

# How to Use a USB Flash Drive

## Wellesley College Online Tutorial

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### ***Introduction:***

A Flash Drive is a small *self-powered* drive that connects to a computer directly through a USB port. It's both Mac and PC compatible. Flash drives can be used on any device with a USB port, including public computers. Some flash drives require you to install drivers before use, but usually not on computers with Windows XP or equivalent operating system.

Flash drives can hold any type of data, including excel, jpeg, video, and text files. Flash drives are also called key drive, thumb drives, jump drives, USB drives, pen drives, etc.

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### ***Uses:***

**Flash drives are used to copy files to and from multiple computers. They are NOT for backups.** We strongly encourage users to backup files to CD-R disks or DVD disks or external hard drives.

Flash drives come with varying amounts of memory. You may purchase a flash drive that is approximately the size of a zip disk--256M megabytes, or of a CD--512 megabytes, or of a DVD--4 gigabytes. Also, you have the option of purchasing a couple of 512 megabyte drives instead of a large 2 gig drive.

Some of the most popular brand name drives are Lexar, Sandisk, Kingston, PNY, and Iomega.

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### ***Copying files from a PC onto a flash drive:***

1. Open **My Computer** and see which drives are shown. Most computers, for example, have a hard drive known as (C:) and a few removable storage devices such as a floppy drive (A:), a CD/DVD drive (usually D:), and occasionally a Restore drive (probably D:, making the CD/DVD drive be E:). USB ports are generally designated as "Removable Disk (G:)," (H:), (I:), (J:), (K:), and etc.
2. Insert the flash drive into the USB port and watch to see where the USB flash drive appears. Most will appear as removable storage, but some will instead appear as hard drives. **Note the name** that your operating system uses to refer to the flash drive, "Removable Disk (G:)," for example.

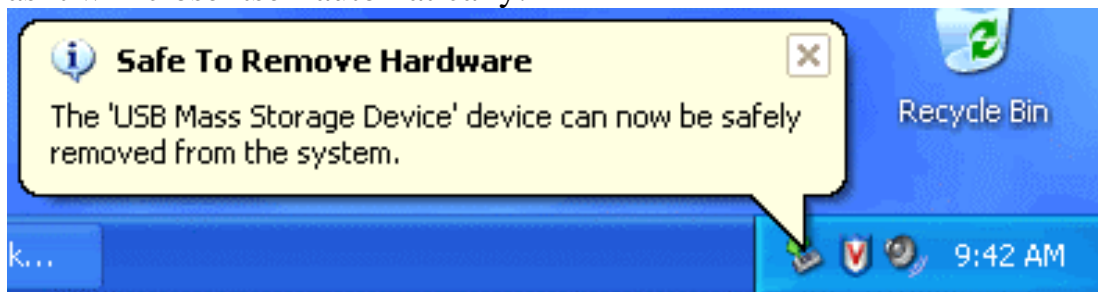
- Open **My Documents** or the location from which you want to transfer files to the flash drive. Select the **files** or **folders** you want to save to the flash drive by left-clicking on them. To select more than one, hold down the CTRL key while you click and select all of the files you wish to save.
- Right-click** on the file(s) or folder(s) you selected, then select **Send to**, then select the name you saw appearing in My Computer for the flash drive ("Removable Disk (G:)," for example).

Alternately, you may click Edit (menu)/"Copy" on any one of the files you selected, then Edit (menu)/"Paste" on the flash drive you want the files copied to.

- When the copying is finished, **do not immediately remove the flash drive from the USB port**. Instead, left-click on the **Remove Hardware** icon located in the System Tray. A window containing a list of the USB devices will appear. Left-click on the **Safely Remove Mass Storage Device** line that matches your flash drive (for example, **Safely Remove Mass Storage Device - Drive(G:)**).



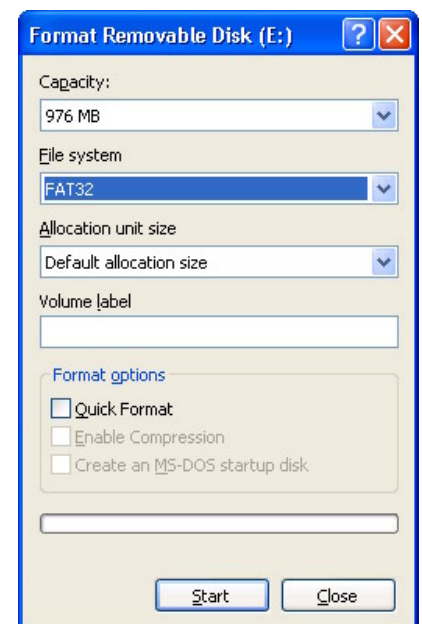
- When you see the following message appear in the bottom left toolbar, it is, as it says, safe to remove the flash drive from the USB port; you may close the message or ignore it, as it will close itself automatically:



## Formatting a flash drive:

- Open My Computer.
- Right-click on the flash drive and choose Format.
- In the Format window, the capacity, file system and allocation unit size should be chosen already.

You can check Quick Format, which will clean your drive quickly but not as thoroughly. A full format can take up to 10 minutes.



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## ***Copying files from a flash drive onto a PC:***

1. Open **My Computer** and see which drives are shown. Most computers, for example, have a hard disk such as a C: drive and a few removable storage devices such as a floppy drive, a CD-ROM drive, and perhaps a zip drive.
2. Insert the flash drive into the USB port and watch to see where the USB flash drive appears. Most will appear as removable storage, but some will instead appear as hard drives. Note the name Windows is using to refer to the flash drive ("Removable Disk (G:)," for example).
3. **Double-click** on the flash drive to locate the file(s) or folder(s) you want to copy to this computer. Select the **files** or **folders** you want to copy by *left-clicking* on them. To select more than one, hold down the CTRL key while you click and select all of the files or folders you wish to copy.
4. **Right-click** on the files or folders you have selected and choose **Copy**.
5. Open **My Documents** or the location to which you want to transfer files from the flash drive.
6. Click on the **Edit** menu, then select **Paste**.
7. When the copying is finished, **do not immediately remove the flash drive from the USB port**. Instead, left-click on the **Remove Hardware** icon located in the System Tray. A window containing a list of the USB devices will appear. Left-click on the **Safely Remove Mass Storage Device** line that matches your flash drive (for example, **Safely Remove Mass Storage Device - Drive(G:)**).



8. When you see the following message appear in the bottom left toolbar, it is, as it says, safe to remove the flash drive from the USB port; you may close the message or ignore it, as it will close itself automatically:

