Free with Atari World magazine

ST Source

Issue 1 May 1995

THE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO WORKING WITH YOUR ST

One in a Crowd

We help you create a custom start-up disk

Win a copy of UVK

25 copies of the best virus killer up for grabs

Inside

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4 **Getting Ready** – creating and working with an Auto folder

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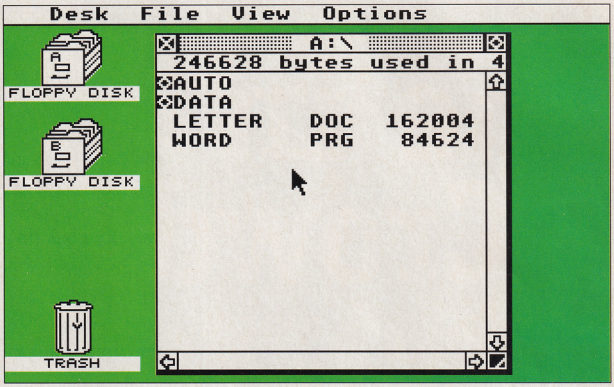
14 **Language Barrier** – make your ST a jargon-free zone!



See page 6 for some stunning Readers' Offers!



Put the



A new beginning

Welcome to ST Source, Atari World's beginners' section. Over the next few months you'll find articles explaining different aspects of your Atari, from simple tasks like making a boot disk, to step by step tutorials showing you how to get the best from your machine.

If it seems a strange thing to include when Atari STs have been around for almost a decade, just stop and think. Walk into Dixons and you're looking at a four figure sum for the latest all-singing, all-dancing IBM compatible PC. If you're on the first rung of the home computing ladder, you don't need one – and you probably can't justify the cost either.

This is why second-hand STs are selling so well. Ten years on, the ST still offers reliability, ease of use and a mature, enthusiastic marketplace full of knowledgeable people willing to help everyone else. The Atari world may be small – but rest assured Atari World won't be! Support us and we'll support you over the coming months in these very pages!

ANDREW WRIGHT
Assistant editor

Andrew Wright gets tough with his ST this month and gives away a few secrets about the booting process.

The ST's desktop – LETTER.DOC and WORD.PRG are in the root directory as they are outside of any folders.

What *really* goes on when you switch on your machine? OK, let's try and work it out. Make sure the floppy disk drive is empty and switch on your Atari. What happens? The screen goes white and the disk drive grinds away briefly – your ST is actually checking to see whether there's a disk in the drive.

After a minute or so, you'll see the familiar bright green screen and three icons labelled Floppy Disk A, Floppy Disk B and Trash. If you're using a colour monitor or TV, you will be in low resolution and the screen will be 320 pixels wide by 200 high. This is the default desktop that is stored in the computer's permanent memory, known as the read-only memory or ROM.

Put a non-game disk in the drive and press the reset button. Things get a little busier. Spotting the floppy disk in the drive, TOS rubs its little hands together – it knows it's got some jobs to do and it sets about them methodically.

First of all it looks into the part of the floppy disk called the Boot Sector. One of four things will normally be here. There could be a loader program. This usually happens if you insert a commercial game disk and explains why they often load straight away without you ever seeing the desktop. Secondly there could be a virus! After all, a virus is only a program. If there is you'll know sooner or later but not straight away. Don't worry about it for now.

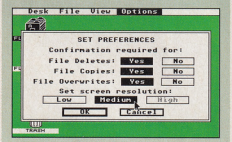
boot in

Thirdly, there could be some special code that produces a "virus free" message on screen when you boot with that disk in the drive. Many disks from PD libraries are like this. If the message is there, the virus isn't – a bit upside down but it helps.

I did say four, didn't I? Well, the fourth thing is nothing at all. If you format a disk on a virus-free system the boot sector will be empty (apart from a few bytes used for technical information).

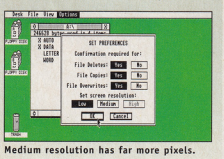
Low or Medium Res?

Assuming you've got your ST hooked up to a TV or colour monitor, you will have a choice of two screen resolutions: low or medium. All the screenshots here are in low resolution because they are easier to see for tutorial purposes but, in reality, medium resolution is better for working in as there are more horizontal pixels (640 by 200) which makes the characters clearer.



Changing screen resolution on a colour monitor or TV.

If you happen to have a mono monitor such as Atari's own SM124, you won't have any choice, but you don't need one – your screen will be crystal clear in high resolution (640 by 400).



Medium resolution has far more pixels.

On auto

After this procedure your ST looks for a folder on the disk labelled AUTO. If there is one, it attempts to run each program with a *.PRG extension that it finds inside (the three letters in the filename that come after the dot are called the extension). These programs are loaded in the order in which they were placed in the folder in the first place. They are specially written to behave this way – don't expect your word processor to run from an auto folder! Often these auto programs will stay in memory, carrying out particular tasks such as speeding up the screen display.

Desk accessories are programs that remain in memory, waiting to be called upon – a bit like a butler

Once the auto programs are loaded, the operating system scrutinises the root directory. Files that aren't in folders are in the root directory, but at this point your Atari is only interested in one particular type of program – the desk accessory. If it comes across a file with a *.ACC extension it assumes it's a desk accessory (which it should be).

Desk accessories are programs that remain in memory, waiting to be called upon – a bit like a butler. Once the boot process is finished you can find their names under the Desk menu. Clicking on a name runs the desk accessory "program". Unfortunately the ST only normally loads six desk accessories, the first six it comes across. If you have more than six in the root directory the system can become unstable.

