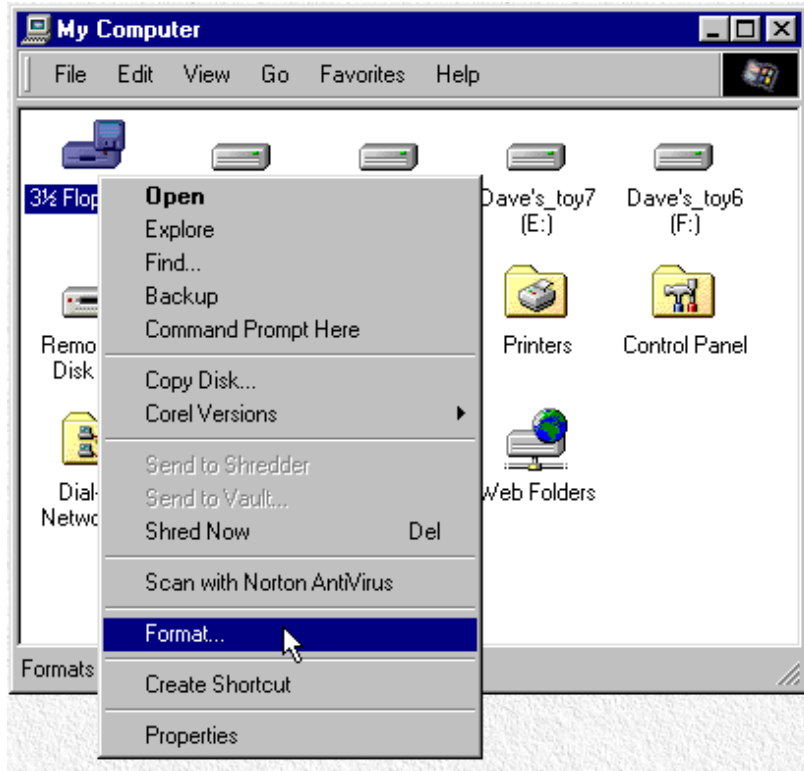


Using My Computer to format a floppy

As you will begin to see, in Windows there always seems to be more than one way to get a job done. In this exercise, we will use My Computer to format the floppy.

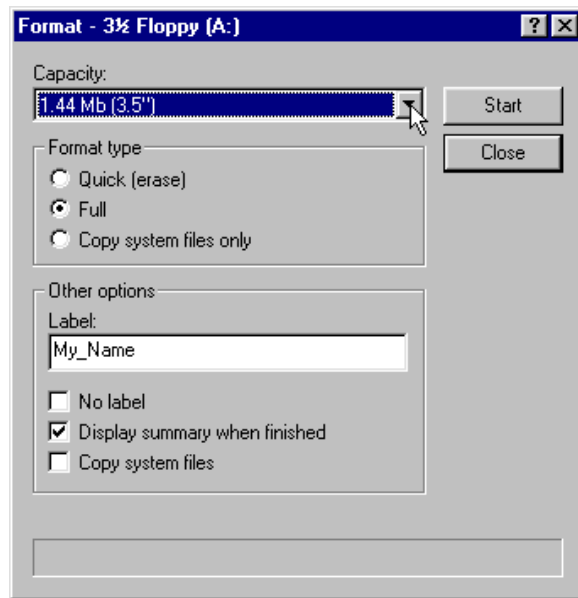


Double-click on the My Computer icon on your desktop or right-click the My Computer icon and click on the OPEN option.

My Computer can open in several view options. This view option shows large icons.

To make your computer's display looks similar, click on the menu option View and select Large Icons from the drop down a list.

Next, right-click on the 3-1/2 Floppy icon and select Format from the menu.



In this window we are exposed to a couple of new Windows objects. A frame is a container which groups objects. The gray sculptured line surrounding 'Format type' and 'Other options' is called a *frame*. It groups objects of like type or similar purpose.

Below Label: is a text box. It is used to allow the operator to input information.

The Progress bar: After clicking on the Start command button, a progress bar will be displayed at the bottom of the form. [Note: the Start button refers to the command button in this widow, not the one on the task bar.]

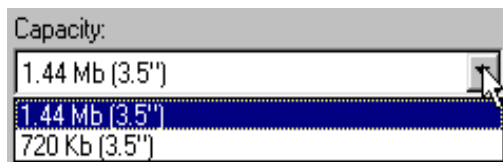
Highlighted command buttons: Note the dark border around the Close command button. It is said to have *focus*. If you press the Enter key, Windows will 'Close' the format operation.

Pressing ENTER to select a highlighted command button is one of several Windows shortcuts. Any time that a command button has a dark border, you can press ENTER or click on the button to activate the command. Both methods yield the same results.

If you already have your hands on the keyboard, pressing ENTER is a faster way to invoke an operation. Moving mouse to click on an object wastes time and increases operator stress.

