

ABOUT CONVERSION 2.0 DA

Please note that there are now two versions of Conversion DA, the full version and the shareware version.

- If the version number to the left says "Shareware" then you have a trial version of the software which you may distribute freely, provided you don't alter it.
- If it says "Full Version" then you have a full, registered version. In that case, please don't distribute it to others. Its user-definable menus took many hours to implement, and I couldn't have done it without the support of registered users like you!

INTRODUCTION

I wrote this Macintosh desk accessory because I work as an illustrator and, for technical drawings, it's always a pain to have to convert between inches and millimeters. I felt that the few other conversion utilities I'd seen were either clumsy to operate or required HyperCard.

Highlights of Conversion 2.0 include:

- Three built-in conversion routines:
 - Fractions: The Fraction-to-Decimal feature converts all of your favorite fractions to decimals. The Decimal-to-Fraction feature converts your input to the nearest 1/64th and then let you know if it was an exact fit or not.
 - Numeric: Convert between hexadecimal, octal, decimal and binary.
 - Temperature: Convert between Celsius, Fahrenheit and Kelvin.
- Copy to the clipboard the result of your last conversion, or the entire list of conversions since the DA was opened.
- On-line help (you're reading it).
- The DA remembers your last menu selections and the window's location on the screen.
- User-definable menus (available only in full version shipped to registered users):
 - Can include up to 32 user-definable menus for proportional conversions such as lengths, weights and volume.
 - Define the menu names and the items they contain.
 - Define how the items are formatted in the clipboard (e.g., 1" or 1 inch).
 - Define how the converted items are combined in the clipboard (e.g., "1 inch = 25.4mm" or "1 inch ==> 25.4mm").
 - Define aliases for menu items (e.g., "mm" or "MM" for an item that appears on the menu as "millimeter") and then use it in an equation such as "1 ft + 3 mm" to combine two or more units of measurement. Aliases are case sensitive.
 - Define an alternate display for an item (e.g., inches could be converted and then displayed as picas/points or millimeters).
 - Define a preferred number of decimals for an item that will override the number in the Options menu.
 - Add dividing lines between groups of items.
 - Choose whether you want to include the three built-in conversion types.
- Enter numbers as equations (e.g., "32/8" or "123+456")
- Choose the number of decimals to display, 0-9 or floating.
- Optional European notation (e.g., "1,500.5" or "1.500 5").
- Choose whether to display an item's alias in the menus.

USING CONVERSION

1. Select from the Unit Type popup menu the kind of conversion you want to do, such as lengths or weights.
2. Select the unit of measure you want to convert from in the second popup menu.
3. Select the unit of measure you want to convert to in the third popup menu.
4. Enter the number you're converting from in the input edit box.
5. Press the Enter or Return key. The DA will calculate your measurement in the chosen units and then select the entire edit box so you can immediately type in the next number without having to mouse around. You can select Copy Result from the Options menu to put the current result in the clipboard for other applications or desk accessories.

Every time you press enter, Conversion adds the calculation to the Calc List, which can be copied to the clipboard by selecting Copy Calc List from the Options menu. Changing unit types will trigger a recalculation, but only calculations caused by pressing the Return or Enter will be added to the list. All of the standard Cut, Copy and Paste functions also work in the input box.

Whenever you change the number of decimals, Conversion saves that setting for that item. Whenever you select an output unit (the third popup menu), Conversion checks for a decimal setting in the menu definition. If there wasn't one defined, it uses the current system default (the last decimal setting you selected).

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

- Page Up: Output Units will change to the previous menu item.
- Page Down: Output Units will change to the next menu item.
- Home: Output Units will change to the first menu item.
- End: Output Units will change to the last menu item.
- Option + Page Up: Input Units will change to the previous menu item.
- Option + Page Down: Input Units will change to the next menu item.

- Option + Home: Input Units will change to the first menu item.
- Option + End: Input Units will change to the last menu item.
- Command key + Up Arrow (cursor up): Conversion will copy the current result to the Input Units edit box and change the input units menu selection to match the output units. Then you can simply change the Output Units menu to some other measurement unit and Conversion will immediately calculate the result.
- Other command-key shortcuts are available as listed on Conversion's menus.

ENTERING NUMBERS AS EQUATIONS

When using user-defined menus, you can enter numbers as equations. For example, the following all equal "12":

*3
x6
6÷3
4/2
+4
3-1
6-(7*2)

Conversion calculates fractions from left-to-right, then performs all remaining calculations from left-to-right.

Parentheses can be used to alter the calculation order, and may be nested as needed. Please note that "*" or "x" may be used interchangeably for multiplication. Either "/" or "÷" (the division symbol is an Option-Slash) may be used for division, although it's important to be aware that Conversion treats numbers separated by slashes as fractions, and that whole numbers and fractions must be separated by a space (not a hyphen). In general, don't use slashes in equations unless you're defining a fraction. For example, "3+1/2" equals 3.5, not 2. If in doubt, enter your equation with the same input and output units to test the equation's result before converting it.

CUSTOMIZING MENUS

These features available in registered versions only!

Menus can be customized in several ways:

- Name your menu*.
- Name all items on the menu.
- Define a conversion factor for each item.
- Define a 1-3 character alias (e.g. "in" or "mm").
- Define a format for an individual item to be copied to the clipboard (i.e., "Copy Result")*.
- Define a format for both items to be copied to the clipboard (i.e., "Copy Calc List").
- Define a format for the alternate display.
- Include or ignore the internal menus (Temperature, Numeric and Fractions).
- Create divider lines in the menus.
- Create up to 32 menus.

To customize Conversion's menus, select "Modify Menus..." from the Options menu. You will be given a choice of modifying the menus interactively through dialog boxes or reading in a whole new set of menus from a source file. Refer to the document "Customizing Your Menus" that comes with the registered version of Conversion.

When you register your copy of Conversion, I'll send you a disk with the full-featured version of Conversion, along with several menu source files. The menu source files are standard files that can be opened and edited in a word processor, and are commented so that you can learn how to modify them or to create your own custom menus.

*In the shareware version of Conversion, these features are fully functional. Other features may be available for experimentation, but changes won't be saved when you quit Conversion. Please note that once you've experimented with the Modify Menus command in the shareware version, you won't be able to save the decimal digits settings with the menu items until you quit and restart the DA.

ONLINE HELP

This document is available online in the About... box, which can be accessed by typing command-slash or clicking on the "?" button.

MEMORY CONSIDERATIONS

If you have less than the 20k necessary to open the help/about... window, then Conversion will beep. If you have less than 2k memory available when you press Enter or Return, then Conversion will beep to remind you that there isn't enough memory to safely continue adding data to the Calc List. If you frequently run into memory shortages:

- Under System 6 MultiFinder, hold down the option key when you choose the DA from the Apple menu. This causes the current application to become the DA's host, which may have more memory available than the DA Handler.
- Define menus with fewer items on them.

IF YOU LIKE CONVERSION

Conversion isn't infallible! After all, I'm an illustrator, not a programmer! Please save your work before calling this DA, especially when generating menus. Question any bogus-looking results, and please inform me of any miscalculations. I can't guarantee flawless performance, but Conversion has performed satisfactorily for me on a variety of Mac systems.

Feel free to try Conversion for 30 days. If you find Conversion useful and dependable for your purposes, please send \$10. Be sure to include the address to which you'd like me to send your menu source disk. Please make checks payable to Graffix. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

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