

## Triaging modern Android devices (aka android\_triage bash script)

By Mattia Epifani - March 30, 2021

When dealing with mobile devices, you need to follow a procedure that includes various stages from identification to reporting. One of the key-point in this process is the **acquisition**, where we extract a copy of the data stored in the mobile device.

While evaluating your acquisition method, you should always consider the old but gold rule of the **order of volatility** (RFC 3227 - "*When collecting evidence you should proceed from the volatile to the less volatile*").

Our general goal is to obtain a **physical dump** of the internal memory, from the very first to the very last bit. On most modern smartphone devices, where file-based encryption (FBE) is in use, a **full file system** is typically our "best evidence".

These extraction methods often rely on vulnerabilities and exploits (either at the hardware or the software level) developed to overcome device security. We use various tools and techniques and sometimes also a physical approach.

In some cases, especially for recent chipsets or operating system versions, there's no public solution to obtain a physical or a full file system dump. In those cases, we have to rely on (and we are limited to) communication options provided by the device.

On Android devices, in particular, we mostly rely on:

1. ADB (Android Debug Bridge)
2. MTP (Media Transfer Protocol)
3. Manufacturer backup tools like Samsung SmartSwitch and Huawei HiSuite

On the ADB side, most of the commercial tools use **four methods**:

1. **ADB Backup**: the tool executes the "**adb backup**" command, with some possible variations among the different tools. This typically doesn't include native and third-party apps data: every single app can specify in the AndroidManifest file (**android:allowBackup** parameter) if its data should be included or not in an ADB

in reading call log and SMS only to the default handler: this required some changes in the flow used by most forensics tools

3. **ADB Screenshot:** the tool leverages the ADB feature that allows taking a screenshot of the device. In this way, also third-party apps can be "screenshotted" and then processed in the tool, by using some image analysis techniques, to parse the content and make it readable and searchable
4. **APK Downgrade:** the tool uninstalls the actual version of a third-party package (app) by preserving user data, and installs a previous version of the same package where the android:allowBackup parameter is set to "true". The tool creates an ADB Backup that includes the specific app and then reinstalls the actual app version.

The Android Debug Bridge is, in reality, more powerful than this, as it allows us to obtain a shell without root privileges. In this shell you can **run commands** (both Linux-native and Android-specific) and **pull files and folders from the device** (where root privileges are not required).

Over the years, various opensource tools and scripts leveraging ADB were published. Among the others, I strongly suggest you to take a look at:

- Andriller
- Android Live Info
- Foroboto
- ADB Export

In this complex scenario, it's difficult to answer the question:

**Am I getting the "best evidence" from this mobile device with my tools?**

**I would say, no.**

Just as a simple example, by using the native Android command "**dumpsys usagestats**" you can obtain information about apps usage, including deleted ones (same concept of the `/usagestats/` folder in a full file system acquisition).

**None of the four methods used by forensic tools can provide you this information.**

Inspired by previous works and after reading a lot of literature on the topic (including the new Android Internals book), I decided to write a **simple bash script, called**

android\_triage that leverages ADB at its maximum level.

[https://github.com/RealityNet/android\\_triage](https://github.com/RealityNet/android_triage)

The script was developed with the precious support of my dear friend Giovanni Rattarto, the Tsurugi Project founder. It was tested on Linux and Mac OS X and it only has two requirements: the ADB executable for the specific platform and the dialog command (instructions for Mac OS X available [here](#)).

#### DISCLAIMERS:

- This script is **only for testing purposes**
- It **requires an unlocked device** (not protected with a passcode or with known passcode)
- **ADB must be active on the device** and the device must be paired with the host
- The script **doesn't install or uninstall any APK** and so it's not able to extract, for example, Call Logs, SMS messages, Third-party apps data, and so on


Please test it and provide feedbacks, as we want to improve the script over the time by adding commands and adjusting them based on various Android manufacturers and OS versions.

Once downloaded, you need to make the script executable (**chmod +x android\_triage.sh**) and then you need to connect the device.

Before executing the script, you need to **allow ADB communication between the mobile device and your host by pairing them**.

There are various ways to do this: probably the easiest one is to execute **adb reconnect**.

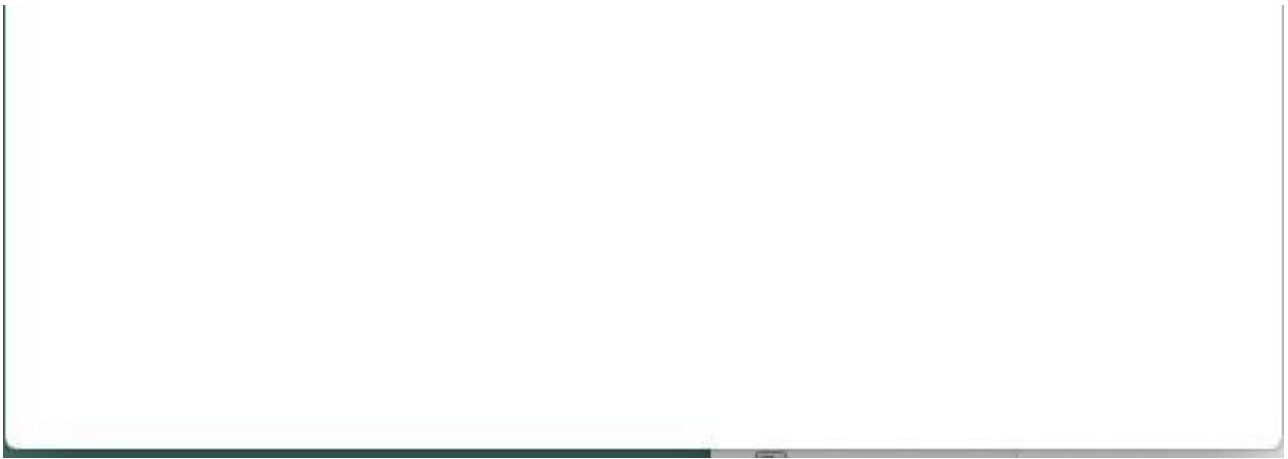
You can always check the pairing status by executing the **adb devices** command: when you see the "**device**" message, it means that the pairing was successful.

