

Why does the CBS_SORT combo box style sort the left square bracket so strangely?

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Raymond Chen

Some time ago, [Michael Kaplan](#) asked (and answered), [How the @#%&! does CBS_SORT choose to sort it all out?](#) One detail in his answer is that the sorting algorithm used by `CBS_SORT` is basically `CompareString`, with special treatment for the left square bracket `U+005B`. Why is the left square bracket so special? It goes back to the `LB_DIR` message (which is in turn used by `DlgDirList`, `CB_DIR`, `DlgDirListComboBox`, and related functions). If you ask for drives to be added to the list or combo box, they are added in the form `[-X-]`, where `X` is the drive letter. The left square bracket is special-cased so that the drive letters sort to the top of the list.

Of course, `LB_DIR` and related functions and messages are pretty old-school nowadays, but the code for them is still around, so the sort function still needs to worry about them.

[Raymond Chen](#)

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