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CSIDL

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Note

As of Windows Vista, these values have been replaced by [KNOWNFOLDERID](#) values. See that topic for a list of the new constants and their corresponding CSIDL values. For convenience, corresponding **KNOWNFOLDERID** values are also noted here for each CSIDL value.

The CSIDL system is supported under Windows Vista for compatibility reasons. However, new development should use [KNOWNFOLDERID](#) values rather than CSIDL values.

CSIDL (constant special item ID list) values provide a unique system-independent way to identify special folders used frequently by applications, but which may not have the same name or location on any given system. For example, the system folder may be "C:\Windows" on one system and "C:\Winnt" on another. These constants are defined in Shlobj.h.

[Expand table](#)

Constant/value	Description
CSIDL_ADMINTOOLS FOLDERID_AdminTools	Version 5.0 . The file system directory that is used to store administrative tools for an individual user. The MMC will save customized consoles to this directory, and it will roam with the user.
CSIDL_ALTSTARTUP FOLDERID_Startup	The file system directory that corresponds to the user's nonlocalized Startup program group. This value is recognized in Windows Vista for backward compatibility, but the folder itself no longer exists.
CSIDL_APPDATA FOLDERID_RoamingAppData	Version 4.71 . The file system directory that serves as a common repository for application-specific data. A typical

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	path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Application Data.
CSIDL_BITBUCKET FOLDERID_RecycleBinFolder	The virtual folder that contains the objects in the user's Recycle Bin .
CSIDL_CDBURN_AREA FOLDERID_CDBurning	Version 6.0 . The file system directory that acts as a staging area for files waiting to be written to a CD. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Local Settings\Application Data\Microsoft\CD Burning.
CSIDL_COMMON_ADMINTOOLS FOLDERID_CommonAdminTools	Version 5.0 . The file system directory that contains administrative tools for all users of the computer.
CSIDL_COMMON_ALTSTARTUP FOLDERID_CommonStartup	The file system directory that corresponds to the nonlocalized Startup program group for all users. This value is recognized in Windows Vista for backward compatibility, but the folder itself no longer exists.
CSIDL_COMMON_APPDATA FOLDERID_ProgramData	Version 5.0 . The file system directory that contains application data for all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data. This folder is used for application data that is not user specific. For example, an application can store a spell-check dictionary, a database of clip art, or a log file in the CSIDL_COMMON_APPDATA folder. This information will not roam and is available to anyone using the computer.
CSIDL_COMMON_DESKTOPDIRECTORY FOLDERID_PublicDesktop	The file system directory that contains files and folders that appear on the desktop for all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Desktop.
CSIDL_COMMON_DOCUMENTS FOLDERID_PublicDocuments	The file system directory that contains documents that are common to all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents.
CSIDL_COMMON_FAVORITES FOLDERID_Favorites	The file system directory that serves as a common repository for favorite items common to all users.
CSIDL_COMMON_MUSIC FOLDERID_PublicMusic	Version 6.0 . The file system directory that serves as a repository for music files common to all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents\My Music.
CSIDL_COMMON_OEM_LINKS FOLDERID_CommonOEMLinks	This value is recognized in Windows Vista for backward compatibility, but the folder itself is no longer used.
CSIDL_COMMON_PICTURES FOLDERID_PublicPictures	Version 6.0 . The file system directory that serves as a repository for image files common to all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents\My Pictures.
CSIDL_COMMON_PROGRAMS FOLDERID_CommonPrograms	The file system directory that contains the directories for the common program groups that appear on the Start menu for all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Start Menu\Programs.
CSIDL_COMMON_STARTMENU FOLDERID_CommonStartMenu	The file system directory that contains the programs and folders that appear on the Start menu for all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Start Menu.
CSIDL_COMMON_STARTUP FOLDERID_CommonStartup	The file system directory that contains the programs that appear in the Startup folder for all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Start Menu\Programs\Startup.
CSIDL_COMMON_TEMPLATES FOLDERID_CommonTemplates	The file system directory that contains the templates that are available to all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Templates.

