

Improve laptop performance by deleting temporary files ^[1]

April 16, 2026 by [ES and UIS Communications](#) ^[2]

Too many temporary files can consume valuable storage space. These files accumulate over time and reduce the storage and system resources available for your computer to run efficiently.

If you're running low on storage space, consider deleting your temporary files to free up space for other files and data. You can choose to delete some or all the temp files, but the process is different depending on the make of your device.

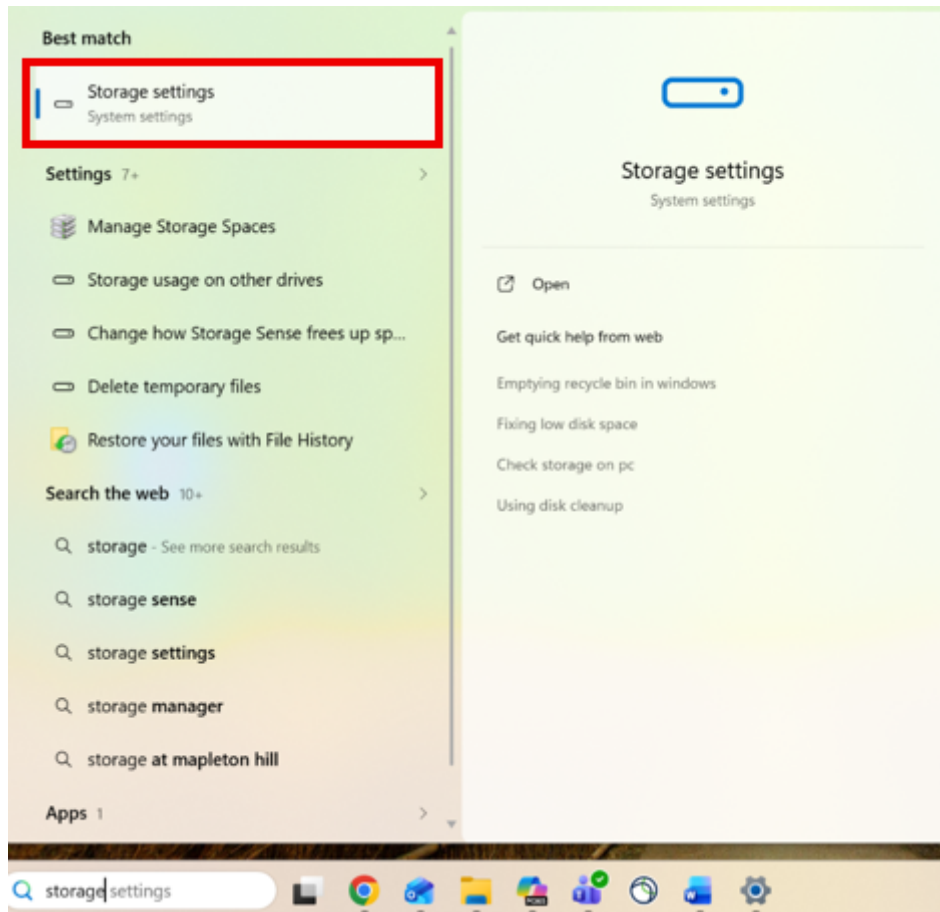
Locate temporary files on Windows

In some cases, Windows will automatically delete temporary files. If they're not automatically deleted, you can safely delete them yourself.

Most programs will create and store temp files in a folder titled **C:\Users\AppData\Local\Temp** — it's safe to delete the temp files you find in the **Temp** folder.

To automate this process, set up **Storage Sense** on your PC:

