Operating Systems

Hi, I'm Sarah

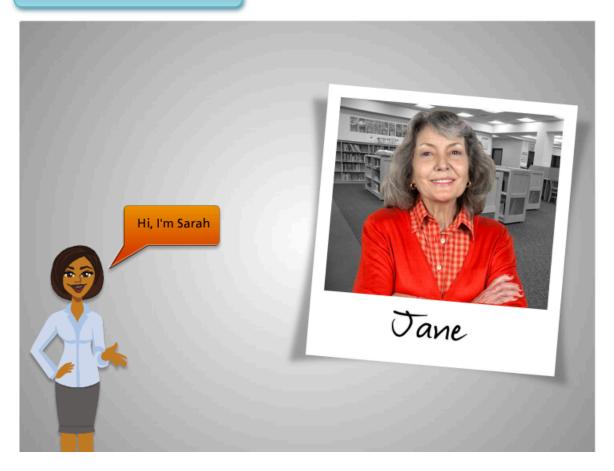Jane

Hi! I'm Sarah, and I'm here to tell you about a computer's operating system and guide you through navigating a computer.

We'll follow along with Jane. Jane wants to use the computer to create a letter with pictures to send to family and friends.

She sits down at the computer and turns it on.

Let's take a look.

When Jane first turns on the computer, software starts running behind the scenes that manages all the different computer programs and processes.

That software is called the operating system.

Just like your brain works to manage your body to make sure that you are breathing and your heart is pumping, the operating system manages the functions of the computer to make sure that everything is working together.

There are many different operating systems.

If you own a Macintosh computer, your operating system is called OS ten.

Most personal computers, or PCs, come with a version of the Windows operating system.

Some people also run an operating system called Linux.

The Desktop

The computer Jane is using is running the Windows 7 operating system.

When the computer has started, Jane sees what's known as the desktop in the monitor.

Here we see the Windows 7 desktop.

If you're using a PC that has a different version of Windows running, the desktop may look different.

The desktop is just like the top of Jane's desk at home or at work. On her desk, she keeps different folders with papers in them and other tools she needs to get things done such as a calculator for math, a pen for writing, or a book for looking things up.

Just as Jane has folders and tools on her wooden desk, she also has those tools and folders on the computer. She can access them through the computer desktop.

To access those tools and folders, she can double click on these icons, also known as shortcuts, since you can open the application right from the desktop.

 If Jane wanted to handwrite a letter, she would use her pen. But since she wants to create a letter on her computer, she would double click on the icon (shown on the left), for the writing application Microsoft Word, in order to open it.

Applications are tools that allow you to do things on a computer.

Some applications allow you to work on text documents, like the one Jane will use for her letter, and others will allow you to do things like edit pictures or do math.

Below the desktop at the bottom of the screen is the task bar, which can include shortcut icons for commonly used applications similar to the icons on the desktop.
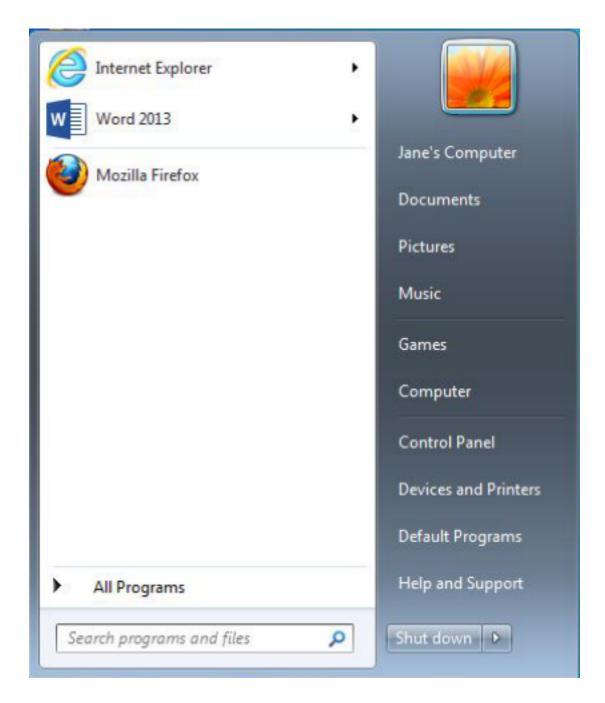

Clicking on the icons on the taskbar will open applications just like clicking on the desktop icons.

