

## AliasMenu

AliasMenu adds custom menus in the menu bar. These menus work exactly like the Apple menu: they may contain any kind of item (applications, documents, desk accessories, folders, aliases, control panels...).

Selecting a menu item opens the corresponding item, as would a double-click on its icon. The menu titles can be replaced by icons to save space in the menu bar, or simply to make it prettier.

## Some Examples of Useful Menus

- An Applications menu, whose corresponding subfolder contains aliases of your favorite applications.
- A Control Panels menu, created using an alias of the Control Panels folder, that gives an instant access to all your control panels. You may prefer to create a shorter menu containing only aliases of the control panels you need to access frequently.
- An Utilities menu holding other applications of that kind (antivirus, alias manager, back-up software...).
- A System menu containing aliases of the System Folder and all its subfolders.
- A Folders menu pointing to your favorite folders.
- A Current Project menu created with an alias to your current project's folder. The menu will always reflect the folder's content and let you instantly open any file in it.
- A Scripts menu containing AppleScript mini-applications.
- An Internet menu grouping all the Internet applications, and as many Bookmarks menus as you may ever want.
- A menu for each of your kids, with their personal folders, games, aliases and Internet bookmarks... There are thousands of things to do with custom menus.

## Installing AliasMenu

AliasMenu requires system 7.0 or more (8.0 or more is recommended) and a 68020 processor or better. It should work on any Macintosh since the Macintosh II, or any PowerMacintosh or MacOS-compatible computer. Some functions will only activate with system 7.5 or better. Some Internet-related function will only be available if Internet Config (or equivalent) is installed and correctly set up.

Is this the most recent version of AliasMenu? You may check by visiting AliasMenu's Internet Web site. Click on the URL in the control panel to access the site. There, you'll find extra or last-minute information about AliasMenu, and all the latest versions of the author's software, available for downloading. AliasMenu's version number is displayed in the control panel.

Drop AliasMenu into the Control Panels folder which is in the System Folder, then restart the Macintosh.

AliasMenu creates an AliasMenu Items folder in the System Folder. Inside its folder, it also creates an alias of the Control Panels folder named "1.Control Panels". You can add as many folders or aliases as you want, each of which will become an extra menu. This first menu gives you an instant access to all your control panels. The alias "1.Control Panels" can be deleted if you prefer, it's merely an example.

The name of the folders must start by one or more digits, followed by a dot and the menu title you want. The digits are here to control the order in which the menus appear in the menu bar.

Example:

.Folders .Applications .Utilities (etc.)  
or if you have plans for more than ten menus:  
1.Folders 2.Applications 3.Utilities  
or even:  
01.Folders 02.Applications 03.Utilities

— There should be no space between the digits and the dot, nor between the dot and the name. A subfolder or an alias whose name does not start by a digit will be ignored by AliasMenu.

— There's no need to "fill" all the number slots. You can skip by tens to leave room for future menus. For instance, you can choose to number as follows:

0.Folders 0.Applications 0.Utilities (etc.)  
thus leaving plenty of slots for the subsequent insertion of extra menus.

Subfolders can be replaced by aliases of other folders. Note that in that case, the menu is titled as the alias, not as the original folder. You can thus freely define the menu titles without altering the original folder's name. In any case, you still need to change the name of the alias to add the numeric prefix that will tell AliasMenu where to insert it in the menu bar.

Important: the AliasMenu Items folder itself can only contain folders (or aliases of folders), whose names define the order and the titles of the menus. If you drop a document or an application into the AliasMenu Items folder, that item will be ignored. It should be placed within a subfolder to specify in which menu it should appear.

The number of custom menus is not limited, except, of course, by the available space in the menu bar, especially with applications that already have a large number of menus. If there isn't enough room, the menu titles will be displayed in condensed text. If there still isn't enough room, some of the menus will not be displayed, but their keyboard shortcuts will still work.

The AliasMenu Items folder is created by default within the System Folder to make its access easy. However, you may prefer to place it in the Preferences folder. You can also put it anywhere you want as long as you replace it by an alias using the same name, in the System Folder (or in Preferences).

### Where to Install the Menus

The default behavior of AliasMenu is to install the menus in every application. The control panel will let you exclude an application should a conflict arise (There are, as yet, no known conflicts).

A reverse method can be selected in the control panel: The menus will then only be installed in the Finder and in specifically designated applications.

Position in the menu bar — The menus can be inserted to the left of the Apple menu, between the Apple menu and the File menu, or after the application's menus.

