

4 Using Buttons

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4 Using Buttons

As we transition away from paper and towards electronic forms, the appearance of forms changes. Forms become more like applications that have a “custom” look-and-feel. Chapter 3, “Customizing Menus,” explains how Informed Filler’s menu commands can be customized for the specific use of a form. This chapter describes Informed Designer’s Button tool and how it can be used to draw and configure buttons to perform specific actions. Buttons can help make a form easier to use by making important or common commands and options visible on the form itself.

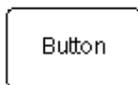
Buttons can be configured to invoke commands that are built into Informed Filler, commands that are available through Informed plug-ins, or scripts that are attached to the form template. In this chapter you’ll learn how to draw buttons, change their appearance, and configure them to perform particular actions.

Drawing Buttons



Informed Designer’s tool palette contains the Button tool. With this tool you can draw buttons of any size. Buttons can have a normal appearance, or they can be transparent and placed over top of other objects such as pictures or icons.

You draw a button much like you do a rectangle. With the Button tool selected, position the pointer where you want a corner of the button to start, then click and drag the pointer to the opposite corner and release the mouse button.



When you draw a new button, its label is initially “Button.” You change a button’s label using Informed Designer’s Text tool. For a detailed explanation of text editing, please see Chapter 6, “Drawing Tools,” in your *Informed Designer Design and Graphics* manual.

You can customize the appearance of a button by changing its font, size, type style, alignment, pen, fill, line width, and roundness of corners. For information on setting these attributes, please see Chapter 7, “Changing an Object’s Appearance,” in your *Informed Designer Design and Graphics* manual.

In addition to the attributes listed above, you can also choose among two button styles: plain and shadowed. A shadowed button is drawn with a small shadow below and to the right of the button.



To set the style of a button, select it, then choose **Button...** from the Settings menu. When the Button Settings dialog box appears, select either 'Plain' or 'Shadowed' from the 'Style' drop-down list.



Choose a button style from this drop-down list.

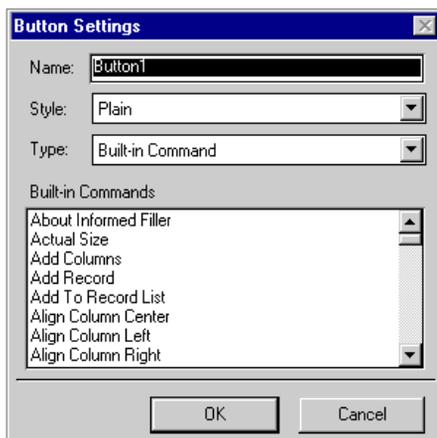
Like any type of object, buttons can be repositioned, resized, and manipulated using Informed Designer's Pointer tool and various commands. For more information see Chapter 8, "Manipulating Objects," in your *Informed Designer Design and Graphics* manual.

Configuring a Button's Action

A button is configured to perform an action when the Informed Filler user clicks it. There are three types of actions that a button can perform:

- a command that's built into Informed Filler
- a command that's associated with an Informed plug-in
- an AppleScript script.

In addition to its action, a button also has a name. Both the name and action of a button are set using Informed Designer's Button command. Select a button, then choose **Buttons...** from the Settings menu.



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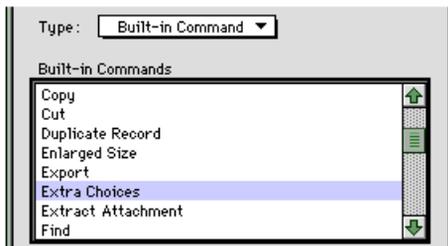
You can give the button a meaningful name regardless of its label. When you draw a new button, it is initially named “Button1,” “Button2,” and so on. To change the button’s name, type a new name in the ‘Name’ text box. Button names must be unique.

To configure a button’s action, first specify the action type by using the ‘Type’ drop-down list, then select the action from those in the scrolling list.

Note You cannot test a button in Informed Designer’s Test mode. A button can be clicked, but doing so will not perform its configured action.

Built-in Commands

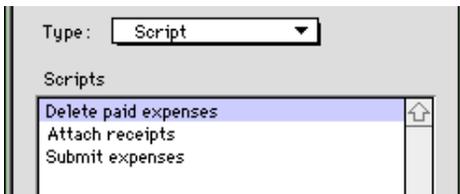
Built-in commands correspond to the commands and settings that are built into Informed Filler. They include the commands and settings that are associated with the menu items of Informed Filler’s standard menu configuration. To select a built-in command, simply click its name in the ‘Built-in commands:’ list.



For a description of the built-in commands, see Appendix B.

Scripts

A button can be configured to invoke an attached JavaScript or AppleScript script. A script is attached to a template using the Scripts command in the Configure submenu of Informed Designer’s Form menu. For more information, see Chapter 12, “Scripting.”





Since AppleScript is a Mac OS scripting system, AppleScript scripts do not function on computers running Windows. For Windows users, Informed Filler will show a button that is configured to invoke an AppleScript script, but clicking it will display the message “That button cannot be used because it relies on AppleScript, a Mac OS scripting system.”



On Mac OS compatible computers, if AppleScript is not active, Informed Filler will show the button, but it will be unavailable.

Plug-in Commands

Some of Informed Filler’s features are made available by installing Informed plug-ins. Certain plug-ins have commands associated with them. In order to configure a button to invoke a plug-in command, you must have the plug-in installed in your plug-ins folder. When you select the Plug-in Command type, the scrolling list below lists all commands, if any, associated with the plug-ins currently installed in your plug-ins folder.

If you configure a button to invoke a particular plug-in command and the Informed Filler user does not have the plug-in installed, the button will be visible, but it will be unavailable.

