HelixCore

P4Merge User Guide

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How to use this guide

This guide tells you how to use P4Merge, the Perforce visual diff tool. It is intended for anyone using P4Merge to view the differences between files across time and across codelines. P4Merge, as its name implies, also enables you to merge differing files into one.

Feedback

How can we improve this manual? Email us at manual@perforce.com.

Other Helix Server documentation

See https://www.perforce.com/support/self-service-resources/documentation.

Syntax conventions

Helix documentation uses the following syntax conventions to describe command line syntax.

Notation	Meaning
`literal`	Must be used in the command exactly as shown.
italics	A parameter for which you must supply specific information. For example, for a *serverid* parameter, supply the ID of the server.
[`-f`]	The enclosed elements are optional. Omit the brackets when you compose the command.
...	■ Repeats as much as needed: • `alias-name[[$(arg1)... [$(argn)]]=transformation` ■ Recursive for all directory levels: • `clone perforce:1666 //depot/main/p4... ~/local-repos/main` • `p4 repos -e //gra.../rep...`
element1 | *element2*	Either *element1* or *element2* is required.

Diffing and merging files with P4Merge

P4Merge is a visual diff tool that displays the differences between file versions and helps you to resolve conflicts and merge competing versions into one.

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Diffing text files

In its diff mode, P4Merge enables you to compare two text files to locate differences. (P4Merge can also diff image files and, if your Helix Server administrator has enabled it, Microsoft Word .docx files.)

The purple icon ( ) is associated with the first file you selected, and purple bands highlight text that is in the first file but not the second file. The green icon ( ) is associated with the second file you selected, and green bands highlight text that is in the second file but not the first file.

To display diffs in a single pane, go to **View > Single Pane Diff Layout**. In single-pane mode, deleted text is shown using strikethrough text. By default, P4Merge displays diffs in a side-by-side layout.

To toggle the display of line numbers, click .

Navigate Diffs

To move forward and back through individual differences, or to locate specific text or lines, click the toolbar buttons listed below.

Go to next/previous diff	
Find text	
Go to line number	

Set Preferences

To configure P4Merge settings to display or suppress differences in white space and line endings, click or choose **File > Comparison Method**. To configure other settings, go to **Edit > Preferences** (Windows) or **P4Merge > Preferences** (Mac).

> **Note**
> If you are comparing Unicode files, selection of the correct character set is essential. If you select the wrong character set, P4Merge cannot correctly diff files.

Diffing images

To diff two different image files: Right-click an image file, choose **Diff Against** and specify the other image, or (in the Depot, Workspace, or Files pane,) drop one image file's icon on another.

To diff two revisions of the same image file: Right-click the image file and choose **File History**. In the File History pane, drop one of the desired revisions on the other revision.

P4V launches P4Merge, displaying the differences between the specified images. You can display image diffs side by side or overlaid.

To enlarge or reduce the displayed images, use the zoom sliders or choose the desired display option from the **View** menu.

To highlight differences, check **Highlight Differences** and use the adjacent slider to increase or decrease sensitivity. P4Merge highlights identical areas in gray and differences in yellow.

To blend or separate overlaid images, use the vertical slider: to blend the images equally, center the slider. **To increase the amount of an image used in the composite**, move the slider toward that image.

You can also view image revisions sequentially in Time-lapse View. For more information, see Viewing Image File History with Time-lapse View in the *P4V User Guide*.

You can diff the following image file types:

- BMP
- GIF
- JPG, JPEG
- PNG
- PBM
- PGM
- PPM
- TIFF

- XBM
- XPM

Diffing Microsoft Word files

If your Helix Server administrator has enabled it, you can diff Microsoft Word `.docx` files in a P4Merge window using a rich comparison tool that shows differences in text, images, formats, styles, tables, headers, footers, and many other objects.

There are two `.docx` compare modes, **Parent-Child** and **Sibling**:

- **Parent-Child** mode is used to show how a file has changed from one version to another; this mode is set when you select **Diff Against Have Revision** in P4V.
- **Sibling** mode is used when there is no direct relationship between the files being compared; it is set, for example, when you drag and drop `.docx` files.

For more information about how to select files in P4V for diffing, see Diffing Files and Folders in the *P4V User Guide* .

