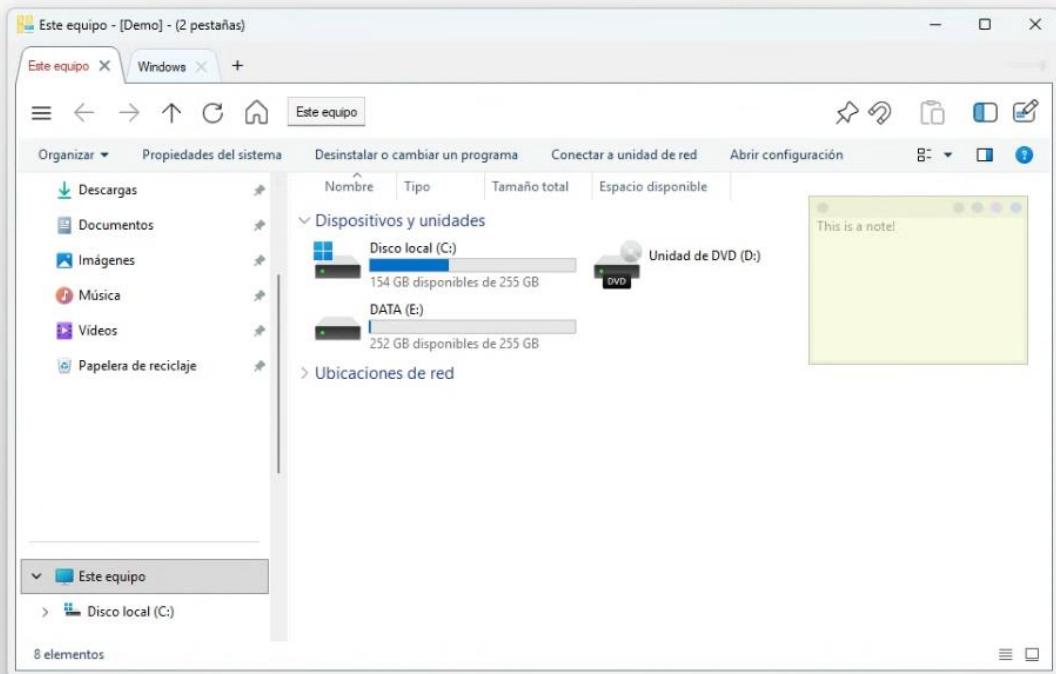


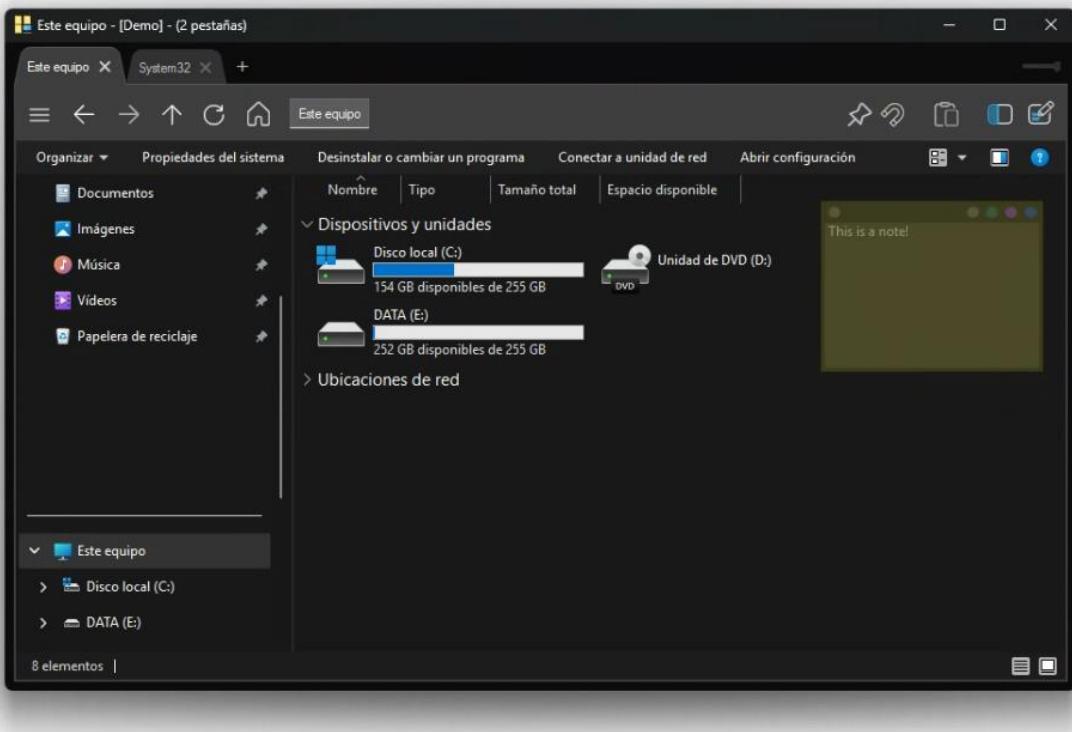
# Welcome to TabExplorer!

