

Table of Contents

- Working with Files in MS365** 1
- Major Concepts to Understand*** 1
- Why would you want to use the Desktop over the Web Browser Approach?*** 1
- "Your" OneDrive versus Shared OneDrive Folders*** 1
- I'm still lost, can you try again?*** 2
- How do I tell MS I want a group or team folder to be replicated locally?*** 2
- How to locate the OneDrive folders for Mac Users*** 2
- How to locate the OneDrive folders for Windows Users*** 3
- How to share/collaborate on files with other people in the organization?*** 3
- How to share/collaborate on files with someone outside the organization?*** 5

Working with Files in MS365

Major Concepts to Understand

One of the major conceptual hurdles we found in setting up MS365 is that you can access files (and often other elements) from multiple ways. You can choose to only ever interact with MS365 via your web browser. For Linux desktop users, this will be the ONLY way you can access it.

If you are a Mac or Windows user, you can also install the OneDrive (and Teams) apps on your local computer, and with a few other small steps, see those same files from the web groups and teams you participate in on your local computer. As well, where you can edit them locally and then they will sync back to the cloud.

And you can use either method once you have them set up and enabled. Which can be powerful, but also confusing.

Why would you want to use the Desktop over the Web Browser Approach?

If you stick 100% with the web approach it is likely less confusing in the end. However, using the OneDrive app to create local sync'd copies has a number of advantages

- for those already familiar with MS Office apps, there will be less of a learning curve
- Often times there is functionality in the thick desktop editing apps (Word, Excel etc) that is richer and more full functioned (note this is not always the case, and in some cases you will find you MUST log into the web version to do certain functions.)
- There may be differences in Accessibility between the desktop apps and the web apps that makes it easier for certain users to use one over the other.

On the flip side - if you want to synchronously edit a document with another user, as in you both see the edits in real time (as was the case with Google Docs) then using the Web app is your ONLY choice. Otherwise, if you edit a document on your local machine, it needs to be sync'd back to the cloud, and possibly "Track Changes" employed if you want to work on it with another user.

In the end, the important thing to understand is - they are ultimately the "same" document, but with the desktop approach it is a "copy" of the document on the server that must (usually automatically) get sync'd back up.

"Your" OneDrive versus Shared OneDrive Folders

Another thing that is confusing at first when you start to use the OneDrive application on your local machine is that initially it sets up a personal OneDrive folder. These are YOUR files. By default, while they sync to the cloud, they are not shared with others. You *can* share these, but you are the owner and in control of these.

This is distinct from files that have been shared from Groups or Sharepoint or Teams. Those are shared *_with you_* but will appear in a different folder than your personal OneDrive. And they will only be sync'd (i.e. a copy brought down off the cloud to your local machine) locally if you choose to actively instruct Microsoft to do so.

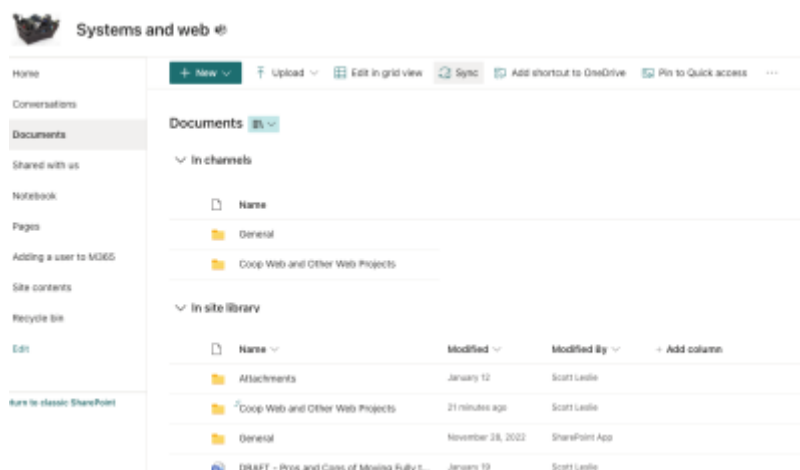
The shared files will typically show up in a separate folder named "One Drive - Shared Libraries - BC Libraries Cooperative." However, because Microsoft likes to make things confusing, it will also introduce links in your **personal** OneDrive folder to these shared folders. These are typically named "Documents - *team name*."

I'm still lost, can you try again?

Well, here is a document from a famous site that tries to explain MS365 that might be helpful, the [The Document Circle of Life in Office 365](#).

How do I tell MS I want a group or team folder to be replicated locally?

