

Command Prompt: 11 basic commands you should know (cd, dir, mkdir, etc.) - Page 2

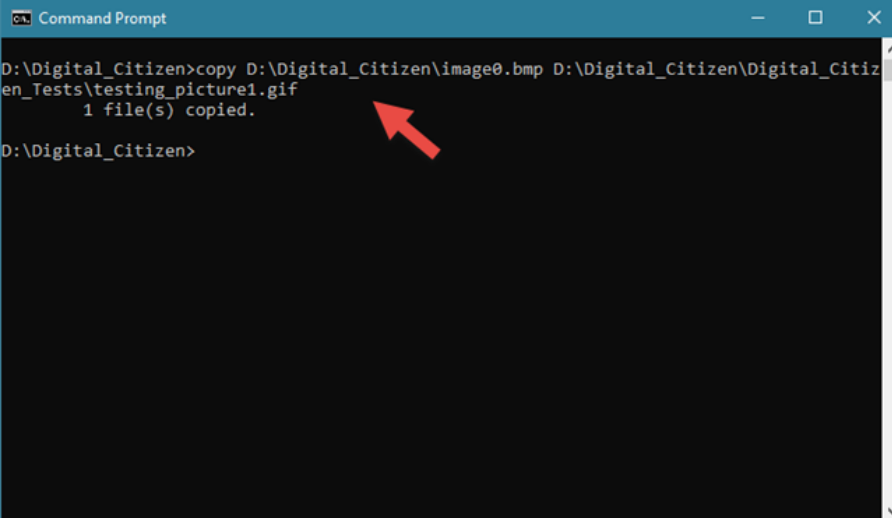
TUTORIAL by Codrut Neagu

[<https://www.digitalcitizen.life/users/codrut-neagu>] published on 10/18/2018

6. How to copy files with Command Prompt (CMD)

The *Copy* command allows you to copy files from one location to another. To use this command, type "*copy location\filename.extension newlocation\newname.extension*".

For example, let's use this command to copy the *Image0.bmp* file from the *Digital_Citizen* folder located on the "D:" drive to the "D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Tests\" folder. To make things more interesting, we want the file to be named *Testing_Picture1.gif*. To do all that, we must type the command "*copy D:\Digital_Citizen\image0.bmp D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Tests\testing_picture1.gif*" followed by *Enter*. You should also receive a confirmation of the operation, as you can see below.

A screenshot of a Windows Command Prompt window. The title bar says "Command Prompt". The command prompt shows the following text: "D:\Digital_Citizen>copy D:\Digital_Citizen\image0.bmp D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Tests\testing_picture1.gif", followed by "1 file(s) copied." on the next line. A red arrow points to the "1 file(s) copied." message. The prompt "D:\Digital_Citizen>" is visible on the line below.

Using COPY to copy files with Command Prompt

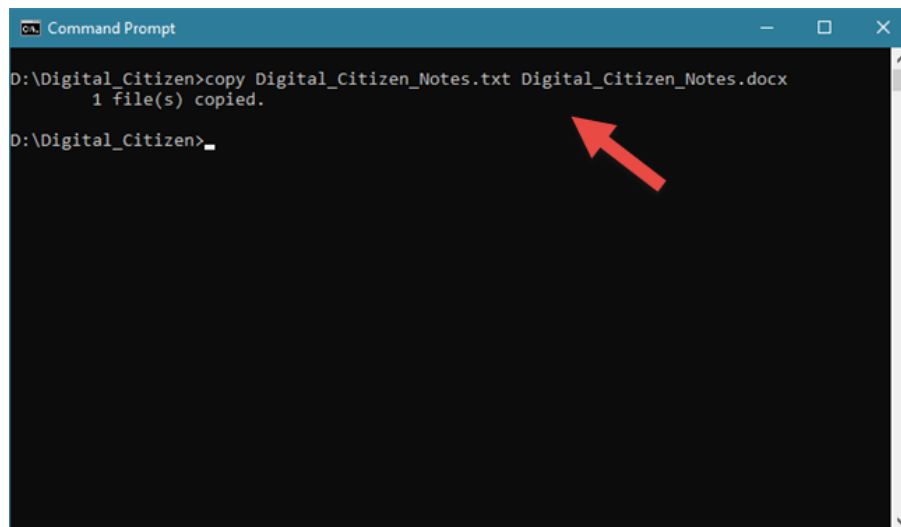
If you are copying within the same directory, you do not have to put the path in command. As an example, let's copy *Digital_Citizen_Notes.txt* from "D:\Digital_Citizen" in the same folder, only with a different extension: let's say *Digital_Citizen_Notes.docx*.

