

PowerBar/Write v. 4.5.1

The Windows Write Buttonbar

©1992-93 David Stewart

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PowerBar/Write--Making Write More Powerful

Windows' Write is not a "power" word processor, and is thus looked at askance by many Windows users. But Write's very lack of "power user" features is a virtue--the virtue of simplicity. Write makes up in speed, ease of use and convenience (not to mention thrift) what it lacks in power and features.

PowerBar/Write gives you toolbar technology for Windows Write, incorporating the most useful, commonly used menu features of Write in a buttonbar that's always readily accessible. In addition, PowerBar/Write has a utility menu that includes a clock, a file finder and opener, a directory creation utility, special characters ("smart" quotation marks, ANSI characters, such as ©, ¾ and æ), application launching, time/date stamps, sizing options for Write, a printer page orientation toggle, timed automatic file saving, and setup options for PowerBar/Write. It starts up Write along with itself, so you don't have to do it. And you can even associate your Write files with PowerBar/Write, for instant loading when you use the application and Write.

PowerBar/Write was originally written in Visual Basic for Windows 1.0, for Windows 3.1. The current version is version 4.5.1, and is written in Visual Basic for Windows 2.0. Visual Basic 2.0 brings new speed and smaller compiled file size, so you will notice, if you have used previous versions of PowerBar/Write, that it is much faster when loading and in action.

PowerBar/Write 4.5.1 requires:

A 286 or higher CPU running in Standard or Enhanced mode.

A mouse, because most everything in PowerBar/Write is mouse-activated.

The Visual Basic runtime library file, VBRUN200.DLL, in a directory that is on your path. (The Windows SYSTEM directory is a good place for it.) If you don't have this file, you can usually download it from the same on-line service from which you got this file (assuming that was your source) or get it from a friend who uses Windows; on-line, look for VBRUN200.EXE or VBRUN200.ZIP. **(Note: Do NOT delete your VBRUN100.DLL file. It is needed for applications written in Visual Basic for Windows 1.0; VBRUN200.DLL does NOT replace this file. If you have applications written in both versions, you need BOTH files.)**

Windows 3.1 (it will not work properly with 3.0) and Write itself.

PowerBar/Write takes up some real estate on the screen--a vertical strip on the right side of your screen, just leftward enough to leave Write's scrollbar uncovered. For many margin settings in Write on standard 640x480 VGA (and on laptop computers), this may mean that you will be cutting off some of your view of the right margin area of Write. Write's default

margins are 1¼" on both sides. PowerBar/Write cuts about ¼" past the right margin; usually, at type sizes above 8 pt., Write will wrap words that fall within this ¼" anyway, so it should not present a problem if you customarily use Write's default margin. And if you use a higher resolution--800x600 or 1024x768, e.g.--you will generally never have any overlap. PowerBar/Write is as narrow as a window can be made in Visual Basic.

Installation

PowerBar/Write has one program file, PBWRITE.EXE, and three documentation files. Unzip them and put them wherever you want. However, PowerBar/Write must be able to find Write itself, so the directory containing Write (most likely your Windows directory) must either hold PowerBar/Write also, or be on your DOS path statement in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file. If you use Program Manager as your shell, use the standard procedure for installing a new launch icon. See the *Windows 3.1 User's Guide*, pp. 78-83. If you use some other shell or nonshell program manager, follow its app installation procedures.

Associating Your Write Files With PowerBar/Write

I strongly recommend that you reassociate .wri files with PBWRITE.EXE instead of with WRITE.EXE. The effect is exactly the same: When you open a Write file from an icon, command line or file manager, it will be loaded into Write *by PowerBar/Write*. Use File Manager's Associate... command, from the File menu. See the *Windows 3.1 User's Guide*, pp. 131-132; but please note that you should Browse to find and enter the PowerBar/Write program name for association. If you set up associations with Notepad by directly editing WIN.INI rather than using File Manager, enter PowerBar/Write's entire path in all capital letters, and be sure to delete the line associating *.wri files with WRITE.EXE. You will need to restart Windows for the new association to take effect.

How PowerBar/Write Works for You

When you use PowerBar/Write, you do not have to launch Write itself! PowerBar/Write will launch Write for you. PowerBar/Write will open up Write, maximized, and itself. So you can use the command line for PowerBar/Write in Program Manager instead of the Write command line. (You can still use the Write icon, if you like, by changing the icon through normal procedures.) If you have associated your *.wri files with PowerBar/Write, PowerBar/Write can start up Write and automatically open a file.

