

## WinBiff 1.7a

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WinBiff is a Windows 3.x version of the well-known Un\*x biff program, designed for use in conjunction with mail delivery programs such as UUPC/extended, Waffle, Pegasus, FSUUCP, or sendmail.

### *Installing WinBiff*

Copy the file WINBIFF.EXE to any convenient directory. Typically, users keep WINBIFF.EXE in a directory along with other small Windows utilities.

To configure WinBiff for your system, start the program, and select **Setup** from the system menu in the upper left window. In the dialog box which pops up, enter a suitable **Polling Interval** (how often WinBiff checks your mail file), a **Window Caption** for the WinBiff title bar, the full pathname of the **Mail File** your mail delivery program creates, the command to invoke your **Mail Reader** (including any command-line arguments), and optionally, the name of a ".WAV" **Sound File** file to play when mail is received.

The minimum polling interval is 5 seconds. If no caption is specified, the mail file will be used. You may use DOS wildcard characters ("\*" and "?") in the mail file specification. Pegasus users should use "\*.CNM" in the mail file specification. Waffle creates two mailbox files, a text file with a ".F" extension, and an index file with a ".I" extension. If you use Waffle, specify the ".F" file. The string "%s" in the mail reader specification will expand to the full pathname of the specified mail file.

For the **Mail File**, **Mail Reader**, and **Sound File** fields, clicking on an adjacent **Browse** button allows you to pick files from a Windows Common Dialog box. (You must enter manually a mail file specification that contains DOS wildcard characters). Use of the **Browse** buttons requires the Windows 3.1 dynamic link library, COMMDLG.DLL. If you are running Windows 3.0, and do not already have COMMDLG.DLL, you may obtain a copy from many shareware sites, from Microsoft, or from the author (inquiries to the e-mail address below).

By clicking with the left mouse button in the appropriate boxes, you may choose the additional **Display options**:

- o start the program minimized
- o show mail headers
- o reverse sort headers by order of arrival
- o whether on startup to display old mail left in your mailbox

The **Reverse Sort** option is inapplicable, and its checkbox disabled, unless the show headers option is selected. If the **Show old mail** option is not checked, and your mail file(s) have not been modified since WinBiff was last closed, mail will not be displayed on startup.

The **Window action** choice tells WinBiff what to display when mail arrives. Normally, WinBiff shows an image of a mailbox with its flag down. When mail arrives, WinBiff will raise the flag on the mailbox and change the background. If the window is display and the **Show headers** option is checked, then up to 150 message headers will be shown. The **To top** option causes the WinBiff window or icon to remain visible even though other windows cover it. The **Restore** option causes the icon to become a window when mail arrives; when all mail has been read, the window again becomes an icon.

You can choose what sound WinBiff will make when new mail is received, by clicking on the

appropriate radio button in the dialog box. Choosing **Beep** uses the Windows "Default Beep" sound. Choosing "Custom" plays the .WAV file given in the Sound file field. The **Test** button allows you to play the sound file during setup. (You must have appropriate hardware or drivers installed for this choice to work. A speaker driver SPEAKER.DRV which provides adequate results without special hardware is available at many shareware sites, and is available from the author on request.)

If you press the **Save** button, a WINBIFF.INI file is created, and the values you have given will be recalled when the program is started subsequently. The WINBIFF.INI file will be placed in the Winbiff working directory. Choosing **OK** applies the setup to the current session only. Choosing **Cancel** cancels any changes to the setup.

### ***Using WinBiff with PC-NFS***

If your PC is on a network with a Un\*x machine which can export directories using NFS, and you run PC-NFS, WinBiff can monitor mail sent to the Un\*x machine. Export the mail spool directory where your mail arrives so that it appears as a directory on a logical DOS drive on the PC. In your WinBiff setup, specify the file that is created on the logical drive when mail arrives as the **Mail File**.

### ***Multiple mailboxes***

You may run multiple copies of WinBiff to monitor multiple mailboxes. For each mailbox to be monitored, create a directory where you want WINBIFF.INI to be stored. With some mail systems, you may already have a directory for each of your mailboxes; you can use these directories to store corresponding WINBIFF.INI files. For each mailbox, add a "Program Item" to a group in Program Manager, and specify one of the directories just created as the "Working Directory".

