

## 16 - Folder Properties

Folders on a Windows 10 machine have unique attributes, or properties associated with them. In this lesson we will delve into these properties and explore some of the attributes we can change.

### 16.1 – Accessing folder properties

To access the folder properties for any given folder, simply right click on the folder and choose “Properties” from the bottom of the context menu. Figure 16.1 illustrates this.

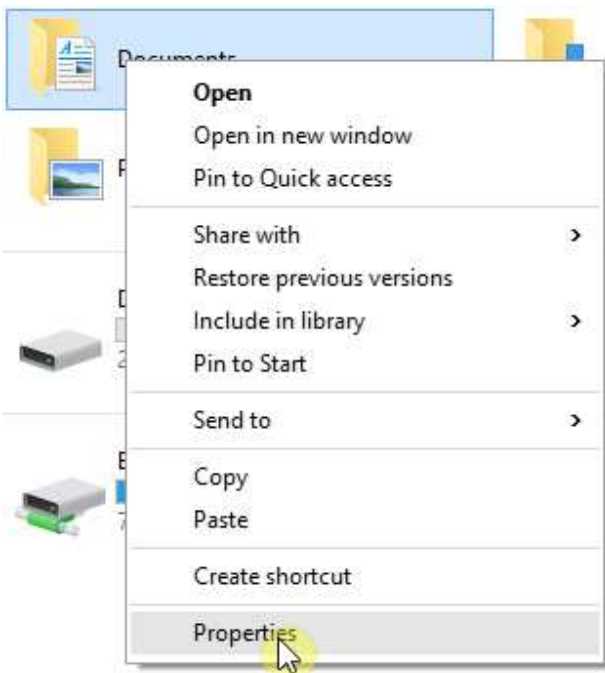


Figure 16.1 – Accessing folder properties

You can also access folder properties by opening the Home tab on the ribbon and clicking on “Properties”. Once you do this, you will see the folder Properties window, figure 16.2 shows this window.

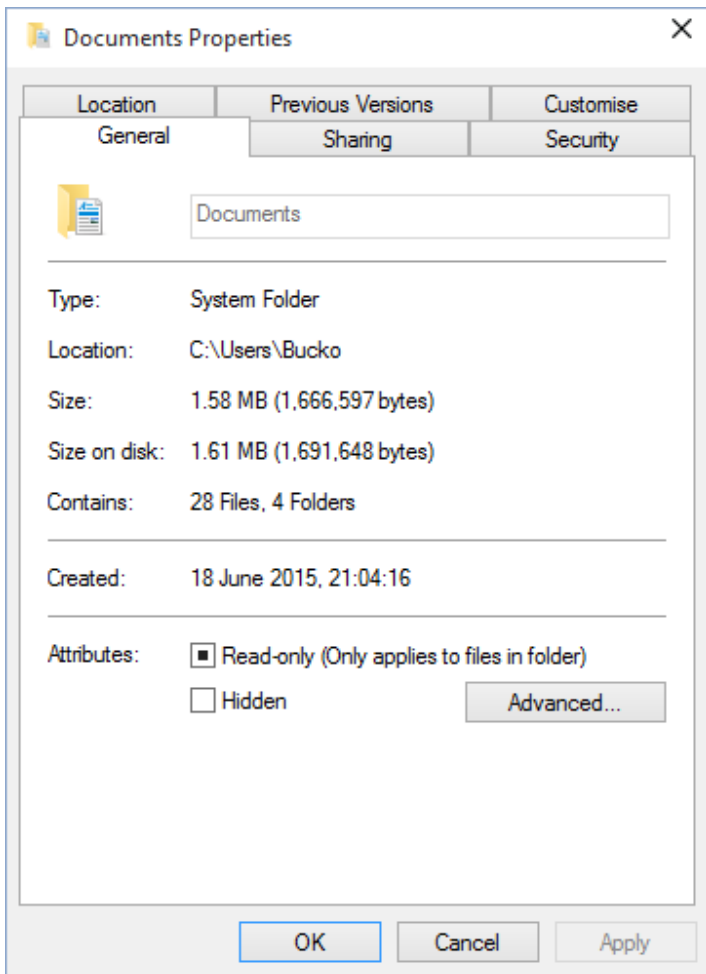


Figure 16.2 – The Properties window for the “Documents” folder

By default the folder Properties window will open on the “General” tab. This tab shows us some general information about the folder, such as the size it takes up and how many files it contains. Notice that we can see values for “Size” and “Size on disk”. “Size” refers to the total size of all the files, “Size on disk” is the actual amount of storage space these files take up. Size on disk is always a little bigger due to the way files are stored on a hard drive.

