

Classic Timepieces HC 1.0

Features

1. 3 separate animated raytraced clocks, that display the current time in moveable windows.
2. User selectable animation interval.
3. 24 bit Color graphics! (Well, really 8 bit, but from a palette of 16Million)

Mission

Classic Timepieces (CT) is a CUA (Cute Useless Application) designed to test the boundries of Microsoft's Visual Basic, from which it was developed.

Hardware Required

Unfortunately, one of the limitations of the standard Visual Basic package is its lack of support for 256 color bitmaps. It does not allow you to create a logical palette to extend beyond the standard 20 colors that Windows supplies. That means that CT does not currently display its Hi Color images on a 256 Color SVGA. Instead, it acts like a standard 16 Card when displaying the clock images.

Unfortunately, this means that the only cards that will allow you to display the images in their Hi Color form are cards that do not use palettes: True 24Bit (16 million colors) True Color or 16 Bit (32,000 Colors) Hi Color cards. With the release of the Sierra HiColor VGA DAC, there is an increasingly large number of cards that support the 16 bit mode. For example, I purchased the Cardinal 732 1MB VGA card used to develop the program for under \$200, **WITH** 1MB of RAM.

As soon as I find an acceptable Custom Control for windows that allows the standard 256 Color SVGA Card to support logical palettes I will release a version of CT to use it. All registered users will receive a copy of the new program immediately upon release. Until then, rather than have you have to look at the yucky colors that Windows "Nearest Color" routine picks for the images, I am including a 16 color dithered version of all of the clocks with the program. This means that even people with a standard VGA card will be able to run the program effectively.

Program Use

I've tried to make the program as simple as possible; there is only one major dialog box currently in use. When you select the **Settings** menu, if you

pick the **Clock...** choice, you are able to choose between the 3 clocks available in the unregistered version:

"Grandfather Clock"	An image of your standard grandfather clock, that has an animated pendulum.
"The Den Clock"	A marble desk clock in a darkened den. To brighten the scene, click on the "on" switch.
"Time Under Glass"	Don't ask about the name. Features a sculptured clock face, and rotating balls.

From this dialog you also have the choice of setting the interval that the clock will refresh itself. It defaults to 1 second, but by decreasing the number, you can increase the speed of the animation. If you find the program slowing down your system, you can increase the interval, to a maximum of 10 seconds. Warning: by setting the interval to 0, you turn **OFF** the clock. In other words, it will never update the image.

There are check boxes to set certain options. The only ones that are active in this release are:

"Animation"	By Checking this, the animated clocks will update the animation every interval seconds.
Unchecked, and	the animation is turned off.
"Thick Hands"	By Checking this option, the hands on the clock are made extra thick, to allow easier viewing from the room.
across	
"True Color"	Unchecking this option will currently select the 16 color dithered images and display them instead of the Hi Color images.

□ Registration □

This program has been released as Shareware, which means that I am asking that anyone who finds this program useful should become a registered user. For a fee of \$20, the registered user receives the newest version of Classic Timepieces, plus free unregistered future releases from **Avalon Studios**. (Note, the registered version also does not display the credits on startup, as the unregistered version does.) Any vendor who wishes to send their Custom Controls in lieu of the registration fee is welcome. I will include the name of any product that I use in the documentation.

Send the registration to:

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Future enhancements to CT include:

1. An alarm feature that will optionally display a dialog box when activated
2. With Windows 3.1 MultiMedia extensions, real "Chimes" can be set for the top of the hour!
3. Additional Clock faces!
4. Making the minimized icon change to display the current time.
5. Allowing the user to set CT to "Background Mode", where it imitates the desktop, giving a full screen backdrop clock!
6. Faster refreshing, and less use of system resources.
7. Mucho more!

Any future products of this nature (a second clock series called Future Timepieces is in the planning stages, as well as some other rather interesting projects) are at the mercy of you the consumer. This took more time than I thought it would to produce (All the raytraced images took **forever** to generate!) and I will only continue to release them if there is an interest generated. I welcome your comments and suggestions! I can be reached on Compuserve at 70674,1227.

Richard Brown