Installing a Programmer's editor - JEdit

There is a difference between a "programmer's editor" and a "word processor".   Generally a programmer's edit will show you want is in the file – whereas a word processor will want to show you what the file will look like. When we want to write code or write HTML or CSS – we want to see the file's real contents – not some prettied-up version of the file.

A number of programs are not suitable for editing programming files including

*   TextEdit on the Macintosh
*   NotePad on Windows
*   WordPad on Windows
*   Microsoft Word on Windows or Macintosh

Sadly, these are often the editors/word processors that come with our operating system – and none of them are suitable for technical work on a computer.

Thankfully there are a lot of really good editors that we can use – you may already be using one of these editors – if so, you can keep using the editor that you already have installed. Here are some of the popular programmers editors that you might find useful:

*   BBedit on the Macintosh
*   TextWrangler on the Macintosh
*   NotePad++ on Windows
*   VIM on Windows and Macintosh
*   TextMate on the Macintosh

Any of these are suitable for the course – if you choose to use one of these editors – you may need to figure out a few things by yourself – but once you get away from the "word processors" – most things work pretty well.

If you have no preference already I suggest that you use the JEdit editor.   I like this editor because it is free and pretty much identical on the Macintosh and the PC. So I don't have to teach everything twice and students can help each other regardless of which operating system they use.
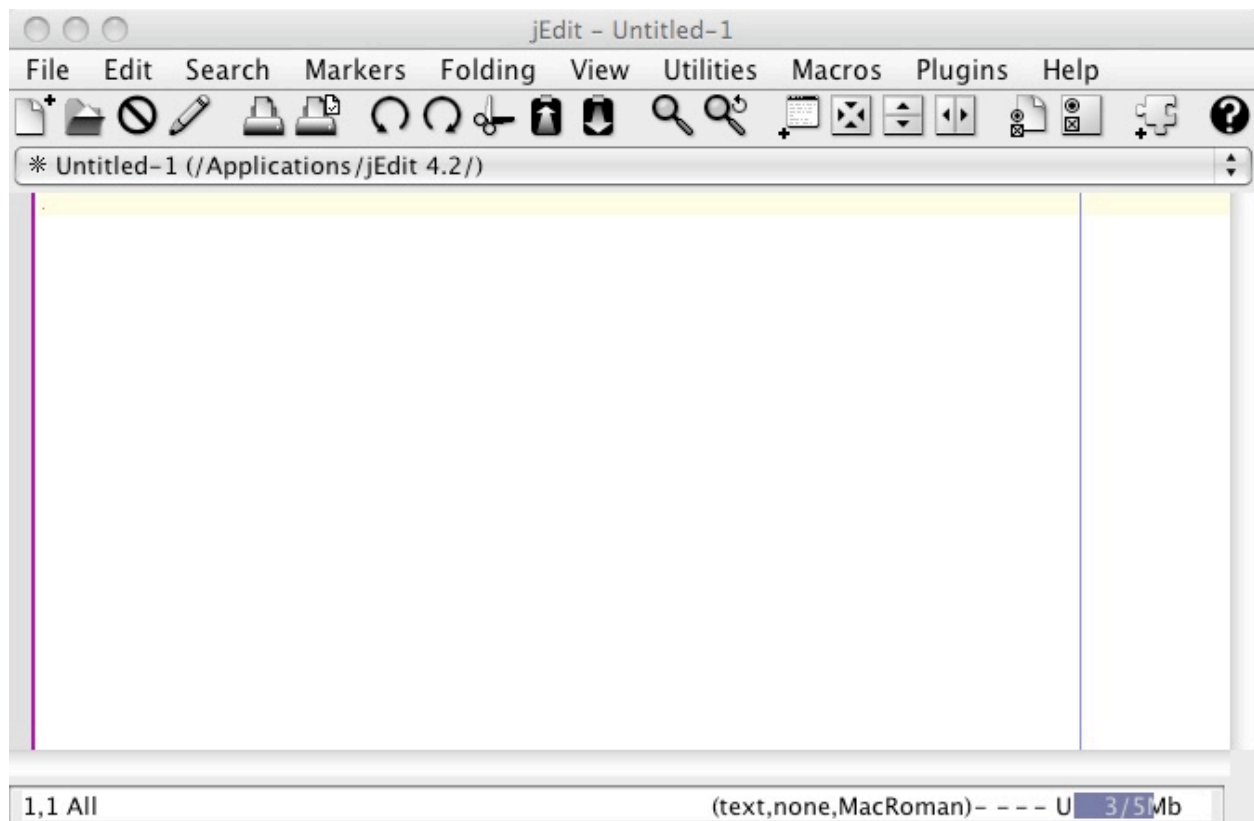
Installing JEdit on the Macintosh

