

**A-START!**

<b>COLLABORATORS</b>
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	<i>TITLE :</i> A-START!		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
WRITTEN BY		July 20, 2024	

<b>REVISION HISTORY</b>
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NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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# Chapter 1

## A-START!

### 1.1 A-START!

A-START! v0.5Beta(23.2.1996) (c) voidParrot Software 95/96  
Programming for you!

Introduction    What is A-Start?  
Requirements    What do I need for A-Start?  
Features        What can it and what not?

Installation    How to install A-Start.  
Usage            How to use A-Start.

Preferences    How to configure A-Start.

Legal stuff!    Crime does not pay!  
Register me!    Support the Author!  
Programmers!    Sam wants YOU!

Future          What is to come.  
The Author      All about the author.

### 1.2 A few words for those who want to read.

Introduction to A-Start (preview) :

Before I start telling you about A-Start I would like to remind you that this is only a preview version of A-Start , that means you will only get a restricted impression of what is yet to come and many , many features are not present yet.

A-Start is a multi-purpose program. It is a alternative for any tool-manager or program-launcher , but that's not all. It has a interface which lets you fast and comfortable keep track of the most important functions of your OS. Editing your prefs is just two clicks away, launching your favorite programs also.

You have fast control of your projects, wether they be a program or a picture or even music. Two clicks and you are in your programming-

environment, paint-program or music-editor working on your project. You may with A-Start browse through your HD in no-time and do whatever you like, due to the marvelous functions of A-Start. A-Start will recognize the files for you and start your preferred text-picture-anim-aguide viewer or music-player. All in a intuitive way with beautiful graphics and relaxing sound. But it can even more! Delete files, move them or rename them. All through A-Start! It almost is a real file-manager!

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## 1.3 What i need is what not!

What you need is:

Kickstart 3.0+ (It will maybe work on a 2.0+)  
Please E-mail me if it works in a machine  
not based on 3.0+ OS.

MagicWB: You need MagicWB-colors to make it look  
nice. Also it is recommended to use an 1:1  
screen resolution for best results.

HardDrive: There is no idea in using A-Start without  
a HD, but hey! everybody should have a HD!

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## 1.4 What can it do for you?

A-Start features:

- Easy to use, intuitive windows&gadgets
- Graphically enhanced outlook
- Automatic file-identifier identifying at the time:
  - Exe
  - Txt
  - AGuide
  - Iff
  - Gif
  - Jpeg
  - infos
- Control over your preferences
- Control over your most used programs
- Control over the projects you are working on
- Fast file-browser always in reach

Please DO remember that this is what A-Start Preview can do  
and that the full version will have tons of new features.  
look at the future-page for more info.

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## 1.5 install

How to install:

To install this software double-click on the install-icon and the Commodore-installer will be started to do the installation.

You also can install the program manually. To do so, copy WbStart-Handler to your Sys:l/ directory and the A-StartPrefs program to your Sys:Prefs directory.

There is no need to make an assign for the A-Start-Directory. If you encounter problems with A-Start please check if you have following sub-directories in the path, where the A-Start-main program lies:  
Caches and Utils!

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## 1.6 usage

How to run A-Start

There are two programs included in this package. The A-Start main program and the very small A-StartWBS program. Because the main program has to be in a own directory with specific sub-directories it can NOT be put into the WbStart-drawer. If you want the program be run every time you boot your computer you may put the A-StartWBS program into the WbStart-drawer. This will execute the A-Start from the directory specified in its one and only tool-type. So make sure this tool-type is correctly set to the A-Start home-directory.

