

# Files Disappeared from External Hard Drive (Ways to Fix)

Many people still use external hard drives as backup systems for their files and to transfer files between devices.

However, these storage devices still face many data challenges including possible data loss from bad weather, physical damage, disk corruption, and viruses among many other reasons.

If files disappeared from your external hard drive, it could be as a result of either of the reasons above or even accidental deletion. Fortunately, you can still recover these files successfully.

In this article, we will show you some of the easy ways to fix this problem even from the comfort of your house. Here you will also learn about hard drive data recovery using the best file recovery software in 2024 . Read on to the end to get the full guide.

## How Do I View Files on External Hard Drive

You may be wondering why files keep disappearing from external hard drives. Some of the very valid reasons could be because you do not know how best to view files in the drive.

While there are apps that you can use to view files on drive, Windows and Mac have in-built features for viewing files. If you are using a Mac, you should be able to view files using the Finder app. However, if you are a Windows user, Windows Explorer does the trick for you.

To view files on Windows, follow the steps below:

1. Begin by connecting the external drive to the Windows computer.
2. Tap This PC to open and search for the files. You can also use the start menu to do this.
3. This window should display all the drives that you can access. Check and open the external hard drive to access your files.

## What do I do if Files Disappear from External Hard drive?

Disappearing files from External hard drives can be very difficult to handle especially when you have very crucial business information stored. However, there are certain things you can do to increase your chances of recovering the files.

Before you can do anything with the hard drive, stop using it further to store data. This will help you stop any possible data overwrite and increase your chances of recovery. Below are some of the methods to try for quick external hard drive recovery.

## Method 1: Display Hidden Files

Files may sometimes disappear from external hard drives, not because they have been deleted or removed by viruses, but simply because they have been hidden. The good news is, even from internal or external drives, you can still reveal hidden files by simply changing a few settings.

To reveal this, open the File explorer and go to the View menu to open Options. Once in this window, locate 'View' and look for Advanced settings.

You should now see the 'Hidden files and folders' section. While there, select 'Show hidden files, folders, and drives' then tap 'Ok.'

Once this is done, go back to File Explorer, open the external hard drive and check if the missing files are now available. If the files are still missing but occupying disk space, try to check for them from the recycle bin.

## Method 2: Check the Recycle Bin

Generally, external hard drives have their own recycle bins hidden by default. You will need to check this folder for the missing files.

To do this, connect the external hard drive to the PC then open the Control Panel. Once there, search for File Explorer Options from the search bar.

Go to the 'View' tab and choose 'Show hidden files, folders, and drivers.' Uncheck the 'Hide protected operating system file' then click 'Ok.'

With this procedure, the recycle bin folder will appear when you browse the hard drive. Open it and check if the disappearing files are there.

Remember to take back your settings to the default ones as that will help you secure hard drive data against accidental deletion of important system files (recommended).

## Method 3: Change Registry Value

Windows Registry generally contains the various configuration settings. This method will help you if your files are still hidden even after changing your system settings to unhide them through the methods described above.

Change your system's registry so that you can restore the hidden files by following the steps below:

**Step 1:** Go to the start menu then type 'regedit.'

**Step 2:** Go to  
HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE>SOFTWARE>Microsoft>Windows>CurrentVersion>Explorer>Advanced>Folder>Hidden

With that command, you should be able to see registry keys appearing on the right side of the window.

**Step 3:** Click 'CheckedValue' and check to ensure that its value is '1.'

If the value is not '1,' delete it and create a new 'DWORD.' You will be able to do this by right-clicking on the whitespace, then selecting 'New,' followed by 'DWORD.'

**Step 4:** Now rename the 'DWORD' as 'CheckedValue.'

**Step 5:** Set the value to '1.'

## **Method 4: Recover with Disk Drill**

Disk Drill for PC is one of the best ways to recover lost files from hard drives. If even after trying all the methods above you cannot reveal the disappeared files, this software will be your rescue.

It is a very versatile data recovery software that many people use to restore lost files. To use it to perform data recovery for files, follow the steps below:

**Step 1:** Go to the Cleverfiles official website to download Disk Drill for PC.

**Step 2:** Install the software.

**Step 3:** Launch the software.

**Step 4:** Search for the external hard drive and select the one where data disappeared from.

**Step 5:** Initiate the scanning process and allow the software to run to the end.

**Step 6:** Preview the files in the results and choose the ones you want to recover.

## **Conclusion**

Even after successfully recovering disappeared files from the external hard drive, you still need to secure the drive against this occurring again. Institute additional backups such as cloud backups, and handle the drive with care to avoid loss of files. Also, keep the hard drive in good condition always by avoiding exposure to bad weather, extreme heat, and protecting it against physical damage.

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