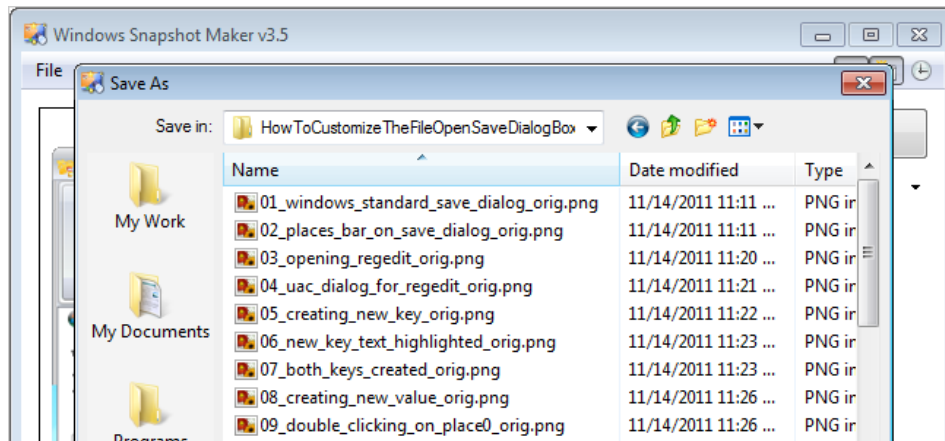


# How to Customize the File Open/Save Dialog Box in Windows

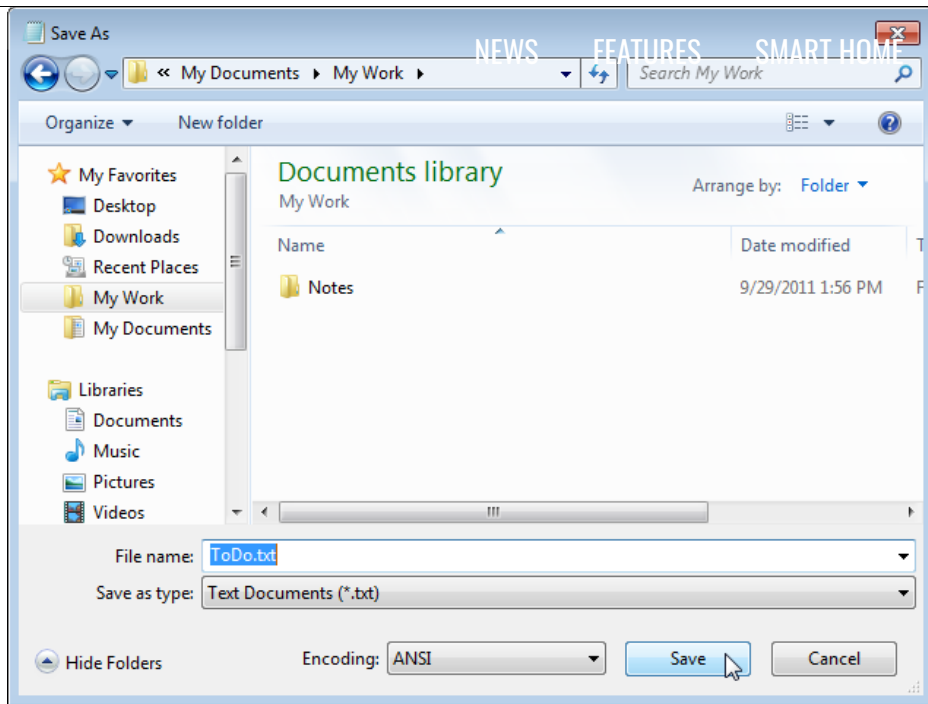
LORI KAUFMAN

NOVEMBER 15TH, 2011

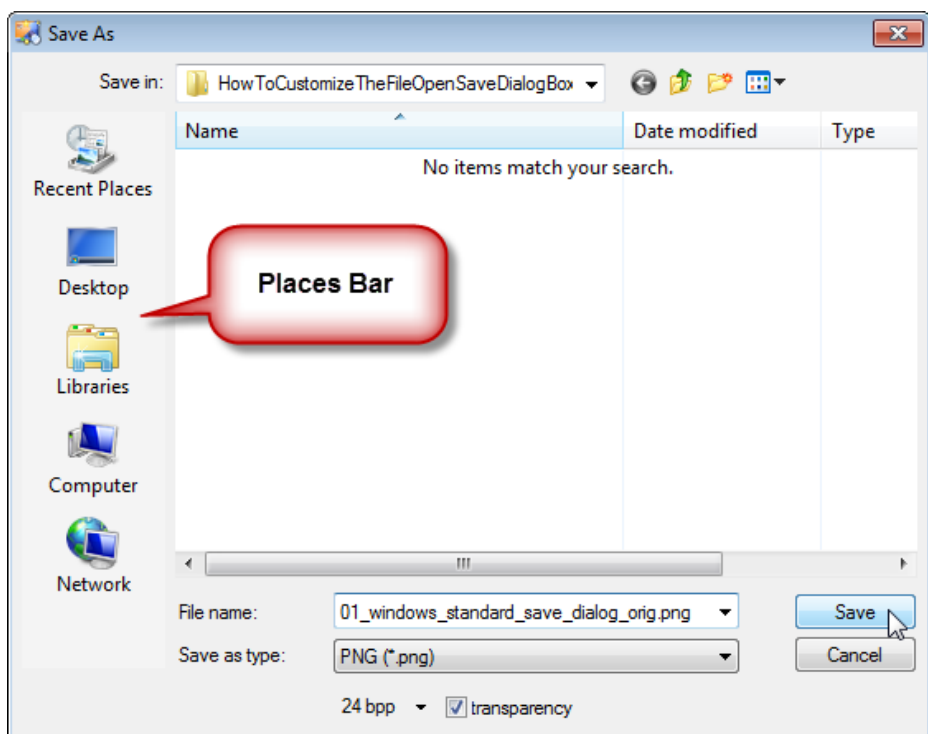


Generally, there are two kinds of Open/Save dialog boxes in Windows. One kind looks like Windows Explorer, with the tree on the left containing Favorites, Libraries, Computer, etc. The other kind contains a vertical toolbar, called the Places Bar.

The Windows Explorer-style Open/Save dialog box can be customized by [adding your own folders to the Favorites list](#). You can, then, click the arrows to the left of the main items, except the Favorites, to collapse them, leaving only the list of default and custom Favorites.



The Places Bar is located along the left side of the File Open/Save dialog box and contains buttons providing access to frequently-used folders. The default buttons on the Places Bar are links to Recent Places, Desktop, Libraries, Computer, and Network. However, you change these links to be links to custom folders of your choice.



