

PointerX

COLLABORATORS

	<i>TITLE :</i> PointerX		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
WRITTEN BY		February 24, 2025	

REVISION HISTORY

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PointerX

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Contents:

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\_____ /
\|~~~~~| /
) | | (
/ | Old programmers never die,.... | \
/ ___ | They just branch to a new address ;^) | ___ \
| |
|_____ |
~~~~~

```

1.2 Archive Contents

1. Archive contents.

~~~~~

The archive you recieved should contain the following files

(Plus possibly some BBS adverts)

History.Guide ..... History of PointerX changes.

PointerX ..... This is the executable.

PointerX.info ..... Workbench Icon.

PointerX.Guide ..... This Documention.

Register.Txt ..... Short form for updates.

Icons/Ptrx\_4col-1.info ..... \

Icons/Ptrx\_4col-2.info ..... Various

Icons/Ptrx\_4col-3.info ..... Icons you may

Icons/Ptrx\_4col-4.info ..... wish to use

Icons/Ptrx\_8col-1.info ..... instead of

Icons/Ptrx\_8col-2.info ..... the default

Icons/Ptrx\_8col-3.info ..... one.

Icons/Ptrx\_8col-4.info ..... /

And no other files.

PointerX needs no libraries/devices e.t.c., it is a stand-alone program.

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## 1.3 Distribution

### 2. Distribution.

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This is a --GIFTWARE-- program.

I.e. if you like/use it, then please send me a gift of some sort..

Just brighten my day, by sending me a -small- token of your gratitude, and by letting me know that someone thinks I should keep working on it.

Don't know what type of gift to send?

° Unwanted CD's (Music or Computer)

If computer CD's, either Amiga CD's, or PC ones with Amiga-Usable files.

For example GIF's,MOD's,JPEG's,MPEG's,FLI's e.t.c..

If music, I'll listen to pretty much anything, but I prefer hard Rock music, such as Nine Inch Nails, Pantera.. e.t.c. ;)

° BlankDisks (Please, No R/W errors!)

° harddisks/CD drives e.t.c.. ;-P

(In this case, A few bad sectors permissable :^P

° If you are a ShareWare author, then sending me a registered copy of one of your programs would be a nice thought...

(You could even **E-Mail** it to me!)

° I recently started learning to play bass guitar, so maybe a few plectrums, strings or something would be cool ;^)

° Food!? (See below! to see what I've had so far!)

° If you don't feel you can send me a gift, just a note/email saying thanks would be nice.

So far, I've recieved the following...

° A Ministry CD Single. - Really Cool!

° A Dan Reed CD Album.. - Cool, but not as cool as Ministry!

° A 'Wang Chung' Cassette. - Still not as cool as Ministry et al.. ;^)

° A few Pot-Noodles. (Spicy Tomato is my fave! yum!)

° Two bars of Chocolate! (Milk Choc rules ;^} ...!)

° A T-Shirt and badge from the Cannes Film Festival (Cool!)

(Now, that's an imaginative giftware registration.. Lifetime support for this guy!)

° A box of Disks

° A cool Snowy mountain-scape photograph from Norway ;^)

Permission is granted for ...

1. you to spread this archive across all electronic storage mediums

(Non profit-making BBS's,InterNet e.t.c...)

2. This program to be included in any PD CD collections

(I'd reeally like a copy though ;^) what you say huh?

If not, I'd like a substancial gift -- A years supply of Pot Noodles
would be cool ;^) (Spicy Tomato Salsa please!! ;^)

3. Any magazines to put the archive on their coverdisks/subscriber
disks as long as..

a. I am contacted me first, so that you can ensure you have the
latest version!

b. I'm sent a copy of the issue featuring PointerX

However distributed, You must include -ALL- files (Program,Docs, and Icons)
in their unmodified form, and no additional material may be included in the
archived form.

1.4 What `n' Why?

3. What does it do and why ?