To do that, we have to run the command "*copy Digital_Citizen_Notes.txt Digital_Citizen_Notes.docx*."

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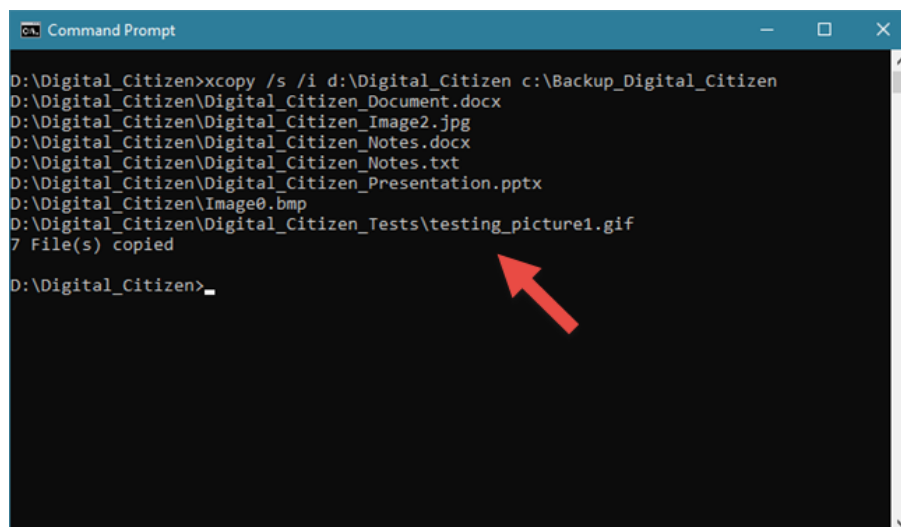


```
Command Prompt
D:\Digital_Citizen>copy Digital_Citizen_Notes.txt Digital_Citizen_Notes.docx
1 file(s) copied.
D:\Digital_Citizen>
```

Using the COPY command to copy files in the same directory

7. How to copy folders (and their contents) with Command Prompt (CMD)

To copy a folder and its content from a location to another, use the *XCOPY* command followed by the */s /i* operators. Let's assume that we need to copy a folder from "D:\Digital_Citizen" to "C:\Backup_Digital_Citizen." To do that, we have to run the command "xcopy /s /i d:\Digital_Citizen c:\Backup_Digital_Citizen." The */s* parameter ensures that all the directories and subdirectories are going to be copied, except the ones that are empty. The */i* parameter creates a new directory if the destination folder does not exist and copies all the files in it.



```
Command Prompt
D:\Digital_Citizen>xcopy /s /i d:\Digital_Citizen c:\Backup_Digital_Citizen
D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Document.docx
D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Image2.jpg
D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Notes.docx
D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Notes.txt
D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Presentation.pptx
D:\Digital_Citizen\Image0.bmp
D:\Digital_Citizen\Digital_Citizen_Tests\testing_picture1.gif
7 File(s) copied
D:\Digital_Citizen>
```

