

TrashPicker

Version 1.0

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by

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TrashPicker is a shareware Control Panel for the Macintosh that monitors your trash and automatically empties the files you specify. It is designed to work under System 7 only. It will check at startup and not install itself if you try to use it with systems earlier than 7.0. The shareware fee is \$10 US.

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1. Introduction and Q&A

What is TrashPicker?

TrashPicker is a Control Panel that monitors your trash and automatically empties the files and folders that you specify. It is designed to decrease the amount of mental energy that System 7 users devote to deleting files & folders and make the trashcan a smarter part of your Macintosh. In a recent study done of Macintosh users in Madagascar, 93% of all items dragged to the trash were immediately followed by the selection of 'Empty Trash' from the Special menu. While more enlightened users might consider this behavior superstitious, it identifies a part of the Macintosh interface that just doesn't work as well as it could.

Where did TrashPicker come from?

TrashPicker was originally conceived as a 'hack' for the 1991 MacHack conference. Originally named 'TrashMan', we had to abandon that name when we discovered another trash utility using it.

How much memory (RAM) does TrashPicker use?

The init (which is always resident) takes up 16k. The control panel uses about 20k while it is open.

When do changes in the TrashPicker settings take effect?

Any changes you make in the TrashPicker control panel will not take effect until you restart the Macintosh. This may be changed in a future version.

What happens when an alias is thrown in the trash?

Only what is actually IN the trash is ever thrown out - if an alias is deleted by TrashPicker, the alias file, not its target, is deleted.

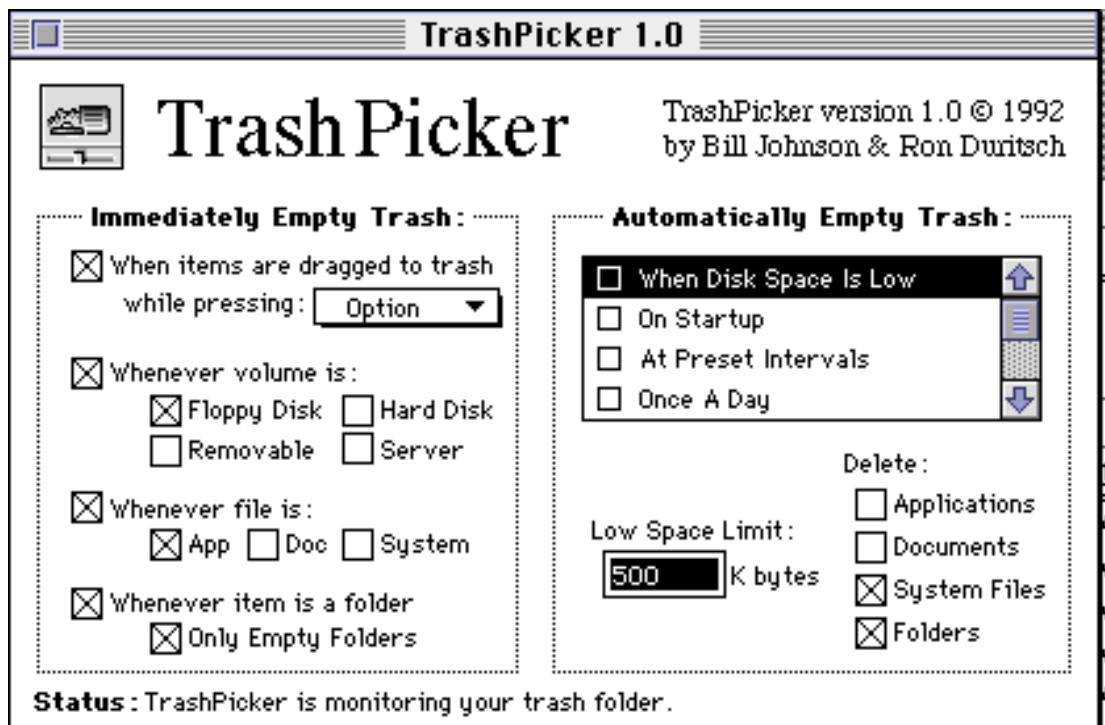
2. Using TrashPicker

Installing TrashPicker

TrashPicker is a System 7 control panel document. To install it, simply drag it over the icon of the system folder and release. When the dialog asks whether you want to put TrashPicker in the Control Panels folder, click the OK button and TrashPicker will be copied to the correct place in your System Folder. Thereafter, when you restart, TrashPicker will monitor your trash folder. The default setting of TrashPicker turns all trash options off except that dragging items to the trash with the modifier (option) key down will immediately delete the file or folder. All other special features are off.

You can remove TrashPicker as easily as you installed it by opening the Control Panels folder inside your System folder and dragging TrashPicker either outside of your System folder or to the trash. It will keep working until you restart the Macintosh.

TrashPicker Window



The main window of the control panel is divided into two parts. The left side of the window contains the TrashPicker options that work immediately when the user drags items into the trash. The right side of the window contains the TrashPicker options that work in the background, regardless of whether something has just been put in the trash.

At the bottom of the window is a status line that lets you know if TrashPicker is running, or if you need to restart.

TrashPicker works by watching your trash. If an item in the trash matches one of its settings, it will be deleted without having to select 'Empty Trash' from the Special menu. The 'Immediate' options work on the items that you drag to the trash, and the 'Automatic' or background options look at everything in the trash at the time associated with each option.

