

# Why doesn't SHGetFileInfo give me customized folder icons?

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 [devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20170501-00](https://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20170501-00)

May 1, 2017



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A customer reported that they were unable to obtain customized folder icons. Whenever they asked for the icon for a folder, they always got a plain folder icon, Even if they asked for folders like My Documents, which come with their own custom icons. The customer says that they are using the code from [this Web site](#):

```

public static System.Drawing.Icon GetFileIcon(string name, IconSize size,
                                             bool linkOverlay)
{
    Shell32.SHFILEINFO shfi = new Shell32.SHFILEINFO();
    uint flags = Shell32.SHGFI_ICON | Shell32.SHGFI_USEFILEATTRIBUTES;

    if (true == linkOverlay) flags += Shell32.SHGFI_LINKOVERLAY;

    /* Check the size specified for return. */
    if (IconSize.Small == size)
    {
        flags += Shell32.SHGFI_SMALLICON ; // include the small icon flag
    }
    else
    {
        flags += Shell32.SHGFI_LARGEICON ; // include the large icon flag
    }

    Shell32.SHGetFileInfo( name,
        Shell32.FILE_ATTRIBUTE_NORMAL,
        ref shfi,
        (uint) System.Runtime.InteropServices.Marshal.SizeOf(shfi),
        flags );

    // Copy (clone) the returned icon to a new object, thus allowing us
    // to call DestroyIcon immediately
    System.Drawing.Icon icon = (System.Drawing.Icon)
        System.Drawing.Icon.FromHandle(shfi.hIcon).Clone();
    User32.DestroyIcon( shfi.hIcon ); // Cleanup
    return icon;
}

```

As I noted some time ago, the SHGFI\_USEFILEATTRIBUTES flag means “Pretend that the file/directory exists, and that its file attributes are what I passed as the dwFileAttributes parameter. Do this regardless of whether it actually exists or not.”

Since you’re passing the flag, and you say “Trust me, it’s a directory,” the shell says, “Okay, then here’s the icon for a standard directory. I can’t give you anything better than that because you told me not to access the disk.”

If you want to get the icon for a live file or directory, then remove the `SHGFI_USEFILEATTRIBUTES` flag.

**Bonus chatter:** Yes, somebody posted a comment on that Web site asking how to get the function to work for special folders, and somebody else posted the same answer (namely, remove the `SHGFI_USEFILEATTRIBUTES` flag). But that question/answer was posted long after our customer asked the question.

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