Common DOS commands

Changing the Default Drive

To change the default drive, simply type the letter of your choice. The new default will be listed in subsequent DOS prompts.

Example:

- C:\> D: [enter]
- Changes the default drive from C to D.
- D:\> C: [enter]
- Changes the default drive from D to C.

md or Make Directory Command

DOS allows you to create a folder or a directory as it is called in DOS using an *md* command.

Example:

- C:\> md assets
- Creates a directory or a folder named assets in drive C:

Changing Directory Command

This command allows you to move from one directory to another directory.

Example: Let's say you are in **C:\Docs** directory

So to move up a directory named **business** (assuming there is directory name business) you issue the following command:

C:\Docs> CD business <enter>

So to move to another directory that is not directly under your current directory (which has been so far the **C:\Docs\business\>**), let's say for example you want to move to **C:\Project\Completed** directory – you issue the following command:

C:\Docs> CD\Project\Completed <enter>

Tip: CD command followed by space and then a directory named like CD business moves you up from your current directory. However, CD command followed by \ (or backslash) moves you any directory in your current drive (C: or D: or E: drive).

Other special CD commands

CD.. – moves you one directory down

For example like in the above if you are in **C:\Docs\business** directory and you want to go back to **Docs** directory you issue the following command:

C:\Docs\Business> CD..

CD - moves you back to the root directory

Again for example if you are in **C:\Docs\business** directory and you want to go back to **root directory** in your current drive you issue the following command:

C:\Docs\Business> CD

DIR (Directory) Command

The DIRECTORY command lists the names and sizes of all files located on a particular disk.

Example:

- C:\> dir
- Shows directory of drive C
- C:\> dir d:
- Shows directory of drive D
- C:\> dir /w
- Shows directory in wide format, as opposed to a vertical listing.
- C:\> dir /p
- Allows you to pause one screen at a time if there are many files to be shown in the screen.

DIR Options

Wildcard character: Using * (or asterisk) allows you to list files and directories according to a given pattern:

Example:

- C:\> dir w*
- Lists all files that starts with letter *w*
- C:\> dir win*
- Lists all files that starts with the word *win*
- C:\> dir *.exe
- List all files that has a file extension name of *.exe*

Displaying files according to attributes:

Files have attributes, that is, it could be read-only, archive, hidden, system, folder or simply a regular file. And to display files according to attributes you use the dir /a<attribute> command:

- C:\> dir /ah
- Lists all files that are hidden files
- C:\> dir /ad
- Lists only directories and does not include files

COPY Command

The COPY command allows you to copy file(s) to another file or drive.

Example:

- C:\> copy golf.doc d:
- Copies the file 'golf.doc' from the C drive to the drive D and gives it the same name, that is, golf.doc
- C:\> copy golf.doc d:\golfback.doc
- Creates a copy of 'golf.doc' from drive C to drive D but with different name this time, namely, golfback.doc
- C:\> copy *.doc d:
- Copies all files from drive C: that has file extension of .doc to drive D: as destination.
- C:\> copy *.* d:
- Copies all files from drive C: to drive D: as destination.