

PECmd – Prefetch Parser

Type of Artifact

Prefetch provides evidence of execution. Prefetch files are created or updated in the **C:\Windows\Prefetch** folder when a program attempts to run. Prefetch files are not automatically deleted if the related program is deleted and therefore can be a source of historical information.

Prefetch is limited to 128 files, meaning that older files may be overwritten when that limit is reached. The creation time of a prefetch file is typically done so 10 seconds after first run.

Basic Usage

Process a single Prefetch files and send results to screen

```
PECmd.exe -f C:\Windows\Prefetch\CMD.EXE-8E75B5BB.pf
```

Process a directory of Prefetch files and send results to a CSV file named prefetch.csv. The **--csvf** allows you to provide the name of the prefetch output csv.

```
PECmd.exe -d C:\Windows\Prefetch\ -g --csv G:\Prefetch --csvf prefetch.csv
```

Process a directory of Prefetch files, including VSS, and send the results to a CSV file named prefetch.csv and higher precision timestamps

```
PECmd.exe -d C:\Windows\Prefetch\ -g --csv G:\Prefetch --csvf prefetch.csv --vss --mp
```

Key Data Returned

PECmd, in csv mode, will output two CSV files, one of which is a timeline. The Timeline csv will have “_Timeline” in the file name. The main Prefetch outpt file will contain important information such as:

- Executable name and full path from which it was executed
- Volume name and serial number from which the program ran
- Run Count – the number of time that the program was run, from that location
- Timestamps (UTC) for the last eight executions
- Volumes, files and directories accessed during execution.

Advanced Usage

KEYWORDS: Using comma-separated list of keywords will cause any hits to be shown in red.

```
PECmd.exe -d C:\Windows\Prefetch\ -g --csv G:\Prefetch --csvf prefetch.csv -k "system32, downloads, fonts"
```

PRO TIP: **PECmd** can extract and process Prefetch files from Volume Shadow Copies by using the **--vss** option. This will process Prefetch from ALL Volume Shadow Copies. The output files will be separated by individual VSS numbers.

```
PECmd.exe -d C:\Windows\Prefetch\ -g --csv G:\Prefetch --csvf prefetch.csv --vss
```

Advanced Usage

PRO TIP: Watch for changes in the **VolumeID**, as these can be indicative of applications being run from external devices. In the example below, the **VolumeID** is different for each executable run, meaning that they were all run from different volumes even though two entries reference the **E:** drive.

Volume ID	File ID Last Write Timestamp	SHA1	Full Path
abc0802d-3b8e-11e3-b85d-24f62566e6de	10/23/2013 3:09	f107c56d650b7c2c00b086cbbd202f66209eef	E:\FTK Imager\FTK Imager.exe
af4f2598-3b2c-11e3-b85c-24f62566e6de	10/22/2013 21:42	ca5fd519a43ff95d1ec0bbdf2533e99209af74	E:\Tactical Subject\response-tacsub.exe
dbcc2aeb-5826-41c0-8011-f0153438212b	10/13/2013 9:42	9fef303bedf84304039f595564e0d9888f6f565	C:\Windows\System32\notepad.exe

PRO TIP: Looking for something specific in the Amcache? You can use the switches **-b** (blacklist) or **-w** (whitelist). Blacklisting will include only those Amcache entries that match the SHA-1 hashes specified in the file, while whitelisting will exclude those Amcache entries that match the SHA-1 hashes. In the example below, we’ve provided SHA-1 values in the Blacklist.txt, meaning that the output CSV will contain items that are only responsive to the SHA-1 values in the text file.

```
AmcacheParser.exe -f E:\Windows\AppCompat\Programs\Amcache.hve -b G:\Blacklist.txt --csv G:\Amcache
```

AmcacheParser – Amcache Parser

Type of Artifact

Amcache is part of the Application Experience Service in Windows. As such, it stores information about what application was run and a hash value of the executable.

Basic Usage

AmcacheParser takes the **Amcache.hve** registry hive as input.

In the example command below, AmcacheParser is being run against an **Amcache.hve** registry hive. Output is stored on the **G:** drive to the **“Amcache”** folder.

```
\Programs\Amcache.hve --csv G:\Amcache
```

Key Data Returned

The columns of most significance are typically the “FileIDLastWriteTimestamp” (the first time the executable was run), “SHA1” (the SHA-1 hash of the file being executed) and FullPath (the location and name of the executable ran). Other data of potential interest include the Volume ID (used to determine from which volume the executable was run), **MFT Entry number and Sequence numbers** (used to determine if the executable was run from an NTFS volume) and information about the internal metadata of the executable itself.

