

File Name Caveats

Naming a file is a seemingly mundane task while creating or managing existing files on your computer. Many errors and file corruptions that occur when reopening files, however, could be very easily avoided if proper file-naming conventions are observed. A standard filename should avoid the following characters:

`\ / : * ? " < > | .`

The above characters should be avoided at all times when naming a file because they are reserved for other functions and could “confuse” the computer as to their actual purpose if input into a filename. For instance, the period (.) is reserved as a designator used between a filename and the file’s extension (e.g. filename.doc, filename2.bmp, filename3.pdf). If a period (.) is used within the filename, the computer may become confused when trying to open the file, possibly causing corruption. An example of this would be “filename.doc.pdf”. The intended filename is “filename.doc” with an extension of “.pdf” used to open in Acrobat Reader. However, the computer may try to interpret this file as having a filename of “filename” with an extension of “.doc” or “.doc.pdf” and try to open the file in MS Word. In this case, “filename.doc.pdf” should be renamed to “filename_doc.pdf” or similar.

In order to avoid bad filenames, it’s recommended to use only alphanumeric characters (0-9 and A-Z), hyphens (-), and underscores (_) when naming your files. This provides consistency, allows your files to be compatible with as many computers as possible, and lowers the risk of file corruption.

About Desktop Resources, Inc.

Desktop Resources, Inc. was founded in 1995 by Tony Schafer, and is a leader in helping organizations couple their business initiatives with the technology to address those needs. DRI's "InformIT" managed services offerings proactively manage client infrastructure and strive to prevent problems before they occur. For more details, contact DRI at (317) 596-3650 or <http://www.DesktopResources.com>