

There was a function in C to adjust background color? (It was actually a Dos Command)

Asked 14 years, 7 months ago Modified 2 years, 9 months ago Viewed 22k times

I am looking for the system function to adjust background color. It was like

```
system("color",somecolorcodes);
```

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Does anyone know about it?

On Windows Xp or 7!



c colors

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asked May 15, 2010 at 19:50



LuckySlevin

325 3 7 13

There is no standard library function to do this. It depends entirely on environment, libraries, and compiler. So what OS and compiler are you using? – Joe May 15, 2010 at 19:53

Compiler : VS 2008 OS : Windows 7 or XP – LuckySlevin May 15, 2010 at 19:56

He said "it was actually a DOS command" in the title and mentioned "Windows Xp or 7" in the question body, so that narrows down the platform quite a bit. Question not edited as of this comment. – Eric J. May 15, 2010 at 19:56

@Eric, these were not included in the first version of the question indeed. SO does not show all edits. – Péter Török May 15, 2010 at 20:04

@Eric Edits within the first few minutes don't show up in the edit history - his original question made no mention of DOS (why do people think this still exists?) or Windows. – anon May 15, 2010 at 20:06

4 Answers

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It's "color XX" where the first X is the background and the second X is the foreground.

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The codes are as following:



0 = Black	8 = Gray
1 = Blue	9 = Light Blue
2 = Green	A = Light Green
3 = Aqua	B = Light Aqua
4 = Red	C = Light Red
5 = Purple	D = Light Purple
6 = Yellow	E = Light Yellow
7 = White	F = Bright White



So basically for black text on white ground, you do

```
system("color 70");
```

Windows only, tho.

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answered May 15, 2010 at 19:55



[chmod222](#)

5,722 ● 2 ● 26 ● 33



1



```
system("cls"); //clears the screen
system("color F0"); //Creates Bright White Background with black text
system("type struct3.c struct2.c"); /*prints the file struct3 and struct2 in the
```

```
console*/
```



system() is a really useful function included in Windows.h library. Apparently we can do many other tasks with this function so I was searching for it when I came across this thread.

Edit:While looking at the commands in command prompt I realized that the above examples are commands in the command prompt and tried using other commands like time, help, del etc in the system() function and figured all the commands that we use in command prompt can be used by System() function. For that we write the commands in the System() function like below system("command"); Even though C is case sensitive the command inside system() is not case sensitive like in command prompt.



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A somewhat more portable way of doing this (not DOS or Windows specific) is:

```
printf("\033[%dm", 40 + color); /* set background color */
```



The corresponding way to set the foreground color is:

```
printf("\033[%dm", 30 + color); /* set foreground color */
```



These work with colors:

```
0    black
1    red
2    green
3    yellow/brown
4    blue
5    magenta
6    cyan
7    white
```

These aren't truly portable, either; they work wherever "ANSI control sequences" are implemented in your terminal, terminal emulator, or console.

Under Linux and/or xterm, prefixes 90 (for foreground) and 100 (for background) seem to work, also, perhaps with a slightly different set of colors.



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You can use the [SetConsoleTextAttribute](#) function in Windows. This will let you output text in different colors at the same time, while calling "color" doesn't.



There are also others that are less coarse -- search for color in [this listing of console functions](#).



Also, if you're looking for a cross-platform approach take a look, for instance, at [this file from Musepack](#).



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answered May 15, 2010 at 20:01



Artefacto

97.7k ● 17 ● 205 ● 227
