A Brief Guide to Fileman

> Ram Dass tells a story about the Lord and Satan taking a walk together. The Lord bends down and picks up something from the ground; it glows radiantly in his hand. Satan asks the Lord what it is, and the Lord replies, it is truth. And Satan says, Here, let me have that, I'll organize it for you.

Fileman is a program to assist you in organizing and managing files on the Internet. It is, fundamentally, an amazingly sophisticated FTP program. FTP, File Transfer Protocol, is one of the oldest tools, or services, available on the Internet. It has a grand and rich history. Unlike traditional FTP programs, Fileman cannot be used to access public archives of documents and programs. But it can be used to greatly enhance your personal research collections.

Is working with files and directory structures new to you?

The basis of any computer is file management, whether it is your "local" computer in your house, or a site on the Internet such as the CORAL site. You are either running programs or moving files around. You need to know where to find those files when you want them. As you create and collect files you will soon want methods for organizing the information and for moving files around. You will begin creating directories (directories are the same thing as "folders") for storage. Directories allow you to group files together by form or function. Think of them like drawers in a filing cabinet, file folders or even rooms in a house.

Your directory structure can be looked at vertically (a tree structure) or horizontally (a path statement).
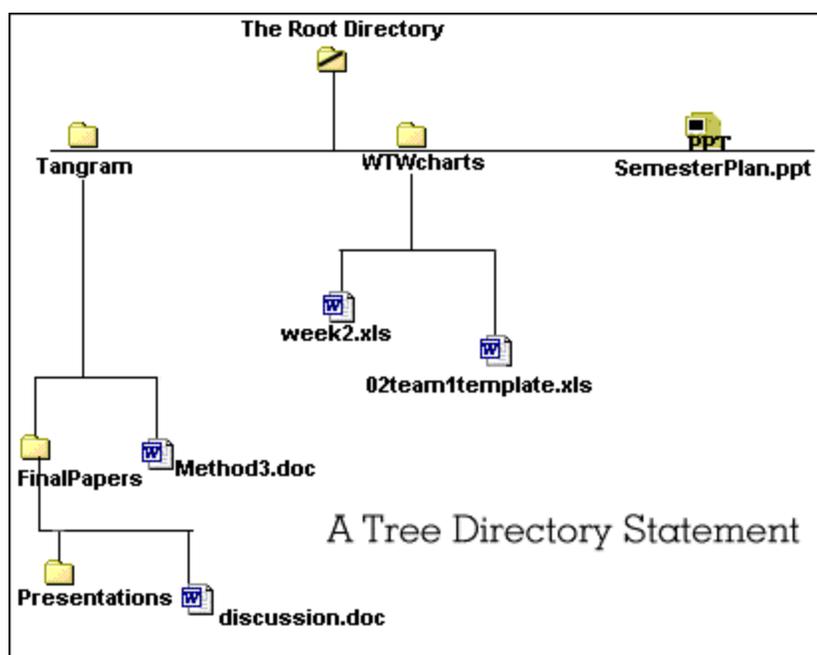
Figure 1: Directory Tree Diagram

Figure 1 is an image of a Tree diagram of a directory structure. Your Web account starts at your **Root directory** (your **Home directory**), and you may upload files and create directories under that root. The Root directory is symbolized by a forward slash: **/**

In this example the Root contains two directories (folders) named **Tangram** and **WTWcharts**, and a single file, **SemesterPlan.ppt**. The Tangram directory contains subdirectories and files, as does the WTWcharts directory. The **Tree diagram** illustrates the **hierarchal** aspect of directory structures.

Fileman displays a **horizontal** view of file structures in a **path statement**. Like the smiley emoticon, the path statement turns the expression of the directory sideways.

Take the path from the **Root**, into the **WTWcharts** directory to the file named **week2.xls**. The path statement is:

/WTWcharts/week2.xls

The path to the document **discussion.doc** (near the bottom of the image, **Figure 1**) is:

/Tangram/FinalPapers/discussion.doc

Notice the path statement begins with a front slash; that is the symbolic root. Furthermore, all directory and files are separated by a front slash (which can be really confusing when you remember that paths are separated by a BACKslash in Windows!!).

In **Fileman** you don't usually see a filename included in a path. The path statement that is always at the top of the Fileman window will contain directory names only.

Look at **Figure 2**, item 2, below, the image of the Fileman window. You can see the directory path listed as **Root / documentation** and the contents of the **documentation** subdirectory are listed below that path statement.

