

Folders Program

Version 3.3b

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This program adds depth to the Program Manager groups for MS Windows. Using it gives the capability equivalent to having subgroups in the groups. Have as many layers as desired of folders. Cut the ties to File Manager by placing all your relevant files in folders in an organized manner. Reduce drain on system resource by eliminating unnecessary groups. Launch applications by simply double-clicking on their icon in the folder. Any associations created between data files and apps are made use of when executing an item.

Features include:

- Add any type of item to a folder
- Move or copy single or multiple items from folder to folder
- Launch your applications directly from a folder
- Customizable command lines for any item
- Use almost any icon on the system to represent items
- Tie two or more folders to the same subfolder
- No limit on nesting folders within folders
- Save size, position of a folder and position of items in folder

Registration

Folders is a shareware program. As such, you may use it on a trial basis for thirty days. After this time, the program should be registered if it is continued to be used. The total cost is twenty dollars. Registered users of version 2.x may upgrade to 3.x for ten dollars. The fee is payable to:

Sloop Software
6457 Mesedge Lane
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
(719) 260-0433

Be sure and specify your name, address, name of the program and where you obtained the program when registering. Also, specify 3.5" or 5.25" disk. Colorado residents, please add the applicable sales tax. Sorry, no credit cards.

Direct any comments to the above address or email to CompuServe, id 72540,144 or Internet 72540.144@compuserve.com. Customer support is available to registered users and to unregistered users during their trial period.

A Japanese version is available from:

Personal Data Factory
Shinjuku yubinkyoku dome
160 Tokyo Japan

It includes a manual written in Japanese and costs 5000 yen. Customer support is also provided from Personal Data Factory.

Folder Commands:

The following sections give detailed explanations on the commands available to a folder. It is suggested that you read the README.TXT file first and then install the program. Take a look at a folder and play around before reading thru this document. Most of the functions should be self-explanatory.

File Menu

New - This command create a new folder. This can be either a subfolder or a group level folder. Group level folders appear as icons in the group specified during the creation process. Subfolders appear as icons in the folder currently opened. Note that you can create subfolders in subfolders with essentially no limit on nesting folders within folders. Be sure and give each folder an unique name. Changing the case of a letter will not make a name unique.

Open - This command allows you to open or activate, if already open, any folder on the system, regardless of it being a subfolder or not. This allows you to open a specific folder without having to hunt it up. The file currently open is not closed, thus allowing you to switch between it and any other folder you open.

Save - This command saves any changes made to the folder. Note that some commands will automatically perform a save when executed. They include delete subfolder, rename a subfolder, create a subfolder. Basically, any command that manipulates a subfolder will cause an automatic save.

Save Config - The current configuration of a folder may be saved using this command. The configuration includes the size of the folder, the position of the folder and the location of the items in the folder. Exactly which of these quantities are saved can be set using the Preferences command under the Special menu.

Name - Using this command, a group level folder may be renamed. It is grayed out in subfolders. Subfolders must be renamed by their parent folder using the Special menu command, Item Name. Note that the folder icon in the Program Manager group must also be renamed using the PM's Properties command.

Delete - This command will delete the group level folder currently open. That is the folder from which this command is executed will be deleted. Like name it only works for group level folders. Subfolders are deleted using the Edit menu command, Delete Subfolder from the parent folder. Two important points to note with this command are, first, no subfolders are deleted. To prevent having any unwanted subfolders left, they must be deleted before this command is executed starting from the lowest level. Second, the folder icon in the Program Manager group must be deleted using the PM's delete command.

Exit - Causes the current folder to be closed. If has not been saved, and changes have been made, you will be prompted on whether or not you want the folder saved.

Exit Windows - This command only appears if Folders is being used as the Windows shell. It allows the user to exit windows and may be executed from any folder, not just the shell folder.

Edit Menu

Add - Adds items to the current folder. A dialog box is presented from which you may choose any file on the system. After choosing, a descriptive name for the item must be entered. This is the name that will show up under the item's icon. An icon will appear which represents the item just added. By double-clicking on this icon, the item may be executed.

Delete -

Item - This command removes the selected item from the folder. It does not delete the file associated with the item. It simply removes it from the folder. If multiple items have been selected, a prompt to delete or not appears for each item selected.

File and Item - This command removes the item from the folder and deletes the file associated with the item. As such, use it only when you wish to remove the file completely from the disk. If you wish to only remove the item from the folder, use the Delete Item command. This command does not function with subfolders. If multiple items have been selected, a prompt will appear as to whether or not to delete it for each item selected.

Subfolder - Use this command to delete a subfolder. Note that this command completely removes the subfolder. As such, if you have copied it to another folder and wish to be able to still access it from this other folder, use the Delete Item command to remove it from the current folder rather than this command. Also, any subfolders in this subfolder are NOT deleted. So be sure and delete these other subfolders, first.

