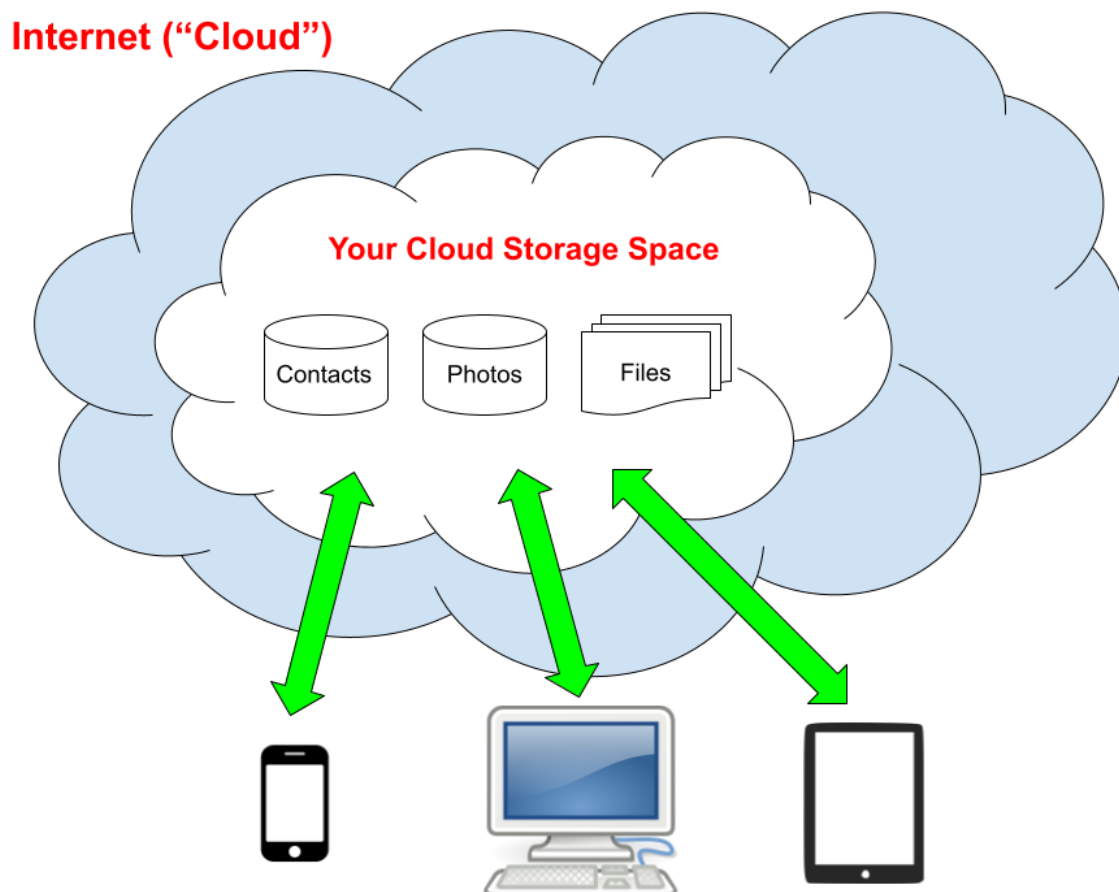


Google Drive

Google Drive is an Internet based storage system (“cloud storage”) that you can use to store files related to Google web applications (Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, etc.) and also all other types of files. It looks like a folder based files system similar to what you find on PC, Mac or other computers.

It can be thought of as an external drive for your computer that can store files which can be shared with your other devices and other users:



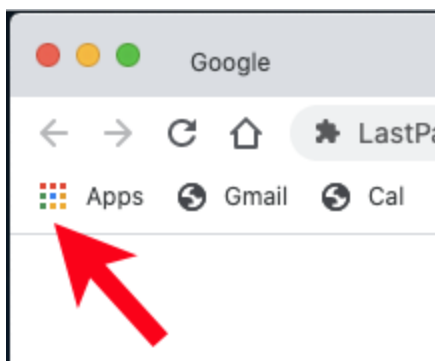
Google Drive can also be used on computers to back up your local files.

Accessing Google Drive With A Browser

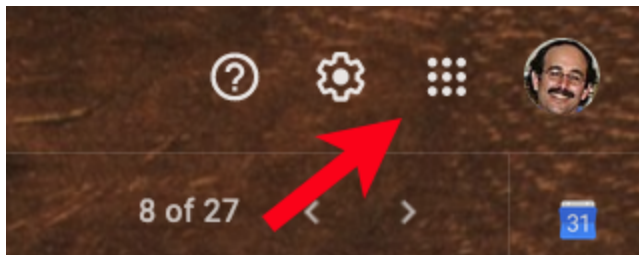
You can view your Google Drive on any web browser by going to:

<https://drive.google.com>

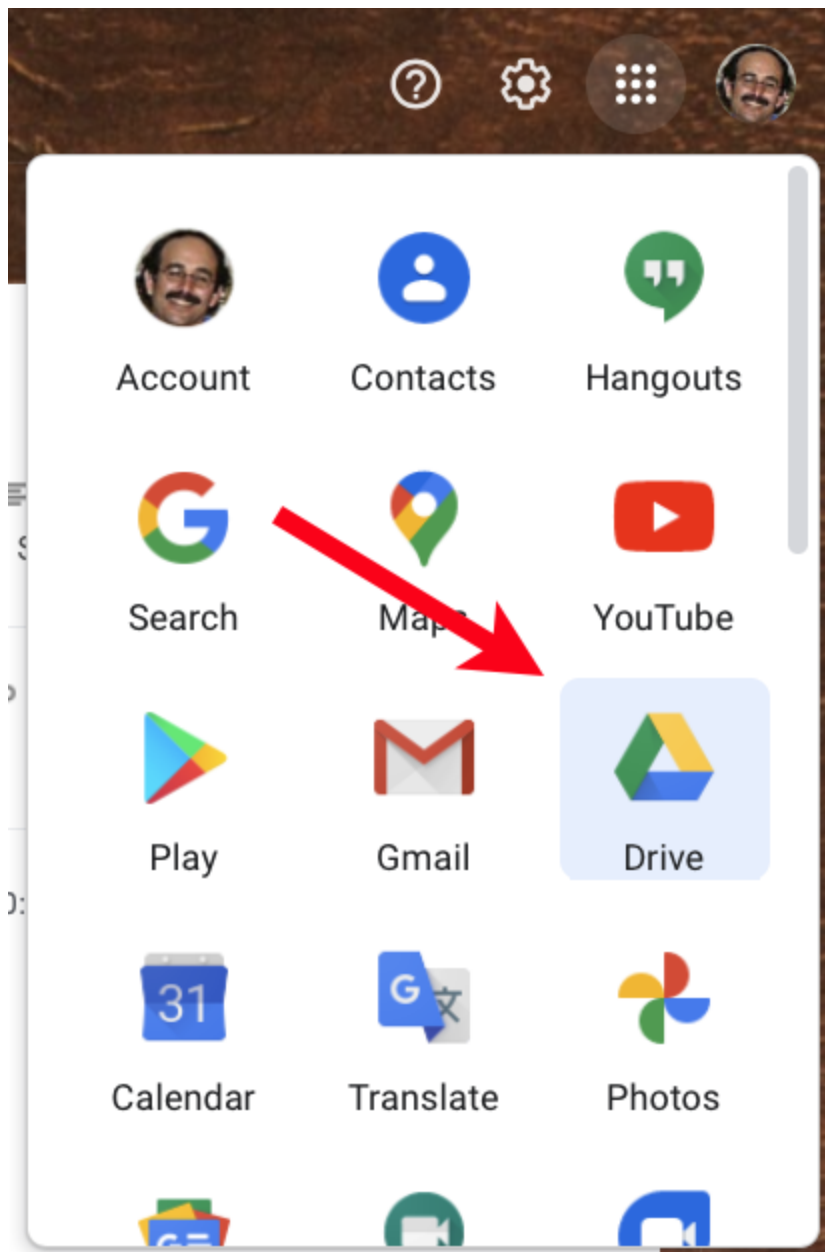
You can also click on the Google Apps icon in the Chrome browser



