

WindowToFront

COLLABORATORS

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Contents

1	WindowToFront	1
1.1	Documentation of WindowToFront 1.6	1
1.2	Introduction	1
1.3	Installation of WindowToFront	2
1.4	Shell usage	2
1.5	Workbench usage	6
1.6	The control panel	7
1.7	Qualifiers recognized by the commodities.library	9
1.8	Localization	10
1.9	Important notes	11
1.10	Existing revisions	11
1.11	Final notes	12

Chapter 1

WindowToFront

1.1 Documentation of WindowToFront 1.6

WINDOWTOFRONT 1.6

dedicated to the memory of Jay G. Miner (1932-1994)

WARNING: WindowToFront requires AmigaOS Release 2 (or higher).

Introduction

1. [Installation](#)
2. [Shell usage](#)
3. [Workbench usage](#)
4. [The control panel](#)
5. [Qualifiers](#)
6. [Localization](#)
7. [Important notes](#)
8. [Existing revisions](#)
9. [Final notes](#)

1.2 Introduction

WindowToFront is a commodity that was written to replace the original "ClickToFront" program that comes with every Amiga.

Why replace it? The main motivation was that I find really annoying the way ClickToFront keeps bringing to front any Workbench window every time the user double-clicks on an icon. This might still be tolerable with the volume or drawer windows, but becomes unacceptable in the case of the main Workbench window: when brought to front, it ends up covering almost the entire screen. Furthermore, I thought the program could use some additional features and a real graphic user interface rather than having to be configured through its icon Information window. So I wrote WindowToFront.

WindowToFront allows to bring to front any non-backdrop window with a chosen number of mouse clicks on it, and to send it to the background in several ways; it's also possible to choose a different number of clicks for three distinct window types, and even one for window borders.

All the options are selectable with a control panel or by editing the tool types; WindowToFront can be started from both Shell and Workbench, it can save the preferred settings into its icon and it can be adapted to any language by using the appropriate localization .catalog file.

1.3 Installation of WindowToFront

1. INSTALLATION

The installation of WindowToFront is very simple: just run the supplied script by double-clicking on the "Install" icon.

However, if you prefer to install it by hand, all you have to do is to copy the program along with its icon into your SYS:Tools/Commodities drawer, and to add the following line to your User-startup script:

Run > NIL: WindowToFront

Alternatively you can simply put it into your WBStartup drawer.

In addition, if you want to use WindowToFront in a language other than english, you can localize it as explained in paragraph 6, "[Localization](#)".

1.4 Shell usage

2. SHELL USAGE

To find out the Shell template of WindowToFront, you can simply enter the typical

WindowToFront ?

The template, anyway, is the following:

CX_PRIORITY/N/K,CX_POPKEY/K,CX_POPUP/K,CLICKS/N/K,CLICKS_WB/N/K,
CLICKS_WBWIN/N/K,CLICKS_BORDER/N/K,CLICKS_BACK/N/K,QUALIFIER/K,
QUALIFIER_BACK/K,WBONLY/K,AUTOBACK/K,ACTIVATEBACK/K,HOTKEY_BACK/K,BACKMODE/K,
LANGUAGE/K,GADGETS/K,FORCETOPAZ/K:

The keywords appearing here match exactly the tool types you can insert in WindowToFront's icon. Let's see their meaning and default values:

CX_PRIORITY=<num> [default: 0]

CX_POPKEY=<hotkey> [default: CTRL w]

CX_POPUP=<YES | NO> [default: NO]

These three are common to all Commodities programs. They allow to specify

the priority of WindowToFront compared to other Commodities (the default is suggested), the key sequence that makes the control panel appear when it is hidden, and whether the panel must pop up at the program's start or remain hidden until called via the hotkey.

CLICKS=<number of clicks> [default: 2]

This allows to choose the number of clicks that will be required to bring to front a "normal" window, i. e. one that is neither the Workbench main one nor that of a Workbench disk or drawer (in short, one that can't contain Workbench icons).

The selectable number of clicks varies from 1 to 4. Anyway, a single click is strongly inadvisable, as it usually creates a lot of confusion.

Specifying 0 as number of clicks disables this function.

CLICKS_WB=<number of clicks> [default: 3]

This allows to choose the number of clicks to bring to front the main window of the Workbench, that is, the one in which the disk icons appear.

