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All About Files and Folders

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This article provides an overview of working with Files in Canvas.

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On July 19, 2025, the redesigned **Files** tab in Canvas has arrived and includes the following changes:

- **To select files or folders individually**, use the checkbox next to each file or folder. Bulk action options are available (including a *Select All* checkbox) whenever multiple files and/or folders are checked.
- Column headers can be clicked to sort files and folders.
- To view your files across all courses (and within your account), click the **All My Files** button.
- To return to the previous design of the Files tab, click **Switch to Old Files Page**. We expect the Switch button to remain available for a few months after the change.

Files Basics

There are three ways you can distribute course materials via Canvas:

- **Files**: Use this for class notes, slides, material produced by the instructor, publicly available articles.
- **Study.Net**: Use this for copyrighted materials, such as business cases (see below for more details).
- **Course @ Penn Libraries**: Use this for copyrighted materials already in the Library's databases.

You can use as many of these as you like, but a specific item should be shared by only one means. Example: An article should not be shared both in Files and through Study.Net.

Course files can be viewed and downloaded by everyone in the course, but **only instructors and TAs can add materials**. You can move and reorganize or rename materials in Files, and preview them in the browser window without downloading.

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Downloading Files

Files can be downloaded in three ways:

Uploading Files

Press **Upload** to upload one or more files from your computer.

Replacing Files

Be careful with replacing any files that may have been linked to assignments. To replace a file without breaking any links, make sure the replacement document has the same name and is in the same folder. You'll be asked if you want to replace the existing file; if you do not confirm this, existing links will no longer work.

Deleting Files

Be careful with deleting any files that may have been linked to assignments.

Creating a Folder

Add a Folder by clicking on the +Folder button.

Restricting Access to Files and Folders

Unpublish files or restrict files to prevent student access. Scheduling files to become available on a certain date is the best way to hide files for exams, as it does not generate a notification for students who have file notifications enabled.

> **Note:** If you upload a file or create a folder within an unpublished or restricted folder and then move the file or folder to a published folder or main files structure, the file or folder will take on the publishing status of its new location. To prevent this, update the publishing status of each file or folder before moving it.

Linking to Files

You can create a link in a page, assignment, or elsewhere in your course site, to material stored in Files.

Study.Net Materials

Although students access Study.Net materials through Canvas, Study.Net is a separate service that manages the delivery of copyrighted materials. Learn more about using Study.Net.

Questions?

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