

[home](#) [services](#) [products & freebies](#) [case studies](#) [tech blog](#) [contact us](#)



## Sector size and MFT FILE Record size

May 4, 2012 in [Forensic Analysis](#)

This is a quick post to clarify a very common misconception about sizes of a sector and a single MFT FILE record on NTFS file system.

The most common values associated with these 2 parameters are:

- 512 bytes – for a sector
- 1024 bytes – for a single MFT FILE record

It turns out that new large drives are often seen by OS as having a sector size that is larger than 512 bytes and as a result, the MFT FILE record size is often also larger. This is not a big issue and many forensic tools handle it properly, but seeing many people explicitly calling out these 'hard wired' values, I thought I will make an attempt to clarify it a bit.

A side effect of this is that \$MFT size may quickly grow to many GiBs.

I do not work with hardcore file carving on daily basis, so I am pretty sure that someone who does could (and I hope will) offer a more in-depth explanation of what's going on under the hood (e.g. whether the 4096 is a virtual sector made out of 8 'old-school' physical sectors that are 512 bytes, etc.).

On a practical level, one can confirm the size of the sector and cluster as well as MFT FILE record size using e.g. fsutil tool in Windows.

For a drive with a 512-bytes long sector, you may get a result like this:

```
fsutil fsinfo ntfsinfo c:

[...]

Bytes Per Sector      :          512  <- sector size
Bytes Per Cluster     :          4096  <- cluster size = 8 sectors
Bytes Per FileRecord Segment :      1024  <- MFT FILE Record size = 2 sectors

[...]
```

For a drive with 4096 bytes long sectors, the fsutil can give the following result:

```
fsutil fsinfo ntfsinfo g:

[...]

Bytes Per Sector      :          4096  <- sector size
```

**View older posts**

[April 2014](#)  
[March 2014](#)  
[February 2014](#)  
[January 2014](#)  
[December 2013](#)  
[November 2013](#)  
[September 2013](#)  
[August 2013](#)  
[July 2013](#)  
[June 2013](#)  
[May 2013](#)  
[April 2013](#)  
[March 2013](#)  
[February 2013](#)  
[January 2013](#)  
[December 2012](#)  
[November 2012](#)  
[October 2012](#)  
[September 2012](#)  
[August 2012](#)  
[July 2012](#)  
[June 2012](#)  
[May 2012](#)  
[April 2012](#)  
[March 2012](#)  
[February 2012](#)  
[January 2012](#)  
[December 2011](#)  
[November 2011](#)

Bytes Per Cluster : 4096 <- cluster size = 1 sector  
 Bytes Per FileRecord Segment : 4096 <- MFT FILE Record size  
 = 1 sector = 1 cluster

October 2011

## Categories

[...]

The values for a logical volume can be read from BPB (BIOS Parameter Block) – a decent explanation on encoding used to preserve the value of FILE record size can be found [here](#).

This is an example of a FILE record on such a large drive:

```
000000000 46 49 4C 45 30 00 09 00 27 25 00 02 00 00 00 00 FILE0...'%.....
000000010 01 00 01 00 48 00 01 00 68 01 00 00 00 10 00 00 ....H...h.....
000000020 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 04 00 00 00 01 00 00 00 .....
000000030 02 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000040 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 10 00 00 00 60 00 00 00 .....
000000050 00 00 18 00 00 00 00 00 48 00 00 00 18 00 00 00 .....H.....
000000060 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 .x..GQ...x..GQ..
000000070 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 .x..GQ...x..GQ..
000000080 06 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000090 00 00 00 00 00 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000000A0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 30 00 00 00 70 00 00 00 .....0...p...
0000000B0 00 00 18 00 00 00 02 00 52 00 00 00 18 00 01 00 .....R.....
0000000C0 05 00 00 00 00 00 05 00 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 .....x..GQ..
0000000D0 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 .x..GQ...x..GQ..
0000000E0 B9 78 C5 A0 47 51 CB 01 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 .x..GQ...@.....
0000000F0 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 06 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .@.....
000000100 08 03 24 00 4D 00 46 00 54 00 4D 00 69 00 72 00 ..$.M.F.T.M.i.r.
000000110 72 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 80 00 00 00 48 00 00 00 r.....H...
000000120 01 00 40 00 00 00 01 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 ..@.....
000000130 03 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....@.....
000000140 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .@.....@.....
000000150 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 11 04 02 00 00 00 00 00 .@.....
000000160 FF FF FF FF 00 00 00 00 20 00 00 00 20 02 00 00 .....
000000170 01 02 00 00 00 00 00 00 05 20 00 00 00 20 02 00 00 .....
000000180 80 00 00 00 48 00 00 00 01 00 40 00 00 00 01 00 ....H....@.....
000000190 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 03 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000001A0 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 @.....@.....
0000001B0 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 40 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .@.....@.....
0000001C0 11 04 02 00 00 00 00 00 FF FF FF FF 00 00 00 00 .....
0000001D0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000001E0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000001F0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 02 00 .....
000000200 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000210 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000220 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000230 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000240 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000250 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000260 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000270 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000280 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000290 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000002A0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000002B0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000002C0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000002D0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000002E0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
0000002F0 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
000000300 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 .....
```

3R

3RPG

Anti-  
ForensicsAutostart  
(Persistence)Batch  
Analysis

Cluster

Compromise  
Detection

DeXRAY

File Formats  
ZOOForensic  
AnalysisForensic  
RiddlesForensic  
Riddles –  
Answers

Hackme/crackme

HAM

HAPI

HCD

Hexacorn

HexDive

HexDive Pro

HMFT

HSD

hstrings

HWD

Malware  
Analysis

Others

PECluster

PESectionExtrac

Preaching

Proxy Logs  
Analysis

Silly

Software  
Releases

Tips &amp; Tricks

<http://www.hexacorn.com/blog/2012/05/04/sector-size-and-mft-file-record-size/>

<http://www.hexacorn.com/blog/2012/05/04/sector-size-and-mft-file-record-size/>

<http://www.hexacorn.com/blog/2012/05/04/sector-size-and-mft-file-record-size/>

Comments Off

<http://www.hexacorn.com/blog/2012/05/04/sector-size-and-mft-file-record-size/>