

ADB05

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Chapter 1

ADB05

1.1 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords

AMIGADOS FOR BEGINNERS

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PART 5 - COMMANDS AND KEYWORDS

Command Format & Template
Commands
Where Commands are Located
Command Keywords
Command Options
About Command Explanations

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1.2 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords - Format & Template

COMMAND FORMAT AND TEMPLATE

Many texts, including the AmigaDOS manual, talk about the 'Format' or 'Template'. They will show things like the following (don't worry - you do NOT have to learn this! But if you want to read more about it then click on the highlighted area above):-

DIR Format:-

DIR [<name>] [OPT A|I|AI|D] [ALL] [DIRS] [INTER] [FILES]

DIR Template:-

DIR "NAME,OPT/K,ALL/S,DIR/S,INTER/S,FILES/S"

If you see this sort of thing do you:-

- a) Throw up your hands in despair, tear up your Amiga manual and throw your Amiga in the garbage?
- b) Give up on Shell/CLI altogether and go back to using Workbench only?
- c) Read on?

If you chose (a) then please go back to the garbage, retrieve your Amiga and give me a phone call to come and pick it up!

Give yourself a mintie if you chose (c)!

Don't forget that you can examine the command template at any time by entering:-

```
> CommandName ?
```

FORGET ALL ABOUT FORMATS AND TEMPLATES FOR THE TIME BEING!!

My advice to you is to forget all about command formats and templates for the time being. But [click here](#) if you really want to know more about them. It is much better to learn the basics of a command without all its fancy options. After you have been using them for a while is the time to start looking at formats etc.

This series of articles is aimed at the raw beginner to CLI/Shell and so will take the reader through various aspects in the simplest possible way.

=== End of Text ===

1.3 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords - Commands

COMMANDS

A command is one of the many "programs" that help you to operate AmigaDOS such as DIR, CD, etc. I say "programs" as that is what they really are - small programs that do a specific thing like DIR which reads the contents of a directory, or CD to change the current directory.

There are about 82 AmigaDOS commands in AmigaDOS v2.1 (the last version for which Amiga or Escom included an AmigaDOS manual). Earlier versions had less and later versions have more.

However, a lot of these you will never use! You should not let the large number of commands worry you at this stage. Many people use just a handful of the total number of commands and get along quite happily without learning the rest.

In the manuals you will find that, in the early days, the command explanations contained only those commands that could be found in the "C" (for "Command") directory and maybe one or two others such as DiskCopy and Format that somehow found their way into the "System" directory.

The latest versions of the AmigaDOS manual tend to include, all in the one section, a lot of other programs that I would not have thought were commands as such. For example, they include the v2+ commodity and preference setting programs and the text editor programs.

These articles will not cover programs such as these which I do not consider to be commands in the old sense of the term.

=== End of Text ===

1.4 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords - Where Commands are Kept

WHERE ARE THE AMIGADOS COMMANDS LOCATED?

In V1.3 and earlier, commands are all contained in one of the Workbench disk's directories. This is, in most cases, the "C" (for "Command") directory. However, a few are in the "System" directory. Whichever directory they are in, they are all DISK BASED.

In V2.0 onwards there are two types of AmigaDOS commands:-

INTERNAL and DISK-BASED

The "Internal" commands have been taken from the Workbench disk and hard coded into the ROM chips. This means that you cannot find them in the "C" directory any more. The "Disk-Based" commands are still in the "C" or "System"~ directories.

Having "Internal" commands has two advantages.

Firstly, the system can access them a lot quicker than disk based commands - they don't have to be loaded from disk every time they are used. However, disk based commands can be made resident which means they are loaded from disk into memory and then used from memory rather than from disk. However, they are lost from memory again on power down or reset.

Secondly, a lot of disk space is saved.

To see a full list of all commands that are "Internal" simply enter at the CLI prompt (don't type the ">" as that IS the prompt!):-

```
> RESIDENT
```

This will display a list of all commands that have been made resident followed by a list (if you have v2+) of all "Internal" commands.

To see if an individual command is "Internal" or "Disk-Based" you use the WHICH command. For example:-

```
> WHICH commandname
```

If it is an "Internal" command you will see:-

INTERNAL commandname

If it disk based, you will see one of:-

```
Dirname/commandname  
RES commandname
```

For example:-

```
Workbench2.0:C/type  
RES copy
```

The first tells you which directory holds the command (if it has not been made resident) and the second tells you that the command is disk based but has been made resident.

=== End of Text ===

1.5 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords - Command Keywords

COMMAND KEYWORDS

Some commands have Keywords associated with them which give the command some information about the way that the command should operate. For example:-

```
COPY FROM s:startup-sequence TO dfl:s/startup-sequence
```

The command COPY uses the keywords FROM and TO to tell AmigaDOS that the string following FROM is the file that is to be copied and the string following TO is the directory that the copied file is to be put into and name that it is to be given.

These strings, i.e. the information that is inserted by the user, are also called Arguments.

Keywords often do not need to be used. If you used:-

```
COPY s:startup-sequence dfl:s/startup-sequence
```

AmigaDOS will know that the first string is in the FROM position and that the second is in the TO position and act accordingly.

