

# How to delete large folders in Windows super fast

by Martin Brinkmann on July 18, 2017 in Windows - Last Update: July 18, 2017 - 56 comments

When you delete huge folders in Windows, you will notice that the process takes quite a bit of time to complete.

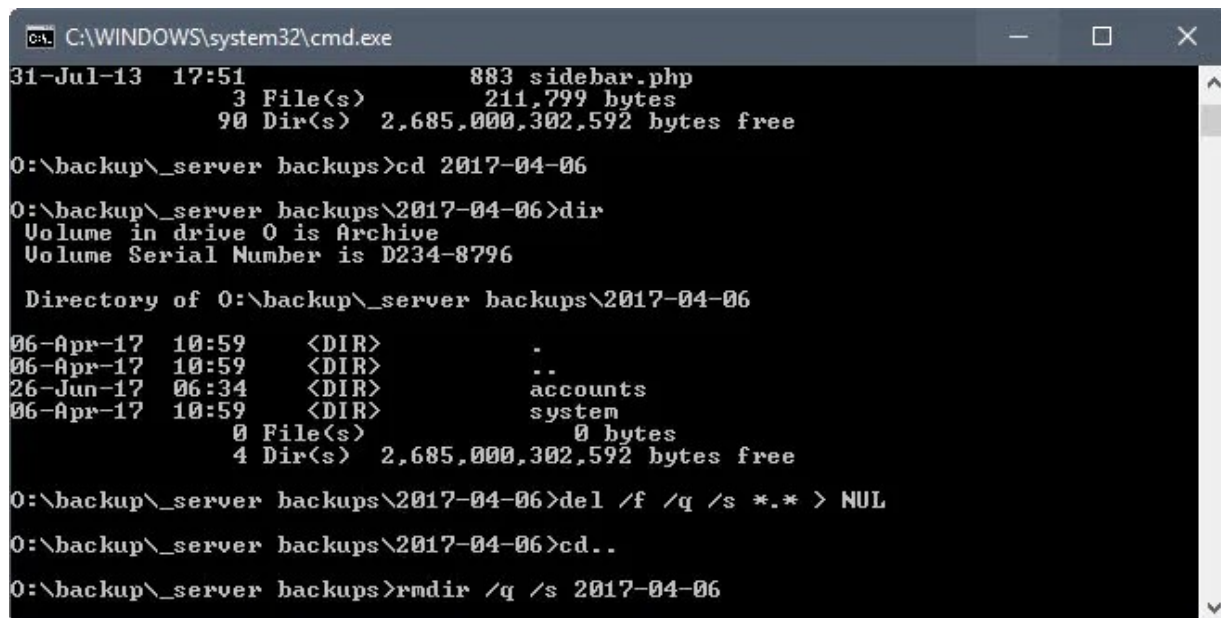
I keep backup folders of Ghacks locally on a platter-based drive, and these folders come close to 30 Gigabytes in size with more than 140,000 files and 350 folders.

When I need to delete them again, it takes a long time if I run the delete operation in Windows Explorer. First thing that happens is that Windows runs calculations which in itself may take a very long time to complete.

Then when the actual deleting takes place, Windows analyzes the process and posts updates to the file operation window.

It may take ten or twenty minutes, or even longer, to delete a large folder using Explorer on Windows devices.

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A screenshot of a Windows Command Prompt window titled "C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe". The window shows the following commands and output:

```
31-Jul-13 17:51      883 sidebar.php
                3 File(s)      211,799 bytes
                90 Dir(s)  2,685,000,302,592 bytes free

O:\backup\_server backups>cd 2017-04-06

O:\backup\_server backups\2017-04-06>dir
Volume in drive O is Archive
Volume Serial Number is D234-8796

Directory of O:\backup\_server backups\2017-04-06
06-Apr-17 10:59    <DIR>      .
06-Apr-17 10:59    <DIR>      ..
26-Jun-17 06:34    <DIR>      accounts
06-Apr-17 10:59    <DIR>      system
                0 File(s)      0 bytes
                4 Dir(s)  2,685,000,302,592 bytes free

O:\backup\_server backups\2017-04-06>del /f /q /s *.* > NUL

O:\backup\_server backups\2017-04-06>cd..

O:\backup\_server backups>rmdir /q /s 2017-04-06
```

If you run delete commands from the command line instead, you will notice that the operation completes a lot faster. You may notice that the operation needs just a fraction of time that the same operation requires when you run it in Explorer.

Matt Ditz, who wrote about this hack in 2015 saw a reduction from 11 minutes to 20 seconds, which made

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