

What's in your Utility Toolkit? [closed]

Asked 16 years, 2 months ago

Modified 2 years ago

Viewed 2k times



10



Closed. This question does not meet [Stack Overflow guidelines](#). It is not currently accepting answers.

💡 Questions asking us to **recommend or find a tool, library or favorite off-site resource** are off-topic for Stack Overflow as they tend to attract opinionated answers and spam. Instead, [describe the problem](#) and what has been done so far to solve it.

Closed 11 years ago.

[Improve this question](#)

Some of the most efficient engineers, developers and IT professionals I know usually carry around a common "toolkit" of useful programs, add-ins or utilities which help them for day-to-day debugging, developing or designing.

The question is:

What is in your utility toolkit.. What tools couldn't you live without?

debugging

Share

edited Jan 13, 2014 at 0:56

Improve this question

Follow

community wiki

3 revs, 2 users 100%

RobS

32 Answers

Sorted by:

Highest score (default)



1

2

Next



[Unix Utilities for Windows](#)

14

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:33

Follow



[Vinko Vrsalovic](#)

340k ● 55 ● 340 ● 373



What's your preference for Cygwin? Good/bad/Other?

– [RobS](#) Oct 16, 2008 at 12:56

A lot less intrusive, easier to carry around. On my machines I install cygwin. Another good one is Strawberry Perl

– [Vinko Vrsalovic](#) Oct 16, 2008 at 15:55

that link doesn't work for me... – [Mitch Wheat](#) Nov 24, 2008 at 11:09

downforeveryoneorjustme.com/unxutils.sourceforge.net

– [Vinko Vrsalovic](#) Nov 24, 2008 at 17:41



[Ack](#)

7



Its like grep, but better, faster, and does more what you want to generally do with large source collections. Written in Perl, and does complete PCRE because of this.

Recursive traversal is default, and it intelligently skips files that are unlikely to match using file-type identification to short cut.



(This means it automatically avoids traversing `.svn/.hg/.git` directories and thus gives massive speedups)

```
ack "function\s+foo\s*\(" --php
# find the definition of "foo" in all php files
# decendant of the current directory
```

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 8:00

Follow



[Kent Fredric](#)

57.3k ● 14 ● 111 ● 151

They should have called it grep++. – [Chris Lutz](#) Apr 28, 2009 at 4:07

then it would be greq ;) – [Kent Fredric](#) Dec 4, 2009 at 11:00



Total Commander (GREP, FTP, ZIP, it's all here...I'm not even starting on this one)

6

Notepad++



WinMerge



Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 7:36



Follow



Maltrap

2,620 ● 2 ● 33 ● 32



4



Python. Seriously. I use it for a lot of small stuff. I also like to use the command line module for creating easy little project specific "shells" that I drop in frequently used queries etc. (show all tables in the projects db, search for stored procedures etc. - yeah, doing a lot of t-sql lately...)



I tend to accompany big c#/t-sql projects with a little python script that extends the `cmd.Cmd` class to give me a small collection of helpful queries etc. that I can use to poke around in the database.



Also, I often use python to modify input data (often csv files, but any junk will do) into insert statements etc. Or do plausibility tests on that data.

Share Improve this answer

edited Apr 27, 2009 at 7:41

Follow

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 7:20



Daren Thomas

70.2k ● 42 ● 155 ● 205



Currently on my thumbdrive (not ALL software):

2



- Notepad++

- .NET Reflector

- **develop (incase I need a quick IDE setup on a different computer)**

- C# Default Keybindings pdf
- Math tables pdf
- Boo Primer pdf
- MSDN C# & VB Example projects

Share Improve this answer

Follow

edited Jun 20, 2020 at 9:12



Community Bot

1 • 1

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:35



Inisheer

20.8k • 9 • 54 • 83

+1 for .net reflector - I almost don't use the MSDN documentation anymore because it's so much faster to find the answer using the reflector. – [jean](#) Apr 28, 2009 at 3:40



2

My Utility toolkit would have: 1.) Hex Editor - XVI32, or any other 2.) Beyond Compare - Comparison of files 3.) Cygwin shell installable complete with perl, gcc,gprof,gcov,gdb and related tools,bash,vim, development/debugging tools 4.) A model makefile for



*nix platform 5.) Winzip utility 6.) Source insight or any other good code browsing tool 7.) Ghostscript and GSView 8.) PDF reader 9.) Good quick antivirus tool/exe



-AD

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:35

Follow



[goldenmean](#)

18.9k ● 57 ● 157 ● 216



Currently in Thumbdrive\Tools.

2

"Edit Plus 3" - lightweight editor that I've been using for ages.



"F# - 1.9.6.2" - great for when I need to throw something together since it's usable without an IDE, also a great language for many tasks.



"ildasm"

"Sysinternal Procmon" - great for debugging and getting a feel for what the machine is really doing.

