

# PowerBar/Write

v. 2.2a

## The Windows 3.1 Write ButtonBar

Program and documentation  
©1992 David Stewart, d.b.a. Argyle Softstuff  
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### PowerBar/Write--Making Write More Powerful

Windows' Write is not a "power" word processor, and is thus looked at askance by many Windows users. But Write's very lack of "power user" features is a virtue--the virtue of simplicity. Write makes up in speed, ease of use and convenience (not to mention thrift) what it lacks in power and features.

But you've probably wished that it were somewhat easier to operate--say, that it had the toolbar technology that's all the rage. PowerBar/Write gives you toolbar technology for Windows Write, incorporating the most useful, commonly used menu features of Write in a buttonbar that's always readily accessible. In addition, PowerBar/Write has a utility menu that includes a clock, a file finder and opener, special characters (ANSI characters, such as ©, ¾ and æ), application launching, time/date stamps, sizing options for Write, a printer page orientation toggle, timed automatic file saving, and setup options for PowerBar/Write. It starts up Write along with itself, so you don't have to do it. And you can even associate your Write files with PowerBar/Write, for instant loading when you use the application and Write.

PowerBar/Write is useful for users at any level; it is not difficult to use or set up. Yet it gives you many capabilities that are "advanced." It's a power tool, but *not* targeted only at the power user. Thanks for taking a look at PowerBar/Write. I'm sure you'll find it helpful and even interesting to use.

### PowerBar/Write--What It Takes

PowerBar/Write is written in Visual Basic for Windows 3.1. It requires:

A 286 or higher CPU running in Standard or Enhanced mode.

A mouse, because almost everything in PowerBar/Write is mouse-activated.

The Visual Basic runtime library file, VBRUN100.DLL, in a directory that is on your path. (The Windows directory is a good place for it.) If you don't have this file, you can usually download it from the same on-line service from which you got this file

(assuming that was your source) or get it from a friend who uses Windows; on-line, look for VBRUN100.EXE or VBRUN100.ZIP.

Windows 3.1 (it will not work properly with 3.0) and Write itself.

PowerBar/Write is very easy to use and understand; this documentation file is full of details on the application, but does not contain much on actually using it. Please be sure to see the registration details near the end, and the survey/order form at the very end. You need not register to return the survey; after all, I would find it helpful to know why you *didn't* register.

PowerBar/Write takes up some real estate on the screen--a vertical strip on the right side of your screen, just leftward enough to leave Write's scrollbar uncovered. For many margin settings in Write on standard 640x480 VGA (and on laptop computers), this may mean that you will be cutting off some of your view of the right margin area of Write. Write's default margins are 1¼" on both sides. PowerBar/Write cuts about ¼" past the right margin; usually, at type sizes above 8 pt., Write will wrap words that fall within this ¼" anyway, so it should not present a problem if you customarily use Write's default margin. And if you use a higher resolution--800x600 or 1024x768, e.g.--you will generally never have any overlap. PowerBar/Write is as narrow as a window can be made in Visual Basic.

(If you find that you have a margin problem in 640x480 resolution, there is a workaround: For the time you spend writing, set your margins so that they total about 3"--for example, 1½" left, 1½" right. This will put the right margin just to the left of PowerBar/Write, so you'll be able to work and see all your text. Then, when your editing session is done or you want to print your document the way you want it to look when you're finished, change the margins to the desired measures.)

### Installation

Well, this couldn't be much easier: PowerBar/Write consists of one program file, PBWRITE.EXE, and this documentation file. Unzip them and put them wherever you want. (If you are updating from a previous version of PowerBar/Write, simply copy the new PBWRITE.EXE v. 2.2 file over the old, and the same with this file, PBWRITE.WRI; or if you want to keep the old version, move it to another directory for storage.) However, it would be good to have it in your Windows directory, if you don't mind having stuff that isn't "original equipment" in there; or alternatively, if you start Write up in a separate data file directory, as 3.1's Program Manager lets you, you might want to put PowerBar/Write in that directory. If you use Program Manager as your shell, use the standard procedure for installing a new launch icon. See the Windows 3.1 *User's Guide*, pp. 78-83. If you use some other shell or nonshell program manager, follow its app installation procedures.

