

Index

[Introduction](#)

[Auto Startup](#)

[Menu Items](#)

[Due Event Dialog Box](#)

[Recognized Text Formats](#)

[Update History](#)

Introduction

SkedEzy Pro is a small but sophisticated scheduler for Windows 95 and Windows NT that does not pretend to be a full featured PIM or task automater. Users with a need for straightforward message or file scheduling report that it is both very easy to use, and very useful. Many great ideas from users have been incorporated, without compromising SkedEzy Pro's trademark simplicity.

Messages can be scheduled to popup on any future date, at any particular time of the day, to the minute. A message can be once only, such as for a lunch appointment, or it can recur, such as a meeting that is held every fortnight. File scheduling is not restricted to .exe and .bat files - any file with a registered file type may be specified. Scheduling files is very similar to scheduling a message. Events appear in date order in the Event List, and may be altered or deleted.

SkedEzy Pro is programmed to understand dates, times and time periods in any way that you are likely to type them. Hence there are no commands to remember or multi-level menus to wade through. Just tell it what to do in English, by typing in text just like you would jot down a note to yourself on a scrap of paper.

SkedEzy Pro looks good no matter what colour scheme you choose for your desktop because it uses matching colours for most areas.

Although SkedEzy Pro is a reliable program, you should make a copy of the file skedezys.ev on a floppy disk at least once a week if you intend storing important information on it. Then your info is safe, even if the hard disk crashes, or your machine is stolen...

This Help system assumes that you have basic Windows keyboard skills, such as tabbing around the fields of dialog boxes, editing the text in those fields, selecting radio buttons etc. If you are an absolute beginner, there are many good books available which can teach you the basics.

In case of any problems, or if you have any suggestions for this product, feel free to contact the author at any of the following addresses:

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Auto Startup

1. Press the Start button, select Programs, then click on Windows Explorer. (If you cannot do this, your start menu has been customized. Getting help from someone else if necessary, find Windows Explorer and run it.)
2. In Windows Explorer, click on the plus signs next to the Windows folder, the Start Menu folder, and then the Programs folder. You should be able to see a folder called Startup (Don't open it yet).
3. Now find your SkedEzy Pro folder i.e. where you installed SkedEzy Pro, and open it so all the skedezy files appear in the right hand window.
4. Scroll the left hand window until you see the Startup folder, which you found in step 2. Holding down the RIGHT mouse button, drag the file skedezy.exe (which has the yellow and red SkedEzy Pro icon) from the right hand window to the StartUp folder, then release the button.
5. After releasing the button, a menu pops up. Select 'Create shortcut here' and click the left mouse button.

Now, when you next start your computer, SkedEzy Pro will start automatically and appear in the Windows 95 task bar. Also, it will close down automatically (saving your scheduled events) when you close down Windows.

Menu Items

Clicking on the SkedEzy Pro icon using the **right** mouse button, brings up a menu.

Apart from any standard Windows menu items such as *close*, the others are:

Schedule Message...

Schedule File...

List Events...

Print Events...

Options...

Help...

About...

Due Event Dialog Box

When an event comes due, a dialog box appears, perhaps preceded by some sound, if specified for that event. This dialog box can be left on the screen indefinitely - you can even close down SkedEzy Pro and the due events will still be there when it starts up again. If the message does not fit inside the text area, you can use the up and down arrow keys to scroll the text up and down.

If you double-click inside the text area, the buttons disappear and the window sizes itself to an approximately square shape, just big enough to contain the text. This minimizes the amount of screen taken up, so you can leave it somewhere until ready to take some action. In this form, the window is fully sizeable, so you can make it even smaller if you want, hiding some of the message. Double clicking again restores the window to its original form.

Clicking on *OK* will close the window, and in the case of recurring events, will reschedule the event for its next occurrence. This next occurrence will be the scheduled date and time, as shown below the text area, plus the time period as shown just below that. Recurring events can also be deleted from the event list at this point, by clicking the *Delete* button. Clicking on the *Put Off* button will bring up a small dialog box in which you can specify a time period. When you close this dialog, the event will be rescheduled for the current time plus the specified time period. If the event happens to be a file run, clicking the *Skip* button will cause the due event dialog box to close down without running the file.