Move - This command moves the currently selected item to the folder specified. In doing so, it is removed from the current folder. Note that if the folder you are moving the item to is open, it must be closed and reopened before the new item will appear. This commands will work on any item including subfolders. If multiple items are selected, all items selected are moved.

Copy - Works the same as move, but does not remove the item from the current folder. If multiple items are selected, all items selected are copied. Use this command to link two or more folders to the same subfolder. Simply create the desired subfolder using the File menu New command. Then copy the new folder item to whatever other folders you wish to be able to access it.

Command Line - Allows you to customize a command line for an item. Note that this command line takes precedence over the file name. That is, if you have an item whose file is LETTER.TXT and TXT files are associated with Notepad, normally executing this item would cause Notepad to be ran using the file as the data file. However, if you specify the command line as WRITE.EXE LETTER.TXT, the program Write will be ran rather than notepad. By setting the command line to blank, the original functionality of the item will be returned. Note that any type of command may be specified on the command line.

Filename - Allows the file name of an item to be viewed or edited.

Special Menu

Item Name - This command allows you to rename items and subfolders. When renaming subfolders, an automatic save will be performed, otherwise a save must be done to keep the new name.

Item Icon - Allows you to specify which icon is to be used to represent an item. This may be any icon that has been added to the folders system either thru the use of the Add Icon command or by being added thru the inclusion of an executable. See the Add Icon command for details. The item may be returned to its previous state by simply specifying a blank in the icon name field of the dialog box.

Icons -

Add Icon - Folders comes with several built-in icons already available for use within a folder. However, using this command, almost any icon description file (usually ends in .ICO) may be added to the folder system for use within a folder. Once an icon has been added, it may be accessed using the Item Icon command or the Set Default Icons command. Note that icons associated with executables are automatically added to the folder system whenever a new executable or an item associated with a new executable is added to a folder. These icons are automatically named the same as the executable program and appear with an asterisk before their names in the icon selection dialog boxes. They may be used in exactly the same manner as an icon explicitly added using the Add Icon command. Before adding an icon, it may be previewed after selecting it by hitting the Show Icon button.

Delete Icon - Icons that have been added to the folders system, whether thru the Add Icon command or by adding an executable, may be removed from the system using this command. Simply select the icon you wish to be deleted from the dialog box and it will be removed from the system. This operation should be used sparingly, however. Any items that have had their icon explicitly set using the Item Icon command or the Set Default Icons command may appear using an incorrect icon. In this case, simply use the appropriate command to reset the icon you wish to be used. Note that the built-in icons may not be deleted.

Set Default Icons - This command allows you to add or change the icons associated with specific extensions. Simply specify the extension, then choose the icon you want associated with it. Click on Set and the association will be recorded. Make as many associations as desired, hitting Set each time, then hit Done when finished. The new associations will not appear until the folder is closed and reopened. This is true for any folder that was open when the changes were made. Once set, any item with the specified extension will appear using the icon associated with that extension. Any association made for an extension may be removed by simply specifying blank in the icon name field of the dialog box.

Arrange Icons - Arranges the folder icons in an orderly manner.

Preferences - This command allow the folder to be customized. What aspects of a folder that are saved when using the Save Config command may be set from this command. Also, the folder can be set to minimize or close on execution of an item in the folder. Auto arrange of icons can be turned on or off from this command. Note that if auto arrange is on, the icons will be re-arranged everytime the folder is resized or minimized. Finally, the icon to be used to represent folder may be set. Once a new icon is assigned to the program, all subfolders and minimized folders will appear using this icon. However, any folder icons in Program Manager groups will still need to be set by hand. All folders should be closed after executing this option to allow the change to take effect.

Using Folders as the Windows shell: Folders may be used as the shell for Windows in place of the Program Manager. In order to do so, two simple changes need to be made, one to SYSTEM.INI and one to FOLDERS.INI, using a text editor like Notepad. Both of these files should be in your Windows directory.

In SYSTEM.INI find the line that reads **shell=progman.exe** and change it to read **shell=folders.exe**. Note that if you are not using Program Manager, progman.exe will instead be the name of whatever program you are using. In FOLDERS.INI, find the line that reads **shell=** and, after the equal sign, add the name of whatever folder you wish to have open on Windows startup. For example, **shell=Main Folder**. Be sure and spell the name correctly or you may not be able to run Windows.

After making these changes, restart Windows. It should startup with the folder you specified in FOLDERS.INI open and any programs listed in the load and run lines in WIN.INI appropriately executed. To protect yourself, you may want to make a backup copy of SYSTEM.INI before making any changes. This way, if there is a problem in starting Windows, all you need do is copy the backup of SYSTEM.INI over the changed version to return you to whatever shell you were using previously.

