

mtools: Working with Floppies on UNIX

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1 Introduction

mtools is a set of UNIX tools which facilitate access to DOS and Windows floppy disks on our SPARC systems in the UNIX lab. In essence, the floppy disk can be queried and files can be copied back and forth between the floppy and a UNIX user account, all via a set of Unix tools which simulate the DOS command set.

2 Getting started

First, the **mtools** package must be added. This is done via the **addpkg** system, by running the command **addpkg mtools**, logging out, and logging back in. To see a listing of all the available **mtools** commands, type **mtools** at the command line. Output such as the following should be listed:

Supported commands:

```
mattrib, mbadblocks, mcd, mcopy, mdel, mdeltree, mdir, mformat  
minfo, mlabel, mmd, mmount, mpartition, mrd, mread, mmove  
mren, mtoolstest, mtype, mwrite, mzip
```

Most of the listed command correspond to well known DOS commands, such as **attrib**, **cd**, **copy**, etc., and behave similarly.

3 mtools commands

Some commands, such as **mcopy**, can take as arguments file names for files which may reside on both the floppy or the UNIX file system. In the former case, the file must be prefixed with the drive name and path, such as **a:/foo/bar.txt**. In the latter, a normal UNIX path should be specified, such as **foo.txt** or **foo/bar.txt**.

A brief and incomplete list of commands will be given here:

- **mcd** Change to a specified directory on the floppy.

```
mcd a:
mcd a:/foo
mcd a:/foo/bar
```

- **mcopy** Copy files between the floppy and the user account, between the floppy and the floppy, or even between the user account and the user account.

```
mcopy a:foo.txt .           # copy foo.txt from floppy to UNIX
mcopy foo.txt a:bar.txt    # from UNIX onto floppy
mcopy foo1.txt foo2.txt    # from UNIX to UNIX
mcopy a:foo1.txt a:foo2.txt # from floppy onto floppy
```

- **mdel** Delete a file from the floppy.

```
mdel a:foo.txt
```

- **mmd** Create a directory on the floppy. (**a:** does not have to be specified.)

```
mmd foo
mmd foo/bar
```

- **mdir** List files in a directory on the floppy.

```
mdir
mdir a:/foo
mdir a:/foo/bar
```

- **mren** Rename a file on the floppy. Note that **a:** does not to be specified as a prefix, since **mren** operates only on floppy files.

```
mren foo.txt bar.txt
```

- **mtype** Display the contents of a file on the floppy or on UNIX.

```
mtype a:foo.txt    # on the floppy
mtype foo.txt      # on UNIX
```

4 Further help

Users are encouraged to read the `mtools` manual page, by typing `man mtools` at the command prompt. Further help can be obtained by emailing CS tutors at `tutors@cs.pdx.edu` or joining our chat channel, `#cschat` on `irc.cat.pdx.edu`.