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Ministry of Buttons is used on an 'as is' basis - no guarantees are made as to its suitability to any task (due to the nature of what Ministry of Buttons does, it may not be compatible with all Windows software). You have been warned...!

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Overview

Ministry of Buttons is an installable device driver for Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups.

Purpose:

To allow configurable toolbars to be used in all (most) Windows applications.

Use:

Once installed, Ministry of Buttons will add empty toolbars to your applications when they start. You may then associate menu items with buttons & short-cut keys.

Aim:

Ministry of Buttons stipulates that it will improve the users productivity, by allowing the user to configure applications in a way intuitive to themselves and not the original product designer. Potentially it could also truncate learning curves by allowing the user to have common ways of performing the same tasks under different applications.

How to install Ministry of Buttons

If you're familiar with computers, you'll now that most Windows software consists of an executable file (the ones with the '.exe' extension) and to run the software, you just double-click on it from Program Manager or File Manager. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the tasks Ministry of Buttons performs, it has to be installed differently than most other software. Follow the instructions below to install Ministry of Buttons:

1. Start up Windows if it's not already started.
2. Start up Control Panel (CONTROL.EXE).
3. Double-click the drivers applet in Control Panel.
4. A dialog box will be displayed showing the drivers currently installed. In this dialog box you should click the 'Add...' button.
5. Another dialog box will be displayed; this one presents a list box showing the names of drivers that can potentially be installed. Select the list box item named 'Unlisted or Updated Driver' and click 'OK'.
6. Yet another dialog box will be displayed! In this dialog box there is an edit box, type in the full path of the directory where the Ministry of Buttons files are located. Click the 'OK' button.
7. Guess what? Another dialog box is displayed. In the list box shown, select 'Ministry of Buttons' ('Ministry of Buttons' should be the only selectable driver anyway). Click the 'OK' button.
8. Ministry of Buttons should now be installed, though you will have to restart Windows before Ministry of Buttons takes effect. If you experience any problems installing Ministry of Buttons there is a section in your Windows manual that describes how to install drivers such as Ministry of Buttons. If you still can't get Ministry of Buttons to install itself please E-Mail me on Compuserve at 100332,2046 for help. To configure Ministry of Buttons (once Windows has been restarted) carry out steps 2 and 3, select Ministry of Buttons and click the 'Setup...' button.

Notes:

Ministry of Buttons is Freeware/Public Domain software, anybody may freely use and distribute Ministry of Buttons as long as all of its files are distributed with it and the files are not changed or tampered with in any way.

When Ministry of Buttons is installed, entries are made in control.ini and system.ini, also mob.driv & mob.hlp are copied to your system directory - this information is given only for completeness and is not a warning.

It is not advisable to attempt to install Ministry of Buttons manually (i.e. without the use of Control Panel) as Ministry of Buttons has to carry out many peculiar tasks at installation time.

Related topics:

[Removing Ministry of Buttons.](#)

How to remove Ministry of Buttons

Follow the instructions below to remove Ministry of Buttons:

1. Start up Windows if it's not already started.
2. Start up Control Panel (CONTROL.EXE).
3. Double-click the drivers applet in Control Panel.
4. A dialog box should be displayed, containing a list box showing the currently installed drivers on your system - select the list box item that represents the driver you wish to remove from your system (in our case the 'Ministry of Buttons').
5. Click the 'Remove' button and confirm your action appropriately.
6. That's it folks - Ministry of Buttons has now gone with the wind (Oh yes, you'll have to restart Windows for the changes to take effect).

NB. When Ministry of Buttons is removed it automatically cleans all ini's of any junk it put in them previously.

As you may[not] know the above instructions remove Ministry of Buttons from the internal Windows driver list, but does not delete Ministry of Buttons of your hard disk. So if you like to manage your computer in a sustainable fashion follow the instructions below:

1. IMPORTANT: Make sure Ministry of Buttons is fully removed from your system and none of its components are loaded and/or active (a system will very rapidly become extremely unstable if you delete a driver module while it's in use).
2. In your Windows system directory you will find 2 files called 'MOB.DRV' & 'MOB.HLP'- delete them.
3. In your Windows directory you may find a file called 'MOB.DAT', if so - delete it.
4. You have now deleted the three core files of Ministry of Buttons, the only files left to delete now are the toolbar configuration files, these can be located & deleted quite easily by performing a search using File manager.

Related topics:

[Installing Ministry of Buttons.](#)

Adding a button to a toolbar

Follow the instructions below to add a button to a toolbar:

1. First make sure that the toolbar is not hidden.
2. Select a menu item while holding down the Ctrl key or the right mouse button.
3. The button characteristics dialog box will appear - make the appropriate selections and hit the 'OK' button.
4. The new button will be placed at a random position on the toolbar (tip: if a toolbar is getting quite full and whenever you add a new button its hidden by others and hence extremely disruptive to find - just increase the height of the toolbar when you need to add a new button, move the button to its correct position, then restore the toolbar to its previous height).

