

Windows Printer Alias System Help

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Installed Printers List Box

The Installed Printers box shows all of the printing devices that you currently have installed in your Windows system, including printer aliases and devices that are not compatible with Aliasing. When you create a new alias, it will show up in the Installed Printers box.

You can perform the following operations on printers that are listed in the Installed Printers box:

1. Connect the printer to a different port.
2. Remove the printer.
3. Set up the printer.
4. Change the default printer.

Available Printers List Box

The Available Printers box lists all of the installed printers that are compatible with Aliasing (see Printer Compatibility). You can Create an alias based on any of the printers in this list.

Only "real" printers are listed in the Available Printers box, not Aliased printers.

Aliases List Box

The Aliases box shows all of the Aliases that you have created, and the "real" printer name that each alias corresponds to. The format is as follows:

My Alias Name = Real Printer Name

For example:

The LaserJet III in Room 7120 = HP LaserJet III

See Also

[Editing an Alias](#)

Connect Button

The Connect button brings up the Connect dialog box, which allows you to change the port connection of the currently selected Installed Printer.

Remove Button

The Remove button will bring up a confirmation box, asking if you wish to delete the currently selected Installed Printer. If you select Yes, Alias will remove the printer entry from the WIN.INI and notify other applications of the action.

The printer driver file itself will *not* be removed from the disk.

Setup Button

The Setup button allows you to specify printer settings such as portrait/landscape orientation, memory size, paper type, etc. for the currently selected [Installed Printer](#).

See Also

[Setting Up a Printer](#)

Create Alias Button

Press the Create Alias button to create a new alias based on the currently selected Available Printer.

See Also

Creating an Alias

Edit Alias Button

This button allows you to change the Alias text for the currently selected Alias within the Aliases list box.

See Also

Editing an Alias

About Button

This button brings up the About Box, which gives copyright and version information for Alias.

Close Button

Press the Close button to quit the Alias program.

Default Printer Indicator

This indicator shows which printer is currently selected as the default printer for all Windows applications.

See Also

[Changing the Default Printer](#)

Creating an Alias

To create a new Alias, use the following steps:

1. Select the printer for which you wish to create an Alias, from those listed in the Available Printers list box.
2. Press the Create Alias... button.
3. Type in the desired Alias, up to 31 characters in length.
4. Press the OK button.

The display will change to reflect the new Alias name. The new Alias will be added to both the Aliases list box, and the Installed Printers list box.

Note that the printer on which the new Alias is based will still be present in the system. If you wish to do a full rename (i.e. replace an existing "real" printer with an Alias), you should first Create the Alias, then Remove the previous printer.

See Also

[Editing an Alias](#)

[Removing an Alias](#)

Editing an Alias

To edit Alias text (change the name of an existing Alias), use the following steps:

1. Select the Alias you wish to edit from those listed in the [Aliases List Box](#).
2. Press the Edit Alias... button.
3. Change the Alias text as desired.
4. Press the OK button.

The display will change to reflect the new Alias name.

See Also

[Creating an Alias](#)

Connecting a Printer

To change the port to which a given printer is connected, use the following steps:

1. Select the desired printer from those listed in the Installed Printers box.
2. Press the Connect... button.
3. Choose the desired port from the list of ports in the Connect Printer dialog box.
4. Press OK to change the port connection.

See Also

[Setting Up a Printer](#)

Removing a Printer

To remove a printer or Alias, use the following steps:

1. Select the printer you wish to remove from those listed in the Installed Printers list box.
2. Press the Remove... button.

The Remove button will bring up a confirmation box, asking if you wish to delete the currently selected printer (or alias, as appropriate). If you select Yes, Alias will remove the printer or alias entry from the system and notify other applications of the action. The printer driver itself will *not* be removed from the disk.

