Welcome to AmiFind help
AmiFind version 1.0

File Finder for Ami Pro, versions 2 and 3

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AmiFind Overview
Why AmiFind

Getting Started
Getting More Help
Using Search Criteria
Starting a Search
A Sample Search
Search progress indicators
Using the Search Results

AmiFind menu commands
Using AmiFind with non-AmiPro files
Hints & Techniques
Registration
Coming soon...!

AmiFind Overview

AmiFind is designed to help you quickly and easily located "lost" files, created by Ami Pro and, to a lesser degree, other programs.   AmiFind is a shareware program; this means that you try it out for a few weeks, and if you like it and want to keep it you send me, the author, $15.

The idea in AmiFind is to locate your files based on the minimum amount of information you remember about a file that you saved perhaps years ago.   If you have any idea how you named or described the file, you can find it quickly; you can even search the document text itself.

AmiFind enables you to locate a file based on its name, date (of creation or last modification), description, keywords, or contents.   Remember a few letters of the filename?   How about a word from the description, or one of the keywords?   Even a general idea of the last time you accessed the file, or when it was created, will help find the file.   Finally, you can search through the text of your files, finding words in the main body.   And of course AmiFind has powerful wildcard and pattern-matching capabilities.

Once you have entered all information about the file that you remember, called search criteria, you are presented with a list of all matching files.   At this point, you can print the list of files, or copy it to the Windows clipboard.   You can view the document description, or the entire Doc Info window, just like in Ami Pro.   Or, you can load one ore many files into Ami Pro for easy editing, or print any files you want.   All without leaving AmiFind!

Go ahead.   Try it out for a week, or two.   Take a month.   At the end of this time, if you find AmiFind to be a useful addition to your collection of software tools, please register it.   Otherwise, delete it, or pass it on for a friend to try.   Enjoy!

See also:

Using Search Criteria
Registration

Using Search Criteria

AmiFind lets you base your search on nearly anything you remember about the file(s) you are looking for.   The idea is to enter enough information to distinguish the file(s) you are looking for from all other files, without adding unnecessary information that will only slow down the search.

The different criteria available are listed below in approximate order of speed, meaning that for the fastest possible search you should base your search on the criteria nearest the top of the list.

AmiFind works by first identifying all files with matching names, in the specified directory(ies).   The total number of files is listed as "eligible files" under Search Results.   AmiFind then checks each file to make sure it matches the other criteria you specified.   If you entered a description, this is checked first: if the file has a matching description, the search continues; if the description does not match, the file is thrown out.   File date is checked next, if it applies, then keywords, and then finally content, if you opted for these types of searches.   Only if a file matches all applicable criteria is it considered a match; therefore, your goal when specifying search criteria is to enter enough to exclude most or all files except the one(s) you want to find, without excluding the desired file(s).

For each search criteria, there is a corresponding section of the main window allowing you to fill in the search information.   Click on the button corresponding to the name of the criteria to enter the search information.

You can choose whether to use each criteria.   If you fill in any information for a certain search criteria, that criteria will automatically be selected.   You can also manually select and deselect search criteria using the check boxes next to the criteria names.   You can also quickly see which criteria are selected by looking at these check boxes; a check next to the criteria name means that that criteria is selected for use in the next search.

For more detailed explanation, click one of the topics below.

Filename criteria
File date criteria
Description criteria
Keyword criteria
Content criteria

See also:

Starting a Search
A Sample Search

Filename Criteria

The filename criteria is the heart of AmiFind.   Here, you specify what drive and directories to include in the search; you can also specify what file names and extensions to search for.

File Spec: here, enter the filename and or extension to search for.   DOS wildcards are allowed. To match all Ami Pro files, leave File Spec set to its default, *.SAM.   If you remember part or all of the file name, specify it here: for example, if you remember the filename started with an M, type M*.SAM (this will considerably narrow down the search).   To allow Ami Pro macro files, type *.SMM; to find Ami Pro documents and macros, enter *.S?M.   You may enter other extensions, but AmiFind cannot work to its full capabilities with non-Ami Pro files.

