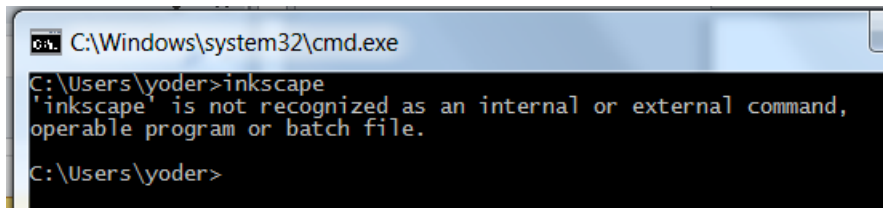# Changing the System Path

Warning: Regardless of which method you use to change the path, you must restart any programs that you want to use the new path. This includes Visual Studio, a command prompt, etc.

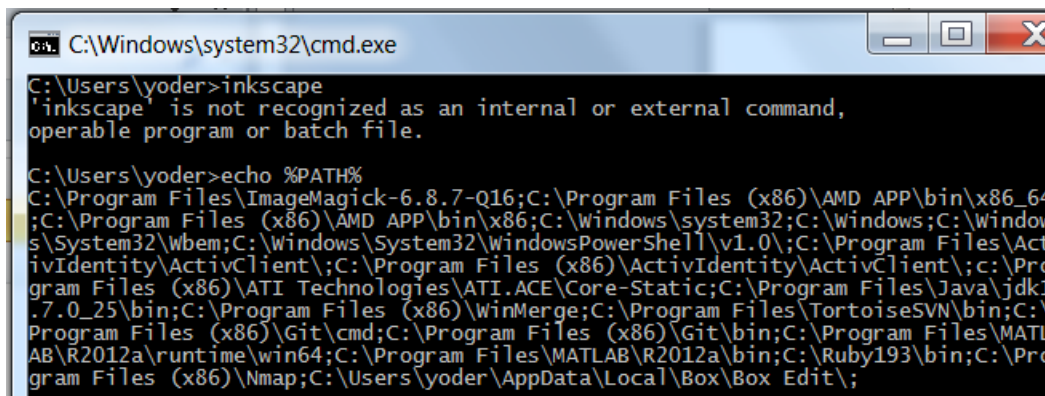This document describes how to set the path on your computer.

Motivation: Using and checking the path

Whenever you want to run a program just by typing its name into a command prompt like this…

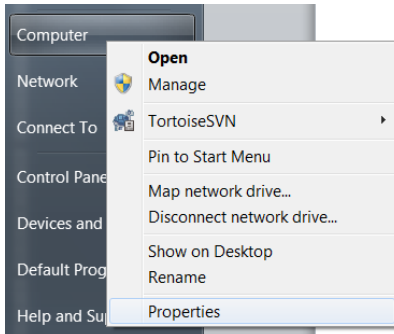You will want to add that program to the path. You can see what the path currently is from the command prompt by typing…

If you add a new path to this list, separated by a **;** the computer will look in that folder for any EXE files
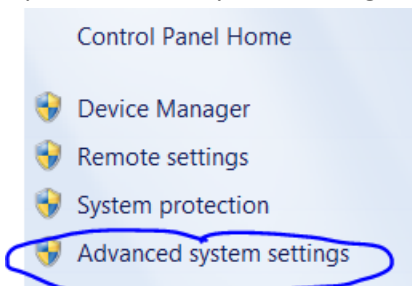
You can change the path from a command-prompt, but it will only apply inside that command prompt. From other programs, or from a new command-prompt, you will still have the old path. There are two other ways of changing the path that can be useful, described in the next two sections.

