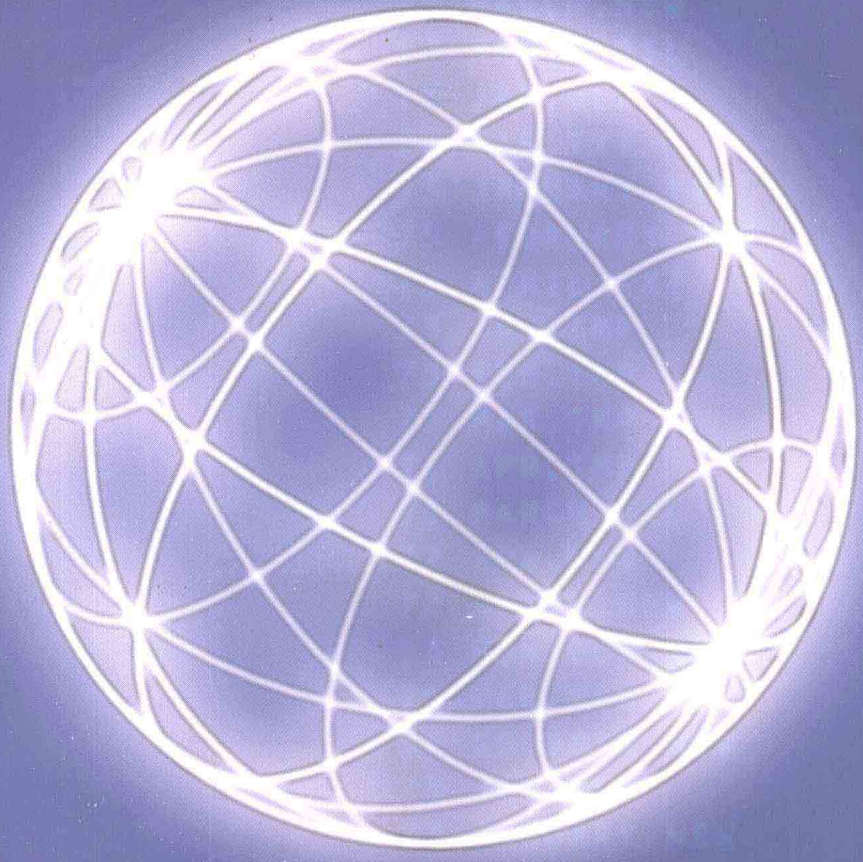
# Windows User's Guide to DOS:

## Using the Command Line in Windows 2000 *Professional*



Carolyn Z. Gillay & Bette A. Peat

Franklin, Beedle & Associates

# WINDOWS USER'S GUIDE TO DOS

## USING THE COMMAND LINE IN WINDOWS 2000 PROFESSIONAL

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# PREFACE

This textbook introduces the hardware, software, and operating system concepts of today's computer systems. Students gain system-level experience through problem-solving exercises at the command line. It is written for use as the core textbook for a course that focuses exclusively on DOS, for the DOS portion of a network or programming class, as a supplement to a Windows 2000 Professional course, or for a class that follows an introduction to Windows 2000 Professional.

## WHY LEARN DOS WHEN IT'S A WINDOWS WORLD?

Students with no computer experience believe DOS is "dead." However, the rise of network computing and the vast number of businesses running legacy DOS applications make knowledge of DOS and the Windows 2000 command line essential. Command syntax, parameters, parsing commands, and troubleshooting are all handled better from the command line interface rather than the graphical user interface.

The command line interface exists in Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows NT 4.0, Windows NT 4.5, Windows 2000, Windows XP, and Novell. Batch files are useful in all these operating systems. Batch file skills are critical in the networking world, as well as on the stand-alone computer system.

## BEGINS WITH THE BASICS AND LEADS TO THE ADVANCED

This text leads students from a basic to a sophisticated use of the command line interface. Each chapter has questions for both novice and advanced students, so it challenges advanced students without sacrificing the needs of beginning students. Furthermore, while this text does teach the various character-based commands, it also stresses the concepts, theory, and understanding of operating systems in general.

The text demonstrates the command line interface and explains when and why one would use it instead of the graphical user interface of Windows 2000. It provides numerous examples to allow students to master operating systems. This text teaches these concepts using the Command Prompt window, referred to as the MS-DOS Prompt window in earlier versions of Windows. Though this text deals primarily with those commands and functions that are available at the command prompt, it also deals with commands and functions necessary to understand, maintain, and troubleshoot a system that are available only in the GUI.

Pipes, filters, and redirection used with batch files are covered in a thorough, step-by-step methodology. Advanced batch files are covered in detail, building on programming logic in a comprehensible way. Students cover all batch file commands and are introduced to DEBUG.

Setting up computer systems, optimizing performance, and troubleshooting require students to have good command line skills. To this end, the student learns how to create an Emergency Repair disk (ERD), boot into Safe Mode, and create a set of floppy disks to boot the system into Windows 2000 Professional.

This text also covers two major forms of connectivity: networking and the Internet. We have found that there is a gap in too many students' knowledge of net-

works. Students often take a Windows and/or DOS class and then, if on a networking career path, jump into a large-systems networking class. This can be an intimidating jump. There are many other students who work in small offices that do not have network administrators; others may work in environments where they only need to access a network or share files, folders, and devices on their own systems at home. These students are not going to follow the networking program. To address the needs of all these students, this text introduces some basic networking concepts and then leads the students into setting up a peer-to-peer network (where possible) and shows them how to share files, folders, and devices. Students also learn general networking techniques, such as mapping drives, which will serve them in good stead if they are on the networking career path.

