

# BLAZE 0.5 QUICK GUIDE

Welcome to Blaze quick guide. Here I will teach you:

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This guide gives a brief introduction of how to use Blaze as an application launcher and offers a good coverage of how to use it as an Automation Mechanism.

The following topics **are covered** by this guide:

- Using basic application launcher features.
- Using your own contextual information.
- Automating recurrent tasks.
- Recording Adaptive Macros.

The following topics **are NOT covered** by this guide:

- Using advanced application launcher features.
- Configuring Blaze.
- Editing automations.
- Creating new Automations.

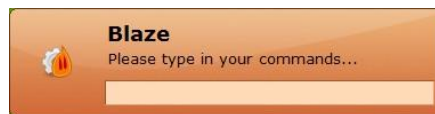
# 1 How to use Blaze as an Application Launcher

Blaze automatically indexes all your applications and all recently accessed files and folders. Furthermore, Blaze performs calculations, searches the web and even browses your file-system.

Blaze also has the remarkable feature of always being aware of what you are doing and using that information to help you do your daily tasks. In the next sections I will address some of these features.

## 1.1 Launching the first application

After Blaze is installed, it will hide itself on the background. So, in order to launch an application, you first have to invoke Blaze by pressing **Ctrl + Alt + Space**:



Here, you can tap **Esc** to dismiss Blaze or just start typing in the application's name. For instance, imagine that you would like to launch Mozilla Firefox:



Typing "fir" would be enough for Blaze to recognize that you are willing to launch Firefox. Then, you just have to hit **Enter** to open Firefox.

## 1.2 Learning a few basic hotkeys

Also, before hitting the Enter key, you could also tap the **Tab** key to auto-complete the applications name:

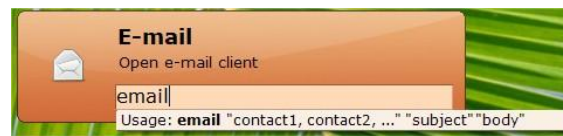


This is a very useful hotkey that you should never forget! Also, imagine that you would rather like to launch Mozilla Firefox (Safe Mode). By pressing the **Up** and **Down** arrow keys the alternatives' *dropdownbox* will open. Using the same keys you can choose the desired application:



In order to close the alternatives' *dropdownbox*, you can just press the **Left** or **Right** arrow keys. Also, you can cycle through the alternatives without opening the *dropdownbox* by pressing **Shift + Tab**.

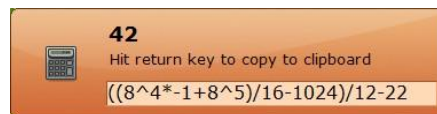
There is also another very important shortcut that you should have in mind. **Ctrl + Shift** will toggle on and off the *help tooltip*. The *help tooltip*, once toggled on, will display the path of the currently selected item or usage help for the currently selected command.



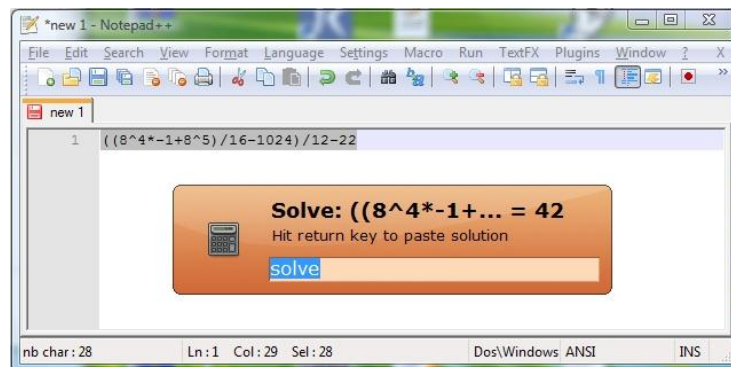
To know more about Blaze's hotkeys click [here](#).

