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Design Overview

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Playlist & Board (Save)	(edit, reformat, Verify)	Playlist & Board (Play)
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Understanding how to use FileMate requires awareness of the possibilities for data flow through the system. The program's design is best described as a workarea, with functions that copy data into and out of the workarea and process data in the workarea. The workarea is a standard Windows multiline edit control with standard editing functions. It can receive data from a file, the clipboard, the board, the header data entry dialog, and the keyboard. Data in the workarea can be edited, checked for errors, and reformatted. The data can then be copied to a file, the clipboard, or the chess board and playlist. This design gives the user many possible scenarios for moving and processing chess related textual data, which is the basic purpose of this program.

File Processing

There are controls for editing, adding, and deleting games in the current file. The Add and Save controls are located in the workarea because they operate on workarea data. The Cut (delete) control is located in the gamelist because it operates only on the file. Using these functions will make the program behave as though the file has been immediately updated. But you should understand that NO changes are actually made to the file until you explicitly tell the program to save changes. Even then, the original file is renamed and kept as a backup. Save changes by using the file Save and SaveAs (menu item) functions. The program will ask if you want to save changes when you close a file (if changes have been made, and it isn't marked read-only). Note that there is no control to explicitly close a file. A file is implicitly closed when you open another file (or New) and when you exit the program.

The program will mark the current file as read-only if the Open/read operation does not complete (see Cancel below).

Open processing

When a file open is requested, FileMate reads through the entire file. It does this to locate the position of games so they can be directly accessed from the file instead of having to load them all into memory. It also extracts information from the game headers to be used in the game list. The file is actually closed after it has been read through, and is then designated as "the current file". The current file is opened, read, and closed when games are selected in the game list.

FileMate can read and recognize the following:

1. Valid PGN, NTR, and NIC formatted games
2. An NTR game without the second header line. The format code will be NTR.
3. A game with no header (i.e. just the move list). The format code will be MOV.

Any other contiguous block of text (i.e. without embedded blank lines) will be listed as an unidentified text block. The format code will be UNK, meaning "unknown".

Save processing

When a file save is requested, FileMate creates a new file (extension .TMP) into which the current file and its updates are merged. After this is done, the current file is renamed with a '_' in the first character of the extension to indicate that it will serve as a backup file. (The previous backup is now gone.) The new .TMP file is then renamed to whatever extension the original (current file) had.

A Save request will cause no actions if no changes have been made to the current file, or if the current file is marked as read-only.

A **SaveAs** (in the menu under File) request will simply cause the creation of a new file with whatever name you specify. But It will not accept a name with a '_' in the first character of the extension. Such names are reserved for backup files. Verification will be requested for overwriting an existing file.

Misc.

The program has no file deletion function.

A future release may allow the user to turn off backup file creation.

A restore-from-backup function may be added.

Component Descriptions

The Game List

The gamelist window is a custom child window designed to behave much like a standard listbox control. Each entry in the list represents a game (or a block of text) in the current file.

Select an entry in the gamelist with the mouse to copy the game to the workarea.

Double-click an entry to play the game, i.e. put it on the board.

Color-coding is used to indicate games that have been edited (yellow) and added (green).

Show the **game list controls** at any time by clicking the **right mouse button anywhere** in the gamelist window. These functions are also duplicated in the menu (GameList).

Cut - This button serves two different purposes: deleting and moving games in the current file.

To delete a game, select its entry in the gamelist, and click the Cut button. The entry will be grayed to indicate the game is marked for deletion from the file during the next file save.

The game move operation uses the Windows cut&paste paradigm (but the clipboard is not actually used). To move a game, select its list entry and click Cut as though you are marking it for deletion. Then select another entry in the gamelist to indicate the insertion point. Finally, click one of the **Before** and **After** buttons to effect the move and redisplay the list. The program will understand you are moving, not deleting, the game.

Undo - is used to "un-delete" a game which has been marked for deletion. Just select a grayed entry and click Undo. Undo only works on deletions, not game changes, moves, or additions. These other file changes can effectively be undone by closing the file without doing a file save.

Cancel may be used to abort a file Open or Save operation. When an Open is canceled, the portion already read will be available for viewing; but as a safety precaution the file will be marked as read-only so that it can't be saved. (But SaveAs can be used.) The Save processing has been designed to allow it to be cancelled without loss of data to either the actual file or to the program's working information about the file. Although the design may not be flawless, much effort has gone into disallowing or forgiving accidents which could result in a loss of data.

The Play List (or Move List, if you prefer)

This custom child window provides controls for both direct and sequential access to the plays/positions of a game. The list can be scrolled, and any play can be selected with the mouse. The last-play-made is always framed.

The board and the playlist are always kept in synchronism.

The > button will cause a piece to slide to its destination. Use the right scrollbar button to play forward without piece-slide.

