



## Colour Converter 1.0

*Written and copyrighted Mark Dunlop*

### What is Colour Converter?

Colour Converter is a shareware application for the Apple™ Macintosh™ which converts Sun™ format raster files into Macintosh™ PICT files.

### Changes Since Converter 1.0:

The following are the main changes since the previous released 'Converter':

- 8 bit colour raster conversion
- run length encoded conversion
- AUFS compatible conversion
- works in the background in MultiFinder™
- can convert whole folders
- built in printing commands
- Colour Converter is a shareware application

### What is Sun Raster format?

This is the standard format of raster images created by Sun workstations. Raster files come in standard/raw and run length encoded formats; Colour Converter can read both these formats.

### What is Macintosh PICT format?

This is the standard picture definition format on the Macintosh and is used as a transfer medium between many Macintosh drawing applications. The PICT files which are created by Colour Converter are often very large and can only be read by *modern* applications such as Claris' MacDraw II.

### What is a shareware application?

A Shareware application is a piece of software which can be distributed and copied legally so long as no charge is made for process. If you find that you use the software or that you wish to keep a copy then you must pay the shareware fee which is, usually, stated in the about box of the application. If you do not wish to use the software you must delete your copy of the application. You may distribute a shareware application freely (but you must not charge for it), and thus the software spreads easily, the charge is very small, and you get to try software before paying excessive amounts for it.

Colour Converter carries a Shareware charge of £10 sterling, you may also pay your own countries equivalent plus a £1 surcharge which my bank makes on payment of foreign cheques. At the moment suitable equivalents are 15 ECU or US\$20. A cheque made payable to **Mark Dunlop** should be sent to

Mark Dunlop,  
4 Stirrat Street,  
Paisley PA3 1RF,  
Scotland, U.K.

Please include a note of your name, address, and e-mail address (if you have one). You will then feel content that you have paid for the software and that you hold it legally.

## What about colour?

Colour Converter (as the name implies) can convert colour Sun rasters into Colour PICT format. This allows for the conversion of 8-bit rasters with colour table.

## What about printing?

Colour converter can print PICT files or Sun Raster files to the selected printer. As printing requires use of the Macintosh QuickDraw routines you must be on a colour capable Macintosh before you can print colour images, otherwise crude monochrome equivalents shall be printed. If your print out is a blank page then Colour Converter did not have enough memory to print the specified file, you should quit Colour Converter and enlarge its memory allocation (from the Get Info... window of the application). Sorry that an error could not be given but I could not work out the difference between a very small picture and an empty one due to lack of memory.

The PICT files need not be created by Colour Converter and hence you can use Colour Converter to print any PICT file to a given printer (especially useful for colour printers which currently have poor printing support).

## What preferences can I specify?

There are three preferences windows in Colour Converter, one controls the preferences for monochrome image conversion, one for colour, and one specifies general conversion preferences. preferences are explained below, your preferences are saved in the System Folder when you quit Colour Converter so things are the same the next time you use Colour Converter.

The Monochrome and Colour conversion preferences allow you to set the conversion ratio and the creator for any Macintosh files, in addition the colour preferences allows you to set the brightening factor for colour images.

The conversion ratio states the number of Sun raster pixels that will be converted into the space of one Macintosh pixel (linearly). If you choose a ratio of 1:1 the resulting image is a 72dpi picture, if you choose 4:1 the resulting image is at a resolution of 288dpi. When printing to a 300dpi LaserWriter you should set the Page Setup to print at 4% reduction (this can be done from the options of the Page Setup) to give precise bitmap alignment of 300dpi. You should also use 4% reduction for the 144dpi images produced by a 2:1 conversion ratio. On the StyleWriter reduction percentage of 80% should produce the best quality images of 90dpi (the same as standard Sun screens), 180dpi, and 360dpi but this has not been tested.

You can also specify which application *created* the files which Colour Converter produces, this allows the files to be open in the Finder with your favourite drawing programme. You can also specify a custom set up, if your favourite application does not appear on the list.

When converting colour images you can specify a brightening factor, this is useful when the image is being printed on a colour printer which is not gamma corrected to print images as displayed on screen.

The general preferences dialogue allows you to specify the following:

- whether Colour Converter should beep when finished converting the selected file(s)
- whether the Colour Converter should be AUFS compatible, this allows files

held on an AUFS server to be converted but produces error messages when the source volume is locked.

- whether the temporary file produced when printing a Sun raster should be held in the system folder (usually preferred) or in the source file's folder.
- Whether the Monochrome/Colour preferences dialogue should be displayed before each conversion operation. It is useful to have this on when you are planning to produce different ratio images, but most of the time it should be kept off.

## Can I convert a whole folder at once?

Colour Converter allows you to convert a whole folder (or directory) in one command, this is useful for multiple conversions and/or print jobs. You can then use your Macintosh for other work or go for a coffee. All error messages are recorded and are displayed when the last file is converted thus there is little risk of the conversion failing just after you leave the room. When converting a folder Colour Converter also looks through any folders which are contained within the selected one and converts/ prints any files which are found in these sub-directories.

## How do I get the raster files onto the Macintosh?

**To transfer the files to the Macintosh you must use a file transfer application. This application must be set up to use binary transfer mode. I cannot stress this enough, all *bug* reports I received for Converter 1.0 were results of users not using a binary transfer method. Most file transfer applications default to transferring 7-bit bytes which contain the standard ASCII character set, however, since raster files use 8-bit data the file must be transferred using binary mode.**

**AUFS is not suitable for transferring files as it assumes any Unix<sup>TM</sup> created file to be textual.**

Most file transfer programmes produce files of type TEXT, if you cannot see the file you wish to convert when you choose the convert file command you should repeat the action while holding the shift key. This allows you to see files of any type and try to convert them, this feature is not available for multiple conversions since too many files would be tried wrongly.

## Can't I use AUFS?

Despite not being able to transfer the files using AUFS you can convert files which are held on an AUFS volume. Colour Converter persuades AUFS that it is transferring a non-textual file by taking temporary ownership of the document (all is returned to normal when the transfer is over), as a result of this you must have write permission on the AUFS volume before this conversion works. See the general preferences dialogue box to turn on this feature.

## What Macs will Colour Converter run on?

Colour Converter shall run on all Macintosh computers which are not older than than the 512K/800. The Macintosh must be running System 4.2 or later. At the moment this means the following machines:

512K/800, Plus, SE, II, IIx, IICx, SE/30, Portable, IICI, IIfx, Classic, LC, & IIsi

You shall get full functionality on all machines except that you will not be able print colour images from a machine which does not have Colour QuickDraw. The

following machines will allow you to print colour images:

II, IIfx, IIfx, SE/30, IIfx, LC, & IIfx

## What about MultiFinder™?

Colour Converter can perform its conversions in the background, this allows you to use your Macintosh for other purposes while files are being converted. However, due to the amount of disk accessing required the performance of your Macintosh shall be impaired while conversion is in process but you can still do word processing or other low weight activities. Colour Converter should also be compatible with System 7.

## What was Colour Converter written in?

Colour Converter was written entirely in Symantic's THINK's Lightspeed Pascal version 2.03 and was mainly developed on an aging 2.5M Macintosh Plus.

## Why the clock?

Because it's there! This was added as an alternative to the button palette to allow you to easily find Colour Converter when you have many applications open. Its easier to click on a window than run down the application menu.

## And finally

I hope you find Colour Converter useful, I look forward to any comments you can make (and your £10 won't go a miss either).

Thanks, Mark

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