



Google Drive: Access and organize your files

Use Google Drive to store and access your files, folders, and Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides anywhere. Change a file on the web, your computer, tablet, or your mobile device, and it updates on every device where you've installed Google Drive. You'll always have the latest version of your files and Google Docs at your fingertips. Read, edit, share, and collaborate wherever you are!

Set up Google Drive

1. In your browser, go to **drive.google.com**.

When you first access Google Drive on the web, you'll see a Welcome page. If you've previously used Google Docs, Google Drive on the web will look something like this:

The screenshot shows the Google Drive web interface. At the top, there's a search bar and the user's email address, cassy@solarmora.com. Below that, the 'Drive' header is visible. On the left, there's a sidebar with 'My Drive' selected, showing options like 'Shared with me', 'Starred', 'Recent', and 'More'. The main content area features a 'Meet your Drive' section with a 'Download Google Drive for Mac' button. To the right, there's a 'Then, go for a spin' section with a list of tips. Below this, a table lists files in 'My Drive' with columns for 'TITLE', 'OWNER', and 'LAST MODIFIED'.

<input type="checkbox"/>	TITLE	OWNER	LAST MODIFIED
<input type="checkbox"/>	Projects	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacations	me	2/11/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Certificate of award Shared	Mary Doma	3/26/12 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cover letter	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Satisfaction Survey Results Shared	me	3/26/12 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Survey Results	me	2/16/12 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marketing Presentation Shared	me	May 13 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	owner's manual.pdf	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Philly trip video.mov	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project specs Shared	me	1/23/12 Mary Doma
<input type="checkbox"/>	rock.png	me	10/13/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Solarmora logo Shared	me	Jan 2 me

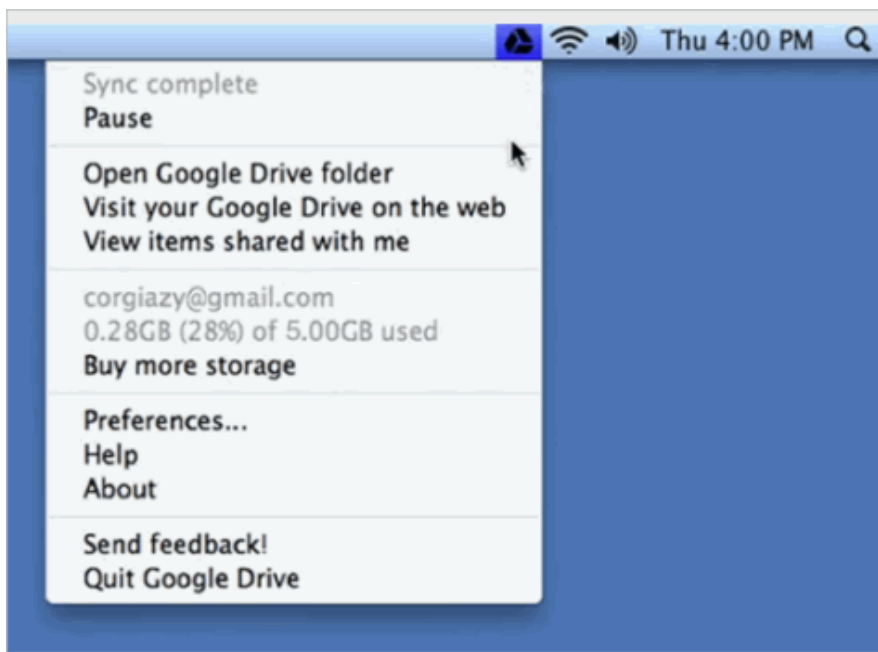
2. Download and [install Google Drive for your Mac/PC](#). (Or your administrator might do this for you.) This lets you sync files from your computer to Google Drive on the web, giving you access to your files on any device, at any time. Syncing is built-in—you don't have to do anything to set it up other than connect to the Internet.

Note: The link to download and install Google Drive for your Mac/PC might be disabled in your organization. If it's not available or if you choose not to install it, Google Drive on the web still provides access to all your Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, and any files that you manually upload.

Once installed, you can find Google Drive for your Mac/PC in your Windows system tray or Mac menu bar. Here's how it looks on the Windows system tray:



Click the icon to see sync status, access your Google Drive folder on your computer or on the web, pause the sync, set preferences, and more. Here's how it looks on a Mac:



You can also access Google Drive files on your Android or iOS device. See [Google Drive on a mobile device](#) to learn how.

Get to know your Drive

There are lots of ways to view your files, folders, and Google documents in Google Drive on the web. Let's take a quick look around.



Are you upgrading to Google Drive from the Google Documents List? Check out [this video](#) to see what has changed, or see [Google Drive versus your Documents List](#).

