Contents for Suckmeister Help

Welcome to Suckmeister, a shell enhancement program that simplifies the most often performed Windows tasks. (Well, sort of...)

To learn how to use Help, press F1.

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What is Suckmeister?

Suckmeister is a Windows system toolbar that makes launching and managing applications easier. At least that is its intent.   In an effort to minimize its burden on system resources, SM does not currently include the kitchen sink, nor several other household utensils.   As a result, SM provides increased functionality for what you do most often; lets say 80% of your work.   *(The other 20% is left as an exercise for the reader.)*

Suckmeister is actually a set of small applications, called applets, that each perform a simple task.   The toolbar is structured such that these applets can be added and removed dynamically.   New applets can be added to SM to increase its functionality. *(Even the kitchen sink.)*

The applets included with Suckmeister are:

- **Command Line -** A command line launch facility with some additional commands.
- **Current Directory -** A button that displays the current working directory and launches Windows File Manager when pressed.
- **Task Manager -** A graphic list of all currently executing applications, that allows the user to switch to an application by clicking on an icon.
- **Button Manager -** Buttons that can be configured to launch applications or execution any special Command Line applet commands.
- **Clock -** Uh, you figure it out.

How To Change the Appearance of Suckmeister

One of the nicest things about Suckmeister is that it allows you to easily configure the toolbar to your needs. Applets can be dynamically enabled, disabled, and sized. All changes made to the toolbar layout are automatically saved, and will be used by future invocations of Suckmeister.

How To...

Enable/Disable an Applet

Change Vertical Size of Suckmeister

Change Width of an Applet

Right Justify an Applet

How To Maximize an Application Under Suckmeister

By holding down the *shift* key while maximizing and application, you will effectively position the application directly under SM and maximize its size to fill the entire screen not taken by SM.   This is not a true maximize! You will notice that you can still move your window, and maximize the application.

Enabling or Disabling an Applet

Enabling or disabling an applet gives you the ability to add our remove an applet from the toolbar at anytime.   For instance, if you happen to hate the Current Directory applet, and would much rather use the valuable space it is taking up as additional buttons in the Button Manager, then disable it!   Applets can be enabled and disabled at will. Disabling an applet does not cause configuration loss.   (i.e. You will not loose your configured buttons if you disable the Button Manager applet)

To enable or disable a Suckmeister applet

- Click on the system button and select 'Configure...' from the menu.
- Select applet from the   'Applets' list box.
- Click on 'Enabled' checkbox to toggle enable status

The changes will take affect after exiting the configuration dialog via the OK push-button. All changes are automatically saved to disk.

Changing the Vertical Size of Suckmeister

The vertical size of the toolbar can be changed dynamically, by grabbing the bottom edge of the toolbar, and dragging it up or down. Changing the height of the toolbar allows you to find a happy medium between space utilization and readability.

To change the vertical size

- Position cursor over bottom edge of toolbar. The cursor will change to the vertical sizing cursor when it is over a valid grabbing point.
- Depress left mouse button and drag the mouse up or down to resize the toolbar to desired height. The new size of the toolbar is denoted by the inverted rectangle.
- Release mouse button to affect changes.

The sizing changes will automatically be saved to disk.

As a result of changing the height of the toolbar, an applet's width might change. This is because some applets base their width on integral values of the toolbar height. A good example of this is the Button Manager applet. When the height of the toolbar changes, the Button Manager recalculates the size of a button *(so that it will be square)*. Based on the new button width, the Button Manager then adds as many buttons as it can within the original applet width. This will likely result in fewer buttons being displayed. The buttons that have been removed from the display have not been destroyed!   They just aren't displayed!

So what does this mean? After sizing the toolbar vertically, you will most likely want to adjust the width of the applets.

Changing the Width of a Suckmeister Applet

To change the width of an applet

- Position the mouse over the <u>applet sizing handle</u> for the applet you want to size.
- Hold down the left mouse button and drag the handle to change the applet's size. (An inverted handle will show you the new size.)
- Release the mouse button to affect the changes.

The sizing changes will automatically be saved to disk.

NOTE:

If the applet happens to be right justified, sizing is MUCH easier (read: only possible) if <u>right justification</u> is disabled before the sizing.   Right justification can be re-enabled after you are finished sizing.

When sizing an applet, Suckmeister will not allow the new size of the applet to force other applets to shrink. However, Suckmeister <u>will</u> allow the applet to make use of all unused toolbar surface. As a result, to increase the size of one applet, you may need to shrink the size of other applets. The easiest way to understand this, is to try it out!

NOTE:

Shrinking the size of an applet **will not** cause the loss of its data.

As an example, lets say the Button Manager is temporarily resized to just two buttons so that we can enlarge the Task Manager to view more tasks. (originally we had 10 buttons) Once we no longer need the additional space for the Task Manager, we can shrink the Task Manager and enlarge the Button Manager back to its original size. The buttons return, as they were originally configured.

