



# PC File Organization For Genealogists

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October, 2003

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# Why spend time organizing

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- Faster access to information
- Less likely to delete wrong file
- Allows more complete backups
- Helps with publication projects
- Makes file maintenance easier
- Reduces chance of multiple masters



# General Tips of organization

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- Be consistent with your paper files
- Consolidate data in common area (\$)
- Organize directories by functionality
- Avoid directories with 100s of files
- Organize by family lines or geography
- Keep input and output files separate



# Common Types of Data

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- Family History Database (input)
- Stored output reports (output)
- Photographic images (output)
- Source document images (output)
- Source files that you create (input)
- Source files (files from other places)
- How to files and other information



# Save your source files

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- Detach email attachments as files
- Download files from Internet
- Save web sites (HTML, PDF, TXT)
- Print CD-ROM data as files (PDF)
- Output emails as files (PDF)
- Print web sites as files (PDF)



# Highest Level Directories

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- \$gen (almost all files for genealogy)
- \$code (downloaded code & patches)
- \$work (work related files)
- \$html (output files for web site)
- \$images (images for genealogy)
- \$misc (odds and ends)



# Example of \$gen Directory

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- gedcom (DB files from others)
- htm (files from the Internet)
- email (detached files from emails)
- letters (letters to others – WP files)
- publish (printing documentation)
- htmltest (test files for web)
- ftm (your Family Tree Maker files)



## Examples of ftm directory

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- brooks (for Brooks line)
- bryan (for Bryan line)
- olliff (for Olliff line)
- test (for test new functions - copy)
- cousins (from other researchers)
- revier (subset of bryan - copy)



# Classes of files for CD-ROM

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- Primary publication (inline images)  
(this emulates a printed book)
- Source publication (integrated sources)  
(census abstracts, more source images)
- Other electronic source files  
(GEDCOM, emails, web sites, etc.)
- Program files and Readme files  
(Acrobat reader, how to access CD-ROM)



# Classes of files for web site

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- Navigation HTML for web site entry
- HTML, Acrobat or JAVA files
- Special web files (counters, guestbook, robot file, email address as graphic)
- Special reports, pedigree charts, etc.
- You should have an exact image of web site
- Files for Copyright statement, how to contact you, your publication projects, etc.



# Classes of files for Printing

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- Printers now prefer electronic files
- Acrobat, WP and DTP files for text
- Images must follow specific rules
- Separate file for cover
- These files should be isolated
- Images may be inline or separate



# Classes of files for email

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- Register Reports for specific ancestors
- Source images to be shared
- WP files for widely distributed info
- GEDCOM intended for sharing
- Print several emails as files then attach
- Attach web sites as files (vs. links)



# File naming conventions

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- Eight character best (CD-R)
- Extension identifies data type
- Images do not need dates
- Versions of your genealogy needs dates
- Anything that you update needs dates
- Use first 3 or 4 char for line – then date



# Be careful when moving data

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- Copy then delete later (safer)
- Cut and then paste (not safe)
- External references can get corrupted
- Make directory names meaningful
- Directories should be reasonable  
(no 100s of files or 100s of MB)



# Summary

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- Good organization reduces errors  
(applies to both paper & PC files)
- Organization is moving target  
(as your data grows & interests change)
- Knowing your target publication is key  
(printed book, web page and/or data sharing)
- Allocate reasonable time to organize  
(examine files and move files regularly)