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Overview

Lister is a general-purpose text file printing utility for Microsoft® Windows(TM) version 3.1 or later. It is intended for printing simple text files such as those generated by Notepad® or other text editor. It is also useful for printing captured text from communications programs.

Although Notepad can be used to print text files, it suffers from several limitations. First, it is limited to files less than approximately 48 KB long. Second, the font used is fixed. Third, Notepad does not preserve its settings from one working session to the next. Lister addresses all of these problems.

Lister is intended to be a desktop utility. You should place Lister in your Startup group, with the properties set so that it will start up minimized (as an icon). You can then print any file by finding it with the File Manager, and dragging it to the Lister icon. Release the mouse button with the file over the icon, and the file will be printed. (Note: This does not remove the file from the directory; it just prints it.) You may also restore Lister like any other iconified application to get access to the Lister control panel.

Lister has the following features:

- 1) You can use any font that is available to your printer under Windows.
- 2) You can select any available printer mode.
- 3) You can specify margins, as well as lines to print at the top and bottom of the page.
- 4) Lister saves all of your selections between sessions.

Main Window Operation

To get access to the main window, restore it from its iconified state. (If it is already restored, simply click in the window to bring it to the top.) The main window contains eight push buttons, with the following functions:

<u>Set up printer</u>	Select the printer and set up its options.
<u>Select font</u>	Select the desired font.
<u>Set up page</u>	Set up margins, headers, and footers.
<u>Select files</u>	Select the files to be printed
<u>Stop current job</u>	Stop printing the current file
<u>Stop all jobs</u>	Do not print any previously selected files.
<u>Help</u>	Selects this help screen
<u>About</u>	Displays the About window for Lister.

In addition, it includes a Save Settings check box to set whether or not the user's preferences are saved when they are changed.

The main window contains several display items that show the name of the file currently being printed, the percentage of the file that has been processed, and the number of files left to process. You should note that these displays show the status of the Lister program. After the Lister program has processed each file, the Windows Print Manager actually prints it, unless you have the Print Manager disabled through the control panel.

Note: the Stop current job and the Stop all jobs buttons are "grayed out" when no file is being printed. This indicates that the abort functions are not available at this time.

To shut down the Lister program, choose the Close option from the System menu. The System menu can be selected by clicking on the "-" in the upper left corner of the Lister window, clicking on the Lister icon, or by holding the Alt. key and pressing the spacebar while the window is active.

Troubleshooting

File does not print

Before printing one or more files, open the Print Manager. Watch the Print Manager to see if the file names appear in the list of files to print. (The names will be prefixed by "Lister: ".) If this occurs, the file is getting to the Print manager. Check the Print Manager documentation for further information.

A file with no carriage returns or line feeds in it may never print. A file without a carriage return or a line feed at the end of it may not print the last line.

File format is incorrect

If you are trying to print a file that uses overstrikes to create special effects (such as underlines or overstrikes), you must do two things to make the file print correctly:

- 1) Select only fixed pitch fonts. Many printer fonts, and any font with the word Courier in its name is fixed pitch. See the Select font function.
- 2) Disable the line wrap option on the Set up page dialog box.

If the file is printing with incorrect spacing of rows and columns, use a fixed pitch font. (Indentation with either spaces or tabs will print correctly with a proportional font, so long as there are no non-blank characters ahead of the indentation.)

Font is incorrect

You should select a printer before selecting a font. The fonts available depend on the printer selected. If you change printers without selecting a new font, Windows will choose the closest font it can find. The results may be unexpected.

Printing is slow

For maximum speed, especially with dot matrix printers, use a printer font and set up the printer for Draft quality printing.

Printer is ejecting large amounts of paper with garbage on it

Note: There is no check for the type of the file. If you print a file that is not a text file, the results may be unexpected. The printer may print many pages with only a few characters per page. In this case, open the Lister window and press the stop all jobs button.

Do not use Lister to print a PostScript file (unless you want to see PostScript commands). All files are printed as text.

Set up printer

Selecting this function from the main window will bring up a dialog box that allows you to select the printer to use, and to configure it to your needs. If you select the Default printer, Lister will change printers when you change the Control Panel setting for the default printer. If you select a specific printer, this printer will remain selected even if the user changes the default. To see additional options that are specific to the printer you have selected, press the Options button. This brings up an additional dialog box.

When the configuration is satisfactory, activate the OK button. To exit either dialog box without changing the printer settings, press the Cancel button or press the [Esc] key.

You should select a printer before selecting a font. The fonts available depend on the printer selected. If you change printers without selecting a new font, Windows will choose the closest font it can find. The results may be unexpected.

For maximum speed on dot matrix printers, use a printer font with Draft quality printing (select the Options button in the dialog box to see this choice if it is available).

Select font

Selecting this function from the main window will bring up a dialog box that allows you to select the font to be used. You can select the font, the font style, and the size. In the list of fonts, printer fonts are denoted by a printer icon. True Type(TM) fonts are shown with the "TT" icon.

A printer font is one that is contained in the printer itself. When a printer font is used, Windows can just send the characters to be printed, without sending the "pictures" of the characters. The difference in speed is greatest with dot matrix printers. PostScript(TM) printers can print True Type fonts quickly. On other printers, some experimentation may be needed to find out which fonts print at a satisfactory speed.