### Icons in the Menu Bar

If you use a small screen, the menu bar will be filled very quickly... You can save room by replacing the menu titles by icons. If the subfolder (or the alias) used to make a menu has a custom icon, the icon will be displayed instead of the menu title.

To put a custom icon on the folder, simply open its "Get Info" window and paste in the icon you want. To reset the text title, delete the custom icon.

If you create an alias to a system folder or subfolder—such as the Control Panels—, you can open the alias's "Get Info" window, copy its icon and paste it on itself: it will then be taken into account by AliasMenu. Disk aliases have the same behavior, their icon must be copied and pasted on itself to appear in the menu bar.

### Modifier Keys

If the menu item is selected while holding the Option key down, the item will be "revealed" instead of opened: the folder containing it will be opened and the item selected.

With the Command ⌘ key, the “Get Info” window appears.

Option and Command ⌘ can be used together. In this case, the Finder will open the folder that contains the item, select it and open its “Get Info” window.

You can insert a separator (a disabled line in the menu) above a menu item by holding the Shift key while selecting the item.

A separator is made by creating an empty SimpleText file in the folder. The name of the file is that of the selected item, the last character being replaced by an open parenthesis. That parenthesis has two effects: it puts the separator at the right place in the alphabetical order, and tells AliasMenu that it is a separator.

To delete a separator, select the item right under the separator holding both the Option and Shift keys. Another way is to open the menu’s folder and drag the SimpleText file to the Trash.

Since the SimpleText documents used for making separators are empty, they don’t take up any disk space except for the few bytes of their directory entry.

### Change the Order of the Menu Items

You can control the order of the items in the menus in exactly the same manner as the menus themselves. Add a numeric prefix (1.Item, 01.Item or 001.Item as needed) to the items you want to reorder. The text will appear as “Item” in the menu, without the prefix.

Just like the menus, there should be no space between the digit and the dot, nor between the dot and the following text.

There’s no need to order all the items in a folder. The ordered items will generally be placed above the other items, as digits have a smaller ASCII value than letters.

To force an item to the bottom of the menu without numbering all the articles, use the “tilde” character as a prefix. Thus, “~Item” will be displayed as “Item” and will be placed at the end of the menu. Left or right braces or vertical bar | can also be used for the same purpose.

### Keyboard Shortcuts

AliasMenu lets you define keyboard shortcuts to menu items. No check for duplicates is performed on the character you select: if the same command appears in several items, the first match found will be triggered.

To define a shortcut to an item, append a slash / to its name, then the character you want for the shortcut.

To avoid conflicts between AliasMenu's shortcuts and applications, AliasMenu's control panel lets you define another modifier key (or a combination of them) and reserve it to trig AliasMenu's shortcuts. The default AliasMenu modifier is the control key (displayed as ctrl or ). The symbol appears in the menu when the item has a modifier.

Example : to assign ctrl-T to open the item "Test", rename the file as "Test/T".

If an application has problems with the reserved modifier, you can exclude it in AliasMenu's control panel. If no modifier key is selected in the control panel, all shortcuts are disabled.

## Grouped Items

When a menu contains a folder and the corresponding item is selected, the normal behavior of AliasMenu is to open the folder in the Finder. However, if the folder's name ends with the star \* character, AliasMenu will not open the folder. Instead, it will open all the items contained in the folder.

Example: an Internet\* folder containing aliases of FreePPP, Eudora and Netscape. Selecting that item will launch those three applications with a single command. You can even combine the star with a keyboard shortcut, for example rename the folder Internet\*/K so that you only need to hit ctrl-K to be ready for an Internet session.

Note that the aliases are launched according to their alphabetical order. By altering their names appropriately, you can control the launch order and thus which one will be frontmost at the end of the multiple launch.

## Text Insertion

AliasMenu can insert your name and address, or any other text you have to type often, whatever its length.

Open SimpleText and type the text you want. Select it, then drag it to the desktop. The Finder displays it as a text clipping. Give the clipping an appropriate name, then drop it in an AliasMenu menu's folder.

When the menu item is selected, AliasMenu "types" the text of the clipping in the frontmost application. To stop the typing, click in the text.

For even faster access to your most frequently used clippings, you can define a keyboard shortcut for them. For instance, you can use ctrl-A to type your name and

address.

This text insertion is disabled if the Finder is front, or if the front application does not recognize the required AppleEvents. In those cases, selecting a text clipping only opens it on the desktop.

