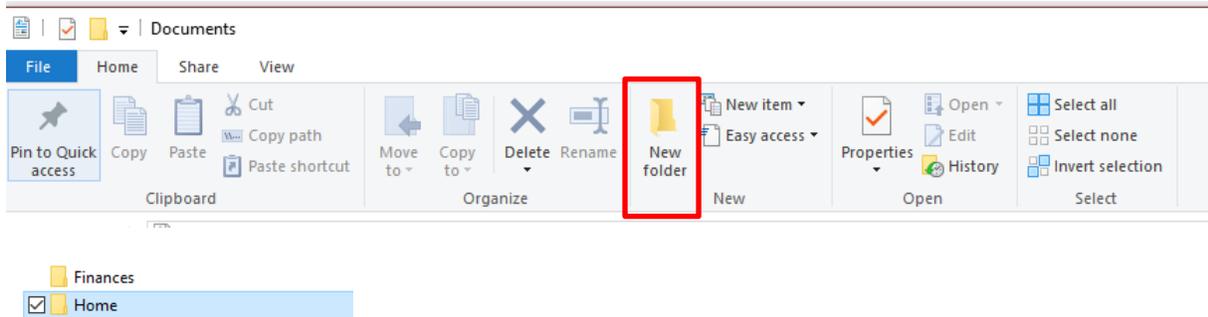
SAVING FILES FROM APPLICATIONS

When saving files form applications, you need to understand the difference between Save and Save As.

To save a new file, click the **File Tab** and select **Save**.
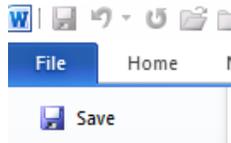
Here we will file the Word document in the **Finances** Folder within the **Documents** Folder:
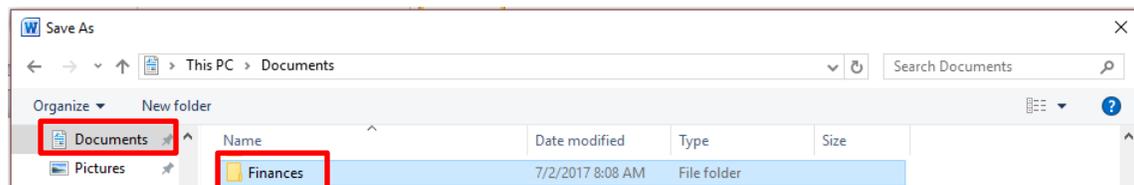
Click into he Finances folder and name the file:
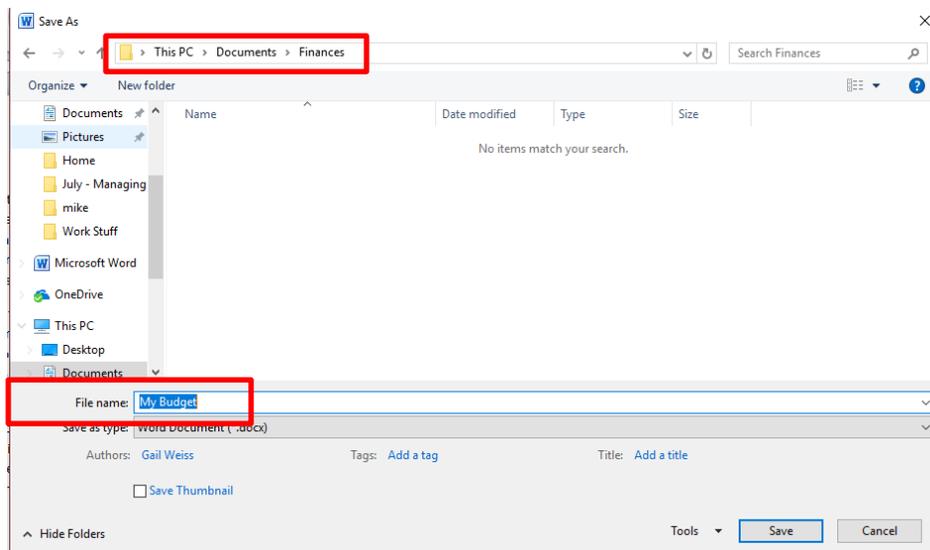
To save any changes to the file again, click **SAVE**.