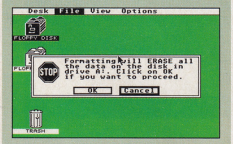
There's one more little thing that your ST does before it hands control back to you. It searches the root directory once more for a file called DESKTOP.INF (NEWDESK.INF in later versions of TOS). This contains a lot of information about your system – what colour the desktop is (if you have a control panel accessory installed), where the windows are positioned, which drives are available, which icons are where and much more. If it doesn't find one, you get the default desktop stored in ROM.

Formatting a disk

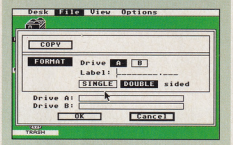
Boot your ST and when you see the desktop, insert the disk you want to format. It doesn't matter if you've formatted it before as long as there's nothing important on it.



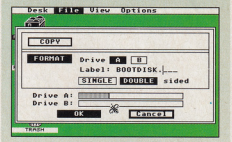
Select the A FLOPPY DISK icon and under the File menu select Format...



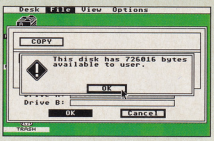
You will get a warning just in case your best-seller is on this disk. Ignore it and click on "OK".



Next comes the disk formatting and copying dialogue box. If you have an early version of TOS (this is an STe) it may look a little different but they are basically all the same. Where the dialogue says "Label", you can type the name of the disk – "BOOTDISK" will do – but it is purely optional. Make sure the double sided option is highlighted (you won't be able to if you have a single-sided drive) and also the drive A button.

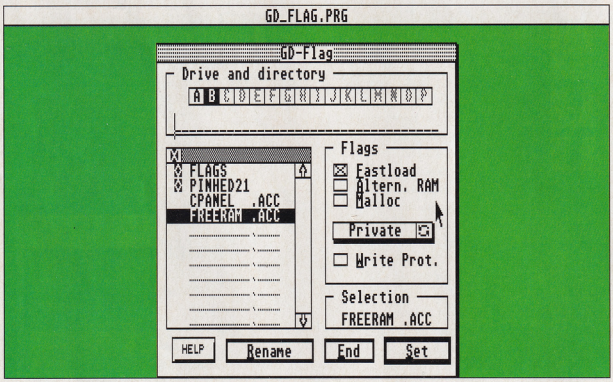


Clicking on "OK" starts the drive humming and the bar in the lower half of the dialogue box starts filling up, illustrating how much of your disk is formatted.



When the formatting is complete you'll see a dialogue box telling you how many bytes there are free on the disk. A disk in good condition will have 726,016 bytes free. You're now ready to roll and turn your newly formatted disk into a boot disk.

First move



GD_FLAGS, a freeware utility that keeps an eye on your bits!

Andrew Wright shows you how to sort out that boot disk once and for all!

Once you understand the boot process, it's time to put that knowledge to good use. On pages 10–13 you'll find lots of ideas about the programs you can put in your Auto folder and which accessories you might need. First of all, we'll show you how to make an Auto folder and put them all together on a boot disk in our two special step-by-step guides.

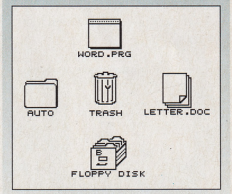
Once you've copied the things you want, it's a good idea to add that one essential ingredient – the DESKTOP.INF file. When you have the desktop looking the way you want it, with the relevant

Icon see clearly...

There are five types of icon in the ST's graphical interface: two on the desktop and three inside the windows. The drive icons, the ones that look like filing cabinet drawers on the desktop, represent the disk drives. Having a B drive may seem strange if you only have one drive but in fact it's a virtual disk drive and vital for file copying as you can see from the step-by-step!

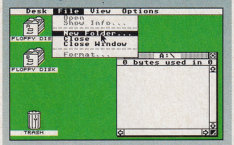
The other desktop icon is the trashcan or wastebin. It's pretty efficient at waste collection too – as soon as you let go, it's gone! I wish my local refuse collectors were that good...

Inside the windows are three icons: one for folders (with a small tab), one for programs (with lines across the top) and the other for ordinary data files (it looks like multiple pages).

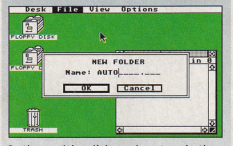


The various icons in the ST's interface.

Creating an Auto folder

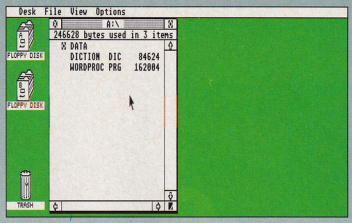


An Auto folder is no different that any other folder – it just happens to be called AUTO, that's all. Make sure you have selected the boot disk window and that the root directory is visible (you're not inside any folders. Under the File menu select New Folder...



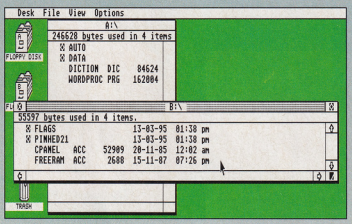
In the resulting dialogue box, type in the word Auto – it will appear in upper case but it doesn't matter how you type it. Click on "OK" and the folder will be created.

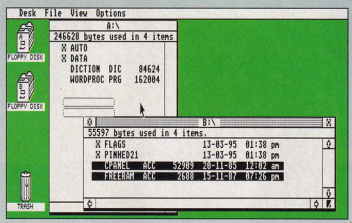
Creating your boot disk



You can format a disk, if you haven't already done so, or turn any existing disk into a boot disk. Always use a backup copy though – if anything goes wrong, all you do is start again. In this example, I'm about to turn my word processor disk into a boot disk. Note that the word processor files won't be touched – I'll simply add accessories and Auto programs and still be able to run the word processor.