Notes on using icons: In order to use your own icons in a folder, they must be added to the Folder system. This can be done in one of two manners. The first way, and easiest way, is to simply add either an executable file with an icon in it or an item associated with an executable with an icon.

For example, if .TXT files are associated with Notepad, if you add either a .TXT file or NOTEPAD.EXE to a folder, the notepad icon will become available for use by the Item Icon or the Set Default Icons commands. In addition, any item with a .TXT extension will appear using the notepad icon after this. Note that the first time you do this, the folder will have to be closed and reopened before all items appear using their icon.

The second method involves using the Add Icon command under the Special menu. Using this command, you can add any acceptable icon description file. These files usually end in .ICO. Once an icon has been added, it can be accessed using the Item Icon or the Set Default Icons commands. You'll note that when using these commands, some icon names appear with an asterisk before them. These asterisks indicate icons that were added to the system from an executable in the manner described by the first method of adding icons.

There may be some cases where you wish to use an icon in an executable that is not the first icon in the executable. Folders cannot extract these icons itself. There also may be cases where, for some reason, Folders just cannot find the icon in the executable (eg. WINWORD). In order to use such an icon, you will need to convert it into an ICO file using some utility such as Icon Manager. Once this is done, it may be added using the Add Icon command.

Should you be using a 256 color display and the icons are not displaying correctly, try this fix. In the FOLDERS.INI file, under [Defaults] should be a line that reads 'Color Mode=0'. Change the 0 to 256. This should allow the icons to display correctly. Note that Folders will only work in 256 mode now. To run in 16 color mode, change the number to 16 or 0, for auto-sensing of the color mode. If your INI does not have the color mode line, simply add it in to the [Defaults] section.

Hierarchy of icons: There is a hierarchy involved in Folders deciding which icon should be used to represent an item. At the top-level, if an item has had an icon explicitly set for it using the Item Icon command, this icon will always be used regardless of any other settings made. Next, if the item does not have an icon set for it, but does have an icon associated with its extension, this icon will be used. Finally, if neither of the above is true, if the item is an executable or is associated with an executable, the icon for that executable will be used. If none of the above holds, the item will appear using the default icon, which is the DOS icon.

Folders File Structure

Folders creates and maintains a data file for each folder created. These files end in a FLO extension. It is suggested you allow the install procedure create a separate directory for these data files, simply to avoid cluttering up the Windows directory any more than it probably is already. This is not necessary, though, as the files can be maintained anywhere as long as the directory is correctly specified during the install process.

An association is created between FLO files and the folders executive. When you click on a folder icon, the exec is ran with the appropriate data file. The exec itself cannot be ran without a data file being specified.

Folders Getting Confused

Should the FOLDERS.INI file get messed up, as will happen if you delete a folder without first deleting its subfolders, it can be repaired. Open FOLDERS.INI with a text editor like Notepad. Under the section [Folders List] the name of every folder with its corresponding DOS filename is listed. Make note of the DOS filenames of the folders that should be deleted. Delete those lines. Close the INI file and go to your folders directory. Delete those files whose names you made note of in the INI file. If you want to save these subfolders, instead of deleting anything, add the file whose name you found to a folder naming it with the subfolder name. A folder icon should be created representing that subfolder.

Manual Installation Process

Should the automatic install process fail for some reason, the following process may be followed to install the program.

1. Copy FOLDERS.EXE, FOLDERS.INI, FOLDERS.HLP to the windows directory.
2. Create a subdirectory of your windows directory called FOLDERS.
Note this step may be skipped. Any existing directory may be used instead.
3. Copy the file FLD0000.FLO to your folders directory.
4. Edit the file FOLDERS.INI in the following manner:
Under [Folders Directory] add the line: path = <directory>\
<directory> is whatever directory you want the folder data files placed in. Note the backslash at the end of the name. An example line would be: path = c:\windows\folders\.
5. Under the [Folder List] section add the line:
Empty Folder = fld0000.flo
That is all you need to do to FOLDER.INI.
6. Next, create an icon for FLD0000.FLO in a group in any of the manners described by the Windows documentation. Name it Empty Folder.
7. Finally, from the File Manager, using the associate command under the File menu, associate FOLDERS.EXE with .FLO files.
8. That's it. You should now be able to open and use your first folder.

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- FOLDERS.EXE - The Windows executable program
(shareware version only)
- FOLDERS.WRI - The program documentation
- README.TXT - Installation information
- FOLDERS.INI - Folders initialization file
- FOLDER.HLP - Folder help file
- FLD0000.FLO - Empty folder for manual installation process
- FINSTALL.EXE - Folders install program
- ORDERFRM.TXT - Folders order form

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