Tips and Tricks for File Management

- Use this program to create directories (folders) to group similar files together. If you want to track versions of documents, you could create a directory to house all of the versions of that document, uploading the most recent version as available, renaming older versions of the documents, perhaps with a date in the filename. You can use Fileman for uploading files, renaming and even deleting files from your site.

- Avoid including a blank space in a file or directory name. Some web browsers can handle the presence of a blank space but some cannot.

- You may use upper case letters and lower case letters (and any mixture of the two) when naming files and directories. But on the Internet names are **case sensitive**. I recommend the use of lower case letters for simplicity.

The Main Fileman Window
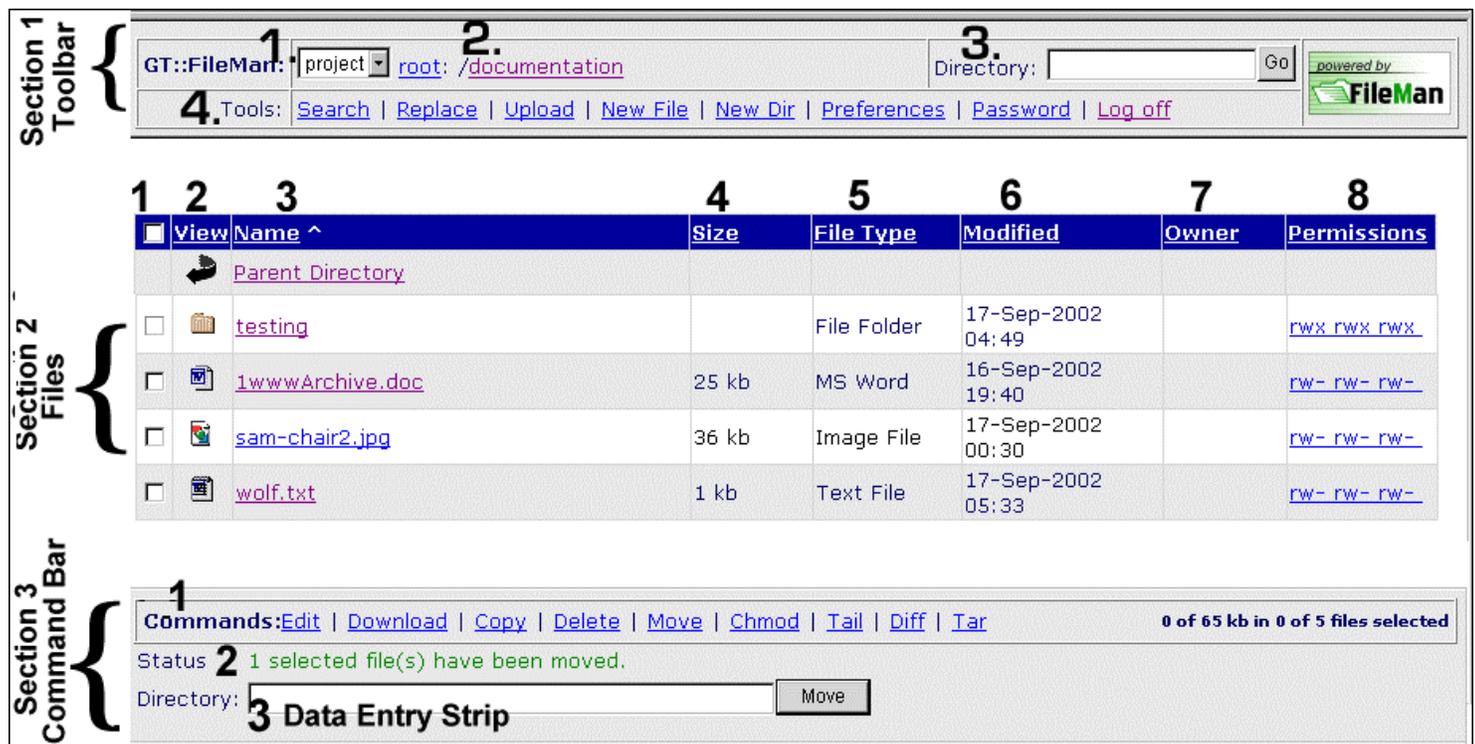
Figure 2:The main Fileman window is divided into three parts

Although file and directory commands are placed in separate areas of the Fileman window, they are not really separate from each other. Some of the commands present in Fileman will not be relevant to the work you're doing, or to the Windows environment in which your site resides. In the interest of brevity and the longevity of trees, this guide will cover only the most commonly used commands. Please feel free to ask for more information on the material covered here, and about Fileman features that are not covered here.

