

StartMenu

John Corigliano

COLLABORATORS

	<i>TITLE :</i> StartMenu		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
WRITTEN BY	John Corigliano	July 20, 2024	

REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

Contents

1	StartMenu	1
1.1	StartMenu	1
1.2	About StartMenu v2.0	1
1.3	Requirements for StartMenu	2
1.4	Why use StartMenu?	2
1.5	Cool new stuff	2
1.6	Using the Software	3
1.7	The main menu	4
1.8	The Programs Menu	5
1.9	The My Computer Menu	5
1.10	The System Prefs Menu	5
1.11	The Screens Menu	5
1.12	The Commodities Menu	6
1.13	The Edit Menu Menu	6
1.14	The Find File Menu	6
1.15	The Quit Menu	6
1.16	Using the keyboard	7
1.17	Stuff StartMenu Really Needs	7
1.18	Using 3rd Party programs	8
1.19	StartMenu-Lite/UltraLite	8
1.20	Problems?	9
1.21	Thanks...	9

Chapter 1

StartMenu

1.1 StartMenu

MoppSoft's StartMenu v2.0

The Ultimate Win95 Taskbar Clone

by John Corigliano

jcorig@strauss.udel.edu

<http://www.del.net/users/mopp>

Dedicated to TV's Frank Oh! How we miss him...

Contents

About What is StartMenu?

Requirements Stuff you really need!

Why StartMenu? Choosing a TaskBar Program

Cool New Stuff New and Improved!

Using StartMenu How to get Started.

The Main Menu What it all means.

The Keyboard Who needs a mouse?

Files The files StartMenu needs

Invaders Letting other programs use the TaskBar.

Lite and UltraLite StartMenu's Little Brothers

#&%\$! Problems?

Tanks Credit where credit is due.

1.2 About StartMenu v2.0

What is it?

StartMenu is a clone of the TaskBar program by MicroSoft for Windows95®. It lets you launch programs and scripts easily and painlessly. And it's much, much more...

Copyright and stuff

All the programs in this archive (except "easyrexx.library", "WBStartup-Handler", and "wbstartup.library") were written by me, John Corigliano and are all ©1996 by me (They're mine! Mine! All Mine!). However, I am placing them in the Public Domain for you to do with them as you please.

You must use this software at your own risk!. I shall not be held liable for any unspeakable atrocities that may occur :P

To get the latest version of StartMenu, don't forget to check out the MoppSoft home page: <http://www.del.net/users/mopp>.

1.3 Requirements for StartMenu

Okay, so you're all excited and ready to run StartMenu. Well, make sure you have:

1. An Amiga :) If you're not sure if you have an Amiga try to run two programs at once. If the computer stutters and stalls you probably have a PC. Otherwise, if the operating system looks like it was written for children (and other brain-dead humans) you probably have a Mac.
2. AmigaDOS 2.0 or better.
3. MUI - this is not required by StartMenu but is required by StartSetup and FindFile.
4. A complete Miles Davis discography, Well, you don't actually need this, but shouldn't everyone have one?

1.4 Why use StartMenu?

As you may know, there are a few other programs out there that try to emulate a real TaskBar program and you may be wondering which, if any, you should use. Well, in a recent survey, 9 out of 10 really hip people said they prefer StartMenu over those cheap imitations. Here are some reasons why you should use StartMenu

- Totally customizable!
- Built for "Power Users".
- Its FREE!! Think of it as a gift from me to you (ain't I a wonderful person? :)
- It really works!
- Does not require Magic Workbench (do you think if Matisse had an Amiga he'd use those colors?)
- It was written by me (that alone should excite you to no end :)
- Promotes World Peace.
- Approved by the American Association of People Who Know What the Best TaskBar Program Is.
- It's FREE!! (did I mention that already?)

Being a kind and gentle man, I will gladly listen to any suggestions you may have regarding future versions of StartMenu. Many of the new features of this version were suggested to me by users of the program.

1.5 Cool new stuff

This version is pretty much a complete re-write of the original StartMenu!

New Features

1. An icon can be added to the "Start" button.
 2. You can place the taskbar wherever you like.
 3. You can alter the width (but not height) of the taskbar.
 4. You can change the colors of just about everything.
-

5. There are now four (4) types of menu hi-lighting :

1. "Bevel" - similar to MagicMenu (great proggy, btw :).
 2. "Rectangle" - a filled rectangle like normal menus.
 3. "Dotted" - a dashed box is drawn around the item.
 4. "Complement" - same as in v1.0 (the colors are inverted).
6. You now have control over the icon size.
7. You also control the amount of blank space between the menu items.
8. IFF brushes can be used for icons.

