

Task Manager Plus Users Guide

Installation Requirements

Task Manager Plus requires the following hardware and software to function correctly.

1. An AT or better computer with an 80286/80386 or 80486 CPU.
2. Windows version 3 or better running in either standard or 386 enhanced mode.

What does it do

Task Manager Plus replaces the "TASKMAN.EXE" supplied as standard with Windows Version 3. In addition to the facilities offered by the standard task manager program this program offers the following additional facilities.

1. This program will allow you to minimise - maximise and hide selected windows. The latter feature is particularly useful.
2. Child windows and hidden windows are displayed in the task list of this program and may be manipulated by the program. The standard task manager will only display "Task" windows. This feature gives a clearer picture of what is happening in your windows session even if you make no use of the ability to manipulate these previously unavailable windows.
4. The current number of active tasks and the amount of free system memory is displayed. Once again this helps to give a clearer picture of what windows is currently doing.
5. Taskman+ will function as a convenient program launchpad.

Task Manager Plus lacks the "Cascade" and "Tile" options present in the original windows task manager. If you make use of these features but would still like to use the Task Manager Plus program you can install the original windows task manager in the taskman+ launch list and have the best of both worlds.

Installation

To install the software on your computer follow these steps

1. If vbrun100.dll is not installed on your system then copy this file to your windows directory
2. Copy the file 'taskman.exe' in your windows directory to 'wtm.exe'. This is the task manager program supplied with windows and you should keep a copy of it in case you require it in the future.
3. Copy the file 'taskman.exe' from the distribution diskette to your windows directory.

Using The Program

To load the program double click anywhere on the windows desktop. The main task manager window will appear as follows.



These controls function as follows.

1. The list of tasks is used to select which window the command buttons should act upon.
2. The "Task" menu provides facilities for using TaskManager+ as a program launchpad. The features available from this menu are documented elsewhere.
3. The "Help" menu gives access to the "About" program information panel.
4. The "Terminate Task" button will terminate the task or window currently selected in the list of tasks. If no task is selected this button has no effect. Some tasks may refuse to terminate themselves.
5. The "Minimise" button will minimise the task or window currently selected in the list of tasks. If no task is selected this button has no effect.
6. The "Maximise" button will maximise the task or window currently selected in the list of tasks. If no task is selected this button has no effect.
7. The "Show Window" button will cause a task or window selected from the list of tasks to be shown. This button only has an effect if the task or window is currently minimised or hidden or if the selected window is currently obscured by another.
8. The "Hide Window" button will request the window or task selected from the list of tasks to hide itself. Hidden tasks are still active but are inaccessible to the user until they are shown. It is useful to hide windows that you are not currently using but plan to return to. Some tasks will refuse to hide themselves.
9. The "Arrange Icons" button will neatly arrange all iconic windows.

Using Task Manager Plus as a program launchpad.

You can use "Task Manager Plus" as a program launchpad by making use of the facilities offered from the "Tasks" menu. The use of these facilities should be fairly intuitive. The following is a brief guide to get you started.

The task menu contains the following items.

Run This item will allow you to type in a command line for immediate execution or you may launch a task from the stored list of tasks. To run an immediate task simply type the command line into the text area of the run window and click the OK button. To run a stored task click on the downward arrow at the right of the text area and select the task you wish to run from the list of tasks, when you have done this click on the OK button to run your selected task.

Define New This will display the task definition window to allow you to enter a new task definition. The items in this window are as follows. "Task Description" - the description that will be used by TaskMan+ to refer to this task. "Program to load" - the full path to the program you wish to load. "File to Load" - the name of a file you wish to be loaded by the program when it starts. This will only work properly if your program supports the entry of filenames on the program command line (most do). "Startup Directory" - This item is optional, if it is filled in then before starting your program the directory specified here is made the current working directory, the directory specification may include a drive specification but should not include a trailing '\'.

The browse buttons in this window may be used to fill in the details in the adjacent text boxes. If you click on the browse button a file dialogue window will open. From this you can select the program or file to load and the directory to start in.

When you have finished defining your task click the OK button to store the task definition. Once you have done this you can start your task as defined using the Task Run menu item of taskman+ at any time.

Modify Existing This will display the task definition window discussed above and allow you to modify a previously stored task definition.

Delete Old This will display the task deletion window. Select the task you wish to delete from the drop down list and click the OK button to delete a task. Click the Cancel button if you decide not to delete any of your stored tasks.

Caveat's

Task Manager Plus allows you to manipulate windows that a program's designers did not intend you to manipulate. Take care when manipulating hidden windows that you have not hidden yourself. If a program hides its windows then the programmer does not expect you the user to be able to manipulate the window. In the same vein it may be dangerous to hide the windows of some programs. In all cases experiment with care.

Distribution Policy

This program is not in the public domain. I retain the copyright to this work. On the other hand it is not shareware as you do not need to pay me anything if you like this program and decide to use it.

Please feel free to use this program. If you wish to distribute this program then please ensure that your distribution disk or archive contains the executable file "taskman.exe", vbrun100.dll (unless you store this file separately) and this file (taskman.wri).

If you wish to make a contribution then any amount of money or a postcard from your home town will be greatly appreciated.

If you wish to contact me either because you would like to make a contribution or because you have found a bug then I may be reached as follows.

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Why?

This program grew out of two rash statements. Rash statement number 1 was "I could do that" and rash statement number 2 was "That looks easy enough". After a few happy nights ploughing through the Windows SDK help files I had an idea how to achieve my goals. A few nights longer with visual basic and some spectacular crashes later as I called windows DLL routines with wildly wrong parameters and I had a program that was stable and did what I wanted. All in all it has been a useful learning experience. My thanks to my wife for putting up with me and to Microsoft for taking the Mystery out of Windows programming by providing the world with "Visual Basic".

Legalese

I make no guarantees as to the suitability of this software for any purpose. Before you use or install this software be aware that so doing is entirely at your own risk. I accept no responsibility for anything that may occur as a result of using this software.