

Separating Research Files from the CHAFF

When opening files across different operating systems, you may come across irrelevant files, often called Concealed, Hidden, And Forgotten Files (CHAFF).

Want to learn how to identify and delete them before sharing your project? Keep reading!

Common CHAFF types:

- Temporary backup files
- Cache files
- Operating system-specific metadata and more...

Why should you not include them?

- Reduce confusion and accidental deletions
- Free storage space
- Boost efficiency during searches and backups

How do you spot hidden files?

macOS:

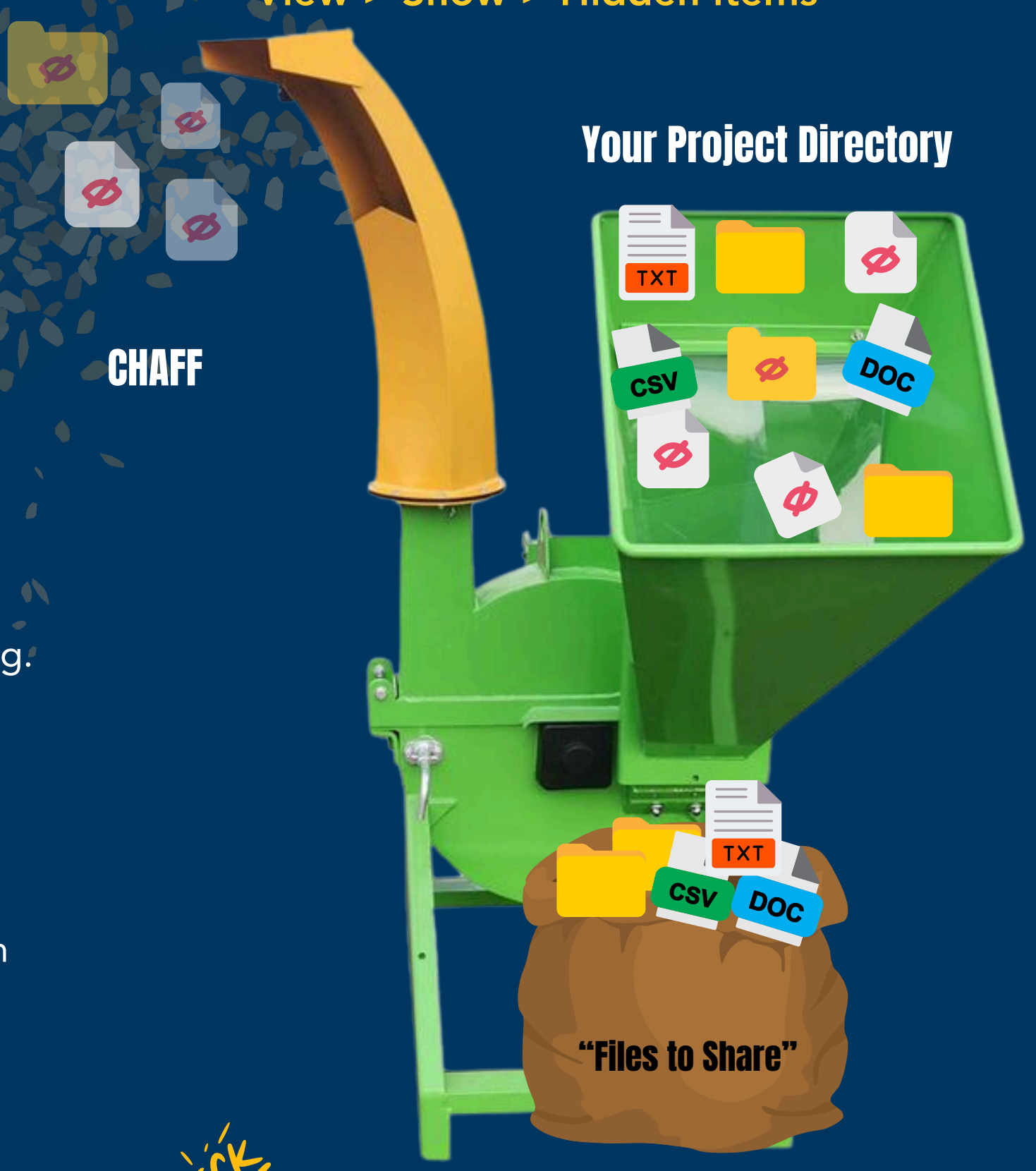
- Press **Command + Shift + .** (period) in Finder
- For .DS_Store files, open Terminal and run: **find ~/Documents -name ".DS_Store"**

Windows:

- Open File Explorer on Taskbar and go to **View > Show > Hidden items**

Common CHAFF's names and extensions

- .DS_Store**
Stores Finder's display settings and Spotlight's metadata.
- __**
Contains extended attributes like Finder's tags.
- __MACOSX**
Holds a duplicate structure with files for extended attributes.
- ~\$**
Temporary Office files that track open documents.
- thumbs.db**
File storing image/video thumbnails for faster browsing.
- ~[file_name].tmp**
Temporary files created by software for performance, settings, or backups.
- .[directory_name]**
Hidden directories containing configuration files, often useful to keep.
- .bak**
Backup copies of the file.



Prevent CHAFF Cluttering in your GitHub Repo

Add a .gitignore file in the root directory of the repository, and specify patterns for files and directories that Git should ignore. Click below for more information and templates:



git-scm.com/docs/gitignore
github.com/github/gitignore



How to remove CHAFF?

Read DCN's [blog post](#) for strategies to handle and remove CHAFF across operating systems and from compressed folders:



bit.ly/dcn-chaff



Schedule a consultation with us:
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