~~~~~

Some time in 1994, I got a program called PointerX 2.0 from a magazine  
coverdisk, which made me think `Cool!, This program makes the hands on the  
busy pointer spin!' However, after loading the program on my 1200, it refused  
to animate the busy pointer!

So, I threw the disk back into the diskbox, and continued with everyday life.

That was, until one day when I was soooo bored whilst waiting for a program  
to assemble, that I thought, `shame PointerX don't work, it'd look real neat  
right now'. A quick disassembly/fix-up later, and PointerX 3.00 was made.

And since then, I've been updating PointerX the whole time.

Version 4 saw more or less a complete re-write, as some features were  
impossible to implement easily on the old framework.

The 4.x generation brings resolution support, Choice of one or two hands,  
Recognition of more busy pointers, better patching, lower usage of memory,  
and probably much more to come!

Some people have suggested that I shouldn't take credit for PointerX

However, I would like to point out, that the only remnant of Steve Tibbetts

PointerX 2 in my version, is the pointer graphic data.

(And as of v4.5 even that has changed!)

EVERYTHING has been recoded, now, completely from scratch, and bears very  
little resemblance to Steve's original version.

Also, I think, judging by the structure of the v2.0 code, I'd say that Steve's  
version may have been written in C.

## 1.5 Requirements

### 4. Requirements.

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To run PointerX you need...

- Workbench 2 or above. (Yup, now even WB3 is okay!)
- Something that sets the busy `clock` pointer

(To test it, Load a workbench, select `execute program` and click back in the workbench screen ;^)

*NB: Since v4.1, PtrX will also replace busy pointers from several other programs.

No other requirements whatsoever.

1.6 Usage

5.Usage.

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CLI/SHELL:

- `PointerX ?`

This will print the Argument Template:--

LORES/S,HIRES/S,SHRES/S,SINGLEHAND/S:

- `PointerX`

This will install the Patch, and set the Sprite Resolution to the current system Default.

- `PointerX LORES`

This will install the Patch, and set the Sprite to Low resolution (Pixel speed=140ns) Best for Non-interlaced screens

- `PointerX HIRES`

This will install the Patch, and set the Sprite to High resolution. (Pixel speed=70ns) This is best (IMHO) for Interlaced screens.

- `PointerX SHRES`

This will install the Patch, and set the Sprite to Super High resolution. (Pixel speed=35ns) This is best (IMHO) for special screenmodes like DBLPAL

- `PointerX SingleHand`

This option disables the hour hand, Use this if you prefer it.

Three people requested this, and it was only 3 lines of code so...

- `PointerX NoResetHands`

This will prevent the hands from resetting to 12:00 every time the



busy-pointer is set. Handy if you use programs like Resource, which  
Sets the busy pointer quite often.

#### WORKBENCH:

Doubleclicking the PointerX icon will install the Patches,  
Repeating this action will remove it.

You may also Drag the Icon over to your SYS:WBStartUp directory, which  
will Auto-Load the patch on boot-up.

(The default icon was drawn by Kirem Rahmani [spe3kdr@cardiff.ac.uk] the  
replacements in the Icons/ directory were drawn by Graham Maddox. - Thanks guys!)

If someone wants to submit more icons (Normal, MagicWB, NewIcons or whatever),  
please feel free, and I'll add them to the next distribution.

You can specify three tooltypes in the icon.

#### SPRITERES=

This can be one of LORES, HIRES or SHRES

#### SINGLEHAND

Disables the hour hand

#### NORESETHANDS

Disables resetting to 12:00

To remove PointerX No!! :) simply run PointerX again.

Any arguments will be ignored, you can also start PtrX by the WB and quit  
with the shell, or vice versa.

Whilst PointerX will do everything it can to avoid doing so, there is  
always a degree of danger in removing a patch program such as this, as  
another program may be using the patched functions.

However, if you ensure that the busy pointer is not displayed when you  
remove PointerX, then all should be well.

Although, come to think of it, why would you want to remove PointerX ?