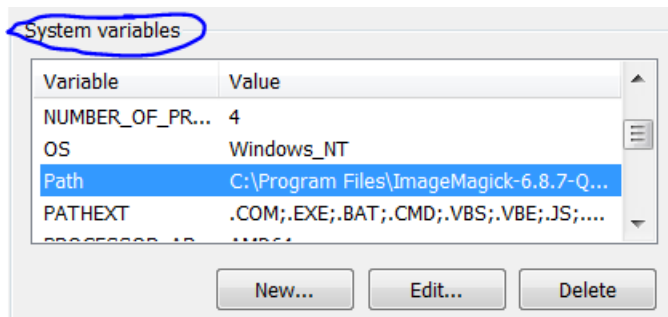## Changing the Path: The Old-Fashioned Way

- Open up computer properties from the Start menu:

- Open Advanced System Settings
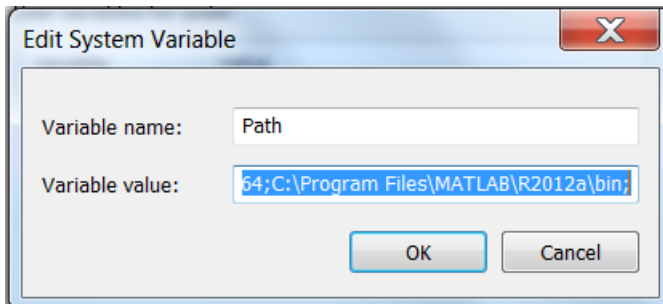

- Open Environment Variables (Button in bottom-right)
- Under **System Variables** at the bottom (**not** user variables for …), select Path

- Click the "edit" button

- As you can see, this is a little difficult to use. You can copy-paste the whole path into Notepad, or you can press the <END> key to add your path to the end of the path. **Be sure to put a ; between each path.**
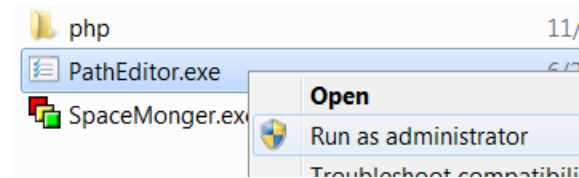
Changing the Path: Path Editor 2

This approach requires installing a new program. While convenient to use, the program does not give you complete control over the path.
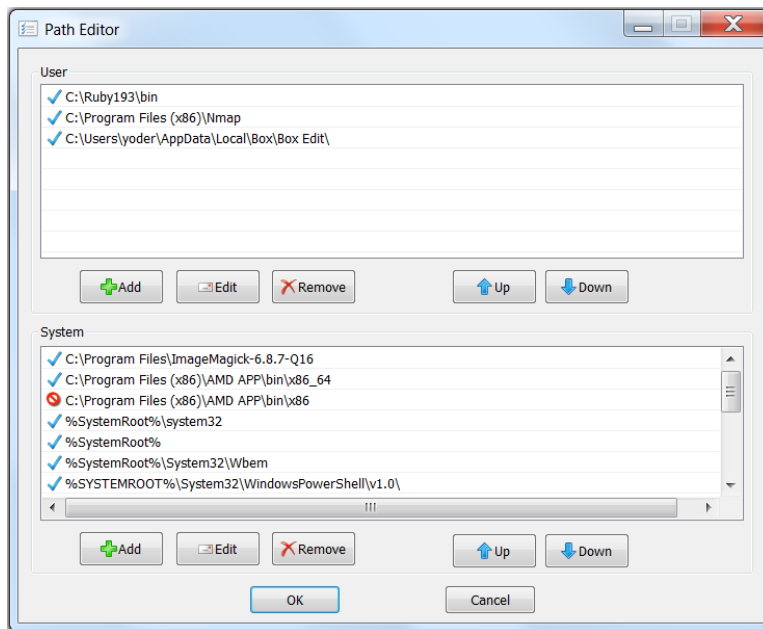
Inspired by
http://docs.opencv.org/doc/tutorials/introduction/windows_install/windows_install.html#windows-installation

Download http://patheditor2.codeplex.com/ (Currently Path Editor 1.0). Run this program as administrator. Right-click to get the menu shown below.

You can also put PathEditor onto your start menu, if you like. Ask me for details.

Once you have run PathEditor as administrator as described above, you can edit all of the folders on the path in a convenient GUI:

One difficulty of this approach is that it does not let you use a variable like %OPENCV_DIR% -- it will evaluate the variable and insert the true path (e.g. D:\OpenCV\build\x64\bin) instead of the relative one (e.g. %OPENCV_DIR%\bin). You also can't edit the path as text… unless you use the old-fashioned way above…