

Can't open an attachment? How do you know which program to use? What if you don't have the program needed?

A: First off—before you open any attachment, make sure you know who sent it. Even if you do know the sender, if you aren't expecting it, you might want to send a quick note to your friend and make sure they really sent it—especially **.pps** files since they can contain viruses. Also, do not open any attachments with **.exe** , **.scr** or **.pif** file extensions.

Nothing worse than getting a file from a friend and you don't have the right program to open it. Here are some common file extensions and the programs needed to open:

.doc - Microsoft Word **.pps** - MS PowerPoint **.xls** - MS Excel worksheet **.wpd** - Corel WordPerfect
.pdf - Adobe Acrobat **.jpg** - JPEG graphic file **.zip** - Zip (compressed) file

.sit - Stuffit (compressed) file **.scr** - Windows Screen Saver (DO NOT OPEN)
.pif - Program Information File (DO NOT OPEN)

The good news is that most software developers offer freeware viewers that will allow you to see, but not alter, content.

.doc - [Microsoft Word Viewer](#) **.pps** - [PowerPoint Viewer](#) **.xls** - [Excel Spreadsheet Viewer](#)

.wpd - [Wordperfect](#) **.pdf** - [Acrobat Reader](#)

Corel no longer offers a viewer, but there is a third-party application called "Lightning" that includes a Wordperfect viewer.

.jpg - You can view these in your web browser or most imaging software.

.scr - USE CAUTION if you receive a screen saver via email. They can contain worms or viruses.

.pif - DO NOT OPEN! This is most likely a virus. Clicking it will run a program or code that can mess up your computer.

As for compressed files (.zip & .sit), I recommend 7 Zip, because it's free.

There are also freeware/shareware programs for opening .zip files such as [WinZip](#) . In addition, with Windows XP you can save any zipped file to your desktop or a folder and access the files without unzipping (just click it like any other folder—drag items out to run them).

So, next time you get an attached file in your email but don't have the program to open it, just grab a viewer.