

Tutorial: Network a Mac and a PC

Ever wanted to share files between a PC and a Mac without using email? If you have a network there is a cunning way, which we will show you here



Task: Share files between a Mac and a PC

Difficulty: Intermediate

Time needed: 10 minutes

X Sometimes it's easy to forget that Macs and PCs aren't actually that different from each other. Sure, Windows can slowly suck the soul from your body, removing all trace of colour and joy from the world faster than a French philosopher, but a PC is still a computer and has a lot in common with Macs. For example, you can connect it to the Internet; you can network it with other computers; you can play MP3s and other music files on it; and Microsoft Office is still alive and well on Windows, even if it was originally designed for the Mac.

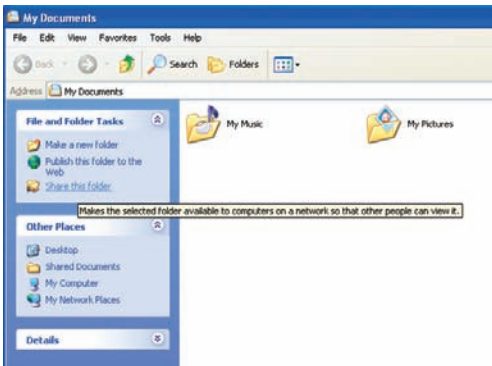
Many businesses and a surprising number of homes that have Macs also have PCs lurking about. Being able to share files between them without constantly having to burn CDs, plug in portable USB drives or attach files to emails is high on the list of priorities of any network owner and is often the reason why they installed one in the first place. With a network, it's possible for two compatible

computers to exchange information and maybe even files – if they're set up properly, that is.

The good news is that both PCs and Macs have built-in file sharing capabilities. It's trickier to share files between a Mac and a PC than it is between Macs, but it's certainly not difficult, especially since this tutorial will walk you through the process. We'll be using the latest versions of both Windows and OS X – Windows XP and Mac OS X 10.3 aka Panther. If you're using earlier versions of either things will be a little harder, particularly on the Windows side (isn't it time to consider upgrading to a Mac?), but not impossible.

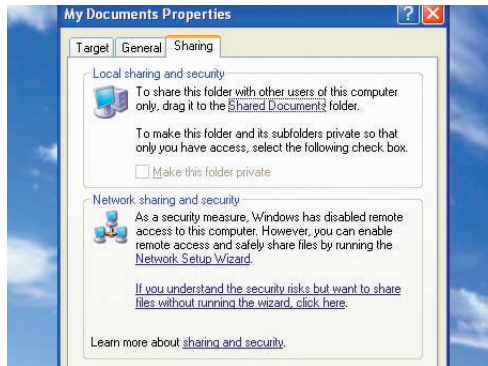
Last thing: as always, it's easier to do most things on a Mac and there are a lot of things that can go wrong trying to connect to a Mac from Windows (such as having a name Windows doesn't like or not owning server software from Microsoft...). So, for now, we're sticking with the easier, Mac way.

Step-by-step OS X Share files with a PC



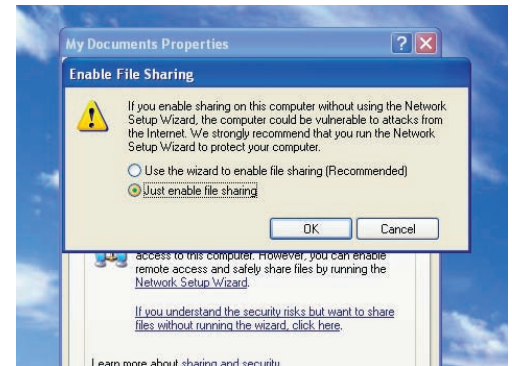
1: Start in Windows

First, decide which Windows folder you're going to share. We're using the My Documents folder. Open it in Explorer and click 'Share this folder' in the sidebar.