Download the 4.2 Final version (aka Stable version) of JEdit for the Macintosh :

http://www.jedit.org/index.php?page=download

It should mount up a disk image as JEdit – drag the Jedit42 folder into your **Applications** folder on your Macintosh.   You can then un-mount the JEdit disk image.

To launch JEdit simply go to **Applications -> Jedit42 -> JEdit** – it may ask your permission to launch since it came from the Internet – it should come up and look as follows:

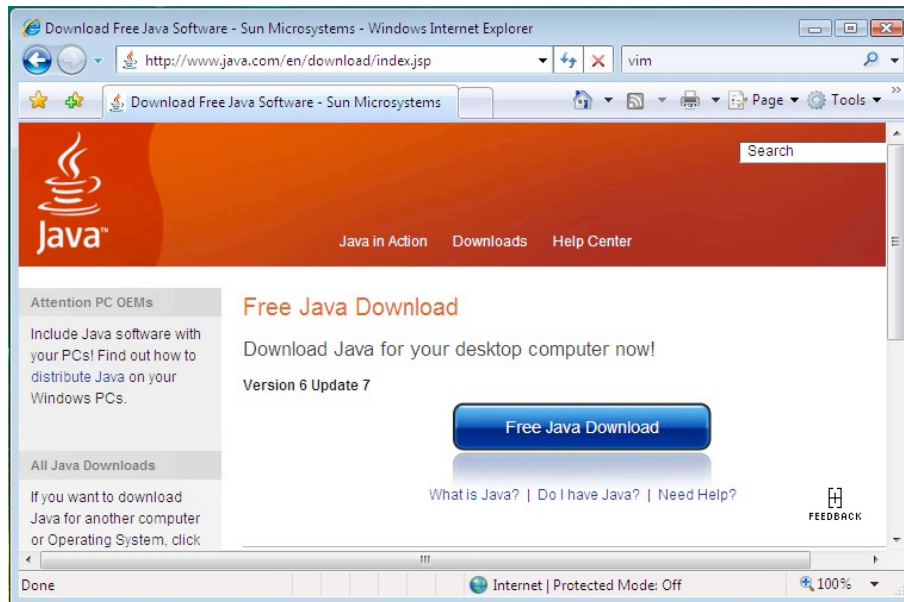Jump to the section on "Configuring JEdit".

Installing Java on Windows

Before you install Jedit, you need to install Java – because JEdit is written in Java. If you already have Java installed on your system – you can skip this step.

Navigate to the URL

http://www.java.com/en/download/index.jsp

This URL might change over time – but you are looking for a screen that will download and install the Java Run-Time Environment for your system. If the url does not work – simply start at www.java.com and work your way to the free download of the Java Run-Time Environment (JRE).

Click on the Download button and the installer should pop right up. You may have to give it permission depending on the security settings on your browser.

It will take a few minutes for Java to download and install on your system.

Note: As part of the installation process the Java installer may ask you if you want to install the Google Toolbar in your browser. I recommend that you say "no" to this – if you want the Google Tool bar – feel free to install it – I generally do not like it when the installation process for a particular piece of software installs something other than the software itself. Organizations to this to get a commission on your searches – when is OK – but you should not feel pressured to install unnecessary extra software

