

StartupScreen Help - Table of Contents

Hit the F1 key now if you need help using the Windows help system.
Additional information can be found in the STARTUP.TXT document.

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Overview: What is StartupScreen?

StartupScreen is a "freeware" Windows application that allows you to replace the Microsoft startup screen (also known as a "brag screen" or "opening logo") that welcomes you to Windows with a screen of your own design or choosing. StartupScreen brings one of the nicest conveniences of the Macintosh to Windows!

I accidentally discovered the method for changing startup screens in January 1991. It took me some time to figure out exactly what was going on, but with time, and the help of others, I managed to "perfect" the system. Soon, the first version of StartupScreen was released.

Now, a year later, just about everyone is changing their startup screen. And here is a new tool that will make the process even simpler: StartupScreen 3.2. Key sections of this version have been entirely re-written for improved speed, error-checking, and compatibility with Windows 3.1. On top of that, new "Install as Wallpaper" and "View BMP" features have been added, making it easier than ever for you to save disk space by using wallpaper in RLE format.

All you need to get going with StartupScreen are some RLE graphics files. There are probably some RLE's where you found this program. You can then use StartupScreen to install them as either wallpaper (to save disk space, because they are considerably smaller than BMP files) or, of course, as startup screens. The process is pretty self-explanatory. If you make a mistake, the program is designed to stop you in your tracks and let you know exactly what's gone wrong.

No real technical support is available, but that shouldn't be necessary. However, if you do have a problem, I'll do my best to help you. And, of course, as mentioned above, your comments and suggestions are always appreciated. Here's how to contact me:

FoReM-Net E-Mail, Mike Mezaros: Node 593
GEnie via Z*Net Publishing: Z-NET
CompuServe via Z*Net Publishing: 75300,1642
InterNet via Z*Net Publishing: 75300.1642@compuserve.com
Z*Net Headquarters BBS, Mike Mezaros: (908)-968-8148

Finding and Making RLE Files

The type of graphics files used by StartupScreen to replace your startup screen or wallpaper have the extension RLE.

RLE stands for Run Length Encoded, a type of compression. Basically, RLE's are compressed images - they will generally be much smaller than BMP files containing the same image. There are two different kinds of RLE files that you'll see floating around: CompuServe and Microsoft style RLE files. CompuServe style RLE files will NOT work with StartupScreen, they are a totally different kind of format.

The Microsoft style RLE format is a compressed version of the Windows BMP format. This format actually comes in several varieties. The only kind you need to worry about are "RLE4" files. The 4 stands for 4-bit, meaning a maximum of 16 colors per picture. ***The only RLE files usable with this program, or any other program that works on the same principle, are Microsoft style RLE4 files in VGA (640x480x16) or lower resolution.***

StartupScreen checks to make sure that your RLE is the proper resolution before installing or previewing. You may use RLE's that are the same resolution as your video mode or lower (except for better than VGA systems, where 640x480x16 is still the limit). For information on effectively using certain RLE's with a lower resolution than your video mode, see the [Using Lower Resolution RLE's](#) section.

Windows BMP files can be converted to RLE's using either Paint Shop or WinGIF. Both of these are shareware programs, available on many BBS's, as well as CompuServe and GENie. (If you opt for PaintShop, be sure to use a 1991 or later version. Earlier versions had a number of problems.)

You will also probably find RLE startup screen files wherever you found this file. For example, on CompuServe, there is a nice selection of them in the WINNEW forum, Library #5.

IMPORTANT: The RLE you use for your new startup screen cannot not be any larger than about 58k (the exact size varies slightly depending upon what kind of video adapter and what version of Windows you use). If it is too large, StartupScreen will refuse to install it

Restore Microsoft Startup Screen Button

The **Restore Microsoft Startup Screen** button will re-install the original Microsoft startup screen that came with Windows.

Install Buttons

There are two **Install** buttons. One installs as wallpaper, the other as a startup screen.

The **Install As Startup Screen** button installs the selected RLE file as your new startup screen. It will be used the next time you load Windows, and from there on until you install another (although Windows will set it back to the original Microsoft startup screen if you use the Windows Setup program to change video drivers).

If this is the first time you are using StartupScreen, it makes a backup of your current WIN.COM file named WINBAK.COM. Then, if for some reason you can no longer load Windows, simply rename WINBAK.COM to WIN.COM. This backup is provided as a precautionary measure only. The procedure used by StartupScreen has been used reliably by thousands of people for quite some time now, and has proven itself to be extremely "solid."

The **Install As Wallpaper** button installs the selected RLE or BMP file as wallpaper. This is done immediately. Two option buttons on the right side of the window determine if you want your wallpaper to be tiled or not tiled (centered).

Version History

StartupScreen 1.0 - Dos-based. Written in GW-BASIC (compatible with GW-BASIC and BASICA). Featured a menu driven interface and a variety of RLE files.

StartupScreen 1.01 - Corrected a few extremely small bugs and added an additional RLE file.

StartupScreen 2.0 - Only released to beta-testers. All RLE files dropped. Written in ASIC 2.0 compiled Basic. Due to problems with the compiler, this version was never publicly released.

StartupScreen 3.0 - First version for Windows. This version was labeled 3.0, despite the fact that 2.0 was never released, because Version 2.0 had been widely publicized prior to its demise.

StartupScreen 3.1 - Added the viewing feature, enhanced error-control, enabled the search feature for the help system, several minor bug fixes.

StartupScreen 3.2 - Portions re-written for Windows 3.1 compatibility, increased speed, and better error-checking. Wallpaper installation and BMP viewing capabilities added. Sample RLE added.

Assorted Thanks

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My apologies *and* my thanks to anyone I've forgotten, or those whose help came too late to include in this file!

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View Button

After selecting an RLE or BMP file from the file list box, clicking the **View** button will allow you to view it. The picture "takes over" your screen, and the pointer changes to an up arrow. Clicking anywhere on your screen (or hitting any key) will make the picture disappear.

Using Lower Resolution RLE's

99.9% of you can ignore this section. Those of you who like to experiment should read on!

StartupScreen automatically determines what type of video adapter you are using. However, it also assumes that the resolution of your new startup screen will be the same resolution or less than your graphics mode, and not matching that of any other graphics mode. This is usually (99.9% of the time?), but not always, the case. Basically, this feature was provided for people like myself who love to try every different RLE they can get their hands on, regardless of resolution.

Specifically, you may want to use an RLE with a lower resolution than your graphics mode (you cannot use one with a higher resolution), but matching that of a lesser graphics mode. For example, you might have a VGA monitor and want to use an RLE designed to fill an EGA screen. In order for the RLE to display properly, Windows must be given special instructions.

How do you do this? From the "Options.Startup Screen Resolution" menu. The item currently checked will be your default resolution. Simply check the item that matches the resolution of the RLE you want to use.

What if some of your options on the menu are disabled?

StartupScreen checks your Windows\System directory for any LGO files. These LGO files are included with Windows and determine how startup screens should be handled by different types of displays. Only those that are found are enabled on the menu. If any of these are not in your Windows\System directory, they are on your original Windows diskettes (see Windows' documentation for information on retrieving files from those diskettes). The LGO files correspond to the menu items like this:

VGALOGO.LGO	<i>VGA or Better</i>
EGALOGO.LGO	<i>EGA</i>
EGAMONO.LGO	<i>EGA Monochrome</i>
CGALOGO.LGO	<i>CGA</i>
HERCLOGO.LGO	<i>Hercules Monochrome</i>

Remember: You don't need any additional LGO files unless you specifically want to use an RLE designed for lower graphics mode.

