

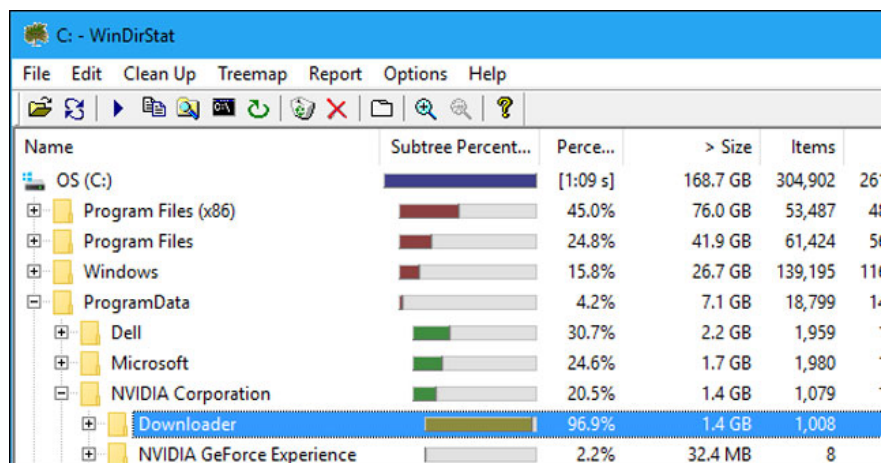
Why does NVIDIA store GB of installation files on your hard drive?

If you're a gamer (or just a normal PC user) using NVIDIA graphics, you might not know that NVIDIA drivers are probably wasting GB of space on your hard drive. NVIDIA puts old installation files into the user's hard drive until they are annoyed and have to delete them themselves.

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Many users who use NVIDIA graphics hardware for years feel uncomfortable when these files use a lot of GB of storage. Although it is a small number for large computers, it occupies a large portion of space on a small SSD. And users only pay attention to it when using the storage analysis tool.

1. Solid-state drives (SSDs) and some things you should know

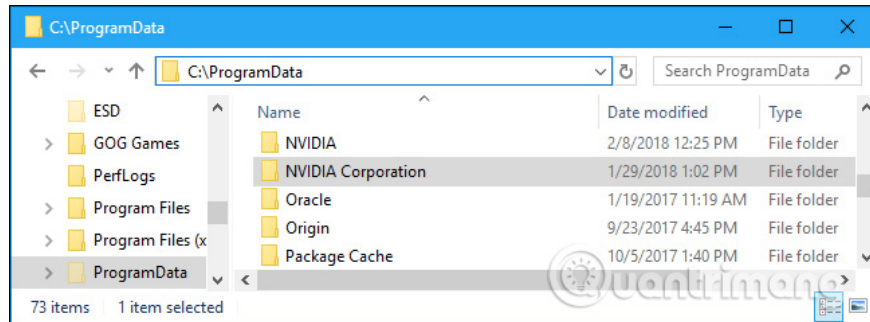


Update: In the GeForce Experience 3.9.0, NVIDIA has added a cleanup tool that automatically removes old driver versions. NVIDIA now only keeps the installers for the current and previous driver versions, which will only take about 1 GB.

NVIDIA also said it plans to add the " **Revert to prior driver** " feature (back to the previous driver) in the future GeForce Experience version. That's why NVIDIA stores these files on your hard drive.

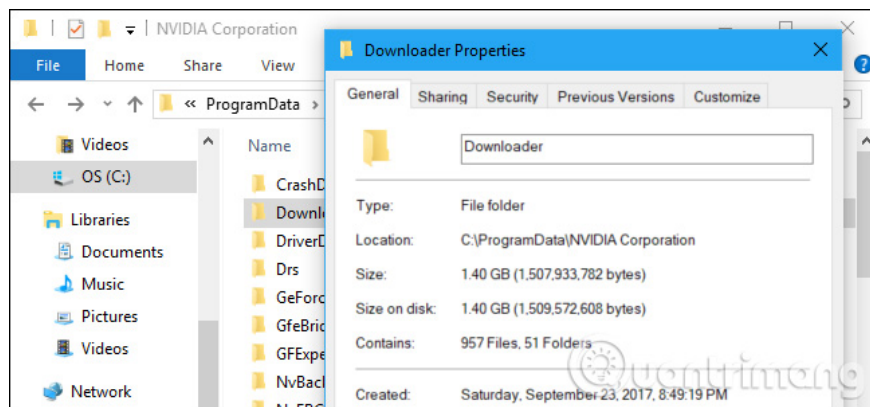
Where to store the installation files

Currently, NVIDIA stores these graphics driver installation files at C: ProgramDataNVIDIA CorporationDownloader. The ProgramData folder is hidden by default, so you must view hidden files or type C: ProgramData into the file manager's address bar to go directly to it.



To view the exact size of these files in use on your computer, open the **NVIDIA Corporation** folder here, right-click on the " **Downloader** " folder and select " **Properties** ".

In the screenshot below, these files only use 1.4 GB of space on the system. However, this is because in this test, these files were deleted a few months ago or the file may take up more GB.