Section 1: The Toolbar
This top section, shaded gray, contains the drop-list of the Team Fileman accounts (1), the path statement (2) and a collection of site management commands (3,4).

Section 2: The Files Area
The middle section of the page links the files and directories, with file commands (1,2,3), information about files and directories (4,5,6,7) and access permissions (8).

Section 3: The Command Bar
This lower section, shaded gray, contains two parts: a list of commands that affect individual files and directories (1), and a status statement (2) and data entry strip (3) used by commands in all three sections.

Section 1: The ToolBar

Figure 3: The Toolbar

1. A **drop down pick list** to open all the team Fileman accounts. Seen only when logged in as a Project Guide.

2. **The path for the current window**. The path statement is the list of directories leading to the location of a file. A directory is the same thing as a folder. The root is the top-most directory available. The current directory shown in **Figure 3** is named **documentation**. These directory labels are hyperlinks that can be used to traverse the directory structure of the account.

3. **Directory** Data Entry Strip: Another way to open a directory: you can type in the name of the directory and click the go button to open it.

4. **The Tools:** A collection of site management tools.

   - **Search**: search for a string of text appearing in any, or all, of the checked files. Fileman will then present you with a list of the files containing the string.

   - **Replace**: find every occurrence of a string of text and replace it with the supplied new string.

   - **Upload**: Upload a file to the Fileman account. When you click on Upload a strip opens in the bottom part of the window containing a data entry strip, a browse button and an upload button. Use the browse button to select the file to be uploaded. The filename will then appear in the data entry strip. Click the Upload button to transfer the file.

   - **New File**: Create a new text file. I don't think this is a good approach to creating a web page. Only plain text. Could be useful for raw notes.

   - **New Dir**: Create a new directory (AKA Folder)

   - **Preferences**: Settings to customize the look of Fileman. Settings include the font face, how lists of files are sorted, screen and link colors, number of lines per display.

   - **Password**: Change your Fileman password.

   - **Logoff**: Quit Fileman. This closes your working session. It's a safety feature in case you leave the browser window open in a public area.

Section 2: The Files Area

Figure 4: The Files Area

The files area is divided into eight columns of description and commands for files and directories.

1. **Checkboxes:** Select multiple files to act on with a command.

2. **Icons:** Click on an icon in this column to open a directory or view a text or image file. You can open directories with either the icon or the filename link. Don't try to open a non-image binary file such as MS Word (**.doc**) or excel (**.xls**) using the icon. You must use the **Download** command in **Section 3** to edit and view Word and Excel.

3. **Names:** List of files and directories in the current path (list of directories leading to a file, or to your "current location"). Click on a text filename (**.txt**) to edit it. You cannot edit any other type of file. Click on a directory to open it. You can open directories with either the icon or the filename link. Click on the name of an image file to view it. Don't try to open a non-image binary file such as MS Word (**.doc**) or excel (**.xls**) using the name link. You must use the **Download** command in Section 3 to edit and view Word and Excel files.

4. **File Size:** Size of files in kilobytes. There is some kind of limit on file size in this version of Fileman. The transfer will fail if you try to upload a file that exceeds the size limits.

5. **File Type:** Discuss ASCII, text and binary. ?

6. **File Date:** Date the file was last edited, or date the directory was created.

7. **File Owner:** Not available in this CORAL configuration.

8. **File Permissions:** Not available in this CORAL configuration.

Section 3: The Command Bar
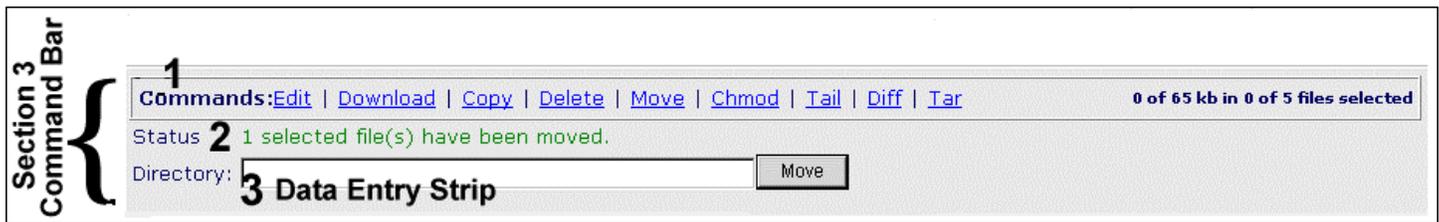
Figure 5: The Command Bar

The Command section of the Fileman window contains two distinct parts: The **file commands** (1), and the **status/data entry strips** (2,3), which are used in conjunction with all Fileman commands.