For example:  
dhl:Utils/A-Start/

How to use the PREVIEW version of A-Start

First of all you have to start the program by double-clicking on the programs icon or running it from CLI. Now a small button

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should appear at the bottom of your workbench-screen. Be advised that if your workbench-screen is not open A-Start will open it. By clicking on that button the mainwindow will open stating seven different possibilities:

MyComputer	Lets you browse through your mounted drives.
Porgs	Lets you start your most important progs.
FileList	Lets you start your most important projects
Utilities	Lets you start the OS-control programs
Prefs	Quicklink to your prefs directory
Command	Lets you input a CLI command
Reboot	Lets you reboot your Amiga(TM)

Quit A-Start How to quit A-Start

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## 1.7 mycomp

MyComputer-button:

After pressing this gadget a window opens stating all your mounted devices by name. Clicking on one of these brings the root-directory to front.

In future versions there will be added a ASSIGNS drawer, from where you have fast access to all your assigns and there will be a possibility to put all your most important drawers into this window, so you have fast access for example to all your pictures and musics.

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## 1.8 Define your most used programs

UserProgs-button:

This gadget brings your progs-window to front. This is a window, where all your favorite programs are. You must grab the icon of the program, you wish to have fast access to and drop it onto the window, whereafter it is redrawn now stating your program. It is not possible to drop drives or directories onto the window, but in future versions there is going to be a possibility to sort your programs even better through program-independent drawers. There will be a possibility to put all your graphic-progs into for example a gfx directory created with A-StartPrefs.

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## 1.9 A button to launch your projects fast

Userdefined FileList-button:

This equals the UserPorgs-window but in here you should only put your projects you are currently working on. The program will then check the default tool for the currently pressed project and load the default program, so it is extremely fast to start editing on your sourcecode again, after it had the last time you ran it crashed your computer.

This option is NOT available yet! At this point the FileList-window equals the Userprogs-window!

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## 1.10 This is not implemented yet!

Utilities-button:

In this directory you will in this version find nothing.

In future version here will be stated all important porgramms for fast, easy and comfortable programs to control your OS.

Programmers, please look at the For Programmers Button

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## 1.11 prefs

Preferences-button:

This is a quicklink to the prefstdirectory for easy and fast (am I repeating myself) access to all the preferences of your Amiga(TM)

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## 1.12 command

Command-Button:

After pressing this button you may enter a CLI-commandline and A-Start will execute it. This is like pressing rCommand e on newer OS-versions. Please do not mind the ugliness of the appearing window, but there was no time to make it look better.



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## 1.13 reboot

Reboot-button:

Hmm? What do you think this button does?

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## 1.14 programmers

As you may have noticed there is a button stating "Utilities" on the main window of A-Start. It points to a directory in the program dir called Utils. Currently this drawer is empty and when you press the Utilities-button you get a File not found-message. Here is where you can help.

The button was created to introduce a number of very useful System-tools to help the user in "communicating" with the OS. The idea is to predefine these tools and integrate them into the A-Start-program, so that they always are present. These programs would help the user to better control the Amiga-OS and its most important functions. They would have their own small id-icons and would be provided and updated with every new version of A-Start. The problem is that I nor any other member of voidParrot Software has the time to make these OS-controlling programs. That's why I ask you to help us.

Programs like the following would most certainly be integrated to A-start and published with it:

- Commodity Exchange tool
- FileLocator
- ScreenBlanker/Saver
- Calculator
- Clock

? -...

All these programs should be intuitive and graphically enhanced. Programmers who are interested should write E-mail to me and receive detailed description of what to do. Also we can provide all programmers with graphics, sound, music and tips.  
How to contact the author

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## 1.15 author

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## Address:

Tuomas Artman  
Päärynäpolku 3  
02710 Espoo  
Finland

## E-mail:

aartman@snakemail.hut.fi

## Tel:

+358-90-5091387

Please send me any bug-reports (only if you think that they are very hard to find, because i am aware of a great number of bugs), comments, suggestions and/or psychedelic ideas.

I also would like to thank the following people:

Frederick Hacklin, for good ideas and support.  
Stefan Stunz, for his fabulous MUI.  
Eric Totel, for his excellent MuiBuilder.  
Stefan Becker, for his WBStarter utility.  
Brem, for the software-support.  
AlienSoft, for their superb MCP.

