

Common File Extensions

I have compiled this list in response to several enquiries about specific file extensions. This list is by no means exhaustive, but lists some of the most common in use at this time. It is not the purpose of this document to explain what each file is used for, as this information is available from individual programme suppliers. -- Lionel Hartley 2002

At least six specific variations also occur:

1. Some programmes rely on additional data and use the same extensions for different types of files. For example the extension '.DOC', one of the most common extensions for DOCUMENTS, is used by almost all versions of Microsoft Word, yet many '.DOC' files are not backwards compatible (able to be opened in earlier versions of word without conversion).
2. Some extensions are used to access the same file in different programmes. For example the extension '.CSV' which refers to a text file using commas as tabs (Comma Separated Value) and is used by Microsoft Excel, but may also be used by Microsoft Access address book, Cheyenne BitWare®, etc., and can be read just as easily in each programme. Many file extensions are deliberately cross-programme compatible, for example '.RTF' (Rich Text Format) and '.PDF' (Adobe® Portable Document File) which is also cross-platform compatible, usually able to be read by MAC or IBM. The extension '.TXT' is often cross-programme and cross-platform compatible because it usually refers to plain text, but can also include variations with a range of formatting codes that may be lost in the conversion process.
3. Some files are of the same type yet have different extensions for use in different programmes. For example a database file may have the extension '.D&A', '.DAT', '.DET', '.MDE', '.MDT', or '.ODC'.
4. Some extensions mean one thing in one programme and something quite different in another. For example the extension '.TBL' is a *table* in Adobe® Table and a *graph* in EncyloDict®.
5. Some extensions mean the same thing in different programmes and yet are not compatible. For example, a file with the extension '.DIC' usually refers to a dictionary file. However a '.DIC' file written for QuickVerse® is not compatible with a '.DIC' file written for QuarkXpress®.
6. A few programmes, notable DOS based (Such as PC Write) may allow the user to use extensions for their own purposes of file identification, such as date or subject codes. This may cause problems if the files are later used under Windows.

Programme files which are yet to be installed may have an extension that ends in an underscore (E.g. 'Ex_' will be unpacked as '.EXE' by the installer programme). Certain programmes may use a file that has no extension to store password keys, etc. A file that begins with a tilde (~) or a dollar sign (\$) is usually either a temporary or corrupt file. For example MS Word stores recovery files in the tilde format while Word is running and if the programme is shut down properly these are automatically deleted.

.1ST a text file - usually 'READ.1ST' (Read First) – compare 'READ.ME' (May be opened in notepad or a DOS editor)

.386 Virtual Device Driver

.8BA Photoshop Plug In

.8BE Photoshop Plug In

.8BF Photoshop Plug In

.8BI Photoshop Plug In

.8BX Photoshop Plug In

.8BY Photoshop Plug In

.8LI Photoshop Plug In

.ABR Photoshop Brushes File

.ACF Microsoft Agent Character File

.ACG Microsoft Agent Preview File

.ACL AutoCorrect List File

.ACO Photoshop Swatches File

.ACS Microsoft Agent Character File

.ACT Photoshop Colour Table File

.ADD PageMaker Plug in

.ADO Photoshop Duotone Settings File

.ADP Microsoft Access Project

.AI Adobe Illustrator Artwork

.AIA Adobe Illustrator Action File

.AIF AIFF Audio File

.AIFF AIFF Audio File

.AIP Adobe Illustrator Plug in

.ANI ANImated Cursor

.API Photoshop Printing Inks File

.APL Photoshop Adobe Plug In

.ARC WinZip File (ARChive)

.ART ART Image

.ARTX ARTX Image File

.ASD ASF Stream Description File

.ASL Photoshop Styles

.ASP Photoshop Sep Tables File

.ATN Photoshop Actions File

.AU AU audio file

.AVI Video Clip

.AW Answer Wizard File

.BAK Back-up File (DOS or programmes such as PC Tools)

.BAS Visual Basic Module

.BAT MS-DOS Batch File (May be edited in notepad or a DOS editor)

.BBS Bulletin Board Service File

.BCF PageMaker Colour Library

.BFX BitFax Pro View Fax File

.BIN Windows Archive File

.BJC Printer Resource File

.BK1 Book resource File (Also .BK2, .BK3, etc.)