If you go to the group's sharepoint site and select "Documents" from the left-hand menu, it will list both the "site Library" documents as well as the "Channel Documents" for the group/team.



At the top of that list are links to "Add Shortcut to OneDrive" and "Sync." If you perform both of these actions in that order, you will now see in your local One Drive -Shared Folders a subfolder with the group/teams name that contains these files.

How to locate the OneDrive folders for Mac Users

Mac users - when OneDrive is installed locally, it should create aliases on the sidebar of your finder to the personal and shared OneDrive folders. But they also have actual locations, and the actual file paths to the folders are

- /Users/_username_/Library/CloudStorage/OneDrive-BCLibrariesCo-operative for your PERSONAL onedrive, and
- /Users/_username_/Library/CloudStorage/OneDrive-SharedLibraries-BCLibrariesCo-operative for any shares from groups or teams **that you have opted to sync to your desktop**

Note that last part is important - unless you specifically go into the various Sharepoint group documents folders and teams document folders and tell them to "sync" those will remain on the server only.

How to locate the OneDrive folders for Windows Users

Windows Users - when OneDrive is installed locally, the actual physical file paths to the folders are

- C:\Users_username_\OneDrive-BCLibrariesCo-operative for your PERSONAL onedrive, and
- C:\Users_username_\OneDrive-SharedLibraries-BCLibrariesCo-operative for any shares from groups or teams **that you have opted to sync to your desktop**

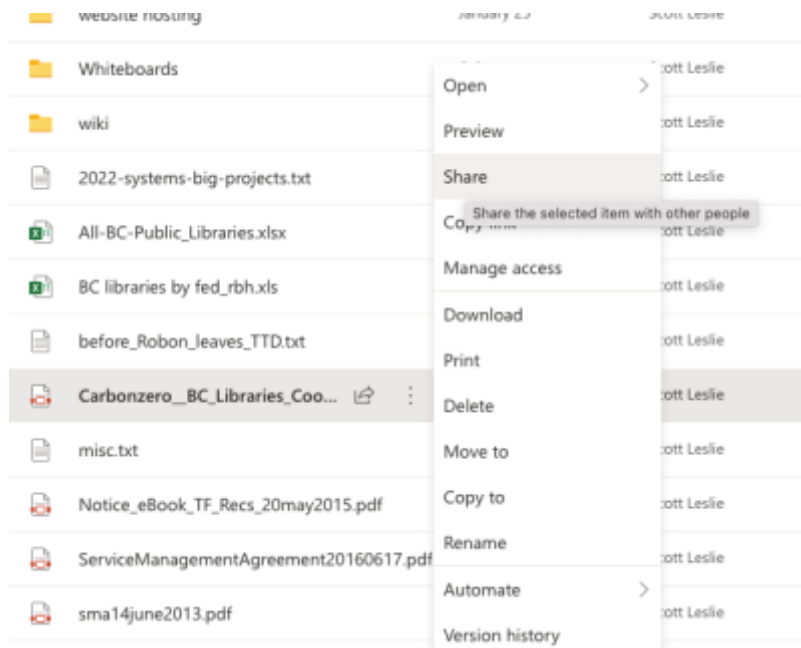
Note that last part is important - unless you specifically go into the various sharepoint group documents folders and teams document folders and tell them to "sync" those will remain on the server only.

How to share/collaborate on files with other people in the organization?

If the file is in your own personal OneDrive folder, you can either

a) move the file into a Shared folder in one of the Sharepoint Groups or Teams, and this will automatically give access to the people in that group or team (you may still need to let them know you've moved it there), or