Recognized Text Formats

The following examples, being lifted directly from comments in the source code of SkedEzy Pro, will give you a fairly complete picture of the program's English recognition ability in the area of dates, times and time periods. Where part of a date or time is missing, SkedEzy Pro makes the logical assumption. For a date, the month and year are assumed to be the current month and year if not specified. Or in some cases, the next month or year. For example, 'next Friday' could happen to be in the current month, or the next month, or even the next year in the case of a day late in December. Similarly, a time might not be specified at all, in which case the program sets it to 12am.

[Date Recognition](#)

[Extended Date Recognition](#)

[Date Recognition with Calendar Months](#)

[Time Recognition - 12 Hour Mode](#)

[Time Recognition - 24 Hour Mode](#)

[Extended Time Recognition](#)

[Time Periods](#)

Date Recognition Examples

25th, the thirteenth etc.

100897 etc.

13121998 etc.

April 1st. etc.

fifth of October etc.

2/3, 4th of the fifth etc.

the twenty fourth etc.

12/9/1997, fifth of the seventh '98 etc.

Aug. 23rd 1997, april fifth '99 etc.

Aug. twenty third etc.

14th March 2003 etc.

twenty sixth of July etc.

Jan the twenty second '98 etc.

the thirty first of march 1997 etc.

the twenty eighth of the sixth 2012 etc.

Extended Date Recognition Examples

Friday wk, for Tuesday week etc.

a wk Friday, a week Tuesday etc.

Friday fortnight, for Tuesday fortnite etc.

a fortnight Friday, fortnite Tuesday etc.

today, date is today etc.

in a day's time, tomorrow etc.

on Fri., next mon etc.

a week's time, next wk etc.

a fortnight's time, in a fortnite etc.

tomorrow week etc.

a week tomorrow etc.

a week today etc.

on Friday, next wednesday etc.

Fri. wk, for Tues week etc.

2 day's time, in five days etc.

3 week's time, in one wk etc.

3 fortnight's time, in one fortnight etc.

Date Recognition Examples with Calendar Months

2nd. Tuesday in September, first monday of Mar etc.

2nd. Tuesday in the month, first monday of the month etc.

a month's time, next calendar mth etc.

a year's time, in a yr etc.

1 month's time, in three mths etc.

1 year's time, in two yrs etc.

3rd. Wed, first tues etc.

2nd. Tues in September, first mon of Mar etc.

2nd. Tues of the month, first mon in month etc.

2nd. Tuesday, first monday etc.

Time Recognition Examples - 12 Hour Clock

Examples labelled CTS are 'current time sensitive'. This means that the current time is taken into account when deciding how to interpret the entered time. Hence if 2:30 is typed in just before midday, it is taken to mean 2:30pm - not 2:30 am. This concept also applies for times such as '20 past'. For example if the time is currently 3:10pm, this would result in the event being scheduled for 3:20pm. If, however, the time is currently 3:35 pm, then the event would be scheduled for 4:20pm.

1025, 230 etc. (current time sensitive - CTS)

at 5, six o'clock etc. CTS

1130 this morning, 245pm etc.

at 5 a.m., six this evening etc.

half past, qtr to etc. CTS

17 past, twenty to etc. CTS

10:00, three twenty etc. CTS

2 fifty six, five twenty nine etc. CTS

1/4 to, 1/2 past etc. CTS

5:41 p.m., six twelve this afternoon etc.

twenty two past, twenty 5 to etc. CTS

half past 2, qtr to six etc. CTS

17 past 3, twenty to eight etc. CTS

1/4 to six, 1/2 past nine etc. CTS

twenty eight to nine, twenty three after 5 etc. CTS

twenty five minutes to three, twenty two mins past six etc. CTS

17 past 3 in the afternoon, twenty to eight in the morning etc.

1/4 to six a.m, 1/2 past nine in the afternoon etc.

twenty five past four in the afternoon etc.

Time Recognition Examples - 24 Hour Clock

2100, 455 etc.

23:45, seventeen hundred etc.

2100pm, 0035 in the morning etc. if pm etc added from force of habit

800 hrs, 2340 hours etc.

23:45 hrs, nine hundred hours etc.

five twenty two, nineteen forty five etc.

twenty two hundred, twenty one forty etc.

twenty one forty five, twenty three fifty nine etc.

twenty two hundred hrs, twenty one forty hours etc.

twenty one forty five hrs, twenty three fifty nine hours etc.

Extended Time Recognition Examples

now, the current time etc.

at startup, when booted etc.

when I first start the m/c, first boot etc.

at midday, noon etc.

12 midday, at twelve noon etc.

'round midnight etc.

at 12 midnight etc.

40 minute's time, in fifty minutes etc.