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:44

Follow



[Torbjörn Gyllebring](#)

18.2k ● 2 ● 31 ● 22

so is c# for that matter. csc compiler is supplied with .net install. – [benPearce](#) Nov 20, 2008 at 22:01



2



I have the following tools on my USB thumb drive:

- [SysInternals Suite](#) All their great troubleshooting tools in one download, in case I might need a tool that I didn't download before
- WireShark setup
- VNC binaries (so I can run the viewer directly from USB) and setup
- A couple of [Portable Apps](#):
 - Notepad++ Portable
 - Putty Portable
 - FileZilla Portable
 - 7-zip Portable
 - Sumatra PDF Portable
 - WinMerge Portable

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 8:06

Follow



Otherside

2,845 ● 22 ● 21



2



I use/carry with me:

- .Net Reflector
- The SysInternals Suite (particularly Process Explorer, Debug View etc)



- Exescope
- Orca (Windows Installer)
- Depends
- Spy++ OleView
- Resourcer
- Ethereal
- IE Dev toolbar
- Depends .Net
- DocView
- LDP (For LDAP)

Just to name a few

Share Improve this answer

answered [Apr 23, 2009 at 7:21](#)

Follow

community wiki
[Count Duckula](#)

+1 for Ethereal and the SysInternals – [dance2die](#) Apr 28, 2009 at 3:12



2

I do a full install of cygwin. It gives me 95% of the stuff I need and hard drive space is cheep. It's a lot easier to install everything then get emacs, gcc, gdb, perl, utilities such as grep and awk, not to mention the servers it



comes with like Apache and MySQL if you want to try something out quick.



Share Improve this answer

answered [Apr 28, 2009 at 3:33](#)

Follow

community wiki

[Jared](#)



1



[grep](#) gives you the biggest bang for the buck. You can use it to search on any type code and many forms of data. It is fast, and very powerful. In code it can locate what you're looking for in variables and function names, but also in comments. You can also pipe results into it, and can thus enhance the utility of many tools available on site.

With some clever hints you can easily make grep search for a specific type of an identifier. For instance, `"^function_name"` will often find in C code a function's definition, because these start with the name of the function at the beginning of the line. If a search pattern gives you too many false matches, you can filter those out, by piping the result through `grep -v`.

Many years ago I was stranded debugging COBOL programs on a 1970s-era Perkin Elmer machine running OS/32. The machine lacked programming tools, but had an ancient C compiler (so old, it would accept `=+` as the original form of the `+=` operator). I ended up writing a

rudimentary grep program, which immensely improved my productivity.

Share Improve this answer

edited Oct 6, 2008 at 6:47

Follow

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:41



Diomidis Spinellis

19.3k ● 6 ● 66 ● 85



1



- Notepad ++
- FF + Firebug
- JQuery + bunch of plugins
- DBManager
- Cygwin for error tracking
- Google for help
- Docs in CHM & Cheatsheets

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 7:09

Follow



Komang

5,064 ● 4 ● 32 ● 33



1



I always seem to have a bootable Linux Distro on me in SOME form or other. Whether it be the bootable Pen Drive I keep attached to my Keys, or the multitude of LiveCDs I have for various "diagnostics" - I find that if I am in a situation, generally, where I'd need some sort of tools... a reboot into a Live environment provides me with near enough everything I need, and more

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 9:24

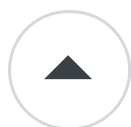
Follow



Mez

24.9k ● 14 ● 74 ● 93

I have a bootable linux pen drive on my keys as well!
– [Carson Myers](#) Sep 9, 2009 at 23:46



1



- [PE Explorer](#)
- FAR Manager (great file manager especially when working with lots of ftp sites)
- FlexHex
- Ida
- OllyDbg

Share Improve this answer

answered Jan 28, 2009 at 14:02

Follow



Wylder

287 ● 2 ● 3



1



Emacs. It's my "does list of things" tool, helpful with quick calculations, with mangling configuration files (I work as a network engineer, there is an awful lot of configuration to be done, lots of it bordering on trivial to generate with either small snippets of code or careful use of keyboard macros).

Share Improve this answer

answered Jan 28, 2009 at 14:29

Follow



Vatine

21.2k ● 4 ● 56 ● 70



1



Here's the tools I use to make Sharepoint solutions:

- Visual Studio Team Suite 2008
- VSTS Database Edition GDR
- Sandcastle
- DocProject for Sandcastle
- .net Reflector
- GhostDoc
- CSS Vista
- Sharepoint Inspector
- Sharepoint Explorer
- EditPadPro
- CodeSmith 2.6 Freeware (with my own .net 3.5 SP1 gui)
- Indigo Rose MSI Factory

- Wix
- Nmap
- Wireshark
- Fiddler
- Adobe Photoshop CS3
- Espresso (Regex tool)
- VMRCPlus
- Powershell 2 CTP
- Quest PowerGui for Powershell
- IIS Resource Kit
- HyperV

Share Improve this answer

answered [Apr 14, 2009 at 5:51](#)

Follow

community wiki
[Matt Lynch](#)



Tools I use because you do not have to install, just drop on system and use:

1



- [Agent Ransack](#)
- [7-zip](#)
- [PSPad](#)





- [Robocopy](#) : Need to extract from Windows 2003 resource kit (just grab the .exe)

Share Improve this answer

answered Apr 16, 2009 at 23:44

Follow

community wiki
[Walinmichi](#)

Agent Ransack is the best file search tool I've ever found.
– [Toby Allen](#) Feb 5, 2011 at 10:22



Fast image viewer that has been around for a long time and proven to work.

