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Summary

The basic steps to use Convert are as follows:

> Select a category from the top box using either the mouse or keyboard.
> Select Units to convert from and Units to convert to
> Enter a number in Number From box on the left-hand side
> Select the GO button using either the mouse or keyboard

That's really all there is to it.   When you GO, the answer is calculated and displayed in the Answer box on the right-hand side of the window.

Categories and Units (and their conversion factors) are read from data files.   The CATS.DAT and UNITS.DAT files supplied with the program are quite complete and will probably meet most any needs you have.   You can easily modify them, however, if you'd like to pare down the list a bit or if you have special needs (e.g. industry-specific units) which aren't met by the supplied files.

SCATS.DAT and SUNITS.DAT are smaller versions of the CATS.DAT and UNITS.DAT files which also ship with the program.   They can be set as the standard data files through the Toolbox.

In addition to the basic functions, Convert also allows you to select new files or modify existing files through the Tool button, Swap the Units From and Units To selections, modify the output format using the Display box, or use the answer in chain calculations through the Edit buttons.

Swap

This button swaps the selected item in the Units boxes from the left-hand side to the right-hand side and vice versa.   The answer is automatically recalculated.

About the Program

CONVERT is a units conversion program for Microsoft Windows 3.1.   Version 2.0 is a complete rewrite from Version 1.0 and has a much more contemporary look, control over output format, and many other enhancements.   Version 2.0 was written using Borland C++ 3.1 with ObjectWindows and TurboPower's Data Entry Workshop and WinSys toolkits.

What sets Convert apart from the many other conversion programs available for Windows, is the large number of conversions which ship with the program and the user's ability to easily create his own data files to address specific requirements.

Convert is released as Shareware.   Shareware is an alternative marketing method which allows you to completely evaluate programs before purchase.   If you continue to use a Shareware program after an evaluation period, you are required to register that program.

Registering Convert costs just $15 with media or $10 without.   Either registration option gets you a serial number which you can enter from the Toolbox's Enter # button.   After entering the registration number, the Shareware reminder and registration associated buttons in the Toolbox will be gone the next time you start Convert.   You can easily printout a registration form to send to Bit Masons along with your check through the Register button in the Toolbox.

About the Author

Gordon Haff and Bit Masons produces a wide variety of Shareware and Freeware for PC's.   Gordon Haff is a member of the Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP).

Our DOS-based file management program, *Directory Freedom*, is perhaps the smallest and fastest program of its type yet one of the most powerful with extensive customization options.   Features such as SmartViewers, a very complete system information screen, and the ability to create archives mean that *Directory Freedom* has features usually found only in much larger and slower programs.

the last word is a DOS-based quotations trivia game which breaks away from the usual multiple-choice answers and, instead, matches the user's answers against a list of acceptable responses with a sophisticated pattern recognition algorithm.   *PC Computing* called it "a nice break from less thoughtful, shoot-'em-up action games."

In addition to the above Shareware products, Bit Masons has released a wide range of Freeware utilities for both DOS and Windows.

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Edit Keys

The Edit keys and buttons allow you to easily make chain calculations.

The Copy key copies the answer to the Windows clipboard while the Paste key copies the contents of the Windows clipboard to the input field.

Display Keys

The Display keys and buttons allow you to customize the formatting of the answer.

The Decimal and Exponent buttons allow you to choose whether the answer should be displayed in Decimal (e.g. 1345.32) or Scientific notation (e.g. 1.35E03) form while the Decimals item determines the number of digits to the right of the decimal point.

Even if you choose a decimal display, the answer will automatically be displayed in Scientific notation if it would otherwise be too long to fit in the answer box.

Toolbox

The Toolbox, accessed from the Tools button, allows you to change the files used for category or units data and/or to edit the contents of those files.

If you press Cancel from this box, the data file selections will not change.   Note, however, that editing changes cannot be undone once the files are saved.

Unregistered versions of Convert have two additional buttons.   The Register button provides you with a form which you can fill out and then print for registering your copy of Convert.   The Enter # button gives you an easy way of entering your personal serial number which you will receive together with your registration acknowledgement.

Data Files

Convert is supplied with two data files: CATS.DAT and UNITS.DAT.

The format of CATS.DAT is as follows:
      cat1
      cat2
      cat3

where cat1, cat2, cat3 are the names of categories such as length or volume.

The format of UNITS.DAT is as follows:
      cat1,unit1,MultFactor[,AddFactor]
      cat1,unit2,MultFactor[,AddFactor]
      cat2,unit3,MultFactor[,AddFactor]

where cat1 and cat2 are the names of categories which correspond to entires in the CATS.DAT file, unit1, unit2, and unit3 are units which correspond to the various categories, and MultFactor and AddFactor and multiplicative and additive conversionfactors (respectively) for each of the entries. The AddFactor is optional and, if not present in an entry, is assumed to be 0.

The following formula is used to calculate the answer:

$$NumberTo = (NumberFrom + AddFrom) * ConvTo/ConvFrom - AddTo$$

If you want to create your own data files, the best thing for you to do is probably to look at the existing UNITS.DAT file and puzzle it out (temperature has Add factors).

Any text editor can be used to create the data files. If you use a word processor, be sure to save the file in ASCII mode. If you save in your word processor's standard format, you will likely make Convert very unhappy.

CONVERT.INI Format

The following is the default CONVERT.INI file -- which should reside in your Windows directory.

```
[Convert]
CatData=cats.dat
UnitData=units.dat
Decimals=2
Type=0
Registration=
AlwaysSmall=0
DisableEdit=0
```

CatData and UnitData point to the locations of the current categories and units data files.   The default settings specify the default data files shipped with Convert in the Working directory set for the program. Any changes made in the Toolbox will be automatically saved when exiting Convert.

Decimals specifies the number of digits to the right of the decimal point in the answer.   Any changes made through the control in the main Convert screen will be automatically saved upon exit.

Type specifies whether Decimal or Scientific notation is the default format for the answer.   0 is for Decimal and 1 is for Scientific notation.   Again, any changes made through the control in the main Convert screen will be automatically saved uponexit.

Registration is filled in when you enter your serial # via the Toolbox.

AlwaysSmall should be set to 1 if you wish the Convert main screen to have the same layout for both 640 x 480 displays and larger displays (800 x 600).   The main screen normally uses a somewhat different layout (the same buttons, etc. but a different layout) when a larger display is available.   This different layout is, I think, somewhat more aesthetic for the larger display but is too wide to a 640 x 480 display.   If, however, you use computers with different display resolutions, you may wish touse the same layout for both.

DisableEdit should be set to 1 if you wish to disable the edit file buttons in the Toolbox.   These buttons give you an easy way to edit the data files from within Convert, but this may not always be a desireable feature.