In other cases, such as:-

```
FORMAT DRIVE df0: NAME mydisk
```

the keywords must be used.

The command explanations will make it clear whether the use of the keyword is optional or essential.

When Keywords MUST Be Used

Apart from those commands which state that keywords must be included, there are occasions when keywords must be used even if it is stated that their use is optional.

I said above above that often the keywords do not need to be used as the system will know what to do from the position that the arguments are in.

However, where, for some reason, you wanted to put the arguments in places within the command line that the system would not normally expect to find them, then you must include the keywords. For example, in the COPY command, if you used:-

```
COPY Disk1:File1 Disk2:File2
```

then the system would know that you wanted to:-

```
COPY FROM Disk1:File1 TO Disk2:File2
```

If you wanted to reverse the position of the FROM and TO files then you must include the FROM and TO keywords as in:-

```
COPY TO Disk2:File2 FROM Disk1:File1
```

The other situation where problems can arise if a keyword is left out is if the argument is identical to a keyword. For example, let's say there is a file that is called "From". If you tried to copy this file by using:-

```
COPY from dfl:myfile
```

then the system would think that the "from" was the keyword and that the "dfl:myfile" was the FROM file. It would then find that there was no TO file and would give an error message.

You can overcome this sort of thing by either using the keywords, as in:-

```
COPY FROM from TO dfl:myfile
```

or by enclosing the name in inverted commas, as in:-

```
COPY "from" dfl:myfile
```

or by using the path to the file. For example:-

```
COPY diskName:DirectoryName/from dfl:myfile
```

So no matter which command you are using just keep in mind that it is best to use keywords in these situations:-

1. If the arguments are not in the correct positions.
2. If an argument is the same as a keyword.

=== End of Text ===

1.6 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords - Command Options

COMMAND OPTIONS

A lot of CLI commands have "options" that can be entered along with the command. They allow the command to operate in a slightly different way to that in which the command would work without the options.

As an example, the COPY command has an option called CLONE which can be used as follows:-

```
COPY s:startup-sequence df1:s/startup-sequence CLONE
```

When COPY is used without this option, then the system will write to disk the date and time that the new copy was created. If CLONE is used then the date and time (and other things) of the original file will be written to disk with the new copy.

Some commands have a lot of very complicated options, many of which most people never use or understand.

As I discuss each command I will attempt to explain the way each of its options works by giving examples. However, If you are a beginner and can't understand a particular option then forget about it. Use only the simple form of the command until you are more used to AmigaDOS commands. Then maybe you can reread about the options again and it may be clearer.

=== End of Text ===

1.7 AmigaDOS For Beginners - Part 5 - Commands & Keywords - About command Explanations

ABOUT THE COMMAND EXPLANATIONS

As mentioned earlier, these notes are NOT a detailed explanation of the full command format or template. Rather, they are designed to help get the beginner underway.

I would suggest that you follow them through in their correct order as some later articles will assume that you have already learned what is in earlier articles.

The AmigaDOS commands and their keywords are shown in UPPER case in order to make them stand out. However, they need not be used by you in upper case. AmigaDOS will accept them in any case, upper, lower or mixed. All of the following will do the same thing:-

```
> DIR df1: OPT A
```

With the commands and their keywords shown in upper case, the additional information, or arguments inserted by the you, the user, are shown in lower case. Thus in:-

```
> COPY FROM name TO name
```

you will know that the words "COPY", "FROM" and "TO" are the AmigaDOS commands and keywords and the two instances of "name" represent an indication of the arguments that you, the user, should put in that spot.

For example, you could use one of these:-

```
> COPY FROM s:startup-sequence TO dfl:s/startup-sequence
> COPY FROM devs:Printers/EpsonQ TO dfl:devs/printers/
```

As with keywords, the use of upper and lower case does not matter with your own entries when you are reading from directory and file names. AmigaDOS will see the names as the same even if the case is different. However, when writing to a disk, AmigaDOS will write the name in the same case that you use.

As there are some differences in commands from one version of AmigaDOS to another, I will make a note with each command as to the differences, if any. V1.1 is NOT covered as I do not have it nor have I ever seen it and I would be very surprised if there is anyone still using it!

I will also make a note as to the location of each command so that you can look for it on the Workbench disk if you so desire.

When I give examples, I will show them as in this example:-

```
> DIR dfl: OPT A
```

As mentioned early, the ">" is part or all of the Shell/CLI prompt. Do NOT type in the ">". Start typing the text that appears after the ">".

I will not say so in the examples but you must always press the RETURN key after you have finished typing. This tells the system that you have finished your work and it is the computer's turn to do something!

If you make corrections to the start or middle of the line before pressing return, you do not need to return the cursor to the end of the line. You can press return with the cursor anywhere on the line.

If I show what should appear in the CLI window after the use of a command then I will show it under the command and indicate it with "-->". Of course, you will not see the "-->" in the CLI window!. For example, if I have:-

```
> LIST c:dir
--> dir 3440 --parwed 04-Dec-92 15:00:00
```

it means that everything AFTER the "-->" will appear on the screen when you use the command shown after the prompt ">".

=== End of Text ===
