DeZkTop v1.8

1. Introduction

DeZkTop is a program launcher, that is an application which starts other applications.   The program launcher most Windows users will be familiar with is the Program Manager, but DeZkTop offers many more facilities than Program Manager and is easier and more convenient to use, not to mention being far more elegant.

This section will get you started with DeZkTop and summarise the features it offers.   The next sections describe how to use it in greater detail.

DeZkTop is available for Windows 3.1 and Windows NT and works fine on the latest beta of Windows 95 available at the time of writing.   To see which version you have choose Help/About from the system menu of any menu window.

Summary of Features

Installing DeZkTop

Importing Program Manager Groups

Making DeZkTop the Shell

1.1 Summary of Features

As mentioned above, DeZkTop is all about starting Windows programs, and there are three ways it does this.

Menu Windows

DeZkTop uses menu windows similar to Program Manager.   The windows contain icons for either applications, or for folders which can in turn contain applications or sub-folders. Folders can be nested within folders to any depth.   Unlike Program Manager, DeZkTop menu windows are normally invisible and pop up when you click on the Windows desktop or use a preselected hot-key.   Normally, menu windows hide themselves again after use, but they can be made permanent to make them more like Program Manager.   Permanent menu windows do not disappear after use and display an icon when minimised.

Floaters

Macintosh users have long been able to leave application icons lying out on the desktop. DeZkTop extends this facility to Windows.   Applications can be dragged out of File Manager, out of a DeZkTop menu window or out of any drag-drop server, and dropped onto the Windows desktop where they appear as an icon.   Alternatively they can be placed directly on the desktop by holding the control key down and clicking at the spot where you want the icon.   Clicking on the icon starts the application, and dropping data files on the icon starts the application and loads the data file dropped.   You can also make a floater act as a link to a menu window so that the menu window is opened when you click the floater.

Hot-Keys

Hot-keys can be set up to launch applications.   For example control-shift-F might be chosen to start File Manager, control-shift-W to start Word for Windows etc.

Sizing

Unless an application deliberately chooses a size for itself its window size and position will be randomly chosen when it starts.   For word processors this means that usually the first thing you do after starting the application is to manually move and resize the window to the shape you want.   DeZkTop has a facility to set the startup size and position of applications to preset values.

Changing the Desktop

DeZkTop allows you to have multiple arrangements of Menus, Floaters, Hot-keys and Sizes, and switch quickly between them just by holding the shift key down and clicking on the desktop.

Auto-run

DeZkTop can run applications automatically when it starts.   This is the same as putting an app in the Startup group of Program Manager, but unlike Program Manager and icon in any DeZkTop menu or any floater can be set to Auto-run.

1.2 Installing DeZkTop

DeZkTop consists of two program files, dezktop.exe and dezklib.dll, and the help file dezktop.hlp.   To install DeZkTop simply copy the ini files to your Windows directory.   The two program files, dezktop.exe and dezklib.dll, can be moved to any convenient directory, but note that the two files must be kept together.   If you plan to use DeZkTop as the shell then dezklib.dll **must** be in a directory on the path.

When you first run DeZkTop its menus will be empty and you will probably want to import the data from Program Manager.

You can run DeZkTop from Program Manager, but it works best when used as the Windows shell.

DeZkTop uses an environment variable to determine where it keeps its data.   By default it creates a subdirectory called DEZKTOP to hold its data in the Windows directory.   You can change the directory the DEZKTOP subdirectory is kept in by setting the environment variable dzkdirectory.   For example in your autoexec.bat you might include the line

    set dzkdirectory=c:\mydir

This will cause DeZkTop to keep all its data in the directory c:\mydir.

This facility was added to make it possible for different users to use the same PC and keep different DeZkTop setups.   Under NT this is easy because each user has their own set of individual environment variables.   Under DOS it is a bit harder, but you can use the DOS 6 multiple configuration facility to set the environment variable DZKDIRECTORY differently at boot time.   The environment variable can also be set differently where different operating systems are used on the same PC, e.g. Windows 3.1, Windows 95 and Windows NT.

1.3 Importing Program Manager Groups

You can import groups from Program Manager into DeZkTop to create <u>menu windows</u>.   This saves the trouble of having to enter icons for all your programs by hand.   To do this select the New folder command from the system menu of any menu window and in the Configure dialog box click the Import button.   This will show a list of all the Program Manager groups.

