

LotsaBlankers

Dag Ågren

COLLABORATORS

	<i>TITLE :</i> LotsaBlankers		
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REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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Chapter 1

LotsaBlankers

1.1 LotsaBlankers.guide

CircleSoft presents

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LOTSABLANKERS  
=====
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v1.04

By Dag Ågren
©1996 CircleSoft

(<http://www.abo.fi/~mamannev/circlesoft/>)

Documentation by Manne

Use the 'Browse >' key for a quick tour through this documentation!

We have found Michael D. Bayne, thanks to Ali Graham!

General

Usage

Technical Support

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CircleSoft
Who are we?
Other Products
What have we done?

There you go, have fun!

<<< CircleSoft >>> -Manne

1.2 LotsaBlankers.guide/Introduction

INTRODUCTION

LotsaBlankers is a collection of excellent blankers for the
GarshneBlanker
system, and a replacement Garshnelib.library with a little better ←
AGA
support. There are many blankers out there, it's true.. But there is
always room for good blankers. This archive features a set of five
blankers, LotsaSnow, LotsaStars, LotsaPlasma, LotsaLego and
LotsaDistortion. As the smarter ones already have noticed, all of the names
begin with 'Lotsa.' (For those less familiar with english, that's some kind
of slang for 'Lots of.')

It is meant to give the blankers some kind of
unity, and to imply that the blankers can do much of what they are meant to
do. For example LotsaSnow can smoothly animate over 20000 'snowflakes' on a
040/40MHz...

But what do they all do then? Here:

Garshnelib.library

This is a replacement for Garshnelib.library, with a little better AGA support - namely that the function copying the frontmost screen supports AGA now.

LotsaSnow

A blanker inspired by another blanker for GarshneBlanker named Snow, Snow is nice, but Dag figured why not make one that can really put snowflakes on the screen, so he made LotsaSnow. The idea is quite simple, it draws snowflakes (white pixels) that slowly fall down your screen, excellent for those nastily hot summer-days.

LotsaPlasma

This one is a plasma-blanker, but it's a little special. It generates a double-plasma on the screen, that is then animated with two dimensional colorcycling. Got that? No? Well, install them and check it out!

LotsaStars

You might think that this one is a normal Stars-blanker, that simply draws lots of stars on the screen, but it's not. This one uses a special color-cycling method to get many colorful stars on screen, followed by colorful trails. As with LotsaPlasma, you have to try it out to see what it's like. Does not work on over 8-bitplane screens.

LotsaLego

For all of you who miss the times playing with Lego(\$^1\$) from when you were younger, and for all of you who still do play with Lego. This little blanker builds random constructions of Lego on the screen, over and over again...

LotsaDistortion

Now this is the real pearl of this package. It is inspired by the 'Lens' blanker by Nick Christie also available for GarshneBlanker. Lens was cool, entertained us for some time, but it didn't quite cooperate with our systems and was a tad slow. Also, at a CircleSoft meeting some time ago, Rofa (a Circle member) introduced us to the corresponding blanker under Windows 95, it had things like Twirl and Black Hole along with the normal Lens. Facing these things, LotsaDistortion had to be born.

The idea is that it renders a distortion, and then moves this around on the screen. An example would be a lens, that you move around on the screen, but LotsaDistorton features much more than just a lens, other distortions are Ripples, Bump, Black Hole, Twirl, something we call Exponential, and our favourite; Flower. (There is an additional sneak-surprise too... :-)

LotsaDistortion eats quite a bit of CPU-power, so you might want to have some better number-cruncher than your 68000 or 68020. A 68040/40MHz does quite fine.

And as far as we know, it is the fastest and most configurable of its kind. Rejoice!

So there, now try them! And

contact us
if you have problems!

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Legos are small tiles, created in a very intellectual way, so that you can build very complex constructions of it. For more info, travel to LegoLand in Denmark.

1.3 LotsaBlankers.guide/Known problems

KNOWN PROBLEMS

- o It is very possible that some of the blankers (esp. LotsaStars and LotsaDistortion.) don't work with graphics cards. If you are willing to code a version that functions on graphics cards,
contact us
and
we may be able to work something out.
- o LotsaStars does not exit when precalculating, so you might have to wait a few seconds if you happen to try to unblank when it is precalculating.
- o When the double-buffering in LotsaDistortion is turned on, sometimes a short line is left flickering on the bottom of the screen, it is harmless, though.

If you have problems,
contact us
for technical support.

1.4 LotsaBlankers.guide/Future

FUTURE

We may be releasing another replacement for the Garshnelib.library, with better AGA support, and some extra features in the preferences. It depends on the response we get from our users.