If you want to make a copy of the file, click **SAVE AS** and give the file another name.
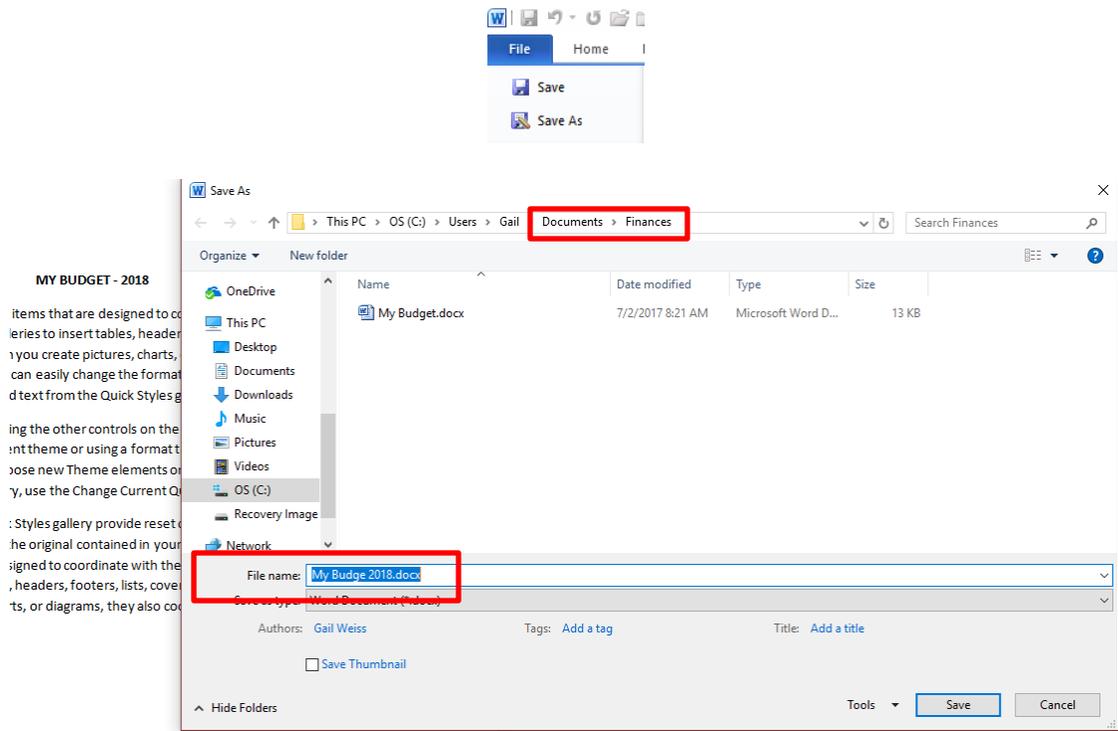
You now have two separate files.
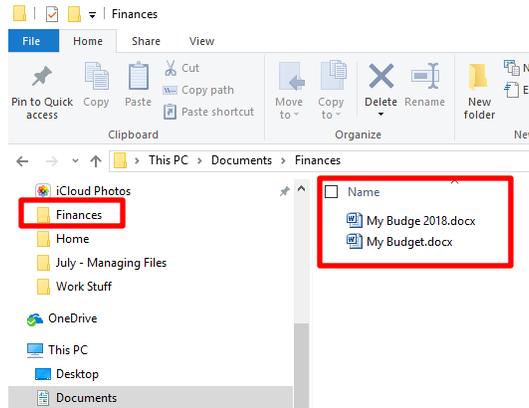
SAVING FILES FROM E-MAIL ATTACHMENTS

To save a file attachment from your email:

FROM GOOGLE ACCOUNT

Click the Download Icon:
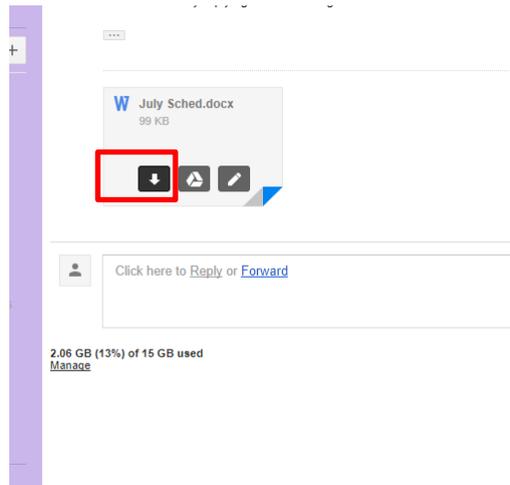
The file will open in the corresponding application:

File Extensions:

.docx – WORD
.xlsx - EXCEL
.pdf – Adobe Reader
.jpg - Picture

NOTE: Always select **File – Save As**, so that you can control where the file will be saved. If you select **File – Save**, the computer will decide where to save it and you may not be able to find it again.

Here we will file the Email Attachment in the Home Folder within the Documents Folder:
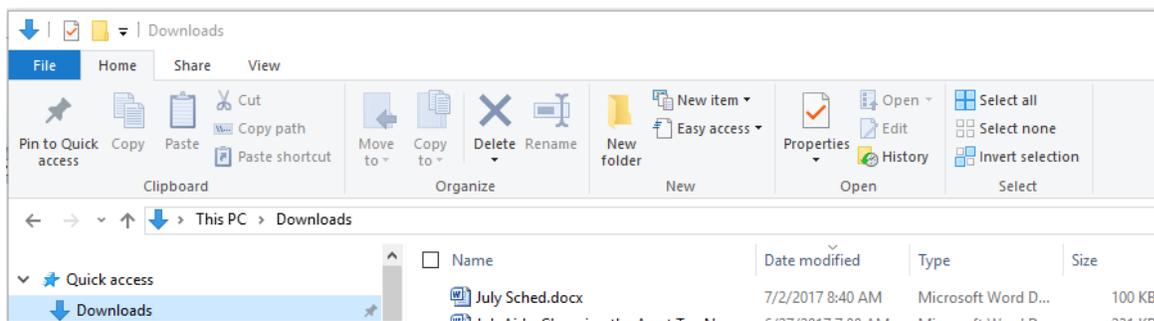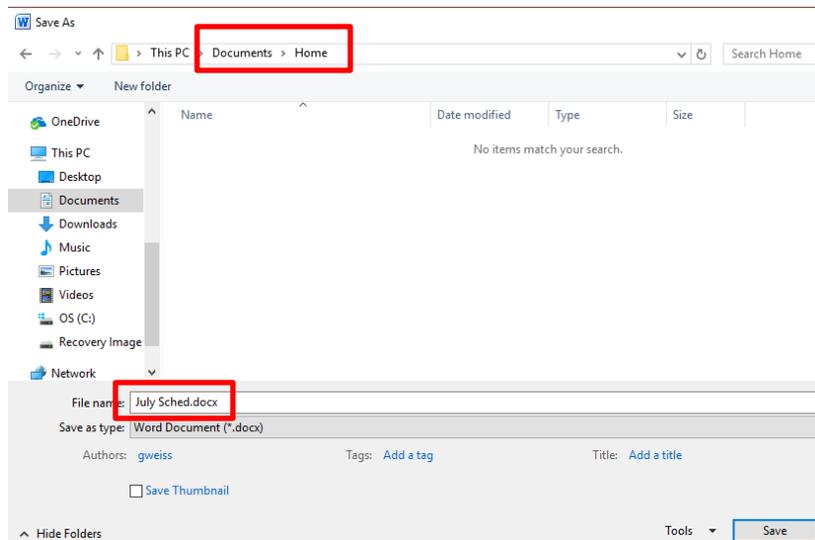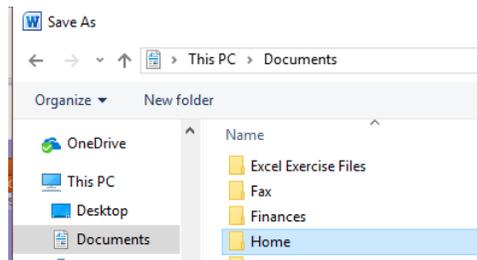
SEARCHING FOR FILES