Other information such as the date, time, volume control and internet settings are also found on the taskbar.

In addition, the taskbar includes the "Start" button, which opens the Start menu. The Start menu is another way that Jane can open an application.

Clicking the "Start" button will open the Start menu where you can see the writing application that Jane wants to use for her letter.

Clicking the icon for Word 2013 in the Start menu would open the application just like clicking the icon would.

To recap, there are 3 ways to open an application:

- Double clicking the icon on the desktop.

- Clicking once the icon on the taskbar.
- Selecting your option through the Start menu.

All of these 3 options can take you to the same application.

Files and Folders

While an application is a tool, such as the writing application Jane will use to write her letter, the letter itself is stored in a file.
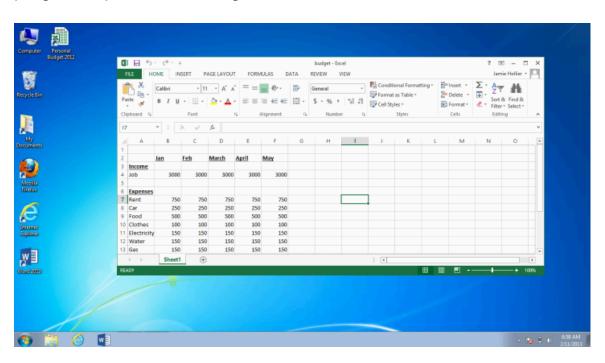
A file is a package of information.

That package could include text, like a letter or a recipe, a photograph, a video, or music.

File Icon

You can open a file icon that is on the desktop in the same way you open a program, by double clicking on it.

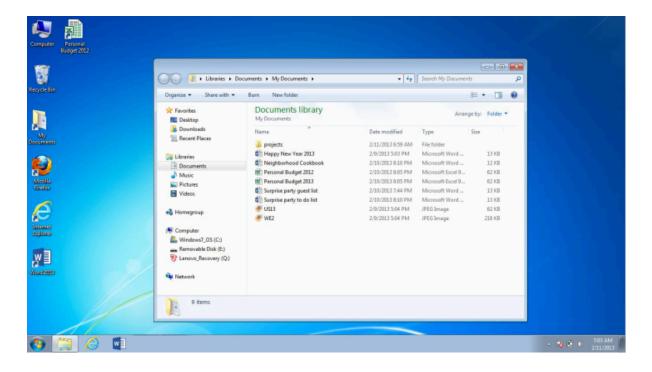When you open a file, it will open in the default application that file works in.

For example, by double clicking the budget file, it will automatically open Microsoft Excel, since that is the application it works in.
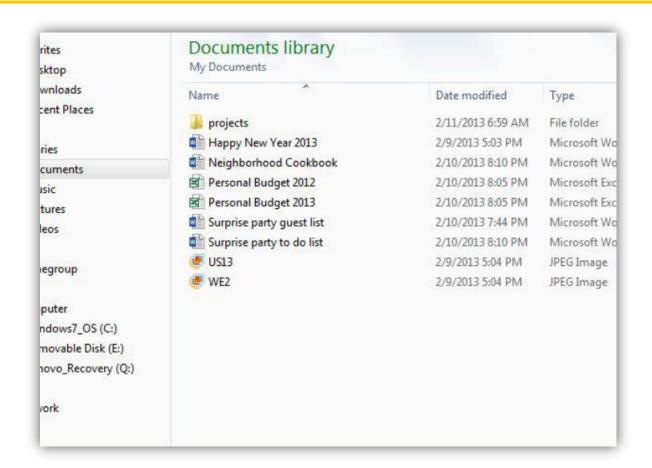
Folder Icon

Folders on the computer are like the folder that was on Jane's wooden desk.

