Lesson 4.5

Create and rename folders

To start setting up your own file organization in File Explorer, we need to be able to create folders, and we also need to be able to rename both files and folders. I want to start by going to my Documents folder. So in File Explorer, I'll just use the shortcut on the left to go to my documents, and from my Exercise Files, I'll open this folder called Photos. Inside of that, I have several more folders, and each of these folders contains several pictures. Now I'd like to get this more organized. So to start, I want to make a new folder inside of this Photos folder. So first I want to make sure that I am in the right folder, and I can confirm that by looking at the path bar up at the top. We are in the Photos folder, looking at the contents of it. Now that I've confirmed that, I'll go to the toolbar up at the top. I'll click this New button, which opens up a menu, and I'll choose to make a new folder, and it creates a new folder inside of the folder that I'm currently in. Now, when you make a new folder like this, the name of it will be highlighted in blue, and at this point you can type in a different name. So I'll type in the name Italy, then I'll hit the Return key. So now I've made a new folder, and I've given it the name Italy. Okay, let's make another folder. Once again, look at the path bar to make sure you're in the right folder. Then click the New button up at the top, and choose to make a new folder. And I have another new folder here. Now if you click outside of that before you give it a name, then it will set the name of it as

New folder. But this gives us the opportunity to see how to rename something. Renaming a file or renaming a folder works the same. Just click on that file or folder to select it, then in the toolbar at the top, you can click this Rename button, or you could right-click on the file or folder, and choose the Rename option there. Then it switches to that mode where you can change the name. So I'm going to give this the name Switzerland. Then I can just click anywhere outside of that folder and that name has been set, and it sorts it here alphabetically. So in this case, I renamed a folder, but you can rename any file or any folder at any time. Making folders and renaming things are really important steps to getting your files organized.

Move and copy files

Copying and moving items from one place to another on your storage drive is key to getting your files organized. Here in File Explorer, I'll use the shortcut to go to my Documents folder, and I want to work with this folder called Photos. Just keep in mind, these are the files that are included in the exercise files for this course. And this folder called Photos is not the same as the standard Pictures folder that you find in your Home folder. So I'll open up this photos folder where I have several folders, including some that I made in another video. These new folders, Italy and Switzerland, are going to help me get more organized. To start, Florence is in Italy. So I want to move the Florence folder inside of the Italy folder. And one way to move something is to just drag it. So I can place my mouse cursor on a file or a folder, hold the mouse button down, drag it on top of the

destination folder and let go. And now it has been moved. It's gone from the original location. But if I double click on this Italy folder, I can see that it has moved inside of that folder. And for now, I'll click the back button to take a step back. Next, there are several other folders that also belong in the Italy folder. So sometimes you'll want to move several files or folders at once. And there are a few ways to select multiple items. One option is to click on a file or folder to select it, then hold the shift key on your keyboard and click on another, and you'll see that it selects everything in between and I'll let go of the shift key. For now, I'll click on the empty white space to reset. And another way to select multiple items is to click on one to select it, then hold the control key on your keyboard, and as you're holding the control key, click on another and another and another then let go of the control key. So now I have four items selected and if I drag one, they will all move together. I can drag them on top of the Italy folder and let go, and they will all move into that Italy folder. Okay, let's do the same for the folders that belong in Switzerland. So I'll select these three folders, drag them on top of Switzerland, and now I am much more organized. Next, I want to move all three of these folders into the standard Pictures folder inside of my Home folder. That's just a better place to store pictures. Up until now, we've had an advantage because we could see all of the folders that we were working with in one window at the same time. But I am not able to see the contents of this folder and the contents of my Pictures folder in the same window at the same time. Now, one thing I could do is use shortcuts. I do see the shortcut for my Pictures folder on the left.

So I could drag the Italy folder onto the shortcut from my Pictures folder and let go and it will move there. It's gone from the original location, but if I click on the shortcut for my Pictures folder, I can see that it has moved here. Now there's another option. If you do not have the shortcut for the folder that you want, you can use two separate windows. Now you can open another window by right clicking on a folder or a shortcut to a folder. So I could right click on my Documents folder and then choose open in new window. So now I have these two windows and I can move them roughly side by side, so I can see them both. And in this new window, I'll navigate back to that photos folder. And now it would be very easy to drag one of these folders over to the destination window and let go. So now it's moved to this folder, and of course it has gone from the original folder. So here's the next important thing, everything that we've done so far has been a move action. It's gone from the original location and moved to the new location. But sometimes you'll want to copy something, which means it is copied in both locations. So to reset, I'm going to move these folders back. So I'll move the Switzerland folder back and I'll move the Italy folder back. So they're not in this folder, they're back in the original folder. So one way to move something is very similar to what we've done before. I could drag the Italy folder, but as I'm dragging it, I will hold the control key on the keyboard. As I'm holding the control key, you see this flag under the item that I'm moving and it says copy. So if I drag it over here and let go, it will copy it over. So now I have a copy here, but I still have a copy in the original location, or there's another option that does