My Drive

When you first get Google Drive on the web, all the files and folders you've uploaded and Google Docs that you own are in the section called **My Drive**:

	TITLE	OWNER	LAST MODIFIED
<input type="checkbox"/>	Projects	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacations Shared	me	2/11/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marketing Presentation Shared	me	May 13 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	owner's manual.pdf	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Philly trip video.mov	me	2/4/11 me
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project specs Shared	me	1/23/12 Mary Dorna



Click the red **Upload** button (next to **Create**) if you want to upload more files and folders to **My Drive**

If you or your administrator installed Google Drive for your Mac/PC, the contents of **My Drive** will sync with the contents of a folder called **Google Drive** on your computer. Only the contents of **My Drive** are synced.

You can move files that have been shared with you to **My Drive** if you want them to sync to your computer and mobile devices. You can also add new files to **My Drive** by moving or saving files to the **Google Drive** folder on your computer. In a nutshell: everything you put in **Google Drive** on your computer can also be found in **My Drive** on the web and mobile devices, and vice-versa. We'll demonstrate how that works in just a bit.

Shared with me

Shared with me is where you'll find the files, folders, and Google documents that have been shared with you:

	TITLE	SHARE DATE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Certificate of award My Drive	Mary Dorna 3/26/12
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paria Hike	Benito Cacciatore 2/4/11
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group work	Benito Cacciatore 2/4/11

Shared with me only shows items that were shared with you explicitly. You won't find items here that were shared with the "Public" or "Anyone with the link." (You can find those items by searching in the **All items** view.) If you'll be referencing a shared document often, you can drag it into **My Drive** so that it appears there as well.



Are you looking for a folder that was shared with you? Click **Sort > Title** in the **Shared with me** view to put all the folders that were shared with you first.

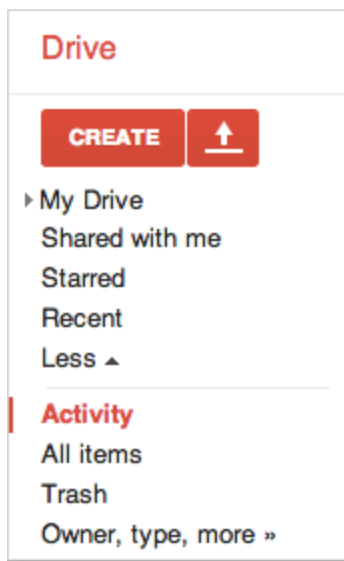
Starred and Recent views

Click **Starred** to see all the items you've marked with a star. Just click the star to the left of an item to mark it. Stars are like "bookmarks" or "favorites" in a browser to mark web sites you want to access frequently.

Use the **Recent** view to see all the private and shared files that you've opened, in reverse chronological order. This is a great way to quickly find your most current stuff.

Activity and All items

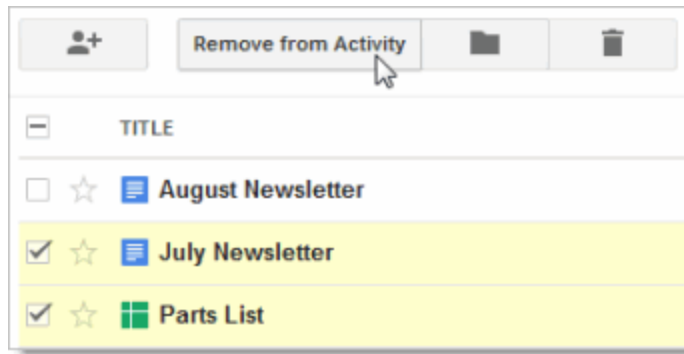
Click **More** in the left column to see a few additional views:



The **Activity** and **All items** views are similar. They both include things that have been shared with everyone in your organization (not just you explicitly), so you'll probably find things here that you didn't know about yet.

- **Activity** shows everything that has been edited recently.

Is there too much stuff in your Activity list? Check the items you don't want to see there and then click **Remove from Activity**:

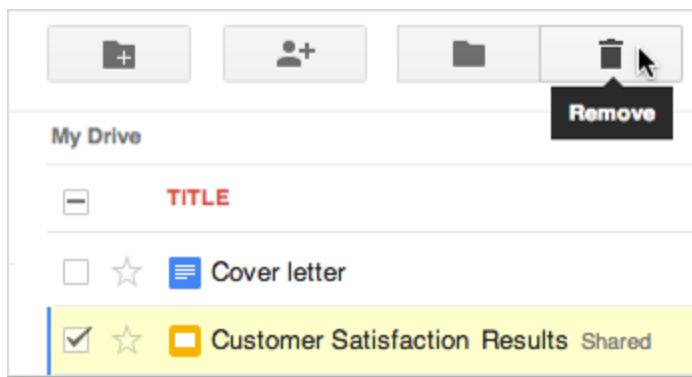


Note: This button only appears in the Activity view. In other views, click **More > Don't show in Activity list**.

