

# **NewsUpdate**

Kevin Phair

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**COLLABORATORS**

	<i>TITLE :</i> NewsUpdate		
<i>ACTION</i>	<i>NAME</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>SIGNATURE</i>
WRITTEN BY	Kevin Phair	February 12, 2023	

**REVISION HISTORY**

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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## Chapter 1

# NewsUpdate

### 1.1 NewsUpdate AmigaGuide Help

NewsUpdate 2.1, © 1994 to 1995 by Kevin J. Phair.

FREELY DISTRIBUTABLE

About NewsUpdate

Special features

Usage

History

Author information

(This is my first attempt at doing AmigaGuide documentation, so ↔  
please

bear with me...)

### 1.2 About NewsUpdate

NewsUpdate is an updated version of my (previously unreleased) program, NextUpdate. I know there's already a program called NextUpdate, but that wasn't it (although it did something similar.)

What my version did was to also strip out unnecessary header information from articles, since the newsgroups were being made accessible through the BBS. Stripping out the information means that there is less clutter at the top of a news article if it's being read online, or if you get it via FIDONet.

### 1.3 Special Features

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So, here's version 2.1, with a new name (NewsUpdate, in case that wasn't clear), and the ability to specify names/part-names to look for in the From: header, to see if the message should be killed. So now you can remove bandwidth-wasting posters from your message base, and even people like myself who use GRn will benefit, if only in terms of reduced blood pressure.

At some stage, I would hope to add support for killing articles by subject, and perhaps other things too.

## 1.4 Using NewsUpdate

Usage is pretty simple, the first argument must be a filename, and it must be the filename of your active newsgroups file (the one you use for NNTPxfer), and then you can follow that up with some options.

Memory requirements:

If you have T: assign to somewhere in RAM:, then you should make sure that you have enough RAM to cope with the largest article that will be processed, or assign T: elsewhere.

The command template is as follows:

```
NewsUpdate Active file
```

Keywords are not case-sensitive.

## 1.5 is

The active file is the newsgroup control file that you are using with NNTPxfer (or similar) to transfer news articles. The format should typically be along the lines of this:

```
rec.arts.sf.tv.babylon5 36785 36605 n
ieie.announce 330 22 n
ieie.comments 936 181 n
ieie.help 713 297 n
ieie.test 349 164 n
comp.sys.amiga.hardware 14798 14721 n
comp.sys.amiga.programmer 8723 8693 n
comp.sys.sinclair 3452 3433 n
alt.sex.wizards 5619 5603 n
alt.tv.x-files 29140 29090 n
alt.tv.melrose-place 7114 7103 n
```

I.e. lines of "Newsgroup high-pointer low-pointer flag"

You MUST provide an active newsgroup list or this program can't do anything for you.

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## 1.6 Command line options - QUIET

QUIET

Will prevent any normal output from cluttering your CLI window or accidentally opening one up from your script.

## 1.7 Command line options - NOISY

NOISY

Will provide more detailed information on what the program is doing (i.e. it will list articles as it cleans them, and also as it kills them, if necessary)

## 1.8 Command line options - KILL

KILL

Will make the program read in a list of specifiers from the file 'UULib:KillFile.From' when it starts up, and as it scans each article, it will see if any of these specifiers are contained in the From: header. If there is a match, then the article is deleted. NOTICE that this only needs to find the string WITHIN the From: line, so you can specify a source address to search for, or even a partial address, e.g.:

'anewton@alturia' would match posts by user 'anewton' at machine 'alturia', in any domain. '@loser.com' would match posts from any user at loser.com. 'Robodude@' would match posts from a user called "Robodude" posting from any site.

'(Kevin Phair)' would match any of my posts, whether it's me using my own account, or posting from the BBS.

You can get a bit of added safety, by putting in the whole address, and even including the "From: " at the start of the line!

This is a very powerful option, and you should be as specific as possible in terms of origin addresses you want to kill articles from.

## 1.9 Command line options - CLEAN

CLEAN

This is one of the reasons the program was first written (since an ARexx script can quite happily look after updating those little .next files anyway!)

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What it does is it buffers each article through a temporary file in T:, and keeps only the From:, Organi[s|z]ation:, Message-ID, References:, Subject: and Date: fields. Everything else in the message header is discarded. Once the header has been parsed, then the body of the article is pushed straight through, and then the original article is overwritten with the new, leaner article.

The reason I leave the threading fields in is that I, or someone else, may decide at some stage to convert these to FIDO threading kludges.

## 1.10 Command line options - NOBIN

NOBIN

Will skip any newsgroups with 'binaries' in the name, so that large numbers of large files will not be thrashed to-and-fro between the hard disk and RAM, as there is little point in making large encoded posts a few lines shorter.

Note: Using NOBIN will still update the .next pointer!

## 1.11 Command line options - COLOUR

COLOUR (or COLOR)

Will enable ANSI colour codes (limits itself to the first four)

## 1.12 Return Codes

Return codes:

The program will return an error code of 30 if there are any errors, and a return code of 0 if all has gone well.

## 1.13 Examples of usage

Example usage:

```
NewsUpdate UULib:News/Active KILL NOISY COLOUR
```

Will scan articles, using killfile to remove unwanted posts, and will provide a running commentary on what it's doing, as well as putting colour in the output, so you can see things a bit more clearly.

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NewsUpdate UULib:News/Active QUIET CLEAN NOBIN

Standard usage for SysOps; No output, trim article headers, don't process articles in any binary newsgroups.

## 1.14 Future Prospects

Future:

Anyone interested in an option to ARCHIVE posts by certain people, or subjects, into a separate directory, or even run a user-defined command on the articles?

I think I'll probably release the source code with the next version.

## 1.15 NewsUpdate history

Version 1 has been in use for the last 6 or 7 months with no ill effects, hopefully this version will be just as reliable.

Version 2.0: Pretty much the same as this version (2.1) but with no colour.

Version 2.1: Fixed bug where it wouldn't update newsgroup with only one new article.

## 1.16 Author information

I've written other stuff, mainly for DLG BBS SysOps:

DLGFM. Small program to manage simple file area maintenance (i.e. remove orphaned .fd files, rebuild quick file description table...)

DLG-Edit. Slightly larger program, which provides a GUI interface for editing User records, File/Message areas (names, access levels, import text files to create new areas...)

Vec (not yet released). Small WB toy which sits in a window displaying shaded rotating 3D polygon-based shapes.

If you find bugs, or have suggestions, then e-mail me at Kev@Scorpio.ie, or you can send fido netmail to me at 2:263/150.6

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