not require two windows. So I'll close this window and instead, we're going to copy and paste some items. First, you should select the items that you want to copy. So I'm going to click on one of these folders, hold the control key and click on another, then let go. With these two items selected, you could click the copy button up in the toolbar at the top, or you can use a keyboard command that we actually saw earlier in the course. If you hold the control key and tap the letter C, that will copy the items that you have selected. So I'll use that keyboard shortcut, control C, and at first, it looks like nothing has changed, but when you copy something, the computer has stored it in its memory and is ready to paste it somewhere else. So let's go to the destination folder. I'll use the shortcut on the left to go to my Pictures folder and I want to paste what I just copied here. So I could click the paste button in the toolbar up at the top, or I could use the keyboard command. The keyboard command for paste is control, V. So I'll hold the control key and tap the letter V and it will paste a copy of those folders here. So they have been copied. They're still in the original location, but I also have a copy here. So those are your core options for copying and moving files. Of course, there are other ways to copy and move files, but these are the most common options.

Delete files and folders

At some point, you'll probably want to delete some files or folders that you don't want anymore. Here in File Explorer, I'll use the shortcut to go to my documents folder where I have some stuff that I can get rid of, like this Photos folder. I've copied everything I need from this folder and I'm ready to delete

it. One easy option is to drag a file or a folder to the Recycle Bin on the desktop, then let go. And that has moved to the Recycle Bin. It's gone from the original location. Or here's another option. I'll open up this Client Projects folder and this Explore California project has been canceled. So I'm ready to delete this folder. I could click on a file or folder to select it, then click this delete or trashcan button up in the toolbar, or right click on the filer folder and choose the Delete button there. And that will also remove it from its original location and move it to the Recycle Bin. Okay, so both of those folders are gone, right? Well, no, not completely. In the real world, if you put something in the trash can or the recycling bin, then change your mind, you can go to the trash can and pull it out. So what if I realized that throwing one of those folders away was a mistake? Well, I could double click on the Recycle Bin here on the desktop to open it up and I can see that those folders are still there. And if I wanted to, I could select one of them, right click on it and choose Restore, which would put it back in its original location. Or I could just manually drag it to its original location. Or really I could drag it to any location in File Explorer. And now I have moved it from the Recycle Bin back to its original location, but eventually you should empty the Recycle Bin because it's just sitting there taking up space. Or maybe you want to ensure that something is completely gone. So just to reset, I'm going to close these windows, and one option is to right click on the Recycle Bin on the desktop and you can click this option that says Empty Recycle Bin. Or if you open the Recycle Bin, there's an empty Recycle Bin button right here. Either way, you can click that,

and it will ask you if you are sure. Now keep in mind, I am using demo files for this exercise. When you deal with your real files, you should be very careful. Once you empty the Recycle Bin, those files will be gone. But in this case, I'm ready so I'll click Yes. Now that folder is gone. I can close this window. And when we look at the Recycle Bin icon, we can see that it is empty. Now later, if you realize that that was a terrible mistake and you need those files back, well then you would have a big problem. There are data recovery services out there that can take your storage drive and charge you lots of money and can maybe recover your files. And there's also some software that you can buy that might be able to recover deleted files. But those options are expensive and there are no guarantees. So please be careful. Please do not delete something and empty the Recycle Bin unless you are completely sure you want those files gone.

