

Microsoft Windows 7

12 – Desktop icons



DESKTOP ICONS

INFOCUS

Windows uses **icons** to graphically represent items, such as programs and folders. This is part of Windows **GUI**, or **graphical user interface**. Icons appear everywhere throughout Windows, and are really just pictures that depict the type of items they represent. The Windows **desktop** contains a range of desktop icons. Many of these icons are known as **shortcuts** or links to frequently-used programs, folders and files. You can save quite a bit of time and reduce the number of mouse clicks in a day by creating desktop shortcuts for frequently-used programs. Shortcuts to programs, files and folders can be added easily to the desktop, as well as arranged, moved and removed. You should also clean up your desktop from time to time when it becomes too cluttered.

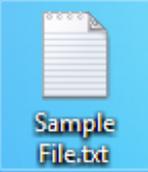
In this booklet we will show you how to:

- gain an understanding of common desktop icons
- arrange and resize desktop icons
- create desktop shortcuts
- delete desktop icons.

UNDERSTANDING DESKTOP ICONS

The Windows desktop contains a range of **icons**, some of which appear when you install Windows 7, and some that appear when you install new programs. Icons with an arrow are known as **shortcuts** or links

to programs, files or folders. You can double-click on a desktop icon to launch that program, folder or file. Below are some common desktop icons.

Icons	What They Represent
	<p>Programs</p> <p>The icons to the left represent shortcuts to various programs. You can tell it's a shortcut as it contains an arrow. So, if you were to delete the shortcut, you wouldn't be deleting the actual program, only the desktop link to it.</p> <p>Double-clicking on the relevant icon will launch that program. For example, if you double-click on the icons to the left you will launch:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Microsoft Word 2007 (word processing program) 2. Mozilla Firefox (internet browser) 3. Adobe Reader 9 (to view PDF files)
	<p>Files</p> <p>Icons that show a page represent a file. When you double-click on the icon, the file will open in the program that it was created in. The picture to the left shows that the file was created in Notepad. However, as no arrow appears, it is not a shortcut, but indicates that this file was actually saved to the desktop. Therefore, if this desktop icon is deleted, so is the actual file.</p>
	<p>Folders and drives</p> <p>Icons that show a folder represent a folder or shortcut to a folder. When you double-click on a folder icon, the Windows Explorer window will open and you will see the contents of that folder. Similarly, icons that show a hard disk will display the contents of that drive in Windows Explorer when you double-click on it.</p>
	<p>Recycle Bin</p> <p>The desktop icon for the Recycle Bin is shown as a waste paper basket with the recycle symbol on it. Double-clicking on this icon will open the Recycle Bin window, allowing you to permanently delete or restore files as necessary.</p>

CREATING A DESKTOP SHORTCUT

Desktop icons are designed to enable quick access to frequently-used programs, files, folders and so on. Many of these icons will be **shortcuts**, which are used to launch a program (or whatever) from another

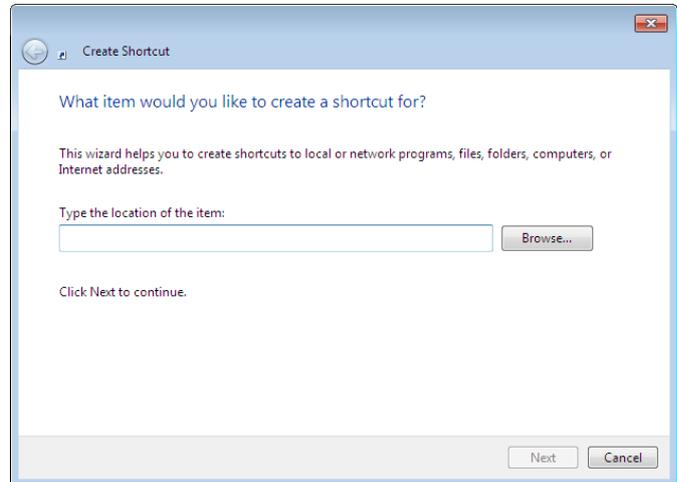
location. You can create desktop shortcuts for pretty much anything on your computer: programs, files, folders, windows and the like.

Try This Yourself:

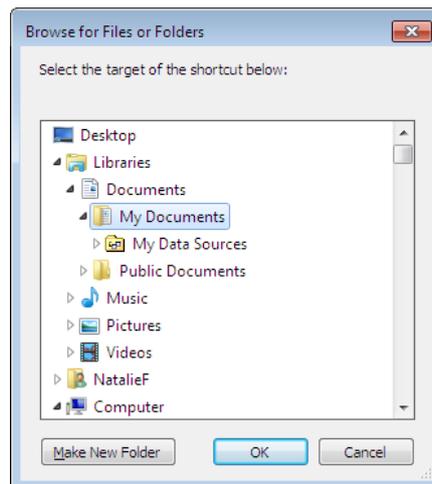
Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

- 1 Right-click on a blank area of the desktop to display a shortcut menu
- 2 Select **New > Shortcut** to display the **Create Shortcut** dialog box
- 3 Click on **[Browse]** to display the **Browse for files and folders** dialog box
- 4 Click on the white arrows ▸ beside **Libraries** and then **Documents**, and then click on **My Documents** to select it
- 5 Click on **[OK]** and then click on **[Next]**
You will then be asked to name the shortcut but you will keep it as My Documents...
- 6 Click on **[Finish]**
The My Documents folder now appears as a shortcut on your desktop...
- 7 Double-click on the **My Documents** shortcut to launch **Windows Explorer** and display the contents of the **My Documents** folder
- 8 Click on **close**  to close **Windows Explorer**

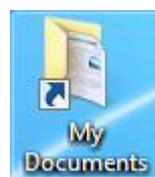
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4



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For Your Reference...