Version 1.0.0.3

Unlike other programs, TabExplorer does not replace the Windows file explorer itself, but rather the elements that Microsoft places around it: tabs, menus, buttons, effects... To achieve this, we use Microsoft's own libraries, which allow only the browsing component to be embedded, without all the additional elements. The result is a lightweight and portable application (**simply copy it and run it from the desired folder**) that takes up just 2 MB of disk space, runs using around 60 MB of RAM, and delivers a response speed even faster than that of Windows 11's own file explorer.

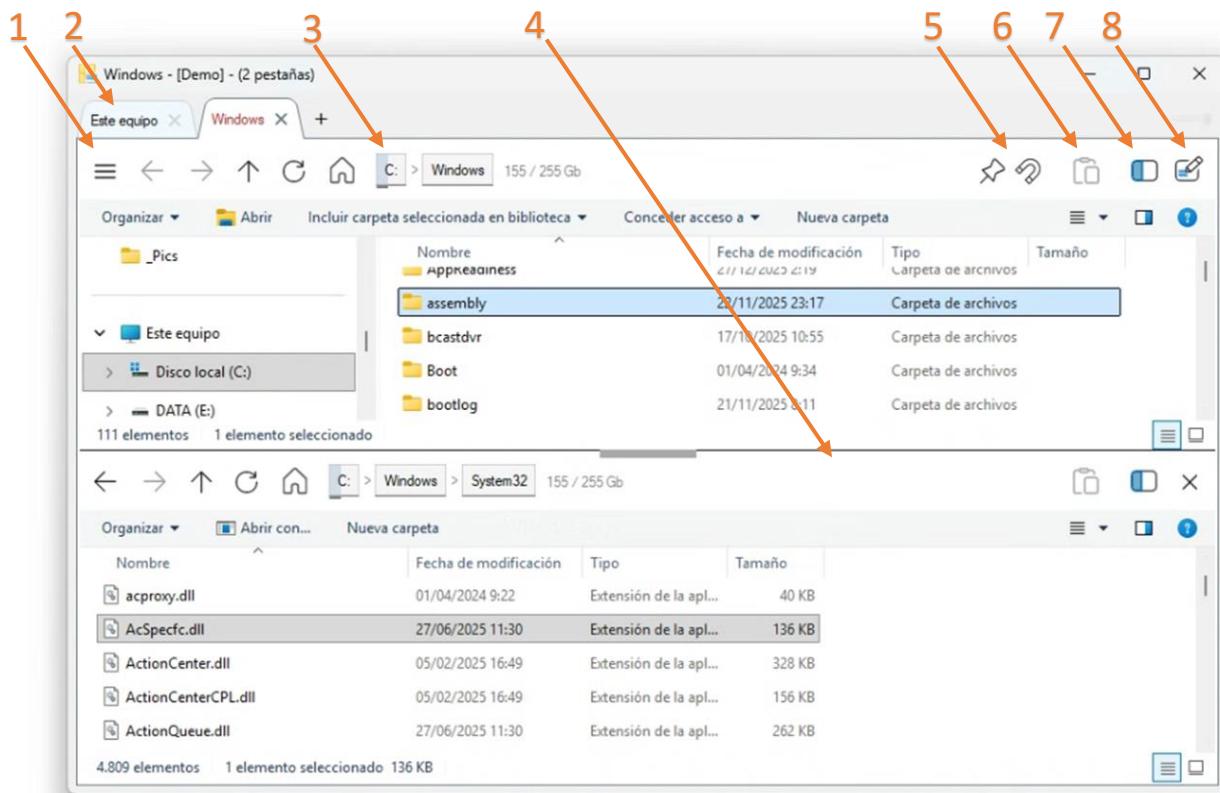


The advantage of using the native file explorer within TabExplorer is that it works exactly as Microsoft designed it and behaves in the same way, it even uses the same keyboard shortcuts... because it is still the native Windows file explorer, which will also be automatically updated as Microsoft releases patches and improvements. TabExplorer simply adds navigation buttons, tabs, and customization in the most intuitive and straightforward way possible. It also keeps track of the window state, so if it is closed or Windows restarts unexpectedly, it will return to the point where it was left!