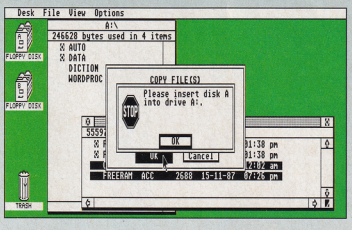
Create an AUTO folder. If you don't know how, consult the guide to the left. Now open a window onto the second disk by double clicking on the FLOPPY DISK B icon. When prompted, remove your prospective boot disk and insert the floppy disk with your accessories or Auto folder programs on. They may be on several disks – choose one for now and then repeat the steps for each disk. Notice that you can now see the contents of both disks even though you only have one drive. If you have two drives things look much the same except you don't have to swap disks so often!

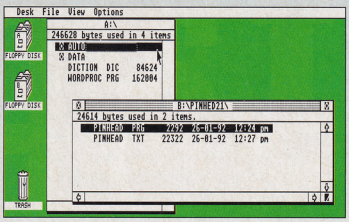




Select the accessories you want to copy to your boot disk. If you want to select more than one, hold down the Shift key as you select them. When they are all highlighted, click once more on one of them and hold down the mouse button. You can now drag an outline of the file or files anywhere on the screen but as we want to copy the files to the boot disk, let's not get carried away! When the mouse pointer is over the boot disk window, release it and the copying process will start.

The best thing to do is to follow the on-screen prompts from hereon in. You'll be asked to confirm that you want to copy the files (unless copy confirmation is switched off under Preferences) and told when to swap disks. All you've got to remember is which disk is which! In this case, A is your boot disk and B the master disk your accessories are on – keep this one write protected by opening the little black plastic tab at the bottom of the disk so that you can see through the hole.





With the accessories copied into the root directory, it's time to copy some Auto folder programs into the Auto folder. The principle is exactly the same. You can drag the appropriate program files onto the Auto folder icon itself until it turns black (or its name depending on how you're viewing the desktop) or open the folder first and drop the files anywhere inside the window.

icons where they're most accessible and the windows in the position and viewing style you've decided upon, you can look under the Options menu for the Save Desktop command. This will save everything so that next time you boot with the disk, the desktop will look the way it was when you saved it.

One last thing. Try out your boot disk and see what happens. There's a feature of TOS that causes problems with some programs, making the system hang up for no apparent reason. This is the fastload feature.

The idea of the fastload feature is that programs and accessories can be forced to load into memory (RAM) more quickly by not checking to see whether the memory they're loading into has been properly cleared.

This is achieved by what is known as a program flag – basically the operating system looks at a specific byte in the program's header file and works out whether a particular bit is set or not.

All you need to know is that there are a number of freeware programs around (including one from Atari itself and GD_FLAGS as pictured on the opposite page) that will let you examine the fastload bit and reset it if you experience problems. If you're getting frequent inexplicable program or accessory freezing, try and get hold of one of these utilities from your PD library.

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UPGRADING AN STe

A 520 STe is usually supplied with two 256Kb SIMMs and has sockets to plug in two more – it's that easy! A few do not have sockets in which case you will need a pair of adaptors. These may need soldering; if this is the case, we will supply the sockets at no extra cost – that's service!

A 1040 STe will usually have four 256Kb SIMMs. In order to upgrade you need to replace these with two or four 1Mb SIMMs to give either 2 or 4Mb of memory.

UPGRADING AN STFM

In over 90% of all STFMs, the upgrade plugs straight in. There are possible problems if either the video shifter chip or the MMU chip in your computer are not in sockets.

Occasionally, extra components and a little soldering may be required. In these cases, we supply any extra components free of charge.

YOUR ST

other essential items!

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- ✓ All memory boards are populated with memory
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These lines are manned Monday to Friday, 10am to 8pm, and Saturday, 10am to 5pm.

If you call outside these hours you can place an order by answerphone – just give the information on the order form as it appears. You might find it easiest to complete the order form before calling so that you can read from it.

TURN OVER...

... for more readers' offers and details of ordering by fax or post!

SEE THE PREVIOUS PAGE FOR OUR SENSATIONAL MEMORY UPGRADE OFFERS!

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From £3.99!

Either a single or twin joystick adaptor will save you from the ST's most common hardware fault – a broken mouse port. Changing from mouse to joystick is that much easier if you have extension cables.



MOUSE

£9.99!

The ST may be a great computer but the mouse that comes with it simply isn't up to scratch. Our mouse is far better because it uses micro-switches for the buttons, making it much lighter and easier to click. It also has a much higher resolution – 280 dots per inch which means you need far less desk space and get much finer control.



UVK

£9.99!

Everyone knows about viruses, but far too many ST owners think it can't happen to them – it can! Despite the fact that you never get disks from "friends" and only buy commercial software, a virus could still infect you. And when the gremlins get at your disks, life becomes an absolute misery. Don't let this happen to you. UVK detects and kills more viruses than any other virus killer.

Version 6.0 now runs as a desk accessory

EXISTING USERS CAN UPGRADE – CALL FOR DETAILS

CLOCK CARTRIDGE

£14.99

Who sets the time each time they switch on their ST? If like many thousands of ST owners you don't, then you are missing out. Every time you save a file it gets stamped with the time and date – invaluable when you are hunting for a file. Get a clock cartridge and the time will be set automatically each time you switch on your ST.