Import Groups

Select Program Manager groups to import

StartUp
Network
Games
Accessories
Main

OK   Cancel

Simply select the groups you want to import and click OK.   The groups will be imported as folders in the top level menu window.   You can then simply drag these folders into whichever menu window you want.

1.4 Making DeZkTop the Shell

Windows 3.1

To make DeZkTop the Windows 3.1 shell exit from Windows and edit the file system.ini in the Windows directory.   Find the line

shell=progman.exe

and change it to

shell=<put the path if necessary>dezktop.exe

For example I keep DeZkTop in the directory c:\windows\utils, so my system.ini contains

shell=c:\windows\utils\dezktop.exe

If you want to go back to Program Manager as the shell change the line back to its original state.

NB If you make DeZkTop the shell then the library dezklib.dll must be in a directory that is on the DOS path.   The easiest way to ensure this is to place it in the directory \windows\system, but any directory on the path will do.

If you are unfamiliar with editing system.ini then make sure you make a copy of it first, for example by copying it to system.old.   That way if anything goes wrong you can simply copy system.old to system.ini to undo your changes.

Windows NT

Before you make DeZkTop the NT shell pause for a moment.   You have to edit the NT registry to change the shell, and if you mess this up youll find that NT will boot happily but on logging in youll be left with a blank screen.   If youre lucky then hitting ctrl-escape will allow you to run regedt32.exe and repair the damage, but you may find this doesnt work, and youll have to use the NT repair disk to undo the damage.   In extreme cases you may have to reinstall NT.   If, thus warned, you want to go ahead then heres how you do it.

To make DeZkTop the Windows NT shell start the Registry Editor, regedt32.exe in \winnt\system32, and open the tree

HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows NT\ CurrentVersion\Winlogon

and change the entry for shell from

progman.exe

to

taskman.exe,<put the path if necessary>dezktop.exe

The reason for including taskman.exe is that unlike Windows 3.1 the Task Manager, i.e. the ctrl-escape handler, is not started automatically.   Unless you include it in the shell entry or autorun it from DeZkTop youll find that ctrl-escape wont do anything.
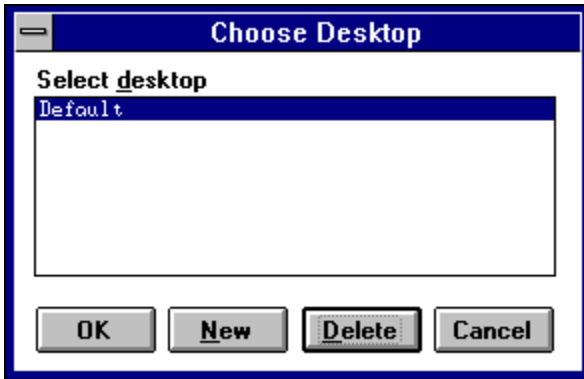
If I recall correctly NT3.1 might have a shell entry looking like *progman,wowexec*.   I think that all the *,wowexec* does is start the win16 subsystem at login and it can safely be left out.

NB If you make DeZkTop the shell then the library dezklib.dll **must** be in a directory that is on the path.   The easiest way to ensure this is to place it in the directory \windows\ system32, but any directory on the path will do.

You will need to logoff and log on again for the change to take effect.   Be damned careful when messing with the registry files!

1.5 Changing the Desktop

Your desktop consists of your Menu windows, your Floaters, your Hot-keys and your Sizing information.   DeZkTop allows you to set up multiple desktops, and you can switch between them simply by holding the shift key down and clicking on the desktop.   This will display the Choose Desktop dialog box.
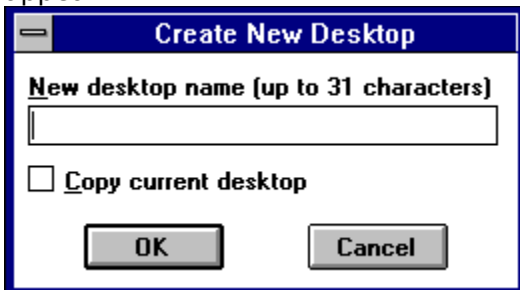
Changing the desktop
You change the desktop simply by choosing a desktop name from the list and clicking OK. As a shortcut you can double-click the desktop name in the list of desktops.