Save files within an application

In many applications, you will need to create a new file and do some work, but in order to keep the work that you've done, you need to save that file in a folder somewhere on your storage drive. I'm starting with Microsoft Word, but don't worry if you don't use Microsoft Word. We're going to do something here that works the same in many different applications. This is a new blank document, so I'll just write some text here. And I'll stop there. Once you've done some work on your document, you should think about saving it. In Microsoft Word you can click file in the top left and then you'll find the options here for save and save as. But remember, every application is different. Some have a menu, some have toolbars. These will look different and

you may need to look around a bit, but ultimately you're looking for the same options. Save and save as. And since this is a new document that I've never saved before, at this point, they would do the same thing. So I'll choose save as. Now if you're using Microsoft Word, there's an extra step that most other applications don't have, you'll need to click this button that says Browse. And usually when you choose save as, you'll go straight to a window like this where you'll need to set the name and the location where you want the file to be saved. Let's start in the file name field. In most cases, you'll see that it will end with an extension, a period, followed by three or four letters, and it's a good idea to leave that extension as it is. So I'll place my text cursor here and I'll change the rest of the file name. I'll call this meeting notes Q3, but I will keep the extension, the .docx at the end. Then in the rest of the window, you can choose where you want the file to be saved. So I could use the shortcuts on the left and choose my documents folder. So now I've given it a name, I've chosen a location, and I'll click save. So now this exists as a file on my storage drive, so I can quit Microsoft Word. Later I can go to File Explorer and I can go to that folder and I can see the file that I just saved. I can even double click on that file to open it again in Microsoft Word. Next, in the future, as you make changes, you will need to save your changes to the file that you just established. Now, it is interesting to point out if you are using Microsoft Word or one of the other Office applications, there is an Auto Save feature and we see that up in the top left. So we can automatically save your changes for you as you go. But that will only work if you have saved your file in

a folder on OneDrive. So you can look for that option, but I'm going to leave that off here. In most cases, when you make a change to your file, like adding some more information, you should save it. So we can click file in the top left and we can go to the option for save. So unless there's an Auto Save feature, you should click save periodically to make sure your changes are updated to your file. Now, later you might decide that you want to keep this file, but also want a different version of the file so you can work in a different direction in a different file. In that case, you can go back to the file menu, again. You can choose save as. I'm going to use Save As again, because in this situation we're trying to create a different new file. So I'll choose that. Of course, I need to click browse. I'll give this new file a slightly different name. I'll just call this meeting notes Q4. Make sure I keep the extension at the end. Then click save. And once again, I've created a new file on my storage drive, and when I go to File Explorer and I go to the folder where I saved it, I can see both of those files here. Now, if I need to copy or move those files, I can go to this folder and I can do whatever I need to do with the files. So that's it. You should make sure to save your files so you can come back to them and continue working where you left off later.

Use an external drive or memory stick

Working with an external storage drive, like an external hard drive or a USB memory stick is almost the same as working with files on your main system drive. But there are some details to be aware of. First, let's talk about what happens when you connect an external drive to your computer. I'm going to connect

a USB memory stick to my computer. (system pinging) And the first time you connect an external drive, you will probably see a notification asking you what you want the computer to do when you connect an external drive. You can click on this and then you can make your choice. So I'll choose Open Folder to View Files. Now in the future, when I connect an external drive, it will open in a File Explorer window and show me the contents of that drive. Now if you change your mind later, it's very easy to change that selection. You'll just need to go to Windows settings. So in the Start Menu, I'll open Settings. On the left, I'll go to the category for Bluetooth & devices. Then scroll down and find the subcategory for AutoPlay where we can see the choice that I've made for a removable drive, and I can change that choice here in the future. Okay, let's close Settings. And let's open that drive to work with the files on it. So I'll go to File Explorer, and on the left side I can see that drive is listed, or you can click on This PC in the sidebar on the left. Then you can find that drive and double click to open it and see the contents. And from here, you can treat this just like any other storage location with two main differences. First, you may remember that if you simply drag something from one folder to another, the default action is that it will move the thing that you're dragging. But if you drag something from one drive to another, like for example, if I drag this project folder from the external drive to the Documents folder on my main system drive, it will copy it. So it's still here in the original location, and it's been copied to my Documents folder, so I can see that here. Okay, let's go back to that external drive. So by default, when you drag something from one drive to

another, it will be copied, not moved. Now the second important thing is that when you delete files or folders from some external drives, they do not go to the Recycle Bin. They will be deleted immediately, so let's see that. I'll select a folder here and I'll click the delete button in the toolbar at the top. And you see that it will warn me before that happens. But if I delete this, it will delete it from this drive and it will be deleted immediately. So for now, I'm just going to click no. Now, if you've used a Mac or an older version of Windows, you may remember that you had to properly eject a drive before unplugging it on those systems, but that's not true on Windows 11. When you're finished with an external drive, you should just make sure you don't have any files open that are stored on that drive, and make sure you're not in the middle of copying something to or from that drive, and then you can just unplug that drive when you're done. With those few exceptions, everything that you would do on an external drive works the same as on your main storage drive.