

FileTyper

Version 3.2

by Daniel Azuma
May, 1992

What is FileTyper?

Ever run into a file that you can't identify? When the icon is the generic file icon, and the Finder says it can't find the application that created it?

Or are you a "power user" who has to change file types and creators and Finder flags often, but can't stand to have to use a big program like DiskTop or ResEdit?

Or do you want much of the functionality of popular utilities like Hand-Off II without having to pay the big bucks?

Then FileTyper is for you! FileTyper is a small application that allows you to edit file types, creators, and Finder flags without having to open a large program such as DiskTop or ResEdit. Just put FileTyper in a handy place (I usually keep it on the Desktop just above the Trash). Drag files and folders onto it, edit them, and click "Change." FileTyper 3.1 offers many features not found in other commercial or public domain programs.

Also included with FileTyper is a utility with which you can create and edit custom "AutoTypers," which are very small applications that automatically make a specific change to files dropped on them. For instance, you can create an AutoTyper which changes the creator of TEXT files to the creator of your favorite "GIF" program.

System Requirements

System 6.0.x or later and Macintosh Plus or later required. System 7 strongly recommended. Some features available only under System 7. FileTyper is 32-bit clean and compatible with the 68040 cache.

Registration and Distribution

The first versions of FileTyper were free, but, with the 2.0 release, I made a number of significant enhancements, so it was distributed as shareware. Versions 1.0 and 1.0.1 are still free if you manage to find a copy still floating around.

Version 3.2 is still shareware. Now, I don't believe in posting shareware reminders all over my programs or hiding features from people who don't pay. I feel this defeats the whole spirit of the shareware system, the honor system. My policy is simple. You are allowed to try out FileTyper for 15 days. If you don't think FileTyper is useful to you, trash it or pass it on to someone else and you owe nothing. If you keep FileTyper, you are expected to send \$10 US funds to me at:

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The \$10 fee entitles you to keep the entire FileTyper package, which includes "FileTyper 3.2", "FileTyper 3.2 Help", "MakeAutoTyper 3.1", and the four sample AutoTypers "TEXTtoMSWD", "GroupLock", "GroupUnlock", and "Vanish!".

You can print the registration form at the end of this document.

Site licenses are \$30. This fee allows free use of FileTyper on all machines at a single postal address. If you're registering a site license, mark the appropriate space on the registration form.

If you have already registered for an earlier version, your upgrade to version 3.2 is free.

If you like, you can receive the latest version of FileTyper, plus a few more of my (free) hacks and stuff by enclosing a formatted 800K disk with your registration. There's no extra charge for this. A SASE would be appreciated, but isn't required.

The FileTyper package may be distributed and uploaded to bulletin boards freely, but only in its entirety. The package or its components may not be sold or bundled with anything that is sold without written permission. Any AutoTypers that you create can be distributed freely, but may not be sold or bundled with anything that is sold without written permission. For more information about AutoTypers, see the file "MakeAutoTyper Docs."

If you want to distribute FileTyper or any AutoTypers with a shareware or commercial package of your own, please contact me at the address at the end of this document.

Installation

Simply drag FileTyper to a convenient location. I usually keep it on the desktop just above the Trash. Put the "FileTyper 3.2 Prefs" file into your System Folder if you're running System 6, or in the Preferences Folder in your System Folder if you're running System 7.

If you are using System 7 and want balloon help, drag the file "FileTyper 3.2 Help" into your Extensions folder. If you've already installed the help file for an earlier version, you can trash it.

If you are installing MakeAutoTyper or any custom AutoTypers, simply drag them to the most convenient spot.

Using FileTyper: System 7 users:

This information has not changed since version 3.1.

The Basics

Simply drag files and folders onto the FileTyper icon. FileTyper will launch and present a dialog box letting you edit file types, creators, and finder flags. Click "Change" to make the changes or click "Cancel" to discard them. "Revert" returns to the original settings.

You do not need to close and re-open the window to see your changes; FileTyper now causes the Finder to update its display immediately when you change creators or types. However, if you change any of the flags other than "locked," you should clear the "hasBeenInited" flag also, or the Finder may not update properly.

If you drag more than one object onto FileTyper, FileTyper will let you edit them one at a time, first all the files, then all the folders. If you click "Change" or "Cancel", another dialog box will appear for the next file. If more than one file or folder was opened, two more buttons will be active. "Change All" changes the current file or folder, plus all subsequent files or folders automatically. "Cancel All" is equivalent to clicking "Cancel" for the rest of the files or folders.

