

ALMANAC for Windows

Version 0.96

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1.0 Introduction

Almanac is a calendar/information utility for the Microsoft Windows operating environment. It provides traditional calendar displays in month and year format as well as a popup desk set for day-to-day notes and schedules. Configuration files (auto-load modules) and overlays allow you to customize calendars for all of your business and personal needs.

An overlay is a set of data which provides Almanac with the information it needs to calculate the days that events will occur on. The types of events Almanac will calculate include weekly, monthly, and annual events by day or date, as well as birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and others. Up to ten overlays may be specified in a configuration file. This release contains three sample overlays which define holidays for the United States, Canada, and Sweden. (We are very interested in acquiring information for the holidays of other countries and would appreciate all efforts to forward such info to us. Thank you!).

In addition to specifying overlay files, Almanac auto-load modules allow you to configure options for calculating religious holidays (Christian and/or Jewish), phases of the moon, and calendar mode (Gregorian/Jewish). A location data base is used to select a geographic location for each auto-load module. This information is used to calculate the time and azimuth of sunrise and sunset for each day.

TIP: All of the menu selections under 'Config' are stored in the auto-load module (except the master directory path where auto-load modules and other globally accessed information is stored).

Almanac can be easily navigated using the keyboard and/or mouse. The mouse interface makes extensive use of intuitive 'point and shoot' actions. Double-clicking on any day will activate either a sizeable popup window to display all events for the day or the desktop mode with day calendar, alarm clock, notepad and scheduler. Double clicking on the last or next month calendars in the upper corners will change the current month. The same action over the year (centered between last/next month) will activate the YearView popup. The keyboard can be used to access all features through menu selections and keyboard accelerators.

TIP: Almanac will display a 'finger pointer' whenever the cursor is located over an area which can be clicked or double-clicked for an action to occur. One button on the sleeve indicates a single-click while two buttons indicate the area will also respond to double-clicks.

Almanac can print the month or year calendars, notes, or schedules with notes for any range of time. As with the video display, Almanac allows you to compose your output using all of the fonts available to your printer.

1.1 Installation

Almanac **MUST** be installed using the included ALMSETUP utility. **Do not** copy the Almanac files into their destination directories; ALMSETUP should be run from either a floppy disk or a temporary directory on your hard disk along with the rest of the Almanac release files. ALMSETUP is a Windows application which will install and configure Almanac within your Windows environment. If you are a registered user, ALMSETUP will convert any support files you may have created with versions .91 or later (except the location data base) so they can be used with version .96. ALMSETUP can be run from floppy or hard disk as long as all of the Almanac release files are included in the current directory. If you install from a hard disk, ALMSETUP will relocate release files (duplicate the file and then delete the original). Files will be copied and left intact if installed from floppy drives

A: or B:. Please refer to the accompanying ALMSETUP.DOC file for more information.

NOTE: ALMSETUP will not copy any of the text files except the Almanac manual, ALMANAC.WRI. You should print and/or save the *.DOC files including ALMORDER.DOC.

2.0 Operational Basics

Almanac is a calendar/scheduler which can be customized using calendar overlays and a variety of configuration options. Any combination of options and overlays may be saved in an **auto-load module** from the File menu. '**Open...**' an auto-load module from the '**File**' menu and automatically setup a different Almanac environment. The File menu has a '**Save**' and a '**Save As...**' selection to allow auto-load modules to be updated or created. A default file, **ALMANAC.ALM**, is built during installation and is used to initialize Almanac if it is started without specifying an ALM parameter on the command line.

Overlays allow fixed and floating events such as holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, etc... to be calculated for your calendar display. Up to ten overlays may be automatically recalled using an auto-load module. Organizing overlays into logical categories will help you define more flexible auto-load modules. The Overlay menu has selections to clear the current overlays, add an overlay to the current overlays, create a new overlay, edit an existing overlay, and display the currently active overlays.

Configuration options can be selected from the Config menu to:

- o Calculate phases of the moon
- o Choose a geographic location (used for sunrise/set/azimuth)
- o Configure the desktop scheduler
- o Calculate Christian holidays (Xmas, Easter, etc...)
- o Calculate Jewish holidays
- o Select Gregorian or Jewish calendar modes
- o Select brief (small popup) or deskview (full screen desktop) mode to be activated when a day is double-clicked.
- o Configure the directory paths where Almanac will access overlay and desk files from.
- o Specify the master Almanac directory (global support files)

Preferences are used to customize the video display and initial window areas. This menu has options to:

- o Automatically activate the popup (brief or desktop) when Almanac is started.
- o Add or remove a sizing frame for the brief popup.
- o Change the display fonts.
- o Save the current location and size for the main and brief windows to be used when Almanac is started.

