

How to make an Autorun.inf File

by [Crazy Leprecaun](#) on December 7, 2008

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Intro: How to make an Autorun.inf File

In a previous Instructable, I went over this quickly and did not explain it very well. I was asked to make a full Instructable on Autorun.inf files, and here it is.

An Autorun.inf file is a file that, when placed on a drive (internal or external), will allow the drive to start programs, have a different icon than the standard boring one (LOTS OF FUN TO MESS WITH), and have a different name. The syntax is "option=value". Examples will be given later on.

Continue if you want to learn more.

ANOTHER UPDATE ON PAGE 4



step 1: A Basic Autorun File

In this step, we will make a basic, do-nothing Autorun file. All that will change is the name of the USB drive, and the icon that goes with it.

Open Notepad (or Notepad++ or what ever you use) and type the following:

```
autorun
icon=NAME.ico
label=NAME
```

BEFORE YOU SAVE IT!

Where it says **autorun**, insert brackets around the word. I cannot type this in the Instructable, as it the Instructable creating software would turn the word into a link. Refer to the picture for the correct format.

Here is what you typed:

autorun : This states that this is an Autorun file, and what follows describes what the drive will look like and how it will act.

icon : This will change the icon of the drive (in the "My Computer" screen) to a custom one that you choose. The picture you choose must be an icon file (it must have the extension ".ico"). You can get pictures of that format from <http://www.iconarchive.com/> and many other websites.

label : This will change the name of the drive to whatever you choose, as long as what you choose does not contain too many characters.

OK. Save the file to the main directory on your drive ("My Computer, Removable Drive X"). Eject the drive, then plug it back in. If you saved it to an internal hard drive, you will have to restart the computer.

If you are adding an icon to the drive, you will need to have an icon file to go use. An icon file is NOT a picture you got off the internet. It must have the extension ".ico". If it does not, then it will not work. Place the icon in the same directory as the Autorun file. Once you have done this, go back into the Autorun file and change the line that says **icon=NAME.ico** to have the name of the icon (keep the part that has the ".ico").

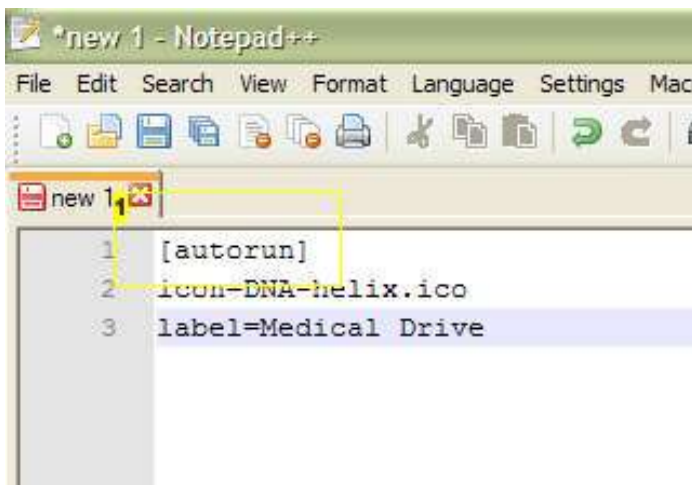
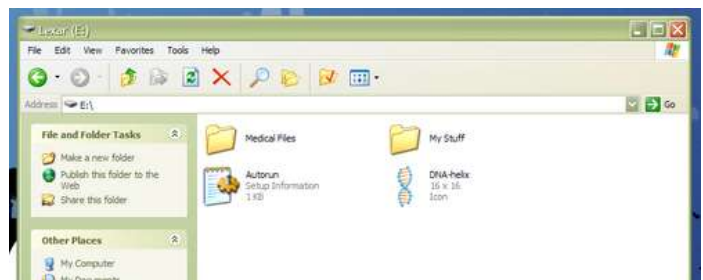
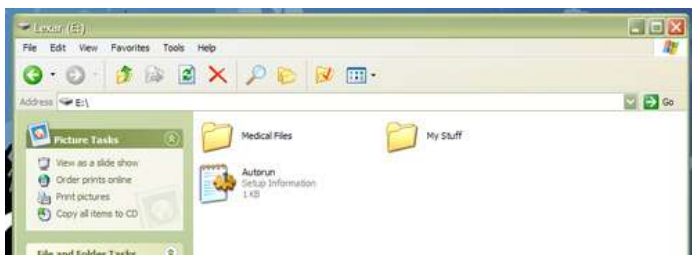
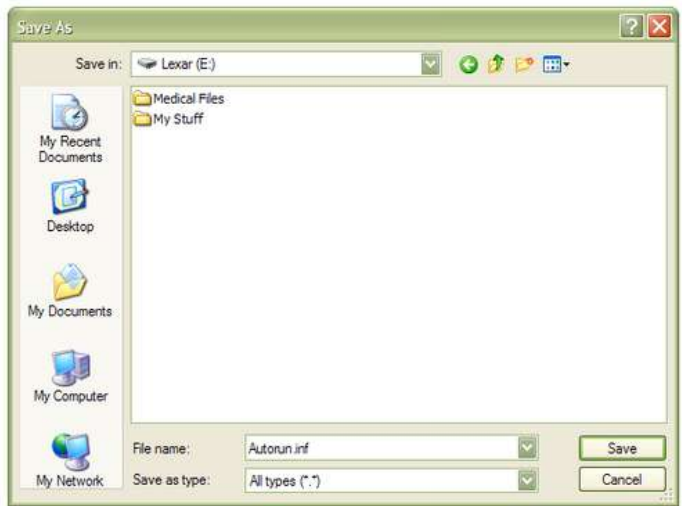


