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Using WordPerfect & DOS

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👉 DOS File Management 👈

Introduction

Files are managed in order to have a "clean" or neat arrangement of the files on a disk. This is done by ensuring that few files are kept in the root directory of the disk. Subdirectories are made for the files. This chapter introduces more of the DOS commands used in file management. You may want to refresh your memory of the use of the commands CHDIR, MKDIR, DIR and TREE which are described in the Directory and Prompt Chapter.

Brief Summary of Primary Directory Commands

Command	Meaning
CHDIR	Change Directory
MKDIR	Make Directory
TREE	Show a picture of the directory tree.
DIR	Show the contents of the directory.

This chapter builds from these commands.

COPY

COPY is a DOS command used to duplicate a file or files. It copies the file(s) into another location which may be on the same diskette or another diskette in another drive. If copy is done into the same disk, then the file must be given a different name, unless it is being copied into a different directory.

The general format for the copy command is

COPY source destination

where the source is the file or files to be copied and destination is where to copy the files to. Source and destination are written in *italic* to indicate that they are not the actual words you type. Instead, you type in the names of the files for the words source and destination. When copying, it is good practice to give the complete source and destination. This is because the COPY command **does not warn** you if the file already exists, it simply replaces the old file with the new one. Although the full path may be omitted, it is good practice to supply this when issuing the COPY command, at least when you first start using COPY. The current directory is assumed as the destination, i.e., the default. If your destination is just a directory, then the files have the same name as the source when copied. If you want to rename the files, you can give a new name as part of the destination. Wild cards can be used.

DEL (Delete)

DEL is the command used to delete one or more files from the disk. Another command that could be used in place of DEL is ERASE. When either ERASE or DEL is used, the correct path must be given. This ensures that important files are not lost. Where no path is given, the computer assumes the current directory. The general format is

del filename

where filename can be the full path and file name or just the file name. Wild cards can be used.

Wild Cards Conventions

Wild cards are special characters that are used in file naming when issuing a command such as COPY, DIR, or DEL. The characters used are "*" and "?". The "*" stands for a group of characters and "?" stands for a single character.

Examples of * Wild Card

Wild Card	Meaning
**	Refers to every file in the directory.
TEM*.*	Refers to every files beginning with TEM.

Wild Card	Meaning
TAN.*	Refers to all files with the name TAN and any extension
*.DO?	Refers to all files with an extension beginning with DO and having any character in the third position.

What you type to use a wild card is known as a mask. By that, it means that it shows what the file will look like. It is a pattern that DOS follows to find files that match the pattern. For example, the mask B???UR.DOC means all the files starting with B, having the fifth and sixth characters as U and R respectively and the extension of DOC.

RMDIR or RD (Remove Directory)

This is a DOS command and its purpose is to remove an existing directory. For instance the command

```
rd a:\temp
```

removes a directory called temp from the root directory of drive A. If the directory contains some files and/or directories, the RD command would not be carried out. You will see the error message "Invalid path, not directory, or directory not empty". Be sure the directory has no files or subdirectories. If it is empty and you still get the error, see if you gave the proper name and path of the directory. If it still will not be removed, see your DOS manual on "hidden files". You can also read about hidden files in the book *Computer Management - DOS version*.

In removing a directory you can either give the full path name or have the parent directory as your current directory and give only the directory name. For example, if the directory CORRESP is a subdirectory of DATA, and it contains another directory, PERSONAL, to remove PERSONAL, the full path would be:

```
rd a:\data\corresp\personal
```

or the commands to be in the proper parent directory before removing PERSONAL are:

```
a:
cd \data\corresp
rd personal
```


It is possible to remove a directory from a disk in another drive by specifying the appropriate drive. For instance, if the default drive is A: and we wish to remove PERSONAL from B:, the full path would be:

```
rd b:\data\corresp\personal
```

RENAME

Sometimes you would like to change the name of a file. To do this you use the DOS RENAME command. The general format is

```
rename old-name new-name
```

where old-name is the current name of the file and new-name is the name you want to change the file to.

