

RSIBreak

COLLABORATORS

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Chapter 1

RSIBreak

1.1 main

```

*****
@RSIBreak 1.3a (13/08/97)
-----
    By $LiNg$HoT
    -----

Introduction

Standard Disclaimer

Requirements

Usage/Installation

Features

Bugs

History

TO DO

Greetings

Contacting the author
    *****
    Moo, Moo...or something...
|AI|      -- Gateway to the future  --      |AI|
*****

```

1.2 What the hell is RSIBreak - Some kind of snooker util???

What is RSIBreak

RSIBreak is a small commodity which sits in the background of your

work environment and at regular intervals reminds you to take breaks. There are two types of break; the first is taken usually after a couple of minutes and results in the screen flashing continually for a defined number of seconds. It requires that the user stops typing and maybe shakes their hands out. I have called this the MICROBREAK. The next type of break is called the GETUPBREAK and occurs after a longer period of time and requires that the user stops typing completely and maybe gets up, walks around and possibly stretches out their arms. The length of time taken for this break is usually around 2-5 minutes depending on user preference. The GETUP break results in a recoverable alert appearing which lasts for the amount of time set by the user (it can be skipped with a mouse click).

What is RSI anyway?

Well, it's quite a complex subject area but basically RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury) is a collective term referring to a number of different physical ailments mainly affecting the arms and/or shoulders resulting from keyboard use. It is a cumulative disorder which means that once you have it, it will progressively get worse and develop into a more serious condition. RSI does not just affect computer users however and can arise through many other repetitive activities such as piano/guitar playing etc... RSI is a very nasty thing to develop and if ignored can completely destroy a career in computing. The scary thing though is that the symptoms can just suddenly come on strong and from that point they won't just disappear over night.

What should I do then

It is very important that computer users are aware what can cause the injuries to develop and take action accordingly. RSIBreak is just one simple method of attempting to reduce the amount of uninterrupted typing sessions an Amiga user may have. This means that the repetitive action of typing which can cause RSI symptoms to appear is reduced. This is no where near complete protection against RSI but it will provide some resistance. Also, if you already have RSI using RSIBreak may well help to reduce some of the symptoms as the actions which caused the problems in the first place are reduced and thus the body may be able to repair itself. In my case by changing my posture, keyboard position and using RSIBreak I have managed to reduce the symptoms of RSI by a fair amount.

However, I have had some form of irritation in the arms ever since I first developed the symptoms suddenly on a day in November 1994, and I really should have seen a doctor about them soon after. Therefore, I recommend that if you ever develop pain in the arms for more than a couple of weeks you must seek medical attention and find out more about RSI.

Also be aware that many doctors do not recognise RSI as being a valid medical condition and so some may mis-diagnose your symptoms. I recently saw a doctor for the first time since I developed the symptoms and he was, basically useless! He didn't really check my arms or shoulders very thoroughly and simply sent me for a blood test to rule out Arthritis. After the test came back negative he simply said he knew there was something there but couldn't do anything about it - it could get worse, it could get better! I don't know whether all doctors will be like this but I recommend that you don't accept such rubbish and insist on further tests or ask to be referred to a specialist. That's exactly what I intend to do next!

As I havent got the knowledge to fully describe the many causes and treatments for RSI, I have put together a list of Internet resources on the subject.

1.3 WWW RSI links

Please note: I added these links for the first version of the program and it is highly possible that they may no longer exist today. I havent had time to check them and so appologise if they are inaccessible.

WWW RSI links

1). Typing injury FAQ

<http://www.cs.princeton.edu/grad/dwallach/tifaq/>

2). The CTD News

<http://wanda.pond.com/mall/ctdnews/rsi/month.html>

3). Ergonomic discussion and RSI links.

<http://www.com/metamorphosis>

E-Mail

Also, there is a UK mailing list for discussion of RSI. Here is some information on it:

A UK-based list for discussion of Repetitive Strain Injury, tendonitis, tenosynovitis, thoracic syndrome, carpal tunnel syndrome, and other forms of upper limb disorder.

This list is intended to supplement existing RSI mailing lists, newsgroups, newsletters, and other Internet resources, by providing a local forum for UK users to exchange UK-specific information, e.g. on support groups, books and articles, NHS and other health facilities, suppliers of ergonomic equipment, health and safety legislation, and so on. The list is unmoderated, and anyone suffering from or interested in RSI is welcome to join.

