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An Overview of HelpColr 2.0

Welcome to HelpColr 2.0 for Windows! HelpColr 2.0 for Windows supports the Microsoft Windows 3.x Operating System family. This includes Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Windows for Workgroups, Microsoft Windows NT 3.1 and Windows for Pen Computing.

HelpColr 2.0 allows you to modify the different colors that appear in the Windows Help System and Multimedia Viewer. The color entries are stored in the [Windows Help] section of the "WIN.INI" file for WinHelp, and in the [Multimedia Viewer] section for the Multimedia Viewer. You can modify these colors manually by editing the "WIN.INI" file with a text editor and putting in the desired RGB color values in a "rrr ggg bbb" fashion. However, unless you have a color chart readily available, or know specific RGB values, this is not a very practical way to set your WinHelp or Multimedia Viewer colors. This is where HelpColr 2.0 can be of great assistance. HelpColr 2.0 allows you to visually see your modifications that you are making and then save these changes to the "WIN.INI" by choosing the "OK" option. If you do not like the new colors you have chosen, you can simply choose the appropriate setting and change the color again, or you can choose the "Cancel" option which will exit the HelpColr 2.0 application and leave your original color settings intact.

When HelpColr 2.0 starts, it automatically comes up with the colors that are currently set in the [Windows Help] and [Multimedia Viewer] sections. If the color entries are not present, it will use the default colors that Windows assigns to the individual entries.

Please feel free to distribute HelpColr 2.0 to your friends and associates. HelpColr 2.0 is free of charge and is designed to be used by anyone who finds it helpful. If you wish to distribute HelpColr 2.0 to your favorite bulletin boards, which I encourage, please be sure that you have included the VBRUN300.DLL and HELPCOLR.HLP files along with HELPCOLR.EXE. HelpColr 2.0 needs the VBRUN300.DLL file to run, and the HELPCOLR.HLP file is useful to people new to Windows and/or the Windows Help color system.

If you should experience color problems, dithered colors, or any abnormal program execution problems with HelpColr 2.0, please refer to the [Running the Debug Mode](#) section of this help file. It will describe the process of reporting information to me and a switch that can be run to produce a debug output file.

WinHelp and Multimedia Viewer Settings

Description of the different Radio Buttons used to choose a setting.

Jump - Selects the Jump Color. Allows you to change the JumpColor setting.

Popup - Selects the Popup Color. Allows you to change the PopupColor setting.

Macro - Selects the Macro Color. Allows you to change the MacroColor setting.

IFJump - Selects the IFJump Color. Allows you to change the IFJumpColor setting.

IFPopup - Selects the IFPopup Color. Allows you to change the IFPopupColor setting.

JumpColor

Definition.

A word displayed in the JumpColor, when chosen, will "jump" you to a new section in the *same* help or viewer file. The most common use for the JumpColor text is to lead the user to a sub-category under a major topic. For example, if you have a topic called "Printing", you may have several sub categories under this topic such as "Adding a new printer", "Printing multiple copies", and "Printing Envelopes". The "jump" method is usually used to navigate to these sub categories.

PopupColor

Definition.

A word colored with the PopupColor, when chosen, will allow you view the definition associated with that keyword or phrase in the *same* help or viewer file. The most common use for the PopupColor text is to signify that the word contains a definition. This is useful for new users, or users who may not be familiar with the language common to the application. For example, the word "Icon" may be a word that a user does not understand but is colored with the PopupColor. The user could then click on the word and get a definition possibly saying "An icon is a pictorial representation of a application or file in the Windows Operating System." The Popup window will stay "active" until the you click the left mouse button again to dismiss the window.

MacroColor

Definition.

Text that appears in the MacroColor will execute a macro when clicked on. The macros can range from bringing up Copyright information, a common function in help and viewer files, to executing a complex macro designed to retrieve special information. It is not uncommon to see graphics used now in place of macro text to run macros.