### 1.3 Making simple calculations

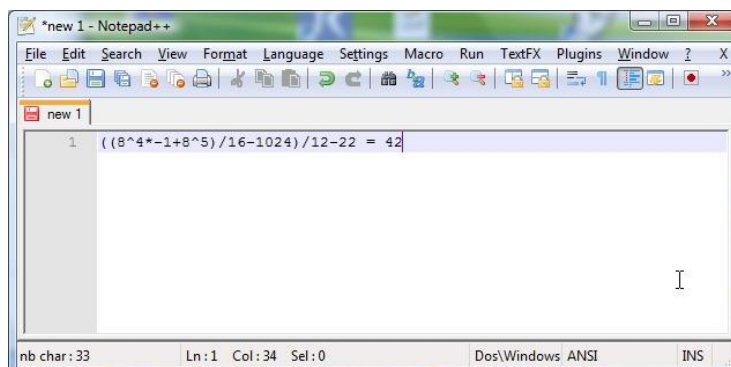
Blaze can perform simple calculations, using common math notation:



Also, Blaze can perform **in-place** calculations. For instance, imagine that you just typed a calculation on notepad or Microsoft Word or even on an Instant Messaging client's window. You just need to **select that calculation** with the mouse, open Blaze and **type "solve"**:



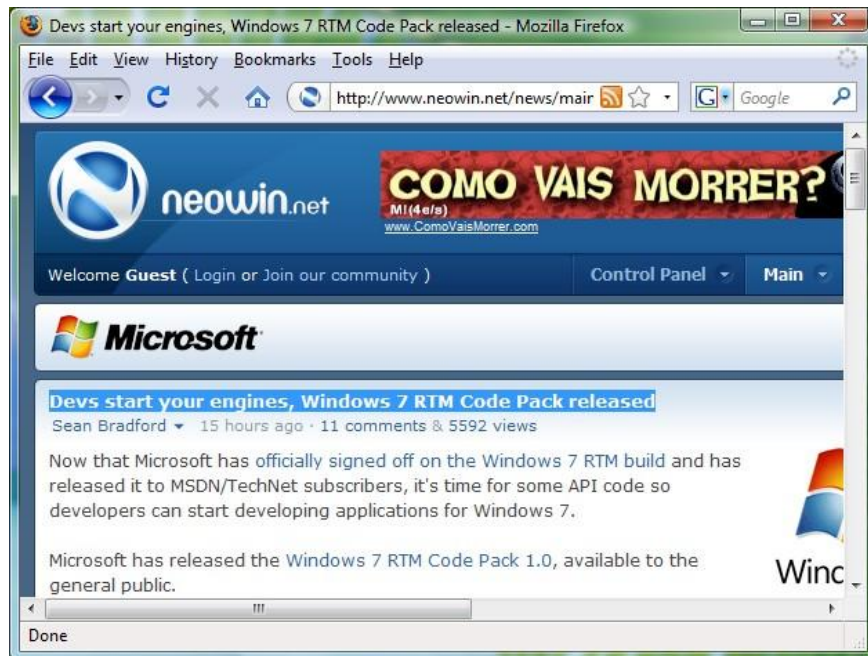
Then, you can just hit the **Return** key to replace the selected expression with the solution or **Shift + Return** to append the solution to the expression. In this example, hitting Shift + Return would append "= 42" to the selected text:



To know more about this feature and about all supported operators click [here](#).

## 1.4 Creating an email on-the-fly

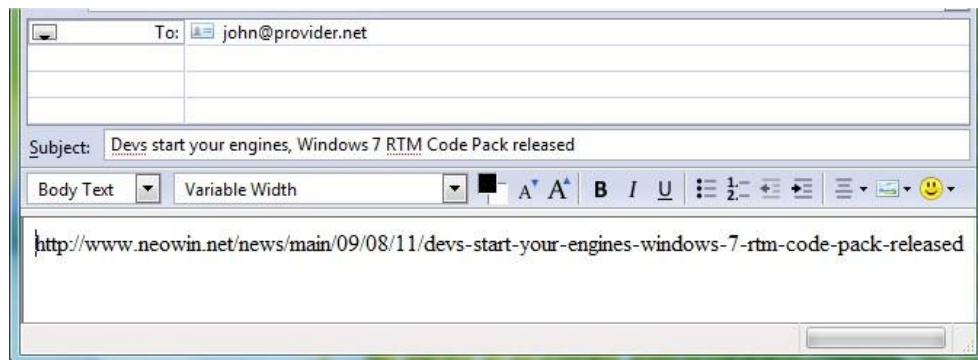
Imagine that you want to share with your friend John an outstanding story from a popular technological blog. You would like to quickly send the headline as the email's subject and the URL as the body. With Blaze, you just need to select the headline with your mouse, like this:



Type on Blaze “email john@provider.net “!this” “!url” and hit **Enter**, just like this:



Which, will create an email with your default email client:



Note that both **!this** and **!url** are commands that symbolize context information. For instance, **!this** symbolizes **currently selected text**, while **!url** symbolizes the **webpage address** that you are currently browsing. These commands are called *context commands* as they can be embedded with the other *normal* Blaze commands.

