



Characters to Avoid for Successful Archiving

Characters to Avoid in Directories and Filenames for Successful Archiving

Your archived files may be viewed or restored by numerous users who use a wide variety of operating systems (Mac, PC, Linux, and unknown future OS's) and devices (desktops, tablets, and smartphones are some examples). Therefore, it is essential to play it safe and avoid common illegal directory and filename characters to ensure successful archive and restoration of files regardless of the environments in use. Following these guidelines ensures maximum ease of use and minimizes the need to reconnect files after a restore due OS forced to name changes.

Naming conventions for all files in an archive are important, including not only video files, but other commonly archived support files such as PDFs, Word documents, and Excel spreadsheets.

Do not use any of these common illegal characters/symbols:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|---|---------------------|----|-------------------|---|------------|
| # | pound | < | left angle bracket | \$ | dollar sign | + | plus sign |
| % | percent | > | right angle bracket | ! | exclamation point | ` | backtick |
| & | ampersand | * | asterisk | ' | single quotes | | pipe |
| { | left bracket | ? | question mark | " | double quotes | = | equal sign |
| } | right bracket | / | forward slash | : | colon | | |
| \ | back slash | | blank spaces | @ | at sign | | |

Also, keep these rules in mind.

- Don't start or end your filename with a space, period, hyphen, or underline.
- Keep your filenames to a reasonable length and for maximum OS cross compatibility be sure they are under 31 characters.
- Some operating systems are case sensitive; always use lowercase.
- Avoid using spaces; use a hyphen or underscore instead.

Bad filenames:

1. F&A Costs.html
2. my PDF file#name.pdf
3. My Movie, Scene 1 "Brandon Falls Down" 4/22/2014.mov
4. *Two files each called FinalCutProject1.fcp and finalcutproject1.fcp on a case sensitive OS.*

A Web browser or OS that does not support those characters will see:

1. F&A%20Costs.html
2. my%20PDF%20file%23name.pdf

3. `My%20Movie,%20Scene%20%20“Brandon%20Falls%20Down”%204/22/2014.mov`
4. *One of the two example files above will be overwritten or will cause an error on restore as both will be seen as `finalcutproject1.fcp` on an OS that is not case sensitive.*

Good filenames:

- `fa-costs/index.html`
 - `my-pdf-file-name.pdf`
 - `mymovie_s1_b-falls_42214.mov`
 - `finalcutproject1.fcp` *and* `finalcutproject1_1.fcp`
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