DelDir for DOS

version 2.4

Program and documentation by Emmanuel Verbeeck
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Object:

DelDir is a command-line utility to remove or wipe files, directories, and whole volumes.

Features:

- Handles read-only, hidden, and/or system files (eg. DELDIR \io.sys);
- Handles non-empty directories and their subdirectories (eg. DELDIR \windows);
- Handles whole volumes at once (eg. DELDIR d:);
- Handles multiple wildcards specifications at once (eg. DELDIR *.old *.bak *.tmp);
- Wilcards can be used recursively across subdirectories;
- Can request global and/or local confirmation before deletion;
- Can truly wipe data for non-recoverable sensible data;
- Can remove all files but keep the 'skeleton' (the directory structure);
- Operates in interactive, batch, and mute modes;
- Detects redirection of report to a log file;
- Handles exclusion wildcards with *Extended Patterns* (Unix-like);
- Intercepts or ignores hardware faults;
- Intercepts or ignores break requests;
- Remembers default options set via an environment variable;
- Handles Listfiles (ASCII list of files to be deleted);
- Operates in both French and English;
- Is totally free!

Syntax:

    DELDIR [wildcard...] [/options...]

Wildcards specifications:

d: is a complete drive to delete
[d:]path   is a specification of directories to delete
[d:][path]name[.ext]   is a specification of files to delete
@[d:][path]name[.ext]   is an ASCII file containing a list of items to delete
#name[.ext]   is a specification of files to exclude

Exclusion masks can use *Extended Wildcards*:

*   means "zero, one or more character" and is not confined to end of pattern
?   means "any one and only one character" and is not confined to end of pattern
[abc]   means "one letter, must be either 'a' or 'b' or 'c'"
[!xX]   means "one letter, any letter but not 'x' and not 'X'"
[a-dA-D]   means "one letter, from 'a' to 'd', lower- or uppercase"
\!   means '!' literally
\[means '[' literally
\]   means ']' literally
*   means '*' literally
\?   means '?' literally
\-   means '-' literally
\\   means '\' literally

eg. this:
        #[a-c]*_*.[!~]*
means:
        exclude any file beginning with either 'a', 'b' or 'c', containing an underscore, and whose
        extension doesn't begin with a tilde.

• files that would match: a_now.doc   cx_.txt b_b_b.1
• files that wouldn't match: xtra.exe   army_. a_now.~do

In the current version, Extended Wildcards are not used in items-to-delete specifications in order
to be totally compatible with DOS' s internal command DEL, so:

        DELDIR [ab]*.*

means literally "delete files begining with [ab]", it doesn't mean "files beginning with 'a' or 'b'"

        DELDIR [ab]*.* #*[ab].zip

is the same but will bypass ZIP files ending with either 'a' or 'b'.

Options summary:

/A   ask for confirmation (Yes/No/All/Quit) before processing each removal;
/B   beep on errors;
/C   count files deleted in each directory;
/D   disable CTRL-C and CTRL-BREAK during processing;
/E   bypass environment variable DDOPT=... reading, thus ignoring default parameters;
/F   display all messages in French instead of English;
/I   ignore hardware errors (this is especially useful in unattended batch files);
/K   keep the directory structure, just remove all the files;
/L   delete the listfile after it has been processed;
/M   be mute, don't report anything even errors (this is the same as a redirection to NUL);
/N   save the current parameters by automatically setting the DDOPT environment variable;
/O   only process files and ignore directories with the same pattern;
/P   pause when the screen is full;
/Q   be quiet, don't report items removed (but will report hardware errors);
/R   only process directories and ignore files withthe same pattern;
/S   also delete files in subdirectories;
/V   verify that files have correctly been deleted or wiped;
/W   wipe files instead of deleting them (data cannot be recovered even with UNERASE);
/X   exclude the files which have been created or modified since the last backup;
/Z   exclude hidden and system files.

Notes:

Multiple options can be combined (eg. /bcp is equal to /b /c /p); they can be either upper- or lowercase (eg. /c is equal to /C); and they can start with - instead of / (eg. -p is equal to /p).

Default options can be set via the DOS variable DDOPT in the AUTOEXEC.BAT file (eg. add the line SET DDOPT=F to always use French as DelDir's native language).

If the output is redirected to a logfile with > or >> then the options /A (ask for confirmation) and /P (pause when screen is full) will be ignored.

