



# PATACS Posts

## Newsletter of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

June 2025, Volume 4

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### My turn.....

It seems like it's been a long while since the last POSTS was published, but it's only been since mid-April. This issue should have come out about 2 weeks ago and I admit that this is late and I apologize. Between travel, family events, other volunteering I do, and just living life, time has gotten quite tight. Years ago, my older clients—who were then mostly retired, but are probably all deceased now—used to say “I don't know how I got it all done when I was working, I'm so busy now!”. While I always understood, now I *really* understand! 😊



Since you refuse to tell me what's going on in your life, I'll give you some idea about what's been going on in mine.

In mid-April, the Board of Trustees at my high school alma mater—out-of-the-blue—announced they had run into a wall and the school had to close at the end of this school year!! Four alums from the early 2000s got together and as a group said, “not so fast”. In the space of 3 *days*, they raised fifteen *million* dollars in pledges to allow the school to remain open for the foreseeable future. They are working with a newly re-constituted Board to make sure the school can move forward. Having been on every Alumni Committee since the late nineties myself, I am participating in that activity. We've been quite busy.

At some point in May, because of some outside prompting, it became necessary to actually write down publishing guidelines for POSTS. To my knowledge, up until that point they had never been necessary or written down. I consulted with several members who have writing and editing experience, plus a professional editor who is the editor for one of my favorite publications. Now with the support of the Board of PATACS, there is a proper set of guidelines. You can find them here: <https://patacs.org/newsletter.html>, under **Newsletter Article Publication Policy-June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025**. It's a PDF.

May brought the regular goings on in life, including continued work for the earlier-referred-to school, and a new computer installation for a new client which went well. Once my wife and I return from summer travel in mid-August, we are next.

A few months ago, I started working out at a gym. One cannot build muscle without weight machines and our condo's “gym” just isn't well-enough equipped. While I don't love it, it's good for me and I feel like I am regaining lost—or never-had-before—strength.

I have just (6/14/25) returned from a photo workshop in Jackson Hole, WY and Grand Teton National Park. But I won't get those images processed for awhile. There's just no time! 😞

This issue I will do something I've never done: dedicate the entire issue to one article! Why? Mostly because it's an interesting article but I don't want to extend it over more than one issue.

Next printed issue: July, 2025

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Thank this issue's proofreaders: Jonathan Bernstein, Paul Howard, Linda Soady, and Nick Wenri

## How to Find Files

By Al Williams, President

Willow Valley Computer Club [wvcomputerclub@gmail.com](mailto:wvcomputerclub@gmail.com)

### Introduction

Did you ever want to find a file, but you couldn't remember where you put it? Or perhaps you couldn't remember all of the filename?

*There are ways to find files on your device.*

Whether you have an iPhone, iPad, Android, Linux, or Windows device, they all have utilities to help you find files. Windows has a built-in search function, but it doesn't allow specially designed searches. In this article, I'm going to describe the tool known as ***Everything***, which quickly finds files and folders on Windows devices, allows specially designed searches, and shows all possible search results. Several friends have tried this tool and like it. I think you'll find it very helpful. I've written the article for those who are completely new to ***Everything***, those who have experience and wish for an intermediate understanding, and those who would like an explanation of ***Everything's*** advanced features. I'll provide information about utilities for other operating systems at the end of the article.

This section is for those who are completely new to ***Everything***.

### What is ***Everything***?

***Everything*** is a free utility that finds files or folders. It can also find a file that contains user-specified text.

### How do I install ***Everything***?

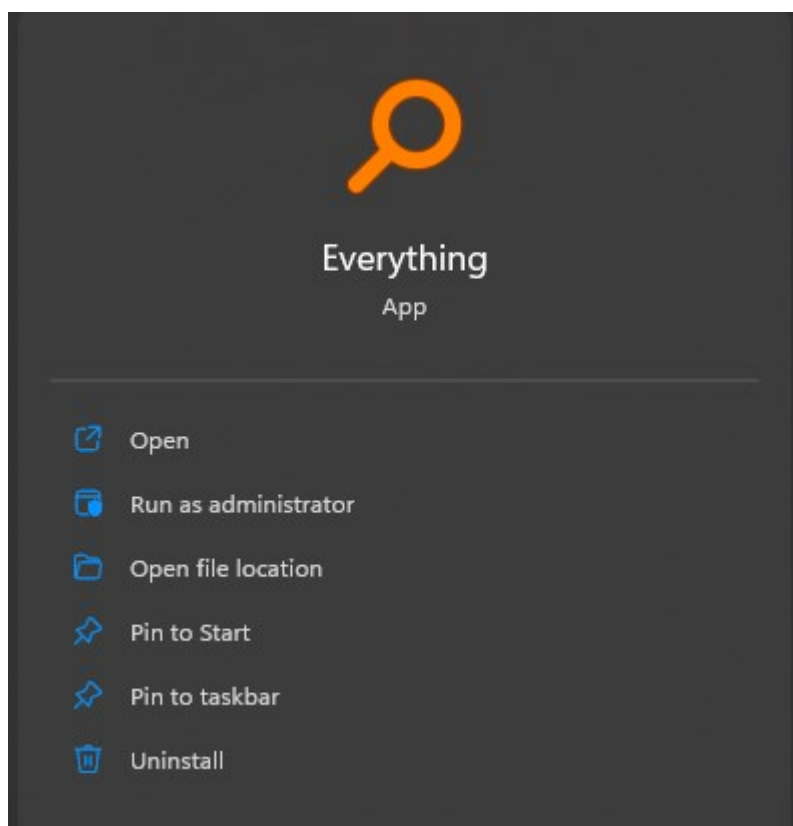
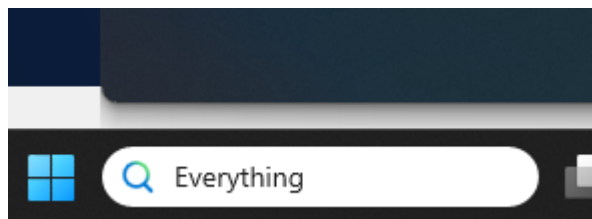
***Everything*** is found at <https://www.voidtools.com>. The webpage shows multiple ways to download ***Everything***. For most users, the *Download Installer 64-bit* choice is best. You download the file and then install it by double-clicking the filename. However, if you wish to try it without installing, then the best choice is *Download Portable Zip 64-bit*. You could use the popular 7-Zip program<sup>1</sup> to unzip this download to use it; however, Windows has

built-in unzip capability in Windows 10 at<sup>ii</sup> or<sup>iii</sup> and Windows 11 at<sup>iv</sup>. If you choose to install, *Everything* installs in the same way as other programs.