- **All items** shows everything in Google Drive, except items that are in your Trash. You can't remove items from here (except by deleting them), so this is the best place to search if you're having trouble finding something.

Trash view

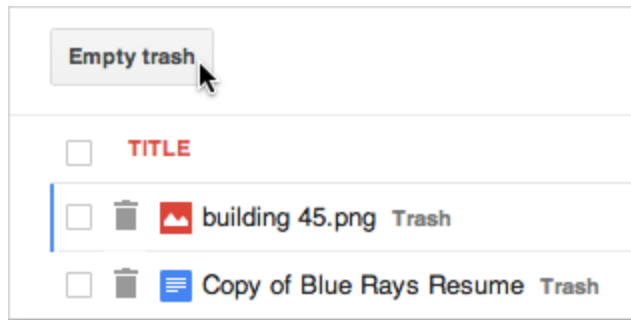
Trash contains everything you've deleted. To delete an item, check the item and click the trash icon that appears:



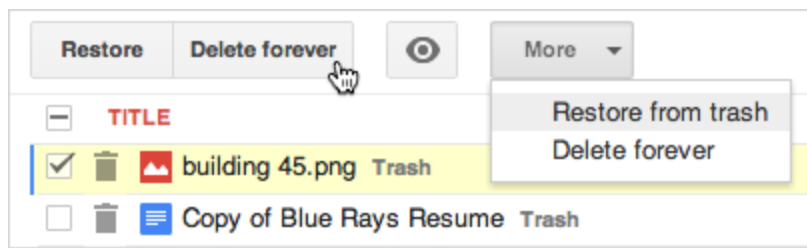
Note: You can only trash items that you own. For items you don't own, click **More > Remove** to take them out of your Google Drive, but not remove them for everyone else.

Your trash is never automatically emptied, so you'll probably want to clean it out once in a while. Items in your Trash still count toward your storage quota, so this helps free up some space. To clean it out:

- In the **Trash** view, click **Empty trash** to permanently delete everything:



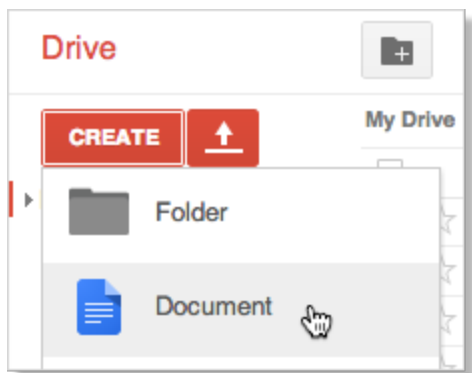
- Or, check individual items and click **Delete forever**:



Tip: Notice that after you select items in the trash, you can also choose to restore them from the **More** menu.

Add files and folders to Drive

When you're ready to create new documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and more, just click the red **Create** button and select an app from the list to get started.



See [Using Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides](#) to learn more about using these Google productivity apps.

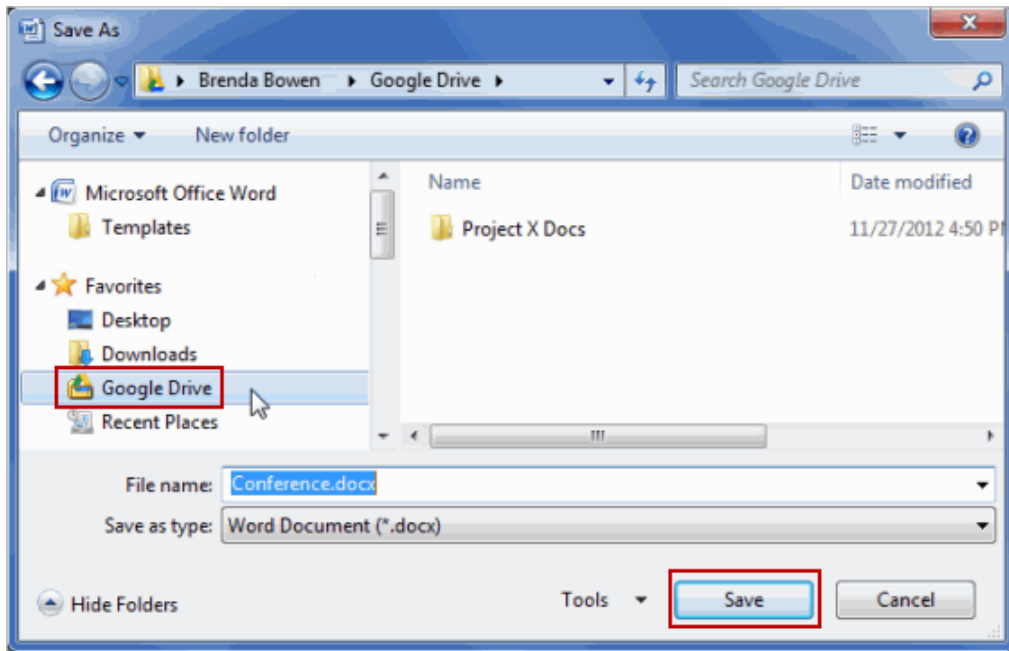
Do you have existing files and folders you want to add to Google Drive? You can easily sync or upload those files to add them to Google Drive on the web and your mobile devices. Here's how it works:

Add files to Google Drive using sync

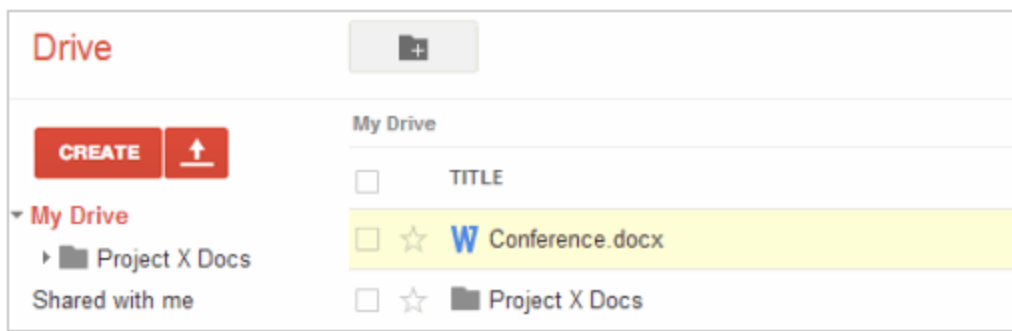
If you or your administrator has installed Google Drive for Mac/PC, anything you add to the **Google Drive** folder on your computer will automatically sync to **My Drive** on the web and your mobile devices. So all you need to do

is move or save files to the **Google Drive** folder. For example:

1. In Microsoft Word, save your document to the **Google Drive** folder:



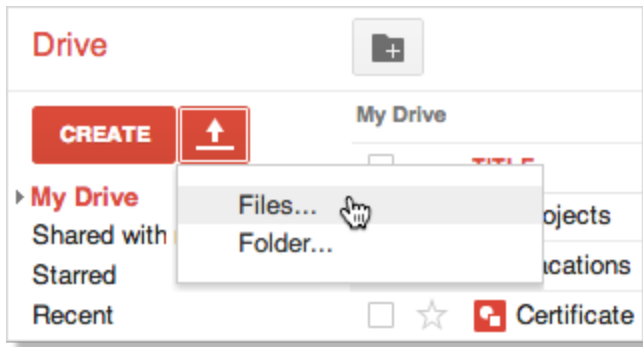
That's it! Now you can access your Word document in Google Drive on the web and your mobile devices:



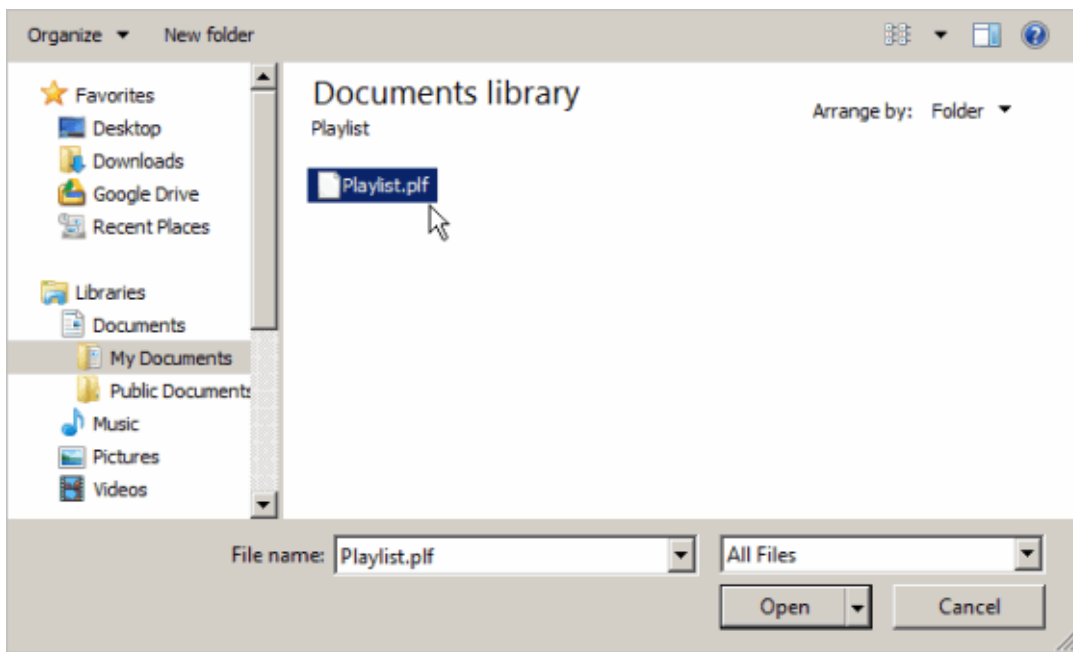
Upload files and folders to Google Drive

