

VisualZIP Pro32 Table of Contents



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Comments/Problems

We would like to hear from you if:

- You have a problem that you cannot find an answer to in the help file
- A feature does not behave as documented, or even as you expected
- You require technical support
- You have comments, complaints, suggestions

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QuickStart Info

This topic is a quick list of 20 of the things you can do with VisualZIP, and how to do them. For more information on any of these, refer to the [help contents](#).

ZIP archives will now appear on your desktop and in folders with a special icon that looks like a normal folder but that has “Zip” emblazoned on it.

You can double click these new icons to open the archive as if it were a folder. You can also right-click the icons and select “Explore” to open them in a hierarchical tree-style view. From there, it behaves just like a normal explorer.

Once the archive is opened (as in item 2, above) you drag new items from your desktop or any folder into the archive to compress them.

You can also drag any item out to your desktop or a folder to extract them.

You can create a new ZIP archive anywhere by selecting the New/VisualZIP Archive menu from your desktop (or in any folder).

You can right-click any item and select “Extract To Path” to extract items to a specific location without having that destination open in the explorer.

You can “Copy” items from an open archive and “Paste” them anywhere in the filesystem any number of times (as long as the folder you copied from remains open).

You can drag or paste items directly into Exchange messages.

You can drop files and folders onto a ZIP archive’s icon (just as if it were a normal folder) to compress items into the archive without actually opening it.

You can set the passwords for extracting items and for compressing new items with the VisualZIP/Set Passwords menu item in any archive folder.

You can select any or all of the items in an archive and select “Scan For Viruses” from any of the selected items to invoke your favorite virus scanner on the files before you extract them.

You can delete any set of selected files and folders within an open archive from the context menu of the selected items or by pressing the Delete key.

You can set the level of compression for new items that you add by selecting the VisualZIP/Options menu in any ZIP folder.

You can quickly extract (or “checkout”) files from an archive by selecting “Extract to Path” from the archive icon without actually opening the archive.

You can drag the archive to the place you wish to extract the files to and then select “Extract Here” from the icon’s context menu for a little extra convenience.

You can view documents and run standalone programs from within an archive simply by double-clicking it as you would if it were in a normal folder. Handy for reading “readme” files before extracting them.

You can view an open archive in “Details” mode (from the View/Details menu) to see a great deal of information about each item in the archive.

VisualZIP archives are fully hierarchical, so you can compress entire subtrees into an archive and navigate them normally. You can also drag entire subtrees out selectively to decompress them.

When you are dropping (compressing) items into an archive folder, dropping the items onto a folder icon in the archive compresses the new items into that subdirectory. The same is true for dropping items to any directory in the left hand (tree view) pane when you are in explorer mode.

You can right drag into an archive folder (or onto its icon) and select from other options, such as “Update”, which will replace only files that are older than the ones you are dropping.

OK, we lied. There are actually 21 things: You can even browse and extract things from ZIP archives *inside* of other archives.

VisualZIP Overview

VISUALZIP

VisualZIP is an extension to your Windows Shell which allows you to interact with compressed ZIP archives as if they were normal folders on your hard disk. You can open ZIP archives as you would any normal folder, and inside you will find the files and directories that were added to the archive by whomever originally created it.

With *VisualZIP* you can:

- Open and browse the internal ZIP archives as if they were part of your normal disk structure
- Execute programs and read files, spreadsheets, and documents directly from within the ZIP file, without ever having to extract them
- Extract files from the ZIP archive to your desktop, or any other normal folder.
- Drag and drop files seamlessly from a ZIP archive to any normal folder
- Compress files simply by dragging them into a ZIP folder
- Copy files from the ZIP archive to the clipboard, and paste them to the desktop, mail messages, normal folders, or any other suitable OLE drop target.
- You can even do all of these things with ZIP archives inside of other ZIP archives!

VisualZIP also has full support for encryption, decryption, and for running your choice of virus scanners over the contents of an archive.

VisualZIP is all you need to work with existing ZIP files: it contains all of the necessary compression, decompression, encryption, and decryption code, and does not rely on any external archiving software.

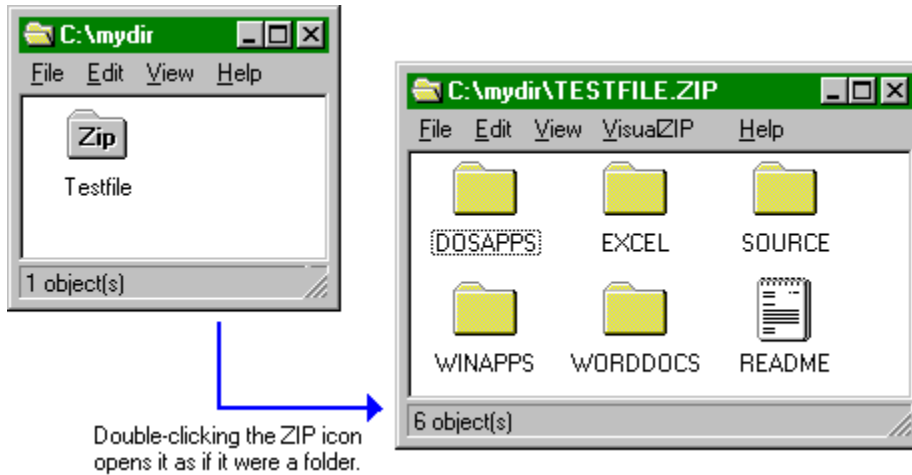
[Opening ZIP Archives]