A screenshot of a macOS terminal window titled "AndroidTriage — -bash — 80x24". The terminal shows the following commands and output:

```
MacBook-Air-di-RNMAC:AndroidTriage rnmac$ ./adb reconnect
reconnecting 320060ad46f6b567 [unauthorized]

MacBook-Air-di-RNMAC:AndroidTriage rnmac$ ./adb devices
List of devices attached
320060ad46f6b567      device

MacBook-Air-di-RNMAC:AndroidTriage rnmac$
```



Once the device is properly connected, you can execute the script.

```
MacBook-Air:Downloads mattiaepifani$ chmod +x android_triage.sh  
MacBook-Air:Downloads mattiaepifani$ ./android_triage.sh
```

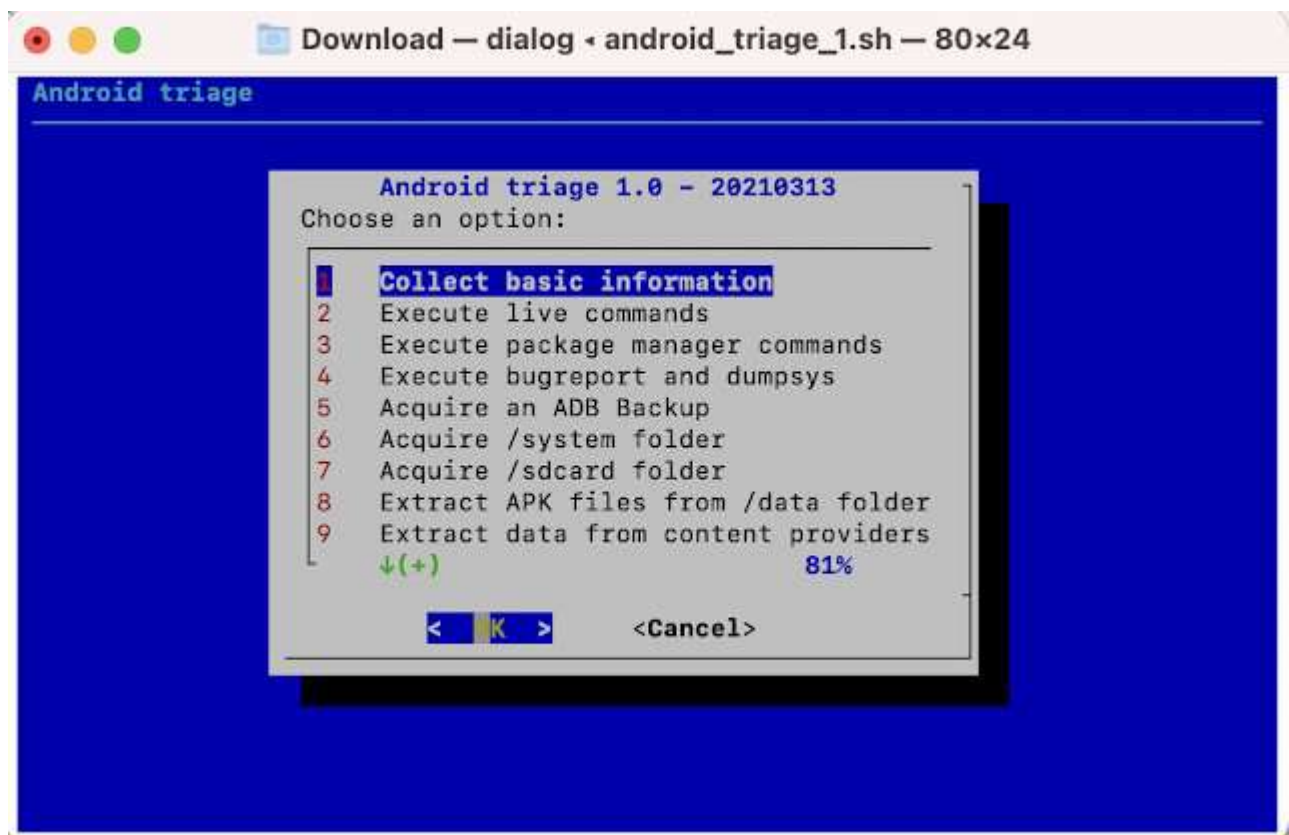
If the ADB command is not found in the path or in the script folder, the script will prompt the error message shown in figure.



If the device is not properly connected or paired, the script will prompt the error message shown in figure.



### Option 1 - Collect Basic Information



This option collects **basic information about the device** by executing the following commands:

- *adb shell getprop*
- *adb shell settings list system*
- *adb shell settings list secure*
- *adb shell settings list global*

It also generates the "**device\_info.txt**" file, containing relevant information about the device:

- Device Manufacturer (*adb shell getprop ro.product.manufacturer*)
- Device Product (*adb shell getprop ro.product.model*)
- Android ID (*adb shell settings get secure android\_id*)
- Android Serial Number (*adb shell getprop ril.serialnumber*)
- Product Code (*adb shell getprop ro.product.code*)
- Product Device (*adb shell getprop ro.product.device*)
- Product Name (*adb shell getprop ro.product.name*)
- Chipname (*adb shell getprop ro.chipname*)
- Android Version (*adb shell getprop ro.build.version.release*)
- Android Fingerprint (*adb shell getprop ro.build.fingerprint*)
- Build date (*adb shell getprop ro.build.date*)
- Build ID (*adb shell ro.build.id*)
- Bootloader Version (*adb shell ro.boot.bootloader*)
- Security Patch (*adb shell ro.build.version.security\_patch*)
- Bluetooth Address (*adb shell settings get secure bluetooth\_address*)
- Bluetooth Name (*adb shell settings get secure bluetooth\_name*)
- Timezone (*adb shell getprop persist.sys.timezone*)
- USB Configuration (*adb shell getprop persist.sys.usb.config*)
- Storage Size (*adb shell getprop storage.mmc.size*)
- Notification Sound (*adb shell getprop ro.config.notification\_sound*)
- Alarm Alert (*adb shell getprop ro.config.alarm\_alert*)
- Ringtone (*adb shell getprop ro.config.ringtone*)
- Media Sound (*adb shell getprop rro.config.media\_sound*)
- Device Time (*adb shell date*)