In this way, PowerBar/Write is virtually seamlessly integrated with Write; if you associate it with your Write files, you can think of it as not another program, but as part of Write. It's the easiest way to make Write easier to work with. And the point *is* to make Write a more powerful, more "full-featured" word processor.

If you have the popular Windows shareware spell-checking program WinSpell, and if the WINSPELL.EXE file is on your path, PowerBar/Write will start WinSpell when you run PowerBar/Write. If you don't have WinSpell, don't worry. PowerBar/Write will simply start up without it; there will be no effect on startup. (Note that if you are using WinSpell but are not using a registered copy, you will have to get past the "nag" screen in WinSpell. I have no association with the makers of WinSpell.)

By default, PowerBar/Write also floats on top of all other application windows, so that it is always at the ready when you're working in Write. You can choose, from the Options submenu, to sink it or float it.

You'll see a clock (which can be turned off; see below) on PowerBar/Write's menu bar. Clicking on the clock will drop down PowerBar/Write's menu.

You can close PowerBar/Write itself by clicking one of the bottom buttons on the bar.

The Buttons on the Bar

The PowerBar/Write buttonbar is mostly self-explanatory. Most buttons correspond to menu choices in Write. However, where Write's Document menu uses the phrase "Page layout," I have used "Margins." "Fnd" and "Nxt" stand for "Find" and "Find Next," respectively. Where Write's Character menu uses words for Bold, Italic, etc., I have used symbols. "+2" and "-2" are the Character menu's Enlarge font and Reduce font functions, each having a 2-point effect on the type selected or following. "N" removes all special type effects except size, corresponding to the Character menu's Regular (most word processors, including Microsoft's, call this Plain or Normal). L, C, R and J are left-justify, center, right-justify and left- and right-justify paragraph functions. Norm is a "Normal" paragraph as Write defines that. "Ind" is indents. "1," "1.5" and "2" are single, 1½ and double line spacing. The buttons will execute their appointed functions just as quickly as Write menu choices. PgBreak enters a hard page break a line below the cursor point. XBoth shuts down both PowerBar/Write and Write (you'll be prompted to save any changes since the last file save); Xpb shuts down just PowerBar/Write.

The Open button simply calls up the Open File dialog, with Write's .wri files as the file choices showing. But if you click on the ".txt" button, the Open Dialog will filter the directory and show you only text files with the .txt extension; similarly, if you click the ".doc" button under the Open button, you will see only .doc files (usually these are Microsoft Word for DOS files), and if you click on the "*" (asterisk) button you will see *all* files. **Note: If you use these**

buttons when you have unsaved changes to a file, PowerBar/Write will either Save the file if it has already been named, or prompt you to save it if it has not yet been named; but it will prompt you to save in the format you specified with the button you clicked-- which may not be the format you want to save in.

Under the Save and As buttons you'll see two more buttons labelled ".txt" and ".doc." Clicking on one of these will prepare you to save a file as a text or Word file. After having once saved them in the desired format, you need not use the ".txt" or ".doc" button again; the AutoSave function or the Save button will take care of saving, and retain the desired format for you.

Underneath the Save ".txt" and ".doc" buttons you'll see buttons labelled "A:" and "B:"; these buttons will save your file to drive A: or B:, respectively; if the file is already named, they will simply save it named to the floppy drive you select; if it is not yet named, you will have to name it. Note that if you use these buttons, but do not also save your file to your hard drive as usual, you may end up with differences between the file on floppy and the file on hard disk.

Underneath the Undo button you'll see "Sel All" and "Copy All" buttons. "Sel All" selects/highlights the entire Write file so that you may perform an operation of your choice on the file's entire contents; for example, you might want to select the whole file in order to put it all in a specific typeface, or to reduce the whole file in one motion, or to cut the whole file... The "Copy All" button selects the whole file, again, and then copies it to the Clipboard, for pasting into another application or file.

If Write Is Not Running If you attempt to use the buttons on the bar or a menu item while Write is not running, PowerBar/Write pops up a dialog box that asks whether you want to start Write. The exceptions are the New and Open buttons, which automatically start Write if you click either of them while Write is not running; the New button opens Write to a blank file, and the Open button does the same, but also calls up the File Open dialog.

The Clock Utility Menu

The Clock Menu PowerBar/Write opens up with a clock where a menu heading would normally be expected. Clicking on the clock drops down the Utility menu, just as if there were a normal heading. You can turn the clock off and back on in the menu's Options submenu. When the clock is off, the menu heading becomes "Utility."