This is possible only if the window wasn't made backdrop. You can safely choose 2 for this option, as a double-click on a Workbench icon, if this is of the DISK, DRAWER or TRASHCAN kind, does not bring the window to front.

With other icon types (for instance AppIcons) in some cases it's still possible that the window get brought to the front: if you find yourself often in such a situation, you can for example set 3 as a value for this parameter.

Specifying 0 as number of clicks disables this function.

CLICKS_WBWIN=<number of clicks> [default: 2]

With this you specify the number of clicks for Workbench windows associated to a disk or to a drawer. These windows are usually smaller than the entire screen, so normally it doesn't matter very much if one of them get brought to front unintentionally by double-clicking on an icon that is located inside it; anyway this won't happen in most cases (it certainly won't happen if you double-click on a drawer or on the Trashcan).

Specifying 0 as number of clicks disables this function.

CLICKS_BORDER=<number of clicks> [default: 2]

This allows to specify the number of click to bring to front any window when the mouse pointer is on its border or on its title bar (excluding the system gadgets).

Specifying 0 as number of clicks DOES NOT disables the function, but means that the number of clicks to use for the border is the same defined for the inside of the window (thus differentiating between the three window types). Otherwise the number of clicks for the border is the same for all

window types.

CLICKS_BACK=<number of clicks> [default: 1]

With this you specify the number of clicks that will be needed to send to the background any window when you simultaneously press the key (or keys) indicated with the QUALIFIER_BACK parameter (see below).

This operation usually requires a qualifier, so there are no problems with specifying 1 as number of clicks: in fact, it is the more convenient choice.

Specifying 0 as number of clicks disables this function.

QUALIFIER=<qualifier> [default: NONE]

The qualifier is a key or combination of keys (for example, CTRL ALT) that must be held pressed while clicking on windows to make the bring-to-front function actually work.

Because in most cases the need to press one or more keys together with the mouse button slows down the operations (of the user, not of the computer), it is advisable to specify NONE for this option.

QUALIFIER_BACK=<qualifier> [default: LALT]

This qualifier, instead, is indispensable in order to be able to distinguish between clicks made to bring a window to front and clicks made to send it to the background.

If both operations were to require the same qualifier and the same number of clicks, the bring-to-front operation would always override the other (it would be the only one to be executed).

Note: until version 1.1 the program's behavior in this case was exactly the opposite!

If, on the other hand, you assign a different number of clicks to the two operations, under the same qualifier the operation requiring less clicks will be executed first. If you continue clicking with the mouse the other, too, will then be executed.

For instance, you can specify NONE for both qualifiers and assign 3 as the number of clicks to send windows to back: by triple-clicking on a window, it will be first brought to front, then immediately to back. This may be a way to avoid using a qualifier, which may sometimes be uncomfortable.

The default background qualifier is the left ALT key. I advise against the use of the SHIFT keys, already handled by the Workbench, and of the AMIGA keys, that have a special significance to Intuition. This means that the keys more suitable to carry out this task are the two ALTs and CTRL.

A note on the qualifiers: by specifying separately two analogous keys, such as "LALT RALT", it will be required to SIMULTANEOUSLY press these

keys. By specifying instead only their common part, such as "ALT", it will suffice to press any one of the two to perform the associated operation. Furthermore, the word NONE is valid no matter which language you localized WindowToFront to, while its synonyms in other languages, as for instance NESSUNO for italian, are only recognized if you use the relative catalog. See also [paragraph 5](#) for a complete listing of the names suitable as qualifiers.

WBONLY=<YES | NO> [default: YES]

By default, WindowToFront performs its function only with the windows that appear on the Workbench screen (or on the default PUBLIC screen). By specifying NO here you obtain that the program work on the windows of all screens. Sometimes this might cause conflicts with the operations of the program that opened these screens, but usually there are no particular problems.

Note: for this tool type and all others of the same type (YES/NO) any specification different from "NO" (even a null string, such as "AUTOBACK=" or "WBONLY") will be interpreted as YES.

AUTOBACK=<YES | NO> [default: NO]

The specification of YES here means that if you use the number of clicks chosen to bring a window to front on a window that is already in front of all others (that is, it's not obscured by others) this window will be sent to the background. If the window is instead partially obscured it will be brought to front as usual.

