



# Tech Info Library

## A/UX: ed and Filenames

Revised: 9/18/92  
Security: Everyone

A/UX: "ed" and Filenames

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### Article Change History

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08/31/92 - REVIEWED  
• For technical accuracy.

### TOPIC -----

Some A/UX users have misunderstood how the "ed" program works in terms of remembering file names.

### DISCUSSION -----

In the following illustration the user tries to edit a file named "testfile", insert the contents of the password file, and update the original file.

\$ ed - testfile	
P	Get a prompt
* 3	The original script inserted a file at line 3
-r /etc/passwd	Include the password file
w	Try and update the original
?	'ed' has a problem!
h	Explain it.
cannot open file	It can't write to the /etc/passwd file
f	Show the "current" file
/etc/passwd	It's set to /etc/passwd not to "testfile"!
q	
\$	

The user assumed that the file name at the end should be "testfile" and not "/etc/passwd".

The manual entry for ed(1) gives an explanation for this problem. The currently remembered filename can be set when you use certain commands within ed--"r FILE", for example. There are some restrictions; the currently remembered filename is only changed when FILE is the very first filename mentioned since ed was invoked. So when you add a command like

```
f testfile
```

directly after invoking ed, the currently remembered filename will be "testfile" until you specify otherwise. This way the "r" command will not set the filename.

The ed(1) manual pages do mention some restriction on the currently remembered filename. Paragraph of (\$) r file command, states

"The currently remembered filename is NOT changed unless the file is the very first filename mentioned since ed was invoked."

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