File Finder for Windows

Help Topics

For information on using Help, press F1 or select Help:Using Help

Getting Started

Let's start with a search for all the picture files on your hard drive.   Picture files for Windows are files that have a file extension of BMP.   Here's how to do it:

1. Run File Finder for Windows by double-clicking on the icon.   Make sure that the Search Type is "DOS Standard", and enter a search pattern.   Since we want to find all BMP files, enter "*.BMP" (without the quotes).   This will locate files with any name that have an extension of BMP.

2. Turn off the "Search Archives" option in the Options Menu.   File Finder will run faster when it is not searching archives.

3. Press Enter or click on the "Search" button, and the search will begin.   When the search is complete, all the BMP files on your drive will be listed.   You can use the scroll bar to scroll the list.   The keys Home, End, Page Up, Page Down, and the up and down arrows can all be used to scroll the list.

4. The BMP files can be selected for viewing directly from the list, if a Windows "association" has been established.   Try double-clicking on one of the files in the list. If Paintbrush runs and shows you the picture, then an association already exists.   If no association exists, you will see a message saying "No association defined for .BMP files. Use File Manager to define one."   In this event, run the Windows utility "File Manager."   In the File menu, select Associate, enter the file extension BMP, select "Paintbrush Picture," then click O.K.   Now you should be able to select any BMP file in the File Finder for Windows file list.

5. Press "Clear" when you are done looking at the list.

A Slightly More Complex Search

Now, let's find all the program files that come with Windows.   These file will all have an extension of EXE.

1. In the Directories menu, select the drive where you have Windows installed.   This is usually the "C" drive.

2. When a drive in the list is selected, a dialog box will be displayed allowing you to search the entire drive, by starting in the root directory, or to search only some portion of the drive by selecting another directory.   In this case, we want to search only the Windows directory, so find the Windows directory by scrolling the directory list, if necessary, and double-click on the Windows directory entry.

3. Click "Done."

4. Enter "*.EXE" in the Search Pattern box, and press Enter, or click "Search."

5. A list will be displayed of all programs stored in the Windows directory, including the directory **C:\WINDOWS\SYSTEM**, which is a subdirectory of the Windows directory. Double-click on any program to run it.   For example, select CALC.EXE to run the Windows Calculator program.

6. Press "Clear" when you are done looking at the list.   Also, you may want to set the search directory back to the root directory: **C:**

Search Pattern

Let's look at a DOS Standard search first.   Select 'DOS Standard' as the Search Type.   In the Search Pattern, enter a file name pattern for which to search. The pattern may include the DOS wildcard characters * and ?. Try some of these Search Patterns to see how they work:

COMMAND.COM   Find all occurrences of COMMAND.COM.

.   Find all files.

*.EXE   Find all executable files (EXE files).

ABC*.*   Find all files that start with ABC.   (You might not see any.)

*.   Find all files with no extension.

AB?C.*   Find all files that start with AB, have any character in the third position, and a C in the fourth position.

Another Search Type is 'Substring'.   When you use this, you will see all files which contain the Search Pattern entered.   For example, if the Search Pattern is 'WRI' (don't type the quotes), and the Search Type is 'Substring', all files containing 'WRI' will be shown.   That is, all Windows Write files with the extension 'WRI' will be shown, and also the files WRITE.EXE and WRITE.HLP

The most complex and most powerful Search Type is 'Regular expression.'   If you are not already familiar with regular expressions, you may want to get acquainted with File Finder for Windows in general before you delve into regular expressions. Look at the following list of characters allowed in a regular expression, then read and try the examples that follow.   A regular expression may contain:

1.   Any character other than: . \ [ ] * + ^ $ matches itself.   That is, an 'A' in the search pattern must match to an 'A' in a file name for that file to be listed.

2.   A period (.) is a wildcard that matches any character.

3.   A backslash is used to override the special behavior of   . \ * + ^ $ to allow matching on these characters.   For example, '*' will match on an asterisk (*). '\\' will match on the backslash (\) character.   A backslash also has other uses, described below.