CSIDL_COMMON_VIDEO FOLDERID_PublicVideos	Version 6.0 . The file system directory that serves as a repository for video files common to all users. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents\My Videos.
CSIDL_COMPUTERSNEARME FOLDERID_NetworkFolder	The folder that represents other computers in your workgroup.
CSIDL_CONNECTIONS FOLDERID_ConnectionsFolder	The virtual folder that represents Network Connections, that contains network and dial-up connections.
CSIDL_CONTROLS FOLDERID_ControlPanelFolder	The virtual folder that contains icons for the Control Panel applications.
CSIDL_COOKIES FOLDERID_Cookies	The file system directory that serves as a common repository for Internet cookies. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Cookies.
CSIDL_DESKTOP FOLDERID_Desktop	The virtual folder that represents the Windows desktop, the root of the namespace.
CSIDL_DESKTOPDIRECTORY FOLDERID_Desktop	The file system directory used to physically store file objects on the desktop (not to be confused with the desktop folder itself). A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Desktop.
CSIDL_DRIVES FOLDERID_ComputerFolder	The virtual folder that represents My Computer, containing everything on the local computer: storage devices, printers, and Control Panel. The folder can also contain mapped network drives.
CSIDL_FAVORITES FOLDERID_Favorites	The file system directory that serves as a common repository for the user's favorite items. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Favorites.
CSIDL_FONTS FOLDERID_Fonts	A virtual folder that contains fonts. A typical path is C:\Windows\Fonts.
CSIDL_HISTORY FOLDERID_History	The file system directory that serves as a common repository for Internet history items.
CSIDL_INTERNET FOLDERID_InternetFolder	A virtual folder for Internet Explorer.
CSIDL_INTERNET_CACHE FOLDERID_InternetCache	Version 4.72 . The file system directory that serves as a common repository for temporary Internet files. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files.
CSIDL_LOCAL_APPDATA FOLDERID_LocalAppData	Version 5.0 . The file system directory that serves as a data repository for local (nonroaming) applications. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Local Settings\Application Data.
CSIDL_MYDOCUMENTS FOLDERID_Documents	Version 6.0 . The virtual folder that represents the My Documents desktop item. This value is equivalent to CSIDL_PERSONAL .
CSIDL_MYMUSIC FOLDERID_Music	The file system directory that serves as a common repository for music files. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\User\My Documents\My Music.
CSIDL_MYPICTURES FOLDERID_Pictures	Version 5.0 . The file system directory that serves as a common repository for image files. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \My Documents\My Pictures.
CSIDL_MYVIDEO FOLDERID_Videos	Version 6.0 . The file system directory that serves as a common repository for video files. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \My Documents\My Videos.

CSIDL_NETHOOD FOLDERID_NetHood	A file system directory that contains the link objects that may exist in the My Network Places virtual folder. It is not the same as CSIDL_NETWORK , which represents the network namespace root. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \NetHood.
CSIDL_NETWORK FOLDERID_NetworkFolder	A virtual folder that represents Network Neighborhood, the root of the network namespace hierarchy.
CSIDL_PERSONAL FOLDERID_Documents	Version 6.0 . The virtual folder that represents the My Documents desktop item. This is equivalent to CSIDL_MYDOCUMENTS . Previous to Version 6.0 . The file system directory used to physically store a user's common repository of documents. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \My Documents. This should be distinguished from the virtual My Documents folder in the namespace. To access that virtual folder, use SHGetFolderLocation , which returns the ITEMIDLIST for the virtual location, or refer to the technique described in Managing the File System .
CSIDL_PRINTERS FOLDERID_PrintersFolder	The virtual folder that contains installed printers.
CSIDL_PRINTHOOD FOLDERID_PrintHood	The file system directory that contains the link objects that can exist in the Printers virtual folder. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \PrintHood.
CSIDL_PROFILE FOLDERID_Profile	Version 5.0 . The user's profile folder. A typical path is C:\Users\ <i>username</i> . Applications should not create files or folders at this level; they should put their data under the locations referred to by CSIDL_APPDATA or CSIDL_LOCAL_APPDATA . However, if you are creating a new Known Folder the profile root referred to by CSIDL_PROFILE is appropriate.
CSIDL_PROGRAM_FILES FOLDERID_ProgramFiles	Version 5.0 . The Program Files folder. A typical path is C:\Program Files.
CSIDL_PROGRAM_FILESX86 FOLDERID_ProgramFilesX86	
CSIDL_PROGRAM_FILES_COMMON FOLDERID_ProgramFilesCommon	Version 5.0 . A folder for components that are shared across applications. A typical path is C:\Program Files\Common. Valid only for Windows XP.
CSIDL_PROGRAM_FILES_COMMONX86 FOLDERID_ProgramFilesCommonX86	
CSIDL_PROGRAMS FOLDERID_Programs	The file system directory that contains the user's program groups (which are themselves file system directories). A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Start Menu\Programs.
CSIDL_RECENT FOLDERID_Recent	The file system directory that contains shortcuts to the user's most recently used documents. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \My Recent Documents. To create a shortcut in this folder, use SHAddToRecentDocs . In addition to creating the shortcut, this function updates the Shell's list of recent documents and adds the shortcut to the My Recent Documents submenu of the Start menu.
CSIDL_RESOURCES FOLDERID_ResourceDir	Windows Vista. The file system directory that contains resource data. A typical path is C:\Windows\Resources.
CSIDL_RESOURCES_LOCALIZED FOLDERID_LocalizedResourcesDir	
CSIDL_SENDTO FOLDERID_SendTo	The file system directory that contains Send To menu items. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \SendTo.

