

Preferences

Apollo is very flexible in how it pops up its menus and what they look like when they appear. You can change most of its actions from the preferences dialog.

Apollo's preferences submenu looks like this:

ust like the configuration dialog, the preferences dialog has several pages. You can switch easily between pages once the dialog is onscreen, but you can also go directly to a particular page.

The first page, General, looks like this:

t the top of is a popup menu which lets you move from page to page within the preferences dialog. It is exactly the same as the preferences submenu in the first illustration, but it always appears in the system font. At the bottom are the usual OK and Cancel buttons. These items appear on every page of the dialog: only the central items change.

The two checkboxes at the top of the first page let you decide whether Apollo should show its icon as your Mac starts up, and whether, if it does, it should animate it (watch the startup to see what this means!).

The popup menu entitled “Active top corners” lets you choose whether a click at the end of the menu bar should activate Apollo. The options are left, right, neither or both. Below this, the “Menu bar icon” popup lets you choose whether Apollo will draw its mini-icon at one or both ends of the menu bar. If you choose to have one end of the menu bar active, you can decide whether the active area is just the size of Apollo’s mini-icon or if it should extend the full height from the top of the screen to the bottom of the menu bar. Choosing “full height” makes Apollo easier to activate, but can cause conflicts with other system extensions, notably PopChar and some screen savers.

If you check “auto-drop” menu, Apollo will drop its menu from one of the active ends of the menu bar when you move the mouse over the active area: no click is required. Since all background activity is suspended when a menu is dropped, Apollo will cancel its menu if the mouse is not moved for 15 seconds during auto-drop.

In addition to the top corners, Apollo will pop up its menu anywhere on the screen if you click the mouse while holding down certain keys. The “pop up menu anywhere while holding” check box enables or disables this feature, and the four boxes underneath control which keys you want to hold down. The hieroglyphics represent, from left to right, the command, shift, option and control keys. They are taken from Apple’s very own MacroMaker program, so any complaints about comprehensibility should be directed at Apple, not me! The setting shown means that Apollo’s menu will appear if the mouse button is clicked and held while the control key is pressed. You can check the control box even if you are using a Mac Plus, but since non-ADB Mac keyboards don’t have control keys, there isn’t a lot of point.

he second, Menu, page of the preferences dialog looks like this: the top popup and the bottom buttons are omitted for brevity.

“Use icons” works only under system 7: if checked, items in all of Apollo’s menus will have generic icons (except running applications, which will have their own icons). Checking “include apple menu” makes Apollo include a copy of your Apple menu as a submenu of its own main menu. Under system 7, folders and folder aliases in the Apple Menu Items folder will have their own dynamic submenus. The two font popups let you choose the font and size of Apollo’s popup menus.

Apollo normally sorts its menus alphabetically, but you can, if you like, ask it to place groups at either the top or bottom of the main menu, with or without a dotted divider line, using the Position popup. The two Style check boxes let you decide the style in which group names are to be drawn.

If you check the “recently used applications” group” box, Apollo will create a special group called Recent apps in your main menu. Initially empty, Recent apps will grow to contain the last ten applications you have used which were not started by Apollo. This group can be treated in the same way as any other group except that it cannot be made active, you cannot move items into it in the configuration dialog and applications in it cannot have their own settings or submenus. You can rename the Recent apps group using the Rename button in the groups dialog. Uniquely among Apollo’s group submenus, the Recent apps group is not sorted alphabetically: rather, the most recently-used application is at the top and the items are sorted in reverse chronological order of use.

If you hold down the option key as you choose an application from one of Apollo’s menus, Apollo will ask you to pick a document with which to start that application. Another way of doing this is to check the “include “Other...”” box, which will add a choice with that name to all applications’ document submenus, at either the top or the bottom. You can also add a “Default” item to those submenus: this lets you open the default document for that application (default documents are chosen from the Application settings dialog, discussed in the next chapter), which is useful if it is already running.

The third page, Switching, of the preferences dialog looks like this:

lthough you can switch between running applications using the Apple menu (under system 6) or the application menu (system 7), it can be tedious to move to the top of a large screen in order to do so. Apollo will therefore let you pop up a menu of current applications anywhere on screen and let you activate one just by choosing it from the menu. This popup menu can be part of Apollo's main menu (either at the top of the main menu or as one of its submenus), and it can be popped up separately by holding down one or more of command, shift, option and control keys as you click the mouse. The hieroglyphics on this page of the dialog have the same meaning as those on its first page. Under system 7, Apollo's application switching menu includes submenus showing the windows each application has open. If you choose a window from a submenu, not only will that application be made active, but that window will be brought to the front as well.

Sometimes, you don't even want to use the mouse to change applications, so Apollo lets you do it from the keyboard. You can choose any key to be the application switching key (switching cycles between applications in alphabetical order) by clicking on one of the Set buttons. Under system 7, you can have two switching keys, one of which hides the current application as it switches you to the next. (You can set up two keys under system 6, if you like, but they will behave identically.) The dialog which appears when you click on Set looks like this:

hen you press a key, it will appear in the dialog. If you press the delete key on its own, the key setting will be cleared to <none>. The word “without” may or may not be present, depending on which Set button you clicked.

Sometimes you will have applications running in the background on your Mac which you rarely, if ever, want to bring to the front: PrintMonitor, DownLine and CEIAC come to mind. Apollo lets you exclude these applications from either or both of its popup menu and its keyboard switching rota. If you click on Exclusions..., you will get this dialog:

hen you select an application in the list, you can choose from which of the two alternatives it is to be excluded. To add a new application, click Add... and choose an application (desk accessories and system extensions can be excluded as well) from the standard Open dialog which will appear. To remove an application, select it and click Remove, or double click its name.

Finally, the last, Window menus, page of the preferences dialog looks like this:

f you are using an application which has many open windows, you may find that some are completely obscured by others—this happens particularly on small-screen Macs. Not all applications are courteous enough to provide a window menu to let you bring a hidden window

to the front, so Apollo again steps into the breach. Unlike the window submenus in the application-switching menu, this popup menu contains only the windows of the active application and this feature works under system 6 as well as system 7. The hieroglyphics have the usual meanings. You can choose to have the windows in the menu sorted alphabetically or listed from front to back. If you are running system 7, the sorting order applies to the window submenus of the application-switching menu as well.