We will show you how to customize the Places Bar using the

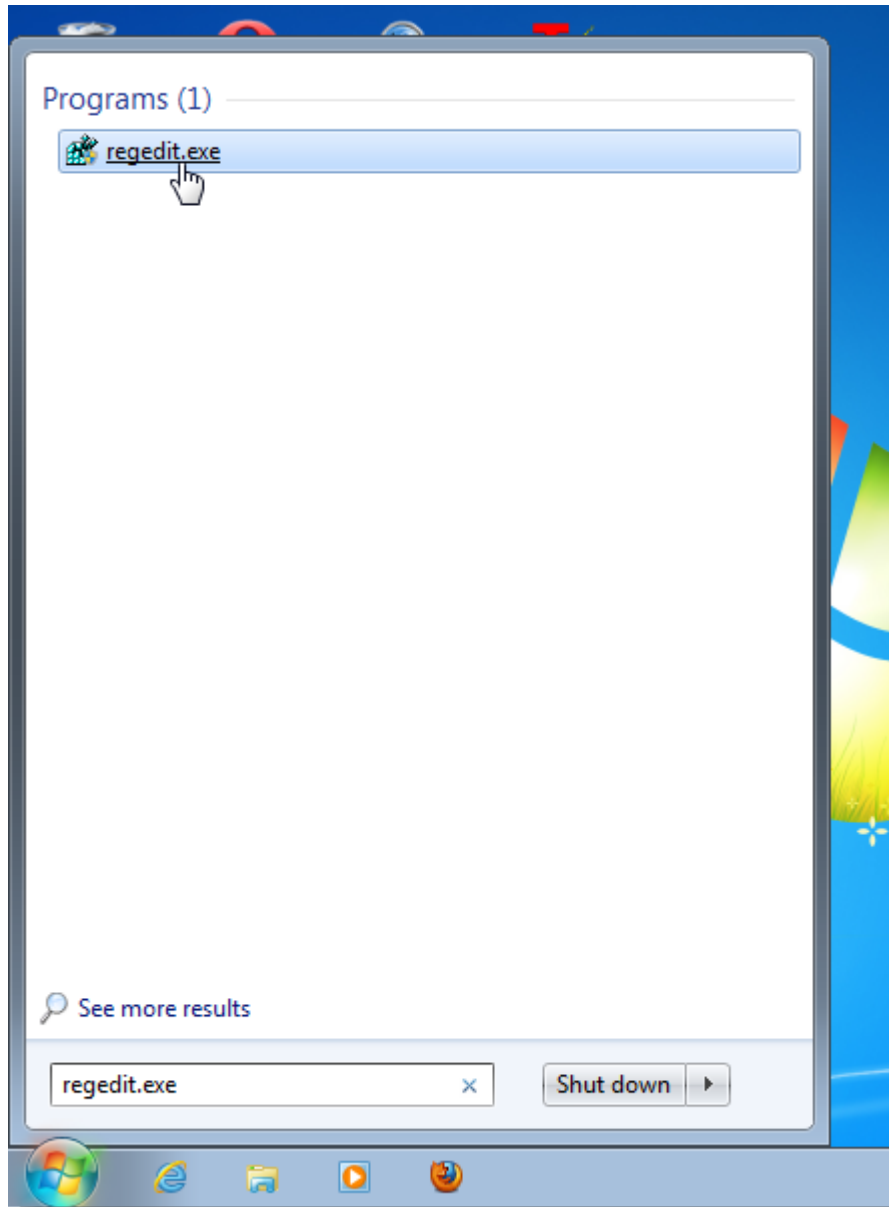
registry and using a free tool in case you are not comfortable

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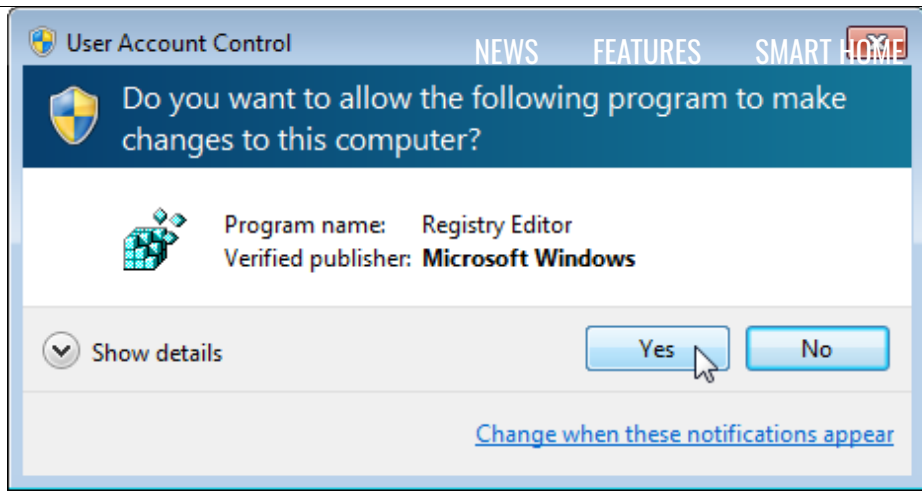
# Using the Registry

To open the Registry Editor, open the Start menu and enter “regedit.exe” in the Search box. Click the regedit.exe link in the results or press Enter.



If the User Account Control dialog box displays, click Yes to continue.

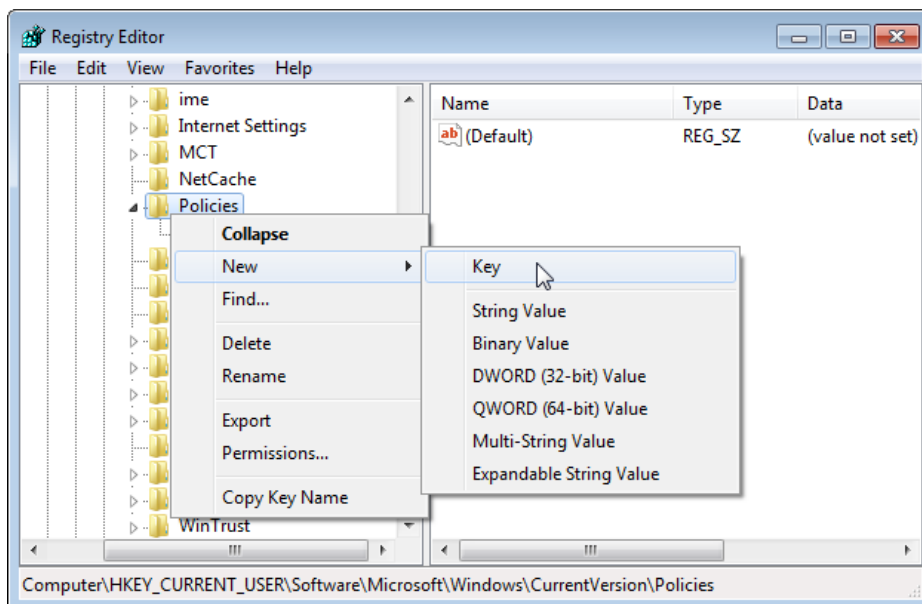
NOTE: You may not see this dialog box, depending on your [User Account Control settings](#).



