

# DOS Commands: some helpful tips about what can be used for what.

## For: Windows OS.

Typing DOS commands on the Windows Command Line prompt is a most efficient and faster way of doing things in Windows.

Here's a run-down of the most useful DOS commands available in Windows XP.

DOS Command-line tools must be run at the prompt of the Cmd.exe command interpreter.

To open Command Prompt, click Start, click Run, type cmd, and then click OK.

### **ipconfig - Windows IP configuration.**

Useful for troubleshooting your internet connection.

Displays the current IP address of your computer and the DNS server address.

If you call your ISP for reporting a bad internet connection, he will probably ask you to run ipconfig.

### **fc - Free Beyond Compare in XP**

FC is an advanced DOS Command that compares two files and displays the differences between them.

Though the file comparison results are not as interactive as Beyond Compare or Altova DiffDog, fc is still very useful.

You can even set fc to resynchronize the files after finding a mismatch.

### **type - open text files sans Notepad**

Similar to UNIX cat command, type is my favorite DOS command for displaying the contents of text files without modifying them.

When used in combination with more switch, type splits the contents of lengthy text files into multiple pages.

Avoid using the type command with binary files or you'll hear alien PC beeps and see some Greek characters on your PC.

### **ping - Say hello to another computer**

Ping network command followed by the web-address or IP address tells you about the health of the connection and whether the other party is responding to your handshake request.

Ping tool can also be used to convert the web address to a physical IP address.

### **tree - visual directory structure**

You often need to take prints of your physical directory structure but XP has no simple "visual" commands for printing directory contents.

Try the tree DOS command and redirect the output to a text file.

```
tree > mydirectory.txt
```

```
print mydirectory.txt
```

### **attrib - make hidden files visible**

Attrib lets you change attributes of System files and even hidden files.

This is great for troubleshooting Windows XP.

Say your XP doesn't boot ever since you edited that startup boot.ini file (Hidden), use attrib to remove the Hidden attribute and edit the file using EDIT dos command.

### **assoc - which program will open that .xyz file**

The assoc DOS command can be used to either display or even modify the file name extension associations.

The command **assoc .htm** will quickly tell you the name of your default web browser.

### **move - more flexible than copy-paste**

Say you got a lot of XLS and DOC files in your My Documents folder and want to move only those XLS files that have their name ending with 2006.

In XP Explorer, you have to manually select each file and then cut-paste to another folder.

However, the DOS move command make things much simpler.

Just type the following at the command prompt:

```
move *2006.xls c:\2006Reports\
```

### **find - advanced file search with filter**

Find is the most powerful DOS command and even more useful than the Windows Desktop Search tool or the Windows Find Wizard.

The find command searches for a specific string of text in a file or files.

After searching the specified file or files, find displays any lines of text that contain the specified string.

To search your hard disk to find and display the file names on drive C: that contain the string "Google" use the pipe (|) to direct the results of a dir command to find as follows:

```
dir c:\ /s /b | find "Google"
```

**Quick tip - Drag to avoid typing:** When your command acts on a file or folder, you must type the path to that folder after the command. You can save typing time by dragging the file or folder from Windows Explorer into the command window.

To view help at the command-line, at the command prompt, type the following:

**CommandName /?**

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### **tracert www.xxxx.xxx**

Determines the path taken to a destination by sending Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) Echo Request messages to the destination with incrementally increasing Time to Live (TTL) field values.

The path displayed is the list of near-side router interfaces of the routers in the path between a source host and a destination.

The near-side interface is the interface of the router that is closest to the sending host in the path.

Used without parameters, **tracert** displays help.

## **Syntax**

**tracert [-d] [-h *MaximumHops*] [-j *HostList*] [-w *Timeout*] [*TargetName*]**

## **Parameters**

**-d** : Prevents **tracert** from attempting to resolve the IP addresses of intermediate routers to their names.

This can speed up the display of **tracert** results.