To subscribe, send:

To: listserver@tictac.demon.co.uk
Subject: (leave blank)

`subscribe rsi-uk <yourfirstname> <yourlastname>`

RSI-UK uses Tim Illingworth's "Listserver" mailing list manager. For details of commands available, send:

To: listserver@tictac.demon.co.uk

Subject: (leave blank)

help

Owner: Ellen Mizzell (ellen@tictac.demon.co.uk)

1.4 Excuse me...but what are the associated legalities...?!???)

I make no guarantees for this program at all! You use it at your own risk. Although, I've been using it for months and have had no crashes..At least not ones I can track down as being RSIBreak caused... :)

RSIBreak is coded in the awesome Amiga E dedicated Amiga programming language. This is a great language and lets you create efficient AmigaOS programs in the shortest time...Try it..! Amiga E is coded by Wouter van Oortmerssen.

RSIBreak is Copyright James Allen A.K.A \$LiNg\$HoT

RSIBreak can be included with any PD-CD or placed on any cover disk as long as the LHA archive is not changed in any way. Oh and it would be nice if James Allen was mentioned in the Mag if it's put on a magazine CDROM.. :)

1.5 What ya need..

RSIBreak needs:

- Any Amiga running Kickstart 3+.
- Someone with enough self will to take breaks when reminded to!

1.6 So.....How do I use it then?

Workbench

If you want to run RSIBreak from Workbench (recommended) simply copy it into your WBStartup drawer. There are only three tooltypes which can be set. When installing to WBStartup you should make sure that the tooltype GUIDEFILE is set:

CX_POPUP=(YES|NO) - Set to YES if you want the GUI to open on startup.
CX_HOTKEY=(hotkey) - Set the hotkey combo you want to use to open the gui
E.G 'lcommand lshift r'
GUIDEFILE=(path and name of .guide file) - E.G Text:RSIBreak.guide

If GUIDEFILE is not included RSIBreak will search the current and help:english directories for the file named: RSIBreak.guide.

The default HOTKEY is 'lcommand lshift r'.

* Note: If running from WBStartup you must have the tooltype DONOTWAIT in the programs icon.

When running RSIBreak for the first time the GUI will open and you will be able to configure the timing values using the sliders. When they are set, click on SAVE to save the values to the prefs file: ENVARC:RSIBreak.prefs.

The GUI

The interface to RSIBreak is fairly straight forward - conforming to the Commodore guidelines for prefs programs - and if your using WB3, you'll notice that when you move the mouse over any of the buttons a description of that button will appear in the info box.

The following describes the function of each button:

SAVE - Saves the current values to the file ENVARC:RSIBreak.prefs, which is read when the program starts up. When saved, the GUI is ← closed and the timers reset using the new values.

USE - Closes the GUI and resets the timers to use the new values. The change is only temporary as the prefs file in ENVARC is not changed.

CANCEL - Closes the GUI, cancelling any changes made to the timing values. The timers continue to count down from their current positions.

The sliders at the top right of the interface are used to change the timing of the two breaks. As mentioned in the intro, there are two breaks in RSIBreak: the GETUPBREAK and the MICROBREAK.

The Microbreak is taken every couple of minutes for a short time. Therefore:

Micro Every: is the amount of time before starting a Microbreak.
and FOR: is the amount of time to take of for the Microbreak.

During the FOR time, the screen will flash and you should shake your hands out.

The Getupbreak should be taken twice or more during an hour and requires that you stop typing and get up out of your seat - possibly stretching your arms. Therefore:

Getup Every: is the amount of time before you have to getup.
and FOR: is the amount of time to remain out of your seat.

During the FOR time, a DisplayAlert will appear (a nice yellow, non guru type alert box :). Although you should really leave it until it dissapears automatically, it is possible to click the mouse to close it down early.

Saving and Loading prefs files

The menu of the RSIBreak GUI is laid out just like standard Commodore prefs menus. There is a Project menu which allows you to "Open" and "Save As" the timer values to a prefs file of your choice. These both result in an ASL file requester appearing allowing you to specify a file to open or save

to.

One thing to note here: When you select "Save As" the prefs are saved to the new file but are NOT saved here when you click on SAVE from the main interface. The SAVE button always saves the prefs to ENVARC:RSIBreak.prefs! This is the way all of the other system prefs programs work.

Also, the menu item "Last Saved" under the Edit menu loads the last save to ENVARC:RSIBreak.prefs, not the last "Save As" prefs file save.

What should I set the timing values to?

This should really be up to you and based upon the amount of time you will be able to take off without getting too annoyed... However, I use the following timing values, which also happen to be the defaults, accessed from the GUI's Edit menu.

```
Micro Every: 3 mins
              FOR: 10 seconds (I need the extra time to grab my attention
                              otherwise I keep ignoring it!)
```

```
Getup Every: 30 mins
              FOR: 4 mins
```

The official line seems to be that you should take at least 10 minutes off per hour of work done and shake your hands out every 3-5 minutes. OK, so I only take 8 minutes off (well, sometimes - usually I just click past the getupbreak requester :), but I used to only take off 4 minutes an hour!

