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Allocation Unit

A storage unit made up of one or more sectors, depending on the size of the disk. The smallest unit of DOS file space allocation. Same as cluster.

Archive Attribute

The symbol (a) that marks files that have been changed after they were last backed up. Backup applications clear the archive attribute. You can clear it manually in the File Manager File menu Properties dialog box.

Ascending Order

A sorting method. When this method is used, items are sorted from A to Z, smallest to largest, or earliest to latest.

ASCII

The set of text codes used by DOS. The basic set includes 128 letters, numbers, punctuation marks, and other codes. Most computers recognize the extended ASCII set of 256 characters, which includes line-drawing and international characters.

Associate

Specify the application that runs documents that have a specific file type.

You cannot open a file directly unless it is associated with an application. After a file type is associated with an application, when you run or open any file with that file type, you start the associated application.

To run an individual file in a different application, first launch the application you want to use, and then open the file from the application.

AUTOEXEC.BAT File

A batch file in the root directory that is executed every time you start your computer. This file contains DOS instructions used to initialize system settings, such as your DOS PATH, load memory-resident programs, and launch applications.

AUTOEXEC.BAT is run after CONFIG.SYS.

BIOS

Basic Input/Output System. The routines stored on the ROM chip on your system motherboard that control such functions as video display, keyboard input, and printer control. Your computer uses these instructions to prepare to load DOS.

Boot Sector

The first sector on a disk. It contains a small startup program that loads and starts DOS.

If the boot sector on your hard disk is damaged, you cannot boot your system normally. Use your emergency disk to boot the computer and run DiskFix to repair the boot sector if possible.

Bootable Disk

A disk that contains the basic operating system files that start your system.

On most systems, if there is a disk in the A: drive, the system will try to boot from that disk. Make sure that your emergency or bootable disk can be run from your A drive or the floppy drive your system uses as a boot drive when it contains a disk.

Case-sensitive Search

A search for characters that match upper and lower-case letters exactly as typed.

CGA

Color Graphics Adapter. A graphics standard used in many early PCs, CGA allows 16 colors and can display only ASCII characters or low-resolution bit-mapped graphics.

Cluster

The smallest unit of DOS file-space allocation. Same as allocation unit.

CMOS

Complementary Metal-Oxide Semiconductor. A battery-powered semiconductor on the motherboard of your computer. It stores the system date and time, and information about the memory and disk drives on your system.

Compress Command

Reduces the size of files so that they take up less disk space. Some files can be reduced by 50% or more.

The Expand command restores compressed files to their original size so you can use them again. File Viewer can display the contents of a compressed file. File Manager lets you launch compressed files directly from their compressed format in a compression file set.

Several individual compressed files can be stored in one compression file.

Compression File

A file that contains one or more compressed files.

In File Manager, you can create an empty compression file with the Create Directory command on the File menu and use it as if it were a directory. You can delete, copy, or move individual compressed files into and out of it. You can also view the compressed files.

Compression files are useful for storing large files you use occasionally, or for sending files to another user.

CONFIG.SYS File

A configuration file in the root directory that is executed on startup before AUTOEXEC.BAT. This file might contain commands that configure memory, set   internal system commands, or load device drivers necessary for the normal operation of your computer.

Confirm

Respond to a prompt that asks you to approve an action such as deleting a file.

By default, Windows displays a dialog box asking you to press Return or click OK to confirm that you want to delete or move a file, or copy a file that will write over an existing file.

Contiguous

Elements that are immediately adjacent to each other.

For example, if all clusters assigned to a file are in sequence on the disk, the file is contiguous. If the clusters are located in different parts of the disk, the file is fragmented.

Copy-protected Software

Contains a program of hidden instructions intended to prevent you from making unauthorized copies.

CPU

Central Processing Unit. The chip that executes instructions on your computer. Its speed and abilities depend on its type: the 8086 chip was used for the original PCs and XTs, then the 80286, and 80386 or 80486 for some of today's PCs. Some of the newest PCs contain even more powerful CPU chips.

Some computers have a separate, additional math coprocessor chip, while others rely on math coprocessor emulation. The 80486DX has its math coprocessor built in.

Cross-linked Files

A file-storage error that occurs when one cluster is assigned to more than one file.

