

How can I determine whether a specific file is open in Windows? [closed]

Asked 16 years, 4 months ago Modified 8 years, 10 months ago

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107



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One of my favourite tools for linux is [lsuf](#) - a real swiss army knife!

Today I found myself wondering which programs on a WinXP system had a specific file open. Is there any equivalent utility to lsuf? Additionally, the file in question was over a network share so I'm not sure if that complicates matters.

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command-line

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edited Apr 20, 2013 at 18:44



Anderson Green

31.7k ● 69 ● 208 ● 337

asked Aug 19, 2008 at 4:37



Daniel Fone

2,905 ● 3 ● 23 ● 20

10 Answers

Sorted by:

Highest score (default)



88

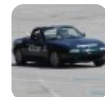
Use [Process Explorer](#) from the Sysinternals Suite, the Find Handle or DLL function will let you search for the process with that file open.



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answered Aug 19, 2008 at 4:48



Jay Hofacker

3,469 ● 21 ● 14



2 Does this really answer the question? Process Explorer lets you see which files are open for a particular process/handle/dll/whatever, but that's the reverse mapping. See my answer stackoverflow.com/questions/15708/... to this question. – [Greg Mattes](#) Oct 9, 2008 at 17:37

8 Yes it does. Click on Find Handle or Dll (or hit Ctrl-F) , type in the name of the file you are searching for, and you end up with a list of processes with that file open. – [Jay Hofacker](#) Oct 10, 2008 at 0:07

8 @MatthewMcCullough Any references? You are incorrect, [Process Explorer](#) and [Process Monitor](#) are two different utilities. – [Alois Mahdal](#) Mar 21, 2012 at 9:48

3 Does Process Explorer have a command-line interface? – [Anderson Green](#) Feb 22, 2013 at 19:44

1 This was so awesome. I knew about Process Explorer but not the ^F trick, and it just helped me track a bug where my application could not delete its own lock file. (The culprit was "Immunet 3.0 Agent", free antivirus software that is apparently worth every penny.) I really don't understand the obsession with marking tips like this "off topic". Programmers need tools. – [Robert Calhoun](#) Jan 17, 2014 at 15:19



50



The equivalent of `lssof -p pid` is the combined output from sysinternals handle and listdlls, ie

```
handle -p pid
listdlls -p pid
```



you can find out pid with sysinternals `pslist`.



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edited Feb 17, 2016 at 9:14

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[peterh](#)

12.6k ● 20 ● 89 ● 113

answered Mar 1, 2009 at 4:48



[lj](#)

Does this come with a standard windows installation like Windows 10? – [Morten](#) Sep 22, 2020 at 20:09

@Morten sysinternals is an external Microsoft package that "every" windows developer installs, but it does not come with the box. but they are small and easily shipped with your application (we do something like that to install our java application as a windows service). – [oligofren](#) Jun 2, 2021 at 12:42



11

Try [Handle](#). [Filemon](#) & [Regmon](#) are also great for trying to figure out what the duce program foo is doing to your system.



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answered Aug 19, 2008 at 4:46



[slipsec](#)

3,052 ● 3 ● 34 ● 46



-
- 1 @slipsec FileMon and Regmon are now replaced by [Process Monitor v3.2](#) on versions of Windows starting with Windows 2000 SP4, Windows XP SP2, Windows Server 2003 SP1, and Windows Vista. – [Lucky](#) Aug 17, 2015 at 9:35

Thanks, Process Explorer for some reason does not find the handle, but the handle64 does, very helpful. – [Rostislav Matl](#) Feb 23, 2022 at 12:21



10

One equivalent of *lsOf* could be combined output from Sysinternals' *handle* and *listdlls*, i.e.:



```
c:\SysInternals>handle  
[...]
```

```
-----  
-----
```



```
gvim.exe pid: 5380 F00\alouis.mahdal
  10: File (RW-) C:\Windows
  1C: File (RW-)
D:\some\locked\path\OpenFile.txt
[...]
```

```
c:\SysInternals>listdlls
[...]
```

```
-----
-----
```

```
Listdlls.exe pid: 6840
Command line: listdlls
```

Base	Size	Version	Path
0x00400000	0x29000	2.25.0000.0000	
D:\opt\SysinternalsSuite>Listdlls.exe			
0x76ed0000	0x180000	6.01.7601.17725	
C:\Windows\SysWOW64\ntdll.dll			
[...]			

```
c:\SysInternals>listdlls
```

Unfortunately, you have to "run as Administrator" to be able to use them.