4.   A sequence of characters surrounded by square brackets is known as a 'set', and matches any character in the set.   For example, [ABCD] will match on any of the characters A, B, C, or D.   [A-Z] matches on any alphabetic character.   [A-Z0-9_] matches on any alphanumeric character or the underscore character.   Using the character '^' at the beginning of the set, is a 'NOT' and reverses the meaning of the set.   [^A-Z] will match on any character that is NOT an alphabetic character.

5.   An asterisk (*) indicates that the prior character, as specified in 1 through 4, occurs at least 0 times.

6.   A plus sign (+) indicates that the prior character, as specified in 1 through 4, occurs at least 1 time.

7.   A regular expression in the form 1 through 9, beginning with '\(' and ending with '\)' matches the expression, and creates a numbered 'TAG'.   This tag can then be used to match on the identical character later in the expression.   The tags are numbered 1

through 9, and are used as shown in 8.   For example, the expression   \([A-Z]\) matches any character A through Z, and creates a tag.   If the expression matches an 'L', a tag is created which will also match on an 'L'.

8.   A backslash (\) followed by a number from 1 to 9 matches whatever the tagged expression matched.   For example, if the tag created in form 7 matched on an 'L', and was the first expression of this form, the expression \1 will match only on the character 'L'.

9.   The expressions \< and \> force the string to match on the beginning and ending of a word, respectively.   In this context, the filename and the file extension are "words." An example would be using 'C\>' to match all files which have either a filename or file extension which ends with 'C'.

10.   An expression beginning with ^ or ending with $ anchors the expression to the beginning or the end of the filename.

These rules are fairly complicated if you have never worked with regular expressions before, but some examples may help.

For the first example, assume that you have done a search using the 'DOS Standard' Search Type, with a Search String of '*.DOC', and you found a number of temporary documents on your drive, which start with the '~' character.   You can use the expression

    ^[^~].*\.DOC$

with a 'Regular expression' to list all 'DOC' files which do not start with the '~' character. The first '^' anchors the expression to the beginning of the file name.   The set [^~] which specifies the match conditions for the first character, indicates that the character should not be a '~'.   The '.*' which follows the set uses the period, which is the wildcard character, followed by the asterisk, which indicates that there may zero or more characters following the first character.   The '\.' is used to match on the period in the filename, followed by 'DOC' to match on the file extension, and '$' which anchors the expression to the end of the filename.

For another example, let's say that you have a group of files that start with a couple characters, followed by a numeric sequence, like this:

    AS0004.DOC
    AS0004A.DOC
    AS0008.DOC
    AS0009.DOC
    AS0009A.DOC
    AS0009B.DOC
    AS0013.DOC

You can use File Finder for Windows to generate a list of these files using the Regular expression Search Type.   Select Regular expression, and enter this search string:

    ^AS[0-9]+.*DOC$

The first character (^) anchors the string to the beginning of the file name.   The following two characters (AS) require an exact match.   Since they are anchored, only the files that have 'AS' as the first characters will match.   The next expression is a set which matches any numeric character, repeated at least once, as indicated by the plus sign.   Next is the period, which is a wild card, and will match whatever character(s) follow the sequence of numbers.   The final 'DOC$' will match only files with a filetype of DOC.

Regular expressions will also allow you to search for files with repeated characters.   This example uses the forms 7 and 8 as shown above.   The expression \([A-Z]\)\1 creates a tag numbered 1 which matches on any letter, followed by \1 which will match on the same letter as the first match.   That is, if the first expression matches on K, the second must also match on K.   In this example, the letters must be adjacent to match.

In order to match on non-adjacent repeated characters, add a wildcard between the creation of the tag and the use of the tag.   For example, \([A-Z]\).*\1 will match on any letter, followed any number of intervening characters (even no intervening characters), followed by the first match again.

We recommend that you experiment with regular expressions to see how they work.