.BMP Bitmap Image

.C3D COOL 3D Object

.CAB WinZip or other archiver File

.CAD Cad Studio (or similar) Drawing

.CAT Security Catalogue (or any catalogue in general)
.CCC Confidential Client Code File
.CHA Photoshop CHA File
.CHM Compiled HTML Help file
.CIF Easy CD Creator Image File
.CL3 Easy CD Creator Layout File
.CLB QuarkXPress Colour Book
.CLR Screen Contents Clearance File
.CLS Visual Basic Class Module
.CNF PageMaker Preference list
.COD Database or dictionary File
.COM MS-DOS Application
.CPL Control Panel extension
.CRL Certificate Revocation List
.CSF Photoshop Colour Settings
.CSS Cascading Style Sheets File
.CSV Microsoft Excel (& others) Comma Separated Values File
.CTL Visual Basic User Control
.CUR Cursor
.D8A PC-NAG Data File
.DAN Danish Dictionary
.DAT Data File
.DB Database File
.DCT QuarkXPress (or other) Dictionary
.DET Office Data File
.DIC Dictionary or Text Document
.DICT Dictionary
.DLL Application Extension (Dynamic Link Library)
.DOC Microsoft Word Document
.DOS DOS (Disk Operating System) File
.DOT Microsoft Word Template
.DRV Device driver
.DSK Disk Image File
.DSN SureThing CD Labeller File
.DSR Visual Basic Designer Module
.DSX Visual Basic Designer Binary File
.DUN Dial-Up Networking Exported File
.EBO Microsoft Reader
.EGA Graphics Information File
.ELM Microsoft Office Themes File
.EML Outlook Express Mail Message
.ENG English Dictionary
.ENV Sound clip envelope
.EPS Encapsulated PostScript
.EXE Application (EXEcutable File)
.EXP Database for export (Eg. CSV or TSV)
.FIN Finish Language Dictionary
.FLE Temporary file
.FLG Memory Tag (flag) File
.FLT Adobe Illustrator Filter
.FND Saved Search

.FNT Font file
.FON Font file
.FRD French Dictionary
.FRM Visual Basic Form File
.FRX Visual Basic Form Binary File
.FTM Coda Template File
.FXT Finale Plug-In
.GER German Dictionary
.GIF GIF Image
.GRA Microsoft Graph 2000 Chart
.GRD Photoshop Gradients
.HLP Help File
.HOL Microsoft Outlook Holidays
.HTM HTML (Hypertext Mark-up Language) Document
.HTML HTML (Hypertext Mark-up Language) Document
.HTT HyperText Template
.HTX Internet Database Connector HTML Template
.HUB Network Administration File
.HYP Adobe Illustrator Hyphenation Dictionary
.ICC ICC Profile
.ICM ICC Profile
.ICO Icon 1
.ICS iCalendar File
.ID Identification (ID) File
.IDF MIDI Instrument Definition
.IDX Index File
.IMF IMF File
.IMG Image File
.IMP Data Import File
.INF Setup Information
.INI Configuration Settings
.INS Internet Communication Settings
.INV Invoice template
.IQY Microsoft Excel Web Query File
.IROS Photoshop IR Settings
.IRS Photoshop IR Settings
.ISA Photoshop IR Actions
.ISP Internet Communication Settings
.ITS Internet Document Set
.JAR Java File
.JAVA Java File
.JPG JPEG Image
.JS JScript Script File
.KAR Karaoke Player MIDI Sequence
.KBD Keyboard information File
.KEY Programme Loading Access File
.KEYS Programme Loading Access File
.LEX Dictionary File
.LIB Library or colour palate File
.LIC Licence Information File 79,436 5 15,887
.LIT Microsoft Reader 7,518,761 14 537,054