As for blankers, we have some partially finished ones that we may release in the future as 'EvenMoreBlankers', or something similar.

All of the future depends mostly on user-response however, so if you have anything you would like to say to us, do it!

Please read the
contacts page
to find out how to contact us.

1.5 LotsaBlankers.guide/Requirements

REQUIREMENTS

LotsaSnow, LotsaStars, and LotsaLego run happily on any system equipped with the following:

- o Garshneblanker v3.6 (rev 38.8) or higher.
- o AmigaOS v3.0 or higher.
- o A 020 or better processor.
- o The AGA chipset, or 100% compatible.

Garshneblanker requires MUI or BGUI, they are GUI systems for AmigaOS, you can find them both on Aminet.

Many functions of the blankers are hard-coded for planar graphics, especially LotsaSnow, therefore they may well fail on systems using Graphics-cards.

LotsaStars won't work on screens with a depth over 8 bitplanes (256 colors).

1.6 LotsaBlankers.guide/Installation

INSTALLATION

Before you install, be sure that you have
Garshneblanker
installed.

The simplest way to install LotsaBlankers is to start the installer-script, simply double click on the icon from the Workbench.

If this would fail, however, you should copy all the files from the 'Blankers' directory to the directory where your blankers are installed, and the documentation where you like.

1.7 LotsaBlankers.guide/Usage

SETTINGS

After you have installed the blankers, you must set them up. This is done in the usual

GarshneBlanker
way, from GarshneBlanker prefs. Each blanker's

options are explained in their own chapter, but the best way to find things out is to play around with the settings, and consult the manual for adjustments you find confusing.

LotsaSnow

LotsaStars

LotsaPlasma

LotsaLego

LotsaDistortion

1.8 LotsaBlankers.guide/Hints and Tips

HINTS AND TIPS

- o Try finding the secret mode!
- o Try finding the secret node, in this documentation! (Don't cheat!)
- o Setting any of the ripple-wave amounts to 1 gives quite nice distortions.
- o Try setting a real high refraction-index on Glass ripples.
- o A low Flower Power and some two Flower leaves gives an amusing flower.

1.9 LotsaBlankers.guide/Settings/LotsaLego

SETTINGS - LOTSALEGO

Speed

Sets the speed at which the Lego "construction" will be built.

NOTE: There is one feature that comes along the GarshneBlanker package that can be utilized very well with LotsaLego, namely Displaymode. Setting the resolution very low will create Duplo constructions instead of usual Lego constructions.

1.10 LotsaBlankers.guide/Settings/LotsaPlasma

SETTINGS - LOTSAPLASMA

Timeout

Sets the time to display current plasma before rendering new one.

Colorcycling delay

Sets the delay of the color-cycling. A lower value gives a higher cycling speed.

Dithering

If set to 'Yes', the plasma will be dithered with random dithering. This option should be enabled.

Color 1

If set to 'RGB', the color of the first plasma(\$^1\$) is set by the sliders below. If set to 'Random', a random color-value will be used.

Color 2

If set to 'RGB', the color of the second plasma(\$^1\$) is set by the sliders below. If set to 'Random', a random color-value will be used.

R, G, and B (For Color 1 and Color 2)

Sets the RGB values for the colors. Note that the gadget above the respective sliders must be set to 'RGB' for the adjustments to take effect.

--

(\$^1\$) LotsaPlasma generates one double-plasma, i.e. two plasmas mixed together.

1.11 LotsaBlankers.guide/Settings/LotsaStars

SETTINGS - LOTSASTARS

Number of Stars

Sets the maximum number of stars, unless the gadget below is set to 'Unlimited.'

Note that the amount of stars increases with time, you will start out with a very small number, that will increase until this limit is reached.

Precalc

If set, LotsaStars will render the stars before blanking, so that you will not start out with one star and increase the amount with time.

The 'Unlimited' option is automatically turned off if Precalc is set.

Unlimited

If set, the number of stars will increase forever, causing panic and havoc all over the screen. (You will have to wait some time though.)

Number of colors

Amount of different star-colors. If set to 0, the stars will be greyscale instead of colored, and then these adjustments won't have any effect: 'Hue offset', 'Random', 'White stars'...

Hue offset

When LotsaStars chooses the colors of the stars, it picks the colors at even distances along the hue scale(\$^1\$). So if you pick two colors, you will have one color from the beginning of the Hue-scale (red) and one color from the middle of the hue scale (cyan) for the stars.

With this slider you can adjust the amount of steps along the hue-scale LotsaDistortion should choose the first color from. Setting this to a value of 60, will move all colors 60 degrees along the hue scale, which will make the first color yellow and the second color blue. The 'Random' option frees you from the trouble of adjusting this, it will pick a random Hue offset on each blanking.

