Windows Home Server comes with support for Windows Media Connect, which is software that streams digital media from (in this case) the server to programs and devices that support Windows Media Connect. Supported programs include digital media players such as Windows Media Player and devices such as the Xbox 360 and Kodak Wireless Digital Picture Frame. The latter two are examples of digital media receivers (DMRs), or devices that can access a media stream being sent over a wired or wireless network connection and then play that stream through connected equipment such as speakers, audio receivers, or a TV. In Windows Home Server 2011, the server now supports Microsoft’s Play To functionality, which enables the server to act as a digital media server (DMS).

Note, too, that Windows Media Connect uses standard protocols—specifically Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and Universal Plug and Play (UPnP)—so, theoretically, any device that supports these protocols should also be able to receive Windows Home Server media streams. (Most UPnP devices have options to disable and enable UPnP, or “network control” as it’s sometimes called. Access the device settings, and make sure that UPnP is enabled.)

Windows Home Server offers four media streams: music, pictures, recorded TV, and videos. This chapter shows you how to get your devices ready for streaming and how to activate streaming via Windows Home Server. You also learn nonstreaming techniques for sharing photos, music, and videos via Windows Home Server.
Streaming Digital Media

The ability to stream music over the network is one of Windows Home Server’s most attractive features. Yes, you can activate the Media Streaming feature in Windows Media Player 12 (or the Media Sharing feature in Windows Media Player 11) and share your library over the network, but that sharing is limited to the media on your computer. Throw Windows Home Server’s centralized storage into the mix, and you suddenly have a much wider variety of media to stream.

If you’re in the market for a new DMR device, make sure it’s a certified Digital Living Network Alliance (DLNA) device, because Windows Home Server 2011 now supports DLNA out of the box. This means that a DLNA-compatible device—it could be a Blu-ray player, a TV, a digital picture frame, or an Xbox 360 in Windows Media Center mode—will automatically find your server and stream content from it. If it’s a Wi-Fi device, make sure it supports 802.11n for maximum wireless bandwidth.

### CAUTION

Before purchasing a DMR, check the device’s wireless capabilities. Some older and less expensive devices can only connect to wireless networks that use Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP) security. However, WEP has been superseded by Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA), which is much more secure than WEP. If you use WPA or WPA2 (a more secure version of WPA) on your wireless network (as you should), make sure any DMR you purchase either supports WPA out of the box or can be updated to support WPA with a firmware upgrade.

### Getting Your Devices Ready

Getting a device ready to receive and play streaming media is a fairly straightforward affair that usually encompasses just the following steps:

1. Get the device ready for networking:
   - If the device is physically near a network router or switch, run a network cable from the device to the router or switch.
   - If you need to use a wireless connection, check to see if the device has built-in wireless (at least 802.11b) support. Many devices—including the Xbox 360—require separate wireless components to be plugged in to the device.

2. Turn on the device.

3. If you’re using a wireless connection, set up the device to connect to your wireless network.
   - **SEE** Chapter 3, “Adding Devices to the Windows Home Server Network.”

4. Use audio or video cables to connect the device to the appropriate output equipment, such as powered speakers, a receiver, a display, or a TV set.
After you have the device on the network, you should see an icon for it in Windows 7’s Network folder, or Windows Vista’s Network window. For example, Figure 8.1 shows a Network window with two media devices: an Xbox 360 and a Roku SoundBridge.

![Network window with devices](image)

**FIGURE 8.1** Devices that support Windows Media Connect should also appear in the Network window.

**TIP**

Whatever device you use, it’s always a good idea to install the latest firmware to ensure that you’re using the most up-to-date version of the device interface. See the device documentation to learn how to upgrade the firmware.

**NOTE**

You can also see many digital media devices in Windows XP with Service Pack 2 or later. Select Start, My Network Places, and then click the Show Icons for Networked UPnP Devices link in the Network Tasks section. (XP may install support for this feature at this point.) The devices appear in My Network Places in a new Local Network group.

Note, too, that some devices offer a link to their built-in control and settings pages. Right-click the device icon, and look for the View Device Webpage command. For example, Figure 8.2 shows the pages that appear for the Roku SoundBridge device.
TIP

If you don’t see the View Device Webpage command, you can also try opening the device directly in a web browser. Find the device’s IP address (right-click the device icon and then click Properties) and then enter http://address in the web browser (where address is the device’s IP address).