1. Type **Storage** into the search bar next to the **Start** button.
2. Select **Storage settings**.



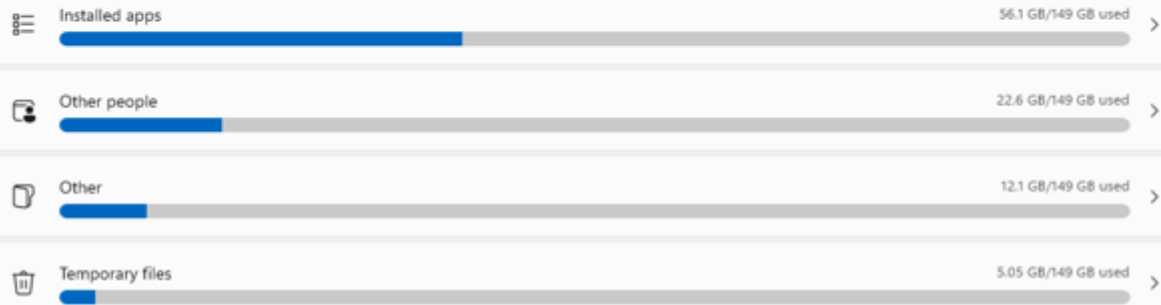
3. Click the slider to enable **Storage Sense**.

System > Storage

Windows (C:) - 471 GB

149 GB used

322 GB free



Show more categories

Storage management

- Storage Sense**
Automatically free up space, delete temporary files, and manage locally available cloud content
On
- Cleanup recommendations
Storage optimized, no action required
- Advanced storage settings
Backup options, Storage Spaces, other disks and volumes

4. From the **Storage Sense** menu, you can configure it to run at specific times and empty your recycle bin on a schedule

System > Storage > Storage Sense

Cleanup of temporary files

Keep Windows running smoothly by automatically cleaning up temporary system and app files

Automatic User content cleanup

On

Storage Sense runs when disk space is low. We clean up enough space to help your system run its best. We cleaned up 0 bytes of space in the past month.

Configure cleanup schedules

Run Storage Sense

During low free disk space (default) ▾

Delete files in my recycle bin if they have been there for over:

30 days (default) ▾

Delete files in my Downloads folder if they haven't been opened for more than:

Never (default) ▾

Removing specific categories of temporary files

Another option is to select **Temporary files** from the **Storage** menu. There, you can find a breakdown of all the temporary files your computer is currently using.

1. From the **Storage** menu, select **Temporary files**.
2. Select the checkbox beside the categories you would like to delete.
3. Select **Remove files**.

System > Storage > Temporary files

Some temporary files are needed by apps. Below is a list of files you can remove now.

Remove files

Refresh 

Total selected: 1.20 GB

Last scanned at 4/10/2026 4:45 PM

Delivery Optimization Files

766 MB

Delivery Optimization is used to download updates from



Microsoft. These files are stored in a dedicated cache to be uploaded to other devices on your local network (if your settings allow such use). You may safely delete these files if you need the space.

Thumbnails

363 MB



Windows keeps a copy of all of your picture, video, and document thumbnails so they can be displayed quickly when you open a folder. If you delete these thumbnails, they will be automatically recreated as needed.

Temporary files

97.5 MB



Apps can store temporary information in specific folders. These can be cleaned up manually if the app does not do it automatically.

Downloads

49.7 MB



Warning: These are files in your personal Downloads folder. Select this if you'd like to delete everything. This does not respect your Storage Sense configuration.

Recycle Bin

7.82 MB



The Recycle Bin contains files you have deleted from your computer. These files are not permanently removed until you empty the Recycle Bin.

Temporary files on a Mac

On Mac devices, deleting temporary files is often referred to as “clearing the cache.”

There are two main types:

- **System cache** — supports system processes (avoid deleting)
- **Application cache** — data from apps that can be safely removed if no longer needed

Restarting your Mac and using built-in Storage recommendations are the safest ways to clear temporary data.

Review storage usage

- macOS Monterey and earlier: **Apple menu > About This Mac > Storage**
- macOS Ventura and later (including Sonoma): **Apple menu > System Settings > General > Storage**

In Storage Settings, you will see a breakdown of Mac storage indicating where there are files that you might want to delete or move to cloud storage, such as [OneDrive](#) [3], in order to free up space.

Manually delete application cache (advanced)

If you are still experiencing difficulties, you can also manually delete temporary files from your Mac.

1. Back up your system.
2. Open **Finder**.
3. Select **Go > Go to Folder**.
4. Enter `~/Library/Caches/` and click **Go**.
5. Open folders and move unnecessary files to **Trash**.
6. Empty the **Trash**.

[computer help](#) [4]

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