

# **AmiSlate**

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<b>COLLABORATORS</b>
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	<i>TITLE :</i> AmiSlate		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
WRITTEN BY	Jeremy Friesner	July 22, 2024	

<b>REVISION HISTORY</b>
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NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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# Chapter 1

# AmiSlate

## 1.1 Contents

AmiSlate V1.0 by **Jeremy Friesner**

AmiSlate is a program that allows you to draw pictures or play graphical type games with a friend over an AmiTCP/Internet link.

**Disclaimer** Don't blame me!

**Distribution** AmiSlate is DonationWare (tm)

**Requirements** What do I need to run this program?

**Introduction** What does AmiSlate do?

**Installation** How do I set AmiSlate up?

**Using AmiSlate** How to run AmiSlate

**Credits** Where it's due

**Acknowledgments** Thanks to...

**ARexx** AmiSlate supports ARexx!!

**Included Scripts** Games and Stuff

**History** Earlier versions/modifications

**Future** What next?

**Known Problems** Bugs! Aack!

## 1.2 Installation

If you want to run AmiSlate without using its TCP connection capability, then installation is simple. You will only need to do steps 1, 4 and 5, below.

If you want to connect to another person, on the other hand, then Installation is a bit harder. However, follow the steps below and you should be OK. (Note: this is what works for me under AmiTCP 3.0B2-- other versions of AmiTCP may vary slightly, so if you find a discrepancy,

please tell me about it!)

- 1) Copy the AmiSlate executable to where you want it to be. I put mine in amitcp:bin, so if you put it elsewhere, substitute that directory wherever you see amitcp:bin, below.
- 2) Add the following line to the end of your amitcp:db/services file:  
AmiSlate 2955/tcp
- 3) Add the following line to the end of your amitcp:db/inetd.conf file:  
AmiSlate stream tcp wait root amitcp:bin/AmiSlate
- 4) Copy the SlateRexx directory to wherever it is you want to keep it.
- 5) Copy the SlateScripts directory to wherever you want to keep it.
- 6) Edit your s:User-Startup (or whatever file you do all of your ASSIGNs in at system bootup) to assign the logical drive SlateRexx: to the directory where you are keeping your AmiSlate ARexx scripts. Also, assign the logical drive SlateScripts: to the directory where you want to keep your AmiSlate scripts (the binary recordings). For example, I keep my AmiSlate ARexx scripts in the directory dh0:AmiSlate/SlateRexx, and binary scripts in dh0:AmiSlate/SlateScripts, so I added the lines:  
assign SlateRexx: dh0:AmiSlate/SlateRexx  
assign SlateScripts: dh0:AmiSlate/SlateScripts  
to my s:user-startup file.
- 7) Re-start your computer (just to be sure of things), and try it out!

## 1.3 credits

AmiSlate V1.0

Created by **Jeremy Friesner**

ARexx port created with ARexxBox by Michael Balzer

Compiled with DICE C by Matt Dillon

## 1.4 How to reach me

Here are some ways to get in touch with me:

by EMail: jfriesne@ucsd.edu

by SMail: Jeremy Friesner,

7581 Knollwood Place

Dublin, CA 94568

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## 1.5 disclaimer

This software comes with no warranty, either expressed or implied.

The **author** is in no way responsible for any damage or loss that may occur due to direct or indirect usage of this software. Use this software entirely at your own risk.

## 1.6 AmiSlate is DonationWare

AmiSlate is DonationWare. I've put a lot of time into it to make it as fun and useful as possible, so if you find AmiSlate to your liking and use it often, please consider sending **me** a \$5 or \$10 donation, and in return I will send you future upgrades directly and give your suggestions preferred treatment.

However, if you can't afford that or for some other reason don't want to send money, that's okay also. Just send me email telling me that you're using it, and list any suggestions that you have for improving it. :-)

Furthermore, if you have any cool ARexx scripts that you've written for AmiSlate that you think should be included in the AmiSlate archive, please send me those.

