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Clean your desktop in 5 minutes with Claude

The exact prompt that sorts a messy desktop into tidy folders without deleting a single file. Claude proposes the plan, you approve it, and everything lands in one reviewable folder.

who it's for

complete beginner

time needed

5 minutes

cost

free

a free guide

You watched the video, so here's the whole thing in one place, plus the exact prompt. This is the one that turns a desktop full of random screenshots, downloads and "final_v3" files into something you can actually find your way around. And it never deletes anything, it asks you first.

Why your desktop looks like that

Your desktop is where files go to get lost. You download a thing, screenshot a thing, save a thing "just for now", and a year later it's 400 icons deep and you can't find the one PDF you need. You keep meaning to sort it, but doing it by hand is an hour of dragging files around, so you never do.

Claude can do the sorting for you. Cowork, and Claude on your desktop, can see your files, work out what's what, and propose a tidy structure. The bit everyone worries about, "is it going to delete my stuff?", is the whole point of the safe version below. It proposes, you approve, nothing moves until you say go. And nothing ever gets binned.

The prompt

Open Claude Cowork (or Claude on your desktop), point it at your desktop, and paste this in:

```
Look at the files on my desktop. Don't move, rename or delete anything yet, just read what's there.
```

```
Then propose a tidy folder structure for me: a short list of folders (like invoices, screenshots, photos, work, admin) and roughly which files go in each. Show me the plan as a simple list first.
```

```
Rules you must follow:
```

- Ask me to confirm the plan before you touch a single file.
- When I say go, make one new folder on my desktop called _to-review, and move the files into tidy subfolders inside it. That keeps everything in one place I can check.
- Never delete anything and never empty the bin. If you're not sure where a file belongs, put it in a "not sure" subfolder and tell me.
- If a file looks important or you can't tell what it is, leave it where it is and flag it.

```
Start by showing me the plan.
```

What it looks like when it runs

Say your desktop has about 50 files: screenshots from March, three versions of a logo, a couple of invoices, a tax PDF, some holiday photos.

You paste the prompt. Claude reads everything and comes back with: "Here's the plan, 6 folders: screenshots (23), invoices (4), logos (3), photos (12), admin (5), not sure (2). Want me to go ahead?" You read it, say "yes, but put the logos in work", and it does exactly that, into a `_to-review` folder on your desktop.

Your desktop is suddenly clean, every original is in one place, and you deleted nothing. If you hate it, you drag the folder to the bin yourself. You were in control the whole way.

A few more to try

Give me a one-line summary of what's in each folder you made, so I know what I'm looking at before I keep it.

Find every file on my desktop I haven't opened in over a year and just list them. Don't move them, let me decide.

I keep dumping screenshots on my desktop. Suggest one simple habit so they land in a screenshots folder from now on.

The one rule

It always asks before it changes anything. Claude shows you the plan first and waits for your yes. When you approve, it moves files into a `_to-review` folder on your desktop, it never deletes anything, and it never empties your bin. If you don't like the result, every original is in that one folder and you can drag it all back in ten seconds. You decide, every single time.

This guide lives at <https://fionntobin.com/guides/clean-your-desktop-with-claude> and gets updated when the tools change. More free guides: <https://fionntobin.com/guides>