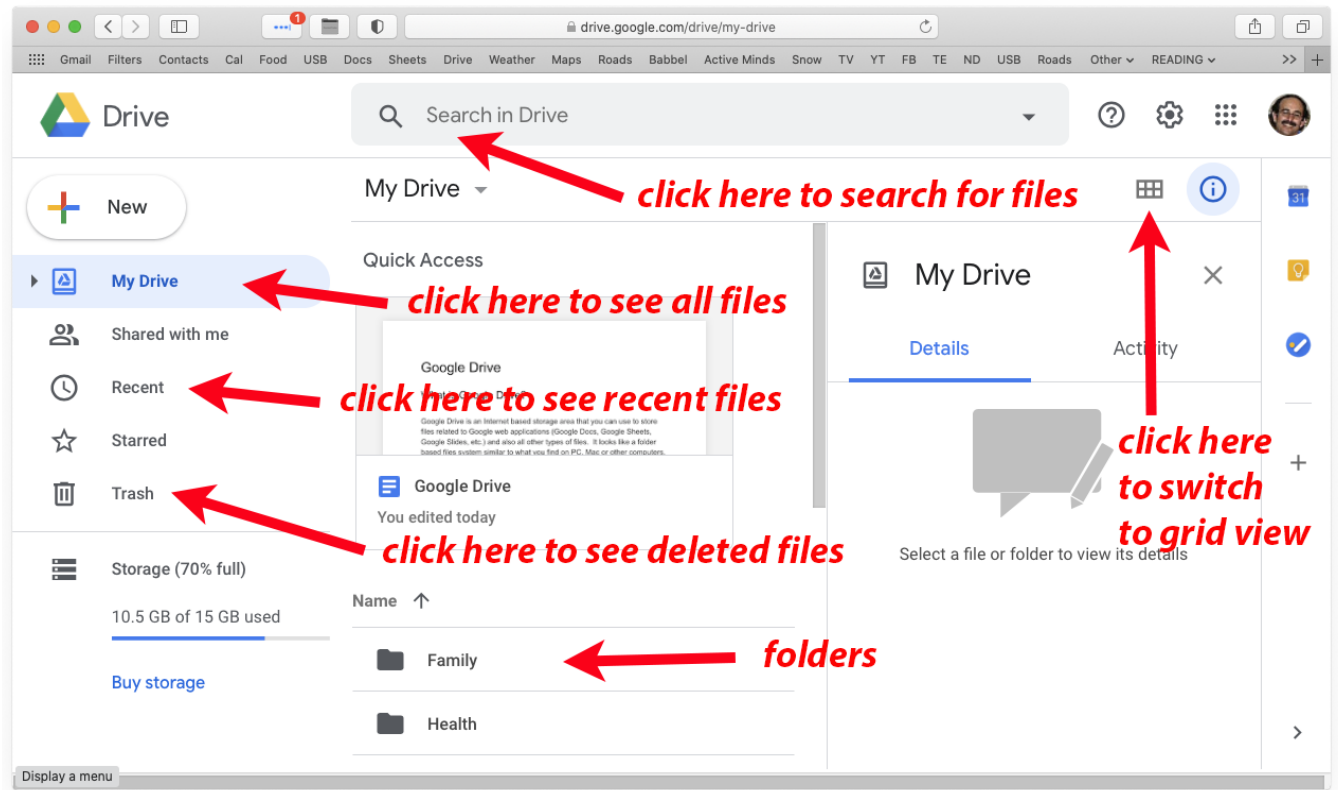
Or the Google Apps icon in Gmail or other Google web applications:



Then select the Drive icon from the pop-up menu:



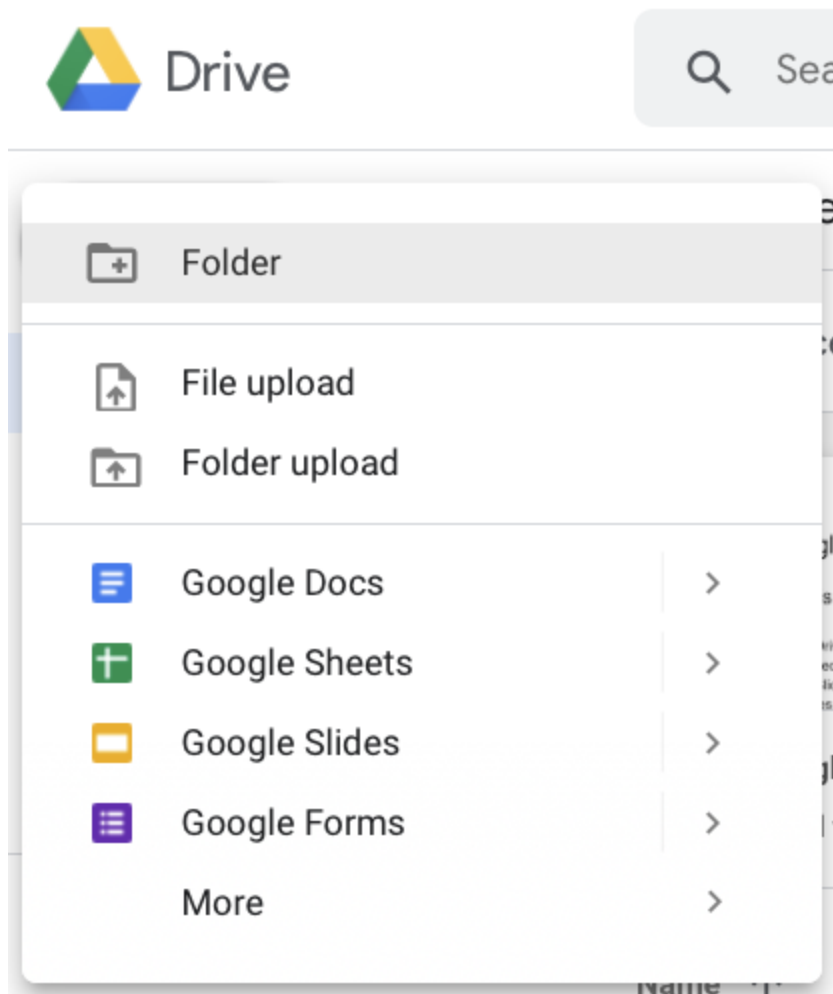
This will take you to the Google Drive homepage. The left sidebar will have “My Drive” highlighted and show you the contents of your drive:



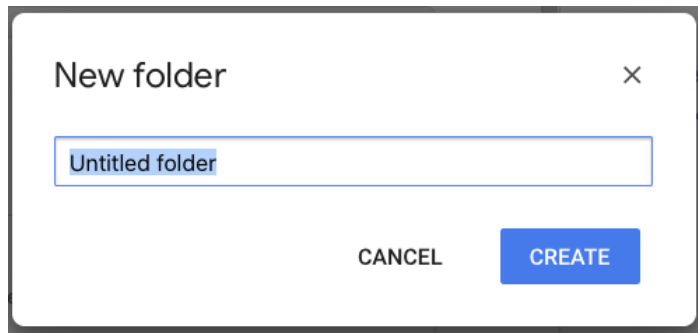
Google provides 15Gb of space for you for free or you can pay to get more storage space. You can currently get 100Gb of storage for \$1.99 per month, 200Gb for \$2.99 per month or 2Tb of storage for \$9.99 per month.

Currently, Google does not count compressed photos you save in Google Photos against the 15Gb storage limit, but this is changing on June 1st, 2021. You can import photos into Google Photos before then and their space will not count against your Google Drive storage limit.

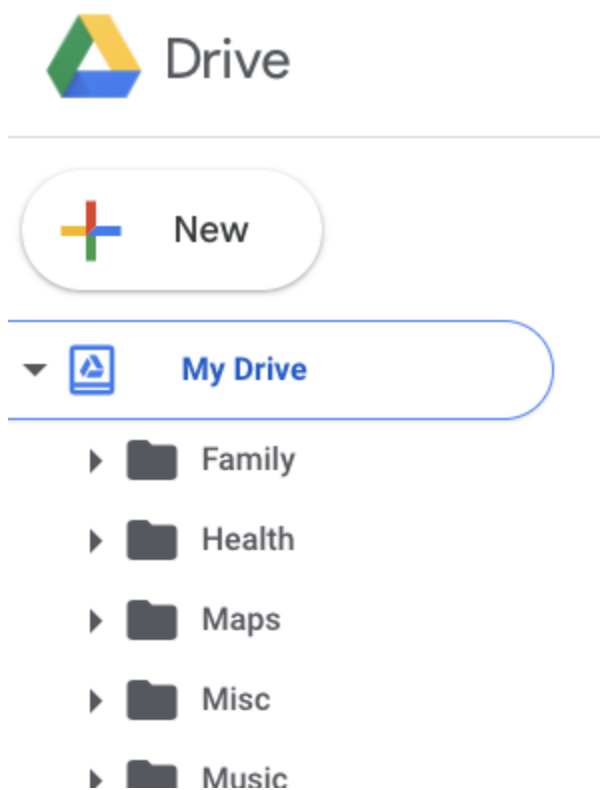
The “New” button lets you create a new folder, Google file or another file:



For example to create a new Google Docs file, click on Google Docs. You can organize your files in folders by click on the “Folder” which brings up this popup window where you enter the folder name:

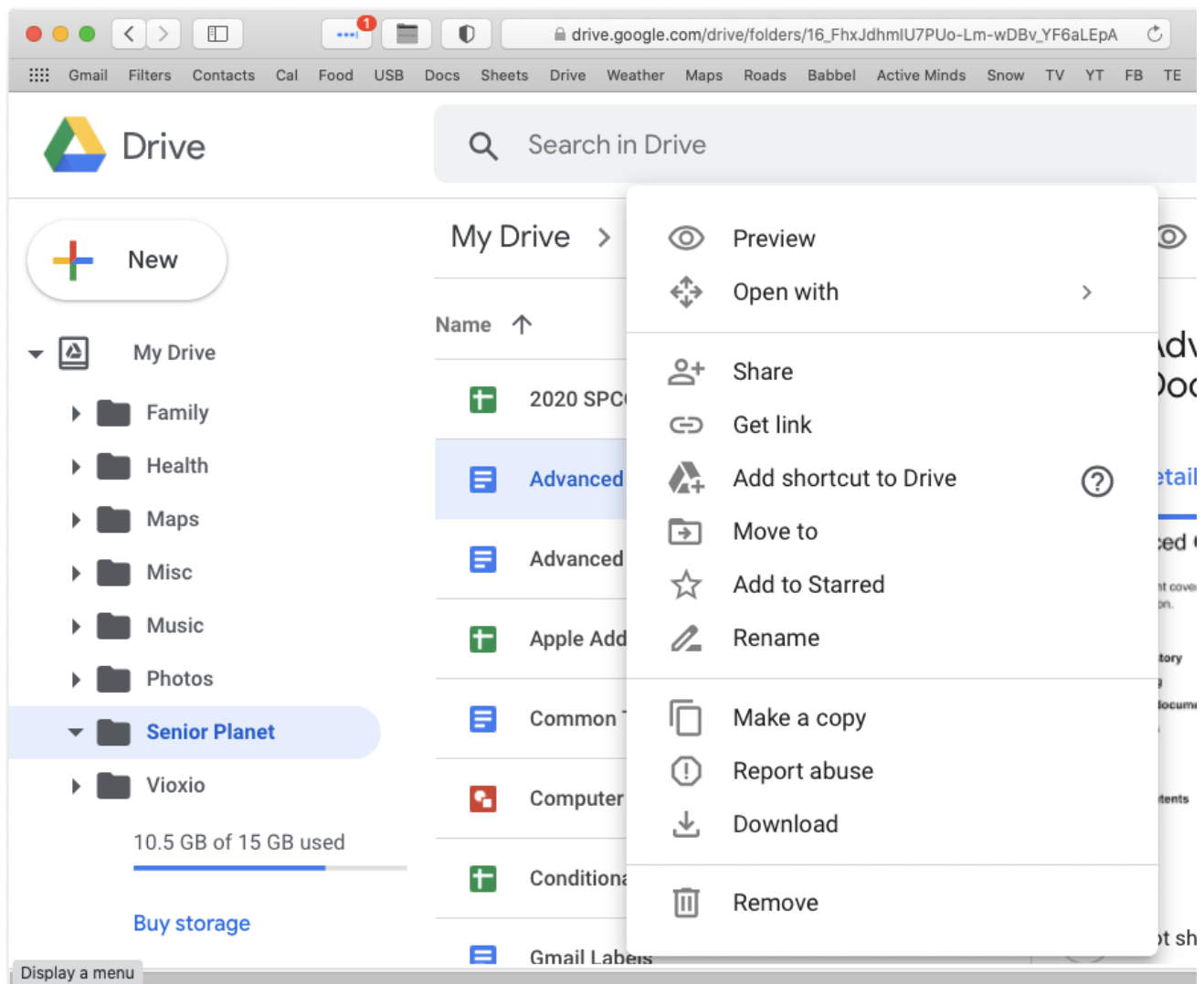


If you click on the small black triangle to the left of “My Drive” it will show you your folders (which are also visible in the main window):



You can drag files to these folders just like on a computer to organize your files.

If you right click on a file, this menu will appear which has many useful functions:

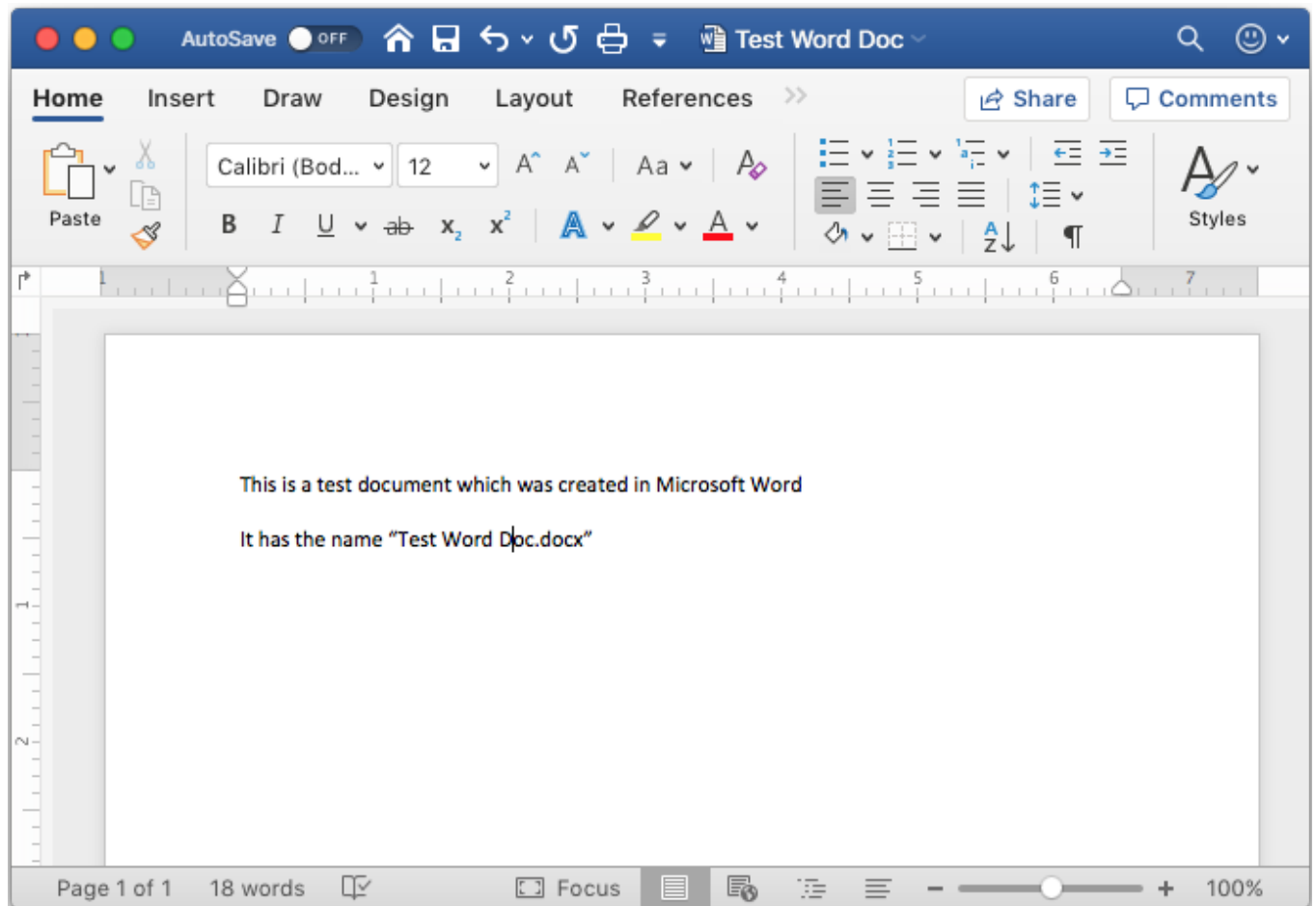


The Preview function will show you what other people will see if you send them a link to this file or share it with them (via the Share option).

