

CHAPTER ONE: Scanning and updating disks

When DiskTracker scans a disk, it creates a catalog for that volume. That is, it records the full directory structure (but not the contents!) of the disk and various bits of information about the individual files and folders (including, among others, the creation date, modification date, size, and type/creator codes). The process of scanning a disk can take anywhere from less than 5 seconds for floppies to around a minute for a fairly substantial hard drive to several minutes for a CD-ROM or file server. Once a disk is scanned, you can browse the files on the disk quickly and launch, display, or get info on any of the individual items on the disk.

Once a disk is scanned into a catalog file, you'll probably want to update its catalog from time to time as the contents of the disk change. DiskTracker offers simple updating by integrating the updater into the disk scanner.

DiskTracker allows several methods of disk scanning and updating:

- Floppy scan/update
 - On-line volume scan/update
 - Drop scan/update
 - Automatic disk scan/update

Using the floppy scanner/updater

When a floppy scan is initiated, you are prompted to insert a floppy disk to be scanned. As soon as a disk is inserted, a catalog is created from its contents and then is added to the current disk list. After the disk is scanned, the disk ejects, and you may insert another to be added to the list.

Floppy updating works just like floppy scanning — as each disk is inserted to be scanned, if an older catalog of the disk is found in the current disk list, the old disk catalog is updated.

- To use the floppy scanner/updater:

1.) To start a floppy update, select "Scan Floppy Disks..." from the Scan menu (or hit $\hat{C}E\hat{Y}$). When you do this, all of the floppy drives attached to your computer will eject their disks and you will be prompted to insert a floppy:

2.) Insert a floppy disk into a disk drive.

3a.) If an up to date catalog of the disk is already in the disk list of the frontmost window, you will be told so and no scanning or updating will be needed and the disk will be ejected.

3b.) If the disk is already in the catalog file, but its catalog is not current, you will be asked whether you would like the catalog of the disk to be updated. If you choose, the catalog will be updated and the disk ejected and if not, the disk will be ejected without being scanned or updated.

3c.) If there is no catalog for the disk, the disk will be scanned into the current disk list and then ejected when the scan is completed.

4.) Repeat step (2) for all additional floppies that you would like scanned or updated.

5.) Click the “Done” button or hit Return when you are finished.

TIP—Although this is called a “Floppy Scan”, you may actually use this method to scan (or update) any type of removable media drive, including CD-ROM, Magneto-optical, Iomega Zip™, etc. Although these other types of removable media disks will eject after the scan, they will not eject when the “Scan Floppy Disks...” command is issued.

TIP—By default, an option called “Fast Floppy Scan” is selected in the DiskTracker “Preferences...” dialog. This option provides a much faster floppy scanning mechanism, but in turn does not allow you to cancel a scan once it has been started and does not let you switch into the background while a floppy disk is being scanned. To disable fast floppy scanning, see the section on the “Preferences...” dialog box.

Scanning and updating online volumes

For an on-line volume scan, you are presented with a list on of the disks that are currently “on-line” (that is, the disk is in a drive and is accessible to the computer — for instance, the startup hard drive is always on-line, while a floppy that is on the desktop but not in the drive is not). From this list, several volumes can be selected to be scanned or updated at a time.

• To scan/update on-line volumes:

1.) Select “Scan On-line Volume...” from the Scan menu (⌘M). A dialog with a list containing all of the on-line volumes will appear:

.) Click on the volumes that you would like scanned or updated (command-click to select more than one, or shift-click to select a range). You can use the eject button to remove any removable-media on-line volumes from their drives.

3.) Click the “Scan” button or hit the return key. Clicking “Cancel” will exit the dialog without doing any scanning or updating.

4a.) If, for a selected disk, an up to date catalog already exists in the current disk list, you will be told so and no scanning or updating will take place and the scanner will proceed to the next disk, if there is one.

4b.) If, for a selected disk, there is a catalog which is not current, you will be asked if you would like the catalog of the disk to be updated. If you choose, the catalog will be updated, and, if not, the disk will be skipped. In either case, when this is finished, the scanner will progress to the next disk, if there is one.

4c.) If, for a selected disk, there is no catalog for the disk, the disk will be scanned into the current disk list. When this is finished, the scanner will progress to the next disk, if there is one.