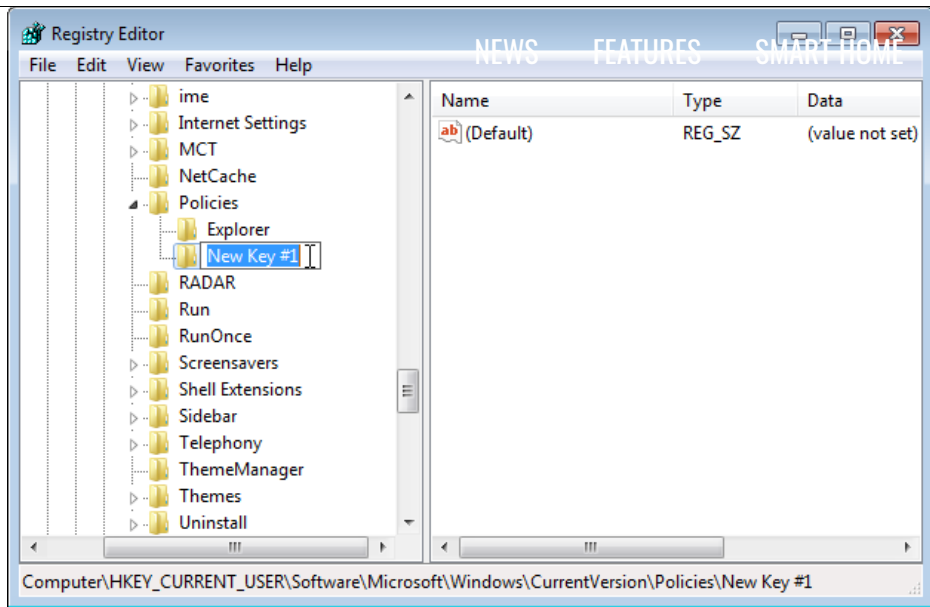
Navigate to the following key:

```
HKEY_CURRENT_USER \ Software \ Microsoft \ Windows \  
CurrentVersion \ Policies \ cmdlg32 \ Placesbar
```

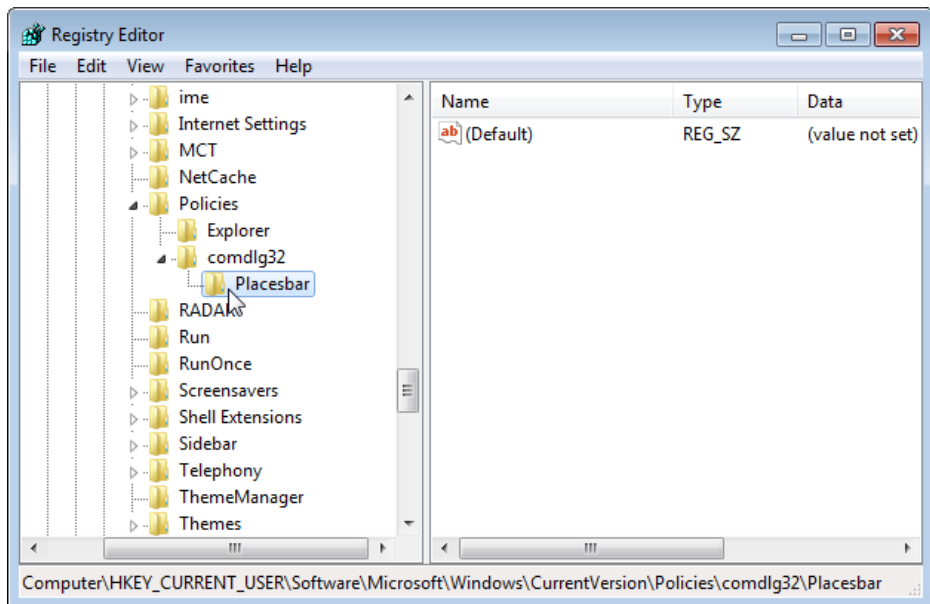
The cmdlg32 and Placesbar keys may not exist. If not, you need to create them. For example, to create the cmdlg32 key, right-click the Policies key and select New | Key.



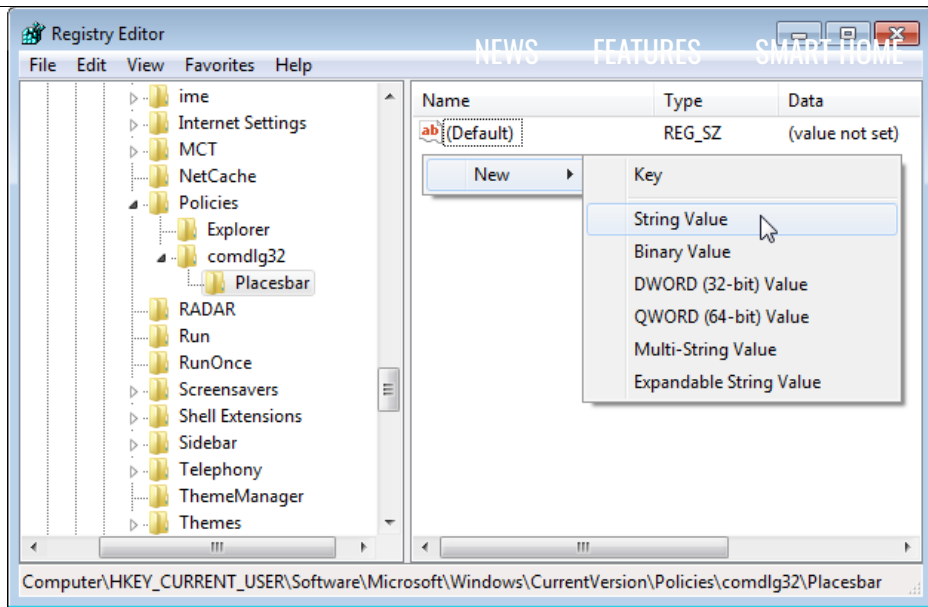
A new key is created and the text is highlighted. Rename the new key "cmdlg32."



Add Placesbar as a new key under the comdlg32 key.

