How to properly use an IF and GOTO statement

Asked 11 years ago   Modified 11 years ago   Viewed 25k times

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I have zero experience with writing batch files but my goal does not seem difficult. I'm trying to write a small script that will prompt a user to enter an ID number and then search a directory of .jpgs and copy any pictures containing the ID number to a separate directory. The .jpgs are names xxxxxx_zzz.jpg where xxxxxx is the ID number up to 6 digits and zzz is the sequence number. For example, one ID can have many pictures: 123456_001.jpg, 123456_002.jpg, 123456_003.jpg, etc.

I've played with several `IF` and `GOTO` commands, but I seem to be diverging from my goal. I know the two `IF` statements I currently am using below are garbage, but I left them in the syntax to convey the direction I think I should be moving in.

I can't get the `IF` statements to use the `GOTO` commands. I also don't think I fully understand how labels are supposed to work.

```
    @ECHO OFF
    CLS
:START
    DEL /q C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp\*.*
:GETINPUT
    set /p propkey=Enter the Property Key of
```

```
pictures to retrieve.:
    IF EXIST
C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\photos\*%propkey%_???.jpg
GOTO Success
    IF "%propkey%"=="" ECHO No Property Key was
entered. GOTO START
:Success
    ECHO Pictures from Property Key %propkey% will
now be moved to the Temp folder on the Desktop. &&
PAUSE
    COPY
"C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\photos\*%propkey%*.jpg"
"C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp\"
    START C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp\
:END
```

batch-file   **if-statement**   **goto**

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@npocmaka IF EXIST does indeed support wildcards for file names. – Tony Dec 11, 2013 at 23:32

3 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default) ⇕

Try this:

4

```
:Start
    @echo off
    cls
    :: store source folder
    set _sd=C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\photos
    :: store target folder
    set _td=C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp
:CheckFolders
    if not exist %_sd% echo Source folder not
found.&goto End
    if not exist %_td% echo Target folder not
found.&goto End
    :: wipe target folder
    del /q %_td%\*.*
:GetKey
    set /p _key=Enter the property key:
    if '%_key'=='' echo No property key entered.
Please retry.&goto GetKey
    if not exist "%_sd%\*%_key%*.jpg" echo No
photos matched the key.&goto End
    echo Copying pictures to %_td%...
    copy "%_sd%\*%_key%*.jpg" "%_td%"
:OpenFolder
    start "%windir%\explorer.exe" "%_td%"
:End
```

A label is a way to arbitrarily designate a line in a batch file. It is used by the `GOTO` command to change the usual top-to-bottom progression of command execution, specifying which line should be processed next. As you probably figured out, using `IF` commands in unison with `GOTO` allows for conditional processing, such as when values are met or errors are encountered.

Another use of a label could be for documentation or clarity. In my example above, "CheckFolders" isn't used by a `GOTO`, but it lets the programmer hint at what that section of code does.

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answered Dec 11, 2013 at 23:28

Tony
2,734 ● 2 ● 36 ● 51

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Although wild-cards do works in `if exist` , there are certain combinations that may fail. Also, you must enclose the name in quotes if the path may contain spaces. Try:

```
IF EXIST
"C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\photos\*%propkey%_*.jpg"
GOTO Success

IF "%propkey%"=="" ECHO No Property Key was
entered. & GOTO START
```

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answered Dec 11, 2013 at 23:32

Aacini
67k ● 12 ● 73 ● 111

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Your code was very close. It needed a `goto :eof` to stop it falling through to the main routine. Change `&&` to `&` and an `&` after the echo statement was missing. I changed the `goto start` to the next label, to avoid a harmless error message.
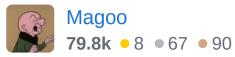
```
    @ECHO OFF
    CLS
:START
    DEL /q C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp\*.*
:GETINPUT
    set /p propkey=Enter the Property Key of
pictures to retrieve.:
    IF EXIST
"C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\photos\*%propkey%_???.jpg"
GOTO Success
    IF "%propkey%"=="" ECHO No Property Key was
entered. & GOTO GETINPUT
    goto :EOF
:Success
    ECHO Pictures from Property Key %propkey% will
now be moved to the Temp folder on the Desktop. &
PAUSE
    COPY
"C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\photos\*%propkey%*.jpg"
"C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp\"
    start "" "C:\Users\ADMIN\Desktop\temp"
:END
```

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