

FastScripts 1.0.2 Readme

Installing FastScripts

To install FastScripts, simply drag it to a folder on your hard drive where you keep your Applications.

Note that if you haven't already installed Apple's Script Menu, you may not have any AppleScripts available in the various script folders on your computer. I recommend installing Apple's Script Menu to get some of the useful Scripts from Apple, which will then show up when you run FastScripts. Alternatively, you can place your own scripts into ~/Library/Scripts or /Library/Scripts.

FastScripts adds a script menu to the menu bar at the upper-right corner of the screen. To add the menu at any time, simply double-click the FastScripts application icon.

If you use FastScripts frequently, you will probably want to configure your Login Items to launch FastScripts when you log in.. The easiest way to do this is to allow FastScripts to automatically set this up for you when prompted at first launch.

What Is It?

FastScripts is a utility for quickly and elegantly running scripts (AppleScript or shell scripts) from whichever application you happen to be running at the moment. In most respects, it can be considered a replacement for the Apple-provided "Script Menu" menu extra. In addition to the functionality provided by Apple's Script Menu utility, FastScripts offers the following features:

- > **Smart Switching** feature switches application context only when appropriate.
Apple's utility switches context regardless of the script's functionality, and then neglects to switch back when the script is finished running! With FastScripts, focus remains on the application you're working on. If the executed script needs to put up a window, the context is switched to the script. When you dismiss the dialog, FastScripts switches you back to the application you were working in!
- > Direct execution of applet and droplet script code. Scripts that are packaged as applications for convenient launching from elsewhere in the system can take a lot longer to execute when launched as applets. FastScripts recognizes such scripts, but runs the script in its own application context, saving yet more time!
- > Improved menu organization. With Apple's script menu, all of the system-wide scripts

network (/System/Library/Scripts) are awkwardly separated from the user (~/.Scripts) and
are (/Network/Library/Scripts) scripts. With FastScripts, scripts from all three locations
are combined into one alphabetically sorted list, for easiest possible access.

-> Improved menu appearance. Apple's menu suffers from several small cosmetic
nuisances. The folder icons have clunky white pixels adorning their edges. The
"Open Scripts Folder" menu item is only capable of opening one of the three possible
Script Folder locations. With FastScripts, the icons are perfectly clean, and the
"Open Scripts Folder" item presents a submenu with all of the script folders in use on
your computer. These minor touches help make FastScripts even more enjoyable to
use.

-> Finally, FastScripts is, well, fast! FastScripts operates on the assumption that if you
care enough about a script to put it in an easy-access menu, you don't want to waste
any time at all getting it to execute when you select it. To eliminate as much delay as
possible, FastScripts preloads every script, essentially "priming" it for execution. As
a result, it takes a little while for FastScripts to finish loading scripts when it's first
started, but every script you execute afterwards will be lightning fast!

There are a few areas in which FastScripts does not fulfill the same functionality as Apple's
Script Menu. You should be aware of these in case they are important to you:

-> FastScripts makes no effort to automatically resynchronize with the disk whenever
the menu is selected. Apple's Script Menu rescans the disk for changes every time
you click the menu-icon. This can be handy if you're constantly changing the layout
of your script folders, but to make sure FastScripts was as fast as possible, we
decided to leave this "synchronizing" at your discretion. When you've made changes you'd
like FastScripts to pick up, simply select the "Rebuild Script Menu" item near the
bottom of the FastScripts menu.

-> FastScripts is not a "MenuExtra" like Apple's utility. Because Apple has not made
the MenuExtra API public to developers, we decided to stick with the sanctioned method
of providing a menu to users. FastScripts uses an Apple-approved method of
installing a menu as an invisible background application. If and when Apple publicizes the
MenuExtra API, we will investigate offering FastScripts in that format as well.

Version History

1.0.2 - Execute script code from within AppleScript applets and droplets - without launching them!

1.0.1 - Fix a bug where scripts that contain periods in their titles had their names cut short in the menu.

1.0 - Initial Release!

System Requirements

FastScripts 1.0 is a Mac OS X only application, and requires Mac OS X 10.0 or later.

Acknowledgements

- FastScripts 1.0 uses NDApplScriptObject by Nathan Day. Thanks, Nathan!
- Thanks to Eggert Thorlacius and Allen Watson for reporting bugs!

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