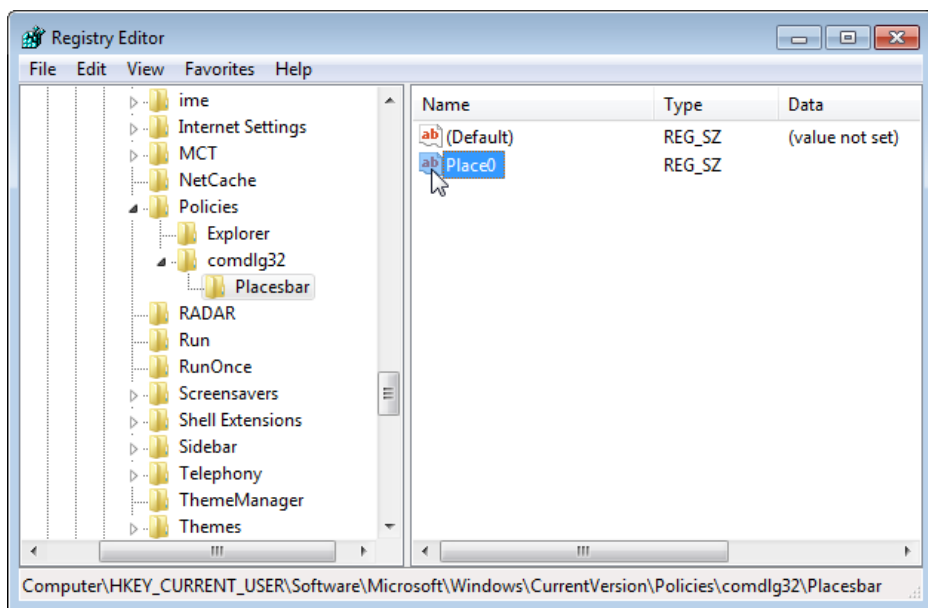


Select the Placesbar key and right-click in the right pane. Select New | String Value from the popup menu.

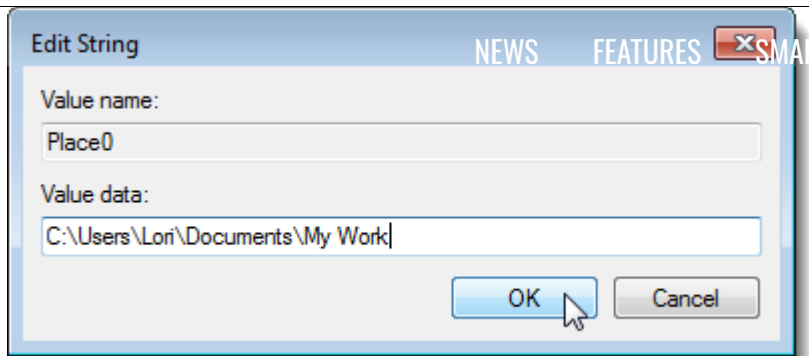


Rename the new value Place0. You can create up to 5 entries: Place0, Place1, Place2, Place3, Place4. You don't have to define all five places, but they must be defined in numerical order.

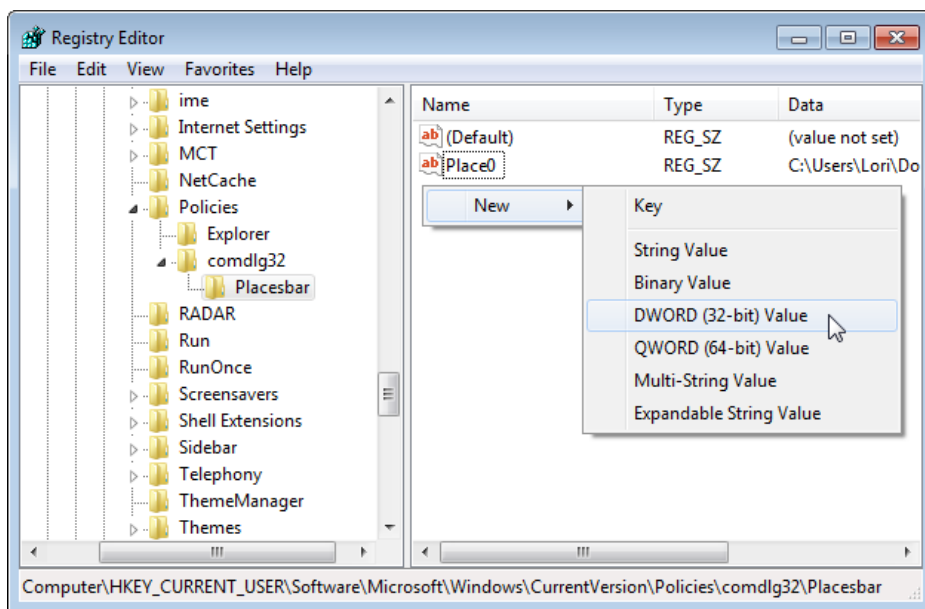
To define the target folder for a PlaceX value, double-click on the value name.



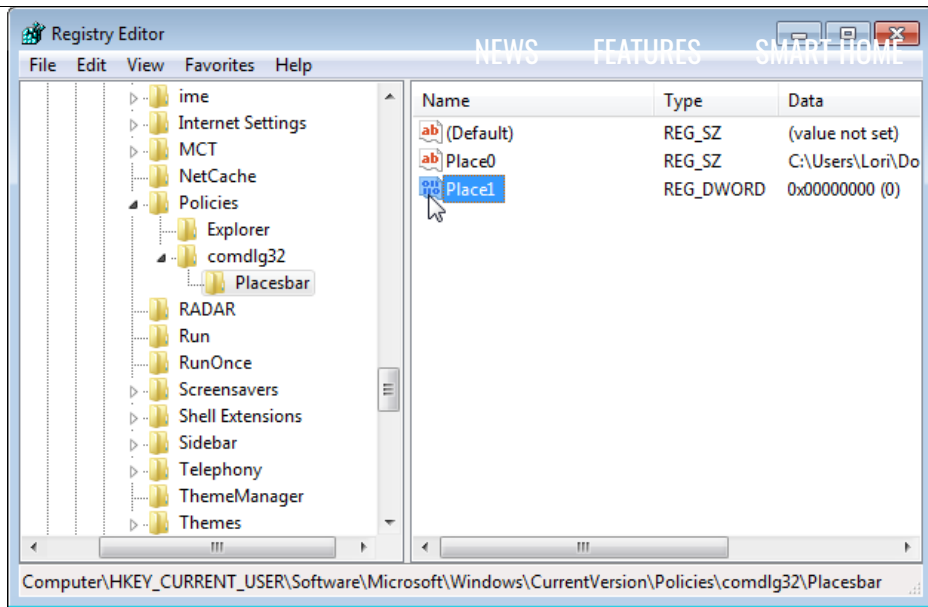
In the Value data edit box on the Edit String dialog box, enter the full path for the location you want to add to the Places Bar and click OK.