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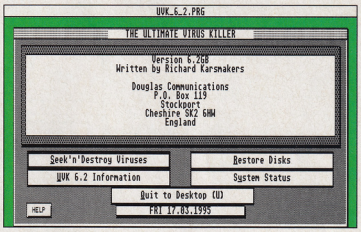
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Get virus-free...

25 copies of UVK, the Ultimate Virus Killer, up for grabs

... for free, with our easy-to-enter competition

UVK is the best virus killer for Atari computers – fact! Which other virus-killing package offers these features:



- Supports all Atari machines
- Intuitive mouse-driven software
- Works as a stand-alone program, desk accessory or XControl module
- Recognises and kills 83 boot sector viruses and 5 link viruses
- Recognises 1,532 different valid boot sectors

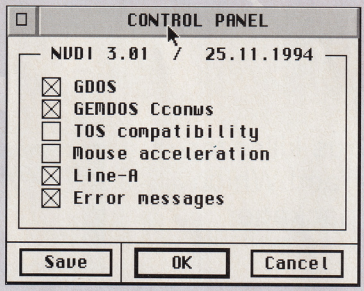
TO ENTER, simply tell us what the initials "UVK" stand for – what could be easier! A special draw from the survey entries will be made – and 25 of you will receive a copy of UVK!

Now go to page 44 in *Atari World*, write the answer in the "UVK" box, fill in the survey and send it back to us!

Let's automate...

Got a new AUTO folder? Wondering what to put in it? Denesh Bhabuta pops up with some ideas...

How many times have you wondered what you could do to enhance your system and improve the way it works? Most of us want to do things that little bit more quickly or that little bit more conveniently and one way is to choose the right auto folder programs. Upgrading the software side of your system in this way is very easy. Just imagine being able to work with more windows than the normal limit of four or having keyboard short-cuts available at your fingertips. How about putting in a new all-singing, all-dancing file selector – or even speeding up your machine? Drooling yet? Well, read on...

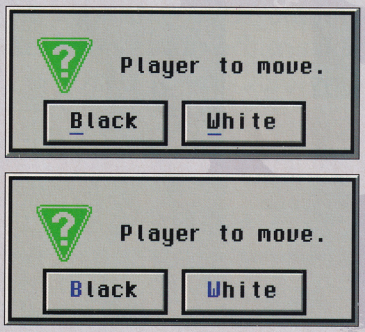


NVDI can be configured easily...

Let 'em Fly

Let 'em Fly is one of those special utilities that has never been off my boot disk. It adds extra features to dialogue and alert boxes such as assigning a keyboard shortcut indicated by an underscore or coloured character. Alert boxes are much nicer looking and both dialogue and alert boxes can be dragged around the screen using the mouse.

The program also adds an extended editor for editing text fields in the dialogue boxes, selecting special characters and making boxes snap to the mouse pointer.



Let 'em Fly shortcuts can be indicated by an underscore or coloured first letter.

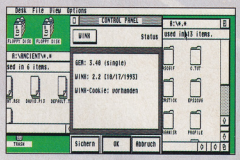
Screen accelerator

NVDI is my choice in this category. Before I used NVDI, I wondered what all the fuss was about but, believe me, it is one of those programs that you just have to use once and you'll be hooked for ever. NVDI speeds up your Atari's screen display by three or four times, making it look and feel as if you've just added an accelerator board!

Windows and dialogue boxes just open and close with a blink of your eye and text and graphics scrolling and display are much faster. Version 2.5 is recommended for floppy users, version 3 for those with a hard disk.

WinX

WinX changes GEM's window management routines, removing many of its shortcomings and giving you a much enhanced system to work with. WinX provides luxuries such as up to 40 windows on screen at any one time and extra window management commands. Windows at the back can be controlled using the right mouse button without bringing them to the front and they can also be moved beyond the edge of the screen. Other features include the ability to resize the windows in real time and putting a window to the background just by clicking on the title bar.



A background window being moved with WinX installed.

WinX requires another program, GEMRAM, to be present so it isn't recommend on Ataris with less than 1Mb of memory.

TOS patches

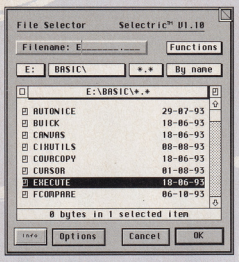
Each different version of TOS brought its bugs. Most minor bugs were discovered fairly quickly and Atari released fixes, in the form of small auto folder programs, into the public domain.

Essential for all TOS versions is Folderxxx which overcomes a memory bug. The serial port has had consistent bugs throughout the different versions of TOS and so there are different patches for each one. Finally, a sound and LAN port bug in the Falcon's TOS can be fixed by Fpatch2.

File selectors

The file selector in GEM leaves a lot to be desired – it is hard to navigate from disk to disk and find files in a hurry. Considering how often you use it, it makes sense to install a better one.

Enter the best replacement of all, Selectric, with extensive features and a nice interface. It is mouse driven with comprehensive keyboard short-cuts and includes file manipulation functions, such as delete and copy, and a search facility with wildcards. Selectric also

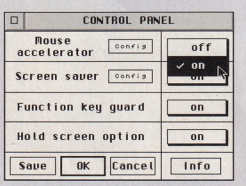


Just look at that pretty interface. Everything is just a mouse click away with Selectric...

has the ability to load several files in one go with those programs that support it.

Mouse accelerator

If you are using the Atari mouse then you probably drag the mouse to the end of your desk just to get the pointer half



Configure the mouse acceleration according to your requirements.

way across the screen. What you really need is Silkmouse.

