Lab 1-1
Using the Command Line

Internal Versus External Commands

Internal Commands

Built into the OS.

Already in memory if the OS is loaded.

Available anytime the computer is displaying a command prompt.

Generally, the more frequently used commands.

Examples include: DIR, COPY, PATH, CD, MD, DEL, TIME, DATE.

External Commands

Not a part of COMMAND.COM.

Located in another directory.

Must be loaded into memory as needed by the OS.

Examples include: FORMAT, DEFRAG, DISKCOPY, MEMMAKER, and SCANDISK.

Syntax

A specific set of rules that you must follow when writing commands.

The order in which you arrange the elements of the command.

The rules of grammar for the command line.

Commands have three parts:

Keyword **Parameter** **Switch**

Optional

Keyword - What action to perform.

Parameter - What is acted upon.

Switches - How to perform the action.

Keyword

A unique word or set of characters that identifies the action to be performed.

Some are quite descriptive: FORMAT, COPY, MOVE

Others are abbreviated: DEL, DEFRAG, DBLSPACE

A few are little more than memory aids: EMM386 and MSCDEX.

Parameter

Additional directions for the command.

It may specify a directory or file on which to perform the action.

It may specify a hardware device.

It may specify a system setting.

Switches

A special type of parameter that enables or disables optional functions of the command.

The /P switch with the DIR command displays the directory one screen at a time.

The /W switch with the DIR command displays the directory in the wide format (five columns wide).

Two Common Forms of Commands:

Keyword   Drive/Files   Switches

Or

Keyword   Source Files   Target Files   Switches

DEL SALES95.DOC

Keyword

File

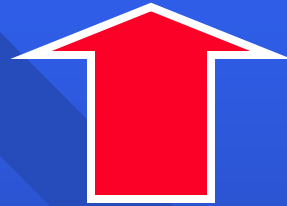DEL A:\SALES95.DOC

Keyword   File

COPY FILE13.TXT A:

Keyword

Source

Target
or
Destination
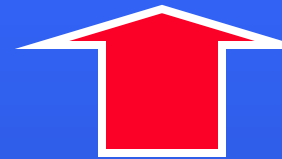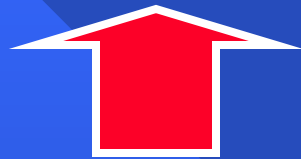
COPY FILE13.TXT A:

Space

Space

`COPY FILE13.TXT A: /V`

Keyword

Source

Target
or
Destination

Switch

Backslash Vs. Forward Slash

\   Backslashes are used as separators when specifying directory or file information.

/   Forward slashes are used to notify DOS that the next character is a command line switch.

Bad command or file name.

Getting Help.

Type **HELP** followed by the command you want to know about.

Type the command and then follow it with the switch **/?**.