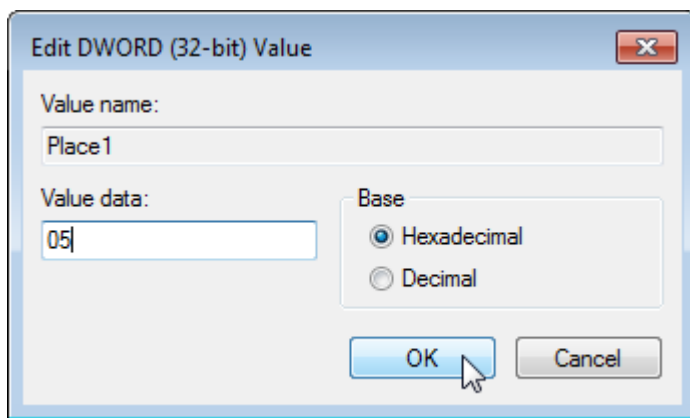
You can also define a target folder using a numerical value for system folders. There is a table below listing the numerical values for the different system folders. To define a target folder using a numerical value, create a new DWORD (32-bit) Value the same way you created the String Value.



Double-click on the new DWORD value.



Enter a numerical value in the Value data edit box. Use the values from the table below the image.



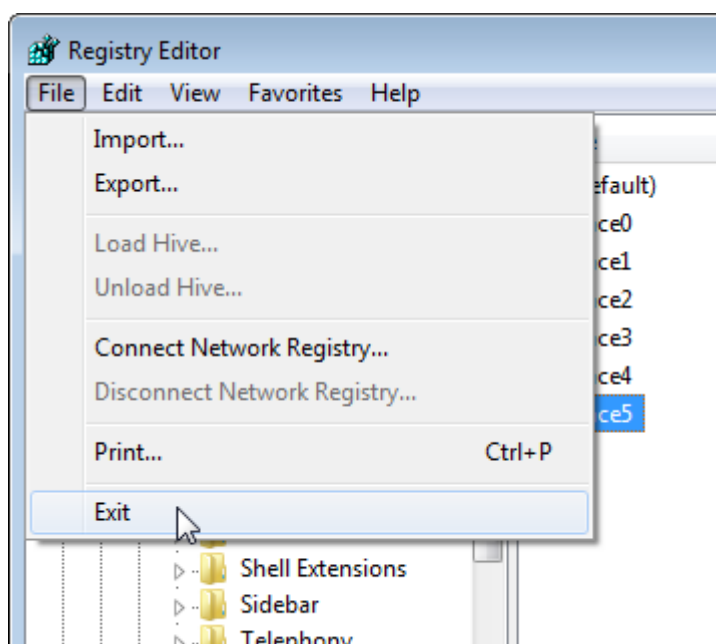
The following “DWORD” values can be used to add standard folders to the Places Bar.

00 – Desktop	1d – – Nonlocalized startup
01 – Internet Explorer	1e – – Nonlocalized common startup
02 – Start Menu\Programs	1f – Favorites
03 – My Computer\Control Panel	20 – Temporary Internet Files
04 – My Computer\Printers	21 – Cookies
05 – My Documents	22 – History
06 – Favorites	23 – All Users\Application Data
07 – Start Menu\Programs\Startup	24 – WINDOWS directory
08 – \Recent	25 – System32 directory
	26 – Program files
	27 – My Pictures

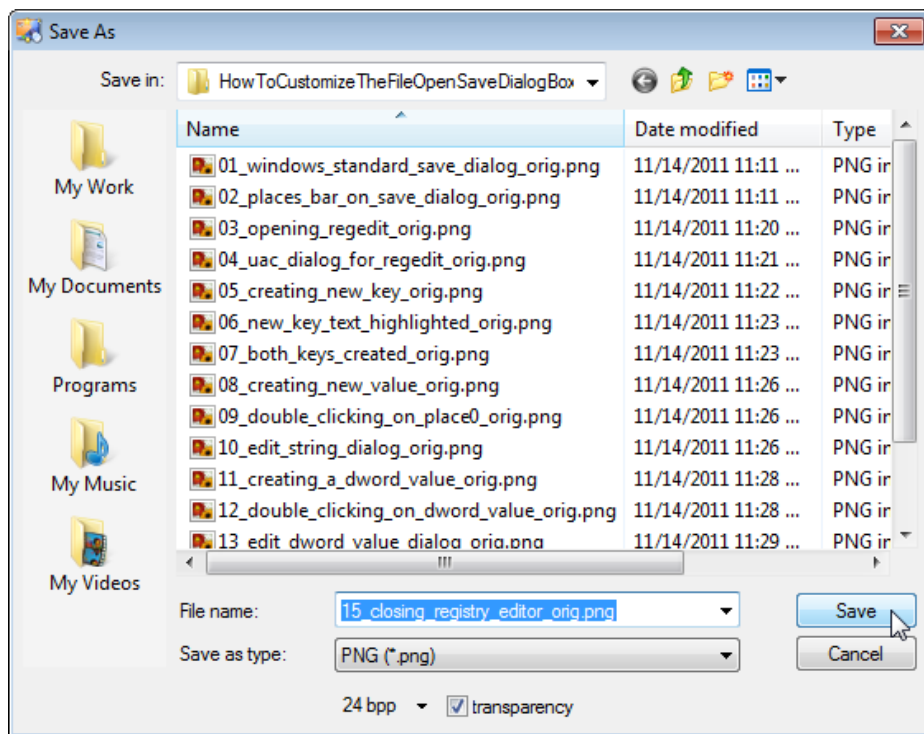


0a – \Recycle Bin	29 – – x86 system directory on RISC
0b – \Start Menu	2a – – x86 C:\Program Files on RISC
0c – – logical “My Documents” desktop icon	2b – C:\Program Files\Common
0d – My Music	2c – – x86 Program Files\Common on RISC
0e – My Videos	2d – All Users\Templates
10 – \Desktop	2e – All Users\Documents
11 – My Computer	2f – All Users\Start Menu\Programs\Administrative Tools
12 – My Network Places	30 – – \Start Menu\Programs\Administrative Tools
13 – \NetHood	31 – Network and Dial-up Connections
14 – WINDOWS\Fonts	35 – All Users\My Music
15 – Templates	36 – All Users\My Pictures
16 – All Users\Start Menu	37 – All Users\My Video
17 – All Users\Programs	38 – Resource Directory
18 – All Users\Start Menu	39 – Localized Resource Directory
19 – All Users\Desktop	3a – Links to All Users OEM specific apps
1a – \Application Data	3b – USERPROFILE\Local Settings\Application Data\Microsoft\CD Burning
1b – \PrintHood	
1c – \Local Settings\Application Data	

Select Exit from the File menu to close the Registry Editor.



The Places Bar on the Save dialog box displays the custom folders and chosen system folders.