Like lost clusters, cross-linked files can occur when the computer is interrupted by a system crash or a power outage while it is saving a file.

Run DiskFix to repair cross-linked files.

Custom Command

A command that you create through the Options menu Customize Commands dialog box. A custom command can be another Windows application, a DOS application that has an associated PIF file, or a ScriptTools compiled script.

▶ Add custom commands to the Toolbar or any menu in the application you are running. Select Customize Menus or Customize Toolbar from the Options menu Customize command.

Cylinder

The set of tracks on a disk that occupy the same position on each side of each disk platter.

On a single, double-sided disk,   cylinder 1 includes track 1 of the top and bottom sides. On hard disks with several platters, cylinder 1 is made up of track 1 on the top and bottom of each platter.

Data Encryption Standard (DES)

An encryption standard established by the National Bureau of Standards. The DES technique allows information to be transformed into an apparently random stream of bits for security reasons. It uses a binary number or string of binary values as an encryption key. Each key results in a different encoding pattern.

Full DES encryption performs the substitution table pass 16 times. Quick encryption performs the substitution table pass twice. Even two passes make the file extremely secure. However, full DES encryption is required by US Department of Defense standards.

Note

DES encryption is available to US and Canadian users, but it is not supplied with the standard version of PC Tools for Windows. If you need DES encryption and are entitled to use it, you can download WNDES2.DLL from the Central Point BBS, or from the Central Point Software forum on CompuServe. You can also call Central Point and ask us to send you the DLL.

Default

The settings or configuration a program uses when it first starts up.

You can change default values temporarily or permanently. If you change defaults permanently by saving the changes, then the new settings are the defaults.

Note, however, that some programs allow you to reset to the original defaults shipped with the product. To recover factory defaults for most programs, you have to reinstall the program.

Delete Sentry

A Central Point Software data protection method that saves whole deleted files in a hidden directory named \SENTRY. You can specify what kind of files are saved for later recovery.

A file protected by Delete Sentry can be reliably restored because the file itself is saved. See Delete Tracker for comparison.

Delete Tracker

A Central Point Software data protection method that saves the name of each deleted file and its cluster numbers in a hidden file named PCTRACKR.DEL.

A file protected by Delete Tracker can be reliably restored if none of its clusters have been written over by more recent files, or if you have not run a disk defragmentation program such as Optimizer, which relocates file clusters. See Delete Sentry for comparison.

Descending Order

A sorting method. When this method is used, items are sorted from Z to A, largest to smallest, or latest to earliest.

Device Driver

A program, usually loaded in your CONFIG.SYS file, that controls a device attached to your system, such as a mouse or printer, or manages a system component, such as expanded memory or a compressed drive.

Disk Label

A name you give to a disk or disk volume so that you can identify it. Disk label names can contain as many as 11 characters.

DOS

Disk Operating System. The system software that lets your programs communicate with your PC and its drives, monitor, and other components. DOS also contains a collection of commands, such as COPY and DIR, that do tasks like copying and organizing files.

DOS File Names

A DOS file name consists of two parts, the file name and the file extension, separated by a period. The file name can contain up to 8 characters. The file extension can contain up to 3 characters.

You can use the following characters in DOS file names:

A - Z and 0 - 9, underscore (_), caret (^), dollar sign ($), tilde (~), exclamation point (!), number sign (#), percent sign (%), ampersand (&), hyphen (-), curly braces ({}), parentheses (()), at sign (@), apostrophe or right single quote ('), grave accent or left single quote (`).

You cannot use backslash characters, commas, spaces, or extra periods.

Drag-and-Drop

A method of acting on objects by selecting them with your mouse, holding down the mouse button, and dragging the file name or object to a new destination, where you release the mouse button to drop it into place.

EGA

Enhanced Graphics Adapter. A video graphics standard that can display up to 16 colors at a time from a palette of 64 colors, at a resolution of 640 horizontal pixels by 350 vertical pixels.

Encrypt

To encode ordinary files so that they cannot be read or executed until they are decrypted. A method of securing data from unauthorized or improper use.

Environment Variable

A string of characters that DOS translates to a path name. Many programs use environment variables to locate files.