**-h *MaximumHops*** : Specifies the maximum number of hops in the path to search for the target (destination). The default is 30 hops.

**-j *HostList*** : Specifies that Echo Request messages use the Loose Source Route option in the IP header with the set of intermediate destinations specified in *HostList*.

With loose source routing, successive intermediate destinations can be separated by one or multiple routers.

The maximum number of addresses or names in the host list is 9.

The *HostList* is a series of IP addresses (in dotted decimal notation) separated by spaces.

**-w *Timeout*** : Specifies the amount of time in milliseconds to wait for the ICMP Time Exceeded or Echo Reply message corresponding to a given Echo Request message to be received.

If not received within the time-out, an asterisk (\*) is displayed.

The default time-out is 4000 (4 seconds).

***TargetName*** : Specifies the destination, identified either by IP address or host name

| COMMAND         | DESCRIPTION   |
|-----------------|---|
| <u>ANSI.SYS</u> | Defines functions that change display graphics, control cursor movement, and reassign keys. |
| <u>APPEND</u>   | Causes MS-DOS to look in other directories when editing a file or running a command.        |
| <u>ARP</u>      | Displays, adds, and removes <u>arp</u> information from network devices.                    |
| <u>ASSIGN</u>   | Assign a drive letter to an alternate letter.   |
| <u>ASSOC</u>    | View the file associations.   |
| <u>AT</u>       | Schedule a time to execute commands or programs.  |
| <u>ATMADM</u>   | Lists connections and addresses seen by Windows <u>ATM</u> call manager.                    |
| <u>ATTRIB</u>   | Display and change file attributes.   |
| <u>BATCH</u>    | Recovery console command that executes a series of commands in a file.                      |
| <u>BOOTCFG</u>  | Recovery console command that allows a user to view, modify, and rebuild the boot.ini       |
| <u>BREAK</u>    | Enable / disable CTRL + C feature.  |
| <u>CACLS</u>    | View and modify file <u>ACL</u> 's.   |
| <u>CALL</u>     | Calls a batch file from another batch file.   |
| <u>CD</u>       | Changes directories.  |
| <u>CHCP</u>     | Supplement the International keyboard and character set information.                        |
| <u>CHDIR</u>    | Changes directories.  |
| <u>CHKDSK</u>   | Check the hard disk drive running <u>FAT</u> for errors.                                    |
| <u>CHKNTFS</u>  | Check the hard disk drive running <u>NTFS</u> for errors.                                   |
| <u>CHOICE</u>   | Specify a listing of multiple options within a batch file.                                  |
| <u>CLS</u>      | Clears the screen.  |
| <u>CMD</u>      | Opens the command interpreter.  |
| <u>COLOR</u>    | Easily change the foreground and background color of the MS-DOS window.                     |
| <u>COMMAND</u>  | Opens the command interpreter.  |
| <u>COMP</u>     | Compares files.   |
| <u>COMPACT</u>  | Compresses and uncompress files.  |
| <u>CONTROL</u>  | Open Control Panel icons from the MS-DOS prompt.  |
| <u>CONVERT</u>  | Convert <u>FAT</u> to <u>NTFS</u> .   |
| <u>COPY</u>     | Copy one or more files to an alternate location.  |
| <u>CTTY</u>     | Change the computers input/output devices.  |
| <u>DATE</u>     | View or change the systems date.  |
| <u>DEBUG</u>    | Debug utility to create assembly programs to modify hardware settings.                      |
| <u>DEFRAG</u>   | Re-arrange the hard disk drive to help with loading programs.                               |
| <u>DEL</u>      | Deletes one or more files.  |
| <u>DELETE</u>   | Recovery console command that deletes a file.   |
| <u>DELTREE</u>  | Deletes one or more files and/or directories.   |
| <u>DIR</u>      | List the contents of one or more directory.   |
| <u>DISABLE</u>  | Recovery console command that disables Windows system services or drivers.                  |
| <u>DISKCOMP</u> | Compare a disk with another disk.   |