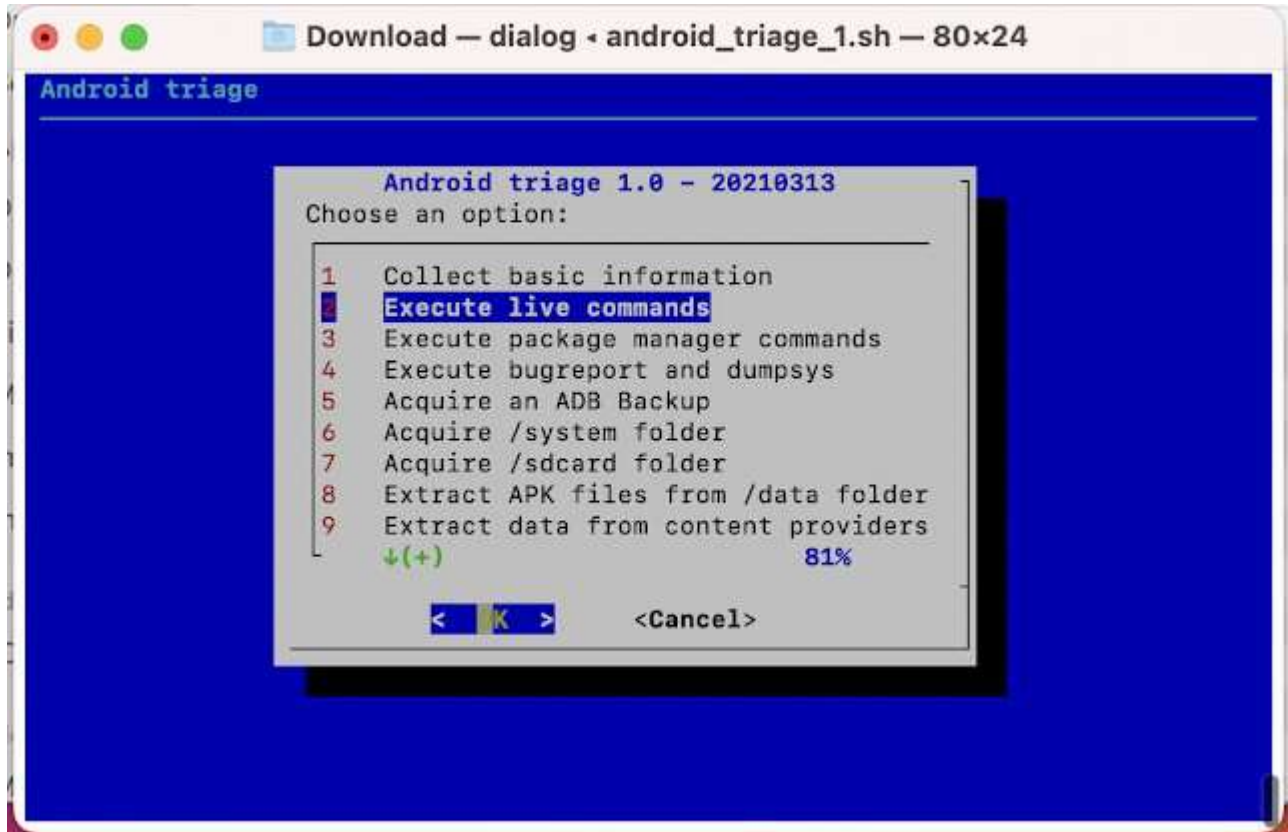
The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path):

"\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H\_%M\_%S"}\_info"



settings\_secure.txt  
settings\_system.txt

## Option 2 - Execute Live Commands



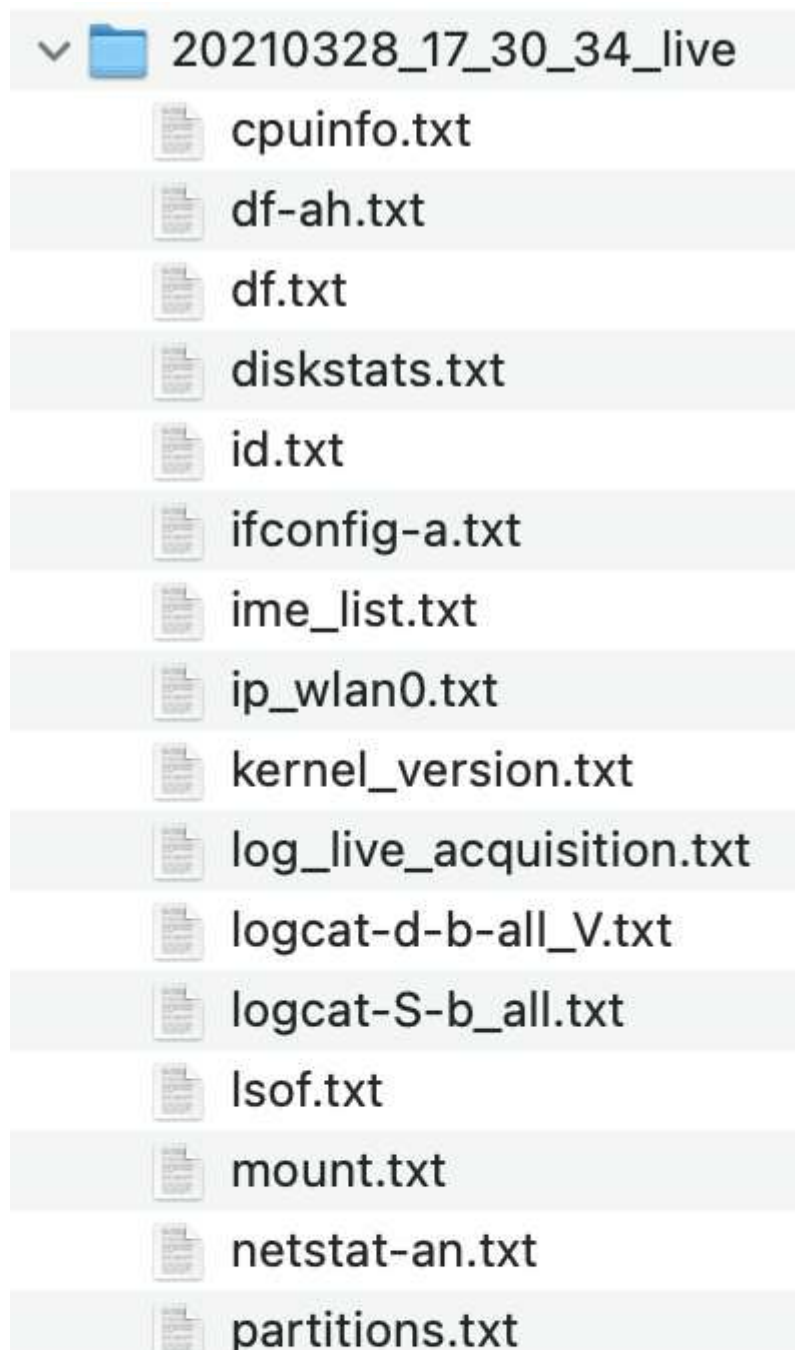
This option executes various Linux commands.

