

Appending Files

How to add data to a file

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In the [last tutorial](#), we saw how to create and read data from a file. Here we are going to look at appending a file.

Create a File

When you append a file, you simply add an extra line (or more) at the end of the file, after everything that was already in there. This is useful if you want to add information to a file but not delete other information in it. Before you try this on any important information, you should create a test file to make sure these commands work properly. We will make a test file here which holds some web site information. Suppose we had a file that looked like this, let's call it "websites.cgi":

```
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Appending

Now suppose we want to add another site to the list. We can do that by appending the websites.cgi file. First, we open the file, like we did when we read from it:

```
$sitedata="websites.cgi";
open(DAT,">>$sitedata") || die("Cannot Open File");
```

Notice that we have quotes around the command after the comma, plus we have the two greater than characters (>>) before the file to open variable. Having two of these indicates we want to append the file, rather than read or overwrite it.

Now to append it, we basically send data to the file with the print command:

```
print DAT "Mysite\|http://www.mysite.com\|My website\n";
```

Notice that we follow print with the file handle DAT, then we include what to print between the quote marks, just like a regular print command. Here, we want the information in the same format as the rest of our file, so we put it in the same order. Also, we place the pipe symbols to separate the information, but we have to be sure to escape them with \ characters or it will make a mess. So, between each item we have \| to make it print the pipe character. At the end, we also need to remember to place the \n character at the end so that we have a new line set and added in.

When we are done, we can close the file and it should now have the new information:

```
$sitedata="websites.cgi";  
open(DAT,">>$sitedata") || die("Cannot Open File");  
print DAT "Mysite\|http://www.mysite.com\|My website\n";  
close(DAT);
```

Of course, you can use variables in place of the straight data. The variable method is more useful if you have read in data from elsewhere though. Here we don't gain much by it, other than it would be a little clearer if we wanted to change the values of the variables later:

```
$sitename="Mysite";  
$siteurl="http://www.mysite.com";  
$description="My website";  
$sitedata="websites.cgi";  
  
open(DAT,">>$sitedata") || die("Cannot Open File");  
print DAT "$sitename\|$siteurl\|$description\n";  
close(DAT);
```

So, appending files is a useful way to add more information to a file so that when we read it again, it will have something new. This can be useful for dynamic pages to update content or just to store more data.

Well, that's all for now, let's go on to: [Writing to Files](#).

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