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| <u>DISKCOPY</u>   | Copy the contents of one disk and place them on another disk.                             |
| <u>DOSKEY</u>     | Command to view and execute commands that have been run in the past.                      |
| <u>DOSSHELL</u>   | A GUI to help with early MS-DOS users.  |
| <u>DRIVPARM</u>   | Enables overwrite of original device drivers.   |
| <u>ECHO</u>       | Displays messages and enables and disables echo.  |
| <u>EDIT</u>       | View and edit files.  |
| <u>EDLIN</u>      | View and edit files.  |
| <u>EMM386</u>     | Load extended Memory Manager.   |
| <u>ENABLE</u>     | Recovery console command to enable a disable service or driver.                           |
| <u>ENDLOCAL</u>   | Stops the localization of the environment changes enabled by the <u>setlocal</u> command. |
| <u>ERASE</u>      | Erase files from computer.  |
| <u>EXIT</u>       | Exit from the command interpreter.  |
| <u>EXPAND</u>     | Expand a Microsoft Windows file back to it's original format.                             |
| <u>EXTRACT</u>    | Extract files from the Microsoft Windows cabinets.  |
| <u>FASTHELP</u>   | Displays a listing of MS-DOS commands and information about them.                         |
| <u>FC</u>         | Compare files.  |
| <u>FDISK</u>      | Utility used to create partitions on the hard disk drive.                                 |
| <u>FIND</u>       | Search for text within a file.  |
| <u>FINDSTR</u>    | Searches for a string of text within a file.  |
| <u>FIXBOOT</u>    | Writes a new boot sector.   |
| <u>FIXMBR</u>     | Writes a new boot record to a disk drive.   |
| <u>FOR</u>        | Boolean used in batch files.  |
| <u>FORMAT</u>     | Command to erase and prepare a disk drive.  |
| <u>FTP</u>        | Command to connect and operate on a <u>FTP</u> server.                                    |
| <u>FTYPE</u>      | Displays or modifies file types used in file extension associations.                      |
| <u>GOTO</u>       | Moves a batch file to a specific label or location.                                       |
| <u>GRAFTABL</u>   | Show extended characters in graphics mode.  |
| <u>HELP</u>       | Display a listing of commands and brief explanation.                                      |
| <u>IF</u>         | Allows for <u>batch files</u> to perform conditional processing.                          |
| <u>IFSHLP.SYS</u> | 32-bit file manager.  |
| <u>IPCONFIG</u>   | Network command to view network adapter settings and assigned values.                     |
| <u>KEYB</u>       | Change layout of keyboard.  |
| <u>LABEL</u>      | Change the label of a disk drive.   |
| <u>LH</u>         | Load a device driver in to high memory.   |
| <u>LISTSVC</u>    | Recovery console command that displays the services and drivers.                          |
| <u>LOADFIX</u>    | Load a program above the first 64k.   |
| <u>LOADHIGH</u>   | Load a device driver in to high memory.   |
| <u>LOCK</u>       | Lock the hard disk drive.   |
| <u>LOGON</u>      | Recovery console command to list installations and enable administrator login.            |
| <u>MAP</u>        | Displays the device name of a drive.  |
| <u>MD</u>         | Command to create a new directory.  |