Let's go through the format screen starting at the top.

Capacity: is a drop down box. It shows the two types of 3-1/2 floppy drive types which can be formatted. HD (high density) 1.44mb and DD (double density) 720Kb. If you have the correct capacity value showing in the window, you do not need to change



anything. If you need to change the selected value, click on the downward pointing triangle to 'drop down ' the box. Click on the correct value. Clicking on the listed option will select the option and close the box.

Next you must select one of the three options from the 'Format type' frame.

Quick (erase) *Default method and least secure.*

This option is fast, but it has several limits. It does not erase the information on the disk. It only clears the FAT (file allocation table). You could achieve the same results by deleting all the files on the disk. If data security is an issue, this is not a secure way to erase files.

Full

This is the best method. It not only clears the FAT but also writes and reads data to all sectors of the floppy. It over writes all data on the disk. There is no way to recover old data once this method is used.

In addition, this option verifies that the disk is in good condition to receive data. It is possible over time for disks to go bad. After the format process completes, you will get a report on the condition of the disk. Verify that the disk had no 'bad sectors'. [More on this later.]

Copy system files only.

This option is a carryover from old MSDOS. It copies several files to the disk. A disk which has the required system files could be used to boot your computer. These files require almost 1/4 of your disk space and are normally never needed. In a later chapter we will make a system disk. (This option requires a previously formatted disk.)

The 'Other options' frame:

Label:

This option is another carryover from old MSDOS and has limited value in Windows. MSDOS reported the disk's label on the first line of the Directory command. Windows only shows the label if you are viewing at the floppy disks property's screen.

A label cannot exceed 11 characters. A label cannot contain any spaces. You cannot use the following characters. !@#\$%^&*()+=/?><|\ or a period. You can use the underscore.

An example label: My_Name

A label is not case sensitive. All letters will be converted to uppercase when written to the disk.

No label

This option just 'grays' out the area where you would write the label.

Display summary when finished.

Be sure to place a check in this box.

Copy system files

This is similar to the 'Copy system files only' option above, but this option places system files on the disk after formatting is complete. Both formatting and copying are done in a single step.

****** Warning ******

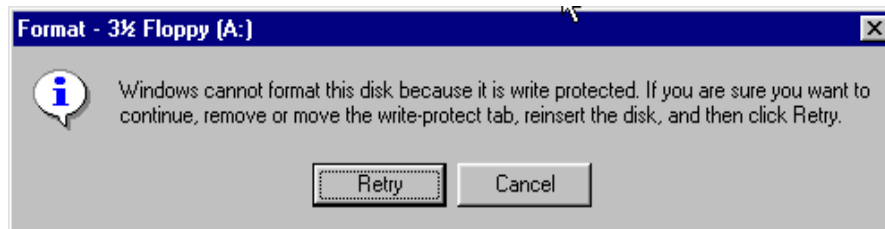
The next step will erase all information on your disk. Proceed only if you do not need any information presently on the disk.

If your screen looks like the screen display shown earlier, click Start.

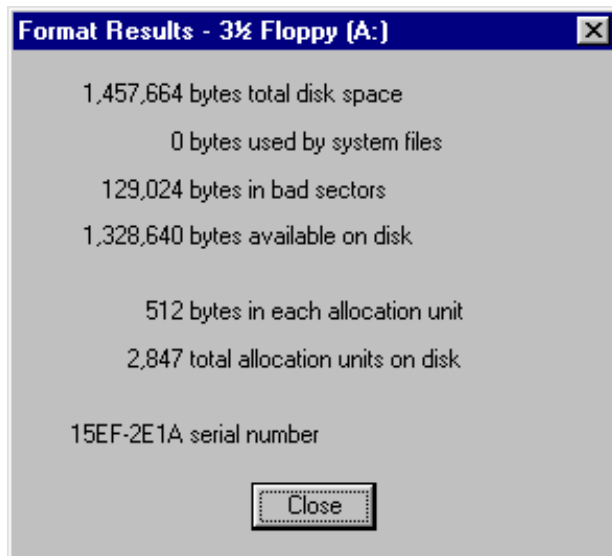
In a few seconds a processing bar will appear.



The process bar gives you a graphical indicator of the program's progress.



If you receive this error message, you need to change the write protect tab on the floppy disk.



After formatting, a results screen appears. Note the third line. BAD SECTORS

This disk might have a problem. Windows had trouble writing to several sectors on the disk.

If a floppy has bad sectors -
DO NOT USE IT

Floppies are very cheap. The data that they contain is time consuming to create and can not always be replaced. Don't take a chance with bad floppies.

The serial number is a system assigned number. It is based in part on the time and date that the disk was formatted. You can't change it. The disk will be given a new number each time that it is formatted.

Click Close on each of the two screens to exit the format program.