### How do I open *Everything*?

Once installed, an easy way to open it is to type *Everything* into the Search field, as shown in the following window. I am using a dark theme. Your window will look similar but may have different colors.

If you are using the portable version of *Everything*, you will not be able to find *Everything* by typing *Everything* into the search window. Instead, you'll need to find the folder containing the unzipped *Everything* app and double-click the app to open *Everything*.



Then, click on the *Open* option, as at left.

Initially, you may not see anything in the *Everything* window as *Everything* updates its database by finding all the files on your computer. After it has found the files, a window similar to the one at left will appear. The files that will be listed in your *Everything* window should be very different from the files in my computer which are listed below.

Name	Path	Size	Date Modified
e89742a1-942d-4426-ba41-680bc271cd50.csv	C:\ProgramData\HP\HP Touchpoint Analytics Client\Provider Data\SystemStateMonitor\202...	18 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
6824f4a902c78fbd.customDestinations-ms	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent\CustomDestinations	20 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
usage	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Mozilla\Firefox\Profiles\afreenci.default-release\storage\...	1 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
hp-touchpoint-analytics-service.log	C:\ProgramData\HP\HP Touchpoint Analytics Client\Logs	432 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
analytics_store.dat	C:\ProgramData\HP\SharedServices	2 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
WMIPRVSE.EXE-8DDA8D43.pf	C:\Windows\Prefetch	5 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
SVCHOST.EXE-774F8DB6.pf	C:\Windows\Prefetch	4 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
addonStartup.json.lz4	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Mozilla\Firefox\Profiles\afreenci.default-release	19 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
mbae-protector.xpe	C:\ProgramData\Malwarebytes\MBAMService\LOGS	7,232 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
context_open.marker	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Mozilla\Firefox\Profiles\afreenci.default-release\storage\...	0 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
caches.sqlite-wal	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Mozilla\Firefox\Profiles\afreenci.default-release\storage\...	1 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
caches.sqlite-shm	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Mozilla\Firefox\Profiles\afreenci.default-release\storage\...	32 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
DLLHOST.EXE-57A853C4.pf	C:\Windows\Prefetch	4 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
V01.chk	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\WebCache	8 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
f01b4d95cf55d32a.automaticDestinations-ms	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent\AutomaticDestinations	474 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
2023-09.Ink	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent	1 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
5f7b5f1e01b83767.automaticDestinations-ms	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent\AutomaticDestinations	1,862 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
~DFF1760FADB697202E.TMP	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Local\Temp	1 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
How to Find Files.Ink	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent	2 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
How%20to%20Find%20Files(Autorecovered-310508132927058...	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Word\How%20to%20Find%20Files31050844163...	34 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
AutoRecovery save of How to Find Files.asd	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Word	34 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
~WRS(A2C8081B-CFCE-4A18-9DE4-80602DA57F84).tmp	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\NetCache\Content.Word	2 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
index.dat	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Office\Recent	4 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
How to Find Files.LNK	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Office\Recent	2 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
fb3b0dbfee58fac8.automaticDestinations-ms	C:\Users\atwil\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Windows\Recent\AutomaticDestinations	463 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
MOUSOCOREWORKER.EXE-B4BE72C1.pf	C:\Windows\Prefetch	13 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
MbamClientConfig.json	C:\ProgramData\Malwarebytes\MBAMService\config	69 KB	8/11/2023 10:22 AM
store.db	C:\ProgramData\USOPrivate\UpdateStore	14,664 KB	8/11/2023 10:21 AM

1,043,443 objects

If you look at the bottom left-hand corner of the above window, you'll see that I have over 1 million files on my computer's hard drives and my external hard drives. *Everything* states in their FAQ webpage that it takes about a minute to find 1 million files. You very likely have a smaller number of files, and *Everything* will not need a minute to find all of your files.

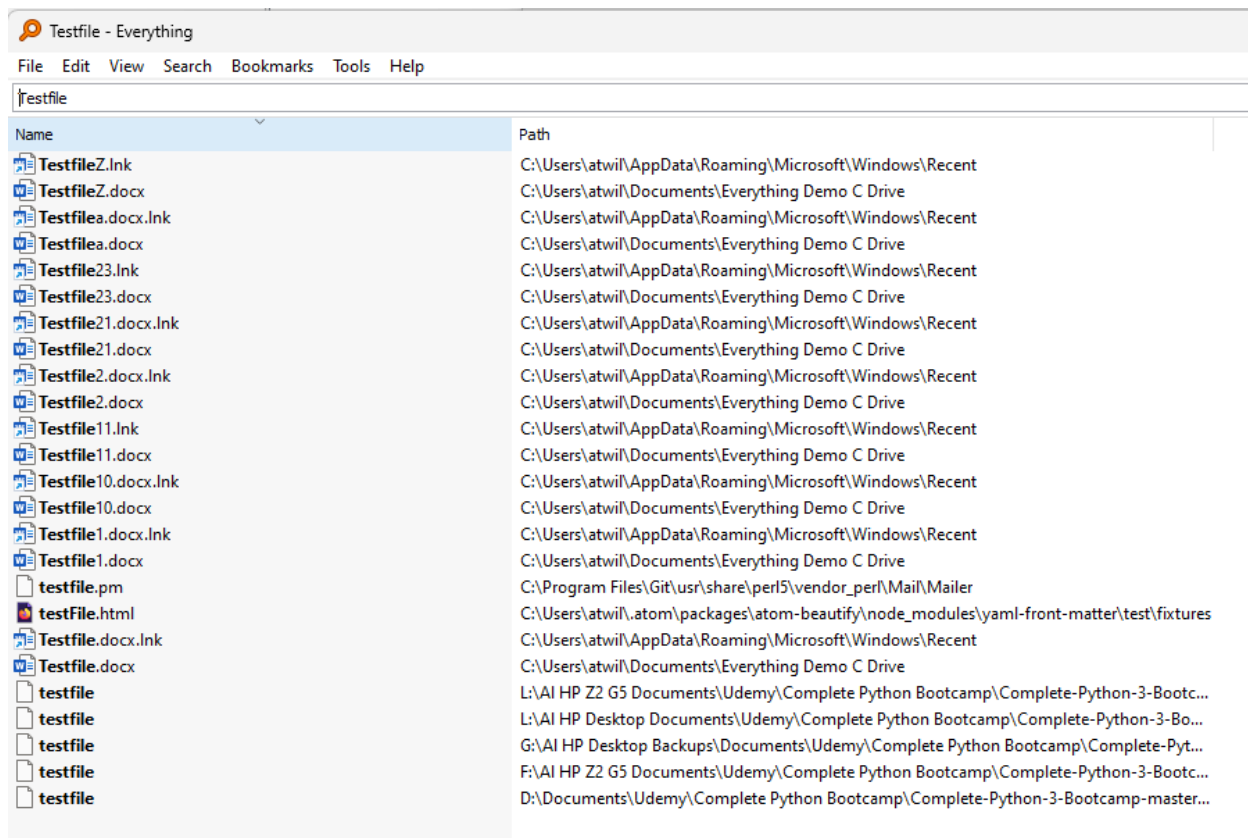
### How do I use *Everything*?