It's also easy to upload existing files and folders to Google Drive on the web. Here's how to upload a file (folders work the same way):

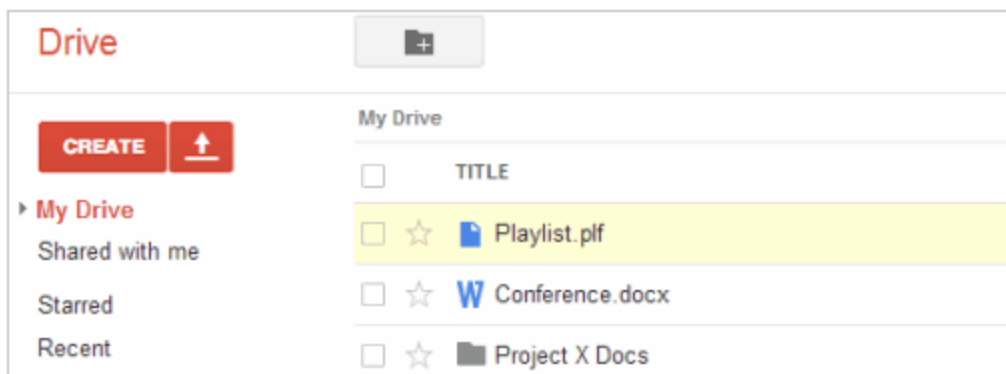
1. In Google Drive on the web, click the red **Upload** button and then select **Files**:



2. Select the file (or files) you want to upload and click **Open**. Here's how it might look on Windows:

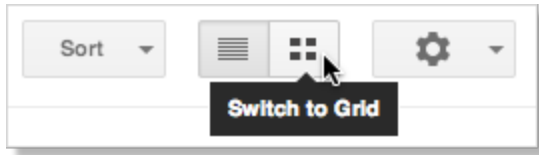


That's all you need to do. As soon as the upload completes, you'll see the file in **My Drive**:

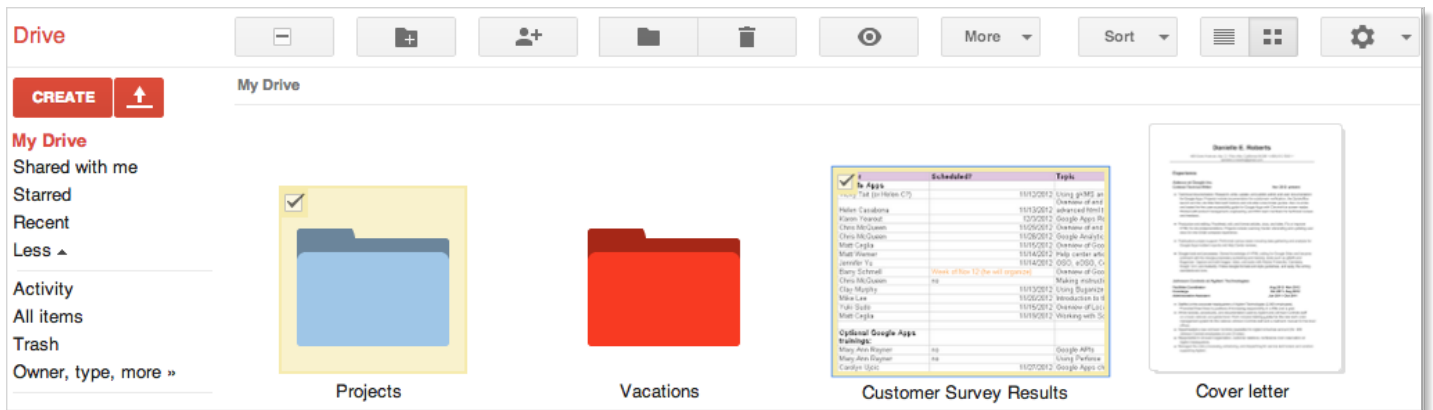


[Preview or learn about a file](#)

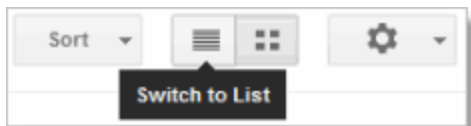
So far we've seen how files look in Google Drive using the default List mode. This is the most compact way to view your files. If you'd prefer to see a preview of each file in Google Drive, click the **Switch to Grid** icon in the upper-right of Google Drive on the web:



Now your files are displayed in a grid of thumbnail previews. This can help you locate a file without having to open each one. You can also select files and folders to make changes.

