G.C.E. O/L Grade 10 ICT · Lesson 5

5.2 Files and Folders: Drives, File Extensions and File Management

Your computer may hold thousands of photos, notes and videos. The OS keeps them tidy using a **file system** of **drives, folders and files** – just like a cupboard with shelves and boxes. In this note you will learn about **drives**, **folders**, **files and file extensions**, **file paths**, how to **create, rename, copy, move and delete** files and folders, the **Recycle Bin** and **shortcuts**, and how to **organise your documents** in folders, including **OneDrive and Google Drive** cloud folders.

1. The file system

A **file system** is the method the OS uses to **name, store, organise and find files** on a storage device. Common file systems: **NTFS** (Windows), **FAT32 / exFAT** (USB drives, memory cards), **APFS** (macOS, iOS), **ext4** (Linux, Android). You see the file system through a **file manager**: **File Explorer** (Windows), **Finder** (macOS), **Files** (Android/iOS, Ubuntu).

> 💡 Think of a **drive as a cupboard**, a **folder as a box** inside it (a box can hold smaller boxes) and a **file as a book** in a box.

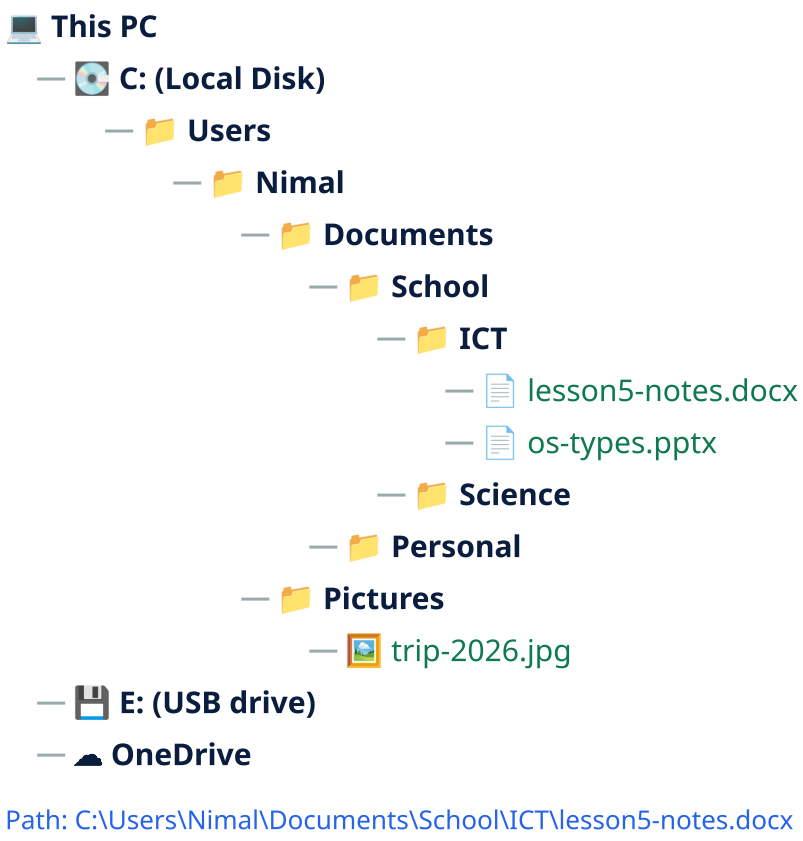
2. Drives

A **drive** is a storage area shown with a **letter** in Windows. **C:** is usually the main drive where Windows is installed. Others: **D:** (second partition or disk), **E:/F:** (USB flash drive, external disk, memory card, DVD). A **cloud drive** such as **OneDrive** or **Google Drive** appears as a folder that is saved on the internet.

3. Folders and the folder tree

A **folder (directory)** is a container that holds **files and other folders (sub-folders)**. Folders inside folders make a **tree (hierarchy)**. The top of a drive is the **root** (C:\). Windows gives each user ready-made folders: **Desktop, Documents, Downloads, Pictures, Music, Videos**.

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A folder tree in File Explorer and the path of one file.

A **path** shows the exact address of a file, from the drive down through each folder, separated by a **backslash (\)** in Windows:
C:\Users\Nimal\Documents\School\ICT\lesson5-notes.docx
macOS, Linux and web addresses use a forward slash (/), e.g. /home/nimal/Documents.

4. Files and file extensions

A **file** is a named collection of data saved on a storage device – a document, photo, song, video or program. A file name has two parts: **name . extension**, e.g. **report.docx**. The **extension** tells the OS the **file type** and **which program opens it**.

