

File Management with JAWS

Navigating Folders and Files



By default, items inside drives and folders are sorted alphanumerically. Folders come first, followed by files. Upon opening a drive or folder, focus will be on the first item in the list and JAWS will announce its name and whether or not it is selected. If an item isn't selected, you can select it by pressing the **SPACEBAR**. Alternatively, you can navigate away from it and then back to it.

To navigate a list of folders and files, press **DOWN ARROW** or **UP ARROW**. Alternatively, if you know the name of the folder or file you are looking for, you can press the first letter of its name until it is selected in the list. If there are multiple folders/files that start with the same letter, you can quicken the navigation process by typing the first 2 or 3 characters of its name. This will result in the first item starting with the letters you typed being selected.

Customising the View Type

By default, the items in the Documents folder are arranged in a grid structure. This can make navigation of folders and files cumbersome using the Arrow keys, as you'll regularly need to move between rows and columns manually. Therefore, to make navigation of the folders and files as easy as possible, it is recommended to change the way the items are displayed to a view type called Details. This will organise your folders and files in a list format, which can then be navigated using **DOWN ARROW** or **UP ARROW**.

To change the view type to Details, follow these suggested steps:

1. Press **CTRL and SPACEBAR** until the currently selected item is deselected. Upon doing this, JAWS will say "Not selected".
2. Next, press the **Applications** key (this key is located to the left of the **CTRL** key on the right side of the keyboard). Upon doing this, a menu will be displayed.

Note 1: If your keyboard does not have an **Applications** key, you can press **SHIFT and F10** instead to display the menu.

3. Press **DOWN ARROW** or **UP ARROW** until the View menu option is selected and then press **ENTER**. Upon doing this, its associated sub-menu will be displayed.
4. Now press **DOWN ARROW** or **UP ARROW** until the Details menu option is selected and then press **ENTER**. Your files will now be displayed in a list format!

How can I tell the difference between a folder and a file?

Files are different in appearance to folders in that they have a 3 or 4 character extension appended to the end of the name. This extension denotes the program which was used to create the file. Some common file extensions are as follows:

.docx Microsoft Word document
.xlsx Microsoft Excel spreadsheet
.pptx Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
.bmp High quality picture file
.jpg Medium quality picture file
.gif Low quality picture file
.pdf portable Document File
.txt Plain Text File

JAWS alerts you to the file type by announcing the file extension. For reference, folders do not have extensions! So, if JAWS announces an extension after an item's name, you'll know that it is a file. If it doesn't announce an extension, you can assume that it is a folder!

Note 2: If JAWS doesn't announce the extension for an item you know to be a file, it's likely that the File Explorer program has been set to hide file extensions. If this is the case, follow these suggested steps to show file extensions.

1. Press the keyboard shortcut **CTRL and F1** until JAWS says "Ribbon expanded".
2. Press **ALT** to move focus to the Upper Ribbon. Upon doing this, JAWS will announce the name of the currently selected tab. This should be Home.
3. Press **RIGHT ARROW** until the View tab is selected. Upon doing this, the associated controls for this tab will be displayed on the Lower Ribbon.
4. Press **DOWN ARROW** to move focus to the Lower Ribbon. Upon doing this, JAWS will announce the name of the currently selected control. For reference, this should be Navigation Pane.
5. Press **TAB** until the check box labelled File Name Extensions is selected and press **SPACEBAR** to toggle the setting. Upon doing this, focus will return to the list of folders and files. JAWS will now announce the file name extension when you select a file.

Note 3: An alternative method of choosing a control from the Ribbon is to press a sequence of keys. The sequence of keys required in order to toggle the File Name Extensions check box, are as follows:

ALT followed by **V** then **H** then **F**

Opening Folders and Files

To open a folder and view its contents, first select it and press **ENTER**. To close a folder and return focus to the previous folder, press **BACKSPACE**. As you open and close folders, JAWS announces the name of the folder you are positioned in.

You can also find out the name of the folder you are positioned in by pressing the JAWS command **INSERT and T**. Upon doing this, JAWS will read the contents of the title bar, which includes the folder name!

To open a file, first select it and then press **ENTER**. Upon doing this, The associated program will open along with the file. When you have finished with the file, press the keyboard shortcut **ALT and F4** to close it. Upon doing this, focus will return to the folder you were in prior to opening the file.