(\$^1\$) The hue scale

The hue scale is part of the Hue-Saturation-Value (HSV or HSB) color-model, Hue alters the actual color, while saturation and value alters the brightness of it.

The Hue scale ranges from 0 to 359 degrees. The easiest way to explain this is by using the colorwheel-model (as the one found in Palette-prefs of OS 3.x), a value of 0 is straight up on the colorwheel, which is red. A value of 90 degrees is to the right, which is between yellow and green. As it goes around in a circle, 359 degrees is back to red. The rough scale is shown below.

HUE		COLOR
0		Red
60		Yellow
120		Green
180		Cyan
240		Blue
300		Magenta
359/360		Red

Random

Sets the Hue offset to a random value on each blanking.

White stars

If set to 'Yes', the stars are colored white, while the trails are

colorful as usual.

1.12 LotsaBlankers.guide/Settings/LotsaDistortion

SETTINGS - LOTSADISTORTION

Screen

Chooses the screen to clone for distortion.

Fade %

Sets (in percentages) how much darker the cloned screen should be than the original screen.

Size

Sets the width of the distortion, as a multiple of 32. The height is then adjusted according to the screen aspect to make the distortion a square, or circle.

Speed

Sets the speed at which the distortion moves across the screen. A higher speed makes the distortion jump over more pixels each step. Higher values mean more calculations, so they actually slow down the effect a bit. Also, a lower speed often looks better. On higher resolutions higher speeds look better.

Timeout

Sets the time to display each effect before rendering a new one. A value of 0 makes the first effect permanent.

System readpixel

If set, LotsaDistortion will use the OS's ReadPixel(). This is slower than the built-in faster ReadPixel, and should only be used if the built-in one causes problems.

WaitTOF

If set, LotsaDistortion synchronizes the drawing of the effect with the refresh rate of the screen. This normally reduces flicker, but also slows down action a little bit. You can experiment with both modes, but normally you would have it turned on.

Double buffer

If set, LotsaDistortion will first render the effect on a hidden bitmap, and then copy it to the visible screen. This ultimately reduces flicker, but also speed.

There are two different modes, 'Evil' and 'Nice'. As the name indicates 'Nice' is a system-friendly, but slow, double buffering method, this

mode is the last resort, if all other modes cause flickering.

The 'Evil' mode is not system-friendly, but it is much faster, it is practically as fast as without double buffering. It directly hacks the memory, so it may very well be incompatible with graphicscards.

The 'Evil' mode does not work with interlaced screens.

Glass Sphere, Bump, Twirl, Ripples, Twirples, Glass Ripples, Black Hole, Exponential, and Flower

These turn the different effects on and off, if more than one effect is selected, a random effect from these will be selected.

To see what the effects are like, test them!

Sphere refraction index

Applies to Glass-sphere.

Sets the strength at which light is 'bent' in the glass sphere. A value of 1000 lets light straight through without bending it. A value near 1900 bends nearly all light to one point, which causes one pixel to be extremely magnified. A value over 1900 will cross the light inside the sphere, inverting the area below it. Experiment to find out what value you like the most, 1500 is the default setting.

Example refraction indexes:

- o 1333 is water.
- o 1613 is silicon-glass.
- o 1510 is crown-glass.
- o 1362 is Ethanol (You might like this one. ;)).
- o 2417 is Diamond.

NOTE: The range is actually between 1.000 and 5.000, but the adjustment goes between 1000 and 5000, since GarshneBlanker only supports integers in sliders.

The refraction indexes are for Yellow (589,3 nm) light, emitted by Sodium (Na), traveling through 20\textdegree{}C air at 1,013 bar pressure.

Twirl angle

The angle which the center-point has turned relative to the outer edge. Higher values twist more.

Ripple-, Twirple-, and G-Ripple amount

Sets the amount of 'waves' for Ripples, Twirples, and Glass Ripples respectively.

Twirple strength

Sets the twirl strength of the Twirple-waves.

G-Ripple refr. index

Works as Sphere refraction index, but applies to Glass Ripples.

Black Hole pull

Sets the force at which graphics are pulled towards the center of the Black Hole.

Flower power

Sets the pull-strength of the flower-leaves.

Flower leaves

Sets the amount of leaves for a flower. Generally, an odd number of leaves looks better.

1.13 LotsaBlanker.guide/Legal matters

LEGAL MATTERS

DISCLAIMER

The blankers have been found to be safe, they have been tested to be safe in most situations (including low memory situations), nevertheless we take no responsibility for any damage caused by anything distributed in this archive.

