Directory Snapshot User Guide

What does this program do?

Directory Snapshot creates snapshots of directories (also know as folders) that contain:

- the locations of folders and files

- the names of those folders and files

- the time they were last modified at, and

- their size

The snapshots can be read by the program and compared to each other to identify changes. One example use-case is taking snapshots of offline off-site backups so that the user can know what information is stored in that backup without having to keep a copy of all the data.
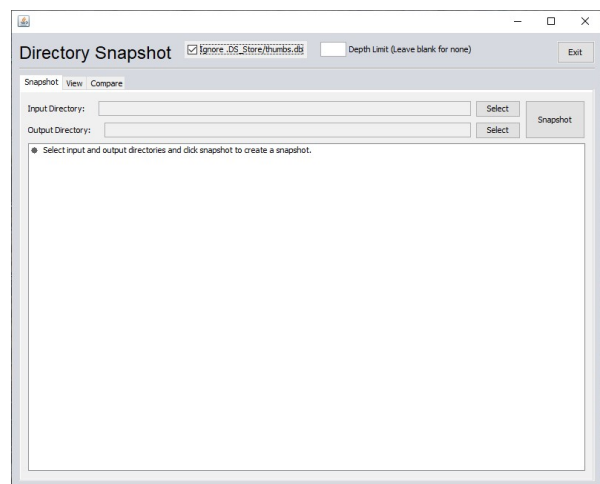
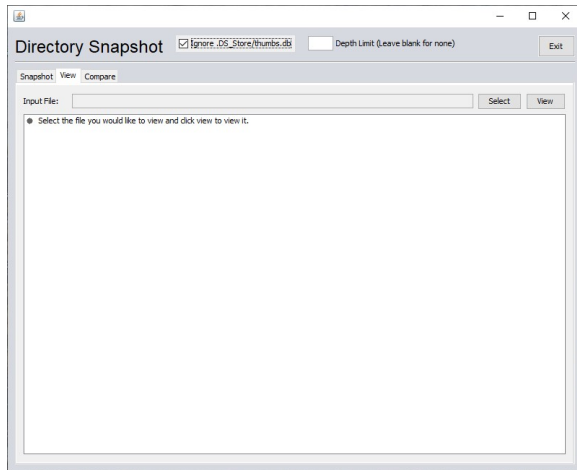## How do I use this program?

Installation:

Ensure that you have Java version 8 or newer installed, and run the JAR file.

Snapshot:

First select the input directory and the output directory. The input directory is the directory that you want to take a snapshot of, the output directory is where you want the file to be saved. Then click snapshot to scan the directory, and save the file.
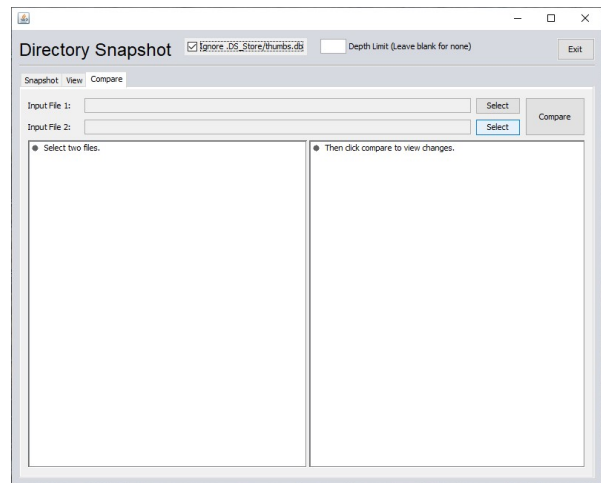

The snapshot tab of the program

The view tab of the program

View:

To view an existing file, navigate to the view tab, select the file that you want to view, then click the view button.

The compare tab of the program

Compare:

To compare two files, navigate to the compare tab, select the two files, then click compare. Any differences found between the two files will be displayed.

Other features:

The **"Ignore .DS_Store/Thumbs.db"** option, which is enabled by default, will prevent these files from being displayed or compared. However, they will still be recorded to the output file. These are hidden files that are used to cache icons or icon positions by the Mac and Windows operating systems. If you want them to be shown and included in comparisons.

The **depth limit** option can be used to prevent snapshot, view, or compare from going down too many directories. When using this option with snapshot, directories and files past the chosen depth will not be recorded. When using this with view, directories and files past the depth will not be displayed. When using this with compare, directories and files past a certain depth will not be compared, and the contents of newly created or deleted folders will not be displayed past that depth.

Note:

Running a snapshot with this program on files that are open in the operating system, especially programs or parts of the operating system, can cause issues with the program (but not the operating system), and is not advised.