

# Best Practices for Folder Organization

Before adding any content to the [Content Collection](#), users should plan out how they will manage their content. This will allow them to organize content in a way which best meets their individual needs.

Files in the Content Collection are organized in a tree structure of nested folders up to, and including, the content area level. This means that each folder may contain other subfolders and files. The term "items" refers to files and folders.

A folder stores both files and other folders. Folders are automatically available to the user who added the folder but must be shared if other users are to view the folder and its contents. It is important to remember that all folders are contained within other folders up to the root (/) folder. Root folders are folders in which all other folders are placed. Content areas, such as Users, Courses, Institution, and Library, are simply folders stored under the root folder.

The system does not allow subfolders with the same name in a single parent folder. For example, two folders named Group Projects may not be created in the top-level of the username folder. The system also does not allow files with the same name to exist in a folder.

## Related articles:

[Page:Best Practices for Folder Organization](#)

[Page:Best Practices for Building and Managing Course Content](#)

[Page:How to Create an Item](#)

[Page:How to Access Content Collection](#)

[Page:How to Attach Course Files to a Content Item](#)

### 1. Creating a Private Folder

A private folder is created in the same way as other folders in the Content Collection, through the Add Folder option. The permissions granted on the folder determine whether or not it is private. In the username folder, a private folder is a subfolder that is not shared with any other users. A user may create a subfolder in his or her username folder and not grant any other users permissions to it. In a course folder, a private folder may be specifically for the instructor, or it may also be accessible by users with other course Roles. For example, a private subfolder may be created with permissions granted to the instructor, teaching assistant, and course builder. This folder would not be available to any students enrolled in the course.

### 2. Creating a Public Folder

Similar to private folders, public folders are created in the same way as other folders, using the Add Folder option. The permissions granted on a folder determine whether or not it becomes to multiple users and groups of users. Any user with Manage Permissions may share the item with a wider audience. In a username folder, a public folder may be created and shared with a group of users collaborating on a project. In a course folder, a public folder may be created and shared with all users enrolled in the course. This folder would include course information or articles that the whole class needs to read.

### 3. Using Private Content Space and Public Content Space

Creating separate folders for personal content (private space) and folders that are available to other users (public space) is very helpful. This method allows the user to have certain folders available only to them, where they can store personal content. For example, one personal folder may contain papers and projects that are in progress, while another contains professional content that is not ready to be shared, such as resumes and cover letters for jobs. Additional permissions for these personal folders are not granted to anyone else. When a document is ready to be shared, it may be copied or moved to a public folder. For example, if an instructor is working on a course document he or she can create the draft in a personal folder, and then move it to a shared folder when it is complete. The shared folder is shared with all users enrolled in the class (public space that is set to be available to only course members), and allows for collaboration.

### 4. Organizing the Folders

A course folder for each course appears by default under Courses. The default roles that have full permissions (read, write, manage, and remove) to this folder when the folder is first created are instructors, teaching assistants, and course builders. Administrators may edit this default setting. For example, administrators may set it so that when a course folder is first created, only instructors and TAs have full permissions. It is very important to understand which permissions have been granted to the folder before proceeding with setting up subfolders and additional permissions. Any user with manage permission on the course folder can grant additional permissions on that folder to other users. For example, an instructor may want to grant read permission to all students in the course to the course folder, and read and write permission to a public folder created beneath the main course folder.

### 5. Storing Single Course Content

The temporary nature of courses makes the course folder (tied to the course ID) useful for storing content that is specific to a single course. If a course is deleted, the folder tied to the course ID is no longer accessible. If content that is stored in the course folder does need to be reused, options for copying and moving items are available. It may be easier to store content that is used in multiple courses in the institution folder or the instructor's user folder. This also depends on how the Administrator configures the institution folder and its availability. Keep in mind that if course-related content is stored in a user folder, and it has not been shared. This content will be unavailable if the user leaves the Institution and is deleted from the system.

## Folder Examples

Subfolders within the course folder may be used to store both private and public content. The following are some examples of folders that may be created in the course folder:

- **Private Folder**

A private folder is shared with instructors, teaching assistants, and other applicable course roles that contain private course information, such as test and survey results. These users all have read, write, manage and remove permission on the folder.

The instructor may decide to retain the course folder as a workspace for the course, and not allow users to access any items in the course folder. Instead, the instructor may link to Content Collection items from the course. In this scenario, the entire course folder would be a private folder.

- **Group Folders**

A group folder is shared with course groups, which may be used as group collaboration areas. There are a few options for setting this up:

1. Grant all students in the course read access on the top-level course folder. Remove read permission for students to all private folders. Add permissions for each group to their respective group folder. This option allows students to use the Find Folder tool to locate the group folder.
2. Grant each course group permission to their respective group folder in the course (do not grant any permission for course users to the top-level course folder). The students may use Search, Go To Location, and Bookmarks to locate the folder.

- **Public Folder**

Folder shared with all course users where they may access course related materials, such as the syllabus or reading list. There are a few options for setting this up:

1. Grant all students in the course read access on the top-level course folder. Remove read permission for students to all private folders. Add permissions for all course users to the public folder. This option allows students to use the Find Folder tool to locate the public folder.
2. Grant all course users permissions to the public folder (do not grant any permission for course users to the top-level course folder). The students may use Search, Go To Location, and Bookmarks to locate the folder.