

# **Toolbar**

## **1.01**

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## Hardware and software requirements

To run *Toolbar* you need Microsoft Windows 3.1 and the hardware necessary to run it.

## Introduction

*Toolbar* is intended to provide some features that I found lacking in the *Program Manager* and *File Manager* of the retail Windows 3.1. To start with, while working in *File Manager*, you can drag an item and drop it over some running programs. But if one of these programs is not running and you drop the item over its icon, the program is not started. Instead, the dropped item is added to the corresponding group of *Program manager*. Of course, sometimes this is just what you expected. One could say that the groups in *Program manager* are devoted more to organize programs than to run them. On the other hand, most programs still lack the ability to accept dropped files and you cannot use with them this drag and drop feature of *Program Manager*.

Since my screen tends to be cluttered with windows, I also wanted the possibility to locate (in a permanent and compact way) at a corner of the screen the utilities I use most often. *Program Manager* groups are nice but big and I do not need to see the names of my preferred utilities: I am able to recognize them by their icons. The utilities should be always at hand ready to be started by double-clicking at them (as in *Program Manager*) or by dropping an item on them. For instance, this is a nice way to provide the most important facility missing in *File Manager*: a file viewer.

*Toolbar* is the answer to these wishes. It provides an alternative to the groups of *Program Manager* with the following distinctive characteristics:

- It can be used either as a substitute for *Program Manager* (which, in turn, can be run from *Toolbar*), or as a normal application installed in *Program Manager* (or in the current shell program).
- It is more oriented to run programs than to organize them..
- All programs in a toolbar are always visible (as long as the whole window is on the screen). They are held together in a very compact way, to be as unobtrusive as possible. Optionally, you can force a toolbar to be always visible on top of other windows. In order to save space, even the title bar can be used to have at hand useful information.
- Items from *File Manager* can be dropped virtually on any program installed as a tool. It only needs to be able to accept file names in the command line. Most MS-DOS and Windows programs have this possibility. A program can also be started by double-clicking at it or by using the **Enter** key or a user selected accelerator key.
- You can choose among one instance of the program for each dropped file or, instead, a single instance to deal with all the dropped files.
- Programs can be easily added, removed and reordered. The corresponding caption, command line, working directory, icon and other options can be easily changed.
- You can implement a full tree of nested toolbars.
- Apart from these distinctive characteristics, *Toolbar* works much in the same way than *Program Manager*.

### Note

After having completed version 1.00 of *Toolbar*, I have just received my CD-ROM containing the CICA collection of Microsoft Windows programs. As I suspected, there exist other programs that provide similar capabilities. Sincerely, I do not knew them but the idea was rather obvious. In any case, *Toolbar* might have an advantage: it is completely free for non-commercial use!

## Installing *Toolbar*

To install *Toolbar*:

- Copy to the desired directory the executable file, **TOOLBAR.EXE**, the help file **TOOLBAR.HLP** and, optionally, this documentation file: **TOOLBAR.WRI**. When you execute it, *Toolbar* will install, in the same directory, **TOOLBAR.INI** or the corresponding **INI** file.
- Install the program in a Windows group. You may want to install it in the **StartUp** group to have *Toolbar* automatically started at the beginning of each Windows session.
- You can use the dialog box of **Properties** (in *Program Manager*) to append to the command line the name of an **INI** file to be used instead of the default **TOOLBAR.INI**. In this way you can install and run simultaneously different copies of *Toolbar*. You can even install one or several trees of nested toolbars.

## Running *Toolbar*

You can run *Toolbar* exactly in the same way as any other Windows program: by double-clicking on it, by using the **Run** menu entry, etc. If you find yourself using *Toolbar* on every Windows session, you could install it in the **StartUp** group to have *Toolbar* automatically started each time Windows starts.

The first time you run the program it will create the **TOOLBAR.INI** (or the **INI** file you selected in the installation process). In this file the program will automatically save information on the window location and appearance and on the installed tools. In this way, the next time you run the program it will start exactly at the same screen location and with the same tools and options.

