How to free storage memory on Windows Phone

This article explains how to free storage memory on your Windows Phone device.

Introduction

Even with the generous internal memory provided on most Lumia devices, at some point users may find that they are running out of internal storage for apps, music, videos and other files. In some cases it may be possible to use an external memory card, but in others it will not.

This article explains some approaches for freeing memory on your Lumia device.

Check how phone storage is used

To free up some space in your device you have a few choices. Before doing anything, it's worth knowing how much storage is being consumed, and what it is being used for.

From the app list select **Settings | Phone Storage** to get an overview of free/used memory (left image). Press on **phone** to get a breakdown of how memory is used (right image):

Available/used storage memory

Storage memory usage breakdown

The phone storage breakdown provides several good hints on the best actions to free storage. If the apps are using most of the storage, perhaps you can remove the apps you're not using. Similarly if you've got a lot of photos on the device you might want to back some up to a PC and then delete them from the phone.

OS cleanup of internal phone storage

Windows Phone 8 allows phone storage (Other / Apps) to grow until your phone has no more space left - at which point the operating system will attempt to free memory on next restart. If you're running low on internal memory, one option is to use Shrink Storage (a free app) to fill up the memory and trigger this storage clean-up early. The app takes quite a lot of time to run, but normally gives good results.

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Shrink Storage

Uninstalling an application

To uninstall an application:

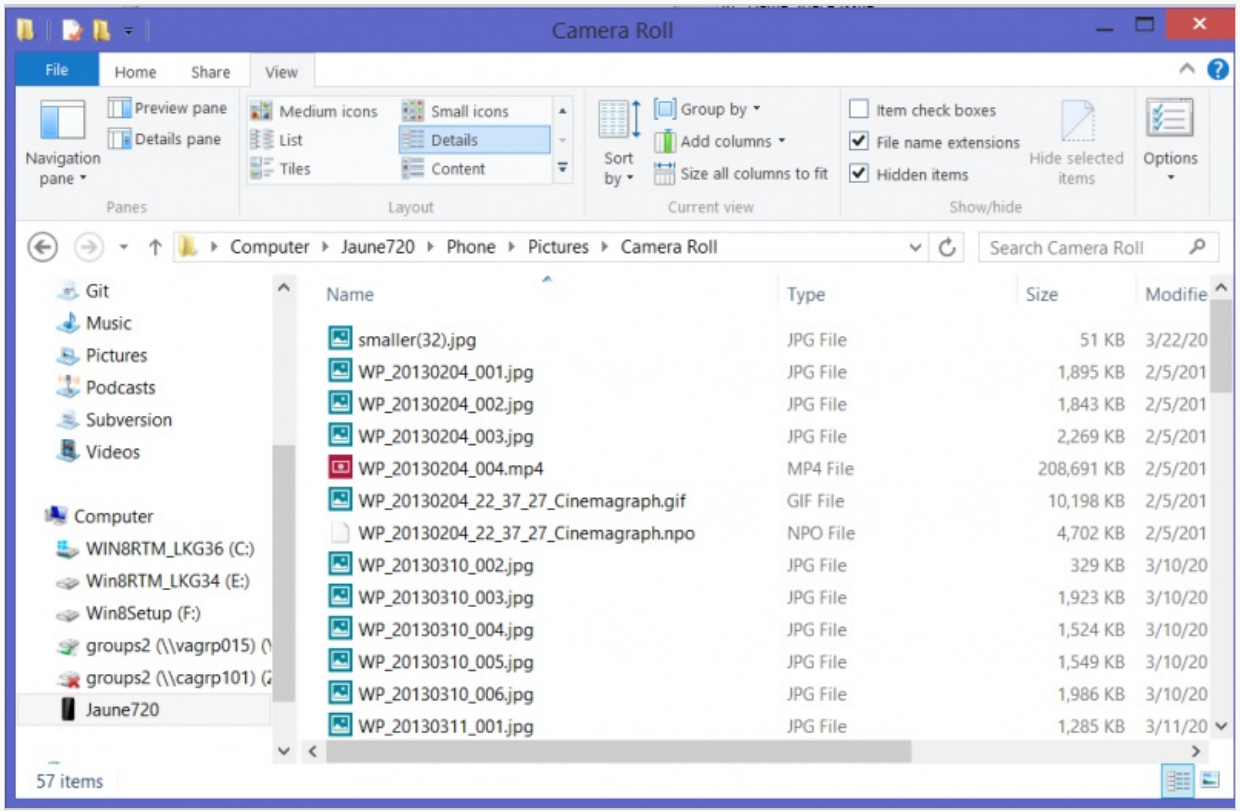
- On the home screen (Start screen), flick left to the Application list.
- In the application list, Tap and hold an application. A menu will pop-up. Tap **Uninstall**.
- When asked for confirmation, tap **Yes**.

Deleting photos and videos

You can delete the images and videos that you've been capturing from the phone photo application.

Warning: This will delete permanently the photos and videos. Remember to back up your files.

With a Windows Phone 8, I personally prefer to do this with my phone tethered to my PC, using the file explorer on my Windows PC. The file explorer shows the file size, which is very convenient to delete the biggest ones. Just connect your phone to your Windows PC using the USB cable. Open the file explorer, you will find your phone listed under "computer". Browse through the list of images and videos.



Browsing the phone storage content with Windows 8 file explorer

Note: Since this functionality is not available for the Windows Phone 7, Zune can be used instead of the file explorer.

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