Escom & AT, yes thank you, but why don't you allow clone-makers to produce Amiga-machines? !BM did it, and although they have only sold 4,7 Mio computers world-wide they still are one of the leading computer-firms in the world. Give AMIGA the freedom to develop in a larger scale. Only if many organisations develop the Amiga, it can get out of its grave!!! DO IT NOW!!!

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## 1.16 This is a preview!

A-Start is currently in developing phase and V1.0 will be released in near future. To see how you can support me and how to get me to do the first version more quickly see the Register/Support-page.

## 1.17 The Prefs program

## Preferences:

To configure A-Start to your own demand start the prefs-program

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located in your sys:prefs/ directory after a successful installation. The preference program uses MUI 2.0+.

In the main-window you can see 3 different pages:

#### Misc:

Store File-ID in comments:

A-Start always tries to save the type of a specific file in its comment, so that the second time (even after rebooting) the file-type-check will work much faster. A-Start needs therefore 6 Bytes from the end of the comment-string. If the comment of the file is so large, that it covers these 6 Bytes, ID-Caching is not done, because the 6 last characters of the comment would be destroyed. Now you have the option to enable this destroying of filecomments, if you do not need them. This might improve filechecking-speed a bit, depending on the length of your comments.

Use WBStarter whenever possible:

When this checkmark is set, A-Start will search, if your files have corresponding info-files, and if so they are started with Stefan Beckers WBStarter-handler! Otherwise a normal cli-start will be made to all files, with or without icons.

LowMem/HighMem: Here you can choose whether you want to use much memory and keep HD-activity low, or vice versa.  
THIS OPTION IS NOT YET AVAILABLE!

#### FileWindow:

Maximal Y-entries:

Here you input the maximal number of entries, which will be shown in a File-window. If the number of files exceeds this number, scroll-pointers will appear on top and bottom of the window.

Y-Slides:

Here you input the number of files, which will be scrolled through, if you press one of the slide-pointers.

#### Viewers:

Here you enter the viewers to show Text-files, Iff-pictures, Gif-pictures, Jpeg-pictures and AmigaGuide-files. The viewers must support arguments.

Multiview for example does:  
run Multiview dhl:docs/bla bla/showme.txt

Lots of options will be added to the 1.0 version of A-Start!

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## 1.18 Stefan Beckers WBStart-handler

About WBStarter:

WBStarter is a utility written and copyrighted by Stefan Becker.

Short Description:

WBStarter is a program which lets you run programs in "WB-mode" from CLI. The program acts like it would have been started from WB by double-clicking on it.

See the WBStarter documentation for more information and legal stuff.

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## 1.19 Magic User Interface

About Magic User Interface:

MUI is copyrighted by Stefan Stunz as Shareware. You do not have to register MUI in order to use the A-Start preferences program, but I really advise you to do so, because of the quality of the program.

## 1.20 Legalize it!

A-Start (c) Tuomas Artman/vPS 1995/96

1) The program is provided "as-is" and the author can not be made responsible of ANY harm done by the program.

2) The program can be spreaded in electronic form IF:

2.1) the whole and nothing but the whole ORIGINAL package is copied and absolutely no changes have been made to it.

2.2) only a small amount of money to cover the expenses of the media is being demanded.

3) No changes of any kind are allowed to me made to the software, this guide-file, nor any other file in the whole, unchanged package without the permission of the author.

4) The program may be put on PD-series or other kinds of Software-collections without the permission of the author, but in these

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cases the author would be thankful, if he could be informed of such cases.

5) This program is at this stage of development considered to be "FreeWare".

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## 1.21 Register and support the author

How to "register" and why?

At this stage of development this software is considered to be FreeWare. That means, everybody may use it without any restrictions.

So why "register"?