Clicking "Change All" in the files dialog will only affect the files waiting to be edited, not the

folders. Similarly, clicking “Cancel All” will only cancel the rest of the files; the folder dialog will open next if there are folders waiting to be edited.

You can also change the file name from within FileTyper. This is useful for quickly renaming locked or nameLocked files. If you’ve opened more than one file and you’ve pressed “Change All”, the new file name will only affect the first file, since you can’t have more than one file of the same name in the same folder.

Enabling and Disabling

If you’ve opened more than one file and you want to change only certain attributes and leave the rest alone, you can disable some of the attributes by holding down the option key and clicking. When the option key is down and the cursor is over something that can be disabled, it will change to a backwards arrow. Option-clicking one of the check boxes will gray it out. That attribute will then be ignored; it will not be affected when you click “Change” or “Change All”. Option-clicking it again will re-enable it. This will also work if you option-click the “Type” or “Creator” edit fields, but will not work with the file name field because it only affects the first file. If you want to disable or re-enable all items at once, click the “Disable All” or “Enable All” buttons. Option-clicking and the “Disable All” and “Enable All” buttons will only be available if more than one file is open.

For example, suppose you want to lock a number of files at once, while leaving the rest of the finder information alone. Just drag all the files onto FileTyper and set the locked attribute. Then option-click the two edit fields and all check boxes except “locked”, graying them all out. Alternatively, you can click “Disable All”, which will gray out everything, and re-enable the “locked” attribute by option-clicking it. Finally, click “Change All”.

Setting Preferences

FileTyper 3.0 introduced a preferences dialog. With version 3.2, you can set a number of preferences controlling how FileTyper works:

Warn before changing all: When this box is checked, an alert will be shown when you choose “Change All.” I included this because the “Change All” function is dangerous and irreversible. You should leave this option on unless you’re absolutely sure you won’t accidentally press the “Change All” button.

Auto-display “Open...” dialog: This is for those of you who want to use FileTyper as an application without using drag-and-drop. When this option is checked, if FileTyper was opened with a double-click instead of a drag-and-drop, the “Open...” dialog will appear automatically.

Edit Files: When this box is checked, FileTyper will “see” files that you drop onto it. The only time you’ll want to uncheck this box would be if you wanted to drop a large batch of stuff onto FileTyper but only edit the folders. The setting of this box doesn’t affect the “Open...” dialog, only drag-and-drop.

Edit Folders: When this box is checked, FileTyper will “see” folders that you drop onto it. Just like in “Edit Files”, the only time you’ll want to uncheck this box would be if you wanted to drop a large batch of stuff onto FileTyper but only edit the files. The setting of this box doesn’t affect the “Open...” dialog, only drag-and-drop.

Folder dropping opens...: This controls how FileTyper responds to a folder drop from the Finder. You can set it to open just the folder itself, the folder and its immediate contents (those visible just inside the folder), or the folder and its full contents (all files and folders contained within the folder, even those within subfolders). The setting of this box doesn’t affect the “Open...” dialog. If you open a folder using the “Open...” menu command, just the folder is edited, regardless of the setting of this preference.

Note that the way this is handled is slightly different from 3.0, in that, when you open folder contents, the parent folder is still opened, and, when you perform a full content search, folders as well as files are opened. To turn the folders back off, you can just disable folder editing.

The “Save” button saves your preferences in the “FileTyper 3.2 Prefs” file you put into your Preferences Folder. The “Temporary” button saves the preferences in memory, but not to the file, so they will revert back to their original settings when you quit FileTyper. The “Save” button will not be available if FileTyper can’t find its prefs file.

Miscellanea

If you like, you can also double-click FileTyper to open it as an application. You can then edit files using the “Open...” menu command. This is useful for editing invisible files, and is also required for opening aliases.

If you drag an alias onto FileTyper, FileTyper will open the original file and not the alias itself. If you want to open an alias, open FileTyper as an application and choose “Open...” from the File menu. Then check “Open alias instead of original”. There is a known problem with the “Open alias instead of original” feature (see “If You’re Having Problems...”).

If you open a stationery pad, FileTyper will edit the original stationery pad, not a copy.

If you have a slow Macintosh or a slow hard disk, or you simply use FileTyper often, and you don’t want to wait for FileTyper to launch and quit each time you edit a file, just double-click on FileTyper to open it as an application. Then, you can drag files and folders onto it without waiting for it to open, and FileTyper won’t quit until you choose “Quit” from its menu. If you use FileTyper very often, you might consider putting an alias of it in your Startup Items folder.

Using FileTyper: System 6 users:

This information has not changed since version 3.1.