Starting Directory: tell AmiFind what directory in which to begin the search.   You can choose to search this directory, or, if you check Search All Subdirectories, the chosen subdirectory and all directories below it on the tree (child directories) will be searched.
Next to the Starting Directory list box is the drive list box, which drops down when you click the arrow on its right side.   Choose the drive on which to search; only one drive can be searched at one time.

Search All Subdirectories: tells AmiFind to recursively search all directories branching off the chosen directory; see above for mor information.   Selecting the root directory, and then checking Search All Subdirectories, will result in the entire drive being searched.

See also:

File date criteria
Description criteria
Keyword criteria
Content criteria

File date criteria

File date criteria can be based on the date the file was last modified or the date the file was created.   You can specify all files after a certain date, all files before a certain date, or, by using both, files between a range of dates.

Creation date: specifies that the dates you enter are to be compared with the date a file was first created.

Modification date: specifies that the dates you enter are to be compared with the date a file was last changed.

Before (and the accompanying text box): Specifies that you want to limit the search to files created or modified before a certain date.   When the check box is checked, this option is active; entering a date automatically checks this box.   Unchecking the box means that the search will no longer be limited to files before this date.

After (and the accompanying textbox): Specifies that you want to limit the search to files created or modified after a certain date.   The checkbox works the same way as the Before checkbox.

If you specify dates for both Before and After, the search will be limited to files created or modified between the dates you specify.

In general, entering even a general idea of the file date will greatly increase the speed of a search. For instance, if you are looking for a file that you know you have not changed since 1991, enter 1/1/92 in the Before textbox.   If you are looking for a file that you know you just used, enter a fairly recent date (i.e. within the last 3 months) in the After textbox.   It is a better idea to make the date range wider than it needs to be, and make sure that you don't accidentally exclude the file(s) you are looking for, than to make the date too close, if you only have a general idea of the file date.

Enter dates according to the date format chosen in the Control Panel.

See also:

Filename criteria
Description criteria
Keyword criteria
Content criteria

Description Criteria

The description criteria is probably the most useful of all the criteria for narrowing the search down, if you have gotten into the habit of giving every file a description.   Since the description option is in every Ami Pro save file dialog, if you haven't been using this feature, now is a good time to start!

This criteria section is fairly self-explanatory, but can be much more powerful than it looks at first glance due to Amifind's powerful wildcard and pattern-matching abilities.

Description: enter a word or two that you remember from the document description.   The comparison is not case-sensitive, that is, ABC matches ABC, AbC, or abc.   The order of the words you enter does matter, and if you enter more than one, they must all appear in the description of the file you are looking for; for this reason, I suggest using only one word in the description textbox unless you are pretty sure of the description of the file you are seeking.   AmiFind will find a word within another word; for instance, if your name is Bob and you type Bob in the description of every file you create, AmiFind will find these, whether you type Bob, by Bob, Bob's file, or Created by Bobby.

Match files with no description: ordinarily, AmiFind will limit the search to files containing the partial description you specified.   However, what if the file you are looking for doesn't have a description? I suggest you try the search first without this option, and if the file you are seeking doesn't turn up, perhaps it has no description; turn on Match files with no description and try the search again.

Powerful wildcards are also available.

See also:

[Filename criteria](#)
[File date criteria](#)
[Keyword criteria](#)
[Content criteria](#)
[AmiFind Wildcards](#)

Keyword Criteria

The keyword criteria capability is very similar to that of the description, except it searches the document's keywords.   However, I find this less useful, since I rarely give a document keywords: you have to go into the Doc Info box to assign keywords in Ami Pro, while the description field is available from every Save dialog.

Keyword: enter a keyword associated with the document being sought in this text box.   I do not recommend using more than one keyword here, because then you have to remember the correct order of the keywords in the document as well as what punctuation was used between them. However, the comparison is not case-sensitive; project will match Project, project, and PROJECT.

Match files with no keywords: this option will result in allowing files with matching keywords or files without keywords to be included in the search results, while files with non-matching keywords are excluded.

Keyword searches support the same powerful wildcards as description and content searches.

