

HARDDISK

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Chapter 1

HARDDISK

1.1 main

Amiga Hard Disk Guide

By Peter Hutchison June 1997

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1.2 Choosing a hard disk

Choosing a hard disk

The type and size of hard disk are the main requirements when selecting a hard disk for your Amiga.

Types of interface

IDE - Intelligent Device Electronics. A simple interface designed mainly to add hard disks (upto 2) to a computer. Modern interfaces, using Atapi, can make it possible to add upto 4 devices including CDROMS.

SCSI - Small Computer System Interface. A faster and more powerful system then IDE which allows upto 7 devices added to the computer through a daisy chain.

You may come across other types but they are incompatible with the Amiga.

Size of hard disks

The physical size of a hard disk can vary from 1½" to 5¼" in size. The most usual sizes are 2½" and 3½" sizes. The height of the hard disk depends on the number of platters (surfaces) the disk has: full height, half height, slim etc.

Capacity of hard disks

The capacity of hard disks has doubled approx. every two years and it is now possible to get 9Gb hard disks! It is quite difficult these days to find small capacity hard disks. For 2.5" drives the smallest you can get is 80Mb, for 3.5" IDE it is 1.2Gb and 3.5" SCSI it is 840Mb.

It is recommended to buy the largest capacity hard disk you can afford, aim for around 500Mb or more.

Interfaces available in Amigas

A500 - None
A600 - IDE
A1200 - IDE
A1000 - None
A2000 - None
A1500 - None
A3000 - SCSI
A4000 - IDE
A4000/T - SCSI

If you have a Zorro based Amiga, it is possible to purchase IDE or SCSI adaptors and add a hard disk that way. Some accelerators cards now have built in SCSI interfaces.

For A500 owners, the hard disk is usually supplied with an interface to

be attached to the expansion port on the left side (on the A1000 it is on the right side).

The A600 and A1200 has a PCMCIA port and hard disks can be added via a SCSI interface such as the Squirrel or Dataflyer or a special Overdrive hard disk.

1.3 Installing a hard disk

This entirely depends on where the hard disk is going to be put. If externally, then a suitable lead is required to attach it to the interface of the SCSI (or IDE) interface.

If it is to be internally, an short lead will be needed and the hard disk fitted in the appropriate cradle. For 2.5" hard drives the power is supplied via the IDE interface, for 3.5" drives a seperate power lead is required via the PSU or another power source (e.g. floppy drive power).

All you require to do is open the Amiga, attach the lead the interface and the hard disk to the lead and secured in the cradle (if necessary) and any power supply attached from the PSU or another source.

Usually, instructions are supplied by the retailer or if you are unsure how to install a hard disk or if your Amiga is still under warranty it is better if the dealer fits it for you!

1.4 Partitioning a hard disk

Partitioning a hard disk

The standard partitioning software is called HDToolbox and it is usually supplied on the Install disk with Workbench. Sometimes third party software is supplied such as GVPPrep, RDPprep and so on.

1. Locate and run HDToolbox.
 2. The program will search through available scsi slots and then display a menu screen. (NB: ide drives on A1200/A600 are listed as scsi, even if they are not, this is normal).
 3. At the top of the screen a list of drives is shown at the top. If it is not recognised then 'Unknown' would be listed. If it is unknown, then do the following steps:
 - a) Click on the item and select 'Change Drive Type'.
 - b) Click on 'Define New...'
 - c) Click on 'Read Configuration' to read the drive's settings.
 - d) Click on OK until the main menu appears.
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4. Now select 'Partition Drive'.
 - a) A new screen appears, with a graphical representation of the partition(s) set up on the hard disk. Sometimes a hard disk may be set up with one or two partitions.
 - b) You can resize partitions using the blue triangle to the appropriate size.
 - c) You can delete unwanted partitions by selecting the partition with the mouse and select 'Delete Partition'.
 - d) If there is space, then selecting 'New Partition' will create a new partition for you by clicking in the free space. Use DHx for partition names where x is 0,1,2 etc..
 - e) To make a partition bootable, click on the appropriate partition e.g. DH0 and click on Advanced Options and tick the 'Bootable' option. Make sure no option partitions have this ticked.
 - f) If you have made a mistake, you can always, click on 'Cancel' and exit HDToolbox.
 - g) Once changes have been made to your satisfaction, click on OK and then on the main screen select Save Changes to Drive.
 - h) Exit HDToolbox and reboot your Amiga. This will force the system to read the new settings on bootup.
5. Boot off a copy of the Workbench disk or the Install disk (preferred).
6. You can now format the new partitions using the Format option on the Workbench Icon menu.

1.5 Installing Workbench on your Hard disk

1. If you have an Install disk then run the 'English' version of the installation script in the Install drawer.
 2. If you do not have the install script then follow these instructions:
 - a) Double click on the Shell icon to open a Shell window.
 - b) Insert the Workbench disk and type:

```
COPY WORKBENCH3.0:#? DH0: All Clone Quiet
```

NB: If you have a different version of Workbench, change the name of the disk used to the one inserted (type INFO to see whats mounted).
 - c) Insert the Extras disk and type:

```
COPY EXTRAS3.0:#? DH0: All Clone Quiet
```
 - d) Insert the Fonts disk and type:

```
MAKEDIR DH0:Fonts  
COPY Fonts:#? DH0:Fonts All Clone Quiet
```
-

- e) Insert the Locale disk and type:
MAKEDIR DH0:Locale
COPY Locale:#? DH0:Locale All Clone Quiet
 - f) The Storage disk contains extra drivers and may be installed later. Not all the files are required but copy the files via Workbench if they are needed.
3. Remove any disks and reboot the Amiga. It should now boot using the files stored on the Hard Disk.
 4. Run each of the Preferences programs to configure the keyboard, mouse, screen and printer as you see fit. Some files may need to be copied to DEVS drawer first for Printer, Keyboard and Monitor drivers from the Storage disk.