- *adb shell id*
- *adb shell uname -a*
- *adb shell cat /proc/version*
- *adb shell uptime*
- *adb shell printenv*
- *adb shell cat /proc/partitions*
- *adb shell cat /proc/cpuinfo*
- *adb shell cat /proc/diskstats*
- *adb shell df*
- *adb shell df -ah*
- *adb shell mount*
- *adb shell ip address show wlan0*
- *adb shell ifconfig -a*
- *adb shell netstat -an*

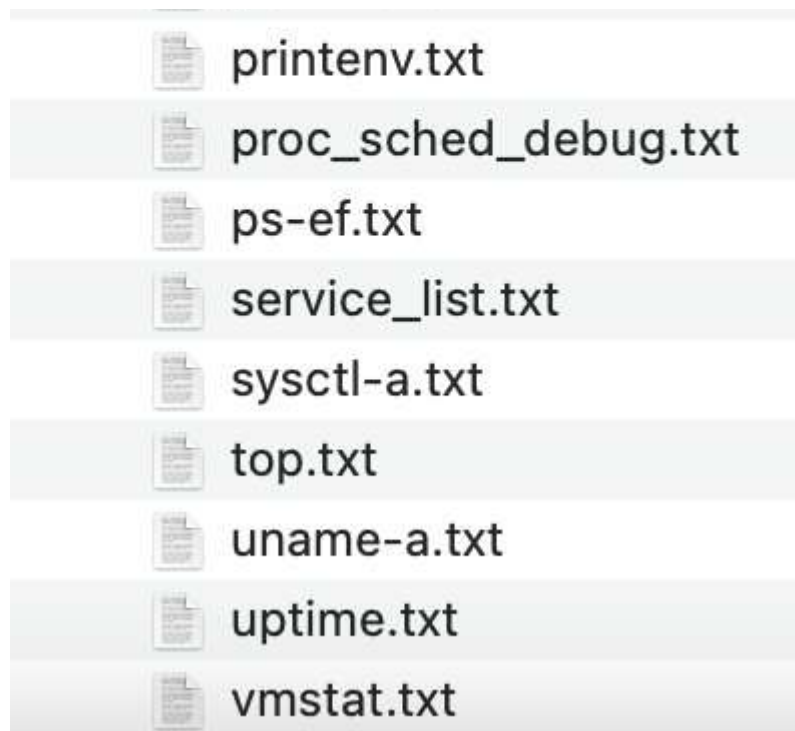


- *adb shell lsof*
- *adb shell ps -ef*
- *adb shell top -n 1*
- *adb shell cat /proc/sched\_debug*
- *adb shell vmstat*
- *adb shell sysctl -a*
- *adb shell ime list*
- *adb shell service list*
- *adb shell logcat -S -b all*
- *adb shell logcat -d -b all V:\**

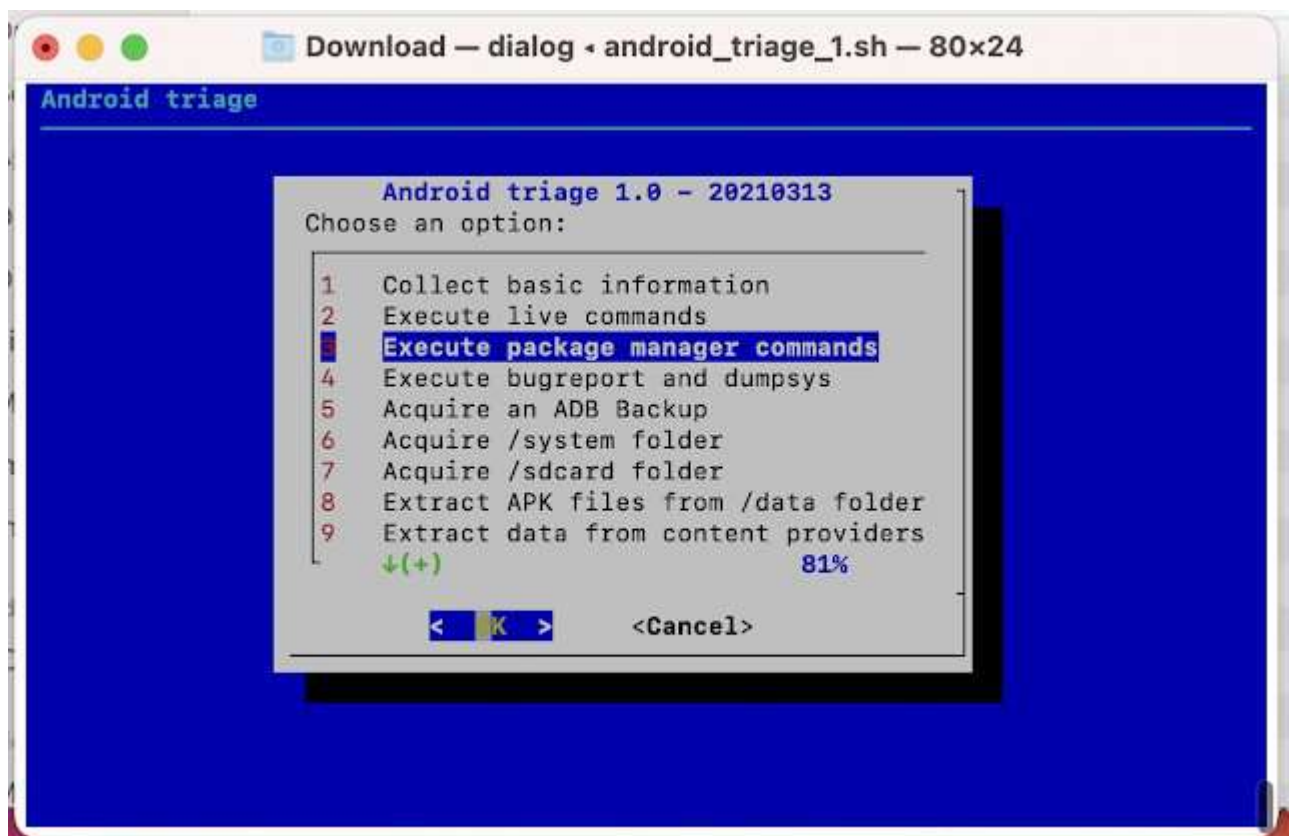
The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H\_%M\_%S"}\_live"







### Option 3 - Execute Package Manager commands

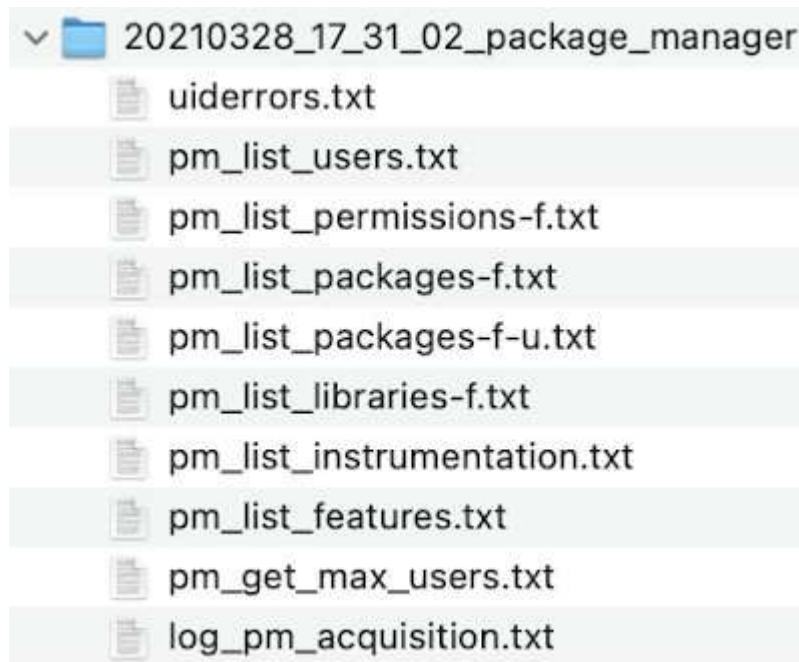


This option executes various Android Package Manager commands.