When TrashPicker must match a file type (i.e. you specify that for a particular option, you want to delete Applications), the matching is only done at the top level, and not inside of any folders that are in the trash. So if you check the option to delete 'Whenever file is: App' but not 'Whenever item is a folder', nothing will happen if you drag a folder of applications to the trash.

Immediate Trash Types

There are four sets of options under 'Immediately Empty Trash'. These options all work independently; if more than one of these options is checked, anything dragged to the trash only has to match one of the options in order to be deleted.

Delete When Modifier Key Is Down - This option deletes an item if you hold a key down when you drag it to the trash. The popup menu allows you to specify which of four modifier keys to invoke this behavior. (Option, Cmd, Ctl. or Shift)

Delete By Volume Type - This option deletes an item that is put in the trash if it resides on a volume (or disk) of the type you checked. Checking one of these volume types is equivalent to not wanting the trash to remain on any volume of this type. Turning this option on and checking all four volume types will always immediately delete anything dragged to the trash.

Delete By File Type - This option deletes a file if it is an application, document or system file, depending on which box you check.

Delete Folder - This option will delete all folders if it is checked. Check its sub-option 'Empty Folders Only' if you only want to delete empty folders.

Background Trash Types

There are five sets of options under 'Automatically Empty Trash'. They can be used in any combination. Each option works in the background, at the times associated with each item. These background options will only be invoked if 10 seconds has gone by since the last check, and if there is no other computer activity going on. Each has individual settings that appear when the option is selected.



When Disk Space Is Low - This option (see above) deletes the specified files or folders when available disk space falls below the limit you set. It scans mounted disks (except floppys) every 10 seconds, and also checks each item dragged to the trash to see if the disk it resides on has less space than the user specified.



On Startup - This option (see above) deletes the specified files or folders each time the Macintosh is started up.



At Preset Intervals - This option (see above) deletes the specified files or folders when the time interval you set expires. When the computer is started up, a timer is set to

zero. When this timer reaches the number of minutes you specify, this trash option is invoked, and the timer is reset to zero.

This trash type, as well as the next two, have two checkboxes labeled 'Beep' and 'Icon'. If either checkbox is selected, TrashPicker will give a one minute warning before it deletes the files & folders specified for this type. If 'Icon' is checked, a trash icon will flash in the menu bar over the apple of the Apple menu. If 'Beep' is checked, the default system sound will play at the beginning of the sixty second warning period. If you don't want the items to be deleted, simply open up the trashcan and drag them out into an available folder before the warning period is over.

Automatically Empty Trash:

<input type="checkbox"/> On Startup	↑
<input type="checkbox"/> At Preset Intervals	▒
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Once A Day	≡
<input type="checkbox"/> Once A Week	↓

Delete:

Time (military):	<input type="checkbox"/> Applications
<input type="text" value="11:15"/> (HR:MN)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documents
	<input type="checkbox"/> System Files
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beep	<input type="checkbox"/> Folders
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Icon	

Once A Day - This option (see above) deletes the specified files or folders if the Macintosh is running at the time of day you specify.

Automatically Empty Trash:

<input type="checkbox"/> On Startup	↑
<input type="checkbox"/> At Preset Intervals	▒
<input type="checkbox"/> Once A Day	≡
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Once A Week	↓

Friday ▾

Delete:

Time (military):	<input type="checkbox"/> Applications
<input type="text" value="11:40"/> (HR:MN)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documents
	<input type="checkbox"/> System Files
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beep	<input type="checkbox"/> Folders
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Icon	

Once A Week - This option (see above) deletes the specified files or folders if the Macintosh is running at the time you specify on the day of the week you specify.

3. Future Features

Under consideration for a future version:

- delete files by type or creator
- delete files by name or extension
- an On/Off master switch, and having the cdev changes take effect immediately
- balloon help

We welcome other ideas or suggestions. Our goal is not to have the most complicated trash utility around, but one that does what you want without having to think about it.

4. Registration & Support

Shareware

Shareware is a means of distributing software that lets you evaluate the software before committing your money. When you get a shareware program, you have the opportunity to try it out for some period of time to see if it does what you need. After trying it, you must either send the registration fee to the author or stop using the program. In addition, once you register, you normally don't have to pay for updates.

Registration

After using TrashPicker for 30 days, you must either register or delete any copies that you have. Registration has the following benefits: support of the development of quality Mac software, use of TrashPicker without a guilty conscience, and an open ear for comments & suggestions. Registration only is \$10 (US). All payments must be made in US funds. To register, just send a \$5 check to each of the two addresses below:

Bill Johnson
1549 Teakwood Avenue
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Ron Duritsch
6982 Devon Drive
Middletown, OH 45044

We know it's a pain to write two separate checks, but we'd really appreciate not having to do any accounting at the end of the year.

If you have any questions or comments, you can leave either of us a message at the electronic addresses listed on the front page of this document. We scan the message areas of CIS, GENie & AOL on a regular basis.

The latest version of TrashPicker will always be available on GENie, CIS & America Online.

5. Acknowledgements

Thanks to the organizers of MacHack, who every year put on a most enjoyable Mac developers conference.

Thanks also to the MACincinnati Hacker Group, the Cincinnati Mac User Group Programmers SIG.

We would be remiss if we didn't thank our wives, who put up with the occasional late night programming session...

And a special thanks to those who will support further TrashPicker development by registering.