

Computer Tips

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De-Mystifying Types of Files—2

As we mentioned at the end of our last article, this issue we will look at some common file extension types, and what they mean to the average computer user.

PDF - This file extension type is very common on most PC's, and stands for Portable Document File. PDF files are a compressed version of an original document, done to make sending over the Internet or email easier and quicker. To open PDF files, you need Adobe Acrobat Reader, a free program available for download from Adobe's website.

PPS - This file extension type is common as an email attachment, and is short for PowerPoint Slideshow. To open this file type, you need Microsoft Office installed on your PC. Usually the later the version of Office, the easier it is to open PPS files. Also, as an alternative to installing Microsoft Office, Microsoft have released a free PowerPoint Viewer, specifically designed to view PPS files. This can be downloaded free from Microsoft's website. Another alternative is to use OpenOffice, the free Office-like software from Sun. This will open PPS files as if you had PowerPoint installed.

WPS - This is the file extension for documents created with Microsoft Works, and was common several years ago as an alternative for Microsoft Office. Unfortunately however, the WPS format is not readable by any other program except Microsoft Works. Microsoft have released a file converter extension for Word 2007, available free if you do not have your original Microsoft Works software. This converter will enable Word 2007 to read WPS files, but some formatting is lost.

WMV - This file extension is common on Windows based PC's, and stands for Windows Media Video, the propriety Microsoft movie format. WMV files are always associated with Windows Media Player, Microsoft's default media player bundled with each version of Windows. Unfortunately, WMV files are somewhat difficult to play with other media players. An exception is VLC Media Player, which seems to play almost any type of media file. This is available for free download from the Internet.

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