IFJumpColor

Definition.

The text that you see displayed in the IFJumpColor will have the same functionality as text in the regular JumpColor, except that it will lead you to a topic in a *different* help or viewer file. It will do this by opening another help window and placing or "jumping" you to the related section. For more information on the "Jump" concept, please refer to the "JumpColor" definition.

IFPopupColor

Definition.

The text that you see designated with the IFPopupColor will have the same functionality as text in the regular PopupColor, except that it will display the information that "pops up" in a *different* help or viewer file. It will do this by first opening another help window and then displaying the related information. For more information on the "Popup" concept, please refer to the "PopupColor" definition.

Saving or Exiting Options

Methods for saving or disregarding your changes.

OK

This option will save out the color changes that you have made for the different text entries, and then notify the Windows Operating System of the modifications to your WIN.INI. If you choose this option by accident and have not made any changes, it will simply exit the HelpColr 2.0 application.

Cancel

This option will simply exit the application. It will ignore any changes that you have made since starting the HelpColr 2.0 application. This is a good option to exercise if you have made changes to see what the effects would be and then decide not to save your changes.

Additional References

How to find out more information about Microsoft Windows.

If you are interested in more information about the Microsoft Windows Operating System and the WINHELP program, you can purchase the Microsoft Windows 3.1 Resource Kit directly from Microsoft. This 500 odd page reference book contains a wealth of information about the way Windows 3.1 works, and many, many settings that you as a user can modify. I would like to point out that this book is mainly of reference nature and not one of casual reading. The kit also comes with a disk containing some useful programs for use in Windows. For more information regarding the Microsoft Windows 3.1 Resource Kit, you may contact the Microsoft Product Support Services.

Message - The current video driver...

Explanation of system colors.

If you receive the message that your current video driver does not support the four extra system colors, DO NOT BE ALARMED. This is perfectly normal behavior. My program determines whether or not your driver supports the extra four system colors. All Microsoft Windows 16-Color drivers that I have tested so far DO NOT support the four extra system colors. To be quite honest, you are not really missing much. If you have a driver that supports 256 colors or more, you will get the 20 system color choices in which to use for setting your text for the Help system. If you have a 16 color video driver, you will get 16 choices. A rather interesting note is that while you may have a driver that supports 32,000 colors or more, you can still only represent text in the 20 basic system colors. The reason for this, to the best of my knowledge, is that Windows must use a "standard" solid color to display text. To do this, it will match a "non-standard" solid or dithered color to the closest System Palette Color that is available in the System Palette.

Uninstalling HelpColr 2.0...

Process to uninstall HelpColr 2.0

If you would like to uninstall HelpColr 2.0, you can do so by removing the following files from your hard drive: HELPCOLR.EXE, HELPCOLR.HLP, and VBRUN300.DLL. These are the files that make up HelpColr 2.0. Normally the VBRUN300.DLL file should reside in the <drive>\WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory, however depending on whether or not you moved the files to that location will determine if you need to remove it from the SYSTEM directory. It is probably a good idea to hold onto the VBRUN300.DLL file since there may be other programs that you will use in the future that will make use of this file.

About the Author

How you can send me feedback concerning HelpColr 2.0.

If you would like to send me feedback related to HelpColr 2.0, which I strongly encourage, please feel free to contact me through CompuServe or Internet. My CompuServe ID number is 70162,176. If you have Internet access, I can be reached at "chado@microsoft.com". Please feel free to send comments and suggestions to me about HelpColr 2.0. I hope you enjoy using HelpColr 2.0!

Windows Defaults Option

Describes the function of the Windows Defaults Option

The Windows Defaults button allows you to set all the help or viewer file color settings to the original state you are presented with after a normal installation of Microsoft Windows. Note that choosing this option does not automatically save the settings. If you desire to save your settings as the Windows Defaults, you must first choose the Windows Defaults button, and then the OK option.