## The TabExplorer window

As explained above, around the well-known native file explorer, TabExplorer just adds the tab layout, the navigation buttons, a bunch of customization options, a secondary optional browser...



- 1) **“Hamburger” menu**, with most options (dark mode, customization, run at startup, etc.), along with the usual buttons: previous and next folder (in browsing history), go up one level, refresh, and home.
- 2) **Tab layout**, with a context menu to clone tabs, reopen recently closed ones, customize colors and more.
- 3) **The path**, displayed as *breadcrumbs* (similar to those in the native file explorer). Each block represents a folder. When available, free and total space will be shown (graphically in the first block and in gray after the last one).
- 4) **Secondary browser**: Tabs can be split in two to display a useful secondary file explorer.
- 5) **Pin window**: The window and its tabs will reopen the next time TabExplorer is launched. This button is only available in secondary TabExplorer windows (this will be explained in the next page).

**Native explorer magnet**: When enabled, the window icon changes and from that moment on, any new native Windows Explorer that is opened will be automatically detected and closed, with its path opened instead in a new tab. In this simple way —which can be enabled or disabled with a single click— TabExplorer effectively becomes the “default Windows file explorer” without interfering with the real explorer’s operation or changing its integration with Windows (which is often problematic and not recommended).

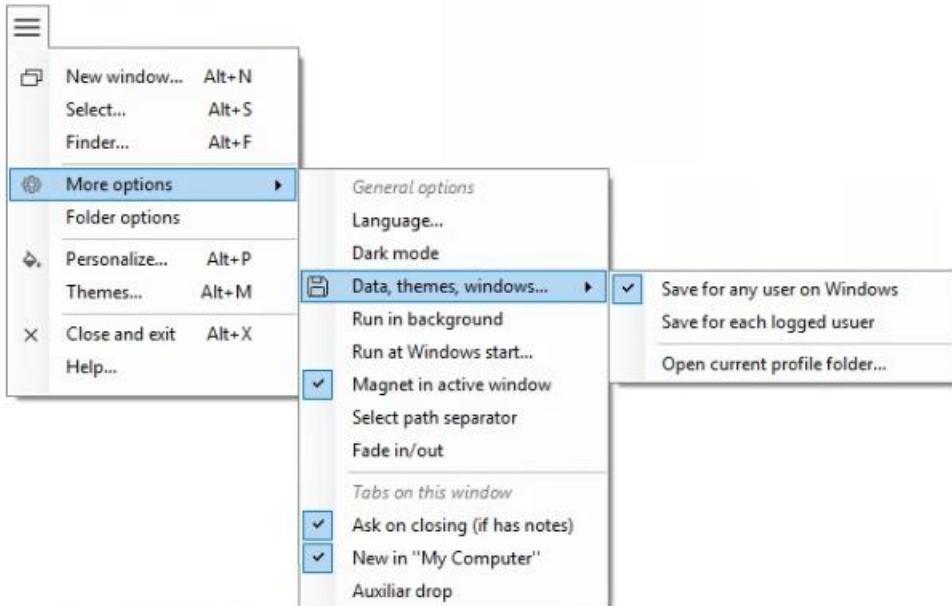
- 6) **Parallel paste**: When copying or moving large files (or a big number of them), TabExplorer may become unresponsive until the operation finishes. Using this button, the action is performed in a parallel thread, preventing the interface from being blocked.

*Note: The way files are copied and pasted is not changed. Windows will continue to use whatever is configured, whether is the default system or a third party tool installed by the user (for example, TeraCopy).*

- 7) **Folder tree button**, to show or hide it as needed.
- 8) **Notes button**: Displays a floating sticky-note that is associated with the current tab. Please remember: if you close a tab with notes on it, these notes will disappear too. So use it only for temporary notes and reminders!

**Opacity selector**, to work with files in the most transparent way possible!

## Options menu



## New window



Any number of TabExplorer windows can be opened, in addition to the initial one (called “Default”). The only requirement is that all additional windows must have a name. That’s why, when opening a new window, this screen is shown where the name can be set. Once defined, it is saved and will appear in the list below, allowing the window to be reopened and to continue where it was left.

