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Introduction

Thank you for trying ECTool !

This utility was born to help email chess players to manage the games in play, to avoid losing their game record, or forget to send their moves. (As I do frequently :))

To begin using ECTool you might read the ECTOOL.DOC enclosed in your ZIP archive. It is a good explanation of what can you do with the program It has written by Remi Pach, a net friend that speak a bit more English than the author of ECTool :)

<http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/4591>

[ftp ://ftp.pitt.edu/group/student-activities/chess/UTIL/ect ? ? ?.zip](ftp://ftp.pitt.edu/group/student-activities/chess/UTIL/ect%20%20?.zip)

[ftp ://narc.tnc.com/pub/ECTOOL](ftp://narc.tnc.com/pub/ECTOOL)

Fill free to send your comments to :

Andres Valverde <andres@spainmail.com>

Main features

Keep track of your games, simply dragging and drop the pieces in the graphic board
Create the messages with your new moves, in PGN or text format with optional ASCII board, time registers, signature etc. Then you can send them with the built - in SMTP client. Also you can save the message to a text file with optional 'to :' header. This is useful in some BBS systems

The program works like a very simple mailer, with a POP3 client that allows users retrieve their mail. The program recognize automatically if a game file is attached to some incoming message, and ask the user if he wants to replace the existing file. This is wonderful, but it needs another ECTOOL user at the other side :)

From v2.50 you can import games from PGN (Portable Game Notation) files. At his point I want to say thanks to Manfred Rosenboom [wait, spelling check...] a net friend that helped me a lot developing this feature. The 16 bits version needs his file ECTPGN.DLL (enclosed in the ZIP archive) to run.

At the moment the program does not make an exhaustive legal computation of your moves, but it is enough to record them. Remember : *THIS IS NOT A CHESS GAME, NOR A CHESS TEACHER PROGRAM*, it is only a single database that allows you to send and retrieve by email your game records.

I'm open to all suggestions of the email chess community. I promise I will try to implement most of them (If it is possible that I can do it).

Installation

ECTool is now released in both 16 and 32 bits versions.

The 16 bits program (ECTXXX.ZIP) runs fine both under WIN 3.X and Windows 95 and NT. You don't need any extra runtime or database engine. You'll need a Winsock stack installed, like Trumpet Winsock or RAS for Win 95

The 32 bits program (ECT32XXX.ZIP) runs under Win95 and NT and it is fully 32 bits native and compact code.

Simply unzip the file ECT*.ZIP in the directory you choose. Then you must execute SETUP.EXE and select a directory to install. The first time you run ECTool, the program creates the directories it needs to work, the inifile, etc. If you use versions of ECTOOL prior to 2.0 then you can overwrite existing files, and the program will copy the *.ECT files to the new directory ..\GAMES. Also, the program will try to fill the new fields 'White' and 'Black', parsing your old 'Opponent' field and your 'Username' in the ECTOOL.INI file.

The address book file 'ECTOOL.LST' will be imported to the new format to the file 'ADDRESS.LST', but not destroyed.

ECTOOL will not copy any file to your windows or system directory and neither modify your system settings, so you can unistall it safety and completely, in the strange case you want :)

If you haven't any previous version of ECTool, then this dialog will appear . See the explanations below to fill the different fields on it.

<u>U</u> ser name	<u>E</u> mail Address	<u>S</u> MTP server
<u>P</u> OP3 Server	<u>P</u> OP3 password	<u>S</u> ignature File
<u>I</u> ECG Key	<u>S</u> end Domain name	<u>D</u> isplay Coordinates
<u>D</u> ark Squares	<u>L</u> ight Squares	<u>C</u> ancel Button
<u>O</u> k Button		

User name

Your First Name Last Name, **without comma or another separator** that can cause trouble in your SMTP server, p.e. 'Andres Valverde'

Email address

Your electronic mail address.

SMTP server

Your host for sending mail, p.e. : smtp.host.com. If you don't know its name, ask your Internet Service Provider. If you are having any problem sending mail try to put in numeric notation : p.e. 124.234.34.2,

POP3 server

Your host for receiving mail., p.e. pop3.host.com. If you don't know its name, ask your Internet Service Provider. If you are having any problem retrieving mail try to put in numeric notation : p.e. 124.234.34.2

POP3 password

The password for logging in your POP3 server. It is frequently the same that you have to connect with your Internet Service Provider.

Signature File

This is a text file that the program will add at the end of your messages, you can edit it with any ASCII text editor

IECG KEY

(Optional) This is the key IECG gives you as a member. Now (February 97) it has no use, but can have it in the future

SEND DOMAIN NAME

Toggle on/off this option if you have problems with connections with your SMTP server

DISPLAY COORDINATES

Check if you want see the board coordinates

Dark/Light Squares

Allows to change the color of the chessboard squares.

