

D: *ABrief ProDOS Tutorial*

This is a brief explanation of the **Professional Disk Operating System, ProDOS**, for those who are completely new to it. All of this information and more is included in your *Apple Owner's Guide*, but we have provided it here for your convenience.

Operating System

ProDOS is one of several operating systems for the Apple. Others include DOS 3.3 and Pascal. Operating systems, as defined in the *Apple Owner's Guides*, are programs that control how information is loaded into memory, how the computer handles the information, how the information is stored on a disk, and how the computer communicates with the printer and other peripherals.

Naming Volumes

ProDOS must have a way to locate which disk (often called "volume") you want to access. Instead of typing in the location of the disk as in DOS 3.3 (ex: S6,D1), you simply type in the name of the disk (the volume name). Some rules for volume names are

- 1) Name can include letters, numbers, or periods but not spaces
- 2) Name must begin with a letter
- 3) Name can be up to 15 characters long

These rules also hold true for subdirectory names.

Root Directory and Subdirectory

The main directory of the volume is called the root directory. The root directory uses the same name as your disk. Subdirectories are ProDOS' way of organizing information on a disk.

Think of the root directory as a file drawer and the subdirectories as folders within the drawer. You can

- 1) Put files directly into the root directory like putting documents straight into the file drawer
- 2) Place files within subdirectories like putting documents in folders
- 3) Put subdirectories within subdirectories like putting folders within folders.

Pathname

The name of the directory combined with the names of one or more subdirectories is called a pathname. Volume names and subdirectory names are preceded by a slash, "/". (Note that some applications add the slash for you.) For example, you could have a volume named /MY.DISK and a file called /MY.FILE on the root directory of that disk. To access that file, you would use the pathname /MY.DISK/MY.FILE. You could also have a file /JUL.AUG in a subdirectory (folder) called /PHONE on a disk called /BILLS.