Merging files

If you and another user have edited the same file, Helix Server requires you to resolve those changes. One way of resolving is by merging your changes with the other changes using P4Merge. P4Merge enables you to compare two text files with a common base file to locate differences and to select the text that you want in the merged result file. The purple icon ( ) is associated with the file that another user edited (*[italic] their* file), and purple bands highlight text that unique to that file. The green icon ( ) is associated with file that you edited (*[italic] your* file), and green bands highlight text that is in the second file but not the first file. The *[italic] base* file is indicated by the yellow icon ( ) and yellow highlighting indicates text that is in the base file but not in the other files.

In the top half of the window, P4Merge displays the base file surrounded by the two changed versions of the revision being merged. In the bottom half of the window, P4Merge displays the merge results file, where you select or enter the text that you want to check in. Make your changes as described below, and be sure to save them before exiting P4Merge.

Navigate Diffs

To move forward and back through individual differences, or to locate specific text or lines, click the toolbar buttons listed below.

Go to next/previous diff	
Find text	

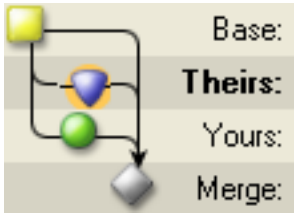
Go to line number	

Merge Text

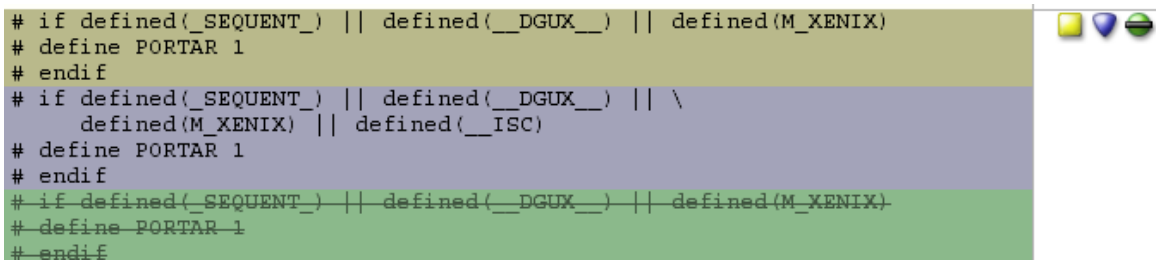
To merge files, you can either choose text from one of the files or enter changes directly into the merge results file.

Choose Text Chunks

To choose the entire contents of a file, click the corresponding icon in the merge diagram, as shown below.

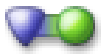


To choose a single chunk of text from a set of diffs, click the corresponding button to the right of the chunk, as shown below.

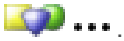


The buttons indicate the origin of the text and the way it was changed, as follows:

	Base file text
	Same in theirs and base.
	Same in yours and base.
	Text added to their file. Not in yours or base.
	Text added to your file. Not in theirs or base.
	Text deleted from their file.
	Text deleted from your file.

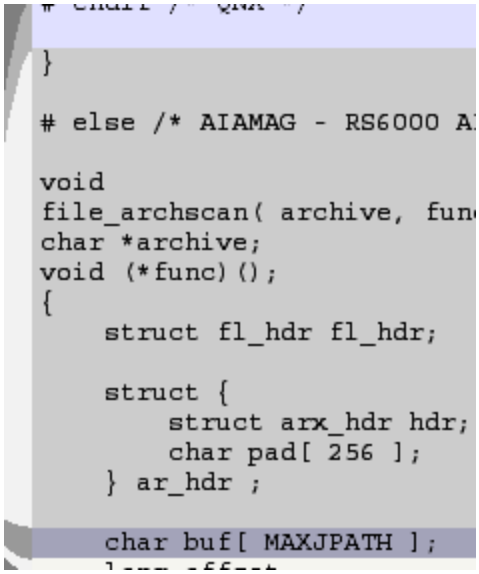
	Same in yours and theirs, different from base.
	Added to both yours and theirs.
	Deleted from both yours and theirs.

Note that these are toggle buttons: Click once to select the corresponding text, click again to deselect it.

If P4Merge encounters too many changes to display all the required buttons, it displays this button:  . Click it to view the details.

Edit Text

To edit the text in the merge result file, click on the text in the bottom pane and enter your changes. Manually-edited text is displayed with a gray highlight, like the middle chunk in the following example:



Set Preferences

To configure P4Merge settings to display or suppress differences in white space and line endings, click or choose **File > Comparison Method**. To configure other settings, choose **Edit > Preferences** (Windows) or **P4Merge > Preferences** (Mac).

To toggle the display of line numbers, click .

> **Note**
> If you are comparing Unicode files, selection of the correct character set is essential. If you select the

wrong character set, P4Merge cannot correctly compare files.

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