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# replace

Article • 02/03/2023 • 8 contributors

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Replace existing files in a directory. If used with the `/a` option, this command adds new files to a directory instead of replacing existing files.

## Syntax

```
replace [<drive1>:][<path1><filename> [<drive2>:][<path2>]
replace [<drive1>:][<path1><filename> [<drive2>:][<path2>]
```

## Parameters

 Expand table

Parameter	Description
<code>[&lt;drive1&gt;:]</code> <code>[&lt;path1&gt;]</code> <code>&lt;filename&gt;</code>	Specifies the location and name of the source file or set of files. The <i>filename</i> option is required, and can include wildcard characters (* and ?).
<code>[&lt;drive2&gt;:]</code> <code>[&lt;path2&gt;]</code>	Specifies the location of the destination file. You can't specify a file name for files you replace. If you don't specify a drive or path, this command uses the current drive and directory as the destination.
<code>/a</code>	Adds new files to the destination directory instead of replacing existing files. You can't use this command-line option with the <code>/s</code> or <code>/u</code> command-line option.
<code>/p</code>	Prompts you for confirmation before replacing a destination file or adding a source file.
<code>/r</code>	Replaces Read-only and unprotected files. If you attempt to replace a Read-only file, but you don't specify <code>/r</code> , an error results and stops the replacement operation.
<code>/w</code>	Waits for you to insert a disk before the search for source files begins. If you don't specify <code>/w</code> , this command begins replacing or adding files immediately after you press ENTER.
<code>/s</code>	Searches all subdirectories in the destination directory and replaces matching files. You can't use <code>/s</code> with the <code>/a</code> command-line option. The command doesn't search subdirectories that are specified in <i>Path1</i> .
<code>/u</code>	Replaces only those files on the destination directory that are older than those in the source directory. You can't use <code>/u</code> with the <code>/a</code> command-line option.

/?

Displays help at the command prompt.

## Remarks

- As this command adds or replaces files, the file names appear on the screen. After this command is done, a summary line is displayed in one of the following formats:

```
nnn files added
nnn files replaced
no file added
no file replaced
```

- If you're using floppy disks and you need to switch disks while running this command, you can specify the **/w** command-line option so that this command waits for you to switch the disks.
- You can't use this command to update hidden files or system files.
- The following table shows each exit code and a brief description of its meaning:

 Expand table

Exit code	Description
0	This command successfully replaced or added the files.
1	This command encountered an incorrect version of MS-DOS.
2	This command couldn't find the source files.
3	This command couldn't find the source or destination path.
5	The user doesn't have access to the files that you want to replace.

8	There is insufficient system memory to carry out the command.
11	The user used the wrong syntax on the command line.

#### Note

You can use the `ERRORLEVEL` parameter on the `if` command line in a batch program to process exit codes that are returned by this command.

## Examples

To update all the versions of a file named *Phones.cli* (which appear in multiple directories on drive C:), with the latest version of the *Phones.cli* file from a floppy disk in drive A:, type:

```
replace a:\phones.cli c:\ /s
```

## Related links

- [Command-Line Syntax Key](#)

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