1

[IrfanView](#)



Share Improve this answer

answered Apr 28, 2009 at 3:14



Follow



community wiki
[dance2die](#)



ide: visual studio / netbeans (zip file!, almost portable)

1

editor: notepad++ (portable) with monaco font



file comparison: winmerge (portable)

source control: subversion, tortoise



ticket control: redmine



file manager: free commander (portable)

explorer: IE, FF (portable), chrome (portable), iron (chromium without google crap, also portable), qtweb, arora,

FF plugins: firebug, web developer, xmarks

imclient: pidgin

mail client: gmail

download manager: free download manager (portable)

sites: STACKOVERFLOW!!!, gotapi... and google, all the time...

miscellaneous: launchy (can't live without it!)

virtualization: virtual box (I have a machine image for every environment)

office: openoffice (portable)

lamp stack: xampp (portable!)

disk usage: windirstat (portable), scanner (portable)

pdf viewer: foxit (portable), sumatrapdf (portable)

uncompressor: 7-zip portable

M\$ sql comparison tool: sql delta

M\$ sql management: visual studio sql manager

mysql

mysql management: phpmyadmin, manager provided with mysql

uninstaller utility: revo unistaller (portable)

registry cleaner: ccleaner (portable)

ftp: filezilla (portable)

as you may have noticed, I have a special predilection for portable applications...

Share Improve this answer

answered [Jun 20, 2009 at 23:57](#)

Follow

community wiki
[opensas](#)



1

1. gVim
2. VS2010 Express
3. Firefox + Firebug



Share Improve this answer

answered [May 25, 2010 at 6:18](#)



Follow



community wiki
[kev](#)



[System Rescue CD](#)

0

- A collection of very useful utilities on a Live CD



Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:30

Follow



[Vinko Vrsalovic](#)

340k ● 55 ● 340 ● 373



There are two tools I simply can't work without

0

1. PowerShell
2. GVim (or really any vim style program)



These tools are so heavily ingrained into my daily routine and greatly increase my productivity.



Share Improve this answer

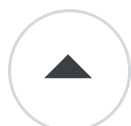
answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:31

Follow



[JaredPar](#)

753k ● 151 ● 1.3k ● 1.5k



Since I'm often working on different workstations, I've got into the habit of tagging the stuff that I install on delicious:

0

<http://delicious.com/DavidSchmitt/stdsw>



answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:40



Share Improve this answer



Follow



David Schmitt

59.3k ● 26 ● 123 ● 165



wc.exe (from <http://unxutils.sourceforge.net/>) so handy.

0

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 6:42

Follow



s d

2,706 ● 5 ● 26 ● 43



WinRAR and puTTY. That is all I need (i'm assuming internet doesn't count).

0

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 7:22

Follow



jeremy

4,651 ● 4 ● 26 ● 29



- .Net Reflector
- Powershell
- Stackoverflow.Com

0



Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 7:57

Follow



GvS





52.5k ● 16 ● 103 ● 139



0



I like to program in Python so I have created a portable Python programming environment on a thumbdrive.

- [Portable Python 1.0](#)
- [SPE Python editor](#)
- wxPython in Action ebook
- Python How to Program ebook
- Several Python ebooks from O'Reilly
- Various tutorials for Python tools I don't use often

Share Improve this answer

answered Oct 6, 2008 at 8:13

Follow



[crystalattice](#)

5,089 ● 12 ● 43 ● 57



0



Development Tools

- Subversion
- Tortoise SVN

Useful tools/utls

- Virtual Cd Control Tool
- Linq Pad
- Reflector
- Subversion Commit Monitor

- BGInfo
- SourceGear Diff Merge
- Unlocker
- MWSnap
- Paint.NET
- WinRar

FireFox Add Ons

- Firebug
- ColorZilla

Visual Studio Add Ins

- GhostDoc

Share Improve this answer

answered Apr 24, 2009 at 0:54

Follow

community wiki
[Paul Rowland](#)



0

The utility toolkit or the Tools List that every developer **should** have described in the following link from Scott Hanselman:



[Scott Hanselman's Ultimate Developer and Power Users Tool List for Windows](#)





Share Improve this answer

edited Jun 17, 2021 at 7:13

Follow

community wiki

3 revs, 2 users 67%

egyamado



I use [Espresso](#) (I got it with the [MacHeist](#) bundle!), and Firebug for coding. I use Photoshop if I need any images.

0

I manage my projects with [The Hit List](#).



Share Improve this answer

edited Dec 12, 2022 at 8:01



Follow



community wiki

2 revs, 2 users 80%

Bravery Onions

1

2

Next