Welcome to AutoKey!   If you're tired of losing hours of work to UAEs, power failures, or other "unnatural" causes, this program's for you.   AutoKey is an auto-save program.   After you take a few minutes to set up all the applications you want AutoKey to affect, it'll sit quietly in the background and tell all your other Windows applications to save their work (or perform other functions) periodically.

This help file contains instructions for using AutoKey along with hints to make AutoKey work cleanly in your environment.   For complete information, see the manual.

AutoKey is user-supported shareware.   Without your support, it's not going to get any better.   With your support, it will.   It's that simple.   To find out how to register your copy, see How To Register

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Using AutoKey

This section of Help explains how to use AutoKey to increase your productivity.

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Adding an Application

In order for AutoKey to control another Windows application, you must add the application to AutoKey's application list.

To add an application to AutoKey's control:

1. Click the Add... button on the Main Window to open up the Add dialog box.
2. Enter the Application Name as you want it to appear in the application list.
3. Click either the Window title or EXE file name buttons to tell AutoKey how to identify the <u>target application</u>, and enter the appropriate information.
     a.   If you enter a <u>window title</u>, you can finish it with a * wildcard to tell AutoKey to accept any title with the root characters.
     b.   If you enter an <u>EXE file name</u>, AutoKey will verify that the file exists on your disk when you click the OK button.
4. Click the OK button.   The new application will be added (in alphabetical order) to the application list.

Removing an Application

If you wish to disable AutoKey's   effect on another Windows application, you should remove it from the application list.

To remove a target application from AutoKey's application list:

1. Select the application in the list, if it isn't already selected.
2. Click the Remove button on the Main Window.

Setting Up an Application

When you add an application to AutoKey's application list, it gets set up with the <u>default application</u> <u>configuration</u>.   If this is unacceptable, or if you wish to change an existing <u>target application's</u> parameters, you can change the application's setup.

To set up an existing or new target application:

1.   If it's a new application, add it to the application list.   See <u>Adding an Application</u>.
2.   Select the application in the application list if it isn't already selected, by clicking on it.
3.   Click the Configure... button on the Main Window, and enter the information.
       -OR-
     Simply double-click on the application's name.

There are three major attributes you can define for the application:

<u>Defining the Autokey</u>
<u>Defining the Intervals</u>
<u>Defining Special Conditions</u>

Defining the Autokey

The "autokey" is the <u>menu command</u> or <u>menu accelerator</u> or <u>mnemonic</u> you instruct AutoKey to send to the <u>target application</u>.   Usually it's File/Save, but it can be any keystroke or menu command.

To define an autokey for a target application:

1.   Click either the Menu Command... or Menu Accelerator... buttons in the Define Autokey section of the Configuration dialog box.   These will create additional dialog boxes.
2.   To define a menu command:
    a.   In the Menu box, enter the name of the top-level menu which contains the command (or submenu) you wish AutoKey to invoke.
    b.   In the Submenu/command box, enter the name of the command you wish AutoKey to invoke
      -OR-
      For <u>nested menus</u>, enter the name of the submenu.   Repeat as necessary, entering submenu names in the following Submenu/command boxes.   Enter the final menu command in the next Submenu/command box.
    c.   Click Test to see if the menu command works as expected.   (The target application must be ready to receive the menu command.)
    d.   Click OK.
3.   To define a menu accelerator or control mnemonic:
    a.   In the Accelerator Keystroke box, press the acclerator key.   The key's name will appear in the box, whether or not the key normally causes a character to appear.
    b.   Check any of the modifier keystrokes which should normally be pressed with the accelerator key.
    c.   Click Test to see if the menu acclerator works as expected.   (The target application must be ready to receive the keystroke.)
    d.   Click OK.

Defining the Intervals

The Invoke Autokey section of the Configuration dialog box allows you to specify the intervals between autokeys in minutes, keystrokes and mouse clicks.

