

Restoring Corrupted, Lost, or Deleted Files and Folders

I've lost a file or folder: what do I do?

This article documents a new service offered by ITS which allows anyone at Carleton to recover lost or deleted files and folders on our new Windows file shares. This recovery service relies on a native Windows architecture called 'shadow copies'.

Broadly speaking, a shadow copy is a near-line copy of a production file share like HOME, Collab, etc. Shadow copies are managed by the operating system and available via native Windows tools or a software agent on Mac OSX. Their function is to make available to an end user copies of their data, just like our normal backups, with the exception that these copies are available directly from Windows Explorer (or Finder) when you are mapped to the share in question. In other words, Shadow Copies will allow you to recover lost or corrupted files without needing to ask (and wait) for help from ITS.

Detailed documentation for using Shadow Copies to restore lost or corrupted data on your file shares can be found, specific to Windows or Mac OS, in the articles below:

- [Restoring from Shadow Copies on Windows](#)
- [Restoring from Shadow Copies on Mac OSX](#)

Shadow Copies are essentially point-in-time snapshots of an entire volume. For reference, we have copied below the snapshot times for the main volumes in use at Carleton. This information may be useful if you need to know how long ago the most recent backup of a file or folder was taken.

- HOME: 7am, 12pm Monday - Friday
- COLLAB: 7am, 12pm Monday - Friday, 7am (only) Saturday/Sunday
- COURSES: 7am, 12pm Monday - Friday, 7am (only) Saturday/Sunday

So for example, if I am working with a file on COLLAB and I accidentally delete or modify it at 3:00 pm, the most recent copy of this file available via the Shadow Copy service is the snapshot taken at 12:00 noon that same day if it's during the work week. If the same thing happened on a weekend, the most recent copy would be 7am that morning. If I am working on a file at 6:30 am on Monday morning and I delete or modify it accidentally, the most recent shadow copy would be the 7am snapshot taken Sunday morning.