See also:

Filename criteria
File date criteria
Description criteria
Content criteria
AmiFind Wildcards

Content Criteria

Content-based searches allow you to search through your collection of files based upon the actual body text of the files.   Content-based searches, especially when involving long files, can be slower than other searches, but for a file without a description or keywords, or a file which you can barely remember, content searches can be invaluable.

File must contain: enter a unique word or two from the file.   As with description and keyword criteria, the search is not case-sensitive, but if you do enter more than one word, they must appear in the file in the same order as you specify.

The same wildcards are available for content-based searches as with description and keyword criteria.

See also:

Filename criteria
File date criteria
Description criteria
Keyword criteria
AmiFind wildcards

AmiFind Wildcards

Wildcards supported for description, keyword, and content searches:

n   ?   matches any single character

n   *   matches any character or groups of characters, or nothing at all

n   &   matches any digit, 0-9

n   [list]   matches any single character in list

n   [!list] matches any single character not in list

To match a ?, *, or &, enclose it in brackets, i.e. [&].

Note: although the File Spec option in the Filename Criteria section does support wildcards, it uses the standard DOS wildcards.   You cannot use the techniques in this section to specify the filename.

See also:

Description criteria
Keyword criteria
Content criteria

Starting a Search

Once all search criteria have been entered, it's time to start the search.   Just click the Start Search button.

If you want to watch the progress of the search, go ahead.   Otherwise, if you want to work in another application until the search is complete, AmiFind will work in the background, either as a window or as an icon.   Go ahead and minimize AmiFind; the search will continue.

AmiFind will begin to process the directory(ies) selected in the Filename criteria entry.   Depending on how many directories are selected and how many files they contain, this process can be almost instant, or it can take a minute or two.   AmiFind informs you of its progress both in the Search Progess box, where it displays the search time and the directory being processed, and in the lower-left corner of the window, where it shows the number of files so far located.

After all files have been located by name, AmiFind searches each one individually and checks it against your criteria.   Any file matching all required criteria is considered a hit, and is added to the Results list box.   AmiFind tells you the name of the file currently being searched, and how close to completion the search is.

At any time during the search, you can pause the progress.   You will then be given the option to continue or abort the search.

Once the search is done, if you have minimized AmiFind, a message window will inform you that the search is complete.

You are now ready to identify, view, or print the resulting files;

See Also:
Using Search Criteria
Search progress indicators
Using Search Results

Search Progress Indicators

AmiFind reports the progress of a search to you in several ways.   (If you turn off background search, you lose some feedback; if you enable SuperSpeed Search, you lose all feedback--both ways, you gain speed.)   First of all, when you start the search, AmiFind immediately processes the selected directory(ies) and reports the number of initially matching files under Eligible Files, under the Start Search button.   As AmiFind checks each file, the total number of files searched so far is noted under "checked."   If a file matches, it is added to the Results list box, and the "hit" number changes to reflect the total number of matching files.

The amount of files checked compared to the total is reflected graphically in a thermometer-style progress gauge in the upper-right corner of the window.   Below this, AmiFind tells you the total search time, and which directory is being processed or which file is being searched.

If you minimize AmiFind to an icon during a search in order to work in another application, AmiFind's icon title changes to reflect the search progress.

Eligible files: the number of files eligible to be checked based on their names and directory locations.

Checked: the number of files already processed according to your search criteria.

Hit: the number of files checked that match all your criteria; these files have been added to the Results list box.

Search time: the total amount of time taken by the search.

Now searching for eligible files in...: tells you which directory is currently being procesed to find files eligible to be checked.

Now searching file...: tells you which file is currently being checked against your search criteria.

Thermometer display: tells at a glance what AmiFind is doing.   It first reports that AmiFind is processing directories for eligible files, then graphically reflects the search progress.   When the bar reaches the end, the search is complete.   The thermometer also reports if a search has been aborted, or if the search resulted in no files found.

