

# Definition



A .zip file is file that has been compressed to take up less space. Think of packing a suitcase. For convenience, you would rather pack one suitcase than three. As you add more clothes, you realize there is extra fluff that can be compressed by pressing down to remove any extra air; you might even find yourself sitting on the suitcase to try to zip the bulging contents securely inside.

Similar to that suitcase, a .zip file is usually a collection of files. These files are compressed to save space in order to send as an e-mail attachment or to download from the internet. It is easier, and faster, to e-mail or download one smaller file than several ultimately larger files.

And, just like you have to unpack that suitcase to get to your clothes, you have to *unzip* a compressed file to open the individual files inside.

On a Macintosh this process is called *stuffing*.

## NOTES:

*Technology*

*Training & Consulting*

## Understanding Zip Files



---

*Technology*

*Training & Consulting*

Phone: (410) 337-6139

Email: [training@goucher.edu](mailto:training@goucher.edu)

## Getting Started...

### The necessary software

The first thing you are going to need is software that will unzip (or extract or decompress) a zip file. The same software will also let you create zipped files of your own.

#### **HOT TIP!**

Windows XP already comes with this software installed.



There are many different software packages to choose from, but **WinZip** is most widely used on Goucher computers.

If needed, you can download a free evaluation copy of WinZip at [www.winzip.com](http://www.winzip.com), where you can also find comprehensive documentation on installation and frequently asked questions. The evaluation version of the software will continually prompt you to pay, but you can cancel through this request as often as needed.

Other examples of zip programs include:

- PKZip
- Stuff It (for Macintosh computers)

## Zipping & Unzipping...

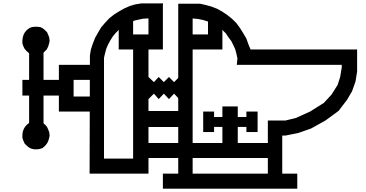
### Basic Overview

<b>Step One:</b>	Save the Zip file onto your computer
<b>Step Two:</b>	Decompress (unzip) the zip file
<b>Step Three:</b>	Scan the new files for viruses

### Unzipping/ Extracting/ Decompressing Files

These instructions assume that WinZip is already installed on your computer.

1. **Double-click** on the zip file.
2. WinZip will launch and you might get prompted to buy an upgrade. Skip through this by clicking on **I ACCEPT**.
3. A list of individual files included in the zip file will appear. Click on the **EXTRACT** button on the toolbar.
4. A new window will open with the location where the individual files will be copied. Use the right-hand side to navigate to a new location if necessary.  
***It is highly recommended that you use the NEW FOLDER button to keep the new files in a single place for virus scanning.***
5. Click on the **EXTRACT** button. The decompressed files will be copied to the location specified.



### Scanning Downloads For Viruses

It is important to check any files downloaded from the internet or saved to your computer for viruses before installing them. The steps to take for virus scanning will vary depending on what virus protection software is installed on your computer.

If you are using a Goucher computer, you can usually right-click on a file (use CONTROL-click on a Macintosh) and choose “Scan for viruses” to scan an individual file. However, this will not work for .zip files. Instead, you will have to “unzip” the file first and check the individual files for viruses before using them.

### Creating Zipped Files

Again, assuming that you are using WinZip software...

1. Launch the WinZip software.
2. Click on the **NEW** button on the toolbar.
3. Navigate to a location for your new file and type in a name for the file. Click on **OK**.
4. Click on the **ADD** button as often as necessary to add all the files you want to store in this zip file by double-clicking on them.
5. Close the program.