To demonstrate how *Everything* works, I've created these files on my computer and put them into a folder named *Everything Demo C Drive*.

Testfile.docx	Testfile2.docx
Testfile1.docx	Testfile21.docx
Testfile10.docx	Testfile23.docx
Testfile11.docx	Testfilea.docx
TestfileZ.docx	

When I enter **Testfile** into *Everything's* search box, the window below is what I see on my computer.

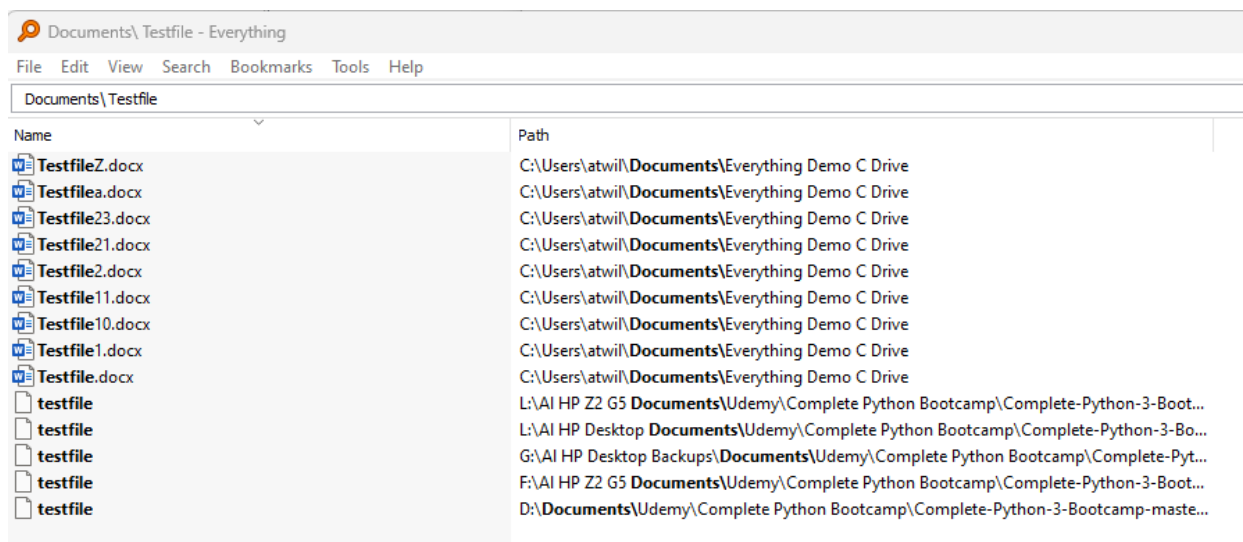
*To understand this tutorial, it would be good to either install **Everything** or use the portable version of **Everything** and follow the steps below.*



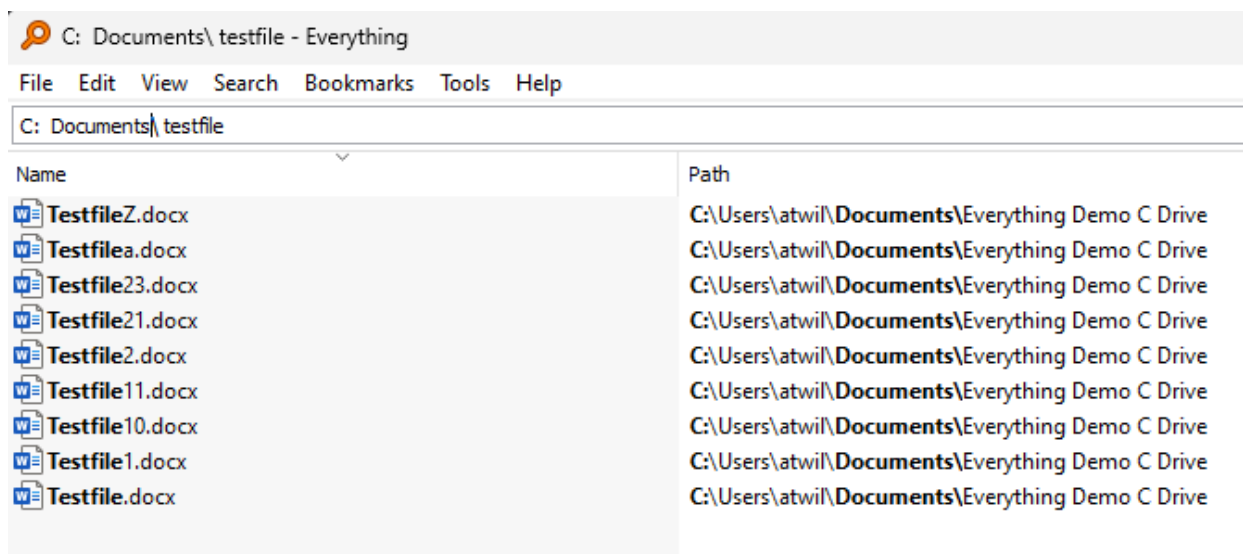
The above window shows that *Everything* will display only the files that contain the characters **Testfile** in the filename. You can, of course, search for any characters in a filename.

You'll notice some link files that Windows created in addition to the files I created. In addition, I've taken a **Udemy course** (<https://www.udemy.com/>) which also uses a file named testfile, which appears at the bottom of the window. While looking at the window, note that the Udemy testfile is in another hard drive on my computer, the D: drive, and on two external hard drives, G: and L: *Everything* will also display files on flash drives. This window shows that *Everything* has searched for all files on my computer.

I can cause *Everything* to display only the .docx files, that is, to not include the **.docx.lnk** files, by typing in the search field a few spaces, then **Documents\**, and then **Testfile**. The **Documents\** instructs *Everything* to look only in the Documents folder. You could use a different folder for searching, such as **Videos\** or **Pictures\**. In all cases, the \ (backslash) symbol indicates that Documents, Videos, or Pictures is not the name of a file but rather the name of a folder. The result of adding **Documents\** is shown in the next window. The **.lnk** files are no longer displayed.