Drop scan/update

The drop scanner allows you to drag the icon of a disk to DiskTracker's icon. The disk is then scanned into the frontmost window. If there is no frontmost window, or the frontmost window is not a catalog window, a new catalog window will be created.

- To use the drop scanner/updater:

- 1.) Make sure that you are in the Finder.

- 2.) Drag the icon of a disk to be scanned or updated to DiskTracker's icon. The disk will be scanned or updated into the frontmost catalog window (if there isn't a frontmost catalog window (or DiskTracker isn't running), one will be created). If you drag both a catalog file icon and a disk icon to the DiskTracker icon, the disk will be scanned into the catalog file.

Scanning and updating automatically

When the Automatic Disk Scan options are selected, you do not need to specifically tell DiskTracker that you wish to scan disks. Instead, if the automatic options are set and a catalog file window is frontmost in DiskTracker, any disks that are inserted or mounted will automatically be scanned into that catalog file.

- To enable Automatic Disk Scanning:

- 1.) Select “Scan Options...” from the Scan menu.

- 2.) Check the “Automatically scan disks in the foreground”, the “Automatically update disks in the foreground”, the “Automatically scan disks in the background”, and the “Automatically update disks in the background” checkboxes to enable scanning and updating while DiskTracker is the frontmost application and while it is not:

.) Click the “OK” button to lock in the new settings or the “Cancel” button to abort.

4a.) If the “Automatically scan disks in the foreground” option is checked, any disk inserted (while DiskTracker is the frontmost application) that does not currently have a catalog in the disk list of the frontmost window will be scanned. Similarly, if the “Automatically scan disks in the background” option is checked, any disk inserted (while DiskTracker is in the background) that does not have a catalog in DiskTracker’s frontmost window (that is, the window that would be frontmost if DiskTracker were not in the background (pheew!)) will be scanned.

4b.) If the “Automatically update disks in the foreground” option is checked, any disk inserted (while DiskTracker is the frontmost application) that has a non-up to date catalog in the current disk list will be updated. Similarly, if the “Automatically update disks in the background” option is checked, any disk inserted (while DiskTracker is in the background) that has a non-up to date catalog in the current disk list will be updated.

About ID files

Ordinarily, DiskTracker identifies a specific disk by a combination of its name and its creation date. If a disk is found with an identical name or creation date as another, DiskTracker will check with you to see if it is indeed the same disk. Each disk is also assigned a unique serial number which helps both you and DiskTracker identify the disk.

If you frequently find that DiskTracker is getting disks confused (say perhaps because you have a lot of identically named disks (like “Untitled”, for instance) or have a bunch of disks with identical creation dates (preformatted disks often have the same creation dates)), you can tell DiskTracker to create ID files. An ID file is a tiny invisible file on a disk which contains information that allows DiskTracker to positively identify a disk by its serial number.

To enable ID files (which are disabled by default), uncheck the “Don’t create ID files” checkbox in the “Scan Options...” dialog box (found under the Scan menu).

Stripping ID files

If you find that you want to remove the DiskTracker ID files from some disk, there are several paths you can take. First of all, you could use a file utility (such as Laurence Harris’s indispensable File Buddy) to make the “.DT.ident” file visible and then just drag it to the trash. In addition, you could use DiskTracker’s built in ID stripping facility.

NOTE—Since, if a disk appears in more than one catalog file, the identification information for both of those files is stored in the same ID file, stripping this file will remove the ID’s for both catalog files.

You may strip ID files from either one or many floppy disks or from on-line volumes.

- To strip IDs from floppies:

- 1.) Select “Strip ID From Floppy Disks...” from the Scan menu. All of the attached floppy drives will eject their disks and you will be prompted to insert a disk:

.) Insert a disk into the floppy drive. If the disk has a DiskTracker ID file, it will be removed. If not, nothing will be changed. In either case, the disk will be ejected when the strip is done.

3.) Repeat step (2) for any additional floppy disks.

4.) Click “Done” when you are finished.

TIP—Like the Floppy Scan, you may actually use this method to remove the ID files from any type of removable media disk.

• To strip IDs from on-line volumes:

1.) Select “Strip ID From On-line Volume...” from the Scan menu. A dialog with a list containing all of the on-line volumes will appear:

.) Click on the volumes that you would like to have ID files stripped from (command-click to select more than one, or shift-click to select a range). You can use the eject button to remove any removable-media on-line volumes from their drives.