By registering you first of all give me the feeling that A-Start is a program which really is good and is being liked, urging me so to finish the 1.0 version quickly. On the other hand the 1.0 version of A-Start will certainly be considered ShareWare, so you would have to register anyway. And sure is that I WILL continue developing A-Start no matter how many users register or send me comments. I think it is a very good piece of software and think it should be developed further into new dimensions. And why not support a Author, who's software you use? I haven't slept for many weeks to give you the pleasure of using this program, now it's your time to do something for me.

Why do I write "register" in quotation marks?

At this stage you cannot register. That is because of the FreeWare status of the program. You can only support me. BUT! All users who at this stage support me will be treated as registered users in upcoming A-Start programs. And supporting me now is cheaper than registering later.

To "register":

Send 13 \$ / 16 DM / 50 Fmk along with a letter to

Tuomas Artman  
Päärynäpolku 3  
02710 Espoo  
Finland

The letter MUST contain following information:

Name  
City

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Country  
E-Mail

If you do not have an E-Mail address you have to include your street address and zip-codes and a formatted disk!

You will receive your Key-File when the 1.0 Version of A-Start is ready.

## 1.22 What is to come?

Future versions of A-Start:

A-Start is right now going through heavy development and many things WILL change and be included in future versions:

- There will be a possibility to enter "drawers" into the proglis and filelist-windows. This will open the possibility to sort your programs and projects, for example put all gfx-progs into a proglis/gfx/ directory and all texteditors into proglis/text/
  - The Command window is UGLY. This will change in future versions.
  - All graphics will be redrawn, and many, many more will be included. The idea is to get a interface, where there is graphics everywhere.
  - The slide-method of the FileWindows is not very good. In future versions the user may decide, if he wants to use the current method, or a slide-bar on the left or right side of the window.
  - Requesters will be replaced by my own Reqeater. They will have lots of graphics and other neat stuff.
  - The whole program will be speed up (ESPECIALY WINDOW-OPENING AND CLOSING)
  - There will be a possibility to open wb-directory-windows directly from A-Start.
  - Many more file-types will be supported in the future!  
for example:
    - Executable
    - ASCII-file
    - AmigaGuide
    - Iff-picture
    - Gif-picture
    - Jpg-picture
    - Tiff-picture
    - IffAnim
    - Fli-Anim
    - Mpeg-anim
-

- Mod-module
- Med-module
- Mon-module
- 8SVC-SoundSample
- Wave-SoundSample
- C-Header
- C-Source
- Asm Source
- Asm include
- Amos source
- E-source
- Dms-archive
- Lha-archive
- Lzx-archive
- Zip-archive
- Arj-archive
- Font
- Library
- Scala-script
- Dos-script

If you know any important file-types not mentioned in the list above, please e-mail me!

-Currently the whole program is very unstable and there is a great number of known bugs. All these will be fixed. But please report to me any bugs, wich are rather hard to find.

-The program takes up MUCH processor time, when the start-button has been pressed. Although this should not be a problem for most users, it will be changed to eat less processor-power in the future.

-Not only graphics will be available in tons, but also music and sound-effects. Of course full ability to customize.

-LowMem/HighMem option is not present yet. In future versions you will have the possibility to keep A-Starts memory consumption very low, with a increasing HD-activity. All graphics are flushed from memory when they are not needed anymore. A-Start will thereafter only use about 10 Kb of memory when not currently in use (meaning that the start-button is unpressed).

-Some serious Bug-hunting and terminating will be done.

-Does anyone know how to open these Workbench-drawer-windows with icons?

Yes,yes, there is very much to do, and I really need your help!  
Please read the Register and the Programmers page

## 1.23 But how to quit?

How to quit A-Start:

If you want to quit A-Start you first have to activate one of A-Starts windows, for example by pressing one of A-Starts buttons, and the press

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the right mouse-button. A-Start thereafter quits.

If you just want to close all those FileWindows, you just have to click somewhere on your workbench and A-Start will close all windows. Note that this will NOT be the case if you have opened the UserProgs-or the FileList-window. In that case just click the button at the left bottom stating "Amiga", and all windows will be closed.

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