



AppleScript and POSIX paths

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- Where POSIX uses the slash `/` as the separator for directories, AppleScript uses the colon `:`.
- You can use colon `:` in a POSIX file name, and you can use slash `/` in an AppleScript file name: they translate one into the other.
- To translate a UNIX path (file or directory, valid or not) into an AppleScript file reference, use **POSIX file**. **POSIX file** returns a file reference, that your script can use directly to create or use the file.

```
set p to "/usr/local/bin/"
set a to POSIX file p
-- file "Macintosh HD:usr:local:bin:"
```

- To translate an AppleScript path (file or directory, valid or not) into a POSIX path use **POSIX path of**.

```
set a to "Macintosh HD:usr:local:bin:"
set p to POSIX path of a
-- "/usr/local/bin/"
```

POSIX path also understands AppleScript's file references.

```
set a to alias "Macintosh HD:usr:local:bin:"
set p to POSIX path of a
-- "/usr/local/bin/"
set a to file "Macintosh HD:usr:local:bin:"
set p to POSIX path of a
-- "/usr/local/bin/"
```

- A file name may include characters which need to be escaped to be passed to a shell command. Use **quoted form** to get the quoted form of a string.

```
set a to path to application support
set p to POSIX path of a
-- "/Library/Application Support/" -- contains a space
do shell script "ls " & p -- does not work
-- ""
```

```
do shell script "ls " & quoted form of p -- works
```

-- Result:
Adobe
Lexmark Z53 Files
etc.

- The reserved directories may have various names (for localization purposes). Instead of accessing those directories with their names, you use keywords and the **path to** command. Most of the keywords are given in the dictionary of StandardAdditions.osax (select **path to**, press ⌘⇧F).

path to accepts a **from** parameter to specify either the **user domain**, **local domain** or **system domain**. Compare to the example just above.

```
set a to path to application support from user domain
set p to POSIX path of a
-- "/Users/<login>/Library/Application Support/"
```

For the exhaustive list of the keywords recognized by **path to**, use the following tool: **User Scripts > More Smile commands > Scripting > Path to** menu.