Creating a new desktop
To create a new desktop click the New button and the Create New Desktop dialog will appear.

Type a name for the new desktop and hit ok.   If you check the Copy current desktop the new desktop will be created as a copy of the current one.   The desktop name has to be a valid file name which means that on Windows 3.x it must be no longer than 8 characters with no spaces.   On NT/W95 the name has been limited to 31 characters to keep it compatible with OLE2 structured storage should I wish to go that route in the future, but it can contain spaces.

Deleting a desktop

To delete a desktop choose its id in the list and click Delete.   You cannot delete the current desktop, switch to another desktop first.

1.6 Auto-running Applications

DeZkTop can run applications automatically when it starts.   This is the same as putting an app in the Startup group of Program Manager, but unlike Program Manager and icon in any DeZkTop menu or any floater can be set to Auto-run.

To set an icon or floater to Auto-run right-click on it to bring up the <u>Configure</u> dialog box and check the box marked Auto run.

2. Menu Windows

DeZkTop menu windows work in a similar way to Program Manager windows. They appear as standard looking windows with a system menu at the top left, and a minimise button at the top right. The system menu contains commands to control the way DeZkTop works.

The first difference from Program Manager you will notice is that DeZkTop menu windows are initially hidden. They pop up when you click on the Windows desktop, and after use they normally hide themselves again, or they can be manually hidden by clicking the minimise button. Menu windows can be set to permanent, in which case they do not hide themselves after use, and when minimised they display an icon instead of disappearing. They can also be set to be always on top so that they remain visible even when they do not have the focus.

You can choose whether a left or right click on the desktop is used to pop up menu windows by selecting the Preferences command from the menu window system menu.

The icons in a menu window can represent applications or folders. If you click on an application it is started, or if you click on a folder it is opened to produce another menu window. Unlike Program Manager that menu window can in turn contain folders, and indeed folders can be nested to any depth. By default a single left click on an icon will start it, but for compatibility with Program Manager DeZkTop can be set to require a double-click using the Preferences command from the menu window system menu.

You can also run an application from a menu by drag-dropping a file from File Manager onto the icon. This will start the application and load the dropped file.

NB if you miss an icon and instead drop the file onto the space between icons or after the last icon then DeZkTop will simply add the file to the menu.

Adding Applications to a Menu Window
Adding Folders to a Menu Window
Importing Program Manager Groups
Deleting Icons from a Menu Window
Moving Icons in a Menu Window
Customising Menu Windows

The Menu Window System Menu
Running Applications by File Name

Exiting Windows

Using the Keyboard in Menu Windows

2.1 Adding Applications to a Menu Window

There are two ways to add applications to a DeZkTop menu window, by drag-drop from File Manager and manually using the New Item command from the system menu.   To drag-drop from File Manager, open the DeZkTop menu window you want to add the item to, and then open File Manager.   Find the file you want in File Manager, drag it over the DeZkTop menu window and drop it onto the space between icons in the menu, and you will see the item appear in the window.

NB If you are using this method to add files to a menu then be sure not to drop the file onto an icon or that will start the application for that icon and load the dropped file.   You have to drop the file onto the blank area between icons or after the last icon.

If necessary you can subsequently configure the icon by right-clicking on it.

To manually add an application to a DeZkTop menu select the New Item command from the menu window system menu.   This command brings up the Configure dialog box.   You need to choose a title for the application, and the name of the program file.   If you cannot remember the file name you can click the Browse program button to search for it.   The other options you can change are described in the page on configuring icons.

2.2 Adding Folders to a Menu Window

To add a new folder you have to use the New Folder command from the menu window system menu. If you select this command the <u>Configure</u> dialog box is opened, and you can choose a name for the folder and any other options you want.

2.3 Deleting Icons from a Menu Window

Icons and folders can be deleted from a menu window by right-clicking on them to bring up the <u>Configure</u> dialog box, and then clicking the Delete button.   By default DeZkTop asks you to confirm the deletion.   If you do not want confirmation open the <u>Preferences</u> dialog box and uncheck the box labeled Confirm deletion of icons.