Permission is given to include this program in a public archive (such as a BBS, FTP site or PD library) providing that all parts of the original distribution are kept intact. These are as follows:

Listing of archive 'AmiSlate1.0.lha':

Original Packed Ratio Date Time Name

```
-----
2228 515 76.8% 13-Mar-95 02:32:38 AmiSlate1.0.info
74876 36785 50.8% 13-Mar-95 02:27:22 +AmiSlate
29368 11334 61.4% 13-Mar-95 02:27:26 +AmiSlate.guide
504 285 43.4% 13-Mar-95 02:32:32 +AmiSlate.guide.info
1560 1122 28.0% 13-Mar-95 02:32:32 +AmiSlate.info
32558 9521 70.7% 13-Mar-95 02:27:52 +AmiSlateRexx.guide
504 285 43.4% 13-Mar-95 02:32:32 +AmiSlateRexx.guide.info
2273 564 75.1% 13-Mar-95 02:32:32 +ExampleRexx.info
2051 921 55.0% 13-Mar-95 02:32:00 +constants.rexx
309 196 36.5% 13-Mar-95 02:32:00 +easyreq.rexx
378 232 38.6% 13-Mar-95 02:32:00 +remote.rexx
446 266 40.3% 13-Mar-95 02:32:00 +remotestringreq.rexx
2521 996 60.4% 13-Mar-95 02:32:00 +wait.rexx
```

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2273 561 75.3% 13-Mar-95 02:32:32 +SlateRexx.info  
 1317 632 52.0% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +boxme.rexx  
 29370 6859 76.6% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +chess.rexx  
 916 501 45.3% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +diamond.rexx  
 664 383 42.3% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +explode.rexx  
 1011 538 46.7% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +flower.rexx  
 1634 679 58.4% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +qix.rexx  
 793 437 44.8% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +rainbowpen.rexx  
 13798 3298 76.0% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +tictactoe.rexx  
 2228 516 76.8% 13-Mar-95 02:32:32 +SlateScripts.info  
 10444 5836 44.1% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +AmiSlate.script  
 12468 5827 53.2% 13-Mar-95 02:27:18 +HappyFace.script

-----

226492 89089 60.6% 13-Mar-95 02:33:16 25 files

No charge may be made for this program, other than a reasonable copying fee, and/or the price of the media.

## 1.7 requirements

AmiSlate requires an Amiga running Kickstart V37 (WorkBench 2.04) or higher to operate.

AmiTCP 3.0b or higher, an Internet connection, and a friend are not required, but life is definitely more fun if you have them :)

AmiSlate opens the following libraries:

Library Minimum Version #

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intuition.library 37

bsdsocket.library 2 (AmiSlate will run without this)

graphics.library 37

gadtools.library 36

asl.library 37

icon.library 33 (only when started from WorkBench)

## 1.8 introduction

Please read the [History](#) section for information on changes and bug-fixes.

AmiSlate is a program that lets you and a friend paint together on the same canvas, using two different Amigas that are connected by AmiTCP.

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It also allows recording and playback of your paintings, and has extensive ARexx support that allows AmiSlate to be used as a base for simple network-aware **games** and other things.

AmiSlate lets two communicating sessions be on screens of different sizes and depths; colors transmitted will be mapped to the closest color available on the remote client's palette. However, AmiSlate demands that the window size of both sessions be the same; when one client resizes its window, the other client will resize its window as well. Thus, if your AmiSlate window seems to be resizing itself spontaneously, blame your friend on the other end of the connection. ;-)

## 1.9 Using AmiSlate

**The GUI** Where do I click?

**Startup options** Command line arguments & ToolTypes

**Menu options** Explanation of cryptic menus

**Keyboard Shortcuts** For people too lazy to use the mouse

**Serving Suggestion** Hints

## 1.10 keys

There are keyboard equivalents in AmiSlate for most options available in the menus; those items with keyboard equivalents have the equivalent listed next to the item.

Most keys, if pressed, will transmit a character to the "chat line" at the bottom of the window.

