Contents for Visual File Manager Help

Visual File Manager is a file management system which implements a complete environment for file and program manipulation similar to the Macintosh's Finder. This product includes features of both of Windows' File Manager and Program Manager.

Introduction

How To...

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API File Formats (for Programmers)

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What is Visual File Manager?

Visual File Manager attempts to replace Windows' File Manager with a product that is more consistent and intuitive. This product works in many ways as the Macintosh Finder, simplifying many of the file operations.

VFM adds Macintosh features such as colored <u>labels</u> for files and <u>aliases</u> and now includes VFM <u>Titles</u>.

Credits

Conceived, written and developed by Scott M. Messier
Contributions of interface design, help file, and testing by James Owen

Information in this help file is subject to change without notice and does not represent a commitment on the part of Tuesday Software.

Fine Print:

System Requirements of Visual File Manager

This program requires Windows version 3.1 and a pointing device, such as a mouse. Although most features of VFM can be accessed by keyboard control, all file transfer operations are performed by clicking and dragging with the cursor.

Registering Your Copy of Visual File Manager

Send us your name, company name, mailing address, and phone number, and $25 and we will send you update notices as well as low cost upgrades. Send your info and money to:
VFM - Tuesday Software
215 Via Sevilla
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please contact us at:
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New Features for Version 1.15

VFM v1.15 adds the following features:
1. The **Modify...** dialog will now prompt to use the changed file name as the VFM <u>title</u> or default to the existing title.
2. The **Empty Trash** command on failure will now show the user the name of at least one file or folder that could not be deleted, avoiding the mysterious "could not be emptied" message which seems to be appearing too frequently on some computers.
3. Selecting individual file icons is much faster.

VFM v1.15 fixes the following bugs:
1. The disappearance of icons (caused by unusual system colors) has finally been solved.
2. Files which have had their attributes modified by other programs (for instance, the archive flag) no longer lose their label, icon position or title upon returning to VFM.
3. When the trash is emptied in the process of clearing enough disk space to transfer files, the added disk space is considered before issuing the dreaded "insufficient disk space" message.
4. VFM no longer allows you to move a volume into itself, an unintentional feature of earlier versions. An error message is given when this is attempted. It is still possible to copy a volume into itself without negative effect, although duplicating your hard disk tends to use a lot of disk space.

Thanks to all those who have registered their copies of VFM and have supported what appears to be a popular first attempt at uniting Windows and Macintosh users. Your responses have been very encouraging. Thanks also for bug reports and suggestions for improvements.

Copying Files and Folders

Copying makes a duplicate of the selected files and <u>folders</u> in a separate folder. A copy operation cannot have the same source and destination folder. Successful copying requires sufficient disk space on the destination volume. Copying to and from unmounted <u>volumes</u> is supported by Visual File Manager with a minimum of disk swapping.

To Copy Files and Folders
1. Bring the folder containing the items to be copied to the top by clicking on it, etc.
2. Select the files and folders to be copied. Selecting a folder selects its contents.
3. Hold down the control [Ctrl] key if copying to and from the same volume.
3. Drag the selected items over the target folder window, folder icon or volume icon. If the target is an icon, then the icon will change its appearance as the files are dragged across, indicating it is ready to receive files.
4. Release the mouse button. A dialog box appears showing progress.

To Copy between floppies when you have a single floppy drive
The trick to copy items from one floppy to another is to get the icons of both disks on the desktop.
1. Insert the first floppy and double-click on the icon to mount the volume.
2. Select the **Unmount disk** item under the **Special** menu. Now you can remove the disk from the drive.
3. Insert the second floppy in the drive, and again double click on the icon.
Once you have both icons on the desktop, you simply drag the items from one disk to the other, and VFM will ask for the source or destination disks as needed.

