

## Help with vern



Vern, the dwm **virtual environment manager**, is a part of the dwm applications package, a collection of programs which give the user control over the Windows desktop environment, Windows programs, file launching and file manipulation.

**Vern** makes your computer act as though it had many independent screens connected to it. Each of these virtual screens is represented by a cell in *vern*space. The user can quickly switch screens by **double clicking** on a verncell (or a single click if the toggle has been set in the Vern options dialog box). Verncells also contain miniature representations of opened windows within their space. These mini windows can be dragged from one verncell to another.

To learn more about vern and its abilities, **click** on one of the following topics. For help on one of the other dwm applications, click on its button on the help window button bar. If you need help on how to use Windows help, press the F1 key.

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## Running vern

In order to use vern, **dwm must be running**, as dwm is the communication locus for all the dobs applications. If you are using dwm as the **Windows shell**, vern will be automatically run when Windows is started if the *vern at startup* option is ON in the **dwm options dialog box** (this option is on by default when dwm is first installed). Vern can be run the same way any executable program is launched (i.e. double clicking on the vern icon in the dwm program group etc.).

When vern is run, it appears on the desktop as a matrix of rectangles (vernspace); the configuration of vern is user defined. A typical vern looks something like this:



Each of the rectangular cells represents a different full screen view. Having multiple virtual screens available allows the user to run several programs simultaneously, with their windows distributed over vernspace, avoiding the annoying problem of multiple windows cluttered together on the same screen. Since vern allows windows to be spread over a virtual space, it can be used as a sort of task switcher; instead of using a task manager to raise a window over the top of other open windows, simply switch to the screen containing the desired window.

Hitting the vern **hotkey** will bring vern to the forefront (the vern hotkey is **F12** when dwm is first installed). The other method of calling vern is to **right click** on the caption bar of any program window.

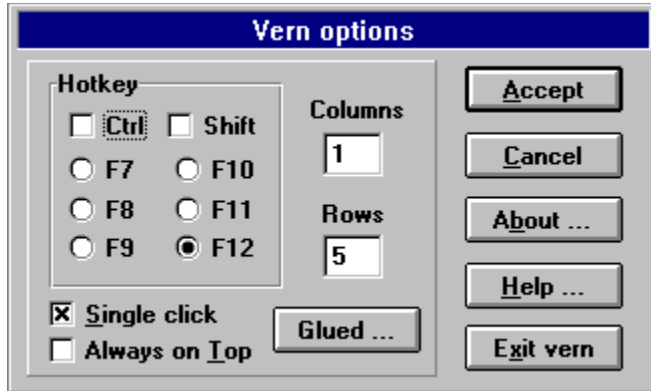
**Double clicking** (or single clicking, if the appropriate option has been set in the **vern options** dialog box) on a cell in vernspace changes the active screen (the cell representing the active screen will have a slightly raised appearance relative to the other cells).

Open program windows are represented by miniature windows in vernspace. These mini windows are *interactive*. Dragging a mini window within its cell, or between cells, changes the location of the full size window (i.e., the actual window) on the screen. Moving a full size window changes the position of the mini window in vernspace, only after vern has been updated (**clicking** on vern will update the position of the mini windows).

**Note:** To move vern, hold down the **Ctrl** key and **drag** it to a new location (vern will unstick if you move it far enough.)

## Configuring vernspace and setting the vern hotkey

**Right clicking** on vern opens the vern options dialog box, which looks like this:



The vern hotkey can be any one of 24 keystroke sequences: **F7 - F12**, or one of these function keys in combination with the **Alt** and/or **Ctrl** key. The vern hotkey is initially **F12** by default when dwm is installed; if changed the new hotkey is preserved between Windows sessions.

The configuration of vernspace is initially a row of 5 virtual screens, but can be any number of rows and columns, from 1 by 1 (single screen, *dumbass* mode) to 15 by 15 (225 screens, *lunacy* mode). If you change the configuration of vernspace on the fly, you will be prompted to exit and restart vern (i.e., go to the dwm program group and relaunch vern). The new vernspace configuration will appear as soon as vern is reexecuted. If there are open program windows in vernspace when reconfiguration takes place, all the windows will remain open, but collapse onto a single screen. These windows can be redistributed in the new vernspace by dragging their miniature representations to other cells in the vern matrix.

**Note:** Vern hooks into the hotkey sequence and interprets it as a request to display itself. Certain applications may use the vern hotkey as an accelerator (i.e.: a function quickly accessed through a keystroke sequence), in which case vern "steals" it before the application can process the command. If you are running an application which would normally process the hotkey, you can usually access that function through other means (such as a drop down menu etc.). If this is not acceptable, simply set the vern hotkey to some other sequence.

**Single click:** Allows the user to change vern cells with a single click of the mouse rather than a double click.

**Always on top:** If this checkbox is clicked **on** then vern will be a *topmost* window, that is, vern will stay on top of all other windows (except other *topmost* windows). The default is off.

