Case Sensitivity Encyclopedia Article

Case Sensitivity

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Case Sensitivity

Case sensitivity refers to a program's ability to distinguish between uppercase, or capital, letters and lowercase, or small, letters. Such programs are described as being case sensitive.

A case sensitive program requires that certain information, often that denotes a task, must be entered in the expected case. If an uppercase entry is required, "RUN" for example, the entry of a lower case "run" could produce a different consequence than the intended one. Some search engines are case sensitive; different and erroneous results can be a consequence of the improper use of case.

Different operating systems utilize case sensitivity in different fashions. **DOS** does not preserve the case when saving file names in **memory**, whereas **Unix** does. In Unix, the retrieval of files is also case sensitive. Case sensitivity is also important in **programming**.

In **Internet** protocol, Universal Resource Locators (URLs) are case sensitive. Thus, if the **URL** consists of upper and lowercase characters, these must be correctly supplied. Otherwise, the URL cannot be located. A "404 Not Found" error **message** when attempting to reach a URL can arise from the improper use of case.