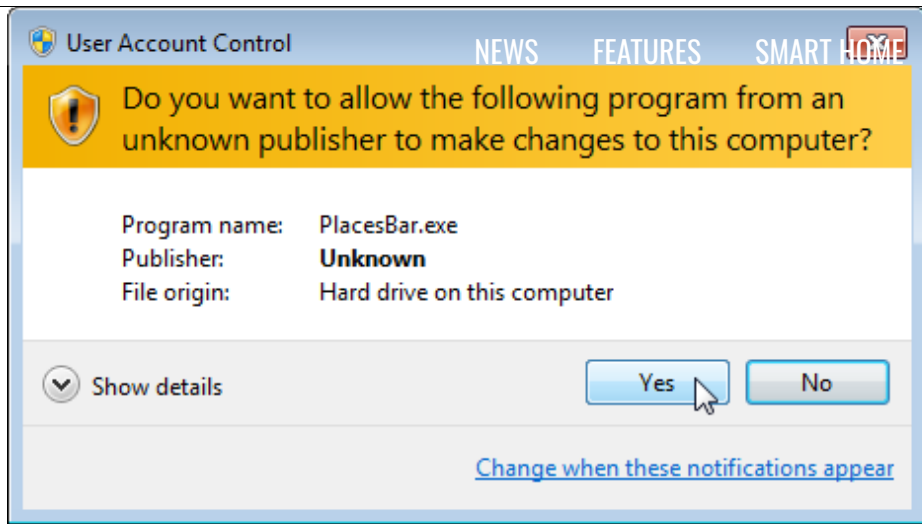


## Using PlacesBar Editor

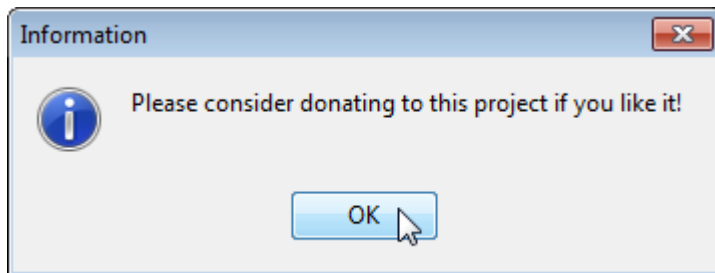
For those of you who don't feel comfortable making changes to the registry or who just want an easier way to customize the Places Bar, there is a free tool available called PlacesBar Editor. Download the tool using the link at the end of this article and follow the instructions to install it. If the User Account Control dialog box displays during installation, click Yes to continue.

NOTE: You may not see the User Account Control dialog box, depending on your [User Account Control settings](#).

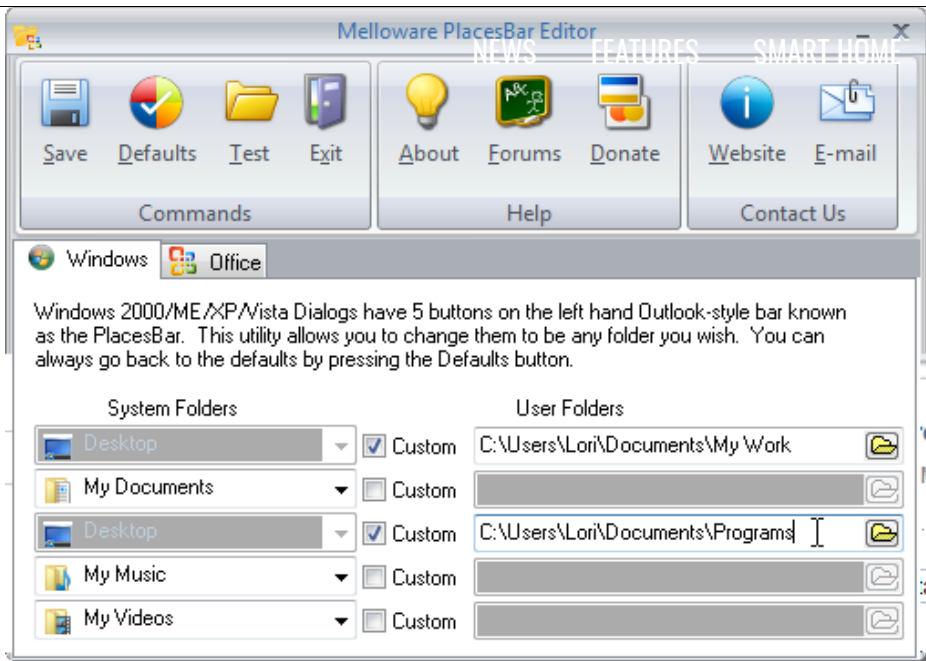
Use the shortcut created on the desktop to run PlacesBar Editor. You may see the User Account Control dialog box again.



The first time you run PlacesBar Editor, the following dialog box displays, encouraging you to donate. Your default web browser also opens to a PayPal page, suggesting a donation.

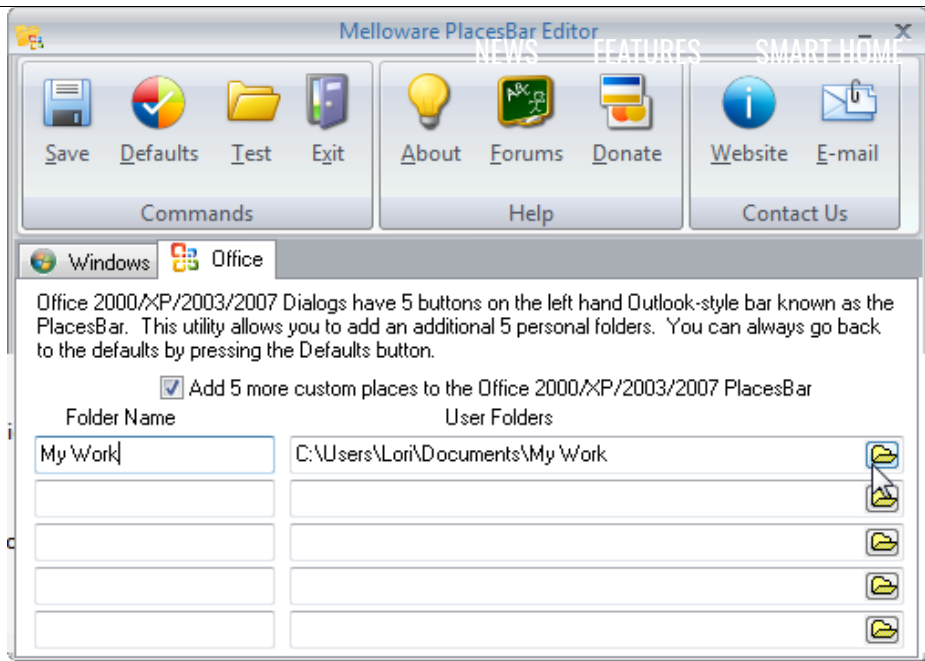


The main interface displays showing a toolbar and two tabs. The Windows tab allows you to make changes to File Open and File Save dialog boxes containing the Places Bar. To define a custom target folder for one of the places, select the Custom check box for that place. Click the folder button to the right of the User Folders edit box to select a folder, or type in the full path to a folder. To select a system folder for a place, select a folder from the drop-down list under System Folders for that place.

