Contents

Introduction

TopDesk lets you manipulate applications from a bird's eye view of your desktop. TopDesk provides a representation of the <u>virtual desktop</u> that shows the <u>current desktop</u>, the <u>home desktop</u>, all <u>visible windows</u>, and, optionally, all <u>ghost windows</u>.

You can manipulate these objects with keyboard and mouse actions. After you learn to use TopDesk, you will have an easy, intuitive way to switch between several applications while conserving screen space.

Keyboard Commands:

Key	Description
CTRL-A	Arranges all visible windows, moving them to their respective ghost window locations. Only windows that have ghost windows are affected.
CTRL-E	Erases (destroys) all ghost windows.
CTRL-F	Hides or shows the TopDesk frame controls (title bar and menu bar).
CTRL-G	Changes how ghost windows are shown, as either hidden, partially shown, or fully shown.
CTRL-H	Hides or shows the representation of the TopDesk window in TopDesk.
CTRL-M	Magnifies the virtual desktop view (zooms in).
CTRL-O	Moves the home desktop to the current desktop.
CTRL-P	Displays the Preferences dialog.
CTRL-R	Reduces the virtual desktop view (zooms out).
CTRL-S	Takes a snapshot of the visible windows to create or reconfigure ghost windows.
CTRL-T	Gathers all visible windows onto the current desktop.
CTRL-U	Displays the Start Up Information dialog.
CTRL-V	Alternates between the Relative and Absolute views of the virtual desktop.
CTRL-X	Exits TopDesk.
CTRL-ALT-T	Hotkey that swaps the focus between TopDesk and the topmost visible window on the current desktop. You can redefine this hotkey in the Preferences dialog.
HOME	Moves the current desktop to the home desktop.
0-9 (keypad)	Places the current desktop in relation to the home desktop in a position that corresponds to the key's position on the numeric keypad. For example, pressing numeric key 9 places the current desktop just above and to the right of the home desktop.
Arrow keys	Moves the current desktop in the direction of the arrow.
CTRL-Up Arrow	Magnifies the virtual desktop view vertically. (Zoom in vertically)
CTRL-Down Arrow	Reduces the virtual desktop view vertically. (Zoom out vertically)
CTRL-Right Arrow	Magnifies the virtual desktop view horizontally. (Zoom in horizontally)
CTRL-Left Arrow	Reduces the virtual desktop view horizontally. (Zoom out horizontally)

ALT-Arrow keys   Adjusts the topmost window on the current desktop to align with the edge
                   of the current desktop that the arrow points to.

SHIFT-Arrow keys   Adjusts the TopDesk window to align with the edge of the current desktop
                   that the arrow points to.

F1   Displays TopDesk Help.

Mouse Commands:

Mouse button	Area clicked	Modifier key or action	Results
Left	In the window	double click	Hides or shows the TopDesk title bar and menu bar.
Left	Virtual desktop		Drags the TopDesk window.
Left	Current desktop		Drags the current desktop.
Left	Home desktop		Drags the home desktop.
Left	Visible window		Drags the visible window.
Left	Ghost window		Drags the ghost window.
Left	Visible window	'A'	<u>Arranges</u> the window, moving it to the location of its ghost window.
Left	Visible window	'L'	<u>Locks</u> the window in its current position in relation to the current desktop.
Left	Visible window	'S'	Takes a <u>snapshot</u> of the window to create or modify its associated ghost window.
Left	Visible window	'U'	<u>Unlocks</u> the window.
Left	Visible window	DELETE	Closes the application represented by the visible window.
Left	Ghost window	'A'	Arranges the window associated with the ghost window, moving it to the ghost window's location.
Left	Ghost window	'E'	<u>Erases</u> (destroys) the ghost window.
Right	Ghost window		Jumps to the application associated with the ghost window. If the application is not currently running, TopDesk starts the application. If TopDesk cannot find the application, the <u>Start Up Information dialog</u> is displayed.
Right	Virtual desktop		Moves the current desktop to where the mouse was clicked.
Right	Visible window		Moves the current desktop and focus to the visible window. If the application was minimized, it is restored.
Right	Anywhere	CTRL	Begins dragging out a rectangle which defines which ghost windows to startup. All ghost windows that intersect with this rectangle will be started when the mouse button is released.