There are a few "special" keys, however. To control palette selection, (at least until I put in a real palette requester) AmiSlate uses the DeluxePaint style of palette control keys, on the numeric keypad. The keys are as follows:

keypad 1 : Decrement Blue in selected color

keypad 2 : Increment Blue in selected color

keypad 3 : Remove all Blue from selected color

keypad 4 : Decrement Green in selected color

keypad 5 : Increment Green in selected color

keypad 6 : Remove all Green from selected color

keypad 7 : Decrement Red in selected color

keypad 8 : Increment Red in selected color

keypad 9 : Remove all Red from selected color

Note that if you have "Lock Palettes" selected, then palette changes will also affect the remote user's screen. Otherwise, they won't.

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## 1.11 The AmiSlate GUI

When started without any arguments, AmiSlate opens a requester to allow you to select what type of screen you wish to draw on. You may use this requester to pick either the WorkBench screen or your favorite type of Custom Screen. Note that at the moment, you can only use a Public Screen by specifying it as a Tooltype or command line argument. After you've selected a screen type, AmiSlate will open a window to draw in. Most of the window is taken up by the drawing area, but there are several areas around the right and bottom edges which have different uses:

**The Toolbar** - On the upper portion of the righthand side

**The Palette** - Below the Toolbar

**The Chat Lines** - Along the bottom of the window

## 1.12 The Toolbar

The Toolbar consists of eight little icons that run along the right side of the window. Any resemblance these have to Deluxe Paint icons, is of course complete and total coincidence ;-). Seriously, if you have ever used Deluxe Paint or any other half decent paint program, then these are probably self explanatory, but here's the rundown anyway:

Starting from the upper left:

The Dot Tool : Allows you to draw dotted lines by dragging the mouse.

The Pen Tool : Allows you to draw connected lines by dragging the mouse.

The Line Tool : Allows you to draw straight lines by... oh, you know how.

The Circle Tool : Allows you to draw filled or empty circles and ellipses by dragging the mouse from the center of the circle until both radii are where you want them. Clicking on the upper left portion of this icon produces empty circles, while the lower right produces filled ones.

The Square Tool : Allows you to draw filled or empty rectangles by dragging from one corner of the rectangle to the other. Select Filled or unfilled just as with the circle tool.

The Polygon Tool: This allows you to draw shapes out of straight lines. (Sorry, no filled polygons yet!) Click once or draw out a line to start the polygon; you'll notice a little square appear on the polygon tool's icon. This indicates that a polygon draw is in progress. Click or drag out

the next line of the polygon, and continue repeating this for as long as you want. When you are done drawing lines, either connect the last line to the original point of the polygon, or click on a Toolbar icon to reset the Polygon tool.

The Flood Tool : Does a "Flood Fill" of the current color at whatever location in the drawing you click on.

The Clear Tool : Clears the drawing window.

Note that these tools can have their effects redefined by an ARexx script; if you want their original functions back, quit the ARexx script or abort it.

## 1.13 The Palette

The Palette lets you choose the color you wish to draw with. The current drawing color is shown as "depressed" in the palette array, and the others are shown as "raised." The neat thing about the palette is that it automatically reconfigures itself in accordance with your window and palette size. Well, at least I think it's neat :-)

## 1.14 The Chat Lines

The Chat lines allow you to converse more easily with the person you are connected to over a TCP link. They operate rather simply; If you press a key, it goes into the local chat line (the lower one), and the letter pressed will be sent to the other person's computer as well, where it will show up on the remote chat line (the upper one). The same thing goes in reverse for him/her. The delete and backspace keys can be used to remove boo-boos, but text that has scrolled off the screen cannot be recovered. Resizing or clearing the window will clear the chat lines.

## 1.15 Serving Suggestion

AmiSlate is designed to run as well as possible on a variety of screen sizes and depths. It is also designed to be able to connect between two users who are not running the same screen type. To do this, AmiSlate uses a palette matching scheme where colors are transmitted as 12-bit RGB values and the receiving computer

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uses the color with the "best fit". This will work, but may lead to less than the best results if the displays differ too greatly. (Specifically, two different colors on a deep display might match to the same color on a more shallow one, causing confusion to the user of the lesser palette, and possibly confusing the flood fill tool as well)

To minimize color matching problems, it is best to run AmiSlate on a screen as much like your peer's as possible. When you receive an AmiSlate connection request, you will be given some information about your partner's screen at the bottom of the screen mode requester. Try to use a screen with the same depth as your partner. Furthermore, the color matching scheme will work best if you and your partner **Lock Palettes**. If you are using the same Screen Depth, this will guarantee a one to one, exact palette match.