Under “Attributes” at the bottom of the window there is a box labelled “Read-only”. If you cannot delete a file or folder then sometimes deselecting this box will help.

Notice the tabs labelled “Sharing” and “Security”. These tabs let you set permissions for other users to access your folders either locally or over the network (the local network not the internet). We discuss Homegroups and how to share folders on a home network using Homegroups in [lesson 55](#). Discussing security permissions is an advanced topic that you will probably never have to deal with unless you are a systems administrator. On some systems, these tabs may not appear, so don’t be alarmed if you don’t see them.

The “Previous Versions” tab works with File History backup to allow you to browse backups of the data stored in the folder. We cover File History in [lesson 34](#).

Special folders such as “Documents”, “Pictures” and “Music” have a location tab. That is because these folders are actually links to other folders. See figure 16.3.

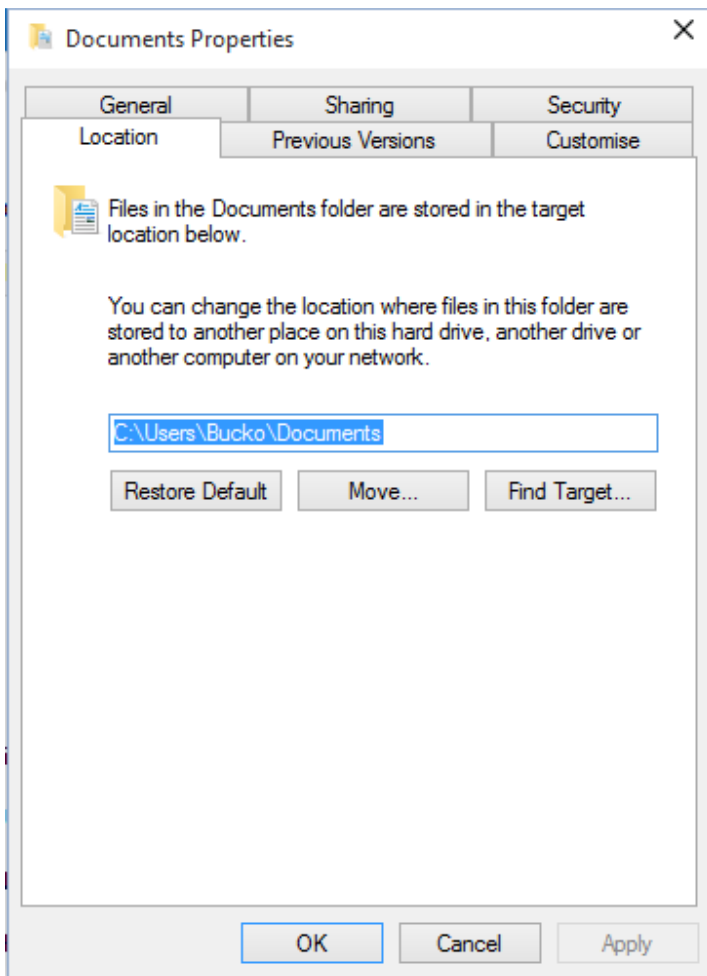


Figure 16.3 – Some special folders are actually links to other folders

In figure 16.3 we can see that actually, the documents folder points to “C:\users\Bucko\Documents”. The default location should be suitable for most users, but if necessary it is possible to change the location of your personal folders by clicking on “Move...”. This is occasionally useful if you want to move your pictures or music folder to a larger, secondary hard drive for example. However, since certain badly written third party software may have issues with systems that have been reconfigured like this, we would advise against it. If you need to add more storage space to your personal folders, you can always use libraries, as shown in [lesson 15](#).

Regular folders, including folders you create yourself, do not have a Location tab like this on their folder properties window.

## 16.2 – Customise tab

The bulk of this lesson will focus on the options available in this tab. Note that if you do not see this tab when you open the folder properties window, you are probably working with the folder in a library or a folder that is actually a link, and not from the folders true location. To go to any file or folders true path or location, right click on the file or folder and choose Open file/folder location.

Figure 16.4 shows the folder Properties window open on the Customise tab.

