

UUParser User Guide



Written by John S. Lee

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BRIEF HISTORY

UUParser was written to extract uuencoded data from **text** files that have been saved from an Internet newsgroup. Usually the process of extraction is done by a text editor. Using a text editor can be time consuming, and at times, it cannot handle the large files saved from Internet Newsgroups. Another problem with using text editors is if you have a file that consist of several uuencoded files, the cutting and pasting process becomes grueling to say the least.

I wrote UUParser to resolve these problems and make parsing and encoding/decoding easier. You can save all the files you want, run them through the UUParser program, and get either separate uudecoded files or “clean” files ready for uudecoding. No matter how large the file is, and no matter how many parts it consists of, you can save many articles consisting of, for example, parts 1 through 4 of FILE A, a 1 of 1 of FILE B, and a 1 through 20 of FILE C. Your result could either be the 3 uudecoded files - FILE A, FILE B, and FILE C, or 3 separate text files - FILE A.uu, FILE B.uu, and FILE C.uu ready to be decoded!!

Text Editor Recommendation

Another powerful tool is BBEdit, b.k.a. Bare Bones Text-Editor written by Rich Seigel. This great utility provides something I really miss, LINE NUMBERS ON THE SIDES OF THE TEXT YOU'RE EDITING! This is an invaluable tool when trying to locate a problem with text files since UUParser gives precise information as to where a problem occurred.

User Instructions

Double Click on the UUParser application icon

Select **Open** or **Open Several** from the FILE menu.

The Standard File Dialog Box will appear. Select the file you want to parse.

The program begins work on the file, saving the new file(s) in the “Target Directory” directory of the source file.

UUParser will give information about what filename was used for the output file as well as the number of lines created for your file.

Once complete with the cycle it will stop. If you chose **Open Several** it will prompt you for another file.

You can select another file or click Cancel to quit.

Once you are finished, select "uudecode" from the FILE menu, or for added time savings use the Auto uudecode feature in the SPECIAL menu.

Drag & Drop :^{11,22}

UUParser supports drag-drop of single or multiple files. Select the documents you want to parse and drag them to the UUParser icon. The application will start and the files will be parsed.

¹¹ Holding down the COMMAND key, when a drag & drop from the Finder occurs, will automatically **JOIN** the selected files.

²² Select Auto UUDecode (Special Menu), and Auto-SAVE (Preferences...) for parsing/decoding immediately after Parsing or Joining a file.

FILE MENU

UUParse... [command-O]

This function prompts the user to select a file for parsing. The file must be in TEXT format, and must have been uuencoded in order for UUParser to work.

UUParse Several

This function does the same thing as open, except that once a file is done being parsed, UUParser will prompt the user for an additional file to parse.

Parse BinHex File [command-B]

This function allows the user to parse a file that has been BinHex encoded. It strips out all erroneous information and leaves a binhex file as a result.

Join Files [command-J]

Prompts user for a new file to be created, then prompts user for **multiple(source)** files to be concatenated/joined into a previously specified 'join' file.

For instance: 1st file -> test.jpg 1/5 (this file contains sections 1-3/5 of the file)
 2nd file -> test.jpg 4/5 (this file contains sections 4-5/5 of the file)

Result: test.jpg.uu This contains **everything** that was in the source files. **Your next step is to parse this file.** If you set the "Auto-SAVE" option in your preferences file, the file will automatically parse and decode. Select "Preferences" from the file menu and make sure the "Auto-SAVE" option is selected.

This can also be done from the desktop by selecting the files you want to join, holding down the COMMAND key, and drag the documents to the UUParser icon. The system will ask you for the name of the joined file, and UUParser does the rest, automatically.

Split File

Prompts user for a file, which will be segmented into sections of 900 lines each [by default]. Each (segmented) file can then be uploaded to a newsgroup in succession. This function adds 'Begin' and 'End' cut lines in the file(s) it generates. You can alter the write permissions and the number of lines per segment by selecting "Preferences" in the File menu.

uudecode [command-D]

Choose files to selectively uudecode into binary format.

uuencode [command-E]

Choose a file to uuencode into text format.

Preferences...

You can configure UUParser to your liking. The items you have control over are the source file, the intermediate file generated by parsing (identified by a ".uu" extension), encoding parameters, write permissions, lines/segment, and other functions.