To create a desktop shortcut:

4. Right-click on the desktop, select **New > Shortcut**, and then click on **[Browse]**
5. Navigate to and select the item, and click on **[OK]**
6. Click on **[Next]**, type a name if required, then click on **[Finish]**

Handy to Know...

- Just as you can add shortcuts to the desktop for your frequently-used programs and folders, you can also pin programs and folders to the **Taskbar**. To do this, open the program or folder, right-click on its icon in the Taskbar and select **Pin this program to taskbar**.

CLEANING THE DESKTOP

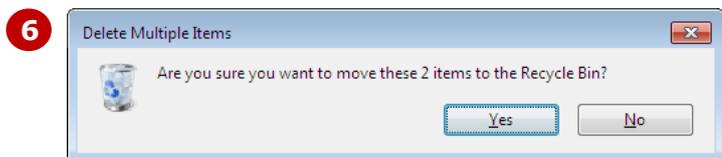
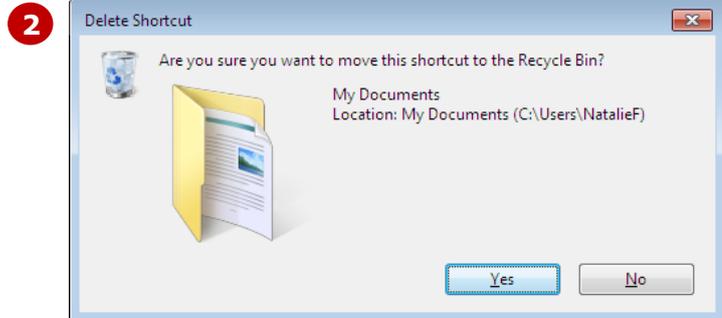
As you work with your computer over time, you'll find that more and more icons make their way onto your desktop. This might be through saving files to the desktop, or shortcuts being added when new programs

are installed. From time to time, however, you'll need to clean your desktop so that you can easily find what you need and keep the desktop free from clutter.

Try This Yourself:

Before starting this exercise ensure you are viewing the desktop...

- 1** Click once on the **My Documents** desktop shortcut to select it
- 2** Press **Del**
You are asked to confirm that you want to move the shortcut to the Recycle Bin...
- 3** Click on **[Yes]** to delete the shortcut
- 4** Click on a desktop shortcut or icon (that you don't use) to select it
- 5** Press and hold down **Ctrl** and click on another shortcut (that you don't use) to select both shortcuts
- 6** Press **Del**
Again you are asked to confirm that you want to move the items to the Recycle Bin...
- 7** Click on **[Yes]** to delete both shortcuts



For Your Reference...

To delete a desktop shortcut:

1. Click on the shortcut to select it
2. Press **Del** and click on **[Yes]**

To delete multiple shortcuts:

1. Use **Ctrl** and click to select the shortcuts
2. Press **Del** and click on **[Yes]**

Handy to Know...

- To delete multiple desktop shortcuts, drag a border around the shortcuts to select them, press **Del** and then **[OK]**.
- You can use the same selection techniques for desktop icons as you can with files and folders.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Congratulations!

You have now completed the **Desktop icons** booklet. This booklet was designed to get you to the point where you can competently perform a variety of operations as outlined in the task list on page 2.

We have tried to build up your skills and knowledge by having you work through specific tasks. The step by step approach will serve as a reference for you when you need to repeat a task.

Where To From Here...

The following is a little advice about what to do next:

- Spend some time playing with what you have learnt. You should reinforce the skills that you have acquired and use some of the application's commands. This will test just how much of the concepts and features have stuck! Don't try a big task just yet if you can avoid it - small is a good way to start.
- Some aspects of the course may now be a little vague. Go over some of the points that you may be unclear about. Use the examples and exercises in these notes and have another go - these step-by-step notes were designed to help you in the classroom and in the work place!

Here are a few techniques and strategies that we've found handy for learning more about technology:

- visit CLD's e-learning zone on the Intranet
- read computer magazines - there are often useful articles about specific techniques
- if you have the skills and facilities, browse the Internet, specifically the technical pages of the application that you have just learnt
- take an interest in what your work colleagues have done and how they did it - we don't suggest that you plagiarise but you can certainly learn from the techniques of others
- if your software came with a manual (which is rare nowadays) spend a bit of time each day reading a few pages. Then try the techniques out straight away - over a period of time you'll learn a lot this way
- and of course, there are also more courses and booklets for you to work through
- finally, don't forget to contact CLD's IT Training Helpdesk on **01243-752100**