Magic Menu Trick There is, above the "New" button, a little button with a minus sign on it. If you click on this, it will change to a plus sign. Then, if you bring your pointer up to the menu at anything less than breakneck speed, you should notice an interesting phenomenon: The menu will drop down without your having to click on the clock (or the menu heading, "Utility"). This doesn't mean you can't click on it, if you like, but you may find it handy to have it drop down like this. PowerBar/Write does NOT have to be the active application for this to work.

This is a "trick"--it is not standard Windows behavior; in fact, there is no way to really make a menu, per se, do this. The trick is to get another part of the program's interface to do it. Notice the little title box beneath the menu bar. That title box is the object that activates the menu. When you pass over the title box, it tells PowerBar/Write to drop the menu down. But if you come into the menu too fast, or from above, or from the side, the title box will not sense the mouse passing over it, and will not trigger the menu.

As I said, this is not standard Windows behavior, and I'm usually a real stickler for sticking to Windows conventions. Still, I've seen this trick in DR DOS's graphical file manager's menus, and it can be added to the Mac system; it seems like a pretty good idea to me, so I added it here. If you don't like it, simply click the "+" button; if you like it, you can turn it on in each session. (I'll probably include the ability to save it in the on or off position with the next version of PowerBar/Write.)

File Finder A file search, open and deletion utility. The utility box will pop up on your screen ready to use. It consists of:

A file filter setting. The default setting is *.wri, to search for Write files. But you can change it to search for any filename or extension you wish. (Enter filespecs only here--filename and/or extensions, including wildcards; do *not* enter directories or drives.)

A drive drop-down list. You can change the drive you wish to search here.

A directory list. Here you can travel through the directory structure of the disk and drive you want to search; double-click on the target or initial subdirectory.

A matching list box. This will list all the files that match your mask.

Command buttons. These start and halt searches, open a selected file, delete a selected file and exit the search box.

To search for a file, set up the filter, and if necessary the drive and initial directory, then click the Start Search button or press AltS. The searcher will move through the designated directory and its subdirectories to find all the files that match the mask you set up. (To search an entire disk, specify its root directory.) Matching files will be listed in the box on the right of the File Search window. You can stop a search in progress if, say, you already see what you need; just click the Quit Search button or press AltQ.

To open a file, note the condition of the file you're working on currently, if there is a file open: Has it been saved--ever, or lately, or does it have changes you'd just as soon dispose of? PowerBar/Write can either save your most recent, unsaved changes and then open the selected file, or discard the most recent changes before it opens the selected file. If you are

opening in place of an unused file, or in place of a file that has not changed since it was last saved, *either button will open the selected file without error*. Select the filename you want to open, and then click the appropriate button.

PLEASE NOTE: If the file you are using has not been saved even once, **do not use the File Searcher's button option to save the file**; PowerBar Write cannot finish its open operation by itself if you try to use it on a never-saved file. So first save the file through the buttonbar. Alternatively, you can go ahead and use the save button, but you will be prompted as to whether or not you want to overwrite the file you're trying to open; *answer NO*. You'll note that that file name now appears in the Save As... dialog's filename space; simply overtype the new file's new name, and press Enter; then, when the file open dialog pops up, enter the keys Shift Ins or Ctrl V and Enter to open the file you wanted opened.

To delete a file, first use the Search function; then simply select the file you want to delete by clicking on it once and then click on the "Delete selected file" button. You will be prompted to approve the deletion.

Make Directory This little utility gets you into creating a directory FAST. Note that you need only enter the directory name, and you must follow DOS conventions for naming. If you try to create a name longer than 8 characters plus dot and 3 characters, or longer than 8 characters without a dot and extension, the Make Directory utility will automatically trim the name down to DOS acceptability. (You may not like the name that results, so just do it right the first time.) You can search back through the directory and drive lists to verify that the directory has been made, but really, you can trust it pretty well. And yes, it will only make directories on the A:, B:, C:, D: and E: drives.

AutoSave Submenu With this submenu you can choose a new timed AutoSave interval, or turn off AutoSave altogether. The default is On with a 5-minute interval between saves.

PLEASE NOTE: PowerBar/Write's AutoSave will activate according to the specified interval even if you are working in an application other than Write, so if you are going to do so and don't want to have PowerBar/Write abruptly take you away from your work (or play) by popping back to save the Write file, you should turn off AutoSave before going on to another application.

Character submenus On these four submenus you will find an extensive selection of ANSI special symbols and characters that are frequently used in business and academic documents. Put the I-beam insertion point where you want the character to appear, drop down to the desired character on one of PowerBar/Write's four character submenus and release. The character will appear in your Write document.