Image Notes

1. DO NOT FORGET THE BRACKETS!!!



step 2: A More Complex Autorun

If you want a USB drive that actually does something when you plug it into a computer, then this is the step for you.

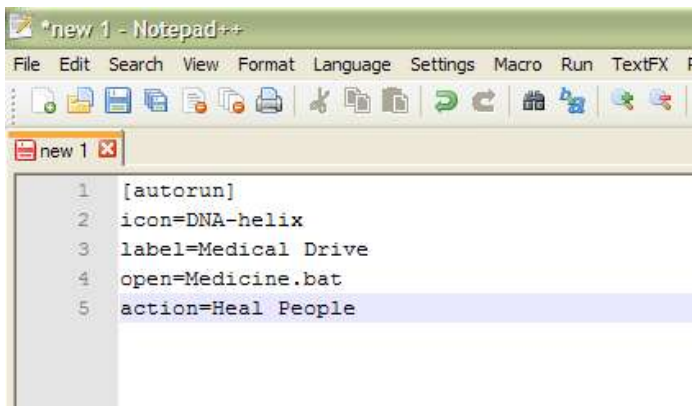
Type the following into Notepad or Notepad++:

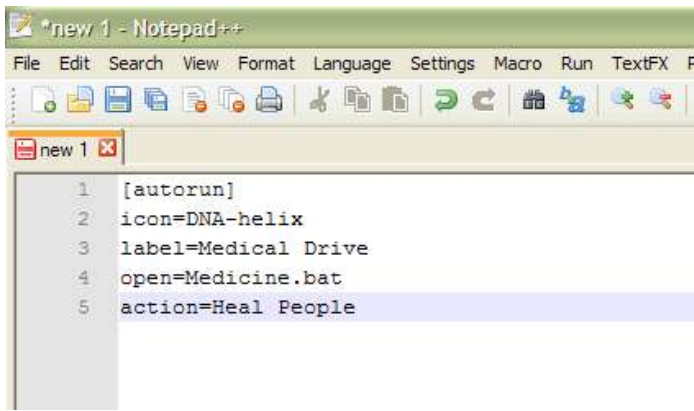
```
autorun
icon=NAME.ico
label=NAME
open=FILE.EXT
action=ACTION NAME
```

This is a short explanation of the new stuff you just typed:

open : Duh. This will open a file that you choose. If that file is in a folder, you would type the following:
open=.\Folder\File.ext

action : This is what you want the option to be called. If you remember, the option's name on the first page was "Heal People". Refer to the picture to see what I mean.





step 3: An Autorun file with extra Commands

The previous steps just messed with the name, icon, and actions of the USB drive. Now, I will show you how to add extra commands to the USB drive. These commands will show up when you right-click on the USB drive.

If you lose your USB drive often, you should 1) buy a keychain for it and 2) add this to your Autorun file:

```
shell\lost\command=Lost.bat
shell\lost=Help! I'm Lost
```

NOTE : This command is not only for a lost USB drive. You can make it anything you want.

shell\lost\command= : This is the file that will open when you click on the "Help! I'm Lost" command.

shell\lost= : This is what the name of the command is. Look at the picture for more information.

Also, the computer does not have a file called "Lost.bat" already on it (duh). You will have to make one. This is some good code for the batch file:

```
:top
@echo off
title Please Return Me!
cls
echo I have been lost! Please return me to my owner!
echo 1234 Second St. Small Town, America, 12345
echo 1-555-555-5555
echo return-me-please@gmail.com
pause
goto top
```

I have written this code so that if someone presses a key (like the file asks you to, see the screenshot), it will simply repeat itself! It will continue to do this until the finder of the drive closes out of the CMD window.

PLEASE make sure that you replace the info with your actual address, phone number, and email (unless you happen to live at 1234 Second Street, Small Town, America, 12345).