See Also:

Using Search Criteria
Preferences

Preferences

From the Preferences window, accessible from the Edit menu, you can change certain internal program values that allow you to tune AmiFind more to your liking.

n   Maximum DDE Delay-measured in seconds, allows you to specify how long AmiFind will wait when attempting to start a DDE "conversation" with Ami Pro.   AmiFind uses DDE to load and/or print files using Ami Pro.   If you receive error messages when trying to use the Load Files or Print Files options, increase this value.   Note: if you set this value too high, and want to stop the program from waiting the full delay amount, press the Alt key.

n   Search in Background-When turned on, allows AmiFind to search in the background so that you can run other programs while it searches.   When you do this, since AmiFind is sharing the computer with any other program you use at the same time, neither one will run as fast as it would alone.   Therefore, turning off Search in Background will decrease search times, but will not allow you to run other programs during a search or cancel the search.

n   SuperSpeed Search-Disables all screen updates, so that maximum search speeds are possible.   However, you will not receive any progress information until the search is complete. This option is only available when Search in Background is turned off.

These values are saved when you exit AmiFind; any changes you make are permanent until you change them again.

Using the Search Results

Now that your search is complete, you have several options.

The Results list box contains the filenames of all files that matched your criteria.   You can print this list (Choose File: Print Search Results), or copy it to the clipboard so that you can paste it into other applications.

If you want further information about the Results files, click on any filename to see the description for that document.   If you double-click a filename, or highlight a name and click View Doc Info, the Doc Info window for that file appears.

Finally, if you want to view or edit the actual contents of a file, highlight the name or names, and click on Load File(s).   To directly print one or more files, highlight the name(s) and click on Print File(s).

To select multiple files, you have several options.   If you want to select several contiguous filenames (i.e. next to each other), click on the first name and drag to highlight the rest, click on the first and hold Shift while you click on the last, or, using the keyboard, highlight the first and hold down Shift while you select the others.   You can also select multiple filenames that are not next to each other, but this requires a mouse: Hold down Ctrl while you click on each desired filename.

See also:

Doc Info (for AmiPro files)
Doc Info (for non-AmiPro files)

Doc Info (for AmiPro files)

This screen is essentially identical to the Doc Info screens in AmiPro and the AmiPro file manager. It shows all known information about the file, including description, keywords, imported files, page and word counts, and date information.

File Name: shows the file name of the document
Directory: shows the directory in which the file is saved
Style Sheet: shows the style sheet upon which the document is based

Description: shows the complete text of the document's description
Keywords: shows all keywords which this document has been given
Import files: shows all graphics files imported into this document

Statistics: shows the number of characters, words, pages, and kilobytes in the document; may not be accurate as this has to be manually updated by AmiPro.   Below, Size on Disk shows the number of kilobytes in the document as reported by DOS.   If this differs from Size (K) as reported by AmiPro, the word and page counts may not be accurate either.

Date & Time created: shows the date and time when the document was first created
Date & Time last revised: shows the date and time at which the document was last changed.
Total revisions: shows the number of revisions made to this document
Total editing time: in minutes, shows how much time has been spent editing this document.

Doc Info (for non-AmiPro files)

Files created by programs other than AmiPro do not include the extensive information that AmiPro files do, such as description, keywords, creation time and date, etc.   The only file information available from DOS alone, and therefore the only file information available from non-AmiPro files, is:

n   Filename, including directory.

n   Date of last modification- the last date the file was changed; the creation date of the file is not available.

n   Time of last modification- the last time the file was changed.

n   Size- the amount of disk space used by the file, measured in kilobytes.

A Sample Search

This is a step-by-step walkthrough of many of AmiFind's features.

For this example, we will assume that you store all your Ami Pro documents in the default AMIPRO\DOCS directory.   You are searching for a letter that you wrote to your grandmother, sometime in 1992.

First of all, make sure that the filename criteria are displayed: Click on the File Name button under Base seach on:.   Then, in the directory list box, select the AMIPRO\DOCS subdirectory (changing to the correct drive if necessary).

Now, enter your description criteria.   Click on the Description button under Base search on:, and enter 'grandmother' (no quotes) in the Find files whose descriptions contain: field.   (This example assumes that the description of the letter contains the word grandmother, i.e. 'Letter to grandmother about...').

Finally, restrict the search to 1992.   Click on the Date button, and select Use Creation date.   In the Before box, enter 1/1/93.   In the After box, enter 1/1/92.