OK Button

When you finish introducing data click this button to save the changes. If you want to discard all the changes made then click the Cancel button

Cancel Button

Close the dialog without saving the changes you made. If you want to save them click the OK button

Unzip

You must get a program that can decompress ZIP files, like PKUNZIP.EXE, UNZIP.EXE or similar, that are in the most of FTP sites around the world.

Using ECTOOL

First Steps

An Actual Game

Importing and Exporting games

First Steps

When you are finished with the config, you jump to the main screen, with some icons on top, plus the chessboard and some more boxes in which to fill in the details of the game you want to start playing. Note that you can insert your name in the boxes labelled 'White' and 'Black' just by double-clicking. It's nice and easy. The rest is obvious, and the flyover help will guide you through that. (See also the Address book item)

We'll discuss the 'time/date' dialogue when we come to entering the moves of an actual e-mail chess game. So let's jump to the 'Options' dialogue box. There you can set up this points :

Send game attached

Send PGN

Send Diagram

Send Signature

Select Language

Select Language

You can select the language you wish to use in your chess notation. For instance, if you are a Frenchman and play with another Frenchman, you'll prefer to use the abbreviations RDTFC, instead of their English equivalent KQRBN. In that case, check 'French'. (Note that ECTool doesn't offer yet the international numeric notation, but its conceptor is working on that.). Don't forget that the OFFICIAL PGN Notation is in English Language

Send game attached

This is a clever feature, and it can make your life easier provided your opponent also uses ECTool. Remember that each game you play is stored in a game file with the extension *.ect, which is placed in the 'Games' subdirectory. This *.ect file is updated every time you change it. When the 'Send game attached' option is checked, a copy of the game file is attached to the message. When EC Tool retrieves the message, it will automatically put that file in the games directory (and keep a backup copy of the old file). It saves you a lot of trouble, since you won't have to enter manually your opponent's move and his time details. Try it!

Send PGN (i.e. Portable game Notation)

PGN is a standard way of recording games and game headers (names, tournament, date, etc.) in ASCII format. It is neat and intelligible. Most popular chess programs (ChessBase, Fritz, etc.) can read PGN, which makes it easy to exchange data between different programs. Besides, play-by-mail organisations usually ask you to use the PGN format when you send in your completed games. I recommend that you leave this box checked at all times.

Send diagram

You can choose to send you opponent a sketchy diagram made up with ASCII characters. Not absolutely necessary, but it can come in handy sometimes.

Send signature

Here you choose whether you want a signature to accompany your message.

An actual game

Now that all the preliminaries operations have been successfully completed, we may start a game.

- (1) Make sure you've filled in all the relevant fields in the Main dialogue, including your opponent's name and e-mail address. You can also use the address book
- (2) Put your mouse cursor on the 'e' pawn and drag it to e4.
- (3) If you play with a time limit, go to 'Date/Time', check 'Send date register', click on the '?' next to 'Sent'. This will display the calendar. If you agree with the date, click 'OK'. Since you have spent no time over that move, you can leave the other settings unchanged. But in future, you'll have to enter your reflection time as well as his.
- (4) Go to the Options dialogue, and check that everything there is the way you want it to be.
- (5) Click on the icon labelled 'Message Editor'. You'll see what your opponent will receive. If you wish to, you can add a message, as you would with any e-mail client. For instance you can introduce yourself briefly (which is good etiquette), offer him some conditional moves, etc. You can also use the message editor to send normal e-mails, of course. See below for more details.
- (6) Next you put the message in the queue by clicking 'Queue'. You can queue several messages and send them all at once when you're connected to your server. Clicking on 'Mail' and 'Mailboxes' in the main screen will show you which messages are in the queue, with the option to modify them in case you change your mind before sending them
- (7) Once you are connected to your service provider, you can click 'Send/Retrieve' to send and/or retrieve your mail.
- (8) Now, your opponent has received your move and sent you his reply. You go to 'Load game' and select the game by double clicking on it, or by highlighting it and pressing OK. You enter his move and, if necessary, his time details. You then play your move, enter your time details if necessary, and send the move back as usual. Please note that if your opponent uses ECTool as well, and selects the 'Send file attached' option, you won't have to enter his move and time details.

Address Book

You can maintain an address book with all the particulars concerning your regular opponents. To do this, go to 'Utilities' > 'Address book'. If you've got a *.bmp picture of your opponent, ECTool will display it provided you enter its path in the 'Photo' field. The rest is obvious: you can add, delete, edit, sort and insert addresses, as you would with your usual e-mail client.

PGN IMPORT

From version 2.50 and above, the program offer a powerful feature : the capability to import games from files written in PGN (Portable Game Notation) format. This is today the main format to transmit games across the Internet, and a good interface between the different formats of commercial programs.

