BU - Batch Utility V4.00

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Batch Utility   *BU*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this program is to enhance the use of MS-DOS batch files.

"BU" replaces a number of separate utility programs, such as: *ASK, CRLF, CURSOR, HEADER, HITENTER, MSG, REDALERT, SOUND, TIMER, WARBLE,* and *YN.* It also adds functions not found in those older programs.

There are several reasons to combine all these functions into one program. First of all, the individual functions have been standardized. Secondly, you will save disk space by using only one program. Thirdly, the sound functions are adapted to the speed of your processor.

The syntax for the program is simple. The very first letter on the command line is the key code. This code may be followed by a "clear screen indicator" which clears the screen before the requested function is executed.

Then, optional arguments follow which are applicable to the requested function. For example, the "header" function takes the rest of the command line and displays it in a box on the screen, and the "sound" function looks at the first letter of the rest of the command line to determine which sound to produce.

If you don't like the noises, set the environment variable GD.SOUND to OFF:

<div align="center">SET GD.SOUND=OFF</div>

KEY CODES

P - Pause, wait for [Enter]   1)
C - Enter Character   1)
Y - Enter Y or N   1)
D - Dump File to Screen
F - Display File
H - Display Header   1)
M - Display Message   1) 2)
B - Display Blank Line   2)
T - Display Day, Date, and Time   2)
S - Sound   3)
W - Wait for a number of Seconds
^ - Clear the Screen, DOS CLS replacement
_ - Set Cursor to Normal, Big, or Hidden

All codes may be followed by ^, which will clear the screen first, e.g. P^, Y^, etc. Code H and H^ work the same, and so do ^ and ^^.

    1)   These codes may be followed by a message to be displayed.

    2)   These functions use DOS for the display, so the information may be redirected to a file or printer. If you have used ANSI.SYS to set colours, these three functions will display text in those colours.

    3)   Follow this code by B(eep), G(lissando), N(oise), P(hone), R(ed Alert), or W(arble).

Examples of all codes are found in BU-DEMO.BAT.

PAUSE:

Key code P or P^. Acts as a replacement for the DOS PAUSE command. The DOS command asks to strike "any" key when ready. That can cause problems if you accidentally hit a key. For example, you ask the user to insert a new disk in drive A: and use the DOS PAUSE command. If the user, by reaching for the disk happens to hit the space bar, disastrous things could happen. BU's PAUSE only accepts the [Enter] key, which is less likely to be hit by accident.

The optional message is displayed, followed by:
                Press the [Enter] key to continue, or [Ctrl]/[Break] to abort...

ENTER CHARACTER:

Key code C or C^. This function waits for the user to enter a keystroke, and sets an errorlevel code which can be examined in the batch file. There are two modes of operation for this function, one where ANY key is accepted, and one where only valid characters are accepted. All lowercase letters are converted to uppercase letters, regardless of processing mode.

If the rest of command line starts with a "{" then the program assumes that a list of acceptable characters follows, terminated with a "}". If such a list is given, then only a character from the list is allowed to be entered, and an errorlevel is returned corresponding to the position in the list. For example, if {ABC} is the given list, and the "B" was entered, errorlevel 2 is returned. In order for this procedure to work properly, all characters given must be unique. If {abcA} is handed to the program, it will never return errorlevel 4!

A second "{}" string may be included, to indicate a default response, and how many seconds to wait before this default is assumed to have been type. This can be very useful for unattended AUTOEXEC.BAT files of a BBS computer, or a file server, where the computer can load the required programs after a power outage, for example. Syntax of this string is "{k:secs}", where "k" is the default key, and "secs" is the number of seconds to wait. See BU-DEMO.BAT for an example.

If no list is given, then the ASCII value of the character is returned in the errorlevel. If a "Q" is entered, the errorlevel is set to 81.

