

This README file gives instructions for installation, and a bare outline of what IniControls does. **You will find much fuller details in the helpfile, INICTRLS.HLP.**

Introducing IniControls

IniControls is a small set of components for Delphi programmers. The components are intended primarily for programmers who are writing configuration programs that store settings and preferences in `.ini` files (and, under Windows 95, in the registry).

The IniControls components are like Delphi data-aware components. But instead of linking a control on the screen directly to a field in a database, these components link the control to an entry in an `.ini` file. We call them *.ini-aware components*.

Delphi comes with a TIniFile object that encapsulates the behaviour of `.ini` files. But if you have an even moderately complex configuration program to write, you will find yourself coding large blocks of ReadString and WriteString method calls. This is easy, but tedious.

IniControls lets you snap together components in Designer to build a configuration program with almost no coding. You can load the controls from the `.ini` file, save the new settings back, or restore installation defaults, all with a single line of code each. IniControls provides a complete set of controls, including edit box, numeric-only edit box, radio button, checkbox, combobox and string grid.

Installing IniControls

There are two steps to installation: installing the IniControls unit in the Delphi environment, and installing the helpfile so that it is accessible to the Delphi context-sensitive search engine.

Installing the Components

Start Delphi and close any open project. Then select Options | Install Components | Add | Browse. Set "List files of type" to "Unit file (*.dcu)" and navigate to the directory where you unzipped the IniControls package. Select inictrl.dcu and press OK. You will then be returned to the main Install Components dialogue. Press OK.

After a noticeable pause, Delphi will return control to you. You will notice that the component palette has a new tab labelled `.INI` containing seven new components. (You can change this arrangement later using Options | Environment | Palette if you like.)

Installing Help

You can consult the helpfile, INICTRLS.HLP, without installing it. But you will not have context-sensitive help inside Designer until you install the help in the Delphi environment. We have taken a lot of trouble over the smooth integration of IniControls help with the Delphi search engine. *Please* install it.

1. In the IniControls package you will find two files that you need, INICTRLS.HLP and INICTRLS.KWF. Copy INICTRLS.HLP to `\DELPHI\BIN`. Copy INICTRLS.KWF to `\DELPHI\HELP`.
2. Run HELPINST.EXE: this is supplied as part of the Delphi package. First select File | Open and open `\DELPHI\BIN\DELPHI.HDX`. Then select Keywords | Add keyword file and open `\DELPHI\BIN\INICTRLS.KWF`. Finally, select File | Save and exit the program.

Demo Program

To get a quick idea of what IniControls can do, compile and run the demo program INIDEMO.DPR.

Licence

IniControls is distributed as shareware. It is not in the "public domain". It is not free software. However, you do have the opportunity to try it for 90 days before you pay for it, subject to the terms of the evaluation licence, which you can read in the helpfile.

You may not distribute programs of your own that incorporate INICTRLS.DCU without a developer licence. A licence costs \$17-50 (or \$37-50 if you want the source) per developer workstation. Generous site licenses are available. This is a one-off fee: there are no royalties to pay. The fee is per developer workstation.

How to Obtain a Developer Licence

You will find a licence form in the helpfile. Help will print it or copy it to the Windows clipboard for you. You have the choice of paying by cheque, credit card, company purchase order, NetCash, or, if you have a CompuServe account, you can license the product online.

The benefits of licensing the program are:

1. *Deployability.* You can't deploy applications containing unlicensed copies of INICTRLS.DCU to end-user sites. When we receive your licence form we will send you a licence number that will permit you to deploy unlimited copies of your programs.
2. *Support.* Licensed users get guaranteed support for 90 days. If IniControls does not work on your system we will do our best to fix it so that it does work. We can't promise to make it work in all cases. If we can't fix the defect we will refund your fee.
3. *Nag-free usage.* After your trial-use licence expires, the program will nag you to license it.

Uninstalling IniControls

After you have evaluated IniControls, you may decide it is not what you need. To uninstall it, use the following procedure:

1. Start Delphi and close any open project. Then select Options | Install Components. Highlight IniCtrls in the Installed Units list box, and press Remove. Press OK. After a noticeable pause, Delphi will return control to you. You will notice that the component palette no longer has the .INI tab.
2. Run HELPINST.EXE. First select File | Open and open \DELPHI\BIN\DELPHI.HDX. Highlight INICTRLS.KWF in the list box. Then select Keywords | Delete keyword file. Finally, select File | Save and exit the program.

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This is \$Revision:: 1.23 \$ of this file.