For example, a database program may translate the environment variable DBASEDAT to find out where data files are stored. You might use the DOS SET command to specify the name of the drive and directory where the files are kept. If you keep your files in D:\DATAFILE, you enter the following line in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file to create the DBASEDAT environment variable.

```
SET DBASEDAT=D:\DATAFILE
```

Expanded Memory

One method of using memory above the 640K limit of conventional DOS RAM. Expanded memory, also known as EMM or EMS memory, is controlled by a memory manager such as QEMM, 386MAX, or DOS EMM386. Windows uses extended memory instead, but you may still need expanded memory if you run older DOS applications.

Extended Memory

Memory above the 640K limit of conventional DOS RAM. Extended memory, also known as XMS, is used by Windows to run faster and more efficiently.

File Allocation Table (FAT)

A reserved area that DOS uses to keep track of all clusters on the disk or partition. The FAT contains information about which clusters are assigned to which files, and marks bad clusters so that they cannot be used to store data.

File Attribute

A specific characteristic that describes properties of a file. For example, a file may have attributes that define it as hidden or read-only.

The following are DOS file attributes:

System (s)   Used by the operating system and not listed by the DIR command.

Hidden (h)   Not listed by the DIR command.

Read-only (r)   Cannot be written to or deleted.

Archive (a)   Changed since last backup.

Directory (d)   A subdirectory.

Networks use additional file attributes.

File Properties

File name and type, size, creation and modification dates, path and access specifications, and all file attributes.

File Type

File type is determined by the file extension, which are the characters that follow the period in the file name.

A DOS file extension can contain as many as three characters. For example, FILE.TXT has a file type of TXT and PROGRAM.C has a file type of C.

The file type is used to associate a file with an application that runs it. For example, all files with file type TXT are associated with the Windows Notepad application by default.

DOS file names do not always include a file extension: FILE alone is a legitimate DOS file name. You cannot associate such a file with an application, however.

Filter

A file-property specification that determines what file names are displayed in a file list, or found by a file-search command such as SmartFind.

For example, if you want to delete old files, you might create a filter that selects files last modified before January 1, 1993.

Format

Prepare a disk to store data.

There are two kinds of disk format:

Low-level   Prepares the surface of the disk to store data by writing the addresses that indicate individual sectors. Most hard disks are low-level formatted by the manufacturer.

High-level   Creates the system areas necessary for data storage, such as the boot sector and root directory.

When you format a floppy disk, you perform both a high-level and low-level format.

Fragmented File

A file stored in allocation units that are in noncontiguous sectors on a floppy or hard disk.

Hardware Interrupt

An interrupt request, or IRQ, that comes from hardware such as a keyboard, mouse, or modem. Hardware interrupts tell your CPU when to interrupt operations momentarily in order to get information from a hardware device.

For example, when you click your mouse button you send an interrupt to the CPU. The active application decides how to interpret the information, whether to display a dialog box or move the cursor, perhaps.

Hidden Attribute

A DOS file attribute. The Hidden attribute (h) is assigned to files to prevent users from seeing the file name in file lists, and then changing or deleting the file.

History List

A list of the most recent entries you have made in a particular text box.

For example, a history list for a file name text box contains the most recently used file names.

Icon

A graphic representation of an object in a computer system. For example, systems using a graphical user interface (GUI) use icons to represent objects such as files, applications, documents, and disk drives. When you select the icon with a mouse click, you can move the icon or access the object it represents.

Idle Time

Time during which a system receives no input, such as keystrokes, mouse clicks, or disk activity, and no processing is going on.

I/O Port

An connector used for an input or output device. In most cases, the I/O ports are the serial and parallel ports, used to connect modems, printers, and other devices.

Launch

To start an application.

You can launch an application in several ways:

- Double-click a file name in a file list window. You can double-click an application name, or the name of a file associated with the application.
- Use the File menu Run command.
- Double-click an application icon in Desktop.

Logical Drive

Storage space to which a drive letter has been assigned so that you can access it.

A logical drive may be an entire physical disk, such as a floppy disk, or a RAM drive, which exists only in memory. It may also be a partition on a large hard disk or a network drive.

Lost Cluster

A cluster that is marked as "in use" in the File Allocation Table (FAT), but is not associated with any file.