If you give the command correctly, the names are changed but DOS does not tell you. It simply gives the DOS prompt again. If you get the error

Duplicate file name or file not found

then there are two possibilities. Check to see if the old-name is correct. If that file does not exist, then the RENAME will not work. The other possibility is that the new-name is already used by another file. RENAME will not destroy the other file. It simply refuses to make the change in names. If you want to still make the old-name into the new-name, you can either delete the file that has the new-name or you can change the name first.

RENAME works with files. It does not work with directories. If you want to rename a directory, you need to get a program that will do it. There is a free program available called RENDIR that will do it for you. If you would like this program and some other free programs, send a blank disk that is formatted for DOS along with a self-addressed stamped envelop to:

ECWA Information & Computer Science Institute
 ECWA Headquarters
 P.O. Box 63
 Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria

By a self-addressed stamped envelop I mean that along with the diskette you should enclose an envelop that has your address on it and enough stamps so we can send it back to you. If there is not enough postage on the envelop, we will not be able to send your diskette back to you.

Practice

To help us understand the use of these DOS commands we will work through several examples. We will use your data diskette that has the tree developed in the Directory & Prompt Chapter. Assume you have been doing a lot of miscellaneous work and decided to put it in a separate directory called MISC. How would you make MISC under the root?

Answer ^{use}

Making MISC Directory

1. Be sure the data djsk is the default drive by entering the name and a colon, such as A.

2. Change to the root directory.

```
cd \
```

3. Make the new directory.

```
mkdir misc
```

4. Check to see if it is there using the DIR or TREE^{*} command.

```
dir
```

Command versus Program

You may have found that TREE did not work. Instead, you got the error "Bad command or file name". The reason is that DIR is a command and TREE is a program. Can you determine what difference that makes?

^{*}TREE may not work. See the next section for an explanation.

Answer **✎**

Until now we have considered DOS commands and DOS programs the same. The point that you could use DIR or TREE above, but both may not work, brings us to the difference. When your computer starts, DOS loads some of the most used commands into the computer's memory. These are available at all times, no matter what disk you have in the drive. The DOS programs are only available if you have the DOS diskette that contains the program in one of the drives. Hence, if you get the "Bad command or file name" when entering TREE, it means that the program "tree" was not found on your disk. If you want to use TREE, you must have the program available.

Making Several Files

Now you will make several files. In our scenario we will imagine that these are the files you made over several weeks.

Before I give you the steps to create the files I want to give you a description of a command that I will give many times. I am explaining it here once and you can turn to this page if you forget how to do it.

Steps to Clear the Screen

1. This assumes you have saved the file. Press F7 to exit.
2. Answer N when asked if you want to save the document.
3. Answer N when asked if you want to exit WordPerfect.

Creating Some Files

1. Start WP.
2. These are fictitious files so we will not type much in them. Type the following, which is suppose to be a letter to Sue.

Dear Sue,

How are you?

Your friend,

3. Save the file (F10) as A:\MISC\SUE.DOC. (If you are using B: drive, then replace A: with B:.)
4. Clear the screen. (See the steps above.)
5. You are also writing a book. Type in the following:

Chapter 1 - Introduction
6. Save the file as A:\MISC\CHAP01.DOC
7. Clear the screen.

That is the basic idea how to make files for testing the DOS commands. Make the following files.

File Name	Contents
A:\MISC\YUSUFU.DOC	Dear Yusufu, Thinking of you.
A:\MISC\CHAP02.DOC	Chapter 2 - Mathematics in School
A:\MISC\NANCY.DOC	Dear Nancy, Tomorrow is
A:\MISC\CHAP03.DOC	Chapter 3 - Market Mathematics
A:\MISC\CHAP12.DOC	Chapter 12 - Using Trigonometry
A:\MISC\CHAP14.DOC	Chapter 14 - College Mathematics
A:\MISC\RUTH.DOC	Dear Ruth, Did you see the
A:\MISC\MOSES.DOC	Dear Moses, I was thinking that
A:\MISC\CHAP05.DOC	Chapter 5 - M.A.N.
A:\MISC\CHAP08.DOC	Chapter 8 - Constructions
A:\MISC\CHAP09.DOC	Chapter 9 - Insights