3 hour's time, in five hrs etc.

Time Periods Examples

each month, once every mth etc.

each hr, daily, once a week, every yr etc.

two monthly, every 3 calendar mths etc.

30 minute intervals, every 2 wks, two yrs etc.

twenty eight days, forty five minutes etc.

every half hr, qtr hourly etc.

Update History

Version 1.15 Feb 1994

First distributed version.

Version 1.2 Aug 1994

Made all fields editable. 'Once only' messages are not deleted after they have been triggered. They stay on the list but may be deleted manually at any time, or re-activated by changing the date.

Version 1.21 Sep 1994

Added error recovery to reduce risk of data loss.

Version 1.22 Nov 1994

Fixed a bug which affected the updating of recurrence period. This sometimes resulted in an incorrect value being displayed in the event list, after the user had updated the recurrence period. This fix seems to have cured the General Protection Fault at 000A:0026 encountered by some users using version 1.2 or 1.21.

Version 1.5 Aug 1995

Major upgrade. Total visual facelift, extra options, subjected to a 6 week Beta Test program by 7 CompuServe beta testers. Incorporated dozens of user-suggested improvements, both minor and major. Improvements included:

- Ability to edit or delete an event just after it pops up.
- 'Early warning' and 'Reserved time' features added.
- Options - 'Always on top', 'Save events after every change' and 'Expiry days'
- Printing of events.
- Short and long formats for the event list.
- Colour scheme compatible with selected system colours.
- Current date/time displayed in event list and schedule message dialogs.

Version 1.51 Nov 1995

Bug fix - data loss was possible if a large number was entered for 'Expiry Days' under Options. Usage limiting introduced to the unregistered version, in the form of text reversal after a set number of uses.

Version 1.6 Mar 1996

Minor upgrade, incorporating more suggestions from users. Usage limiting changed to disable entry of new events after the set number of uses.

- 'The day after tomorrow' is now recognized as a date.
- Small number of date/time recognition bugs fixed.
- Lines in message text may now be terminated with the <Enter> key.
- Windows Help file now available.
- Double booking of events now allowed, although a warning is given.
- Program runs can now be cancelled from the *Confirm* dialog box without deleting the event.

Version 1.61 Aug 1996

Minor upgrade, mainly involving changes to documentation e.g. discounts for multiple orders and site licencing. Also, unregistered users now have unlimited use for 30 separate 'usage days'. So if it is not used at all on a particular day, that doesn't count as a 'usage day'. On the other hand, it doesn't matter if SkedEzy is run once or twenty times on a particular day - it still counts as 1 'usage day' of the 30 allowed.

Additional features:

- Sound support - any .wav file may be used for announcing messages.

- Multiple backups - cyclic backups to a specified number of backup files. Added peace of mind!

Version 1.62 Jan 1997

Minor upgrade, changes to pricing and shareware incentives.

Version 2.00 Mar 1997

Complete rewrite as a 32bit application for Windows 95 and Windows NT. User interface brought up to date, some new capabilities, more customization.

Additional features:

- end date - recurrent events can stop recurring after a specified day.
- warning recurr - early warning can recurr until event occurs
- registered files - any file that is registered e.g. Word documents, can be run, not just .exe and .bat files
- multiple due event windows - events that come due can be left to pile up on the screen, to be actioned when the user sees fit.
- system tray icon - SkedEzy runs from the system tray by default
- instant search - super fast and easy searching of the event list

Schedule Message...

Selecting this menu item brings up a dialog box with a tabbed display. There are 3 pages accessible via the tabs labelled Message, Scheduling and Sound. This dialog box enables you to specify what message you want to appear at some time in the future. There is considerable flexibility in specifying exactly when and how often the message is to appear, with early warning if desired. Messages may also be announced with beeps or sound files.

Click on *OK* to schedule the message, or *Cancel* if you change your mind and don't want to schedule any message. Clicking on *OK, Do Another* will schedule the message you have just set up, and then bring up the dialog box again, ready for another message. Useful for entering a list of people's birthdays, for example.

Message Page

This is where you type your event text, i.e. message text or file pathname. Just like a simple word processor, you can cut, paste, back space, use the arrow keys and so on. Pressing <Enter> will end a paragraph, rather than closing the dialog box as it normally does. The message can be as short or as long as you like - if you want to write a short essay in here, that's fine! The theoretical maximum is roughly equal to 10,000 words.