Activating the Windows Home Server Media Server

The next step in getting media streaming up and running in Windows Home Server is to enable the server’s built-in media server, and then enable Media Library Sharing for some or all of the shared media folders. You can stream any of the shared folders, but the four media folders are the most common: Music, Pictures, Recorded TV, and Videos. Before getting to the specifics, here are some notes to bear in mind:

Media Library Sharing doesn’t work with most copy-protected media, because generally you can only play that media on the computer or device that you used to purchase the media in the first place. You’re still free to place copies of such media on the Windows Home Server shares, but you can only use the purchase device to play back the media stream.

Media Library Sharing isn’t related to sharing the files themselves through \server and the Windows Home Server user accounts. With the latter, you can assign permissions such as Full Access or Read Only to tailor the access that a specific user
has to the folder contents. When you enable Media Library Sharing on a folder, however, any program or device that supports DLNA or Windows Media Connect can access the library and play the media it contains.

- As a consequence of the previous point, note that Media Library Sharing overrides any user restrictions that you’ve placed on a media folder. Even if the folder access level that you’ve assigned to a particular user is No Access, after you enable Media Library Sharing for that folder, the user can stream the folder contents to a DLNA or Windows Media Connect media player on his computer. If you have media in a folder that you don’t want others to stream, you must move the files into a folder that doesn’t have Media Library Sharing activated.

**CAUTION**

A further consequence to the open nature of Media Library Sharing is that any computer or device that can access your network can also stream the media. Therefore, if your wireless network is not secured, anyone within range of the network has access to your streamed media. If you don’t want this, secure your wireless network.

Here are the steps to follow to stream some or all of the Windows Home Server shared media folders:

1. Log on to the Windows Home Server Dashboard.
2. Click Server Settings to open the Server Settings dialog box.
3. Click the Media tab.
4. If the media server is currently off, click Turn On to activate it.
5. In the Video Streaming Quality section, use the list to select the streaming video level: Low, Medium, High, or Best.

**TIP**

The higher the video streaming quality, the better the playback, but the greater the burden it puts on the server’s processor. How do you know which level to choose? That’s a bit tricky, because it depends on the horsepower of your server’s processor. Microsoft’s guidelines are, oddly, based on the processor score that you see in the Windows Experience Index, which is part of Windows 7 and Vista, but not Windows Home Server! Your best bet is to search the Web for processor scores for your server’s processor. If you find it, choose low for a score less than 3.6; Medium for a score between 3.6 and 4.1; High for a score between 4.2 and 5.9; or Best for a score of 6.0 or better.

6. In the Media Library section, click Customize to open the Customize Media Library dialog box.
7. Select Yes for each media folder you want to stream, as shown in Figure 8.3.
Click OK, and then click OK again. Windows Home Server immediately starts sharing the selected media folders.

When you turn on media streaming, Windows Home Server activates a new media server “device,” which appears in the list of network devices, as shown in Figure 8.4.

**Playing Streamed Media in Windows Media Player**

After you activate Media Library Sharing on a Windows Home Server share, Windows Media Player (which supports DLNA in version 12 and Windows Media Connect in versions 11 and later) immediately recognizes the new streams and adds them to its library.

To play the streamed media, follow these steps:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Media Player (or click the Windows Media Player icon in the taskbar).
2. In Media Player 11, click the Library tab.
3. In Media Player 11, pull down the Library menu and select a media category: Music, Pictures, or Video.
4. In the Navigation pane, click the Windows Home Server shared media library, the name of which in Media Player 12 always takes the following form (where server is the name of the Windows Home Server computer; see Figure 8.5. In Media Player 11, the library name is Home Server on server):
   Home Server (server)
5. Use the library properties (such as Artist and Album in the Music category) to open the media you want to view.
6. Play the media.
FIGURE 8.4 When you turn on media streaming, the server's media server device appears in the list of network devices.

