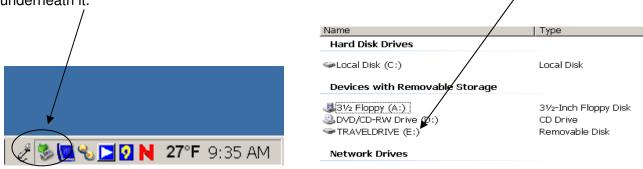# How to Use a USB Flash Drive
(also know as Travel Drives, Thumb Drives, Data Sticks)

Flash drives are fast becoming an easy and convenient method to store files. They are smaller, faster, more durable, and have more storage capacity than the commonly used floppy drive. Although, they are very easy to use, there are a few rules that will keep your experience using them trouble-free.

USB drives insert into any USB port of your computer. They are "plug and play" devices, so the 1st time that you use your drive, your computer will display a message that it has found new hardware and will automatically install the driver. On subsequent uses on the same computer, the computer already has the driver installed, so you will only receive an indication that the drive has been inserted. You will see this in 2 ways: An additional drive letter will be added to the computer which represents your flash drive. You will also see an icon in the system tray that has a green arrow with a small device underneath it.

Using USB Drives on Your Own Computer
Some drives come with software installed on them that automatically runs when you insert the drive. Drives that come with software on them are called Smart Drives. Usually the package and/or drive itself indicates U3 or Smart on the labeling. DO NOT use this type of flash drive on campus; they will not work on the UD network. The Office of Technology will not be responsible if students, faculty, or staff use U3 or Smart flash drives.

How Do I Uninstall U3 from my Flash Drive?

If you have already purchased a U3 or Smart drive, you may uninstall the additional features to allow it to be compatible with the UD network.
To do so, follow the steps below:

(These steps must be done on a personal computer, not a campus computer.)
Most U3 smart drives come with an uninstall utility that converts the U3 smart drive into a regular USB flash drive. This utility can be accessed from the U3 Launchpad.

Important: Backup all files before uninstalling U3.
Open the U3 Launchpad and click on Settings, then select U3 Launchpad Settings and click on the Uninstall tab. Some devices have a link to the Uninstall utility under Help and Support.
For more information: http://www.u3.com/uninstall/

Using USB Drives on a UD Computer

When purchasing a USB drive to use at the University, make sure that you are purchasing a **flash** drive and not a **smart** drive. When using University-owned PC's in the labs and library, it is always wise to reboot the PC before inserting your flash drive. This prevents problems with driver conflicts from a previous user using a different brand of flash drive in the same PC.

Moving Files

To copy files from a PC to a USB drive, you just use any method you are familiar with such as "drop and drag", "copy and paste", or "send to" to put your files on the portable drive. Be sure to note the drive that was created when you inserted your drive. Even though USB storage devices appear like a conventional drive to the computer, they are a good deal slower than a hard disk or CD-ROM burner. Most USB drives have an LED or other indicator to show when the device is active. If the LED is flashing, it means there is activity between the USB drive and the computer. Wait until the LED is glowing steadily before removing the drive from the computer.

IMPORTANT TIPS

Finally, to keep your USB flash drive operational, the following tips may save you from losing hours of work.

1. Nothing in the computer-world is problem-free. Having a back-up of your back-up is a smart move. If you are using a portable device as a back-up, also have those files copied to your Y: (network) drive or your personal computer. **Never** use your flash drive as your **only** means of storage for important files.

2. All USB flash drives come with some sort of cover for the USB end, and most come with a lanyard for wearing them around your neck. Use them! Using a lanyard with your USB flash drive, may prevent it from getting lost or damaged. ***Do not attach your USB drive to your key chain, put it in your pocket, or let it flop around at the bottom of a book bag or purse.*** Just like 3 ½ "diskettes, they are easily damaged.

3. Add a folder on your USB drive entitled ***your name.*** This may help get it back to you if it is lost. A lot of USB drives are turned into the Technology HelpDesk without any way to identify the owner.

4. **VERY IMPORTANT:** Before removing your portable drive, be sure to remove it properly. This is done by clicking on the icon that was created in your system tray when you inserted it. You then click on the text "Safely remove USB Mass Storage Device – Drive( )".

Once you've done that you will see the following message:

It is now safe to remove your USB flash drive. Not removing your flash drive properly, could result in corrupt files or an unusable drive.

NOTE: The University of Dubuque does not guarantee computer systems and devices to be safe from failures or operator errors. The University assumes no liability for data lost or destroyed.