Setting Up a Printer

To set up a printer, use the following steps:

1. Select the printer you wish to set up from those listed in the Installed Printers list box.
2. Press the Setup... button.
3. Make your desired changes to the printer setup (the printer driver contains its own on-line help, accessible through a Help button and/or the F1 key).
4. Hit the OK button within the printer driver as many times as necessary to return to the main Alias display.

The Setup button allows you to specify printer settings such as portrait/landscape orientation, memory size, paper type, etc. These settings are also available through the Windows Control Panel, but are provided in Alias for the sake of convenience.

See Also

[Connecting a Printer](#)

Quitting ALIAS

Press the Close button to quit the Alias program.

Changing the Default Printer

To change the global default printer for all of the Windows system, simply double-click on the desired printer in the [Installed Printers](#) box.

The Default Printer indicator at the bottom of the main Alias screen will change, indicating the new default printer setting. Other Windows applications will be notified that the setting has been changed. This function is also available through the Windows Control Panel, but is provided within Alias for the sake of convenience.

See Also

[Connecting a Printer](#)

[Setting Up a Printer](#)

Printer Compatibility

Most Windows 3.1 printer drivers are compatible with Aliasing. However, there are a few drivers (notably those using the GENDRV generic printer driver) which will not work with the Printer Alias System.

Alias keeps a list of which printers are compatible and incompatible, in the ALIAS.INI file. If Alias encounters a printer with which it is not familiar, it will scan the printer driver to determine its compatibility. The compatibility scan need only be performed once for a given printer driver.

Aliasing

The process of renaming a printer driver to your own desired string. For example, a printer that normally appears as an "HP LaserJet III" may be referred to as the "LaserJet III in Room 7120". This is the purpose of the Windows Printer Alias System.

Printer Compatibility Scan

When Alias starts up, it examines all of the installed printers in the system, and checks to see if they are listed in the ALIAS.INI file. Unfamiliar printers will then be scanned for compatibility. You will be prompted if you wish to perform the compatibility scan. You must answer Yes if you wish to use the Alias system. The compatibility scan may take a few moments.

LaserJet III character limit

The HP LaserJet III driver HPPCL5A.DRV is limited to 17 characters. This limitation is not shared by the Microsoft LaserJet III driver HPPCL5MS.DRV.

Introduction

The Windows Printer Alias System was created to provide a capability missing from the Windows 3.1/Windows for Workgroups 3.1 systems, namely the ability to rename printers.

Let's say you're printing from your favorite Windows application. Wouldn't it be nice if, instead of the printer selection saying something generic like "HP LaserJet III", you could call the printer anything you like? This is what Alias does for you.

This capability is incredibly helpful for network installations, using Windows for Workgroups or any other network software. The user may wonder, "Where is the LaserJet III that I'm printing to? Is that the one in Cathy's office or the one down at the end of the hallway, I forget...?" Network sharenames are too cryptic; something like "\\HR1024\HP3" or "HRSRV\SYS:HP3" is no help. Using Alias, you could call the printer "LaserJet III in Cathy's office" instead, eliminating confusion and headaches, saving time and money. Once you create an alias on a particular machine, no further maintenance is required.

I hope you find this shareware product helpful.

Kai Kaltenbach

Technical Information

Technical Information

Why do you need Alias to rename printers? Because you can't just rename printers under Windows 3.1 manually like you could under previous versions. The string used in the WIN.INI needs to correspond to a lookup table in the driver in order to provide the correct functionality. If you change the string to something the driver doesn't recognize, then you'll get default capabilities only and things won't work correctly.

For example, let's say you manually edit the WIN.INI (a hassle at best anyway) and change an HP LaserJet IID printer to "John's Printer". When you print from an application, the driver is going to try to figure out which printer you have selected by comparing the string "John's Printer" with its lookup table of supported devices (e.g. HP LaserJet II, IID, IIP). Since it won't find a match, it will default to its base unit, in this case the standard LaserJet II. This means you won't get the correct settings for the IID (fonts, duplex printing capability, etc.) Alias uses new technology to provide a rename capability without these problems.