2.4 Moving Icons in a Menu Window

Icons can only be moved around in a menu window if you have a mouse.   To move an icon just drag it to the position you want and drop it.   The icon should be dropped onto another icon not onto "white space".   If you drag an icon forward it will be placed in front of the icon you dropped it on, while if you drag the icon backwards it will be placed behind the icon you dropped it on.

Icons can also be dragged between menu windows and also onto the desktop to appear as a floater.   Dragging between menu windows moves the icon, if you hold the control key down while you do the drag the icon will be copied.   At present folders can only be moved not copied between menu windows.

2.5 Customising Menu Windows

There are several ways you can change the appearance of a menu window.   You can change its size and shape, you can change the icon spacing and you can change the font used, and you can change the appearance and properties of individual icons.

To resize the menu window just drag its border with the mouse.   The icons will automatically be re-arranged to fit the new shape.

To change the icon spacing or font use the <u>Preferences</u> dialog box.   You can display this by choosing the Preferences command from the menu window system menu.

To change the properties of individual icons in a menu window right click on them.   This will display the <u>Configure</u> dialog box or the <u>Configure Folder</u> dialog box if the icon is for a folder.

2.6 The Menu Window System Menu

Move, **Size**, **Minimise**, **Close**:   These are the standard entries on all system menus and allow you to move the menu window, resize it and close it.   Note however that closing a DeZkTop menu window simply hides it.   To exit DeZkTop you have to select the Exit command.

Run: This allows you to <u>run</u> an application by typing its name.   This is useful for running applications for which an icon or floater hasn't been created.
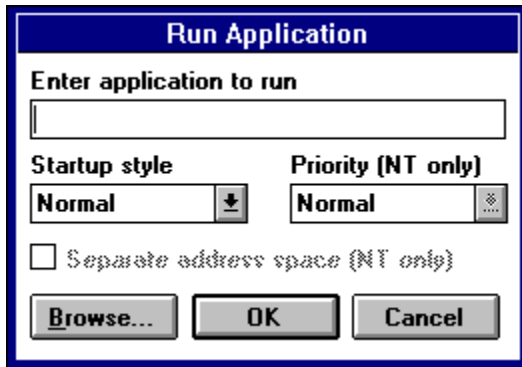
New item, **New folder**:   These are used to add icons or folders to menu windows.

Preferences: The <u>Preferences</u> dialog is used for changing general DeZkTop options.

About/Help: Displays the About dialog.   The About dialog has a **Help** button for opening the DeZkTop help file.

Exit: If DeZkTop is not the shell then this just exits DeZkTop.   If DeZkTop is the shell the this command ends the Windows session.   See <u>Exiting Windows</u> for more details.

2.7 The Run Application dialog box

The Run Application dialog box is used for running applications using their file name.   Type the application file name and any arguments into the Enter application to run box and if necessary choose how you want the application to start from the Startup options control.   If you cannot remember the application file name you can use the Browse button to search for it.

2.8 Exiting Windows

If DeZkTop is the Windows <u>shell</u> then choosing the Exit Windows (Windows 3.1) or Logoff (Windows NT) command from a menu window system menu will exit Windows 3.1 or log off from Windows NT.   If the Confirm exit from Windows box is checked in the <u>Preferences</u> dialog then you will be prompted for confirmation before exiting.

There are a couple of extensions to this facility.   If you hold the control key and shift key down when you click the command DeZkTop will shut down Windows then reboot the PC. Holding down just the shift key will exit Windows 3.1 or shut down Windows NT.   Holding down just the control key will exit then restart Windows 3.1 or logoff Windows NT.

2.9 Using the Keyboard in Menus

DeZkTop cannot be fully used without a keyboard, but the menu windows and of course the hot-keys can be used.

You can pop up the top level menu window by pressing the hot-key combination control-alt-space.   This hot-key can be changed using the hot-key window.   Pressing 1 then starts the first icon, 2 starts the second icon and so on.   Pressing escape closes the current menu window.   Note that using the keyboard only the first 9 icons can be started; if you work without a mouse you should bear this in mind when designing your menu windows.