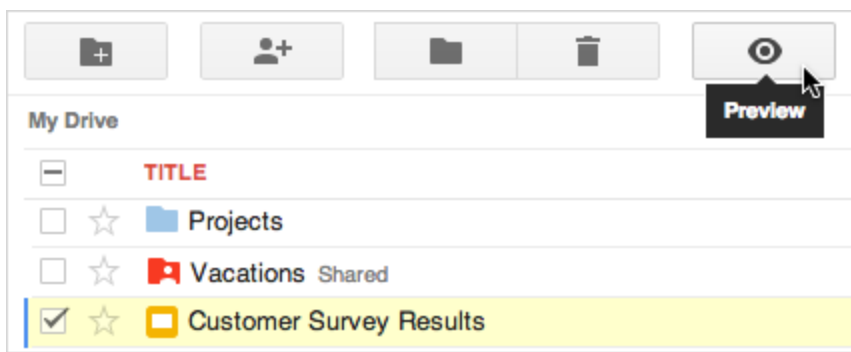


To return to the List mode, click the **Switch to List** icon:



However, if you like to work in List mode and want to see a visual preview of a file, you can do that too!

1. In List mode, select a single file, folder, or Google document.
2. Click the **Preview** icon that appears when only one item is selected:



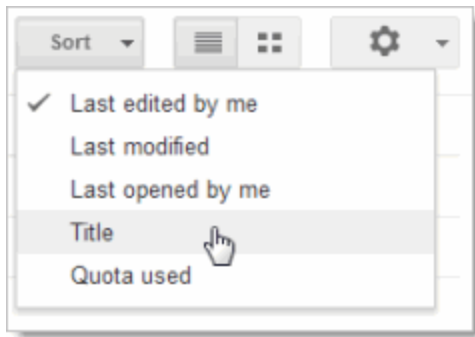
Your file or document is displayed as an overlay:



3. In Preview mode, you can:
 - a. Scroll through your displayed document
 - b. Preview the previous ⏪ or next ⏩ document in your Drive
 - c. Select another document from your Drive to preview by clicking **View all**
 - d. Share your document with others
 - e. Print your document
 - f. Open your document to edit it
 - g. Exit the preview by click the X

Sort your files

If you have a lot of files, it can get harder to keep track of them. One way to make your files easier to find is to sort them. Click the **Sort** menu to see your options:



The sort options above are available in most Google Drive views. However, the **Activity** view is automatically sorted in the order of when things were last modified, so you won't see the **Sort** menu there. In the **Recent** view you can sort items by when you last opened or edited them.

Here are a few sorting tips:

- Sort by **Last modified** to see items that were recently modified by anyone (not just you). This might help you keep track of things that your collaborators have recently changed.
- Use **Last opened by me** to find things you've recently opened, regardless of whether you've edited them. This is a great way to get back to items you were recently looking at if you accidentally closed a tab in your browser or you didn't bookmark something.
- Sort by **Title** if you know the name of something and want to scan an alphabetical list to find it. This puts all folders first in **My Drive** and **Shared with me**, so it's also a good way to find folders.
- Sort by **Quota used** to see which files are taking up the most space. To free up storage space, you can delete files by moving them to the **Trash**, but don't forget to permanently delete them from the Trash view if you need more storage space.

Note that only synced or uploaded files take up storage space. Files shared with you and Google documents (such as Docs, Sheets, and Slides) don't take up any of your storage space. Items that don't count toward your storage will show as "---" in Google Drive:

TITLE	OWNER	QUOTA USED
Energy slides	me	1 MB
About Solarmora.pdf	me	455 KB
PY Platinum PIP 2011	me	178 KB
Book1	me	64 KB
Conference docs Shared	me	—
Conference Presentation	me	—
Contact Us Template	me	—
Attendance List	me	—



Do you need extra storage? You can [purchase additional storage](#), but check with your system administrator first. Your organization might do that for you!