Once the Java install is complete, you can continue installing JEdit.
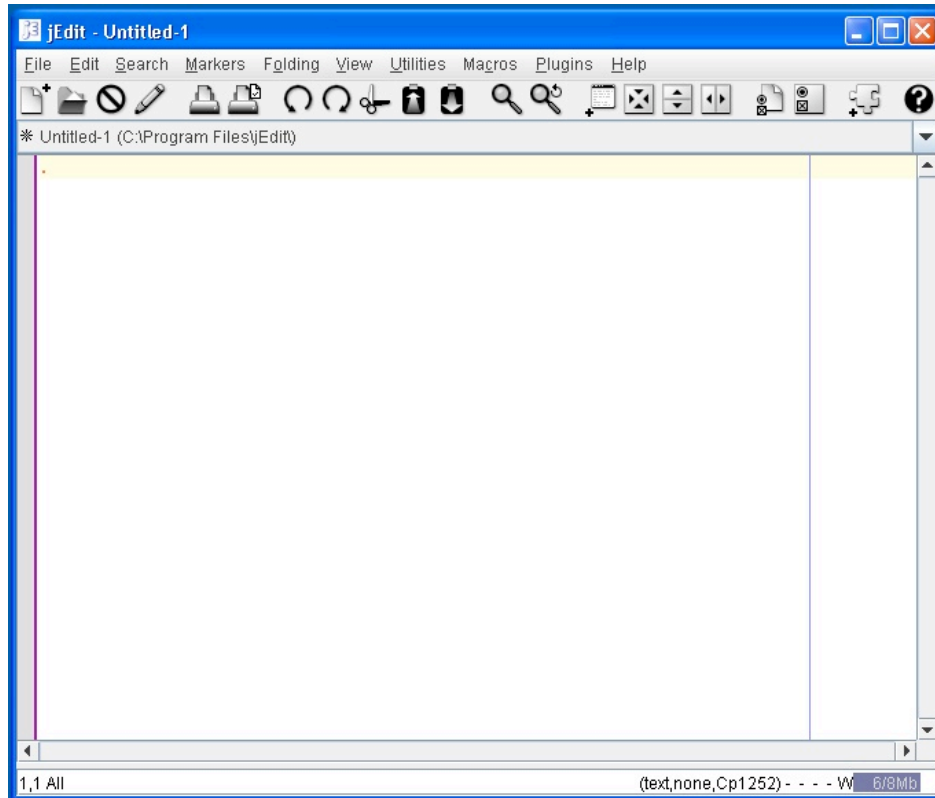
Installing JEdit on Windows

Download the Windows Installer for the JEdit 4.2 Final version (aka Stable version):

   http://www.jedit.org/index.php?page=download

Save the file to your Desktop and then launch **jedit42install.exe** – you may need to permit the downloading of the file – watch for a bar at the top of the browser – if the bar appears – click on the bar and allow the file to be downloaded.
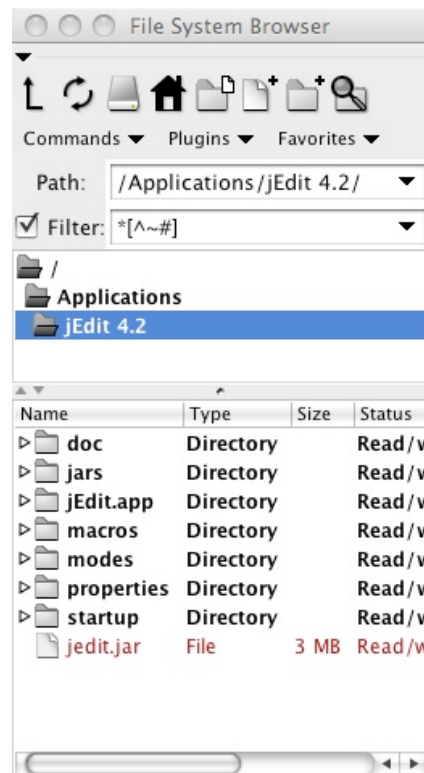
Go through the setup wizard. You probably want to create a desktop icon. Once the install is complete – you can discard the jedit42install file – this is the installer – not JEdit itself.