Scheduling Page

This page describes exactly how you want your event scheduled. At first, all the fields have default values in them, so you just change what you need to, and ignore the rest. As you change the fields, a line of text (the 'confirmation text') below the fields constantly tells you how SkedEzy Pro is interpreting what you are typing in. If a field is invalid for some reason, 3 question marks, '???', will appear in the appropriate spot in the confirmation text to alert you.

The data you type in will be one of three types - a date, a time or a time period.

It is possible for all the fields to be valid on their own, but invalid in combination with each other. In this case SkedEzy Pro brings up a helpful error message when you attempt to click on *OK*.

The examples given concern messages, but the scheduling of file runs is exactly the same.

Scheduling Examples

In the simplest case, you might want to remind yourself to pop down to the shops first thing in the morning to get some bread. Since the default date is 'tomorrow' and the default time is '12am', you don't need to change anything at all since these settings will cause the message to be due as soon as you start your PC the next morning.

A more complex requirement might be to wash and vacuum the car. You might want to schedule it for 'next Saturday' (**date**) at '2 in the afternoon' (**time**), and to keep it looking good you might want to do this 'every 3 weeks' (the **recurr period**). However, you intend to trade down to a motor bike in 8 months time, while undertaking some study, so you set the **end date** to 'in 8 mths time'. After this time, the messages will no longer appear. To prevent yourself from booking something else in for those particular Saturday afternoons, you want '5 days' **early warning** and a 'daily' reminder after that (**warning recurr**), until the message comes due on the Saturday afternoon. Finally, you don't want to accidentally book something else in that will interfere with your car washing job, so you allocate a **reserved period** of 'two hours' for it. This how to make SkedEzy Pro really work for you!

Sound Page

SkedEzy Pro allows you some flexibility in how you want your events to be announced. That is, the sound you want to hear immediately before the dialog box pops up for your message or file event when it comes due. In this page, you can turn sound off altogether by selecting **none**, use system beeps only by selecting **System beeps** or play a .wav file by selecting **Play .wav file**.

Note that your computer must have a sound card installed in order to play .wav files.

If a beep or .wav file is being used, the **count** field specifies how many times the sound is to be played. The **spacing** field specifies how long the period of silence is between sounds. In the case of .wav files, this refers to the gap between when one sound *finishes* playing and when the next one starts.

The **file name** field specifies the .wav file to use, e.g. ding.wav. Any .wav file that you have found, for example from the Internet, may be used. The **browse files** button will bring up a directory listing so you can select any .wav file that is accessible from your computer.

Schedule File...

Selecting this menu item brings up a dialog box with a tabbed display. There are 3 pages accessible via the tabs labelled File, Scheduling and Sound. This dialog box enables you to specify what registered file you want to execute at some time in the future. There is considerable flexibility in specifying exactly when and how often the file is to run, with early warning if desired. File runs may also be announced with beeps or sound files.

Click on *OK* to schedule the file run, or *Cancel* if you change your mind and don't want to schedule anything. Clicking on *OK*, *Do Another* will schedule the file run you have just set up, and then bring up the dialog box again, ready for another one.

File Page

This is where you type the full path of the file that you wish to execute. For example, C:\mygames\chess.exe. If you can't remember the full pathname, or just want to avoid having to type it, you can press the **Browse Files** button to select any file accessible from your computer.

If you need to run the file from a directory other than the one where the file resides, you can select the startup directory by pressing the **Startup Directory** button.

Normally, a dialog box pops up just prior to the file run. This gives you the option of going ahead with the run or skipping it. However, no dialog box will appear if the **Confirm** checkbox was checked when the event was first scheduled - the file just runs. This is useful for when no-one is around, e.g. running backups during the night.

List Events...

This menu item brings up a window that contains a list of all the events that you have scheduled. If the list is longer than will fit in the list box, a vertical scroll bar appears. Also, the width of the list box is adjusted to accommodate the longest event that is listed. If you want the window another size for some reason, you can always resize it manually. If necessary, a horizontal scroll bar appears to enable viewing of the longest events.

For quick reference, events in the list are colour-coded according to date. Events scheduled prior to today appear on a dark gray background, and events scheduled for today have a light gray background. All future events appear in the default window colour as defined by your system.

If you don't want to display absolutely all of the scheduling details for each event, you can exclude some of them from the display by changing the appropriate settings in Options.

The current date and time are always displayed at the bottom right of the window.

Besides viewing the events you have scheduled, you can also search the list and edit or delete events. If you click on the *Cancel* button, the event list reverts to how it was before any edits and/or deletes were done.