To know more about Blaze commands click [here](#).

To know more about context commands click [here](#).

## 2 How to use Blaze as an Automation Mechanism

Blaze has the outstanding ability to automate recurrent tasks. Blaze is always monitoring your activity and when it detects that you are performing repetitive tasks it offers to complete it in your place.

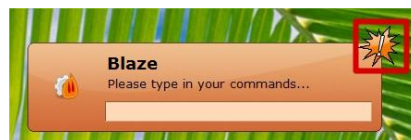
Have you noticed that Blaze is just standing there, in the system tray, watching you?



Every time it detects a repetition, it lights up just like this:



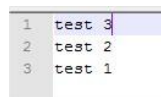
Therefore, you can just **double tap CapsLock** or press the **exclamation point** in Blaze's interface to open the *Blaze Assistant*.



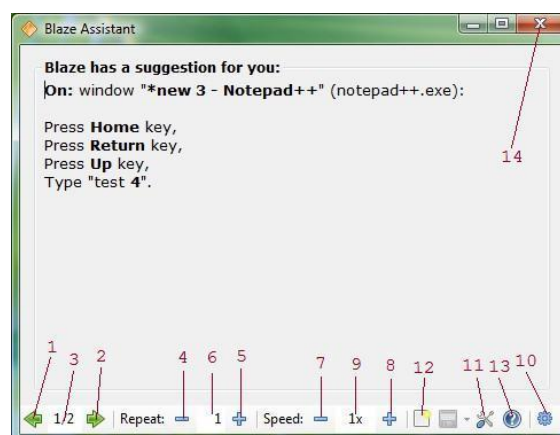
Blaze Assistant displays one or more comprehensive narratives that describe sets of consecutive actions that may accomplish a task for you. These sets of actions are called *Automations*. You may choose one of the suggested automations, edit or even create a new one.

### 2.1 A simple example

Imagine that you just typed on notepad "test1", pressed Home, Enter, Up, typed "test2" again, so that you get the following result:



As Blaze changed its color on the system tray, you double tab the CapsLock key. The Blaze Assistant Shows up:

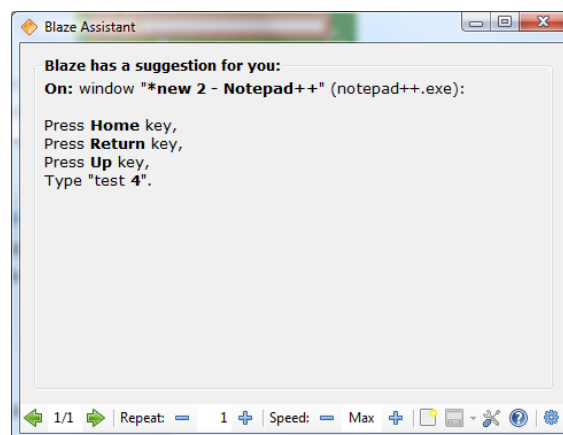


Blaze Assistant shows what will be done in order to complete the recurrent task for you. Controls from 1 to 14 allow you to parameterize the way this will be done.

#### Legend:

- 1 – Display previous Automation. (Hotkey: **Left Arrow**)
- 2 – Display next Automation. (Hotkey: **Right Arrow**)
- 3 – Automation index. The first number indicates the currently selected suggestion and the second indicates the total amount of suggested Automations.
- 4 – Decrease the amount of iterations to be performed. (Hotkey: **Down Arrow**)
- 5 – Increase the amount of iterations to be performed. (Hotkey: **Up Arrow**)
- 6 – Iteration counter. Indicates the amount of iterations that will be performed. In some cases this field is hidden as it doesn't affect the execution.
- 7 – Decreases execution speed. (Hotkey: **Minus key**)
- 8 – Increases execution speed. (Hotkey: **Plus key**)
- 9 – Speed display. Speed may range from 0.25x to 2.0x. The step next to 2.0x is Max, which means the Automation will be executed at the maximum possible speed.
- 10 – Executes the Automation, accordingly to the specified parameters. (Hotkey: **Enter key**)
- 11 – Modifies the currently selected Automation in the Automation Editor. (Hotkey: **Ctrl + M**)
- 12 – Create a new Automation from scratch, in the Automation Editor. (Hotkey: **Ctrl + N**)
- 13 – Opens the help window. (Hotkey: **F1**)
- 14 – Closes Blaze Assistant. (Hotkey: **Esc key**)