When UUParser is first started it creates a preference file in the System Folder within the Preferences folder. The defaults settings are in brackets.

Disk Based Parsing [On]

This feature allows UUParser to parse from disk rather than reading the file into memory at once. This option takes more time, but allows parsing of files in tight memory situations. By default, this option is on. See the section on **Memory** for more information.

Delete Source File [Off]

The delete function allows you to delete a file once the scanning/parsing is complete.

With the delete function *ON*, your source file will be erased if there have been no errors. If errors were encountered either during the scan or the parsing process, the file will not be deleted. This allows you to examine the source file for anomalies.

Delete ".uu" File [Off]

The delete intermediate function in the preferences file allows you to delete the intermediate files UUParser creates (identified by a ".uu" extension).

With the delete function *ON*, your intermediate file, will be erased after it has been decoded and there were no errors. If errors were encountered either during the scan or the parsing process the file will not be deleted. This allows you to examine the intermediate file for anomalies.

Show Status [On]

The show status function draws a status bar and gives you the percentage of the file parsed. Turning this function off saves some time during the parsing/scanning process. However, this does not disable the display for the percentage complete.

Scan File [On]

The scan before parsing checks each character in the file for non-ASCII values which may be embedded in the file. This function can save you time if you are unsure about the quality of the file you have retrieved from a newsgroup. If the scan fails, it issues a warning message and allows you to either continue processing (meaning the file will be parsed once the scan is done) or to stop processing (so no new file is created). If you want to perform only the scan without parsing, you should select the *SCAN ONLY* item from *SPECIAL* menu.

Encoding:

Lets you set the type of uuencoding used when you uuencode a file. The type of encoding has a default setting of *UNIX*. The most commonly used form that I have observed is

PC/MSDOS (identified by all UPPERCASE characters in the uuencoded file). The types of encoding available are PC/MSDOS, UNIX, Mac, AIFF->Linear, and AIFF->ULAW.

When you set the encoding type, you are also specifying the filename parameters for the resultant encoded file. The criteria are:

PC & MS-DOS.....Name will follow 8 by 3 naming convention (12345678.uu)
UNIX.....'White spaces' and delimiter characters, '/' and '\', will be replaced with underscores('_'). Extended characters will be replaced by the hash symbol (#).
Macintosh.....All characters are allowed, except the usual ':'. Filename is not truncated
AIFF->Audio Linear.....Use this to convert an AIFF file to Mac Linear format
AIFF->Audio ULAW Use this when converting from an AIFF file to ULAW format (useful when transferring sounds to a Sun or NeXT workstation).

You can also set the default encoding from the **Encoding** menu.

Display:

Show Line/Byte Info [ON] lets you display the lines read, and the total number of bytes parsed. This is used primarily as another indicator to show that UUParser is working. I use this option if I am parsing a file that has long c-shell scripts attached. In the past, the indicator bar stopped moving, and you had no indication that the program was still working. With this option enabled, you can.

Alerts:

Show Minor Problems [OFF] tells the system to display the minor errors UUParser encounters. These are errors with the line length being too long (>80 characters), and 'begin' found before 'end' errors.

The line length errors have little effect on the final output file (since such lines are normally deleted during parsing). This error message has been kept for parser scanning purposes, to alert you of this minor anomaly.

The "...found 'begin' before 'end'" message is displayed if you have saved or concatenated the files out of order, such that a new filename was found before the previous file was saved in it's entirety. UUParser ignores files that have this error, but continues parsing.

Misc.:^{3Δ}

Auto-SAVE [ON] tells UUParser to automatically parse files that have been Joined. It bypasses the option of you renaming the file when the decoding process starts, so the system determines the filename and immediately begins to save the decoded file in the target directory. When used in conjunction with parsing the files, once parsed, are automatically decoded.

If you choose **uudecode** from the FILE menu, the Auto-SAVE is disengaged. This allows you to rename the resultant uudecoded files.

Drag&Drop then Quit [OFF] tells UUParser to "QUIT" after it parsers/joins/decodes/etc. files that have been dragged&dropped on UUParser's icon. If the program is active, and this preference is ON, UUParser *will* terminate after handling the files that have been d & d'ed.