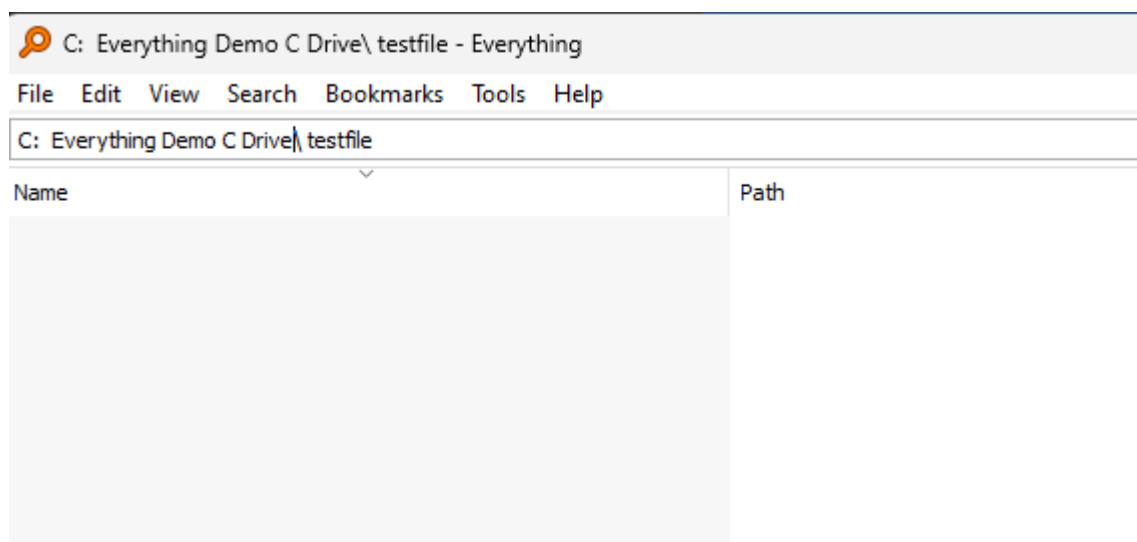


However, at the bottom of the screen are the multiple testfile entries from other drives on my computer. Those files are also inside a Documents folder on those drives. I can choose which hard drive I want to search. In this case, I want to view only files on my main hard drive, the C: drive. The window below shows how to add the **C: drive** criteria and the resulting search.

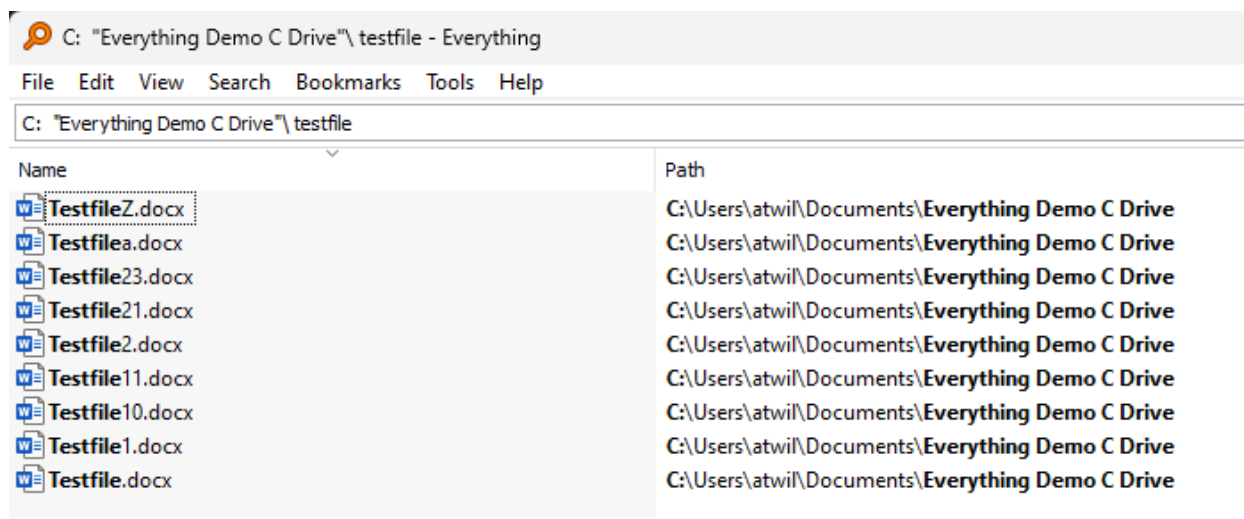


The above search is called an AND search. It says: search only the C: drive. Then, search only the Documents folder that is in the C: drive. Finally, it says to find all possible **Testfile** files in the Documents folder. You could reverse the thought process by saying that you are going to find all **Testfile** files that are in the Documents folder that is on the C: drive.

Instead of instructing *Everything* to use the **Documents\** to find the files, I could use another folder. Let's try using the folder containing the **testfiles**, *Everything Demo C Drive*. The below window shows the results when I replace Documents\ with *Everything Demo C Drive\*.



There are no results. That's because *Everything* understands that a space separates file names or folder names that are part of an AND search. If I enclose a folder name or a file name that includes spaces with quotation marks, *then Everything* sees the entire quoted string as a file name or folder name. In this demonstration, the search using the *Everything Demo C Drive* folder is shown below. Note that the \ symbol indicating a folder is immediately after the quotation mark.