Related topics:

[Removing a button](#), [Editing a button](#).

Toolbar configuration files

Every application that has a toolbar which has been modified in any way from its original configuration, will also have a configuration file which describes to Ministry of Buttons how the toolbar should look and act. The name of this configuration file is that of the executable file associated with the toolbar except that the '.EXE' extension is swapped for '!@~' e.g. the configuration file for 'F:\EXCEL\EXCEL3\EXCEL.EXE' would be 'F:\EXCEL\EXCEL3\EXCEL.!@~'. You can authenticate configuration files by identifying the following signature beginning at offset zero 'MOB1.00JHMÖÖxØÙÚÛÜÝÞàáâãäåæç'.

You can quite safely delete configuration files at any time - this maybe necessary from time to time if you drive your toolbar down a one-way cul-de-sac using an odd-ball piece of software (for example Norton Desktop).

You cannot and must not modify these configuration files manually unless you savour GPFs.

How to remove a button

Quite simply hold the button you wish to delete with the right mouse button and then click it with the left mouse button or hit the 'Delete' key. A confirmation dialog box will appear - reply appropriately.

Related topics:

[Adding a button](#), [Editing a button](#).

How to edit a button

This one's quite tough so sit down - click the button you wish to edit with the right mouse button - told you! The button characteristics dialog box will appear - make the appropriate selections and hit the 'OK' button.

Related topics:

Adding a button, Removing a button.

Acknowledgements

- A. Ralph Taylor (Allstar Services) - alpha guinea pig!
- B. Mark Bader & Charlie Kindel (Microsoft Product Support Services, Developer Support).
- C. Jonathan Mote (myself) - for writing such an insane utility.

Configuring a toolbar

You can configure a toolbar from the '[Configure Toolbar](#)' dialog box. Below is a list of ways you can get to this dialog box:

- A. Double right click in the menu area.
- B. Double left click on the toolbar.
- C. From the system menu, select the 'Toolbar...' item.

If the application in question is incompatible with Ministry of Buttons the 'Toolbar...' entry on the system menu will be greyed out.

Related topics:

[Incompatible applications](#), [Configure Toolbar dialog box](#).

Incompatible applications

Ministry of Buttons is not compatible with all applications. Normally Ministry of Buttons will sniff out incompatible applications when they start up and automatically disable itself for that application. Sometimes Ministry of Buttons might be fooled into thinking that an incompatible application is actually compatible - in which case you should go to Ministry of Buttons setup by firing up Control Panel selecting the 'Drivers' applet then selecting Ministry of Buttons and click the 'Setup...' button. The Setup dialog box displayed allows you to categorically instruct Ministry of Buttons to ignore specific applications.

Moving a button

To move a button drag it with the right mouse button to the desired position on the toolbar (if you are not familiar with dragging objects start the Windows Tutorial from Program Manager - this explains clearly).

You can also use the keyboard cursor keys while dragging a button to facilitate accurate button positioning. Using the Ctrl key while using the cursor keys allows more coarse adjustment.

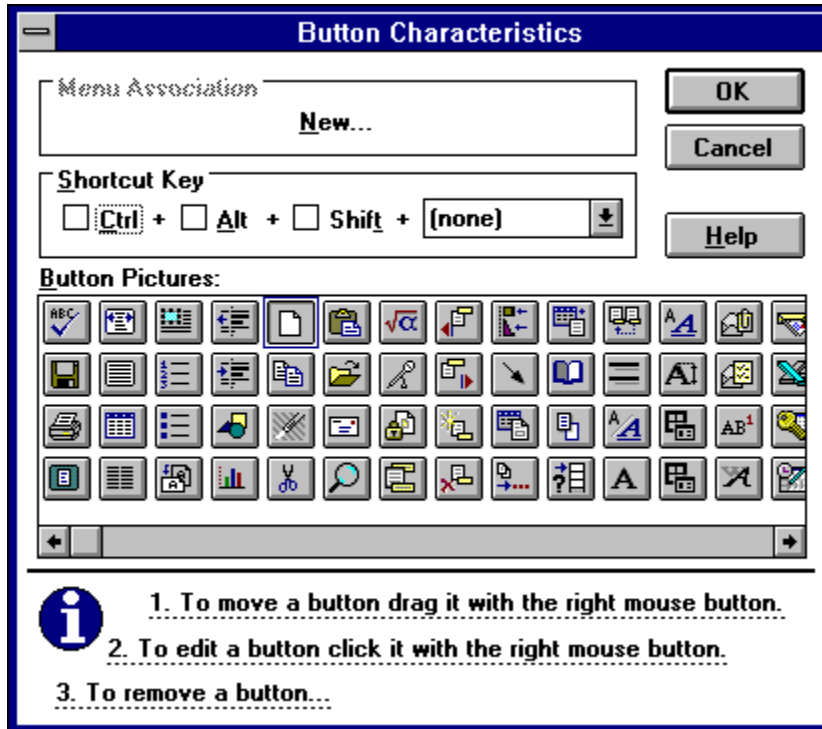
To restore a button to its original position while moving it - press the Esc key.

