

Common File Types

The three letters found at the end of a file name are called a file extension and tell you the file format or file type. These three letters offer a clue as to what program you need on your computer to view or edit the file.

Word Processing

- doc – Microsoft Word
- wpd – WordPerfect
- wps – Works 6 and Works 7
- cwk – Claris Works for Macs, could be a word processing, spreadsheet or database file
- txt – text only
- rtf – Rich Text Format
- dot – MS Word document template
- sxw or sdw – Open Office

Spreadsheet

- xls – Excel
- wk? – Lotus 1,2,3
- wq1 – Quattro Pro
- csv – comma separated value
- sxc – open office

Presentation Software

- ppt – PowerPoint presentation
- pps – PowerPoint slide show
- pot – PowerPoint design template
- cpr – Corel PRESENTS presentation
- sxl – open office

Database

- mdb – MS Access Database

Video

- wmv – Windows movie file
- mpg – standard Internet movie format
- avi – Audio Video Interleaved, Windows movie file
- mov – QuickTime movie

Sound

- mp3 – common digital audio format
- mid – musical instrument digital interface
- wav – Windows audio format
- mp4 – commonly used as an alternative to mp3 but allows streaming of audio and video in one file

Graphics/Images

- jpg - Joint Photography Experts Group, common Internet graphics format for photographs and other complex images
- gif – graphic interchange file, common Internet graphics format
- tif – tag image file, high-quality images, large file size
- psd – Adobe Photoshop
- bmp – Windows bitmap image

On the Web

- html or htm – hypertext markup language, most common format for web pages

Miscellaneous

- zip - Windows compression format to compress large files; needs an unzipping program to decompress or extract the files
- exe – executable program
- pdf – Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format
- pub – Microsoft Publisher file