Match for Windows

Help Index

Match is a Windows application to compare two text files.   A summary of its operation can be accessed via the following items:

Summary of Operation
Matching Algorithm

The following menu items appear in the Match menu bar.   For information on the commands in one of the menu items, mouse on the corresponding menu item name.

File Menu
Help Menu

In addition, a number of keystrokes are interpreted by Match.   For information on these keystrokes, mouse on the following item:

Match Keyboard

For information on using Help, press F1 or choose Using Help from the Help menu item.

File Menu

The File menu item provides commands to direct loading text files into the left and right windows for matching against one another.   Separate File Open commands are provided for the left and right match windows, with keyboard accelerators for each.   The File menu item also provides a command to exit Match altogether.   For more information, select a File menu command name from the list below.

Open Left
Open Right
Exit

Open Left command - File Menu

The Open Left command of the File menu item directs that a file be loaded into the left-hand match window.   The file chosen is opened and read, and is then compared against the file in the right-hand window, if any.   Lines of text which cannot be matched against lines in the right-hand window are displayed in reverse video.

You choose the file to be loaded into the left-hand window via a file open dialog box.

You may also invoke the Open Left command via the Cntrl+F12 or Alt+Cntrl+F2 keystrokes.

Open Right command - File Menu

The Open Right command of the File menu item directs that a file be loaded into the right-hand match window.   The file chosen is opened and read, and is then compared against the file in the left-hand window, if any.   Lines of text which cannot be matched against lines in the left-hand window are displayed in reverse video.

You choose the file to be loaded into the right-hand window via a file open dialog box.

You may also invoke the Open Right command via the Cntrl+Shift+F12 or Alt+Cntrl+Shift+F2 keystrokes.

Exit command - File menu

The Exit command terminates the Match application, removing it from the screen.   The keystroke Alt+F4 is equivalent to the Exit command.

Help Menu

The Help menu item provides access to Windows Help for the Match application.   Commands are available for the Match help index, for the Match keyboard summary, and for help on the Windows Help application.   A command is also available to show the About box for Match.   For additional information, select a command from the list below.

Index
Keyboard
Help on Help
About

Index command - Help Menu

The Index command activates the Windows Help application and displays the help index for Match.

Keyboard command - Help Menu

The Keyboard command activates the Windows Help application and displays keyboard usage information for Match.

Help on Help command - Help Menu

The Help on Help command activates the Windows Help application and displays help information on using Windows Help.

About Match Dialog Box

The About Match command in the Help menu item displays a dialog box for Windows Match.   The dialog box includes the version number of the program and the date the executable file (match.exe) was created.

Match Keyboard

The following keys are interpreted by Match:

Command Accelerator keys:

Cntrl+F12	Open a file into the left-hand match window.
Cntrl+Shift+F12	Open a file into the right-hand match window
Alt+Cntrl+F2	Open a file into the left-hand match window.
Alt+Cntrl+Shift+F2	Open a file into the right-hand match window.
Alt+F4	Exit Match

Window scrolling keys (scroll up means towards the front of the files):

Home	Scroll to the first line in both files.
End	Scroll to the last line in both files.
PageUp	Scroll up one window in both files.
PageDown	Scroll down one window in both files.
Up Arrow	Scroll up one line in both files.
Down Arrow	Scroll down line line in both files.

Summary of Operation

Match is a Windows application to compare the contents of two text files. The overall Match window is divided into two child windows below the menu bar, termed the left-hand match window and right-hand match window.   Text files may be loaded into both of these child windows.   Text loaded into the child windows is matched, line by line, with the results of the comparison displayed in the windows.   For any given line of text, there are three possibilities:

1. If the line matches a corresponding line in the opposite window, then the two lines are displayed alongside each other using the normal window text colors.   These colors are user-selected via the Windows Control Panel.

2. If the line occurs in the left-hand window but not the right, or in the right-hand window but not the left, then the line is displayed in reverse video and a blank line is displayed alongside it in the opposite window.

3. If the line corresponds to a differing line in the opposite window, then the two lines are displayed alongside each other, both lines in reverse video.

See Also

   Matching Algorithm

Matching Algorithm

Because text files may contain inserted or changed lines, simple character-by-character file comparison algorithms are inadequate to discover the changes between two files in any useful way.   Match incorporates a line-oriented algorithm designed to find inserted or changed lines and to display these changes in a useful form.

Match operates by scanning the two files from front to back.   After a pair of lines are found which differ, Match looks for a changed section in the two files or an inserted section in one or the other file after which the files once again compare.   A minimum number of lines must correspond exactly before Match decides it has isolated the difference between the two files.   The default value for this minimum number of lines is 3.