Although all of the combinations shown are valid, not all will give satisfactory results. The following things should be kept in mind:

- 1) For maximum speed, especially with dot matrix printers, use a printer font and set up the printer for Draft quality printing.
- 2) Many text files print best with fixed pitch fonts. The characters in this kind of font all have the same width. Files that depend on this property to line up columns vertically will not print correctly with other fonts. On dot matrix printers, the printer fonts are usually fixed pitch. All fonts with Courier in their name are also fixed pitch.
- 3) A 10 point or 12 point font gives best results for general purpose printing. Do not use a size that is not one of those shown for this font; you may not like the results.

Set up page

Selecting this function from the main window will bring up a dialog box that allows you to control the page formatting. There are three groups of controls, as follows:

- 1) Header and footer lines. The header is placed two lines above the text body, and the footer is placed two lines below it. As described below, special character sequences can be used to specify the filename, the last modified date, and the page number. The header and footer lines are centered between the left and right margin positions. If the header and footer are blank, they are not printed.
- 2) Margin positions. These are in inches from the outer edge of the paper. Note that the header and footer lines, if present, are printed outside the top and bottom margins. If the margins are too narrow, they are widened to allow for the header or footer.

The margins are rounded to whole character spaces. This allows the printer to be as fast as possible printing fixed-pitch fonts.

- 3) The line wrap option. If this box is checked, lines that are too long to fit on the page are "wrapped" onto the following line. If this box is not checked, the excess length is discarded.

When the options are as desired, click on the OK button. To exit without changing the settings, click on the Cancel button.

The header and footer lines can contain special character sequences to allow for the insertion of special information into the header or footer. These are as follows:

&p This sequence inserts the page number in its place.

&f This sequence inserts the name of the file being printed.

&d This inserts the date and time that the file being printed was last modified.

Note that an ampersand in front of any other character is ignored. Some good initial settings are as follows:

Header: **-- &f &d --**
Footer: **-- Page &p --**
Left: **0.50**
Right **0.50**
Top: **0.80**
Bottom: **0.80**
Line wrap **Not checked.**

Select files

The primary method of selecting files to be printed is by selecting one or more files in the File Manager, and dragging the files to either the Lister icon or to the window. You can also select files by choosing this function from the main window. This will bring up a dialog box that allows you to select the files to be printed. This dialog box allows you to type the name in directly, or select it from a scrollable list. The Directories list can be used to change directories on the current drive, and the Drives control selects the current drive. Note that the List Files of Type control cannot be changed, since it only has one choice.

More than one file may be selected at a time. To do this, hold the control key down while choosing files. This will allow you to select and deselect files individually. If you wish to select a set of files in a group, select the first file normally. Then, hold the shift key down and select the last file. All files between these points will be selected.

When all files are selected, press the OK button. This will add the selected files to those waiting to be processed. To exit without selecting any files, select the Cancel button or press the [Esc] key.

Note: There is no check for the type of the file. If you print a file that is not a text file, the results may be unexpected. The printer may print many pages with only a few characters per page. In this case, open the print manager and pause the printer. This will give you enough time to figure out what to do next. In most cases, you will want to stop all jobs, then delete the job in the Print manager.

Do not use Lister to print a PostScript file (unless you want to see PostScript commands). All files are printed as text.

Stop current job

Selecting this function from the main window will bring up a dialog box to verify that you want to stop processing the current file. If OK is chosen, processing of the current file is stopped, and the next file in line is processed.

Note that this function cannot stop a file that has been processed and sent to the Print Manager. To stop such a file from printing, open the Print Manager window and use the controls in that window. Note that all Lister jobs will be shown as Lister: <file name>.

Stop all jobs

Selecting this function from the main window will bring up a dialog box to verify that you want to stop processing all files. If OK is chosen, processing of the current file is stopped, and all other filenames waiting to be processed are discarded.

Note that this function cannot stop a file that has been processed and sent to the Print Manager. To stop such a file from printing, open the Print Manager window and use the controls in that window. Note that all Lister jobs will be shown as Lister: <file name>.

When you shutdown the lister program or close your Windows session when Lister still has files to print, you will get a dialog box asking you to confirm the operation. If OK is chosen, processing is stopped on all files, and shutdown is allowed to occur. If cancel is selected, the shutdown does not take place.

Save settings option

This function is controlled by a check box from the main window. If this box is checked, all selections made with the Set up printer, Select font, and the Set up page functions are saved in the lister.ini file in your Windows directory. (You do not need this file to use Lister; if it is not present and you change the default settings, a lister.ini file will be created for you.)

The purpose of this check box is to allow you to change the settings for a special job without disturbing your normal settings. To do this, click on the Save Settings check box so that the X is not displayed. Then, alter the settings as needed. When the job is finished, click on the Save Settings box again. This restores the settings to their state prior to turning off the check box.

If the Save Settings box is not checked and you check it, the last set of settings that were stored with the Save Settings box checked are restored. If there were no prior settings, the default settings are restored.

Although the lister.ini file is in the same format as other initialization files (such as win.ini), it is not intended to be changed except through the lister program. Changing it by hand is likely to lead to unexpected behavior. If this occurs, delete lister.ini.

Help and About

Activating the main window Help function will bring up the Windows help facility that you are currently using. Activating the About function brings up a dialog box describing the Lister program.