### Associating Your Write Files With PowerBar/Write

If you find that you use PowerBar/Write whenever you work with Write files, you can reassociate your Write files with PowerBar/Write instead of with Write. The effect is exactly the same: When you open a Write file from an icon, command line or file manager, it will be loaded into Write *by PowerBar/Write*. Use File Manager's Associate... command, from the File menu. See the Windows 3.1 *User's Guide*, pp. 131-132; but please note that you should Browse to find and enter the PowerBar/Write program name for association. If you set up associations with Notepad by directly editing WIN.INI rather than using File Manager, enter PowerBar/Write's entire path in all capital letters, and be sure to delete the line associating

\*.wri files with WRITE.EXE. You will need to restart Windows for the new association to take effect.

If you regularly use Write, you may find that you can gain from putting PowerBar/Write on the Run= line of WIN.INI or in your Startup group. Since PowerBar/Write can exit Windows as well as launch any application or preassociated file on your system, it can act as a session "shell" (though, like every other Visual Basic app, it cannot be used as your Windows shell!).

## How PowerBar/Write Works for You

***When you use PowerBar/Write, you do not have to launch Write itself! PowerBar/Write will launch Write for you.*** PowerBar/Write will open up Write, maximized, and itself. So you can get rid of that Write icon in Program Manager if you find that you like working with PowerBar/Write. If you have associated your \*.wri files with PowerBar/Write, PowerBar/Write can start up Write and automatically open a file.

In this way, PowerBar/Write is virtually seamlessly integrated with Write; if you associate it with your Write files, you can almost think of it as not another program, but as part of Write, much the same way a floating icon styles palette is part of Ami Pro. (You could even use the Write icon for PowerBar/Write in Program Manager, since starting PowerBar/Write is also starting Write itself.) The point is to make Write a more powerful, more "full-featured" word processor. The "seams" you may notice are: If you try to use PowerBar/Write while Write is not running, the "Power" title will disappear from the PowerBar/Write title bar as an indication that Write is not running; and PowerBar/Write has its own "About..." box.

PowerBar/Write is almost entirely mouse-activated.

PowerBar/Write automatically places itself on the right-hand edge of your screen, leaving just enough room for Write's vertical scrollbar, since the left visual margin is set by Write. You can move the bar like any other Windows window by dragging its title bar; an item in the Options submenu will put it back in its original position. You can minimize, but not resize the bar.

By default, PowerBar/Write also floats on top of all other application windows, so that it is always at the ready when you're working in Write. You can choose, from the Options submenu, to sink it or float it.

You'll see a clock (which can be turned off; see below) on PowerBar/Write's menu bar. Clicking on the clock will drop down PowerBar/Write's menu.

You can close PowerBar/Write itself by clicking the bottom button on the bar.

### The Buttons on the Bar

The PowerBar/Write buttonbar is self-explanatory. Each button (except three--Pg Break, Exit Both and Exit PB/W) corresponds to a menu choice in Write. However, where Write's Document menu uses the phrase "Page layout," I have used "Margins." "Fnd" and "Nxt" stand for "Find" and "Find Next," respectively. Where Write's Character menu uses words for Bold, Italic, etc., I have used symbols. "+2" and "-2" are the Character menu's Enlarge font and Reduce font functions, each having a 2-point effect on the type selected or following. "N" removes all special type effects except size, corresponding to the Character menu's Regular (most word processors, including Microsoft's, call this Plain or Normal). L, C, R and J are left-justify, center, right-justify and left- and right-justify paragraph functions. Norm is a "Normal" paragraph as Write defines that. "Ind" is indents. "1," "1.5" and "2" are single, 1½ and double line spacing. The buttons will execute their appointed functions just as quickly as Write menu choices. PgBreak enters a hard page break a line below the cursor point. Exit Both shuts down both PowerBar/Write and Write (you'll be prompted to save any changes since the last file save); Exit PB/W shuts down just PowerBar/Write.