FIGURE 8.5 Windows Media Player automatically adds the shared Windows Home Server media libraries to its own library.
This all works fine, but it’s a bit cumbersome to have to deal with multiple libraries. Fortunately, if you’re running Windows Home Server 2011 and you have Windows 7 on the client PC, the whole multiple library setup is a thing of the past. That’s because Windows Home Server 2011 supports Windows 7’s libraries, which are virtual folders that can gather content from multiple folders, including (crucially for our purposes here) network shares. When you install the Windows Home Server Connector on your Windows 7 PC, the program automatically adds the server shares to the appropriate Windows 7 libraries. For example, the server’s Music folder gets added to Windows 7’s Music library (see Figure 8.6), and the Pictures share appears in the Pictures library.

![Image](image.png)

**FIGURE 8.6** When you install Windows Home Server Connector on a Windows 7 PC, the server’s shares are added automatically to the Windows 7 libraries.

Not only does this give you an easy way to access the server’s shares, it means that Windows Media Center automatically adds the media files to its own library, because the program automatically scours the Music, Pictures, and Videos libraries for media content. In Figure 8.7, for example, I’ve opened the Artist genre of the Music section of the Media Center library. Because this machine stores no music of its own, all the artists shown are located in Windows Home Server’s Music share.

### Playing Streamed Media in Windows Media Center

As with Windows Media Player, Windows Media Center (another DLNA and Media Connect application) automatically recognizes Windows Home Server’s shared media libraries and sets them up in the Media Center interface.
FIGURE 8.7 On a Windows 7 PC, Media Center automatically loads the Windows Home Server media shares into the library for easier access.

NOTE
For some reason, Media Center takes quite a bit longer to add all the Windows Home Server media to its libraries. Whereas Media Player usually populates its libraries with Windows Home Server media within a few minutes (depending on how much media exists on the shares), Media Center can take considerably longer, even a few hours.

To play the streamed media, follow these steps:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Media Center.
2. Select a media library:
   - For Windows Home Server music, select Music, Music Library.
   - For Windows Home Server photos, select Pictures + Videos, Picture Library.
   - For Windows Home Server TV recordings, select Home Server, TV Archive.
   - For Windows Home Server videos, select Pictures + Videos, Video Library.
3. Use the Media Center interface to open and play the media you want.

Streaming Digital Media Over the Internet

One of the awesome new features in Windows Home Server 2011 is the capability to stream media—photos and videos—over the Internet. This happens through the Remote Web Access feature, and a special Silverlight plug-in renders high-quality video to the remote device. It’s a sweet setup, but it does require three things:
- A fast Internet connection (DSL or cable)
- Remote Web Access turned on and set up with a domain name
- Silverlight installed on the client’s web browser

**NOTE**

Windows Home Server 2011 also includes welcome support for a range of video formats, including the following: 3GP, AAC, AVCHD, MPEG-4, WMV, and WMA, as well as most AVI, DivX, MOV, and Xvid files. As I write this, Windows Home Server 2011 doesn’t support MPEG2 and AC3, but Microsoft has promised that these codecs will be supported when Windows Home Server 2011 is officially released. Note, too, that if a device doesn’t have the proper codec to play back a video, the server will transcode the stream to different formats (and different resolutions, if necessary) on the fly to make the stream playable on the device.

To try this out, open the remote computer’s web browser, navigate to your Remote Web Access domain name, and then log in. In the Remote Web Access Home page, use the Media Library section to select the media type you want to stream:

- **Browse Pictures**—Click this item to open the Pictures library, which shows thumbnail images of all the files in the server’s Pictures share. Click Play Slideshow or double-click an image to view it (see Figure 8.8).

![FIGURE 8.8](image)

FIGURE 8.8 Open a picture to view it, and click Play to start the slide show.
Sharing Photos

Music—Click this item to open the Music library, which shows thumbnail images of all the albums in the server's Music share. You can use the View menu to choose a different library view, such as Artists or Genre. Double-click an album (or whatever) to play it. Windows Home Server opens a separate window with the playback controls, as shown in Figure 8.9.

Videos—Click this item to open the Videos library, which shows thumbnail images of all the items in the server's Videos share. Click a video to play it. Windows Home Server opens a separate window with the playback controls.

Sharing Photos

Whether or not you activate Media Library Sharing for Windows Home Server's Pictures folder, you can still use this share as the central repository for some or even all of your family's photos. The next few sections take you through a few techniques that should make the shared Pictures folder easier to work with.