9. Three (3) new menus were added to the main menu :

1. "Screens" - lets you jump to any screen
 - 2 "Commodities" - acts like the commodities Exchange program.
 3. "My Menu" - instant access to all your drives.
10. You can change which programs appear in the "System Prefs" menu.
11. You can change all the texts (i.e. change "Start" to "Press Here").
12. The window iconification ability has been removed (it was a Hack!).
13. Instead, other programs can add buttons to the taskbar.
14. Added the "StartUp" drawer.
15. The clock can be turned off.
16. Menus can popup automatically (after a very slight delay).
17. Menus no longer close "in order".
18. Programs can be started as WorkBench programs.
19. Added a picture to the main menu.
20. StartMenu can be run from WorkBench.
21. Added keyboard support.
21. And a few others I've probably forgotten...

Bug Fixes

1. Removed the one-and-only Enforcer hit.
2. Removed extra debugging code (oops).
3. Removed the font bug.

1.6 Using the Software

Okay, let's assume you've installed the software correctly (see the "Install.readme" file) and that you have installed it to a directory called "Work:Utils/StartMenu".

To use StartMenu either:

Run it from cli (there is no need to use "run"):

1. Work:> cd Work:Utils/StartMenu
1. Work:Utils/StartMenu> StartMenu

Or, run it from WorkBench:

Just double-click its icon.

To use it everytime you boot your Amiga:

Add this line to your s:user-startup:

Work:Utils/StartMenu/StartMenu

Or, drag-and-drop the StartMenu icon into Sys:WBStartUp

If you run it from WBStartUp, you need to use the PATH tool type. Its template is:

PATH/A

Where path is the home directory for StartMenu. If you used the Installer script to install StartMenu, it will set this tool type for you. If not, you'll need to set it yourself.

StartMenu needs to know where to look for all of its stuff. I found this to be the best solution. It doesn't require an assign and it doesn't require anything to be added to ENV: (which is usually on the RAM: disk).

So, in our example, you would need to add this tool type to the StartMenu icon:

PATH=Work:Utils/StartMenu

Easy as pie....

1.7 The main menu

So you've got StartMenu up and running and you press that strange little button labeled "Start". Poof! You are magically transported to a mystical world where the trees are made of Spam! Well, not really. What happens is a menu like this appears:

```
+---+-----+
|| Programs |
|| My Computer > |
|| System Prefs > |
|| Screens > |
|| Commodities > |
|| Edit Menu... |
|| Find File... |
||-----|
|| Quit |
+---+-----+-----+
|+-----+ +-----+|
|| Start || 12:30 am ||
|+-----+ +-----+|
+---+-----+
```

This is the so-called Main Menu. To see what each entry does, click its button, baby.

BTW, that blank space to the left is where the picture is displayed.

Also, if you click on the clock, it will switch to a date display. Click again and it returns to a clock display...

1.8 The Programs Menu

Programs

Initially, this will do nothing (unless you're upgrading from v1.0). However, once you've added some programs for StartMenu to launch, this menu-item will be the gateway to all those programs.

1.9 The My Computer Menu

My Computer

While I was waiting for the translators to finish translating, I added the "My Computer" menu to the main menu.

Please note that this is not quite completed!! I mostly added it as a teaser for things to come :P

When you select the "My Computer" menu, a sub-menu opens with a list of all the volumes currently mounted on your system. Each of these menus have submenus, which are the directories. This is a quick way to move through the directory structure of each disk.

If you select a file, StartMenu will try to launch the file if:

- 1) It is an executable program.
- 2) It has a Project icon.

Otherwise, StartMenu ignores it (at least for now :) For files with Project icons, StartMenu will launch the Default Tool with the file as an argument. For example, if you have an AmigaGuide file, let's call it "HelpMe.guide", with a Project icon and MultiView as the Default Tool, StartMenu will launch MultiView to display "HelpMe.guide".

In the future, StartMenu will use the Whatis.library to perform certain functions for certain file types. For example, you will be able to select a picture file from the menu and StartMenu will launch a picture viewer (or any other program you want) to view the image. If you want to get a head start, you might want to download the Whatis.library now - it can be found on Aminet in the util/cli directory.

I need your help! If you use the "My Computer" menu you will experience a problem: when a directory with many files or subdirectories is chosen, all the items will not fit on the screen! StartMenu will display the menu in a multi-column format, but sometimes even this is not enough :(My question to you is: how should StartMenu handle this? Perhaps a scrolling menu? But this might be a pain for really long directories. Any suggestions?

Please be patient! The menus are created in real-time. This means that whenever you open a directory, its entire contents are read, sorted alphabetically, then formatted into a menu. For fast hard disks this is usually no problem, but for slower disks (like floppies and CD-ROMs) the menus might take a few seconds to appear.

Lastly, before you complain, I do realize that in a multi-column display, the first column does not start at the top of the menu. I will (hopefully) fix this!