Use DiskFix to recover lost clusters so that you can use them.

Mapped Drive

A network drive that has been assigned a logical drive letter on your local system so that you can access it.

Math Coprocessor

An auxiliary processor that handles math operations.

A math coprocessor processes floating-point operations much faster than the CPU. A math coprocessor can improve performance in spreadsheets, computer-aided design, and other math-intensive applications.

Some chips, like the 80486DX, have a built-in math coprocessor.

Maximize

To enlarge a window to its maximum size by using the Maximize button, which is the upward-pointing triangle at the right of the title bar, or the Maximize command on the Control menu.

Media Descriptor Byte

The first byte in the file allocation table, indicating what kind of disk it is, such as a 360 K floppy disk.

Memory

The short-term electronic storage area in a computer system. When you turn the computer off, the contents of memory is lost.

Minimize

To reduce a window to an icon by using the Minimize button, which is the downward-pointing triangle at the right of the title bar, or the Minimize command on the Control menu.

Modeless Dialog

A dialog box that allows you to work in another window while the dialog box is open.

Mono

Monochrome. A video graphics adapter for a monitor that can display only a single color, usually black and white, green, or amber.

Native Mode

The display mode of a file as you see it in the application that created it.

For example, a spreadsheet file is displayed as you would see it in the spreadsheet application.

NetWare File Attributes

Special properties of a NetWare file.

Execute Only   Can only be executed. It cannot be read or written to.

Sharable   Can be used by more than one user at a time.

Index   Maintained in the network system index for quicker access.

Purge   Can be erased from the network drive. Purged files cannot be recovered.

Copy Inhibit   Cannot be copied.

Delete Inhibit   Cannot be deleted, even if you have Erase access privileges.

Rename   Cannot be renamed.

Transactional   Ensures proper file modification. If some changes cannot be written, no changes are made. The file is left in its original state.

Normal Window Size

The application-defined window size.

You can specify the normal window size for some applications. Some applications remember the most recent size of the window, and use that as the normal size. Other applications have a fixed normal size.

OEM

Original Equipment Manufacturer. An OEM supplies a component to another company, which sells it under its own name. For example, a brand-name computer usually includes a version of DOS, which might be supplied by a different company. The supplying company is an OEM.

Partition

A section of a physical disk that has been formatted with its own partition table, root directory, and File Allocation Table (FAT), and assigned a unique logical drive letter.

You can use a disk partition like a separate hard drive. Partitioned drives contain only one bootable partition, however.

Physical Drive

The disk actually in the floppy drive or a fixed disk itself.

A physical drive can be partitioned, or otherwise assigned more than one logical drive letter.

Pixel

An abbreviation for picture element. A pixel is a single dot on a display screen.

Recovery Disk (Emergency Disk)

A special disk that contains a copy of the master boot record on your hard disk as well as other unique system information. A recovery disk helps you to reboot your system and recover data in an emergency.

Remote

In network terminology, any peripheral equipment, such as a printer, to which a user has access, but is not physically attached to the user's computer.

Root Directory

In hierarchical file systems, the top-level directory from which all subdirectories branch.

Screen Font

A font as displayed on your screen. Screen fonts are designed to match printer fonts closely so that your documents look the same on the screen as they do when printed.

Search Group

A set of files that have specific file extensions. You can create a search group that contains files with more than one file extension, such as .EXE, .BAT, and .COM.

Certain default search groups are created when you use the File Manager Associate command to connect files with application applications. You cannot modify these default groups except by using the Associate command, but you can create new groups and change groups that you have created.

Sector

The smallest data storage unit on a disk. Even if only a single byte of information storage is requested, an entire sector is assigned to the file.

Security Standards

Refers to the computer security standards required by the Department of Defense. These standards require a special method for writing over deleted files so that no data can be recovered and read. You can select this method of clearing free space, or the Central Point standard method.

Select

To mark an item so that you can perform some action. Selected items are usually highlighted or surrounded by a hollow selection box.

Software Interrupt

Interrupts that programs send to the BIOS or the operating system to request services. For example, the Int 21h functions control file management services provided by DOS, such as Execute Program and Open File.