It may be very difficult to stop working, especially if your on a roll but it will be worth it in the long run.

CLI

Usage is pretty straight forward. If running from the shell the standard AmigaDOS template is:

```
RSIBreak DELAY/N/A,BREAK/N/A,GETUP/N/A,GETUPBREAK/N/A
```

Where:

```
DELAY = The amount of time before entering a MICROBREAK.
BREAK = The amount of time to take for the MICROBREAK.
GETUP = The amount of time before entering GETUPBREAK.
GETUPBREAK = The amount of time to take for the GETUPBREAK.
```

* Note: All values must be in seconds *

Example:

```
1> RUN >NIL: RSIBreak DELAY=180 BREAK=5 GETUP=1800 GETUPBREAK=120
```

* Note: The RUN >NIL: bit makes the program detach from the shell and run in the background. If this is not included you would not be able to close the shell or enter any other commands from it. The only way to get it back would be to press CTRL-C to terminate the program or to use the exchange program.

Commodity Control

RSIBreak is a commodity which means that once running you can terminate it or disable it using the Exchange program (sys:tools/commodities/exchange). Once you have disabled the program the timers will be reset and so once re-enabled they will begin counting from 0.

Obviously selecting SHOW will display the GUI and HIDE will....hide it. :)

* Note: You can also kill RSIBreak by sending a CTRL C signal to it using one of the many PD System Monitor programs.

1.7 It will stop you getting painful RSI!!

Features:

- Reminds the user to take regular breaks.
- 2 breaks for more protection against RSI.
- It's a commodity and has commodity hotkey support. (See
 tooltypes
 configuration)
- It has an HCI based GadTools GUI including:
 - * Gadget sensitive help.
 - * Easy configuration of the timing parameters
 - * Countdown timer display
- It's free!!! Why would I charge for a tool like this? This is not the PC or Mac after all.. :)

1.8 Arhhhhh no not them....!

KNOWN BUGS

None that I know of. Although...Sometimes using MagicMenu some of the menu items don't seem to work one minute but do the next! I can't seem to recreate this using the standard system menu routines so who knows! If anyone else notices this, please mail me...

If you discover ANY other bugs that occur during use, please report them to

me

as soon as possible. I will then attempt to fix them, and mail ↔
you the

new version.

1.9 What has been changed and added..

RSIBreak Version History

V1.0 - (15/04/95) - UNRELEASED

- First version
- Uses loops and delay() to time the breaks.

V1.1beta - (05/05/95) - SCRAPED

- Uses the timer.device directly (using message ports!! :)
- It is now a commodity.
- Uses 2 timer requests for the two breaks.
- Didnt work properly like this and so was scraped.

V1.1 - (22/11/95) - RELEASED ON AMINET (1/1/96)

- Modified to use 1 timer request, 1 second at a time with a counter.
- Tidied up code and made more efficient.

V1.2 - (11/02/97) - UNRELEASED (Unfinished) [GUI addition]

- Now has a GadTools GUI for timing configuration.

V1.3 - (25/06/97) - RELEASED ON AMINET (25/06/97) [GUI enhancements]

- Completely redesigned the GUI to make it more HCI based (I.E User Friendly)
- Added menu allowing the opening and saving of prefs files.
- Added Gadget Sensitive help system and info box making the program easier to use without having to refer to the help guide. Gives better feedback and provides a reliable help mechanism for the user.
- Added hotkey support - now the GUI can be opened with a key press.
- No longer accepts tooltypes for configuring timing values, just used for setting CX_POPUP, CX_POPKEY and GUIDEFIL.

V1.3a - (13/08/97) - REALEASED ON AMINET (13/08/97) [Major bug fix & minor changes]

Major:

- SLIDERS NOW WORK!

For some strange reason on my system the gadget ID for sliders was 1280. However, Lawrence Manning (Aslak) reported that on his system the sliders werent working so whenever he made a timing change it was reset back every time. I couldnt reproduce this until suddenly for no reason they stopped working on mine. Then I found that the gadget ID was being returned as 256! Now fixed. If anyone still has problems please let me know . I should probably be using a named constant anyway.

Minor:

- Fixed bug which meant it wouldnt run from the CLI.
- Removed extra 0 at front of the timer displays.
- Added '...' to the menu items which bring up requesters (Thanks Aslak!)
- Added tag to ensure a black background on SAVE AS requesters (" ") when using ← ASL.

1.10 What next then?

At the moment RSIBreak does everything I want and has been for ←
over a
year and a half. However, I do like adding new features to programs and keep having loads of new ideas. Therefore, the following are a list of possible additions to the program. I may implement them at some point but will definately put them into action if I get some feedback from people who are actually using RSIBreak...Is anyone?