Related topics:

[Adding a button](#), [Removing a button](#), [Editing a button](#).

The button characteristics dialog box

Click the appropriate part of the dialog box to see what its purpose is:



Notes:

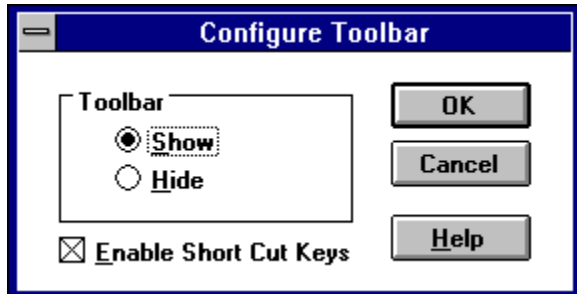
Unfortunately custom button pictures cannot be created by yourself, so therefore the only pictures available for use are the ones displayed - though you can scroll through the button pictures if you didn't already realise!

Related topics:

[Adding a button](#), [Removing a button](#), [Editing a button](#).

The toolbar configuration dialog box

Click the appropriate part of the dialog box to see what its purpose is:



Related topics:

[Adding a button](#), [Removing a button](#), [Editing a button](#).

The setup dialog box

Click the appropriate part of the dialog box to see what its purpose is:



Notes:

All changes take effect immediately - though if you have an application currently running which should be ignored according to the new ignore list, the application will have to be closed and reopened for the changes to take effect.

Related topics:

[Removing Ministry of Buttons.](#)

Closes the dialog box and implements the configuration changes.

Closes the dialog box, discarding any configuration changes made (as if the dialog was never displayed in the first place).

Surprise! It displays this help topic.

Displays the toolbar.

Hides the toolbar.

When the check-box is checked, short-cut keys are enabled and when the check-box is unchecked the short-cut keys are disabled.

When you click this button another dialog box is displayed requesting the name of a program to ignore - type in the filename of the program to ignore and hit the OK button.

This button is disabled until you select an ignored application in the listbox. Once enabled it simply removes the selected ignored application from the listbox allowing it have a toolbar once more.

This listbox displays the applications that Ministry of Buttons should ignore. To add an application to this listbox click the 'Add...' button and to remove an application from this listbox click the 'Remove...' button.

Displays the menu item the button is associated with.

Specifies whether the Ctrl key should be part of the short-cut key combination.

Specifies whether the Alt key should be part of the short-cut key combination.

Specifies whether the Shift key should be part of the short-cut key combination.

This drop-down combo-box allows you to specify a short-cut key to associate with the specified button. Choosing the '(none)' item means no short-cut is to be used for this button. Ministry of Buttons does not check for short-cut key clashes with other buttons et al.

Select a button picture from this department for your button.

Displays a Quickhelp window briefly describing how to move a button.

Displays a Quickhelp window briefly describing how to edit a button.

Displays a Quickhelp window briefly describing how to remove a button.

Misc. notes

Copyright stuff:

Ministry of Buttons is the Copyright © of Jonathan Mote 1994 as defined in the VERSIONINFO of mob.drv.

Ministry of Buttons is Public domain/free software - you may use it as long as you like and copy it as many times as you like for no cost, please feel free to give it to your friends et al.

When distributing Ministry of Buttons you must transfer all its associated files with it, the file list is as follows:

MOB.DRV -	Ministry of Buttons driver.
MOB.HLP -	Ministry of Buttons help file.
OEMSETUP.INF	Ministry of Buttons setup file.
REAME.TXT	Ministry of Buttons errata.

Ministry of Buttons files must not be changed or tampered with in any way.

Technical support:

Life time technical support is supplied free of charge by way of E-mail at Compuserve 100332,2046 all support letters sent to this address must be sent 'Sender Pays' otherwise a reply will not be forthcoming. All queries should be answered within 24/48hrs if sent between Monday & Wednesday. N.B. The Compuserve mail network is accessible from the Internet, Cix etc.

Fat cats:

If you want Ministry of Buttons customised for yourself/company, modifications are extremely competitively priced(I'm strapped for cash).

General:

If you're a hobbyist programmer like myself and would like to code up an obscure feature to be included in future versions of Ministry of Buttons please contact me for details. Your code will have to be in C, C++ or 80x86 assembler and be extremely robust as re-entrancy has plagued the development of Ministry of Buttons V1.00. Alternatively if anybody would like to create some buttons for future versions of Ministry of Buttons (all you need is a simple bitmap editor like Paintbrush included with Windows) please contact me for exact dimensions and the palette.

Late breaking notes:

Oooops! I forgot to document which version of Ministry of Buttons this is - its V1.00. It's almost inevitable that some people will experience bugs in Ministry of Buttons, if you do please let me know otherwise you'll only have yourself to blame if they're still in future versions of Ministry of Buttons.

