

ID:DB dBase III Plus and IV Colors
DESQview Technical Note #126
by Stan Young

dBASE III Plus and dBASE IV use the TopView/DESQview call to write to DESQview's screen buffer and therefore can be run in a small window and in the background.

Unfortunately, when the dBASE developers implemented the call, they used a TopView function called "Logical Colors" incorrectly. As a result, when you run dBASE with the "Writes Directly to Screen" option turned off, dBASE will not display the colors that you select with the "SET COLOR TO" option. When dBASE is run with the default color scheme and is running in the ASSIST mode, the menu bars do not display highlighting properly.

The most drastic way to cause dBASE to display the screen correctly is to run DESQview's "Change a Program" and turn on the options "Writes Directly to Screen" and "Runs Only in Foreground." Using this configuration, colors in dBASE will appear exactly as they do in DOS. Unfortunately, this prevents the program from processing in a small window and running properly in the background unless you are running on a 386 machine, in which case DESQview can virtualize the screen.

If you don't have to set specific colors, however, there is another solution that will result in a pleasant, readable set of colors that will run properly in a window and background:

FIRST - Edit the CONFIG.DB file (in your dBASE directory) and change the line that says "COMMAND = ASSIST" to:

```
COMMAND = DO DESQVIEW
```

NEXT - Using a word processor capable of producing ASCII files (such as you would use to write batch files), make a file called DESQVIEW.PRG and place it in the dBASE directory. The file should contain the following two lines followed by a blank line:

```
SET COLOR TO  
ASSIST
```

When you run dBASE, dBASE will now automatically run the DESQVIEW.PRG file. This provides a pleasant set of colors, although not exactly the default colors that it should provide. You may then use the DESQview option to change the colors further, if you like, by selecting "Rearrange" and "Colors" from the DESQview main menu.

Let me restate that this problem occurs because of what amounts to a dBASE III Plus and dBASE IV "bug" in their TopView/DESQview routines. Since we support these routines, the problem only shows up when you are running in DESQview or TopView.

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