Opening ZIP Archives

There are three methods by which you can Open a ZIP archive:

- 1) Double-clicking its icon in the explorer
- 2) Right-clicking its icon and selecting “Open” from its context menu
- 3) Entering the name of the ZIP archive from the command line

Each of these first three methods yields the same result:



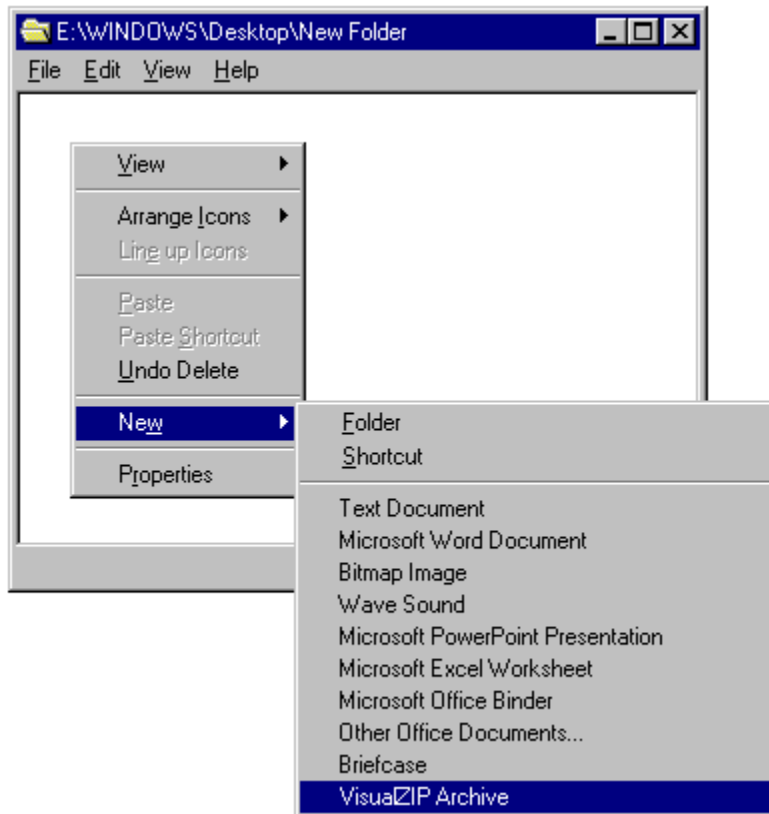
This view behaves exactly like the Open view of a normal filesystem folder, with the exception that the root of the view is the ZIP archive itself.

In addition to “Opening” ZIP archives, you may also “Explore” them.

[Exploring ZIP Folders]

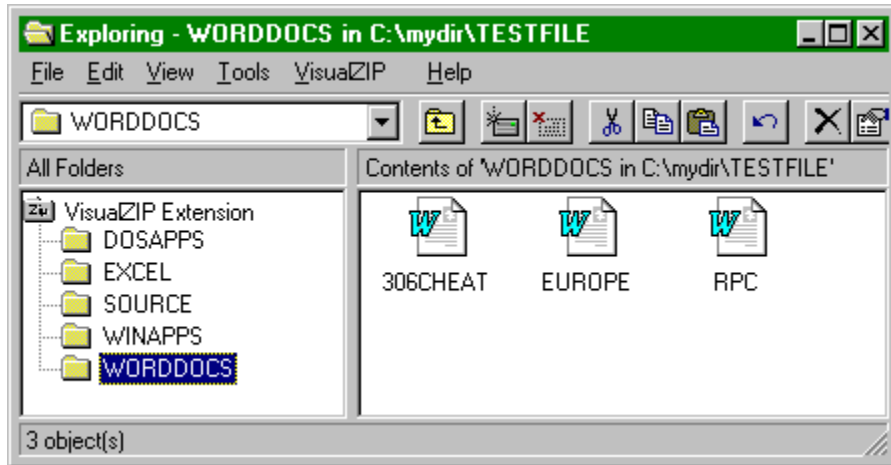
Creating New ZIP Archives

You can create a new, empty ZIP archive in any folder (including the desktop) by right-clicking an empty area on the folder and selecting New from the resulting context menu. Among the other registered document types that are listed you will find “VisualZIP Archive”. Selecting this menu will create the new archive.