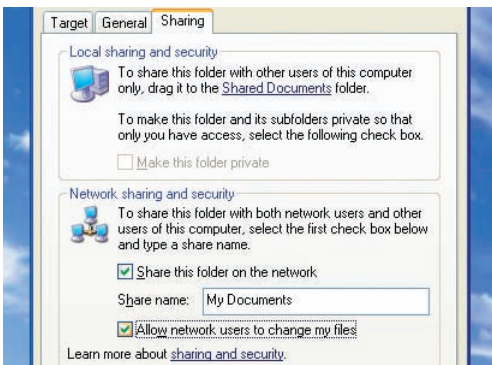
2: Turn on sharing

By default, Windows XP has file sharing turned off. To activate it, click on the penultimate link to share files without running the Network Setup Wizard.



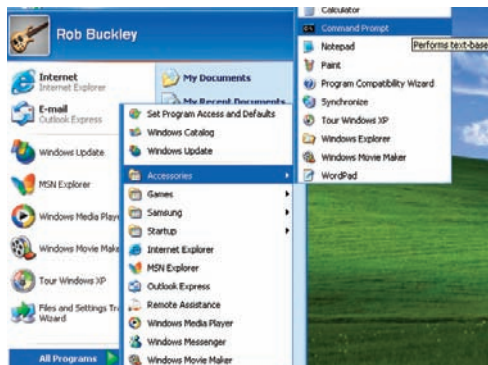
3: Just enable it will you!

In case you missed the big warning in the previous dialog, Windows asks you again if you want to run the wizard. We don't, so select the second option.



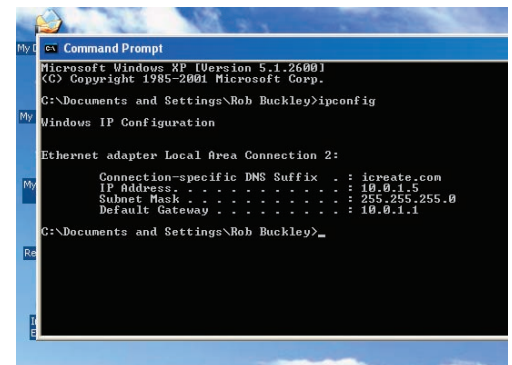
4: Feed in the details

Now we'll tell Windows what others can see and do. Type in a Share name. Then, if you want to be able to upload files as well, click the second box.



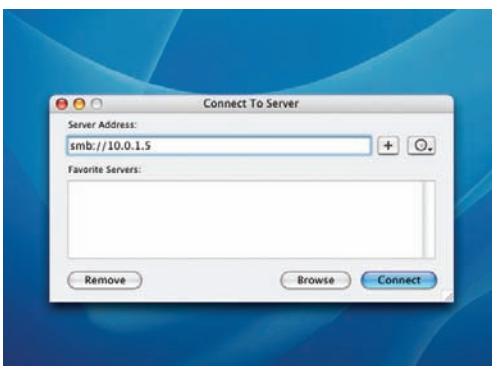
5: Sigh. Why isn't it a Mac?

Since we don't have a Windows server, we need more information. In the 'Start' menu, select 'All Programs', 'Accessories' and then 'Command Prompt'.



6: We want information

When the command prompt pops up, type 'ipconfig'. This will give you your network information. From the second line, note the IP Address.



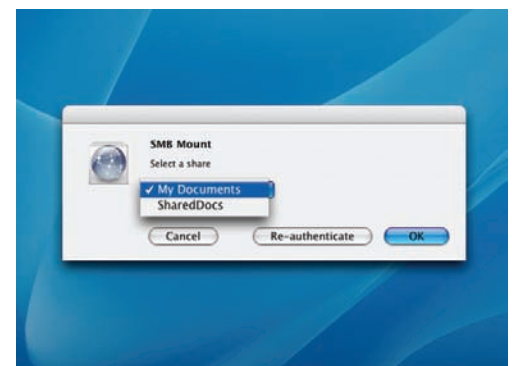
7: We're back with the Mac

To access the PC from the Mac, select 'Connect to Server...' from the 'Go' menu in the Finder. Now type 'smb://' followed by the address from step six.



8: Identify yourself

If everything's working well, you'll be asked to enter an ID and password. These will be the ID and password from Windows, not from your Mac.



9: Everything's mounting up

You'll be given a choice of which shared folder you want to access. Look for the one you named in step four. You can now swap files with your PC.