- *adb shell pm get-max-users*
- *adb shell pm list users*
- *adb shell pm list features*

- *adb shell pm list instrumentation*
- *adb shell pm list libraries -f*
- *adb shell pm list packages -f*
- *adb shell pm list packages -f -u*
- *adb shell pm list permissions -f*
- *adb shell cat /data/system/uiderrors.txt*

The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H%M%S"}\_package\_manager"



#### Option 4 - Execute Bugreport and Dumpsys



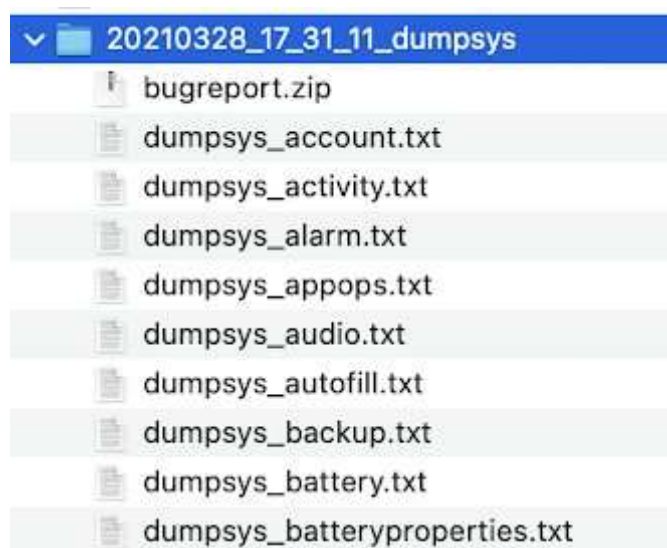


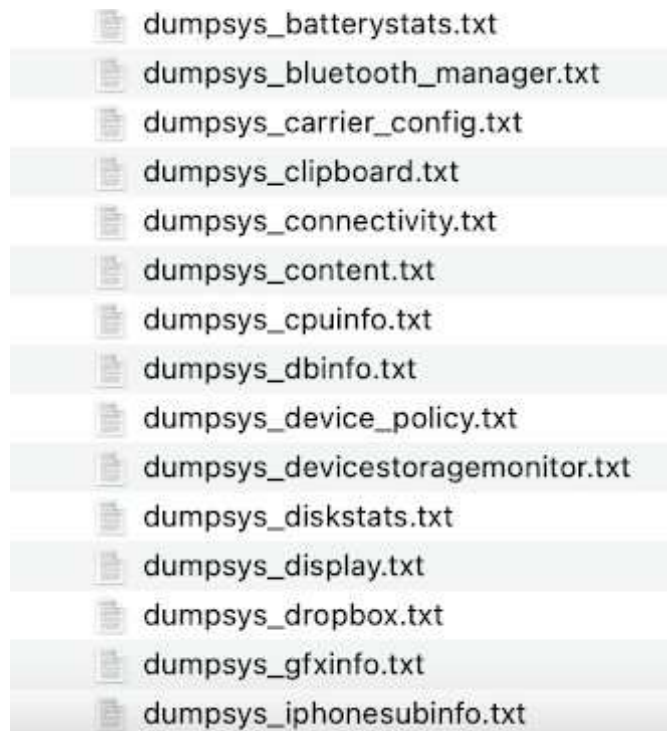
This option executes **Android Bugreport** and **Android Dumpsys** commands.

- *adb bugreport*
- *adb shell dumpsys*
- *adb shell dumpsys account*
- *adb shell dumpsys activity*
- *adb shell dumpsys alarm*
- *adb shell dumpsys appops*
- *adb shell dumpsys audio*
- *adb shell dumpsys autofill*
- *adb shell dumpsys backup*
- *adb shell dumpsys battery*
- *adb shell dumpsys batteryproperties*
- *adb shell dumpsys batterystats*
- *adb shell dumpsys bluetooth\_manager*
- *adb shell dumpsys carrier\_config*
- *adb shell dumpsys clipboard*
- *adb shell dumpsys connectivity*
- *adb shell dumpsys content*
- *adb shell dumpsys cpuinfo*
- *adb shell dumpsys dbinfo*
- *adb shell dumpsys device\_policy*
- *adb shell dumpsys devicestoragemonitor*
- *adb shell dumpsys diskstats*
- *adb shell dumpsys display*
- *adb shell dumpsys dropbox*
- *adb shell dumpsys gfxinfo*
- *adb shell dumpsys iphonesubinfo*
- *adb shell dumpsys jobscheduler*
- *adb shell dumpsys location*
- *adb shell dumpsys meminfo -a*
- *adb shell dumpsys mount*
- *adb shell dumpsys netpolicy*
- *adb shell dumpsys netstats*
- *adb shell dumpsys network\_management*
- *adb shell dumpsys network\_score*
- *adb shell dumpsys notification*

