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- [Home](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Tutorials](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Hubs](#)

Don't Panic: Step-by-Step Strategies to Find Your lost Files

How to Find Lost Files on PC (Windows)

Ever feel like your precious files have vanished into thin air?

Whether it's a lost document, that perfect photo, or an accidentally deleted masterpiece, don't worry—we've got your back! This ultimate guide will walk you through the wild world of data recovery, from beginner basics to advanced detective work. So, grab your digital magnifying glass and let's go on a file-finding adventure!

Beginner Tips

1☐☐ Check the Recycle Bin

Steps:

- Double-click the **Recycle Bin** icon on your Desktop. If you can't find it, just search in the search bar at the bottom of the screen.
- Look for your missing file.
- If you find it, right-click and select **Restore**.

Considerations:

The file will be restored to its original location.

2☐☐ Use Windows Search

Steps:

- Click the **Start** menu or press the **Windows key**.
- Type part of the file name in the search box.
- Browse through the search results.

Example:

If you're looking for a file named report.docx, type report.

3☐☐ Look in Default Folders

Steps:

- Open **File Explorer** (Win + E).
- Check these folders:
 - **Documents**
 - **Downloads**
 - **Desktop**
 - **Pictures**

- **Videos**
-

Intermediate Tips

1□□ Use Advanced Search Filters

Steps:

- In File Explorer, click in the search box.
- Use filters like:
 - `date:>01/01/2025` (to find files created after Jan 1, 2025).
 - `kind:=document` (to find only documents).
 - `size:>10MB` (to find files larger than 10 MB).

Considerations:

These filters make it easier to narrow down your search.

2□□ Enable Viewing of Hidden Files

Steps:

- In File Explorer, go to the **View** tab.
- Check **Hidden items**.

Risks:

Hidden system files are visible, so be cautious not to modify them.

3□□ Use Recovery Software

Tools:

- **Recuva** (free, user-friendly)

▪ EaseUS Data Recovery Wizard

Steps:

- Install and launch the software.
- Select the drive where the file was lost.
- Start the scan and browse through recovered files.
- Save recovered files to a different drive to avoid overwriting.

Risks:

Free versions often have limits. Recovery isn't guaranteed if files are heavily overwritten.

Advanced Tips

1▣▣ Use Command-Line Tools

Windows Command Prompt:

- Open **Command Prompt** (Win + R → cmd → Enter).
- Use the dir command:

```
dir C:\ /s /p
```

- /s = search all subdirectories.
- /p = pause after each screen of results.

Example:

```
dir C:\*.docx /s /p
```

Searches for .docx files in C: drive.

2▣▣ Check Windows Event Viewer Logs

Steps:

- Press Win + R, type eventvwr, and press Enter.
- Go to **Windows Logs** → **Security**.
- Look for file creation or deletion events.

Considerations:

Event logs can help if you suspect file deletion, but they're not user-friendly for beginners.

3▯▯ Forensic-Level Tools (Use with Caution!)

Tools:

- **TestDisk** (for deep recovery)
- **PhotoRec** (can recover many file types)

Steps:

- Download TestDisk or PhotoRec.
- Follow the command-line interface to scan and recover data.

Risks:

These tools require technical know-how and could damage data if used incorrectly. Avoid using them on your primary system if unsure.

How to Find Lost Files on Android Devices

Beginner Tips

1☐☐ Check the Trash/Bin in Apps

Many gallery or file manager apps have a Trash/Bin:

- Open the app (like **Gallery** or **Files**).
 - Look for **Trash** or **Recently Deleted**.
 - Restore the file if available.
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2☐☐ Use Android's Search Function

Steps:

- Open **Files by Google** or your file manager.
 - Type the file name in the search box.
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3☐☐ Look in Default Folders

Steps:

- Open your file manager app.
 - Check folders like:
 - **Download**
 - **DCIM** (photos/videos)
 - **Documents**
-

Intermediate Tips

1☐☐ Enable Hidden Files

Steps:

- In your file manager, open the **Menu** or **Settings**.

- Enable **Show hidden files**.

Risks:

Some hidden files are system files—don't delete them!

2▣▣ Use Recovery Apps

Apps:

- **DiskDigger** (root not always required)
- **Dr.Fone**

Steps:

- Install the app.
- Scan internal storage or SD card.
- Browse and recover lost files.

Risks:

Rooting may be needed for deep recovery, which can void warranties.

Advanced Tips

1▣▣ Use ADB Commands (if USB Debugging is enabled)

Steps:

- On your PC, install **Android SDK Platform Tools**.
- Connect your Android device via USB.
- Open Command Prompt and use:

```
adb shell ls -R /sdcard/
```

- Lists all files recursively.

Example to pull a file:

```
adb pull /sdcard/Download/lostfile.txt C:\Recovered\
```

2▣▣ Use Linux Terminal Tools (if device rooted)

Steps:

- Connect device via USB.
- Use `adb shell` to enter a terminal on your device.
- Use commands like `find` or `grep` to search:

```
find / -name "lostfile.txt"
```

Risks:

Root access is required and can damage the system if commands are misused.

3▣▣ Forensic Recovery with Tools like Autopsy

Steps:

- Connect your device in **mass storage mode** (if possible).
- Use tools like **Autopsy** or **Sleuth Kit** to analyze the storage image.

Risks:

Complex, requires forensic knowledge, and can compromise privacy if mishandled.

Final Tips & Warnings

- Always **act fast**—deleted files may be overwritten.
- **Do not** save new files to the same location.
- Use these advanced tools only if you're comfortable with

them—seek help from an expert if needed

Congratulations, digital explorer!

You've now unlocked the secrets to recovering lost files like a pro. Remember: stay calm, stay curious, and never stop searching—because even when files go missing, they're never truly lost. Happy recovering!

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