

How to use offline files in Windows XP

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SUMMARY

This article describes how to use the Offline Files feature in Microsoft Windows XP.

You can make network files available offline by storing shared files on your computer so that they are accessible when you are not connected to the network. If you do this, you can work with the files the same way that you work with them when you are connected to the network. When you reconnect to the network, changes that you made to the files are updated to the network.

MORE INFORMATION

Configuring your computer to use Offline Files

To configure your computer to use the Offline Files feature:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **My Computer**.
2. On the **Tools** menu, click **Folder Options**.
3. Click the **Offline Files** tab.
4. Select the **Enable Offline Files** check box, and then click **OK**.

Making files or folders available offline

To make shared network files or folders available when you are offline:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **My Computer**.
2. Click **My Network Places**.
3. Double-click the network place that contains the folder or file that you want to make available offline.
4. Right-click the file or folder that you want, and then click **Make Available Offline**. The Offline Files Wizard starts. Click **Next** to continue.
5. Select the **Automatically synchronize the Offline Files when I log on and log off my computer** check box, and then click **Next**.
6. Select the **Create a shortcut to the Offline Files folder on my desktop** check box, and then click **Finish**. The files are copied to your computer, and a "Shortcut to Offline Files" folder is displayed on the desktop.

NOTE: When you make other files available offline, they are displayed in the "Shortcut to Offline Files" folder.

It is also possible to use offline files with third party servers if they have SMB (Server Message Block) protocol installed. With the SMB protocol, you can use this feature from heterogeneous servers, such as Netware and UNIX.

Ensure that your network administrator has setup your UNIX or Netware servers to use the SMB protocol to share files on the network. They can use a product, Samba, for example, to setup SMB on your servers. Once SMB is running on the server, you can use Windows XP to connect to those files and make them available offline like you would if the server was a Windows-based server.

Making files or folders unavailable offline

To stop using a shared network file or folder when you are offline, right-click the offline file, and then click the **Make Available Offline** command to remove the check. The file or folder is removed from the Offline Files folder.

Synchronizing Offline Files

Offline files are automatically synchronized by default when you log off the network. To manually synchronize an offline file, right-click the file that you want, and then click **Synchronize**. You must be connected to the network to synchronize files.

To edit the synchronization settings:

1. Right-click the offline file that you want, and then click **Synchronize**.
2. In the **Synchronizing** dialog box, click **Setup**.
3. Change the synchronization settings that you want, and then click **OK**.

Troubleshooting

- You cannot use offline files.

This can occur if the Fast User Switching feature is enabled. You cannot use fast user switching when you use offline files. To disable the Fast User Switching feature:

1. Click **Start**, and then click **Control Panel**.
 2. In Category view, click **User Accounts**.
 3. Click **Change the way users log on or off**.
 4. Clear the **Use Fast User Switching** check box, and then click **Apply Options**.
 5. Quit User Accounts, and then quit Control Panel.
- When you attempt to synchronize offline files, a **Resolve File Conflicts** dialog box appears.

This can occur if both the offline copy of a file and the online copy of the file has been changed. To resolve this issue, click the file-conflict resolution that you want, and then click **OK**. If you want to use this same resolution method for all synchronization conflicts, select the **Do this for all conflicts** check box.

APPLIES TO

- Microsoft Windows XP Professional Edition

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