

AliasMenu adds menus to the Finder. These menus work exactly like the Apple Menu: they may contain any kind of items (applications, documents, desk accessories, folders, aliases, control panels...).

Selecting an item in a menu will open it, as if you had double-clicked it. The menu titles can be replaced by icons, which you'll find useful if you have a small screen.

AliasMenu needs System version 7.0 or higher. It doesn't modify the System or the Finder in any way.

Installation: drop AliasMenu on your System Folder, the Finder will place it where it must go (in the Control Panels folder). Then restart your Macintosh.

AliasMenu will create a new folder within your System Folder, named "AliasMenu Items", and a subfolder named "1.Alias" within it. You can add up to 8 more subfolders (for a total of 9) which will become as many new menus.

The default "1.Alias" subfolder can be renamed or deleted, but it will be created again if the "AliasMenu Items" folder is empty.

Subfolder names must start with a digit (1-9) followed by a point, then the menu title you want. The digit will determine the order of your menus in the menu-bar.

Example: 1.Folders 2.Applications 3.Utilities (etc.)

Warning:

- There must not be any space between the digit and the point, or between the point and the name. A subfolder whose name doesn't respect this rule will simply be ignored by AliasMenu.

- The digits must be continuous, there must not be any "blank" in their order, i.e. the first menu must have the number 1, the second the number 2 and so on. Otherwise, the menus after the blank may not function correctly.

The subfolders can, of course, be replaced by aliases pointing to other folders. Note that in this case the menu will be created according to the alias name, not the original. So you may give any title you want to your menus. In any case, you'll need to change the alias name to add the numeric prefix it needs, as described above.

Some examples of useful menus:

- An "Applications" menu, whose corresponding subfolder contains aliases to your favourite applications.
- A "Utilities" menu pointing to other applications of this kind (antivirus, alias manager, back-up software...).
- A "Panels" menu, created via an alias of the Control Panels folder, so you have instant access to all your control panels.
- A "System" menu containing aliases to the System Folder and its subfolders.
- A "Folders" menu pointing to your favourite or "current work" folders.

Important: the "AliasMenu Items" folder can only contain subfolders (or aliases to folders), whose names will determine the order of the menus. If you drop an application or a document in the "AliasMenu Items" folder, it will be ignored: it must reside in a subfolder, which will specify in which menu it will appear.

Control Panel: AliasMenu automatically adds a first item to the first menu to give instant access to its control panel. You may disable this option in the control panel, and decide if you want the menus before or after the "Special" menu.

<Option> and <Command>: if an item is selected while pressing the <option> key, the item is not opened, it's only displayed and selected by the Finder, which will open the folder if necessary.

If you press the <command> key, you'll get the "Get Infos" window.

You can press both <option> and <command> to combine the two functions.

Keyboard: you can add keyboard-equivalents to menu items. AliasMenu will not perform any check on the key you choose, if the same letter appears in several items, the first matching item found will be selected.

To assign a key-equivalent, simply append a slash / to the file (or folder, or alias) name, then the key.

Example: to assign <cmd T> to the “Test” menu item, rename the corresponding file “Test/T”.

Note: AliasMenu is fully compatible with QuicKeys. The combination is highly recommended, especially if you use QuicKeys Icons.

Icons: if you have a small screen, the menu bar will become rapidly filled... You may want to regain space by turning your menu titles to icons. Use the Finder to paste an icon on the subfolder (in the “Get Infos” window) or the alias. To get the normal title back, delete the icon.

If you create an alias to a System Folder's subfolder, such as the Control Panels folder, you may open the “Get Infos” window on the alias, select its icon, copy and paste back: this will force AliasMenu to use it. Aliases to disks must be treated the same way if you want to iconize the corresponding menu.

AppleShare: you can use aliases to AppleShare volumes in AliasMenu. The volumes will be mounted when the startup is finished (if they don't mount automatically), asking for your password if necessary.

This only occurs if the alias is used to make a menu, not if you put it in a subfolder to make a menu item. In this last case, the volume will mount only if you select it in the menu, so you can build a menu presenting all your AppleShare volumes without mounting them all the time.

Startup Delay: if your startup is unusually long (for example if you have several “heavy” applications launched at startup) and if AliasMenu has a menu made with an alias to an AppleShare volume as a menu title (see above), the startup delay may be too short. In such a case, AppleShare's password dialog may appear too early in the startup process, and can disturb it very badly.

If you see this problem, simply restart holding the <shift> key to disable all extensions, then open the AliasMenu control panel (yes, you can open it even with extensions disabled) and increase the delay in the “Startup Delay” field. An average delay is 20, but this value may be decreased (down to 4) if your menus appear obviously too late after the Finder starts, which can happen if you don't use AppleShare volumes.

Note: the delay value is not expressed as “seconds” or “ticks”, it's an internal cycle in AliasMenu whose duration varies depending on the speed of the Macintosh.

ARA: use AliasMenu with care if you create a menu corresponding to an AppleShare volume available through AppleTalk Remote Access!

Separators: you can add separators (an inactive grey line in a menu) by holding the <shift> key and selecting an item.

A separator is made by creating an empty TeachText document in the subfolder. The name is the same as the selected item except that the last character is replaced with a '('. The parenthesis has two effects: it sorts the separator alphabetically just before the item, and lets AliasMenu know it's a separator.

To remove a separator, open the subfolder and drag the TeachText document to the Trash.

Since the TeachText documents are empty, they don't eat any space on the disk except for their catalog entry.

Power Users: you can totally control the order of your items by adding one or more NULL characters (ASCII 0) to the beginning of the aliases names. If you put a NULL in the clipboard (with JoliWrite, Clipboard Magician or any other utility), the Finder will let you paste it in a file name.

This addition is perfectly okay with aliases. But proceed cautiously if you put real (non-alias) items in the subfolders.

Hierarchical menus: no. I have written AliasMenu because I'm tired of overusing a hierarchical Apple Menu...

Distribution: AliasMenu is a shareware, it must not be sold. It may be uploaded to networks or BBS's, but only if there's no extra fee for downloading. It may not be included in a compilation to be sold without the author's written consent.

If you like it and decide to keep it, please send me \$20, along with a short note precising the following informations:

- that you are paying for AliasMenu,
- its version number,
- your name and address,
- your e-mail address if you have one.

Benoît Widemann
68, avenue d'Italie
75013 Paris — France

Special Thanks:

— To Éric Simenel for his sample code on FSSpecs and AppleEvents, it saved me a huge amount of time.

— To Paul Mercer for “ShowInit”.

— To Jacques-André Régnier, whose Mac runs under HS permanently, for his good tricks with icons and for the countless bugs he helped me to obliterate.

— To the great beta-test team:

Daniel Ranson, Vincent Florin, Jean-Pierre Nouet, Philippe Giraud, Ellen Herzfeld, dOMinique Martel and Bora Horza Gobuchul.

©1992 Benoît Widemann — All Rights Reserved.

EMail: bw10@calvacom.fr