

Using Storage to hold Information

- A **storage medium** (also called **Secondary storage**) is the physical material on which the computer keeps data, instruction and information for future use.
- Examples of storage media are floppy disks, Zip disks, hard disks, CDs, DVDs, tapes, PC cards (used on notebooks), flash memory cards (used on digital cameras), USB flash drives, and microfiches.
- A **storage device** (also called a **drive**) is the hardware that records (**write**) and or retrieves (**reads**) items to and from a storage medium.
- A storage medium can be used on a computer only if that computer has a drive that can read and/or write on that storage medium.
- On a computer with Windows operating system, each drive has a **drive letter** (A to Z) as follows:

A:	for the floppy disk drive
B:	for the second floppy disk drive (if it is present)
C: to Z:	for the hard disk drives
Z: to B:	for mapped network drives

Notes:

- Drive letters A and B can also be assigned to removable drives if the computer does not have a floppy disk drive.
- Other drives (CD, DVD, Flash.... etc) are assigned drive letters following those used by the hard drives.
- In order to store a collection of data/information or a program on a storage medium, you must first put it into a **file**.
- A **file** is the basic unit of storage that enables a computer to distinguish one set of information from another.
- There are two basic types of files: **program files** and **data files**.
- A **program file** contains the instructions of a program.
- A **data file** is a collection of data/information that are used by a program or that a user can retrieve, change, delete, save, or send to an output device, such as a printer or e-mail program.
- Every file has a **filename** that identifies it to the operating system.
- A **filename** can contain up to 255 characters (including spaces) followed by a **period**, and a **file name extension**: For examples: Jo's letter.doc, budget.xls, program.exe, notes.txt.

- **Filenames** can not contain the following characters: \ / : * ? " < > | .
- A **filename extension** usually indicates the contents (**type**) of a file, and is assigned by the program that is used to create that file.
- The following are examples of file types on IBM PC and compatible computers:

Extension	Type of File
.txt	Text files
.bmp, .jpg, .gif	Images or graphics
.doc .docx	Word documents
.ppt .pptx	PowerPoint presentations
.xls .xlsx	Excel workbooks
.pdf	Adobe Acrobat files (in portable document format)

- The different file types on IBM PC can be found at the web site:

computeruser.com/resources/dictionary/filetypes.html
- In order to better organize storage mediums, files are often kept in **folders**.
- A **folder** is a container for both files and other folders. It is symbolized on the screen by a graphical image (icon) of a file folder.
- A folder is a means of organizing programs and documents on a storage medium.
- The **name of a folder** is given in the same way as a filename, without the filename extension. For examples: Fall2009, CS215, data files, home work, class work, junk files.
- Some folders are automatically created on the hard disk (in drive C) by Windows XP: **Documents and Settings, Download, Drivers, My Music, Windows, and Program Files**.
- A folder is also created in the **Documents and settings** folder for each user of a PC.
- This folder also contains the following subfolders: **My Documents, Desktop, Windows, Start Menu and Favorites**.
- In the **My Documents** folder, you also have the following folders: **My Downloads, My Video, My Pictures, My Music**.

My Computer

- Is a program that gives access to, and provides information about the drives, cameras, scanners, printers, some folders, and other hardware connected to your computer.
- To open the My Computer window, click **Start** and choose **My Computer**.
- To open a drive or a folder window, double click on it.
- Each window has the following parts: the **Menu bar**, the **Standard Buttons toolbar**, and the **Address bar** which shows the location of the active folder.
- Each window also consists of the *Left pane* and the *Right pane*.
- The **Right pane** displays the contents of the selected folder or drive. Double-click an object to open it.
- The objects in the Right pane may be displayed in one of the following ways: **Thumbnails**, **Tiles**, **Icons**, **List** and **Details**. In order to select a display type, choose **View**, and select that type.
- The **Left pane** either displays the **Tasks pane** or the **Explorer bar**.
- The **Tasks pane** contains various sections depending on the active item.
- The Explorer bar displays different ways of locating specific files, folders, or drives. To display the Explorer bar, choose **View**, **Explorer Bar**, and then choose one of the following:
 - **Search**: contains tools to help you find a particular file or folder on the computer.
 - **Favorites**: list your favorite files and folders on the computer and your favorite sites on the internet
 - **Media**: lists multimedia files, such as video and music.
 - **History**: displays the files and folders on the computer, arranged by the date you last worked with them.
 - **Folders (also called Windows Explorer view)**: displays the hierarchy of files, folders, and drives on the computer. Using this is the same as running **Windows Explorer**.

How to Create a New Folder?

1. Double Click on the device/folder in which you want to create a new folder.
2. Select **File** -----> **New** -----> **Folder**
3. Type the name of the new folder and press the **ENTER** key.