POSSIBLE:

- Add new methods of reminding the user to take breaks, maybe a screen blanker type GETUPBREAK reminder (like in the Mac program - Coffee Break) Still not too sure on how to do this in Amiga E (or rather with the Amiga system routines).
- Logging? Now this is something which has just come to me, but...what if the program logged the amount of actual time the user takes off for a getupbreak - the one which can be bypassed by clicking the mouse. Then, a log analyser could show the user exactly how much time he/she has taken off in one day - or rather how little. I know I keep clicking past the getupbreak and I really shouldnt. Maybe the logger would help me see my error? Would anyone else like this facility?
- A non-alert requester Getupbreak? At the moment the Getupbreak results in an alert requester popping up. This of course is displayed on a nasty 15khz screen (nasty if you have a multiscan monitor, that is). Therefore, on multiscan monitors the screenmode change will result in an annoying click and often a slow change to and from the alert. There are patches will allow you to promote such requesters to multiscan screen modes but I havent found one that actually works. Therefore, it may be worth adding a normal system Getupbreak requester which opens up on the currently active screen. I am definately looking into this.
- OS2 support? I tried to make this release WB2 (V37) compatible but couldnt get gadtools to create the gadgets. I can't see why it wouldnt work on V37 but I havent got the time to try and work it out...yet. If anyone would like this on their WB2 machine please mail me and ask.
- Add the ability to launch an AmigaDOS command when any of the two breaks begin. One use of this could be to get play16, dsound etc.. to play a sample when the breaks start. For example, you could sample yourself shouting: "Hey, get the hell off the computer, NOW!!!" :) as a more aggressive method of reminding you to break - its all too easy to get used to the flashing screen and ignore it...

I could implement this now but I am going to wait until somebody else wants it. Therefore:

If you have any ideas or find some bugs (I hope not!), feel free to mail them to me!

1.11 Hi mum!

Greets go out to the following people:

Laurie Lee (The C God) - Havent spoken to you in years! Get in touch...
Yeah, I know, I should have mailed you first.. :)
Mark & Scott/Visage Computers - What are YOU doing with one of my programs?
Catlord - When ya gonna code a demo then.... *;)
Creator - Hey, if you ever read this mail me - I need your e-mail address!
KenD/LSD - See yers on mono m8 - or IRC..Lets bring Grapevine back from the dead!
CounterPoint/Westower - I want a space battle score right now... :)
Chalky - Havent seen you in..how many years? Mail me if you read this...
WhiteWolf - LOOK, I want my damn CD back... I think 3 years is LONG ENOUGH!!!
Deztech - Its unlikely you'll ever see this considering you have defected!
Dave Hollway - Are you still into the Amiga?

Greets also go out to some of the interesting people I've met on IRC lately:

Aslak - Thanks for the advice and discussion; its great to know someone thinks my program is worthwile,
MarkP - Hey, I want my own personalised copy of Mindlink and I want it now!!!! :)
Darwin,
SimD,
aTmosh,
Quango...

AND..

All the programmers on the world wide Amiga scene, who make our machine such a joy to use.

While I'm at it, greets to ALL Amiga owners everywhere. Keep the dream alive!

1.12 So you want to talk to me huh? :)

Here is my lovely home e-mail address (oh its nice to actually have a personal e-mail address, not one which is constantly monitored and censored - damn Nottingham Trent Uni):

Mail me - James Allen - at:

- rsibreak@intuition.u-net.com

This should remain open until April 98, although I will most probably renew my subscription with U-NET anyway - especially if I have a nice computer job by then...

I look forward to hearing from you.....

Mailing List

If anyone would like to be informed of future releases of RSIBreak, please mail me with a request and I'll put you on a mailing list.

Look out for my other releases such as:

MultiVer - Scans 2 directories and compares \$VER of files.
(Aminet: util/cli/MultiVer12.lha)
NameStrip - Recursively scans and strips file names of spaces etc..
GuideCompiler - Scans recursively and builds an @AmigaGuide of text files.
(Aminet: text/hyper/GuideCompil12a.lha) Includes:
DeliList - " " " and builds up a @DeliTracker2 playlist.
(Aminet: mus/misc/DeliList10a.lha)
SpeakTime - Speaks the current time using speak:
(Aminet: util/time/SpeakTime10.lha)

Oh and my one released music mod is on aminet in mods/pro and is called:

WhoIsElvis94.lha

It's a remix of the techno track, "Who is Elvis" By Interaction.

I have also done a REKO Klondike AGA cardset. The theme is space and it is a 256 colour set. It's on Aminet as:

game/think/SpaceREKO.lha
