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Burning a CD

Background

CD ReWritable software, also known as CD Burning software, is the program used to copy data to a CD. Using a CD burner (CD-RW) and software, you can store up to 700 megabytes on a single CD. Blank CD's are inexpensive and durable, making them an ideal media to store backup information.

The term "burn" comes from the idea that once data is copied to the CD, it cannot be changed or erased. Although most CD burners can use re-writable media, this is not recommended due to the price, reliability and time needed for CD re-writable discs.

Summary

All CD burning software uses the same basic method: open the program, add the file(s) that you want to put on the CD, burn the disc.

Terms

Pane: A window can contain other areas inside of it. These areas can either be called a Window or a *Pane*. The difference between a window and a *pane* is that a window will always have a Minimize, Maximize/Restore, and Exit button like this:

but a *pane* will not.

Instructions

1. Open the CD burning software. Most programs immediately ask if you are burning a data, music, or other type of CD. Select **Data CD** for backing up files.
2. The screen will usually show four panes inside the main window. Two of these windows represent the files on your computer. Usually the left pane shows folders while the right pane shows files and folder inside the folder that is selected on the left. This format is common and is sometime referred to as the Explorer View.
3. The other two panes are blank, representing the CD you are about to burn. The left and right pane behave the same as the left and right panes in the Explorer View.
4. Locate the file or folder that you want to put on your CD in the Explorer View panes. Once you locate the file or folder, select it and click the "ADD" button. Sometimes you can also right-click on the file or folder and then choose "ADD" from the menu.
5. As you add more files and folders to the CD there will be an indicator that displays how much room you have remaining on the CD. This is usually a meter bar at the top or bottom of the main window.

6. When you are finished adding files, select "Write CD" from the button or File Menu. The term used may be slightly different, like "Burn CD" or "Write Disc".
7. The program will prompt you for details, but usually you can just click OK and insert a blank CD.

- Remember that just because a CD can hold 650-700 megabytes of data, you don't always need to fill a CD, especially considering the cost of a blank CD is about a quarter.
- If you run into errors, try closing other programs, and then try a new CD.

Reference

As always, your software is the best source of help. There is always a Help menu and the instructions for burning a CD will be the most obvious, since it is the purpose of the software. Usually there is a topic called "Getting Started" which contains simple instructions specific to your particular software.