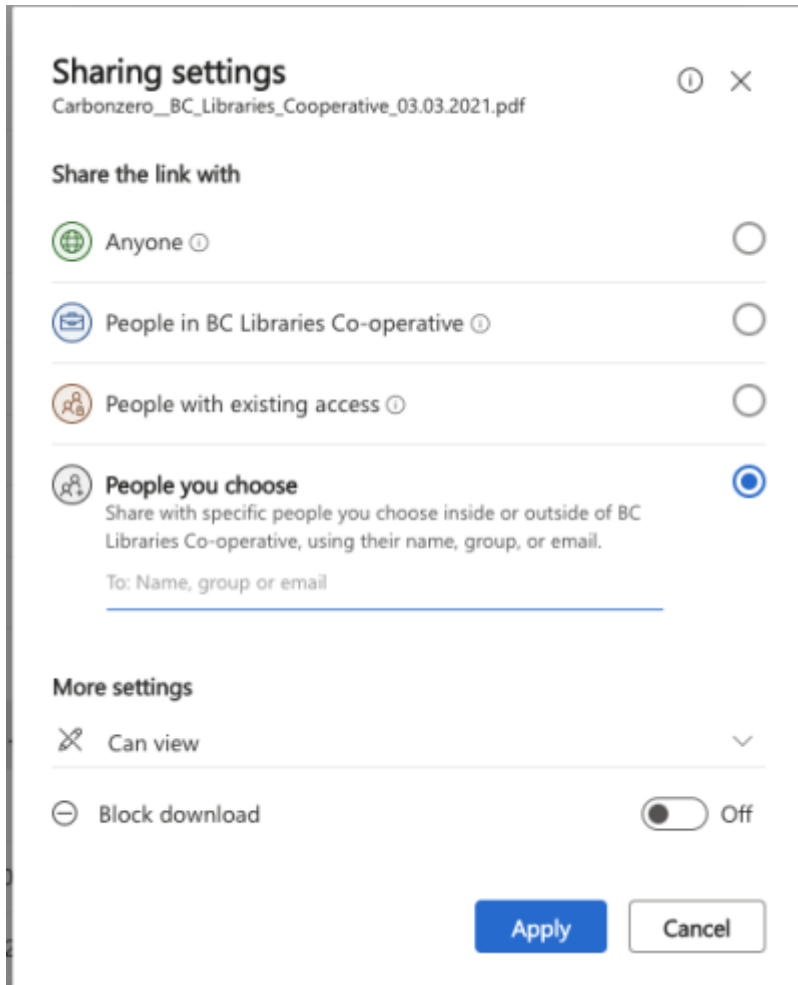
b) [Share the file from where it is by clicking on the three stacked dots after the filename in Onedrive or Sharepoint and selecting "Share"](#)



and then either enter in a person's email address

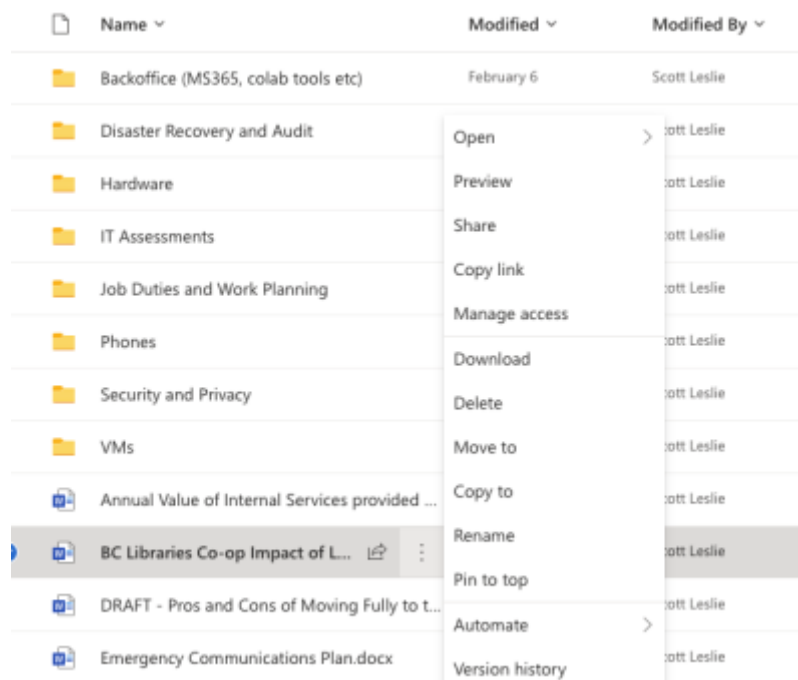


or further select "People you can specify can view" and then change who and what they can do with the file



How to share/collaborate on files with someone outside the organization?

The simplest way is go into the web version (it doesn't matter if the web version of OneDrive, Sharepoint or Teams, as ultimately it is the same files that show up in all three), click on the three dots to the right of the file name and select "Share."



This will popup a window in which you can enter the email of the person you need to share with and set the permission as to what they can do (View, Comment or Edit.) You can also write a note here to the person that will accompany the shared link.

Send link

BC Libraries Co-op Impact of Legacy Systems and Technical Debt.docx


People you specify can view >

les.nessman@wkrp... X

Add another X v

les.nessman@wkrp.com is outside of your organization.


Hi Les here is the file you asked for

 Send

Copy link

People you specify can view >

Copy

Shared with: 

From:
<https://wiki.libraries.coop/> - **BC Libraries Coop wiki**

Permanent link:
<https://wiki.libraries.coop/public/ms365/files>

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