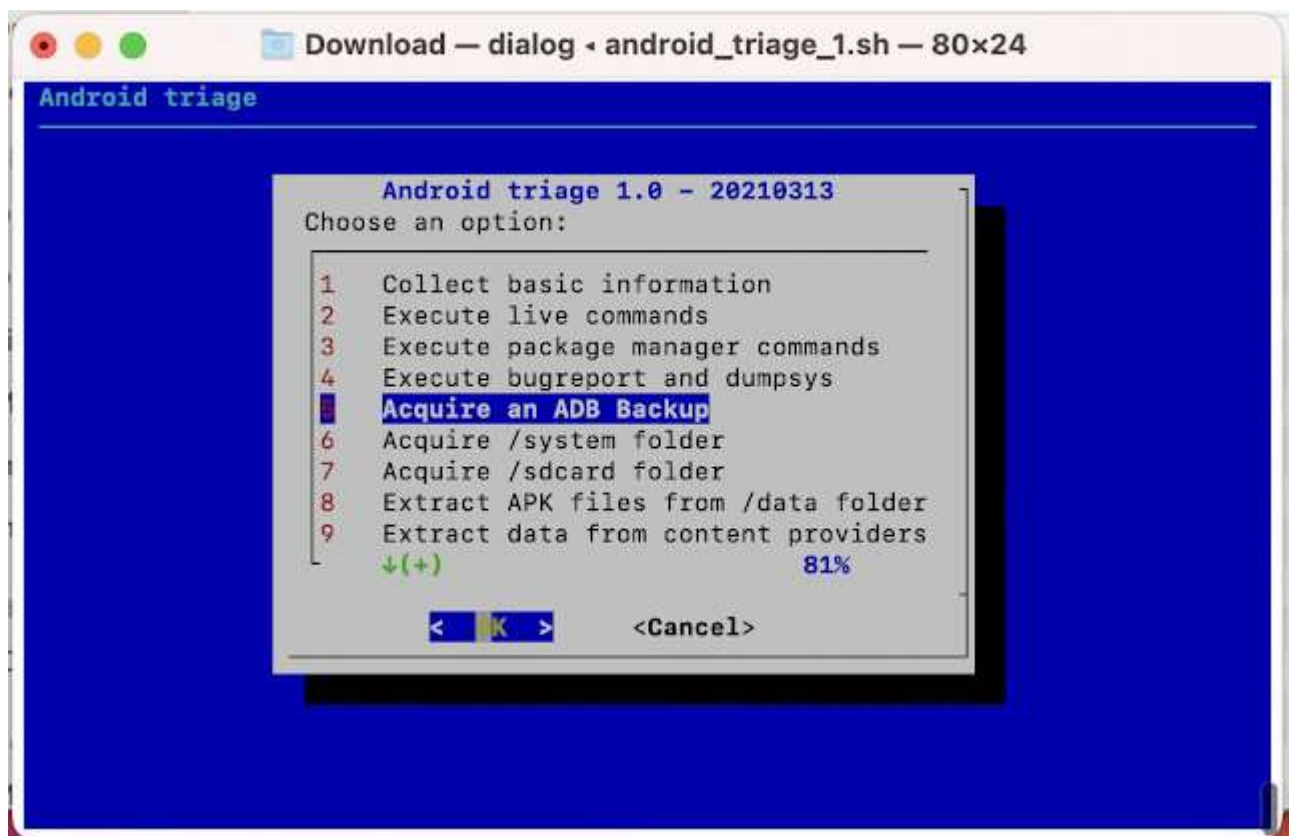
- *adb shell dumpsys package*
- *adb shell dumpsys password\_policy*
- *adb shell dumpsys permission*
- *adb shell dumpsys phone*
- *adb shell dumpsys power*
- *adb shell dumpsys procstats --full-details*
- *adb shell dumpsys restriction\_policy*
- *adb shell dumpsys sdhms*
- *adb shell dumpsys sec\_location*
- *adb shell dumpsys secims*
- *adb shell dumpsys search*
- *adb shell dumpsys sensorservice*
- *adb shell dumpsys settings*
- *adb shell dumpsys shortcut*
- *adb shell dumpsys stats*
- *adb shell dumpsys statusbar*
- *adb shell dumpsys storaged*
- *adb shell dumpsys telecom*
- *adb shell dumpsys usagestats*
- *adb shell dumpsys user*
- *adb shell dumpsys usb*
- *adb shell dumpsys vibrator*
- *adb shell dumpsys wallpaper*
- *adb shell dumpsys wifi*
- *adb shell dumpsys window*

The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H\_%M\_%S"}\_dumpsys".





#### Option 5 - Acquire an ADB Backup



This option **creates an ADB Backup** by executing the following command

***`adb backup -all -shared -system -apk -f "$BACKUP_DIR"/backup.ab`***

The command requires interaction with the device

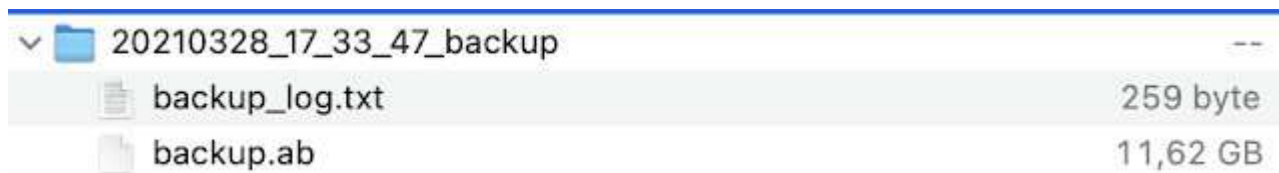




A terminal window titled "Download — adb < android\_triage\_1.sh — 80x24". The output shows the execution of the command `adb backup -all -shared -system -apk -f backup.ab`. It displays the start time "ADB Backup started at 20210328\_17\_33\_47" and a warning: "WARNING: adb backup is deprecated and may be removed in a future release. Now unlock your device and confirm the backup operation...".

```
[*]
[*]
[*] This option creates an Android Backup by using the command
[*] adb backup -all -shared -system -apk -f backup.ab
[*]
[*]
[*] ADB Backup started at 20210328_17_33_47
[*]
[*]
[*] Executing 'adb backup -all -shared -system -apk -f backup.ab'
WARNING: adb backup is deprecated and may be removed in a future release
Now unlock your device and confirm the backup operation...
█
```

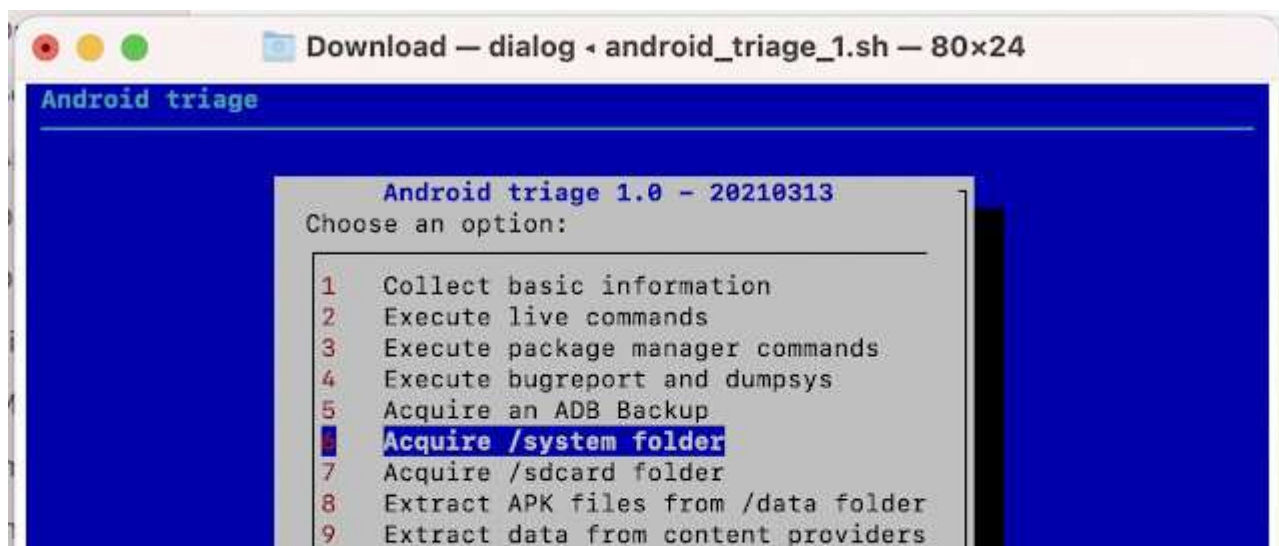
The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): `"${ANDROID_ID}/${date +"%Y%m%d_%H_%M_%S"}_backup"`