Many times you save a file and then you can't find it. You will use File Explorer to find your files:

Click the Magnifying Glass icon and the Search Tab will appear. Click This PC to search the entire computer:
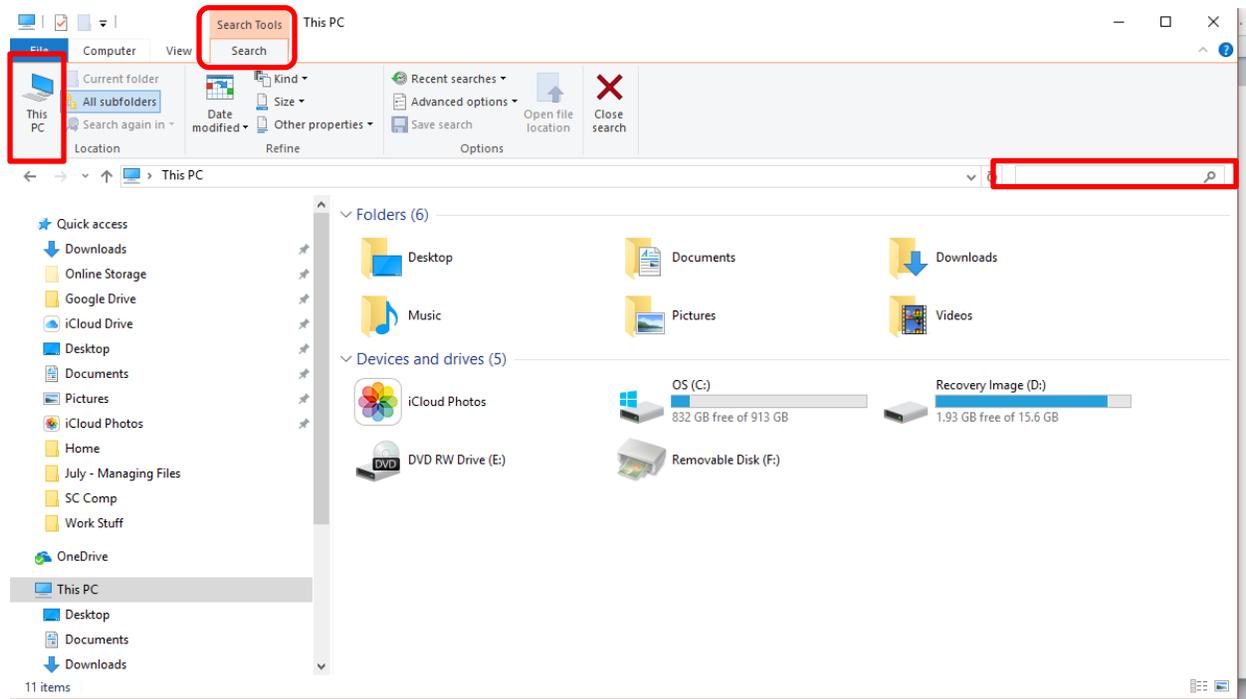
Searching Tips