Customizing Visual File Manager

Visual File Manager must make some assumptions when it is first run, but there is no reason for you to feel restricted to these default options. You are free to modify the following by using the appropriate menu items:

1. Font name and font size for all displayed text.
2. Whether or not VFM is allowed to store icon information on removable, fixed and network drives. This includes the positioning of the icons in folders, the labeling of the icons and the position and sequence of folders opened on a volume. If VFM is not allowed to store this information in files (usually less than 1K per folder), then icon positions and labels will be forgotten as soon as their folders are closed.
3. Specific reserved file and folder names which VFM may use to store its information. Although the default names are cryptic enough for most users, assuring that there will be no conflicts, there may in fact be those users whose applications conflict with these names. To prevent data loss in these cases, the user is free to change these special names (in addition to turning-off icon saving). This should only be done as necessary so that VFM icon files may be shared between computers without needing to be renamed.
4. The path and contents of the Pear Menu, which displays the names and icons of programs and other items for quick reference. The smaller the number of items displayed, the faster VFM will start-up.

Finding Files and Folders

At times you may need to locate a file or <u>folder</u> that's somewhere on your disks, but you can't remember where.
The **Find** item under the **File** menu lets you type the name or partial name of a file or folder and search all the mounted <u>volumes</u> for the item. The first matching item will be highlighted. If this is not the item you were looking for, then select the next menu item **Find again**. VFM accepts wild cards and partial names when searching.

Labeling Files and Folders

Files, <u>folders</u> and <u>volumes</u> can all have <u>labels</u>. Although descriptions for the label colors are supplied, these are only suggestions and have no real effect or meaning. Label information is stored in the same files which store icon positions.

Labels serve as an additional way of identifying icons. Labeling items changes the color of the icons. You may sort your icons by label. A suggested use for labels is to mark those programs which should not be launched from VFM (see <u>Opening Applications</u>).

To Label Files and Folders

1. Select the item or items if more than one should have the same color.
2. Select a label color from the **Label** menu.
3. Be sure that the **Remember...** option for this volume is checked or labels will be discarded when the folder closes.

Mounting Volumes

Volumes can be mounted to cause their contents to be revealed and manipulated in Visual File Manager. While fixed disks are mounted by default when VFM starts up, other disks need to be mounted manually by the user.

To Mount a Volume
1. Make sure the disk is in the appropriate drive if the drive is removable, or that the drive has been logged-on in the case of network drives.
2. Double-click on the unmounted volume icon with the corresponding disk letter (e.g.. "A:\") which should be present on the desktop. Be sure that the icon you double-click on is dark (as opposed to bright, indicating a mounted volume).
3. When the volume is mounted, the volume icon changes to a brighter-colored version of itself. In the case of removable volumes, a duplicate volume icon will appear nearby showing dark colors. Any other volumes sharing the same drive letter with the mounted volume will be automatically unmounted, but any folders opened on these volumes will remain unchanged.
4. Any remembered folders will automatically open when a volume is mounted, or you may double-click on the mounted volume icon to see its root folder.

Moving Files and Folders

Moving the selected files and <u>folders</u> reorganizes the way the directories of your <u>volumes</u> are set up.

To Move Files and Folders
1. Bring the folder containing the items to be moved to the top by clicking on it, etc.
2. Select the files and folders to be moved. Selecting a folder selects its contents.
3. Drag the selected items over the target folder window, folder icon or volume icon. If the target is an icon, then the icon will change its appearance as the files are dragged across, indicating it is ready to receive files. If the target is a different volume than the original one, you will get a copy of the files or folders on the target, and the original ones will be left intact.
4. Release the mouse button. A dialog box appears showing progress.

Opening Folders

Opening a <u>folder</u> shows the content of that folder. To open a folder, double-click on the folder or select the folder and select the **File** menu and choose the **Open** menu item. To open the parent folder of an opened folder window, you can click on the title bar of the window while holding down the [Ctrl] button. This will evoke a pop-up menu containing the names of all parent folders and the name of the <u>volume</u> on which this folder resides. Select the name of the parent folder to open it.

Opening Documents

Opening a <u>document</u> launches the appropriate <u>application</u> to edit the document, or sends a message to the open application. To open a document, double-click on the document icon or select the document and select the **File** menu and choose the **Open** menu item. You can also drop the document icon directly into the application you wish to open it if that application accepts filenames passed as command-line parameters. This is the best way to share common document formats (like text, graphics and sound) between various applications without associating the documents with a particular application.