Since we would like to repeat this task 3 times, we need to **set the number of iterations to 3**:



After pressing **Enter** key, the result was the expected:

1	test 6
2	test 5
3	test 4
4	test 3
5	test 2
6	test 1

Of course this is a dead simple example. However, there are many recurrent situations that we are constantly facing. I'm going to show you more interesting examples in the next subsections.

To check for more detailed information about Blaze Assistant's hotkeys click [here](#).

**Note:** Blaze stops monitoring your activity whenever Blaze Assistant is opened. So be sure to close the Assistant when you no longer need it.

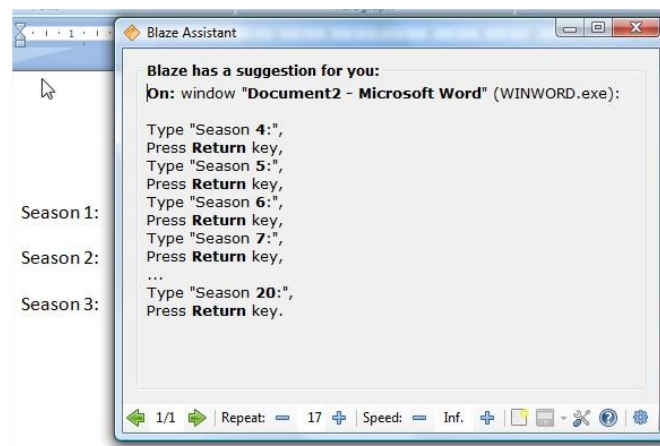
## 2.2 Word Demo

Imagine that you are following a TV series and you usually write small reviews about it. Therefore, you want to prepare a Word document such that you'll have:

Season 1:  
Season 2:  
Season 3:  
...  
Season 20:

... with the idea of writing each season's review as they air on the TV.

Doing this by hand would be rather painful. However, with Blaze, you just need to do the first 3 iterations and it will do the rest:



However, after executing this, you remember that it was 40 seasons after all. Would you have to do the remaining 20 by yourself? No! You just have to type on Blaze “**continue 20**”, and it will continue the last performed automation for 20 more iterations.



**Continue** is a very important command. To know more about how to use it, click [here](#).

### What if I make a typo?

If you mistype something, you can correct it by using the backspace, before a new line is introduced. Correcting words in other lines or by changing the cursor position with the mouse or arrow keys won't take the desired effect on Blaze.

## 2.3 Excel Demo

Imagine that you have an Excel Book with 5 sheets, all containing similar tables describing results of medication tests.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	First Experiment	Test Subject 1	Test Subject 2	Test Subject 3	Test Subject 4	Test Subject 5	
2	Medicine 1	taken	not taken	partially taken	taken	not taken	
3	Reaction 1	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
4	Medicine 2	partially taken	not taken	taken	not taken	partially taken	
5	Reaction 2	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
6	Medicine 3	not taken	taken	partially taken	not taken	taken	
7	Reaction 3	died	diseased	recovered	diseased	recovered	
8	Medicine 4	not taken	taken	not taken	taken	partially taken	
9	Reaction 4	died	diseased	recovered	diseased	recovered	
10	Medicine 5	not taken	partially taken	not taken	taken	not taken	
11	Reaction 5	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
12	Medicine 6	taken	not taken	partially taken	taken	not taken	
13	Reaction 6	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
14	Medicine 7	partially taken	not taken	taken	not taken	partially taken	
15	Reaction 7	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
16	Medicine 8	not taken	taken	partially taken	not taken	taken	
17	Reaction 8	died	diseased	recovered	diseased	recovered	
18	Medicine 9	not taken	taken	not taken	taken	partially taken	
19	Reaction 9	died	diseased	recovered	diseased	recovered	
20	Medicine 10	not taken	partially taken	not taken	taken	not taken	
21	Reaction 10	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
22	Medicine 11	taken	not taken	partially taken	taken	not taken	
23	Reaction 11	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	
24	Medicine 12	partially taken	not taken	taken	not taken	partially taken	
25	Reaction 12	recovered	died	diseased	diseased	diseased	

You would like to apply bold to all lines containing Medicine in the first cell. In other words, lines 2, 4, 6, 8, ..., 22, 24 should be bolded. But you want this to be performed, not only in the first sheet but also in the other ones.

