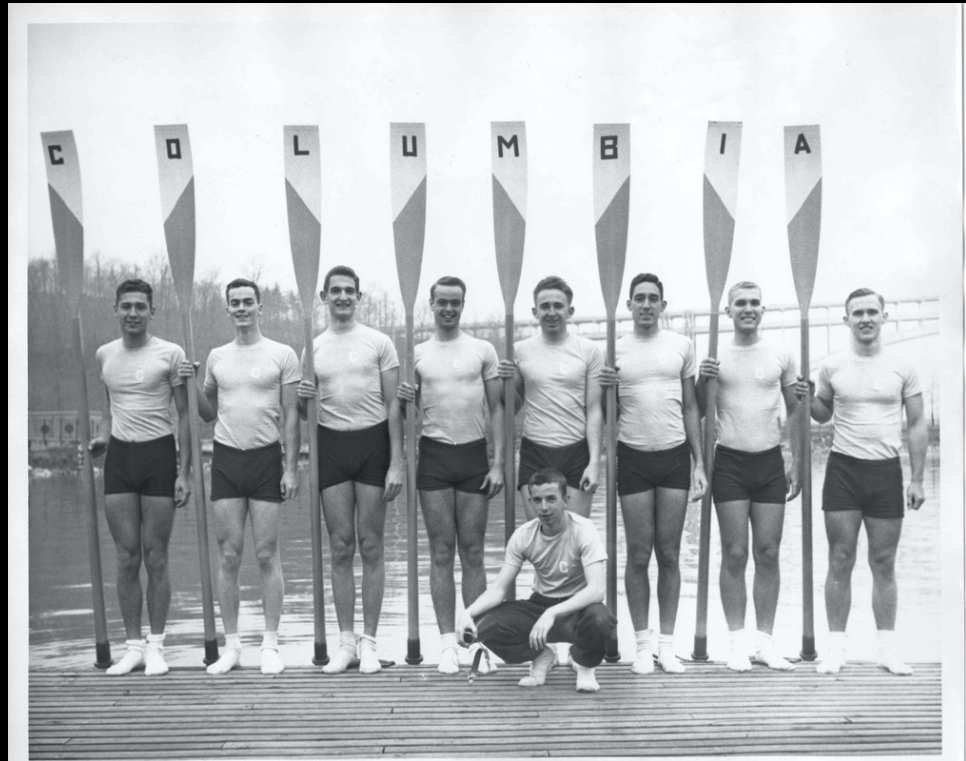


# How to Organize a Shared Drive

Columbia crew teams  
show you how to work  
together



Columbia Crew Team, 1953. Scan #0765. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

## Shared Drives Are Shared

Shared drives mean that there are multiple users. As a group of users, you need to work together to organize materials in a way that makes sense to all.

Here are the steps for a File Folder Clean-Up.



Columbia Crew Team, 1926. Scan #1189. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

## 1. Agree on Big Buckets

As a team of users, identify areas of work, major functions, main activities or key tasks. Decide on a name or keyword for each “big” area.



Columbia Crew Team, 1945. Scan #3589. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

## 2. Bring Files Together

Use the “Big Buckets” to bring files together: use top-level folders to collect task- or work-area-related documents.



Columbia Crew Team, 1970s. Scan #3590. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

### 3. Sort Inside the Buckets

Create subfolders to organize content: by time (academic year), by document type (drafts, photos), by phase (communications, proposals, interim reports).



Columbia Crew Team, 1935. Scan #4723. Intercollegiate Athletics and Department of Physical Education Negatives, University Archives.

## 4. Keep It Simple

Aim for success by keeping file charts and folder structures clear and easy to follow. Complex structures may be more precise but they may be too hard to maintain.



Columbia Crew Team, 1944. Scan #4724. Intercollegiate Athletics and Department of Physical Education Negatives, University Archives.

## 5. Write It Down

Make a file map or outline of what the agreed names and folder titles are. Think of this as a cheat sheet or template for anyone new joining the team: the filing system at a glance.



Columbia Crew Team, circa 1968. Scan #4733. Office of Public Affairs Photograph Collection, University Archives.

