

KickStart Version 2.7 Help Contents



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System Menu

<u>R</u> estore	
M ove	
M inimize	
<u>C</u> lose	Alt+F4
S hell & M inimize	
<u>S</u> hell	
A ccessories	▶
<u>F</u> loating Icon	
<u>H</u> elp	▶
<u>E</u> xit Windows	
R estart Windows	
R eboot System	

This is KickStart's system menu. All of the important options are available here. This is so that KickStart can be used in its iconic state.

After the first four options, standard to all Windows Applications, the next one or two options are **Shell & Minimize** (if applicable), and **Shell**. These function the same as the options under the [Dos Shell Menu](#). Next is the **Accessories** popup menu which is only functional in [Registered](#) copies. Next is **Floating Icon** which has the same effect as its counterpart under the [Options Menu](#). Next is the **Help** option which displays a popup menu identical to that of the [Help Menu](#). The final three options, and the original purpose of this program, are **Exit Windows, Restart Windows, and Reboot System**. These function identically to their equivalents under the [Exit Via Menu](#).

Here is an example of what a fully configured copy of KickStart's System Menu can look like. Note that in an unregistered version, the Accessory menu items will work only 50% of the time. [Registration](#) will remove this random factor and ease your conscience.

<u>R</u> estore	
M ove	
M inimize	
<u>C</u> lose	Alt+F4
S hell	
A ccessories	NotePad
<u>F</u> loating Icon	Calculator
<u>H</u> elp	WP Speller
	File Manager
	WinZip
<u>E</u> xit Windows	
R estart Windows	
R eboot System	



KickStart
9:29 PM

You can put any program, Windows or Dos, in the Accessories popup menu. The necessary

file information is stored in Kickstar.ini by the Customization Utility so that it only needs to be set up once. Clicking on any program title in the menu will launch that program. This is a handy way to launch often used programs without having to navigate through Program Manager.

Exit Via Menu

Exit Via	
<u>E</u> xit Windows	Ctrl+E
Re <u>s</u> tart Windows	Ctrl+S
Re <u>b</u> oot	Ctrl+B

This menu allows you to **Exit Windows**, **Restart Windows**, or **Reboot** your computer. Before any of these options can take effect, any Dos programs that are running must be terminated.

All three of these options are also available from KickStart's System Menu.

The three large buttons on KickStart's main form also perform these functions.

Dos Shell Menu

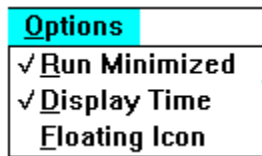


This menu allows you to open a Dos box. It will attempt to run the DOS command interpreter as a maximized window. On systems where this is not possible, it will open the interpreter in full screen mode.

The **Shell** menu option will open a dos shell and leave KickStart's window as it was. The **Shell and Minimize** button will open a dos shell and minimize KickStart.

These options are available from KickStart's System Menu. When the **Shell and Minimize** option is not applicable (when KickStart is minimized) it will not appear in the system menu.

Options Menu



This menu controls how KickStart runs.

Run Minimized causes KickStart to start in the minimized or iconic state. This option defaults to checked (true) and keeps KickStart available but out of the way.

Display Time controls whether or not KickStart displays the current time in its title bar and icon title. It defaults to checked (true).

Floating Icon controls whether or not KickStart's icon "floats" over other windows on the desktop. Normal icons can be covered up by other programs. Floating icons and windows attempt to keep themselves visible at all times and show through windows that overlap them. This option affects only KickStart's icon. It has no effect on KickStart's windows. Floating Icon defaults to checked (true). This option is also available in KickStart's System Menu.

Note: Floating icons cannot be overwritten by screen savers. If you plan to be away from your PC while a screen saver program "saves" your monitor from burn-in, disable the floating icon feature of KickStart. Otherwise, it will defeat your screen saver on a small portion of the screen.

All of these options are stored in Kickstar.ini in your windows directory.

Help Menu



The help menu has four options. These are **C**ontents, **S**earch for Help On, **H**ow to Use **H**elp, and **A**bout KickStart. Contents displays the contents page of this help file. Search for Help on displays the search dialog box for this help file. How to Use Help displays the MicroSoft Help Viewer's help file. And About KickStart displays KickStart's About Box.

All of these functions are available through a popup menu in KickStart's system menu.

Kickstar.ini

KickStart stores startup information in its ini file, Kickstar.ini. The file will be created in your main Windows directory. It should generally not be moved or tampered with. If KickStart cannot find Kickstar.ini, a new one will be created with default values for all options.

Program Overview

KickStart was written because Windows does not offer easy ways of Restarting Windows or Rebooting your computer. Anyone who frequently changes their win.ini, system.ini, autoexec.bat, or config.sys files will soon get tired of exiting windows and typing WIN to restart, or exiting Windows and then doing a three fingered salute to restart their computer.

