

How to Stop Windows Hiding Files and Folders in Windows Vista

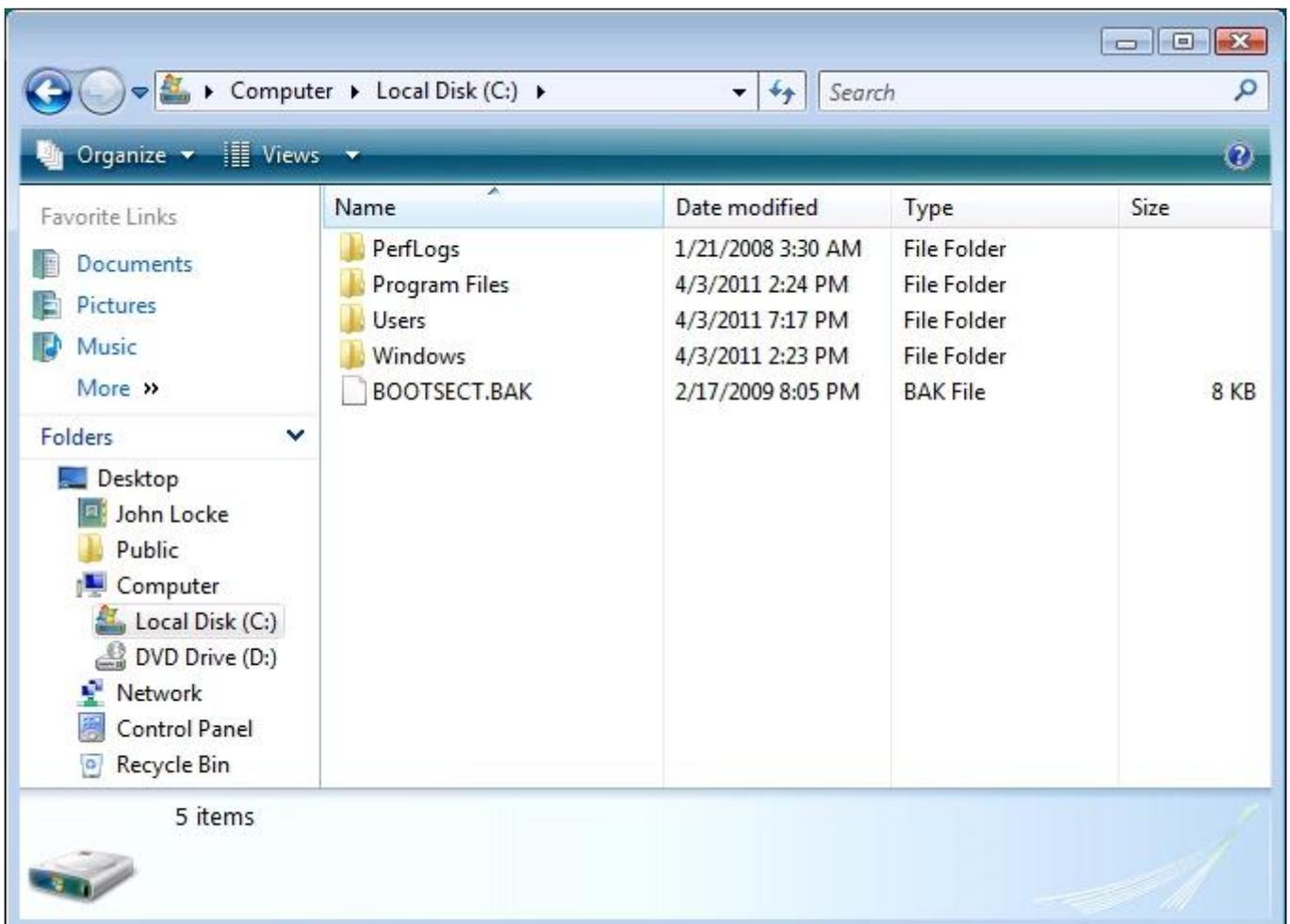
This “How To” guide is included to give you a better chance of locating the files on your PC that contain email data which you’ll need when migrating to our hosted Exchange server.

