

KBDock Version 1.2

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Keith Burton Consulting
1800 Grier's Creek Road
Versailles, KY 40383

Revision History:

- V1.2: Version 1.1 had a serious bug when starting up, and would not display at all on many machines. That bug is fixed in V1.2. As an apology to those who wasted money downloading 1.1, this version is *FREE* for six months. There will be no Nag Screens until 6/1/93.
- V1.1: Added CONVERT.EXE to migrate Program Manager Groups to KBDock. KBDock will now work as the Windows shell, and supports a "Startup" menu. Added new configuration options. Minor bugs fixed.
- V1.0 First shareware release.

What is KBDock?

KBDock is an "application bar" replacement for the Windows Program Manager. A strip of icons runs down the right (or left) side of your screen, and you run programs by double-clicking an icon just like in Program Manager. Among KBDock's features are:

- Allows multiple nested menus of icons.
- Icons are cached after their first use, making KBDock fast.
- Descriptive titles are listed as the cursor moves over each icon, so you don't have to memorize what all those little pictures mean.
- May be configured to run programs with either a double-click or a single click.
- Drag-Drop supported for adding new programs from File Manager, and for rearranging the dock.
- Automatically extracts icons from Windows programs, or can use standard .ICO files.
- Colors and Fonts fully user configurable.
- 3-D style appearance.

System Requirements

Windows 3.1 or above (3.0 will not work).

VBRUN100.DLL (the run-time library for Visual Basic) must be on your system.

A mouse or other pointing device is required.

Installation

Copy the following files to a directory on your PATH:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 3DLABEL.VBX | the add-on that I used for the 3-D "frame" effects. |
| KBDOCK.EXE | the executable program. |
| CONVERT.EXE | migration aid. |

CONVERT.EXE is only used during conversion from Program Manager to KBDock, and can be deleted when installation is complete.

Migrating Your Group Definitions From Program Manager:

If this is your first time installing KBDock, run CONVERT.EXE. This program will read all your Program Manager groups and copy the information into KBDock's data file, KBDOCK.DAT.

If you are upgrading from a previous version of KBDock, you may either use your existing KBDOCK.DAT file, or run CONVERT.EXE to copy the definitions from Program Manager. If you

are going to run CONVERT.EXE, you will first need to rename (or delete) your existing KBDOCK.DAT. I suggest renaming it so you can undo the migration if you don't like it.

CONVERT.EXE will reproduce your Program Manager desktop organization as closely as possible. KBDOCK's top menu will consist of a bunch of those identical ProgMan Group icons, which I imagine you'll want to customize. Remember, KBDOCK allows you to have nested menus, so you'll want to rearrange to take advantage of that as well.

You may find CONVERT leaves a few icons "empty" on the KBDOCK menu. Program Manager will allow "associated" files (like ABC.TXT) to be entered as "icon files". These files don't actually contain any icons, but ProgMan will do a two-level lookup and find "notepad.exe" (or whatever is associated with .TXT), and use that icon. KBDOCK doesn't support that feature yet, so those icons will be blank. The rest of the properties are correct, so all you'll have to change is the icon.

If you have a Program Manager Group that has more icons in it than KBDOCK can display in one column, CONVERT will split that group into two (or more) KBDOCK menus. Likewise, if you have too many groups for one KBDOCK column, CONVERT will add additional menu bars titled "More ProgMan Groups".

Deinstallation

Delete KBDOCK.EXE, CONVERT.EXE and 3DLABEL.VBX from wherever you put them. In your Windows directory, delete KBDOCK.DAT. Examine KBC.INI. If the only section is for [KBDOCK], delete KBC.INI. Otherwise, edit KBC.INI and remove the [KBDOCK] section.

Using KBDOCK

Run "KBDOCK.EXE" from File Manager, Program Manager, or wherever else you have a "Run" command. After you get past the nag screen, The dock should appear.



When you first start KBDOCK, you should see three icons. The top one is used to get to the "Dock Control Panel". The other two are menus I've already defined: "Main Menu" and "Accessories Menu".