Example of using a list of valid characters:

```
:menu
bu h Menu to test sounds:
echo  Red Alert
echo  Warble
echo  Quit
bu c {rwq} Select an option
if errorlevel 3 goto m-end
if errorlevel 2 goto m-2
if errorlevel 1 goto m-1
bu p Should never get here!
:m-1
bu s Red
goto menu
:m-2
bu s Warble
goto menu
:m-end
```

Example of using ASCII codes:

```
:menu
bu h Menu to test sounds:
```

echo   Red Alert
echo   Warble
echo   Quit
bu c Select an option
rem R=82, W=87, Q=81 --- this is compatible with the old ASK program!
if errorlevel 88 goto menu
if errorlevel 87 goto m-2
if errorlevel 83 goto menu
if errorlevel 82 goto m-1
if errorlevel 81 goto m-end
goto menu
:m-1
bu s Red
goto menu
:m-2
bu s Warble
goto menu
:m-end

ENTER YES OR NO:

Key code Y or Y^. This function works much like the "enter character" function with a list
option of {YN}. This function accepts a default value as {?}, where ? is a Y or N. Pressing
[Enter] causes the default value to be assumed as entered. The only other characters the
program will accept are "Y" and "N". Errorlevel 1 is returned for a YES response, a 0 for a NO
response.

The default {Y} or {N} may also include a number of seconds before this default response is
used. See "Enter Character" for more information, and check BU-DEMO.BAT for an example.

Example:

    rem A default response of "Y" is assumed.
    bu y {y} Do you want to continue
    if errorlevel 1 goto yes_opt
    echo Processing NO option
    goto contin
    :yes_opt
    echo Processing YES option
    :contin

Or:

    rem No default. The user must enter Y or N only.
    bu y Do you want to print the audit file

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if errorlevel 1 print audit.fil
:contin

DUMP FILE TO SCREEN:

Key code D or D^. The file name following the key code is dumped to the screen. Only one screen at most is shown. Display region is from the cursor position to the end of the screen. Useful for building a menu system.

DISPLAY FILE:

Key code F or F^. The file name following the key code is displayed on the screen. Much like the DOS TYPE command, except that the screen output is faster.

DISPLAY HEADER:

Key code H or H^. The message following the key code is displayed centered in a box, after the screen has been cleared.

DISPLAY MESSAGE:

Key code M or M^. The message following the key code is displayed on the standard output device. This is the screen if not re-directed. The text may be redirected to a file or the printer if you are logging messages. Works like the DOS ECHO command, but displays a blank line before and after the message so that you don't lose the message if there already is a lot of text on the screen. If you specify no text, 3 blank lines are displayed.

DISPLAY BLANK LINE:

Key code B or B^. A blank line is displayed on the standard output device. Output may be redirected to a file or the printer. Works like the DOS ECHO command without parameters SHOULD have worked.

DISPLAY DAY, DATE, AND TIME:

Key code T or T^. The current day, date, and time are written on standard output like "Thu 06-May-1993 11:25:01.92". This is useful for logging start and end times of a task. For example, if you redirect the output of this function to a file after each backup, you can always see when your last backup was done:

bu m Last backup done:

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type last-bak.txt
backup ....
bu t >last-bak.txt

SOUND:

Key code S or S^. This function is useful for signalling the end of a long task, or errors. Possible options are R(ed Alert), W(arble), N(oise), or G(lissando). Run it without options and you'll get the default sound.

WAIT:

Key code W or W^. This function allows you to pause a batch job for a given number of seconds, and then continue automatically. This can be used for displaying messages for 10 seconds, and then continuing. If a key is pressed during the sleep process, the wait is terminated. That way you don't have to wait the full 10 seconds, but continue as soon as you've finished reading the message.

CLEAR SCREEN:

Key code ^ or ^^. This function could replace the DOS CLS command because it maintains the coloured background and border (borders on CGA and VGA only). Of course colours are irrelevant on monochrome displays and colour monitors in BW mode.

SET CURSOR:

Key code _ or _^. Use as parameters ON, OFF, or BIG. ON and BIG set the cursor to normal and a full box respectively. OFF hides the cursor.

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