Customizing the Pictures Share with a Template

When you access your user account's Pictures library (in Windows 7), Pictures folder (in Windows Vista), or My Pictures folder (in Windows XP), you see a few features that aren't part of the regular folder view, as follows:

- You get access to image-related file metadata, such as the date an image was taken and the image dimensions.
In Windows 7 and Windows Vista, the task pane includes extra commands such as Slide Show and E-Mail.

In Windows XP, the task pane includes a Picture Tasks group with links such as View as a Slide Show, Order Prints Online, and Print Pictures.

These extra features come from a special template that Windows applies to this type of folder. However, when you access the Windows Home Server Pictures share, Vista and XP treat it just like any other folder. (In Windows 7, if you access the Pictures share through the Pictures library, you get the extra image-related features; if you access the share via the Network folder, you don’t see those features.) If you want access to the extras that you see in the local Pictures (or My Pictures in XP) folder, follow these steps to customize the Pictures share to use a picture folder template:

1. Open the folder containing the Windows Home Server shares.
2. Right-click the Pictures folder, and then click Properties to open the folder’s property sheet.
3. Display the Customize tab.
4. In the list, select the template you want to apply:
   - **Picture and Videos**—(Windows Vista) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as Vista’s Pictures folder.
   - **Pictures**—(Windows 7 and Windows XP) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as Windows 7’s Pictures library or XP’s My Pictures folder.
   - **Photo Album**—(Windows XP only) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as XP’s My Pictures folder and display the folder in Filmstrip view by default.
5. If you want Windows to apply this template to all the subfolders in the Pictures share, click to activate the Also Apply This Template to All Subfolders check box.
6. (Windows XP only) If you also want to change the image used for the folder icon, click Choose Picture, choose a new picture in the Browse dialog box, and then click Open.
7. Click OK.

**Using Server Pictures as a Screensaver Slideshow**

In the old days (a few years ago) when everyone was still using CRT monitors, you had to be careful to avoid *burn-in*, which is permanent damage to areas of the screen caused by continuously displaying a particular image over a long period. Whatever the image—it could be a menu bar, the Windows taskbar, or an application toolbar—if it was onscreen long enough, it eventually became a permanent part of the screen as a ghostly reflection of the original.

Now that most of us are using LCD monitors, burn-in is a thing of the past, but that doesn’t mean that continuously displayed images are no longer a worry. LCDs suffer from
a similar problem called *persistence*, in which a long-displayed image persists onscreen as a faint version of the original. Fortunately, LCD persistence is usually temporary and can often be remedied just by turning off the monitor for a while (say, half an hour or so). However, persistence does become permanent on occasion, so further preventative measures are necessary.

The best of these measures is configuring a screensaver to kick in after an extended period of computer idleness. Windows 7, Vista, and XP come with built-in screensavers, but you can also set up a screensaver that displays a slideshow of images from a folder. If you have lots of pictures stored on Windows Home Server's *Pictures* share, this folder is perfect for a screensaver. Here are the steps to follow to set this up:

1. Use one of the following methods to display the Screen Saver tab:
   - In Windows 7 and Windows Vista, right-click the desktop, click Personalize, and then click Screen Saver. (Alternatively, select Start, Control Panel, Appearance and Personalization, Change Screen Saver.)
   - In Windows XP, right-click the desktop, click Properties, and then display the Screen Saver tab. (Alternatively, select Start, Control Panel, Display, Screen Saver.)

2. In the Screen Saver list, select Photos (in Windows 7 or Vista) or My Pictures Slideshow (in XP).

3. Click Settings.

4. Click Browse, use the Browse for Folder dialog box to select the `\SERVER\Pictures` folder, and then click OK.

5. Configure any other screensaver options you want to use (such as the slide show speed), and then click Save (in Windows 7 or Vista) or OK (in XP).

6. Click OK to put the new screensaver into effect.

**Adding the Pictures Folder to Windows Media Player**

If you’re not streaming the *Pictures* share, you can still add it to Windows Media Player so that you can access it in the Pictures portion of the Media Player library. Note, however, that you don’t have to bother with this in Windows 7 if you have the Windows Home Server Connector software installed, because the Connector automatically adds the `\SERVER\Pictures` share to Windows 7’s *Pictures* library.

Here are the steps to follow in Windows Media Player 11:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Media Player.