If the program is running and you try to re-run it, the already running instance will be activated and its size restored if it was minimized. This can help locating the program if it gets lost under other windows. You can only have a running instance of *Toolbar* for each **INI** file, because I cannot think of any advantage of having two exact copies of the program running at the same time. But, of course, by using different **INI** files, as described in the Installation section, you can run simultaneously different toolbars.

## Using nested toolbars

You can use these features to implement a full tree of toolbars! Simply install in a toolbar (which, to be always visible and at hand, would probably have the attribute **Top window** set; see below) one or several secondary toolbars (each with a different **INI**

file and, probably, with the attribute **Minimize** or **Quit** set). This can be nested to any depth to give a very complete and yet unobtrusive way of accessing your tools. You could even use *Toolbar* as the Windows shell by checking the **Use as shell** command (see below).

## Installing elements (tools and toolbars)

To add an item (a tool or a secondary toolbar) to the current toolbar use the **New element...** entry in the system menu of *Toolbar*, or press the **Ins** key. (Alternatively, if there is some piece of *Toolbar* window with no tool, you can double-click there.) After having selected the type of element in the **New** dialog box, the **Tool properties** or **Toolbar properties** dialog box will appear to let you define the new tool. You can also drag a file from the *Program Manager* and drop it on the title bar of *Toolbar*. In this case, the **Tool properties** dialog box will appear with default values for the **Title** and **Program** entries.

In any case, if you exit the **Tool properties** or **Toolbar properties** dialog box with **OK**, the new tool will be installed and the *Toolbar* window will be resized to display it. You can change the appearance of this window by using the **Options...** menu entry.

## Selecting an element

To select a tool you click once at it with the mouse or use arrow keys to change the selection. When a tool is selected you can change its properties with **Alt+Enter**, delete it with **Del** and run it by pressing the **Enter** key (or **Shift+Enter** if you want it to start minimized).

## Changing element properties

To change the properties of an element, select it as described above and use the **Properties...** entry in the system menu, or the **Alt+Enter** key combination. The **Tool properties** or **Toolbar properties** dialog box will appear to let you customize the element.

## ***Tool properties and Toolbar properties dialog boxes***

This dialog box is started when installing a new element (by using the **New element...** entry in the system menu, or the **Ins** key) or customizing the selected element (by using the **Properties...** entry in the system menu, or the **Alt+Enter** key combination). Apart from the self-explanatory **OK**, **Cancel** and **Help** buttons, you can use the following items to change the attributes of the element:

**Title:** The caption that will optionally be displayed to identify the element. **If you do not provide any title, the element will remain installed only during the current session of Toolbar!** (This can be useful to install an element that will be used only during the current session.) To display the title in two lines, use the pair **\n** as line break.

**Program:** This entry appears only in the *Tool properties* dialog box and contains the complete file specification of the program to be run, including optional parameters. You can enter directly the program specification or search for it through your disks and directory tree by using the **Browse...** button and the **Select program** dialog box that will be displayed. Instead of an executable file you can also specify here any (document) file whose extension is associated by the Program Manager to an executable file. For instance, using file.wri you will actually get write file.wri; i.e., the write.exe program with the file.wri file as parameter.

**File:** This entry appears only in the *Toolbar properties* dialog box and contains the complete file specification of the **INI** file that will contain options and tools for the nested toolbar. You can enter directly the file specification or search for it through your disks and directory tree by using the **Browse...** button and the **Select INI file** dialog box that will be displayed.

**Directory:** The directory in which the program will be started. Though this entry is optional you should consider filling it, because many programs will only work properly if they start from the right directory (most often their own directory).

**Icon:** This entry specifies the icon that will represent the element in the toolbar. By default, the first icon in the executable file will be used, but you can select another icon by using the **Change...** button and the **Select Icon** dialog box that will be displayed.

**Minimized:** If the entry is checked, the tool will start minimized. If it has not been checked, you can still run the tool minimized if the **Shift** key is held down when the program is invoked.