Just as the folder on her wooden desk contains letters, pictures, and other documents, the folder on the desktop contains the files we just mentioned.
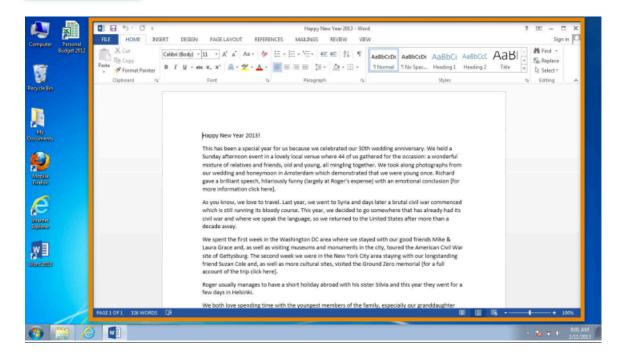
Documents library My Documents		
Name	Date modified	Type
projects	2/11/2013 6:59 AM	File folder
Happy New Year 2013	2/9/2013 5:03 PM	Microsoft Wo
Neighborhood Cookbook	2/10/2013 8:10 PM	Microsoft Wo
Personal Budget 2012	2/10/2013 8:05 PM	Microsoft Exc
Personal Budget 2013	2/10/2013 8:05 PM	Microsoft Exc
Surprise party guest list	2/10/2013 7:44 PM	Microsoft Wo
Surprise party to do list	2/10/2013 8:10 PM	Microsoft Wo
US13	2/9/2013 5:04 PM	JPEG Image
WE2	2/9/2013 5:04 PM	JPEG Image

Sidebar (partially visible):
rites
sktop
wnloads
cent Places

ries
cuments
usic
tures
leos

egroup

puter
ndows7_OS (C:)
movable Disk (E:)
novo_Recovery (Q:)

vork

Double clicking the folder will show the files in the folder, just as opening a paper folder allows you to sort through the documents in that folder.
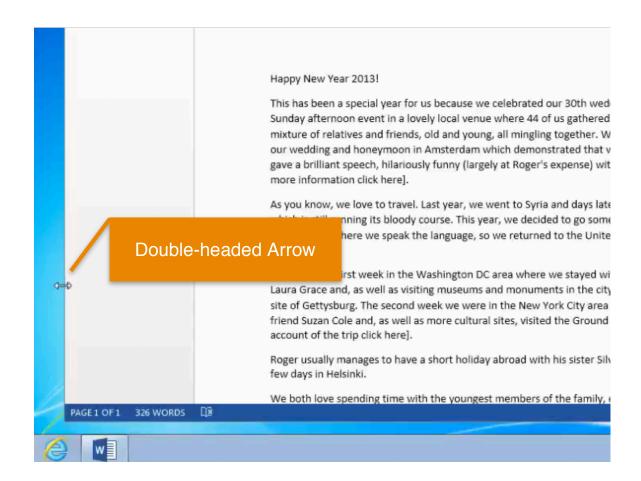
Windows

Once a file or folder opens, you will see a window. A computer window gives you a view into a file, folder, or an application just like a store's window gives you a view into the store.

The window is your working area.

Double-headed Arrow

When you open a window, it may appear in a size that's too big or too small for your work.

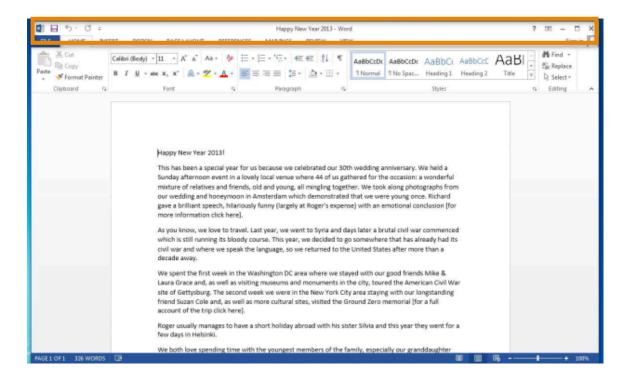You can change the size of the window by hovering over a border or corner of the window with the mouse.

The mouse will then become a double-headed arrow.

You can then click and hold the left mouse button to "grab" the edges of the window.

Drag the arrow to change the size of the window.

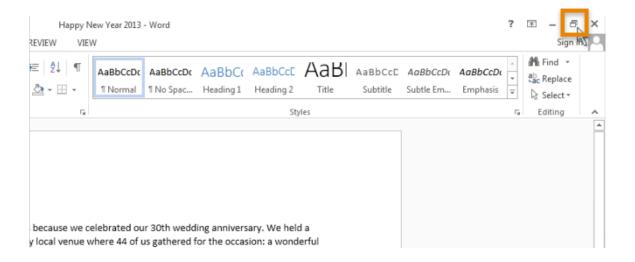Release the mouse button when the window is the desired size.