Exploring ZIP Archives

If you select “Explore” from the context menu of a ZIP archive, VisualZIP will open the archive in hierarchical “explorer” view:



This view allows you to more easily navigate through the structure of a ZIP archive that contains directories. This view behaves exactly like the Explorer view of a normal filesystem folder, with the exception that the root of the view is the ZIP archive itself.

Problems With Executing Files from Archives

There are two main requirements for executing a file from within an archive.

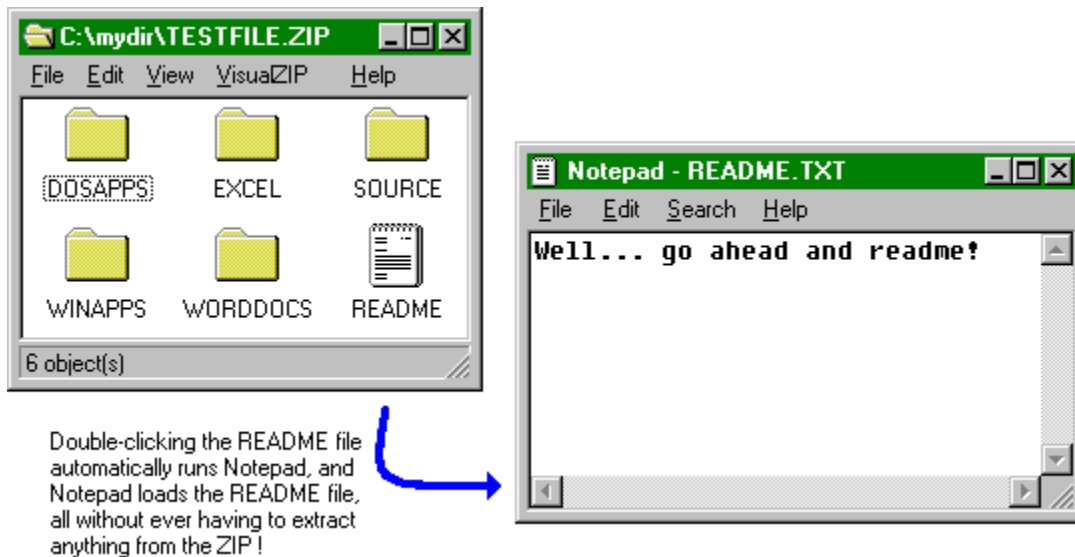
First, the file should be of a type which is registered on your system, such as a .txt file. To examine or modify the set of file types which *are* registered on your system, select the View/Options menu from any Explorer window and select the “File Types” tab of the resulting dialog.

Second, if the file is an executable, it must be able to run standalone: it cannot depend on DLLs or data files which are also in the archive, since those files will not “exist” if they have not been extracted. In order to run a file from an archive which *does* depend on other archived files (such as a Setup or Install program), it is best to extract all of the required files to a new filesystem folder, and then execute the file in question from this new folder.

Executing Programs From Within a ZIP Archive

To execute a program that resides inside of a ZIP archive, you can simply double-click it as you would any application from your Windows shell. You can also “execute” files of any registered type, such as text files, word processor documents, and so forth: VisualZIP will load the correct application, and provide it with a copy of the file in question.

If no application is set up to handle the type of file you are “executing”, the default viewer (configurable under VisualZIP Options) will be used .



There are few caveats you should be aware of when executing files from within ZIP archives:
[\[Problems with Executing Files \]](#)

Extracting Files From an Archive

There are four methods by which you can extract files from a ZIP archive:

- Dragging files from the archive view to another folder or the desktop
- Selecting one or more items in an archive view, right clicking on your selection, and picking "Extract to Path"
- From the context menu of the ZIP archive itself, selecting one of the extraction menus
- Copying one or more items in an archive view to the clipboard, and then pasting them to your destination of choice.

Self-Extracting Archives

VisualZIP can create a self-extracting archive (SFX) for distribution to users that may not have VisualZIP or an alternate decompression program already installed on their system. This process involves combining a special executable program with an archive you supply, which results in Windows program that knows how to extract the data contained in the archive automatically. VisualZIP transparently handles all of this for you.

To create an SFX, you first need to create the archive itself by using VisualZIP as you would to create any normal archive. Once you are satisfied with the content and structure of the archive, select the "Create Self-Extracting Archive..." menu item. You will be presented with a dialog that will allow to you select a name for the SFX. The .EXE extension will be automatically added to the name, so you do not need to enter it.

In order to guarantee maximum compatibility of the SFX you generate, and in the interests of producing as small an archive as possible, the SFX itself will be a 16-bit Windows program. This, however, means that as a 16-bit program it will not be able to create (extract) files from the archive that have spaces embedded in their names, or files which are longer than the 8.3 naming convention allowed for 16-bit programs.