It uses up so very little memory/cpu time.. ;-)

## 1.7 Bugs

### 6.Bugs!

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° PixelTrash!

Old PtrX die-hards may remember this bug from the early 3.x days, well now
I may have found the cause, and (maybe) a solution..

If you experience this trash, check the width of your screen, If you don't
have AutoScroll on, this should be no wider than the current overscan
setting. (*NB:It's probably a good idea to keep your screens a multiple of

16 or 32 wide, for enhanced video performance)

I found this when my texteditor set its screen 8 pixels wider, and when I hit a key, the mouseptr blanker I run (The CBM one) displayed the trash in the extra area that had been added to the screen.

° Not really, a bug, more something I may have to workaround sometime..

1) Boot without running PointerX

2) LoadWB, and click 'Execute Command', Click outside the window.

The static Busy Pointer should appear.

3) Click in a shell window, and load PointerX.

4) Click back in the workbench screen. Note how it doesn't spin.

If you cancel the 'Execute Command' requestor, and then select it again, they will spin. ;-)

5) Also, if you remove PointerX while a busy pointer is spinning, the hands will stay at that position until you cancel the requestor ;-)

This isn't really a problem, and doesn't rank too highly on my 'To do' list

° Busy clock appearing when it shouldn't.

I noticed this on the Workbench screen when doing a drag-select.

(Try it with and without PointerX installed.)

Some people actually prefer this !? Should I fix it?

° Busy clock NOT appearing when it should.

When running some system patches, with PointerX installed, when entering a drawer on Workbench, the pointer hands will not spin.

I have (so far) found three programs which cause PointerX to do this.

'FrontPubScreen' by Nicola Salmoria

'SysiHack' by Dr Boopsi

'UrouHack' by Tinic Urou (Versions newer than 1.7 are ok)

I am unsure if the bug is a fault of mine or the coders of the other patches.

Until new versions of both patches are released, you'll just have to suffer with it, or not use it/them.

All these programs patch the BOOPSI internals of gadtools in some way or other.

And this makes the WorkBench call SetWindowPointer() with some wierd taglists

° PointerX doesn't work in any 3rd party video board.

I don't own one, and so cannot bugtest/fix.. (Any Donations? ;-)

Or maybe you could lend me your Retina board? Hmph.. it was worth a try I suppose ;-)

This bug exists because these gfx boards have no hardware sprites, and so 'emulate' them through software (ie, using bobs)

PointerX works like this:

Allocate some mem for my sprite

Copy the next frame of the busy pointer into this mem.

If the sprite is busy, change the sprite to point at my memory, and increment the frame pointer.

I think, that the 'Sprite Emulation' of these 3rd party boards copies the sprite data some place, and uses that area of mem. So whilst my area of mem is animating, the sprite isn't. I hope to address this problem in a future release.

° There is a program called 'MCP' which has many patches in one program.

One of these patches, enables a 16 colour pointer, which PointerX doesn't like. This will be fixed when I make a 16 colour version of PointerX.

° If 1 million people all fail to send me a gift, and they all have a busy-pointer on screen at the same time, the world (as we know it) will stop spinning on its axis.

This cannot be helped, and is unlikely to ever be fixed. ;^)