MFTECmd – MFT Explorer

Type of Artifact

MFTECmd parses a number of different files from NTFS-formatted drives. At a high level, **MFTECmd** parses each of these internal NTFS System files. At a lower level, the application dives deep into NTFS and helps uncover much data of interest.

File	Description	Contents
\$MFT	Index of each file and folder on volume	File name timestamps, and other metadata
\$Boot	Volume boot record	Volume serial nbr, volume signature, nbr of sectors
\$SDS	File ownership	Contains a list of all the Security Descriptors on the volume
\$J	USN Journal	Transaction log of all changes to a file (write, delete, rename, etc.) (file change journal)
\$LogFile	Transaction Log File	Used by NTFS to maintain the integrity of the filesystem in the event of a crash (metadata change journal)

Basic Usage

MFTECmd takes a **\$MFT**, **\$J**, **\$SDS**, **\$LogFile** or **\$Boot** as input. These input files can be in the form of an exported copy of the file(s) or by referencing them from within a mounted image. The example command below shows **MFTECmd** being run against a **\$MFT** file that has been exported from an evidence file.

```
MFTECmd.exe -f 'G:\Exports\MFT' --csv G:\MFT_Output
```

In the next example **MFTECmd** is run against a **\$MFT** file.

```
MFTECmd.exe -f 'E:\$MFT' --csv G:\MFT_Output
```

Note the command line syntax for referencing the alternate data streams **\$UsnJrnl** and **\$Secure**.

```
MFTECmd.exe -f 'E:\$Extend\$UsnJrnl:$MFT' --csv G:\USN_Output
```

```
MFTECmd.exe -f 'E:\$Secure:$SDS' --csv G:\SDS_output
```

Key Data Returned

The columns of most significance are highly dependent on the type of investigation and the reason for parsing the files in the first place. For example, the dates and times in the **\$MFT** could provide an indication as to the copying of files from external devices. If the written/modification time precedes the creation time, there is a high degree of probability that the file was copied from another volume.

In the example below, the **\$MFT** was parsed to CSV and loaded into **Timeline Explorer**. In each row the **Last Modified** time precedes the Created time. This is a clear indication that these files were copied from another volume.

Parent Path	File Name	CreatedOn	Last Modified
Donald			
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130805_001.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:19.3189517	2013-08-05 11:48:29.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130804_006.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:18.8759317	2013-08-05 00:55:58.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130804_005.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:18.4530393	2013-08-05 00:55:58.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130804_004.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:18.2192675	2013-08-04 20:41:50.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130804_003.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:17.9378031	2013-08-04 16:41:42.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130804_002.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:17.6420940	2013-08-04 13:53:58.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130804_001.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:17.2661007	2013-08-04 13:53:55.0000000
Users\Donald\Pictures	HP_20130731_001.jpg	2013-08-12 01:11:16.8754640	2013-07-31 14:38:46.0000000

The processed **\$J** data can be used to determine the date and time that specific actions were taken on a file. **These actions include (but are not limited to) creating a new file, making changes to a file, deleting a file, overwriting a file, and renaming a file. The \$LogFile tracks changes to the information found in the MFT such as timestamps and other metadata.** In the example below follow the flow of activity the files recorded in **\$J**. The first entry is for

the creation of a file named \$!T74KUZ, then data is added to the file before it is closed. Immediately afterwards, the file \$delet64.exe is renamed to \$RT74KUZ before also being closed. This all happens within the same hundredth of a second as \$delet64.exe being sent to the \$Recycle.bin

Update Timestamp	Name	Entry Number	Sequence Number	Update Reasons
2018-01-08 01:18:19.5828928	\$!T74KUZ.exe	1161	63	FileCreate
2018-01-08 01:18:19.5828928	\$!T74KUZ.exe	1161	63	DataExtend FileCreate
2018-01-08 01:18:19.5860616	\$!T74KUZ.exe	1161	63	DataExtend FileCreate Close
2018-01-08 01:18:19.5860618	\$delet64.exe	5899	13	Renamed DlName
2018-01-08 01:18:19.5860616	\$!T74KUZ.exe	5899	13	Renamed DlName
2018-01-08 01:18:19.5865898	\$!T74KUZ.exe	5899	13	Renamed DlName Close

A few moments later, both files are deleted as the \$Recycle.bin is emptied.