There are countless possibilities that you can place here. Also, you can insert more than one, so you could have a "Help Me" option, a "Hello" option, and a "Destroy the Earth" option. Have fun with that (and be legal!).

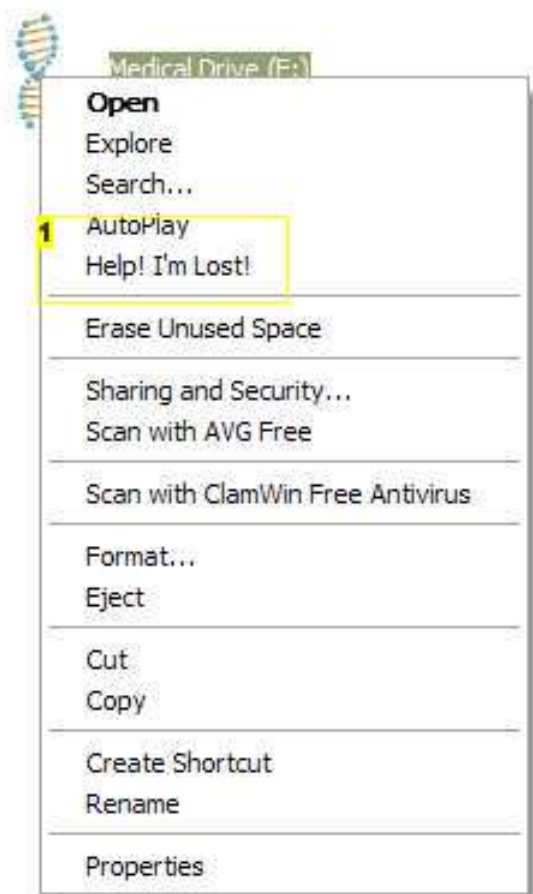


Image Notes

1. Here is what I named the command.



step 4: The End

Well, I hope that you found this helpful. I know that there are many more commands that I left out, and I did that because I did not want to have to explain them to some little kid who just wants to give his new 1gig a power-rangers icon.

Feel free to leave comments, give suggestions, make corrections, and vote.

UPDATE

If you have trouble making the autorun file, you can download the text file version of one I made. Just replace the information inside it and save it as a .inf file.

ALSO , the *icon* and *open* fields cannot have multiple words in them. Use the underscore symbol if you have to, but NO spaces.



File Downloads



autorun.txt (96 bytes)

[NOTE: When saving, if you see .tmp as the file ext, rename it to 'autorun.txt']

Related Instructables



How to Make an Auto-Hacking USB Drive by Crazy Leprecaun



Run command prompt when you click on your flash drive by locofocos



How to Pod Slurp by Elementix



How to make flash drive that copy's users files silently and automatically by bigdaddyclint



NES Controller USB Flash Drive by tubadude88



Autorun anything off of a usb key by dark-shot666



How to Autorun Portable Apps off of a CD by Fenwick



How to make a portable stacraft flashdrive by fang113

Comments

26 comments

[Add Comment](#)



J-Manoo7 says:

where is the icon file for the default windows folder icon? great ible

Oct 2, 2009. 12:02 PM [REPLY](#)



Crazy Leprecaun says:

I use Ubuntu now, so I can't check for you. However, if you want to find out, enable the viewing of system hidden files and folders, then open any folder with the standard icon an open the *desktop.ini* file. The icon label will have it. I think that it's something like "*shell-32, somerandomnumber*". Tell me if it works.

Oct 2, 2009. 6:56 PM [REPLY](#)



J-Manoo7 says:

yea its in the shell32 directory, when you change icon on the desktop i found thats where it looks, put the number 5 in and it acutally change so i just need the number now, problem is itf you search google for "icon=%blablabla%blablabla\SHL32, 5" (the icon path) avast! finds a virus on one of the pages before i even navigate to it. (still on the search page) so either i will just have to kep guessing or find a way to let avast! let me use the search.. or ill search something else. either way you're right. ill get back at you and tell you if it works. if it does good i might just post an 'ible

Oct 3, 2009. 6:55 AM [REPLY](#)



emuman4evr says:

I made this on a vista machine and it will not autorun on a xp machine. Have any idea?

Apr 17, 2009. 3:39 PM [REPLY](#)



Crazy Leprecaun says:

Hmm... Not really. People have mentioned this before, I think. I use XP on my laptop, so I really can't tell you a lot about this error. Try making the file on an XP machine.

Apr 17, 2009. 4:48 PM [REPLY](#)



DNR says:

wat does the autorun file of our drives contain....i want the whole code,mine file is modified...wen i open drives a "open with" dialogue box opens.....can u solve it

Aug 9, 2009. 11:52 AM [REPLY](#)



PCfreak says:

great lble ive did this on both XP and Vista and didnt have a prob at all, all tho i started seeing viruses on my flash drive so i quit using autorun files but i liked using them tho

Jul 16, 2009. 4:10 PM [REPLY](#)



erikals says:

Excellent 'ible.
Thanks again.