Search Type

The Search Type can be:

'DOS Standard', which works in the same way as the DOS 'DIR' command, including the wildcards * and ?.

'Substring', which finds all files which contain the search string.

'Regular expression'.   The search string is a "regular expression."

Search Pattern:Regular Expressions

Quickbuttons

The Quickbuttons select drives with a single click.   When a drive is selected with a Quickbutton, the starting directory for that drive is set to the root directory.   The Quickbutton display and the Directories menu are always kept synchronized, so that a drive selected by Quickbutton is shown as selected in the Directories menu, and vice versa.   The Quickbuttons display can be turned on or off by selecting Show Quickbuttons in the Options menu.

Searching Archives

Check the Search Archives menu item in the Options menu if you want File Finder for Windows to search <u>archives</u> to find files.

Archive types searched are:

ARC
ARJ
LBR
LZH
PAK
PKA
ZIP
ZOO

Searching Subdirectories

Check the Search Subdirectories menu item in the Options menu if you want File Finder for Windows to search subdirectories to find matches on the search pattern.   If this item is not checked, File Finder for Windows will search only the starting directory for each selected drive.

Selecting disks

Select the disks that you want File Finder for Windows to search from the Directories menu. Only valid disks are listed.   When a disk is selected, you will be asked to select a starting directory.

To quickly select the root directory of a drive, make sure that the Quickbuttons are on, and click one time on the button of the disk or disks you want to search.

Starting Directories

File Finder for Windows searches start at the root directory by default.   When you select a drive in the Directories menu, you will be asked to select a starting directory, which may be the root directory of the drive, or a subdirectory.

Check Search Subdirectories in the Options Menu to search subdirectories within the starting directory.

Date and Time Ranges

Date Range searches are an important feature of File Finder for Windows.   You may remember that you created a file yesterday, or last week, but not remember the name.   By using the Date Range, you can list all files or selected files that have been created in the range you specify.   The Time Range fields are available to further restrict your search.

The format for Date and Time Ranges are specified using the Windows Control Panel, in the International section.   When you enter a date and time, they are checked to make sure that they have been entered in the appropriate format.   When the dates are displayed, they will be displayed in the format that you have chosen, so use the same format when you make changes.

DOS dates are always in the range from January 1st 1980 through December 31st, 2099. File Finder for Windows will not allow you to enter dates outside this range.

DOS times will displayed in either 12-hour format with A for A.M. and P for P.M., or they will be displayed in 24-hour format.   One peculiarity about DOS file times is that odd seconds are changed to an even number when they are saved, so you will never see a file with an odd number of seconds in the time stamp.   When you enter a time that has an odd number of seconds, it will be changed to an even number when you begin your search.   The exception to this is that if you enter 11:59:59P or 23:59:59 (depending on the format), it will not be changed, so that you will know that you are getting the full range of times.

The button marked Reset will reset the Date, Time, and Size Ranges to the full ranges, without changing any other settings.

Size Range

    The Size Range selection is another valuable feature.   One way you can use this feature is to find large files that need to be removed or copied of off a hard drive.   The range of files sizes supported by DOS is from 0 to 2,147,483,647 bytes.

    The button marked Reset will reset the Date, Time, and Size Ranges to the full ranges, without changing any other settings.

File Menu

Copy to Clipboard
Copy the list of files found to the clipboard. Also copied are the search patterns and search options.   Any word processor can then use the Paste Option to insert the list from the Clipboard.

Print
Print the list of files found. Also printed are the search pattern and the search options.

Printer Setup
Use this option to select printer and font settings.   These settings effect the printed list of files, and the printing of the registration form from the About menu.   Only monospaced (nonproportional) fonts are listed, so that file listings are displayed properly.   Click 'Setup' to choose settings specific to your printer.

Exit
Leave the File Finder for Windows program.   The search pattern, the Options settings, and the selected disks and directories are saved.   When File Finder for Windows is run again, these options are restored.