Find a file

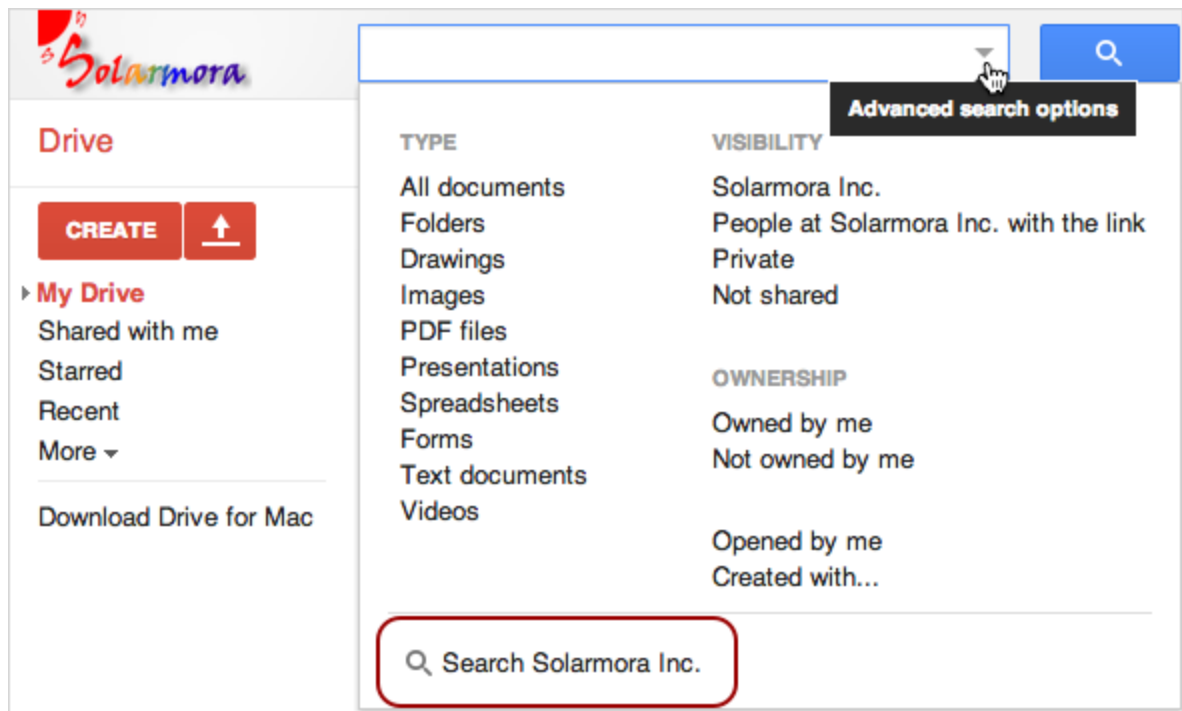
Type a word or phrase in Drive's search box to find a specific file, folder, or Google document. As you're typing, Drive will try to predict what you are looking for and give you a list to choose from.

The screenshot shows the Google Drive search interface. The search box contains the word "Support". Below the search box, a dropdown menu shows search results: "Support Plan" (highlighted) and "Print Calendars and Events". The main table below shows search results with columns for OWNER and LAST MODIFIED.

	OWNER	LAST MODIFIED
Support Plan Shared My Drive	me	Jun 10 Alice Abemathy
Print Calendars and Events Shared	Google Training	10/2/12 Google Training

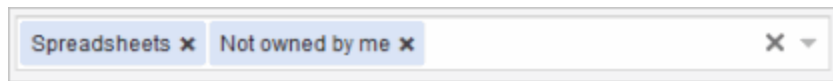
Narrow your search results

1. In the search box, click the down arrow to see advanced search options:



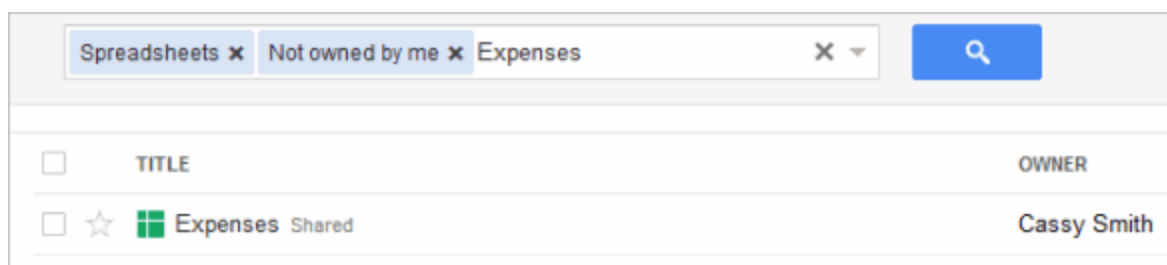
2. Click any search option to narrow your search.

You can repeat steps 1 and 2 multiple times to further filter your results. For example, maybe you know the file you want is a spreadsheet that you don't own. Click those options and your search box will look like this:



Click the **x** on an option to remove that filter, or click the big **X** on the right to clear the entire search.