2.1 Quick Start

When started, the initial Almanac window will display the current month calendar with prior and succeeding month displays in the upper corners. The current day will be highlighted. Double-click the mouse on one of the days to popup more information. If you like, double click once again on the popup text area to switch the popup to maximized desktop mode. The popup mode can be toggled between brief or desktop modes by double-clicking on the dayview window where the overlay and sunrise information is located.

Double-click on the prior or succeeding month displays and you will activate them as the current month. Double-click on the year in the main header and the YearView calendar is displayed. Use the mouse or cursor keys within YearView mode to change the month selection. Use PgUp and PgDn to quickly move to a different year. Double click on any month to quickly select it as the current month. Double-click on the date/time status bar in the main window to return to the current date.

The keyboard can also be easily used to navigate Almanac. Use the arrow keys, home, end, page down and page up to change day selections or move from month to month. Use the space bar to activate the popup dayview window for the current highlighted day. The TAB key can be used to toggle keyboard input between the main calendar and the brief dayview window. The YearView and Today features are available from the main menu or as keyboard accelerators.

3.0 Menu Selections

3.1 File

3.1.1 Open...

Opens a dialog box to allow selection of a new auto-load module for the Almanac environment.

3.1.2 Save

Saves current option and overlay settings to the current auto-load module.

3.1.3 Save As...

Opens a dialog box to allow the current options and overlay settings to be saved to a new or existing auto-load module.

3.1.4 Print...

Activates the Print dialog to allow selection of month, year, notes, or schedule printing, and the range of time to be processed. A checkbox is supplied to control the printing of notes for schedule items. The dialog box can be expanded by selecting the 'More' option for more specific selection of fonts and sizes for different portions of the calendar. Fonts selections are presented based on the current printer selected (see Change Printer). The different text areas are:

Title:	Main calendar header.
Main Dates:	Date numerals on main and year calendars.
Main Text:	Text placed in main calendar date boxes.
Last/Next Month:	Small calendar dates.

Dates:	Date headers for notes and schedules.
Notes:	Note text.

When printing month calendars, notes, and schedules, the print area may be sized using the height, width, and margin settings. These values are initially chosen to allow for a one-quarter inch margin on the top, left, and right edges of the printable surface area.

TIP: Almanac will print in portrait or landscape mode as your printer provides. Selecting landscape mode (see Change Printer, below) will provide a larger area for month calendars to be printed on.

3.1.5 Save Print Settings

This selection is made available after printing is performed. It will save any changes you have made to print fonts and margins during the current session. This information will then be used as the default settings for later print requests.

3.1.6 Change Printer...

Allows the selection of configured printers and printer options. Depending on your printer(s), this option may provide access to paper orientation, font cartridges or downloadable fonts, and other features which can be used to extend your print options.

3.1.7 Exit

Ends the current Almanac session.

3.1.8 About Almanac...

Displays version and copyright information about Almanac.

3.2 Overlay

3.2.1 Clear

Removes all current overlays.

3.2.2 Add...

Opens a dialogue box to allow the addition of overlays to the current environment. Overlay files are used to define holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, or any other calendar event for computational purposes. See section 4.0 for a description of the overlay file format.

3.2.3 Current...

Displays the names of all currently active overlays.

3.2.4 **New...**

Used to create a new overlay file of events. Events can be created, modified, or deleted. Selecting '**New...**' will create a new event, prompting you first for the type of event, and then displaying a dialog to allow entry of information to define the event. Current event types are:

Date: A fixed, one-time event. Requires input of month, date and year.

Weekly: A recurring event every week. Requires start/end dates and day of week.

Bi-weekly: Similar to weekly except every other week.

Monthly Date: A recurring event every month on the same date. Requires start/end dates.
Example: Every 15th of the month.

Monthly/Day of week: A recurring event every month on the same day of the week (e.g. 1st Tuesday, 3rd Monday, Last Friday). Requires start/end dates and week/day of week.

Annual Date: An annual event occurring on the same month and date each year. Requires month and date.
Example: New Year's Day

Annual/Day of week: An annual event occurring on the same week/day every year. Requires month and week/day of week.
Example: Labor Day (1st Monday in September)

Annual/Float: An annual event occurring on the same weekday of every year, but not necessarily the same week. Requires month, date (first date that the event COULD fall on), and day of week.
Example: Sadie Hawkin's Day (1st Saturday after November 11)

Birthday: Requires the person's name, and month, date, and year of birth. Will display event such as 'Bob's 32nd Birthday' when name is set to 'Bob'.