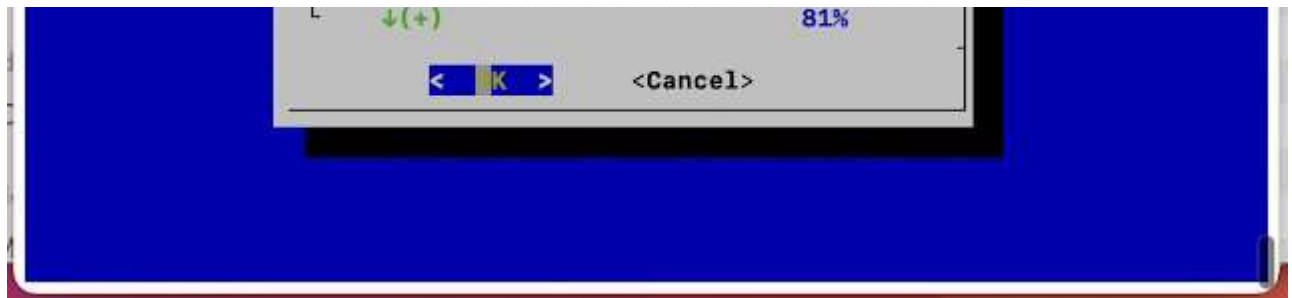


A file explorer window showing the contents of the folder `20210328_17_33_47_backup`. It contains two files: `backup_log.txt` (259 byte) and `backup.ab` (11,62 GB).

File Name	Size
20210328_17_33_47_backup	--
backup_log.txt	259 byte
backup.ab	11,62 GB

Option 6 - Acquire `"/system"` folder





This option pulls the `/system` folder and saves it locally, also as a tar file.

- `adb pull /system/`
- `adb pull /system/app`
- `adb pull /system/cameradata`
- `adb pull /system/container`
- `adb pull /system/etc`
- `adb pull /system/fake-libs`
- `adb pull /system/fonts`
- `adb pull /system/framework`
- `adb pull /system/hidden`
- `adb pull /system/lib`
- `adb pull /system/lib64`
- `adb pull /system/media`
- `adb pull /system/priv-app`
- `adb pull /system/saiv`
- `adb pull /system/tts`
- `adb pull /system/usr`
- `adb pull /system/vendor`
- `adb pull /system/xbin`

```
Download — adb • android_triage_1.sh — 80x24
[*]
[*] This option extracts files from /system
[*]
[*]
[*] SYSTEM acquisition started at 20210328_17_55_18
[*]
[*]
[*]
[*] /system/app
[*] /system/bin
[*] /system/cameradata
[*] /system/container
[*] /system/etc
[*] /system/fake-libs
[*] /system/fonts
[*] /system/framework
[*] /system/hidden
[*] /system/lib
```



```
[*] /system/lib64
[*] /system/media
[*] /system/priv-app
[*] /system/saiv
```

The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H\_%M\_%S"}\_system"

20210328_17_55_18_system	--
log_system_acquisition.txt	29 KB
system	--
system.tar	3,62 GB

### Option 7 - Acquire "/sdcard" folder



This option pulls the "/sdcard" folder and saves it locally, also as a tar file.

- *adb pull /scard*

The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H\_%M\_%S"}\_sdcard"

20210328_17_57_56_sdcard	--
--------------------------	----

log_sdcard_acquisition.txt	281 byte
> sdcard	--
sdcard.tar	4,55 GB

## Option 8 - Extract APK files from "/data" folder



This option pulls APK files from "/data" and "/vendor" folder and saves them locally, also as a tar file.

```
$SHELL_COMMAND pm list packages -f -u >
${APK_DIR}/${ANDROID_ID}_apk_list.txt
```

```
SELECTED_FILE=${APK_DIR}/${ANDROID_ID}_apk_list.txt
```

```
echo "[*] Pulling APK files"
while read -r line
do
    line=${line#"package:"}
    target_file=${line%%".apk="*}
    target_file=$target_file".apk"
    IFS="/" read -ra tokens <<<"$target_file"
```

```

apk_type=${tokens[1]}
app_folder=${tokens[2]}
app_path=${tokens[3]}
apk_name=${tokens[4]}

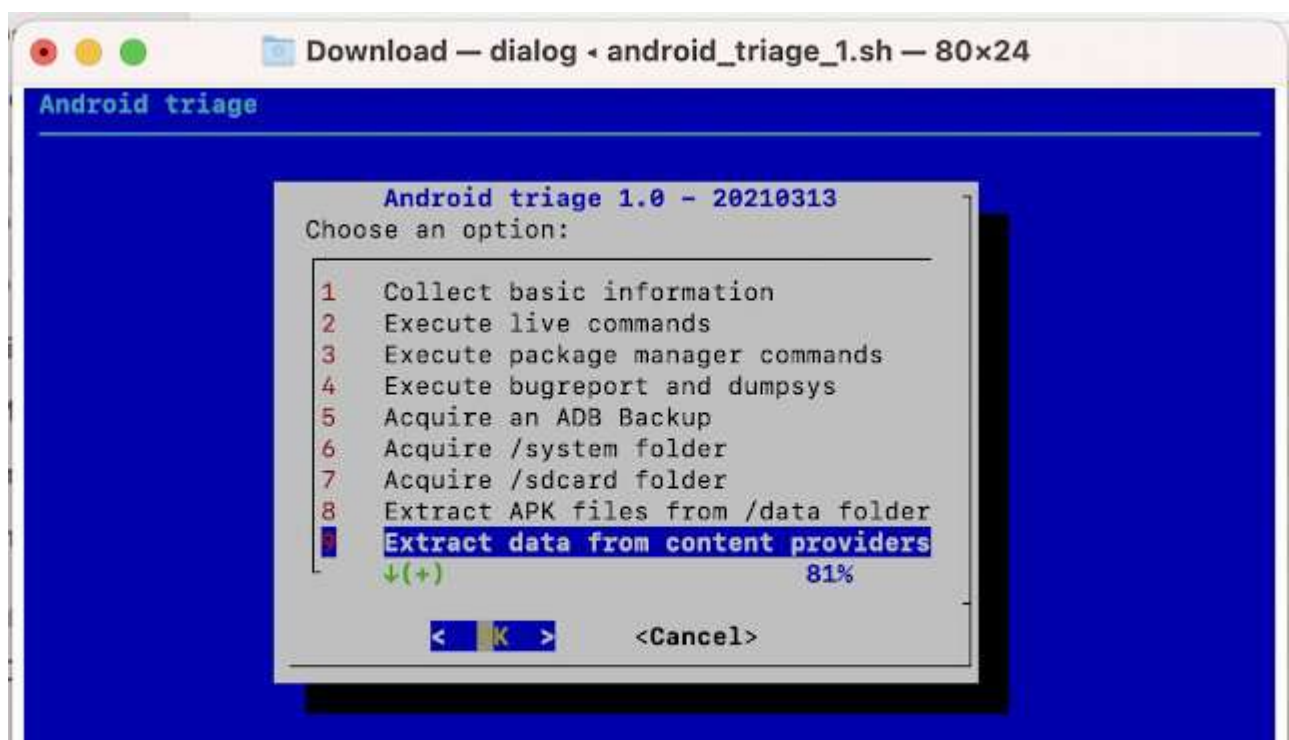
if [[ ${apk_type} != "system" ]]; then
    mkdir -p ${APK_DIR}/${apk_type}/${app_folder}/${app_path}
    $PULL_COMMAND $target_file
    ${APK_DIR}/${apk_type}/${app_folder}/${app_path}/${apk_name}
fi
continue
done < "$SELECTED_FILE"

