This section, "Using ActiveX Controls," provides a starting point for each of the ActiveX™ controls, formerly called OLE controls, in the Microsoft® Visual Basic® programming system. Each ActiveX control is documented in its own section here with task-oriented overviews. These overviews are not meant to replace the language reference provided in online Help, but to give the new user contexts for using the controls.

For language-specific information, search online Help for the control's name.

The information in this manual is the best available at the time of publication. In some cases, more up-to-date information may be available in online Help.

Contents

What Is an ActiveX Control?

An ActiveX control is an extension to the Visual Basic Toolbox. You use ActiveX controls just as you would any of the standard built-in controls, such as the CheckBox control. When you add an ActiveX control to a program, it becomes part of the development and run-time environment and provides new functionality for your application.

ActiveX controls leverage your capabilities as a Visual Basic programmer by retaining some familiar properties, events, and methods, such as the Name property, which behave as you would expect. Then, however, the ActiveX controls feature methods and properties that greatly increase your flexibility and capability as a Visual Basic programmer.

For example, the Visual Basic Professional and Enterprise editions include the Windows Common controls that allow you to create applications with the look and feel of Windows 95 toolbars, status bars, and tree views of directory structures. Other controls allow you to create applications that take full advantage of the Internet.

Installing and Registering ActiveX Controls

At setup, the Professional and Enterprise Editions automatically install and register ActiveX controls in the \Windows\System or System32 directory. You are then able to use the ActiveX controls at design time to build your applications.

If you plan to create a setup program for your application, you'll need to include information on any ActiveX controls in the Setup.lst file. For more information, see "Distributing Your Applications."

Note   It is a violation of your license agreement to copy and distribute any information from the "Licenses" section of the system registry.

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Upgrading VBX Controls to ActiveX Controls

If you have a project with VBX custom controls that you'd like to replace with ActiveX controls, Visual Basic can do this automatically. Conversion is only possible for VBX custom controls for which replacement ActiveX controls exist on your system. For more information, see "Managing Projects."

The following VBX custom controls are no longer supported in Visual Basic 5.0. However, 32-bit ActiveX versions can be found as .ocx files in the \Tools\Controls directory of your Visual Basic CD-ROM:

- AniButton
- Gauge
- Graph
- KeyState
- MSGrid
- Outline
- Spin
- ThreeD

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To install these controls, you will have to register the controls using the Regsvr32 application, which is also available in the Tools directory. For instructions on how to use the Regsvr32 application, consult the Controls.txt file in the \Tools\Controls directory.

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Loading ActiveX Controls

ActiveX controls have the file name extension .ocx. You can use the ActiveX controls provided with Visual Basic 5.0 or obtain additional controls from third-party developers.

You can use ActiveX controls and other insertable objects to your project by adding them to the Toolbox.

Note   Visual Basic ActiveX controls are 32-bit controls. Some third-party developers offer ActiveX controls which are 16-bit controls, and these cannot be used in Visual Basic version 5.0.
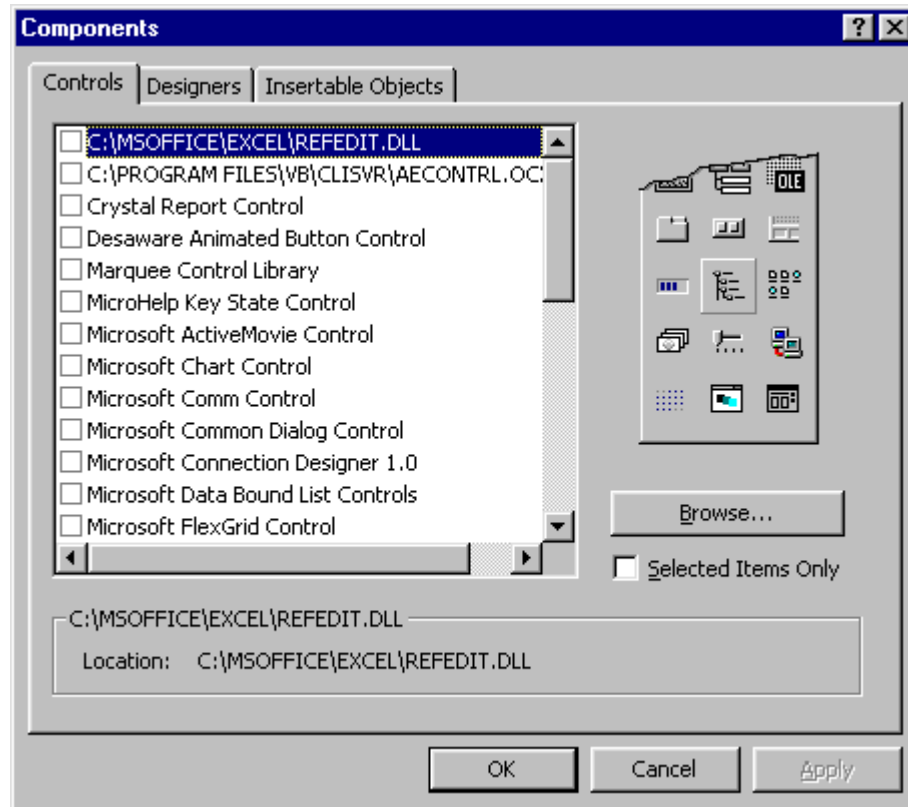
4