Doing this by hand would just be too hard and boring to accomplish. Blaze, however, makes this task really easy to complete.

You just have to do the first 4 iterations by yourself and Blaze will figure out what to do.

Blaze Assistant

Blaze has a suggestion for you:

On: window "Microsoft Excel - ExperimentBook.xlsx" (EXCEL.exe):

- Left mouse click at 10,
- Press Ctrl, B key,
- Left mouse click at 12,
- Press Ctrl, B key,
- Left mouse click at 14,
- Press Ctrl, B key,
- Left mouse click at 16,
- Press Ctrl, B key,
- ...
- Left mouse click at 24,

1/1 Repeat: 8 Speed: 1x

In operations comprising mouse actions, 4 iterations offer more click precision than only 3. Although 3 iterations would be enough for Blaze to detect what you were doing, it might not be enough to precisely infer your next mouse clicks. So, if you have a really bad aim, you better provide five iterations instead.



Executing this suggestion will complete the task for the first sheet.

Now, how can we do the same for the other sheets? Just select the desired sheet and type on Blaze **“redo 12”**. This will redo the last automation from the beginning for 12 iterations. In other words, it will apply bold to the 12 lines beginning with medicine on the selected Excel sheet.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Second Experiment	Test Subject 1	Test Subject 2	Test Subject 3	Test Subject 4
2	Medicine 1				
3	Reaction 1				
4	Medicine 2				
5	Reaction 2				
6	Medicine 3				
7	Reaction 3	died	diseased	recovered	diseased
8	Medicine 4	not taken	taken	not taken	taken
9	Reaction 4	died	diseased	recovered	diseased

**redo**  
Repeat last suggestion for 12 iterations  
redo 12

**Redo** is a very important command. To know more about how to use it, click [here](#).

**Note:** to apply bold in this example we had to use the Ctrl + B shortcut instead of clicking on the bold button. **Doing so would break the mouse click sequence** and Blaze wouldn't be able to know what you were really doing.

## 2.4 File Renaming Demo

Imagine that you took 50 photos with your digital camera on a summer party. You just downloaded them to your computer and noticed that the camera has assigned strange names to your photos:

Name	Date taken	Tags	Size	Rating
*03082008(001).jpg			*03082008(018).jpg	*03082008(035).jpg
*03082008(002).jpg			*03082008(019).jpg	*03082008(036).jpg
*03082008(003).jpg			*03082008(020).jpg	*03082008(037).jpg
*03082008(004).jpg			*03082008(021).jpg	*03082008(038).jpg
*03082008(005).jpg			*03082008(022).jpg	*03082008(039).jpg
*03082008(006).jpg			*03082008(023).jpg	*03082008(040).jpg
*03082008(007).jpg			*03082008(024).jpg	*03082008(041).jpg
*03082008(008).jpg			*03082008(025).jpg	*03082008(042).jpg
*03082008(009).jpg			*03082008(026).jpg	*03082008(043).jpg
*03082008(010).jpg			*03082008(027).jpg	*03082008(044).jpg
*03082008(011).jpg			*03082008(028).jpg	*03082008(045).jpg
*03082008(012).jpg			*03082008(029).jpg	*03082008(046).jpg
*03082008(013).jpg			*03082008(030).jpg	*03082008(047).jpg
*03082008(014).jpg			*03082008(031).jpg	*03082008(048).jpg
*03082008(015).jpg			*03082008(032).jpg	*03082008(049).jpg
*03082008(016).jpg			*03082008(033).jpg	*03082008(050).jpg
*03082008(017).jpg			*03082008(034).jpg	

Therefore, you would like to give meaningful names to them. But wait... there are 50 photos! You would take about 5 whole minutes to do that by hand! Or maybe you could just spend 10 minutes trying to learn how to use a dedicated tool for file renaming. Or... you could use Blaze, which will accomplish this task in no time.

