



GOOD OLD DOS WILL HELP PRINT LIST OF FILES

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Column: TECH THURSDAY; ASK THE COMPUTER GUY

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Q: How do I print out a listing of files in Windows Explorer?

A: This is not a job for mild-mannered Windows Explorer. We must don our "DOS IS BOSS" baseball caps and limber up our fingers to accomplish this bold task.

Go to "start," then "programs," then the MS-DOS prompt. From there, type "cd:\\" to get to the root directory. What we are going to do is to tell the operating system to print out the four types of Windows files: hidden, archive, system and read-only.

At the command prompt, carefully type "dir /s /a {gt} c:\list.txt", which tells the operating system to take all the files (the "/s" indicates the system files and the "/a" indicates the archived files) and put them in a text file named "list.txt."

Once this is done, go to Windows Explorer and look in the root directory for the list.txt file. When you find it, double click on it. If it is small, Notepad will open it up. If it is large, Wordpad will open it up. Print it out. Voila!

Q: I am sick of waiting for large files to download. I don't want these in the first place. How can I block them?

A: Let's quickly review how e-mail works. Someone sends you a large file and it sits on a server. When you go to your Internet service provider, you download those messages from the server.

Some e-mail programs allow you to block incoming e-mail greater than a certain size. Under Eudora Pro, go to "tools," "options," "incoming." There is a box to select for the size file to block. With Outlook Express, go to "tools," "accounts," "mail," "Internet accounts," "properties" and "advanced," then select the size to be blocked.

Please note that even if blocked, the large message still sits on the server. Every day that you check your e-mail you will get that same large message; it will bounce back, but only as far as the server. Sooner or later your ISP may call you up and ask, "What's all this junk?"

If you are a trusting soul, one possible solution is to check out *Mail2Web* (mail2web.com). Go to this page and enter your server name with password. If you choose to get your mail through *Mail2Web*, you have the option of viewing it before you download it. You can take a peek to see if a specific message has a huge attachment. The good thing about this site is that it gives you the option of then deleting

the message from its page, avoiding the problem of having unwanted files piling up on your ISP server.

Q: Is there a way I can use my parallel port to network my two home computers?

A: Most offices today have bunches of computers cabled together through network cards in each machine. Well, what about those 17 million American households with multiple personal computers?

There are four popular ways to network home computers: using existing telephone or power lines, a wireless method using radio frequencies or, as they do at work, with good old cable.

If you decide to use the telephone connections in your house, how do you get from your personal computer to the telephone jack? You can use a PCI network card, a USB connection or the parallel port.

If you have two PCs at home, you can buy a parallel port kit from Intel for \$159 (www.intel.com/anypoint). This package will include cables that will run from the parallel ports on two machines to a telephone connection in your house.

The hardware is the easy part for most of us mere mortals. The headaches normally begin with setting up your software to allow files to be transferred. Fortunately, the Intel AnyPoint product is easy to install.

John Gilroy of Item Inc. is heard on WAMU-FM radio's "The Computer Guys" at 1 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month. Send your questions to him in care of The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071 or via e-mail at jgilroy@iteminc.com.

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