

Detour v1.2

© Christopher S. Bolin

CIS:76447,1507

8/5/1991

So what the heck is Detour anyhow? Well, one of the advantages to Windows is the capability to associate data files with executable files and the ability to execute them with point and click or from the command line. For example, you can point at your text file, MINE.TXT, in File Manager, and then NotePad.exe starts and loads that file. The problem I have encountered repeatedly though; I want to load a file that is associated with one executable file into a different executable file with the same kind of ease. Say I have a text file named TEST.DOC, well if I click on it in File Manager, then it loads the text into Word for Windows. Sure it works fine, but to hog up all that memory and processor time while I'm connected to Compuserve downloading a file, well, I'd rather load it into notepad or notebook. Or sometimes when I am editing graphic files I may load a .BMP file into 1 of 4 different paint or conversion programs. Until Detour, I've had to start these apps via Program manager RUN, or one of the other run utilities that involves typing in a whole path name or at least a file name, and with my memory, well...

To Install Detour, simply copy it to your Windows directory (i.e. c:\windows) or somewhere in your path.

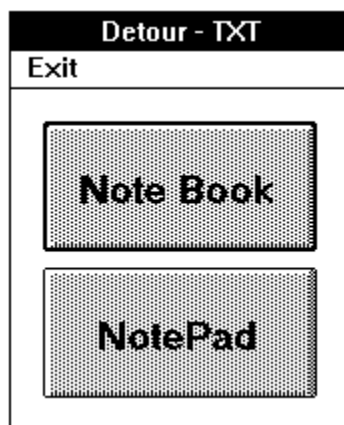
So here is the deal. Use the Program Manager Run or click on DETOUR.EXE in your file manager to execute Detour. Detour Edit will appear and from here type the first file Extension (i.e., TXT) you want to associate in the Extension box. Then type a Pet Name(What you want the Detour menu button to be named), the full path name(i.e., c:\windows\notepad.exe) for each possible EXE file, and then check the MIN box if you want the Executable file to start minimized. After this, click the SAVE button and bingo!

For example, suppose I want to have the option to send files with the extension TXT to either an application called notebook.exe or the Windows

notepad.exe. I would start Detour from my file manager or Program Manager RUN... Once Detour Editor begins type the extension TXT in the combo box. Then I move to the first "Petnames" text box in the "Default to execute" frame. I would type whatever I want the button to be called, for instance, Note Book. Then I could either type the full pathname in the "File Paths and .EXE file name" text box, or I could click the "!" button to browse. I continue to do this for as many applications as I want to have as options, then click the SAVE when satisfied. Although Detour Editor checks, it is a good practice to always fill the entries in order (1,2,3,4,5)

Every time you load the Editor thereafter, all the extensions will be available in the pull-down combo box. If you select an extension in the combo box then it will be loaded with all the files you have associated.

If you ever want to break an association with just one of the applications, simply click the CLEAR (<) button and then SAVE your work. If you want to break an association entirely(break Detour's connection with an extension) just click the DELETE key. If you ever make a mistake during editing, then click the LOAD button and everything from you last SAVE will return. This is similar to "undo" in other applications.



Next time and forever there after when you click on a file in the Program manager, or almost any other file manager, a menu like the one above will pop-up and offer the possible EXE files to send the data file to!! It is that simple!

One of the newer features of Detour is to not appear at all. What I mean by this is, say you send 90% of the files with the extension .DOC to Word for Windows. You know when you are selecting a file in your file manager that you want to send it to WFW and you don't want to be bothered with the pop-up, then click the file wanted and then push and hold the <SHIFT> key. With file managers that don't use the <SHIFT> key by itself, this bypass works beautifully. With programs like the Windows File Manager (WINFILE.EXE) however, if you hold the <SHIFT> and then click, detours just starts minimized. There is an easy way around this though, click the file you want and then quickly push and hold the <SHIFT> key. Detour will pass the file to your default application!

Detour is being offered as freeware, with but one stipulation. If you use it, please write me a brief note and tell me what you liked, disliked, would like to see, or just to say "howdy". I am in the process of writing several much more complicated projects that will be posted in the near future and your input now will help me learn. Thanks, and I'd love to hear from you,

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!!!!Detour does require the VBRUN100.DLL, this is available in the MSLANG forum. If you don't have it now, the download time is worth it for all the great stuff appearing in all the windows forums, and its FREE!!!!

Why not call the largest Windows Dedicated BBS in the northwestern U.S. ?
SPECTRUM BBS 1-503-691-0927 (Wade's Board)

The author assumes no responsibility for the use or misuse of Detour.

Detour has been tested with many different file managers. If the program works with Windows associations, then Detour works as well. The only reasons that Detour may not work for a specific application, is if the application itself writes its own file associations. If this is the case, just use the File Association that should be intrinsic to the application (Detour should inform you of this). Or, as is the case with BeckerTools, if they have disregarded one of the better features of Windows for their own reasons, then neither Detour or Windows associated files do anything.

How does it do it?

A brief note on how Detour works. When you make an association in the Detour editor, Detour searches your WIN.INI file for the [Extensions] section and tries to find the association with the extension you have chosen. If it doesn't find it, one is created.

[Extensions]

TXT=Detour.exe ^TXT

Next Detour searches it's own profile in the WIN.INI file for the associations you have created, the PetNames and the Run Options.

[Detour]

Extensions=TXT,

TXT1=c:\windows\notebook.exe,Note Book^1

TXT2=c:\windows\notepad.exe,Note Pad^1

Detour reads all the options and creates a push button with the label equal to the PetName you have given it. Once the button is pushed, Detour sends the file passed to it to the choice you have made.

Kudos to Microsoft. Finally a Window's programming system that makes stand alone, honest to goodness EXE files! If anyone is interested in programming in Windows and doesn't have the experience, patience, or money to wade through the SDK, and can't stand the dragging ToolBook or

KnowLedgeBase, well here's your answer. I'm in school for Computer Sci and nearly every professor I've ever had has bad mouthed BASIC at one point or another. But this truly is different from those early implementations, as is QuickBasic I assume. Anyhow, Visual Basic is an answer to a need I've had since I fell in love with Windows.

Thanks: Paul Horner(for great suggestions and the replies), Wade Norton(the nicest guy I know, and a fellow Window-phile), MicroSoft, and most of all, my father for purchasing Visual Basic for me, paying for my education, and his love.

History:

- 1.1 - Detour now operates faster
 - Added the Browse feature to Detour Edit
- 1.2 - Added "clear entry" to Detour Edit
 - Exchanged Text extension box for Combo box retaining Detour extension history
 - Made Text Boxes and button text bigger as requested
 - Configured Detour to work on different size screens and repositioned editor forms to be positioned to see pertinent info beneath
 - Got a DoEvents in there and as I time it, you are less held up during load. (Advice?)
 - Detour popup now starts at the approximate position of the item clicked and never leaves the visible screen on load
 - if SHIFT is held when item clicked, Detour loads item into default association.
 - Added Delete Association to Detour Edit(Finally!)