Double-Click on the "Main Menu" icon, and you should see a list of 8 icons. The top icon is used to get back to the previous menu level (It also will let you get to the "Dock Control Panel". More about that later).

The other 7 will run some of the standard Windows programs from the "Main" Program Manager group.

Now, go back to the top-level menu by double-clicking on the "up-arrow" icon.

To see the effect of KBDOCK's icon cache, go back into the "Main Menu" by double-clicking on its icon. You'll notice it's a lot faster after the first time in a menu. Double-click on the "up-arrow" icon to return to the top-level menu.

The Dock Control Panel

To activate the Dock Control Panel, move the mouse to the top icon in the dock (either the "KBC" logo, or the "up-arrow", and click with the **RIGHT** mouse button (If you're on the top-level menu, double-clicking with the left button will also work, but the right button will work everywhere).

To select one of the functions, left-click on it with the mouse. To close the control panel without performing any function, click on the "Cancel" button.

Add New Button

This will bring up the "Program Item Properties" dialog box, which is similar to the Program Manager Properties dialog. The dialog consists of:

Type: Program or Menu Select "Program" to add a new program to the existing menu. Select "Menu" to add a new menu level.

Description Type the text you want displayed in the floating "description box" that will appear when you move the mouse over this icon.

Command Line (Not used for Menus) This is the Windows or DOS command to be executed. This may be an executable file, or a file "associated" with an application. If the directory containing the file is not on your DOS path, enter the full pathname.

Working Directory (Not used for Menus) The directory that will be current when the program is run. If not entered, the pathname from Command Line will be used.

Icon File Name Where KBDOck is to find the icon to be displayed. It can be in a Windows executable program, a ".DLL" file, or a ".ICO" file. For Windows programs and associated files, it will default to the standard icon for that application, but may be changed.

Available Icons After the cursor **leaves** the Icon File Name field, these windows will display all the icons in the chosen file. If you didn't want to use the first one, you may scroll through them and select the one you want by clicking on it.

Mode: Normal, Max or Min (Not used for Menus) How you want the application's window to initially be displayed; Normal, Maximized or Minimized.

Paste Fill in all the property values from the last item deleted. This is the way you move an icon from menu to menu. This is discussed more fully under "Toggle Drag-Drop Mode".

Note: The Properties dialog may also be displayed by right-clicking on an existing icon. This allows you to edit the Properties for that item. Anything can be changed except the Type, meaning you can't change a menu into a program.

Toggle Drag-Drop Mode

Ideally, you would be able to transparently drag files from File Manager onto KBDOck any time you wanted to. Unfortunately, Visual Basic version 1 was written for Windows 3.0, and doesn't internally support that form of drag-drop.

I was able to make it work using API calls direct to Windows, but that requires KBDOck to sit in an idle loop, constantly checking to see if you've dropped a file on it. That obviously wasn't acceptable, either.

My short-term solution is to have drag-drop available to you as a toggle: You turn it on, drag the files you wanted to add from File Manager, rearrange icons however you'd like, then turn it off again. While drag-drop mode is active, you won't be able to run programs, or do other KBDOck operations.

There are two visual indicators that drag-drop mode is active: First, the top icon changes to a pair of scissors. Second, the dock border changes from gray to red.

To cancel drag-drop mode, click with the right button on the top icon. Actually, almost anything cancels drag-drop mode. You can also right-click on any other icon, or double-click on the top icon.

Rearranging Your Icons: You can drag icons around while drag-drop is active. Use the same procedure you use when dragging a card in Solitaire.

Cutting and Pasting: To delete an icon, drag it to the top icon (the scissors) and drop it. To move an icon to a different menu, first delete it. Then move to the new menu, and select "Add New Button" from the Dock Control Panel. When the blank Properties dialog appears, click "Paste" to insert the values from the deleted icon.

A promise: Microsoft is supposedly releasing Visual Basic 2.0 around November. I'll be getting it as soon as it's available, and will put better drag-drop handling into KBDock right away. (v1.1 note: I promised I'd have 1.1 out by November 1st, so couldn't wait on VB 2.0 this time. Maybe I'll have it in time to do the next version)

Move KBDock

Select this, then drag the entire dock wherever you'd like it on your screen. KBDock will work equally well on either the left or right sides of your screen. If you move it all the way to the left side, all the descriptions and dialogs will just appear on the dock's right side.