May 25, 2009. 3:17 AM [REPLY](#)



Rellsun says:

I can't seem to get this to work in vista. Only the name change works. But it does work fine in xp, name, icon, open command all work. Pic of my autorun file included Any suggestions?

Mar 26, 2009. 3:29 PM [REPLY](#)



Crazy Leprecaun says:

You did not include a pic. I am using XP, so I do not know a lot about Vista. Try Googling it to see what you can find. My idea is that Vista is made to accept Autorun files differently. Look for an Autorun file maker.

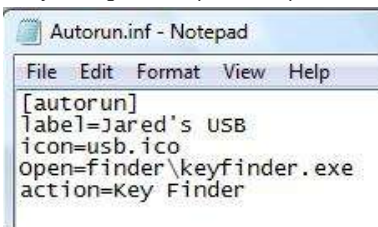
Mar 26, 2009. 3:40 PM [REPLY](#)



Rellsun says:

ill try that i guess the pic didnt upload. thanks anyway though. I think your right on the way vista accepts autorun because it worked on xp.

Mar 26, 2009. 3:55 PM [REPLY](#)



Crazy Leprecaun says:

I think I see your problem with the action part. I'm not sure, but I think that the *keyfinder* file needs to be in the same directory as the autorun file, not in a sub-folder. Try this and tell me if it worked.

Mar 26, 2009. 4:01 PM [REPLY](#)



Rellsun says:

Nope still nothing ill try and do a little research. Im gunna use this so i can get the serial keys for windows by itself obviously just weird that it works in xp and in an xp virtual machine.

Mar 26, 2009. 4:06 PM [REPLY](#)



Rellsun says:

Ok i got it to work in vista and make the menu come up. if others are having trouble in vista try this:
1. Open your search box and type regedit and click OK.
2. Go to HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Policies\Explorer.
3. You should see a key called NoDriveTypeAutoRun. Double click it and set the Value Data to 91 (hexadecimal).
4. kill and restart explorer.exe then remove and reinsert flash drive.

Mar 29, 2009. 10:50 AM [REPLY](#)

<http://theonegreatx.com/2007/11/03/restore-usb-autorun-autoplay-in-vista-or-xp/>



7Chris Crash says:

A great Instructable! Very descriptive.

Mar 21, 2009. 5:51 PM [REPLY](#)

I have a problem though, when i plug my usb in, it says "G:\ is not a valid Win32 application"
I have vista and the G:\ is just the port i used.

Any suggestions?



Crazy Leprecaun says:

Mar 21, 2009. 7:24 PM [REPLY](#)

Well, this error can be caused by a hardware problem. Try plugging the drive into a different computer and see if it works there. If the problem started after you made an autorun file, you might have made a bad file. If this is the problem, plug the drive into a different computer or one running Linux (where autorun doesn't work). If the problem still stays there, then go to an IT guy you know.



Crazy Leprecaun says:

Feb 14, 2009. 9:17 PM [REPLY](#)

Hey everyone! I just wanted you to know that I wrote batch file that will make an Autorun file for you. Check page 4 for details and the file.



totos says:

Mar 14, 2009. 7:32 AM [REPLY](#)

what does the rem command mean?



Crazy Leprecaun says:

Mar 14, 2009. 9:52 AM [REPLY](#)

All that *rem* does is allow you to place a comment into the batch file. Whatever text follows the *rem* command in the same line is not used by the file. Most people use it for documentation.



totos says:

Mar 14, 2009. 7:33 AM [REPLY](#)

This is a very good instructable. Thanks!



zetsway says:

Jan 27, 2009. 4:05 PM [REPLY](#)

Great job. I really enjoyed it.



MacDynamo says:

Jan 1, 2009. 12:40 PM [REPLY](#)

Hey thanks for writing an instructable about how to make these files! I used google but all i got were unclear explanations. Good Job!



Crazy Leprecaun says:

Jan 1, 2009. 4:55 PM [REPLY](#)

Thank you! It's nice to get a comment that has nice things to say, instead of questions or people saying that the Instructable was stupid.



drmmj55 says:

Dec 16, 2008. 1:22 PM [REPLY](#)

good job!!
I also like the auto hacking USB drive



theknight says:

Dec 16, 2008. 12:30 PM [REPLY](#)

Brilliant! Just what I wanted! 5*s!

Happy Holidays
TheKnight



Unit042 says:

Dec 16, 2008. 11:09 AM [REPLY](#)

Nice 'ible. Short, simple, and to the point. I'm definately doing this for my brothers, who have USB thumbdrives. (It's a pain to open My Computer, then open the thingy to do the stuff of inspeficity)
