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Macintosh Finder: Rate of Directory Structure Updates (7/93)

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TOPIC -----

How often is the directory information updated?

I moved files from one folder to another, and then ran an application that crashed. When I restarted, all of the files were back in the original folder.

Is there a way to force the directory information to be updated by a particular Finder event (like duplicating a file) without restarting, shutting down, or rebuilding the desktop?

DISCUSSION -----

There isn't a simple answer to how often the directory information is updated. Updates don't happen at regular intervals.

When files are moved, causing the directory structure to change, the affected blocks of the catalog are read into the cache and marked dirty. The changes to the directory structure are then made in RAM (to what was read into the cache).

It's only when a FlushVol is performed that the information is written out to the volume in question. If the system crashes before the FlushVol occurs, then the directory will be in its prior state. In this case, no actual damage has occurred, although the user's actions of moving the file have been lost. Of course, when crashes occur regularly, it's a good idea to verify the integrity of your data frequently.

There's no easy answer to the question of how often a FlushVol occurs, as there's no predetermined rate at which they occur. Given normal operation of a computer, this shouldn't be an issue. The problem only arises when a crash occurs.

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