"Smart quotes" are true, typefont-style quotation marks, rather than the plain straight quotation marks that Windows uses by default. Smart quotes simply look better. You can create them one at a time from the menu, to suit your current needs. Or you can choose pairs, and PowerBar/Write will create the pair and then put your insertion point between the marks--automatically preparing you to quote away. Spiffy, huh? Please note that not all fonts support "smart quotes."

The Optional Hyphen is an undocumented character that Write is capable of producing. It is essentially a "disappearing" hyphen. Write will not automatically or intelligently hyphenate words, as some high-end word processors will. However, it will let you insert an optional hyphen where you want in a word. This optional hyphen will only show up if the word is near the end of the line it's typed on; then the word will break at the hyphen, rather than carrying over whole to the next line. If you later edit text and move the word back in the line or forward to the next, the optional hyphen will disappear; but it will still be there invisibly (which means it

will take up a character space, with respect to moving the insertion point with the arrow keys), and if the word again gets pushed to the point where it would, without the hyphen, flow to the next line, it will hyphenate instead (as long as the hyphen falls near enough to the beginning of the word to still fit inside the margin). (You can have more than one optional hyphen in a word.) You can also enter the optional hyphen character from your keyboard, directly in Write, by pressing CtrlShift and the hyphen key. This is easier than using PowerBar/Write to insert the character, except that you have to remember the keys.

The Numeric menu uses captions like "e²" and "x^o"; however, when you select these characters, only the symbol--i.e., "²" or "°"--will appear. In the Marks/Symbols menu, the two bullet characters are difficult to see--or, rather, the small one is difficult to see and the large one cannot be reproduced by Windows' menu font as a bullet; thus their captions include SmBlt and LgBlt. Not all typefaces have bullets or full ANSI character sets; you may find that choosing one of these characters inserts a square, a space or a vertical block into your document; if so, select it and put it in another face, such as Windows' TimesNewRomanPS, that has the bullet or ANSI character you need.

Time/Date Stamps This submenu gives you 12 different time and date stamps for immediate entry into your text at the cursor insertion point.

Runners A submenu that lets you start several Windows applications that can be useful when working with word processor files. In addition, Run... will pop up a Run... dialog into which you can enter a command line or associated file name. If you use Program Manager or File Manager as your Windows shell, choosing the shell from the menu will restore and activate its window, not run a second instance of either. The DOS session is a full-screen session, not windowed.

Options This breaks into a submenu with six more sections. It'll be clear what they do from reading the menu. PowerBar/Write's defaults for these options are:

Write is maximized.

The PowerBar floats.

The PowerBar is in its original position, at the top of the screen and just to the left of Write's vertical scroll bar.

The menu clock is on.

Write sets the printer in Portrait mode.

Exits Exit Write & PB/W closes both Write and PowerBar/Write. Exit Windows closes Windows. You will be prompted to save any changed files before anything closes, so *these are safe exits*.

HOTKEYS IN POWERBAR/WRITE The menu hotkeys in PowerBar/Write are there for the convenience of users who like to use the keyboard most of the time. If you are one of these users, you'll become adept at cool-switching to PowerBar/Write by AltTabbing, then hitting the hotkeys you've memorized to make the changes that you desire in the program. I've tried to make the hotkeys have something to do with the menu command they execute, in most cases, but I haven't tried to follow any standard such as Microsoft Word, because this program is nothing like any standard Windows mega-application.

Fooling PowerBar/Write

PowerBar/Write can be fooled, because it is not fully system-aware. Thus if you change the printer orientation from Write's menu options rather than from PowerBar/Write's Options submenu, the Options submenu status check may not indicate the true orientation of the printer. Similarly, if you resize Write from its own system menu or sizing buttons, or if you run multiple copies of Write or open another copy of Write from the runners menu, either along with the original startup copy or after closing down a startup copy, PowerBar/Write's Write size indicator checks may be

wrong for the particular copy you are working in. These inaccuracies, however, will not cause malfunctions, and using the PowerBar/Write options will execute functions properly and update immediately (in the case of size, *for the copy you update only*). But you should know that there are these possibilities; if you use the Options menu exclusively for these functions you'll almost always find PowerBar/Write to accurately reflect the state of Write.

"Why Can't I Save Settings?"

If you prefer an alternative set of defaults, PowerBar/Write has no way to save them. Why? This was a decision based on expressed dislikes of many Windows users. Windows and Windows applications are big programs. Making them capable of saving settings makes them much bigger, or adds files to your hard disk--usually some kind of initialization (.INI) file--or requires writing a new section into WIN.INI. I purposely decided against these options, because I want to keep PowerBar/Write as compact as possible and as neat as possible. Which means I don't want to dot your hard disk with extra files or mess around with your Windows .ini files.