Another connectivity topic is the Internet. In our textbook, students learn various ways to connect to the Internet and then do some simple activities using Internet Explorer. A brief introduction to TCP/IP concepts is included because, when using the Internet, so many students are lost at the first mention of such terms as "protocol" and "IP address." This overview gives them an understanding of some of these important terms so that they have a better comprehension of online activities. Students learn how to use simple Internet-related commands that can be run at the command line, such as FTP. In addition, certain troubleshooting commands such as ping and Telnet are covered.

The last two chapters cover a much too neglected topic—troubleshooting. These chapters include backing up a computer system and recovering a damaged system using such tools as Recovery Console and Safe Mode. Recovery Console is a command line repair tool. Safe Mode gives the computer user options to repair a damaged system. In addition, the students learns the purpose, function, and structure of the Registry. They learn advanced troubleshooting concepts, looking at the CMOS setup utility as well as looking at memory and the paging file. They learn about the tools in Windows such as Regedit and RegEdt32. They use Regedit to do simple tasks.

This book takes up where other Windows books leave off. Although no prior knowledge or experience with computers, software, operating systems, or Windows 95/98/2000 is necessary, it helps if the students have completed a basic Windows 95/98/2000 class.

## ACTIVITIES DISK WITH SHAREWARE PROGRAMS AND DATA FILES

The esoteric nature of operating systems is one of the biggest obstacles in teaching the command line interface to students. Many students find the material interesting and stimulating. However, there is always a group that asks, "What good is DOS? It doesn't do anything." Using discussion and example, this text demonstrates the importance of the command line interface.

Often, when teaching the command line interface, instructors attempt to use a complex application program, such as Word, and it costs them time teaching the application, not the operating system. To resolve this problem, two simple shareware applications are provided for students to work with: a simple database (Home Phone Book) and a simple spreadsheet (Thinker). Students have the opportunity to load an application program and prewritten data files, as well as create simple data files. In doing so, students better understand the differences between data files and program files and are

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able to use operating system commands to manipulate both types of files. In addition, the text includes several educationally sound shareware games that reinforce certain DOS concepts in an enjoyable manner.

These shareware files are on the ACTIVITIES disk along with data files students use for the exercises in the book. The ACTIVITIES disk's files are easily installed on a computer system's hard disk or network server. The exercises do not direct students to save files to the hard disk or network server. Early on, students create a DATA disk, and all files are written to the DATA disk. This approach provides real-life experience in working with the hard disk or server without risking damage to either. There are numerous warnings and cautions alerting students to when a possible network conflict could arise.

## AN INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Each section of the book is presented in a careful, student-oriented, step-by-step approach. Interspersed between the steps in the exercises are the reasons for and results of each action. At the end of each chapter, there are application assignments that allow students to apply their knowledge and prove mastery of the subject area through critical-thinking skills. Each command is presented in a syntactically correct manner so that when the students have finished the course, they will be able to not only use software documentation, but also be comfortable in a network/Internet environment that requires the use of syntax and commands. This also assists the students in their ability to learn how to solve problems using the documentation at hand. This skill also transfers to the use of application packages and other operating system environments. No matter what changes are made to future versions of the operating system, students will be able to use the new commands.

## USES A SELF-MASTERY APPROACH

Each chapter includes a chapter overview, a list of key terms, a chapter summary, discussion questions, true-and-false questions, completion questions, multiple-choice questions, and problems where students are asked to write the commands. Each chapter also includes three sets of application assignments that focus on the skills learned in the chapter. The first two require the use of the computer. The first problem set requires students to complete activities on the computer and write the resulting answers on a Scantron form; the second problem set requires students to use the computer and print out the answers.

For the second problem set, the student results are sent to a batch file provided with the ACTIVITIES disk. The batch file is an easy-to-follow program. The students supply their solutions to the problems, and the batch file formats the answers in a consistent manner and includes the students' names and other instructor-directed identifying information. The printouts typically print on two pages or less.

The last set of application assignments are brief essay questions that encourage students to integrate what they have accomplished in the chapter with their improved understanding of the command line interface of the Windows 2000 operating system. All three types of assignments reinforce critical-thinking skills. These application assignments can be turned in as homework. Where hands-on assignments are not possible,

such as dealing with the Registry, students still have an opportunity to answer brief essay questions that encourage them to explain their understanding of the topic at hand.

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

This book comes with an instructor's manual that includes teaching suggestions for each chapter as well as the answers for every question and application exercise. A complete PowerPoint presentation for each chapter is included as well. There are additional chapter tests. A midterm and a final are included.

## REFERENCE TOOLS

This text is useful as a reference for MS-DOS commands. The first appendix provides instructions to install the subdirectory containing the shareware programs and data files to the hard disk. This feature is particularly useful for students who work at home or in an office. The rest of the appendices include a complete command reference (including DOS commands that are no longer available in Windows), an ANSI table, and FDISK. There is also a glossary.

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Anyone who wants to offer suggestions or improvements or just share ideas can reach me at *czg@bookbiz.com*.

*—C.Z.G.*

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*—B.A.P.*

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