Just keep in mind that the "My Computer" feature is brand new and not fully implemented :)

Keep checking my web page for updates :)

1.10 The System Prefs Menu

This menu is a shortcut to some of the programs in the "Sys:Prefs" directory. Use the StartPrefs program to pick which programs appear in this menu.

1.11 The Screens Menu

Screens

This menu will contain the names of any screens (other than the WB screen) that may be open on your system. If you select a screen's name from this menu, that screen will pop-to-front.

1.12 The Commodities Menu

Commodites

This handy little menu opens up to a list of all the commodities running on your system. Each one will have its own sub-menu which will contain one-or-more of the following:

"Show"

"Hide"

"Activate"

"DeActivate"

"Remove"

The "Show" and "Hide" items only show up if the commodity in question has an interface. "Activate" and "DeActivate" are mutually exclusive (only one of them appears at a time) and can be used to temporarily shutdown a commodity. And, the "Remove" item kills the poor little commodity.

1.13 The Edit Menu Menu

Edit Menu

This one loads the StartSetup program so that you can add/remove programs, change the colors, the font, etc. See "Start-Setup.guide" for more info.

[After installing StartMenu select this to run StartSetup so that you can add some programs to the "Programs" menu]

1.14 The Find File Menu

Find File

This launches the ever-so-useful Find File program. See "FindFile.guide" for more info.

1.15 The Quit Menu

Quit

Last-but-not-least is the "Quit" menu which allows you to quit StartMenu. Why you would ever want to do this is beyond my comprehension, but the option is there.

New! Shutdown

When you choose "Quit" a requester will appear with three (3) options (four (4) for Lite and UltraLite - see below). The choices are:

Quit - this teminates StartMenu

Cancel - this is the "Ooops! I didn't mean to select 'Quit'!" choice.

ShutDown - this might shut down your system

If you choose "ShutDown" StartMenu will look in its home directory for an AmigaDOS script entitled "shutdown.script". If it finds this script, the script will be executed. If it does not find it, StartMenu will look for an ARexx script entitled "shutdown.rexx". If found, the ARex script is exeecuted; if not. StartMenu quits normally.

The general idea behind this is that you have the script execute one of the available programs that systematically shuts down the system to ensure no data loss or disk corruption. Check Aminet for such a program.

For example, suppose you use a program called "shutdown" (or whatever) and this program is in the C: directory. Then, make up a simple, one line AmigaDOS script like this:

```
C:shutdown
```

Or, you could make more complex scripts if you have the ability...

For StartMenuLite StartMenuUltraLite there is a fourth choice: "Restart".

You may have noticed that when you save the prefs using StartSetup, StartMenu recognizes these changes right away, but the other two don't. The reason is the Taskbar: StartMenu creates a message port for the Taskbar and StartSetup will use this message port to notify StartMenu of any changes. However, Lite and UltraLite don't have the Taskbar, thus they don't have the message port, thus StartSetup cannot notify them of any changes.

This is where the "Restart" choice comes in: use it and Lite and UltraLite will reload in the new prefs.

1.16 Using the keyboard

For those of you prefer pressing key over fondling mice, StartMenu is now keyboard friendly.

To use the keyboard features, you need to add a tooltype to the StartMenu (Lite/UltraLite, too):

HOTKEY=<key combination>

Where <key combination> is any standard Commodities key sequence. (For example, I use "rawkey ralt up", which is "RightAlt-UpKey").

When you press the key combination StartMenu's main menu pops up. You can then use the arrow keys to move around. Here's what the keys do:

Up Arrow Key - move up in the menu

Down Arrow Key - move down in the menu

Left Arrow Key - close the top-most menu

Right Arrow Key - open a sub-menu (if the highlighted item has one)

Escape Key - cancel all menus

Enter Key - select the highlighted item

Notez bien: when the menus are reversed (i.e. the arrows are on the left side of the menu, the functions of the Left Arrow and Right Arrow keys are reversed.

1.17 Stuff StartMenu Really Needs

There are certain files that StartMenu needs to have in its home directory. Some you can edit (if you want) and some you can't.

Files You Can Edit

cx.bru - The IFF brush used by the "Commodities" menus.

def.bru - The IFF brush used for programs that don't have icons or user-supplied brushes.

logo.bru - The IFF brush displayed in the main menu.

menu.bru - The IFF brush used for menus

quit.bru - The IFF brush used for the "Quit" menu.

screens.bru - The IFF brush used by the "Screens" menu.

startb.bru - The IFF brush used in the "Start" button.

FindFile.info - The icon for FindFile

StartSetup.info - The icon for StartSetup

Files You Should Leave Alone!

main.pref - The main prefs file.

start.pref - The file with all the programs' info.