Running the Debug Mode of HelpColr 2.0

Describes how to run in debug mode

If you should come across a bug or some problems in HelpColr 2.0, I have included a switch that will record some key information for me. If you run HelpColr 2.0 with the /d switch, it will create a file called "HELPDEBUG.TXT". One method of running with the debug switch is as follows: from File Manager, change to the directory that HelpColr 2.0 is stored on your hard drive. Click once on HELPCOLR.EXE to highlight the file. Then choose File from the menu bar, choose Run from this pulldown menu. Now you should have a window with HELPCOLR.EXE highlighted in it. Using your right arrow key, or the "End" key on your keyboard, move to the end of the command line. Once you are at the end, press the spacebar once, and then enter a "/d" without the quotes. You should see in the command line window, something like the following: "C:\HELMPCOLR\HELMPCOLR.EXE /d". This may not match exactly, but gives an example of what it may look like. Depending on the directory that you have the HelpColr 2.0 program located in will determine what you see. Now click on OK. The HELPDEBUG.TXT file that is created in the HelpColr 2.0 application directory contains some very useful information that will help me recreate the problem you are coming across. This is not a substitute; however, for a description of the steps needed to reproduce the problem. This file merely tells me some information about your video driver and the number of System Palette Colors it contains. It also lets me know what was present in your WIN.INI before you started and what HelpColr 2.0 wrote back out. Please include this file in the mail (see [About the Author](#) in this help file) that you send to me along with information about your Video card, video driver version, your video resolution, and any other steps or special circumstances needed to reproduce your scenario. With your help, I can make the HelpColr 2.0 program as solid as possible!

WinOnLine Review Shareware Edition

Information about WinOnLine Review Shareware Edition - the Windows Online Magazine

See a review of my prior version of HelpColr in Issue 32 of the WinOnLine Review Shareware Edition (WOLRS32.ZIP). You can find the electronic magazine, which is published in the WinHelp format, at many online systems. The weekly magazine is available as a free download from the publisher, Windows OnLine (BBS) at 510-736--8343 (modem).

TO OTHER WINDOWS SHAREWARE AUTHORS: Your program may be reviewed in the WinOnLine Review Shareware Edition. Upload your file directly to Windows OnLine (BBS) 510-736-8343 immediately upon release. Newer programs (release dates within approximately three months) are included in their New Files section, and may be reviewed in the Shareware Briefs as was my program. There is also potential for a full feature review.

I suggest you also consider sending the Editor a disk with the shareware and registered version of your program and any other pertinent materials, and make sure it reaches him during the same week that you intend to upload your program. Send to: Bob Gollihur, Editor, WinOnLine Review Shareware Edition, Seven Baywyn Drive, Ocean View, NJ 08230-1060. He can also be reached at 609-624-1470 and on CompuServe at 71334,2065. If you wish, you may also send disks and materials to Windows OnLine (BBS) at P.O. Box 3487, Danville, CA 94526-8487.

Program Option

Allows you to select which programs color entries to modify.

WinHelp Engine

If this option is selected, the colors you set will apply to the WinHelp Engine and the modifications you make will show in your help files.

Multimedia Viewer

If this option is selected, the colors you set will apply to the Multimedia Viewer Engine and the modifications you make will show in your viewer files.

What's New in HelpColr 2.0

New features and information for HelpColr 2.0

HelpColr 2.0 for Windows now includes the ability to set the colors for your Multimedia Viewer as well as for your Help files. However, I have kept the format in the same, consistent, easy to use process as HelpColr 1.0.

Updated the *look* of the Sample Help File and the new Multimedia Viewer File to show a more realistic representation of a preview mode.

Review from WinOnLine Review Shareware Edition -- See Additional Information section of this help file.

Bug Fix from HelpColr 1.0 to HelpColr 2.0

Fixed minimization bug that occurred when HelpColr 1.0 was run with the *Run Minimized* program item attribute turned on.