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| <u>MEM</u>      | Display memory on system.  |
| <u>MKDIR</u>    | Command to create a new directory.   |
| <u>MODE</u>     | Modify the port or display settings.   |
| <u>MORE</u>     | Display one page at a time.  |
| <u>MOVE</u>     | Move one or more files from one directory to another directory.                    |
| <u>MSAV</u>     | Early Microsoft Virus scanner.   |
| <u>MSD</u>      | Diagnostics utility.   |
| <u>MSCDEX</u>   | Utility used to load and provide access to the CD-ROM.                             |
| <u>NBTSTAT</u>  | Displays protocol statistics and current TCP/IP connections using <u>NBT</u>       |
| <u>NET</u>      | Update, fix, or view the network or network settings                               |
| <u>NETSH</u>    | Configure dynamic and static network information from MS-DOS.                      |
| <u>NETSTAT</u>  | Display the <u>TCP/IP</u> network protocol statistics and information.             |
| <u>NLSFUNC</u>  | Load country specific information.   |
| <u>NSLOOKUP</u> | Look up an IP address of a domain or host on a network.                            |
| <u>PATH</u>     | View and modify the computers path location.                                       |
| <u>PATHPING</u> | View and locate locations of network latency.                                      |
| <u>PAUSE</u>    | Command used in batch files to stop the processing of a command.                   |
| <u>PING</u>     | Test / send information to another network computer or network device.             |
| <u>POPD</u>     | Changes to the directory or network path stored by the <u>pushd command</u> .      |
| <u>POWER</u>    | Conserve power with computer portables.  |
| <u>PRINT</u>    | Prints data to a printer port.   |
| <u>PROMPT</u>   | View and change the MS-DOS <u>prompt</u> .   |
| <u>PUSHD</u>    | Stores a directory or network path in memory so it can be returned to at any time. |
| <u>QBASIC</u>   | Open the QBasic.   |
| <u>RD</u>       | Removes an empty directory.  |
| <u>REN</u>      | Renames a file or directory.   |
| <u>RENAME</u>   | Renames a file or directory.   |
| <u>RMDIR</u>    | Removes an empty directory.  |
| <u>ROUTE</u>    | View and configure windows network route tables.                                   |
| <u>RUNAS</u>    | Enables a user to execute a program on another computer.                           |
| <u>SCANDISK</u> | Run the scandisk utility.  |
| <u>SCANREG</u>  | Scan registry and recover registry from errors.                                    |
| <u>SET</u>      | Change one variable or string to another.  |
| <u>SETLOCAL</u> | Enables local environments to be changed without affecting anything else.          |
| <u>SETVER</u>   | Change MS-DOS version to trick older MS-DOS programs.                              |
| <u>SHARE</u>    | Installs support for file sharing and locking capabilities.                        |
| <u>SHIFT</u>    | Changes the position of replaceable parameters in a batch program.                 |
| <u>SHUTDOWN</u> | Shutdown the computer from the MS-DOS prompt.                                      |
| <u>SMARTDRV</u> | Create a disk cache in conventional memory or extended memory.                     |
| <u>SORT</u>     | Sorts the input and displays the output to the screen.                             |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <u>START</u>    | Start a separate window in Windows from the MS-DOS prompt.                        |
| <u>SUBST</u>    | Substitute a folder on your computer for another drive letter.                    |
| <u>SWITCHES</u> | Remove add functions from MS-DOS.   |
| <u>SYS</u>      | Transfer system files to disk drive.  |
| <u>TELNET</u>   | Telnet to another computer / device from the prompt.                              |
| <u>TIME</u>     | View or modify the system time.   |
| <u>TITLE</u>    | Change the title of their MS-DOS window.  |
| <u>TRACERT</u>  | Visually view a network packets route across a network.                           |
| <u>TREE</u>     | View a visual tree of the hard disk drive.  |
| <u>TYPE</u>     | Display the contents of a file.   |
| <u>UNDELETE</u> | Undelete a file that has been deleted.  |
| <u>UNFORMAT</u> | Unformat a hard disk drive.   |
| <u>UNLOCK</u>   | Unlock a disk drive.  |
| <u>VER</u>      | Display the version information.  |
| <u>VERIFY</u>   | Enables or disables the feature to determine if files have been written properly. |
| <u>VOL</u>      | Displays the volume information about the designated drive.                       |
| <u>XCOPY</u>    | Copy multiple files, directories, and/or drives from one location to another.     |