

How to block users from accessing drives for security in Windows

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Should access be restricted to drives in Windows?

By default, Windows allows almost any user to access any drive or file without any restrictions. Of course, depending on the drive, such as drive C, Windows may impose some restrictions to prevent users from modifying or deleting data. In general, this is not a big deal in most cases.

However, there may be times when you want to prevent users from accessing a specific drive or all drives for several reasons. For example, maybe you are sharing your PC with someone, but you do not want them to access the drive and find your personal data. In those cases, you can use a simple GPO to prevent users from accessing drives in Windows.

If you need to, follow the steps below to prevent users from accessing the drive in Windows 10.

Note : The steps presented below can also be applied in Windows 7 and 8.

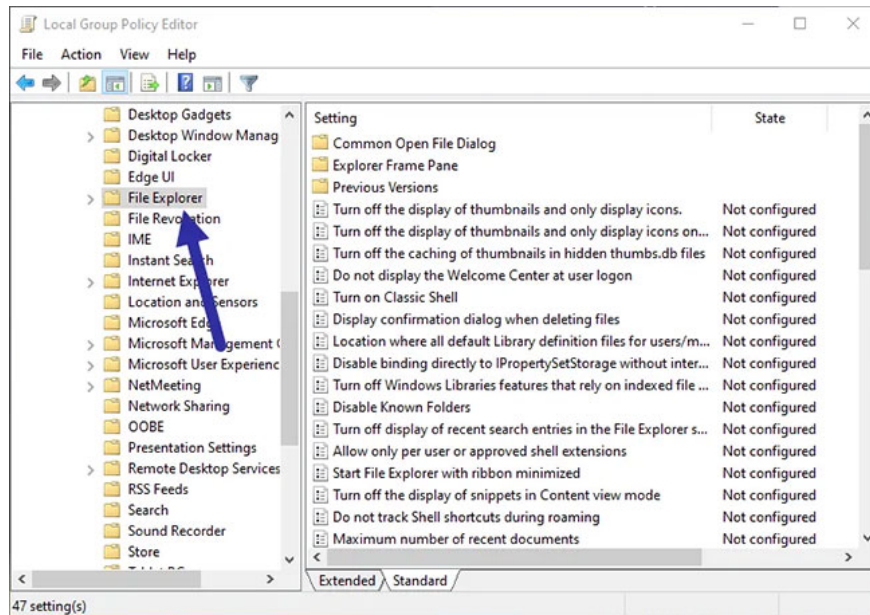
Steps to restrict or block users from accessing the drive

To prevent users from accessing drives or partitions, we will use a simple GPO or Group Policy Object. All you need to do is enable the policy and direct it to the drives you want to restrict.

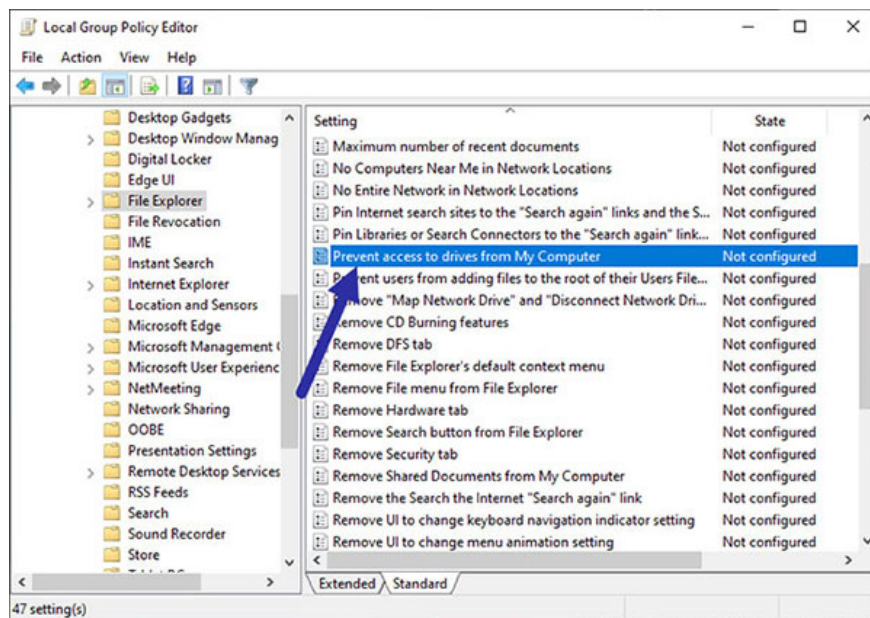
1. Because we need to change a Group Policy Object, open the Group Policy Editor. To do that, open the **Start** menu, search for **Edit Group Policy** and click on the result to open the Group Policy Editor.
2. In **Group Policy Editor** , all policies are divided into different categories or directories. You can see them on the left panel. Expand the directory structure and go to the following location.

