Network: Windows ShadowCopy

Last Modified on 03/01/2021 10:20 am CST

ShadowCopy is a program that allows users easy access to back-up copies of files or entire folders. Back-up copies are created twice daily: once in the morning and once in the afternoon. These back-up copies or previous versions are kept for two weeks. They can be copied so the user can access both the current version and a previous version. Back-up copies can also be used to overwrite or restore a current version to its previous state.

Accessing previous versions of files with ShadowCopy is done through the *Properties* dialog box from Windows Explorer. This document assumes that you have some familiarity with Windows Explorer.
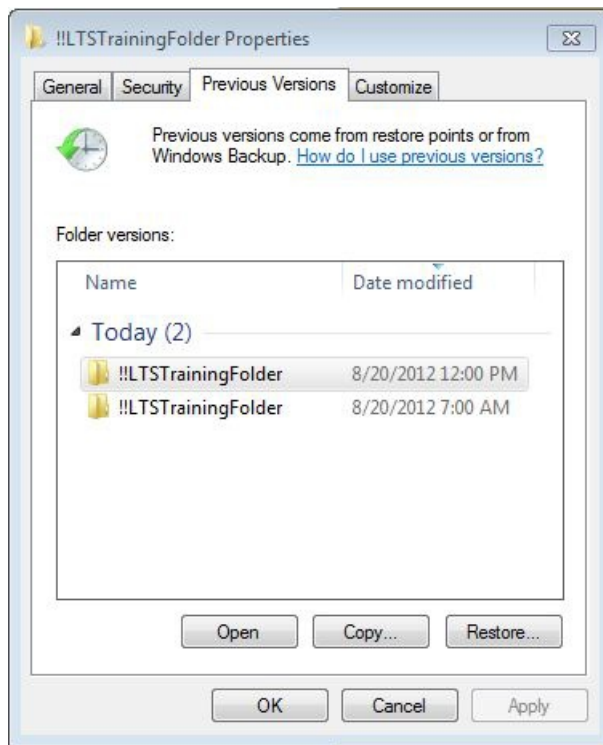
Content

- Accessing the Previous Versions Tab
- Viewing Previous Versions
- Making a Copy of Previous Versions
- Restoring a Previous Version

Accessing the Previous Versions Tab

You can view and access previous versions of files with ShadowCopy through the *Properties* dialog box from Windows Explorer. Viewing previous versions can help you locate the version you want to copy or restore.

1. On the *Taskbar*, right click the **Start** button**.**
2. Select **Open Windows Explorer** (Windows 7) or **File Explorer** (Windows 10).
   A new window opens.

3. Navigate to the desired file or folder.
4. Right click the file or folder and select **Properties**.
   The *Properties* dialog box appears.

5. Select the **Previous Versions** tab.
   The *Folder versions* scroll box lists all available previous versions.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Copyright © 2016 UW-Eau Claire and the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System

Viewing Previous Versions

You can view and access previous versions of files with ShadowCopy through the *Properties* dialog box from Windows Explorer. Viewing previous versions can help you locate the version that you want to copy or restore.

1. Access the *Previous Versions* tab.
2. From the *Folder versions* scroll box, select the version you wish to view.
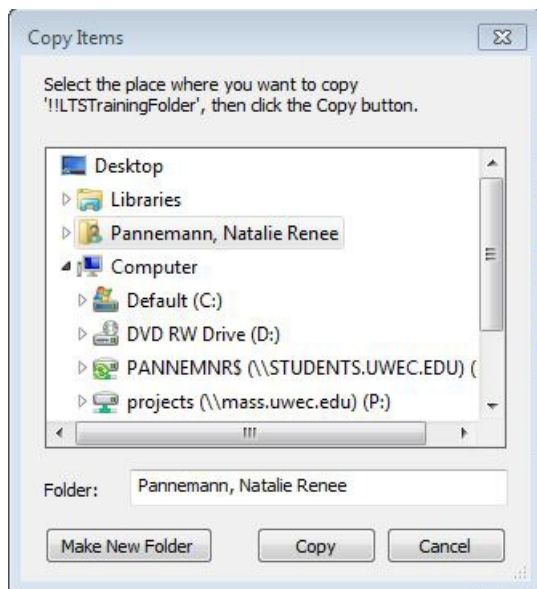3. Click **Open.**

    A new Windows Explorer window appears, showing that version of the file.

Making a Copy of Previous Versions

There may be times, after having made changes to a file, that you would like to have a copy of the file as it existed before your changes. Using ShadowCopy, once you locate the desired previous version of a file, you can make a copy of it. You can place the copy in an existing folder or create a new folder for the copy.

1. Access the *Previous Versions* tab.
2. From the *Folder versions* scroll box, select the version you want to copy.
3. Click **Copy...**

    The *Copy Items* dialog box appears.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Copyright © 2016 UW-Eau Claire and the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System

4. From the scroll box, select a location for the copy.

5. (Optional) To create a new folder for the copy,

   Click **Make New Folder.**

   A new folder appears in the location that you selected in step four. The name *New Folder* is highlighted.

   Type a name for the folder.

   Press [Enter].

6. Click **Copy.**

   The previous version of the file is copied to the designated location.

Restoring a Previous Version

You can restore files that you deleted. Or there may be times, after having made changes to a file, that you would like to return to the original file as it existed before your changes. Using ShadowCopy, once you locate the desired previous version of a file, you can restore it.
WARNING: The Restore function overwrites the current version of a file. So, if the current version has not been backed up yet and not saved under another name, it will be lost.

1. Access the *Previous Versions* tab.

2. From the *Folder versions* scroll box, select the version you want to restore.

3. Click **Restore.**

   A confirmation dialog box appears.

4. To restore the file to that version, click **Yes.**

   The previous version overwrites the current file.