The Options Menu

Preferences...	Displays the <u>Preferences dialog</u>.
Hide Frame Controls	Hides or shows the TopDesk title bar and menu bar.
Magnify	Magnifies the virtual desktop view (zooms in).
Reduce	Reduces the virtual desktop view (zooms out).
Go Home	Places the current desktop on the home desktop.
Set Origin	Moves the <u>home desktop</u> to the current desktop.
Relative View	Alternates between the Relative or Absolute <u>views</u> of the <u>virtual desktop</u>.
Exit	Exits TopDesk.

Windows Menu

Arrange All

Arranges all visible windows, moving them to their respective ghost window locations. Only windows that have ghost windows are affected.

Gather All

Gathers all visible windows onto the current desktop.

Snapshot

Takes a snapshot of the visible windows to create or reconfigure ghost windows.

Erase Ghosts

Erase (destroys) all ghost windows.

Start Up Information...

Displays the Start Up Information dialog.

Hide Ghosts

Hides all ghost windows from view.

Show Unused Only

Hides all ghost windows already associated with visible windows.

Show Ghosts

Shows all ghost windows.

Concepts:

Procedures:

Arranging Windows
Ghost Window Operations
Jumping to Other Desktops
Jumping to Other Windows
Jumping to the Home Desktop
Locking and Unlocking Windows
Moving Windows
Setting the Home Desktop Location
Taking a Snapshot To Create Ghost Windows
Tracking the TopDesk Window

Preferences Dialog

The Preferences dialog provides options for defining TopDesk elements.

Color settings
To alter the colors TopDesk uses, select the apropriate color name from the combo box and click on the "Edit..." button to change the color.

Focus Change Hotkey
To change the hotkey for TopDesk, click the appropriate modifier-key checkboxes and select the hotkey from the combo box. Redefining the hotkey might be necessary if another application uses the same hotkey for another purpose.

Layout Information
The Height and Width fields represent the number of desktops shown by TopDesk in the horizontal and vertical directions. Any odd number can be entered in these fields. Check the Adjust On Resize option if you want TopDesk to alter the Width and Height fields when you resize the TopDesk window. This keeps the individual desktops from becoming too distorted.

Show TopDesk's Window
Check this option if you want the TopDesk window to appear on the virtual desktop.

Always On Top
Check this option if you want TopDesk to stay on top regardless of which window is active.

Select Font
Click this button to change the font that TopDesk uses for window text. TopDesk displays the Font dialog so you can specify the font.

Start Up Information Dialog:

The Start Up Information dialog box appears whenever TopDesk cannot start an application associated with a ghost window. You can also display this dialog box by pressing CTRL-U or by choosing Start Up Information from the Windows menu.

TopDesk uses the information you specify in the Start Up Information dialog to find out where the application is located. You can also specify a working directory to be set before starting the application, or use the Browse button to find the application.

After you specify the application's location, TopDesk saves the location in the *TopDesk.sui* file in your WINDOWS directory. You shouldn't need to specify the file location again.

The combobox lists all titles that TopDesk has saved. A title is added to the startup information database whenever a snapshot is taken of a visible window. Several ghost windows can be associated with the same title.

Use the Set Application Title On Startup checkbox to change the application's title after startup to match the title in the startup information database. This is useful for applications that are run indirectly by other applications and whose title is changed by Program Manager when started by it.

You can delete all startup information for a given title only if no ghost windows exist with that title.

The Virtual Desktop

The virtual desktop is all the potential space that Windows provides for application windows. Much of this space is not visible because it exists off your <u>current desktop</u>. Unfilled virtual desktop space is black in the TopDesk window.   You can change this color using the <u>Preferences Dialog</u>.

The Current Desktop

The current desktop is the part of the <u>virtual desktop</u> currently displayed on the screen. It appears in the same color as your desktop background. In the <u>Relative view</u>, the current desktop is always in the center of the TopDesk window.   The current desktop is always drawn using the system desktop background color.

The Home Desktop

The home desktop (or origin desktop) is a reference point within the virtual desktop that you can jump to at any time. You can also move the home desktop to other parts of the virtual desktop.
The Home Desktop has a green frame.   You can change this color using the Preferences Dialog.

Visible Windows

A visible window (or application window) appears as a cyan rectangle with a blue frame.   A locked window has a yellow border.   You can change these colors using the Preferences Dialog.   TopDesk automatically tracks and updates the movement of visible windows. You can also move and lock visible windows.

