

Cannot Delete Files on External Hard Drive, How to Fix Error

Instructions on how to fix the error of not being able to delete files on an external hard drive effectively. TipsMake will help you deal with 'stubborn' files

Instructions on how to fix the error of not being able to delete files on an external hard drive effectively. TipsMake will help you solve these 'stubborn' files in one fell swoop.

Deleting unnecessary files and junk files is a familiar operation for computer users. Although you can quickly delete files on your computer, including files on external hard drives. But sometimes it doesn't go so smoothly. Many people have encountered the problem of **not being able to delete files on external hard drives** . **TipsMake** has a way to help you solve this problem with simple **computer tricks** .



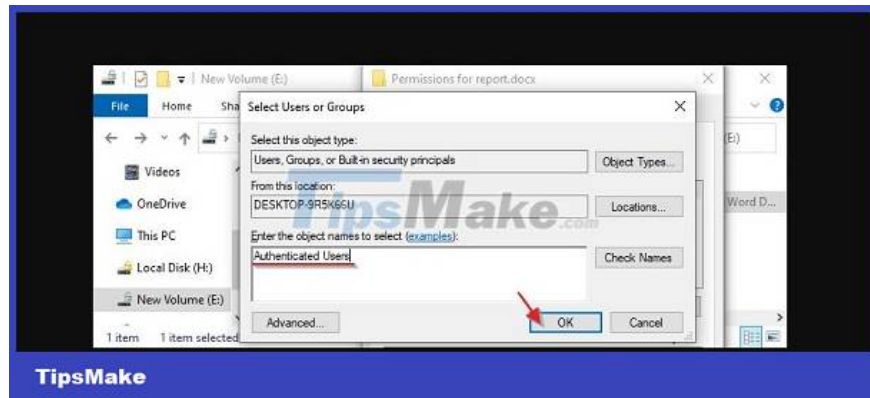
Find out how to fix the error of not being able to delete files on an external hard drive

There are many reasons for not being able to delete files on an external hard drive. It could be because you don't have permission to delete, the write protection feature, the external hard drive is faulty, etc. Apply the following measures one by one to see which trick helps you fix the error.

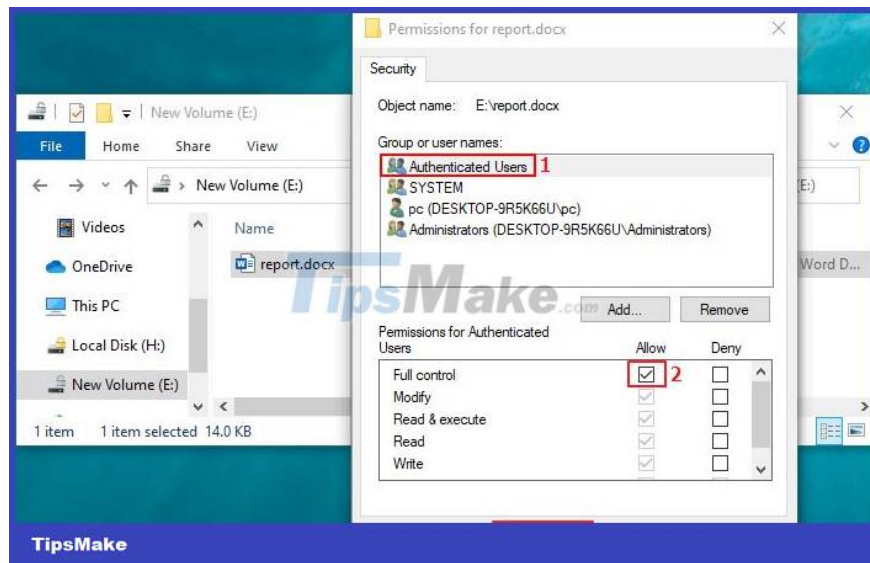
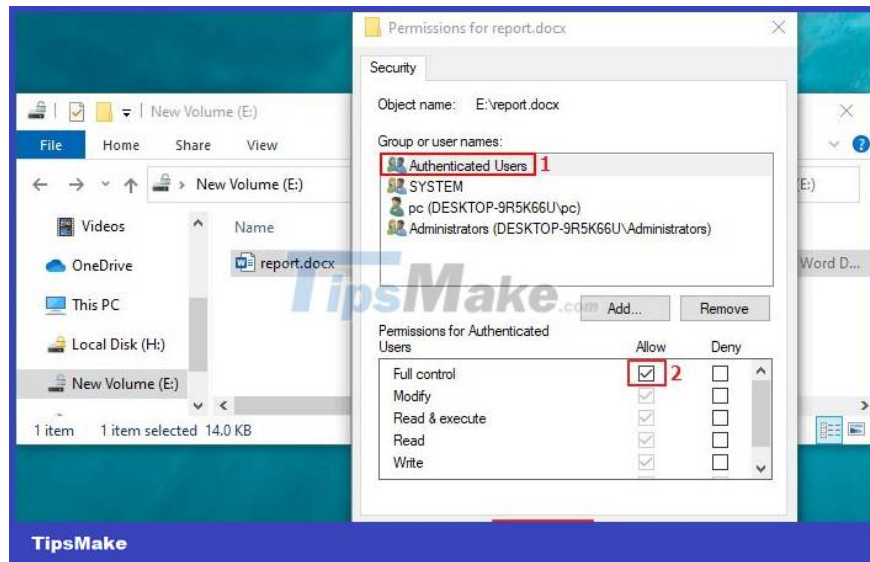
1/ Grant permission to delete files