Device drivers and TSRs often install their own routines to intercept certain interrupts. For example, the VSafe program needs to know when you open a potentially virus-infected file, so it checks for the interrupt that opens files.

Sort Key

A key that determines the order in which files are displayed in the File List window. For example, if you specify date as the sort key, the names of the most recent files are displayed first and the oldest last.

With File Manager, you can specify a primary and a secondary sort key. For example, if you specify date as the primary sort key and file type as the secondary, files for each date are displayed in alphabetic file type order.

Substitute Drive

A DOS directory to which you have assigned a drive letter with the SUBST command. A substitute drive is not a physical drive or a disk partition.

You might create substitute drive A: to refer to C:\INSTALL if you are running an application that expects input from floppy drive A, for example, and your files are actually in C:\INSTALL.

If you have assigned drive letter A: to a DOS directory, it cannot be used to access the floppy drive on your machine. See your DOS manual for more information about the SUBST command.

When you optimize your C: drive, the subdirectory INSTALL and its files are optimized like other directories and files.

System Attribute

The DOS file attribute (s) that marks a file used by the operating system or another program. System files occupy disk space but do not appear in directory listings.

DOS System Files

The DOS system files are the essential files that run your computer system.

DOS system files include COMMAND.COM, the command interpreter, which appears as an ordinary file in the file list and two other files, IO.SYS and MSDOS.SYS or its equivalent. These files must be in the root directory of any disk you boot your system from.

IO.SYS and MSDOS.SYS are hidden files. Unless you use the Custom Filter option on the View menu to specify hidden and system files in your file list, you do not see these names in the root directory file list.

Note

You probably have other system files on your hard disk. System files are marked with the system (s) attribute, and usually have the file type .SYS. Device drivers are often system files. Only the DOS system files are copied to a disk when you format the disk with system files or use the SYS command to add system files to an already formatted disk.

SYSTEM.INI File

The Windows startup file that contains internal system configuration information for Windows. Most of the entries in this file are explained in the SYSINI.WRI file in your Windows directory.

Track

A series of sectors on a disk at the same horizontal distance from the edge of the data recording area. When the disk's read/write head is stationary, a track is all the sectors that spin past the head in each full rotation of the disk.

TSR

A Terminate and Stay Resident program, also called a memory-resident program. A TSR is loaded from DOS and stays in memory, working in the background. Device drivers, memory managers, VSafe, and VWatch are all TSRs.

UART

 Universal Asynchronous Receiver-Transmitter. A UART circuit, usually enclosed in a single chip, controls the serial port on your computer.

VGA

Video Graphics Adapter. One of the current standards for PC video displays. VGA video can display up to 256 colors, at a resolution of 640 horizontal pixels by 480 vertical pixels.

Virus

A program that attaches itself to other programs or data. A virus' typical purpose is to disrupt the processing of information on an infected system. When an infected program is executed, the virus reproduces and spreads by searching for other software that is not infected, and then attaching itself to previously "clean" software.

Whole-word Search

A search option that finds only whole words. For example, if you're searching for the word "his," the characters "his" in such words as "this" and "whisper" won't be found. Without this option selected, any sequence of characters matching the search text will be found.

Wildcard Character

A character that represents one or more characters. The question mark (?) wildcard can be used to represent any single character, and the asterisk (*) wildcard can be used to represent any character or group of characters that might match that position in other file names. For example, *.EXE represents all files that end with the .EXE file name extension.

Windows Enhanced Mode

One of two operating modes of Windows 3.1. Enhanced mode, unlike standard mode, provides virtual memory and allows non-Windows applications to run in the background and in a window called a DOS box. The disadvantages of enhanced mode are that it is slower than standard mode and uses a significant amount of disk space to provide virtual memory.

Windows Real Mode

One of the Windows 3.0 modes. Windows 3.1 eliminated this mode.

Windows Standard Mode

One of two operating modes of Windows 3.1. Standard mode is faster than enhanced mode but does not provide virtual memory. It also does not allow non-Windows applications to run in the background or in a window. DOS sessions must run in the foreground and use the full screen.

WIN.INI File

A file that contains Windows configuration information. The information in this file can be used and modified by any Windows application.

PC Tools for Windows stores a variable in WIN.INI to tell Windows where to find PC Tools for Windows configuration files.