A representation of the TopDesk window, when shown in TopDesk, appears as a yellow rectangle with a yellow frame.   You can change this color using the Preferences Dialog.   The TopDesk window cannot be unlocked or moved off   the current desktop.

Ghost Window Operations

A ghost window shows where you want an application's window placed on the virtual desktop whenever you run the application. A ghost window appears as a clear rectangle with a white frame and white text.   You can change this color using the Preferences Dialog.

Creating ghost windows:
Ghost windows are created by taking a snapshot of visible windows. Minimized windows cannot be snapped.

Starting applications using ghost windows:
To start an application represented by a ghost window, click it with the right mouse button. TopDesk checks the application path associated with the title of the ghost window. If the information cannot be found or if TopDesk has trouble starting the application, TopDesk displays the Start Up Information dialog to request this information.

When an application is started (either by TopDesk or by other means), TopDesk moves the application window to its corresponding ghost window location. The current desktop and focus are changed so that you can begin working with the application immediately. This activity takes place even if ghost windows are not shown. To stop this activity, you must erase the ghost window.

You can start multiple applications at once by pressing the CTRL key while clicking with the right mouse button and dragging out a rectangle that intersects with all the ghost windows you want to have TopDesk start.

Showing ghost windows:
To change which ghost windows are shown, press CTRL-G to toggle between showing *none*, *partial*, and *all* ghost windows. The *partial* option shows only ghost windows that are not associated with a current application.

The Hide Ghosts, Show Unused Only, or Show Ghost command on the Options Menu is checked or unchecked according to how ghost windows are currently shown.

Moving ghost windows:
Ghost windows can be moved with the mouse in the same way that you move visible windows. Because ghost windows are shown on top of visible windows, it's difficult to move visible windows when *all* ghosts are shown.
Whenever a snapshot is taken of any window, *all* ghost windows are shown automatically.

Locking and unlocking ghost windows:
To lock and unlock ghost windows, press the 'L' or 'U' key and click the ghost window with the left mouse button (the same way as locking and unlocking visible windows).

Locking a ghost window does not lock its associated application but does lock the position for the application window when it is started or arranged.

Erasing ghost windows:
To erase a ghost window, hold down the 'E' key and click the ghost window with the left mouse button. To erase all the ghost windows, press CTRL-E.
Erasing ghost windows does not destroy any startup information that TopDesk may have already saved.

Setting up ghost windows:
To set up your ghost windows quickly, follow these steps:

1) Press CTRL-E to destroy any old ghost windows.
2) Run your favorite applications and place them where you want them on the virtual desktop. Lock any windows you want locked.
3) Press CTRL-S to take a snapshot of all your applications all at once.
4) Press CTRL-G to show ghost windows as desired.

Taking a Snapshot to Create Ghost Windows

Because a <u>ghost window</u> is like a picture of a <u>visible window</u>, the process of creating a ghost window is called "taking a snapshot." You can take a snapshot of any individual window or of all running application windows at once.

To create a ghost window for each running application that is not minimized, press CTRL-S. To create a ghost window for a particular application, hold down the 'S' key and click the application's visible window with the left mouse button.

Each snapshot either creates a new ghost window or, if one already exists for a visible window, moves the existing ghost to match the current position of the visible window. When a snapshot is made, all ghost windows are shown so that you can see which are currently defined. You can then press CTRL-G to change how TopDesk shows ghost windows.

Hiding and Showing the TopDesk Window

To show or hide TopDesk within the virtual desktop, press Ctrl-H. Or choose the Preferences command from the Options menu and specify your choice in the Preferences dialog. The TopDesk window is yellow when shown.   You can change this color using the Preferences Dialog.

Jumping to Other Desktops

To change the <u>current desktop</u> location with the mouse, click any unused <u>virtual desktop</u> space with the right mouse button. TopDesk places the current desktop where the grid marks indicate. Use the arrow keys to move the current desktop in the direction of the arrow. The numeric keypad also provides quick access to the desktops placed around the <u>home desktop</u>.

Jumping to the Home Desktop

To move the <u>current desktop</u> instantly to the <u>home desktop</u>, press the HOME key or press 5 on the numeric keypad.

Jumping to Other Windows

To use the mouse to jump to a <u>visible window</u>, click the window (or its associated ghost window) with the right mouse button.

To jump to the topmost <u>visible window</u> shown on the <u>current desktop</u>, press the TopDesk <u>hotkey</u>.