AmiSlate is designed to handle many operations simultaneously; it is possible to have both users drawing at once, and it is even possible to have the users drawing at the same time as ARexx scripts are drawing. In practice, however, such heavy loading of AmiSlate may lead to problems. If you are experiencing problems with AmiSlate during "heavy drawing", try easing off a little to let AmiSlate catch its breath. If you find a problem that is reproducible, email **me** about it so that I can try to fix it.

## 1.16 Rexx Scripts included with AmiSlate

There are several ARexx scripts included with AmiSlate; I intend to add to the collection as AmiSlate grows.

To launch any of these, use the "Execute ARexx script" option in the Rexx menu--manually launching them with "rx" or another program may cause them to malfunction.

Also make sure you have your SlateRexx: directory set up as per the **Installation** instructions, and that these scripts are in the SlateRexx: directory.

Chess - My first "big" ARexx project for AmiSlate. Mediates a game of chess that is played between two people. If a network connection is active when you run this script, the Chess program will allow you to play over the connection with

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a remote opponent, otherwise it will let you play with both players on the same Amiga. The person who actually executes the script is always white.

For now, CheckMate isn't detected (it would make things even slower than they are!) and castling isn't implemented. (Sorry, this WILL be fixed!) Oh yeah, En Passant isn't implemented either, because I'm still a bit unsure as to what that is myself ;).

TicTacToe - A cute little TicTacToe game for one or two computers.

Autodetects a connection for two-computer mode.

BoxMe - Just a dorky little demo of the interactive capabilities of AmiSlate ARexx; Draws a box around the current mouse position whenever you press or let go of the mouse button.

RainbowPen - Cycles the current Foreground pen through the user's palette so that when you draw, you get a neat "rainbow" effect.

Flower - Draws a neat little multicolored design on the drawing area.

Qix - Draws an animated line that bounces around your screen. The line uses XOR mode, so your drawings will not be affected.

For extra fun, run two or three of these at once, on one or two computers. Watch AmiSlate beg for mercy ;-)

Explode - Draws 300 lines worth of violent explosion on your window :)

## 1.17 arexx

AmiSlate contains extensive support for ARexx scripting. AmiSlate's ARexx port is designed to run concurrently with the user's input, rather than "taking over" control from the user. This means that your ARexx scripts can be highly interactive, even down to the level of interpreting mouse clicks from the user!

Documentation on ARexx commands is included in this archive, in the file AmiSlateRexx.guide. Also included are several example/test scripts in the ExampleRexx directory, and even a few modest **games and applications** in the SlateRexx directory.

## 1.18 Starting AmiSlate

AmiSlate can be started from either the Shell or the WorkBench. It supports a few command line arguments. Each of these arguments also has a ToolType equivalent. Look in the AmiSlate icon for examples of these ToolTypes--they are there, just commented out with parentheses.

Template: AmiSlate WBScreen/S,WIDTH/K,HEIGHT/K,PUBSCREEN/K,INFILE/K,OUTFILE/K,REXXOUTPUT/K

**WBScreen/S** Puts AmiSlate window on Workbench screen

**TOP/K** Assigns default Y co-ordinate to window

**LEFT/K** Assigns default X co-ordinate to window

**WIDTH/K** Assigns default width to window

**HEIGHT/K** Assigns default height to window

**PUBSCREEN/K** Opens AmiSlate on given Public Screen

**REXXOUTPUT/K** Sends Rexx scripts' output to given file

**OUTQUEUE/K** Sets size of Output Queue

## 1.19 OUTQUEUE/K

AmiSlate is designed never to block input from the user. (Well, at least as close to never as possible) However, it may be the case that the remote AmiSlate client is not yet able to accept data from the local client; in this case, AmiSlate puts the data generated by user commands into a local queue, and sends it as soon as the remote client is ready for it. Data is not lost until the queue is filled. This keyword allows you to set the size of the queue (the default is about two kilobytes).

