

What is a Zip File?



A zip file

A zip file is a way of grouping (or "archiving") multiple files so that they act like one file. For example, let's say that you want to email a folder of Word documents to someone. You could attach each file individually, but it would take a long time, especially if there are a lot of documents. A better solution would be to put all of the files into a zip file, and then attach the zip file to your email.

Another advantage of zip files is that they are compressed, which means the total file size is smaller. If you're emailing a zip file to someone or posting it to the web, it takes less time to upload — and your recipients will also be able to download it more quickly.

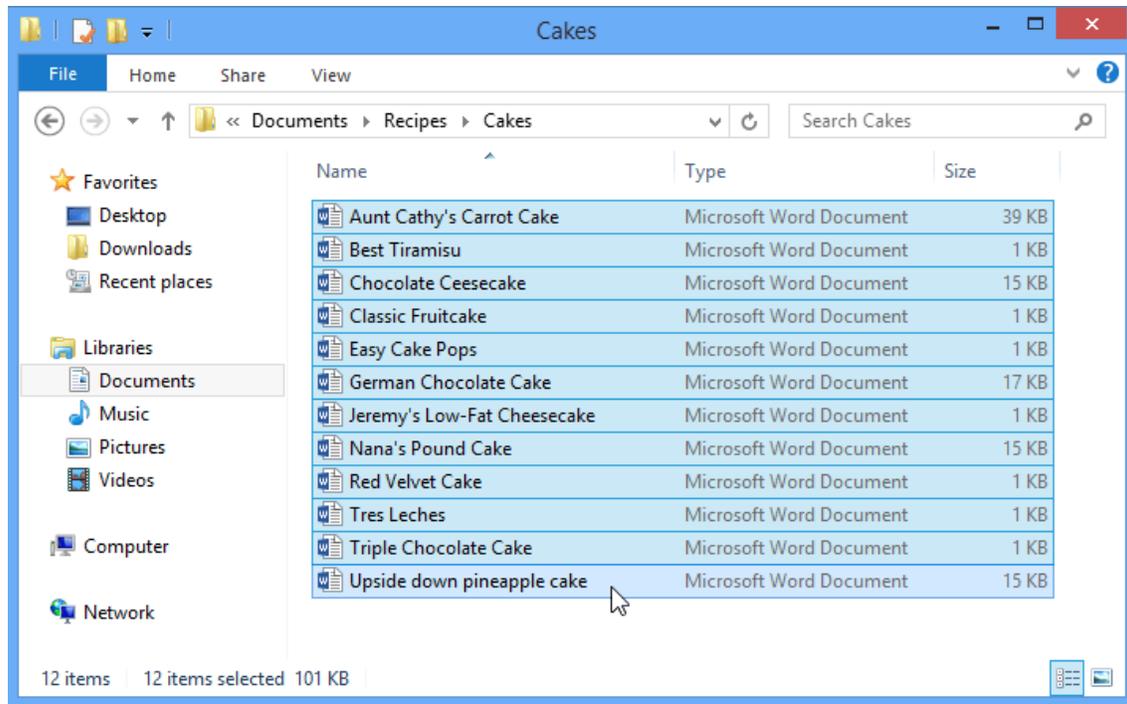
Some file formats, like mp3s and jpeg images, are already compressed. You can still zip these types of files, but the file size may not get much smaller.

Creating Zip Files

Whether you're using Windows or Mac OS X, you don't need additional software to create and open zip files. That's because the basic zip file features are built-in to the operating system.

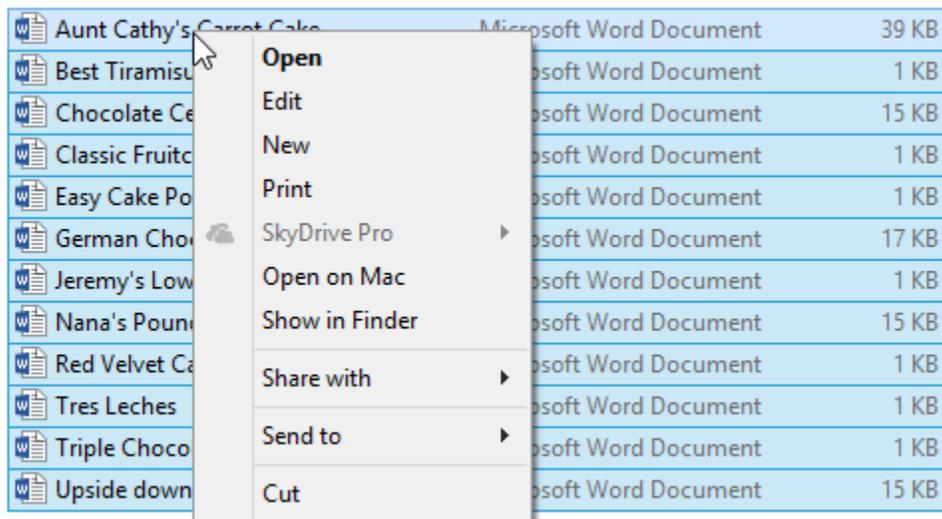
To Create a Zip File in Windows:

Select the files that you want to add to the zip file.



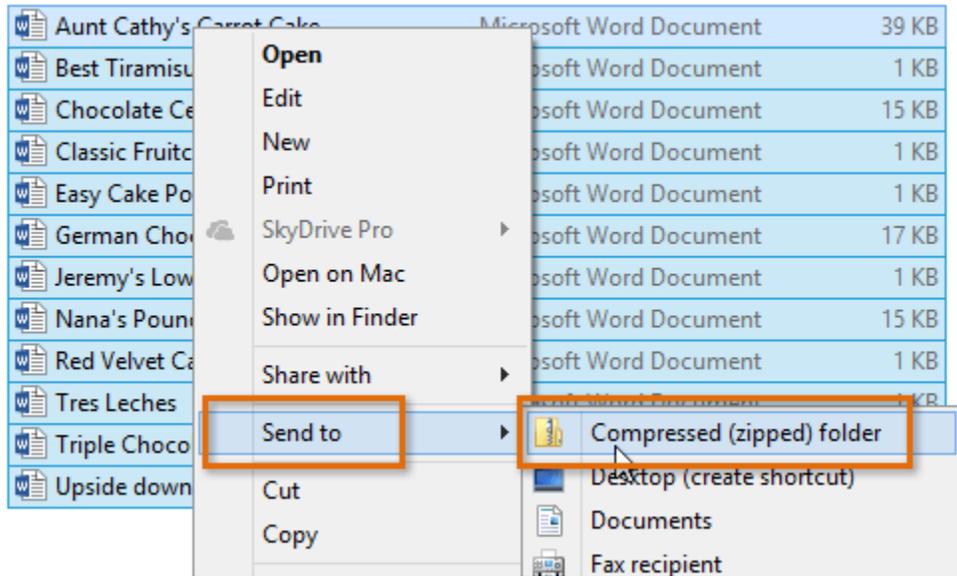
Selecting files

Right-click one of the files. A menu will appear.



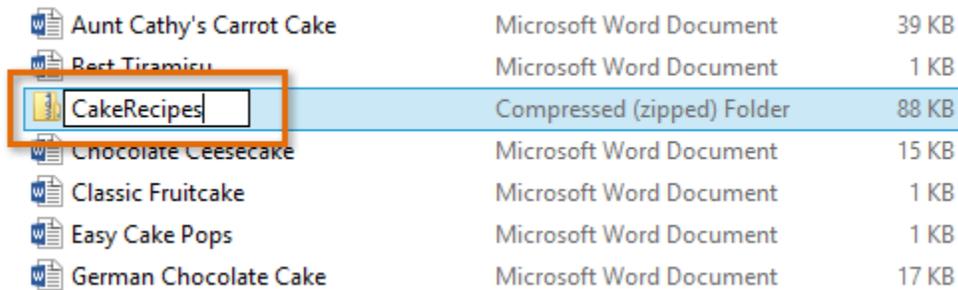
Right-clicking a file

In the menu, click Send to and select Compressed (zipped) folder.



Creating a zip file

A zip file will appear. If you want, you can type a new name for the zip file.



Typing a new name for the zip file

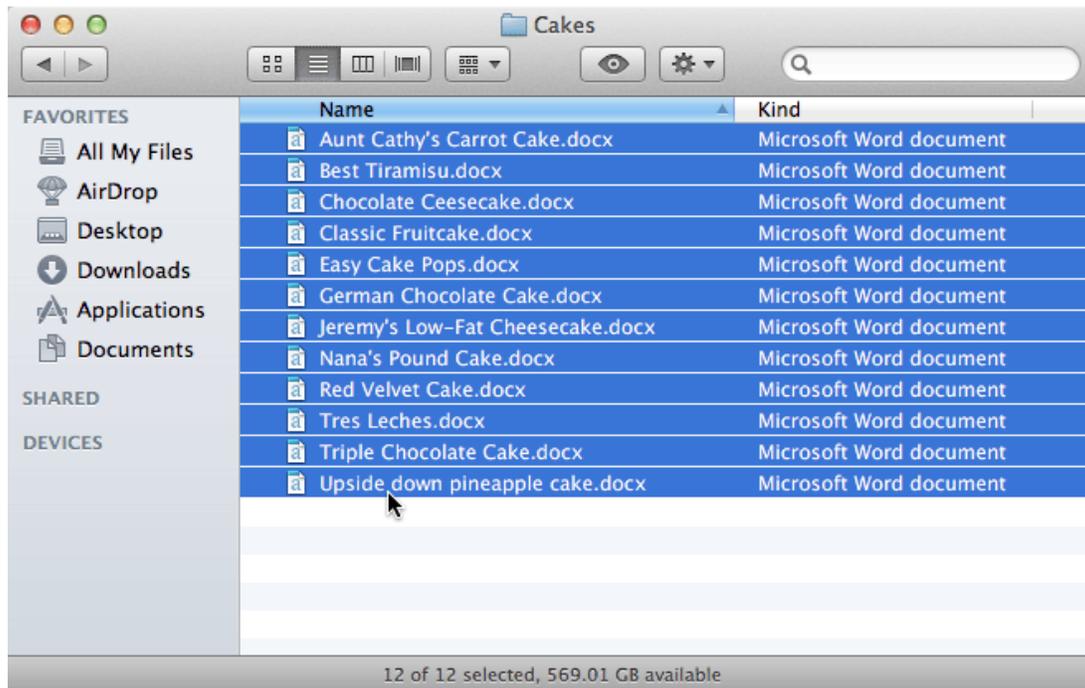
In Windows, once you've created a zip file, you can then add more files to it by dragging them onto the zip file's icon.

Name	Type	Size
Aunt Cathy's Carrot Cake	Microsoft Word Document	39 KB
Best Tiramisu	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
CakeRecipes	Compressed (zipped) Folder	88 KB
Chocolate Cheesecake	Microsoft Word Document	15 KB
Classic Fruitcake	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
Easy Cake Pops	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
German Chocolate Cake	Microsoft Word Document	17 KB
Jeremy's Low-Fat Cheesecake	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
Nana's Pound Cake	Microsoft Word Document	15 KB
Red Velvet Cake	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
Tres Leches	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
Triple Chocolate Cake	Microsoft Word Document	1 KB
Upside down pineapple cake	Microsoft Word Document	15 KB
Very Berry Cupcakes	Microsoft Word Document	17 KB

Adding a document to a zip file

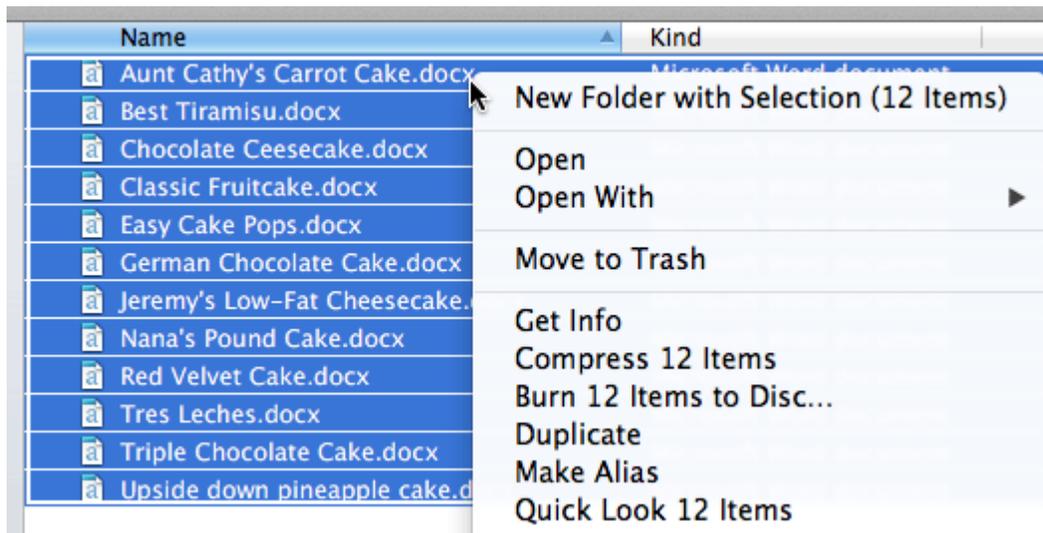
To Create a Zip File in Mac OS X:

Select the files that you want to add to the zip file.