2. Pull down the Library menu and select Add to Library. Media Player displays the Add to Library dialog box.

3. If you don’t see the Monitored Folders list, click Advanced Options to expand the dialog box.

4. Click Add to display the Add Folder list.
5. Select Windows Home Server’s Pictures share, and then click OK. Media Player adds the folder to the Monitored Folders list.

6. Click OK. Media Player begins adding the contents of the Pictures share to the library.

7. Click Close. (Note that you don't have to wait until Media Player has added all the pictures to the library; the process continues in the background, although it might take a bit longer than if you had left the dialog box open.)

To view the folder contents in Media Player, pull down the Library menu and select Pictures. In the Navigation pane, click Library, and then double-click the Folder view. You then see an icon for `\SERVER\Pictures`, as shown in Figure 8.10. Double-click that icon to view the images.

![Figure 8.10 Double-click `\SERVER\Pictures` to view the contents of the Pictures share in Media Player 11.](image)

### Adding the Pictures Folder to Windows Live Photo Gallery

By default, Windows Live Photo Gallery includes the contents of your Windows 7 Pictures library. If you want to use the extensive Photo Gallery tools—fixing image problems, burning images to DVD, ordering prints online, and so on—with your server images, you need to add the Windows Home Server Pictures share to the program’s Folders list. Here are the steps to follow:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Live Photo Gallery.
2. Select File, Include a Folder. The Picture Library Locations dialog box appears.
3. Click Add to open the Include Folder in Pictures dialog box.
4. Select Windows Home Server’s Pictures share. (In Windows 7, you can add the share either via your user account’s Pictures library or via the network.)
5. Click Include Folder. Photo Gallery adds the folder to the library.
6. Click OK.
To view the folder contents in Windows Live Photo Gallery, click Pictures in the Folders pane, as shown in Figure 8.11.

![Figure 8.11. Click Pictures to view the contents of the Pictures share in Windows Live Photo Gallery.](image)

**Adding the Pictures Folder to Windows Photo Gallery**

By default, Vista's Windows Photo Gallery program includes your user account's Pictures and Videos folders, as well as the Public Pictures and Public Videos folders. To add the Windows Home Server Pictures share to the program's Folders list, follow these steps:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Photo Gallery.
2. Select File, Add Folder to Gallery. The Add Folder to Gallery dialog box appears.
4. Click OK. Photo Gallery asks you to confirm that you want to add the folder.
5. Click Add. Photo Gallery confirms that it has added the folder.
6. Click OK.
Running a Slide Show from the Pictures Share

You saw earlier that you can configure a screensaver-based slide show that uses Windows Home Server’s Pictures share as the image source. If you don’t want to wait until the screensaver kicks in, you can run a slide show anytime you like. Windows 7, Vista, and XP give you several ways to run a slide show based on images from the Pictures share:

- If you added the Pictures share to Media Player (see “Adding the Pictures Folder to Windows Media Player,” earlier), open the User 1 (server) branch, select Pictures, and then click Play.

- If you added the Pictures share to Windows Live Photo Gallery (see “Adding the Pictures Folder to Windows Live Photo Gallery,” earlier), open Photo Gallery’s Folders branch, select Pictures, and then click the Slide Show button. (You also can press F12 or Alt+S.)

- If you added the Pictures share to Photo Gallery (see the previous section “Adding the Pictures Folder to Windows Photo Gallery”), open Photo Gallery’s Folders branch, select Pictures, and then click the Play Slide Show button. (You also can press F11.)

- If you applied a picture template to the Pictures share earlier (see “Customizing the Pictures Share with a Template”), open the share and either click Slide Show (in Windows 7 or Vista) or View as a Slide Show (XP).

Changing the Default Picture Import Location to Windows Home Server

Both Windows Live Photo Gallery and Windows Photo Gallery come with a feature that enables you to import images from a digital camera or a document scanner. (Select File, Import from Camera or Scanner.) By default, the program imports the images to a subfolder in your user account’s Pictures folder. If you prefer to import the images directly to Windows Home Server’s Pictures share, follow these steps:

1. Select File, Options. The program’s Options dialog box appears.
2. Select the Import tab.
3. Use the Settings For list to select the type of import you want to customize: Cameras, Video Cameras, or CDs and DVDs.
4. Click Browse to open the Browse for Folder dialog box.
5. Select Windows Home Server’s Pictures share, and then click OK.
6. Repeat steps 3–5 to customize the other import types, if necessary.
7. Click OK to put the new options into effect.