ACTIVATEBACK=<YES | NO> [default: NO]

Usually a window you send to the background is a window you don't want to use for the moment, so there's no point at all in activating it. In fact by default WindowToFront won't activate the windows you send to back in the normal way (that is, with the combination QUALIFIER_BACK + CLICKS_BACK), even if it will do so in the case of windows "sent away" with the AUTOBACK method. By specifying YES here you will make WindowToFront always activate the windows it sends to the background (although the reason of such a choice would be completely beyond me...).

HOTKEY_BACK=<hotkey> [default: LALT ESC]

With this keyword you specify the combination of keys which will cause the current window to get sent to back. Which one is the current window depends on the value you assign to the BACKMODE keyword.

The default key combination is left ALT + ESC.

BACKMODE=<POINTER | ACTIVE> [default: POINTER]

This keyword's purpose is to specify which window must be sent to back

when the key combination assigned to `HOTKEY_BACK` is pressed.

By specifying `POINTER` the window under the mouse pointer will be sent to back, while by specifying `ACTIVE` the sent-away window will be the active one.

`LANGUAGE=<language>` [default: locale]

With this keyword you tell which language WindowToFront must use for its localization (adaptation to a particular language).

To make this possible, the appropriate .catalog file for that language must be present in its directory, as it is explained more thoroughly in paragraph 6, "[Localization](#)".

It is not necessary to have the locale.library to make use of the localization.

`GADGETS=<YES | NO>` [default: NO]

Lastly, with this option you can tell the program whether you want or not WindowToFront's control panel have at its bottom the two "Hide" and "Quit" gadgets.

They aren't needed, as these two options are already present in the "Project" menu and their elimination allows to save some space by having a shorter window, but their presence could be a commodity some people just can't do without.

`FORCETOPAZ=<YES | NO>` [default: NO]

Beginning with version 1.2, WindowToFront exploits a font-sensitive user interface (i. e. it adapts itself to the font used for the Workbench).

Those who should want, for some reasons, to continue using the topaz 8 font, can do it by specifying YES as the value of this keyword.

1.5 Workbench usage

3. WORKBENCH USAGE

The usage from Workbench is analogous to that of all other Commodities: you just have to run the program by double-clicking on its icon.

This operation will bring up the control panel if among the icon's tool types there is "`CX_POPUP=YES`", otherwise the program will start running "silently" in the background.

To make the control panel appear you will then need to press the key combination specified with the "`CX_POPKEY`" tool type (also in the icon).

With the "Information..." item of the Workbench's "Icons" menu you can add, delete and modify the tool types of the WindowToFront's icon.

Alternatively, after you have modified the working parameters of

WindowToFront using the control panel, you can save these parameters into the program's icon with the "Save" item of the "Project" menu. However some parameters, as for instance "CX_POPUP", can't be modified this second way.

The tool types recognized by WindowToFront when started from Workbench, as their possible values, are exactly the same described in the [Shell usage](#) paragraph.

By placing WindowToFront into the "WBStartup" drawer (with its icon) the program will be launched automatically at every reboot. In this case you need to have "DONOTWAIT" among the icon's tool types, as WindowToFront, like any other standard Commodity, isn't self-detaching.

1.6 The control panel

4. THE CONTROL PANEL

It wouldn't be really necessary to describe the usage of the control panel, because it's very intuitive, however let's examine briefly the various gadgets and menus. In referring to them I'll use their english name.

"Hot Key:" - It allows to modify the hotkey (key combination) that is needed to bring up the control panel. If you insert there an incorrect expression the gadget's previous contents will be restored (after you press RETURN). Warning: capital letters such as "W" imply a simultaneous SHIFT key press.

"About..." - It causes the appearance of a requester with some information about the program and its author.

"Normal Windows:" - This slider allows to change the number of clicks to be used to bring to front "normal" windows (those not belonging to the Workbench and not able to contain icons). The change takes place in real time, that is, you don't need to close the control panel to make it work.

"Main Workbench Window:" - As above, but for the main Workbench window, the one which contains the icons for floppy disks, hard disk partitions, Ram/Rad disks, and so on.

"Workbench Windows:" - As above, but for any other window owned by the Workbench (for example drawers).