Silkmouse is the definitely the smoothest mouse accelerator available and it really makes the pointer fly when you need it to but retains pixel-perfect control when you need accurate selection or pointing.

Fast loader

Pinhead is a very tiny program that reduces the amount of time it takes to boot the computer, especially if you have several auto programs and accessories. Every program that loads after Pinhead will load a lot faster than before. Pinhead even fastloads itself!! Just place it in the auto folder, preferably as the first program of all, and reboot. Simple!

Fast printing

Sprint 1.2 is a print spooler that will store the print output from a program and hold it in memory until it can be passed to your printer via the appropriate port, usually the parallel port. Not only does this mean you print much faster but you can also return almost immediately to your program and get on with something else in the meantime.

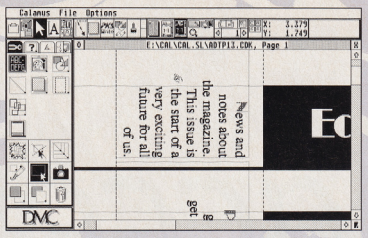
Sprint is best run from an Auto folder (though it can be run when needed from the desktop) and comes with a configuration accessory for setting various parameters, including the size of amount of memory to be set aside. It works best with slower printers such as inkjets and low end lasers.

Setting the time

The date and time are lost every time the system is switched off. Unless you have a hardware clock fitted, your ST will always boot up with the same time and date. If you want to find the file you saved last Wednesday, this always presents a problem. So why not have the computer remind you to fill in the time at each boot-up? Get Set Clock!

Mono or colour emulator

The ST is an all round computer so many people buy a monitor which can run the majority of software, in this case a colour one capable of low and medium resolutions. Some programs require a mono monitor but rather than going out to buy a brand new monitor, you can use a mono emulator instead. SeBra is a good choice that works quite fast, compared to other emulators, and even takes advantage of the blitter chip if it's present. And if you want to run colour programs on a mono monitor, check out BigColour. To give you an idea, the emulator pics on this page accurately reflect the emulated screens.

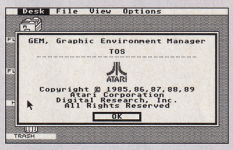


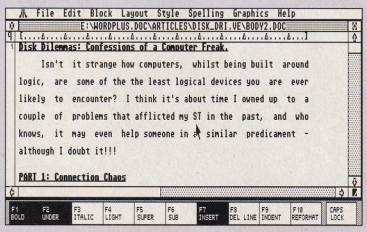
SeBra running in high resolution mode on an Atari colour monitor...



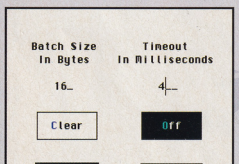
... and with some additional colour into the bargain...

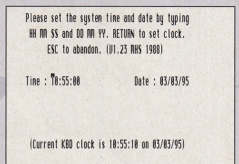
... and there's always a colour emulator for mono monitors too, in the shape of BigColour!





You can speed up your printing courtesy of SPrint (left), or even have your ST remind you to set the correct time at start up!





Where to get them...

GEMRAM 1.6/WinX 2.2, Freeware: Floppyshop, 01224 586208
Let 'em Fly 1.20, Freeware: Goodman, 01782 335650
Pinhead 2.1, Shareware: Floppyshop
SeBra 1.32, Freeware: Floppyshop
Selectric 1.10, Shareware, Goodman
Set Clock, Freeware, Goodman
Silkmouse 3.2, Shareware, Floppyshop
TOS Patches, Freeware: FaST Club Disk UT350, 0115 945 5250
NVDI 2.5 £29.95: System Solutions, 0181 693 3355
XBoot 3.10 £29.95: HiSoft, 01525 718181

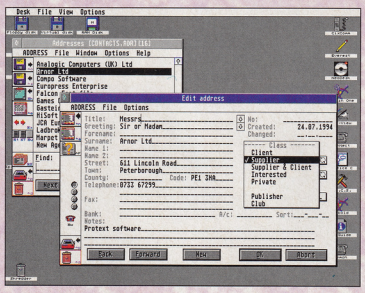
Fashion. accessories

Steve Pedler presents a list of ten desk accessories you just can't afford to miss...

Look in any PD library catalogue and I guarantee you'll see dozens and dozens of desk accessories – often known as DAs for short. Unfortunately you can only load up to six at once, so how do you choose the best? Just for you we've got ten of the very best available. Some are free, others are shareware or commercial programs, but all of them are superb additions to your system.

Address

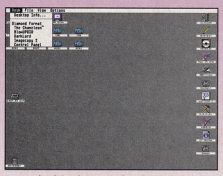
Address is a superb shareware address and telephone number manager and a very attractive one at that. It can store everything you need to know about a contact is contained and even dial the person's telephone number if you have a modem attached. Address is a great example of modern GEM software, and although it's a large program, it will still run from a floppy disk. If you need to keep lists of names and addresses and have them handy when you're using your Atari, this is one of your best options.



The main edit window of Address.

What are desk accessories?

Desk accessories are programs that run inside your computer along with the main program you are running. They are accessed by clicking on the accessory's name in the first (usually called Desk) menu in the menu bar. They are loaded during the boot process and cannot be unloaded until you switch off or reset the machine. A DA can be used at any time, but there are some limitations – only six DAs can be loaded at any one time and they cannot be used from TOS-type (text only) programs.



