File types you will meet

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October 2011

Here is an inexhaustive list of typical file extensions. However file extensions are often not used or needed in Unix. Often the `file` command can give you useful information about a file.

1. *Library files (.a)* - Archive files containing many compiled output (.o) files. Used for linking code to programs.

2. *AWK scripts (.awk)* - Scripts written for AWK.

3. *LATEX bibliography files (.bib)* - Files containing LATEX references.

4. *bzip2 (.bz2)* - Files compressed using the bzip2 compression program.

5. *C source code files (.c/.h)* - Files containing C source code.

6. *C++ source code files (.cc/.C/.CC/.hh/.h/.H/.cpp/.hpp)* - Files containing C++ source code.

7. *csh/tcsh scripts (.csh)* - Shell scritps written for the csh/tcsh shells.

8. *Data files (.dat)* - Normally files containing binary data.

9. *MS Word documents (.doc)* - Open in StarOffice or OpenOffice.

10. *DVI files (.dvi)* - Output files the latex command makes from .tex files. Use xdvi to look at these files. Use dvips to convert these to postscript files.

11. *Encapsulated PostScript (.eps/.ps)* - A subset of PostScript files which can be put into other documents (e.g. LATEX documents).

12. *Fortran source code (.f/.for/.f90./f77/.F)* - The source code to a Fortran program.

13. *Fig format figures (.fig)* - xfig figure.

14. *FITS image/data files (.fits, .fit, .FIT)* - Files containg data or images in the FITS astronomical standard file format.

15. *GIF files (.gif)* - Old GIF (Compuserve) compressed image files. Often found on the internet. GIF compression is loss-less. Use gimp/xv/firefox/mozilla to look at these. GIF files can be animated. Using PNG instead if possible (patent and size reasons).

16. *Gzipped files (.gz)* - Files compressed by the gzip utility to make them smaller. Often you get two endings (e.g. .tar.gz is a gzipped tar file). Use gunzip to decompress these files.

17. *JPEG files (.jpg/.jpeg)* - Image files compressed with the lossy jpeg format. These are often found on the internet. Use firefox/mozilla/xv/gimp to look at these files.

18. *Web-pages (.html/.htm)* - Pages for viewing with a web browser.

19. *Makefiles (Makefile)* - Files with a list of rules, typically saying how programs should be compiled.

20. *MP3 sound files (.mp3)* - Files containing compressed sound or music.

21. *MPEG animations (.mpg/.mpeg)* - Animations in the lossy MPEG format. Use convert to make these.

22. *Compiler output files (.o)* - Files containing compiled code.

23. *OpenOffice documents (.odt, .odp, .ods, .odg)* - OpenOffice/OpenDocument files.

24. *Perl scripts (.pl)* - Scripts written in the Perl language.

25. *PNG files (.png)* - PNG (Portable Network Graphic) lossless compressed image files. Often found on the internet. Use gimp/firefox/mozilla to look at these. Use these instead of the GIF format if possible. Usually smaller the equivalent GIF file.

26. *IDL programs (.pro)* - Programs which can be run in the IDL environment.

27. *PostScript files (.ps)* - Adobe PostScript files containing text/graphics to be printed. Use `lp` to print these files or `gv` to see them on the screen. Use `convert/gimp` to convert these to other image formats. Encapsulated PostScript files can be embedded in LATEXdocuments. Many ps files are encapsulated PostScript files.

28. *Python scripts (.py)* - Scripts written in the Python language.

29. *Bourne Shell scripts (.sh)* - Shell scripts written for the Bourne Shell (/bin/sh) or the Bash shell (/usr/local/bin/bash).

30. *Shared libraries (.so)* - Program libaries which can be loaded at the time of running of a program.

31. *LATEX style files (.sty)* - Files containing LATEX styles of documents.

32. *Tar files (.tar)* - Archive files containing other files and directories. Use the `gtar/tar` command to decompress or make these files.

33. *LATEX or TEX files (.tex/.ltx)* - Files containing LATEX or TEX source.

34. *Text files (.txt)* - Files composed of normal characters - letters, numbers and symbols. Often these will be human-written and formatted into paragraphs.

35. *Compressed files (.Z)* - Old compressed files (use `gzip` instead now). These files can be decompressed with `gunzip`.

36. *Zipped files (.zip)* - Files containing other compressed files. Often found on Windows. Use `zip/unzip` to compress/decompress.