3.) Click the “Strip” button or hit the return key. Clicking “Cancel” will exit the dialog without doing any stripping.

4.) For each selected disk, if an ID file is found on that disk, it will be stripped away. If not, nothing will be changed on the disk.

Locating disks in a disk list

Often, once you have a large disk list, you have the need to display a particular disk (which you have

access to) in that list. To do this, all you have to do is let DiskTracker take a look at the physical disk. The application will then automatically select all of disks in the current file list that look like that one.

There are two methods to specifying which physical disk to locate: floppy disks or on-line volumes.

- To locate a floppy disk:

- 1.) Select "Locate Floppy Disk in Catalog..." from the Scan menu. All connected floppy disk drives will eject their disks. You will be prompted to insert a floppy:

- .) Insert a floppy disk. If DiskTracker can find the floppy in the current disk list, it will select it and show it in the catalog window. The disk will be then be ejected. To abort, click the "Cancel" button.

- To locate an on-line volume:

- 1.) Select "Locate On-line Volume in Catalog..." from the Scan menu. A dialog with a list containing all of the on-line volumes will appear:

- .) Click on the volumes that you would like located (command-click to select more than one, or shift-click to select a range). You can use the eject button to remove any removable-media on-line volumes from their drives.

- 3.) Click the "Locate" button or hit the return key. Clicking "Cancel" will exit the dialog without doing any locating.

- 4.) For each selected disk, DiskTracker will try to locate the disk in the current disk list. If DiskTracker can find it, it will select the disk (along with others that are found) and show it in the catalog window.

Customizing the disk scanner

To make your life easier, DiskTracker's disk scanner offers several customizations.

- “Don't Ask on Disk Update”—This option (which by default is turned off) is found in the Scan menu. If on, this option sets DiskTracker so that it will not ask you whether a disk should be updated, but rather will do the update without confirmation. This option has no effect on the Automatic Disk Updater (turned on in the “Scan Options...” dialog box), which never asks for confirmation for disk updates.
- The “Scan Options...” dialog box—This dialog (accessed through the Scan menu) contains checkboxes for several other customizations that can be set:

Special cases—This subheading refers to special cases under which an item should not be added to a catalog.

These include (default setting in parenthesis):

- “Scan aliases”—determines whether alias files should be scanned (on)
- “Scan Desktop files”—determines whether the special “Desktop”, “Desktop DB”, and “Desktop DF” files should be scanned. (off)
- “Scan items on desktop”—determines whether items appearing on the desktop should be scanned. If this is set to true, these items will be placed in a folder called “Desktop folder” at the root level of the catalog of the disk. (on)
- “Scan items in trash”—determines whether items which have been dragged to the trash (but not permanently erased by emptying the trash) should be scanned. (off)
- “Scan invisible items”—determines whether items which are invisible (i.e., you can't see them in the Finder) should be scanned. (on)

Archives—This subheading refers to the scanning of StuffIt™ and Compact Pro™ archives.

These options (which by default are switched on) include:

- “Expand “.sit” archives”—determines whether the contents of StuffIt .sit archives should be scanned.
- “Expand “.cpt” archives”—determines whether the contents of Compact Pro .cpt archives should be scanned.
- “Expand “.sea” applications”—determines whether the contents of StuffIt and Compact Pro self extracting .sea applications should be scanned.

The other checkboxes in the “Scan Options...” dialog have been discussed elsewhere.

Other options

These options (all of which are checked by default) include:

- “Ask when updating disks with identical creation dates”—This check box determines what DiskTracker does when the scanner encounters a disk with the same creation date as a disk already in the catalog. If the box is checked, DiskTracker will ask the user whether the catalog info already scanned should be updated or if the disk should be scanned as a new disk. If the box is unchecked, the disk is automatically scanned as a new disk.
- “Ask when updating disks with identical names”—This check box determines what DiskTracker does when the scanner encounters a disk with the same name as a disk already in the catalog. If the box is checked, DiskTracker will ask the user whether the catalog info already scanned should be updated or if the disk should be scanned as a new disk. If the box is unchecked, the disk is automatically scanned as a new disk.
- “Don’t put away first floppy disk scanned”—This check box determines whether DiskTracker should put away the disk that was the floppy drive when the “Scan Floppy Disk” option was initiated. If the box is checked, the disk will only be ejected, leaving a “ghost” on the desktop.