**Multiple:** This entry controls the behavior of the tool when several files are simultaneously dropped on it. If the entry is checked, each dropped file will start its own instance of the program. If it is not checked, all the dropped files will be appended to the command line of a single instance of the program. Note that whatever this setting is, if different files are dropped at different times, each of them will get its own copy of the tool. Remember also that MS-DOS programs have very short command lines (less than 128 characters). As a consequence, they can receive only some of the dropped files and the last received file can have its file name truncated. Nothing of this can happen if this entry is not checked.

**Fast load key:** This optional entry lets you select an accelerator key that will start the element.

Exactly as happens in *Program Manager*, when an MS-DOS application is minimized the icon selected in this dialog box will be used, but Windows applications have their own icon displayed. However, there is an exception when using a toolbar that has been installed as element of another toolbar. Though it is a Windows program, if an icon has been selected in the aforementioned **Icon** entry, it will be used instead of *Toolbar's* icon and it will be displayed with a special look: as a button. A primary toolbar (i.e., a toolbar that has not been installed inside another toolbar) will use *Toolbar's* icon, but a power user can change this by adding to the corresponding **INI** file two lines in the form:

```
Icon file=file
Icon number=n
```

where **file** is the complete specification of the icon file and **n** is the number of the icon in the file starting at 0.

### **Select icon dialog box**

This dialog box is started by using the **Change . . .** button in the **Tool properties** or **Toolbar properties** dialog box. Apart from the self-explanatory **OK**, **Cancel** and **Help** buttons, you can use the following items to change the tool icon:

**File name:** The complete file specification of the file containing the icon. The default is the program file but you can enter directly a new file specification or search it through your disks and directory tree by using the **Browse . . .** button and the **Select icon file** dialog box that will be displayed.

**Current icon:** This list box lets you select the icon to be associated with the element. You can also select to have no icon.

### **Select program, Select INI file and Select icon file dialog boxes**

These dialog boxes are invoked but not provided by *Toolbar*. They are three instances of the common dialog box that most Windows 3.1 programs use to find and open a file. You are surely familiar with it and you can find a description in your Windows manual.

### **Changing elements order**

To change the position of an element, pick it with the mouse and holding down the left button move the pointer (whose appearance will change to show the operation in course) over the desired place, then release the mouse button.

## Removing an element

To remove an element, select it as described above and use the **Remove** entry in the system menu, or the **Del** key. You will be prompted to confirm the deletion.

## Running an element

To run an element, you simply use the mouse to double-click at it. You can also select it as described above and use the **Enter** key. The third way to start an element is by using the **Fast load key** selected in the **Tool properties** or **Toolbar properties** dialog box.

The program will start minimized if you have chosen it as the default behavior in the **Tool properties** or **Toolbar properties** dialog box or if the **Shift** key was held down when the program was invoked.

To start a tool with a data file, you drag the latter from the *Program Manager* and drop it over the tool.

## Changing program options

To change *Toolbar* options use the **Options . . .** entry in the system menu, or the **Ctrl+O** key combination. The **Toolbar options** dialog box will appear.

## Running a program

You can run from *Toolbar* any DOS or Windows program (and not just the installed tools as described in **Running an element**). Simply use the **Run . . .** entry in the system menu or press **Shift+R**. The **Run** dialog box will be displayed.

## Run dialog box

This dialog box is started by using the **Run . . .** entry in the system menu, or the **Ctrl+R** key combination. Apart from the self-explanatory **OK**, **Cancel** and **Help** buttons, you can use the following items to customize the toolbar:

**Command line:** Select here the complete specification of the executable file, including optional parameters. You can enter directly this information or to search



for the program through disks and directories by using the **Browse . . .** button and the **Select program file** dialog box that will be displayed. Instead of an executable file you can also specify here any (document) file whose extension is associated by the Program Manager to an executable file. For instance, using file.wri you will actually get write.file.wri; i.e., the write.exe program with the file.wri file as parameter.