## FKEY Launch

An FKEY (for “Function Key”) is an executable code resource, usually installed within the System and normally triggered by a Command-Shift-Number combination. Some numbers are reserved by Apple, such as cmd-shift-1 for ejecting the floppy disk in drive 1.

AliasMenu can launch an FKEY from a menu item. Thus, you can freely exceed the usual 10-FKEYs limit.

Several simple FKEYs can replace some much heavier utilities: for example to type the current date, “mount” a cartridge, insert quoting symbols in clipboard text, take a screen shot, etc. Freeware and shareware libraries on the Internet contain dozens of interesting FKEYs.

Warning: an FKEY executes its code within the current application’s context. If you install an unknown or unstable FKEY, remember to save your work before triggering the FKEY. On the other hand, a big advantage of the FKEY is its fugitive character. The FKEY is only loaded in memory when it runs, then it’s immediatly purged. Consequently, FKEYs generally have less compatibility problems than extensions or control panels.

Using ResEdit, copy the FKEY to a separate file. Give the file the type 'FKEY' and the creator 'aMn2' (AliasMenu’s signature). Place the file in an AliasMenu menu’s folder. The file name can be different than the FKEY’s name.

If a file contains several FKEYs, only the first one found will be executed. The id number of the FKEY is ignored. There is no risk of collision if several FKEYs share the same id, as long as they live each in a separate file.

As with any other AliasMenu item, you can assign a keyboard shortcut to an FKEY, for example ctrl-D to type the current date.

## Launching AppleScript Scripts

AliasMenu can launch AppleScript scripts, as long as they are saved as mini-applications. Whatever the frontmost application is when the script is launched, the mini-application creates a separate context for executing the script, which can at its turn activate or launch another application.

## Using Aliases of Unmounted Volumes

If you place an alias of an unmounted volume in a menu, selecting the item will mount the volume, with the possible appearance of AppleShare's password dialog, or, if the volume is an ejectable cartridge or diskette, of the "Insert Disk" alert.

Such aliases will work as expected when they are placed within menus as menu items. You can use AliasMenu to create a Network menu with servers. The servers will mount only when their menu item is selected.

If such an alias is used to directly create a menu, the menu will only appear when the volume is visible on the desktop. If the volume is ejected or unmounted, the menu disappears.

## Internet, URLs

The Internet browsers let you drag a bookmark to the desktop, which creates a small file containing the corresponding URL. These files can directly be used to build one or more extra Bookmarks menus, which thus become independant of the browser itself. An URL file can be renamed freely and be given a shortcut. When an URL is selected with AliasMenu, the corresponding Web page is displayed in the browser.

## Hierarchical Menus

AliasMenu doesn't support hierarchical menus. On the contrary, the point is to reduce the need for them by providing a very convenient access to files and folders. However, there are obviously some cases where hierarchical menus could be useful, so a future version may very well add some selective hierarchicals. Stay tuned... and please register your copy.

## Shareware

AliasMenu is Shareware, which means if you use it, you must pay for it. A single user license costs US\$25 (or 25 Euros or FRF 150).

Site licenses and lowered prices for students are available. A site license is limited to a 100 miles (160 kilometers) radius. A worldwide license has no radius restriction. See the Kagi registration form for details and prices.

Shareware registration is handled by Kagi, an American service that handles payments for several shareware authors worldwide. Kagi accepts credit cards and offers several

ways for payment:

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Click the Shareware Information button in the control panel. To go directly to the Web site and register on-line, click the Online Registration on Kagi Secure Web Site... button.

If you prefer an off-line registration, click the Kagi Registration (e-mail, fax, postal...) button. Fill out the form, select your payment method and send it to Kagi (copy it to send it by e-mail, print it to send by fax). If you send it by e-mail, send it to <shareware@kagi.com>, not to the author. Note that the credit card number is always sent in an encoded form to ensure safety.

After registering, you will receive your serial number. Entering the serial number will remove the reminder alerts that appear after the first month of use.

Upgrade to version 2 is free for registered users of previous version. Send a mail to the author along with your full name and company name to get your free serial number (the author's address is displayed in the control panel).

AliasMenu should not be distributed on a commercial media (such as a shareware compilation CD) without the author's prior written (or e-mailed) consent. It can be uploaded anywhere freely, but only if there's no extra fee afterwards for its download.

## Warranty

The program should work as described here. If it does not and if the author can't help, please throw the program away and ask the author for a refund (up to one year after your registration).

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That said, just send a mail to the author if something goes wrong.

## Credits

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