To define the intervals in time, keystrokes and mouse clicks:

1.   If you want timed autokeys, check the every ... minutes box, and enter the number of minutes between autokeys.
2.   If you want autokeys to occur after a number of keystrokes, check the every ... keystrokes box, and enter the number of keystrokes between autokeys.
3.   If you want autokeys to occur after a number of mouse clicks, check the every ... mouse clicks box and enter the number of mouse clicks between autokeys.

Defining Special Conditions

The Special section of the Configure dialog box allows you to set up special conditions controlling the occurrence of the target application's <u>autokey</u>.

To define special conditions regarding the target application's autokey:

1.   Check "Beep before sending the autokey" to tell AutoKey to notify you five seconds before the autokey is sent to the target application.   (You will hear the beep.)   This is useful in combination with the <u>defer keystroke</u>.
2.   Check "Allow me to defer it by typing ... within 5 seconds" to specify the defer keystroke.   Press the defer key while the cursor is in the box, and the name of the key will appear.   Check the appropriate keystroke modifiers.   After you've heard the beep indicating an autokey will occur in five seconds, you can press this keystroke to postpone the impending autokey.
3.   Check "Don't send autokey if window title contains ..." to screen out the target application based on the title of its window.   If the window title contains the text you enter in the box, the autokey will not be sent.   Don't use the * wildcard here.
4.   Check "Don't send autokey if window is in background" to prevent AutoKey from sending the autokey if the target application is open but not active.
5.   Check "Send autokey even if iconized" to force AutoKey to send the autokey to the target application even if you've minimized it.

Turning AutoKey Loose

AutoKey doesn't send any <u>autokeys</u> if its main window is open.

To let AutoKey do its work after you've set up all the applications you want it to affect:

1. Check the application list to see if everything's set up the way you want.
2. Click the minimize icon at the upper-right of the Main Window.
3. As you do your other work, you'll be periodically interrupted when the application you're working in magically saves what you're doing!

The Main Window

This section of Help explains what you see when you first start AutoKey.

The Master Control Buttons (top row)
The Application List
The Add... Button
The Configure... Button
The Remove Button

Master Control Buttons

These buttons control the behavior of AutoKey itself.   The Add..., Configure... and Remove buttons are used for setting up target applications, and are described separately.

Help   You probably already know what this button does...   (It displays the information you're reading now.)

About   Click this button to see background information about AutoKey, and abbreviated information for registering your copy.   For more complete information, see How To Register.

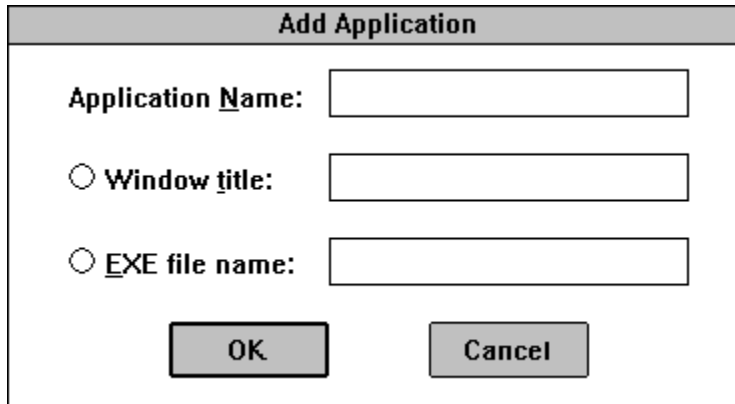**Quit**   Clicking this button closes AutoKey.

The Application List

The application list contains all the <u>target applications</u>.   For each application, it shows the intervals between <u>autokeys</u> in time, keystrokes and mouse clicks.

One of the target applications is highlighted.   This is the current selected application, and is the one affected by the Configure... and Remove buttons.   You can select a different target application by clicking in the list.

The Add... Button

Click this button to add a new application to AutoKey's control.   Clicking this button creates the Add dialog box.

The Application Name box is where you enter the name of the target application.   This is the name as it appears in the application list.   The Window title and EXE file name check boxes select which way AutoKey identifies the application when it's open.   The window title is the title of the application's window when it's running.   For applications that change their window titles, use the * character as a wildcard at the end of the title you enter here. The EXE file name is the full name and directory path of the application's .exe file.   The OK button accepts your inputs, and the Cancel button cancels the box.