### The Clock Utility Menu

**The Clock Menu** PowerBar/Write opens up with a clock where a menu heading would normally be expected. Clicking on the clock drops down the Utility menu, just as if there were a normal heading. You can turn the clock off and back on in the menu's Options submenu. When the clock is off, the menu heading becomes "Utility."

**File Search/Load** A file search and open utility. The search box will pop up on your screen ready to use. It consists of:

- A mask setting. The default setting is \*.wri, to search for Write files. But you can change it to search for any filename or extension you wish. (Enter filespecs only here-- filename and/or extensions, including wildcards; do *not* enter directories or drives.)
- A drive drop-down list. You can change the drive you wish to search here.
- A directory list. Here you can travel through the directory structure of the disk and drive you want to search; double-click on the target or initial subdirectory.
- A matching list box. This will list all the files that match your mask.
- Command buttons. These start and halt searches, open a selected file and exit the search box.

To search for a file, set up the mask, the drive and initial directory, then click the Start Search button or press AltS. The searcher will move through the designated directory and its subdirectories to find all the files that match the mask you set up. (To search an entire disk, specify its root directory.) Matching files will be listed in the box on the right of the File Search window. You can stop a search in progress if, say, you already see what you need; just click the Quit Search button or press AltQ.

To open a file, note the condition of the file you're working on currently, if there is a file open: Has it been saved--ever, or lately, or does it have changes you'd just as soon dispose of? PowerBar/Write can either save your most recent, unsaved changes and then open the selected file, or discard the most recent changes before it opens the selected file. If you are opening in place of an unused file, or in place of a file that has not changed since it was last saved, *either button will open the selected file without error*. Select the filename you want to open, and then click the appropriate button.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If the file you are using has not been saved even once, **do not use the File Searcher's button option to save the file**; PowerBar Write cannot finish its open operation by itself if you try to use it on a never-saved file. So first save the file through the buttonbar. Alternatively, you can go ahead and use the save button, but you will be prompted as to whether or not you want to overwrite the file you're trying to open; *answer NO*. You'll note that that file name now appears in the Save As... dialog's filename space; simply overtype the new file's new name, and press Enter; then, when the file open dialog pops up, enter the keys Shift Ins or Ctrl V and Enter to open the file you wanted opened.

**AutoSave Submenu** With this submenu you can choose a new timed AutoSave interval, or turn off AutoSave altogether. It can be turned off and back on again in a single session. Both the AutoSave submenu and its own interval submenu will indicate the current AutoSave interval or Off status. The default is On with a 5-minute interval between saves; you can also choose a 3-, 8- or 12-minute interval or Off.

**PLEASE NOTE:** AutoSave is based upon a running timer (as is the menu bar clock, also), so if it is On there is a chance that, on some machines, you will note a small deterioration in performance if you leave PowerBar/Write running while you work in some demanding applications. Also note that PowerBar/Write's AutoSave will activate according to the

specified interval even if you are working in an application other than Write, so if you are going to do so and don't want to have PowerBar/Write abruptly take you away from your work (or play) by popping back to save the Write file, you should turn off AutoSave before going on to another application.

**Character submenus** On these three submenus you will find an extensive selection of special symbols and characters that are frequently used in business and academic documents. Put the I-beam insertion point where you want the character to appear, drop down to the desired character on one of PowerBar/Write's three character submenus and release. The character will appear in your Write document.

Note that the Numeric menu uses captions like "e<sup>2</sup>" and "x<sup>o</sup>"; however, when you select these characters, only the symbol--i.e., "2" or "o"--will appear. In the Marks/Symbols menu, the two bullet characters are difficult to see--or, rather, the small one is difficult to see and the large one cannot be reproduced by Windows' menu font as a bullet; thus their captions include SmBlit and LgBlit. Not all typefaces have bullets or full ANSI character sets; you may find that choosing one of these characters inserts a square, a space or a vertical block into your document; if so, select it and put it in another face, such as Windows' TimesNewRomanPS, that has the bullet or ANSI character you need.

