Where Did My Files Go?
How to find your files using Windows 10

Have you just upgraded to Windows 10? Are you finding it difficult to find your files? Are you asking yourself "Where did My Computer or My PC desktop icon go?" It is OK, you are not alone!

When I first started my calling into personal computing we had this thing call **The Command Prompt.**
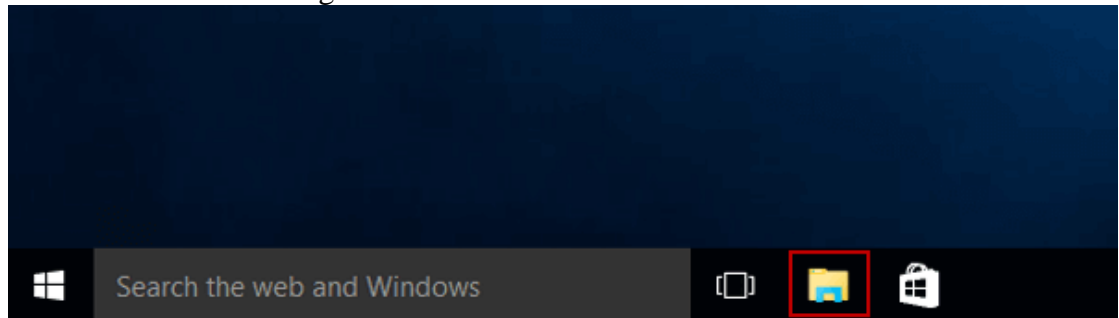

If I wanted to find a file or start a program I had to navigate an entire directory structure with a keyboard by typing the exact names of folders coupled with a command like "CD" change directory. Let me tell how you times have changed. We now have the Graphical User Interface and a handy little built in program called **File Explorer**.

Take a look at some tips I have put together on how to find your files in Windows 10. When you finish you will be a **Master File Explorer!**

1. Open File Explorer
    a. By default Windows 10 puts an Icon on your Taskbar to open File Explorer.
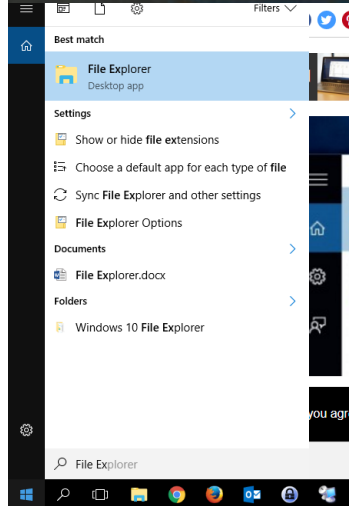   i. It looks a little something like this:

        ii.

        Click on that Icon
    b. Alternatively you can also hit the Windows Key on your keyboard and just type, File Explorer. Then by clicking The File Explorer Icon. (This is a Great Tip to find anything on Windows 10, the Windows Key is your friend!)
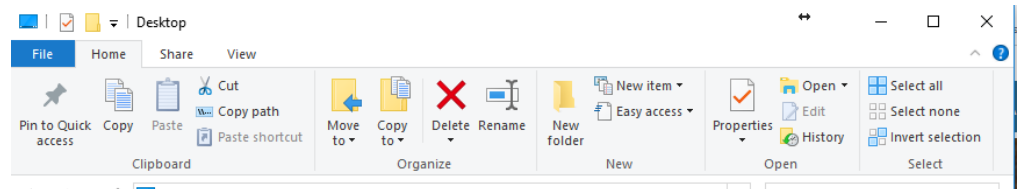
        i.

