Restore Files and Folders with Previous Versions Feature in Windows 7

Note: One thing to keep in mind is that this form of backup is not done every time a file changes; instead it is done once a day, or every time a system a Restore Point is triggered, this could happen by creating a manual Restore Point or when an update or application is installed.

Previous versions are either <u>backup copies</u>—copies of files and folders that you back up by using the Back Up Files wizard, or <u>shadow copies</u>—copies of files and folders that Windows automatically saves as part of a restore point. Two different sets!

Shadow copies are automatically saved as part of a restore point in System Properties. If System Protection is turned on, Windows automatically creates shadow copies of files that have been modified since the last restore point was made.

Procedure
1 Right-click the file or folder, and then click Restore previous versions.
   You'll see a list of available previous versions of the file or folder. The list will include files saved on a backup as well as shadow copies, if both types are available.

Note: Before restoring a previous version of a file or folder, open it to make sure it's the version you want.
Then, follow these steps:

2   Right-click the file or folder, and then click Restore previous versions
3   Click an item in the list, and then click Restore.
4   Should get a warning msg, click ok

If the Restore button is unavailable, you can't restore a previous version of the file or folder.
You might be able to open it or save it to a different location.

Note: To restore a shadow copy that's stored on your computer, you right-click the file or folder, and then click Restore previous versions. Then you select the previous version of the file or folder that you want to restore, click Restore, and the file or folder is restored. Restoring a shadow copy from a network location is similar, as long as your computer is connected to the network and the network location is available (the computer is turned on and you have permission to access the computer or disk).

To restore a backup copy, you follow the same steps but you click the backup version of the file in the Previous Versions tab. When you click Restore, Windows opens the Restore Files wizard and from there, you follow the steps in the wizard. You need access to the removable storage or media (such as an internal or external hard disk or a CD or DVD) that the backup is stored on to restore items from a backup. For more information about backing up your files, see Back up your files.

How is restoring shadow copies different from restoring backup copies?
To restore a shadow copy that's stored on your computer, you right-click the file or folder, and then click Restore previous versions. Then you select the previous version of the file or folder that you want to restore, click Restore, and the file or folder is restored.

To restore a backup copy, you follow the same steps but you click the backup version of the file in the Previous Versions tab. When you click Restore, Windows opens the Restore Files wizard and from there, you follow the steps in the wizard.

Shadow copies are unavailable for files and folders that are required for Windows to work properly.
Use System Restore for that.

So bottom line is turn on System Protection and Windows Backups. otherwise this feature is not available.