COPYRIGHT

LotsaBlankers and everything distributed with the archive are Copyright ©1997 CircleSoft.

1.14 LotsaBlankers.guide/Contacts

CONTACTING CIRCLESOFT

If you have problems, you may contact us, you are even encouraged to do so! Otherwise further development will not be possible, and you will be left alone with your pain. So read this page!

The author of LotsaBlankers can always be reached via e-mail at:

dagren@abo.fi

The coolest and hottest place to go for CircleSoft products is of course the CircleSoft homepage, located at:

<http://www.abo.fi/~mamannev/circlesoft/>

The latest versions of LotsaBlankers, even officially unreleased ones, can be found on Dag's homepage, along with other cool stuff, which is located

at:

<http://www.abo.fi/~dagren/>

Enjoy your time there, and don't forget to check out our
other products

.

1.15 LotsaBlankers.guide/Settings/LotsaSnow

SETTINGS - LOTSASNOW

Very simple - one gadget:

Number of flakes

Sets the number of pixels that will slowly fall down your screen. A higher value gives more flakes. It's important that this value is not set too high, since the visual satisfaction experienced by the user may not resemble that experienced during a moderately snowy day. It is also important not to set this value too low, since that won't resemble the weather of winter, but rather the weather of spring or autumn.

The maximum number of flakes is set to be 20000, however, if you find this being too little, you can pump the amount by editing a file called LotsaSnow.ifc in your blanker drawer. The absolute maximum is 65536.

1.16 LotsaBlankers.guide/Credits

CREDITS

People that deserve some friendly thoughts:

- o Michael D. Bayne for GarshneBlanker.
- o CircleSoft for LotsaBlankers.
- o CNC D / Juliet & Case for the best demos ever!
- o Stefan Stuntz for MUI.
- o Cybernators for their tune 'Ridiculous Lyrics.'
- o Jay Miner, RJ Mical, Dave Morse, David Haynie, Carl Sassenrath and the others for the AMIGA.
- o You for having an AMIGA!
- o You for getting this software.
- o You for copying this software to a friend!

People that should be ran over by a truck:

You know who you are! Out on the highway!

1.17 LotsaBlankers.guide/History

HISTORY

v1.04 19.5.1997

- o FIXED: MAJOR bug in installer, that appeared due to the last 'bugfix.'
- o ADDED: You can set the 'Number of colors' slider to 0 in LotsaStars, to get Greyscale stars.

v1.03 9.5.1997

- o ADDED: 'Random Hue' option for LotsaStars. (We lost the suggestor's name, if you want credits, mail us!)
- o FIXED: Bug in installer that caused updates to fail.
- o FIXED: Michael D. Bayne found! (Thanks to Ali Graham)

v1.02 3.5.1997

- o FIXED: Some other division by zero bugs.

v1.01 26.4.1997

- o FIXED: Division by zero bug in LotsaDistortion.
- o ADDED: FPU version of LotsaDistortion.
- o FIXED: Small bugs in Installer and documentation.

v1.00 19.4.1997

- o First public release.

1.18 LotsaBlankers.guide/Garshneblanker-info

GARSHNEBLANKER

LotsaBlankers is made for the GarshneBlanker system, here follows a description of GarshneBlanker and where to get it. This is the full Aminet-readme for GarshneBlanker, not altered in any way, any errors are those of Michael D. Bayne. ;)

Short: Modular screen blanker
Author: mbayne@qualcomm.com
Uploader: mbayne@qualcomm.com
Type: util/blank

TITLE

Garshneblanker - A modular screen blanking package

VERSION

Release 3.6
Version 38 Revision 8

AUTHOR

Michael D. Bayne (mbayne@qualcomm.com)

DESCRIPTION

Garshneblanker is a complete modular screen blanking package. It has been written to comply with all guidelines layed out for user interface and for graphics compatibility with as many of the graphics boards out there.

An installation and removal script are provided for ease of installation and removal.

NEW FEATURES

- o MUI and BGUI user interfaces
- o Working CPU load detection scheme
- o New modules (including TicTacToe, Spotlight, Lightning and more)

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

AmigaDOS 2.04 or greater is required (ADOS 3.x is supported).

HOST NAME

ftp.wustl.edu (128.252.135.4) and other Aminet sites

DIRECTORY

/pub/aminet/util/blank

FILE NAMES

GBlanker36.lha -- All binaries and support files.
GBlanker36_020.lha -- Binaries, etc. for 68020+ CPU
GBlanker36_src.lha -- Source to program and modules.

PRICE

Free.