Registration/Purchase

PowerBar/Write is shareware; as usual, please limit your unregistered use to a maximum 30-day trial period. If you like and use PowerBar/Write regularly, please register it. This gets you the following: The feeling that you've gotten something for your money, which is almost always superior to feeling that you've gotten away with something. The knowledge that you're encouraging ideas and better programming in the future. Perpetual license to subsequent editions of PowerBar/Write. And if you pay the higher registration price, automatic updating to the next version by mail.

Prices:

\$10 -- Standard registration license: Registers PowerBar/Write for use on any three computers, and I don't care whose--pass it to two friends, put it on a desktop at home, a notebook and a desktop at work--you choose. (With the exception that you cannot assume that someone else, unknown to you, has registered the program without using up all his or her rights to three installations; this is a personal license for you and two others you choose, and unless you were chosen, and received from the chooser a copy of the license, you are not registered for legal post-trial period use.) You'll receive a digital license by mail. Registration is perpetual; I don't expect you to pay for a higher-numbered version of PowerBar/Write once you've paid for it once. But you're on your own as to finding future versions. (If you got this program from America Online, please send only the \$10 registration fee if you think you'll be keeping your AOL account. AOL always gets the earliest upload of new versions of PowerBar/Write and other programs by the same author.)

\$15 -- Same as standard registration, except that I'll send you the next major update by U.S. mail, or America Online, by electronic mail.

For an additional **\$5**, added to either the \$10 or the \$15 registration, you can get the Visual Basic code for PowerBar/Write.

[A note to magazine reviewers about registration price: Please note that the \$10 registration price does NOT cover shipping and handling. In reviews, please list the registration price as \$10 plus, if ordered by mail, \$5 for shipping and handling.]

Send check or money order payable to David Stewart, or, if you want to risk it, cash, and the name of the bulletin board or other source from which you got this program, as well as comments, complaints, compliments, ideas for improvements or additions, to:

**David Stewart
738 Hathaway Drive
Auburn Hills MI 48326**

For your convenience, there's a registration form included in the .zip file from which you extracted this program; use that to register.

Upload/Shareware Catalog/Disk Distribution Notice

The upload policy is very simple: **Please upload this program to as many services as possible, and distribute at users' groups, and do anything else you like to get it around. Just be sure to distribute all files.** And thanks!

If you distribute a shareware catalog of any sort, or compile disks of shareware for sale, or for inclusion in books, you have express permission to include PowerBar/Write or other applications by this author in the publication or on the disks (*PLEASE!*), as long as all original files included with the .zip source file are included, and as long as no charge is made beyond a reasonable one for running a business, distribution and profit, and as long as the software is not represented as "free" software, or as if the price of distributing disks were a substitute for registration fees.

Technical Support

I can hardly think of anything you'd need support for, but if you find a problem, you can write to me, David Stewart, at the above address, or you can drop me a line on Prodigy, ID CTKJ00D (those are zeros between the J and D), or America Online, name Doc Yeah (look for me on-line, too; I don't mind helping live by Instant Message or private room). CompuServe members, as well as members of many other InterNet services, can send mail via the mail gateway between such services and America Online. If you really need help like NOW, you can get my phone number by calling Directory Assistance in the 313 area code. But EMail is preferred.

About the Programmer

David Stewart is an advertising copywriter, a widely published free-lance writer, reviewer and editor and now a learning programmer. He is working on a book on radically customizing Microsoft Windows--far beyond the Control Panel and WIN.INI and SYSTEM.INI settings.

If you want your programs or products or company to have a sophisticated advertising program, but can't afford an agency, or you would like to give your documentation or any other writing the touch of a professional writer or editor, contact him at the address above, on Prodigy or America Online, or by phone: call directory assistance at 1-313-555-1212 and ask for David Stewart in Auburn Hills.

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Tom Hoots.

PC Andy of America Online.

A couple other people, users or people who knew how to do something that I didn't know, but whose names I've forgotten. Believe me, your contributions are appreciated. It's just that sometimes I forget things.

Powerbar/Write

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Man, I hate this part. Just like the big software companies, I disclaim all responsibility for effects of the use of PowerBar/Write. All warranties, either express or implied, including but not limited to fitness for any particular purpose other than interacting with Windows Write are disclaimed. Nor will David Stewart or Argyle Softstuff be liable for any damages whatsoever arising from the use of this program. Let's keep the lawyers out of this: If you have a problem, let me know.