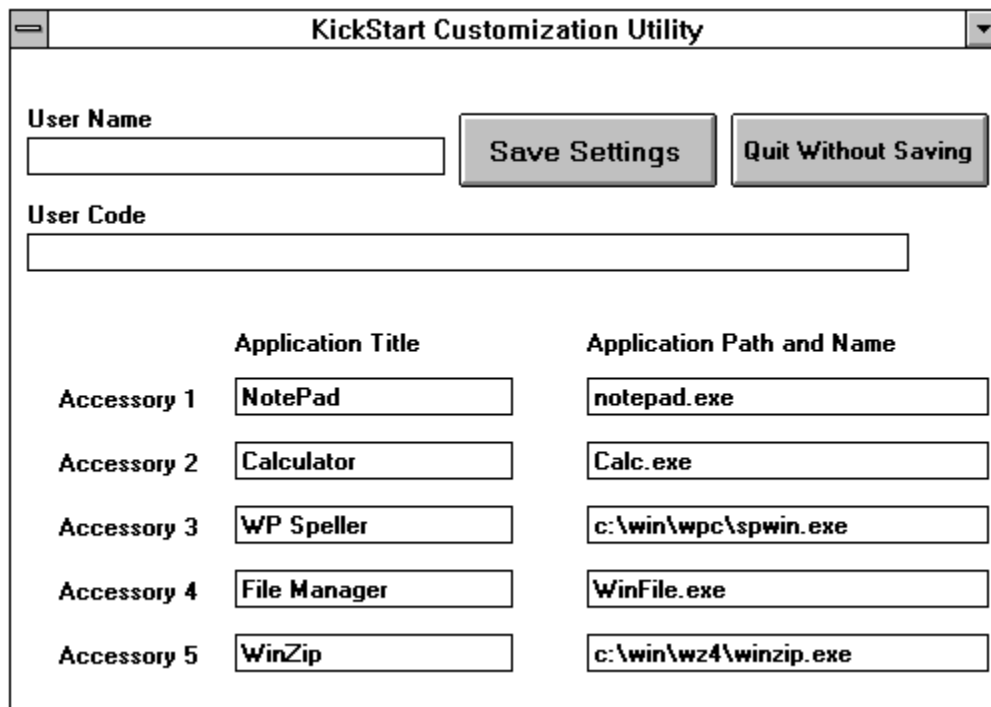
Originally, when I installed Windows, I had icons for the MS Dos prompt in every program group. There were, and still are, many tasks that I prefer to deal with from the Dos prompt. I didn't like having to open up the Main group just to get to the Dos prompt, but thought it was a real waste, both of disk and desktop, space to have a Dos prompt icon in every group. Therefore, I decided that KickStart would be the perfect place to add an option for launching a Dos Box, and added this feature both to the form and system menus of KickStart.

Later I decided that KickStart would make a good place for launching several often used programs. So I added an accessories popup menu to the system menu. This popup menu can hold up to five program names. All five are user definable. **Only REGISTERED** users will be given the information necessary to reliably utilize this feature. Unregistered versions can use the Accessories menu, but there will be only a 50% chance of the selected program being executed.

For the curious at heart, there are two tricks hidden in KickStart's forms.

Configure/Register Button

Pressing the Configure/Register button brings up the KickStart Customization Utility. This form gives you an easier way of setting up Accessory Applications. This can also be done manually by editing Kickstar.ini.



	Application Title	Application Path and Name
Accessory 1	NotePad	notepad.exe
Accessory 2	Calculator	Calc.exe
Accessory 3	WP Speller	c:\win\wpc\spwin.exe
Accessory 4	File Manager	WinFile.exe
Accessory 5	WinZip	c:\win\wz4\winzip.exe

The User Name and User Code text boxes are used for registering KickStart. Registered users receive codes that fully enable the Accessories popup menu. Unregistered copies can setup accessories, but the Accessories menu items will only work approximately 50% of the time. Registration removes this random behavior.

The Save Settings button saves the information from each of the text boxes in Kickstar.ini. The Quit Without Saving button quits the Customization Utility without saving any changes that have been made and returns you to the KickStart main form.

Accessory Application titles can contain any combination of characters and spaces, and should be limited to fewer than 20 characters long.

The Path and Name text box should contain at least the file name of the Accessory Application. It should also contain the file extension, though it is not needed in every case. It may also contain the path of the program. If no path is included, the following directories will be searched: Current Directory, the Windows Directory, the Windows\System Directory, the Directory where Kickstar.exe was started from, the Directories in the Path environment variable, the Directories mapped in a network.

Valid types of programs are .exe, .pif, .bat, and certain .com files.