Extension	File type	Opens with (example)
.docx	Word document	Microsoft Word, Google Docs, LibreOffice Writer
.xlsx	Spreadsheet	Excel, Google Sheets
.pptx	Presentation	PowerPoint, Google Slides
.pdf	Portable Document Format	Edge, Chrome, Adobe Acrobat Reader
.txt	Plain text	Notepad
.jpg / .png	Image / photo	Photos app, Paint
.mp3	Audio / song	Media Player, VLC

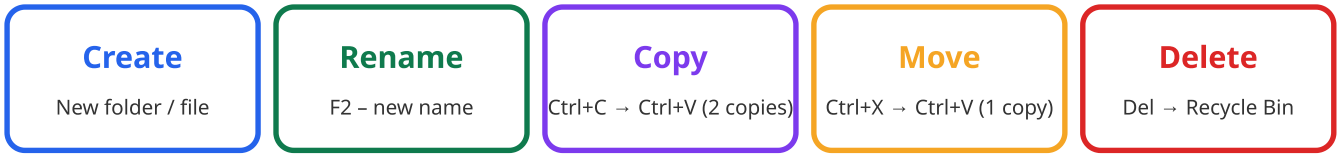
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.mp4	Video	Media Player, VLC
.zip	Compressed folder	File Explorer (Extract all)
.html	Web page	Web browser
.exe	Program (executable) in Windows	Runs itself – be careful!

> 💡 Turn on **View → Show → File name extensions** in File Explorer. A trick file like **photo.jpg.exe** is really a **program**, possibly a virus – never open .exe files from unknown emails or WhatsApp messages.

File name rules (Windows): a name cannot contain \ / : * ? " < > |. Two files in the **same folder** cannot have the same name and extension.

5. Working with files and folders



The five basic file and folder operations.

Task	How (Windows 11 File Explorer)	Shortcut key
Create a folder	Right-click → New → Folder, type a name, Enter	Ctrl+Shift+N
Rename	Select → right-click → Rename (keep the extension!)	F2
Copy	Select → Copy → open new place → Paste. The original stays.	Ctrl+C, Ctrl+V
Move	Select → Cut → open new place → Paste, or drag to another folder on the same drive.	Ctrl+X, Ctrl+V
Delete	Select → Delete. It goes to the **Recycle Bin**.	Del
Delete permanently	Skips the Recycle Bin – cannot be restored easily	Shift+Del
Select many	Ctrl+click (some), Shift+click (a range), Ctrl+A (all)	Ctrl+A
Search	Type in the search box of File Explorer, e.g. *.pdf	Ctrl+F / Win+S

Copy vs move: after **copy** there are **two** copies (old place + new place). After **move** there is only **one** – it is now in the new place.

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Recycle Bin
Deleted files from the hard disk wait here. You can **Restore** them to their old place or **Empty Recycle Bin** to remove them for good. ⚠ Files deleted from a **USB drive** or with **Shift+Del** do **not** go to the Recycle Bin.

Shortcut
A small link (icon with a **curved arrow ↗**) that **points to** a file, folder or program somewhere else. Deleting a shortcut does **not** delete the real file. Create: right-click → **Show more options** → **Send to** → **Desktop (create shortcut)**.

Compressed (.zip) folder
Puts many files into **one smaller file** to send by email. Right-click → **Compress to ZIP file**; open with **Extract all**.

6. Organising your documents

- Make a **folder for each subject or project**, with sub-folders: Documents\School\Grade10\ICT\Lesson5.
- Use **clear, short names** that tell what is inside: **2026-11-03-ict-lesson5-notes.docx**, not **new doc (3).docx**.
- Put the **date as YYYY-MM-DD** at the start so files sort in date order. Use hyphens (-) instead of spaces for web files.
- Do not leave everything on the **Desktop** or in **Downloads** – move files to the right folder.
- Keep a **backup**: a USB drive or a cloud folder.
- Delete files you do not need and empty the Recycle Bin sometimes.

NEW 2026 **Cloud folders: OneDrive** (built into Windows 11) and **Google Drive** sync a folder on your PC with the internet. A file saved there can be opened on your phone, shared with a teacher by link, and is safe even if the laptop is lost. Status icons: ☁ = online only, ✔ = also on this device. Your school Google account also gives Google Drive for assignments.

Key Words

File system – The method the OS uses to name, store, organise and find files (NTFS, FAT32, exFAT).

Drive – A storage area shown with a letter, e.g. C:, D:, E:.

Folder – A container (directory) that holds files and sub-folders.

File – A named collection of data stored on a storage device.

File extension – Letters after the dot in a file name that show the file type, e.g. .docx.

Path – The full address of a file, e.g. C:\Users\Nimal\Documents\notes.docx.

