Password Key v1.4

by Carl Powell III

Instructions

Password Key was written to help you keep "roaming eyes" from accessing your Macintosh Computer. If used properly, it should be very effective in keeping others from wandering about your hard drive.

Initial Setup

To use Password Key, simply copy it on to your hard drive and double-click the application. The first time Password Key is run, you will be asked for your NEW password. This will be written to the disk and will be necessary to continue with the program. Password Key is upper and lower case sensitive and spaces will not work correctly. So... write it down or use something you can remember! After entering the password, press the return key.

As soon as you enter your new password and press return, you will then be prompted by the main Enter Password: screen to re-enter that password to continue. Type it in exactly as you typed it before. Remember, upper/lower case DOES make a difference, so make sure you type it in EXACTLY as you originally did or it will not work!

As you type the password, you will see little □ symbols corresponding to each keystroke. This is to assure your security when others may be watching over your shoulder.

Only when you enter a NEW password are you allowed to see the characters as you type them. If you somehow fail to enter a new password and leave it blank, the password is stored as "PASSWORD" (without the quotes of course).

Once the password is typed correctly, the program will respond with "Correct Password!" and then quit. You will then find a new file on your disk called "PASSWORD." This file now contains your password and will be used to store any illegal attempts to access your system with incorrect passwords.

Storing the Password file

Since this new PASSWORD file contains sensitive information, it is best to store it out of sight in a less obvious place. The best place to put the file is in the System folder. Otherwise, Password Key might not know where to find it. The only three places it can be stored are: 1) in the system folder, 2) on the top level of the hard drive, or 3) in the same folder with the Password Key application. Storing the PASSWORD file in any other location will cause Password Key to assume that you want to start a new file and request a new password from you.

To store the PASSWORD file in the System Folder, just drag it on top of the System Folder and release. It will be moved into the System Folder.

Making Password Key a Startup File

You may want to make Password Key your startup application so that your system will be protected from someone who tries to start your system while you are away. There are two methods for doing this depending on the version of the Macintosh System software your are using.

For System 6.0.x...

Place the Password Key application where ever you plan to keep it and highlight it by clicking on it ONCE. While it is highlighted (inverted to black), pull down the "Special" menu to "Set Startup." Another window will appear asking you to select preferences for startup. Password Key should work fine in both Finder or MultiFinder, so the default settings for this window should be fine. Click the "OK" button. Password Key will now start automatically when you restart your system.

For System 7.0.x...

System 7 has a place to store files that are to be executed at startup time, it is a folder called "Startup Items" and is located in the System Folder. Locate this folder and move the Password Key application there or, make an alias of Password Key and store the alias there. To do this, locate the Password Key application and click on it ONCE. While highlighted, pull down the "File" menu to "Make alias..." to create an alias of the program. (The alias is the one whose name is in italics. You can shorten the name to Password Key after you have moved the file.)

If you are running System 7, you may want to consider making

Password Key available to you in the Apple Menu.   Make an alias of Password Key and copy this alias file to the "Apple Menu Items" folder, also located in the System Folder.   It will now appear in your Apple menu for quick access at any time.

Using Password Key

Startup use of Password Key should now be automatic. The next time you start your system the password will be required. If you make a mistake while entering your password, the delete or backspace key will delete characters you have typed and allow you to re-enter your password. If you press "return" or click "OK", and the password is not correct, your system beep sound will play and the password will be cleared for you to re-enter it.

After five attempts and no success, the system will display the message "Too many tries! I don't know you!" and will lock up for a couple of minutes. This message will continue to be displayed, but the program will eventually allow you to enter the correct password to continue.

The PASSWORD File

Whenever Password Key is run, an entry is recorded to show the date and time it was run. Each time an incorrect password is entered, the attempt is recorded in the PASSWORD file. Each entry includes the Date and Time of the attempt as well as the attempted password. When the correct password is entered, "Successful Entry" is recorded in the file.

If you double-click or open the PASSWORD file, it simply runs Password Key and requests the password. However, you can open the PASSWORD file from Teach Text or a word processor that reads plain text files, if you would like to view the attempts or verify your password while in the system.

Break time protection

You may have to get up and leave your computer running during the day and may be concerned about the delicate nature of the information you are currently using. You can use Password Key to protect your system during the day just as easily. If you are running System 7, and have installed the alias in your Apple Menu Items folder, just select Password Key from the Apple Menu and it will cover your screen and request the password. Screen savers should continue to operate normally, allowing you to leave it in this position while you are away. Upon your return, just enter the password and Password Key will quit and let you go right back to work.

If you are using System 6.0.x, you can just double-click the application to run it.

Changing the password

To change the password, simply delete or rename the PASSWORD file in your system folder, run Password Key to create a new PASSWORD file, and place the PASSWORD file in your system folder. Password Key always creates it's PASSWORD file in the same folder with Password Key, so you will find it there. If you're running System 7, don't forget to move the PASSWORD file from the Startup Items folder, or it may run TWICE! It would not be a problem, but might be a little aggravating.

WARNING!

Password Key is NOT Fool-proof! There are ways to circumvent it's operation! It is intended to provide you with limited security and a way to find out if someone is tampering with your system. Do not consider it to be under "Lock and Key" while Password Key is running. The old adage "Locks are for honest people" applies here.

Shareware Fee

Password Key is shareware. If you like and use the program, please encourage me and others by sending $5.00 to:

Carl Powell
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Thank you for your support. Bug reports and/or Suggestions are also welcome at the above address or via CompuServe at 76702,457.

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