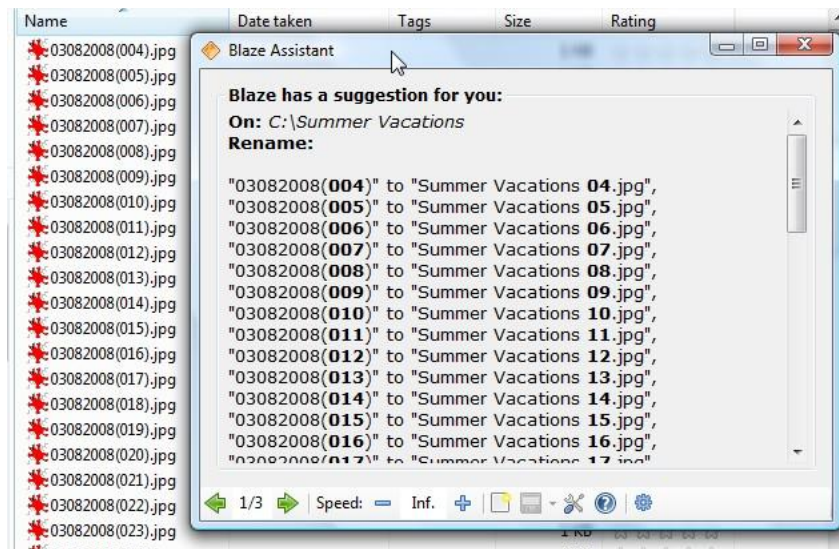
You just have to rename the first 3 files to what you want, respecting the sequential order. For instance:

"03082008(001).jpg" to "Summer Vacations 01.jpg"

"03082008(002).jpg" to "Summer Vacations 02.jpg"

"03082008(003).jpg" to "Summer Vacations 03.jpg"

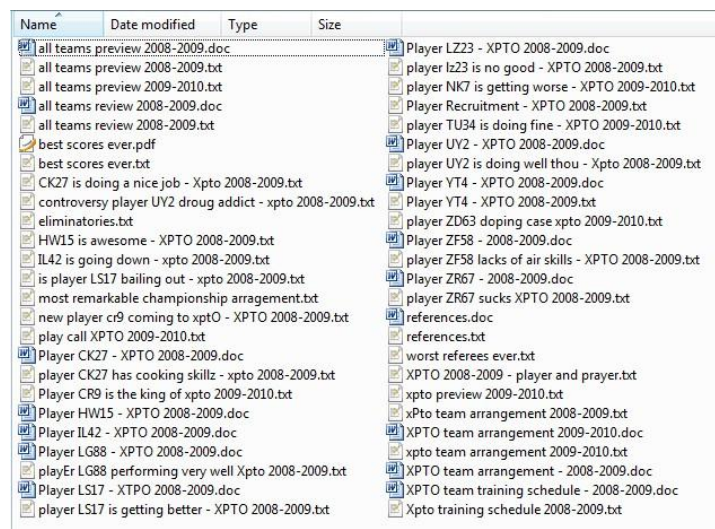
And Blaze will have the following suggestion for you:



You just have to hit the Enter key and it's all done! And it just took a few seconds.

## 2.5 File Deletion Demo

Pretend that you are a fan of the XPTO football team. You use to take notes on both the team and each players individual performance. You use to first make a draft on text documents (.txt), made in notepad, and later write them clean to a Word document (.doc). These documents are stored on a specific folder, which contains notes from both 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 championships.



Now that the 2008-2009 championship is over, you would like to clean all drafts from that championship, leaving only the .doc files in the folder. However, there are other important text files in that folder, which should not be deleted. So, you would like to delete all text files, containing the tokens "xpto", "2008" and "2009" in their names.

This would be a tedious task to accomplish by hand as you take the risk of deleting the wrong files or missing some of the right ones.

