



Night Owl Help Contents

Thank you for choosing Night Owl!

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Introduction

Welcome to the Night Owl Publisher's CD-ROM retrieval program!

We at Night Owl believe that this Windows file retrieval system to be the very finest in the industry. It has been carefully designed to make your access and evaluation of the thousands of files on the Night Owl CD-ROM as fast and easy as possible.

Although the Night Owl Windows CD-ROM retrieval program operates through a very intuitive and easy to use set of controls, the contents of this help file are provided to give you any assistance you might need to facilitate your use of the program.

To get started, you might wish to follow the list of sequential steps below to familiarize yourself with this great retrieval system:

1. Select a file category that you are interested in by moving the cursor to that category name on the list.
2. Press the Show List button.
3. Tag those files on the list that interest you.
4. Press the User List button to add the tagged files to your personal list.
5. Exit back to the main screen and repeat steps 1 to 5 as desired.
6. From the main screen, press the User List button.
7. Select a compressed file in the list that interests you and press the UnZip Button. Select the **Unpack single** and the **Temporary Test & Evaluation** radio buttons.
8. Exit to the main screen. Press the Work Area button.
9. You can now view, print, or execute any of the unpacked files.

Following the steps above will familiarize you with the major functions of the powerful Night Owl CD-ROM file retrieval system.

How to Tag List Items

The term **tagging** is used to mean marking files. The file and category lists in this program use the Windows extended selection method of marking (tagging) items on a list. To tag one item, move the mouse to the item, hold down the Ctrl key, and click with the mouse. To tag a group of items, hold down the mouse and drag it down the list. You must remember that if you point with the mouse at an item and click without holding down the Ctrl key you will remove all other tags. It's the way Windows list boxes work.

Night Owl File Categories

All Night Owl CD-ROM disks are organized by file category. For example, release 9 of the Night Owl Shareware/Public Domain disk has 59 categories. The main window displays the file categories for your disk in a list box. The category list can be browsed with the mouse or keyboard and the cursor bar is used to select (highlight) a specific category for a particular action. If you wish to browse the files in a specific category, simply press the show list button. Or you can press the **Enter** key or **Double-click** on the category name with your mouse.

The main window also contains a vertical array of push button controls. Each push button performs the retrieval function indicated on the face of the button.

Category Action Push Buttons

You can click on any button below to pop up a box with a brief explanation or you can click on the green text for a more detailed explanation.



Help Button



Show List Button



Format Button



Search Button



User List Button



Work Area Button



Exit Button

Decompressing Files from Night Owl

The majority of files on your Night Owl CD-ROM are compressed files that have been processed with ARJ, LHA, or PKZIP. You will find the majority of compressed files are ZIP files. Any time you command Night Owl to view a compressed file or to unpack files into the Work Area, Night Owl will invoke the appropriate file decompressor to accomplish the task. Night Owl displays a status window during the time that the decompression is in progress. Since all of the decompression programs are DOS based, Night Owl must operate them in a DOS window and does so with the window minimized. This means that you will see an MSDOS program icon appear while the decompressor is at work. In the unlikely event that the decompressor encounters some kind of problem that requires user response, all progress will halt and the icon will not disappear. If this happens, open the DOS window by clicking on the icon and enter an appropriate response. This will close the DOS window and Night Owl will continue normally.

Printing from Night Owl

Night Owl does all printing through Windows and will issue a query regarding your printer status before invoking the standard Windows print dialog.. You may print a file category list via the **File** menu on the main window or print a file list while viewing any category via the **Print** menu. You can even print a listing of the contents of a compressed file from the [compressed file viewer](#). You also have the capability of printing files while in the Night Owl text file viewer. Night Owl does not support printing of graphics files.

The Work Area button is used to access the work area (\NIGHT\UNZIP) after you have unpacked a compressed file into the area.

The Night Owl Work Area

The Work Area is used to test and evaluate files unpacked from your Night Owl CD-ROM disk. You can unpack files from any of the category file lists or from your user file list. When you press the main window Work Area button, a dialog box appears that contains a list of the unpacked files and an array of control buttons. While in the Work Area, you may elect to browse text files, view graphics files, print a text file, or execute an EXE or COM file. This is one of the most powerful features of the Night Owl retrieval system since it gives you the tools necessary to thoroughly evaluate any Shareware or public domain program on the Night Owl CD-ROM disk before deciding to copy or unpack it into a more permanent area of your system.

