Accessing Network Storage from a Rpi

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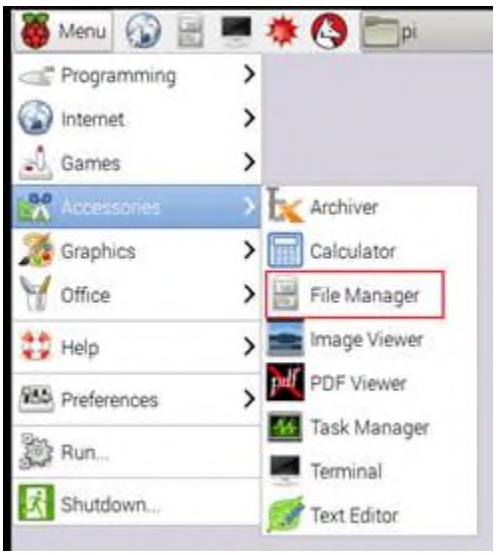
Types of Network Drive

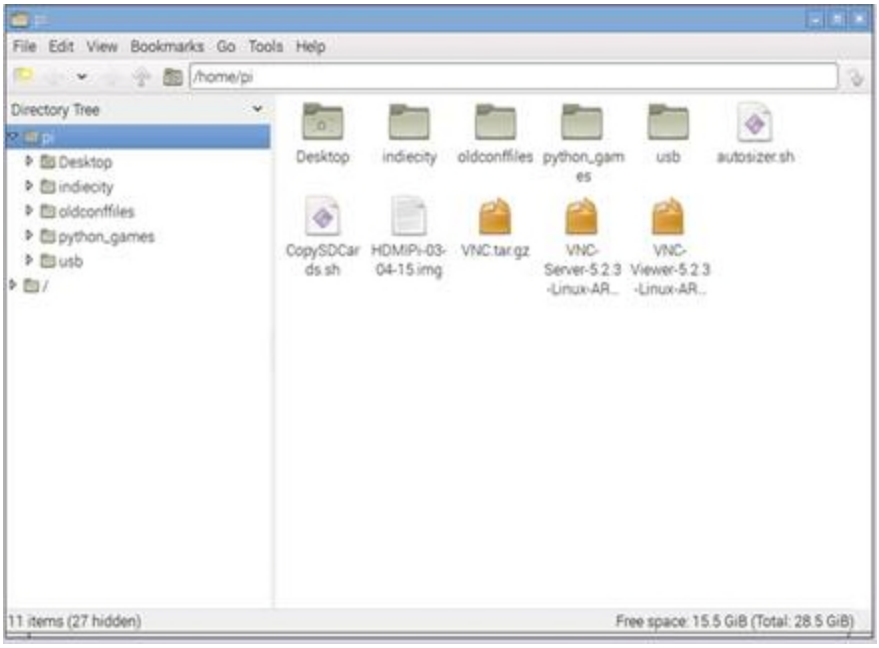
There are three main 'formats' that network drives use to allow access to their files; Samba, NFS and AFP. Each was originally designed for sharing files over Windows, Unix/Linux and Apple networks. However, most computers can share files between these three types. The main differences between them are the way that they transfer files and the way that file permissions are stored. Fortunately, your Raspberry Pi can access files on them all.

Accessing Files from the Desktop

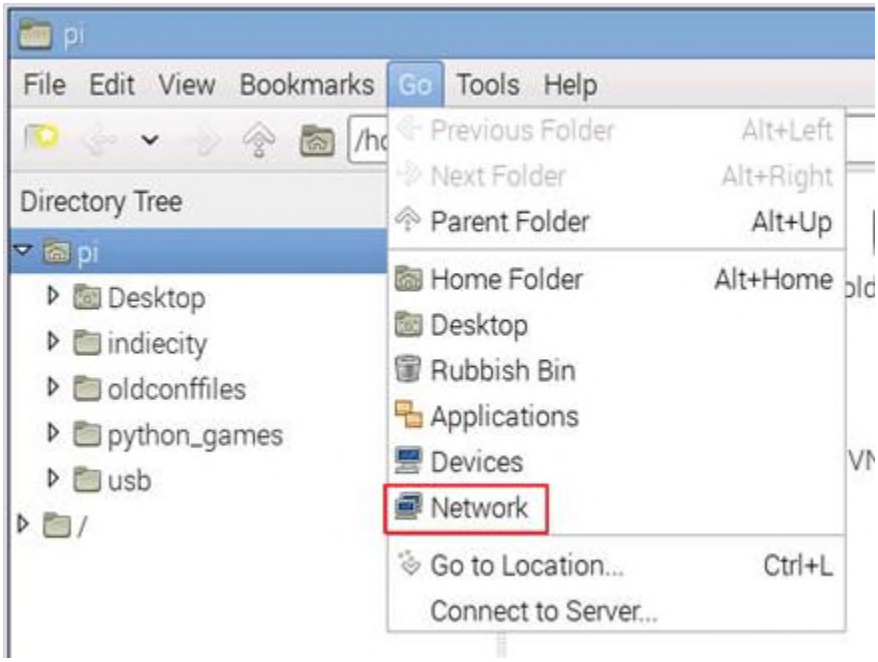
The easiest way to see what files and folders are being shared on your network is to use the File Manager. Boot your Raspberry Pi into Desktop mode and open the File Manager from the Menu, under Accessories:



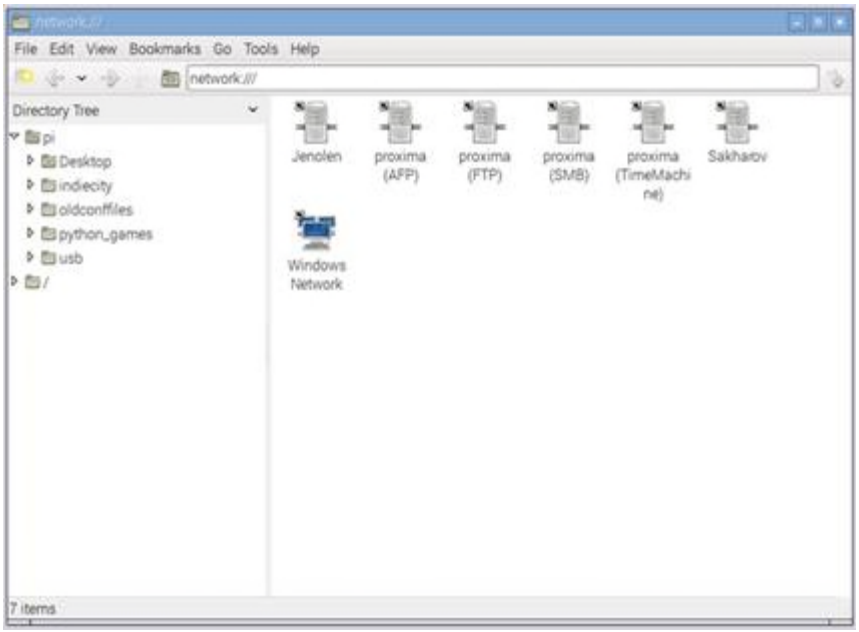
This will open the File Manager:



To find out whether there are any servers sharing folders over your network, use the Go -> Network menu option:

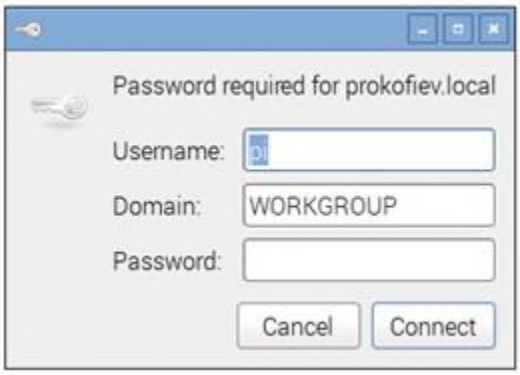


This will show you what is being shared:



The network shown above contains shares of NAS drives, PCs and Macs.

Open any of the server shares you see on the list to see whether they are sharing anything. Unless you have allowed 'guest' access on any of your shared folders, you are likely to be asked for a username and password:



You may need to access your NAS via its control panel (often a web page) itself and add more accounts so that your Pi can access its stored files. For *non-sensitive* files, like music, videos and photographs, a read-only account can be useful to allow any number of computers on your home network to access those files.

Your NAS may allow 'guest' accounts, which means that you do not need to specify a username and password to access the files. Of course, for sensitive files you should *always* password protect folders and files appropriately.

If you have write permissions to network drives, you should now be able to copy and create drives over the network and store them away from your Pi. This is an excellent way to back-up your project files from your Pi.