The new application is added to the application list and highlighted when you click OK.   It is given the default application configuration.

See also:

Adding an Application

The Configure... Button

Click this button to change the parameters for the selected target application.   Clicking this button displays the Configure dialog box.

┌─ Define Autokey: ──────────────────────────┐
│   │
│   [Menu Command...]   [Accelerator...]│
│   │
└──┘

Click one of these two buttons to define the autokey for the application.   See Defining   the Autokey.

┌─ Invoke Autokey: ──────────────────────────┐
│   │
│   ☐ every [   ] minutes   │
│   │
│   ☐ every [   ] keystrokes   │
│   │
│   ☐ every [   ] mouse clicks   │
│   │
└──┘

Use this section to define the intervals at which you want the autokey to occur.   See Defining the Intervals.

┌─ Special ──────────────────────────────────┐
│ ☐ Beep before sending the autokey.   │
│ ☐ Allow me to defer it by typing [   ] │
│   within 5 seconds.   │
│   │
│   Modifiers: ☐ Alt ☐ Shift ☐ Control │
│ ☐ Don't send autokey if window title contains │
│   [   ] │
│   │
│ ☐ Don't send autokey if window is in background. │
│ ☐ Send autokey even if iconized.   │
└──┘

Use this section to define special conditions for the autokey.   See Defining Special Conditions.

[OK]   [Cancel]

Of course, these buttons cause AutoKey to accept or ignore your changes.

The Remove Button

Click this button to remove the selected <u>target application</u> from the application list.   Careful: you can't undo your decision unless you've got a backup AUTOKEY.INI file.

Glossary

This section of Help contains definitions of special terms, and some common terms used differently by AutoKey.

Auto-save program.　　　　　　An auto-save program helps you protect your data by automatically saving it to disk at certain intervals.　It's not the same as a backup program, which periodically backs up existing files on your disk to other media.　Backup programs don't protect data in memory, just on disk.

autokey (vs.　AutoKey).　　　"autokey" refers to the menu command, menu accelerator or control mnemonic this program sends to target applications.

Default Application Configuration.　　　This is the setup parameters given to a new target application that you've just added to AutoKey.　This setup should work well for common Windows applications.　This is the default target application configuration:

　　　　　　Menu Command:　File / Save
　　　　　　Accelerator:　None
　　　　　　Time interval:　10 minutes
　　　　　　Keystroke interval:　2000 keystrokes
　　　　　　Mouse click interval:　500 clicks
　　　　　　5-second notification:　off
　　　　　　Defer key:　none
　　　　　　Window title screening:　none
　　　　　　Background autokeys:　on
　　　　　　Iconized autokeys:　off

Defer keystroke.　　　　　　This is the keystroke you use to skip an impending autokey.　AutoKey can beep five seconds before it sends the autokey to a target application, allowing you to defer it by pressing the key(s) in this keystroke.　This keystroke can include Shift, Ctrl and/or Alt.　You define this keystroke in the Configure dialog box.

EXE file name.　　　　　　This is the name of a target application's .exe file.　AutoKey uses this to determine if a target application is active, and to send the autokey to the application.　See also Window title.

Menu command.　　　　　　This is a command in the target application's menu which AutoKey invokes at the proper interval(s).

Menu accelerator.　　　　　　This is a shortcut keystroke in the target application's menu which AutoKey invokes at the proper interval(s).　Menu accelerators usually appear to the right of a menu command in the target applicaton's menu.

Mnemonic.　　　　　　In Windows, this word refers to accelerator keystrokes that apply to window controls instead of menu items.　They function identically.　Mnemonics appear as underlined characters in a control's title or label.　You use them by pressing Alt plus the underlined character.　(For example, the Windows Help application which you're looking at now uses Alt-B as a shortcut to its Back button.)