**Glued:** Window classes can be glued to the dwm desktop. If a window class is glued to the desktop it will be visible on all vern screens. Clicking on this button opens a dialog box with a list of windows and their associated windows class. Select the classes to be glued by clicking on items in the list -- the item will become highlighted. Deselect by clicking on a highlighted class. Note that the glue will last between Windows sessions.

**Note:** if a window that has been glued becomes lost in vernspace you can retrieve it by unglueing the class (this should not normally happen), or by exiting and restarting vern.

**Columns:** Specify the number of columns for vern (vern must be restarted for changes to take effect).

**Rows:** Specify the number of rows for vern (vern must be restarted for changes to take effect).



**Hotkey:** Specify which key to use as a hotkey. When the hotkey is hit, the window becomes the active window, raising itself if necessary.

**Accept:** Accept any changes you have made.

**Cancel:** Do not accept changes made to vern options. Note that this does not apply to changes made in the **Glued** dialog box.

**About:** Open the about box.

**Help:** Open Windows help with this help file.

**Exit:** Exit vern.

## Dragging mini windows in vernspace

Vern allows the user to have many program windows open simultaneously, distributed onto multiple *virtual* screens, thus avoiding the clutter of having many windows open on a single screen. Each cell in vernspace represents a different full screen view, and contains a miniature representation of the windows on that screen. The miniature windows are scaled to approximate the relative size and position of the real windows that occupy a given screen. If the mini windows are large enough, they may also be painted with a tiny icon of the application running in the open window.

The miniature windows are *interactive*. Moving a full size window changes the position of the corresponding mini window in vernspace. Similarly, **dragging** a mini window within its cell, or between cells, changes the location of the full size window on the screen. The user can drag a window from vernspace into the active screen (the screen the user is actually using), or drag a window from the active screen to somewhere else in vernspace (the window will disappear from the active screen).

Dragging mini windows in vernspace will always snap the mini window into place so that the window will be entirely within a single screen (the cell the mini window snaps to is controlled by the location of the top left corner of the mini window). It is not possible to position windows between screens by dragging mini windows about vernspace. However, full sized windows can be moved by the user into between-screen positions (i.e.: by grabbing a window by the title bar and pushing it part way off the active screen, etc.). Vern will draw these between-screen mini windows faithfully, but will snap them into single screen position if the miniature window is clicked on.

Occasionally, a mini window will become ***Lost in Vernspace***. When this happens, the user can see the mini window, but cannot grab it or move it in vern. This only happens when the user moves the actual window (accidentally or intentionally) so that the top left corner of the window is off the top or to the left of the screen containing the bulk of the window. The situation can be corrected by moving the full size window so that the upper left corner of the window is visible on the active screen, or by maximizing the window.

## Quick tips for using vern

- **Double click** with left mouse button to change screens in vern (single click if the appropriate option has been set in the options dialog box).
- **Right click** (or hit **Alt+Enter** when vern is active) on vern to set the hotkey.
- **Right click** on vern to set the number of cells (rows, columns) in vernspace.
- **Alt+Enter** opens the vern options dialog box when vern is active.
- Hit the hotkey to bring vern to the top (so you can see it).
- **F12** is the vern hotkey when dwm is first installed.
- Right click on the caption bar of any window to bring vern to the top.
- Hold down the **Ctrl** key and **drag** to move the vern window around on the screen.
- **Drag** mini windows between cells to change their location in vernspace.
- Vern at startup is optional, toggled in the dwm options dialog box (if you are using dwm as the shell).
- Mini windows lost in vernspace can be made accessible by moving the full size window corresponding to the lost mini window so that the **upper left corner** of the full window is visible on the active screen.



**Left click:** Position the mouse pointer over the object to be *clicked* then press and release on the left most mouse button. **Southpaw note:** if have swapped the left and right mouse buttons in the *mouse applet* of the **Windows Control Panel** you may consider a *left click* to be the right most mouse button.

**Right click:** Position the mouse pointer over the object to be *clicked* then press and release on the right most mouse button. **Southpaw note:** if have swapped the left and right mouse buttons in the *mouse applet* of the **Windows Control Panel** you may consider a *right click* to be the left most mouse button.

**Double click:** Position the mouse pointer over the object to be *double clicked* then press and release on the left most mouse button twice in quick succession. **Southpaw note:** if have swapped the left and right mouse buttons in the *mouse applet* of the **Windows Control Panel** you should use the right most mouse button when performing a *double click*.

**Dragging:** Position the mouse pointer over the object to be *dragged* then press and **hold** the left most mouse button down and move the mouse across the desktop. If the object is draggable it will move across the screen with the cursor; often the mouse cursor changes shape to indicate that something is being dragged. To drop whatever it is that you're dragging, just release the left mouse button. **Southpaw note:** if have swapped the left and right mouse buttons in the *mouse applet* of the **Windows Control Panel** you should use the right most mouse button when performing a *mouse drag*.

**Note:** Many of the dwm desktop programs (vern, blanch and dobs in the button state) require that you hold down the **Ctrl** key before dragging the program around the desktop. This requirement simply prevents the objects from *sliding* around on the desktop.