User Configuration ? Administrative Templates ? Windows Components ? File Explorer

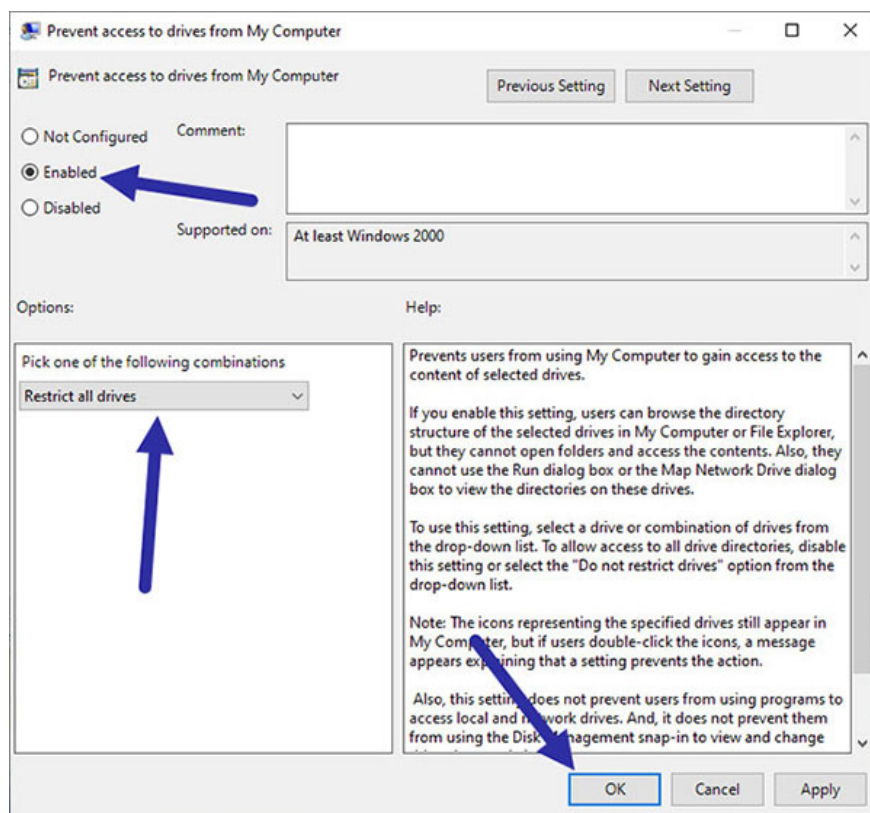
Note : If you're on Windows 7, look for the **Windows Explorer** folder in **Windows Components**.



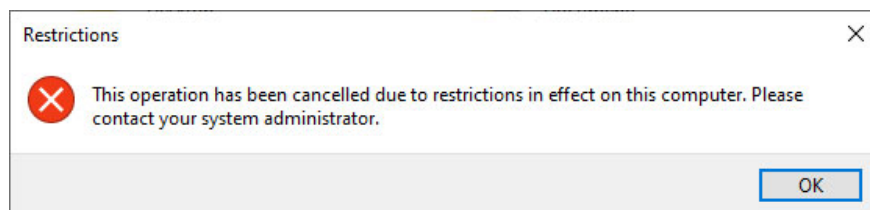
If you are on Windows 7, look for the Windows Explorer folder in Windows Components
3. When you are here, find the policy **Prevent access to drives from My Computer** on the right panel and double click on it.



Find policy Prevent access to drives from My Computer
4. The above action will open the **Properties** window . Here, select the **Enabled** option and the drives you want to restrict from the drop-down menu in the **Options** section . In this case, the article is restricting access to all drives. Click the **Apply** button and click **OK** to save the changes.



Select the Enabled option and the drives you want to restrict from the drop-down menu in the Options section. The changes are applied immediately. From now on, whenever other users try to access the drive, they will be shown this error message.



Error message when unauthorized user access

Note : If the policy does not apply, restart Windows or execute `gpupdate /force` with admin rights to force the policy settings.

To restore drive access, follow the same steps but choose **Not configured** or **Disabled** in the **Properties** window in step 4.

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