Usage Example: AmiSlate OUTQUEUE=12000

## 1.20 REXXOUTPUT/K

This keyword allows you to specify a destination for any console output that ARexx scripts run by AmiSlate might produce. It is useful for debugging your ARexx scripts.

Usage Example: AmiSlate REXXOUTPUT=ram:myrex.out

## 1.21 Workbench Screen

This keyword causes AmiSlate to appear on the Workbench Screen.

Usage Example: AmiSlate WBScreen

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## 1.22 Specify a Public Screen

This allows you to specify the name of a Public Screen upon which you want the AmiSlate window to appear. If a Public Screen with the given name does not exist, AmiSlate will fail with a "Couldn't lock public screen!" error.

Remember, with Public Screen names, alphabetical case counts!

Usage Example:

AmiSlate PUBSCREEN=MyPubScreen

## 1.23 Specify window height

This allows you to set the height of the AmiSlate window.

Usage Example:

AmiSlate HEIGHT=250

will make the AmiSlate window 250 pixels tall.

## 1.24 Specify Window width

This allows you to set the width of the AmiSlate window.

Usage Example:

AmiSlate WIDTH=350

will make the AmiSlate window 350 pixels wide.

## 1.25 Specify window X-coordinate

This allows you to set the horizontal position of the AmiSlate window.

Usage Example:

AmiSlate LEFT=60

will make the AmiSlate window appear 60 pixels from the left of the screen.

## 1.26 Specify window Y-coordinate

This allows you to set the vertical position of the AmiSlate window.

Usage Example:

AmiSlate TOP=60

will make the AmiSlate window appear 60 pixels from the top of the screen.

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## 1.27 AmiSlate menus

AmiSlate has a few menus for you to play with...

**Project** - The usual

**TCP** - Network connection and disconnection

**Script** - Draw recording and playback

**Misc.** - Other random stuff

**Rexx** - Launch and abort ARexx scripts

## 1.28 Project Menu

About - Opens a leetle info-window about **me** and the program.

Quit - Makes AmiSlate go away.

## 1.29 TCP Menu

This menu controls connecting and disconnecting to a remote Amiga that has AmiSlate installed.

Connect - Connect to a given host. Note that you don't need to specify the user's name at that host, just the computer's name.

Disconnect - Sort of the Internet equivalent of hanging up, I suppose.

This menu is only enabled if you have AmiTCP running when AmiSlate is started.

## 1.30 Script Menu

This menu controls the recording and playback of AmiSlate's proprietary "scripts". These are NOT ARexx scripts; if you don't believe me, try loading one into your text editor ;). For ARexx scripts, check out the **Rexx** menu.

Play Script - Select a previously recorded script for playback.

Record Script - Start recording drawing events to the file you specify.

To stop recording, select this item once again.

## 1.31 Misc. Menu

This menu controls options that didn't really belong to any of the other menus.

Safe Flood Fills - This option allows you to toggle between two different methods of transmitting flood fill information to a

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peer or file. If it is checked, AmiSlate will use

**Safe Flood Fills**, otherwise AmiSlate will use **Not-So-Safe Flood Fills**.

**Lock Palettes** - This option is only accessible if you are connected to another person, AND your palette size is equal to or larger than his/her palette size. Selecting this item will cause your peer's palette to be copied to the lower region of your palette, thus ensuring that All colors appearing on his screen will appear the same on yours. Note that unless your palettes are the same size, that the reverse may not always be true. Furthermore, as long as this item is selected, any adjustments made by one of you to his/her palette will be transmitted to the other person, thus keeping the palettes "In Synch".