        ii.
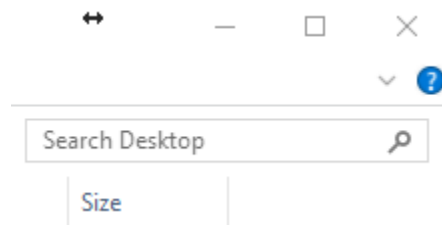   c. For you advanced users try [Windows Key]+[E], this will directly open the File Explorer.
2. The Ribbon Bar
    a. First things first, let's make sure the Ribbon Bar opens every time you open file explorer.
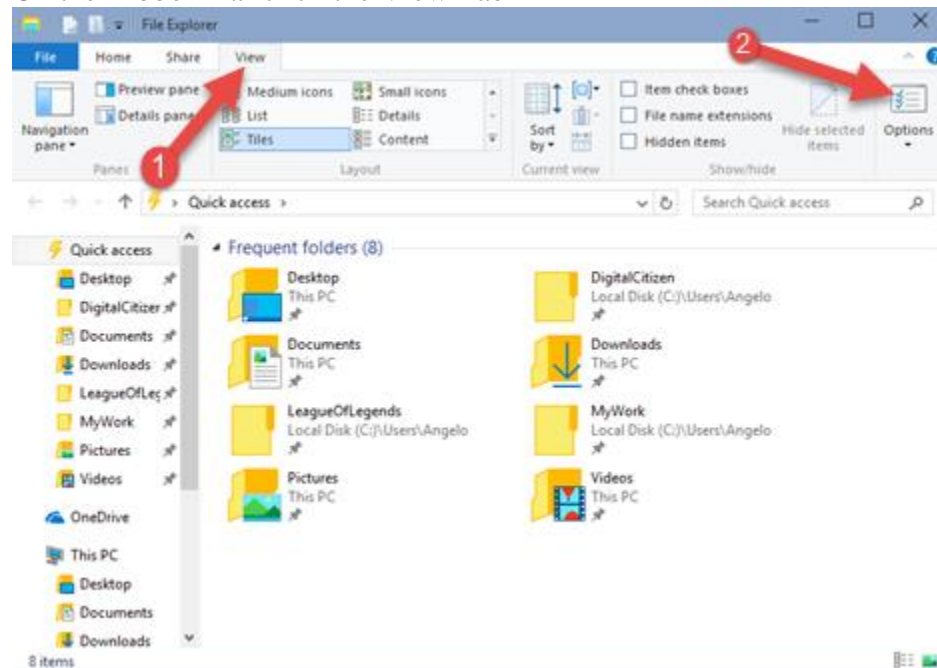   i. The Ribbon Bar looks like this:

1.

    ii. If you don't see the Ribbon Bar, click on the downward-pointing icon next above the search box. Once clicked it should stay visible until you click it again, even after you close File Explorer.
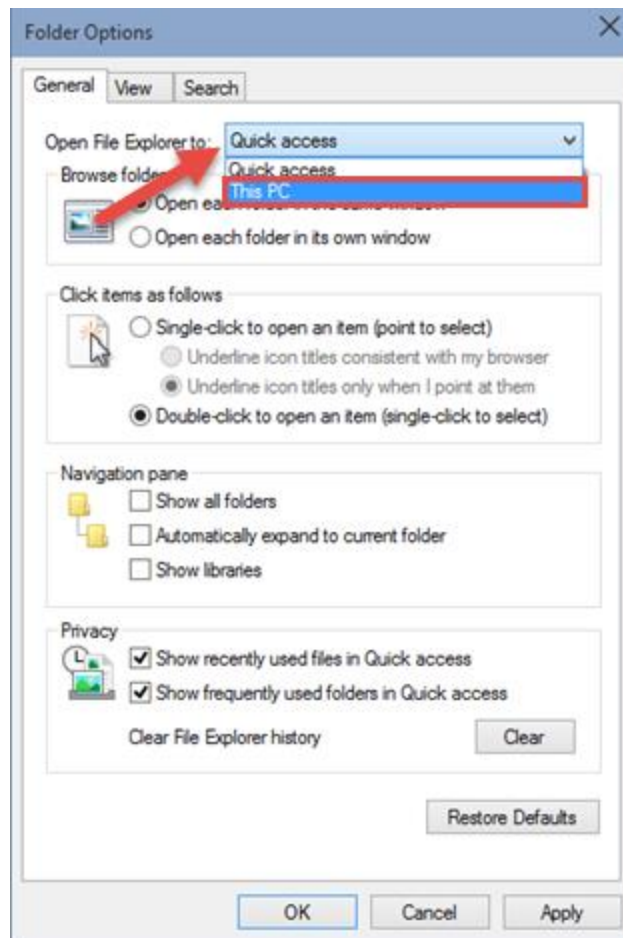

1.

b. The Home Tab

    i. The Home Tab in your file explorer gives you the bulk of your file options; copy, paste, move, delete, rename, new folder, & more.

c. The Share Tab

    i. This tab makes it easy to share files depending on how your organization is setup; OneDrive, email, Skype, ect.