Right Justify an Applet

Right justification forces an applet to align to the right side of the toolbar. Currently, the only applet that defaults to right justified is the clock.

NOTE:

It is quite hard, (read: impossible) to adjust the width of a right justified applet. If this is necessary, it is suggested that you disable right justification before sizing, and then re-enable it after sizing has been completed.

To enable or disable right justification for an applet

- Click on the <u>system button</u> and select 'Configure...' from the menu.
- Select applet from the   'Applets' list box.
- Click on "Right Justify checkbox to toggle status

Setting   the Hotkey

The hotkey is a keystroke that will immediately take you to Suckmeister regardless of what application is currently active.   This keystroke can include *ctrl*, *alt*, and *shift* key modifiers in combination, but <u>must</u> include either the *ctrl* or *alt* modifiers.

To set the hotkey

- Click on the <u>system button</u> and select 'Configure...' from the menu.
- Click on Hotkey edit control -or- type Alt-H.
- Type new key chord. The key combination will be displayed in the edit control. If a particular sequence is invalid, the displayed key combination will disappear as soon as you let up the key(s).
- Press the OK button to leave the configuration dialog and save the new hotkey.

Command Line Applet

Click on the various areas of the applet to find out what they do.

The Command Line Applet is a simple edit control that allows you to launch applications. It will also allow programs to be launched via an associated file type. As an example, if 'readme.txt' is typed on the command line, and '.txt' has an association, then the associated executable will be launched with 'readme.txt' given as a parameter.

Commands entered on the command line are stored in an internal queue, and can be retrieved by using the up/down arrow. Also, a previous command can quickly be found by typing a small portion of the string and then hitting ctrl-right arrow. Duplicate commands, already in the queue, are not stored.

TIP:

By setting the toolbar hotkey, you can quickly get to the command line without the need for grabbing the mouse, or Alt-Tab'ing through the task list.

Commands

Along with the ability to launch applications, the command line offers the following commands:

<program>	- Execute the program specified.
<datafile>	- Execute associated program with datafile
[drive:]- Change the current drive. (same as DOS)	
cd	- Change the directory (same as DOS)
dir	- launch Windows' File Manager
exit	- Shutdown Windows
restart	- Restart Windows

How To...

Enable/Disable the Command Line

Change the Width

Current Directory Applet

Click on the various areas of the applet to find out what they do.

The current directory applet is provided to show the current working directory of Suckmeister.   When launching an application from the command line, the new application will inherit this directory as its current working directory.
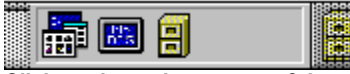
In addition to showing the cwd, clicking the left mouse button on this applet will invoke the Windows File Manager.

How To...

Enable/Disable the Command Line

Change the Width

Task Manager Applet

The Task Manager is probably the most useful applet of the bunch. It displays a graphic list of the currently running applications. Each application is represented by a smaller version of its icon. As applications are launched and shutdown, the list is automatically updated. ToolTips are implemented for this applet and will display the window title (the same text displayed when Alt-Tab'ing) for the icon the cursor is currently over.

In addition to showing the currently executing applications, Task Manager allows you   to switch between applications by clicking on the icons.

TIP:

If you are doing work that requires constant switching between two applications: Clicking on two applications in succession allows you to easily toggle between just those two applications with Alt-Tab.

How To...

Enable/Disable the Task Manager

Change the Width

Button Manager Applet

Click on the various areas of the applet to find out what they do.

This applet provides configurable buttons for launching applications or executing Command Line commands. The Button Manager allows quick configuration via drag-n-drop from Windows File Manager. Once configured, a button can be used to launch an application with specific files, by simply dragging the data files on top of the button, and dropping them.

How To...

Configure a Button

Move or Copy a Button

Reset a Button

Enable Drag-N-Drop Launching

Enable/Disable the Button Manager

Change the Width

Clock Applet

Click on the various areas of the applet to find out what they do.

Okay, I know you pretty much have the hang of this applet. It simply provides the current date and time. The one odd thing about this applet is that it is right justified.

To View the Date
- Click on the applet using the left mouse button.

To Set the Time/Date
- Use the time/date applet in the control panel.

How To...

Enable/Disable the Clock

Change the Width

Turn On/Off Right Justify

System Button

The system button provides access to global information and configuration of the toolbar. By double clicking on the system button, Suckmeister can be shutdown.

Applet Sizing Handle

The applet sizing handle is located immediately to the right of the applet. It looks like part of the toolbar frame, and is used to visually separate the applets. Dragging the handle allows an applet's width to be changed.

Extra space
This area is filled as additional applications are launched.

Running Applications
These are the currently running applications. (In this case, program manager, file manager, and an instance of MSDOS are currently running.)