Using XCOPY to copy folders and their contents, in Command Prompt

8. How to delete files with Command Prompt (CMD)

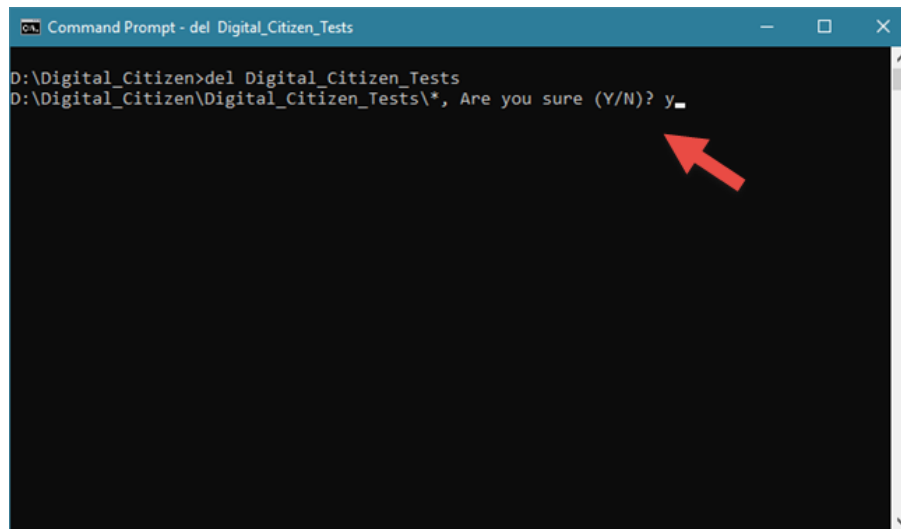
The *DEL* (*Delete*) is used to delete files from the folders you have created. To

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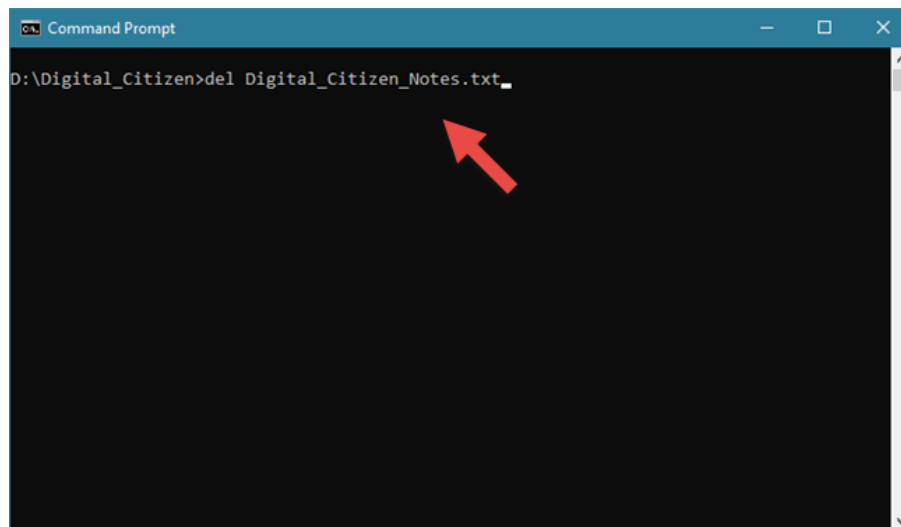
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NOTE: To also delete hidden files from the folder, you must add the `"/h"` parameter. Also, note that the `DEL` command does not work for deleting folders - for that, you have to use the `RD` command of which you can read in the next section of this tutorial.



Using the DEL command to delete all the files in a directory, in Command Prompt

If you need to delete a single file, use the `DEL` command followed by that file's name. For instance, to delete the file `Digital_Citizen_Notes.txt` from "D:\Digital_Citizen," we should run the command `"del Digital_Citizen_Notes.txt."`



Using the DEL command to delete a single file, in Command Prompt

Here is a list of useful `DEL` combinations that are worth mentioning:

- `DEL *.DOCX` - delete all files with the DOC extension (you can use any file extension necessary, `DOCX` is just an example);
- `DEL Test*.*` - delete all files beginning with `Test`;
- `DEL *.*` - delete ALL files from the current folder.