When building archives that you intend to use to generate an SFX from, remember to include only files which are compatible with the 8.3 naming convention.

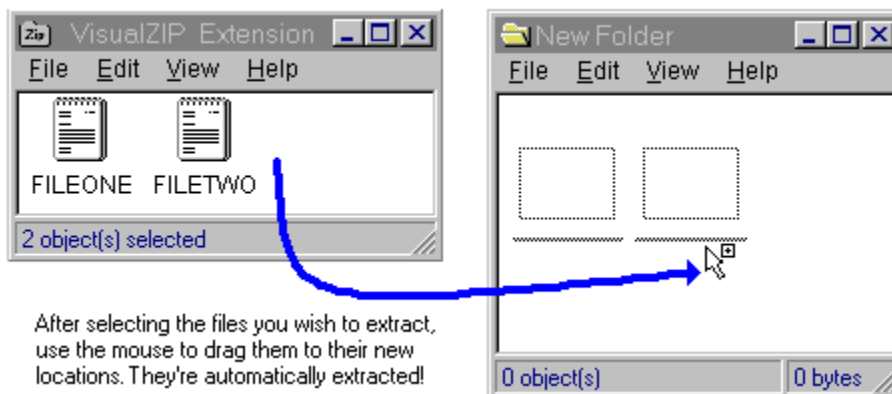
Regardless of the names you use, VisualZIP itself (and any other suitable modern decompression tool) will be able to see and extract the full contents of the archive.

SFX archives **may** employ a password to protect their contents. Simply set the VisualZIP password in the standard fashion when you are creating the original archive. The receiver will have the opportunity to enter the password before extraction begins.

SFX archives **may not** be multivolume archives. In order to reduce the size of the unzip engine that is included with the SFX, the multivolume processing code has been removed.

Dragging Files out of a ZIP Archive

The easiest way to extract files from an archive is to open the archive in which they are contained, and then drag them to the destination folder you chose. The destination folder can be anywhere in the filesystem, including the desktop. The destination can also be any application that supports the FileContents clipboard format, such as a mail program.

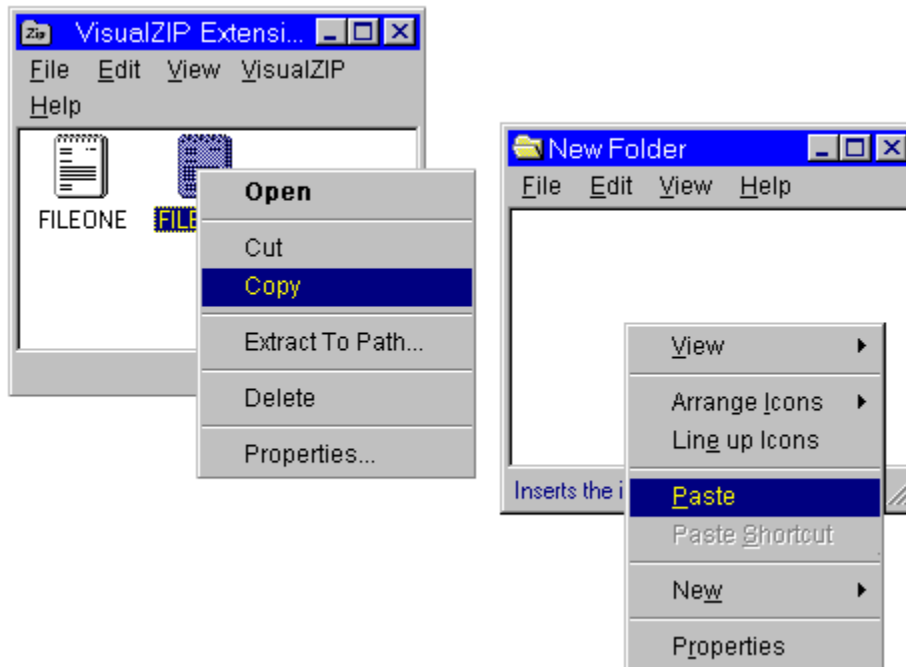


NB: because of a problem with the current release of the Windows Shell, if you drop multiple objects into a folder that is not in “Auto Arrange” mode, you may need to select “Line Up Icons” in the destination folder after the drop. Otherwise, the new files/directories will appear to be stacked one on top of another. This appears only to be an issue for source applications which, like VisualZIP, uses the FileContents clipboard format.

[Copying and Pasting Files from a ZIP Archive]

Copy and Pasting Files from a ZIP Archive

In cases where you will want to make multiple copies of files contained within a ZIP archive, the easiest way to do the extraction is by copying the files to the clipboard, and then pasting them multiple times to as many destinations as you chose:



Note that in order to paste items from a ZIP folder, you must leave that source folder open for the duration of the paste operations, as VisualZIP clears the clipboard on exit to preserve memory. You can, of course, minimize it to avoid screen clutter.