By default, Windows hides some files and folders that Microsoft considers to be part of the Windows Operating System.

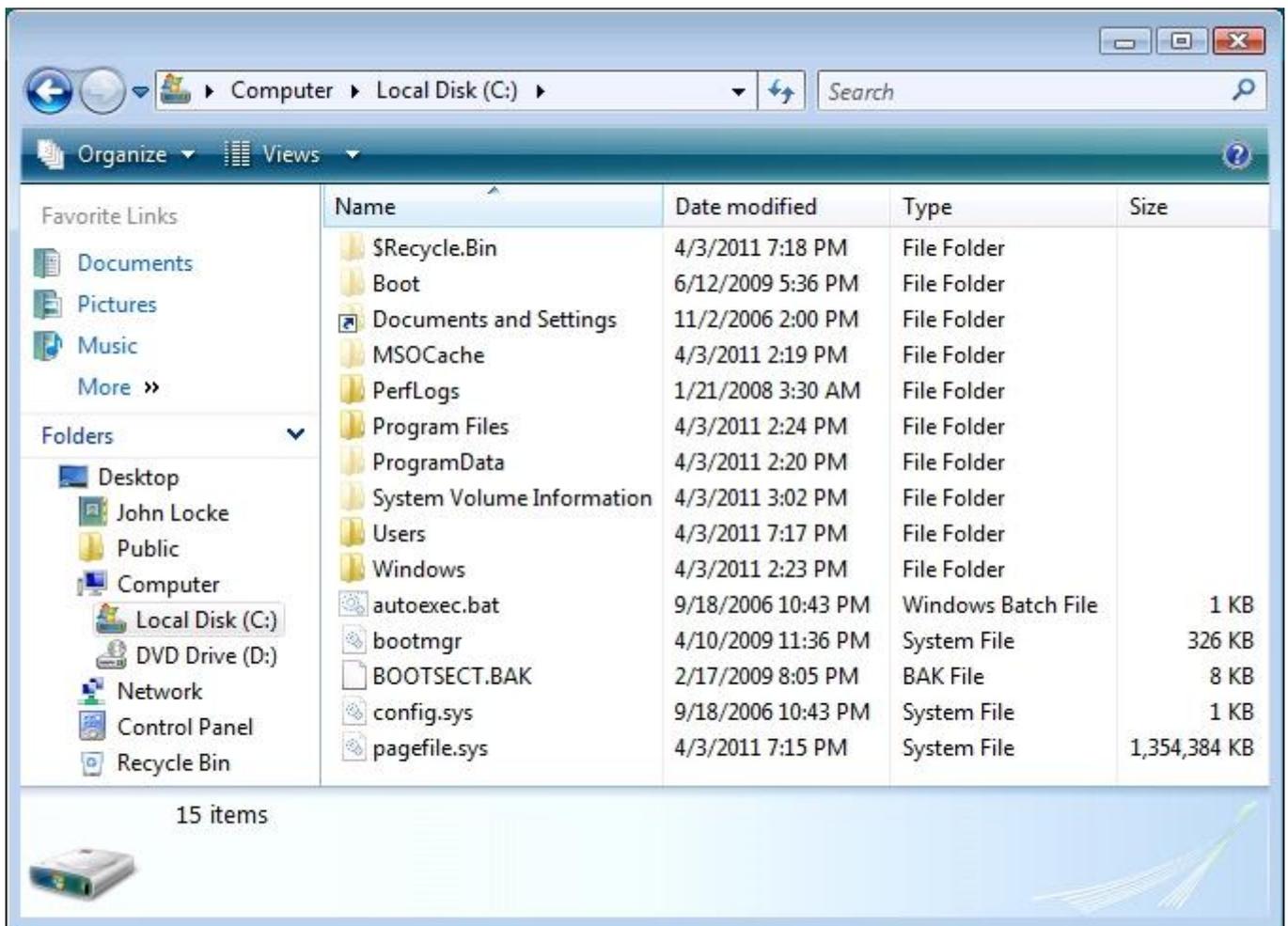
The idea is to save users from self-harm by discouraging them from entering these proscribed areas and going on a rampage of deleting files.