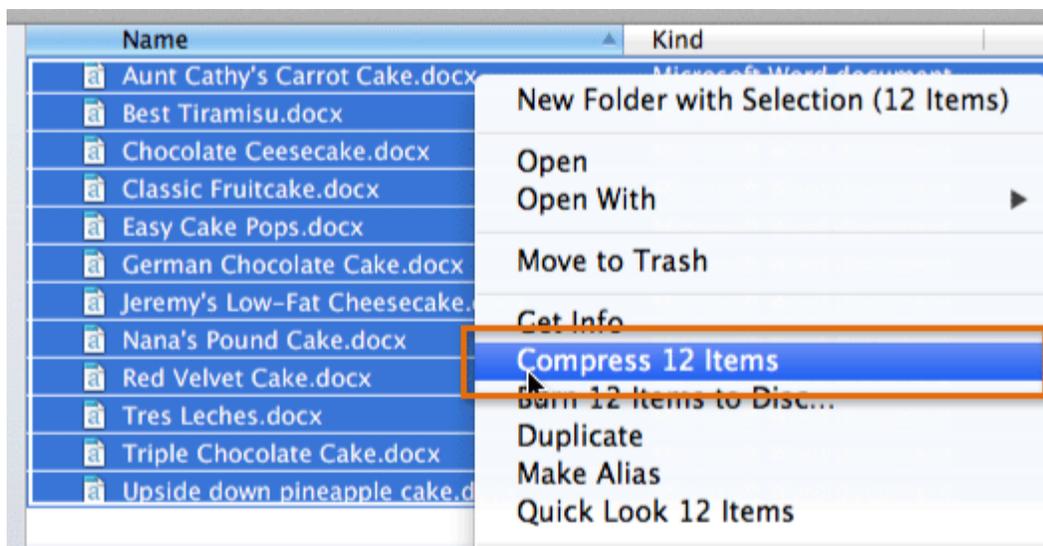
Selecting files

Right-click one of the files. If right-clicking is not enabled, you can hold the Control key and then click. A menu will appear.



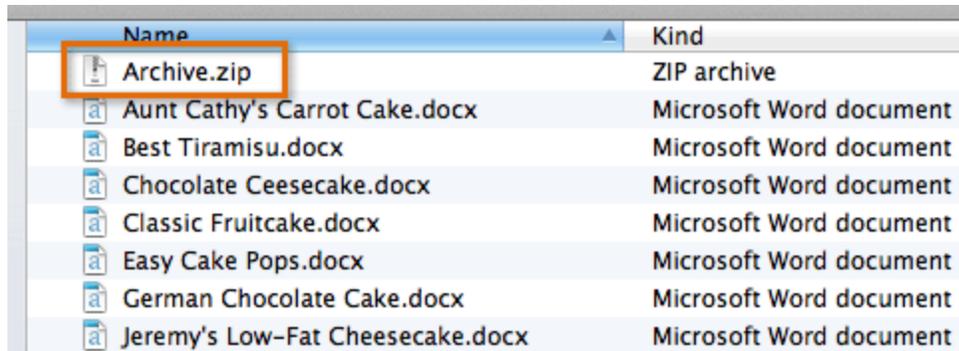
Right-clicking a file

In the menu, click Compress 12 Items (the number will vary depending on how many files you have selected).



Compressing files

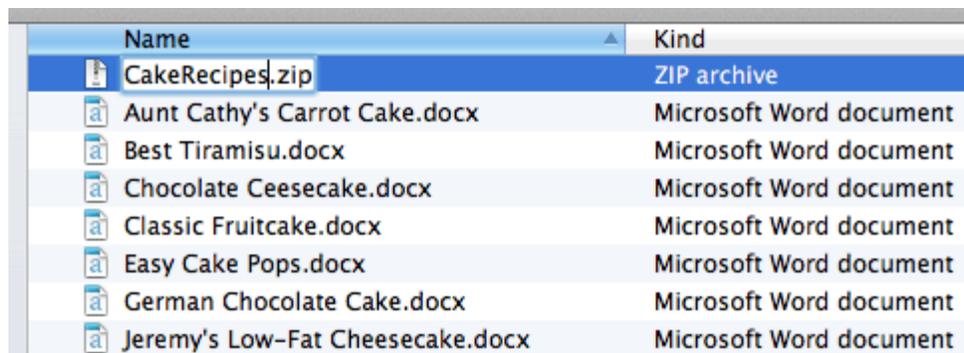
A zip file will appear. By default, the file name will be Archive.zip.



