

Re: Why do folders have the read-only attribute?

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2005-04/msg15836.html>

- *From:* "» mrtee «" <hingelicker@gmail.com>
 - *Date:* Wed, 27 Apr 2005 13:00:35 -0500
-

You do know that "Help and Support" is your friend correct?

I typed "read only" into the search box and this is only one of the results:

Begin quote

You Cannot View or Change the Read-Only or System Attribute of Folders

View products that this article applies to.

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For a Microsoft Windows 2000, Windows NT 4.0, Windows Millennium Edition, Windows 98, and Windows 95 version of this article, see 256614.

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SYMPTOMS

You may experience any of the following symptoms: . You cannot view or change the Read-only or System attributes of a folder by using the Properties dialog box for the folder. For example, you may experience the following symptoms: . When you view the General tab of a folder's Properties dialog box, the Read-only check box is not available, and there is no check box to change the System attribute.

. You click to clear or click to select the Read-only check box on the General tab of a folder's Properties dialog box. When you click OK or Apply, you receive the following message:

Confirm Attribute Changes

You have chosen to make the following attribute changes:

unset read-only

Do you want to apply this change to this folder only, or do you want to apply it to all subfolders and files as well?

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If you click Apply changes to this folder only, the Read-only attribute is changed for all the files in the folder, but the Read-only attribute is not changed for the folder, its subfolders, or any files in its subfolders. If you click Apply changes to this folder, subfolders, and files, the Read-only attribute is changed for all files in the folder and all files in the subfolders, but the Read-only attribute is not changed for the folder or its subfolders.

. Some programs may display error messages when you try to save files to a folder with the Read-only or System attribute. As a result, these programs may not be able to save files to the folder.

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CAUSE

Unlike the Read-only attribute for a file, the Read-only attribute for a folder is typically ignored by Windows, Windows components and accessories, and other programs. For example, you can delete, rename, and change a folder with the Read-only attribute by using Windows Explorer. The Read-only and System attributes is only used by Windows Explorer to determine whether the folder is a special folder, such as a system folder that has its view customized by Windows (for example, My Documents, Favorites, Fonts, Downloaded Program Files), or a folder that you customized by using the Customize tab of the folder's Properties dialog box. As a result, Windows Explorer does not allow you to view or change the Read-only or System attributes of folders.

Note In some previous versions of Windows, you can change the Read-only attribute for folders by using the Properties dialog box for the folder, but no versions of Windows permit you to change the System attribute by using Windows Explorer.

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WORKAROUND

To work around this issue, use the Attrib command at a command prompt (Cmd.exe) to view or remove the Read-only or System attributes of folders. Type attrib /? at the command prompt to view the syntax for the Attrib command.

Warning If you remove the Read-only or System attribute from a folder, it may appear as a ordinary folder and some customizations may be lost. For example, Windows customizes the Fonts folder and provides a special folder view that permits you to hide variations, such as bold and italic. It also permits you to change the folder's view settings in ways that are specific to fonts. If you remove the Read-only and System attributes of the Fonts folder, these customized view settings are not available. For folders that you have customized by using the Customize tab of the folder's Properties dialog box, the folder icon and other other customizations may be lost when you remove the Read-only attribute.

If a program cannot save files to a folder with the Read-only attribute,

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such as My Documents, change the Read-only attribute to System by using the `Attrib` command at a command prompt.

For example, to change the Read-only attribute to System for the `C:\Test` folder, use the following command:

```
attrib -r +s c:\test
```

Note that some programs may not operate correctly with folders that have the System attribute set. To remove both the Read-only and System attributes from the `C:\Test` folder, use the following command:

```
attrib -r -s c:\test
```

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STATUS

This behavior is by design.

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MORE INFORMATION

Windows stores file and folder attributes in the file system with the file and folder name, extension, date and time stamps, and other information. The Read-only check box for folders is not available because it does not apply to the folder. You can use this check box to set the Read-only attribute for files in the folder. However, you cannot use Windows Explorer to determine if a folder has the Read-only and System attributes set. To determine the attributes that are set on a folder, or to change these attributes, you must use the `Attrib` command from a command prompt.

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APPLIES TO

- . Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Datacenter Edition
- . Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems
- . Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Datacenter Edition
- . Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Enterprise Edition
- . Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Standard Edition
- . Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Web Edition
- . Microsoft Windows XP Professional
- . Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition
- . Microsoft Windows XP Professional 64-Bit Edition (Itanium)
- . Microsoft Windows XP Media Center Edition 2002
- . Microsoft Windows XP Tablet PC Edition
- . Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 Premium Edition
- . Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003 Standard Edition

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Keywords: kbenv kbprb KB326549

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end

• *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: Why do folders have the read-only attribute?**
◇ From: NobodyMan
- ◆ **Re: Why do folders have the read-only attribute?**
◇ From: Lew

• *References:*

- ◆ **Why do folders have the read-only attribute?**
◇ From: Lew
- ◆ **Re: Why do folders have the read-only attribute?**
◇ From: Curmudgeon
- ◆ **Re: Why do folders have the read-only attribute?**
◇ From: Lew

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