## 1.32 Safe Flood Fills

In Safe Flood Fill mode, AmiSlate will transmit (or store) a flood fill as a number of horizontal lines. Because the shape of the flood fill is transmitted (or stored), this ensures that any slight inconsistencies between screens (i.e. a missing pixel on the flood boundary) will not lead to enormously different results after the flood. This method is necessarily slower and more disk-space hungry than **the alternative**, but is much more reliable, especially in **less than optimal conditions**.

## 1.33 Not-So-Safe Flood Fills

In Not-So-Safe Flood Fill mode, AmiSlate will transmit (or store) a flood fill operation as a single set of co-ordinates and a color. The only error-checking done is to make sure that the color flooded over at the remote end is the same as the color flooded over locally. After that, the flood fill is left free to go its merry way. This can lead to some havoc if you aren't careful with it, but it is much less bandwidth and disk-space intensive than **the other way**. If you wish to use this mode, be sure to read the **Serving Suggestion**.

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## 1.34 The Rexx menu

This mode controls the launching and aborting of ARexx scripts. Note that AmiSlate runs these scripts asynchronously, so that it is quite possible to have multiple ARexx scripts running at once.

Doing this with scripts that make use of WaitEvent will most likely lead to undesirable results, because each script will only receive information about every other event. (Or every third event, if there are three, etc.)

However, if you are running only non-interactive scripts (explode, flower, qix, etc.) you should be able to run several scripts simultaneously without problems.

If your ARexx scripts start to get out of hand, select Abort Rexx Scripts to get rid of them.

Execute Rexx Script - Allows you to select an ARexx script to run in conjunction with AmiSlate.

Abort Rexx Script - Causes AmiSlate to send a Quit message to any Rexx script with a pending WaitEvent() call, then to close its ARexx port for a brief period. This should cause most ARexx scripts to go away.

This menu is only enabled if you have ARexx running.

## 1.35 Thanks

Thanks go to the following people:

Matt Dillon for DICE.

Commodore for the nifty computer and O/S.

Michael Balzer for ARexxBox, which made the ARexx port coding ten billion times easier.

Scott Ellis for the source code to AmiPop, a lovely TCP programming example.

Jayson Mondala for beta testing.

...my friends, and all the nice people on the Internet who helped me out with Amiga problems.

## 1.36 Long long ago..

( "-" = new feature, "\*" = bug fix)

1.0B : (Released 03/18/95)

- First release. Undoubtedly full of bugs.

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## 1.37 Known Bugs and Other Problems

Here are the things that still don't work right with AmiSlate V1.0:

- If you drag tools around really fast for more than a few seconds or so, AmiSlate's input queue will overwhelm it and it will no longer respond to dragging the mouse. This is especially bad with the circle tools, as they take a relatively long time to update. The only way to fix this is to quit AmiSlate and start it again.
- Background color pens/drawing are not implemented.
- Some ARexx commands are not implemented, and others are not fully implemented. See AmiSlateRexx.guide for details.
- You can select up to 8 bitplanes on any ScreenMode, not just up to the number of bitplanes that ScreenMode can actually do on your Amiga.
- There is no castling or en passant in the chess game.
- The victory slash is not always drawn in the tic-tac-toe game.

## 1.38 What's Next?

Note: These are things I'm thinking of implementing; Whether I actually implement them or not depends on how difficult they will be to implement and user response (both in the form of communications and [donations](#)).

- Better control of screen selection
  - A handy Installer script
  - More ARexx scripts
  - . Interactive writing of vector text to the display
  - . 3D animated spinning vector cubes, just like those European guys have ;)
  - . Anything neat sent to me by users :-)
  - . Little screen-drawing ditties (Moire, etc.)
  - . A Tron/LightCycles style game
  - A program to analyze an IFF bitmap and send it thru the ARexx port as AmiSlate draw commands (yes, it would be slllooooowww, but somehow quite cool! ;))
  - More ARexx commands
  - . Implement WaitEvent timeout, and other features that are lacking
  - Implement Background Color support (a la DPaint with right mousebutton)
  - AS225 support
  - DCC/Grapevine IRC interface
  - An option for scrolling over a "virtual slate" instead of keeping the windows the same size
  - Bug Fixes Galore
  - Possibly a Text Tool
-