2018-01-08 01:18:23.3899473 \$!T74KUZ.exe 5899 13 FileDelete|Close
2018-01-08 01:18:23.3111809 \$!T74KUZ.exe 1161 63 FileDelete|Close

The **\$SDS** file allows us determine file ownership. For example, in the first screenshot below we see output from the parsed **\$MFT** loaded into Timeline Explorer. Looking at the NTUSER.DAT entry we can see that the Security ID for this file is 8271.

If we then go to the **\$SDS** output and search for that same Security ID, we find that the NTUSER.DAT file is owned by the user with the Relative ID of 1001. If needed, we can take the SID and tied it to a username via the SAM Registry Hive.

Id	Offset	Owner Sid	Group Sid
8271			
8271	6343136	S-1-5-21-3601495921-1769018688-3887587880-1001	S-1-5-18

Advanced Usage

PRO TIP: It is important to remember that NTFS stores two sets of dates and times in each **\$MFT** entry. These are known as the **Standard Information Attributes (SIA)** and the **FILENAME attributes**. This means that each file and folder will have timestamps in both groups. These dates and times behave differently and can indicate when a file was truly created, not just what Windows reports. For example, in the table below we see a number of files stored under the Windows directory. The **CreatedOn** is the created date and time as stored in the **SIA** and **CreatedOnX** relates to those stored in the **FILENAME** attributes.

As can be seen in the table, both dates and times are the same for the first two entries, but the third entry shows a **FILENAME creation** date that is much later than the creation date stored in the **SIA**. This may be an indication of manipulation of the **SIA** timestamp for the syncmon.exe file and would warrant further investigation.

CreatedOnX	CreatedOn	Path (combined from Parent Path and File Name)
3/18/2019 09:17	3/18/2019 09:17	C:\Windows\System32\cmd.exe
3/18/2019 09:18	3/18/2019 09:18	C:\Windows\System32\mountvol.exe
3/18/2019 09:19	8/18/2019 01:12	C:\Windows\System32\syncmon.exe

PRO TIP: When an evidence file is mounted as a drive **MFTECmd** can also dive into the volume shadow copies and retrieve previous versions of the **\$MFT**, the **\$J** and **\$SDS** files. This can be done by virtue of the switches **--vss** and **--dedupe** as demonstrated in the command below. The **--vss** switch tells **MFTECmd** to search in the volume shadow copies and the **--dedupe** switch stops **MFTECmd** from reporting duplicate entries found in the volume shadow copies.

```
MFTECmd.exe -f 'E:\$Extend\$UsnJrnl:$J' --csv G:\MFT_Output --vss --dedupe
```

Advanced Usage

PRO TIP: Taking the data from key columns not only tells a forensic investigator when the file was opened, but may also provide details about the number of times a user accessed a file with that name. In the table below, the first row of results indicates that the file was only opened once, as **SourceCreated** and **SourceModified** contain the same time. The second instance indicates that the file has been opened at least twice, as the **SourceCreated** occurred around seven hours before the **SourceModified**. We also see that the Target dates are identical, suggesting that the file was not been changed since it was created. The last row indicates that the file was only opened once, since the Source entries are identical. However, the **TargetModified** precedes the **TargetCreated**, indicating that the file has been copied to the **F:** drive from another location.

Source Created	Source Modified	Target Created	Target Modified	Path (Combined from Local Path and Common Path)
9/1/2018 16:53	9/1/2018 16:53	8/27/2018 09:24	9/6/2018 14:43	C:\Users\Donald\Documents\NETFLIX SEC Filings\SEC-NFLX-1193125-12-53009.pdf
9/27/2018 10:42	9/27/2018 17:37	9/27/2018 10:28	9/27/2018 10:28	C:\Users\srogers\Documents\Netflix 3Q13 Conference Call Announcement 09 30 13.pdf
9/3/2018 14:13	9/3/2018 14:13	9/3/2018 14:11	9/1/2018 18:19	F:\Forms\fy08-form-10k.pdf

PRO TIP: LNK facts to keep in mind:

- The target file name extension is not always provided in the LNK name.
- The LNK file points to the last file of that name. Meaning, if there were two files named exactly the same, the link files point to the last one opened.