### ***UUPC/extended and the multitask option***

If you run UUPC/extended with the "Multitask" option set, two mailbox files are used for each account. One file, located in the mail spool directory, holds new messages as they are received. When the UUPC mail reader MAIL.EXE (either the DOS or the OS/2 version) is started, messages are moved to another file in the account's home directory. You should run a copy of WinBiff to monitor the mailbox in the mail spool directory, so that you will be notified of new messages. If you wish to track old messages (those that remain after MAIL.EXE is run), you will need to run a second copy of WinBiff with the mail file set to the mailbox in the account's home directory.

### ***Using WinBiff***

The first time WinBiff is started, the window will have a default size and position. If you move or resize the WinBiff window, the window size and position will be saved when you close the program. When WinBiff is started subsequently, the changes to the window size and position are maintained. The saved position is the position of the upper left-hand corner of the window when it was last of "normal" size, that is, neither iconized nor maximized. In fact, two sizes are saved, corresponding to the window size when headers are displayed, and the size when headers are not displayed.

The user may force the appearance of the original, no-mail icon (or window) by selecting **Clear** from the system menu. If **Clear** is chosen, the menu item changes to **Show**. Choosing **Show** will re-display the mail window or headers. If mail is pending, but not displayed on startup (because the **Show old mail** option has not been selected), choosing **Show** will also display the mail window or mail headers for the old mail..

To invoke the mail reader, double-click with the right mouse button on the icon or window. If the window is displayed, you may also double-click with the left mouse button or hit <RETURN>. The reader is invoked whether or not you actually have mail pending.

### ***Running WinBiff under WinOS2***

You may run WinBiff under WinOS2, the version of Windows built into the OS/2 operating system (version 2.0 or above). If you run WinOS2 in a full-screen session, you can run WinBiff as you would run it under Windows itself. Similarly, if you minimize windows to the Desktop, WinBiff may be run in a seamless mode session as it would run under Windows.

If you wish to run WinBiff in a WinOS2 seamless mode session, and you hide minimized windows, or you minimize windows to the Minimized Window Viewer, you need to exercise a little care. In this case, Windows icons are not visible in seamless mode. Therefore, you should either 1) run WinBiff as a window all the time (choose **To Top** or **No action**, but don't choose **Start minimized**), or 2) choose the **Restore** option (in which case **Start minimized** may be chosen, or not chosen).

If you run WinBiff in a seamless mode session, and you pick WinBiff from the OS/2 Window List, the window may not be restored to the proper size. This is due to an idiosyncrasy of the integration of OS/2 and WinOS2. If you run WinBiff as described above, it should not be necessary to use the Window List. If the window is restored to a wrong size, simply resize the window manually.

### ***Bugs/Problems***

If you read some, but not all, of the messages in a mailbox, WinBiff may behave as if the remaining messages are new, so that the **Window Action** is taken. This is because some mail readers temporarily delete mail files before writing the remaining messages back to the file. If WinBiff polls the file while the file is deleted, WinBiff will behave as if the mailbox is empty; when the remaining messages are written, these messages are considered new.

If you play a .WAV file on the receipt of mail, use SPEAKER.DRV as your sound driver, and disable interrupts during playback, a serial-port communications program (such as UUPC's UUJO) may lose characters. Normal operation of a single UUJO process should not be a problem, since mail delivery occurs after all files have been transferred.

### ***Credits***

The layout for the Setup dialog was suggested by Tom Metro of Venture Logic, Newton, Massachusetts.

### ***Registration***

WinBiff is a shareware program. If you use the program in a commercial setting, or non-commercially on a regular basis, please submit contributions (\$10 suggested) to:

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10 Harbor Point Blvd. # 405  
Boston, MA 02125-3212  
U.S.A.

Users who send contributions will receive updates as uuencoded .ZIP files by e-mail. Site registrations are available (send inquiries to the e-mail address below). Checks in non-U.S. currencies are accepted.

### ***Distributing WinBiff***

You may freely distribute the WinBiff executable WINBIFF.EXE as long as the executable file is not modified in any way, and as long as this file, WINBIFF.WRI, is distributed with the executable.

### ***Disclaimer***

You use WinBiff at your own risk. All warranties expressed and implied are disclaimed. Any damages resulting from the use of WinBiff shall not result in any liability.

### ***Contacting the author***

E-mail correspondence concerning this program may be submitted to:

*winbiff@blimpy.ci.net*

Users without ftp access may request a uuencoded .ZIP file of the latest version of WinBiff by sending a message to:

*winbiff-request@blimpy.ci.net*