It's possible that you may be required to have administrator rights to delete files. Therefore, in this case, you need to grant permission if you want to delete files on the external hard drive as follows:

1. **Step 1** : Go to the location of the external hard drive, find the file you cannot delete and right-click on it > Select **Properties** .
2. **Step 2** : Click on the **Security** tab > Click on the **Edit... line**.
3. **Step 3** : When the new window displays, click **Add** > In the white frame, enter '**Authenticated Users**' > Click **OK** .



1. **Step 4** : Tick the newly added **Authenticated Users** line > Tick **Full control** > Click **OK** to save.



1. **Step 5** : After that, try deleting the file to see if it works or not!

2/ Turn off write protection for external drives

The write protection feature is also one of the reasons that prevents you from erasing an external hard drive. Therefore, users need to perform the following operations to turn off this feature.

1. **Step 1** : First, click on the magnifying glass search icon > Type **Command Prompt** > When the results are displayed, click on **Run as administrator** to run as an administrator.
2. **Step 2** : In the next window, enter the **diskpart** command and press **Enter** to run the command.
3. **Step 3** : Execute the commands below one by one (as shown)
 1. **list disk**
 2. **select disk 1** (Users need to replace 1 with the disk number of your external hard drive)
 3. **attributes disk clear readonly**
4. **Step 4** : After seeing the message **'Disk attributes cleared successfully'**, close the window and try deleting the files you want from the external hard drive.

```
Administrator: Command Prompt - diskpart
(c) 2019 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
C:\WINDOWS\system32>diskpart
Microsoft DiskPart version 10.0.18362.1171
Copyright (C) Microsoft Corporation.
On computer: DESKTOP-9R5K66U

DISKPART> list disk

   Disk ###  Status         Size             Free              Dyn  Gpt
   -----  -
   Disk 0    Online         120 GB           2048 KB
   Disk 1    Online         250 GB           1024 KB

DISKPART> select disk 1

Disk 1 is now the selected disk.

DISKPART> attributes disk clear readonly

Disk attributes cleared successfully.
```