**Time/Date Stamps** This submenu gives you 12 different time and date stamps for immediate entry into your text at the cursor insertion point. Just drop down the menu to the format you prefer, release, and it'll copy the time, date or both to your file. (The stamps use the Clipboard to format the date and time, so anything on the Clipboard will be cleared and replaced with a time/date stamp.)

**Runners** A submenu that lets you start several Windows applications that can be useful when working with word processor files. In addition, Run... will pop up a Run... dialog into which you can enter a command line or associated file name. PowerBar/Write assumes that the named applications are in your Windows directory, or at least on your path. All apps are started in "normal" size, except File Manager, which is opened maximized, and become the active application. If you use Program Manager or File Manager as your Windows shell, choosing the shell from the menu will restore and activate its window, not run a second instance of either. The DOS session is a full-screen session, not windowed.

**Options** This breaks into a submenu with six more sections: One that allows you to maximize, iconize and window Write, just as is you were to use Write's control menu or its sizing buttons; one that lets you set PowerBar/Write's window to sink as a normal Windows window would do, or to float on top of other apps if it had been set to sink; one that allows you to easily and precisely return PowerBar/Write to its original screen position if you have moved it; one that lets you turn the menu clock off and on (the menu title will change to Utility when the clock is turned off, and will become a clock again when the clock is turned back on); and one that sets your printer to print in either Portrait or Landscape orientation. Check marks indicate the current status of most of these setup options.

PowerBar/Write's defaults for these options are:

Write is maximized.

The PowerBar floats.

The PowerBar is in its original position, at the top of the screen and just to the left of Write's vertical scroll bar.

The menu clock is on.

Write sets the printer in Portrait mode.

**Exits** Exit Write & PB/W closes both Write and PowerBar/Write. PowerBar/Write opens and closes both itself and its "client." Is that user-friendly, or what? (You can exit the bar

alone, leaving Write running, by clicking the bottom button on the bar.) Exit Windows closes Windows. You will be prompted to save any changed files before anything closes, so *these are safe exits*.

### Fooling PowerBar/Write

PowerBar/Write can be fooled, because it is not fully system-aware. Thus if you change the printer orientation from Write's menu options rather than from PowerBar/Write's Options submenu, the Options submenu status check may not indicate the true orientation of the printer. Similarly, if you resize Write from its own system menu or sizing buttons, or if you run multiple copies of Write or open another copy of Write from the runners menu, either along with the original startup copy or after closing down a startup copy, PowerBar/Write's Write size indicator checks may be wrong for the particular copy you are working in. These will not cause malfunctions, and using the PowerBar/Write options will execute functions properly and update immediately (in the case of size, *for the copy you update only*). But you should know that there are these possibilities; if you use the Options menu exclusively for these functions you'll almost always find PowerBar/Write to accurately reflect the state of Write.

### "Why Can't I Save Settings?"

If you prefer an alternative set of defaults, PowerBar/Write has no way to save them. Why? This is a decision based on expressed dislikes of many Windows users. Windows and Windows applications are big programs. Making them capable of saving settings makes them much bigger, or adds files to your hard disk--usually some kind of initialization (.INI) file--or requires writing a new section into WIN.INI. I purposely decided against these options, because I want to keep PowerBar/Write as compact as possible and as neat as possible. Which means I don't want to dot your hard disk with extra files or mess around with your Windows files.

You can open the program with different defaults by recording a Recorder macro to start PowerBar/Write and set new defaults, and then creating an icon for the macro. To do so, record the macro and save it in a file. Then create an icon with a command line like this:

```
recorder.exe -H [hotkey] [filepath/name]
```

The -H is case-sensitive--it *must* be upper-case. The convention for hotkeys is to use ^, the carat or shifted 6, for the Ctrl key; % for Alt; and + for Shift; then use the key spelling from Recorder's Shortcut Key list box for the rest of the key name. (For icon-launch purposes, you can even use keys that are not on your keyboard, such as F keys above 12.) Thus a command line might read:

```
recorder.exe -H ^+F16 c:\win31\pbwstart.rec
```

Double-clicking on this icon will start Recorder, load your file, and run your macro to configure PowerBar/Write. Note that Recorder must *not* be running for an iconic macro launch to work.