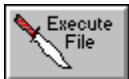
Please note that each time you exit the Work Area dialog, you will be asked if you wish to delete the files in the work area. This is a reminder so that you will not inadvertently overwrite files in this area when unpacking another file.



View Button



Print Button



Execute Button



Copy File Button

Use this button to copy ALL of the files in the work area to a directory of your choice.

Copying Files with NightOwl

You may copy ALL of the files currently in the work area to any destination of your choice. You will be prompted to enter a valid destination path and if the path you enter is indeed valid and you press the **Okay** button, the files will be copied.

Press this button to cause Night Owl to execute the selected COM or EXE file.

Executing Files from NightOwl

Night Owl is capable of executing a DOS or Windows COM or EXE program file that is on the Work Area file list. To run a program, move the cursor bar to the desired file name and press the bExecute Button. Or you can **double-click** on the file line or press the **Enter** key.

A command parameter dialog will appear that prompts for an optional command line parameter entry.

Program Parameter Entry

Some programs require command line parameters to operate properly. When you execute a COM for an EXE program file from the Night Owl [work area](#), a dialog will pop up that allows entry of a command line. This entry is optional and can be ignored if desired.

Press the Print Button to send the selected file to the printer.

Printing with Night Owl

The Night Owl print function interfaces directly with your Windows printing environment. You will be asked first if your printer is on-line and ready. If you proceed, Night Owl will invoke the standard Windows print dialog from which you can actually print the file.

Use the View Button to view a text or a graphics file in the work area.

Viewing Work Area Files

The View Button activates the Work Area viewing function. This function examines the selected file and calls the text file viewer if it is not a graphics file. If the file is recognized as a graphics file then you will be prompted to select one of the user designated graphics file viewers prior to viewing the file.

Press the Exit Button in any dialog box in which it appears to exit from that dialog. You may also press the **Escape** key to exit from any dialog box but the main window.

The Exit Button

An **Exit Button** appears in the major Night Owl dialog boxes. Dialog boxes or windows that do not have an **Exit Button** will have a **Cancel** or and **Okay** button for closing. Any Night Owl dialog can be closed with the **Alt+F4** key or via the Windows pull down menu. You may also use the **Escape** key to close all but the main Night Owl dialog, which can be closed with the **Alt+X** key.

Depress the Help button to display this help file.

The Help Button

Depressing the help button will display this help file. The topic that is displayed will be related to the dialog box in which the help button was pressed. You may also press the F1 key at any time to invoke this help file.

The Show List button displays a list of all the files in the selected category.

The Show List Dialog

Use the Show List button to display a dialog box that contains a list of all the files that are in the selected category and their textual descriptions. As you browse the list, the text description for the selected file appears in file description box.

But you can do far more than just browse the list to view file names and descriptions! You can view a listing of the contents of any file compressed with ARJ, LHA, or PKZIP. You can also view any of the many graphics files supported by Night Owl with one of the three viewers you designated in the Night Owl Install program. add files from the list to your persoanl User List, you can copy files from the list, and you can unpack files from the list.



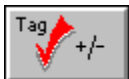
UnZip Button



View Button



Copy Button



Tag +/- Button



User List Button



Search Button

The view button is used to list the contents of a compressed ARJ, LHA, or ZIP file or to view a supported graphics file.

Compressed File Viewer

Night Owl's compressed file viewer allows you to look "inside" a compressed file and to browse a list of the compressed files contained therein. While in the viewer, you may browse the contents of a text file or view a graphics file with one of the user designated viewers. To act on a file, move the cursor bar to the desired file line and then press the **View Button**, the **Enter** key, or **double-click** on a file line with the mouse.

If you elect to view a graphics file, Night Owl will first unpack the file and then it will prompt you to select one of the three graphic viewers that you entered when you ran the Night Owl WINSTALL program.



View Button

Press the button that corresponds to the graphics viewer that you wish Night Owl to invoke for viewing the select graphics file.

Pressing this button will cause Night Owl to unpack the selected file for viewing as a text file or as a graphics file.

Unpacking Compressed Files

Long unpack here.

The Copy File button is used to copy tagged files to the directory of your choice.