 To add a control to a project's Toolbox

1   On the **Project** menu, click **Components** to display the **Components** dialog box, as seen in figure 1.1.

   1**Tip**   You can also display the dialog box by right-clicking on the Toolbox.

2   Items listed in this dialog box include all registered insertable objects, designers, and ActiveX controls.

3   To add an ActiveX control to the Toolbox, select the check box to the left of the control name.

4   Click **OK** to close the **Components** dialog box. All of the ActiveX controls that you selected will now appear in the Toolbox.

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Figure 1.1   The Components dialog box

To add ActiveX controls to the Components dialog box, click the Browse button, and locate files with the .ocx file name extension. These files are commonly installed in your \Windows\System or System32 directory. When you add an ActiveX control to the list of available controls, Visual Basic automatically selects its check box in the Components dialog box.

ActiveX Control Icons

When you add an ActiveX control to your project, its icon is displayed in the Visual Basic Toolbox. You can select the ActiveX control by clicking this icon.

The icons for the ActiveX controls are listed in the following table.

Icon	Control	Allows you to
	ImageList	Contain a collection of images that can be used by other controls. This control is intended to be used as a central repository of images for an application. Windows Common

Control.

	ListView	Display data in one of four different views: icons, smallicons, list, and report. Windows Common Control.
	ProgressBar	Graphically show the progress of an operation by filling a rectangle with chunks from left to right as the operation proceeds. Windows Common Control.
	Slider	Provide a graphic interface for setting values or ranges of values. Contains a slider and optional tick marks. Windows Common Control.
	StatusBar	Show a status bar as a window, usually at the bottom of a parent form, through which an application can display various kinds of status data. The StatusBar control can contain a maximum of sixteen panels. Windows Common Control.
	TabStrip	Create tabbed dialog boxes. Windows Common Control.
	Toolbar	Create a toolbar with individual Button objects which can be programmed to correspond to frequently used functions of an application. Windows Common Control.
	TreeView	Display hierarchical information such as the headings in a document or the entries in an index. Windows Common Control.

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The ActiveX Control About Property

Some ActiveX controls were developed by independent software vendors. If you would like more information about a control's vendor, click the control and press F4 to display the Properties window. Double-click the About property in the Properties window to open a dialog box that displays information about the vendor.

ActiveX Control Class

The class name for each ActiveX control is listed in the following table. (The class name for a control also appears in the Properties window.)

Control	Class name
ImageList	ImageList
ListView	ListView
ProgressBar	ProgressBar
Slider	Slider
StatusBar	StatusBar
TabStrip	TabStrip
Toolbar	Toolbar
TreeView	TreeView

Required ActiveX Control Files

The files required by most ActiveX controls are listed in the following table.

Control	Required files
ImageList [3]	Comctl32.ocx
ListView [3]	Comctl32.ocx
ProgressBar [3]	Comctl32.ocx
Slider [3]	Comctl32.ocx
StatusBar [3]	Comctl32.ocx
TabStrip [3]	Comctl32.ocx
Toolbar [3]	Comctl32.ocx
TreeView [3]	Comctl32.ocx

1   Microsoft Mail or Microsoft Exchange for Windows electronic mail system required.

2   Multimedia PC required.

3   Microsoft Windows Common Control.