The top of the window includes the title bar. This area has tools on it to help you manage the window.
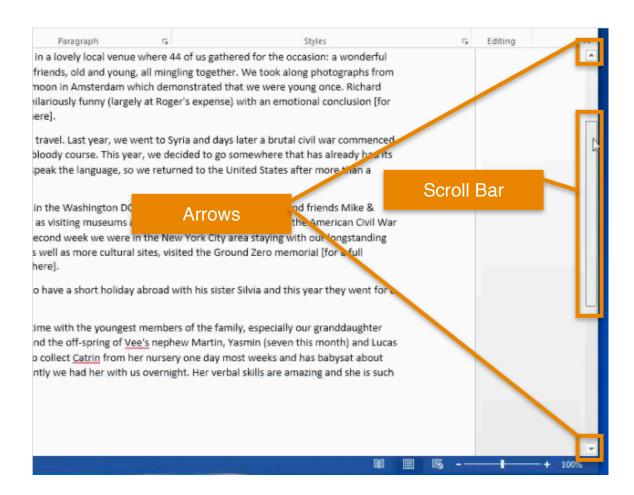
If you wanted a window to fill a desktop, you could do that by clicking the maximize button on the title bar.

When you want to make the window smaller again, click the restore button, which replaced the maximize button, and the window will return to its previous size.
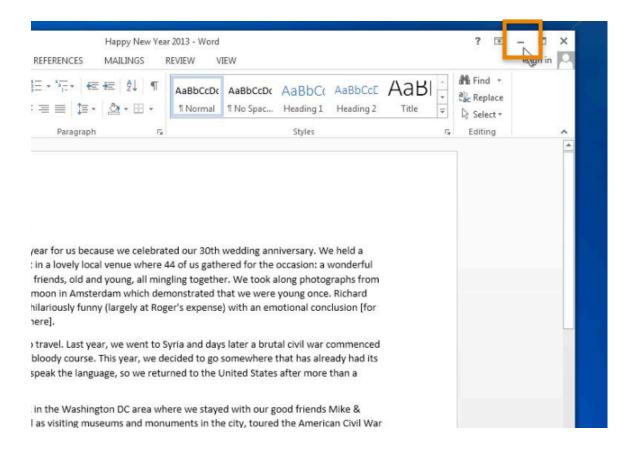
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You can scroll in the window to display different content. This can be done in two different ways.

One way is to click and hold the left mouse button on the scroll bar to "grab" it and then drag it to move in the document.

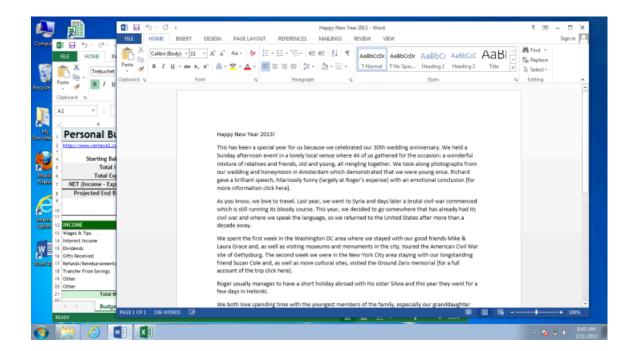The other way is by clicking on the arrows on the scroll bar.

If you need to access other files or folders on the desktop, you can use the minimize button in the title bar to minimize the window.

This will collapse the window into the task bar at the bottom of the screen so that you can see and use the desktop.

Minimized File

Now that the first file is minimized, it will appear on the task bar at the bottom of the screen as an icon. We can now access the desktop and find another file.

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It is possible to have many windows open at the same time.

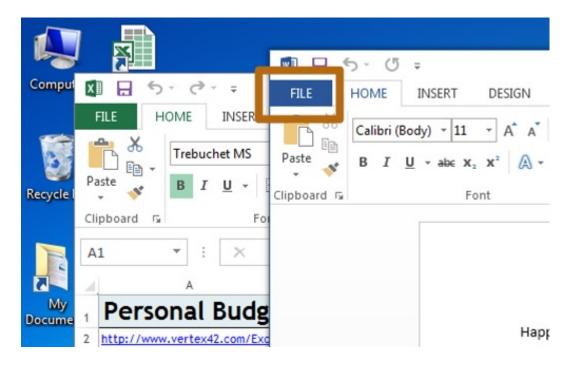This allows you to switch between tasks, or work between multiple files.

You can pick up a window by the title bar and move it around.

