

How to Zip and Unzip files

Zip Files, Zip, Unzip, Zipitie-Do-Dah! | Tech Tips Video by PcCG

Zipping is the process of taking multiple files, compressing them, and adding them to a single file (aka archive).

Benefits of Zipping include

- Faster Sending
- Faster Receiving
- Reduced Storage Space
- Convenience (i.e. I like to download all the files emailed to me at once, rather than save each one individually...)

Zipping has been around for quite some time, yet it still remains somewhat of an enigma to many people. So let's try to understand what's going on, and how to use it.

Creating a Zip file ("Zipping or Compressing"):

Say you have 3 pictures and a document you want to send to Joey. Instead of attaching each item one by one, you can zip all 4 items into a single file, then send off that single file. That single file actually contains the 4 items you zipped. So you only have to attach and send one file that contains all the other files.

This becomes useful if you want to send 15 or 20 items.

It also CAN reduce the size of the files. Many things are already in compressed formats. Mp3's and jpg's are two common examples of files that are already compressed. So adding these to zip files will hardly reduce the size of the files at all. However Docs and a large number of other formats can be compressed significantly.

Opening a Zip file ("UnZipping or Decompressing"):

If you receive a zip file what do you do?

First and foremost, if it's from a strange source, use extreme caution, or don't open it at all! This is one of the most common ways viruses are sent!

A zip file will be an attachment that ends usually with .zip. It could also say 7zip, .rar or many other things but those are the most common for windows.

You can download the attachment as normal, and then simply double click the file. This will usually open the archive and show you what is inside. From there you can drag and drop all the items inside the archive, to any folder, desktop or wherever you might desire to store the information. You could also leave it in the zip file and instead just view it directly from the zip file itself. But remember, if you want to send a single picture from that zip archive, you'll have to pull it out first, before sending it off to someone else.

Software:

WinZip is perhaps the most known zipping program, but it isn't free, and usually persistently bugs you.

Windows has a built in zip utility that works pretty decently, which is why you can usually open zip files without having any special software at all.

My favorite of all the zip programs is "7Zip", which is a free, open source zipping program. It supports almost every format known to man, is fast, lightweight and efficient. It supports lots of features and really just works well.

So hopefully you now have a better understanding of what a zip file is, its purpose, and how to use it. Now download 7zip, create a zip file and send it to Joey! Remember though, you still can't send 500 pictures in a single zip file, it will definitely exceed your mail providers maximum attachment size.

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