The asterisk indicates which windows are currently open, and the side buttons allow to rename, duplicate, or delete as usual.

When TabExplorer is launched, the main “Default” window will always be opened (it cannot be deleted or renamed), followed by any windows that have been pinned with ⚡. The windows and all their contents (tabs, position, size, customization, etc.) are stored

in files with the “INI” extension (see below: *Data, themes, windows*).

## Finder & Select

**Finder option** performs a classic search in an external Windows Explorer window (due to a certain limitations on Microsoft’s side, for now the search screen is not integrated into TabExplorer).

The **select option** allows to start the file selection mode (also accessible by pressing F3).

## More options (language, dark mode...)

- **Language:** Allows changing the language of TabExplorer’s menus and options (the language of the file explorer itself will remain the one set in Windows). Custom languages can be created using the text files with the “LNG” extension as a template.
- **Dark Mode:** Join the Dark Side of TabExplorer!
- **Data, themes, windows**
  - **Save for any Windows user:** the different windows, themes, and all other settings will be saved in the “anyUser” folder, located inside the folder where TabExplorer is executed.
  - **Save per logged-in user:** the configuration will be saved in a folder named after the Windows user who is currently logged in, inside the TabExplorer folder.



**NOTE:** When “anyUser” or the user folder is created for the first time, the themes that come with TabExplorer (compressed in the TabExplorer.Themes.zip file) will be incorporated into it (see: Themes).

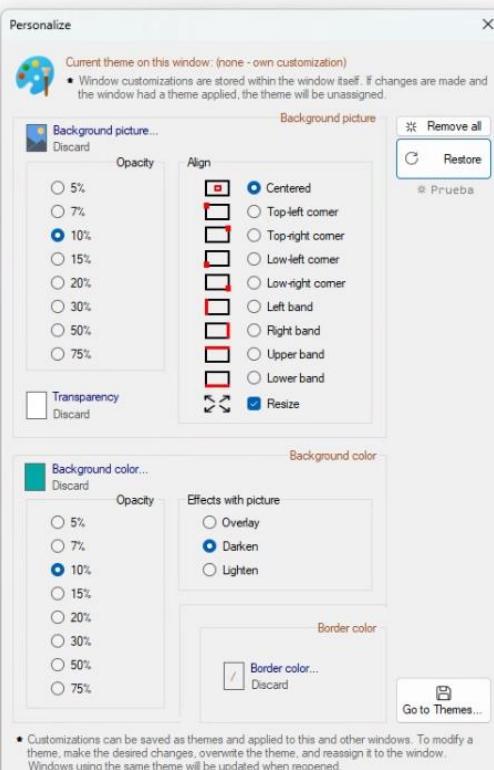
- **Run in background:** If the main window or any window with the pin ⚡ enabled is closed, they will continue running, and an icon in the notification area next to the clock will allow you to return to them.

- **Run at Windows start:** Allows adding or removing TabExplorer so that it runs at login.
- **Magnet on active window:** If native explorer magnet is enabled (⌚), it will be passed to the currently active TabExplorer window in order to capture there the new file explorer windows.
- **Select path separator:** Allows to change the symbol ">" that separates path blocks with a different one.
- **Fade-in/out:** Short fade-in and fade-out animation when opening and closing windows.
- **Ask on close (if has notes):** A confirmation will be requested before closing a tab with notes on it.
- **New in My Computer:** When opening a new tab, it will open in "This PC" (otherwise, in the root of C:).
- **Auxiliar drop:** Displays a new button next to the parallel paste which, when clicked, opens an independent mini file explorer pointing to the current folder. This allows files to be dragged from another location to copy or move them (drag & drop), thus avoiding long operations on the main window that could block TabExplorer (for example, dragging large files from within a compressed archive directly from its own application window —WinRAR, 7-Zip, etc.—).

## Folder Options

It simply opens the native Folder Options screen from the Windows Control Panel. Any changes made on that screen are applied to the native Windows file explorer and, therefore, also to the one shown in TabExplorer.