If you don't know the exact name of the file, type in the first couple of characters that it starts with:
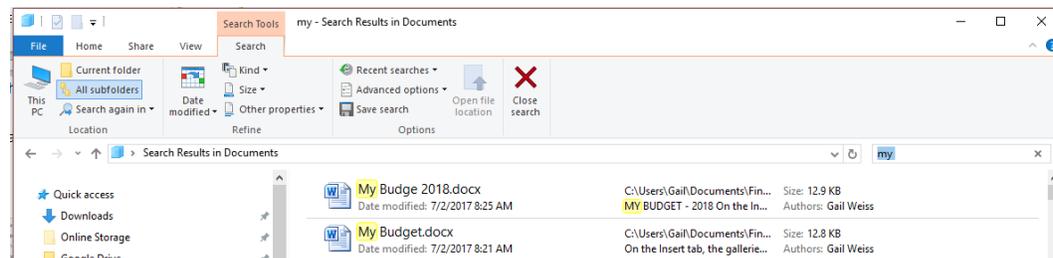
If you can't remember the name of the file, you can search by the "kind" (file type):
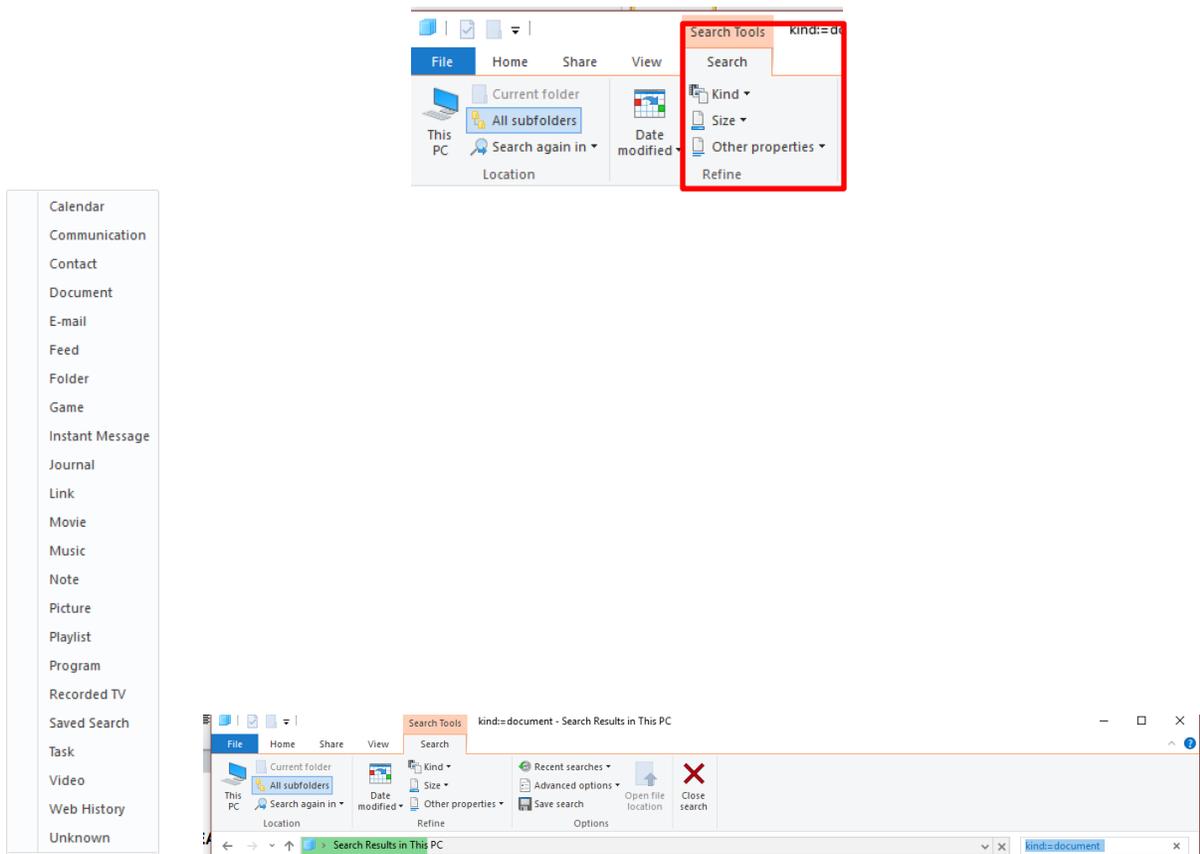
You can also search by using the file extension:

*.docx – Word Doc
*.xlsx – Excel File
*.pdf – Adobe Reader
*.jpg – Pictures

If you know the first couple of characters and the file type you can search using the asterisk to represent the unknown characters as follows:

my*.docx
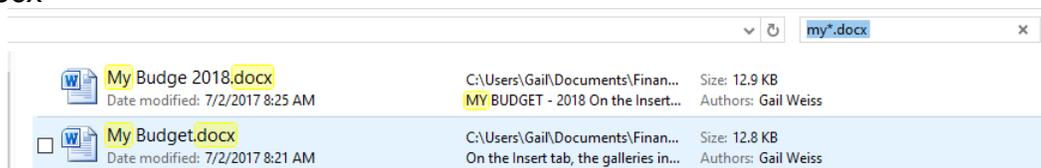
FILES ON A MAC

FINDER ICON ON YOUR MAC

Learning about the Finder is the first step toward finding and organizing your documents, media, folders, and other files.

The Finder is the first thing that you see when your Mac finishes starting up. It opens automatically and stays open as you use other apps. It includes the Finder menu bar at the top of the screen and the desktop below that. It uses windows and icons to show you the contents of your Mac, iCloud Drive, and other storage devices. It's called the Finder because it helps you to find and organize your files.

OPENING WINDOWS AND FILES

To open a window and see the files on your Mac, switch to the Finder by clicking the Finder icon (pictured above) in the Dock. Switching to the Finder also reveals any Finder windows that might be hidden behind the windows of other apps. You can drag to resize windows and use the buttons to close , minimize , or maximize windows. Learn more about managing windows.

When you see a document, app, or other file that you want to open, just double-click it.

CHANGE HOW YOUR FILES ARE DISPLAYED

To change how files are displayed in Finder windows, use the View menu in the menu bar, or the row of buttons at the top of the Finder window. You can view files as icons ⬚, in a list ☰, in columns ▥, or in a gallery ▭. And for each view, the View menu provides options to change how items are sorted and arranged, such as by kind, date, or size.

When you view files in a gallery, you can browse your files visually using large previews, so it's easy to identify images, videos, and all kinds of documents.
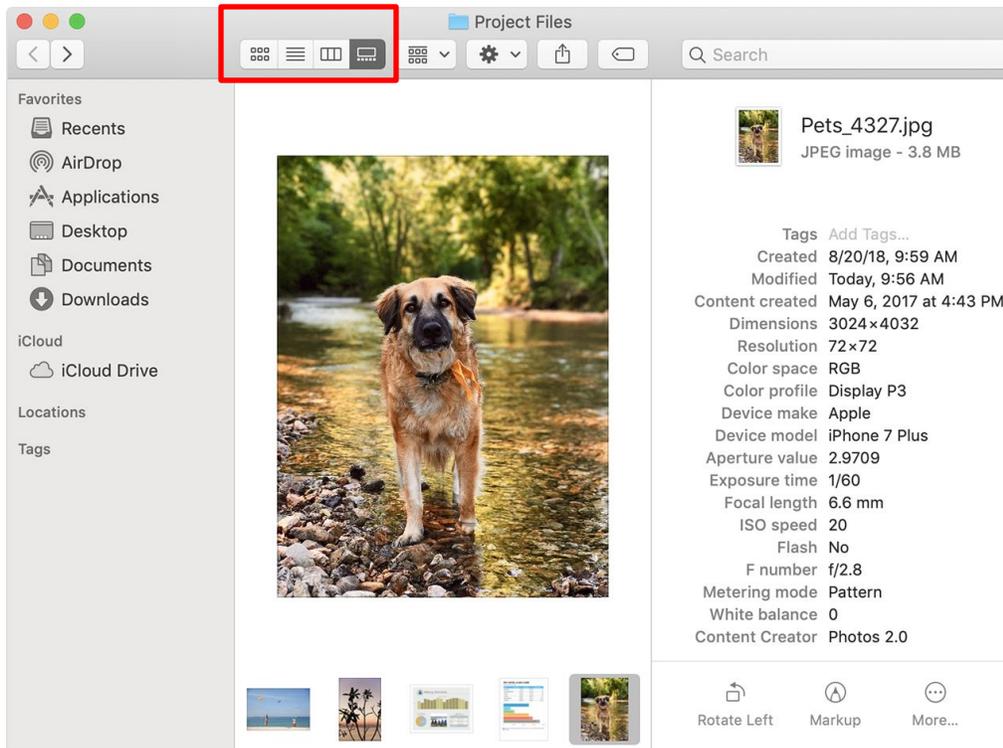
SEARCH FOR FILES