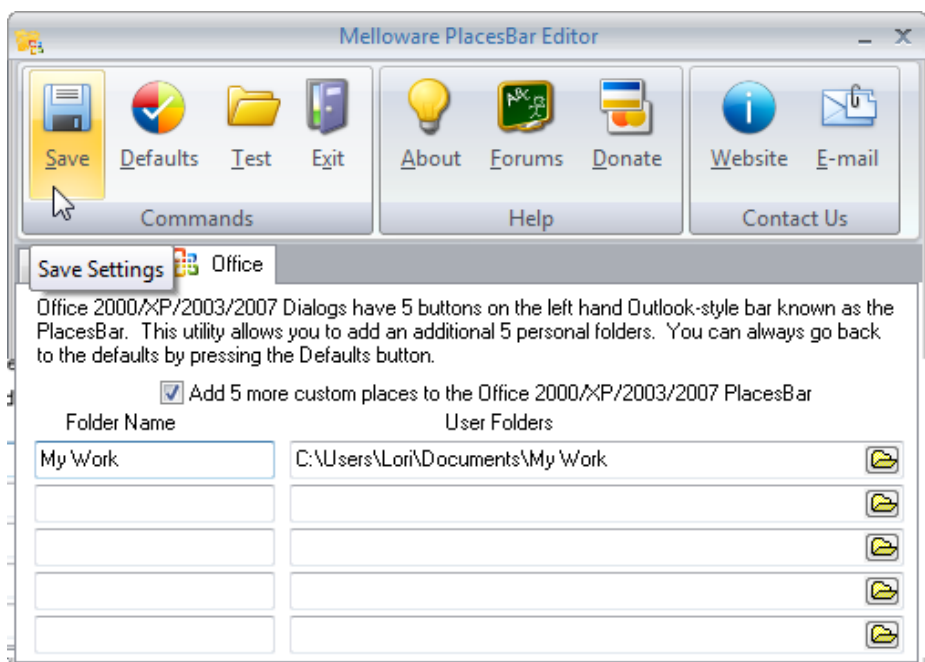


As mentioned at the beginning of this article, some programs use the Windows Explorer-like File Open and File Save dialog box. Microsoft Office programs (and some other Microsoft programs, like Notepad and Paint) use this style of dialog box.

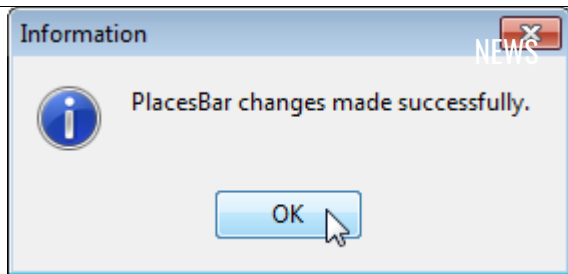
You can use PlacesBar Editor to customize the Microsoft Office dialog boxes as well. Click the Office tab. For each custom folder you want to add, enter a name for the folder in the edit box under Folder Name. Use the folder button to select the desired folder or enter the full path to the desired folder in the edit box under User Folders. You can add up to five additional custom folders. These folders are added to the Favorites, and also display as Favorites in Windows Explorer.



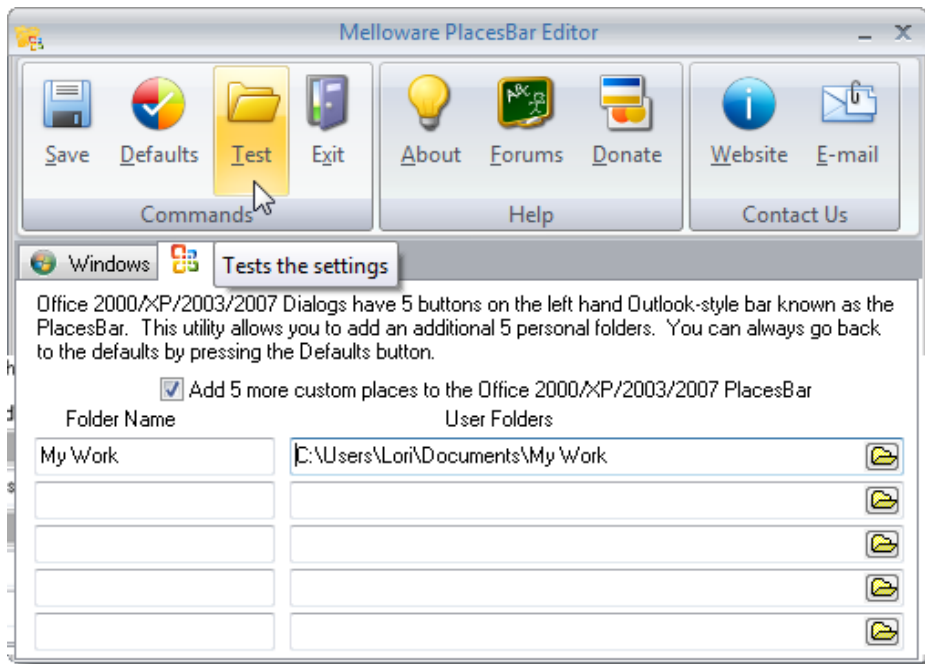
To apply changes for each tab, you must click Save when that tab is active. To apply changes for Office programs, make sure the Office tab is active and click Save. To save changes you made on the Windows tab, you must click the Windows tab and click Save again.