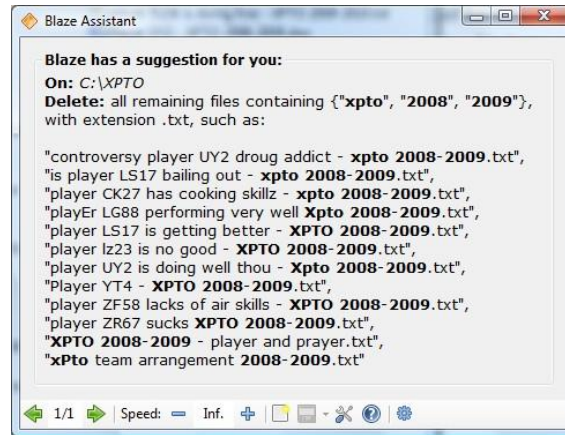
With Blaze, this is a very easy task to complete. You just have to delete 3 files that are only related between them by the .txt extension and by those 3 tokens, such as:

"new player cr9 coming to xpto - XPTO 2008-2009.txt"

"Player Recruitment - XPTO 2008-2009.txt"

"Xpto training schedule 2008-2009.txt"

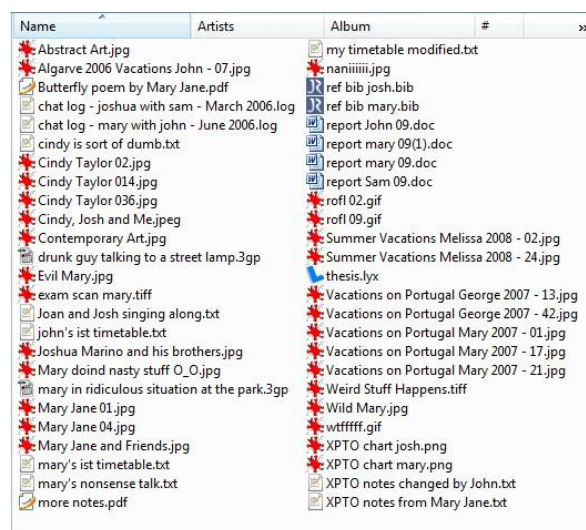
And accept Blaze's suggestion:



**Note:** It's important to supply Blaze with a general sample: the 3 deleted files only had in common the file extension (.txt) and "xpto", "2008" and "2009" tokens, which were the parameters that we wanted for the deletion. Sometimes it might be hard to find a general sample so, you just have to perform a few more operations (i.e. 2 more) and Blaze will figure the pattern by itself.

## 2.6 File Move Demo

Imagine that you received a lot of documents from Mary Jane through your Instant Messaging client. Mary Jane is a narcissistic friend of yours that uses to put her name in every file she sends. Therefore, you would like to put some order in your IM received files folder and move all files received from Mary to a subfolder.



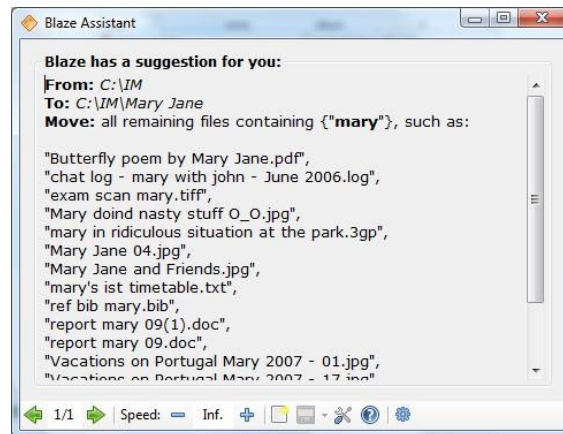
With Blaze, this is really easy to attain. You just have to create a subfolder and move a few files containing the toke "mary" on it. For instance:

"Evil Mary.jpg"

"Mary Jane 01.jpg"

"mary's nonsense talk.txt"

Blaze, in turn, will suggest:



This is exactly what you want.

**Note:** The supplied sample is general enough: The 3 files only have the token "mary" in common, which was exactly what we wanted.

**Note:** While performing file moving actions, **don't leave the current directory** until you've finished performing the required iterations. For example, in this very same demo, the moving was done by dragging and dropping the files into the subfolder instead of cutting them, changing to the subfolder and, then, pasting them.

## 2.7 File Creation Demo

Imagine that you would like to create a set of files, such as:

"Log01.txt"

"Log02.txt"

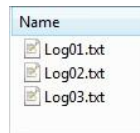
"Log03.txt"

...