A work-around, is for you to send me something ;^P

1.8 TechInfo - EggHead zone

7. Technical Information.

~~~~~

Each version of PointerX ...

° Is Coded in 100% Assembly Language for speed and size. (or lack of size!)

(Versions previous to 3.x were I believe written in 'C'. If Steve Tibbett wants to correct me on that, please mail me!)

The Assembly Source code length is 721 lines (14k) plus some included sprite-data.

° Contains 100% PC relative code, which means it will load at any address without any need for relocation. Let's see 'C' coders write a program like that!

° Utilises fast memory if available. [ regardless of location ]

° Will free any allocated memory / libraries and exit gracefully on failure / exit.

° Has been tested extensively with ...

- Enforcer v37.62, and returns no hits.

[ Unless my serial lead is broken again ;^( ! (See ver 3.04!) ]

- Mungwall v37.71

- CodeWatcher.

- Several CBM 'Strain' type tools (Low-mem, low cpu-time e.t.c.)

- Several personal debugging tools.

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- ° Has had extensive testing by myself and my ever faithful army of Beta-testers on all sorts of varying configurations of Amiga, who will be sure to let me know if there are any problems [I HOPE!] ;-P
- ° Has been developed on an a custom made 1200T fitted with
  - GVP 1230-II accelerator (50Mhz 68030,MMU, 4mb of 32 bit 60ns fastram)
  - 3.5" IBM 525Mb IDE Harddisk.
- ° May be picked up by some VirusKillers as a virus. This is not so.

I patch three functions in the Intuition.library, they are SetPointer(), SetWindowPointer(), and OpenWindowTaglist().

I suggest you use VirusZ-II as this recognises PointerX and many other system patches correctly.

If you are a VirusKiller author, [Contact me](#) for information on how your Killer can recognise this and all future versions of PointerX.

## 1.9 Future Ideas

9. Future.

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Current to do list, in order of priority..

- ° Fixing of any more bug reports. (None I hope ;-)
- ° Support for 3rd party graphic boards.
- ° 16 Colour pointer
- ° Adjustable hand spin-speed
- ° Recognition for more busy pointers.

If you have a program which has a crap busy pointer which PointerX doesn't currently recognise, please send the program to me (If copyright law allow) and I'll add a patch for it!

Note, I cannot patch Animated BusyPointers like the one in Dpaint-IV (They will be patched, but it looks really messy, as my anim gets drawn over the original anim!)

- ° Implementation of any decent suggestions (Should I recieve any ;^)
- ° Some people have suggested playing user specified Anim brushes.

I will not add this, for a one reason.

PointerX was always intended as a hack, and hacks shouldn't grow too big.

I'm determined to keep this less than 3k!

There is now a program like PointerX called SleepPointers which does this function. If you really want it, go use that program. If you don't want all that wasted memory, use PointerX !

1.10 Facts About Me

10. About the Author.

~~~~~

I'm a single 22 year old male (born 6th Feb 1974)

I work 9-5 as a data entry clerk, which is a really boring, but it helps pay for new hardware e.t.c. ;) { Offers of alterative jobs are welcome ;^ }

I've been developing software on the Amiga since 1990, although a lot of it was never released (Phew..) I was a commercial programmer for a while, but things turned sour, and I turned to Shareware programming.

I really appreciate gifts of any description for my efforts.

(SUBTLE HINT: More Bribes==More Code) ;-)

I'm currently working on several small projects, helping out a few shareware friends with a few programs, and also working on one large project of my own which is primarily of use to assembly programmers.

Other programs I've written are...

BootDate..... Outputs the date as a text string for redirection to Env:BootDate, so you can `Incbin Env:BootDate`.

BorderBlank..... Toggles the area around the screen black / colour 0

FasterForbid..... System speed patch.

FastWaitBlit..... System speed patch.

FixMFMDDevice..... Fixes benign bug in mfm.device

FMS 3.x..... Virtual Floppy disk on hard disk.

HunkGuide..... Documentation of Amiga executable file structures.

MoveVBR..... CPU speed patch.

NoIconBorder..... Removes lines from around icons.

RemCards..... Removes unneeded PCMCIA tasks/resources.

StreamLineOS..... System library/device optimiser.

I've also got a few projects in a Beta state for release soon.

## 1.11 How to get in touch with me.

11. Contact Address.

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Feel free to contact me for donations, presents, flames, bug-reports, ideas, requests, or even just to say hello..

Please, read my `To do` list before suggesting something, if it's on there it'll be added eventually, and nagging me won't make me code any faster! ;-)

(Bribes may have some effect though ;-)

Dave Jones.
40,Heol Edward Lewis,
Gelligaer,
Hengoed,
Mid Glamorgan,
Cf82 8ej,
South Wales,
U.k.

