



Windows PC & Mac Compatibility: Play Nice Together

Macs CAN read disks formatted for PCs (Windows/DOS computers)

However, the reverse is not true—

PCs (Windows/DOS computers) CANNOT read disks formatted for Macs

Opening

The Mac recognizes the most common types of Windows/DOS files. If you can't open the file by double-clicking on it, try opening it up from within the appropriate program (for example, if it's some sort of word processing or text document try Microsoft Word, if it's an image file try Photoshop, etc). Files should open up right from the disk (assuming you have a compatible disk format and barring any other computer and/or disk problems).

File Types

Some file types may not open on a computer because there isn't a program that will open that type of file. Older files created in a much earlier version of the software may not open up. (This goes for a Windows PC, too.) There may be other problems which transcend the operating system— Windows or Mac— such as corrupt files, bad sectors on a disk, a problem with the disk drive itself, etc.

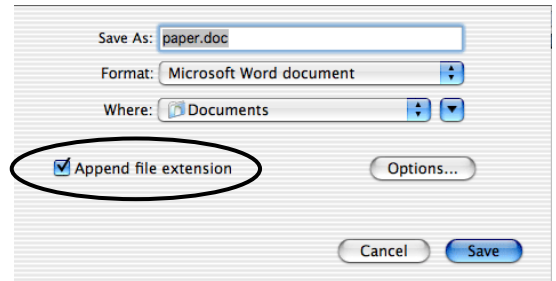
Fonts

Fonts may not read correctly between the two operating systems. The Windows PCs and the Macs do not have the exact same fonts, so the font you used elsewhere may not be available. Some characters that can be displayed on Windows PCs may not be accurately displayed on Macintosh computers and visa versa. For example, bullets in Word may appear differently— a square bullet on a PC may show up as another shape on a Mac. It depends on the fonts installed on each computer. (But this is true for Windows PC to Windows PC or Mac to Mac, also— other computers may have different fonts than the Information Commons computers.)

When saving Mac files, use the appropriate file extensions.

Some programs do this automatically (ex: Adobe Photoshop).

When saving Mac files in MS Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) it is recommended that you check the **“Append file extension”** option in the **Save** dialog box. This enables files to go back and forth between a Mac and a PC with fewer problems. With the appropriate file extension the computer will know what program to open the file in.



	Use in a Mac?	Use in a PC?
Mac formatted disks	YES ☑	NO! ☒
PC formatted disks	YES ☑	YES ☑

When going from one platform to the other there's **no need** to open files from your **PC formatted disk** on a Windows PC, "transfer" (FTP) them to your account somewhere, then open them on a Mac (or visa versa).

NOTE: The **label** on the disk may not correctly indicate whether a disk is Mac or PC formatted, as either type of disk can be reformatted. If it is an unreadable format, a message will appear saying something to that effect on either type of computer. The disk will not be damaged; the computer will just be unable to read it.

Apple Tip: If you work on both Macs and PCs simply buy and use PC formatted disks (floppy or Zip).

They will work on both platforms. There is no need to reformat the disks.