Searching

When you have a large list of events, the search feature (next to the *Cancel* button) will become very useful. Just type in a few characters here to instantly find the first event which contains them. For example, typing 'car' will find (if any exist) the first event with a 'c', then the first event with a 'ca' and then the first event with 'car', as fast as you can type it in! If the event that is highlighted is not the one you are after, just click on the *Next* button to find the next occurrence, if any. SkedEzy Pro will let you know if there are no more matches.

Editing and Deleting

An event in the event list can be selected by either clicking on it or searching for it. A right mouse click will bring up a little floating menu which will allow you to edit or delete the selected event.

The quick way to edit an event is to just double-click it. To delete an event, select it then press <Delete>.

Note: The dialog box for editing an event is identical to the one you used to originally schedule the event. Just modify any of the values on any of the tabbed pages.

Print Events...

This menu item brings up a dialog box which lets you specify the range of dates to include in a printout of the event list. The default setting is to print out a week's events, starting from today. To print out all future events, for example, you might leave the **Start Day** field as it is (i.e. 'today') and type '30 Dec 2050' in the **End Day** field.

Options...

Although SkedEzy Pro is perfectly usable 'straight from the box', you may find you have some preferences for how it is set up, after trying some of the options. This menu item brings up a dialog box in tabbed notebook form with 2 pages, labelled Misc. and Event List Item Text.

Miscellaneous Options

The options available here are Expiry, Number of backups, Printout Font Size, Keep Due Event Windows On Top, Use System Tray and Display Hints.

Options - Expiry

SkedEzy Pro allows you to keep old events in the event list. This field specifies the number of days to keep events before they 'drop off' the bottom of the list. If the contents of this field are deleted, there is no expiry, and all events are kept indefinitely. If set to 0, events disappear from the event list one minute after they come due.

Options - Number of Backups

Every time SkedEzy Pro starts up, a new backup file is created, which is a copy of the current skedezy.evs file. The number entered in this field determines how many such backup files exist at any time. The newly created backup will always overwrite the oldest backup file on disk. For maximum safety and peace of mind, you might want a large number of backup files. To save some disk space, you might prefer just 1 or 2. It's up to you.

Options - Printout Font Size

This setting will affect how large the event details text will appear on a printout, and also how many will fit on a page. Try a few different values and choose one that suits you.

Options - Keep Due Event Windows On Top

If this checkbox is checked, any events that come due will stay on top of all other windows currently displayed (except other due events).

Options - Use System Tray

The system tray is the small area in the Taskbar in which the time is displayed (if you have this selected). If this checkbox is checked, then SkedEzy Pro appears as a small icon inside the tray. If you remove the check, SkedEzy Pro appears on the taskbar like any other application. Changes to this option take effect the next time you start SkedEzy Pro.

Options - Display Hints

The hints that pop up in various places have the job of quickly getting you familiar with using SkedEzy Pro. Once they have done their job, after several hours or days, you may find they become more of an annoyance than a help. At that point, you can turn them all off by removing the check from this checkbox.

Event List Item Text

This page lets you tailor your event list so it contains just the information you need to see at a glance. Remember, to see all the details of an event, it is only necessary to double-click on it in the event list - even if you don't intend to edit it.

Each check box determines if a particular piece of scheduling information can be displayed, for all events in the list. Whether or not is actually is, depends on whether that information is used by each individual event in the list. For example, if the check box for recurrence period is unchecked, no recurrence periods will be displayed in the event list, even if some events have a recurrence period.

Help...

This menu item starts up Windows Help for SkedEzy Pro - the file you are looking at now.

About...

This menu item brings up the About Box for SkedEzy Pro, which displays a copyright notice, version number, author's name and electronic addresses for contacting the author.

An event is either a message or a file run. SkedEzy Pro performs some actions only on messages, or only on file runs, but sometimes on both i.e. 'events'.

for example:

3/5

October fourth, '97

6th Apr 1996

Fri week

In a couple of day's time

for example:

3:08pm

at qtr past

ten twenty, in the morning

at midday

Half past 4 this afternoon

now

in two hrs time

for example:

20 min
every two days
3 wks
a fortnight
yearly

File types, such as .txt or .doc, may be 'registered' (see your Windows books if unfamiliar with this). This associates a program with that type, so double-clicking on the file name in Explorer will open the document in the specified program. For example, double-clicking on myletter.doc might bring up your favourite shareware word processor, loaded and ready to go with myletter.doc.