Warnings:

Using DELDIR C:*.* /DW would completely *wipe* your harddisk and wouldn't allow you to even stop the process! Just to say that you should always combine the /W (wipe) option with the /A (ask for confirmation) option. Also remember that unless the /Z option is specified, system and hidden files and directories are *not* protected!

Drive and/or paths are not allowed in exclusions, so "#mydir*.doc" will be refused. Exclusions are only for file patterns. Also don't forget that the characters [],!?*-\ are used in the extended patterns; if you want to use them literally, precede them with a backslash:

      #hello.*   means "exclude files HELLO with any extension"
      #hello.*   means "exclude files HELLO with the '*' extension"

The ERRORLEVEL value:

DelDir returns an ERRORLEVEL value (0 through 255) composed as follows:

- either a zero value, meaning that the process ran fine;
- either a non-zero value, meaning that some trouble occured:

1st bit set	(1)	file attributes could not be cleared(typically on network files);
2nd bit set	(2)	a wrong parameter had been specified (eg /u);
3rd bit set	(4)	a directory or file does not exist;
4th bit set	(8)	access to a file had been denied (typically on network files);
5th bit set	(16)	DELDIR.EXE has been internally modified or renamed;
6th bit set	(32)	the current directory had been specified;
7th bit set	(64)	a directory could not be removed (run CHKDSK or NDD);
8th bit set	(128)	a file could not be deleted (run CHKDSK or NDD).

This allows batch files to be aware of DelDir's eventual abnormal termination.

Some examples:

DELDIR -W f: g:
   wipes whole volumes F: and G:

DELDIR \tmp \temp -r
   deletes whole directories \TMP and \TEMP ignoring files TMP. or TEMP. in the root.

DELDIR *.bak *.old -s -af
   deletes all .BAK and .OLD files in current drive, requesting confirmation in french.

DELDIR d:\docs\???.doc /WXSQ
   wipes all three-letters .DOC files in D:\DOCS and under, except the new ones,
   and doesn't display anything but errors.

DELDIR a: /i/e/d #*.cpp #*.pas
   deletes whole diskette in A:, except the C++ and Pascal files, ignoring DDOPT,
hardware   faults and user interruptions.

DELDIR @\todelete.lst #*[0-9]*.*
   deletes all the files listed in \TODELETE.LST but excludes files containing a figure.

DELDIR /M/K m:
   deletes all files in M: and don't report anything, but keeps the directory structure

DELDIR *.bak *.tmp *.old -s >>\deldir.log
   removes all .BAK, .TMP and .OLD files, and appends report to \DELDIR.LOG.
   using -a or -p here would be ignored.

About...

DelDir is freeware, it can be freely copied and used without any restrictions provided the code and/or documentation is left untouched. I hope that you appreciate its versatility and many options. I have written the program with Borland C++ version 3.0 (a superb compiler and a top-level integrated environment by the way) and the documentation with Microsoft Word for Windows version 2.0c (very nice too) during some white nights...

It has been tested on several 286/386/486 PCs running under the following operating systems.

- Digital Research's DR-DOS (versions 3.41, 5.0 and 6.0),
- Microsoft's MS-DOS (versions 3.3, 4.01 and 5.0)
- Novell's NetWare (versions 2.15 and 3.11), provided you have enough access rights.

Please report bugs and suggestions for improvement, likes and dislikes, to:

Emmanuel Verbeeck,
32 Boulevard de la Cambre, boîte 58
1050 Brussels,
Belgium, Europe.

You can also send electronic mail to:

- Compuserve: [100010,3700]
- MCI Mail: 568-9552
- Internet: 5689552@mcimail.com

 I try to upload the latest version of DelDir on the same day to the following BBSes:

- Compuserve (in the IBMAPP forum, library 0)
- Channel One, Rusty'n Eddie, and Exec-PC (USA)
- The Farm BBS (England)
- The Top 50 BBS (France)
- Media Concept Lustin, Easy PC and Hysteria (Belgium)

If you upload this program to another BBS (this is a nice idea, thank you!) please use the filename DELDIRxx and the extension ZIP or LZH or ARJ. The archive should contain both the program (DELDIR.EXE) and this file (DELDIR.DOC) in an unmodified form. Keep in mind that using PkZip v2.xx means that users of PkZip v1.xx may be unable to unzip the archive! Anyway in my opinion Lharc and Arj are *much* better alternatives...

Special thanks go to PHL for deep beta-testing and advice!