If Visual File Manager cannot find an appropriate application to match a launched document, it will let you choose an application to use to open the document. VFM will store these settings (in Window's registration database) so that you only need tell VFM once which program is associated with all the documents sharing this extension.

Opening Applications

Opening an application launches it the in almost the same way that the Program Manager does. To open an application, simply double-click on the application icon or select the icon and select the **File** menu and choose the **Open** menu item. You can also open an application by dropping an appropriate document into the application icon. Note that some applications require special command-line parameters to function properly, and that these parameters can be found in the properties of Program Manager icons. Such programs should only be started with Program Manager. In addition, some programs are not meant to be launched while Windows is running and should not be launched from Visual File Manager. All Windows applications and many DOS applications can be safely launched using either VFM or the Program Manager or both.

Renaming Files and Folders

The names and attributes of files, <u>folders</u> and <u>volumes</u> can be modified under VFM.

To Rename a File, Folder or Volume
1. Select the item and select **Modify** under the **File** menu. A dialog box appears.
2. Type the new name in the text field labelled "Dos Name" being careful to avoid characters not allowed by DOS.
3. Click on the OK button.

When renaming a volume, the screen will blank momentarily while the DOS renaming program is invoked.

To Retitle a File or Folder
1. Select the item and select **Modify** under the **File** menu. A dialog box appears.
2. Type the new <u>title</u> in the text field labelled "VFM title" which allows up to 31 characters.

Selecting and Dragging Files and Folders

Selecting files and <u>folders</u> allows you to apply menu operations to these items. Dragging the items lets you move, copy, and open them. To select items, you can single click on one or shift-click on several items. Another method of selecting items is to drag a rectangle enclosing the items you're interested in.

To drag the item, you hold down the pointing device's button while over the item and move the item to where you want it.

Unmounting Volumes

Unmounting <u>volumes</u> makes VFM forget about these disks. This is necessary when you want to eject a disk and no longer need the disk image in VFM. To unmount a volume, you simply drag its icon to the trash; this does not erase anything, it simple throws out the "image" of the disk. You can also select **Unmount disk** from the **Special** menu to unmount the volume without erasing its labeled icon from the <u>desktop</u>. Volumes should be unmounted prior to being removed from the physical drive or VFM will prompt you periodically to insert the disk.

Using Aliases

Aliases help you organize your icons so that you can get at the items you need quickly. An alias can be used in almost exactly the same way as the file or folder it references; for example, launching an aliased application, opening an aliased document, folder, etc. The only difference between aliases and the files they represent is that when an alias is moved or copied, it is the alias file itself which will be transferred, not its aliased item. VFM does not allow volumes, the trash folder or other aliases to be aliased. To make an alias, you simply select an icon and select **Make Alias** from the **File** menu. A small document with a similar name and an .ALI extension will be created. You can tell aliases from real icons because their names are *italicized*.

Using the Pear Menu

The Pear Menu lists all the <u>applications</u> and other items in a special <u>folder</u> called the Pear menu folder. This is a good place to place your most used applications and <u>documents</u>, or <u>aliases</u> referencing them, so that you'll have easy access to them. You may change the folder which is used to fill the pear menu by specifying its path and the type of items to be displayed. To do this, choose **Pear menu options** from the menu topped by the picture of a pear. The default pear menu folder is the Windows default directory.

Using the Trash Folder

When you throw files in the trash can, they are actually moved to a <u>trash folder</u> on your disk. To free the disk space associated with these files, you must select **Empty Trash** item under the **Special** menu.

Pear Menu Commands

The pear menu displays a list of files in a special <u>folder</u> that we designate as the pear menu folder. Selecting one of the files in this list launches the file as if you had double-clicked on it. A good way of using the Pear Menu is to set up a special folder with <u>aliases</u> of the files you use the most, and use the menu for easy access to these files. The pear menu has the following menu item:

Pear menu Options sets the pear menu folder path and allows you to filter the types of files shown in the menu.