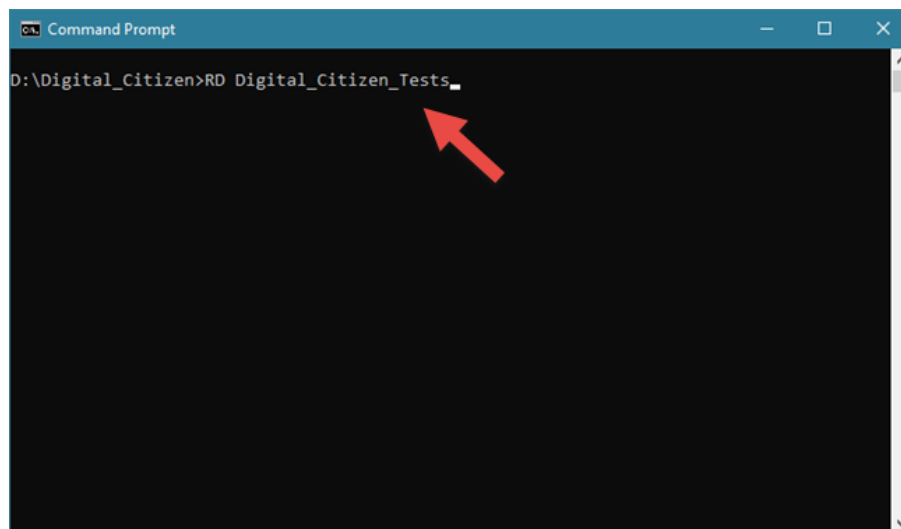
9. How to delete folders with Command Prompt

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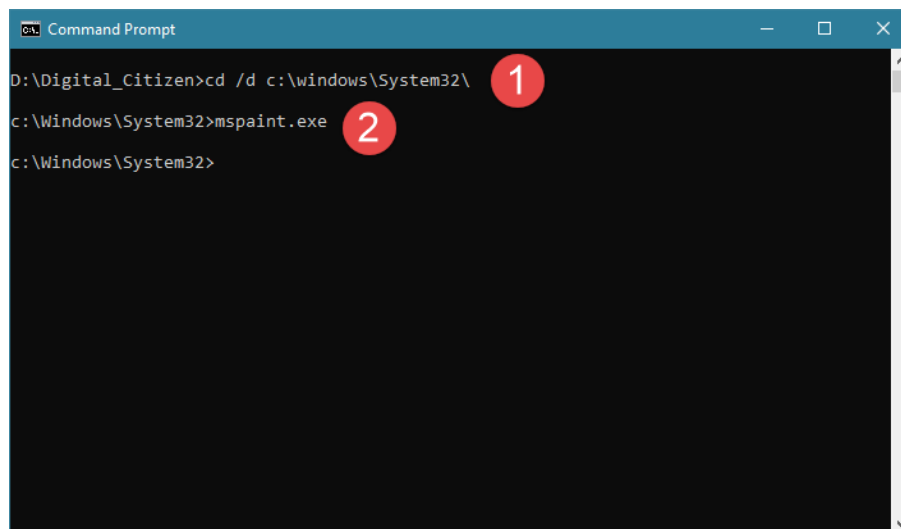
The *DEL* command cannot be used to delete folders. Therefore we must use another command to remove any empty folder: *RD* (*Remove Directory*). We have previously deleted all the files from the *Digital_Citizen_Tests* folder. It is now time to delete the directory too, by typing "*RD Digital_Citizen_Tests*."