"Window Border:" - As above, but for the border of any window. By setting this slider to "Off", you obtain that the number of clicks to use on the border be the same you use inside the windows.

"To Back:" - With this slider you specify the number of clicks to use to send windows to the background (when you simultaneously also press the

qualifier associated to this operation).

"Workbench Only:" - This checkbox allows you to choose whether WindowToFront must operate on the windows of all screens or only on the ones of the Workbench screen.

"AutoBack:" - Checkbox to activate/deactivate the AUTOBACK facility (see the [Shell usage](#) paragraph).

"Activate Back:" - Checkbox to specify whether windows sent to the background must be activated or not. This gadget will be disabled if the number of clicks to send windows to back is 0 (Off) or if it's 1 and you didn't specify any qualifier for the "send to back" operation.

In the latter case it's in fact necessary to always activate the window on which you click, or else no window will ever be able to be activated (at least in the usual mode, using a single click without qualifiers).

"To Front:" - This string gadget contains the qualifier for the "bring window to front" operation. By inserting (with RETURN) an invalid qualifier, the previous value will be restored.

By inserting a null string it will be displayed NONE or the equivalent term of the used language. It is possible to use directly that term or NONE (always valid with any language) to specify that indeed it isn't required any qualifier for the mentioned operation.

"To Back:" - Exactly as above, but for the "send window to back" operation. It is usually better not to insert NONE here.

"Keys:" - This string gadget contains the combination of keys which will trigger the "send window to back" action. If you insert an incorrect value here followed by RETURN, the previous value will be restored.

"Mode:" - This cycle gadget allows you to choose which window will be sent to back when you press the key combination explained above. The "Under Pointer" value means that the chosen window will be the one under the mouse pointer, while the "Active Window" value means that the window sent to back will be the active one.

"Hide" - This gadget is present only if you specified the tool type GADGETS=YES at the launch of WindowToFront (on the command line or in the icon). Its purpose is to make the control panel disappear, while keeping WindowToFront active in the background. You can achieve the same effect by pressing the "H" key (or another key depending on the used language, as specified in the .catalog file).

To make the control panel show up again you must press the hotkey.

"Quit" - This gadget is present only if you specified the tool type GADGETS=YES at the launch of WindowToFront (on the command line or in the

icon). Its purpose is to terminate the execution of WindowToFront and to remove it from memory. You can achieve the same effect by pressing the "Q" key (or another key depending on the used language, as specified in the .catalog file).

"Save" (Project menu) - By selecting this menu item you save the current settings (hotkey, number of clicks, options, qualifiers) into the icon of WindowToFront. If the icon doesn't exist, the program creates it first.

"Hide" (Project menu) - This menu item has the same function as the "Hide" gadget (see).

"Quit" (Project menu) - This menu item has the same function as the "Quit" gadget (see).

Lastly, it's worth remembering that the close gadget of the window of WindowToFront has the same effect as the "Hide" menu item (or gadget).

1.7 Qualifiers recognized by the commodities.library

5. QUALIFIERS RECOGNIZED BY THE COMMODITIES.LIBRARY

This is a listing of the qualifiers recognized by version 37 (and above) of the commodities.library and usable with WindowToFront.

QUALIFIER MEANING

LCOMMAND Left AMIGA key

RCOMMAND Right AMIGA key

LSHIFT Left SHIFT key

RSHIFT Right SHIFT key

LALT Left ALT key

RALT Right ALT key

CAPSLOCK Caps Lock key

CONTROL CTRL key

SHIFT Any SHIFT key

CAPS Any SHIFT key or Caps Lock

ALT Any ALT key

Note: starting with version 38 (OS 2.1) of the commodities.library there are several synonyms for these qualifiers, but it's not necessary to list them here. If you own the 2.1 or 3.x operating system you should find them reported in the system software manual.

1.8 Localization

6. LOCALIZATION

By default WindowToFront communicates with the user in the english language, but, of course, the program can be localized, i. e. adapted to a specific language.

Beginning with version 1.2, WindowToFront can only be localized with the proper .catalog files containing its strings translated into various languages. The program is able to interpret these files even if the locale.library is not present, but in the future this support could be removed because of its redundancy.