Sharing Music

When you think of the word streaming, you probably think about music, because it’s the medium that’s most closely associated with streaming and that’s most easily streamed (because music files generally contain less information than, say, video files). However,
even if you don’t activate Media Library Sharing for Windows Home Server’s Music folder, you can still use this share to store your family’s digital music files. To help make this easier, the next few sections show you some techniques for using and managing the Music share.

**Customizing the Music Share with a Template**

Earlier you learned about the folder template that applies special features to the Pictures folder. There is also a template associated with the Music library (in Windows 7), the Music folder (in Windows Vista), and the My Music folder (in Windows XP). This template gives you a few features that aren’t part of the standard folder view:

- You get access to music-related file metadata such as the Artists, Album, and Genre.
- In Windows 7 and Vista, the task pane includes extra commands such as Play and Play All.
- In Windows XP, the task pane includes a Music Tasks group with links such as Play All, Play Selection, and Shop for Music Online.

However, when you access the Windows Home Server Music folder, Vista and XP treat it like a regular folder. (In Windows 7, if you access the Music share through the Music library, you get the extra image-related features; if you access the share via the Network folder, you don’t see those features.) If you want to see the extras that are part of the local Music (or My Music) folder, follow these steps to customize the Music share to use a music folder template:

1. Open the folder containing the Windows Home Server shares.
2. Right-click the Music folder, and then click Properties to open the folder’s property sheet.
3. Display the Customize tab.
4. In the Use This Folder as a Template list, select the template you want to apply:
   - **Music Icons**—(Windows Vista) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as the Music folder. The folder opens in Large Icons view.
   - **Music Details**—(Windows Vista) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as the Music folder. The folder opens in Details view.
   - **Music**—(Windows 7 and Windows XP) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as the My Music folder.
   - **Music Artist**—(Windows XP) Choose this template for a folder that holds music by a single artist. This gives the folder the same features as the My Music folder and opens the folder in Thumbnails view, which displays an album art icon for each folder that holds an album by the artist.
   - **Music Album**—(Windows XP) Choose this template for a folder that holds music from a single artist. This gives the folder the same features as the My Music folder and opens the folder in Tiles view, which displays an icon for each track from the album.
5. If you also want Windows to apply this template to all the subfolders in the Music share, click to activate the Also Apply This Template to All Subfolders check box.

6. (Windows XP only) If you also want to change the image used for the folder icon, click Choose Picture, choose a new picture in the Browse dialog box, and then click Open.

7. Click OK.

**Adding the Music Folder to Windows Media Player**

You saw earlier that when you activate Media Library Sharing for Windows Home Server's Music folder, it appears in Media Player's Navigation pane in the User 1 (server) branch (or the User 1 on server branch), where server is the Windows Home Server name. (See the earlier section “Playing Streamed Media in Windows Media Player.”) However, even if you don’t stream the Music share, you can still add it to Windows Media Player so that you can access it in the Music portion of the Media Player library. Note, however, that you don’t have to bother with this in Windows 7 if you have the Windows Home Server Connector software installed, because the Connector automatically adds the `\SERVER\Music` share to Windows 7’s Music library.

Just follow these steps in Windows Media Player 11:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Media Player.
2. Pull down the Library menu, and select Add to Library. Media Player displays the Add to Library dialog box.
3. If you don’t see the Monitored Folders list, click Advanced Options to expand the dialog box.
4. Click Add to display the Add Folder list.
5. Select Windows Home Server’s Music share, and then click OK. Media Player adds the folder to the Monitored Folders list.
6. Click OK. Media Player begins adding the contents of the Music share to the library.
7. Click Close. (Note that you don’t have to wait until Media Player has added all the songs to the library; the process continues in the background, although it might take a bit longer than if you had left the dialog box open.)

To view the folder contents in Media Player, pull down the Library menu and select Music. In the Navigation pane, click Library, and then double-click the Folder view. You then see an icon for `\SERVER\Music`, as shown in Figure 8.12. Double-click that icon to view the music.

