Aurora™ 3.0

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Please read this entire document — believe it or not, it might just help you! I know Mac users hate manuals, but please read this one. It can't hurt!

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Aurora needs System 4.1 or above, and should work with any Mac that has a color monitor (including Powerbooks). This cdev also works with System 7.

What is Aurora 3.0?

Aurora is a cdev (Control Panel device) that sits in your System Folder. With it, you have full control over the colors used to draw your windows, buttons, scroll bars, and menus. Ever wanted a mauve menu bar? No problem! Ever wanted puce scroll bars? Now's your chance! It's also very easy to do — as simple as choosing colors from the standard Apple color wheel — and you're off to colorizing (and personalizing!) your desktop.

Installation

It's simple. Just drop it in your System Folder. If you are using Sys7, you will be asked if Aurora should be placed in the Control Panels folder. Click OK.

How to Use Aurora

When you select it from the Control Panel's icon list, you will see three main buttons. Click the button corresponding to what you'd like to change: "**Change Window Colors**" for windows; "**Change Control Colors**" for controls (buttons, scroll bars); and "**Change Menu Colors**" for menus. I told you it was easy!

If you try to select Aurora with your monitor set to 2 colors, Aurora will beep and gray out the Control Panel window. Just change your screen depth (preferably to 256 colors) and re-open it.

An Example of Use

Let's say you want to change the title of your windows to a dark blue (as I have mine). Click the "**Change Window Colors**" button and you are presented with a dialog full of buttons. There is also a picture of a standard window, colored appropriately, on the right. The window is originally drawn with the current system settings and is updated as you make changes. The buttons on the left allow you to change the colors of the different parts: **title bar**, **frame**, **content**, **title highlight** and **title bar text** color (for a detailed explanation of these buttons, see below). We want to change the title bar text, so click that button. Up comes the color picker wheel, pick out a nice blue, and click OK. Notice that the title of the window on the right is now the color you picked.

Click **IN THE DRAWING OF THE WINDOW** to **save** your changes, and with the next application you open, the title of all windows will be blue! These same steps work for both menus and controls.

Sys7 Note : The process is the same for picking colors, only the colors you are allowed to change are different. Some, like frame, content, and title bar text, are the same, but new attributes, dealing with tinges, are also available for modification. Others, like title bar color, are not changeable as they are under System 6. For a full description of what colors can be changed, see below.

Other Features

Save reminders

If you try to exit Aurora (choose another cdev or close the Control Panel) and you have not saved your changes, you will be presented with a dialog that allows you to save them. This makes sure you don't lose any of your changes because you forget to save them. Turning off the computer, however, will not prompt this message; but we all use Shut Down, right? =)

Revert to black and white

The normal black and white colors are restored. These are always present as an option because they are stored in the cdev where no one can fiddle with them.

Sys7 Note : Under Sys7, this button is called **Revert To Original.** This will restore the original colors (grayscale shading, etc.) not a true black and white. I decided that the shading Apple provides looks much nicer than the old-style black and white so there is no way to get those colors under Sys7.

Revert to System colors

Sort of an Undo feature. It restores the colors from the time you opened the cdev, regardless of how many times you have saved new colors.

Consolidate [Sys7 only]

This feature, available in the window and control color selection dialogs, allows you to copy the tinge colors between the windows and controls for a more unified look. If the tinge colors are the same, the scroll bars blend in better with the windows they are in. Clicking this brings up a dialog with two buttons: **Controls->Windows** and **Windows->Controls**. The button you pick decides the direction that the tinge colors are copied (source—>destination). You cannot explicitly undo this command, but you can use the **Revert to System Colors** button and start over.

Revert To Saved & Save Into Cdev

If you have more than one System file (say at home and at work or multiple boot floppies), synchronizing colors between them might seem difficult. However, Aurora provides a feature that allows you to **save the color set you are currently using in the cdev** and to **load this color set at a later time** (even on a different machine) as long as you use the same copy of Aurora. This feature is also useful when your System file becomes corrupted and you get a fresh (uncolored) copy from the installation disks.

In the save dialog, there is a check box labeled "**Save colors into cdev"** at the bottom that is normally un-checked (no 'x' in it). If you want to save the colors into the cdev, check this box. No matter what, however, **THE COLORS WILL ALWAYS BE SAVED INTO THE**

SYSTEM FILE. There is no way to save ONLY to the cdev. Sorry. Aurora can keep track of one set each of control, menu, and window colors, but you must do each individually. Clicking the checkbox only saves whatever colors you are saving into the system file, not any of the others.