Also *listdlls* and *handle* do not produce continuous table-like form so filtering filename would hide PID. `findstr /c:pid: /c:<filename>` should get you very close with both utilities, though

```
c:\SysinternalsSuite>handle | findstr /c:pid:
/c:Driver.pm
System pid: 4 \<unable to open process>
smss.exe pid: 308 NT AUTHORITY\SYSTEM
avgrsa.exe pid: 384 NT AUTHORITY\SYSTEM
[...]
cmd.exe pid: 7140 F00\alouis.mahdal
conhost.exe pid: 1212 F00\alouis.mahdal
gvim.exe pid: 3408 F00\alouis.mahdal
  188: File (RW-)
```

```
D:\some\locked\path\OpenFile.txt
taskmgr.exe pid: 6016 F00\alouis.mahdal
[...]
```

Here we can see that gvim.exe is the one having this file open.

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edited Sep 1, 2014 at 15:27

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answered Mar 21, 2012 at 10:36



[Alois Mahdal](#)

11.2k ● 7 ● 53 ● 70



6



Try [Unlocker](#).

The Unlocker site has a nifty chart (scroll down after following the link) that shows a comparison to other tools. Obviously such comparisons are usually biased since they are typically written by the tool author, but the chart at least lists the alternatives so that you can try them for yourself.

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answered Oct 9, 2008 at 17:35

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[Greg Mattes](#)

33.9k ● 15 ● 76 ● 105

6 Unlocker only lists locked files, not opened files. Most Windows software locks the DLL it uses but not your documents. – [Tobias](#) Mar 26, 2010 at 10:26

Anyone has comparison between it and iobit.com/en/iobit-unlocker.php please? – [xpt](#) Jul 10, 2022 at 16:41



If the file is a .dll then you can use the **TaskList** command line app to see whose got it open:

6

```
TaskList /M nameof.dll
```



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answered Apr 8, 2009 at 18:03

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[Sean](#)

62.4k ● 11 ● 99 ● 138



There is a program "OpenFiles", seems to be part of windows 7. Seems that it can do what you want. It can list files opened by remote users (through file share) and, after calling "openfiles /Local on" and a system restart, it should be able to show files opened locally. The latter is said to have performance penalties.

4



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answered May 9, 2012 at 15:24

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[d850b](#)

61 ● 5



2 I come here looking for a way to find out who's preventing me from deleting a folder and avoid a restart, and I find the command I need requires a config setup that ... you guessed it.... requires a restart. How very very windows. – [Gus](#) Nov 2, 2016 at 22:18

folks, be aware that the openfiles command takes a LONG time to run (on the order of 4 minutes)! – [NH](#). Nov 19, 2018 at 20:17



Use Process Explorer to find the process id. Then use [Handle](#) to find out what files are open.

3

Eg handle -p



I like this approach because you are using utilities from Microsoft itself.



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answered Mar 11, 2010 at 13:45

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[pushNpop](#)

2,064 ● 4 ● 17 ● 17

if only we had source code to those – [graywolf](#) Mar 2, 2016 at 12:27



In [OpenedFilesView](#), under the Options menu, there is a menu item named "Show Network Files". Perhaps with that enabled, the aforementioned utility is of some use.

2



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answered Nov 28, 2011 at 10:21

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[M8R-qpgp8](#)

21 ● 1





1

If you right-click on your "Computer" (or "My Computer") icon and select "Manage" from the pop-up menu, that'll take you to the Computer Management console.



In there, under System Tools\Shared Folders, you'll find "Open Files". This is probably close to what you want, but if the file is on a network share then you'd need to do the same thing on the server on which the file lives.



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answered Aug 19, 2008 at 4:40

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[Matt Hamilton](#)

204k ● 61 ● 392 ● 321

5 Note that this only shows shared files that are open by other network users. It doesn't help find files that are open on the local system. Doing this on the server would probably tell you which user had the file open, but not which program on that user's machine. Process Explorer (as mentioned by @JayHofacker) worked well for me. – [tomlogic](#) Feb 27, 2012 at 21:45