If you did install WindowToFront using the supplied installation script, you have probably already chosen your preferred language, and the appropriate catalog should have already been copied to its correct location. If this is not the case, or if you want to install more catalogs, here is how to do it. All you have to do is to copy the "windowtofront.catalog" file for your language, if supplied, to the directory LOCALE:Catalogs/<langname>, where <langname> is the name of your locale language. For example, if you are italian, you could copy the file "Catalogs/italiano/windowtofront.catalog" (found in WindowToFront's distribution directory) to the directory "LOCALE:Catalogs/italiano/" of your system, thus obtaining the localization file "LOCALE:Catalogs/italiano/windowtofront.catalog".

Even if you have the locale.library, you don't need to select your preferred language with the Locale preferences editor: you can specify it directly in WindowToFront by using the keyword (or tool type) LANGUAGE. If you want the program to use the locale language you chose with the Locale editor, simply set the aforementioned keyword to "locale".

Anyway, the size of the control panel and the position of the gadgets will be adapted to the length of the used strings.

With version 1.6 of WindowToFront I supplied officially the .catalog files for the english and italian languages; in the future I'll manage to add other ones (if someone writes them for me, that is).

You can create a .catalog file for your language by using the program for developers "CatComp" with the .cd file I supplied: if you are a developer you should already know how to do it. Alternatively, you can use one of the many PD programs that carry out this operation by modifying an already existing .catalog file.

NOTE: If you put together versions for other languages of the .catalog file, you're free (and welcome) to send them to me via electronic mail, so that I be able to include them into a future WindowToFront distribution.

You can also spread them separately, of course always in the public domain.

1.9 Important notes

7. IMPORTANT NOTES

WindowToFront does nothing when the user selects a gadget within a window. Some programs handle privately a double click on their gadgets, so WindowToFront should not interfere with them.

Furthermore, WindowToFront doesn't bring to front backdrop windows.

Generally, to specify only one click without any qualifier for any operation causes confusion and serious troubles in the user's handling of the windows as well as interaction problems between him and Intuition.

It is recommended, therefore, NOT to do that.

Starting with version 1.1 WindowToFront is able to save its settings even if in its directory there isn't an icon named after it; in this case the program will create a new icon for itself.

Finally, for various reasons it would take too much time to explain, I suggest you not to rename the program. Anyway "WindowToFront" is its official name and so I intend it to be known by Amiga users worldwide (ok, nobody does such things anymore, but still...).

1.10 Existing revisions

8. EXISTING REVISIONS

1.6 Significantly reduced the stack usage; before it could cause crashes when playing with the GUI (thanks to Nils Görs for the report).

Also, the executable is now 236 bytes shorter.

1.5 Increased compatibility with DirOpus 5 when used as a Workbench replacement (still not perfect, though). Added an installation script to keep up with the times. Documentation rewritten in its most ancient parts. Recompiled using SAS/C 6.58. The executable is 88 bytes shorter.

1.4 Some more bugs fixed. Documentation partially rewritten (it was becoming obsolete). Even more optimized: now the executable is 1132 bytes shorter.

1.3 Removed some bugs that caused Enforcer hits. Executable 92 bytes shorter.

[Note: this version can only be found on the IPISA '95 CD-ROM]

1.2 Completely rewritten and optimized using SAS/C 6.51.

Added the possibility of sending windows to back with a combination of keys (thanks to Federico Chiesa for the excellent suggestion).

Now the control panel is completely font-sensitive. Under OS 3.0+ the NewLook menus are used. Removed support of text file for the localization: only usage of .catalog files remains, however this doesn't require the locale.library. Slightly modified behavior in certain situations. Solved the icon double-click problem! Lastly, the executable is now 7228 bytes shorter.

[Note: this version was only released to beta-testers]

1.1 The localization now also supports the locale.library (and in the future it will support only that). The look of the panel is slightly better. Now WindowToFront is able to create its icon if this doesn't exist while saving the settings. Also added some error messages. The about requester is now an EasyRequester. Lastly, the executable is now 612 bytes shorter.

1.0 The original version.

1.11 Final notes

9. FINAL NOTES

If you discover bugs, have doubts or want to send me suggestions (always welcome) for future versions of WindowToFront, write to:

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And now for a traditional conclusion:

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Thanks to \X/ AMIGA for STILL being the best computer ever!