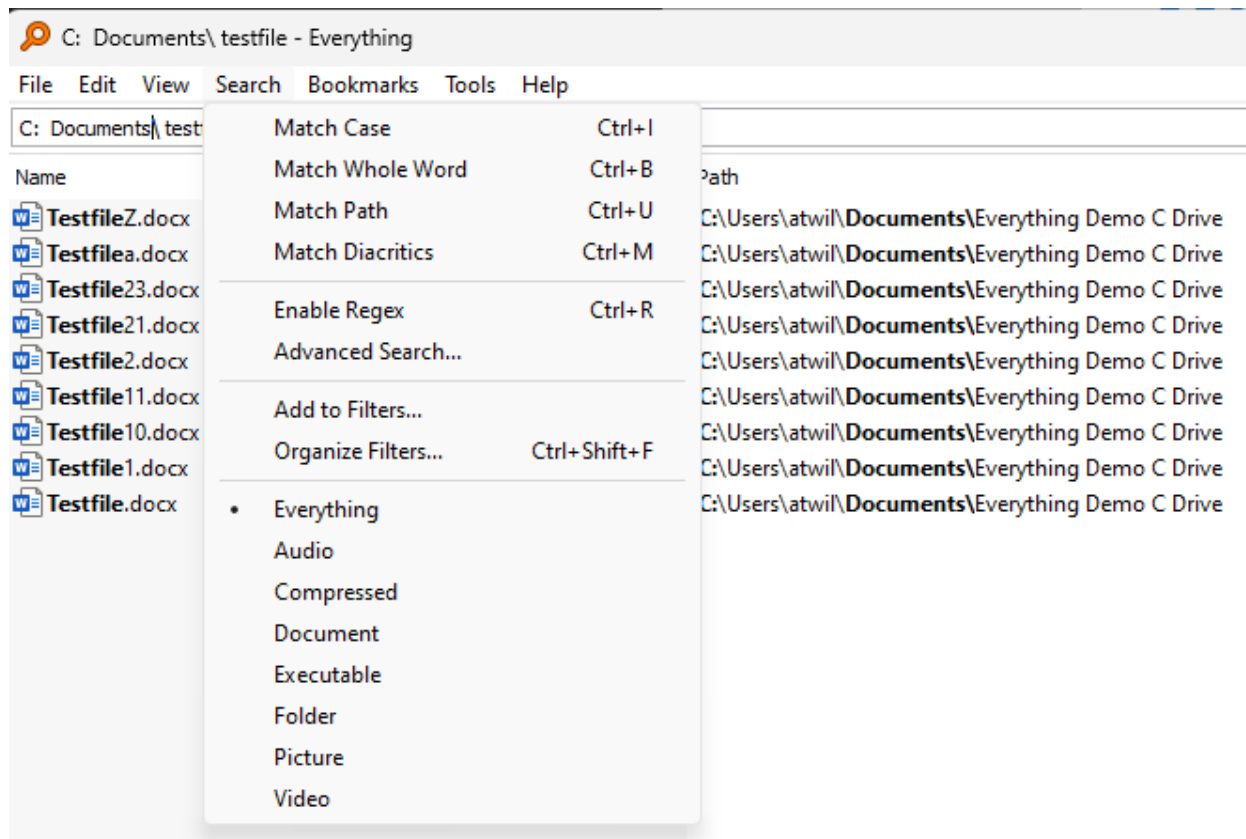
The above completes the demonstration of a normal search..

Normally, the above technique will find all the files you're looking for because, usually you'll be looking for just a few files.

This section is for those who would like an intermediate understanding of *Everything*.

## Advanced Search

However, if the above normal search technique shows many files and you need help finding a specific file or set of files, *Everything* offers two ways to do that. It offers a feature called **Advanced Search** and it offers another feature called **Regex**. To get to the **Advanced Search** window, click on **Search** on the menu bar and then click on **Advanced Search**. See the window below.



### Advanced Search – Finding Files

After you click on **Advanced Search** in the menu, the **Advanced Search** window is displayed.

See below.

Advanced Search

**File names containing...**

all these words:

☐ Match case ☐ Match whole words ☐ Match diacritics

this exact phrase:


☐ Match case ☐ Match whole words ☐ Match diacritics

any of these words:

☐ Match case ☐ Match whole words ☐ Match diacritics

none of these words:

☐ Match case ☐ Match whole words ☐ Match diacritics

**A word or phrase in the file:** 

☐ Match case ☐ Match whole words ☐ Match diacritics

Content type:

**Located in:**

☒ Include subfolders

The **Advanced Search** offers many ways to find files and folders. I think that the user interface is very easy to understand, and I recommend that you explore Advanced Search by trying its options.

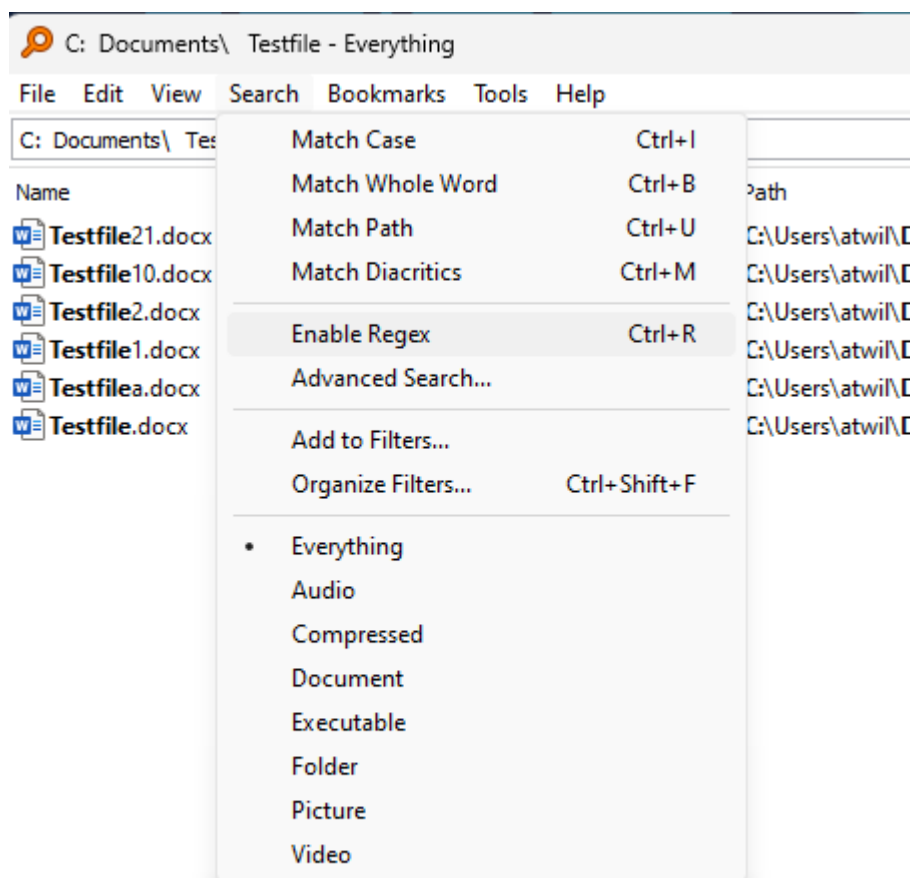
### ***Advanced Search – Finding a file that has the desired text***

**Advanced Search** also offers a way to search for a word or phrase in a file as shown in the bottom part of the Advanced Search window. This search is very slow. You should restrict the search to just a few files so that a result is displayed in a reasonable amount of time.