Wedding Anniversary: Requires the couple's names, and month, date, and year of their wedding. Will display event such as 'Rick & Carol's 7th Anniversary' when name is set to 'Rick & Carol'.

Span: Used to define a one-time span of consecutive days such as a vacation, business trip, or similar event. Requires start/end dates.

All event types listed above which state that start/end dates are required must have a month, date, and year entered that indicate the beginning and ending period that Almanac should calculate for. Start dates are initialized to the current date while end dates are set one-hundred years in the future. These dates should be adjusted to reflect proper boundaries for the recurring event (especially if you select 'Span!'). Use the '**Start/End**' pushbutton to toggle between entry of start and end dates. It is not

necessary that the start or end date actually fall on the first or last occasion of a calculated event.

Selecting '**Copy...**' will create a new overlay entry and initialize its definition using the currently highlighted overlay event. This is useful for entering several events with common definitions.

Select '**Edit...**' to edit the highlighted event, or '**Remove**' to delete the highlighted event from the overlay.

The sort order of the event listbox can be changed to descending date, ascending date, alphabetical events, or sort by event type. Dates which have start/end time frames will be sorted to the top or bottom of the list on a date sort. The type identifiers which appear in the first two columns in the sort by type are provided only to distinguish one event type from another.

All events are created or edited using the same dialog box. Different controls are activated or de-activated depending on the requirements of the event being defined. The red-letter checkbox, for example, is provided to indicate traditional non-work holidays and is currently de-activated when defining an event such as a birthday or wedding anniversary. The start/end pushbutton is activated when an event requires separate starting and ending dates.

The '**Shade>>**' pushbutton expands the dialog box, allowing access to colors and shade or hatch patterns to be used to color the day(s) of the event. You will have a selection of two, eight, or sixteen pure colors to choose from depending on your monitor type and the level of Windows you are running under. Selecting the '**Style**' pushbutton will advance the shade/hatch style and display the result in the sample window. Almanac uses the selected color and style to paint the background of the main month's date window. Some colors or styles may not produce desirable results depending on your monitor or customized Windows color scheme. Almanac provides all possible selections so that you may choose the best style for your requirements. Multiple events falling on the same day will have any selected backgrounds overlaid. You should use caution to avoid similar background styles from overlaying each other.

3.2.5 **Edit...**

Used to edit events in an existing overlay file. See section 3.024 above for a description of editing items.

3.3 **Select**

3.3.1 **Today**

Returns the calendar to the current date. Mouse users can double-click anywhere on the date/time status bar below the menu bar for the same action.

3.3.2 **Date...**

Opens a dialog box to allow the calendar to be moved to any valid date by entering the month, date, and year.

3.3.3 **DayView**

Activates additional popup information for the highlighted day. Use the mouse double-click or just hit the spacebar for quicker selection.

3.3.4 **YearView**

Activates the display of the YearView window showing twelve months of calendar information. The mouse and keyboard arrows, Home, and End can be used to highlight a month. The keyboard can decrement or advance the year quickly with Page Down and Page Up (not available through mouse).

3.4 **Config**

3.4.1 **Moon Phases**

Toggles the display of the four phases of the moon on and off. When selected, the moon phases are calculated on a yearly basis. This will cause a slight delay for calculations upon initialization and when moving across year boundaries. The full and new moons are calculated within a two minute tolerance. The first and third quarters are approximated for performance considerations to within the hour and therefore may disagree occasionally with more accurate sources.

3.4.2 **Location**

Selecting location will activate a dialogue box allowing a choice from the locations found

in the ALMLOCN.DAT file. This information is used to calculate the sunrise/set times and directions. ALMLOCN.DAT comes provided with definitions for many major cities. This file can be edited with Windows NOTEPAD or any other ASCII text editor to create a custom menu of locations. The format for each entry is:

```
City, ST: LatDeg Min Sec LongDeg LngMin LngSec GMTOffset StdZone[/DayZone  
DayLight Start Month, Start Date, End Month, EndDate];
```

The information in [brackets] pertains to daylight savings time and is optional for each entry. You can find the latitude and longitude for locations in most atlases, encyclopedias, almanacs <grin>, and other reference publications.

3.4.3 Scheduler...

Allows various time parameters to be changed for the scheduler.

3.4.4 Christian Holidays

When selected Almanac will compute Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, and Christmas holidays.

3.4.5 Jewish Holidays

When selected Almanac will compute Rosh Hashanah, Fast of Gedalya, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shmini Atzeret, Simhat Torah, Hannukka, Tu B'Shvat, Fast of Esther, Purim, Passover, Shavuot, and four additional fasts.