6. Maintain and Revise  
Schedule a File Clean-Up Day,  
much like a Clean & Go Green  
but for electronic records.  
Review folders and  
subfolders: Are the Big  
Buckets working? Are there  
too many or too few  
subfolders? What areas are  
unclear or have too much  
overlap?

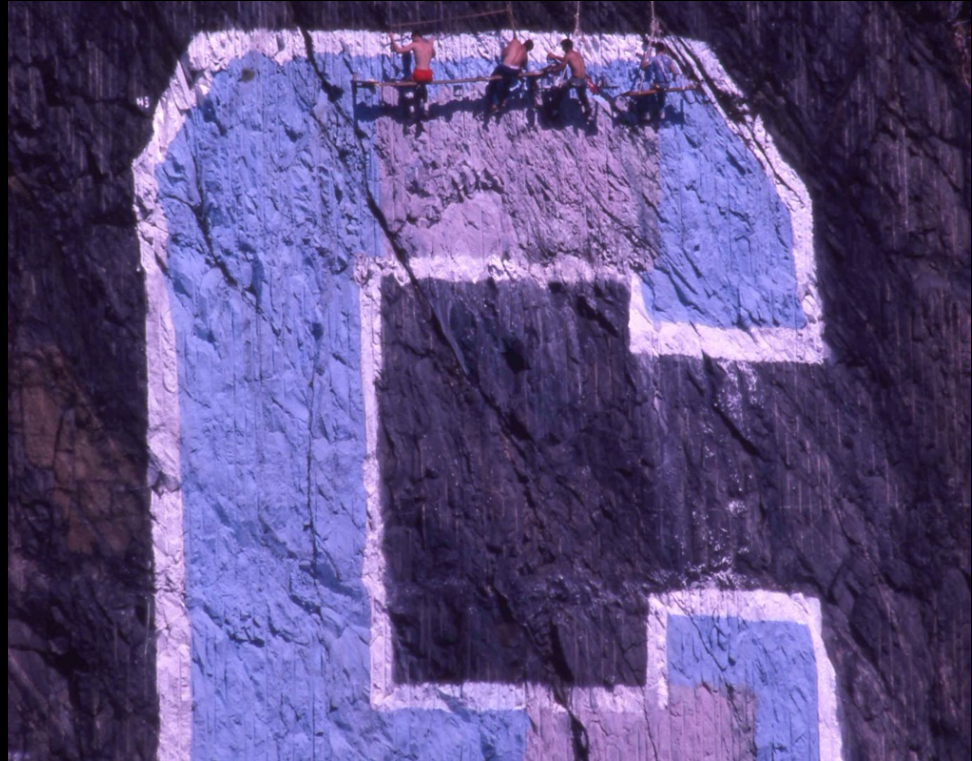


Columbia Crew Team, 1953. Scan #4726. Intercollegiate Athletics and Department of Physical Education Negatives, University Archives.



## Keep in Mind

- Avoid using personal names: responsibilities and staff members change.
- Avoid naming folders “miscellaneous,” “general,” “stuff.” If it’s not clear what is inside the folder (what the grouping means), don’t bury files under unnecessary layers.



Columbia Crew Team repaints “C” Rock, circa 1968. Scan #4732. Office of Public Affairs Photograph Collection, University Archives.

## And Also

- Be consistent: follow the agreed terms and folder structure.
- Be mindful: before adding a subfolder, consider whether it's necessary.



Columbia Crew Team practice in the Low Library rowing tanks, 1952. Scan #0766. Historical Photograph Collection, University Archives.

## And for documents

- Number drafts and revisions: use version control numbering as part of the filename (v01, v02, v02\_01).
- Folder earlier drafts; only keep the current working version (and eventually the final version) at the higher level.
- Once you have the final version of a document, print the final as a PDF. The PDF is easy to identify in a folder and helps to avoid any inadvertent changes when someone forgets to “Save As...”



Columbia Crew Team, 1948. Scan #4725. Intercollegiate Athletics and Department of Physical Education Negatives, University Archives.

## Questions?

If you have any records management and/or University Archives questions, please feel free to contact us.

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Shell rigger and builder Ben "Pop" Johnson, 1940s. Scan #4731. Intercollegiate Athletics and Department of Physical Education Negatives, University Archives.