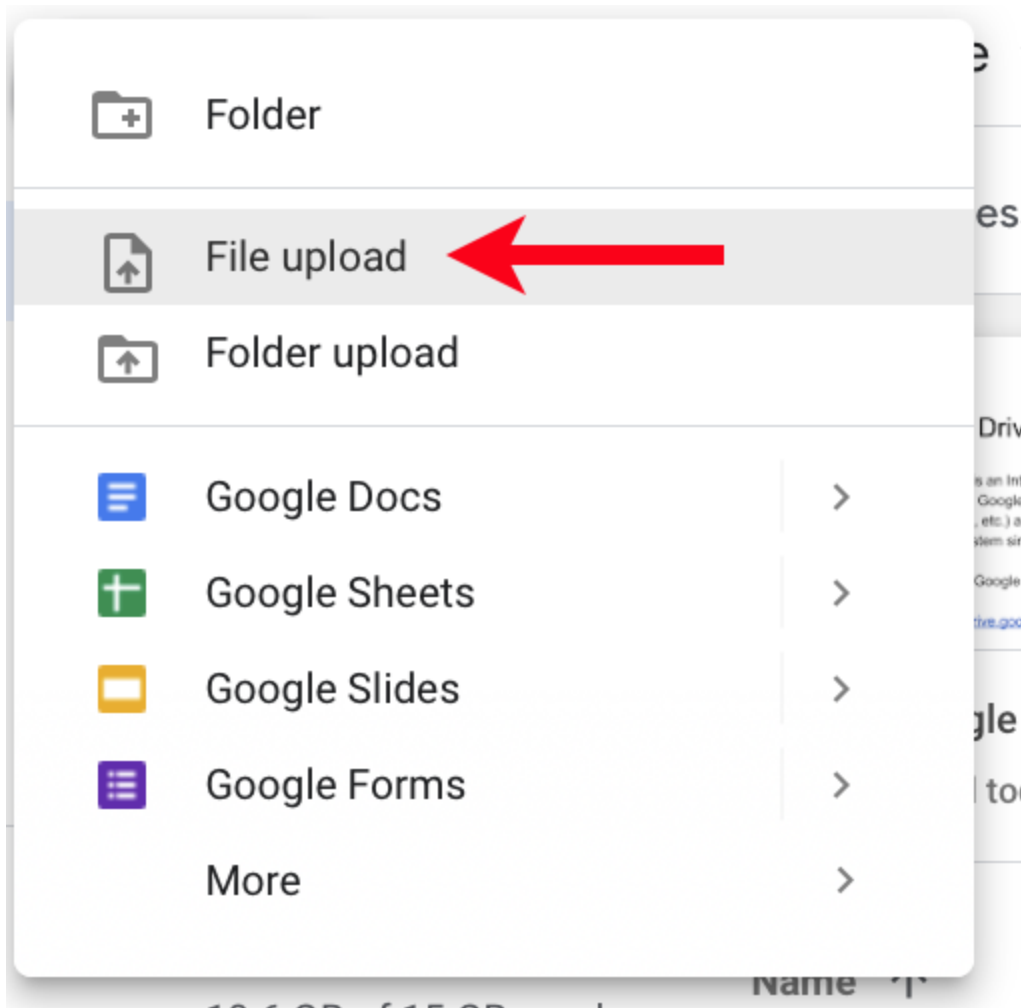
The “Move to” option will let you move a file to a different folder. Folders can contain subfolders, just like on an external storage drive on your computer.

Uploading Files to Google Drive

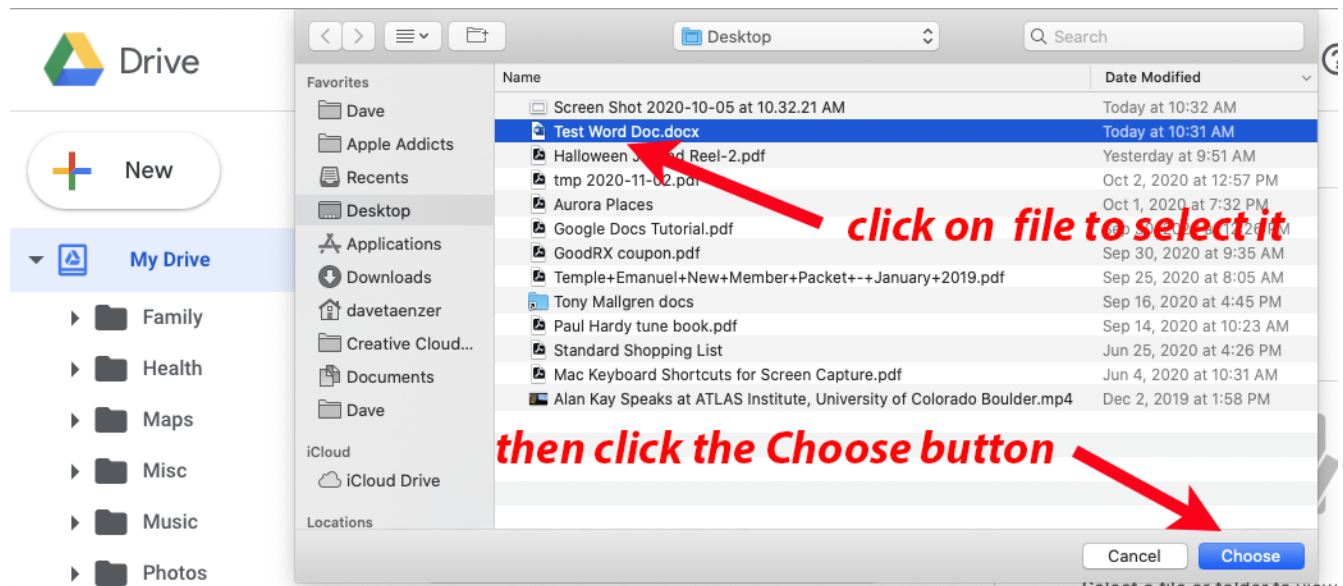
If we create a test Microsoft Word document:



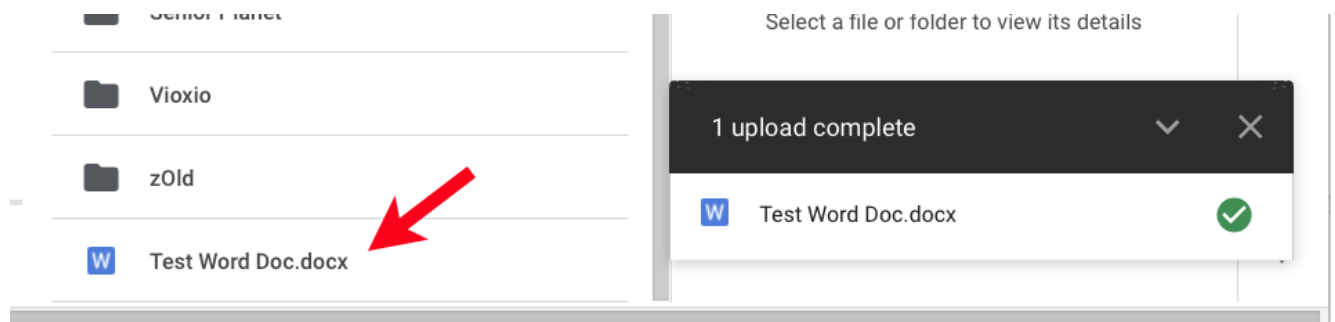
We can add it to our Drive via the New button “File Upload” option:



Which brings up a file dialogue window:



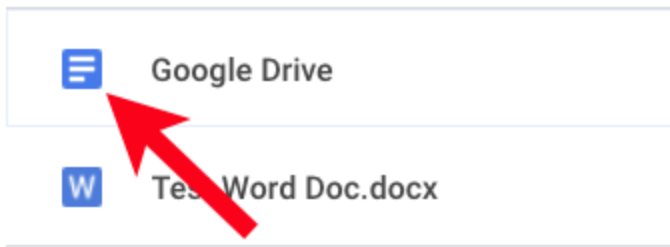
This will upload the Word file to your Drive. You will see a popup window in the lower right corner and the file appear in the list:



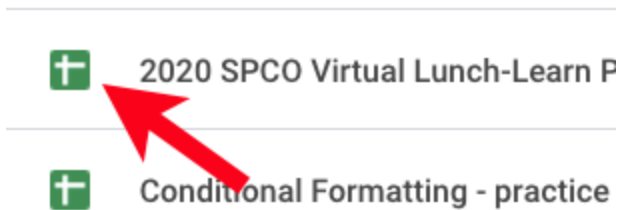
The icon to the left of the file indicates the file type (MS Word in this case)



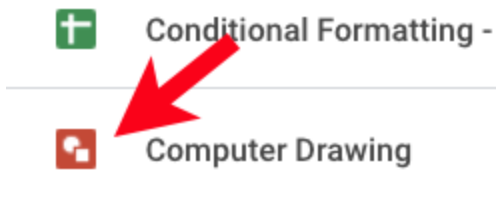
The icon for Google Docs looks like this:



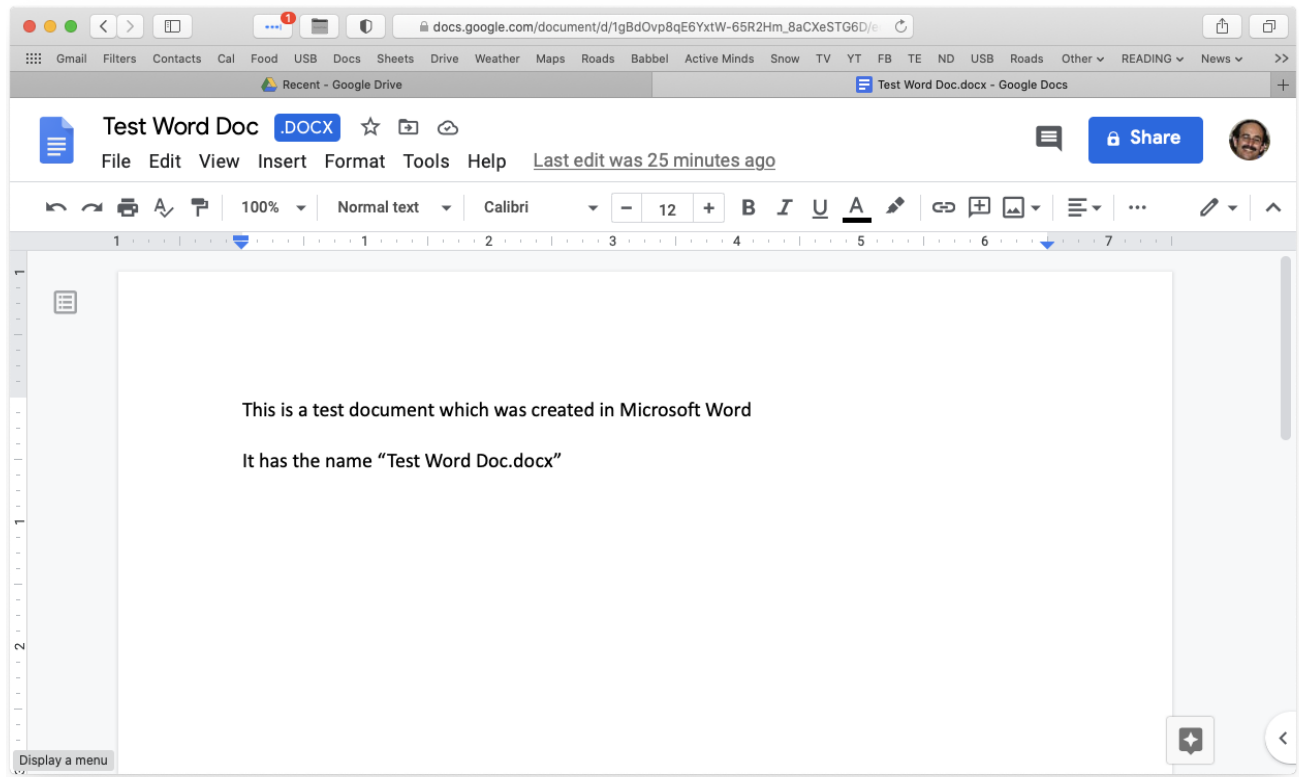
The icon for Google Sheets looks like this:



The Google Drawings icon looks like this:



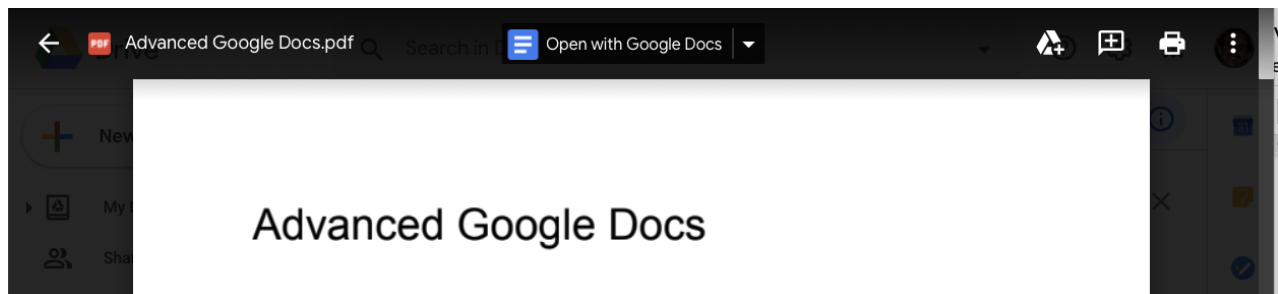
If you double click on a Microsoft Word file, it will open in Google Docs:



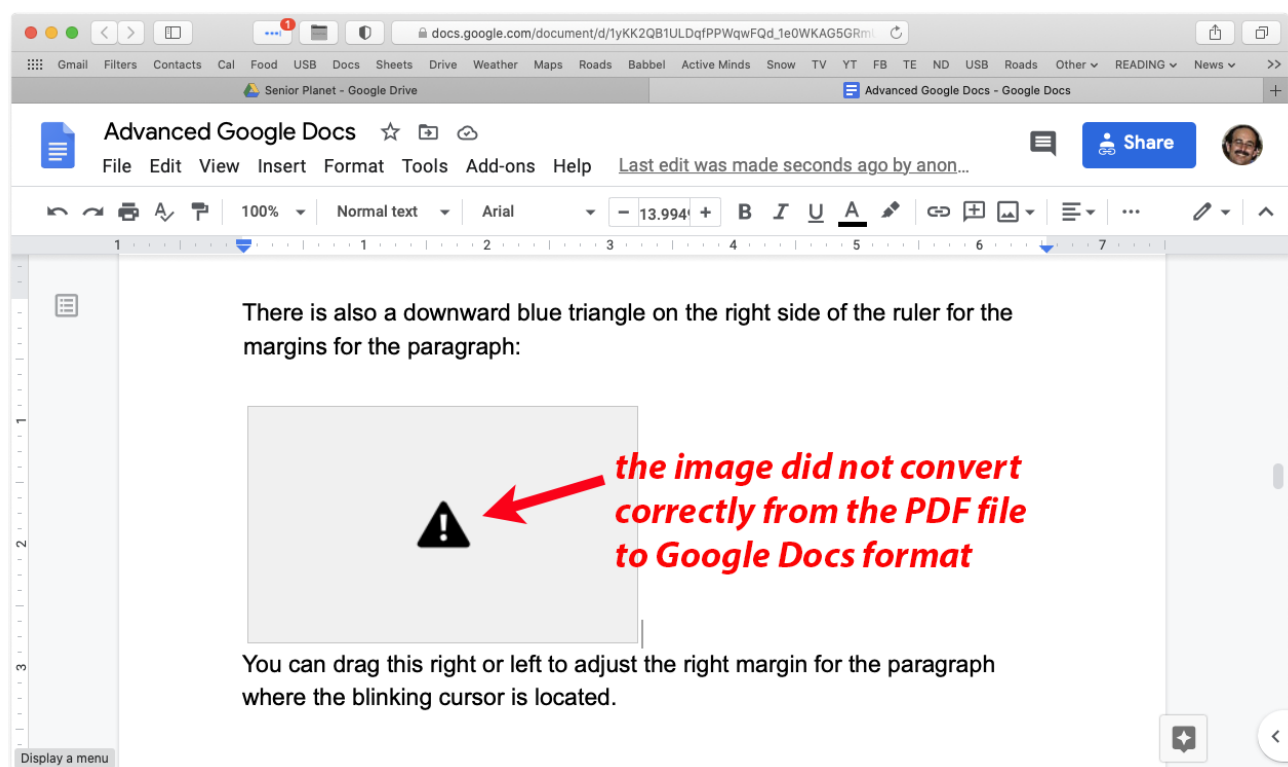
You can then edit the file and it will stay in Microsoft Word format on the Drive. The changes you make will be to the version on your Google Drive and will not change the original file you uploaded from your computer.

You can also convert the Microsoft Word file to a Google Docs file using the Convert to Google Docs on the File menu, but this is not usually necessary.