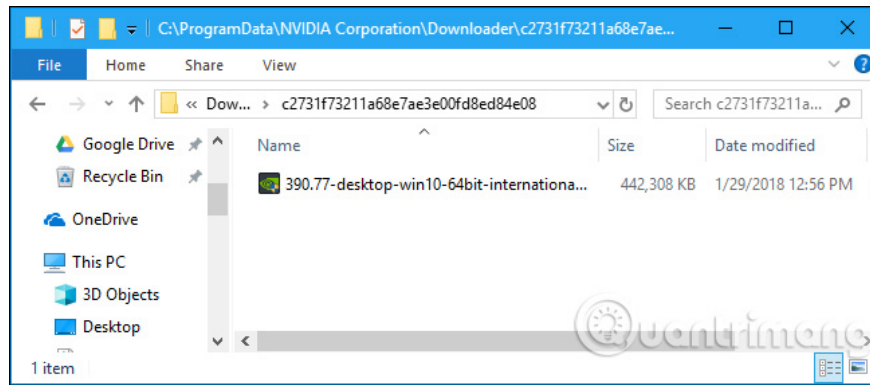


Previous versions of NVIDIA software stored these driver installation files at: Program FilesNVIDIA CorporationInstaller2, C: ProgramDataNVIDIA CorporationNetService and just under the C: NVIDIA folder. If you do not reinstall Windows or delete these files for a while, they may still be stored in these folders. We're still not sure if NVIDIA's software will delete them.

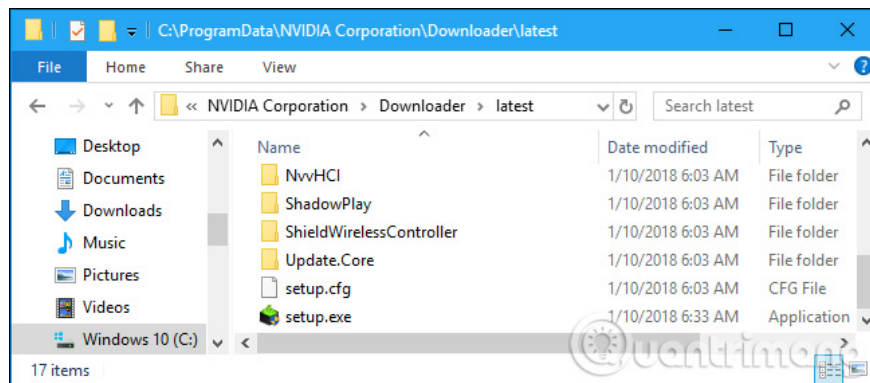
So what are these files?

If you open the Downloader folder, you will see some folders with random names. Double-click one of these folders and you'll see exactly what is inside: the NVIDIA driver update in the form of an .exe file.

Basically, whenever NVIDIA's GeForce Experience software downloads the driver update, it will save all installations of that update. Even after the driver has been successfully installed, the installer is still here.



The "latest" folder saves the uncompressed copy of the latest driver update. This copy is only needed during driver installation, and you will only need it again if you need to reinstall the latest driver.



Why does NVIDIA need to keep this file?

Howtogeek contacted NVIDIA to ask why the GeForce Experience stored copies of all these installers in such a directory, but NVIDIA did not respond.

However, we can guess the reason. If the driver update is causing the problem, you can still access this folder to reinstall the previous driver update. All are here and ready for users to use, so you can easily return to the previous driver without reloading if something goes wrong.

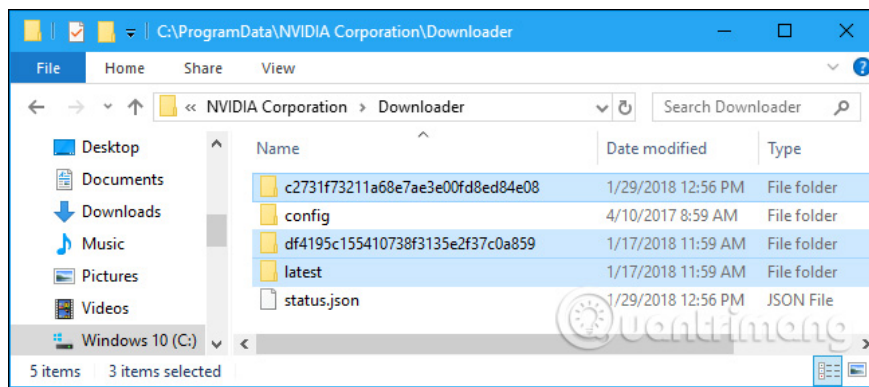
This is great, but how often do users really need to revert to the previous graphics driver? And should I keep one or two recent 'good' drivers instead of storing 4GB drivers so I can return to previous versions? Even if users need to return to the old driver version, they can still access the NVIDIA website to reload the old driver. Therefore, there is no need to waste 4GB of storage space just in case something goes wrong.

This is even more absurd when you see that NVIDIA's GeForce Experience software does not make it easy to revert to the old driver version. It doesn't even tell users that these installers exist. Almost very few users find and run it, so why should we keep it? If you keep the files, the GeForce Experience should provide a way to manage them so that users don't need to dig into the **ProgramData** directory to free up space.

How to delete graphics driver installation files

Although the default Windows file access will not allow you to delete the entire **Downloader** folder, you only need to open the **Downloader** folder and delete the " **latest** " folder and other folders with random names. Leave file " **config** " and file " **status.json** " .

This frees up the space that NVIDIA installation files use on your system. However, when the GeForce Experience downloads new driver files and installs them, these new driver files will be stored here until you delete them.



CCleaner can also automatically delete these NVIDIA installation files. This installer takes up storage space like this without giving users control, which is a big reason why so many Windows users use tools like CCleaner.

1. How to use CCleaner software to clean up computer trash effectively

See more:

1. What is the "Spooler SubSystem App" and why is it running on the computer?
2. What is WMI Provider Host (WmiPrvSE.exe) and why is it using too much CPU?
3. How to update the driver for NVIDIA video card

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