Using 7-Zip to encrypt files

7-Zip is open source file compression software that gives users the capability to encrypt/password protect files. A batch of sensitive files could be compressed into one archive file. If you share that file with someone else (or if it falls into the wrong hands) only someone you have shared the password with will be able to open the archive.

See http://www.7-zip.org/download.html

12 F:\	—	×
File Edit View Favorites Tools Help		
d 🖶 📼 🗸 🗤 📥 🗶 🦹		
Add Extract Test Copy Move Delete Info		
🦻 🚘 F:\		~
Name		
Prophet		
System Volume Information		
sensitive_file_001.txt		
🔚 sensitive_file_002.tex		
📜 sensitive_file_003.pdf		
		 >
0 object(s) selected		

Figure 1 - 7-zip interface

To compress, encrypt, and password protect files using 7-Zip:

- 1. Select the relevant file/s
- 2. Click the Add menu option (usually shown with green + symbol)
- 3. Refer to the screen shot on page 2
- 4. Decide which Archive file format would be most appropriate:
 - a. If you are confident the recipient has a Windows device *and* will be able to use 7-zip choose the 7z format.
 - i. This will constrain the encryption methods: only AES-256 will be available.
 - ii. An additional option "Encrypt file names" will be available. This is selected by default and it is suggested that you don't change this.
 - b. If you are not sure what operating system the recipient is using, choose zip format
 - i. This will offer a second encryption method called **ZipCrypto**. Select this method.
 - c. The other two archive formats (tar and wim) are *not* recommended.

There is no need to change any other settings.

Add to Archive			×		
Archive: F:\ F.zip			····		
Archive format:	zip ~	Update mode:	Add and replace files \sim		
Compression level:	Normal ~	Path mode:	Relative pathnames $~~$ \sim		
Compression method: Dictionary size:	Deflate \checkmark 32 KB \checkmark	Options Create SFX archive	es		
Word size:	32 ~	Delete files after compression			
Solid Block size:	~	Encryption			
Number of CPU threads:	4 ~ /4	Enter password:			
Memory usage for Compressir	ng: 131 MB	Reenter password:			
Memory usage for Decompres	ssing: 2 MB				
Split to volumes, bytes:	~	Show Password	ZinChunto		
Parameters:		Encryptor metrod.			
		OK	ncel Help		
Figure 2 - 7-zip archive options					
If you email enc	rypted files make quite s	sure that you send th	ne password		

If you email encrypted files make quite sure that you send the password in a separate email message or call the person and tell them the password. Choose a strong password consisting of a random combination of letters and numbers, including one or more upper-case letters. Ideally make this 8 or more characters in length.

Extracting/	unzipping	files
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2 0% Extracting F:\Sensitive	files.zip		_		×	
Bapsed time: Remaining time: Files: Compression ratio:	00:00:23 0	Total size: Speed: Processed: Compressed size:			16191 0 0	Here (lef used wit
Extracting sensitive_file_001.txt		Enter password Enter password: VerySecret			×	The past ordinarily
		Show password	Ca	ncel		The exa shown h
	Background	Pause		Cancel		

Here (left) is the interface used within 7-zip.

The password would not ordinarily be visible.

The example password shown here is very weak.

An encrypted archive opened within Windows (not using 7-zip, in other words) would result in dialogues resembling those shown below.

	Compressed Folder Tools USB Drive	(F:)		
🗧 🔋 Extract Compressed (Zipped) Folders	×			~
Select a Destination and Extract Files Files will be extracted to this folder:	■ 0% complete Copying 3 items from F to F 0% complete	×	Date modified 05/02/2018 14:51 05/02/2018 14:49	Type Compres 7Z File
F:\F	→ More details	05/02/2018 14:43 05/02/2018 14:20 05/02/2018 14:20 05/02/2018 14:20	Compres Text Docı LaTeX Do Adobe Aı	
		Sensitive_files	05/02/2018 14:51 05/02/2018 14:45 19/12/2017 10:03	File folde File folde File folde
	Next	Password needed File 'sensitive file_001' is password protected. Please enter the password in the box below.	OK Skip File	
Prophet Sensitive_files	Hext Concer	Password:	Cancel	