FindFile - The search program

StartSetup - The setup program

1.18 Using 3rd Party programs

StartMenu now has the ability for other programs to add buttons to the TaskBar. There are two types of buttons that can be added:

1. TaskBar buttons - these are buttons that can have text, icon, or both. They are displayed in the area between the Start button and the clock.
2. Clock buttons - these are icon-only gadgets that get added inside the clock's area.

I have included five (5) example programs. The programs are in the "Extras" drawer of the archive.

To aid in easily running such programs, there is now a drawer called "StartUp" in StartMenu's home directory. When StartMenu first runs, it will run any programs it finds in the "StartUp" drawer. It's very similar to the way the "Sys:WBStartup" drawer works (where do you think I got the idea? :) It will ignore any files that don't have icons.

The programs included in this archive are:

1. WinControl - This gives you a little bit of control over the windows on the WB screen. Note that WinControl ignores BackDrop and Borderless windows. Please read the WinControl docs for more info!
2. MemMeter - This program creates a clock button that displays a graph of your system's memory usage. Clicking the button pops up more detailed information.
3. AudMon - This little proggy creates a clock gadget with four (4) little circles on it. Each circle represents one of the four (4) Amiga audio channels. Whenever a channel has data in it, the corresponding circle "lights up". I find it endlessly entertaining (ok, so I really need to get out more often ;). Maybe it's not the world's most useful program, but it should give you an idea of what these little buttons can do. Note: if you want to put this program in the StartUp drawer, make sure you copy all the aud#?.bru files along with it.
4. SMRexx - This lets ARexx programs add buttons to the Taskbar! See the doc for more info.
5. WinMaster - This program complements WinControl. It puts a clock button on the taskbar; pressing the pops up a window that has a list of windows in it. From this list you can tile, maximize, minimize, etc. these windows. Requires MUI.

There are many other possibilities for programs to use StartMenu!

If you are interested in writing your own Taskbar programs, please download the developer's material that is available from the MoppSoft web page.

None of these programs are required! If you don't want them you may delete them from your hard drive to save disk space.

1.19 StartMenu-Lite/UltraLite

Who says "Bigger is Better"??? For those of you who just want the "Start" button (and its menus) there is StartMenuLite. This program behaves exactly like StartMenu but does not have the TaskBar. Thus, there is no clock and you can't run third party programs that use the TaskBar.

If you still want less, there's StartMenuUltraLite. This is just like StartMenuLite (only the menus - no TaskBar) only it does not have any graphics at all. No icon in the "Start" button. No logo in the main menu. No icons in the menus. Nothing!

Note: StartMenu, StartMenuLite, and StartMenuUltraLite are all interchangeable - they all use the same files. So you can use either one without changing anything :)

1.20 Problems?

Ok, so we're not living in a perfect world! Here are some problems that might arise :(

I have the clock option set and the clock box appears, but the time never shows up!

Are you using Executive? If so, tell it to ignore any child tasks created by StartMenu.

I am using WinControl and sometimes a window will close, but its button stays on the taskbar!

This will rarely happen (hopefully!) and if it does, hold down the Left-Alt and Ctrl keys and press the button for that window. This will force WinControl to remove the button.

Whenever I move the mouse pointer outside of a menu, all the menus close!

Are you using a program that activates the window under the mouse pointer? If so, this is the reason. Solution: no real solution, yet. You just have to make sure you keep the pointer inside of the menus.

If you have any other problems, please e-mail me at: jcorig@strauss.udel.edu.

1.21 Thanks...

Tanks!

I would sincerely like to thank all the people who wrote to me with suggestions for improving StartMenu . All the suggestions were great and I tried to implement as many of them as I could while trying to keep the size to a minimum.

There were many suggestions that did not make it into this release (for a variety of reasons) but I hope to get them in the next version. Some of these are:

Drag-N-Drop

Pre-scaled icons

Pattern matching for Screens and Commodities menus

Add programs and menus to the main menu

And a few others...

Special thanks to Ashley Powell for the 8 color icons and the screen shots and all the help with WinControl :-)

Extra Special Thanks To:

Eric Totel - Author of the MUIBuilder program.

Ketil Hunn - Author of the easyrexx.library.

Stefan Becker - Author of WBStartup-Handler and wbstartup.library. Please note: to get the full WBStart archive, download it from Aminet:/util/libs/WBStart.lha.

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Lastly, thanks to all these folks (in no particular order) who, in some way, contributed to StartMenu. I hope I didn't forget anyone!!

I-GO

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Marc Feininberg
Lauri Ahonen
Marcus Sundman
Casey Gustafson
Niklas Brunlid
Don Romero
Mike Bond
Piper Deryk
Kenneth Jagenheim
Joop van de Wege
Brent Robinson
Alex Ciber
Valouch Petr
Guilherme Cirne

Whew! If I have left you off the list it was purely unintentional! Please notify me if this is the case.
Keep an eye out for StartMenu v3.0! It will be on my web page long before it's released...
