

How to check if a file exists from inside a batch file [duplicate]



414

This question already has an answer here:

[How to verify if a file exists in a batch file?](#) 3 answers



I need to run a utility only if a certain file exists. How do I do this in Windows batch?



windows

batch-file

54

edited Jan 26 '11 at 17:01



sorin

79.3k

119

381

599

asked Dec 2 '10 at 21:52



sab

3,922

9

34

44

marked as duplicate by [Jaime](#), [Richard Brown](#), [Vishal](#), [Uwe Keim](#), [Anthon](#) Apr 5 '13 at 4:23

This question has been asked before and already has an answer. If those answers do not fully address your question, please [ask a new question](#).

3 Answers



675



```
if exist <insert file name here> (  
    rem file exists  
) else (  
    rem file doesn't exist  
)
```

Open a single line (if only a single action needs to occur):

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```
if exist c:\autoexec.bat notepad c:\autoexec.bat
```

edited Mar 24 '15 at 9:48



waghso

348 5 18

answered Dec 2 '10 at 21:56



Chris J

24.6k 4 52 95

-
- 9 If you are dealing with paths with spaces: stackoverflow.com/questions/138981/... – Nick Dec 24 '13 at 23:17
-
- 5 @loopkin - `else` is valid, see "if /?" ... "The ELSE clause must occur on the same line as the command after the IF. For example: [...numerous examples of use...]" – Chris J Apr 15 '14 at 18:21
-
- 4 @chris-j Thanks Chris, you're correct, it seems like the parenthesis have to be on the same line as the else. That's what I was doing wrong. I think I'll never get used to the batch syntax :(– loopkin May 24 '14 at 15:44
-
- 3 If you're a n00b like me and forget to replace the squiggly brackets too then this won't work. So be sure to remove {} when you {insert file name here}!! Spent an embarrassing 5 minutes realising this :(– piratemurray Jun 6 '14 at 9:10
-
- 3 One **caveat** of `IF EXIST` construct: It cannot detect Hidden files (files with Hidden attribute). – Explorer09 Aug 13 '17 at 16:03
-

▲ C:\>help if

78

Performs conditional processing in batch programs.

IF [NOT] ERRORLEVEL number command

IF [NOT] string1==string2 command

IF [NOT] EXIST filename command

edited May 15 '13 at 1:14



Sk8erPeter

answered Dec 2 '10 at 21:55



Sheng Jiang 蒋晟

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31

```
IF EXIST filename. (  
    del filename.  
) ELSE (  
    echo filename. missing.  
)
```

You can also check for a missing file with `IF NOT EXIST`.

The `IF` command is quite powerful. The output of `IF /?` will reward careful reading. For that matter, try the `/?` option on many of the other built-in commands for lots of hidden gems.

edited Oct 23 '18 at 9:22



Alex Weitz

1,660 2 19 30

answered Dec 2 '10 at 21:56



RBerteig

34.9k 5 74 116

8 Why the '.' at the end of filename? Is it a typo? – [Everyone](#) Jun 4 '13 at 17:30

6 I quoted the help text from the actual `IF` command built in to CMD.EXE, which had those dots. I don't know why they included them, it does seem inconsistent. Of course, what the `EXIST` keyword actually needs is a valid file name, which may be fully qualified. Other commands use the idiom `[drive:][path]filename` in place of the text `filename.` use here, which is obviously clearer. – [RBerteig](#) Jun 4 '13 at 17:36

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