1. Commands

- **Edit:** Same command as clicking on the filename in column 3 of Section 1. Use the edit command only on text files (**.txt**).

- **Download:** Click the checkbox in Column 1 (**Figure 3**: Section 1) before issuing the Download command. Use this command to view non-text files.

- **Copy:** Make a copy of a file or directory.

- **Delete:** Delete (forever!) a file or directory.

- **Move:** Move differs from Copy in that it leaves nothing behind. The Copy command leaves the original in place and creates a second, identical file. Use this command to rename a file or directory or to move a file from its current directory location into a subdirectory.

- **Chmod:** Not available in this CORAL configuration.

- **Tail:** View the last few lines of a text file.

- **Diff:** Compares two **text files** and shows you how they differ.

- **Tar:** Create a compressed file containing one or more files.

Figure 5 continued: The Status Line and the Directory Data Entry Field

These two fields, located in Section 3, are used with a variety of commands from all three sections of the Fileman window. Prompts for commands appear in the Status line as well a report of the conclusion of a command. The Directory data entry field is used by many commands, to collect file and path names, select options, browse the local hard drive for files to upload, and searching files for specified strings of text.

2. Status Line

The status contains information about a command in progress. It prompts you through a command and then reports on the result of the command. For example, when you select the **Move** command (to rename a file or change its location) the status line prompts you with:

Please enter where you would like to move the files

After entering the new filename in the **Directory data entry field** and clicking the adjacent **Move** button, the status line confirms the success of the command with **1 selected file(s) have been moved.**

3. Directory: the Data Entry Field

The data entry field, labeled **Directory**, is used to enter variable information into a command. When you select the **New Dir** command (in Section 1) to create a new directory (folder), the Status line prompts with

Create New directory inside of /documentation directory

and the "submit" button adjacent to the Directory data entry field is labeled **Create**.

The Directory data entry field is used by many of the commands, for entering **new file and directory names**, selecting files to upload, compressing files with the **Tar** command.

Viewing and Editing Files

If the file type is **text** (.txt) you can click on the **icon** in column two **to view the file** or click on the **filename link to edit the file**.

If the file is a **webpage** (.html) click on the **icon in column two to view the page BUT** you cannot click on the filename to edit the file.

1. If the file is **binary**: an image (.gif or .jpg), MS Word (.doc or .wpd), Excel (.xls), etc., click the **check box in column one, then click the download link** down in Section Three. That will download and open the file for viewing and/or editing in its mother program.

Transferring Files Uploading and Downloading (FTP and Beyond)

Fileman is actually a very sophisticated FTP program. Except for ASCII, HTML and image files, which a web browser already has the capability to support, files such MS Word documents and Excel spreadsheets have to be downloaded to your local computer before they can be viewed.

Upload a File

1. Click the **Upload** link in **Section 1**.

    The bottom of the Fileman window will respond with an **Upload status prompt** (1) and the **File name** data entry field will change, as noted below in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6: File Upload Prompts in Section 3

2. The **status line** (1) is reminding you of the currently open directory, the current destination for the uploaded file. If this is NOT the directory you want as the destination then return to Section 1 of the page and open the desired directory.

3. You can choose the support for the file transfer (2), **ASCII** or **binary**, or use **Auto** and let the program define the uploading protocol (recommended).

4. If you're uploading a fresh version of a file that already exists in the Fileman account you can check **Overwrite** to replace the older version with the newer. Select **Multiple Upload** to open a window that will allow you to upload 10 files at once!

5. The **Browse** button works as in any MS Windows program. It opens a window onto your hard drive to help you select the file you want to upload.

6. Once selected, the filename will appear in the **File Name** data entry field.

7. Finally, click the **Upload** button to transfer the file.

Download a File

1. You'll generally **download binary files** such as MS Word files (.doc), PowerPoint presentations (.ppt), and Excel spreadsheets (.xls). You cannot click the icon (**Figure 4**, column 2) or hyperlinked filename (**Figure 4**, column 3) in order to view them. You must enter the download command.