3.4.6 Gregorian Calendar

Selects the standard Gregorian calendar as the display mode. Toggling between Gregorian and Jewish modes maintains the highlight on the same day, making date conversions an easy chore.

3.4.7 Jewish Calendar

Selects the Jewish calendar as the display mode. Due to design complications several Almanac features are unavailable in Jewish mode. These include the YearView window, the printing of year calendars (months are O.K.), and the access to Desktop mode (data is architected for Gregorian months).

3.4.8 Brief DayView

When Brief Dayview is selected, any popup requests (see 2.0, Almanac Basics) will activate a smaller window in the center of the screen which allows you to view information computed from any overlay file (*.AOL) which will not fit in the main display. Days in the main display which are flagged with the plus rectangle in their lower right corner have more information than can be displayed in their box.

3.4.9 Desktop DayView

When selected, popup requests will activate the full-screen desktop display with day calendar, overlay viewer, notepad, and alarm clock. See Desktop Mode below for more information.

3.4.10 Data Paths...

Opens a dialog box to allow the overlay and desk data search paths to be changed. Changing the overlay path to a new sub-directory will cause all current overlays (from the

old overlay path) to be removed from the display. The new path can now be used to add overlays.

Changing the desk data path will cause the desktop section of Almanac to clear any current notepad or scheduler information and re-initialize from any desk data files found in the new sub-directory.

3.4.11 Master Path...

Opens a dialog box to allow the master path to be changed. The master path is the sub-directory Almanac will use for required system files (fonts, location data) and all auto-load modules. This parameter is not usually changed after installation.

3.5 Preferences

3.5.1 Autostart DayView

When selected, Almanac will automatically popup the brief DayView window or enter desktop DayView (see at startup).

3.5.2 Size DayView Frame

Adds or removes a sizing frame to the brief DayView popup. Select this option and size the popup window to your preference. You can de-select this option, if desired, and then select '**Save Desktop**' (see below) to save the current size and location of the popup window.

3.5.3 Fonts...

This selection will activate a dialog to allow custom selection of fonts for your video display. Most of the fonts Almanac uses to create the display can be adjusted from this dialog.

3.5.4 Save Desktop

This selection will save the current size and location of the main and popup windows to the global preferences file, ALMANAC.MST. Almanac will initialize its main window at startup and the popup window when requested using this information. You may still change the position or size of either window during a session without affecting this default information.

4.0 Desktop Mode

The current desktop provides a foundation for normal personal scheduling. Every day can be associated with a page of the notepad for general daily notes. Each appointment entered into the scheduler is also associated with its own page of the notepad to allow free-form text to be attached to appointment entries.

There are five desktop 'objects'. The mouse or the TAB key can be used to switch between them. Exit the desktop mode with the ESC key, ALT-F4, or the system menu close selection. Switch from desktop to brief view mode with the minimize arrow or system box selection.

The **Calendar** is the familiar day of the month type and accepts input from the arrow, home, end, etc.. keys to move from day to day and month to month. The mouse can be used on the arrow icons to change the day or month, as well.

The **DayView**, or overlay viewer, displays the information calculated from overlays as well as the sunrise/set information. If required, a scroll bar will be provided to allow viewing of all information. If the scroll bar is present, the DayView window can be TABbed to for keyboard access.

The **Alarm Clock** is available to set up to five general purpose alarms. Access the alarm dialogue by double-clicking on the Alarm Clock or by hitting the space bar when the clock is selected. Alarms are only valid for the current day (setting to a time earlier than present will have no effect). Set an alarm by selecting any of the five alarms in the selections listbox. Now select the alarm time, message, and sound for the alarm. Select the 'Set' button to record your alarm setting. You **MUST** use the 'Set' button to confirm any alarms that you enter or change. Alarms are stored in the desk data file for the

current month and will remain valid from session to session.

The **Notepad** is available for up to 800 characters of input made up of characters, spaces, and carriage returns (also backspace for erasure). TAB characters are not allowed. The notepad has been programmed with proportional text for an aesthetic appearance. Every attempt has been made to provide accurate word wrap and text formatting within reason (if you lean on a key and wrap a full line of characters with no space break you will frustrate my word/line break scan and send the notepad into never-never land, [I will resolve this promptly]). The mouse, arrow keys, home, end, and page keys can be used as with most other simple editors. The notepad also supports text operations with the clipboard. Cut, Copy, Clear, and Paste functions are provided.