Copying Files

The Copy File function allows you to copy tagged files from CD-ROM to the directory of your choice. You will be prompted to enter the desired destination directory path and the copying will only proceed if you press the **Okay** button and you have entered a valid directory path. Night Owl will insert the path to the user work area as a default in the prompt dialog.

Enter the full DOS path name (with **no** trailing backslash) of the directory where you wish the target file(s) to be copied. If you are copying from Night Owl CD-ROM, Night Owl will automatically insert the path to the user work area directory as a default. This can be edited to any valid directory path in your system.

The UnZIP Function

The Night Owl UnZip function utilizes PKUNZIP, ARJ, or LHA to unpack a compressed file to the directory of your choice or to the Night Owl work area directory. Pressing this button brings up a dialog box query which uses Windows radio button controls to which file(s) to unpack and where to unpack them. If you opt to unpack to the Night Owl work area, you can then use the main window Work Area button to access the uncompressed files for testing and evaluation.

Warning: Although Night Owl supports tagging and unpacking multiple files it is recommended that **not** you use this capability since it is possible that some files might be overwritten during the unpacking process.

Depress the appropriate radio button to make the choice between unpacking a single file or tagged files and unpacking to the user work area or to a directory of your choice.

The UnZip function allows you to uncompress one or more files to the Night Owl work area for test/evaluation or to a directory of your choice.

The User List function will all tagged files to the user file list. Duplicates, i.e., files that are already on the list are not added.

The User File List

The user file list is a powerful feature of the Night Owl retrieval system that permits you to add file records to your list from any of the file categories. There are two ways you can add files to your personal list:

Access a category file list, tag the files you wish to add to your list, and press the **User List** button.

Conduct a search for a text string. Night owl will mark all files that have text descriptions in which a match is found and add those files to your list. Duplicates are not added, of course.

Once you have built a personal list, you can access it at any time from the main category dialog with the **User List** button. You can accomplish the same functions while browsing your user list as you can from the show list dialog.

You may delete your list and start over at any time by accessing the main dialog **File** menu and selecting the **Erase User File** item

Night Owl interprets the following file extensions as graphics files:

BMP FLI GIF GPG ICO IMG

MAC MPG PCX TIF TGA WPG

Zip Viewer text here.

The Format Disk button can be used to format a floppy disk in drive A or B.

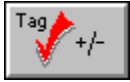
Format a Floppy Disk

Formatting a 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" floppy disk is easy. When you depress the Format Disk button, a dialog box will appear in which you can select the size and type of disk. Depress the Yes button to proceed and Night Owl will invoke the DOS FORMAT.COM utility. If FORMAT.COM is not in your DOS directory nor in your DOS path, you will be unable to format disks from Night Owl.

You can tell Night Owl to search all marked file categories for a line of text that you enter. Whenever a match is found, Night Owl places the corresponding file on your User List.

File Description Text Search

The Night Owl Text Search dialog box provides a powerful text search capability that allows you to search any file category for files with descriptions that have text matching the text you enter in the text entry editor. When Night Owl finds a match, it places the associated file record on your User List for later manipulation. Night Owl will not add duplicate finds to the list. The search target text can be up to 24 characters long and is not case sensitive. Use the following buttons:



Tag +/- Button



Go Button

Entering a Search Target

The search target entry editor is standard windows text line editor. You may enter up to 24 characters of text as the target of the search. Pressing the **Enter** key while in the editor will terminate editing and start the search...the same as pressing the **Go** button.

Pressing the **Escape** key while in the editor exits the Search dialog entirely...the same as pressing the **Exit** button.

You can clear the editor by pressing the **Home** key and then pressing **Ctrl+Delete**.

The Tag +/- Button

The **Tag +/- Button** is a toggle. If there are any items tagged when the button is pressed, all tagged items will be cleared. If no items are tagged, all items on the list are tagged.

This button is a toggle. Press it once to clear all tags and press it again to tag all categories.

The go button starts the search. Or you may press the **Enter** key while in the target text editor.

The Night Owl text file viewer is used to view various text files that are usually found in Shareware and public domain compressed files. You can move through the viewer with the cursor pad keys or with the mouse and scroll bar. You can print the entire file or search the file for text via the window's menu or with **Ctrl+P** and **Ctrl+S** keys, respectively.