^{3Δ} **WARNING: Using this option can overwrite files with the same name. Use with caution.**

Edit File Types [command-F]

This information is used for 'stamping' the uudecoded file with Macintosh type and creator codes. Instead of looking for 'patterns' within a file, the type and creator code information is based on the file suffix, which is most commonly used in the PC (IBM PC/ MS-DOS) and UNIX world. There is a limit of ten settings. Some of these have been preset for you. The defaults are:

<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Creator</u>
.mpg	BINA	mMPG
.gif	GIFf	GCon
.jpg	JIFF	JVWR
.sit	SITD	SIT!
.avi	TEXT	????
.zip	TEXT	????
.qt	Moov	TVOD
.dl	TEXT	????
.gl	TEXT	????
.txt	TEXT	txtt

This feature is NOT **case-sensitive**.

SPECIAL MENU

Scan Only

The "Scan Only" function disables all parsing functionality in the program. Instead of writing a parsed file, it just scans the source file for anomalies and issues warnings when it finds them. Some warnings will not appear if you did not check the "Show Minor Problems" item in the Preferences. See the section on **Preferences** for more information.

Auto UUDecode [ON]

Once UUParser has parsed all of the files it finds (in the source file), it will **automatically** uudecode them when this option is chosen. Use this option in concert with the "Auto-SAVE" option in the preferences to have your file parsed, decoded, and saved.

Filename to UPPERCASE/Do not convert file

When the file is about to be decoded, you can tell UUParser to set the decoded file name to all uppercase, or you can tell UUParser to keep the filename as it exists in the encoded file.

Set Target Directory [command-T]

This specifies where the parsed and uudecoded files will be saved. If one has not been specified, the output files may be stored in the root directory of the boot volume.

Note: If you are upgrading from a (previous) version of UUParser which did not contain this feature, you **must** set the Target Directory to avoid errors!

ENCODING MENU

The encoding menu sets the default encoding method used by UUParser. This function also determines what the 'suggested' filename will be in the 'save as' dialog box, corresponding to the type of encoding used.

- PC & MS-DOS.....Name will follow 8 by 3 naming convention (12345678.uu)
- UNIX.....'White spaces' and delimiter characters, '/' and '\', will be replaced with underscores('_'). Extended characters will be replaced by the hash symbol ('#').
- Macintosh.....All characters are allowed, except the usual '!'. Filename is not truncated
- AIFF->Audio Linear.....Use this to convert an AIFF file to Mac Linear format
- AIFF->Audio ULAW.....Use this when converting from an AIFF file to ULAW format (useful when transferring sounds to a Sun or NeXT workstation)

See the **Preferences** section for more information.

Limitations

Some limitations exist with UUParser. Unfortunately, there are so many ways in which files are posted to newsgroups, and since there is no standard in the way things are delimited for concatenation, you may find that once you run UUParse and uudecode a file, the file is damaged or unreadable. UUParser looks for "cut lines", but does *not* depend on them for proper parsing. The most important thing is the file **MUST** be uuencoded in order for UUParser to function properly.

UUParser now parses files that have been BinHex encoded (available to registered users only).

Features

UUParser provides some information while your file is being parsed. Below are a list of items displayed while parsing.

Output Filename: - This is the filename that UUParser found in the “Begin ### filename.sfx” (sfx = file suffix) line, and will be created once your file has been parsed.

of Lines: - This is the number of lines that UUParser has found that belong to the Output Filename. It continues this count until the end of file is found.

Status Display Bar/Complete %: The amount of the Source file that has been read and Parsed.

Lines Read: The actual number of lines read in the source file.

Bytes Read: The actual number of bytes read in the source file.

Error Detection

UUParser provides error detection for files that have been retrieved from a newsgroup. The error detection includes the capability of detecting non-ASCII characters that may have been received due to poor line conditions or other anomalies. UUParser will issue a warning noting the location where the bad character exists along with the character's position in the format (line#:pos). This allows you to use a text editor to make corrections to your file. If UUParser is asked to parse a file that has no lines which fit the uuencoded criteria, a message will be displayed:

UUParser found no lines in this file to parse.

Please make sure the file has been uuencoded!

This message means that the file was NOT in uuencoded format. Please see the **Error List** section for a complete list of UUParser errors.