You can launch JEdit from the desktop short cut or on Windows from **Start-> All Programs -> JEdit 4.2 -> JEdit**. For Windows Vista – you may need to scroll down after **All Programs** to Find the **JEdit 4.2** folder.
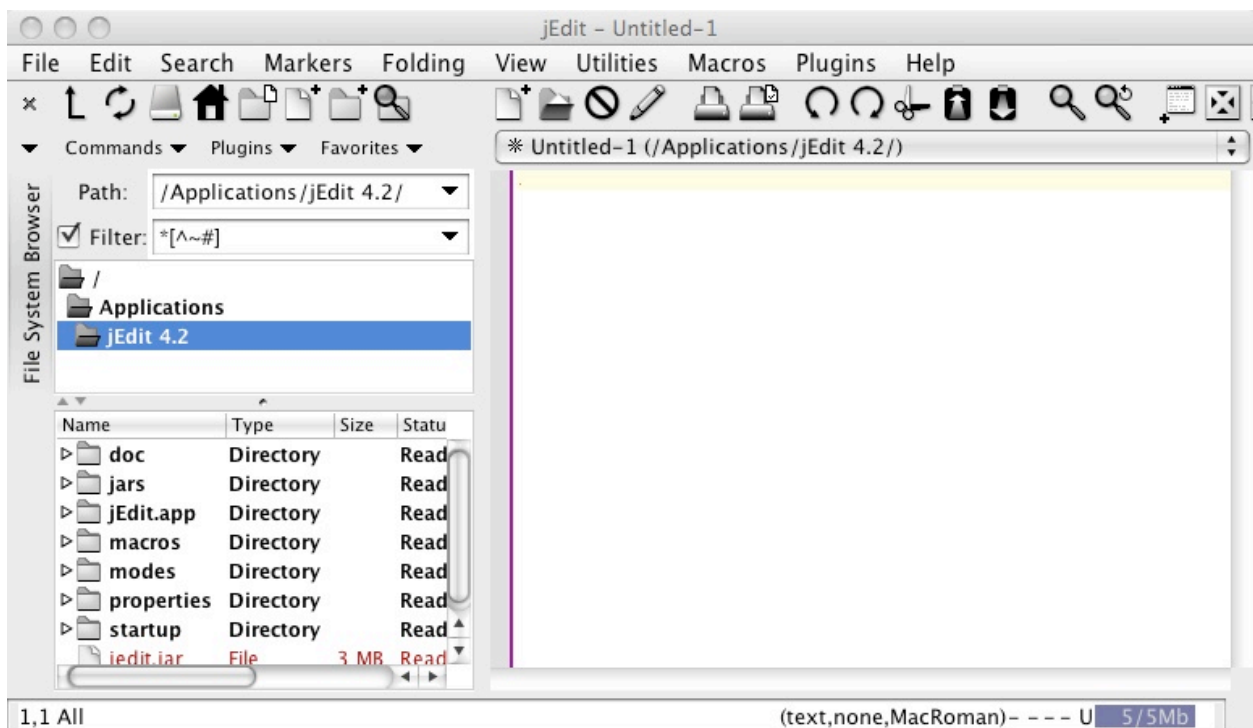

Configuring JEdit

One of the nice features of a programmer's edit is its configuration flexibility.   Lets add a File System Browser to our User Interface. In JEdit go to **Utilities -> File System Browser.** This will launch the file system browser below. Click on the triangle in the upper left and select **Dock at Left**.

Once this is done, you will see the file system browser attached to your editor. JEdit saves your settings so it will always come up with this configuration.

This makes it easy to quickly open many files as you switch around between directories and files as you do your editing and testing.
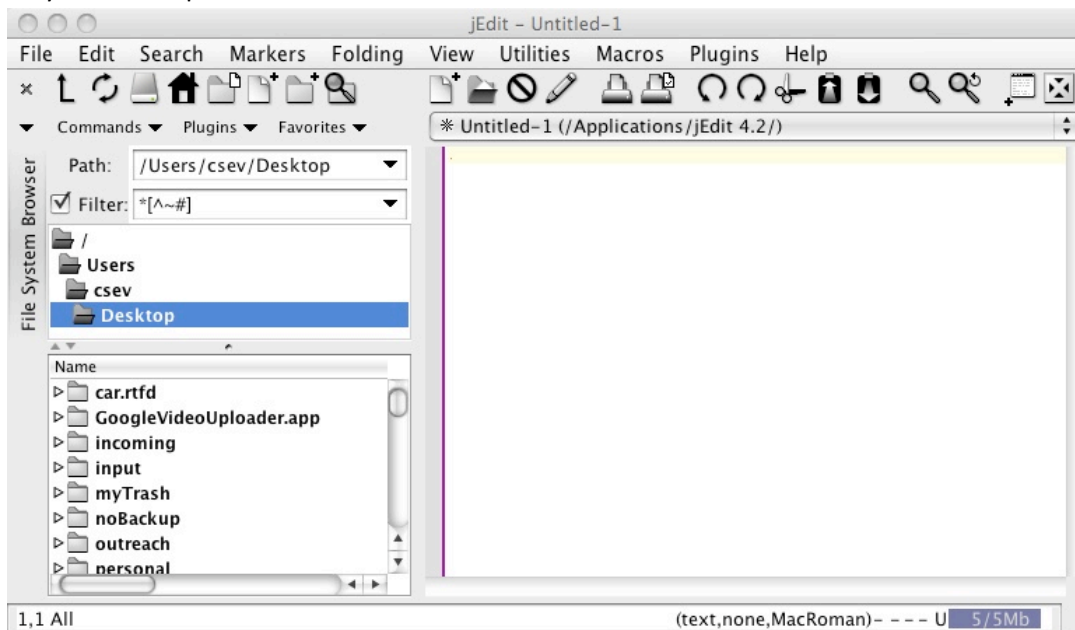
The User Interface of JEdit is a little busy – but knowing a few buttons and features will increase your productivity if you take a moment and look at them.