If you think you'd like PowerBar/Write better with different defaults, let me know. Maybe the program should be able to save defaults. Alternatively, send an extra \$7 with your registration fee, and I will make a customized default version for you.

## PowerBar/Write: Version History

PowerBar/Write v. 1.0 was written late into the nights and early in the mornings of late June 1992, on a 286/12 machine. The first upload release came around June 30. Version 2.0 and 2.0b were created during the next ten days, mainly on the 286 and then on a Gateway 2000 486/25SX. These sessions added the ANSI menus, the menu bar clock, original positioning, AutoSave and the printer orientation control, as well as creation of, and status indications in, the Options submenu, and a few other small changes and corrections. Version 2.0 and 2.0b, entirely reworked on the Gateway 486, are essentially "fix" versions that take care of a couple small lapses (such as duplicate menu shortcut keys) and some coding inefficiencies. V. 2.2 has narrower buttons and a narrower bar than 2.0 and 2.0b (which means that their margin problem has largely been solved), the time/date stamps, a few menu rearrangements (the AutoSave submenu was promoted out of the Options submenu to the main menu), and a couple new shortcut keys, and has routed all the errors. V. 2.2a is a maintenance release of v. 2.2; the buttons have been moved closer together to look better, and the Exit Both button has been added in the bar space thus saved.

Some features that will probably be included in PowerBar/Write v. 2.5 or 3.0:

- Paragraph styles and style sheets
- Picture buttons
- More bar configuration options
- Ability to set default fonts
- Brilliant ideas from users like you

## Registration

PowerBar/Write is shareware; as usual, please limit yourself unregistered use to a maximum 30-day trial period. If you like and use PowerBar/Write regularly, please register it. This gets you the following: The feeling that you've gotten something for your money, which is almost always superior to feeling that you've gotten away with something. The knowledge that you're encouraging ideas and better programming in the future. Notification of updates, and perpetual license to subsequent editions of PowerBar/Write. And if you pay the higher registration price, automatic updating to the next version by mail.

Prices:

**\$10** -- Standard registration license: Registers PowerBar/Write for use on any three computers, and I don't care whose--pass it to two friends, put it on a desktop at home, a mobile laptop and a desktop at work--you choose. (With the exception that you cannot assume that someone else, unknown to you, has registered the program without using up all his or her rights to three installations; this is a personal license for you and two others you choose, and unless you were chosen, and received from the chooser a copy of the license, you are not registered for legal post-trial period use.) You'll receive license copies by mail. Registration is perpetual; I don't expect you to pay for PowerBar/Write v. 3.0 or higher once you've paid for v. 1.x or v. 2.x. But you're on your own as to finding future versions.

**\$15** -- Same as standard registration, except that I'll send you the next major update by U.S. mail (probably version 2.5; you can specify whether you want any intermediate release instead), or, if you are accessible through CompuServe or another on-line service that uses the mail gateway with America Online, by electronic mail.



For an additional **\$5**, added to either the \$10 or the \$15 registration, you can get the Visual Basic code for PowerBar/Write, or for an additional **\$7**, a version with customized defaults (let me know what settings you want changed).

Send check or money order payable to Argyle Softstuff, or, if you want to risk it, cash, and the name of the bulletin board or other source from which you got this program, as well as comments, complaints, compliments, ideas for improvements or additions, to:

**Argyle Softstuff  
David Stewart  
2087 Edgewood  
Berkley MI 48072**

## Support

You can write to me, David Stewart, at the above address, or you can drop me a line on Prodigy, ID CTKJ00D (those are zeros between the J and D), or America Online, name Doc Yeah or Eniac I (that's Eniac "eye"). CompuServe members, as well as members of many other on-line services, can send mail and receive upgrades via the mail gateway between such services and America Online.

## About the Programmer

David Stewart is an advertising copywriter, a widely published free-lance writer, reviewer and editor and now a learning programmer. He is working on a book on radically customizing Microsoft Windows--far beyond the Control Panel and WIN.INI and SYSTEM.INI settings.

