

How to transfer files between Windows Vista and XP PCs

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*Stump the PC Club is a free tech-advice column written by members of the **North Orange County Computer Club**, which has been in existence since 1976.*



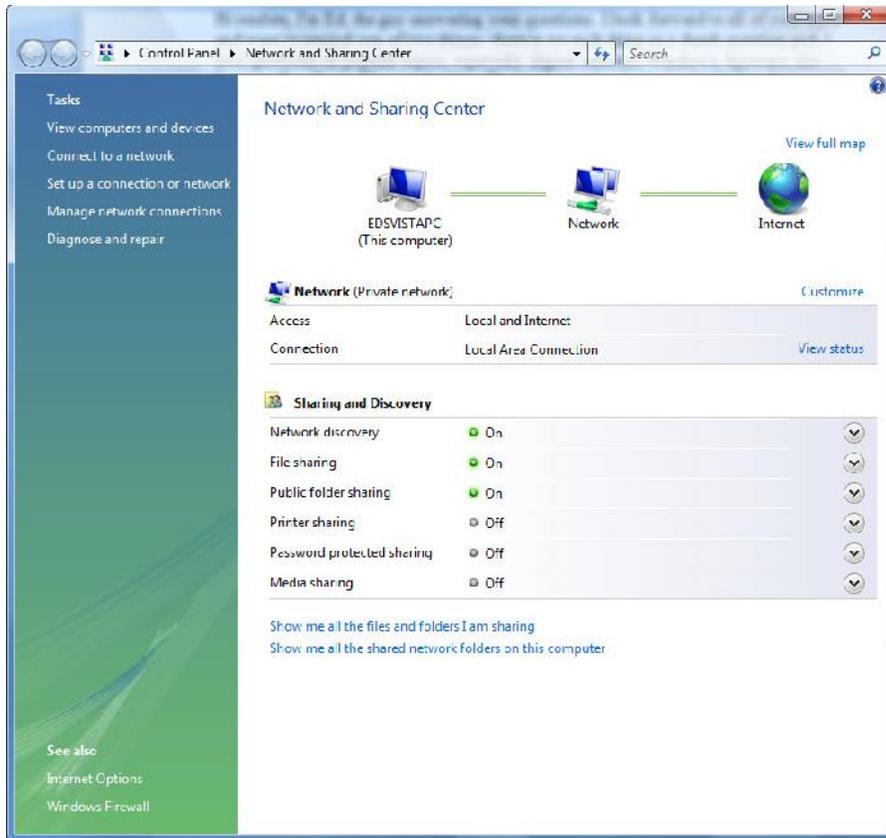
Hi readers! I'm Ed, the guy answering your questions. I look forward to all of your input and want to remind you of two things: There is no such thing as a dumb question and, I love questions on popular topics, especially digital cameras, Windows, Spyware, the Internet, e-mail, etc. You get the idea. The more popular the topic, the higher the probability of getting an answer. Keep those questions coming. Just e-mail thegadgetress@ocregister.com

QUESTION: I am running a desktop with Windows XP and Microsoft Word and a laptop with Windows Vista Basic using DSL and a router for wireless connection. How can I transfer some of the files from my desktop PC to the laptop? Are the two Windows versions able to communicate?

PC CLUB: You can transfer files between your XP PC and Vista PC in several ways. One way is make use of your home network. Your PC's become part of a home network once they are both connected to a router either directly or using wireless. To do this, however, several preparatory steps must be taken as follows:

1. Both PCs should have the same Workgroup name. Also, give each PC a unique name that is easy to remember without spaces. Microsoft offers some file-sharing tips on its site at "[File and Printer Sharing in Windows Vista](#)" (link: bit.ly/2DZiib)
2. If you don't use a password to login to Vista, create one. This will make sharing easier. See About.com's instructions on [how to create a Windows Vista password](#) (link: bit.ly/19F084).

3. In Vista, open the Control Panel, switch to the Classic view and open Network and Sharing and turn on Network discovery, File sharing, and Public Folder Sharing. Make sure your network is Private or click the Customize link to change it to Private.



Now that the two computers are talking to one another, pick a folder to share. Any files inside this folder can be accessed by the other PC — or any other computer on the network. If you don't want other PC users in the house to sniff around at all your files, share just one folder.

- To share a folder in XP, open My Computer or Windows Explorer and navigate to the folder that you want to share with other PCs. Right-click the folder and select Sharing and Security. Place a check in "Share this folder on the network. You can use the default Share name or change it.
- For Vista, navigate to a folder and right-click it. Select Properties and select the Sharing tab. Click the Advanced Sharing button. You can also configure "permissions" if you want to allow others to modify the files, as opposed to just viewing them.

Now that you've shared a folder, it can be accessed by other users depending on their operating system. Here are tips on how to add someone's shared folder:

- **Windows XP:** Open My Computer and select My Network Places on the left. Next, click “View Workgroup” computers and a list of computers on your network will appear. Double-click the computer that you want to connect to see the shared resources. If asked, enter your user name and password for that PC.
- **Windows Vista:** Open Computer and click the Network folder on the left to see the other PC’s on your network. Double-click the PC that you want to connect to see the shared resources.
- **Add a hard drive:** An easy and safe way to transfer files through sharing is to add an external hard drive to one of the PC’s on the network and share it with the other PC. This allows you to easily transfer files between PCs. Don’t forget to turn on sharing for the external drive. Other Windows users on the home network can then access the drive using the two previous steps.
- **Add a networked hard drive:** These hard drives don’t rely on a computer. They have Ethernet ports and appear as a computer on the home network. Files stored on these drives can be accessed by anyone on the home network. But if you want to configure settings and user preferences, software is usually available from the hard drive maker.



Another way, if you choose not to wrestle with setting up sharing, is the old “sneaker network” method. Use an external hard drive or flash drive to move files between PCs to transfer files. I would not bother with CDs or DVDs for this purpose.

There is a new gadget from Targus called the Targus ACC96US High-Speed File Transfer Cable that can transfer files between any two PCs whether they are XP, Vista or Mac PCs - how about that. Staples has it for \$40 and Amazon.com for \$33. No software or drivers are required.

This is not all there is to know about transferring and sharing files but it should get you started. - *Ed Schwartz, NOCCC member. View his blog at www.edwardns.com/blog*