File Menu Commands

The file menu contains all the file related operations, and contains the following menu items:

New Folder creates a new <u>folder</u> in the current window. If no window is selected, the folder is created on the <u>desktop</u>.

Open... opens the currently selected icon. If the selected icon is a <u>volume</u> or a folder, it opens it. Otherwise, if an <u>application</u> is selected, it is launched, and if a <u>document</u> is selected, its associated application is launched. It is possible that a document does not have an associated application, and you will be asked to associate the document to a list of applications.

Modify... allows you to change the name and certain file attributes for the selected icons.

Get Info... shows info about the selected icons (most useful for finding the number of bytes in a folder.

Duplicate... makes a copy of the selected icons.

Make Alias... makes an <u>alias</u> of the selected icons. Aliases are small VFM documents that point to an icon, so that most operations done to the alias affect the real icon; for example, opening an Alias opens the icon that it points to.

Associate... relates documents with programs in the registration database or lets you add applications to the registration database. This allows VFM to know which application to launch when you open a document.

Find... locates an icon by name by searching through all the mounted volumes. When a matching name is found, it selects opens its window and highlights the icon.

Find Again repeats the previous search and highlights the next matching icon.

Open Path... lets you type in the full path name of a folder of file to open (mostly for those that like to type). Also, you can get the full path name by selecting an icon and selecting the **Copy Pathname** item under the **Special** menu.

Print Setup... lets you set the printer characteristics for the next time you print a window.

Print Window prints the contents of the current window.

Exit quits VFM.

Edit Menu Commands

The edit menu is used in text editing dialog boxes and contains the following menu items:

Undo undoes the last operation performed.

Cut cuts out the current selection of text and puts it on the clipboard.

Copy puts the current selection of text on the clipboard without destroying the current selection.

Paste puts the text in the clipboard into the current text selection.

Clear wipes out the current selection of text.

Select All selects all the icons in a window or on the <u>desktop</u>.

View Menu Commands

The view menu reorganizes the display of <u>folder</u> icons and contains the following menu items:

by Icon shows files and folders using large icons.

by Small icon shows files and folders using small icons.

by Name shows files and folders sorted by name.

by Size shows files and folders sorted by size.

by Kind shows files and folders sorted by extension.

by Label shows files and folders sorted by label.

by Date shows files and folders sorted by date and time.

Label Menu Commands

The <u>label</u> menu colors files and <u>folders</u> for visual organization and contains the following menu items:

Essential colors files and folders orange.

Hot colors files and folders red.

In Progress colors files and folders purple.

Cool colors files and folders light blue.

Personal colors files and folders dark blue.

Project 1 colors files and folders green.

Project 2 colors files and folders brown

Special Menu Commands

The special menu contains the following menu items:

Arrange Desktop arranges the <u>desktop</u> icons, organizing desktop icons and positioning <u>volume</u> icons and the <u>trash</u> icon on the right-hand side of the main window.

Empty Trash deletes all files, <u>folders</u> and sub folders in the trash folder.

Copy Pathname(s) copies the full pathnames of all selected folder icons to the clipboard for pasting in dialog boxes or text editing programs.

Remember... changes the options to remember icon and folder positions and <u>labels</u> on a given type of media.

Show VFM Titles... toggles between modes which either show VFM <u>Titles</u> or the actual file name used for file and folders in uppercase.

Advanced Options... evokes a sub menu containing the following items:

    Change reserved names... alters the hidden file names used to manage VFM data. Changing these names will require VFM to be restarted to have effect.

    Remove VFM from disk... removes all icon files created by VFM on the selected volumes.

Font Name changes the name of the font used to display files and folders.

Font Size changes the size of the font used to display files and folders.

Windows Menu Commands

The windows menu contains the following menu items:

Cascade positions opened <u>folders</u> in a cascading pattern.

Tile positions opened folders in a tiled pattern.

Arrange Icons arranges the icons in a folder to optimize icon spacing.