EvtxECmd – Windows Event Log Parser

Type of Artifact

There are many Event Logs in the evtv folder, some aimed at system-wide events like **Security.evtx**, **System.evtx** and **Application.evtx**. Others may contain more specific events. All Event Logs are stored in the same format but the actual data elements collected varies. It is this variation of data elements that makes correlation of Event Logs a challenge. This is where **EvtxECmd** shines. All events are normalized across all event types and across all Event Logs file types!

The **EvtxECmd** parser has custom maps and locked file support. EvtxECmd has a unique feature, “Maps”, that allows for consistent output.

Event Log Location: Event Logs for Windows Vista or later are found in **\\systemroot\%System32%\winevt\logs**

Parsing all events could end in millions of results. Using **EvtxCMD**’s maps can help target specific artifacts.

Check out this PowerShell script that copies out the relevant Event Logs and processes only specific Event IDs (your list of relevant logs and Event IDs may vary).

<https://for500.com/evt2process>

SBECmd – Shellbags Explorer

Type of Artifact

Every time Windows Explorer interacts with a folder, an entry is created in the user’s Shellbags. Folders also include other “Explorer Like” items like the Control Panel, zip files, ISOs, and mounted encrypted containers. The simple existence of a directory in Shellbags is evidence the specific user account once interacted with that folder. Shellbags may persist long after the original directories, files, and physical devices have since been removed.

ShellBags are a set of Windows Registry keys located in **NTUser.dat** and **USRClass.dat** Registry hives (primarily **USRClass.dat**) that maintain viewing preferences of folders when using Windows Explorer. We used to say the Shellbags tracked folders that a user opened.

Basic Usage

SBECmd uses **-d** for a directory to recursively process user registry hives. There is no **-f** option for **SBECmd**.

To process a single user’s ShellBags data, use the following command:

```
SBECmd.exe -d E:\Users\ncromanoff --csv G:\tmp\sbe_out
```

PRO TIP: If you need to process several users ShellBags data, you might consider exporting their data first and then processing just folder containing the exported data. This is a performance decision. Recursively processing many user folder and be very slow.

To process all Users in the Users folder, use the following command.

```
SSBECmd.exe -d E:\Users --csv G:\tmp\sbe_out
```

RECcmd – Registry Explorer Command Line Edition

Type of Artifact

This command line tool is used to access, search and recover, and export any data found in the Windows Registry. To grasp why this tool is so powerful, just think about searching and exporting registry in a consistent output format. It’s no big deal to do this with other tools until you have to do exactly the same thing across tens, hundreds, or thousands of machines.

Basic Usage

Search **NTUSER.dat** for the key name that contains “Dropbox”

```
RECcmd.exe -f "C:\Temp\NTUSER.dat" --sk Dropbox
```

Search **UsrClass.dat** for the key value that contains “Dropbox”

```
RECcmd.exe -f "C:\Temp\UsrClass.dat" --sd Dropbox
```

Search the directory registry_files for the key value that contains “Dropbox”. The last write time is **>= Startdate**, and the **value name** contains either **“AppName”** or **“DisplayName”**, so don’t recover deleted keys and don’t process log files.

```
RECcmd.exe -d "C:\Temp\registry_files" --sk "Dropbox" --StartDate "11/13/2014 15:35:01" --RegEx -sv s (App\Display) Name" --recover false --nl
```

RECcmd will replay and apply all registry hive logs automatically. Use **--nl** to suppress this.

Search

- StartDate Start date: last write timestamps (UTC)
- EndDate End date: last write timestamps (UTC)
- MinSize Find values with data size > MinSize (specified in bytes)
- sk Search for <string> in key names
- sv Search for <string> in value names
- sd Search for <string> in value record’s value data
- ss Search for <string> in value record’s value slack
- Regular expressions must of course be valid .net regular expressions
- If either the key or value has spaces in them, enclose in quotes
- To get default values, use a value name of “(default)”
- “-sX” are search options; they use the “contains” logic
- sd will convert the compare values to ASCII and Unicode before doing comparison unless the “-l” literal switch is used

In the example command below, we are looking for large registry key (1MB and base64 encoded) that often contain malware. Deleted keys are also retrieved and parsed.

```
RECcmd.exe -d "C:\Temp\registry_files" --minsize 1M --Base64 --recover true
```

To search for binary data in value data, simply string together the hex characters you want to find, separated by dashes (04-00-EF-BE, for example).

```
RECcmd.exe -hive "C:\Temp\registry_files" --sd"
```

Batch Mode

By default, batch mode utilizes the same plugins as found in Registry Explorer and works the same way. When used by **RECcmd**, the data from the plugin will be normalized into a standard format for CSV output. When a plugin is used to process a key or key/value, the data generated by the plugin are also saved out to a CSV. In this way, it is very similar to exporting the data from Registry Explorer (albeit to Excel vs. CSV).