Again, windows can also be resized to make it easier to multiple windows at the same time.
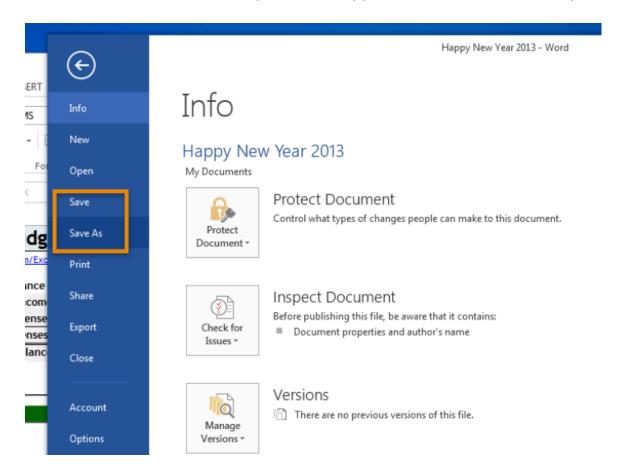
Saving and Closing

Occasionally, while you are working on a file, or before you close it, you will want to save your work.

You can do this by clicking on the file tab from the menu at the top of the application window.

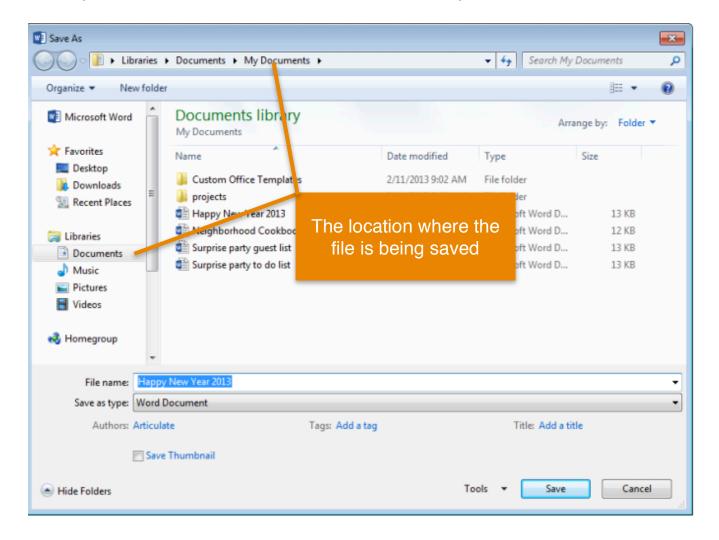The "Save" and "Save As" options will appear in the window that opens.

If you have already saved this file before, know the location where it is saved, and the name it is saved under, you can simply click the "Save" option from the menu that appears in the new window.

However, if this is the first time you are saving this file or you would like to change the name or location of the file, you will want to use the "Save As" function so you can select where the saved file is located on your computer, such as on the desktop or in a folder, and select a name for the file.

When you select "Save As" and a new window will open.
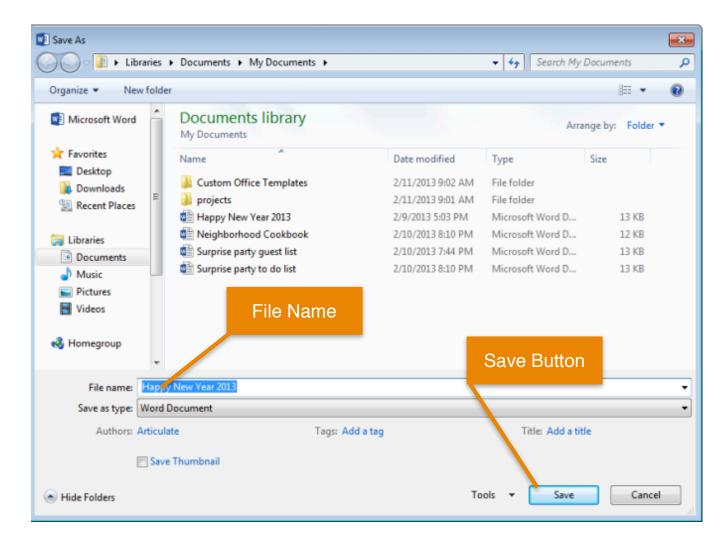

This is the "Save As" window.

Select the location where you want to save the file.

Remember to choose a location that you will remember such as on the desktop or in a specific folder.

In this example, Jane is saving this file in the documents folder, which you can see in two locations, at the top of the window and in the main section.

If you are using a public computer, there may be limits on where you can save files. Seek help from a staff person at the computer center for more information.