Save Config / Reload Config

"Save" will preserve all the current KBDock settings in the "kbc.ini" file, and the icons in the "kbdock.dat" file. "Reload" will return KBDock to the last saved settings.

The icons are not automatically saved because I've found I add a lot of temporary ones. When I'm going to be working with a program for a while, I just drag it to KBDock so it's instantly available. I don't want to be hassled with having to delete these "work icons", so icons don't get saved until you request. If this is a problem, let me know and I can make this configurable.

Change Config

Brings up the Configuration Dialog. Here you can set colors, the font used for descriptions, a couple of options, and register the program.

The Colors and Fonts use Windows 3.1 common dialog boxes, so you're already familiar with them. The options are:

Run Program on Single-Click: If this is checked, moving up/down through menus and running programs will only take a single left click, instead of a double-click. It's faster and more convenient, but it's not the "Windows standard" way of doing things.

Display Text Descriptions: Controls the floating description window.

Keep KBDock on Top: Will keep other windows from overlaying the KBDock window.

Verify on Exit KBDock: If checked, KBDock will display an "Are you sure?" box after you select "Exit KBDock" from the Dock Control Panel.

Verify on Exit Windows: Will display an "Are you sure?" box when you choose "Exit Windows" from the Dock Control Panel.

Register will bring up the registration "nag screen". This screen also serves as the "About KBDock" screen and lists my address and some e-mail addresses.

Menu to Execute at Windows Startup: If KBDock is set as the Windows Shell, you can set a menu as your "Startup Group", same as the Startup Program Group in Program Manager. All the programs in this menu will be run at Windows startup. The rules are:

- This menu DOES NOT have to be a "top level" menu. It can be anywhere in your menu hierarchy, so put it somewhere out of your way.
- Your startup menu may be named anything you want, but the name you type in the Configuration dialog box must match EXACTLY.
- The startup menu may have sub-menus, but programs in the sub-menus will not be automatically run at startup.
- If you have more than one menu with the name you specify, only the first one found will be executed at startup.
- If you don't want a startup menu to be run, leave this field empty.

Minimize

Shrinks KBDock to an icon.

Help

Displays this file (if it's in the same directory as KBDock.EXE).

Run

Displays a Windows 3.1 common file dialog allowing you to browse your files and pick the one you want to run. You can also type a name in manually, of course. One hidden feature: Under "List Files of Type:", one of the entries is "Last Run Command". This will rerun the last name you typed in, hopefully saving you some work.

Exit KBDock / Exit Windows

Does just what you think. If KBDock is the Windows Shell, "Exit KBDock" will be ghosted.

Support

Mail and E-Mail support is available to anyone, not just registered users. Registered users will receive my telephone number and office hours. 30 minutes of free phone support (you pay for the call) are provided with registration.

Registration

Single System License: \$20.00 U.S. This license allows you to use one copy of KBDock at a given time. You may have it installed on multiple PCs, such as a desktop and laptop, but are not to routinely have more than one copy in use at the same time.

Multiple Licenses: 10 licenses may be purchased for \$150.00 U.S. Steep discounts available for larger quantities. Contact me for details.

Non-Profit Organizations: Start by registering a Single System License by mail. Include proof of your Non-Profit status and the number of Windows PCs you now have. I'm sure we can work something out.

Registration is for the life of the product, not just this release.

A free registration to the first user reporting each bug.

Unregistered Version

This version is fully functional. It contains the ever-popular "nag screen" that pops up at startup and regularly during use asking you to register. Registration completely eliminates the nag

screen.

Upgrades

The current version of KBDock will be available on CompuServe in the WINADV forum, and on Internet at ftp.cica.indiana.edu.

Miscellaneous Notes

Whenever you "Save Config", the old KBDOCK.DAT file gets saved as KBDOCK.BAK.

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