

## Formatting a floppy disk from within a DOS batch file but without end-user prompts

**Question :** *Is there a way of formatting a floppy disk from within a batch file without the user having to answer prompts.*

Yes there is. The above question was asked by an Answers That Work user who wanted to provide his end-users with a seamless no-prompts way of formatting floppy disks through a batch file icon on their Start Menu or desktop.

### First, an example ....

- Copy the **RESPOND.TXT** file that you will find in the same folder that this very document resides in, to the folder from which you will be experimenting, let's call it **C:\TEST** for example.
- Start a DOS session.
- Go into **C:\TEST**.
- Put into your **A:** drive a floppy disk that you want to format.
- Type **FORMAT A: /Q/U < RESPOND.TXT**
- You will next see **FORMAT** formatting the floppy disk in drive **A:** with all the prompts automatically answered.
- If you next do a **DIR A:** you will be able to verify that your floppy disk was indeed formatted and that it was given the DOS label "Testing OK".

**How it works**

- Create a file in **NOTEPAD** which will contain all your required responses. This is the file we called `RESPOND.TXT` in our example above.
- In DOS 6.22, in Windows 9x DOS, or in a Windows 95/98 DOS session, the `DOS FORMAT` command prompts the user three times :
  - The first prompt asks you to insert a diskette and **press ENTER when ready.**
  - The second prompt asks you to provide a **label for your disk.**
  - The third prompt asks you if you want to **format another floppy disk.**
- In a nutshell you need to put on 3 separate lines of your response file, the responses that you wish to provide in an automated way.** If you have a look at the `RESPOND.TXT` file, you will see that on the first line we just pressed `ENTER`, on the second line we supplied the label `"Testing OK"` followed by `ENTER`, and on the third line we put `"N"` followed by `ENTER`.

You can simply copy `RESPOND.TXT` if you want, or modify it according to your requirements.
- Once you have finished configuring your responses file, all you need to do to have your `FORMAT` command use it, is use the DOS `"<"` input redirection command to have the `FORMAT` command take its input from your responses file rather than from the keyboard. Example :  
  
**FORMAT A: /Q/U < MYFILE.TXT**
- That's it. You're done.**

ooooooooOoooooooooooooooo