JEdit can have multiple files open at the same time – the bar just above the editing area (currently labeled Untitled-1) allows you to quickly switch between multiple open files without opening and closing each file. Click on the bar and it becomes a drop down.

From left to right, above the file bar, the icons mean "New File", Open File, Close File, Save File (the pencil), Print, Page Setup, Undo (the counterclockwise arrow), and Redo.
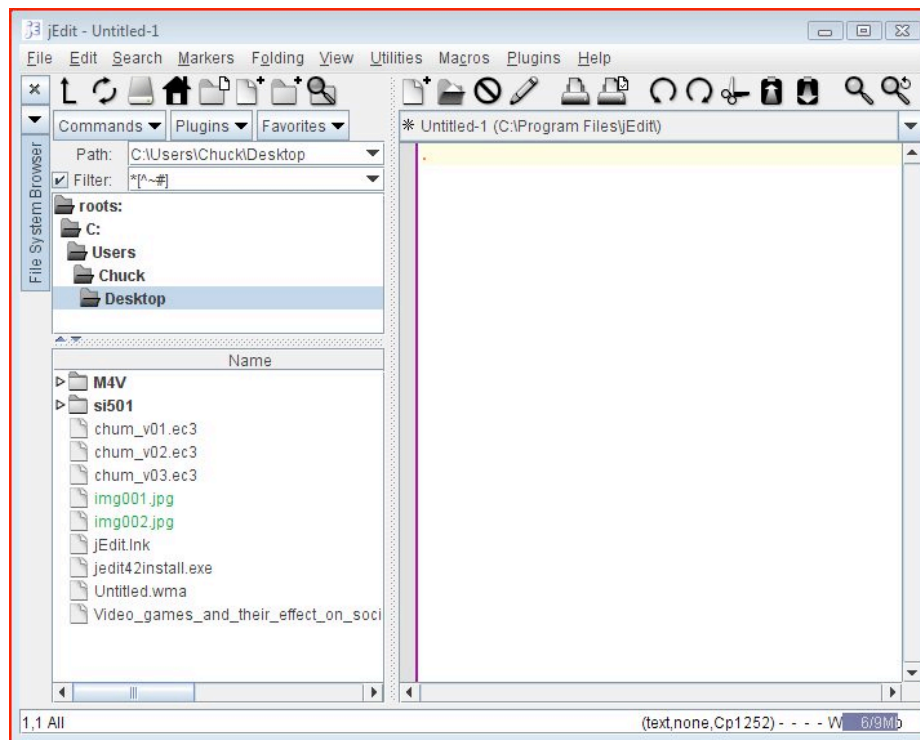
Organizing Your Files