If you want your programs or products or company to have a sophisticated advertising program, but can't afford an agency, or you would like to give your documentation or any other writing the touch of a professional writer or editor, contact him at the address above, on Prodigy or America Online, or by phone: call directory assistance at 1-313-555-1212 and ask for David Stewart in either Royal Oak or Auburn Hills (depending on whether he has moved his residence yet or not).

## Acknowledgements

Thanks to:

The Waite Group, for their book *The Waite Group's Visual Basic How-To*, which gave me many ideas and lots of code examples that helped make this program work.

Blake Ragsdell, editor of *Inside Visual Basic*, for making a phone call to explain just how to float PowerBar/Write, and for putting a lot of other great ideas in one neat publication.

Prodigy correspondents: Gary James and Richard Spurlock, who helped out with file association; Wayne Gray, who helped me get the AutoSave coded by showing how to execute procedures upon multiple timer intervals; Ed Lee, who suggested the time/date stamp; John Chambers, who asked for the menu hotkeys.

Tom Hoots, Windows maven and power-user, who had--and continues to have--fine insight into how to make programs useful and easy to use (and wanted the clock to be an option, and so forced me to learn how to make it work better; thanks again). Tom, eventually everything you've suggested will get into PowerBar/Write--probably.

PC Andy of America Online, who helped keep the newest version on the boards; and the sysops of HHInfoNet, a terrific and very value-priced Connecticut BBS ((203) 738-

0342), helpful in the same regard.

**Disclaimer and other tiny print.**

Man, I hate this part. Just like the big software companies, I disclaim all responsibility for effects of the use of PowerBar/Write. All warranties, either express or implied, including but not limited to fitness for any particular purpose other than interacting with Windows Write are disclaimed. Nor will Argyle Softstuff be liable for any damages whatsoever arising from the use of this program. Let's keep the lawyers out of this: If you have a problem, let me know.

# PowerBar/Write Registration and User Survey

Please print out this page and give me the following information for registration:  
I downloaded PowerBar/Write from:

\_\_\_\_\_ (bulletin board/on-line  
service)  
which is in: \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(city/state) (phone number)

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_)  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Version downloaded: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration choice: REGULAR, \$10 \_\_\_\_\_  
INSTANT UPDATE, \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Media size: 5¼" \_\_\_\_\_ 3½" \_\_\_\_\_  
Other options: VISUAL BASIC CODE FILES (w/registration only!), +\$5 \_\_\_\_\_  
CUSTOM DEFAULTS VERSION (w/registration only!), +\$7 \_\_\_\_\_

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TOTAL REGISTRATION FEE ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to David Stewart, or to Argyle Softstuff. Send cash at your own risk. Sorry, we're not big enough to take credit cards.

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## Survey

I take very seriously what users say about PowerBar/Write; among the features in 2.2, the clock toggle, time/date stamps, printer orientation toggle and float/sink shortcut keys began with user suggestions. For future versions, I'd like to know how PowerBar/Write fits in with how you work and what you'd like to see on it--or even what you'd like to see off of it.

Do you use PowerBar/Write every time you use Write? \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you replaced your Write icon with one that launches PowerBar/Write? \_\_\_\_\_  
Have you reassociated your Write files with PowerBar/Write? \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you use Write regularly before getting PowerBar/Write? \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, do you (or do you think you will) now? \_\_\_\_\_  
Does PowerBar/Write answer needs you felt Write had before? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you like the option defaults:  
1) Menu bar clock ON: \_\_\_\_\_  
2) AutoSave ON: \_\_\_\_\_  
3) AutoSave 5 minutes: \_\_\_\_\_  
4) Write max on launch: \_\_\_\_\_

Powerbar/Write

12

5) Bar floating on top: \_\_\_\_\_

6) Bar screen position: \_\_\_\_\_

What features on PowerBar/Write do you like best?

Which features do you like least?

Which ones are good, but too numerous? E.g., are there too many AutoSave interval options, or too many time/date stamp options?

What would you like to see added?

What would you like to see left off?

What would you like to see changed, and how?

If you didn't like using PowerBar/Write but decided to fill out this survey anyway, why didn't you like using PowerBar/Write?

***Thanks for the help!***