Nested menus.　　　　　　Some Windows applications have complex menus.　To organize their menus, they may "nest" menus by associating another menu with a menu selection.　Selecting such a menu item will create a new menu

instead of invoking a command, and the new menu may contain more menus as well as commands.   AutoKey can invoke commands in nested menus.

Target application.

This refers to another Windows application which AutoKey can control. In general a target application can be any Windows application other than AutoKey.   AutoKey target applications appear in the application list.

Window title.

This is the title of a target application's window.   AutoKey uses this to determine if a target application is active, and to send the autokey to the application.   Because many Windows applications change their window titles, you can use the * character as a wildcard at the end of the window title.   See also EXE file name.

How To Register

To register your copy of AutoKey, print the file REGISTER.DOC, fill it out, and send it and $20.00 (US) to:

Simple Software
PO Box 1465
Salt Lake City, UT   84110-1465

By registering, you get the right to continued use of AutoKey, a current version of the program, a nicely-printed user's manual, free updates for a year after registration, and technical support for as long as you use AutoKey.

The single-copy registration fee of $20.00 covers the use of a single copy of AutoKey at any one time. Site license agreements are available from Simple Software.

Shareware distribution gives users a chance to try software before buying it.   If you try a Shareware program and continue using it, you are expected to register.   Individual programs differ on details -- some request registration while others require it, some specify a maximum trial period.   With registration, you get anything from the simple right to continue using the software to an updated program with printed manual.

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Shareware is a distribution method, not a type of software.   You should find software that suits your needs and pocketbook, whether it's commercial or Shareware.   The Shareware system makes fitting your needs easier, because you can try before you buy.   And because the overhead is low, prices are low also.   Shareware has the ultimate money-back guarantee -- if you don't use the product, you don't pay for it.

An auto-save program helps you protect your data by automatically saving it to disk at certain intervals. It's not the same as a backup program, which periodically backs up existing files on your disk to other media.   Backup programs don't protect data in memory, just on disk.

"autokey" refers to the menu command or menu accelerator or control mnemonic the AutoKey application sends to target applications.

This is the set of parameters given to a new target application that you've just added to AutoKey.   This setup should work well for common Windows applications.   Here is the default target application configuration:

        Menu Command: File / Save
        Accelerator: None
        Time interval: 10 minutes
        Keystroke interval: 2000 keystrokes
        Mouse click interval: 500 clicks
        5-second notification: off
        Defer key: none
        Window title screening: none
        Background autokeys: on
        Iconized autokeys: off

This is the keystroke you use to skip an impending autokey.   AutoKey can beep five seconds before it sends the autokey to a target application, allowing you to defer it by pressing the key(s) in this keystroke. This keystroke can include Shift, Ctrl and/or Alt.   You define this keystroke in the Configure dialog box.

This is the name of a target application's .exe file.   AutoKey uses this to determine if a target application is active, and to send the autokey to the application.   See also Window title.

This is a command in the target application's menu which AutoKey invokes at the proper interval(s).

This is a shortcut keystroke in the target application's menu which AutoKey invokes at the proper interval(s).   Menu accelerators usually appear to the right of a menu command in the target applicaton's menu.

In Windows, this word refers to accelerator keystrokes that apply to window controls instead of menu items.   They function identically.   Mnemonics appear as underlined characters in a control's title or label.   You use them by pressing Alt plus the underlined character.   (For example, the Windows Help application which you're looking at now uses Alt-B as a shortcut to its Back button.)

Some Windows applications have complex menus.   To organize their menus, they may "nest" menus by associating another menu with a menu selection.   Selecting such a menu item will create a new menu instead of invoking a command, and the new menu may contain more menus as well as commands. AutoKey can invoke commands in nested menus.

This refers to another Windows application which AutoKey can control.   In general a target application can be any Windows application other than AutoKey.   AutoKey target applications appear in the application list.

This is the title of a target application's window.   AutoKey uses this to determine if a target application is active, and to send the autokey to the application.   Because many Windows applications change their window titles, you can use the * character as a wildcard at the end of the window title.   See also EXE file name.