Show the **playlist and export controls** at any time by clicking the **right mouse button anywhere** in the playlist window. These controls are used to change the text in both the playlist and the workarea.

Notation (change):

EDN refers to English Descriptive Notation (although a non-English language can be selected). SAN is Standard Algebraic Notation. Its use is required in portable game formats.

XYA, XYN: These notations specify only squares, not pieces, and are used in situations where language may be a problem (pieces have different names in different languages). These notations may go by other names; I have christened them XYA and XYN for brevity.

When you select a different notation, the playlist is immediately updated. The workarea will be affected, but only after you use the Format-change control.

At this time, the program can only read SAN and EDN. So the others should only be used for viewing on the screen or exporting to a document.

You should be aware that although many other programs can read Algebraic notation, few can read Descriptive. Because of this, the use of SAN is preferable and is officially required in PGN and other portability formats. (NIC's algebraic is slightly different from SAN)

Format (change): This controls the content of the workarea.

"Input" shows data exactly as it was read from the file. The other selections PGN, NTR, NIC, and MOV will take information that was extracted from the game, put it back together into a different game format, and then display it (copy it to) the workarea. The result will also depend on which notation and language were selected.

MOV will copy only the move list (no header) to the workarea.

Language (change):

This selects the set of letters to use for the pieces. As with the notation control, a selection will immediately update the playlist, and the workarea will change only after using the Format control. At this time, the program can only read English. This means you should only change to a non-English language for viewing on the screen or exporting to a document.

Horizontal-Run, Columnar: These determine the layout of moves in the workarea. Select either, and then use the Format control to change the workarea. The columnar output may need some editing, but it's a step toward providing some DTP support.

The Work Area

Textual data is displayed here with a standard Windows multiline edit control. This area serves two main purposes. It is used as a stopover when moving data from one place to another. And it is used to view and edit data.

Undo, Cut, Copy, Paste: These are handy controls for the functions that come with a standard Windows edit control. Undo is one level only. **Erase** clears the edit control.

Import should be used to copy a game from the clipboard to the workarea. This function is equivalent to selecting a game in the gamelist except that it retrieves text, if any, from the clipboard (i.e. Paste). It assumes the text is a game and reads it to check for errors (i.e. Verify). The status indicators on the right are updated. A beep will indicate one or more errors were detected.

Export copies whatever is in the workarea edit control to the clipboard. This function is equivalent to selecting-all and then Copy.

Verify checks the game in the workarea for syntax errors. Use this function after editing the text. If one or more errors are detected, the program will beep and display an error report. Move legality is not checked until the game is played. Note that verify error-checking is done automatically when a game is selected in the gamelist and when Import is used.

Play puts the game in the workarea on the board, and plays through the game to check legality of the moves.

Header invokes a data-entry window for creating a header or changing information in the current game header section. You can, of course, directly edit the header in the workarea (Do that for other information such as comments). But this function insulates you from the header syntax rules. The result will always be a PGN format header. The format-change control can then be used if desired.

File Update Controls

Save replaces the currently selected game (in the gamelist) with the contents of the workarea.

Add appends the contents of the workarea to the end of the current file.

Note that the file is not actually changed until you request a file save.

The Board

You can use the mouse to move pieces around the board at any time. The playlist will be updated automatically. Only legal plays will be accepted. The Save button in the playlist window will copy the score (the move list) to the workarea. Use the << button to reset the board.

At this time, there is no undo function to allow backing up to a previous variation. There are a number of possible enhancements for supporting variations which could be added in a future release.

The Keyboard Interface

All menu items can be accessed by using the Alt key with the underlined character. Some standard accelerators which use the Ctrl key are also defined and shown in the File and Edit menus. In addition, the following accelerators are defined in FileMate:

- F1 - show the About dialog
- F6 - next window, Shift + F6 - previous window
- F8 - show the Registration dialog

Navigation and Control

The keyboard can be used with the gamelist, playlist, and workarea child windows. Use F6 or Shift+F6 to select one of these windows to be the "active" window with the keyboard "focus". (F6 is commonly used for this purpose.) These custom child windows do not have a caption bar to indicate which one is currently active. Instead, the letter 'F' (for "Focus") will be prominent in the lower right corner of the active window. Within the active window, some or all of the standard navigation keys can be used.

GameList

Home, End, Page Up, Page Down - These keys will simply scroll the list.
Up and Down-Arrow - Use these to select the next or previous entry in the list. Scroll to the page containing the entry you want, then use these arrow keys to get to the entry.
Enter - Hit the Enter (Return) key to play the currently selected game.

PlayList

Home, End - Go to the start or end of the game.
Page Up, Page Down, Up and Down Arrow - Play backward or forward 8 plays (4 moves).
Left and Right Arrow - Play backward or forward 1 play.

WorkArea

Making this window active will give the focus to the edit control. Note that the control functions in this window are duplicated in the menu (Edit, and Play).