Root folder – The top level of a drive, e.g. C:\.

Copy – Make a second copy in a new place; the original stays.

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Move – Take a file from one place to another; only one copy remains.

Recycle Bin – Place where deleted files wait and can be restored.

Shortcut – A link that points to a file, folder or program elsewhere.

Cloud storage – Saving files on internet servers, e.g. OneDrive, Google Drive.

Sample Q&A

1. What is the difference between a file and a folder?

> **Answer:** A file holds data (a document, photo, program). A folder is a container that holds files and other folders.

2. In the path C:\Users\Kamal\Pictures\trip.jpg, name the drive, the file name, the extension and the folder that holds the file.

> **Answer:** Drive: C:, file name: trip, extension: .jpg (an image), folder: Pictures.

3. What is the difference between copy and move?

> **Answer:** Copy leaves the original and makes a second copy in the new place (two copies). Move takes the file to the new place (only one copy).

4. You deleted a file by mistake from the C: drive. How can you get it back?

> **Answer:** Open the Recycle Bin, right-click the file and choose Restore. It returns to its old folder (if it was not deleted with Shift+Del and the bin was not emptied).

5. Why is a file called invoice.pdf.exe dangerous?

> **Answer:** Its real extension is .exe, so it is a program, not a PDF. It may be a virus pretending to be a document.

6. Give three good habits for organising documents.

> **Answer:** Use a folder for each subject with sub-folders; use clear names with the date (YYYY-MM-DD); keep a backup on OneDrive/Google Drive or a USB drive; do not leave files on the Desktop/Downloads.

MCQ

1. A container that holds files and other folders is a

A. file
B. folder
C. driver
D. extension

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2. In Windows, the drive where the OS is usually installed is

A. A:
B. Z:
C. E:
D. C:

3. Which extension is a spreadsheet?

A. .xlsx
B. .mp3
C. .docx
D. .pptx

4. Which file is a video?

A. photo.png
B. match.mp4
C. notes.txt
D. song.mp3

5. Which file is a program that runs by itself in Windows?

A. setup.exe
B. setup.pdf
C. setup.zip
D. setup.html

6. In C:\Users\Sara\Documents\cv.docx, which folder holds cv.docx?

A. C:
B. Sara
C. Documents
D. Users

7. After you copy a file to a USB drive, how many copies exist?

A. Two
B. None
C. Three
D. One

8. The keyboard shortcut to rename a selected file is

A. Alt+F4
B. F5
C. Ctrl+R
D. F2

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9. Ctrl+X followed by Ctrl+V will

A. copy the file
B. move the file
C. rename the file
D. delete the file permanently

10. Where can you restore a file deleted from the C: drive with the Delete key?

A. Recycle Bin
B. Control Panel
C. Task Manager
D. Downloads folder

11. Which key combination deletes a file without sending it to the Recycle Bin?

A. Ctrl+Z
B. Ctrl+Del
C. Shift+Del
D. Alt+Del

12. If you delete a desktop shortcut to a game, what happens to the game?

A. The game is renamed
B. The game is deleted
C. Nothing – the game stays installed
D. The game moves to the Recycle Bin

13. Which is the best file name for organising school work?

A. new document (2).docx
B. 2026-11-03-ict-lesson5-notes.docx
C. aaaa.docx
D. final final NEW.docx

14. Which character is NOT allowed in a Windows file name?

A. -
B. (
C. _
D. ?

15. OneDrive and Google Drive are examples of

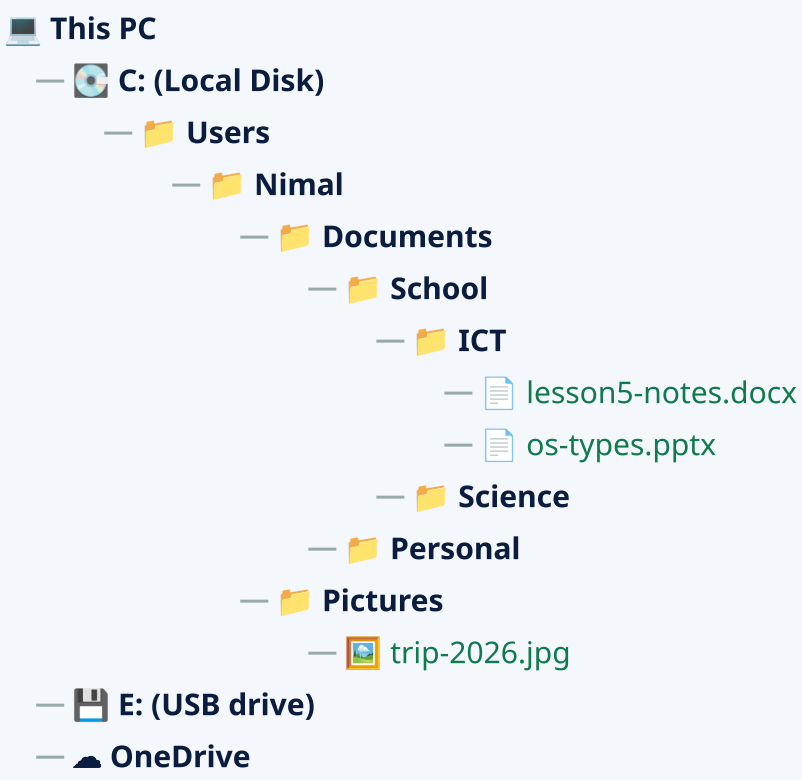
A. file extensions
B. device drivers
C. cloud storage
D. partitions