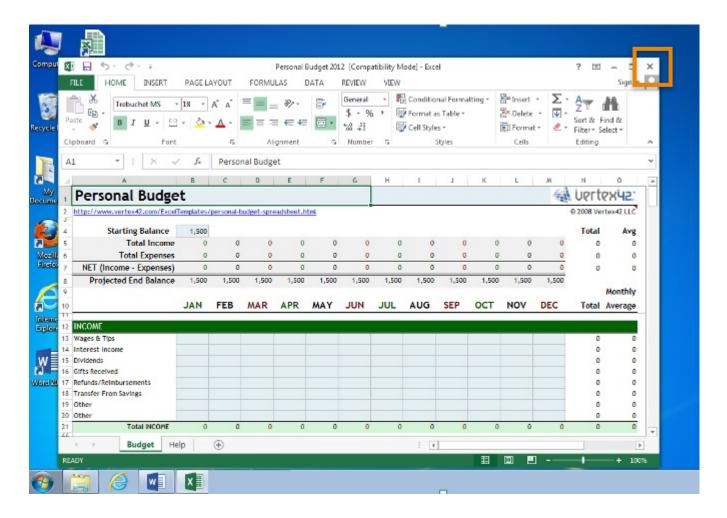DIGITALLEARN.ORG
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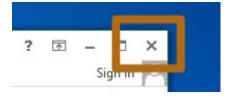Next, type the name for your file under the "File name" field.

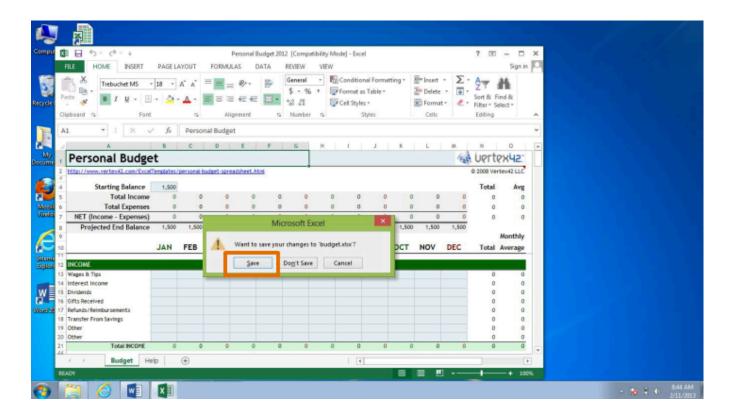Lastly, click the "Save" button to close the window and save your file.

When you are done with your file and have saved it, you will then want to close it.

Click the X in the title bar to close the file.

Note that if you have made changes to your document since the last time you saved, a window will open asking you if you want to save changes.

Click the "Save" button to save and close this file.

Deleting

If you are completely done with a file and won't need it again, you can delete it.

To delete a file, click and hold down the left mouse button to select the file and drag it to the recycle bin.
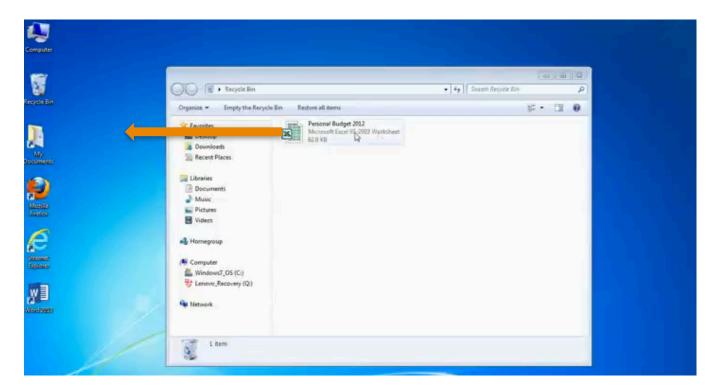

When the recycle bin has files in it, the icon changes.

Like the recycle and trash bins in your home, things stay in the recycling bin until you empty the trash and take it out.

You can still get a file that you placed in the recycle bin out as long as you haven't "emptied" it.

When you click on the recycle bin icon, a window showing the contents of the recycling bin will open.

Click and hold down the left mouse button to select the file and drag it to the desktop.

When you are sure you are done with everything in the recycle bin, you can empty it and the files in there will be gone permanently.

 In order to empty the recycle bin, right click on the icon for it and left click on "Empty recycle bin".