Using the *RD* command to delete folders, in *Command Prompt*

10. How to launch an app with *Command Prompt* (CMD)

To run a program from the *Command Prompt*, you need only to navigate to the folder that contains the executable and type the program's name. For example, if you want to launch *Paint* [<https://www.digitalcitizen.life/how-work-new-paint>] using *Command Prompt*, go to "*C:\Windows\System32*", where its executable is: *mspaint.exe*. Let's see how this operation is done if you were in "*D:\Digital_Citizen*." First of all, change the working directory to the application's folder by typing "*cd /d c:\windows\System32*". Then write *mspaint.exe* or *mspaint* and press *Enter*. Both commands can be seen in the screenshot below.



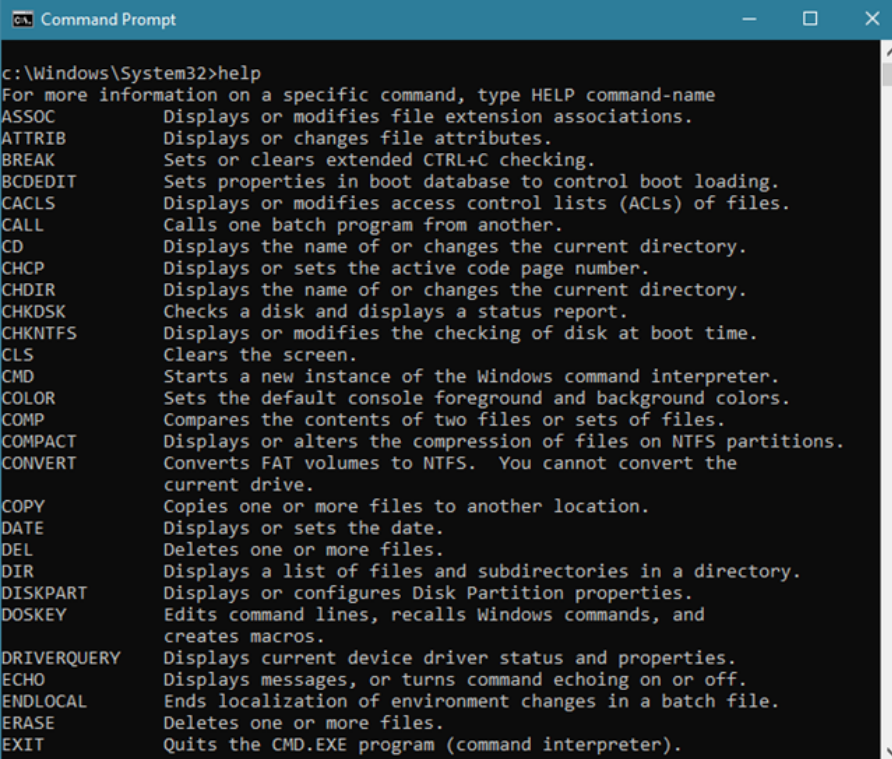
Launching an app from *Command Prompt*

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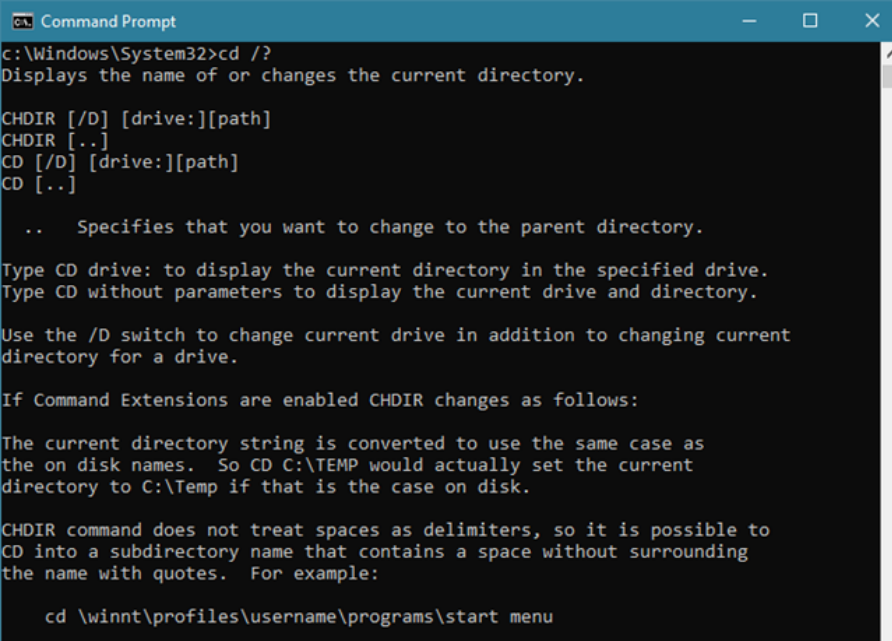
To access help in the *Command Prompt*, you have to type the *help* command and then press *Enter*. A list with all available commands is displayed, as you can see below.



```
c:\Windows\System32>help
For more information on a specific command, type HELP command-name
ASSOC      Displays or modifies file extension associations.
ATTRIB     Displays or changes file attributes.
BREAK      Sets or clears extended CTRL+C checking.
BCDEDIT     Sets properties in boot database to control boot loading.
CACLS      Displays or modifies access control lists (ACLs) of files.
CALL       Calls one batch program from another.
CD          Displays the name of or changes the current directory.
CHCP       Displays or sets the active code page number.
CHDIR      Displays the name of or changes the current directory.
CHKDSK     Checks a disk and displays a status report.
CHKNTFS    Displays or modifies the checking of disk at boot time.
CLS        Clears the screen.
CMD        Starts a new instance of the Windows command interpreter.
COLOR      Sets the default console foreground and background colors.
COMP       Compares the contents of two files or sets of files.
COMPACT    Displays or alters the compression of files on NTFS partitions.
CONVERT    Converts FAT volumes to NTFS. You cannot convert the
           current drive.
COPY       Copies one or more files to another location.