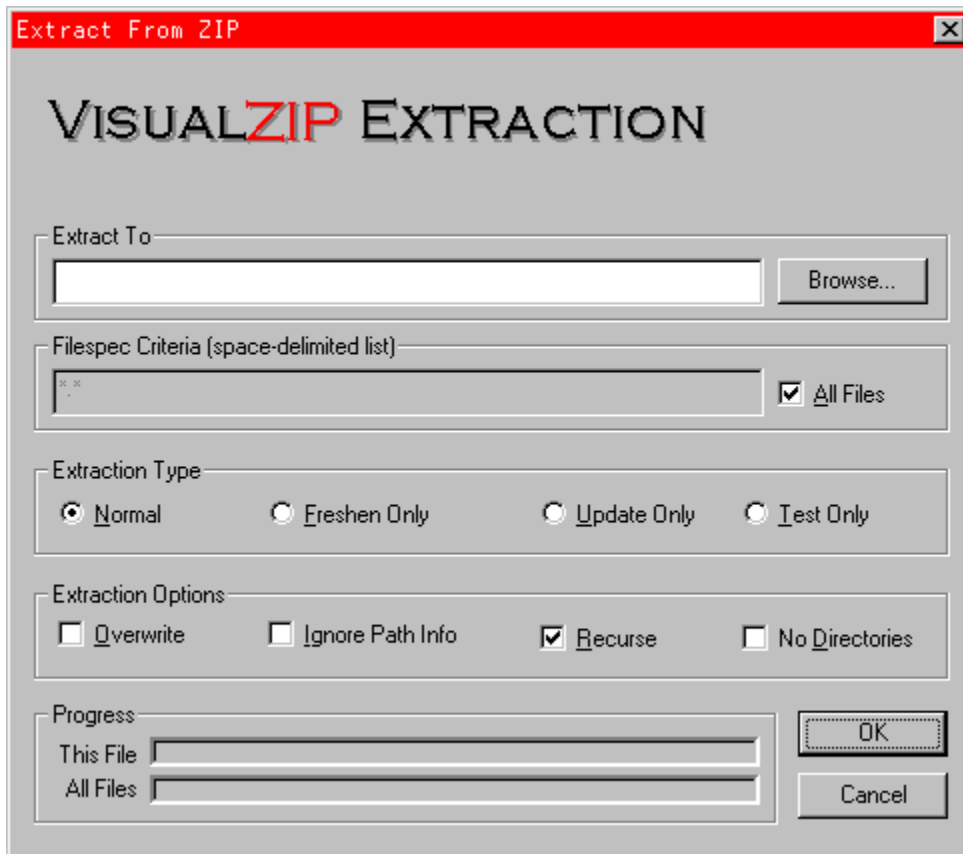
NB: because of a problem with the current release of the Windows Shell, if you paste multiple objects into a folder that is not in “Auto Arrange” mode, you may need to select “Line Up Icons” in the destination folder after the paste. Otherwise, the new files/directories will appear to be stacked one on top of another. This appears only to be an issue for source applications which, like VisualZIP, use the FileContents clipboard format.

Extracting Items from an Archive's Context Menu

When you encounter a ZIP archive on your desktop or any folder, the context menu (accessed via the right mouse button) on its icon provides two menus:

- Extract To Path
- Extract Here

These two menu items provide identical functionality, with the exception that “Extract Here” will use the current directory as the default extraction directory in the resulting dialog. The method of extraction does not support Decryption. You will need to actually open the archive in order to extract encrypted items



You may set the following options before beginning the extraction:

Extract To	Base path where files are extracted to
Filespec Criteria	Wildcard pattern of files to extract
All Files	Simply forces *.* to be used as the Filespec Criteria
Overwrite	Existing files are overwritten without confirmation
Ignore Path Info	Path information is ignored for items extracted from the archive
Recurse	The filespec criteria is used to match path information
No Directories	Directory items are not extracted from the archive

In addition to a normal extraction, you may also select from one of the following extract types:

Freshen

Files are extracted only if older version already exist in the destination directory, and are new than the existing copies

Update

Files which are older than files by the same name that already exist at the destination are not extracted