FileTyper is an application. Open it and choose “Open...” from the File menu to choose a file or folder to edit. FileTyper will present a dialog box letting you edit file types, creators, and finder flags. Click “Change” to make the changes or click “Cancel” to discard them. “Revert” returns to the original settings. The other buttons are only available under System 7, where you can open more than one file at once.

If you’re running MultiFinder, You no longer need to close and re-open the window to see your changes; FileTyper now causes the Finder to update its display immediately when you change creators or types. However, if you change any of the flags other than “locked,” you should clear the “hasBeenInitd” flag also, or the Finder may not update properly.

You can also change the file name from within FileTyper. This is useful for quickly renaming locked or system files.

The “Preferences” menu command brings up a preferences dialog. The only setting that affects how FileTyper works under System 6 is “Auto-display open dialog.” When checked, this box causes FileTyper to automatically display its “Open...” dialog after being launched. The other preferences only affect operation under System 7. To see what they do, see the System 7 instructions.

Under System 6, FileTyper will not be able to edit several files at once or support System 7’s “drag-and-drop” feature. If you want these nice little features, it’s the perfect excuse to upgrade to System 7.

Memory considerations (System 7 users only)

This information has not changed since version 3.0.

FileTyper 3.1 comes pre-configured to use 60 kilobytes of RAM. This is enough to run FileTyper and reliably open as many as 80 files and folders simultaneously. However, if you want to drag more than 80 files onto FileTyper, you should allocate more memory to FileTyper by using the Finder's "Get Info..." command. I've found that increasing the memory size to 100 kilobytes will allow FileTyper to open up to 190 files simultaneously. AutoTypers have similar memory constraints.

There is an absolute upper limit on the number of items that can be opened, which I believe is 468 files and 468 folders. This has to do with the maximum size of a Pascal array. I may include a workaround in a later version.

Some system extensions, like Super Boomerang 3.0, hog up much more memory than they should. According to a beta tester, Super Boomerang's "find" feature requires that you increase FileTyper's memory size to at least 85K.

Be careful when you have "Folder dropping opens..." set to "Folder and immediate contents" or "Folder and complete contents." Each item within each folder counts as one item, so the number of items can pile up very quickly.

The Help File (System 7 users only)

Also included with FileTyper is a file named "FileTyper 3.2 Help". This file contains Balloon Help resources for FileTyper. If you want Balloon Help with FileTyper, drag "FileTyper 3.2 Help" to the System Folder and allow the Finder to place it in the Extensions folder. If you have already installed the help file for an earlier version, you can trash it. You do not need to restart to activate Balloon Help.

Do not rename the help file. FileTyper will not be able to find it if it has been renamed.

If You're Having Problems...

System 7 users: There is one known problem with FileTyper, which is probably a bug in System 7. Often, trying to open "alias instead of original" on an alias that is on the desktop, when more than one disk is mounted, will result in a file not found error (ID = -43). I believe this is a problem with the Standard File package in System 7, because I've noticed the same problem with ResEdit 2.1.1's open alias instead of original feature. If you have problems with this bug, move the alias off the desktop and try again. As of System 7.0.1, this problem hasn't been fixed. System 7 Tune-up also has not fixed it. I've sent in a report of this problem to Apple DTS, but I think System 8 will probably have been released by the time it gets through all the bureaucracy.

AutoDoubler users: An incompatibility with some early (buggy) versions of AutoDoubler, can prevent FileTyper from changing types and creators. A beta tester reported this problem with AutoDoubler version 1.0.5i, and it may occur with other versions as well. Because AutoDoubler also seems to prevent ResEdit's type and creator function from working, I believe this is a bug in AutoDoubler. If this gives you problems, you'll have to expand the file before using FileTyper on it.

If drag-and-drop won't work: Desktop files have been a problem with Apple's System software since who-knows-when. Under System 7, screwed-up desktop files can prevent FileTyper's (as well as other programs') drag-and-drop from functioning.

If FileTyper fails to accept drag-and-drops, try rebuilding the desktop. You can do this restarting and holding down the command and option keys until the dialog box appears. If you're an experienced mac user and you know how to force-quit the Finder, you can do so and hold down command and option while the Finder is restarting itself.

Note that because floppy disks don't use the new System 7 desktop files, drag-and-drop will not work at all if FileTyper (or any "drop-box" application) is on a floppy.

