



Transferring Files from Windows PCs to Mac

This guide explains the steps required to transfer files from Windows-based PCs to Macintosh computers. For information on transferring files in the other direction, please see the accompanying PDF file (web links are at the end of this document).

The document is split into three sections, corresponding to the stages involved:

- Transferring files.
- Mapping file extensions.
- Converting file contents.

We hope this guide is useful – contact us via: <http://www.sigsoftware.com/contact/>

Transferring Files

The first step is to move the files across to a Macintosh. It is easiest to transfer them over an Ethernet network connection, applying one of these methods:

- Run FTP over TCP/IP, with a server running on one platform and a client on the other.
- Use Mac OS X's built-in support of SAMBA to connect to Windows servers.
- Operate Netopia's Timbuktu Pro on both platforms, allowing direct file transfer.
- Install Connectix DoubleTalk or Thursby DAVE on a Mac to access a Windows network.
- Add Macintosh Services to a Windows 2000 server, allowing Macs to access files.

Files can also be transferred over floppy disks, recordable CDs or Zips. Mac OS 7.5 or later has a control panel called PC Exchange (later renamed to File Exchange) which mounts PC-formatted removable media. Prior to Mac OS 8.1, this did not support long file names - Software Architects' DOS Mounter supports them and also runs on older system versions.

Mapping File Extensions

In Windows, file types are only identified by three-character extensions. However, on Macintosh, files have a pair of hidden four-character codes which identify their format and creator application. Modern Macintosh systems can identify some file types by PC-style extensions but it is preferable to assign the hidden codes, since these allow different files of the same format to be opened and edited in different programs. A Windows file copied to a Macintosh disk will often not be opened in the desired Macintosh program.

To overcome this, our NameCleaner product (available for OS 7/8/9 and OS X) maps Windows extensions to corresponding Macintosh file codes. It comes with built-in mappings for over 100 extensions and contains many additional settings which can be adjusted for your specific requirements.

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Converting File Contents

Data such as text, graphics and spreadsheets is stored in files, each of which is in a specific format. These formats come in several categories:

- Industry standards, e.g. JPEG or HTML. These can be read by many programs on both Windows and Macintosh without conversion.
- Windows standards, e.g. WMF or WAV. These will require conversion to a Macintosh equivalent or will need to be read by specific tools under Macintosh.
- Cross-platform proprietary, e.g. Microsoft Office. These can be read directly by a parallel Macintosh product but may need conversion for use with other Macintosh programs.
- Windows proprietary, e.g. Microsoft Access. These will almost definitely require conversion for reading by any program under Macintosh.

If a file does require conversion, a third-party tool will be required, such as:

- DataViz's MacLinkPlus for general use (e.g. word processing and spreadsheets).
- Equilibrium's Debabelizer for bitmap images.
- Terran's Media Cleaner for video.
- Engineered's PowerDraw Translator for CAD files.

We have no association with any of these organizations and recommend researching their products on their own sites.

Web Links

- Sig Software's NameCleaner: <http://www.sigsoftware.com/namecleaner/>
- From Mac to Windows: <http://www.sigsoftware.com/info/mactowindows.pdf>
- Microsoft Windows 2000 Server: <http://www.microsoft.com/ntserver/>
- Mac Services for Win 2000: <http://www.microsoft.com/MAC/products/win2ksfm/>
- Netopia Timbuktu Pro: <http://www.netopia.com/software/products/tb2/>
- Connectix DoubleTalk: <http://www.connectix.com/products/dt.html>
- Thursby DAVE: <http://www.thursby.com/products/dave.html>
- Software Architects DOS Mounter: <http://www.softarch.com/us/products/dm.html>
- DataViz MacLinkPlus: <http://www.dataviz.com/products/maclinkplus/>
- Equilibrium Debabelizer: <http://www.debabelizer.com/>
- Terran Media Cleaner: <http://www.terran.com/products/cleaner/>
- Engineered Translator: <http://www.engsw.com/Translators/SATranslator.html>