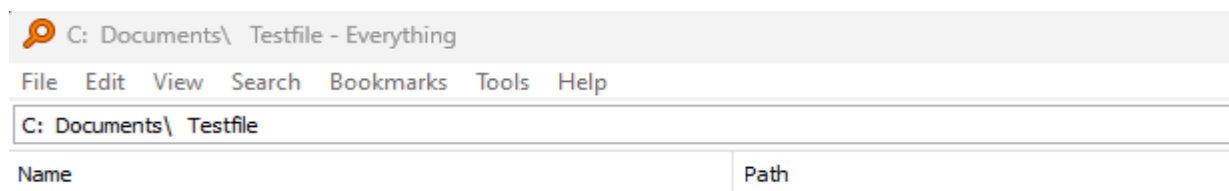
This section is for those who would like an advanced understanding of *Everything*.

### **Regex**

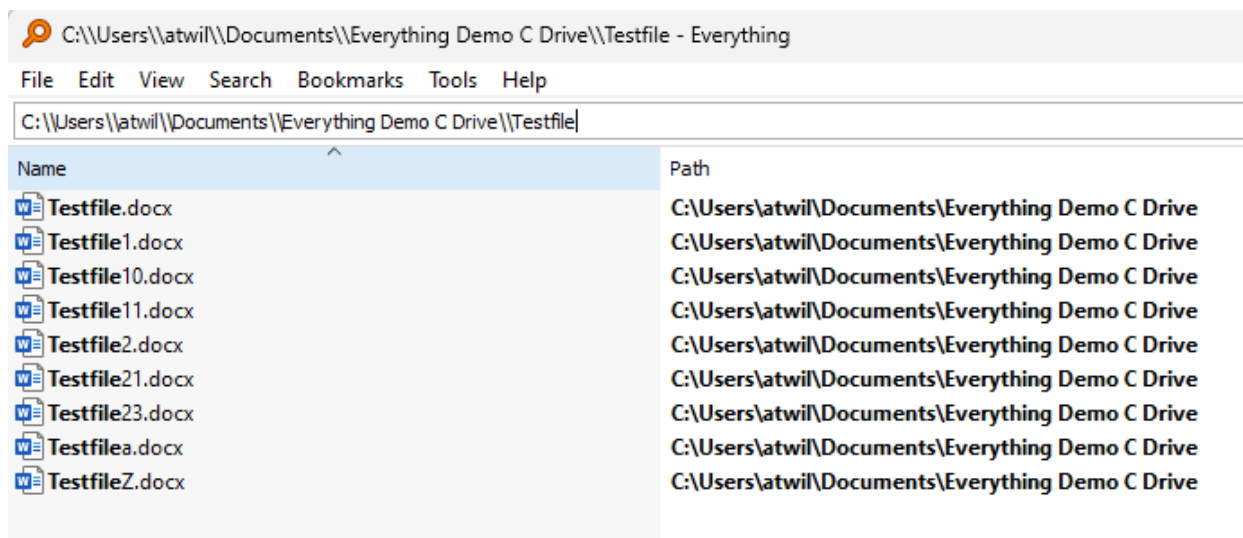
The way to do an even more advanced search is to enable a feature called **Regex** by clicking on Search in the menu and then clicking on **Enable Regex**. Regex stands for **regular expression**. See the next window.



Once **Regex** is enabled, the search technique changes. If you look at the next window, you'll see that our previously used search phrase finds nothing.

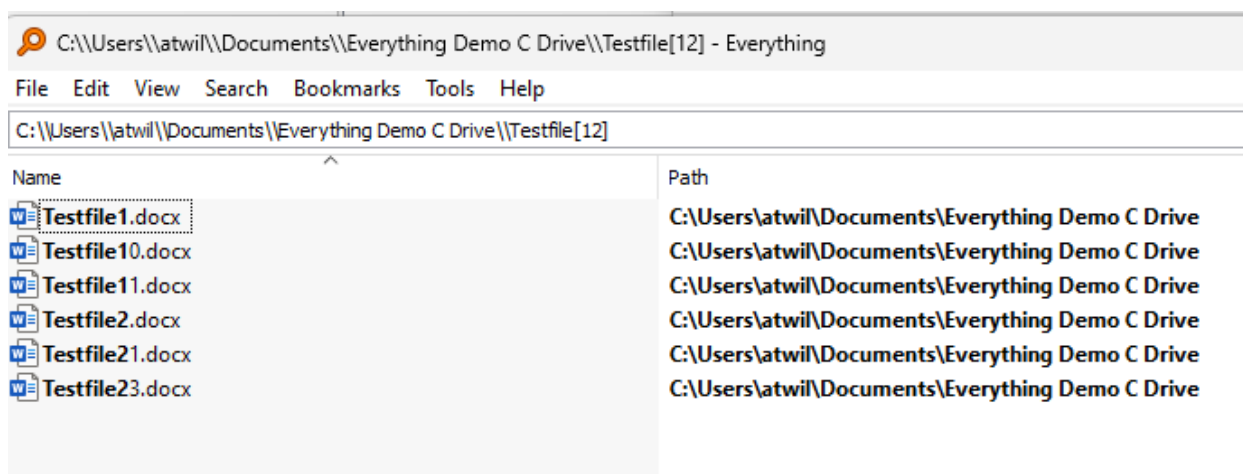


That's because **Regex** requires a more specific search statement. It needs the path to the folder holding the files to be searched. The next window shows the path on my computer. On your computer, the path will be shown in the windows that are displayed using the earlier search technique. Please note that the \ character is a special character in **Regex**. In order to use \ to specify folders, the \ symbol must be escaped by using \\. The window below shows all the possible Testfiles while using **Regex**.



We can now use special characters to manipulate our search. *Everything* has a web page that describes the usage of **Regex** and these special characters at [https://www.voidtools.com/support/everything/searching/#advanced\\_search](https://www.voidtools.com/support/everything/searching/#advanced_search). You may find the page confusing at first, but try the features and you'll soon have an understanding.

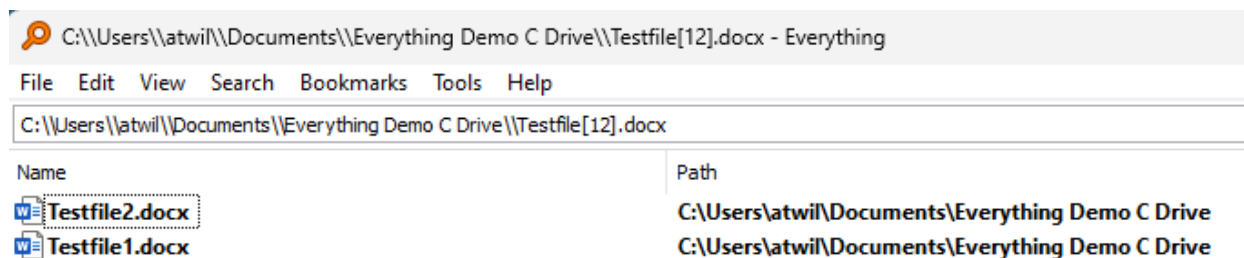
Let's assume we want to use **Regex** to find files that include the numbers 1 or 2. That is, we want to find files whose file names include these text strings: **Testfile1** and **Testfile2**. The below window shows how.