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Structured Questions

1. Look at the folder tree.
(i) Write the full path of os-types.pptx. (2 marks)
(ii) Name the root of the drive and one sub-folder of Documents. (2 marks) *(4 marks)*

(i) C:\Users\Nimal\Documents\School\ICT\os-types.pptx (ii) Root: C:\ ; sub-folder of Documents: School (or Personal).



Path: C:\Users\Nimal\Documents\School\ICT\lesson5-notes.docx

Folder tree used in the question.

2. Write the file type of: (a) budget.xlsx (b) poster.png (c) talk.pptx (d) song.mp3 (e) site.html (f) backup.zip. *(6 marks)*

(a) spreadsheet (b) image (c) presentation (d) audio (e) web page (f) compressed folder.

3. Explain the steps to (i) create a folder called ICT in Documents and (ii) move report.docx from the Desktop into it. *(4 marks)*

(i) Open File Explorer → Documents → right-click → New → Folder → type ICT → Enter. (ii) Select report.docx on the Desktop → Ctrl+X (Cut) → open Documents\ICT → Ctrl+V (Paste).

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4. A student deleted a file from a pen drive and from the C: drive. Only one could be found in the Recycle Bin. Which one and why? *(3 marks)*

> The one from the C: drive. Files deleted from removable drives (pen drives, memory cards) are deleted permanently and do not go to the Recycle Bin.

5. What is a shortcut? How is it different from copying the file to the Desktop? *(3 marks)*

> A shortcut is a small link (curved-arrow icon) that points to the real file. Copying makes a full second file; deleting a shortcut does not delete the real file and it uses almost no space.

6. Design a folder structure for a Grade 10 student's school files and give two advantages of saving it in OneDrive or Google Drive. *(5 marks)*

> Documents\School\Grade10\ (ICT, Maths, Science, English…) with sub-folders per lesson, e.g. ICT\Lesson5. Advantages: files are backed up if the PC is lost or damaged; can open from any device; can share by link with teachers/classmates.

Summary

- The file system organises data as drives → folders → files (NTFS, FAT32, exFAT, APFS).
- Drives have letters: C: (system), D:, E: (USB). Cloud drives: OneDrive, Google Drive.
- Folders hold files and sub-folders, making a tree. The top is the root (C:\).
- A path gives a file's full address: C:\Users\Name\Documents\file.docx.
- The extension shows the file type: .docx .xlsx .pptx .pdf .jpg .png .mp3 .mp4 .zip .exe .txt .html.
- Create (Ctrl+Shift+N), rename (F2), copy (Ctrl+C/V), move (Ctrl+X/V), delete (Del).
- Deleted files go to the Recycle Bin (not from USB or with Shift+Del). Deleting a shortcut keeps the real file.
- Organise: subject folders, clear dated names, no clutter on the Desktop, backup to the cloud.

MCQ answer key – 5.2

1. **B** – Folders (directories) hold files and sub-folders.
2. **D** – C: is the main system drive.
3. **A** – .xlsx is an Excel spreadsheet.
4. **B** – .mp4 is video; .mp3 is audio only.
5. **A** – .exe files are executable programs.
6. **C** – The last folder before the file name holds it.
7. **A** – Copy keeps the original and makes one more.
8. **D** – F2 renames in File Explorer.
9. **B** – Cut + Paste = move.
10. **A** – Deleted files go to the Recycle Bin first.
11. **C** – Shift+Del deletes permanently.

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12. **C** – A shortcut is only a link to the real program.
13. **B** – Clear name with the date in YYYY-MM-DD sorts well.
14. **D** – \ / : * ? " < > | are not allowed.
15. **C** – They store files on internet servers and sync them.

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