Extension

The File Extension is the part of the file name that comes after the period. Extensions usually give some indication as to what type of file a particular file is. e.g. .txt (implies a text file), .exe (implies an executable program file)

Release History

Version 2.7 adds a customization utility for setting up Accessory Applications. Several internal changes have been made, including registration recognition and error handling. This is also the first version that allows unregistered users to use the Accessories popup menu.

Version 2.65 includes changes to the Help and System menus as well as minor internal modifications.

Version 2.6 includes minor changes to KickStar.exe and is the first version to include a Windows .HLP format help file.

Version 2.5 adds the option to have KickStart's icon "float." Floating icons are always visible. They generally do not allow themselves to be covered by anything, including screen savers. For the sake of ease of use, the Floating Icon attribute can be toggled from either the Options menu on the main form, or the system menu of the form or icon. When Floating is engaged, the Floating Icon in both menus will be checked. When Floating is cancelled, Floating Icon will be unchecked. Because floating icons generally are not affected by screen savers, you should cancel Floating Icon if you plan to have your screen saver active for a prolonged period. Otherwise, the floating icon will defeat the purpose of the screen saver, though for only a small portion of the screen.

This version also adds an Accessories popup menu to KickStart's system menu. The Accessories popup menu can hold between 0 and 5 programs. This provides a convenient and very quick method of starting up programs used often. On my system, I have it setup for Notepad, Calculator, a Spelling checker, a file compression program, and File Manager. Currently, this option is being reserved for the use of registered users only.

Version 2.2 adds an options menu to KickStart's main form. The two options are Run Minimized, and Display Time.

Version 2.11 corrects some typos and no longer tries to alter the title of dos boxes. It was found that on some windows installations the routine being used could cause infinite recursion. My apologies to anyone who found this out the hard way.

Version 2.1 includes internal changes to the way some events are handled.

Version 2.04 fixes some minor bug/features in 2.03 and runs minimized automatically.

Version 2.03 adds a clock to the KickStart window title, additional items to the KickStart's system menu, and a safety routine to keep multiple instances of KickStart from confusing the DLL.

Version 2.02 is a minor enhancement over 2.01.

Version 2.01 The DOS Shell menu was modified to give the options of just starting up a DOS box, or starting a DOS box and minimizing KickStart. This way you can start a DOS box and automatically get KickStart back to its iconic state where it's out of the way. This is the first version of KickStart available to the general public.

Known Bugs and Limitations

No bugs are currently known. If they were, this version would not have been released yet. However, this does not mean that there are no bugs present in this software. It is impossible to guarantee that any program is totally bug free, and so you must agree to use this software at your own risk. Any damages caused directly or indirectly by this program are not the responsibility of the programmer.

Only one copy, version, or instance of KickStart can be loaded at once. See [DLL Information](#) for more information on this limitation.

Usage Suggestions

In order for the Run Minimized option to function correctly, whether it is checked or unchecked, the Run Minimized option in the Program Manager Program Item Properties for KickStar.exe should be checked.

KickStart is intended to run at all times. The easiest way to install it is to create a new Program Item in your StartUp group in Program Manager. All programs in the StartUp group are launched every time Windows runs. If you do not have a StartUp group, and do not want one, KickStart can be launched by adding the line **load=Kickstar.exe** to your Win.ini.

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This software is not Public Domain or FreeWare. It is ShareWare and must be registered if you continue to use it after a brief testing period. Registration will remove all feelings of guilt and will allow you to reliably use the Accessories popup menu.

Registration fees of \$8 per copy or any comments can be sent to:

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Dos Shell Opening Technique

KickStart opens Dos prompts by reading the Dos environment variable **Comspec**, and running the program name found there. This was done because I did not want to assume that the command interpreter would always be command.com. Many replacements for command.com exist and by running the shell this way, KickStart will use whatever command interpreter the computer was booted from.

DLL Information

KickStart was written in Visual Basic 2.0 and uses many Windows API functions. Using API functions, it is relatively easy to change a program's system menu. However, using Visual Basic, it is not possible to respond to menu options added to the system menu. This is why KickStart requires KickStar.dll. KickStar.dll, written in C by Samuel A. Lewis, enables KickStar to respond to these user defined Windows messages. KickStar.dll may not be used or distributed except for in the archive with KickStart and other relevant files.

This version of KickStar.dll can only have one copy in memory at a time and only responds to one program at a time. This is the main reason why KickStart will not let you load more than one copy of itself into memory at once. It is possible to load multiple copies of KickStart if different versions are loaded. This is strongly discouraged, as it will corrupt the relationship between KickStar.exe and KickStar.dll. The corruption can be as benign as rendering the first copy of KickStart not fully functional, or as severe as to cause a General Protection Fault in either copy of KickStart.