DATE       Displays or sets the date.
DEL        Deletes one or more files.
DIR        Displays a list of files and subdirectories in a directory.
DISKPART   Displays or configures Disk Partition properties.
DOSKEY     Edits command lines, recalls Windows commands, and
           creates macros.
DRIVERQUERY Displays current device driver status and properties.
ECHO       Displays messages, or turns command echoing on or off.
ENDLOCAL   Ends localization of environment changes in a batch file.
ERASE      Deletes one or more files.
EXIT       Quits the CMD.EXE program (command interpreter).
```

The HELP command from Command Prompt

If a particular command interests you, type *help* followed by the name of that command. Another way to do the same thing is to type the command's name followed by the *"/?"* parameter. To test it, use *"help cd"* or *"cd/?"* to display information about the *cd* command. In the picture below you can see the result:



```
c:\Windows\System32>cd /?
Displays the name of or changes the current directory.

CHDIR [/D] [drive:][path]
CHDIR [..]
CD [/D] [drive:][path]
CD [..]

.. Specifies that you want to change to the parent directory.

Type CD drive: to display the current directory in the specified drive.
Type CD without parameters to display the current drive and directory.

Use the /D switch to change current drive in addition to changing current
directory for a drive.

If Command Extensions are enabled CHDIR changes as follows:

The current directory string is converted to use the same case as
the on disk names. So CD C:\TEMP would actually set the current
directory to C:\Temp if that is the case on disk.

CHDIR command does not treat spaces as delimiters, so it is possible to
CD into a subdirectory name that contains a space without surrounding
the name with quotes. For example:

cd \winnt\profiles\username\programs\start menu
```

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Conclusion

The *Command Prompt* is a powerful tool for Windows computer users who are willing to get their hands dirty and learn new things. We hope that this article was useful in helping you learn the basics of running commands in the *Command Prompt*. If you have any questions about it, do not hesitate to leave us a comment below.

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