

pollo is a program which makes it easier for you to start up other programs. Whatever you are doing on your Mac, you can call up Apollo and ask it to start an application or to open a document, control panel, desk accessory or Finder folder. There's no need to quit the program you are running (unless you are not running MultiFinder, of course, in which case Apollo will do it for you), no need to switch to the Finder and resize your application's windows because they obscure the Finder's icons on the desktop and no need to double-click your way through several folders until you can see the program's icon. Just click the mouse and make a choice from the menu and Apollo does the rest.

When you activate Apollo, it pops up a menu. This menu contains items (applications, documents etc) which you have chosen to put into it, with no limit to the number of items. When you discover how useful Apollo is, you'll want to put lots of items into its menu, which can become very long. To avoid scrolling menus and to help you organise your menu, Apollo lets you create groups. A group is a named list of items: its name appears in the main menu and its items appear in a submenu. Creating groups is analagous to making folders on your hard disk, except that the members of Apollo's groups pop up instantly when you move the mouse over the group name. If you have a number of applications which you tend to use together (under MultiFinder), you can put them in a group and make the group active. When you choose the name of an active group from Apollo's main menu, all the applications in that group are started up, one after the other - as many applications as memory allows, started by a single mouse click!

Any application in Apollo's menu (or in a group submenu) can have its own submenu of documents. Choosing a document starts up the application with that document open, just as if you had double-clicked the document in the Finder.

You can also set up the environment in which programs started by Apollo will run. If you usually use a particular document with an application, you can make that the default document for the application, so Apollo will always start the application with that document (unless you specify another document, of course). Apollo can also set the sound level and screen depth for any application, so you could run, for example, your Finder in 8-bit colour for the pretty icons, your word processor in black-and-white for speed and your painting program in glorious 32-bit colour. If all three are running at the same time, Apollo will adjust the screen depth as you switch between them.

Unlike other launching utilities, Apollo lets you put not just applications, but also the Apple menu, documents and (under system 7) desk accessories, control panels and folders in its menus. Under system 7, folders in Apollo's menus or the Apple menu can have their own submenus which list their contents: these are updated automatically whenever the contents of the folder change. If these folders contain other folders, these can have submenus as well, and so on up to four levels deep. All these submenus are updated as required.

Quite often, when you are running an application, you will find that some of its windows are completely obscured by other windows—this is particularly true of the Finder. Moving and resizing windows so you can bring a back window to the front is tedious, so Apollo provides you with another popup menu which lists the windows of your current application. Choosing a window from this menu brings that window to the front.

A great feature of the Mac is the ability to keep several applications in memory and to switch rapidly between them. Of course, you can do this from the Apple (system 6) or process (system 7) menus, but Apollo provides two easier ways. First, from the keyboard—you choose any key which, when pressed, means “switch to the next application”. Under system 7, you can define a second key which means “switch to the next application and hide this application”. Second, if you find cycling through your applications tedious, Apollo also provides a popup menu which lists the applications you have running. This menu can appear at the top of Apollo’s main menu, as one of its submenus or as a separate popup menu. Choosing an application from it makes that application active. Under system 7, each application in the menu has its own submenu which lists its open windows. If you choose a window, not only will the application be made active, but that window will be brought to the front as well.

Installing Apollo

Apollo is a system extension (or INIT, for pre-7 folks). To install it, just drop it into your system folder. If you are running system 7, you should drag both Apollo and Eagle to your system folder icon and you should let the Finder place both of them in the Extensions folder inside your system folder. Then restart your Mac: if all is well, Apollo’s icon will appear on the screen as your Mac gets going and Apollo will draw a miniature version of its icon at the one or both ends of the menu bar. If all is not well, Apollo’s icon will have a large X through it and you had better talk to me.

Once Apollo is running, you use it by clicking on its icon in the menu bar, whereupon Apollo’s menu will appear. (You can also get Apollo to pop up its menu anywhere on screen if you click while holding down a modifier key or two, and you can tell it at which ends of the menu bar to draw its icon: see later).

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To launch an application, desk accessory or control panel, or to open a folder or document, just choose it from the menu.

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To launch an application with a document, choose the document from the application’s submenu.

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To launch an application that isn’t in the list, choose "Other application..." from the menu.

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To launch an existing application with a document that isn’t in its submenu, hold down the option key as you choose the application.

If the application you’re launching is already running, Apollo will bring it to the front. If you choose a document and its application is already running, Apollo will bring the application to the

front and try to persuade it to open that document. Usually it will succeed, but if it doesn't, it will put up an alert similar to the one the Finder uses under such circumstances.

Upgrading

If you are upgrading your copy of Apollo from an earlier version, you should run the Apollo converter program to copy your existing menu structure into your new copy of Apollo 1.0. If you use system 7, you should delete your old copy of Eagle and use the new version, which resides in your Extensions folder rather than in the Startup Items folder. See the chapter on Apollo converter for more details.