To search from a Finder window, use the search field in the corner of the window:
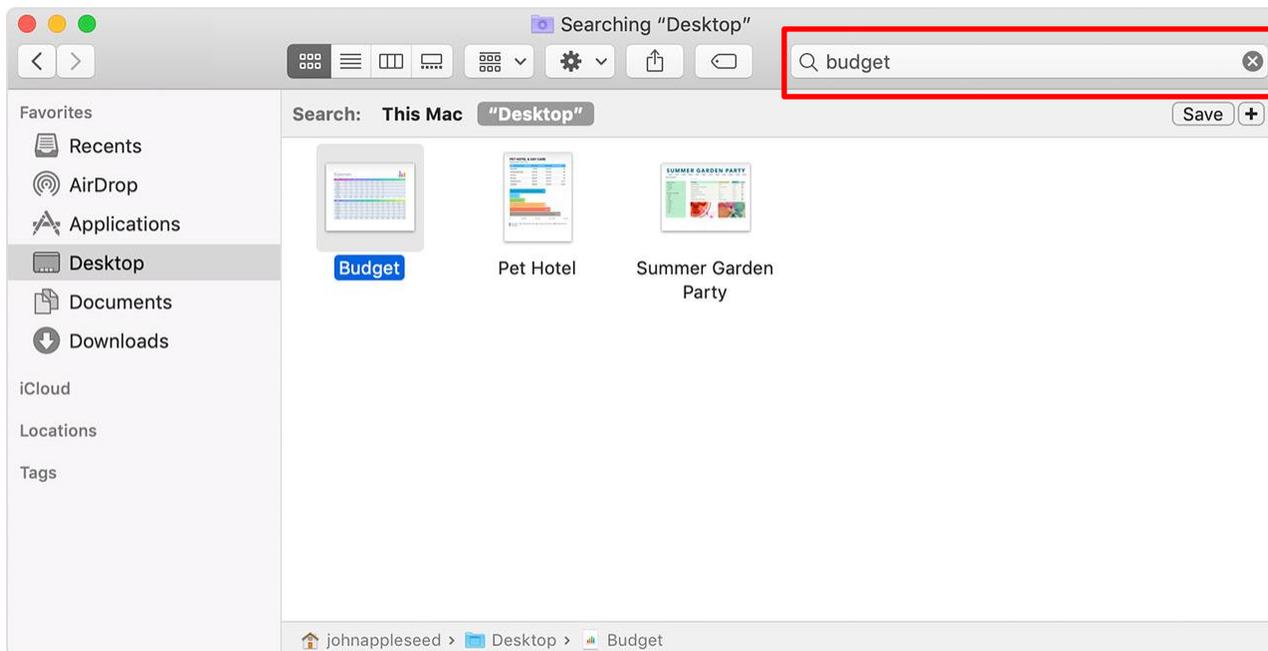
When you select a search result, its location appears at the bottom of the window.

ORGANIZE FILES IN FOLDERS ON MAC

Everything on your Mac—documents, pictures, music, apps, and more—is organized in folders. As you create documents, install apps, and do other work, you can create new folders to keep yourself organized.

1. On your Mac, click the Finder icon in the Dock to open a Finder window, then navigate to where you want to create the folder.

   Alternatively, click the desktop if you want to create the folder on the desktop.

2. Choose File > New Folder, or press Shift-Command-N.

   If the New Folder command is dimmed, you can't create a folder in the current location.

3. Enter a name for the folder, then press Return.