However, if you have to do any form of maintenance or problem solving on your PC, you'll soon find yourself straying into these areas and you'll quickly become frustrated if Explorer windows are only showing you a filtered version of what's actually there.

As an example, this is the *sanitised* view of a typical C: drive:-



This is what's *really* there:-

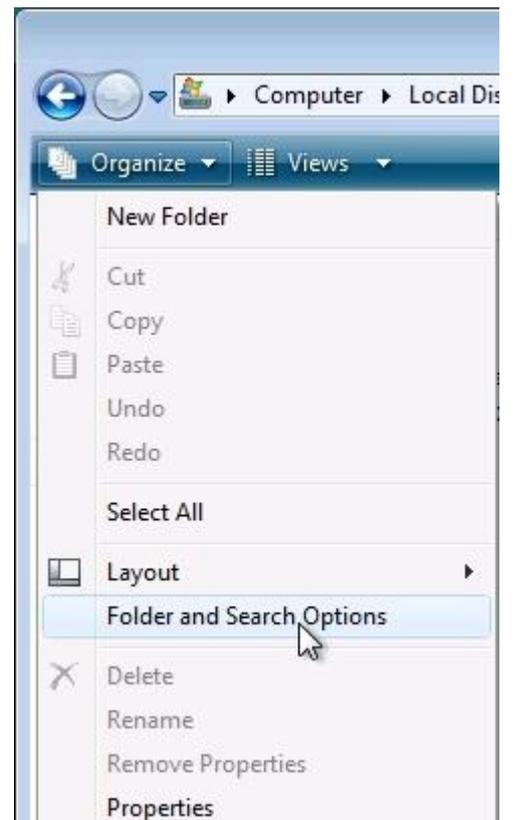


Windows Explorer is the best tool for working with files, and Windows Vista even hides this away in:-

Start – All Programs - Accessories

1 – How to make Windows Display all Files and Folders

Go to **Start – All Programs –Accessories** and run **Windows Explorer**, click on the arrowhead next to **Computer**, then click on the C: drive to display its content in the right-hand column, as shown in the picture on Page 1.