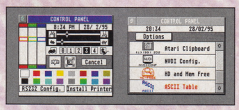
A standard Desk menu showing accessory names

Chameleon

When you install Chameleon, it allows you to load another DA in its place. This second DA takes over Chameleon's slot in the menu bar. Then, if you wish, you can unload the second and load a third DA in place of that one and so on. Chameleon is a clever program that effectively allows you to bypass the six DA limit, although only six are still installed at any one time. Chameleon only occupies 5 Kb of memory which is incredibly useful if you suddenly realise you need that DA that you forgot to install and don't fancy rebooting.

Control Panel and X-Control

Control Panel was the first DA provided with Atari computers. It is an important accessory which allows you to set various system parameters such as the colours, keyboard repeat rate, the type of printer, serial port settings and so on.



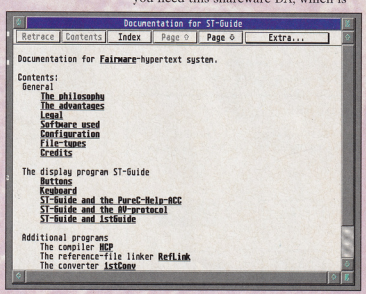
The original Control Panel (left) and X-Control (right).

It has been replaced latterly by X-Control, the extended control panel, which can load special programs called extensions (CPXs).

The beauty of CPXs is that they are not resident in your computer's memory, so you can have as many as you like, and load or unload them at will. Many different CPXs are available, and some commercial programs (such as the screen accelerator NVDI) also come with a CPX to configure the main program. If you have a hard drive, X-Control is the better program, but if not you may find it easier to use the original Control Panel. Both are freeware.

ST-Guide

At long last, the ST has its very own hypertext help system like other graphical computers. To read these files, you need this shareware DA, which is



ST-Guide, displaying the contents page of its own help file.

rapidly becoming an essential item, as more and more software is being supplied with ST-Guide format help files.

Darklord

This is a screen saver DA designed to prevent damage to your monitor if it



Darklord's main control panel.

shows the same image for long periods of time. It does this by providing an ever-changing graphical display so that the picture is never the same in one spot.

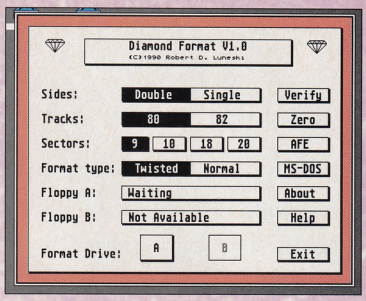
There are many screen savers around but Darklord is unusual that it is extensible and allows you to load alternative modules to give different effects on the screen. It is even possible for you to write your own modules for it. It gets into this list for three good reasons. Firstly, it's well designed and attractive. Secondly, the author has generously made it freeware. And thirdly, I'm the author...

Image Copy

Sometimes you might want to take a snapshot of the image on the computer screen and save it to disk for future use. At other times you might want to quickly view an image on screen but not have the program that created it to hand. There are a lot of these screen grabbers around and while Image Copy is undoubtedly the best, to call it just a screen grabber would do it a serious injustice. It is much more than that; it is a superlative picture viewer that can load and save pictures in many different formats including JPG and PhotoCD (special version) and even catalogue images and display thumbnails. All the screenshots in this article were taken with Image Copy (*Article? More like the entire magazine... Ed*).

Diamond Format

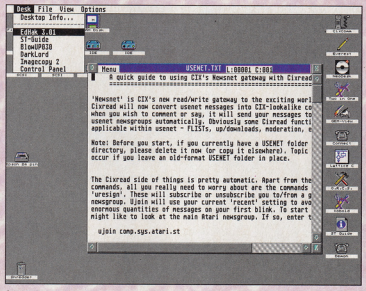
The latest version of Diamond Format is supplied solely with commercial programs such as Diamond Back from HiSoft, but earlier, still very capable, versions are available as freeware. This is a disk formatter, intended to help you round that awkward moment when you have done some important and time-consuming work and suddenly discover that you don't have a floppy disk on which to save it. The solution? Call up this Diamond Format and sit back and wait for it to format a new disk.



The main display in Diamond Format.

EdHak

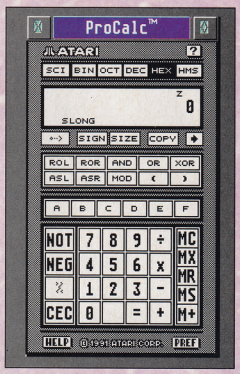
This is a text editor that sits patiently in memory until you need it. This can be extremely useful because you don't have to quit your main program if you want to write some notes or read its documentation file. It is extremely flexible and comes with a good manual for those who want to find out more about ASCII characters sets text conversion from one computer to another and so on. EdHak also lets you examine and change the contents of your computer's memory (hence the 'Hak' part of its name!), which is very useful for programmers. It is commercial but low cost.



EdHak's main window displaying a document.

Procalc

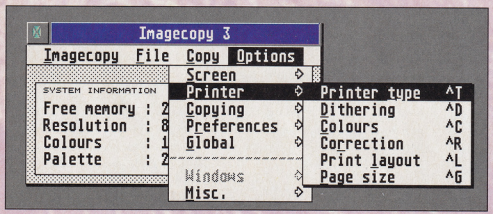
From Atari itself no less, this is one of the best calculator DAs for the Atari and easily beats the buggy affair supplied with Windows on the PC. Procalc can operate in scientific, computer, and time calculation modes and has a number of useful built-in functions. It's also free.



The Procalc calculator.

Harlekin

This is, I suppose, the ultimate desk accessory. Harlekin combines a multitude of functions into one DA, including a superb diary/time manager, text editor, comms module, screen saver, disk and file management facilities (including a replacement file selector) and far more than I can list here! Its disadvantages include the large amount of memory it can take up and the inevitable fact that some of its modules are not as fully-featured as dedicated, single-purpose DAs. But it is still an excellent program with a well-design user interface. Commercial software.