```

The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H%M%S"}\_apk"



## Option 9 - Extract data from Content Providers





This option extracts data from Android Content Providers.

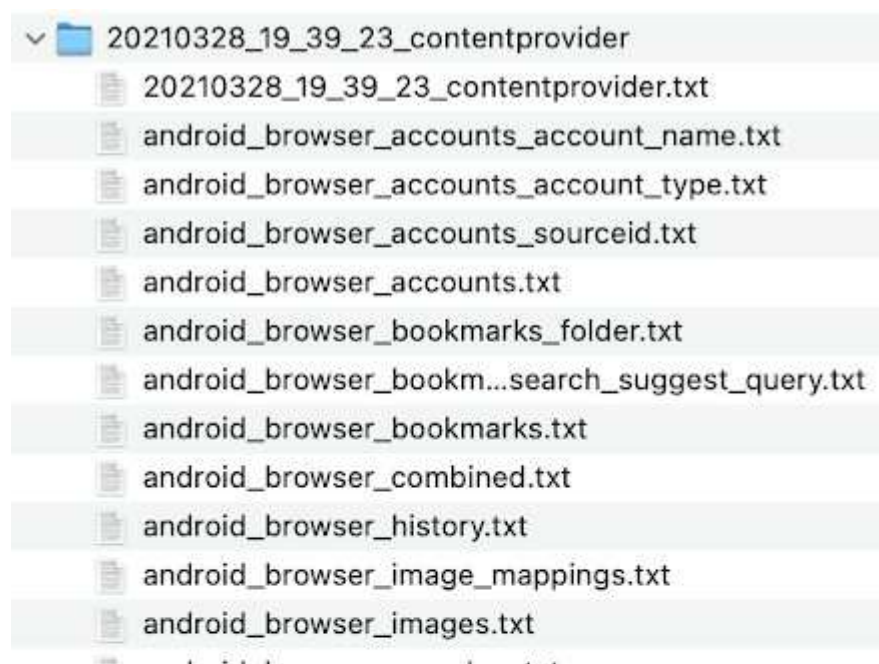
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/calendar\_entities*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/calendars*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/attendees*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/event\_entities*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/events*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/properties*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/reminders*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/calendar\_alerts*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/colors*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/extendedproperties*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.calendar/syncstate*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/raw\_contacts*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/directories*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/syncstate*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/profile/syncstate*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/contacts*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/profile/raw\_contacts*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/profile*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/profile/as\_vcard*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/stream\_items*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/stream\_items/photo*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/stream\_items/limit*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/raw\_contact\_entities*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/profile/raw\_contact\_entities*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/status\_updates*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data/phones*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data/phones/filter*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data/emails/lookup*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data/emails/filter*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data/emails*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/data/postals*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/groups*














- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/groups\_summary*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/aggregation\_exceptions*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/settings*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/provider\_status*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/photo\_dimensions*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.contacts/deleted\_contacts*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://downloads/my\_downloads*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://downloads/download*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/file*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/images/media*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/images/thumbnails*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/audio/media*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/audio/genres*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/audio/playlists*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/audio/artists*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/audio/albums*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/video/media*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/external/video/thumbnails*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/file*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/images/media*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/images/thumbnails*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/audio/media*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/audio/genres*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/audio/playlists*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/audio/artists*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/audio/albums*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/video/media*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://media/internal/video/thumbnails*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/system*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/system/ringtone*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/system/alarm\_alert*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/system/notification\_sound*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/secure*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/global*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/bookmarks*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.google.settings/partner*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://nwkinfo/nwkinfo/carriers*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.settings.personalvibration.PersonalVibrationProvider/*



- *adb shell content query --uri content://settings/system/bluetooth\_devices*
- *adb shell content query --  
uri content://settings/system/powersavings\_appsettings*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://user\_dictionary/words*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://browser/bookmarks*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://browser/searches*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/accounts*
- *adb shell content query --  
uri content://com.android.browser/accounts/account\_name*
- *adb shell content query --  
uri content://com.android.browser/accounts/account\_type*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/accounts/sourceid*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/settings*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/syncstate*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/images*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/image\_mappings*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/bookmarks*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/bookmarks/folder*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/history*
- *adb shell content query --  
uri content://com.android.browser/bookmarks/search\_suggest\_query*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/searches*
- *adb shell content query --uri content://com.android.browser/combined*

The output is saved in the following path (relative to the script path): "\${ANDROID\_ID}/\${date +"%Y%m%d\_%H\_%M\_%S"}\_contentprovider"



 android_browser_searches.txt
 android_browser_settings.txt
 android_browser_syncstate.txt
 android_browser.txt
 bluetooth_devices.txt
 browser_bookmarks.txt
 browser_searches.txt
 calendar_alerts.txt
 calendar_attendees.txt
 calendar_calendar_entities.txt
 calendar_calendars.txt
 calendar_colors.txt
 calendar_event_entities.txt

adb

android

forensics

triage



Enter Comment

Popular posts from this blog

## Huawei backup decryptor

By *dfirfpi* - July 30, 2019

When doing Mobile Forensics the first and usually the hardest step is to get access to user's data . It depends on the case type, but the so called physical acquisition is the analyst object of desire. The reason is simple: iOS and Andro ...

KEEP READING

## Android Forensics References: a curated list

By *Mattia Epifani* - September 06, 2022



During the forensic analysis of a mobile device, we often have the need to understand the content of a specific file or folder. This is particularly true when a file or a folder is not parsed by our set of tools. Our approach is, typically, to ...

[KEEP READING](#)

 Powered by Blogger

©2019 Reality Net System Solutions