Disk Errors

Although UUParser does its best to parse a file for you, at times it cannot parse due to non-ASCII characters being present. If UUParser finds these anomalies, it will stop writing the data, issue a warning message, and continue to scan the file for further anomalies. It will NOT delete the file even if your preferences say otherwise. If you are getting disk errors it is probably due to bad data within the file. Try **SCAN ONLY** in the **SPECIAL** menu and check your results.

Memory

The standard partition for UUParser is 384K. If you try to parse a file that is more than 384K, and you do not have the **Disk Based Parsing** preference checked in your "Preferences" file, UUParser will issue a warning, allowing you to Quit or choose another file (smaller) for parsing. In order to bypass this annoyance (especially if you're planning on downloading files larger than 384K), you can increase the partition by issuing a Get Info from the finder and increasing the partition, or enable the "Disk Based Parsing" parameter from the "Preferences" item under the File menu. Parsing from memory is also much faster than parsing from disk. If you decide not to use the "Disk Based Parsing" , be sure to allocate enough memory for the parsing operation.

A NOTE TO REGISTERED USERS (version 1.8 & up):

UUParser now parses BinHex files. Choose "Parse BinHex File" from the File menu. This option is available to registered user of UUParser.

UUParser Error List

Message

**UUParser found errors in this file
Please make sure the file has been uuencode!**

**UUParser found no lines in this file to parse
Please make sure the file has been uuencoded!**

MINOR PROBLEM(S) FOUND

**There's a 'begin' line before an 'end' line
Try the Join Files command....**

**There is a BAD character in the data stream.
Character error in:**

WARNING: There is not enough memory

Explanation

Binary data is in the file.
The file was not uuencoded OR BinHex encoded.

The file(s) were not in uu format.

During the scan, data problems occurred. Lines over 80 chars non-ASCII data, etc.

There is no 'end' at the end of a uuencoded file. It is probably part of a multi-part file. Try the join files command from the FILE menu.

The scan function was enabled and it found binary data within the file. UUParser works with TEXT files only.

The file you chose was larger than than memory allocated for UUParser. Allocate more memory by doing a Get Info for UUParser from the Finder. Or set the "Disk Based Parsing" from the Preferences item in the File menu.

k Error: -xx
did not decode properly. -34 is a disk full error, -

file or scanning it to find anomalies.

Some sort of disk error occurred. -1 indicates a file that
47's and -51's indicate more than one file open, and
reference number invalid respectively. Although these
should not occur, they sometimes do. Try re-parsing the

Future Versions

UUParser was originally designed to do one thing, parse files. Now it has many features and additions that extends that basic function. It is now a full fledged uudecoder/uuencoder, file splitter, and text file verifier. But the fans, and registered users of UUParser have asked for even more, and I am more than happy to include these additions for UUParser users. The next major release will be 2.0. There may be intermediate versions until 2.0, but these will concentrate on modifications to the version 1.5 & 1.7->1.72 technology. Version 1.8 and above will be available to registered users only.

Version 2.0 will include:

- Control over the parameters of file splitting <- now avail in 1.72/1.8
- Control over parsing parameters
- Encode/decode Mac applications
- BinHex encode/decode, along with parsing files that have been BinHex encoded and sent to a newsgroup <- BinHex parsing avail. in 1.8
- * Log generation of files you've parsed/decoded.
...and LOTS more!

Got a Bug/Comment/Suggestion?

Please e-mail me(Internet): jsl@netcom.com
America Online :JSLee

Credits

Programming/Design : John S. Lee
UU Engine Software : Bernie Wieser & Octavian Micro Development
Testing : Mike Baranowski & Brian K. Tanaka
Support : Arlene G. Lee & Sultan I. Lee
UUDecode info : Peter Honeyman, Robert Perlberg, and Tim Rose
Help Dialog Utility : James W. Walker
Documentation : John S. Lee & Mike Baranowski

Special Props

Brian K. Tanaka for the ever consistent "You know, it would be even better if..."
& "You know what you oughta add is..."

Mike Baranowski for the ever present "Is there a way of..." & "...can you add
this one other mod..." & introducing me to Bernie Wieser

Bernie Wieser for user interface suggestions.

To ALL of them for the many ideas that makes UUParser useful and fun to use.

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*****Site licensing is available. Please e-mail or write for more information.**

Please make checks/(US)funds payable to John S. Lee and mail to:

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