TipsMake

```
Administrator: Command Prompt - diskpart
(c) 2019 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
C:\WINDOWS\system32>diskpart
Microsoft DiskPart version 10.0.18362.1171
Copyright (C) Microsoft Corporation.
On computer: DESKTOP-9R5K66U

DISKPART> list disk

   Disk ###  Status         Size             Free              Dyn  Gpt
   -----  -
   Disk 0    Online         120 GB           2048 KB
   Disk 1    Online         250 GB           1024 KB

DISKPART> select disk 1

Disk 1 is now the selected disk.

DISKPART> attributes disk clear readonly

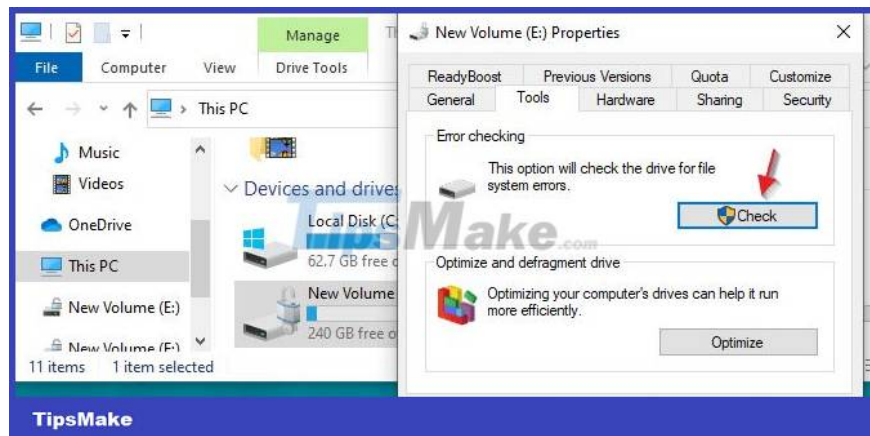
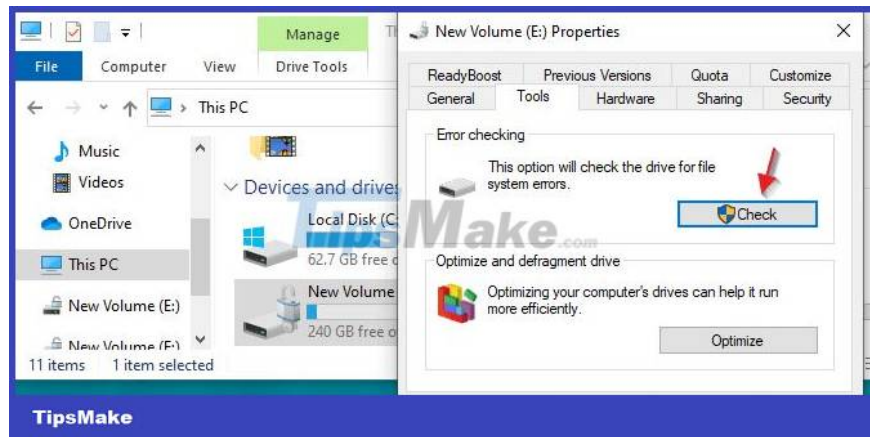
Disk attributes cleared successfully.
```

TipsMake

3/ Review your external hard drive

The reason why files cannot be deleted from an external hard drive is also likely because the drive's file system has been corrupted. When deleting, you often receive the message '**The file or directory is corrupted and unreadable**'. To check and fix, users can rely on Check Disk built into Windows.