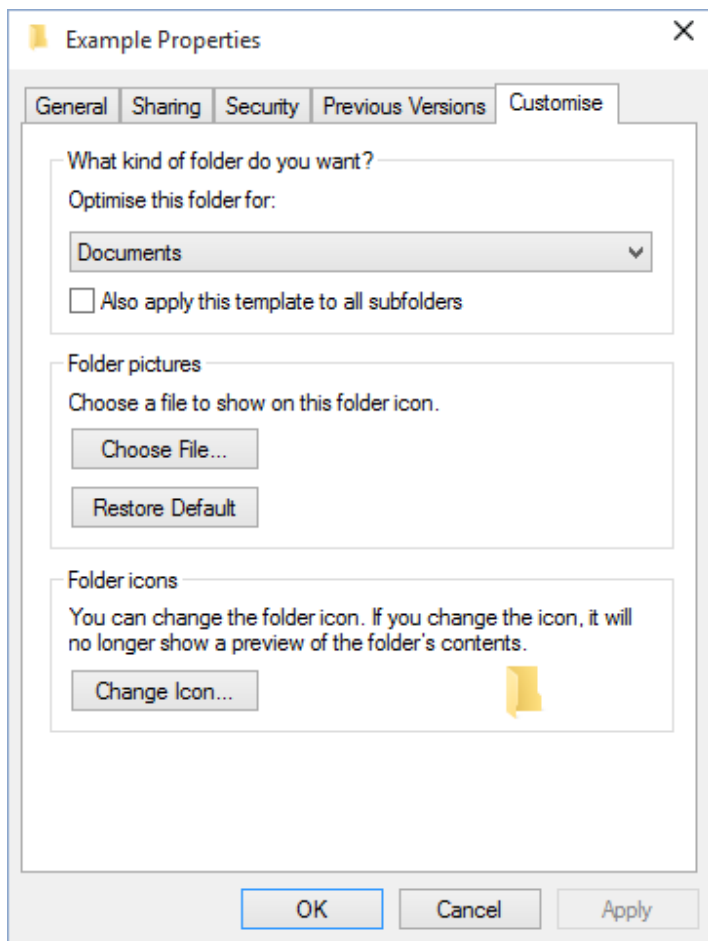


Figure 16.4 – A folder Properties window open on the customise tab

At the top of the window, we are asked “What kind of folder do you want?” Windows 10 knows about several different types of content and the designers of Windows 10 realised that the best way to view pictures in a folder might not necessarily be the best way to view music, for example. Use the drop down box under “Optimise this folder for:” to tell Windows what type of content is stored in the folder. We can choose from “General Items”, “Documents”, “Pictures”, “Music” and “Videos”. When you choose one, Windows will open this folder in a viewing mode suitable for that kind of content.

In [lesson 11.5](#) we demonstrated the different folder viewing modes. It is possible to specify what kind of folder view is used for each type of content. For example, you can have large icons view for pictures and details view for documents, we will show you how in the next lesson.

If the box labelled “Also apply this template to all subfolders” is selected, then any folders inside the current folder will also be switched to documents view, or whatever view was selected in the drop down box.

## 16.3 – Folder pictures and folder icons

In the bottom of the window shown in figure 16.4 is a button labelled “Change Icon...”. Using this option we can change the icon for the folder to any icon we choose.

If you don’t see this option on your folder, try going to the location tab (see figure 16.3) then clicking on the “Find Target...” button. This should open up a new File Explorer window with your folder in it. Now, right click on the folder and choose “Properties” again. This time you should be able to see the “Change Icon...” option on the Customise tab.

Above that option is the option to change the folder picture. Note that this option isn’t available for certain folders (e.g “Documents”, “Pictures” etc), but it is available for any folder you create yourself. You can use any picture on your PC as the folder picture. Click on “Choose File” and then browse to your pictures. Choose the picture by clicking on it and then click “Open”. Back on the folder properties window, click “Apply”. The picture will then be added to the folder in File Explorer. If you don’t see the picture right away, click on the Refresh button (the curly shaped arrow next to the address bar in File Explorer).

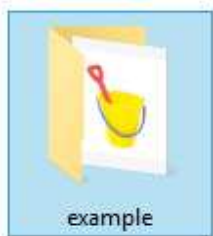


Figure 16.5 – A folder with a custom picture applied to it

Changing folder icons is also easy. Click on the “Change Icon...” button as shown in figure 16.4. The standard Windows icon library will then appear, this is shown in figure 16.6.



Figure 16.6 – Browsing for an icon

Browse through the icon gallery here and pick out any icon you like, then click “OK”. This will return you to the folder Properties window. Click on “Apply”. You should now see your new icon in File Explorer, if you do not, click on Refresh. Note that Windows will not allow you to apply folder pictures and/or change icons on certain pre-created folders. If you create the folder yourself however, you can always change the icon or the picture.

If you want to remove your custom icon, simply access the icon gallery and click the “Restore Defaults” button that can be seen in figure 16.6. To remove a custom folder picture, access the Customise tab of the folder Properties window (figure 16.4) and click on “Restore Default” under “Folder pictures”.