Imagecopy, showing just some of the many options.

Where to get them...

Freeware and shareware programs are available from good PD libraries and bulletin boards. The commercial programs can be obtained from:
EdHak, £9.95, Douglas Communications: 0161 456 9587.
Harlekin, £59.95: HiSoft, 01525 718181.
Imagecopy, from £29.95: FaST Club 0115 945 5250.

The Language

Atari World presents exclusive excerpts from Mark Baines' definitive A-Z guide to the Atari.

A

ACC

The file name extension for a desk accessory. The file extension (also called an extender) comprises the three letters after the dot.

Accessory

Special programs, also known as desk accessories, that can be loaded into the six desk accessory slots available from the Desk menu. They are normally found in the boot disk's root directory and are usually small utilities that can be used in any GEM program. MultiTOS allows an unlimited number of accessories to be run from the desktop.

ACIA

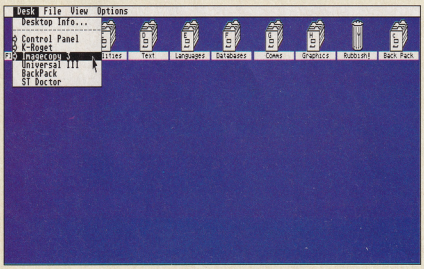
Asynchronous Communication Interface Adapter. Two Motorola 6850 chips used for processing serial data (one bit after another) from various sources into the parallel form (eight bits together) required by the processor or memory. The first operates the MIDI interface and the second interfaces with the keyboard chip which handles the keyboard, mouse, joystick and clock.

ACSI

Atari Computer Systems Interface. A subset of the SCSI commands designed for communication between peripherals and microcomputers and controlling the DMA port of STs and TTs. In the Falcon, the DMA/ACSI port is replaced with a full SCSI port.

ACX

The usual file name extender for an accessory that is not currently installed and hence ignored by GEM at boot-up. A user can inactivate an accessory by renaming it to *.ACX using the Show Info menu item. When the computer is re-booted, that accessory will not load.



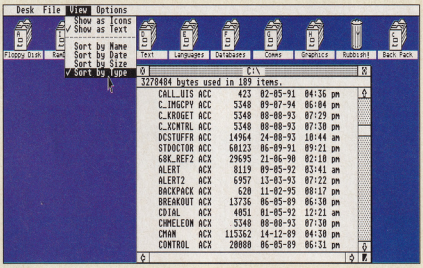
You can select any of up to six accessories from the Desk menu.

AES

Application Environment Services. A part of TOS that provides the windows and iconic user interface of GEM, dealing with resource files, windows, dialogue boxes and menus.

AHDC

Atari Hard Disk Controller. The circuit board found in Atari's hard disk drives that interfaces the hard disk mechanism to the DMA port receiving commands from the AHDI.



ACC and ACX. A drive window showing a list of active and inactive accessories. Those with the *.ACC file extender are loaded into the system. Those with the *.ACX extender are ignored.

AHDI

Atari Hard Disk Interface. Atari's hard disk driver software that controls the hard disk controller via the DMA.

AJAX

The floppy disk controller chip in later MegaSTe, TT and Falcon computers capable of using and formatting high density 1.44 Mb and 2.88 Mb floppy disks. It is essentially an uprated WD1772 chip.

Alert box

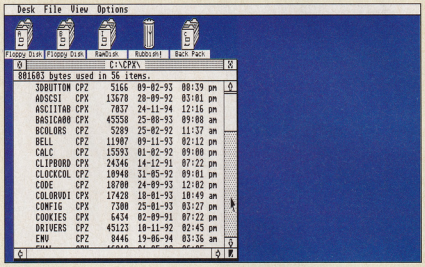
A GEM dialogue box designed to bring something to the user's attention. There may be up to five lines of text each with thirty characters and a question mark, exclamation mark or stop sign image. Up to three buttons can be used, normally including OK and Cancel.

APP

The file name extension for a GEM program like *.PRG.

ASSIGN.SYS

A file used by all types of GDOS to tell it where to look for GEM bitmapped fonts and printer drivers. The file should be stored in the root directory of the boot disk or boot partition.



CPX and CPZ. Like the accessory files, CPX modules for the XControl Panel can be disabled by renaming them with the .CPZ file name extender. The XControl Panel will take care of that Options...Setup dialogue box.

Barrier

Auto folder

A boot disk folder called Auto containing programs with the .PRG extender which are automatically loaded into the computer at boot-up and before the desktop is loaded. Such programs normally add additional functions to TOS or carry out fixes to its bugs.

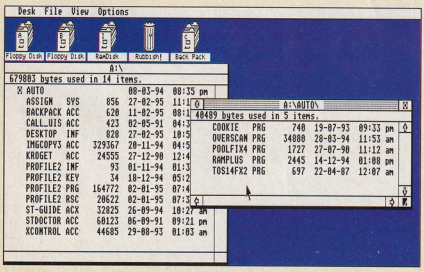
B

BIOS

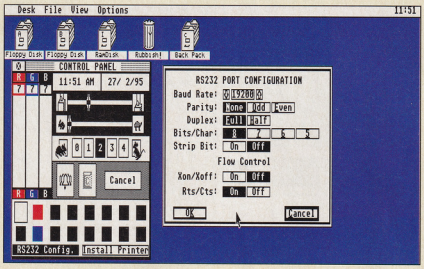
Basic Input/Output System. The part of TOS that provides the low-level screen and disk management functions for GEMDOS. It is essentially the interface between GEMDOS and the hardware and is concerned with screen output, keyboard, joystick and mouse input, printer output, serial port functions and the disk drives.

