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## Wildcards

The \* wildcard will match any sequence of characters  
(including NULL characters)

The ? wildcard will match a single character  
(or a NULL at the end of a filename)

A few quirks affect the operation of wildcards which are best illustrated by example:

To match the filename BAR.TXT any of the following patterns will match

?AR.TXT  
??R.TXT  
B?R.??  
BA?.TXT  
BA??.TXT

However the following will fail to match with BAR.TXT

??AR.TXT  
?BAR.TXT  
B??AR.TXT

The commands COPY and REN accept two sets of wildcards, there are some subtle differences between how these are treated, see the [REN](#) page for details.

## Wildcards will match both Short and Long filename

The command DIR /X will reveal short filenames - where many similar names exist in the same folder the short file name (SFN) may not be an obvious contraction of the long name. e.g.

```
DIR /X

2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIABLO~1 diablo1640
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIABLO~2 diablo1641
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIABLO~3 diablo1642
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIABLO~4 diablo1643
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIE359~1 diablo1644
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIC49C~1 diablo1648
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIF2E9~1 diablo1740
2002-05-12 01:12 96 DIE2EF~1 diablo1649
```

As you can see, the first four short filenames follow the usual numeric tails (~1, ~2, ~3, ~4).

Then, from fifth and more files with similar beginning, the fshort names have four hex digits right in the middle.

Wildcards are supported by the following commands:

[ATTRIB](#), [CACLS](#), [COPY](#), [DEL](#), [DIR](#), [EXPAND](#), [EXTRACT](#), [FOR](#), [FORFILES](#), [FTP](#), [MOVE](#), [MUNGE](#), [MV](#), [NET](#) (\*=Any Drive), [PERMS](#), [PRINT](#), [QGREP](#), [REN](#), [ROBOCOPY](#), [ROUTE](#), [TYPE](#), [WHERE](#), [XCACLS](#), [XCOPY](#)

*"We usually see only the things we are looking for, so much that we sometimes see them where they are not" ~ Eric Hoffer*

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[Long and short filename issues](#)



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