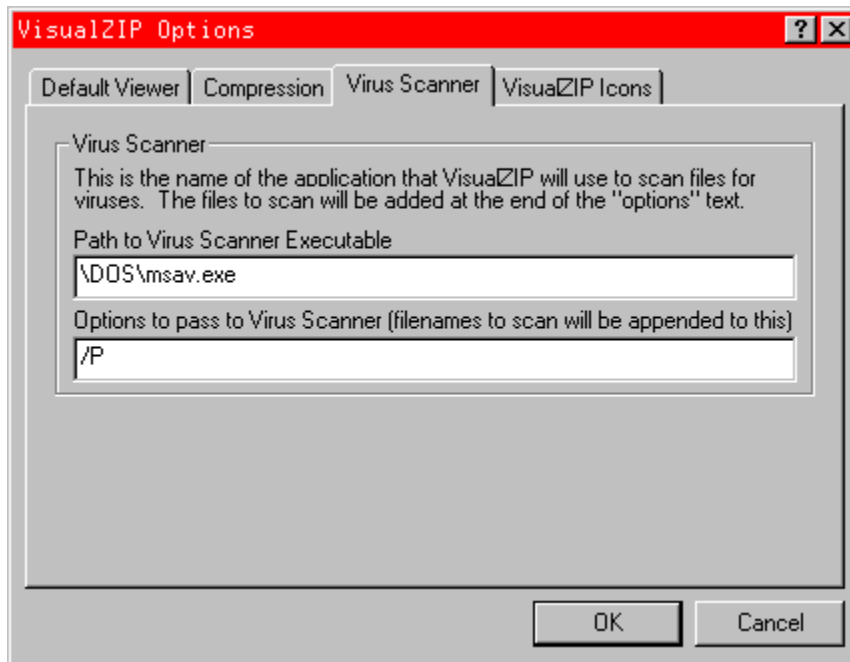
Test Only

No files are extracted, but they are tested for archive integrity

Scanning ZIP Items for Viruses

VisualZIP allows you to scan any portion of the contents of a ZIP archive for viruses before you execute or extract them. Before you can use this feature you must set up a Virus Scanner in the VisualZIP Options dialog (accessible from the VisualZIP/Options menu from any open ZIP folder):

VisualZIP scans only those items that you have selected at the time you chose the “Scan for Viruses” context menu from one of your selected items. Your selection can include directories, which will cause those directories and anything below them to be scanned as well. To scan an entire archive, open it and select all of its contents (using CTRL-A or Edit/Select All) before choosing the “Scan For Viruses” menu item.



By default, VisualZIP comes configured to use the Microsoft MSAV program. You will need to change these options depending on the location of MSAV.EXE on your system and what virus scanner you wish to use.

Important Notes

In the interests of safety (ie: to avoid Trojan Horses), you must provide the *complete* path to the Virus Scanner executable. For example, C:\DOS\MSAV.EXE

VisualZIP will wait until your Virus Scanner is finished checking the files, but it will not provide any information based on the results of the scan (since there is no standard way for a virus scanner to return this information). The onus, therefore, is on the virus scanning program to inform you as to whether or not any suspicious files were found.

The path to the files to scan (a temporary location generated when you select the Scan For Viruses option) is passed automatically at the end of the “Options” that you supply. All files are removed automatically as soon as the scan completes.

If your Virus Scanner requires it, you should provide whatever option is needed to force it to “Scan Subdirectories”.

If the path to your Virus Scanner includes spaces, you should enclose the path with quotation marks.

Example

To configure VisualZIP to use McAfee's Scan95 product, you would provide the following:

Path: "E:\Program Files\McAfee\Scan95.exe"

Options: /autoscan

This would vary, of course, depending on the location of Scan95.exe on your system.

Using Encryption and Decryption

VisualZIP fully supports encryption and decryption within archives. You can access the passwords used to encrypt and decrypt items from the VisualZIP/Set Passwords menu item:



The Encrypt password is used to encrypt (lock) any items that you drag into this archive folder. The Decrypt password is used to decrypt (unlock) any items that you extract or drag out of this folder. As you browse down into subdirectories within a ZIP, the passwords that you have set in the parent directory are automatically passed to the child directories.

To prevent accidentally encrypting items (and subsequently not knowing what the password is), you are asked to confirm any drop into a folder where the encryption password is currently set.

If you try to extract an encrypted item but have either (a) set the wrong password, or (b) not set any password at all, VisualZIP will warn you and ask if you want to change the decryption password. This can be especially handy in archives where multiple items in a single folder have different passwords.

You can determine whether or not items are encrypted by inspecting the "Encrypted" column when VisualZIP is in details view (select View/Details from the menu bar).

Tip: Encrypting items in a ZIP archive does not prevent others from viewing the *list* of what items are in the archive; it only prevents them from viewing or using the data contained in the archived files.

Be cautious when using Encryption in an archive folder. Should you forget the password, the data is irrevocably lost. The author has no mechanism for unlocking encrypted items without the password.