**Changing the Default Rip Location to Windows Home Server**

When you rip music from an audio CD in Windows Media Player, the resulting digital audio files are stored in a subfolder of your user profile’s Music library (in Windows 7), Music folder (in Windows Vista), or My Music folder (in Windows XP). If you then want to stream those files over your network, you need to copy them to Windows Home Server’s Music share.
This two-step process is fine if you always want to maintain a local copy of the audio files. However, if you only access the music on Windows Home Server, having to both rip and move the audio files is a waste of time. A better idea is to rip your audio CDs straight to Windows Home Server.

Here are the steps to follow to change Media Player's rip location to Windows Home Server's Music folder:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Media Player.
2. Select Tools, Options. (If you don’t see the Tools menu, press Alt.) The Options dialog box appears.
3. Select the Rip Music tab.
4. In the Rip Music to This Location group, click Change to open the Browse for Folder dialog box.
5. Select `\\SERVER\Music`, and then click OK to return to the Options dialog box.
6. Click OK to put the new setting into effect.

### Sharing Videos

The rest of this chapter takes you through a few techniques to make Windows Home Server's shared Videos folder easier to use and manage.

#### Customizing the Videos Share with a Template

In previous sections of this chapter, you learned about the folder templates that apply special features to the Pictures and Music folders (My Pictures and My Music in Windows XP). There is also a template associated with the Videos library (in Windows 7), the
Videos folder (in Windows Vista), and the My Videos folder (in Windows XP). This template provides some features that aren’t part of the normal folder view:

- You get access to video-related file metadata, such as Date Taken and Duration.
- In Windows 7 and Vista, the task pane includes extra commands such as Play and Slide Show.
- In Windows XP, the task pane includes a Video Tasks group with links such as Play All and Copy to CD.

However, when you access the Windows Home Server Videos folder, Vista and XP treat it like a normal folder. (In Windows 7, if you access the Videos share through the Videos library, you get the extra video-related features; if you access the share via the Network folder, you don’t see those features.) If you want to see the extras that are part of the local Videos (or My Videos) folder, follow these steps to customize the Videos share to use a video folder template:

1. Open the folder containing the Windows Home Server shares.
2. Right-click the Videos folder, and then click Properties to open the folder's property sheet.
3. Display the Customize tab.
4. In the Use This Folder as a Template list, select the template you want to apply:
   - Picture and Videos—(Windows Vista) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as Vista's Videos folder.
   - Videos—(Windows 7 and Windows XP) Choose this template to give the folder the same features as XP's My Videos folder.
5. If you also want Windows to apply this template to all the subfolders in the Pictures share, click to activate the Also Apply This Template to All Subfolders check box.
6. (Windows XP only) If you also want to change the image used for the folder icon, click Choose Picture, choose a new picture in the Browse dialog box, and then click Open.
7. Click OK.

**Adding the Videos Folder to Windows Media Player**

If you turn on Media Library Sharing for Windows Home Server's Videos share, that folder appears in Media Player's Navigation pane as part of the User 1 (server) branch (or the User 1 on server branch), where server is the Windows Home Server name. (See “Playing Streamed Media in Windows Media Player.”) If you’re not streaming the Videos share, you can still add it to Windows Media Player's library in the Video section. Note, however, that you don’t have to bother with this in Windows 7 if you have the Windows Home Server Connector software installed, because the Connector automatically adds the \\SERVER\Videos share to Windows 7's Videos library.
Here are the steps to follow in Windows Media Player 11:

1. Select Start, All Programs, Windows Media Player.
2. Pull down the Library menu, and select Add to Library. Media Player displays the Add to Library dialog box.
3. If you don’t see the Monitored Folders list, click Advanced Options to expand the dialog box.
4. Click Add to display the Add Folder list.
5. Select Windows Home Server’s Videos share, and then click OK. Media Player adds the folder to the Monitored Folders list.
6. Click OK. Media Player begins adding the contents of the Videos share to the library.
7. Click Close. (Note that you don’t have to wait until Media Player has added all the videos to the library; the process continues in the background, although it might take a bit longer than if you had left the dialog box open.)

To view the folder contents in Media Player, pull down the Library menu and select Video. In the Navigation pane, click Library, and then double-click the Folder view. You then see an icon for \SERVER\Videos, as shown in Figure 8.13. Double-click that icon to view the video files.

![FIGURE 8.13](image)

FIGURE 8.13  Double-click \SERVER\Videos to view the contents of Windows Home Server’s Videos share in Media Player.

