

Access: Dir Function

In Access, the **Dir** function returns the first filename that matches the *pathname* and *attributes* specified. To retrieve additional filenames that match *pathname* and *attributes*, call **Dir** again with no arguments.

The syntax for the **Dir** function is:

Dir [(path [, attributes])]

path is optional. It the path to a file, folder, or directory. If the *path* is not found, the **Dir** function will return a zero-length string.

attributes is optional. It is the sum of the file attributes. File attributes can be one or a combination of the following values:

VB Constant	Value	Explanation
vbNormal	0	Normal (Default)
vbReadOnly	1	Read-only
vbHidden	2	Hidden
vbSystem	4	System file
vbVolume	8	Volume label
vbDirectory	16	Directory or folder
vbAlias	64	File name is an alias

Note:

You can use wildcard characters to specify multiple files. The patterns that you can choose from are:

* allows you to match any string of any length (including zero length)

? allows you to match on a single character

If you wish to iterate over all files in a directory, use an empty string:

Dir ("")

For example:

Dir("C:\example.mdb") would return "example.mdb"

Dir("C:\ex*.mdb") would return "example.mdb"

Dir("C:\exampl?.mdb") would return "example.mdb"

VBA Code

The **Dir** function can only be used in VBA code. For example:

```
Dim LResult As String
```

```
LResult = Dir("C:\example.mdb")
```

In this example, the variable called LResult would now contain the filename of the *example.mdb* file.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How can I use the **Dir** function to test whether a file exists?

Answer: This can be done with a formula that utilizes a combination of the Dir function, IF function, and [Len function](#).

For example:

```
If Len(Dir("c:\example.mdb")) = 0 Then  
    MsgBox "This file does NOT exist."  
Else  
    MsgBox "This file does exist."  
End If
```

Question: I'm not sure if a particular directory exists already. If it doesn't exist, I'd like to create it using VBA code. How can I do this?

Answer: You can test to see if a directory exists using the VBA code below:

```
If Len(Dir("c:\TOTN\Examples", vbDirectory)) = 0 Then  
    MkDir "c:\TOTN\Examples"  
End If
```

In this example, the code would first check to see if the *c:\TOTN\Examples* directory exists. If it doesn't exist, the [MkDir statement](#) would create a new directory called *Examples* under the *c:\TOTN* directory.