

FINAL THOUGHTS ON

CONFIGURE

I have already dealt with most of the more significant and useful features of the Configure application, but there are still some further points which may be worth mentioning. None of these is likely to be that important in ensuring that you get the best use out of your computer - if anything such features as remain to be described just give you some choice in configuring

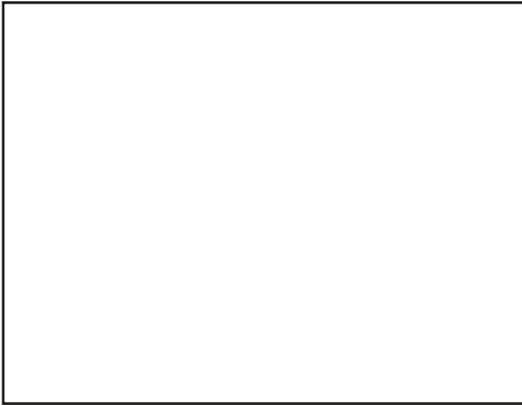


Figure 1.
The Configuration options

your system to suit yourself.

SOUND OPTIONS

The Sound window does give you some control over the level of sound produced by your computer. The Archimedes has built into it a range of different sounds (called voices). The default sound, the one which you are mostly likely to hear as a gentle reminder when you do something wrong, is called WaveSynth-Beep (don't ask me why). There are nine different voices built in, so you could customise your machine by choosing any of these in place of the default. I find most of them too harsh or strident, so I leave well alone.

There is also a choice of a quiet or loud beep, and whichever you choose, you can vary the volume further by using the slider at the head of the Sound window (see figure 2). You can do this by clicking on one of the two arrows either side of the green bar. As you do so the current voice will be played at the corresponding volume

Into the Arc: Using Configure (3)

by Mike Williams

so you can set everything up to your personal requirements. As I said, this is not crucial, and most users probably just leave everything as it is - I do. If you're fed up with sound altogether, then you can switch the speaker off completely.

MANAGING YOUR WINDOWS

Another Configure option which may be worth looking at is the Window manager (the Windows option in the Configure display) - see figure 3. This enables you to switch a number

of window

features on or off. Interactive file copying is quite useful, so leave this on - it means that a file will be copied in the

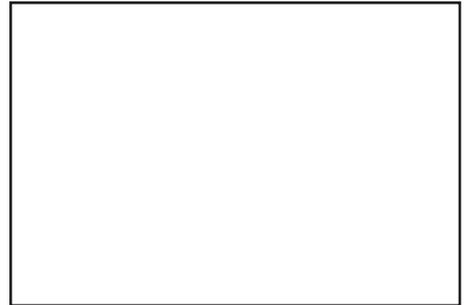


Figure 2.
background thus allowing you to get on with other work once the action has started.

There are four options under the general heading of Instant dragging. These all refer to window functions, and in each case allow you to choose between a solid movement or an outline movement. By solid, I mean that all the detail of the window will be moved or changed at the same time. Outline means that only an

outline is moved, and filled in solidly when the movement is complete.

Take the Move option for example. Look at the difference between having this option switched on or off as you drag a window around the screen. This Configure choice takes effect instantly so testing is easy. Moving a solid window (Move on) looks better, but if the contents of the window are at all complicated, it can be difficult for the computer to keep up with you - on slower machines at least. The settings here are purely personal, but I would suggest you definitely have these options on if you have an ARM3 machine (like the A5000 for example). You may find on other machines that things work quicker in the Desktop if you switch these options off.

slide off the foot of the screen. Drag the window back up and it re-appears. The same is true if you drag the window towards the right-hand edge of the screen.

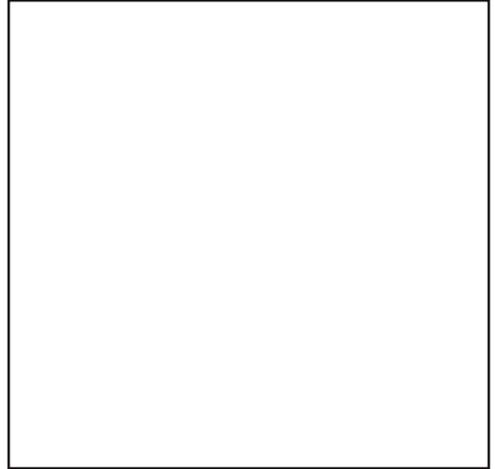


Figure 4.
Screen options



Figure 3.
The Window manager

HIDING

WINDOWS

The Window manager also provides options windows to be moved off-screen. Before RISC OS 3, when windows were dragged or moved around the screen, the whole of the window had to

remain within the Desktop (though there were some clever ways round this for the technical buffs). Now we can all do it.

In the section of the Window manager window called Allow windows off-screen, make sure that the first option (to bottom and right) is selected. Now drag downwards any window currently open on the screen (use the Window manager itself if you like), and you will see the bottom of the window

This feature can be very useful if you have several windows open within the Desktop, because you can park one or more windows so that a large part of the window is hidden from view. When you need that window, just drag it back into sight. It can also be useful where you have one window in front of another. Just drag the top window down to give you sight of the one underneath, and then if necessary drag it back to its former position.

The other option in this group I find less useful - perhaps that's because I'm right-handed - but try it out, and if it appeals keep it configured. Don't worry about losing a window altogether - since you need to point to its title bar to move it in the first place, but things can get a little tricky if hardly any of a window remains visible, so a little care is called for.

AUTOMATIC SUBMENUS

There are still two more options you can play with in this window. The first is fairly self explanatory, the second less so. Suppose, as an example, you click with the

Select button over the drive icon on the icon bar (floppy or hard disc). A window opens showing the root directory of that disc. Click with the Menu button over that window and the standard Filer menu should appear. The first item, Display has an arrow pointing to the right. Normally you will need to follow the arrow for the submenu to appear. Now switch on (by clicking) the option Open submenus automatically. Repeat the steps outlined above, particularly with regard to the Filer menu. You should find the submenu appears automatically after a short pause. Try opening that Filer menu and selecting other options which have a submenu. In each case the submenu will appear automatically after a short pause.

Whether you like this feature or not is up to you. I don't - I find that too often I get the wrong submenu appearing before I reach the option I really want, but its worth knowing the feature is there if you want it.

APPLICATIONS

The remaining two options worth a mention within Configure are those for Screen and Applications. The latter (see figure 4) just allows you to specify any of the ROM-based applications which you want to load automatically when you first switch your machine on. I find the alarm is quite useful, just showing the hours and minutes on the icon bar - at least there's then no excuse for forgetting the time!

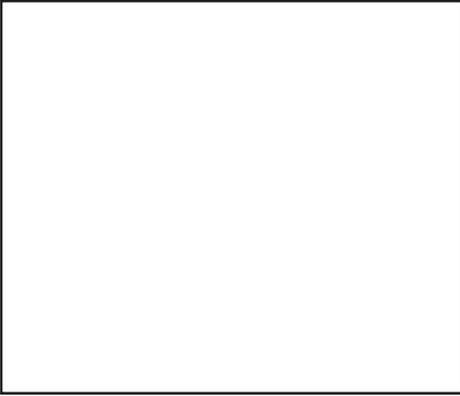


SCREEN DISPLAY

The Screen options are a mite technical, and I would largely advise leave well alone. However, if you know for certain which type of monitor you have, I would



Figure 5. Auto-starting ROM-based applications



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