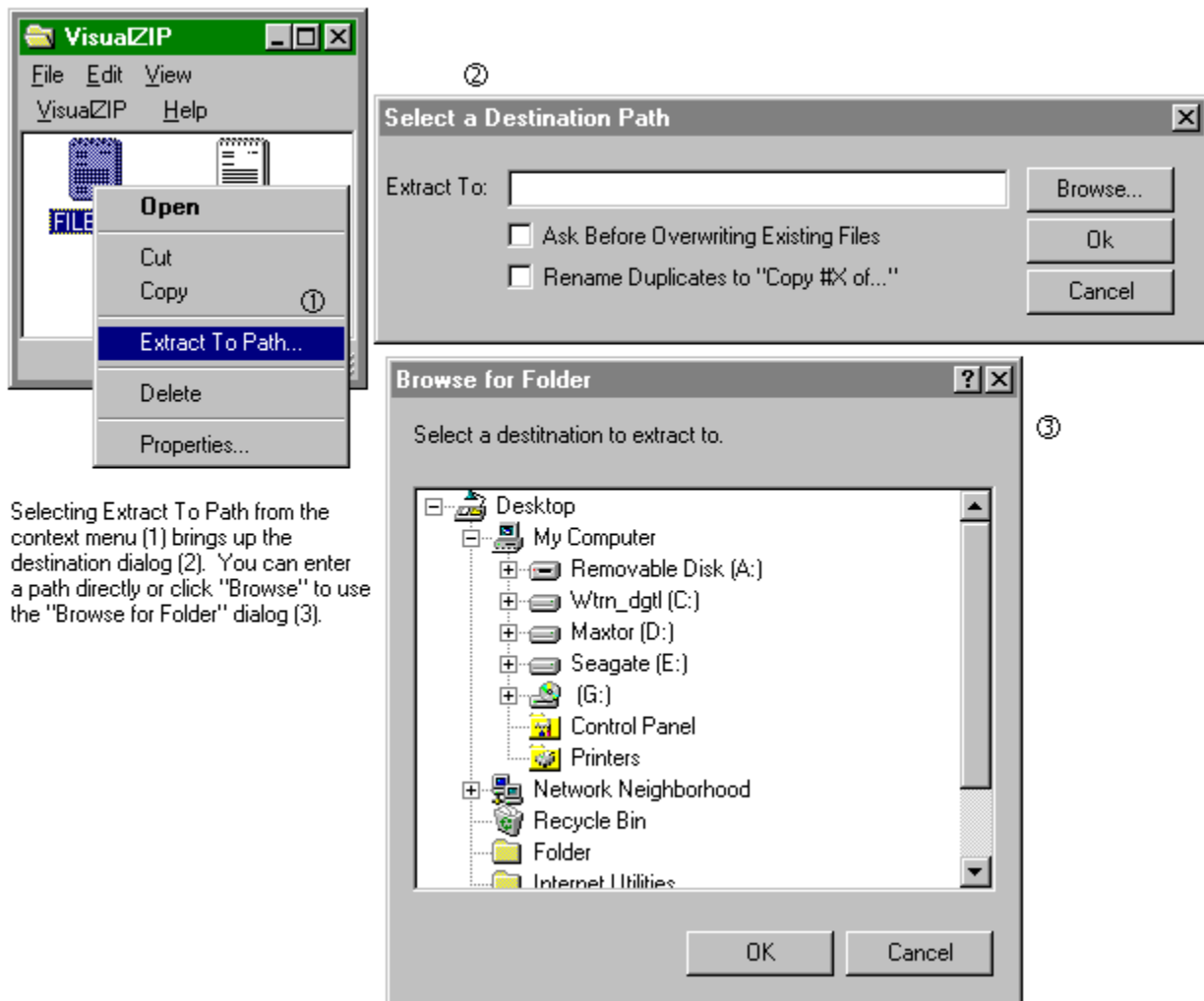
Extracting Files to a Specified Path

There are two ways in which you can extract files from a ZIP archive to a specific path on your hard disk (other than dragging and dropping or using cut and paste).

To use the first method, open the ZIP archive and select the files and/or directories you wish to extract. Right-click on the selection and select the “Extract to Path” menu item. This will bring up a dialog in which you can specify the path to extract the items to.

If your selection includes directories, the directories themselves *and* any files or directories contained within them will be extracted.

You may also chose what will happen if files already exist by the same name: they can optionally be overwritten, or the new files will be renamed numerically to have a different name (for example, “File.txt” will become “File (2).txt”).



Selecting Extract To Path from the context menu (1) brings up the destination dialog (2). You can enter a path directly or click "Browse" to use the "Browse for Folder" dialog (3).

You can also extract files from an archive by using the context menu of the ZIP archive itself, without opening the archive.

[[Extracting Directly From a ZIP Archive](#)]

The “root” of a view is the absolute parent of everything under it. You cannot use the “up” button on the toolbar when viewing the root directory, since it has no parent. With filesystem folders, the “My Computer” object is the root, but with ZIP Archives, the root is the archive file itself.