Click **Organize** and choose **Folder and Search Options**

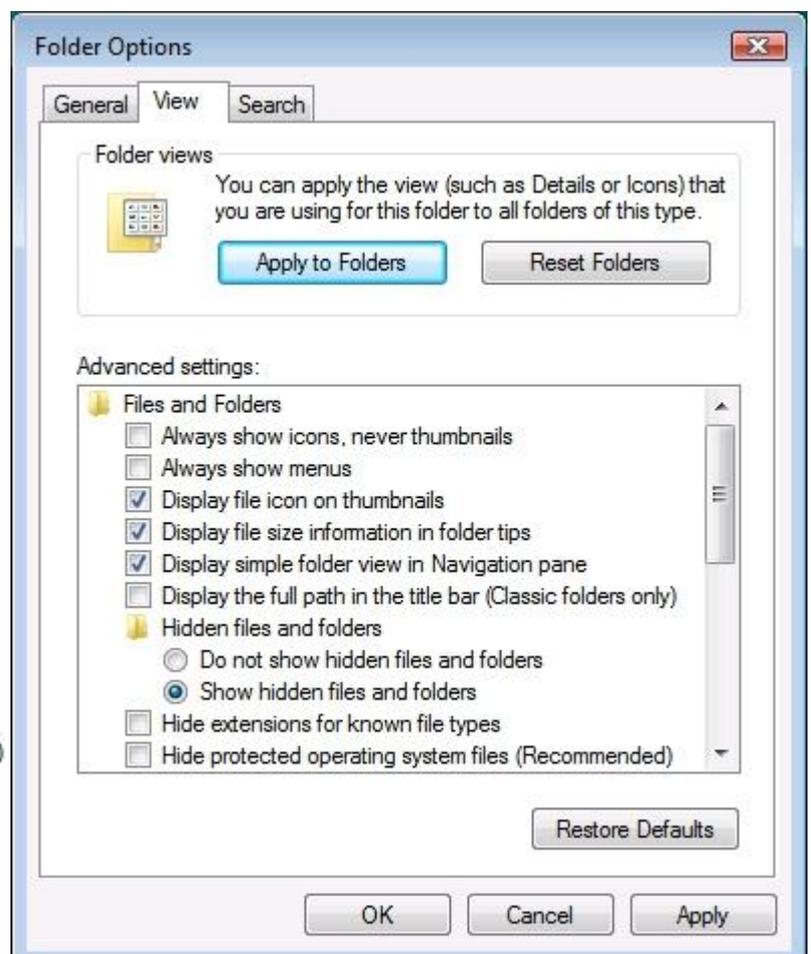
Then go to the **View** tab of the **Folder Options** window.

Change the settings to those shown opposite:

Below are the 3 things you need to change:-

-  **Hidden files and folders**
 - Do not show hidden files and folders
 - Show hidden files and folders
- Hide extensions for known file types
- Hide protected operating system files (Recommended)

Click: **Yes** to ignore any warning message.
Click: **OK** and the new settings will take effect immediately.



2 – How to Change the way Files are displayed in Windows Explorer

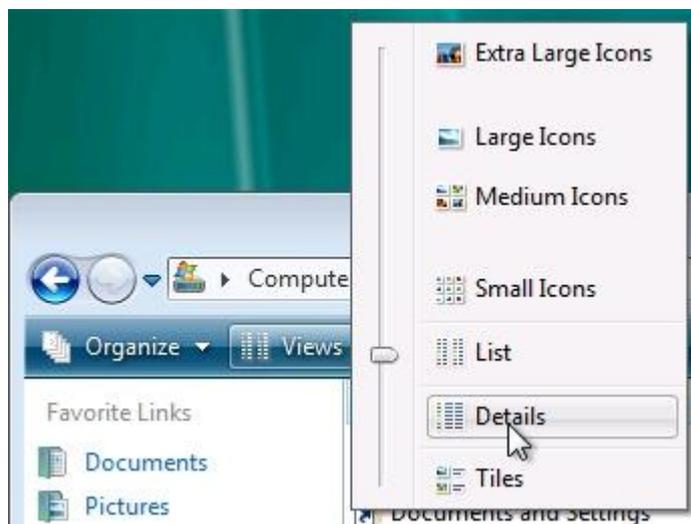
Hopefully you've found Windows Explorer by now and made a shortcut in either the QuickLaunch toolbar or on the Desktop.

There are 7 options for how Windows Explorer displays files:-

Extra Large Icons, Large Icons, Medium Icons, Small Icons, List, Details, and Tiles

Most of these different views can be useful in certain circumstances, but by far the most useful one is Details.

To switch views, click on the down-arrowhead on the **Views** button at the top of a Windows Explorer window and pick the view you want:-



The Details view is usually the one you want because it shows the most information in the smallest space and, by clicking on the column headings, you can sort the files in date order, alphabetically, by size or by type.

If you're convinced then you might say:-

“Wouldn't it be a good idea if Details was the default view for **all** file windows”.

To make this happen, go back and follow Section 2 again, making sure that when you display the contents of the C: drive you switch to your desired default view, then in the **Folder Options** windows – **View** tab, click the button labelled: **Apply to Folders**.