Options Menu

Search Archives
If this option is selected, all archive types will be searched.   See "Searching Archives" for a list of archive types known to File Finder for Windows.

Search Subdirectories
If this option is selected, all subdirectories will be searched.   If it is not selected, only the starting directories will be searched.

Skip Bad Archives
If this option is selected, archives with invalid structures will be ignored.   If it is not selected, File Finder for Windows will display a message about each bad archive it finds.

Show Quickbuttons
Selecting this option toggles the Quickbuttons display.   See the section Quickbuttons for an explanation of how Quickbuttons are used.

Directories Menu

This menu shows the starting directory for each drive on your system.   When a drive is selected, you will be asked to select a starting directory for that drive.   The starting directory may be the root directory, or you may select a subdirectory.

Help Menu

File Finder Help
Displays Contents screen of File Finder Help.

Using Help
Displays information on using Windows Help.

About File Finder
Show information about File Finder for Windows, and allow printing of the registration form.   You should register File Finder for Windows after a sufficient evaluation period of less than one month.

How to Register File Finder for Windows

Buttons

There are three button options. They can be clicked with the mouse or selected with the keyboard by pressing ALT and one of the following letters:

S   - Search
Begin the search process, using the parameters entered.   The search time and the number of files found includes all searches perfomed.   See "Multiple Searches" for an explanation of how successive searches are handled.

C   - Clear
Clear the search pattern and the list of files to begin another search.   The File Finder for Windows output window will be closed.   You can also begin a new search without clearing first, and the files will be added to the current list.

R   - Reset
Reset restores the Date, Time, and Size ranges to the minimum and maximum values, so that all files are selected.   The range of dates supported by DOS is January 1, 1980 through December 31, 2099.   The range of files sizes supported by DOS is from 0 to 2,147,483,647 bytes.

Output Window

The File Finder for Windows output window displays the search parameters for each search, and holds a list of all files found. This window can be scrolled using the scroll bar or the keyboard.   Keys which can be used are Home, End, up-arrow, down-arrow, PageUp, and PageDown.   You can flip back and forth between the Output Window and the Main Window using CTRL-TAB.

In addition to listing files found, any file in the list can be selected with a double-click.   If the program is an executable, File Finder for Windows will run the program.   If the file is not an executable, File Finder for Windows will run whatever application is associated with the file selected.   If no association is defined, File Finder for Windows will display a message.   Associations can be defined in the File Manager.   From the File menu, select Associate, and follow the procedure to define an Association.

Files which are in archives can be extracted, provided that the appropriate de-archiving program exists and is Associated with the archive type.   For example, assume that you have a program PKUNZIP.EXE which will extract .ZIP files.   In File Manager, associate the program PKUNZIP with the file extension ZIP.   When you double-click on a file in an archive, you will be given the option of extracting that file, or the whole archive.   The files extracted will be placed in the same directory as the archive.

If you do not have a separate de-archive program for a particular type of archive, set up a .BAT file which will issue the proper commands.   For example, to create a "de-archive program" for ARJ files, create this file "ARJE.BAT", and associate it with the ARJ extension:

```
arj e %1 %2 %3 %4 %5 %6 %7 %8 %9
```

Assuming ARJ.EXE exists, you will be able to extract files from ARJ archives.

Multiple Searches

When you perform a search with the output window open, you will be given the choice of clearing the output window or appending the search to the existing list.

File Finder for Windows can perform many searches in succession.   The results of each search can be appended to the end of the list.   Each search will include the parameter settings for that search.

Special Characters

You may want to search for files which contain a certain special character, for example, a file named ESPAÑOL.DOC.   To insert such a character, use the Windows Character Map utility.   With Character Map, you can select the character that you want to insert, and copy it to the clipboard.   In File Finder for Windows, use, <shift>-<insert> to insert that character into the search pattern.

An alternative method of using Character Map is to use it to find the code that corresponds to the character you want, then enter that code using the ALT key and the keypad.