Depending on your operating system the path to your files might look a little different. In Macintosh, the path to the Desktop is **/Users/csev/Desktop** (where csev is your account) – you can make a folder on your desktop for the course and then make sub-folders under that course folder for each assignment.
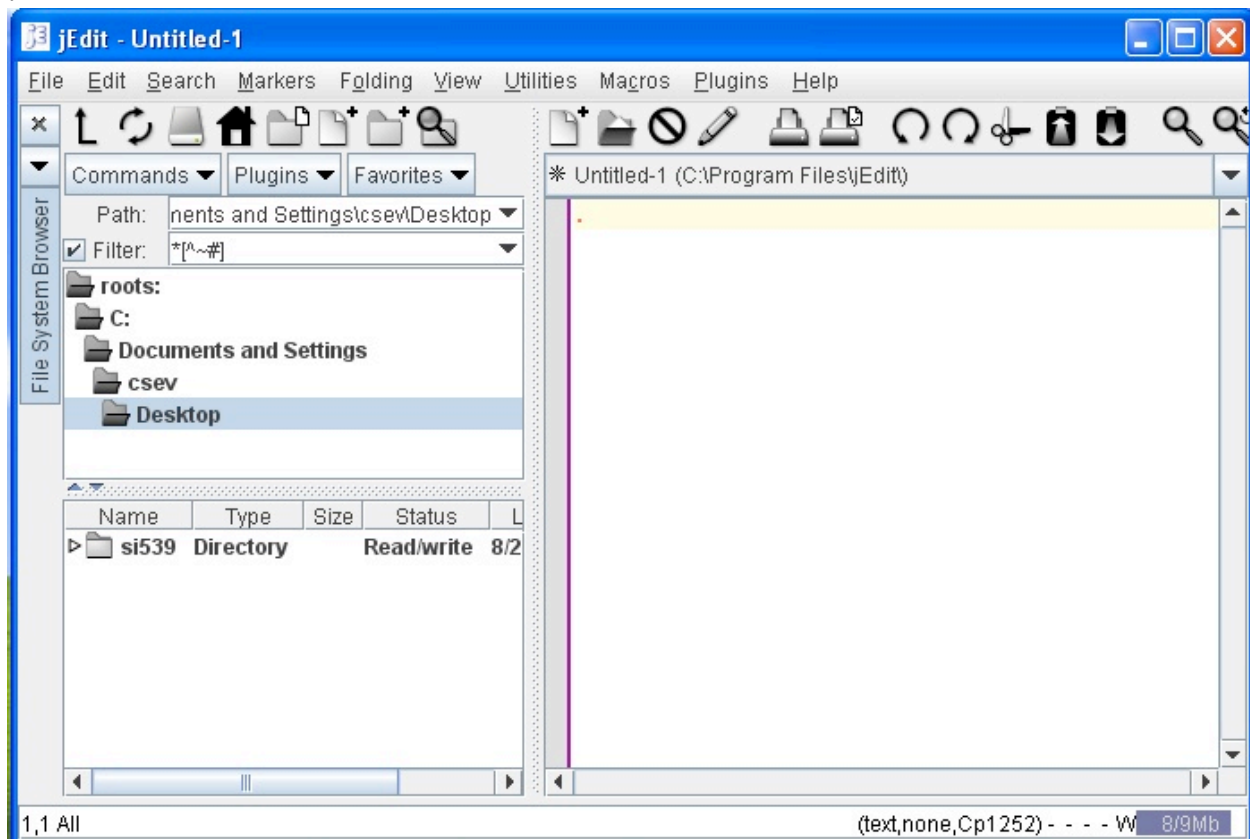

Just above the File Browser window there is a New Folder button (the little file folder with a plus next to it). It makes a new folder in the current directory that is selected – in the above example it would make a new directory on the desktop.

In Windows Vista, the home Directory is **C:\Users\chuck\Desktop** where chuck is your account name.

In Windows XP, the path to your Desktop is **C:\Documents and Settings\csev\Desktop** where csev is your account.

Practice your JEdit Skillz

You should familiarize yourself with the following skills:

- Navigating to a directory and opening a file
- Making a new Folder (Navigate to a directory and use **New Folder**)
- Creating a new File by using the **New** Icon above the file switching bar, type some text, make sure you are in the correct directory in the file browser and then using **File -> Save As**
- Switching between multiple open files
- Closing a file (The not symbol above the file switching bar)
- Resize the sub-windows in the JEdit interface by dragging the bars in between the windows