CSIDL_STARTMENU FOLDERID_StartMenu	The file system directory that contains Start menu items. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Start Menu.
CSIDL_STARTUP FOLDERID_Startup	The file system directory that corresponds to the user's Startup program group. The system starts these programs whenever the associated user logs on. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Start Menu\Programs\Startup.
CSIDL_SYSTEM FOLDERID_System	Version 5.0 . The Windows System folder. A typical path is C:\Windows\System32.
CSIDL_SYSTEMX86 FOLDERID_SystemX86	
CSIDL_TEMPLATES FOLDERID_Templates	The file system directory that serves as a common repository for document templates. A typical path is C:\Documents and Settings\ <i>username</i> \Templates.
CSIDL_WINDOWS FOLDERID_Windows	Version 5.0 . The Windows directory or SYSROOT. This corresponds to the %windir% or %SYSTEMROOT% environment variables. A typical path is C:\Windows.
Flags	
CSIDL_FLAG_CREATE KF_FLAG_CREATE	Version 5.0 . Combine with another CSIDL to force the creation of the associated folder if it does not exist.
CSIDL_FLAG_DONT_UNEXPAND KF_FLAG_DONT_UNEXPAND	Combine with another CSIDL constant to ensure the expansion of environment variables.
CSIDL_FLAG_DONT_VERIFY KF_FLAG_DONT_VERIFY	Combine with another CSIDL constant, except for CSIDL_FLAG_CREATE , to return an unverified folder path with no attempt to create or initialize the folder.
CSIDL_FLAG_NO_ALIAS KF_FLAG_NO_ALIAS	Combine with another CSIDL constant to ensure the retrieval of the true system path for the folder, free of any aliased placeholders such as %USERPROFILE%, returned by SHGetFolderLocation. This flag has no effect on paths returned by SHGetFolderPath.
CSIDL_FLAG_PER_USER_INIT	
CSIDL_FLAG_MASK	A mask for any valid CSIDL flag value.

Remarks

These values supersede the use of environment variables for this purpose. They are in turn superseded in Windows Vista and later by the [KNOWNFOLDERID](#) values.

A CSIDL is used in conjunction with one of four Shell functions, [SHGetFolderLocation](#), [SHGetFolderPath](#), [SHGetSpecialFolderLocation](#), and [SHGetSpecialFolderPath](#), to retrieve a special folder's path or pointer to an item identifier list (PIDL).

Combine **CSIDL_FLAG_CREATE** with any of the other CSIDLs, except for **CSIDL_FLAG_DONT_VERIFY**, to force the creation of the associated folder. The remaining CSIDLs correspond to either file system folders or virtual folders. Where the CSIDL identifies a file system folder, a commonly used path is given as an example. Other paths may be used. Some CSIDLs can be mapped to an equivalent *%VariableName%* environment variable. CSIDLs are more reliable, however, and should be used if possible.

Requirements

 Expand table

Requirement	Value
Header	Shlobj.h

See also

[SHGetFolderLocation](#)

[SHGetFolderPath](#)

[SHGetSpecialFolderLocation](#)

[SHGetSpecialFolderPath](#)

[KNOWN_FOLDER_FLAG](#)

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