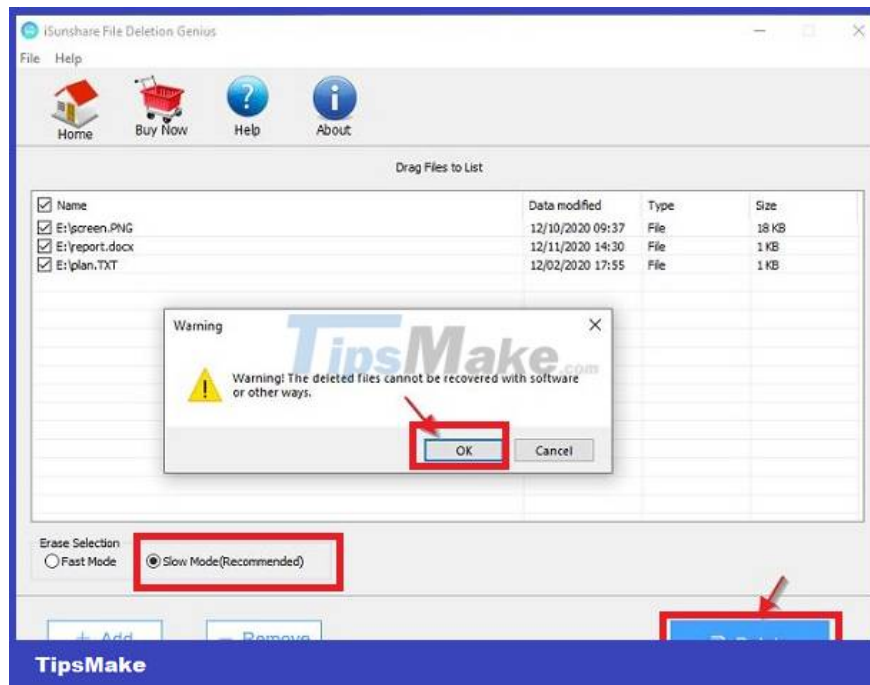
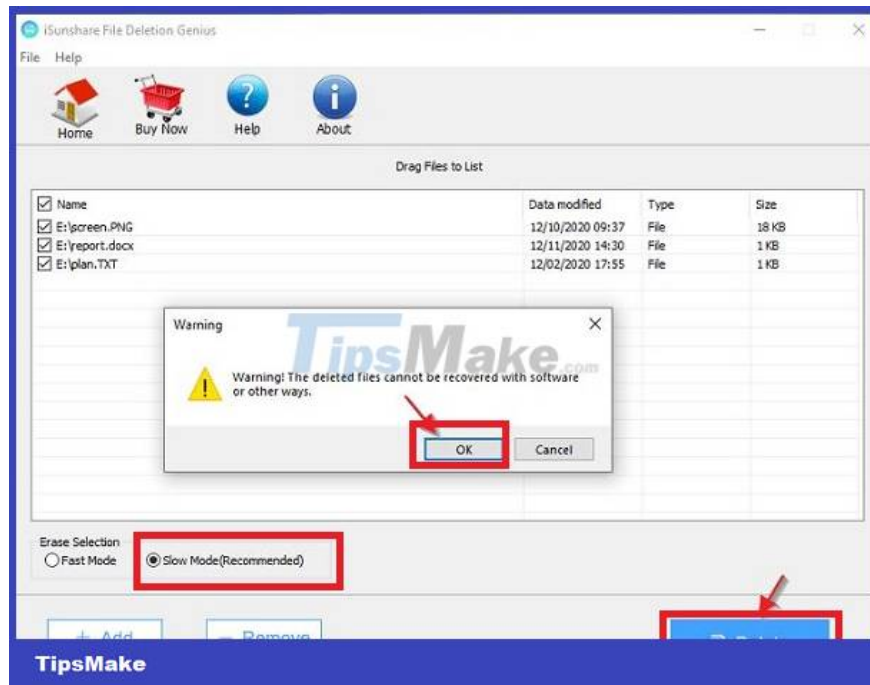
1. **Step 1** : Open File Explorer > Find the external hard drive you need to repair > Right-click on the hard drive and then click **Properties** .
2. **Step 2** : Click the **Tools** tab > Select **Check** .



4/ Use 3rd party software to erase external hard drive

In case all of the above solutions do not help you fix the problem. Try using 3rd party software to delete the file. Here the admin uses iSunshare File Deletion Genius software. After installing this software on your computer, launch and execute:

1. **Step 1** : Click **Add** to add the file you want to delete or drag and drop the file you want to delete into the tool.
2. **Step 2** : Tick to select file deletion mode (prefer **slow mode** because it deletes more thoroughly).
3. **Step 3** : Click **Delete** > Click **OK** when the message displays > The file will be permanently deleted from the hard drive.



TipsMake hopes that the above 4 ways to fix not being able to delete files on an external hard drive will help you get rid of 'stubborn' files in one fell swoop. Wishing you success!

You finished reading the article "**Cannot Delete Files on External Hard Drive, How to Fix Error**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.