Bitmapped

Consisting of individual bits. A bitmapped font, for instance, has each character made up of lots of separate bits or pixels.



A floppy boot disk in drive A: showing the accessories (active and inactive), DESKTOP.INF and ASSIGN.SYS files and the AUTO folder.



The old Control Panel is still useful for setting up screen colours, the serial and printer port configurations. These settings are saved into the DESKTOP.INF file.

BLiT

Block Transfer or Block Image Transfer. The process of moving or copying a block of memory from one position to another. The method results in very fast transfers of data, particularly images.

Blitter chip

The Bit-Block Transfer Processor is an Atari custom designed coprocessor chip using blitting (see BLiT) to improve the speed of text formatting and graphic operations by 30-40%. The blitter is fitted to the Mega ST, STE, Mega STE and Falcon as standard.

Boot disk

A disk (usually drive A or C), sometimes containing an executable boot sector, that automatically runs one or more programs upon power up or reset and which contains accessories, the AUTO folder and the DESKTOP.INF or NEWDESK.INF file.

Bombs

When an error occurs, TOS displays a row of bomb icons across the screen warning the user of what has happened. The best remedy is to switch off the computer and wait about twenty seconds before booting again.

C

Cache

An area of memory or disk space that holds some recently accessed or processed data in anticipation of its use by the processor or a program, thus saving on the time needed to process and construct it again.

Cartridge

Cartridges consist of 128 Kb of Read Only Memory (ROM) and plug into the cartridge slot, enabling instant program access and using no main memory except for the program's data. Some cartridges do not contain program ROMs but are interfaces for other devices, such as scanners and battery backed clocks or contain audio digitisers and samplers. Others are used as a security dongle.

Centronics

A standard for parallel data transfer (eight bits together) between microcomputers and printers. The port is based on a 36-way connector and the cable can be up to several metres long.

Clipboard

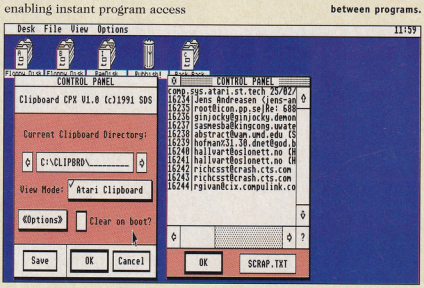
An area of memory or disk storage where a block of data can be temporarily stored from a program to be reused later or transferred to another application. There is a clipboard module for Atari's XCONTROL extensible control panel (CLIPBORD.CPX) that creates a CLIPBRD folder on the boot drive and uses it as a clipboard.

Close box

The icon in the top left corner of a GEM window that closes that window when clicked on and may also cause the program to exit.

Codec

A device used to convert sound into bit-patterns for transmission or storage and to reconvert them back again into sound. The Falcon uses a stereo 16-bit codec.



The CLIPBORD.CPX sets up the clipboard path and enables the contents to be viewed (on the right) or cleared at any time. It is very useful for transferring bits of text or images between programs.

GOODMAN'S
PUBLIC DOMAIN & SHAREWARE UPDATE

No matter how much coverage the ST Magazines give to Public Domain & Shareware, they only give you a sampler of the vast range available. As one of the longest established ST libraries in the World, we are constantly adding new titles to our, already extensive collection, so why not send today for our comprehensive PD & Shareware Guide, it's now approaching 260 pages, with good descriptions, screen shots, etc.

SHAREWARE GUIDE STILL ONLY £2.95

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GEM SPOOL v3.2	FONT SETS	IMAGECOPY 2
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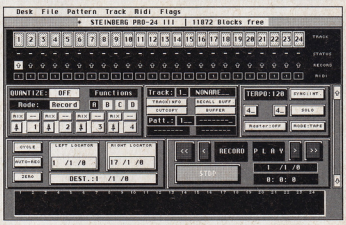
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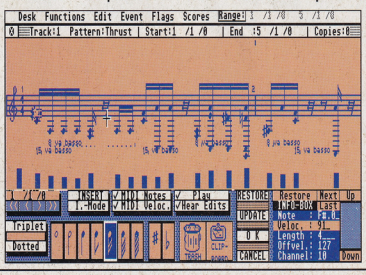
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Classic sequencing on a budget



£14.99 inc. p&p

The Atari ST is the classic computer for music sequencing. PRO 24 V3 had a big part to play in making it so. PRO 24 has been used to make hit records by the likes of Dire Straits and Midge Ure. PRO 24 is not the latest and greatest sequencing package available today. That honour is reserved for the likes of Cubase and Notator which cost hundreds of pounds. But PRO 24 is the software on which Cubase was based – learning PRO 24 means that you're taking your first steps towards learning Cubase.

Our PRO 24 packs are ideal if you want to start sequencing on your ST or if you have so far only used PD and Shareware sequencers. PRO 24 comes complete with the original manual and dongle.



Its many powerful features include:

- 24-track MIDI music system;
- Record, play back and edit from any MIDI keyboard or other MIDI device;
- Display, edit and print music notation;
- Correct your timing – PRO 24 offers many sophisticated methods to 'Quantize';
- Totally mouse driven;
- Supports standard MIDI files;

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Works on any ST with 1MB of RAM; mono and colour supported.

COMPO Software Ltd, Unit 3 Green Farm, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon PE17 2PF

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