If you're running out of memory: Make sure FileTyper's memory size is set up to deal with the number of files you're opening, as outlined in "Memory Considerations." And be careful when you have "open folder contents" active—the number of files can pile up quickly. Also, some system extensions, like Super Boomerang 3.0, hog up much more memory than they should. According to a beta tester, Super Boomerang's "find" feature requires that you increase FileTyper's memory size to at least 85K.

Warning

FileTyper is a "power user's" program. It is a very powerful tool if used wisely, but can damage your files if misused. Make changes to Finder information only if you're absolutely sure you know what you're doing. The programmer takes no responsibility for any damages caused by misuse of this utility.

Version 3.2 Release Notes

Version 3.2 is a bug fix upgrade from version 3.1. Here is a list of changes:

- Fixed a really stupid bug introduced in version 3.1 that caused an error -35 when using "Change All" with folders.
- I think I've been able to fix the nasty problem that often caused drag and drop to fail on newly created AutoTypers, usually making it necessary to rebuild the desktop.
- Took out the MacWrite II docs because the FileTyper package was starting to become large. MacWrite II users can still view the Microsoft Word docs via the Microsoft Word 4.0 translator.

The upgrade to FileTyper 3.2 is free to registered users of earlier versions.

Version History

1.0	–	9/16/91:	This was the first version of FileTyper released.
1.0.1	–	10/14/91:	Fixed a bug that could cause types and creators to get corrupted if they contained invisible characters.
2.0	–	12/9/91:	Changed to shareware; added a check box for the locked attribute; added support for the required AppleEvents; added the ability to open many files simultaneously and edit them sequentially or as a batch; added the ability to edit folder attributes; enhanced the open dialog box to allow the opening of folders and aliases; added optional balloon help; improved handling of disk errors; fixed a bug that could, under very rare circumstances, inadvertently lock a file that had been canceled.
3.0	–	2/28/92:	Added the MakeAutoTyper utility; added the preferences dialog; added code to cause the Finder to update its icons, etc. immediately; reimplemented the rename files function; customized the System 6 Open... dialog for opening folders; "Enable All" and "Disable All" are disabled when only one file is open; FileTyper Help now has its own bundle instead of a System 7 custom icon; improved the interface; fixed a few non-fatal bugs.
3.1	–	4/10/92:	Improved preferences and fixed AutoDoubler problem with preferences dialog; improved handling of drops of file/folder mixtures; added data, resource fork size indicators; grays out OK button when volume is locked; fixed bug introduced in 3.0 that caused an error -43 when trying to edit a volume.
3.2	–	5/16/92:	Fixed stupid bug introduced in 3.1 that caused an error -35 when using "Change All" with folders; fixed bug that often caused drag and drop to fail on newly created AutoTyper; removed the MacWrite II docs to make the package smaller.

Future Enhancements

In the works for version 4.0 are:

- A FileTyper Finder menu command (I believe I've figured out how to do this now.)
- The ability to edit the exact hexadecimal ascii codes for the type and creator and file name, so you can see and edit those control characters.
- The ability to choose a type/creator combination by taking it from another file or selecting it from a pop-up menu.
- An "undo" feature.
- An option to let FileTyper "screen out" files or folders meeting specific criteria, like AutoTypers can do.
- An option to show folder sizes.

And, of course, suggestions are always welcome.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions, comments, or (aaargh!) bug reports, feel free to contact me at

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Unfortunately, I have no E-mail address, so you'll have to use plain old snail mail. (Sorry!)

One more thing: PLEASE do not call me at home unless you have a problem that absolutely ABSOLUTELY cannot wait.

And finally...

Thank you to all the people who have sent in shareware registrations, and especially those who have made valuable suggestions for future improvements. And a special thanks to:

Steve Kalkwarf, without whose help, suggestions, support, magic sixth-sense bug detectors, and America Online membership, FileTyper would not have been possible.

Stuart Cheshire, whose suggestion led to the MakeAutoTyper utility.

John Macdonald, who suggested the option to automatically display the "Open" dialog.

Jerry Goldstein, who suggested the data and resource fork size indicators.

Rory Christianson, who reported several bugs and made a few valuable suggestions.

FileTyper 3.2 registration form

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Your name: _____

Company or organization name (if applicable): _____

Street address: _____

City, state, zip: _____

Registration is for: ☐ Personal license (US \$10) ☐ Site license (US \$30)

Yes ☐ No ☐ Send the latest version of FileTyper on the enclosed 800K floppy.

If FileTyper 3.2 is still the most recent version:

☐ Send the disk back immediately ☐ Wait for a new version

Where did you get FileTyper?

Comments, suggestions:

Send this form and your registration fee to

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Thank you for supporting shareware!