To get the colors back, use the "**Revert to Saved**" button in the color selection dialog. This will replace the current colors with those saved in the cdev.

Important Interface Notes

This works by replacing the 'wctb', 'cctb', and 'mctb' ID = 0 resources in the current System file. That means that different disks can have different window, control, and menu colors. Also, if you use the Installer to update your system version, your colors should remain intact as the Installer does not (normally) touch these resources.

When you change the window/control/menu colors, the current application (or, if under MultiFinder, all OPEN applications) will change only under certain circumstances: If window or control colors were present before, they will be updated in all open applications without rebooting. If no previous colors existed (i.e. you've never run Aurora or Kolor before), or if you are changing the menu colors, you must RESTART or open a NEW application to get the new colors, and then only the new application will have the new colors. **Even though the changes may not be visible on the screen they are saved in the System file**.

For better looking (and faster) screen updates, **keep the window background color white**. Some applications (such as the Finder and Microsoft Word) don't like the background color to be anything but white — so they EXPLICITLY paint it that way. This means that whatever color you pick for the background color WILL BE PAINTED OVER WITH WHITE! This is NOT a bug in my program!!! The application calls the shots, not the cdev (isn't that how it should be?).

If you don't want the title bar to be inverted (black on white) when you switch to 2 colors, keep the **Title Bar Color** either white or a light color. Some people might think an inverted title bar is neat - to each his own....

If the window was not designed to be color (by the actual programmer), the control colors will act funny: The frame color will be matched to the closest **ORIGINAL** color (red, green, blue, cyan, magenta, yellow, black, white) no matter what you tell it to be. The text color, body color, and thumb color (for scroll bars) will also behave the same way. This is a limitation of the Macintosh - not of my program. If a is created to take advantage of color (such as some in Word 5.0 and the Control Panel), everything will work as specified.

Try to stick as near as possible to the normal menu colors. Keeping all item and menu names black makes for easier reading. Also try to keep the menu background color as light as possible for easier reading of the items. Menus are made to be used, and even though they may look nice, if you can't read them, they're useless.

When using System 7, try to keep the tinge colors the same for windows and controls (see **Consolidate** above). It looks better, IMHO.

Control Parts

Frame Color : Outside border of the control.
Body Color: Shading of the scroll bar when it is active
Text Color : Text color for check boxes and radio buttons.
Thumb Color [Sys 6 only] : Controls the color of the scroll bar thumb.
ScrollBar Light [Sys7 only] : Arrow colors in scroll bar.
Tinge Light/Dark [Sys7 only] : Determines highlights for arrows and scroll bar thumb.

Window Parts

Content Color : Everything but the title bar and border — the guts of the window. Some applications explicitly paint this white.
Frame Color : Outside border of the window.
Title Bar Text Color : Text color of the title of the window.
Title Bar Hilite Color [Sys 6 only] : Color of the horizontal lines in the title bar.
Title Bar Color [Sys 6 only] : Name says it all.
Tinge Color [Sys 7 only] : Determines highlights for close/zoom boxes and the grow box. Also mixes with the border of the title bar.

Menu Parts

Menu Title Color : Color of menu titles, of course.
Menu Background Color : Color of background when menu is pulled down.
Menu Item Color : Color of the individual menu items when menu is pulled down.
Menu Bar Color : Guess.

Thank You's

I want to thank all the people who tested my earlier cdevs. I would have been lost without you. There are too many to list here, but I know who you are!

SHAREWARE NOTICE

One really last note. This program is now **sort of Shareware**. This means that I'm charging for it and I retain all the rights to the program and its documentation, but the idea behind Shareware sets out to make people feel guilty about not paying for software - almost a "Big Brother Is Watching You" type of deal - I don't want to do this to people! I want people to feel good about using my software!

I have spent a lot of time and effort on this so if you like it (or anything else with my name on it for that fact), I'd appreciate it if you sent me what you think it is worth - a better name would be Pay-If-You-Use-It-Ware. The only reason 3.0 came out (and I keep toying with this damn computer) was because a good number of people sent checks (usually about $15) and ideas to me!!

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