3. At this point you might already see what you're looking for. If not, type a search query and click the blue search button.





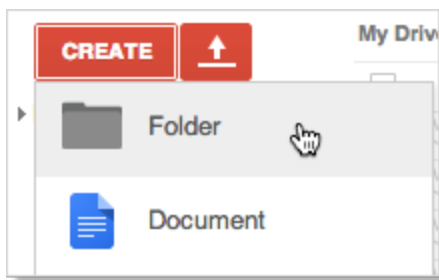
If you want to search articles that are shared with your domain, click **Search <your domain>** instead of the blue **Search** button. This is a good way to find a document that is public to your organization, but hasn't been shared with you directly.

Organize your files

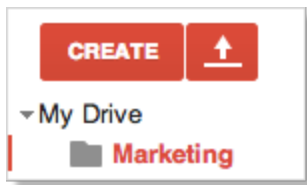
You probably have a lot of files in **My Drive**, or will soon. Use folders to organize the contents, just like you do on your computer.

Create a folder in Google Drive on the web

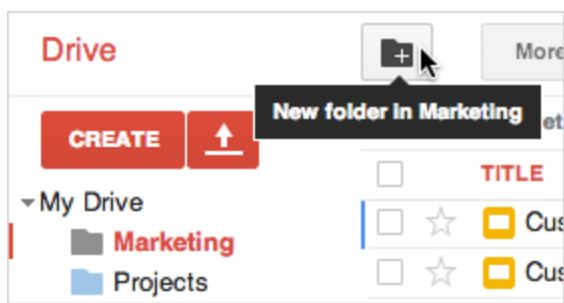
1. Click the red **Create** button and then select **Folder**:



2. Enter a name for the folder and click **OK**. Your new folder is created in **My Drive**:

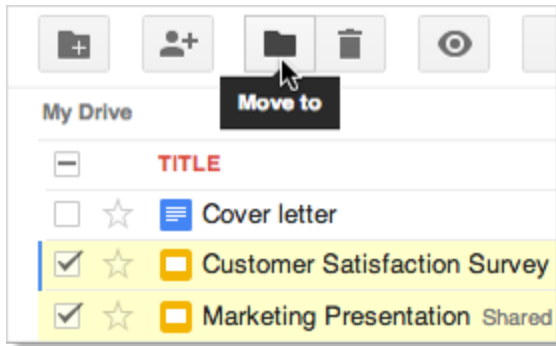


If you're displaying **My Drive**, (or a folder within **My Drive**), you can also click the **New folder** icon to create a folder in your current location:

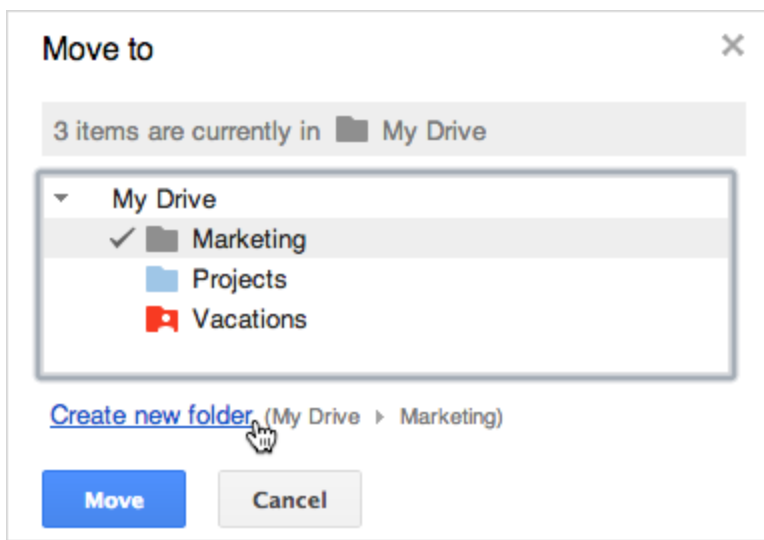


Move files to a folder

1. Check the box by the item (or items) you want to move.
2. Click the icon that looks like a folder:



3. In the **Move to** dialog, select the folder where you'd like to move your items, or create a new folder for them.




Do you want to store your file (or files) in multiple folders? Use the **Ctrl** or **Command** key to check all the places where you want to find your items.


4. Click **Move**.

Share a folder

You can share a folder, just as easily as you share your Google documents.

1. Check the box next to the file or folder you'd like to share.

2. Click **Share**  and add the people or Groups you'd like to share the folder with.

Once the folder is shared with others, it will have a person icon  on it.

See [Sharing and Collaboration](#) to learn about your sharing options.