.LNK Windows shortcuts (DOS shortcuts use .PIF)
.LOG LOG File
.LSF Advanced Streaming Format File
.MAP MAP File
.MAT Microsoft Access Table Shortcut
.MDA Microsoft Access Add-in
.MDB Microsoft Access Application
.MDE Microsoft Access MDE Database
.MDT Microsoft Access Add-in Data
.MDW Microsoft Access Workgroup Information
.MDZ Microsoft Access Database Wizard Template
.ME a text file - usually 'README' – compare 'READ.1ST' (May be opened in notepad or a DOS editor)
.MHT M-HTML Document
.MID MIDI Sequence
.MMC Media Catalog File
.MML Media Catalog File
.MMM Type 1 Multiple Master Metrics
.MMW Media Catalog File
.MOV QuickTime Movie
.MP3 MPEG I Layer 3 file
.MPEG Movie Clip
.MPG Movie Clip
.MRG MRG File
.MSC MSC File
.MSG Outlook Item
.MSI Windows Installer Package
.MTP MTAPI
.MUS Coda Music Notation File
.NDX Index File
.NPK n-Track Studio Peak File
.NSL Nokia Startup Logo
.OCA Control Typelib Cache
.OCR OCR (Optical Character Recognition) File
.ODC Microsoft Office Data Connection
.OFT Outlook Item Template
.OLB Library File
.OLD Archived File
.OPS Office 10 Settings file
.P65 PageMaker 6.5 Publication
.PCI Motherboard controller File
.PCX PCX Image
.PDF Adobe Acrobat Document (Portable Document File)
.PDX Acrobat Catalogue Index
.PFB PostScript Outlines
.PFM PostScript Metrics
.PIF Shortcut to MS-DOS Program (Windows shortcuts use .LNK [link])
.PIP Microsoft Office Settings File
.PMR PhotoModeler Document
.PNG PNG Image File
.POT Microsoft PowerPoint Template

.PPA Microsoft PowerPoint Add-in
.PPD Printer Driver File
.PPS Microsoft PowerPoint Slide Show
.PPT Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
.PREF Preferences File
.PRF Microsoft Outlook Profile Settings
.PRN Printer Settings
.PS Acrobat Distiller file ready for conversion to .PDF
.PSD Adobe Photoshop Image
.PSF Photoshop Proof Setup
.PSP Photoshop Preferences File
.PSW Password File
.PWRD Password File
.PT Kodak Precision Transform
.PUB WP Publication File
.QDAT QuickTime Install Cache
.QPX QuickTime Player Plugin
.QRC QuarkXPress Required Components
.QTIF QuickTime Image
.QTP QuickTime Preferences
.QTS QuickTime File
.QTX QuickTime Extension
.QXD QuarkXPress Document
.QXT QuarkXPress Template
.RAM Memory Access File
.RAT Rating System File
.RDG Registration Entries
.REG Registration Entries
.RMI MIDI Sequence
.ROB ROB File
.RPT Report or log File
.RSL PageMaker Resource
.RTF Rich Text Format (May be opened in MS Word & other WP)
.SAM 8 bit Signed File
.SAV Archived File (Similar to .OLD or .BAK)
.SCA Norton AntiVirus Scan
.SCF Windows Explorer Command
.SCP Dial-Up Networking Script
.SCPT GL Script File
.SCR Screen Saver
.SES Cool Edit (Audio) Session File
.SET Play List Document or Settings File
.SFX Special Effects Data File
.SHP Help File
.SHS Scrap Object
.SITE GLSite File
.SMP SampleVision file
.SNG n-Track Studio song file
.SPD Spanish Dictionary
.SPL Shockwave Flash Object
.SPT PageMaker 6.5 Script

.STF Microsoft Set-up File
.SVG SVG Document
.SWF Shockwave Flash Object 25,449 1 25,449
.SWP Swap File
.SYS System file
.T65 PageMaker Template
.TAB Tab Reference File or Tab Separated Value File
.TAG Tagged File
.TBL Adobe @Table
.TGA Graphics Information File
.TIF Image File (Tagged Image)
.TIFF Image File (Tagged Image)
.TMP Temporary File
.TPL Cakewalk Audio Studio Template
.TSV Tab Separated Value file (May be opened as text)
.TTF TrueType Font file
.TXT Text Document
.UDC Proximity Dictionary
.URL Internet Shortcut
.VBP Visual Basic Project
.VBS VBScript Script File
.VBW Visual Basic Project Workspace
.VBZ Visual Basic Wizard
.VGA Graphics Information File
.VXD Virtual device driver
.WAB Address Book File
.WAV Wave Sound
.WBK Microsoft Word Backup Document
.WIZ Microsoft Word Wizard
.WLL Word.Add-in.
.WMF Windows Meta File (Graphic File)
.WMV Windows Media Audio/Video file
.WPG Glossary
.WRI MS Write Document (May be opened in some versions of MS Word)
.WRK Cakewalk Audio Project
.XLA Microsoft Excel Add-In 2
.XLB Microsoft Excel Worksheet
.XLL Microsoft Excel XLL Add-In
.XLS Microsoft Excel Worksheet
.XLT Microsoft Excel Template
.XML XML Document
.XNT QuarkXPress XTension
.XSL XSL Stylesheet
.Z WinZip File
.ZIP WinZip or other archiver file