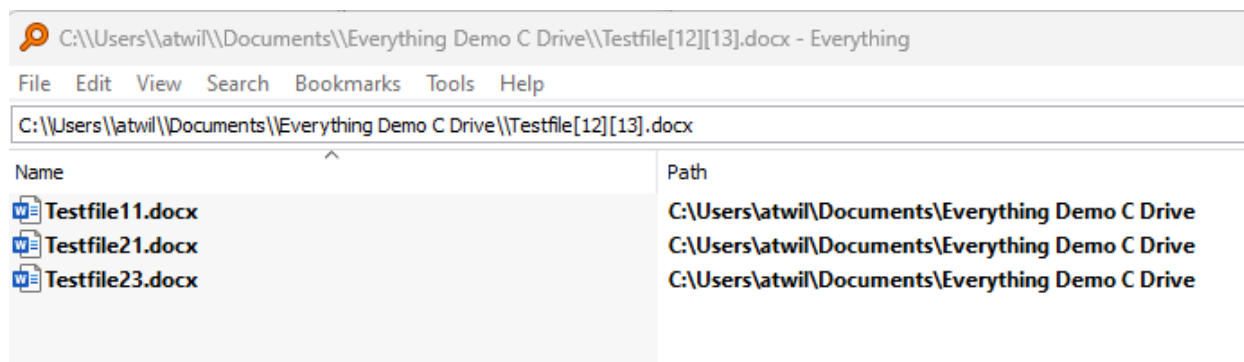
The [12] means that either the character 1 or the character 2 may be added to the string **Testfile** to create **Testfile1** or **Testfile2**.

The window above shows the files that contain the strings **Testfile1** and **Testfile2** in bold. Let's assume that we want to select only the **Testfile1.docx** and **Testfile2.docx** files. We do not want to include the **Testfile10.docx**, **Testfile11.docx**, **Testfile21.docx**, or **Testfile23.docx** files.

We can do so by making the search more restrictive by adding **.docx** to the search, as shown below.

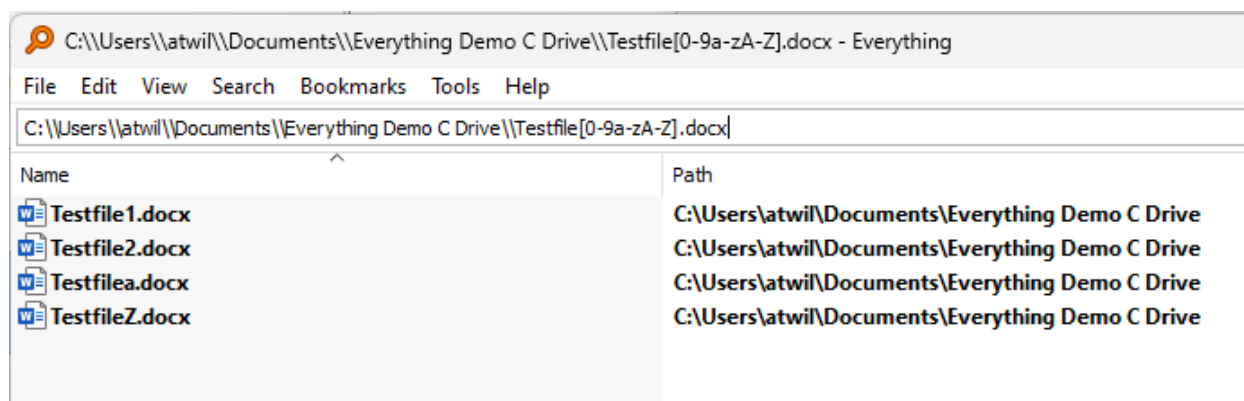


We can do many things with **Regex**. For instance, we can select Testfile11, Testfile21, and Testfile23 using this search:



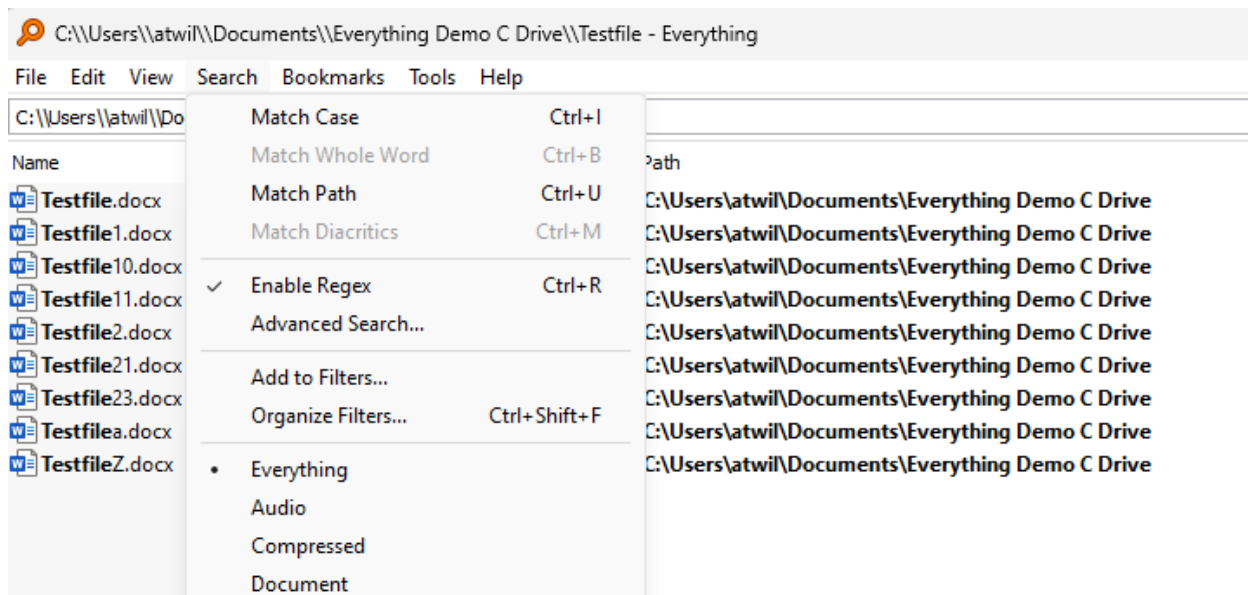
This search states that the character right after **Testfile** may be either 1 or 2, and the character after that may be either 1 or 3.