d. The View Tab

    i. This by far has the most options for how you view your files; preview pane, large or small icons, details list, sorting functions, hidden files, & much more.
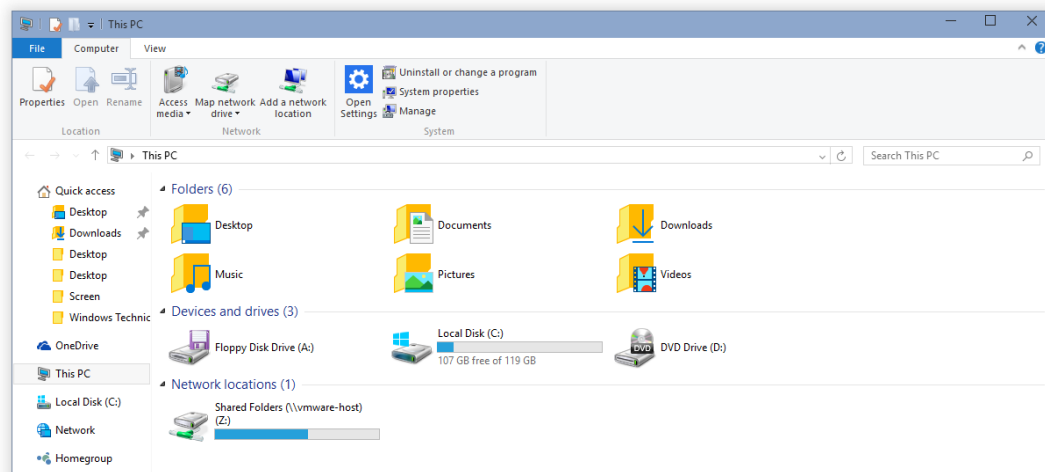
3. Navigation

a. Now that we know how the Ribbon bar works and we have set it to be visible let's fix the default start location when you open Windows 10.

    i. The File Explorer in Windows 10 tries to predict what you want to see and it is a bad predictor. So we are going to set it back to the pre-windows 10 default.

    ii. On the Ribbon Bar click the View Tab

    iii.

    iv. Then click the Options button.

    v. In the Folder Options dialog box under Open File Explorer to: Change from Quick Access to This PC.

      vi.
     vii. Click OK.
    viii. Close the File Explorer and reopen.
   b. Now you can see the normal start location showing your main files, hard drives, connected thumb drives, and network drives.
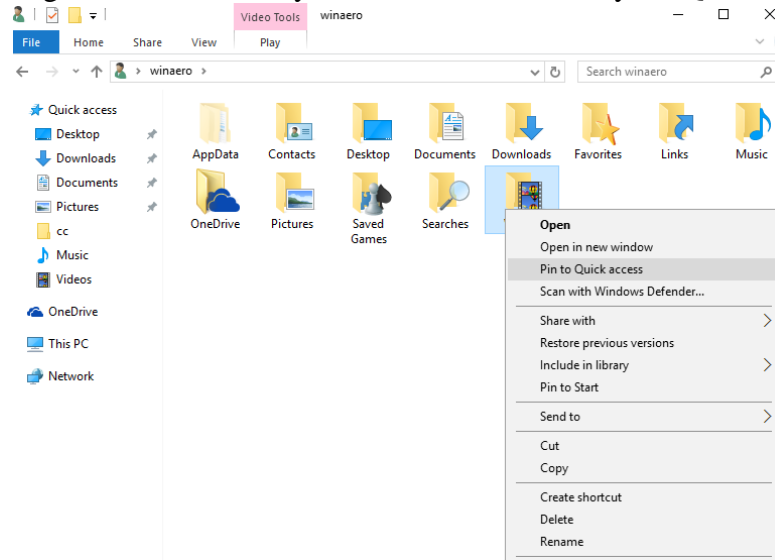

     i.
   c. From here you can navigate by double clicking on the location you would like to view or by single clicking on items on the side navigation pane located on the left side of the File Explorer window.

4. Search Bar
   a. In my opinion one of the best tools for finding files.
   b. Click in the search bar.
   c. Type the first few letters of the file you are looking for.
   d. Look through results.

e. Note, the more files you have the longer the search can sometimes take. It is often better to go to the general location of the files, for example, Documents, then typing in the search bar.

5. Pinned Folders
   a. Access a folder often? Pin it. When you pin a folder it is placed in your Quick Access list on your navigation pane. The Quick Access menu is at the very top left corner of your navigation pane.
      i. Go to the location of your folder.
      ii. Right click the folder you would like to add to your Quick Access.

      iii.
      iv. Select Pin to Quick Access
      v. That item will now show up in your Quick Access Menu