Customising the RISC OS 3 Mode Selector

Alan Wrigley shows you how to put your own selection of modes on the Palette Manager menu.

With RISC OS 3 you can customise the palette manager in order to include your own choice of modes on its Mode menu, by making use of the Resources filing system. If you have this month's magazine disc, the job is made much easier by using the NewResrc application. If not, proceed as follows.

First of all, click Menu on the Apps icon on the icon bar, and open the root directory followed by the directory Resources.Palette. Now create a new directory on your hard disc (with a sensible name) and copy both files from Resources.Palette (i.e. Messages and Templates) to this new directory.

Now load the Messages file into Edit. You will see a list of message tokens numbered L01 to L05. Each of these relates to a particular monitor type and holds a list of mode numbers together with further tokens of the form Modexxx which describe the modes available on the menu. For example, the line for monitor type 1 looks like this:

```
L01:12 Mode012, 15 Mode015, 27 Mode027,
 39 Mode039, ? M12
```

and the tokens Mode012 etc. are further defined thus:

```
Mode012:12 (16 colours)
```

The set of characters starting with ? indicate a writable icon on the menu.

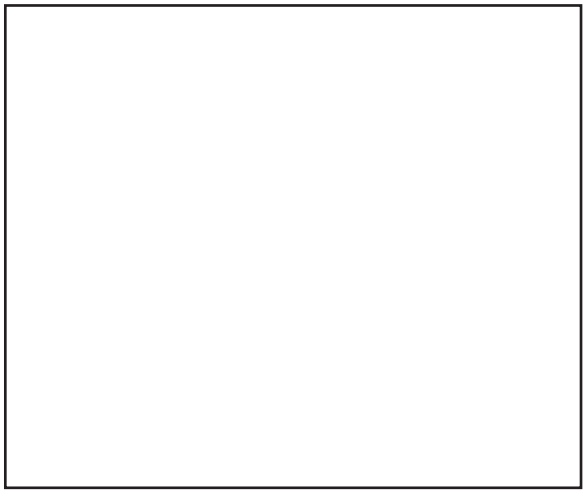
To customise the menu, first decide which modes you require (they do not need to be in any particular numeric order), and then include the appropriate references in the L0 token line which corresponds to the one you see when you open the Mode menu. For example, to modify L01 to include modes 20, 39, 21 plus one writable icon, the line would look like this:

```
L01:12 Mode020, 15 Mode039, 16 Mode021,
? M12
```

If you are including modes which do not already have a Modexxx token, add a line to the list of modes with the description you want to appear on the menu, such as:

```
Mode020:20 (multisync)
```

Now save the Messages file back to its new home on your hard disc. Next you need to tell the Palette Manager where to find its resources when it is started up. The problem here is that the Desktop, and the palette with it, is started up at power-on or reset, and will therefore look for its resources in the original place. What you need is a boot sequence that includes commands firstly to re-route the path which is used to search for the palette's resources, and secondly to re-start the Desktop. The first requirement is met by altering the system variable Palette$Path to point to the new location, and the second simply by a Desktop command.



The Palette Manager's Mode menu customised as described in this article

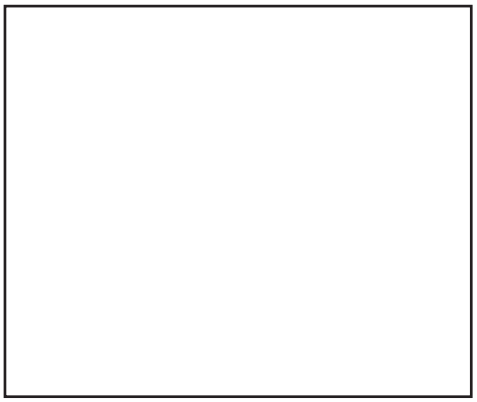
This involves using an Obey file for !Boot, which executes a second file (usually, though not necessarily, called DeskBoot) rather than using a conventional RISC OS 3 type &FEA Desktop boot file. This new !Boot file should contain the following lines:

```
Set Palette$Path <pathname>.
Desktop -file DeskBoot
```

where pathname is the full pathname of the directory in which you have placed the amended palette resources (don't

the full stop at the end). The DeskBoot file (which may be a straightforward text file) should then contain all the remaining commands which are to be executed at start-up, including any which would normally be in the Desktop boot file.

You can, of course, use this method to modify the resources files for any of the ROM-based applications in RISC OS 3.



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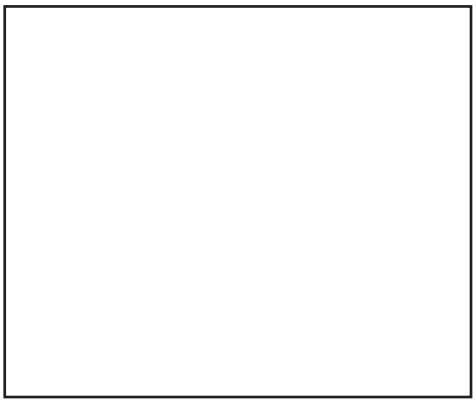

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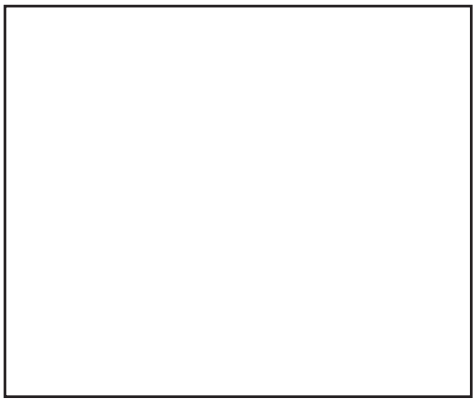

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