Batch File

Header

- Description: A general description of what this batch file is going to find
- Author: Name of this batch file (can be more, too, like contact information)
- Version: A version number that should be incremented as changes happen
- Id: A unique (across all other batch files) GUID (Global Unique Identifier) that identifies this batch file

WxTCmd – Timeline Explorer

Type of Artifact

The 1803 update of Windows 10 introduced the Timeline feature. This keeps a record of the last 30 days of applications and files opened by a given user. The data for this are also synchronized from other computers where the user has logged in with their Microsoft account.

Basic Usage

WxTCmd takes a single **ActivitiesCache.db** file as input. Output for this command is not output to the screen, so a CSV needs to be specified.

In the example command below, **WxTCmd** is being run against the **ActivitiesCache.db** file. Note that the subfolder named **“a3936c317ac1474e”** is not consistent. An equivalent, differently named folder will be present for other users.

```
WxTCmd.exe -f E:\Users\srogers\AppData\Local\ConnectedDevicesPlatform\{a393c317ac1474e}\ActivitiesCache.db
```

Key Data Returned

There are several columns of potential interest in a forensic investigation. The “Executable” column provides the name and the path of the executable in use.

Basic Usage

Recursively parsing a directory of event logs is probably the most efficient way to use **EvtxECmd**. To parse a directory, copy Event Logs to a temporary directory and use the **-d** option. Additionally, use the **--inc** option to only include specific **Event _IDs** in the processing.

You have extracted the Event Log to a folder named **e:\evt\logs** and now you want to process all those logs in a single command.

```
EvtxECmd.exe -d E:\evt\logs --csv G:\evt\out --csvf evtxecmd_out.csv
```

Process all event logs and only include event_id specified by the **--inc** option

```
EvtxECmd.exe -d E:\evt\logs --csv G:\evt\out --csvf evtxecmd_out.csv --inc 4624,4625,4634,4647,4672
```

Exclude specific event_id’s by using the **-exc** option

```
EvtxECmd.exe -d E:\evt\logs --csv G:\evt\out --csvf evtxecmd_out.csv --exc 4656,4660,4663
```

Key Data Returned

Events without maps are still processed, but output format will vary. The normalized Event Log output makes it possible to analyze many different types of Event Logs in a single view. Timeline Explorer is perfect for this analysis.

Advanced Usage

PRO TIP: Process only the Event Logs and Event IDs that are relevant to your case.

Key Data Returned

File system dates and times for target folders and first and last folder interaction times. The Bag Path, Slot, Node Slot, and MRU position for each entry are also shown. These can initially be confusing to decipher in table form. Using the GUI version of ShellBags Explorer to see the table view translated in a hierarchical tree format can be very useful.

Timestamps Shown in SBEcmd output:

Because of the nature of how registry key timestamps have only a single last update value for each key, the hierarchical data in the BagMRU registry key can become stale. This means that there may be a value in the key but it could be outdated. Therefore if **SBEcmd** is not positive that a date is current and accurate, that date will not be shown in the output. This why you will often see that an entry has a **Last Interacted Timestamp** an no **First Interacted Timestamp**. The **First Interacted Timestamp** is stale and can’t be relied upon.

You will also notice that SBEcmd will only show Last Interacted Timestamps for MRU values.

Advanced Usage

PRO TIP: **SBEcmd** can pull data from a live system. This make for a great learning and testing feature. Pull some baseline Shellbags data, run a test like navigating into a folder, pull the data again and compare. See what you own activity does to the Shellbags data.

Keys collection – Each entry consists of:

- Description: A user-friendly description of what this key will find. Can be anything from the key name to a friendlier description of what it means, etc.
- HiveType: The type of hive this entry corresponds to. Valid choices are **NTUSER, SAM, SECURITY, SOFTWARE, SYSTEM, USRCLASS, COMPONENTS, BCD, DRIVERS, AMCACHE, SYSCACHE**
- KeyPath: The path to the key to look for
- Value