A way to state that a character may be a number, lower-case letter, or upper-case letter is to use this search statement: `[0-9a-zA-Z]`. The below window shows a search using this technique:



As you can see, with **Regex** you have significant control when finding files.

If you want to exit the **Regex** feature to use *Everything* in its normal mode, click on Search in the menu toolbar and then click on **Regex** to deselect it.



### File finding utilities for other operating systems

As I stated at the beginning of this article, other operating systems also have file finding utilities. I won't go into detail about their usage but will cite references where you can learn more.

For **Linux**, files are found using the `find` and `locate` utilities. If you are using a Linux distro, you may learn how to use either by issuing the *man find* or *man locate* commands. The man pages are terse, and tutorials are frequently helpful. Digital Ocean has a comprehensive tutorial [here](#)<sup>v</sup>.

To find a file on a **Mac**, do one of the following: 1) Use **Spotlight** to quickly find apps, documents, emails, and other items on your Mac. Apple has a support page for **Spotlight** [here](#); or 2) Search from a **Finder** window, the default file management system of macOS. Apple has a support page for **Finder** [here](#). In both **Spotlight** and **Finder**, you can [use advanced searches to narrow your search results](#).

Apple describes how to find files on an iPhone or iPad [here](#)<sup>vi</sup>.

Android has many file finding utilities in the Google Play Store. The Tom's Guide website lists 20 Android file managers, which they consider among the best<sup>vii</sup>. Some are free, and some require payment. You should find one that is satisfactory. Android also has its own way to find and delete files, as documented [here](#)<sup>viii</sup>. If this Google article is too brief, How-To-Geek has two articles: how to find downloaded files<sup>ix</sup> and how to manage files and use the Android file system<sup>x</sup>.

### Summary

Knowing how to use your device's software utilities to find and manage files is important. This article focuses on a specific utility for Windows, *Everything*, which can make searching for files on Windows much easier than the Windows' search utility.

- i 7-Zip, <https://www.7-zip.org/>
- ii How to Zip (and Unzip) Files on Windows 10, <https://www.howtogeek.com/668409/how-to-zip-and-unzip-files-on-windows-10/>
- iii Zip and unzip files, <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/zip-and-unzip-files-f6dde0a7-0fec-8294-e1d3-703ed85e7ebc>
- iv How to Zip and Unzip Files on Windows 11, <https://www.howtogeek.com/749206/how-to-zip-and-unzip-files-on-windows-11/#how-to-extract-a-zip-file-in-windows-11>
- v How To Use Find and Locate to Search for Files on Linux, <https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/how-to-use-find-and-locate-to-search-for-files-on-linux>
- vi Find files on your iPhone or iPad in the Files app, <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT206481>
- vii Best Android file managers, (Ed's note: the original link is dead and after consulting with the author, it was removed.)
- viii Find and delete files on Android, <https://support.google.com/android/answer/9110661?hl=en>
- ix How to Find Files You Downloaded on Android, <https://www.howtogeek.com/689303/how-to-find-files-you-downloaded-on-android/>
- x How to Manage Files and Use the Android File System, <https://www.howtogeek.com/202644/how-to-manage-files-and-use-the-file-system-on-android/>

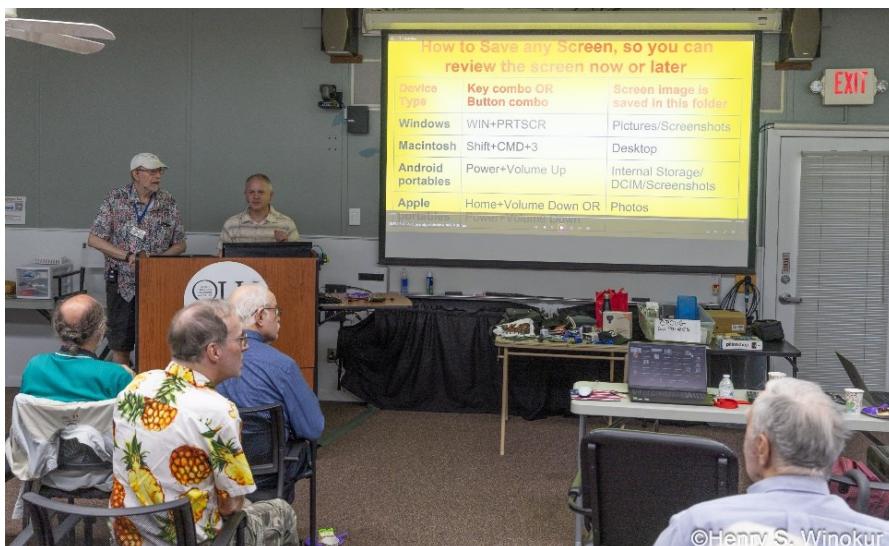
###

We had a party with a wonderful sheet cake at the May meeting! Here's some of what and whom you missed if you didn't come!



Geof Goodrum talks to the assembled multitude about the **Gmail Web Interface** in his **Learn in 30** talk.

President Paul Howard introduces the main speaker for May's meeting, Rob Pegoraro.



The assembled masses listening to Rob Pegoraro wax poetic about his travels in the last year!



###

**Editor's Note:** A special shout-out to Bruce Rosen for his help in formatting this issue. The **How to find Files** article had some special formatting applied to it, notably Word's **End Notes**, which threw me for more than one loop, and it was Bruce's knowledge of formatting which rescued me and therefore us, from formatting Hell.

### PATACS Information

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Club Information call: 703-370-7649 Website: [www.patacs.org](http://www.patacs.org)

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# First Class

AFFIX  
FIRST  
CLASS  
POSTAGE

TEMP-RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Meeting schedule (Zoom=Online Only, Hybrid=Online/In-person)

1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	7:00 – 9 PM	Arlington General Meeting	Hybrid
3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday	7:00 – 9 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Zoom
3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday	12:45 – 3:30 PM	Fairfax General Meeting	Hybrid
4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	7:00 – 9 PM	Technology & PC Help Desk (in Arlington)	Hybrid
Arlington Mtg: 5711 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St., Arl. VA		Fairfax Mtg: 4210 Roberts Rd., Fairfax, VA	

Meetings are Hybrid or Zoom (as above)

Fairfax Health/Safety: <https://www.patacs.org/fairfaxattreqmts.html>

Online Meeting Access Will Be Sent Via Email

**PATACS Event Information**

Messages may be left at 703-370-7649

Website: <https://www.patacs.org>