FileContents Clipboard Format: The FileContents clipboard format (CF_FILECONTENTS) is a new format for Win32, which allows applications to accept data from an OLE stream. This allows applications to accept new files which may never have actually existed in the filesystem. Because this format is new to Win32/Windows 95, Windows 3.X applications may not support it.

Dates are not preserved

When files are dragged from within the ZIP archive, the original date of the file is not preserved. The same is true for the Extract To Path menu item of items within an archive and for Copy/Paste operations.

(Technical note: Although VisualZIP correctly provides this information to the Windows shell, the current release of Windows95 does not properly handle the Creation date in the FILEGROUPDESCRIPTOR structure. If it starts doing so in a later release, dates will be preserved in all cases).

In order to extract files and preserve their original dates, use the "Extract To" menu item from the ICON of the zip archive itself, rather than opening and using drag/drop. This form of extraction bypasses the shell and manually sets the correct dates on its own.

Troubleshooting

The following is a summary of the most common problems you might run into while running VisualZIP.

[Insufficient Disk Space](#)

[Invalid TEMP: Directory](#)

[Icons Do Not Line Up After Drop, or Only One File Appears](#)

[Dates not preserved correctly on extracted files](#)

Insufficient Disk Space

For almost all ZIP operations, VisualZIP relies on your TEMP: environment variable being correctly set, and that the disk on which your TEMP: directory lives contains enough space to hold the files you will be extracting. In fact, since both a temporary copy *and* the final destination copy will exist momentarily at the same time, the space requirements are actually double that of the files themselves.

If you are low on disk space, you can use the Extract items on the context menu of the ZIP archive itself (as opposed to opening the ZIP archive as a folder), and perform the extraction from there. This method bypasses the OLE mechanisms normally used, and can require less temporary working space.

Invalid TEMP: Variable

VisualZIP requires your TEMP: environment variable to be correctly set, and that the directory to which it points resides on a disk with sufficient disk space.

Under Windows95, you can set your TEMP: directory in your autoexec.bat file, as follows:

```
set TEMP=C:\
```

Under WindowsNT, you can set your TEMP: directory in the control panel, in the SYSTEM applet.

Icons Do Not Line Up

If you drop or paste a set of multiple files to a folder (including the desktop) that is in large icon mode but that is *not* in auto-arrange mode, the resulting files' icons will be stacked one on top of the other, giving the appearance of only a single file being dropped or pasted.

This is a result of a bug in the Windows shell, and is beyond the control of VisualZIP. The easiest workaround is to select "Line up icons" in the destination folder after the drop, or to select any of the "Arrange Icons" menus.

Creating Multivolume Archives

If you have a very large archive that you would like to transport to another machine but that will not fit on a single floppy disk, you can use VisualZIP's multivolume archive option to split the archive across multiple disks. VisualZIP also seamlessly reads multivolume archives, prompting for disk changes at the appropriate times.

To create a multivolume archive, first create a standard archive. With that archive open in VisualZIP, select the "Create Multivolume Archive..." menu. The resultant dialog will allow you to set a number of parameters (explained below) that determine how the archive is created.

There is no size limit on multivolume archives; however, because the files must first be extracted from the original archive before they are used to create the multivolume archive, you will need enough temporary disk space to hold the entire contents during the creation process.

Parameters that you can adjust include:

Drive

Selects the drive to be used to create the archive. This drive must support removable media.

New Archive Name

The name of the new archive on the floppy disk.

Password (for original archive)

If the standard archive you are starting with contains encrypted files, you will need to enter a password into this edit control. It does not effect the destination multivolume archive.

Format disks before writing

Floppy disks will be formatted prior to use. You can also select the "Use low density" suboption which will format 720K disks in a 1.44 drive (for example).

Do NOT format disks before writing

Floppy disks will not be formatted prior to use. You can select a variety of suboptions which control what files and directories, if any, are automatically deleted from the target disks in order to make room for the new archive.

Place central directory at start of archive

The standard ZIP format requires that the internal listing of the archive's contents be placed on the last disk. This can result in an excessive amount of disk swapping when you later read the archive, so VisualZIP provides this option to speed use of the resultant archive. *Note that this is a nonstandard feature which will produce archives that may be unreadable by other archive software packages.* Use with caution.

Use short (MS-DOS) style names in archives

Filenames will be stripped of spaces and shortened to conform to the 8.3 MS-DOS file naming convention. Use this option if you are planning to send the archive to someone with an older archive program that does not support long filenames.

Adding Items to an Archive

In order to add items to an archive, simply drag them into an open VisualZIP folder window.

If you drop files onto the icon of a directory within a VisualZIP folder window, the files will be compressed into that subdirectory within the archive.

You may drop a single file, groups of files, entire directory structure, or any combination of these in a single operation.

There will be a pause of a few seconds while the view refreshes before your new items appear in the archive window.