**Run minimized:** Check this entry if you want the program to start minimized as an icon.

## ***Toolbar options dialog box***

This dialog box is started by using the **Options . . .** entry in the system menu, or the **Ctrl+O** key combination. Apart from the self-explanatory **OK**, **Cancel** and **Help** buttons, you can use the following items to customize the toolbar:

**Rows:** Select here the number of rows used to display the tools. **Columns** will be automatically changed to reserve space to display all the tools.

**Columns:** Select here the number of columns used to display the tools. **Rows** will be automatically changed to reserve space to display all the tools.

**Frame:** Select here the width, in pixels, of the frame to be drawn around each element. It can be 0 to display no frame and from 1 to 9 to display it with different widths.

**Button like:** If this entry is checked, *Toolbar* will display tool icons in the form of standard buttons. But, remember that they are not buttons; for instance, to activate one of them you must double-click at it. (Clicking once will only select it.)

**Auto save:** If this entry is checked, *Toolbar* will save the current options defined in this dialog box as the default to be used in the next session. If it is not set, only the installed tools are saved to the **INI** file.

**Minimized:** If this entry is checked, *Toolbar* will be shown as an icon when one of its elements is activated in either way. This is specially useful when implementing a full tree of toolbars.

**Quit:** If this entry is checked, *Toolbar* will exit when one of its elements is activated. This also is useful when implementing a full tree of toolbars.

**Small font:** If this entry is checked, *Toolbar* will use a small but very readable font to display element captions (this allows seeing larger titles). If it is unchecked, it will use the same font as *Program Manager*.

**Titles:** If this entry is checked, *Toolbar* will display a caption under each element. If it is unchecked, captions will not be displayed to save space, except for the elements without icon, which will have the caption displayed instead.

**Top window:** If this entry is checked, the *Toolbar* window will be always visible over other windows on the screen (well, at least over other not top windows). If it is unchecked, the window can be covered by the active window in the usual way. Note that the property of being a top window is hereditary in Windows: child windows will have it and will be displayed over other windows. This can be a little inconvenient when displaying a help window.

**Caption:** In this entry you can select the caption to be displayed in the title bar of

*Toolbar*. You can select here an arbitrary string, but the following pairs of characters will have a special meaning and can be used to save space by using the title bar to display useful information:

<b>Char pair</b>	<b>will be replaced by</b>
<b>%d</b>	the current day (one or two digits)
<b>%D</b>	the current day (always two digits)
<b>%m</b>	the current month (one or two digits)
<b>%M</b>	the current month (always two digits)
<b>%y</b>	the current year (one or two digits)
<b>%Y</b>	the current year (always two digits)
<b>%h</b>	the current hour (one or two digits)
<b>%H</b>	the current hour (always two digits)
<b>%i</b>	the current minute (one or two digits)
<b>%I</b>	the current minute (always two digits)
<b>%s</b>	the current second (one or two digits)
<b>%S</b>	the current second (always two digits)
<b>%f</b>	the free memory in Mb
<b>%k</b>	the free memory in Kb
<b>%b</b>	the free memory in bytes
<b>%r</b>	the free resources percentage

For instance, **%h:%I - %fMb - %r%** will display a title in the form **1:02 - 3Mb - 71%** indicating the current time, free memory and free resources.

**Frequency:** In this entry you can select the frequency, in seconds, at which the caption defined in the previous entry is refreshed to display the current values of the above defined information.

## **Using *Toolbar* instead of *Program Manager***

If you really like *Toolbar*, you could try using it as a replacement shell. To do that, simply check in the **Use as shell** entry in the system menu.

To recover *Program Manager* as shell, use again the same command.

In any case, you will be given the chance to immediately restart Windows with the new shell. If you do not accept this (or if Windows does not actually exits because some DOS box is running or some other application refuses to finish) the new shell will be used only in the next Windows session).

Since after the file specification of the Windows shell program no command line can be added, you can only install as shell an instance of *Toolbar* that uses the implicit **TOOLBAR.INI**.