## Personalize and Themes

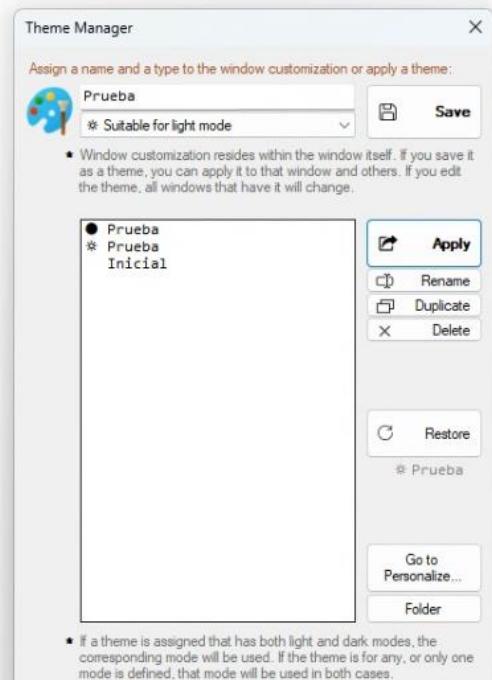


From the **customization screen**, a background image can be set for the entire window, which will act as a skin with the selected opacity. This can be a photograph, a company logo, and so on. If a transparency color is chosen, the parts of the image painted with that color will become transparent (in the case of PNG images, their built-in transparency is always applied).

A **tint color** can also be selected, which will be added to the image or will act as a color overlay.

A **border color** around file explorer and the tabs can also be set.

This customization is applied and saved only for the window being customized, but it can be turned into a theme so that it can be used in other windows. To do so, the **Themes** option opens the screen that allows you to assign a name and save the current customization or **apply** an existing theme to the window:

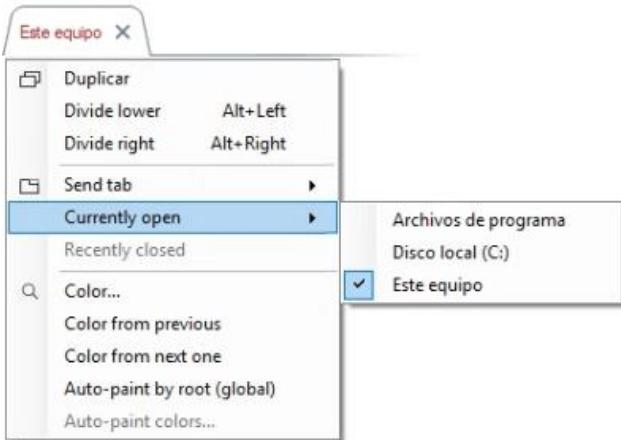


The **Themes screen** allows you to assign a name and save the window's customization as a reusable theme. Also, it's possible to save it only for light mode, then make the necessary changes so that it looks good in dark mode, and finally save the customization again using the same name, indicating that it is for dark mode. This makes it possible to create "dual" themes, identified by ● and ⚡ icons, so that when such a theme is applied to one or more windows, TabExplorer will automatically use the light or dark version depending on whether light or dark mode has been selected.

If no preference is specified, or if the theme has only been saved as light or only as dark, it can be used interchangeably.

If you create a theme called "**Default**", it will be used by default in any new TabExplorer window.

## Tab context menu



### Duplicate

Duplicates the current tab into a new one. The new tab will be identical (path, color, secondary explorer, etc.).

### Divide lower / divide right

Splits the tab horizontally or vertically and adds a secondary file explorer, allowing two different locations to be viewed at the same time and making it easy to work between them without having to switch tabs.

### Send tab

When more than one TabExplorer window is open, this option will be available as a submenu (just like *Currently open*). Selecting a window from that menu simply sends the current tab to there.

### Currently open

When more than one tab is open, this option Will be available as a submenu. Selecting one will focus that tab (useful when there are too many tabs, to avoid scrolling them).

### Recently closed

If a tab has been closed recently, this option will be available as a submenu and will allow it to be reopened. Recently closed tabs are permanently discarded when the window is closed.

### Color

Allows you to choose a color to highlight the top of the tab.

This makes it very easy to group tabs visually.

### Color from previous/next one

Allows you to quickly set the same color as the tabs adjacent to the current one.

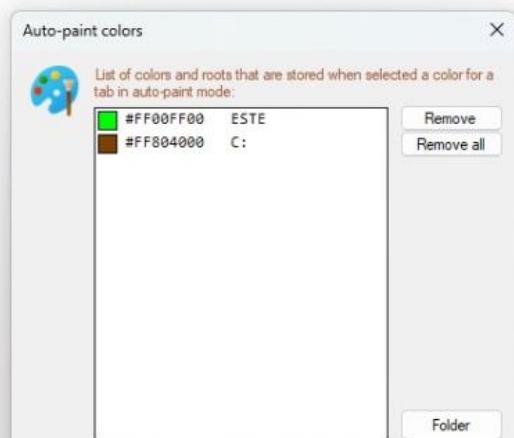
### Auto-paint by root

When this option is enabled, any colors previously chosen for individual tabs are no longer used (but they are not lost), and a global color scheme is applied instead, affecting any tab in any TabExplorer window.