DISTRIBUTABILITY

Garshneblanker is distributed with full source under BSD-like constraints. It is freely distributable with very few restrictions on reuse of the source or the executables.

1.19 LotsaBlankers.guide/Other Products

OTHER PRODUCTS FROM CIRCLESOFT

Here are some of our other products, there is more information and binaries available on our homepage. On the homepage you can also find our fantastic Zick Stuph section, with really mental software.

Misc

Misc is a note-keeping and logging program. The note-part is quite basic, you can write down small pieces of text, that you can read later on, without having to load an editor and find the specific file. The log-part is there mainly for developers, who want to make a history-file of a program. But it's useful to anyone who wants to keep a log of something. It is very configurable and easy to use.

Loves

Have you ever been bothered by any of those painful questions about someone of the opposite sex? Like "Does she love me?" or "Is there any chance that we could end up as a couple?". If you have, Loves is the perfect program for you. If you haven't, have you ever wondered what two people think about each other? Loves can find that out for you too! If you are only trying to fill your HD, Loves can do that too.

With Loves you can find out what two people think about each other, and how big the chance is that these two will make a couple, just by feeding in these two persons' names.

Ripley

Ripley is a wave-simulator. You can create waves on a 2D surface and see how they interfere or fade out. It was made to be a toy, but since it simulates real wave motion, it can be used for scientific purposes. It also has a special object-dragging function, enabling you to simulate a small point that is dragged along the surface of water. Other features are: Rain simulation, three different viewing modes (including bumpmapping), and freezing of display. Try it out!

Maggot

In Maggot you are in control of a Maggot (or Worm, or whatever). Your location is a field (A window actually, but anyway.), with food popping up here and there, your task is to eat it. Your obstacle is everything else but the food, and eating it will kill your worm. So you have to control your worm so that it doesn't eat anything else than food. (Worms are stupid, and can't judge for themselves whether to eat something or not.) Yes, it's the classic worm game, but there is something new with it, it has got free steering. (A'la Pizzaworm on PC and the lesser known SuperWorm on Amiga.) No more up-down-left-right steering, you can freely move your worm in any direction you like.

3DTanxX

3DTanxX is the basic artillery-duel type game, with a whole new dimension of fun! To all of you who haven't played an artillery-duel type game, here is the idea: You are assigned a tank, armed with a wide range of more or less devastating weapons. Your tank is placed at a random location in a world with several other tanks, all enemies. Now - by aiming, adjusting power, and selecting a good fatal weapon - you try and hit your enemy. The last one alive is the winner.

WBCLI

WBCLI is our idea of a better execute-command function. It's a one-line shell, that is always open in a window on your WB. It's designed to be small, so that it won't be in the way for anything else, like a normal shell would be. It opens an output window if needed, exactly like execute-command. Useful for doing short tasks like displaying a directory listing, without having to start a shell.

LED

LED stands for LittleED, and it's exactly what the name refers to, A little editor. It uses textfield.gadget, which guarantees excellent editing functions (even if they are a bit slow). It has a nice buttonbar, with user-definable images. Ah, well, what can you really say about an editor? It's a basic editor, made nice and easy to use.

1.20 We! The People!

CIRCLESOFT

CircleSoft... What can you say? We are a group of Amiga-fanatics, who have decided to do something about their situation. We live in Finland, it's a country, faaar up north... It's the place where you can see Ice-bears walking on the streets. NOT! If you don't know where finland is, buy a map. Or watch the .guide icon very closely.. ;)

For the moment we consist of five (5) persons, who are, in alphabetical order of their nicks: Andreas (Anden) Blomqvist, Dag (Dag) Ågren, Joakim (Jocke) Beijar, Markus (Manne (me!)) Mannevaara, and Vilgot (Vigge) Strömsholm. Some of us have known some of the other of us for long, but the great unity happened in a local BBS called Pandora, in a private message area called Circle. Thereof the name; CircleSoft.

But that's not what you want to know, right? We have some more or less interesting projects going on, you can read more about them in

Other Products

, and even more on our
homepage

. Our goal is to be very
quality aware (that's why we use the Amiga!) when making our software, so

if you have anything to comment, please, do so! We are also trying to keep our software very cheap, if not free. We respect the fact that no-one wants to pay for small software, nevertheless we still want feedback.

Our homepage is seriously delayed, as most other WWW-pages are...

See

[Contacts](#)

for more info on how to contact us.

1.21 LotsaBlankers.guide/Secret Node

Congratulations, you have entered the secret node!

There is a hidden feature in LotsaDistortion, turn off all effects and you'll see!

It's a CircleSoft logo, in case you wonder. Adjust the refraction using the Glass Sphere refraction index.