Note also that you can also install *Program Manager* as a tool to be started from *Toolbar*, much in the same manner as you can install *Toolbar* in a *Program Manager*

group. Moreover, its toolbars can be nested to any depth, unlike *Program Manager* groups (See **Using nested toolbars**). You may take advantage of the features of both programs.

The auto-start facilities provided by the **StartUp** group of the *Program Manager* appear in *Toolbar* in the form of the **STARTUP.INI** file, whose elements, after having been installed by *Toolbar*, will be automatically run when Windows starts if *Toolbar* is the current shell. The **[load]** and **[run]** entries of **WIN.INI** are also correctly started.

## Saving options and tools

To minimize disk access *Toolbar* usually saves the list of installed tools and the current options (the latter only if **Auto save** is On) only when the program exits. If the Windows session is ended abruptly (because some program crashes, for instance) you will lost the changes performed during the current session. To avoid this, you can save at any moment the current configuration without actually exiting by using the same trick that you can use in *Program Manager* and *File Manager*: simply try closing the program while holding down the **Shift** key. In consequence, it is enough to press **Shift+Alt+F4** to have the configuration saved.

## Commands

To save space, *Toolbar* does not have its own menu. It uses instead the system menu that can be accessed in the standard ways (typing **Alt+Space** or clicking at the symbol in the upper left corner of the window). After the standard entries (**Restore**, **Move**, etc.) it adds the following entries:

Entry	Meaning	Accelerator key
<b>New element..</b>	Add a element	<b>Ins</b>
<b>Properties...</b>	Change current element attributes	<b>Alt+Enter</b>
<b>Remove</b>	Delete the current element	<b>Del</b>
<b>Options...</b>	Change program preferences	<b>Ctrl+O</b>
<b>Run...</b>	Run a program	<b>Ctrl+R</b>
<b>Use as shell</b>	Use <i>Toolbar</i> instead of <i>Program Manager</i>	
<b>Help</b>	Open help index window	<b>F1</b>
<b>About Toolbar...</b>	Version information	

## **Error and warning messages**

The following messages are issued by *Toolbar* when necessary:

### **Could not create a window**

Improbable error that indicates that a window could not be created (perhaps by lack of memory).

### **Could not register**

Improbable error that happens if it was not possible to add *Toolbar* window class to the Windows database.

### **Could not run the program**

A tool refused to start. Perhaps there was not enough memory or the executable file was missing or incorrect.

### **Exit Windows?**

If your answer is affirmative, Windows session will finish. It is only possible if *Toolbar* is the current shell.

### **Missing or invalid file**

An **INI** file must be indicated for each toolbar installed as a tool inside another toolbar.

### **No timer available**

A kind of resource necessary to run *Toolbar* correctly is exhausted.

### **Not enough memory**

There is not enough memory to pass files to a tool (or to perform other tasks). Try closing other applications.

### **Remove *element name*?**

or

### **Remove the current element?**

Last opportunity before deleting a tool from the toolbar.

### **Restart Windows now?**

If your answer is affirmative, Windows will restart with the new shell.

### **This element has no name It will not be available in the next *Toolbar* session**

Warning recalling you what will happen with nameless tools.

### **This file has no icon Use icons in File Manager?**

If your answer is positive, *Toolbar* will show you the icons in **PROGMAN.EXE**.

**Toolbar has no element**  
**To add an element, press Ins**  
**To get help, F1**

Warning indicating that the current toolbar is void.

**Two elements have now the same name**  
**Only one of them will be available**  
**in the next Toolbar session**

Warning recalling you what will happen if tool names are repeated.

## **Help**

You can access the *Toolbar* help index by using the **Help** entry in the system menu of *Toolbar*, or the **F1** key. From a dialog box the **Help** button gives access to the corresponding help topic.

## **Suggestions and bugs**

The Author would highly appreciate receiving information about any bug or problem found in the program. Suggestions to improve *Toolbar* in future versions are also welcome.

If you experience problems when minimizing non-Windows programs and are using a very low (CGA, EGA) or very high (8514, etc.) resolution card, try adding to the **[Options]** section of the **INI** file an entry in the form:

**Use DDE=0**