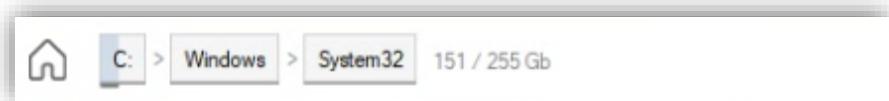
How does it work? When a color is selected, it is applied to all tabs that share the same root in their path. For example, if blue is chosen for a folder on drive C:, all tabs in all TabExplorer windows pointing to drive C: will have the same color. In this way, colors can be defined per drive and applied globally.

### Auto-paint colors

When the previous option is enabled, this option becomes available and allows you to review the colors that have been assigned, as well as discard them if desired.



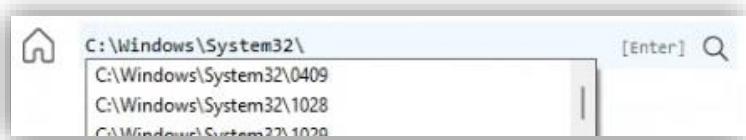
## The current path



The current path is displayed as **blocks** (breadcrumbs), in a similar way to the native file explorer. Each block represents a folder level. Clicking the first level (C:) will take you directly to the root of that drive. Clicking an intermediate block (Windows) will take you to that specific level.

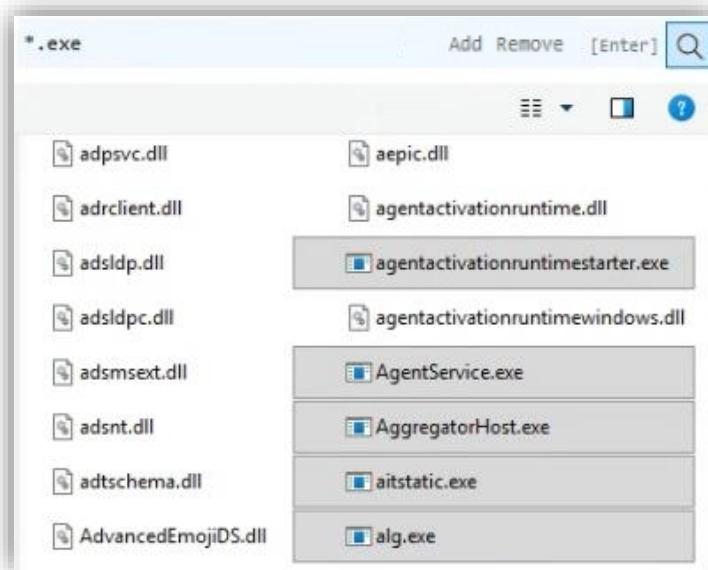
The main difference compared to the native file explorer is that the available and total space of the drive is displayed (when this information is available): graphically in the first block, and in gray after the last one.

## Classic text edition



Clicking outside the blocks (or using the corresponding keyboard shortcut —F4—) switches the path display to the **classic text mode** (`C:\Windows\System32`). In this mode, the path can be edited manually and contextual help is provided as you type. It is also possible to enter special commands (for example, “cmd”, “notepad”, or a URL), closely mimicking the behavior of the native file explorer.

## File selection mode



Another difference compared to the native file explorer: when in **classic text mode**, clicking the **magnifying glass** (or using the corresponding keyboard shortcut —F3—) switches to **file selection mode**.

In this mode, files can be selected using the usual wildcards (?) and (\*). In the image, `* .exe` selects all files regardless of their name, as long as they have the “.exe” extension.

*Note: file extensions can be shown or hidden in the native file explorer’s Folder Options screen, along with other settings such as hiding protected system files, showing hidden files, highlighting compressed files in a different color, and so on.*

The two options **Add** and **Remove** allow you to work with the current selection:

- If **Add** is selected and a different filter is applied, the results will be added to the current selection.
- If **Remove** is selected, the items found will be removed from the current selection.
- If neither option is selected, the filter results will replace and discard the previous selection

## Requirements

Windows 10 or later, and Microsoft .NET Framework 4.8 (which is usually preinstalled with Windows).