Close All closes all opened folders.

Alias File Format

An <u>alias</u> file must have a .ALI extension but can have any 8-character name. When VFM opens a <u>folder</u> containing an .ALI file it attempts to read the path of the aliased file or folder from the .ALI file for display. If the aliased file is an <u>application</u>, then VFM will attempt to extract the icon of the application for display. The .ALI file format is as follows:

Type	Size	Offset	Required Value	Comment
character identification	16	0	"VFMA SMM JEO TS\0"	header string for
hex integer number of this VFM file	2	16	0x0100	version
integer	2	18	<u>Icon Type</u>	type of the icon
character file or folder	128	20	<u>Path Name</u>	full path of the aliased

Folder File Format

When VFM exits, the full pathnames of all opened folders are remembered in a file which is named "_FOLDERS.VFM" by default and stored in the "_DESKTOP.VFM" directory of mounted volumes with the remember option enabled. Because the volume is known, the drive letter is not stored in the pathname.

Type	Size	Offset	Required Value	Comment
character identification	16	0	"VFMF SMM JEO TS\0"	header string for
hex integer this VFM file	2	16	0x0100	version number of
character ...	82	18	Path Name	full path of the 1st folder
character	82	18+(n-1)*82	Path Name	full path of the nth folder

Icon File Format

An icon file will be created or updated in the real DOS directoy whenever a <u>folder</u> is closed in VFM and the remember option is enabled. The icon file will have the name "___ICONS.VFM" by default. The icon file format has changed for version 1.10 and is as follows:

Type	Size	Offset	Required Value	Comment
character identification	16	0	"VFMI SMM JEO TS\0"	header string for
hex integer this VFM file	2	16	0x0110	version number of
integer folder	2	18	<u>View Format</u>	view menu option of
rectangle icons	8	20	left. top, right, bottom	rectangle enclosing
(the following is repeated for each icon in the file until the end of file is reached)				
byte disk	1	variable	record size (10+)	size of icon record on
point the icon	4	variable	x, y	left, top position of
byte	2	variable	<u>Label</u> (0-6)	label of the icon
byte	2	variable	<u>Icon Type</u>	type of the icon
c-string	(1-13)	variable	File Name	name of the icon file
c-string empty	(1-32)	variable	VFM Title	title of the file (or
				string if same as
name)				

Icon Type

The icon types defined in VFM v1.0 are as follows:

Integer Value	Description
0	Mounted ejectable volume
1	Unmounted ejectable volume
2	Mounted CD-Rom volume
3	Unmounted CD-Rom volume
4	Mounted fixed volume
5	Unmounted fixed volume
6	Mounted ramdisk volume
7	Unmounted ramdisk volume
8	Mounted network volume
9	Unmounted network volume
10	Folder
11	Application
12	Batch file
13	Document
14	Empty trash folder
15	Full trash folder

Path Name

A path name must contain the full directory specification for a file or folder, including drive letter and all parent directories. For example:

    C:\WINDOWS\NOTEPAD.EXE

View Format

The view format options in VFM v1.0 are defined as follows:

Integer Value	Description
0	View by icon
1	View by small icon
2	View by name
3	View by size
4	View by kind
5	View by label
6	View by date

Document

A file which is used as data by an <u>application</u>.

Folder

A visual representation of a real DOS directory, which can contain one or more other files and directories.

Application

A DOS or Windows program file which has either a ".COM" or an ".EXE" extension.

Volume

A logical disk drive which represents one instance of a physical disk drive.

Alias

A file which is used by VFM to reference a file or <u>folder</u> in another location.

Label

A file attribute supported under VFM which causes the file or <u>folder</u> icon to be highlighted by a given color.

Trash Folder

A place to store unwanted files and <u>folders</u> prior to disposing of them permanently.

Desktop Folder

A place to store files, <u>folders</u> and <u>volumes</u> in a highly visible manner which is outside of the usual directory structure.

VFM Title

A file attribute supported under VFM which causes items to be displayed with names up to 31 characters in length.