If the Windows Home Server Videos share contains recorded TV shows, Media Player displays them separately. Pull down the Library menu and select Recorded TV. Figure 8.14 shows a Media Player icon for a Windows Home Server folder that contains some recorded TV content.
Archiving Recorded TV on Windows Home Server

When you record TV in Windows Media Center, the program stores the resulting files—which use the Microsoft Recorded TV Show file type with the `.dvr-ms` extension—in the following folder:

```
%SystemDrive%\Users\Public\Recorded TV
```

If you want to stream your recorded TV shows to Windows Media Connect programs and devices on your network, you need to move or copy the Recorded TV files to Windows Home Server’s `Recorded TV` share.

As with ripping music (see “Changing the Default Rip Location to Windows Home Server,” earlier), this extra step is a hassle, particularly because Recorded TV files are often multigigabyte affairs that can take quite a while to transfer. A better solution is to record TV shows directly to Windows Home Server. In previous versions of Windows Home Server, this wasn’t as simple as tweaking a folder value, because by default Media Center has no such setting. It was possible to work around this problem by modifying some Media Center services and Registry settings (as I explained in the previous edition of this book), but it was a hassle.

Fortunately, it’s a hassle that’s now history. Windows Home Server 2011 comes with a new Windows Media Center Connector feature, which adds a Home Server menu item to the Media Center interface. The Home Server menu item includes a tile called TV Archive that enables you to configure Media Center to record TV shows directly to the server. Finally!
FIGURE 8.15 With Windows Home Server 2011’s Windows Media Center Connector installed, use the TV Archive Settings tab to configure TV recording directly to the server.

3. If you want Media Center to archive all your TV shows—that is, shows you’ve already recorded and shows you record in the future—to Windows Home Server’s Recorded TV share, activate the Archive All Recordings Automatically check box.

4. If you want Media Center to record TV shows directly to Windows Home Server's Recorded TV share, activate the Move Recordings to My Home Server check box.
Actually, it's not really accurate to say that, if you activate the Move Recordings to My Home Server check box, Media Center records TV shows “directly” to the server. Instead, Media Center creates a temporary copy of the recorded TV show locally, and it then moves that copy to the server.

5. If you want Media Center to also create a compressed version of each recorded TV show, activate the Create a Compressed Copy For check box, and then choose a format and location:

- **Create a Compressed Copy For**—Use this list to choose one of the following three formats: TV (uses the original resolution of the recording); Windows Mobile (320×240, 500Kbps bitrate); or Zune (720×480, 1,500Kbps). Note that in all cases, the resulting file uses the Windows Media Audio/Video (.wmv) format.

- **Save Compressed Copy To**—Use this list to select a location for the compressed copies. The default is Home Server Videos folder, and you should leave that as is if you want your compressed copies on the server. Otherwise, you can choose either Public Videos Folder or Let Me Use a Different Folder. (The latter requires a path to the save location.)

6. Click Save to put the new settings into effect.

If you left the Archive All Recordings Automatically check box deactivated, you can select which of your existing recordings get archived to the server. In Media Center, select the Home Server item, and then click the TV Archive tile. You have two choices from here, as follows:

- **Series**—Click this tab to see a list of your recorded TV series. Activate the check box beside each series that you want to archive.

- **Programs**—Click this tab to see a list of your recorded TV programs. Activate the check box beside each program that you want to archive.

Click Save to put the settings into effect. Remember that how your existing series and programs are archived depends on the options you configured in the Settings tab:

- If you activated the Move Recordings to My Home Server check box, your selected series and programs are moved to the server’s Recorded TV share.

- If you activated the Create a Compressed Copy for Server check box, Media Center creates compressed copies of your selected series and programs and stores the copies in the server’s Videos share.
From Here

- To learn how to add a user to Windows Home Server, **SEE** “Adding a New User,” **P. 32**.

- For information on connecting various devices to your Windows Home Server network, **SEE** Chapter 3, “Adding Devices to the Windows Home Server Network.”

- For details on changing user permissions, **SEE** “Modifying Permissions for a Windows Home Server Shared Folder,” **P. 119**.

- To learn how to work with the Registry, **SEE** Chapter 18, “Working with the Windows Home Server Registry.”