

Common DOS Commands

1. Changing Drives:Type the drive letter followed by a colon.

Example-- A:(enter) switches to the A Drive

2. Formatting Disks:Prepares a disk for use. Also erases any data that was on it.

Example-- Format A:(enter) formats disk in A drive.
Format A:/s(enter) makes it bootable.
Format A:/4(enter) formats a 5.25" DSDD disk
in a DSHD drive
Format A:/t:80 /n:9(enter) formats a 3.5"DSDD
disk in a DSHD drive.

3. Directory: Allows you to view file information.

Example-- Dir A:(enter) shows directory of Drive A
Dir A:/p(enter) shows directory one page
at a time.
Dir A:/w(enter) shows directory in a multi-
column format.

4. Check Disk: Allows you to get information(size, space available, bad sectors, etc.) on a disk.

Example-- CHKDSK C:(enter) checks Drive c.

5. Wildcards: Allows you to copy or erase a group of files.

Example-- "*.*" means "all the files in this directory."
 "*.com" means "all com files in directory."
 "config.*" means "all config files in this
 directory."

6. Erase, Delete: Allows you to remove files from a disk. USE CAUTION WHEN USING WILDCARDS!

Example-- ERASE CONFIG.SYS(enter) erases config.sys
ERASE *.*(enter) erases all files from
current directory.
DELETE *.COM(enter)deletes all com files
from current directory.

7. Diskcopy: Copies one disk to another in entirety, formats while copying (thus destroying all data on target disk).

Example-- DISKCOPY A: A:(enter) copies all data
from one disk to another using
only Drive A.

8. Copy: Copies files one at a time (or in bulk if using wildcards) from one disk to another already formatted disk. Does not overwrite, so needs sufficient free space on target drive.

Example-- COPY A:CONFIG.SYS C:(enter) copies the config.sys from current directory of Drive A to current directory of Drive C.
COPY C:*.* A:(enter) copies all files from current directory on Drive C to current directory on Drive A.
COPY C:*.* C:\[directory name](enter) copies all files from current directory of Drive C to another directory.
COPY CON [name.ext](enter) copies from the console (keyboard). Used for creating new config.sys or batch files. Use the F6 key to finish.

9. Make Dir: Makes a new directory.

Example-- MD\TEMP(enter) makes a new directory called temp under the current directory of the current drive.

10. Change Dir: Changes to a new directory.

Example-- CD\TEMP(enter) changes current directory to the one named "TEMP."

11. Remove Dir: Removes a specified directory (only if it contains no files).

Example-- RD\TEMP(enter) removes the directory called "TEMP."

12. Path: Tells DOS to look in other directories for a specified file.

Example-- PATH=C:\;C:\UTILITY;C:\DOS(enter) says "If I tell you to run a file and its not in the current directory, look for it in the root, and in the directories named Utility and DOS."

CONFIG.SYS COMMANDS

1. MODE: Re-assigns serial and parallel ports.

Example-- MODE COM1=LPT1 says "convert serial data that would normally be sent out on COM1 to parallel, then send it out to LPT1.
2. DEVICE: Allows DOS to use a device it wasn't intended to.

Example-- DEVICE=ANSI.SYS says "use the DOS file ANSI.SYS to manage a hard drive over 32 Megabytes."
3. FILES: Tells DOS how many separate files to handle simultaneously. (Default is 8)
4. BUFFERS Tells DOS how much RAM to allocate for disk read/write operations. (Default is 2).
5. LASTDRIVE: By default, DOS expects only 5 drives. This command allows more.
6. SAMPLE CONFIG.SYS: Mode com1=com2
Device=ansi.sys
Device=ems.sys
Lastdrive=h
Device=cddrvr.bin(f;g)

Explanation: Ship com1's data out on com2.
Use ansi.sys to manage a 40 meg hard drive.
Use ems.sys to manage a RAM upgrade over 640k.
We have over 5 drives.
Use cddrvr.bin to control two CD-ROM drives and assign them the letters F and G.

File Nomenclature

XXXXXXXXXX.XXX

NAME

EXTENSION

Typical names:

- command (main MS-DOS file)
- autoexec (automatic execute)
- config (vital system info)
- gwbasic (switches PC to work with BASIC language)

Typical extensions:

- doc (documentation)
- txt (text)
- com (runnable)
- exe (runnable)
- bat (batch of DOS commands)
- sys (system info)
- dat (data file)
- bak (backup file)
- bas (written in BASIC)

RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

- XTree Gold: File manager, etc. Puts you in absolute control of all DOS functions and then some.
- Norton Utilities: Diagnostics, hard drive utilities and file manager functions.
- P.C. Tools: Diagnostics, hard drive utilities and file manager functions.
- Seagate Disk Manager: Low-level format of hard drives.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Running MS-DOS, by Van Wolverton (a must!).
- Upgrading and Repairing P.C.'s by Scott Mueller.