When to run a "Fast Format Recover"

A "Fast Format Recover" is best used when a partition (drive letter) has been deleted or is missing, or a hard drive reports in Windows as RAW or Dynamic. It is best to run this search on the physical drive. If this search does not find your files, next try a "Complete Format Recover" which is a longer but more thorough search.

Step 1 - Selecting the "Fast Format Recover"

To run a "Fast Format Recover",   open the Recover My Files wizard by:

- running Recover My Files from the desktop icon (the program will open to the wizard); or,

- if you are at the main program screen, click the "Start Search" button;

select "Fast Format Recover" and then click "Next".

Step 2 - Select the Drive To Search

The next wizard screen performs a scan to identify the devices (hard drives, digital camera, USB drive etc) that are connected to your computer.
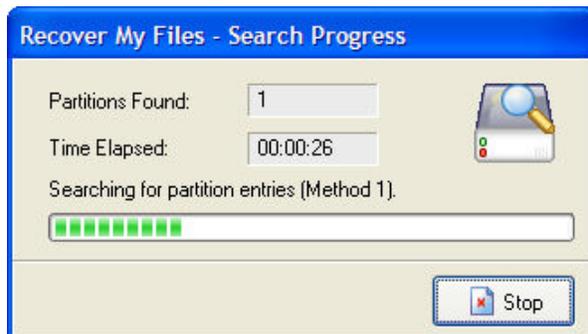
A "Fast Format Recover" lists both "Logical" (drive letters) and "Physical" (hard disk drives) storage devices. Learn more about the difference between a drive letter and a physical drive here.

In a "Fast Format Recover" it is best to search the "physical drive". In fact, if you drive letter is missing, you will often only see the physical drive listed. Select the device/s you wish to search by using your mouse to place a green tick in the box next to the device name. Click

Step 3 - Running the Search

The first component of the Fast Format Recover searches the drive for missing partitions (drive letters). The number of partitions found will be indicated in the search progress window:

When a partition is found, Recover My Files will:

- Read the folder structure; and

- Rebuild the file and folder structure.

Step 4 - Understanding the "Fast Format Recover" Search Results

A Fast Format Recover will recover an entire missing partition with full file and folder names as shown in the screen capture below.   If a partition is not found, the search will end quickly and the results screen will be blank. In this case you need to move on to a "Complete Format Recover".

1. Folder View (Windows 1)

   The partition file and folder structure is displayed under Folder View in the top left window.

2. The File List (Window 2)

   Click on a Folder (in Folder View) to display the list of files found in top right hand window. Important aspects of this file list include:

   - files can be sorted by clicking on the column headings;

   - each file has a "recovery rating ";

   - the "path" indicates the original location of the file which will be used when the file is saved;

   - clicking on a file in this list will display, if available, the properties of the file in Window 3 and a preview of the file in Window 4.

3. The Selected File Properties (Window 3)

   - This window shows the selected files properties.

4. The Selected File Preview (Window 4)

   - This window shows a preview of the file selected in Window 2.

   Other important items in the search results screen are shown in the bottom bar of the program:

The status of the Filter; The number of files found; The number of items selected to be saved and the volume of files selected to be saved.