Configured Buttons
These buttons have already been configured. Clicking the left mouse button on a button will execute the configured command line.   Clicking   the right mouse button on a button will display a popup menu with options for the button.

Sizing Handle
This is the horizontal sizing handle for the Task Manager applet. It allows you to change the width of the applet.

Sizing Handle
This is the horizontal sizing handle for the Command Line applet. It allows you to change the width of the applet.

Sizing Handle
This is the horizontal sizing handle for the Current Directory applet. It allows you to change the width of
the applet.

Sizing Handle
This is the horizontal sizing handle for the Button Manager applet. It allows you to change the width of the applet.

Sizing Handle
This is the horizontal sizing handle for the Clock applet. It allows you to change the width of the applet.

Current Working Directory
This the current directory for the Suckmeister application. This directory can be changed from Command Line applet using the **cd** command.

Launch File Manager
Clicking on this button will launch Windows File Manager application.

Time/Date
Clicking here will display the current date. The date will remain displayed for approximately three seconds, or until you click here again.

Empty Button
This button is not configured. Use the configuration dialog   or drag -n- drop to configure the button.

Edit Area
This is the command line edit area. You can type and execute commands from this area.

Configuring   a Button

A button can be configured either by drag-n-drop or by the configuration dialog. The easiest, quickest, and yes, preferred method is to drag files from the File Manager and drop them on the button. Further tweaking can be accomplished through the configuration dialog.

To configure a button using drag-n-drop

- Launch Windows File Manager
- Find the file you wish to launch
- Select the file with the left mouse button and drag the file over the button. Once over the button, drop the file by releasing the left mouse button.
- Suckmeister should tell you that you are about to configure a button, and ask if you wish to proceed. Select Yes.

To configure a button using the configuration dialog

- Bring up the context-sensitive menu by right clicking on the button to configure
- Select Configure...
- Fill in the dialog properties as necessary.
  (Note that this dialog is functionally the same as the program item dialog in Program Manager).

TIP:

Configure a button to execute the <u>Command Line</u> *Exit* command. This will allow you to exit Windows simply by pressing this button.   You will need to configure this button using the second method described above. The is because the command does not have a file associated with it. Nothing to grab in File Manager!   If you are looking for and icon to use, try **moricons.dll** in your windows directory. It has tons of icons. Use the configure dialog

Once configured, the button displays the icon of the file you selected. If the file you selected was a data file, the then the icon of the associated executable is used.

Moving or Copying a Button

Eventually, you may want to move a button from one location to another, or copy a buttons configuration and modify it instead of starting from scratch. The following procedures allow you to accomplish these tasks.

To move a button

- Depress the *shift* key, and drag the from the old button location to the new location.
  The cursor should change to a pointer with a button to during the drag operation.
- Once over the new button, drop the button by releasing the mouse button.

To copy a button

- Depress the *ctrl* key, and drag the from the old button location to the new location.
  The cursor should change to a pointer with a button. The button should have a plus sign on it. (indicating a copy).
- Once over the new button, drop the button by releasing the mouse button.

Resetting a Button

Resetting a button clears the configuration for the button.

To reset a button
- Bring up the context-sensitive menu by right clicking on the button to configure
- Select Reset

Enable Drag-n-Drop Launching

Drag-n-Drop launching is the ability to drop a file or group of files on a button, and have the configured application launch with those files. This can be a very useful feature.

As an example of its usefulness, you might configure a button to launch your favorite editor. *(Might I suggest CodeWright. Although, Notepad will do in a pinch.)*   Also, configure the button to accept drop files.   Now, launch Windows File Manager and select a file you wish to view. View the file by dragging it to the configured button and dropping it. As soon as the file is dropped, the editor is launched and the selected file is opened. If the editor you selected accepts multiple files, you can select multiple files from File Manager and drop them as a group. *(Sorry, Notepad falls short on this feature.)*

To Enable/Disable Drag-n-Drop Launching
- Bring up the context-sensitive menu by right clicking on the button to configure
- Select Configure...
- Set Allow Drop Files checkbox to enable, reset to disable.

License Agreement and Warranty Disclaimer

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It is hoped, after evaluating the product for a period of time, that you will choose to support the product and its continued development by registering your copy.   To register your copy of Suckmeister, send $10 US dollars drawn on a US bank to: Craig Crutcher 7600 Greenwood Ave E., #307   Seattle, WA 98103.   Registration is not required for continued use of the product, but is merely a suggestion.

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Contacting the Author

Questions, comments, and registrations should be directed to:

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Suckmeister Registration Form

To register, print out this form and send it in with the $10 US registration fee.

Send To: Craig Crutcher
7600 Greenwood Ave E., #307
Seattle, WA, 98103

Date: ___/____/____   **No. Copies:** _____

Name:_____

Company: _____

Address: _____

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Comments: _____

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