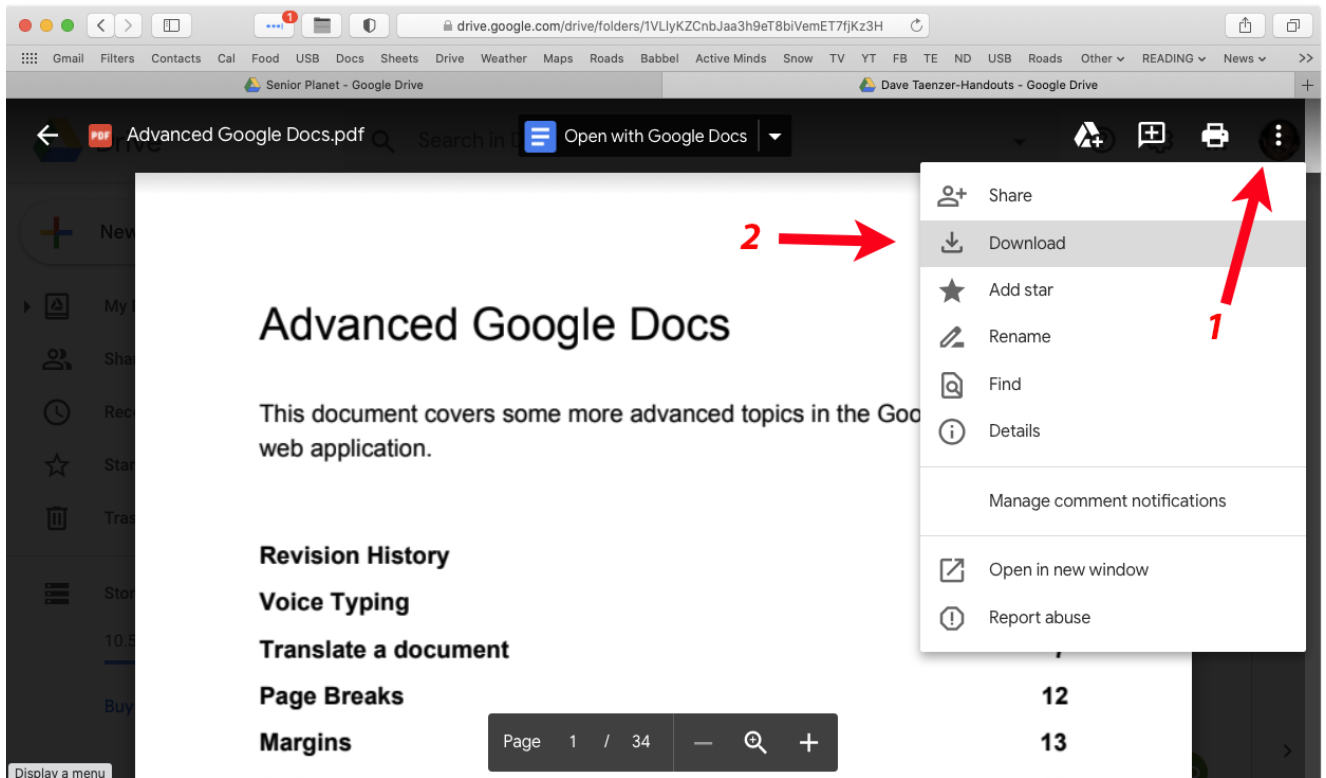
One known problem relates to opening PDF files in Google Docs that contain pictures. Some images may not convert correctly. For example, if you are sent a link to a PDF file in Google Drive you can view it:



But if you click “Open in Google Docs”, you may see this type of problem:

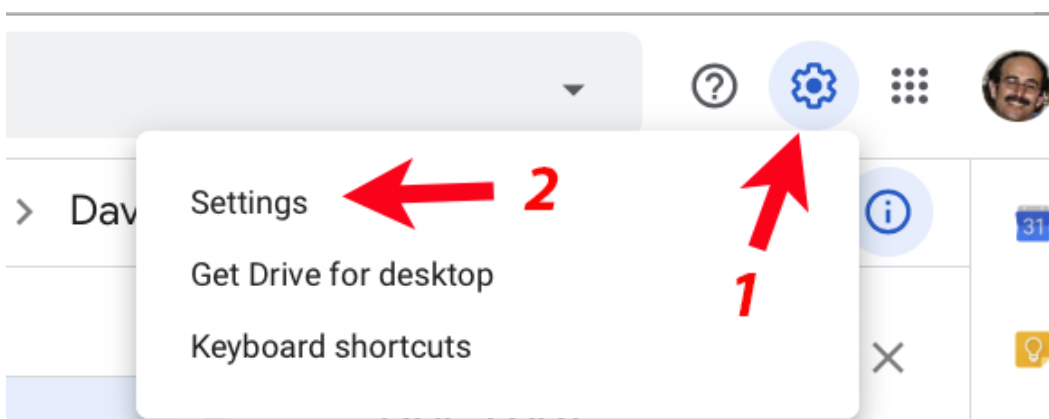


If you try to open a PDF in Google Drive and want to save the PDF to your computer instead of just viewing it on the web browser, you can click on the three vertical dots icon in the upper right corner of the window and then on the Download option:

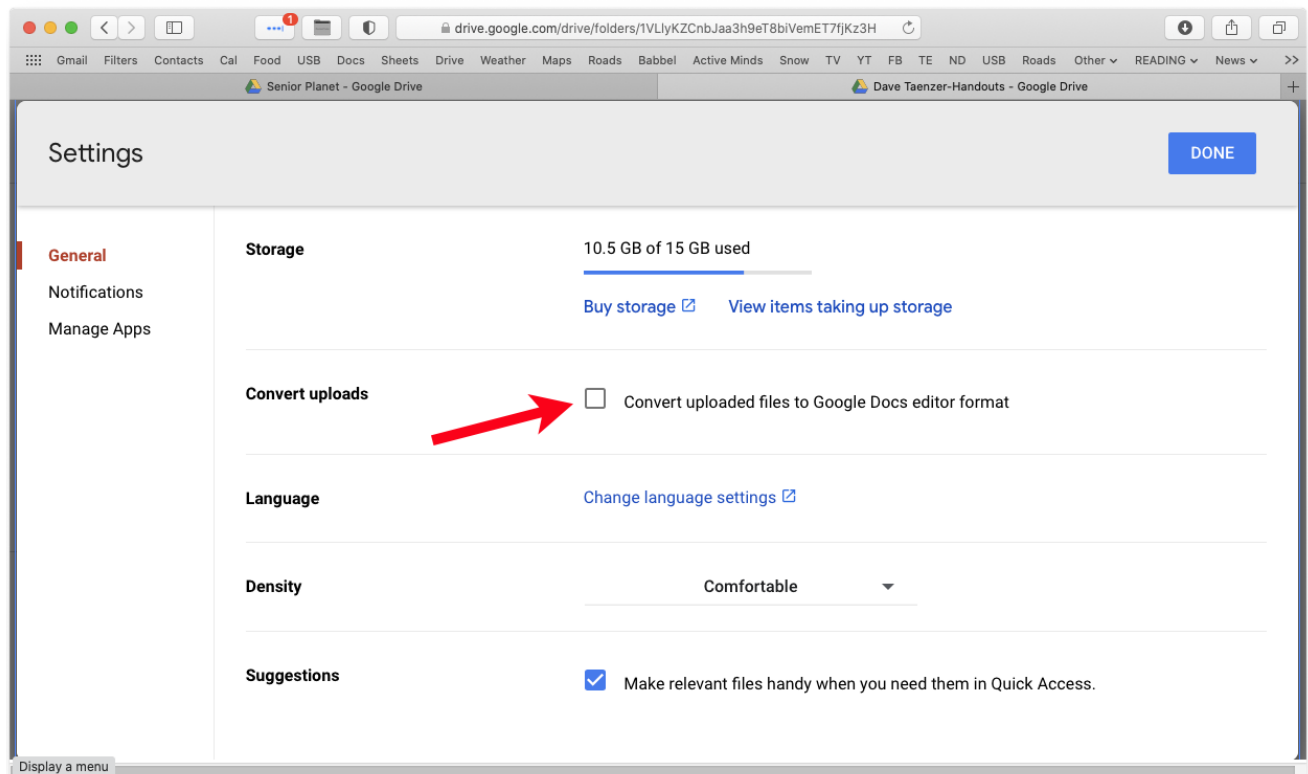


This will put a copy of the PDF file on your computer in a Downloads folder or wherever your browser downloads files. This is a setting on your browser settings or preferences.

If you want to have Google Drive automatically convert your files to Google format (e.g. Microsoft Word to Google Docs), you can change a setting in Google Drive by clicking on the gear icon and then “Settings”:



If you want documents converted automatically to Google docs, check this box on the settings popup window:

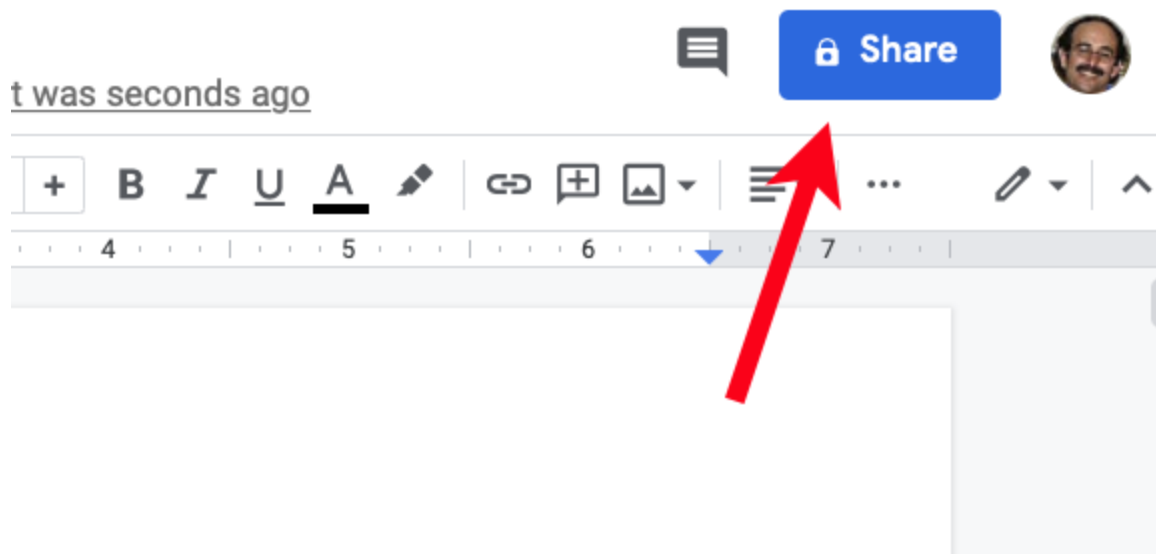


This is normally not necessary but can be helpful.