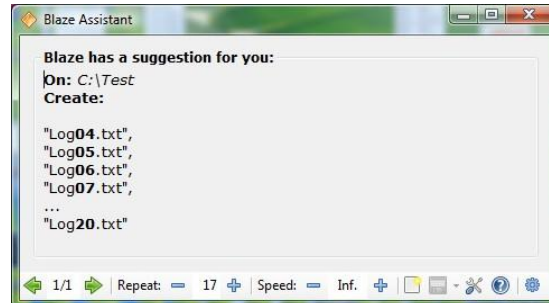
"Log20.txt"

Doing this by hand is just tedious. Building a batch file might be hard too. You might not be familiarized with scripting languages and, if you are, you probably will have to consult some documentation before you start coding.

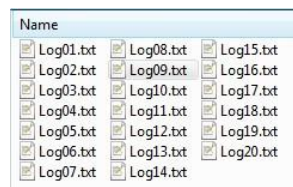
With Blaze, you just have to create the first 3 files:



And accept Blaze's suggestion:



And that's it!



## 2.8 Recording an Adaptive Macro

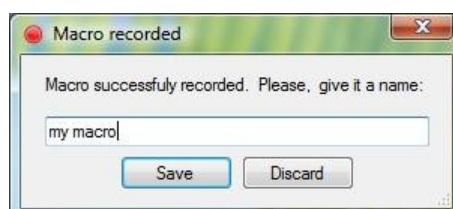
Regular macros consist of strict input sequences that can't adapt to new situations. Imagine that you recorded a regular macro in which you accessed some menus in a window, using mouse clicks. If you move the window to another position and you reproduce the recorded macro, you will notice that the mouse clicks will just miss their target.

Blaze has the ability to record *Adaptive Macros*, which are macros that can adapt to new window positions. These macros also have the advantage of being recorded to IronPython files (.py), making them really easy to edit with notepad.

Blaze really facilitates the macro recording tasks. No macro editors are used. You just have to type on Blaze "**Record Macro**" and start performing your actions.



Once you are finished, you just have to **invoke Blaze**, by pressing Ctrl + Alt + Space, in order to stop the macro recording. Then, you can give a name to your newly created macro or just discard it.





To invoke your new macro, you just have to type on Blaze the name you assigned to it and press Enter:



You can also pass as a parameter the number of times that you want the macro to be repeated:



Adaptive Macros are a good way to **teach something to Blaze on your own**. These macros are excellent to record recurrent tasks that happen within a period of time bigger than a few seconds. For instance, you could record an interaction in which you open Mozilla Firefox, open the “clear private data” form, click “clear private data now” button, and then close both forms. This is an example of a repetitive task that happens once per day.

You can access the folder in which Blaze keeps all recorded macros by typing the command “**Scripts Folder**”:



**Note:** There are a few things that you should keep in mind, before using Adaptive Macros: In order to keep these macros adaptable and easy to edit, they just capture high-level actions and, therefore, don’t tolerate mouse hover actions. Hence, when recording macros with Blaze, try to be as much accurate as possible, try not to commit errors and, when performing mouse hover actions, perform clicks instead. This works perfectly for menus on most of Microsoft Windows applications.

### 3 A Few Remarks

As an application launcher, Blaze is quite easy and simple to use. The Automation part is the really new one. It might be a little hard to master at first, but if you take some aspects into consideration, it be really easy to get used to it.

Blaze is really smart but it doesn’t do magic:

- Only typos **corrected with the backspace** key are seen as corrected for Blaze.
- Don’t forget that recurrent tasks with mouse clicks require a little more precision. Therefore, try to **be as much accurate as possible** while clicking and perform, at least, 4 iterations.
- **Continue** and **Redo** commands are of major importance and may save you a lot of time.



- While performing recurrent tasks over files that aren't related by a sequential numeric order, try to provide a sample **as much general as possible**. If needed, perform 4 or 5 iterations.
- While automating tasks involving files and folders, **try not to leave the current directory** until you've finished the iterations. For instance, if you want to move files to a specific subfolder, just move them by drag and drop. Don't cut them, change to the subfolder and then paste them.
- Blaze won't monitor your activity if Blaze Assistant is opened. So, if you don't want to accept its suggestion, just close it.
- When recording macros, try not to commit errors and perform mouse clicks instead of mouse hover actions.