When finished, you should have all the files with the contents typed into them. Your MISC directory should look similar to:

Directory of MISC

```

A:\MISC>dir
Volume in drive A has no label
Directory of A:\MISC

<DIR>          12-15-93    1:01p
<DIR>          12-15-93    1:01p
SUE            DOC          361 12-15-93    2:31p
CHAP01        DOC          348 12-15-93    2:31p
YUSUFU        DOC          355 12-15-93    2:32p
CHAP02        DOC          357 12-15-93    2:32p
NANCY         DOC          353 12-15-93    2:33p
CHAP03        DOC          354 12-15-93    2:33p
CHAP12        DOC          355 12-15-93    2:34p
CHAP14        DOC          356 12-15-93    2:34p
RUTH          DOC          357 12-15-93    2:34p
MOSES         DOC          362 12-15-93    2:35p
CHAP05        DOC          342 12-15-93    2:35p
CHAP08        DOC          349 12-15-93    2:35p
CHAP09        DOC          344 12-15-93    2:35p
15 file(s)    4593 bytes
685056 bytes free

A:\MISC>

```

Your file size may not be the same as mine. The file size changes according to the printer you are using.

Now we will make a duplicate of this directory so we can use it in the WP File Management Chapter.

Making a Duplicate of MISC

1. Make the directory MISC-LF under the root.

```
md misc-lf
```

2. Copy all the files in MISC to MISC-LF.

```
copy a:\misc\*.* a:\misc-lf
```

That was an example of copying all the files from one directory to another. We used the wild card mask *.* to indicate we wanted all the files moved.

Now that you have used your MISC directory for a few weeks you realize that the files would be better in different directories. You decide to move some of the files. Since the

letters are personal they should be under the directory \DATA\CORRESP\PERSONAL. You start by moving SUE.DOC.

Moving SUE.DOC

1. Copy SUE.DOC to the personal correspondence directory.

```
copy a:\misc\sue.doc a:\data\corresp\personal
```

2. Copying the file is only part of the job of moving the file. You now need to delete it from the MISC directory.

```
cd \misc  
del sue.doc
```

After moving SUE.DOC you realize that copying all the personal letters one by one will take quit a bit of typing. You decide to take care of the other files first. Those files are part of a mathematics book you are writing. It would be convenient to have those in a separate directory. You decide to make a directory called MATHBOOK under the DATA directory.

Moving the Documents of the Mathematics Book

1. First you need to create the directory.

```
cd \data  
md mathbook
```

2. Next you can copy the documents of the book to the new directory. Gratefully, you used a consistent name for the book's documents. They all begin with CHAP. What is the wild card mask to use?

Answer

```
copy a:\misc\chap*.* a:\data\mathbook
```

3. Next you need to delete the book from the misc directory.

```
del a:\misc\chap*.*
```


That was a much faster way to move eight files. Now all we have is personal letters to move. What is the command to copy the files?

Answer

Moving the Personal Letters

1. Copy the files first.

```
copy a:\misc\*. * a:\data\corresp\personal
```

2. Delete the files from the MISC directory.

```
del a:\misc\*. *
```

3. You will be asked "Are you sure? (Y/N)". DOS is looking for a Yes or No answer. Using the mask `* *` is very powerful with the DEL command. It could wipe-out thousands of files. DOS is double checking that you mean to delete all the files. If that is what you want to do then, type a Y and press Enter. In our example we will answer Y for yes.

Now that we have cleaned out the MISC directory we do not need it anymore. To keep our diskette clean we should delete that directory.

Deleting the MISC Directory

1. Change to the root directory.

```
cd \
```

2. Remove the directory.

```
rmdir misc
```

This covers the general use of the commands discussed in this chapter. A DOS manual will give you more options for some of the commands. For example, the copy command is capable of concatenating files. See your DOS manual or *Computer Management: DOS Version* by Dr. Petrillo for more information on DOS commands.