

## Re: erasing a folder filled with locked files

**Source:**

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.basics/2004-10/3354.html>

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**From:** R. C. White (*rc\_at\_corridor.net*)

**Date:** 10/25/04

Date: Mon, 25 Oct 2004 16:27:48 -0500

Hi, Mike.

I hope that reinstalling MusicMatch will let you uninstall it.

In the "DOS" window, if you want to work with a folder name or any filename or path that includes a space character (such as Program Files), you must enclose the entire pathname in quotes. For example: `cd "C:\Program Files"` or `rd "C:\Program Files\MusicMatch" /s`

Another trick with `cd` is to use a wildcard. For example, `cd pro*` will usually get you into Program Files without the quotes (unless you have another foldername starting with `pro`). But the wildcard does not work this way with some commands; `dir pro*` would only produce a directory showing Program Files and any other file/foldername starting with `pro`.

File "attributes" include Archive, System, Hidden and Read-Only. Use the "DOS" command `attrib /?` to see details. But the `/s` switch causes the `rd` command to ignore attributes, deleting files and folders with any or all of these attributes set. As you can see, as with most powerful commands, it can be very dangerous if you slip up and delete more than you intended.

Attributes have nothing to do with a message that a file is in use. Any file, including one with no attributes set, can be in use by a running program, and WinXP will usually refuse the command to delete such a file until it is no longer in use. Booting into Safe Mode often allows us to delete files that otherwise would be used by programs set to run at Startup.

RC

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Microsoft Windows MVP

"mg" <[mg@discussions.microsoft.com](mailto:mg@discussions.microsoft.com)> wrote in message  
news:B6AC707A-65E7-4E11-B308-D17EA97E5F0B@microsoft.com...

> Dear Mr. White,

>

> Thank you for your reply. You gave me a number of ways to solve my

microsoft.public.windowsxp.basics: Re: erasing a folder filled with locked files

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> problem,
> some of which I have tried.
>
> On the matter of going to the dos window, I did that but was unable to
> change the directory using the chdir and cd commands to the Program Files
> directory. I tried every combination of that name but to no avail.
>
> Actually I was attempting to re-install the program when I was informed
> that
> installation could not proceed because files in the old directory were
> proteted or in use. I did all I know to change attributes and to prevent
> the
> files from loading, etc. Still no success.
>
> Finally I changed the name of the sub-directory within the Program Files
> directory that held the program, which is MUSICMATCH, and then installed
> the
> program anew. Now I will try to delete the old, renamed directory in safe
> mode as suggest by another kind colleague in this group.
>
> Thank you for your advice.
>
> Mike Good
>
> "R. C. White" wrote:
>
>> Hi, Mike.
>>
>> Sometimes we can uninstall an uninstalleable program if we install it
>> again,
>> then uninstall it. Installing it again (into the same location, if
>> possible) lets the uninstaller rebuilt its database. The program's own
>> uninstall utility (or Add/Remove Programs) then can find the data it
>> needs
>> to uninstall.
>>
>> If you mention the name of the program, someone here might recognize it
>> and
>> know about its quirks.
>>
>> > How do I force the deletion of all files
>> > in a folder regardless of their attributes?
>>
>> One way is to open a "DOS" window and use the Remove Directory command
>> with
>> the /s switch to include all files and subdirectories. This, of course,
>> does NOT clean up the Registry or delete any related files in other
>> directories. But, if you are sure you want to do this, then navigate to
>> the
>> parent of the directory and enter: rd <foldername> /s
>>
>> RC
>>
>> "Mike Good" <Mike Good@discussions.microsoft.com> wrote in message
>> news:5EF29038-9960-44E8-BC6D-785E0E9CF85D@microsoft.com...
>> >I have a folder filled with all the elements of a program including sub
>> > folders, lots of .dll files and many others. I must delete it to
>> > reinstall
>> > it. There is no uninstall program and it does not appear in the list
>> > of
>> > prgrams on the remove/alter menu. How do I force the deletion of all
>> > files
```

microsoft.public.windowsxp.basics: Re: erasing a folder filled with locked files

>> > in a folder regardless of their attributes?