Now, click Start Search.   AmiFind will scan the AMIPRO\DOCS directory for all *.SAM files, and then check each one to see whether it contains the correct description and has a matching creation date.

Now assume that you wrote three letters to your grandmother in 1992, and that AmiFind found all three.   To see which one is which, click each filename in the Results, and its description will appear below.   If this is not enough information to distinguish between the files, select View Doc Info for the file's keywords, imports, and more.

Once you have narrowed it down to the one file that you were seeking, highlight its name, click Load File, and - presto- it is loaded into Ami Pro!

How to Register AmiFind

AmiFind v1.0, ©1993 Matt Ginzton
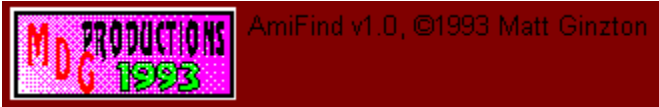
If you find AmiFind to be of value, please register it.   The price, $15, is not excessive, and it supports the author in updating AmiFind and creating other programs.

(Note: the author is a 17-year old high school student, and this is the closest thing he has to a source of income.   Please support his efforts.)

When you register, you will automatically receive, on disk, the latest version of AmiFind direct from the author, complete with speed enhancements that unregistered users have to suffer without.

You will also gain the right to free telephone support for AmiFind.

Additionally, if you register this program and have any ideas for new features or improvements, you will have my undivided attention.

PLEASE REGISTER!   IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO!

Send $15 to:

Matt Ginzton
2135 Lakeshore Drive
Sagle, ID   83860

(Please specify disk size desired)

Why AmiFind?

Recently, people in my family started losing their word processing files, created with Ami Pro. I looked around at the current crop of shareware file finders. All of them do the job to one extent or another, but of the three I tried, one never worked reliably without crashing. Another would only search based on file name and date. The third was fast and effective, but was designed for all types of files and, for instance, cannot base its search upon the descriptions or keywords that Ami Pro allows.

This was the inspiration for AmiFind. Being specially designed to work with Ami Pro files, it allows you to search based upon file characteristics specific to Ami Pro, such as description, keywords, creation date, and paragraph styles. And it works nearly as well as the others even with non-Ami Pro files. The one drawback to AmiFind in relation to the others is its speed. (But it does work in the background, allowing you to work while it searches.)

Once you find the files you were looking for, other file finders let you view and print the list, and perhaps perform some global operation on each one. AmiFind lets you view the descriptions and Doc Info for each file without switching programs, and will also load and/or print any number of files at one time using Ami Pro.

Finally, AmiFind has full background search capabilities: you can start a lengthy search, and leave AmiFind running either as a window or as an icon while you go about your other work. AmiFind will continue to run in the background until the search is complete, enabling you to use other programs while the search is in progress.

See Also:

Using Search Criteria
Using Search Results
Working with non-AmiPro files

Using AmiFind with non-AmiPro files

AmiFind can also be used to locate files that did were not created by Ami Pro, although its capabilities are much more limited.

The Filename criteria still function normally.   Generally, you will want to enter *.* or some other file pattern besides *.SAM in the filename box; using *.SAM restricts AmiFind to files created by Ami Pro.

The only other criteria that functions with files not created by Ami Pro is the modification date. This is because keywords, descriptions, and creation date are part of Ami Pro files, but are not provided by either DOS or Windows.

Once the search is complete, the Results list box will fill as with Ami Pro files.   However, if you highlight the name of a non-Ami Pro file, its description will not appear, because it does not have one.   Double-clicking the file, or choosing View Doc Info, will result in a condensed form of the Doc Info box, showing the information that DOS makes available.

The Load and Print buttons will still be available; Ami Pro can load many types of files besides its own.   However, depending on the types of files you attempt to load into or print with Ami Pro, the results may be unpredictable.

Getting Started

To use AmiFind, start by entering enough information about the file you are looking for to distinguish it from other files.