The **Scheduler** allows appointments to be entered. The viewing area can be scrolled throughout the entire day. The initial position of the schedule scroll and the resolution of the time can be modified from the Option menu under the Scheduler... selection. A fixed summary bar located to the left of the display area is provided to quickly see scheduled/unscheduled time over a larger time period. The summary bar timeframe can also be changed from the Scheduler... dialog.

Access the scheduler dialogue by double-clicking on the Scheduler text (gray) area, or by hitting the space bar when the Scheduler is selected. Using the mouse will initialize the start time of your desired entry using the position the mouse was clicked on.

NOTE: The mouse is currently the only way to access an existing schedule event for modification. Double-click anywhere on the appointment's rectangle to recall the information for editing.

Enter text for the appointment (up to 40 characters) in the edit box. Short-cut time formats can be used to enter start, end, and alarm times. Twelve hour clock users can enter "3P, 3PM, 3 P", etc... Always use two digits to specify minutes, if required (e.g., 3:15P).

The checkbox labelled Alarm can be used to activate an alarm for the appointment. If you have activated the alarm, an alarm time can be entered and an alarm 'sound' may be selected from the Alarm Sound group box.

Appointments will be displayed as rectangular areas on the Scheduler's viewer display and summary bar. You may select the notepad page for any appointment by clicking once in any area of its rectangle. Any changes to the notepad must be saved before moving to another page.

Note indicators will be displayed on the monthly calendar to show the presence of text on the notepad and/or appointments in the scheduler.

Almanac will create files with a name format like FEB90.ALD to store information maintained in the Desktop mode. These files may be deleted from disk as the information they contain becomes out-of-date.

4.1 Desktop Menu

4.1.1 Notepad

The Notepad menu selections are 'Save' to save the current notepad text and 'Restore' to revert the text in the notepad to the last save.

4.1.2 Edit

The Edit menu contains the standard Cut, Copy, Paste, and Clear clipboard functions which can be used with the notepad.

5.0 Tips on using Almanac

Almanac provides several levels of configuration information. Screen and printer fonts are stored in the global configuration file, ALMANAC.MST. Window size and position, saved with the 'Save Desktop' option, are also stored here. This information applies to the entire Almanac system.

All selections available on the 'Config' menu, except for the 'Master Path', are stored in the auto-load modules, as well as the overlays selected from the 'Overlay' menu. This information applies to Almanac environments saved and opened from the 'File' menu. Note that the directories used to maintain overlay and desk files can be varied for different auto-load modules.

5.1 Organizing Support Files

5.1.1 Overlay Files

Multiple overlay entries per auto-load module allow you to create overlays by theme or logical groups and then use appropriate combinations of overlays for different requirements. You may choose to select USA_HDAY in most or all of your auto-load modules. Create separate overlays for family birthdays/anniversaries, friends, and business relationships. Review your overlay organization if you find yourself entering the same event into more than one overlay.

If your business spans several states or countries, you may find it convenient to create auto-load modules for each geographic location and select one or more overlays within each ALM which specifically apply to its region.

The organization and scope of your Almanac environments is limited only by a maximum of ten overlays per auto-load module (you can manually add more), and all overlays must exist in the same directory for a particular ALM.

5.1.2 Desk Files

As with overlays, the desk file directory can be selected within the auto-load module. The overlay and desk directories are chosen independently of each other. You may decide that one overlay directory and one desk top are enough. If you would like to keep a business desk top as well as a personal one, you can create two directories for desk files and select one or the other in your ALMs. Note that many different overlays can be stored in an overlay directory, but only one 'set' of desk files can be stored in the desk file directory. Desk files are named by gregorian month and year such as JUN90.ALD and JUL90.ALD.

5.2 Windows 3.0

Much attention has been given to making version 0.96 totally compliant with Windows 3.0. Actually, Almanac never has intentionally attempted to 'circumvent' Windows programming rules.

A full-color icon for use with Program Manager, ALMANAC.ICN, has been included for Win 3.0 users. This file will be copied to your Windows directory by ALMSETUP, and can be used when defining any Almanac program items in a program group to obtain a more appropriate icon for Win 3.0. Use the 'Change Icon...' selection and enter ALMANAC.ICN into the file name edit box.

If you encounter any 'Unrecoverable error - terminating application!' messages, please forward the particulars of where and how the error occurred to me via any of the methods below.

Please feel free to call or drop me a line with any comments, criticisms, or suggestions you may have!

Dial (714)986-5653 and enter "A - L - M" from your touchtone phone or:

I can be reached on CompuServe - User # 71630, 1703 or:

Please send me a note to:

Impact Software
2321 S. Magnolia Ave. #9D
Ontario, CA 91762

Best regards,

Len Gray