

VB Key Code Generator (c) 1995 by Robert Reinstein
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The VB Key Code Generator enables you to build into your shareware program a built in registration method for your registered users. You can then post your complete program and add or inhibit features based on a key code that you later supply to your registered users.

The VB Key Code Generator performs these functions:

- Generates a VB Function that you can include in your VB program that will validate a Key Code that you give your registered user
- Keeps track of variables, used for generating your Key Codes, that you assign to each of your programs
- Enables you to quickly generate a code to send to your registered user

The VB Key Code Generator consists of these files:

CODEGEN.EXE - the VB Key Code executable
CODEGEN.WRI - this file
CODEGEN.PRJ - data file used to track the key code variables that you use to generate VB code. This file is generated the first time you run the program.
Another file, CODEGEN.INI is generated if a registered version is used.

To use the VB Key Code Generator, place these files into a directory. You may want to keep them in their own directory, however they can be placed anywhere.

Since the CODEGEN.PRJ file is empty you need to create a new project the first time you use it.

Do this by selecting New from the File menu.
Enter a name for your project, up to eight characters.
Enter a short description for your project, up to 25 characters.
Click on OK and you're on your way.

On the main screen you will see three data entry fields. These are used to generate the VB code for your program.

The finished key code can be up to 25 characters long. The first part of the key code is a constant that you specify in the Constant Text field.

Next, you can change the default Multiplier from 1 to whatever you like. As you will see in the generated code, a number is created based on the registered user's name. This multiplier will alter that number in order to insure that one person who may register more than one program from you receives key codes that are radically different. Enter a multiplier, but do not enter more than eight characters in this field. Any number greater than 0, including fractions, are acceptable.

Next is the key length. The total length of a key code cannot exceed 25 characters. This includes the constant that you defined. So, if you had given your project a constant of "ABC", then you may specify a length of up to 22.

When you are finished entering this information you can click on the Generate Code button. This will create a file in the VB Key Code Generator directory that has the same name as your project, with an extension of TXT. If you would like to save these settings, which is advisable since you need to load these settings to use VB Key Code Generator to generate codes for your registered users, click on the File menu and select Save.

To test your code, click on the Test menu item. A dialogue will appear that allows you to enter a user name. After entering any text click on the Go button. The generated code will appear in the License Number field. The user name and generated code are also copied to the Windows

Clipboard.

If you are done with the Test, click on the Exit Test button and you will return to the main dialogue. At this point you can either modify your settings (don't forget to save them again!), generate your code again, and then either exit, or create new settings by choosing New from the File menu again.

Choosing Open from the File menu will display a list of saved projects. When you click on a project name, the description that you had originally given when creating the project will display. Click on OK and that project will be loaded. Don't forget to save any changes you may make.

If you would like to remove a project, choose Remove from the File menu. Those settings will then be removed from the CODEGEN.PRJ file. Bear in mind that even if you delete projects, or the entire CODEGEN.PRJ file, you can still deduce the settings by looking at the generated code.

Using the generated code.

The VB code that VB Key Code Generator creates is a function called ValidLicNumber. This function will return either a true or a false. The two parameters that need to be passed to this function is a string with the user's name, and another string with the license number. I have used my program to create the registration routine in the VB Key Code Generator. I did this by first adding the text file to my project. When my program starts I look in the CODEGEN.INI file for a saved user's name and license number. If this is found I call ValidLicNumber with these values. If ValidLicNumber returns TRUE I set a switch that will identify the program as registered. This switch can prevent the opening and closing About boxes, and removes the Register menu item from the File menu. If Register is chosen from the File menu, I then display a form that will call ValidLicNumber when the OK button is pressed. If a valid number was entered I set the switch, and write the name and license number to the INI file.

Of course, you can implement this however you would like. In fact, you can modify the code that is generated in any way you wish. I recommend keeping it simple and using the code as is. That way you can always generate new code (as new versions of your software is released) without any manual modification to the code.

The VB Key Code Generator currently will track up to 99 projects.
(This shareware version will only handle 4 projects)

Please feel free to let me know if there are any features or enhancements, critiques or criticisms, that you may have. As a VB programmer I am always looking for a better key code scheme for my projects. I have found this one very useful for the shareware applications that I have made available.

Thank you for evaluating the VB Key Code Generator!

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