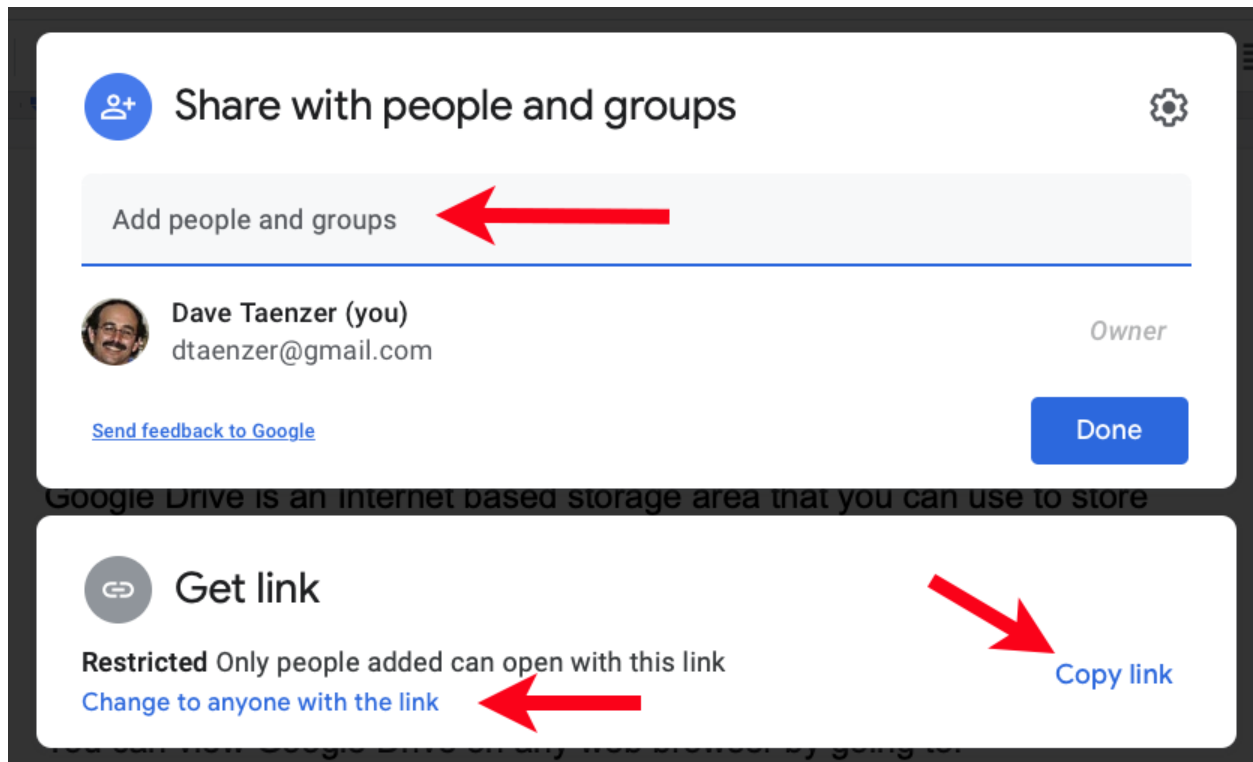
Sharing and Collaborating

You can share a document or folder with other people on the Internet and control whether they can edit or only view the file.

To share a document, click on the blue Share button in the upper right corner of the window:

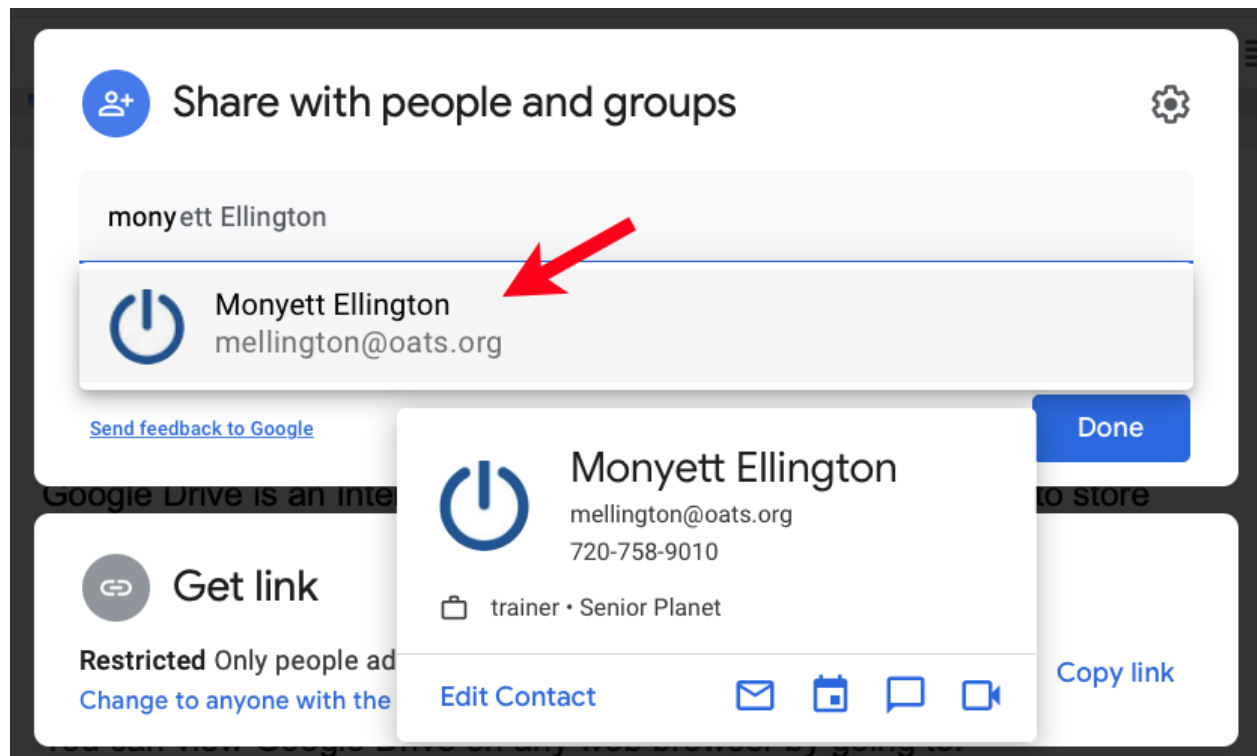


This brings up a popup window where you can add people to share the document by typing email address(es) or name(s) into the top field:



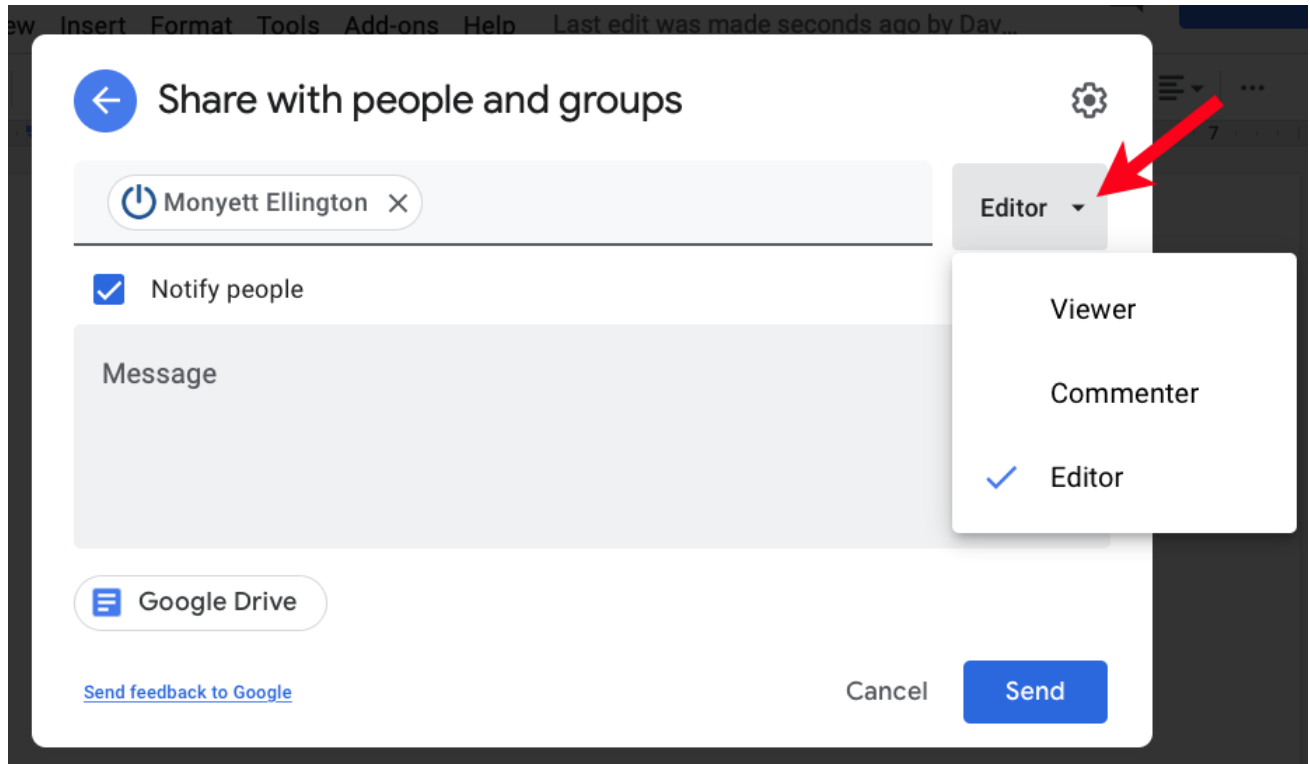
You can also change the general access to the document by clicking on the “Change to anyone with the link” if you want to simply email the link to the document to another person for viewing it. You can then click the “Copy link” button and paste the link into an email and the recipients will be able to view the document.