1.6 Installing software on your Hard disk

1. Most application software can be installed in three ways:
 - a) Using an Installer script. If no Installer program is found, copy the program from the Install disk to the C directory. If possible use the latest version, the current version is v43.3.
 - b) Using an AmigaDOS shell script.
 - c) Copying the Drawers or files via Workbench (or a File Manager) by hand.
 2. Using method (c) is sometimes hit and miss and some programs require extra libraries and drivers to be installed separately.
 - a) All files ending with .library should be copied to the LIBS drawer.

NB: It is now common for some programs to have their own libs drawer e.g. MUI. Also, never replace a library with an older version.
 - b) All files ending with .device should be copied to the DEVS drawer.
 - c) All files ending with .font with their drawer should be copied to the FONTS drawer.
 - d) Check the program's manual to see what should be installed where.
 3. Check the program runs by double-clicking on the icon, it should run okay or give a requester asking for a particular library, device or whatever.
 4. If the program has its own preferences menu or prefs program run that so that it is set up correctly. Check the manual to see what preferences to set to.
 5. If you are unable to run a program, check its requirements. It may require
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a particular version of Workbench, a particular processor (maybe an FPU or MMU unit), amount of memory or disk space. Check requirements in the program's manual.

6. If you are still unable to run a program, find a copy of SnoopDos, run it and then try running the program. The log from Snoopdos can tell you which files it fails to open and what versions are required.
NB: Some open failures are ok to ignore but to decide whether its mportant or not is dependant on your experience.

1.7 Looking after your hard disk

It is important that you look after the hard disk so that it is well organised and does not fill up too quickly. I read somewhere, that a certain person was having problems with his computer and could not save data until somebody pointed out that his hard disk was full!

The following tips should be noted:

1. Allows backup your hard disk. The cheapest method is to backup your hard disk to floppy disk. It would be wise to invest in some good backup software and external backup device e.g. Tape drives, Zip drives etc.
You do not always have to do a full backup but an incremental every day, week or 2 weeks is advisable. It depends on how important the data is to you.
2. Optimise the hard disk using a defragmentation utility. This speeds up the use of the hard disk as files can become fragmented over time. This only requires doing at the most once a month.
3. Delete programs that you are no longer using. Archive data onto other media if it no longer being used, you can always copy it back if you want it.
4. Get some disk repair tools such as DiskSalv or Quarterback Tools. This will enable you to repair any errors that may appear when the Filing System is damaged by errant programs. They will also allow you to Undelete files you accidently removed.
5. To save disk space, it is advisable to install some sort or real-time dearchiving utilities such as PowerPacker, or XPK utilities which allow you to compress files to save space and then unarchive them on-the-fly when you want to read/view them.
6. Make a note on paper the type, size and details of the partitions (see Advanced options). If the hard disk is accidently erased them it may be possible to setup the hard disk as normal. RDB-Salv utility could be a life saver!

Useful software to have:

MRBackup
Quarterback v6.1 & Tools, Wizard Developments
(recently appeared on CU Amiga Coverdisk)
Diavolo Backup Pro, White Knight Technology

AmiBack 2, White Knight Tech.
DiskSalv 4, LH Publishing
Video Backup System, Power Computing
RDB-Salv (RDPprep also has a facility to save RDB info)

1.8 Problems that may occur

As with any hardware or software, there may be problems that may occur when setting up or using a hard disk.

1. Programs won't load or run and data is corrupted.

This is mostly likely due to the MaxTransfer settings being too high for the Amiga to cope when copying files onto the hard disk. Load HDToolbox and goto Partition Drive, click on Advanced and then on Change.. Set the MaxTransfer value from 0xfffff to 0x1fe00 and OK and Save Changes. Reboot and the new settings will be used.

2. The Amiga reboots and the disk light is constantly on.

Best thing to do is boot with both mouse buttons held down and wait until the hard drive light goes out. When the hard disk filing system (FFS) is damaged the AmigaOS automatically runs a Validation routine on the partition affected. Do NOT reboot if this happens, wait until it finishes before running anything. Use a utility called WaitValidate in your startup-sequence to cause the bootup to pause while validation is in progress.

3. Read/write errors are occuring on the hard disk.

This is more serious as this a hardware fault on the hard disk surface. These are known as Bad Blocks and can be mapped out from the Filing System by Using the Verify Data option in HDToolbox to check the hard disk surface for these Bad Blocks.

4. Checksum errors, corrupted or undeletable files or directories.

These occur when the filing system is corrupted and the validation routine has not fixed them. You need to run a Repair of the filing System using a program such as DiskSalv or Quarterback Tools. As shareware version of DiskSalv 2 is available on Aminet (disk/salv) or other PD sources.

5. HDToolbox does not recognise my Hard disk.

If this occurs, the hard disk is either incompatible or has become irretrievably damaged. I hope you have a backup of it! If important data is on this hard disk then some companies can retrieve it for you - for a price!

6. The partitions have disappeared!

Unless you have a copy of the hard disk and partition information, it is next to impossible to retrieve information again. Viruses also may be a cause of losing RDB information!

7. Hard disk does not boot from cold or even a warm boot.

This sometimes occur on particular models of hard disks. If the hard disk does not boot from cold, press Ctrl+Amiga+Amiga again to boot up. The hard disk sometimes takes too long to spin up before the exec tries to read the hard disk's RDB. If the hard disk does not boot from cold or warm boots then check the Bootable option for DH0 in HDToolbox, cut line of the cable to fix it or replace the HD with a better hard disk!