How to Get Technical Support

Technical support is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 6:00 - 10:00 P.M., or Saturday from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.   at (314) 781-8709.   Technical support is also available through Compuserve by writing to 73613,3606.   You may also write to:

Simian Id Software
P.O. Box 430011
St. Louis, MO 63143
USA

How to Register File Finder for Windows

You should register File Finder for Windows after a sufficient evaluation period of less than one month.   It will probably take you less time than this to decide.   Register today!

First, make sure that your printer is ready to print. Then, select the About menu.   Click the Print Registration Form button and the registration form will print.   Registered users will receive the latest version of File Finder for Windows, phone support for one year, a user manual, free upgrades for minor versions, and low-cost upgrades on major versions. Please include comments and suggestions for improvements. Thank you for supporting shareware!

If you do not have a printer, simply send your name, address, and $10 U.S. to:

> Simian Id Software
> P.O. Box 430011
> St. Louis, Mo. 63143
> U.S.A.

Please indicate that you are registering File Finder for Windows, and the version number. Also indicate what diskette size you prefer, either 360K or 720K.

You may also register File Finder for Windows through Compuserve, by using registration ID 1886.

Thank you for supporting the Shareware concept! Any comments or suggestions for improvement are welcome, and will help to make this a more useful program for everyone!

What is Shareware?

This definition of Shareware was written by Paul Mayer, author of GRAB Plus:

Shareware distribution gives users a chance to try software before buying it.   If you try a Shareware program and continue using it, you are expected to register.   Individual programs differ on details -- some request registration while others require it, some specify a maximum trial period.   With registration, you get anything from the simple right to continue using the software to an updated program with printed manual.

Copyright laws apply to both Shareware and commercial software, and the copyright holder retains all rights, with a few specific exceptions as stated below.   Shareware authors are accomplished programmers, just like commercial authors, and the programs are of comparable quality.   (In both cases, there are good programs and bad ones!) The main difference is in the method of distribution.   The author specifically grants the right to copy and distribute the software, either to all and sundry or to a specific group.   For example, some authors require written permission before a commercial disk vendor may copy their Shareware.

Shareware is a distribution method, not a type of software.   You should find software that suits your needs and pocketbook, whether it's commercial or Shareware.   The Shareware system makes fitting your needs easier, because you can try before you buy.   And because the overhead is low, prices are low also.   Shareware has the ultimate money-back guarantee -- if you don't use the product, you don't pay for it.

ASP Ombudsman

As of November, 1993, Simian Id Software became a member of the Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP).   ASP ensures standards of software and support within the Shareware industry.   If you have any dispute with Simian Id Software which is not resolved to your satisfaction, you may go to the ASP Ombudsman for help.   ASP requires its authors to include this statement:

This program is produced by a member of the Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP). ASP wants to make sure that the shareware principle works for you. If you are unable to resolve a shareware-related problem with an ASP member by contacting the member directly, ASP may be able to help. The ASP Ombudsman can help you resolve a dispute or problem with an ASP member, but does not provide technical support for members products. Please write to the ASP Ombudsman at 545 Grover Road, Muskegon, MI 49442-9427 USA, FAX 616-788-2765 or send a Compuserve message via CompuServe Mail to ASP Ombudsman 70007,3536.

Wildcards are the characters **?** and * that can be specified in a search pattern. **?** indicates that any character is a match in this position. * indicates that any number of characters which follow are a match.

An archive is a single file which contains a collection of files. The files in an archive are usually compressed, to take less disk space. The advantages of using archives include using less space for file storage, and easier copying and moving of file collections.

Shareware is a means of distributing software. The basic concept is that programs are distributed for free, by means of electronic bulletin boards, computer networks, and shareware vendors. Its main advantage is that it allows computer users to try software before buying (registering) without the need to spend much money up front. By distributing software in this fashion, software can be made available for a much lower cost than traditional commercial software. Also, shareware software companies are usually more responsive to suggestions than traditional companies.

A root directory is the highest-level directory on a drive.   For example, C:\ is the root directory of the C drive.