Name	Kind
Archive.zip	ZIP archive
Aunt Cathy's Carrot Cake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Best Tiramisu.docx	Microsoft Word document
Chocolate Ceeseecake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Classic Fruitcake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Easy Cake Pops.docx	Microsoft Word document
German Chocolate Cake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Jeremy's Low-Fat Cheesecake.docx	Microsoft Word document

The new zip file

If you want, you can type a new name for the zip file.



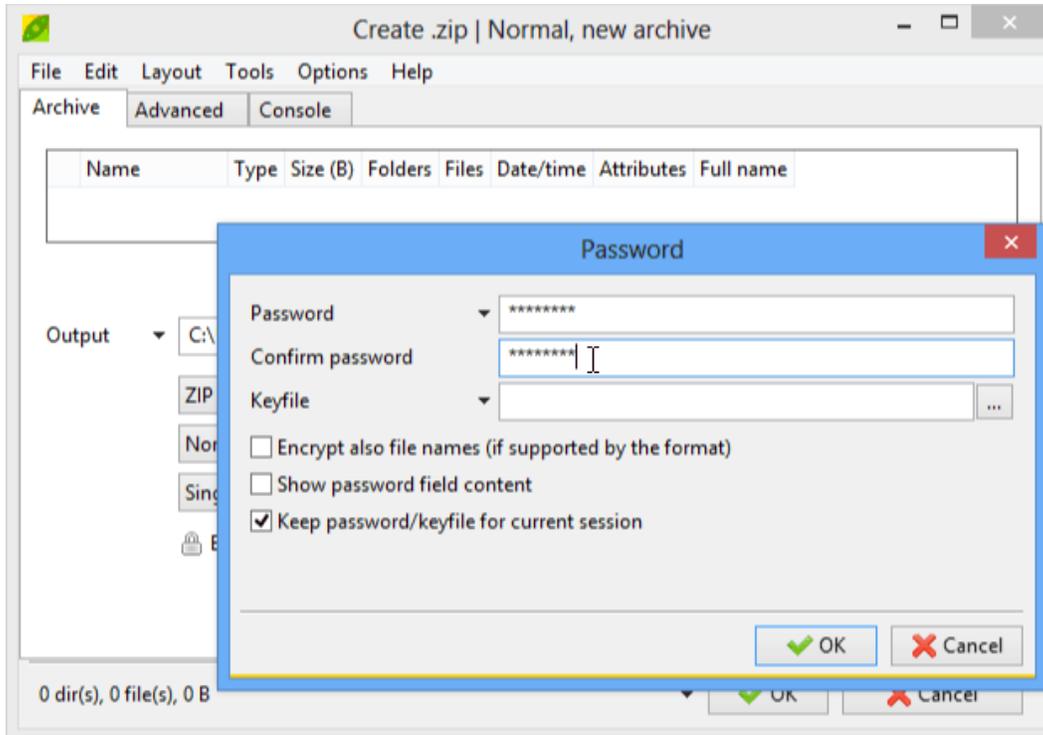
Name	Kind
CakeRecipes.zip	ZIP archive
Aunt Cathy's Carrot Cake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Best Tiramisu.docx	Microsoft Word document
Chocolate Ceeseecake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Classic Fruitcake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Easy Cake Pops.docx	Microsoft Word document
German Chocolate Cake.docx	Microsoft Word document
Jeremy's Low-Fat Cheesecake.docx	Microsoft Word document

Typing a new name for the zip file

In OS X, once you've created a zip file, you cannot add more files to it. If you need to add files, you will need to create a new zip file that contains all of the files that you want.

Adding a Password to Your Zip File

Some people prefer to use zip file programs such as [7-Zip](#), [PeaZip](#), or [StuffIt](#). These programs have additional features such as password protection. If you add a password to your zip file, it's important to tell the recipient what the password is so that they can open it.



Creating a password with PeaZip