For example, if I want to share a document with Monyett, I can enter her name into the sharing popup window and click on her name:



Since she is in my contacts, I just click on her name.

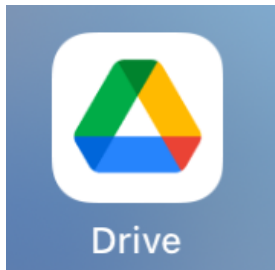
I can then control her access with by clicking on the triangle next to Editor:



If I make her an editor, she can not only make changes to the file, but we can actually both be editing it at the same time.

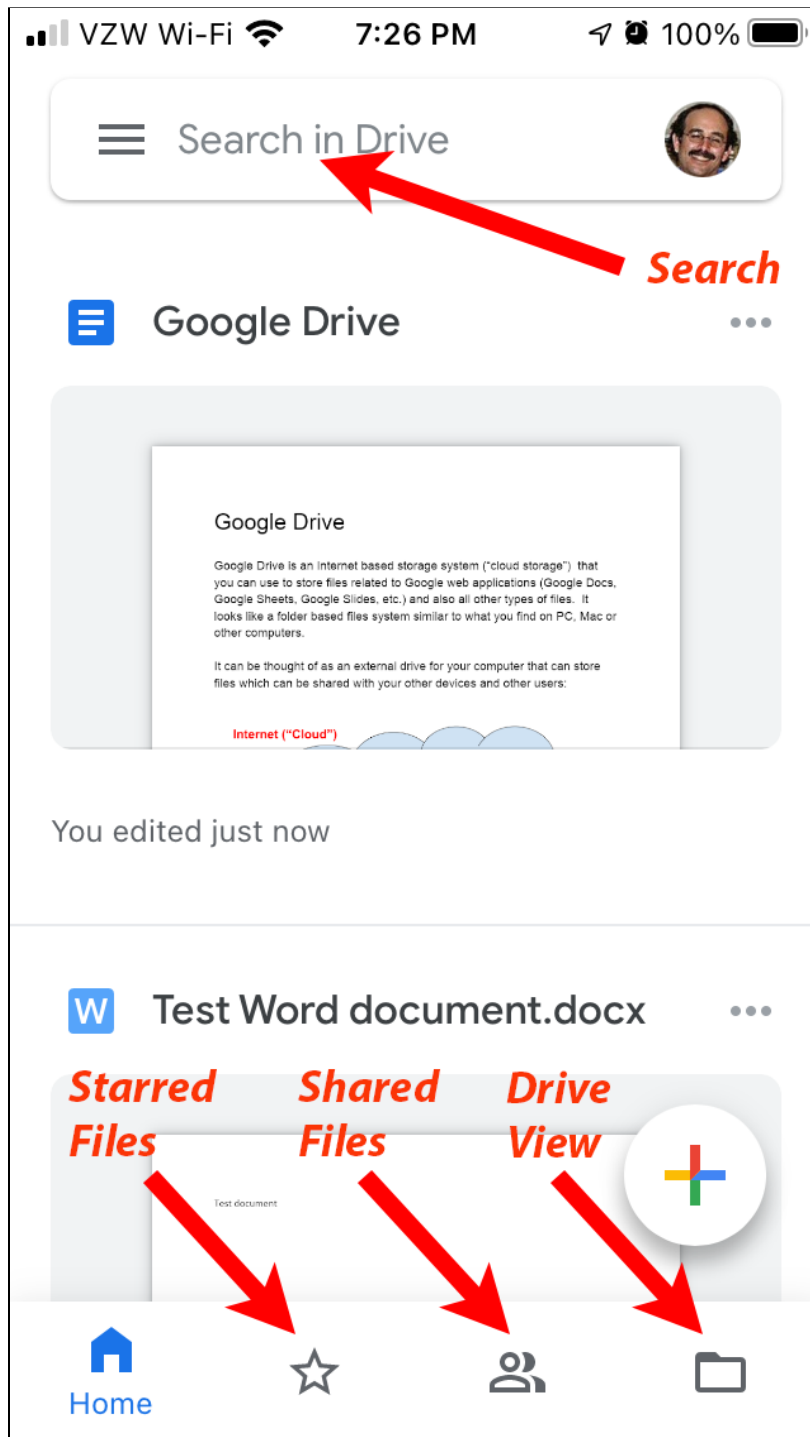
Google Drive on a Phone

There is a Google Drive app for both iPhone and Android phones. You can download it through the App Store. The icon for Google Drive looks like this on your phone:



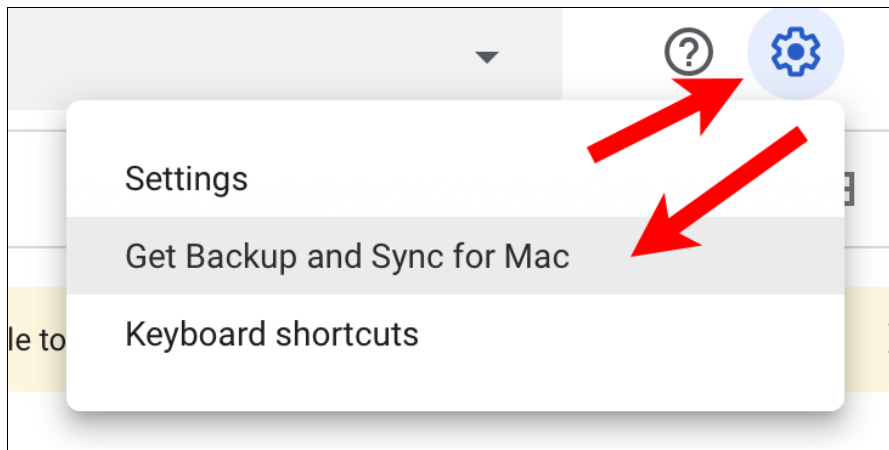
The home screen shows you recent files. You can search for files or view starred or shared files and also see the Google Drive view with folders and files in a fashion similar to the browser display when you click on My Drive.

This is what the Google Drive app looks like on an iPhone:



Google Drive on a Computer

You can also download a program for your computer (PC or Mac) which can be used to view and backup files on your computer to Google Drive. You can do this by clicking on the Settings icon in the upper right corner and selecting to download the app:



Or go to this website:

<https://www.google.com/drive/download/>

This app can be used to make your Google Drive look like a folder on your computer and you can also set it up to backup your Documents, Desktop or other folders. In this case, it creates a mirror copy of the folder(s) on Google Drive and you can then access these on any device through a browser or an app on the mobile devices.

Note that if you use Google Drive to back up your computer you may need to purchase extra storage (as described above).

Google Drive is a very useful tool for many purposes. I hope you enjoy it.

References

Google Drive Help

<https://support.google.com/drive/?hl=en#topic=14940>

How to Use Google Drive

<https://support.google.com/drive/answer/2424384?co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop&hl=en>

How to use Google Drive - Tutorial for Beginners (Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdrxAoqfvbA>

Download Google Drive for a Mac or PC

<https://www.google.com/drive/download/>

PC Magazine Google Drive Review

<https://www.pcmag.com/reviews/google-drive>

Pros and Cons of Google Drive

<https://docstips.com/pros-and-cons-of-google-drive/>

PC Magazine: Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides Will Now Open Microsoft Office Files in Editing Mode

<https://www.pcmag.com/news/google-docs-sheets-and-slides-will-now-open-microsoft-office-files-in-editing>