

Intro to Computing Lab
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Laboratory I - Creating a DOS Command Line Icon

Creating a DOS icon

To create a DOS icon to access the command processor, follow these steps.

- (a) Right-click on the desktop.
- (b) Select **New/Shortcut**.
- (c) Type **CMD** at “Type the location of the item”.
- (d) Type **DOS Shell** at “Type a name for this shortcut”.
- (e) Click **Finish**. This created an icon on the desktop.

Now double-click the new icon. You should see a window containing the text

C:\WINDOWS>

followed by a blinking cursor. This is called the *DOS prompt*; the computer is waiting for you to input a command. Type **dir**; this will list all files and subdirectories in the current directory. Always type the **<ENTER>** key when you are done typing a command, to tell the computer to begin processing the command.

We have three problems:

- (1) The current directory is directory **WINDOWS** on the **C:** drive (why would we want to be there?).
- (2) The order of the files is the order in which they were created (not too useful).
- (3) The color of the text is an ugly grey.

To modify these problems, we change some properties of the icon.

- (a) Right click on the **DOS Shell** icon.
- (b) Select **Properties**.
- (c) Change the entry in the Target box to

C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32\CMD /S /K "SET DIRCMD=/OGNE && PATH C:\UTIL;C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32"

SET DIRCMD=/OGNE causes directory list to be sorted with subdirectories first, then by name, then by extension. **PATH C:\UTIL;C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32** allows DOS to find executable programs in the **C:\UTIL** directory as well as in the **C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM32** directory.

- (d) Change the entry in the “Start in” box to

C:

- (e) Select tab **Colors**.
- (f) Change “text” to green and “background” to black.
- (g) Select tab **Layout**.
- (h) Change “Screen Buffer Size Height” from 300 to 25.

Trying DOS Commands

Click the DOS icon. At the prompt, type the following commands.

- (a) **CD**
This DOS command displays the current directory; you should see `CD:\`.
- (c) **DIR UTIL**
This OS command lists the directory `C:\UTIL`. Files ending in `.EXE`, `.COM`, and `.BAT` are the *executable* files. Since `C:\UTIL` is in the path, these should be accessible from any directory.
- (f) **MD TEST**
This DOS command makes a directory named `test`, where we will store new files which we make.

Downloading Utilities

Utilities are programs which to little tasks for us. Command-line utilities act as extensions to the the set of DOS commands, as long as the command processor knows how to find these files. Proceed as follows.

- (a) **Open My Computer**. Select `C:.` Right click in the window, over a blank spot. Select **New/Folder**. Type `download`, and press the `<ENTER>` key. This makes a directory called `download` off of the root directory; this is where all downloaded files should be temporarily stored.
- (b) Again, right click in the window, over a blank spot. Select **New/Folder**. Type `util`, and press the `<ENTER>` key. This makes a directory called `util` off of the root directory; this is where the utility programs will eventually be stored. Double-click on the new folder.
- (c) **Open Internet Explorer**. Access the web site <http://www.saumag.edu/pbailey>, and navigate to the Intro to Computer Lab page. Click on **Utilities**. Click on **Save**. Enter `C:\download` as the save location, and press the `<ENTER>` key. The file `UTIL.ZIP` should now be downloaded into the `download` directory.
- (d) Click on **Open**. Select **File/Select All**. Right-click on the highlighted file names, and select **Copy**. Move the mouse arrow to the `util` window, right-click, and select **Paste**. This should copy the downloaded files into the `C:\util` directory.

Trying Utilities

Click the DOS icon. At the prompt, type the following commands.

- (a) **CD TEST**
This DOS command changes your current directory to `C:\TEST`, where we will make our own files.
- (b) **ASCII**
This utility displays an ASCII chart. Use the arrow keys to move around. Type `<ESC>` to exit.
- (c) **CALENDER**
This utility display a calender. The arrow keys find the month. Type `<ESC>` to exit.
- (d) **MD TEST**
This DOS command makes a directory named `test`.
- (e) **EDIT POEM.TXT**
This utility is a text editor. Try typing a poem. Press the `<F1>` key for help. Press `<F3>` to save and exit. Press `<ESC>` to exit without saving.
- (f) **VIEW POEM.TXT**
This utility display the poem without allowing edits. Press `<ESC>` to exit.
- (g) **DUMP POEM.TXT**
This utility display the ASCII values, in hexadecimal, of the characters stored in the file.