When you first run AmiFind, the filename criteria will be displayed.   Using the drive and directory list boxes, tell AmiFind where on your drives to search.   Next, if you remember part of the file description, click on the Description button and enter it.   Similarly, clicking on the Date, Keywords, and Contents buttons allow you to specify criteria about these aspects of the file.

When entering search criteria, try to use the fewest possible criteria that will identify your file, to get the quickest results.   This means zeroing in on some unique feature of the sought file(s).   For instance, if you are looking for a letter you wrote to XYZ industries, and this is the only such letter you have written, and the description for the file was "Letter to XYZ industries," you could enter XYZ in the description field and that would be enough to find the file.   However, if you have written dozens of letters to XYZ, you would need to enter more information: for example, date or keywords.

Don't worry about trying to get the search criteria so exact that you exclude all other files.   Make sure that your criteria match all desired files and maybe a few more; it is better to have extra files in the results than to exclude the desired files, and it is easy to weed out extra files after the search.

Once you have entered enough information to quickly identify your file, it is time to start the search.   AmiFind will process the selceted directories first, and then will begin to check each file with a matching name against your other criteria.   Once files begin to appear in the results list box, you can examine them right away: you don't have to wait until the search is complete.

There are several things you can do with files in the results list box: print the list of files or export it to another application, view the description or document info for each file individually, load a file or group of files into Ami Pro, or print one or more files.

Click on a file name, and its description will appear just below the Results.   Double-click a name, or click View Doc Info, and the Doc Info window for that file will appear.   Or, highlight a filename or group of names, and click Load or Print.

See also:

Using Search Criteria
A Sample Search
Using Search Results

Getting More Help

There are several ways to get help on AmiFind:

1)   Starting at the Contents, read the main topics to find basic information about how AmiFind works.

2)   Context-sensitive help- in AmiFind, highlight any item that you are curious about- a window, button, checkbox, text field, etc. (To highlight an item without activating it, press Tab until it has a dotted outline, or click on it and drag the mouse away before releasing the button).   Then, press F1, for help specific to that object.

3)   Keyword searches- in Help, select Search, and enter the term that you want help on.

If all else fails, and you are a registered user, call or write me, and I will be glad to help you.

See Also:

[Registration](#)
[Help on using Help](#)

Menu commands

File menu

n   New Search- clears the Results list box.

n   Print Search Results- prints out your search criteria and a list of all matching files.

n   Exit- closes the program.

Edit menu

n   Copy results- places your search criteria and results list on the clipboard; the resulting text is the same as what is sent to the printer by Print Search Results.

n   Preferences- opens the Preferences dialog box.

See also: Preferences

Help menu

n   Index- displays the index for this help file.

n   Help on Help- displays information on how to use Windows Help.

n   Overview- displays the Overview topic from this help file.

n   Registration- displays the Registration topic from this help file.

n   About- displays the About AmiFind dialog box; the same as clicking on the MDG logo in the lower left corner of the search window.

Hints & Techniques

To find all files with any description, type an asterisk (*) in the Description box, and make sure Match Files Without Descriptions is not checked.

To find all files with no description, check Match Files Without Descriptions, and type a character sequence that will not be found in the description of any document (such as JJQQZZ).

The above techniques also work with keywords.

If you use paragraph styles extensively, the In Paragraph Style option in the content-based search may be helpful.   For instance, if you want to find all files with the words "Ami Pro" in a headline, and you always use the style "headline" for headlines, check this option and enter the style name in the adjacent text box.

To find two or more non-consecutive words in description, keywords, or contents of a file, separate the words by an asterisk (*).   However, the words must still appear in the correct order.

Coming Soon

The main feature that AmiFind lacks is speed.   This is due to its being written in Visual Basic, a very powerful but not very fast language.   Most of the speed enhancements I planned to make for a future version ended up being included here, but anything else I can think of, I'll do.

I plan to add the capability to search for more than one string at a time in description, keyword, or contents, with full boolean (and/or/not) capability.

I would also like to extend AmiFind to search more than one drive at a time, without unnecessarily cluttering up the interface.

Any other features you would like to see?   Please let me know.   See registration information for details on how to contact me.

Since you'll never see any of the new features unless you register, please see topic:

Registration