This an example of a game in PGN format :

```
[Event "China v England match"]  
[Site "London ENG"]  
[Date "1997.03.02"]  
[Round "06"]  
[White "McDonald,N"]  
[Black "Xiaomin, Peng"]  
[Result "0-1"]
```

```
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.d4 exd4 6.Qxd4 Qxd4  
7.Nxd4 c5 8.Ne2 Bd7 9.b3 O-O-O 10.Nd2 Ne7 11.Bb2 Ng6 12.f3 f6  
13.a4 b6 14.Nc4 Be6 15.Ne3 Bd6 16.Rd1 h5 17.Kf2 h4 18.g4 Rd7  
19.Nf5 Bxf5 20.gxf5 Ne7 21.h3 Nc6 22.Rhg1 Rhd8 23.Kf1 Nb4 24.c3 Nc6  
25.c4 Bg3 26.Rd5 Nb4 27.Rxd7 Rxd7 28.Nxg3 Rd1+ 29.Kg2 Rd2+ 30.Kh1 hxg3  
31.Rg2 Rd3 32.Rxg3 Rxb3 33.Bc1 Nd3 34.Be3 Ne5 35.Bf4 Nd3 36.Be3 Ne1  
37.Bf2 Nxf3 38.Rxg7 Nd2 39.e5 Rf3 40.Bg3 fxe5 41.Rg5 Ne4 0-1
```

If you choose the main menu option : **"PGN"** you will be able to use three options :

[Import a new game](#)

[Paste from clipboard](#)

[Export](#)

IMPORT A NEW GAME

When you choose IMPORT at a first time, a new game then a Windows Standard Open File Dialog will appear. You may select a PGN file in this dialog and the Select PGN dialog will be open

The main element in this dialog is the game list. Select the game you want to import and double click in the game list or click the OK button. If the Option "Import as a new game" is selected then ECTool will create a new file named "default.ect", with the imported data. If the option selected is "Import only game record", then the current game record will be overwritten, but the other data of the game will not be touched. This is the best option to import moves for your favourite mailer. If you choose the third option "Overwrite all current game" then all your current data will be replaced with the imported data.

You can modify what is shown in the game list. Entering masks in the fields below the game list and pressing "Refresh list". If you choose "OR comparison" then the filter will extract games that match one of the mask conditions. If you select "AND comparison" the window will be filled with the games that match ALL the conditions. The blank mask fields are not used by the filter.

Also you can search for a text in game lines with the "Search" field and button.

One example :

If you fill the "White" and "Black" field with "Valverde" and click the "Refresh list" button, the entire PGN file will be scanned and the game list will show all those games where "Valverde" played as Black or as White (OR comparison) or those where Valverde played with himself (AND comparison) :)

Finally, if you want to open another PGN file, only click the button "New PGN file"

PASTE FROM CLIPBOARD

This option is very important. The clipboard contents are saved to a file called "clipbrd.pgn" in the main ECTool directory. Then, the Select PGN dialog is open, with the games of this file, if any.

EXPORT

You can export the current game to a PGN file, overwriting it or appending at the end of it.

Credits

I wish to say thanks to all people that help me in developing ECTOOL. My apologies if I forget somebody.

Manfred Rosenboom (Beta testing, and PGN import stuff)

Remi Pach (Help file and testing)

John Mongle (testing)

Joe Deidun (testing)

Javier Milan (testing)

Paul Barrow (testing)

Mike Leahy (Chess diagram component)

Artchil Gogava (Internet Mail Suite Component)

Santiago Portela (Indent List Box)

Fredrik Nordbakke (FNPIlistbox)

Roberto Alvarez (IECG, tester)

Wayne Pierce (testing)

Marcus Seger (testing)

Susan C. Thibodeau

Frank E. Hambaro

Tom Elliot

[..]

I wish also to say thanks to all registered users.

Registering ECTOOL

Ectool is shareware, then if you wish continue using it after a trial period you must register.(The unregistered version has a 20 moves per game limitation). The registration will be valid for ALL the future versions of ECTOOL.

To register ECTOOL please send a \$15 U.S. dollars (or 2.000 pts for spanish users or the equivalent in any other changeable funds) to the following mailing address :

ANDRES VALVERDE TORESANO
PLAZA IBIZA 1, 8 A
04005. ALMERIA. SPAIN

If you send a non Spanish Bank personal check, please consider to add \$5 extra for bank costs. This gift is not mandatory

Also you cant register by major credit card, but my bank only accept snail mail or fax orders. To register please send me a FAX to this number : 34-50-648030, or a letter to the above mailing address with the following data :

Your full name and email address.

Your credit card type, number and expire data.

Your approbation to my charge of the \$15 registration fee.

Your signature and date.

I'll send you the registration keyfile the same day I recibe your order.

I will send you the register keyfile by email (Don't forget to note your email address)

WARRANTY

ECTool is released "as is" without any warranty. Use it at your own risk !!