2. Click the checkbox in column 1 next to the filename you want to download. You can download only one file at a time.

3. Click the Download link in Section 3 of the Fileman window.

4. Your browser is probably already configured to respond to the download command with a special popup menu, **Figure 7**, below.
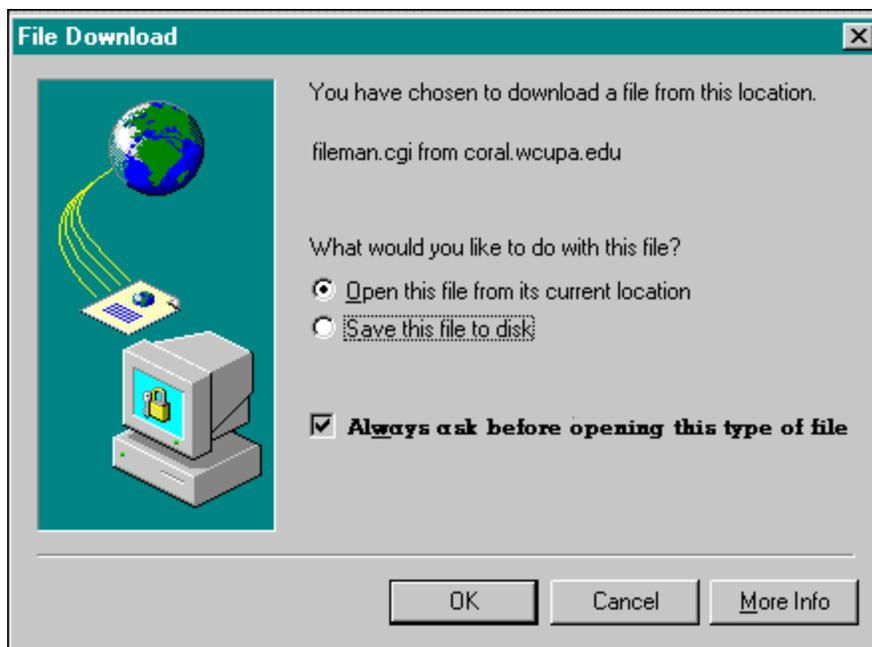
Figure 7: Download Prompt

5. Your options, noted in **Figure 7**, above, include **opening the file for viewing and editing immediately**, and **saving the file to disk**. If you choose the first option, Open this file ... be aware that the file is actually downloaded to your hard drive and stored in a **temporary file**. If you want a copy kept on your hard drive, where you can find it, be sure to enter the **Save As** command as soon as the file opens and assign the file to a directory location and check the filename it will be saved under.

6. Note the checkbox option in **Figure 7**. **Always ask before opening this type of file**. I recommend you **keep that box checked**. The Internet is a raw frontier and it's almost always best to look before you leap!

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

Ask me questions and I'll add them to the FAQ so that others may benefit from your inquiry!
edmiston@matrixmagic.com

Q: Why is it sometimes I have to re-enter my login?
A: Fileman has a **time-out** feature for security. If you are idle (not clicking on links for uploading or downloading) for a certain amount of time you are automatically logged out the account. This is a common feature of all file transfer programs (such as WS_FTP and Fetch)

Q: I tried to upload a file and the upload failed.
A: There are a number of reasons why a file transfer might fail. Check the **status area** at the bottom of the window after a failed transfer (**Figure 3**, Item 2). I don't know what the number is, but Fileman has been configured to reject large files. I tried to upload a file that was about one and half megabytes and Fileman wouldn't allow the transfer. When a transfer is refused due to file size you'll see this error message in the **status area** at the bottom of the window: **Upload: Not enough free space to upload that file.**

Q: I can't see all the commands in first and third section of the Fileman window.
A: Try maximizing the browser window to increase the amount of available space. You may have your **monitor display** set to 800X600 pixels. You have to have your monitor display set to 1024 X 768 pixels. This 1024X768 setting causes everything on the screen to appear smaller than at the 800X600 setting.

1. **Right-click on the Desktop** (click the right, or opposite mouse button) and select **Properties** from the popup menu.
2. The **Display Properties** window that will open. Click the **Settings** tab at the top of the window.
3. In the **Screen area** section of the window, move the slide bar until the pixel setting reads 1024X768.