Advanced Notes

If you end up messing up your JEdit configuration – you can reset it to a "just installed state" it up by removing JEdit's configuration directory for a user – normally this is not necessary. Make sure to close JEdit before taking these steps. Feel free to ask for help before taking these steps.
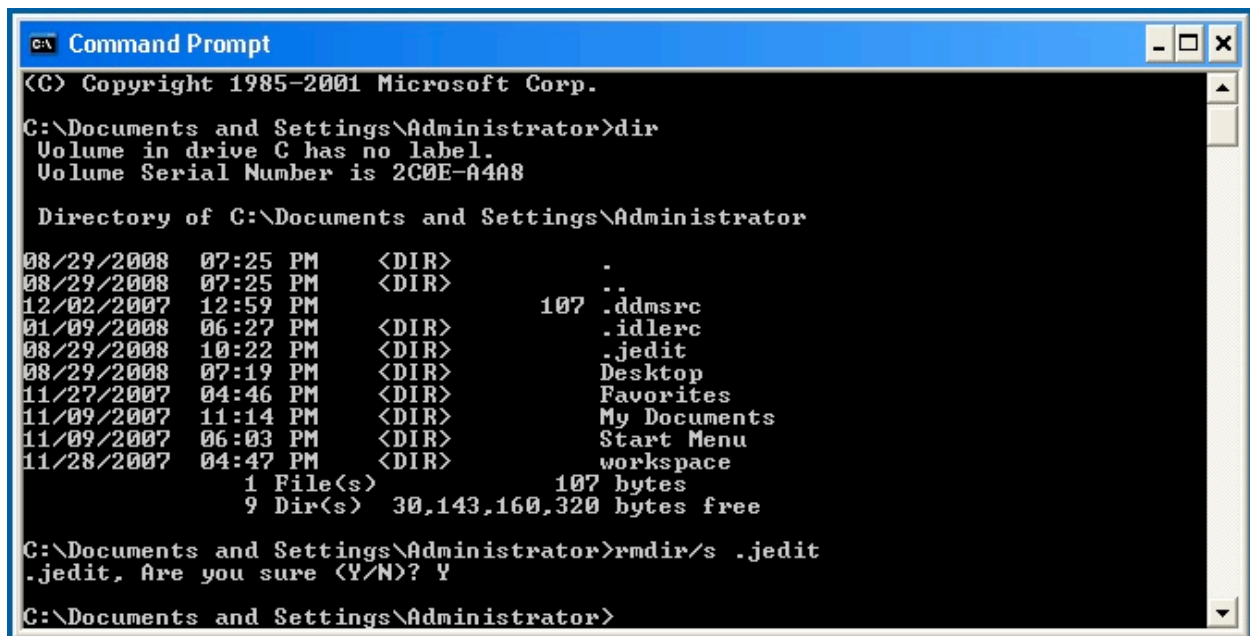
On the Macintosh JEdit stores its settings, plugins, etc in the folder ~/.jedit – to completely remove JEdit form your system so you can do a full reinstall – drag the JEdit42 folder to Trash and empty it and remove the settings and plugins using the following command in a Macintosh Terminal window

   rm -r ~/.jedit/

Again – this is only If you want to clean up and reinstall JEdit.

On Windows XP – to delete the JEdit settings – open a command window **Start->Run->cmd** – You should be in your "home" directory – type the following command to clear out the JEdit configuration:

   rmdir/s .jedit

```
Command Prompt                                                    _ □ ✕

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C:\Documents and Settings\Administrator>dir
 Volume in drive C has no label.
 Volume Serial Number is 2C0E-A4A8

 Directory of C:\Documents and Settings\Administrator

08/29/2008  07:25 PM    <DIR>          .
08/29/2008  07:25 PM    <DIR>          ..
12/02/2007  12:59 PM               107 .ddmsrc
01/09/2008  06:27 PM    <DIR>          .idlerc
08/29/2008  10:22 PM    <DIR>          .jedit
08/29/2008  07:19 PM    <DIR>          Desktop
11/27/2007  04:46 PM    <DIR>          Favorites
11/09/2007  11:14 PM    <DIR>          My Documents
11/09/2007  06:03 PM    <DIR>          Start Menu
11/28/2007  04:47 PM    <DIR>          workspace
               1 File(s)            107 bytes
               9 Dir(s)  30,143,160,320 bytes free

C:\Documents and Settings\Administrator>rmdir/s .jedit
.jedit, Are you sure (Y/N)? Y

C:\Documents and Settings\Administrator>
```

On Windows Vista – Click the Windows Icon in the lower right and type **command** where it says "Start Search "and press enter. Again you should be in your home directory and type the following command:

   rmdir/s .jedit

These commands are only needed if you want to clear out the JEdit settings for a particular account.