You can also use the system hot keys or the task manager to jump to windows.   TopDesk moves the current desktop to whatever window has the focus regardless of how that window got the focus.

When TopDesk jumps to a window, that window is activated and TopDesk automatically moves the <u>current desktop</u> so that the window is on the screen. If the window was minimized, TopDesk restores it.

Locking and Unlocking Windows

A locked window stays in the same position in relation to the <u>current desktop</u> at all times. A locked window has a yellow frame.

The TopDesk window, when <u>shown</u>, is a permanently locked window and can never be moved off the <u>current desktop</u>. All minimized windows are locked automatically also.

To lock a window, hold down the 'L' key and click the representation of the TopDesk window with the left mouse button. To unlock a window, hold down the 'U' key and click the representation of the TopDesk window with the left mouse button.

Ghost windows can also be locked, which means that when an application is <u>arranged</u> to the ghost window location, it is also locked.

Minimized windows are automatically locked and cannot be moved by TopDesk. This prevents icons from getting lost on the virtual desktop.

Moving Windows

To move a window using TopDesk, drag the <u>visible window</u>, <u>desktop window</u>, or <u>ghost window</u> with the left mouse button to a new position on the <u>virtual desktop</u>. Minimized visible windows cannot be moved by TopDesk. The windows cannot be moved with the keyboard.

Relative vs. Absolute View

When TopDesk appears in Relative view, the <u>current desktop</u> is always in the center. This makes the <u>virtual desktop</u> appear to move when you move the <u>current desktop</u>.

When TopDesk appears in Absolute view, the <u>home desktop</u> is always in the center. In this view, the <u>virtual desktop</u> remains still when you move the <u>current desktop</u>.

To change the view state, press CTRL-V.

Setting the Home Desktop Location

The <u>home desktop</u> can be <u>moved</u> in the same way as any other window by dragging it with the mouse using the left mouse button.

To move the home desktop to the <u>current desktop</u>, press CTRL-O.

The TopDesk Hotkey

The TopDesk hotkey quickly changes the focus to and from TopDesk. When TopDesk has the focus, press the hotkey to move the focus to the topmost <u>visible window</u> on the <u>current desktop</u>.
You can also use the hotkey to move the focus to TopDesk regardless of which application currently has the focus.
By default, the hotkey sequence is CTRL-ALT-T. You can redefine this key sequence in the <u>Preferences dialog</u>.

Tracking the TopDesk Window

You can move TopDesk in a variety of ways. If the TopDesk window is <u>shown</u> on the <u>virtual desktop</u>, you can move the TopDesk window representation to move the actual window. To move the TopDesk window directly, click an empty area on the virtual desktop with the left mouse button and drag TopDesk, in the same way that you drag its title bar.

Arranging Windows

Arranging a window refers to moving a <u>visible window</u> to the location of its associated <u>ghost window</u> and making the state of the visible window match that of the ghost window.

To arrange an individual visible window, hold down the 'A' key and click the visible window (or its associated ghost window) with the left mouse button. To arrange the windows for all currently running applications, press CTRL-A.

Tips and Ideas

TopDesk can be sized, shaped, and positioned however you want. Try these tips for placing TopDesk out of your way:
1) As a thin strip along the right edge of the screen.
2) As a thin strip along the bottom of the screen.
3) Maximized with applications placed in a ring of desktops around the edge of TopDesk, each in the center of its respective desktop.

Lock your favorite applications such as the clock or calendar so that they stay on the current desktop.

Place TopDesk in your startup group so your other applications are positioned automatically when they are started.

Add the line:
```
taskman.exe=topdesk.exe
```
to your system.ini file to have topdesk replace the task manager.   This will cause the system hotkey, Ctrl-ESC, to bring up TopDesk.

Some applications create unusual child windows that TopDesk does not recognize. You may find that these child windows act as if they are locked onto the current desktop even though TopDesk does not show them. These particular applications are best kept minimized when not in use.

Note that when you restore an iconized window, TopDesk does not automatically arrange that window to its associated ghost window.   In general, with TopDesk running, you no longer need to minimize any windows.

TopDesk maintains 3 files in the WINDOWS directory:
  Topdesk.pro contains your TopDesk preference information.
  Topdesk.gho contains the definitions of all ghost windows.
  Topdesk.sui contains startup information that associates ghost window titles with application paths.
If these files are erased, TopDesk assumes the default values.