Include postage if you require a reply.

If you are just requesting an update, then I will hold onto your postage until the next release is ready. If you are not residing in the Uk, then just send two extra disks as payment.

You can now send me E-Mail at my own address!

DJones@CardiffCyberCafe.Co.Uk

Now that I have my own net-address, I should reply to all mail I recieve within a `reasonable' period of time, unlike in the past, where it was simply too awkward for me to pass 30 or so texts to my friend, and ask him to mail them all.

If you are just sending a `hello' don't expect a reply, as I get kinda busy sometimes, but if you have a question, I'll try and respond as soon as humanely possible.

If several people ask the same thing (Like what happened with the Hires sprites requests after 3.05 hit the street) then, I'll write short replies in the docs rather than Email all of you.

If you are writing to report an incompatibility between PointerX and some other program, please send it to me (If Copyright laws allow it).

Also, include accurate instructions on how to reproduce the bug.

I can also be found on IRC #Amiga as `Termy' usually on a saturday afternoon for an hour or so.

Soon, You'll also be able to read all the latest PointerX happenings on the WorldWideWeb, as soon as I get time to make some pages.

1.12 Thanks, you've been great...

12. Thanx/ Greetz e.t.c...

~~~~~

Inspiration:

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This version could not have been made without excessive playing of

Misery Loves Co, and eating excessive amounts of Thick&Creamy Yogurt.

Yum!

Personal Thanks to ..

~~~~~

Dave Ward/Amiga User International

~~~~~

Thanks for sorting out the problems I've had in the past with AUI.

All previous distribution restrictions are removed.

Stefane Payet, Jen Allen, and Ronny Bangsund, Ron Griffiths,

Maxine Gamboni, DobbleU, Ulf Bertilsson, Erol Ismael

~~~~~

For sending gifts ;) Thank you all very much!

Michael Sewell

~~~~~

Thanks for the birthday card! Shame you forgot to write your address too!

Then I could've mailed you with an update! v3 was over a year and a half
old when I got your card ;^o

Graham Maddox

~~~~~

For the MagicWB icons! A welcome addition I think!

Please write, I've lost your address!

Tinic Urou

~~~~~

For making UrouHack not screw up PointerX any more ;^)

DobbleU

~~~~~

For the example code to demonstrate the OpenWindowTaglist bug, which was really  
handy while fixing it ;) and also for the CD, and for being my 68040 beta  
tester ;) Apologies for forgetting your name last time, though, I didn't  
do much better this time!

All who contacted me on the net..

~~~~~

For endless suggestions, bug-reports e.t.c.. If you didn't get a reply,
I'm really sorry, but I have to pay for my Net-Access, and I there is no
way I can reply to 50 or so Emails in a one or two hour session ;^)

But thank you for your criticisms.

Everyone else I've forgotten

~~~~~

Thanks for writing, Sorry I couldn't reply to all of you, I would've if you'd

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included postage (or a gift or some sort!)

And remember! If you like PointerX, Rate it on Aminet!

Flame Flame...

~~~~~

Nicola Salmoria..

~~~~~

How come ALL your patches mess up PointerX ? ;-D

Martin Berndt

~~~~~

Thanks for not having the decency to either..

- a. Reply to my letter and return my disk.
- b. Credit me for the optimisation ideas for FPULibs.

I find it strange how a few days after I write to you telling you the optimisations, you release v40.6 with my optimisations.

Never mind, It's your loss, as I could have probably told you many more.

Thanos Angelopoulos

~~~~~

For slagging off PointerX, in the docs for SpinPointer (Which incidentally, don't work ;-o ) Maybe my version uses a few nanoseconds more time than yours, but that's one of the drawbacks of a working program.

The security guards at Cardiff University

~~~~~

For not letting me in for free InterNET access any more 8^{ B**t*rds!