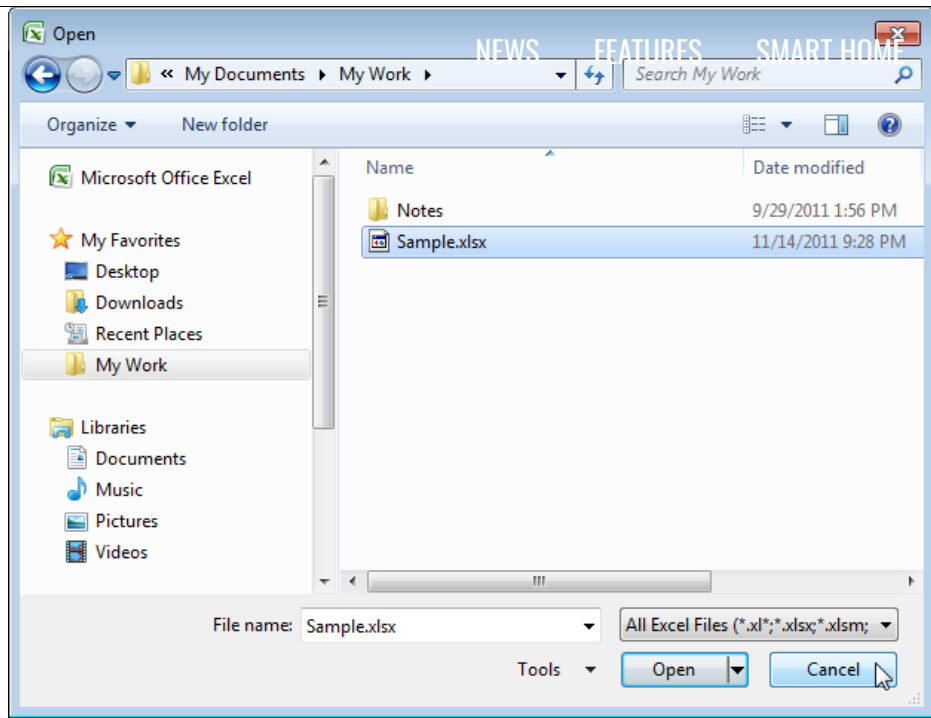
A dialog box displays telling you that the changes were made successfully.



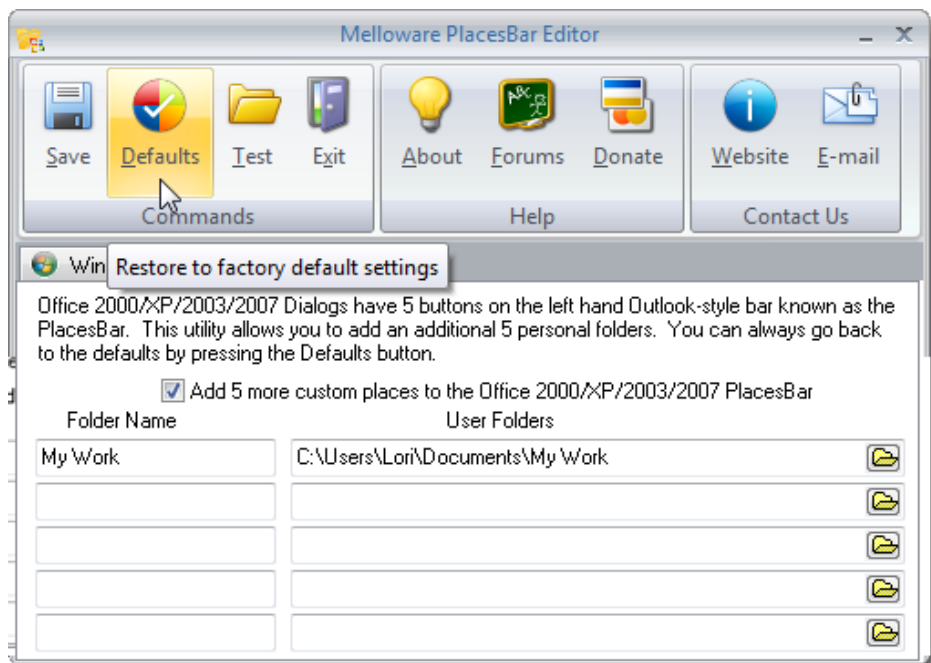
Once you apply, or save, your changes, on a tab, you can test those changes by clicking the Test button.



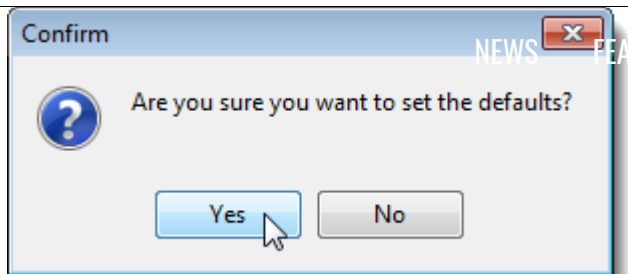
The appropriate dialog box for the currently selected tab displays. If the Office tab is active, an Office program like Word or Excel opens and the Open dialog box displays. Click Cancel on the Open dialog box to close the dialog box and the program.



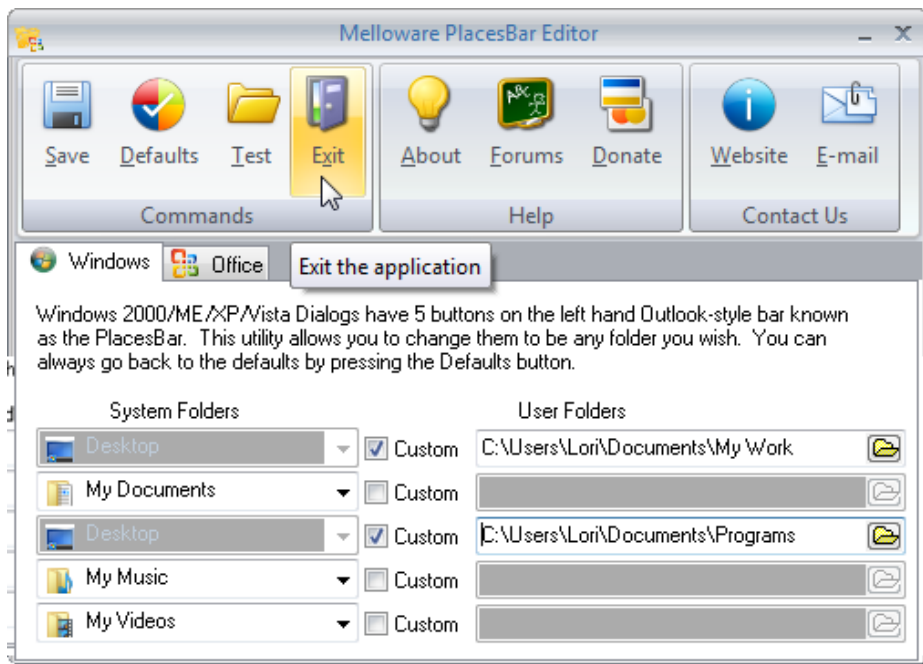
You can revert back to the default settings for both types of File Open and File Save dialog boxes by clicking the Defaults button. You must click the Defaults button for each tab separately.



A Confirm dialog box displays. Click Yes if you're sure you want to revert to the defaults.



To close PlacesBar Editor, click Exit.



Customizing the File Open and File Save dialog boxes with custom folders can improve your productivity, especially if the folders you use most often are several layers deep in your folder structure.

Download PlacesBar Editor from  
<http://melloware.com/download/>.

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