2.10 Permanent Menu Windows

By default the DeZkTop menu windows appear only when you click on the desktop, and they disappear as soon as they have been used.   DeZkTop is designed this way to leave the desktop as uncluttered as possible.   However, menus can be made permanently visible if desired.

To make a menu permanent right click on the icon for that menu to bring up the <u>Configure Folder</u> dialog box.   In the Menu display list choose Permanent and click OK.   The top level menu is made permanent from the <u>Preferences</u>.

Once a menu has been made permanent it will appear when DeZkTop is started and remain visible while DeZkTop is running.   If you minimise a permanent menu then it will display an icon instead of disappearing.   The icon initially appears at the top left of the desktop, but can be moved to any convenient position.

2.11 Always on Top Menu Windows

Normally the DeZkTop menu windows are hidden if other windows are covering them. This is the normal behavior for windows, but menus can be set to be always on top, in which case they appear on top of other windows even when they dont have the focus. This means the menu window is always visible. To take advantage of this it is probably a good idea to make the window permanent too.

To make a menu always on top right click on the icon for that menu to bring up the Configure Folder dialog box and click the Always on top check box. The top level menu cannot be set to always on top.

3. Floaters

If you have used an Apple Macintosh you probably know that it can leave files lying on the desktop, where they can be started by double-clicking.   Neither Program not File Manager provide this useful feature, but DeZkTop does.

Creating Floaters

Editting floaters

Deleting Floaters

Running Floaters

Moving Floaters

Arranging Floaters

Making a Floater Fixed

Making a Floater Always on Top

Making a Floater Link to a Menu

3.1 Creating Floaters

Floaters can be created in three ways:

1) By dragging an icon from File Manager or from some other drag-drop server and dropping it on the desktop. The properties attached to the icon are copied into the new floater.

2) By dragging an icon from a menu window and dropping it on the desktop. The properties attached to the icon are copied into the new floater.

3) By holding the control key down and clicking on the desktop at the spot where you want the floater. DeZkTop will display a dialog box into which you can type the program name.

You can disable creation of floaters using a <u>Restriction</u>.

3.2 Editting Floaters

Once you have created a floater you can edit it to change any aspect of it.   You might just want to change its title, or you can change everything attached to it to in effect make it a completely different floater.

To edit a floater right click on it to display the Configure Floater dialog box, and this can be used to change any or all of the icon properties.

You can disable editting of floaters using a Restriction.

3.3 Deleting Floaters

To delete a floater right click on it to display the <u>Configure Floater</u> dialog box and then click the Delete button.   Depending on the setting in the <u>Preferences</u> dialog box DeZkTop will ask for confirmation before deleting the floater.

You can disable deletion of floaters using a <u>Restriction</u>.

3.4 Running Floaters

Floaters are run by clicking on them.   Normally a single click will start a floater, but you can make it need a double click by checking the box labelled Single click launches app in the Preferences dialog box.

If you drag a document out of file manager onto a floater it will start the floater and load the document.   For example if you drop a .BMP file onto a Paintbrush floater Paintbrush will start with the .BMP file loaded.
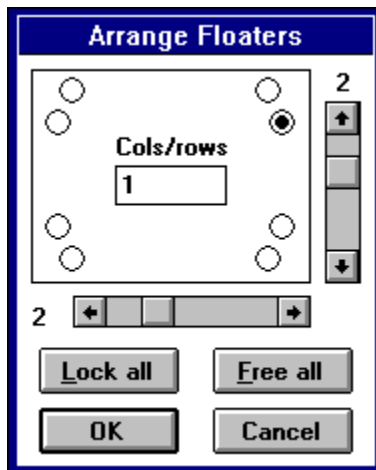
3.5 Moving Floaters

Floaters can be moved about the desktop by dragging them with the mouse.

To make it easier to align groups of floaters they can be snapped to a grid.   If you hold down the control key while you drag the floater will be snapped to a coarse grid.   If you hold down the shift key the floater will be snapped to a finer grid.

Floaters can also be arranged automatically using the Arrange Floaters command.

You can disable moving of floaters using a Restriction.

3.6 Arranging Floaters

Floaters can be moved around by dragging with the mouse, but to tidy all the floaters quickly an Arrange Floater command is provided.

To use this right click on any floater to display the Configure Floater then click the Arrange button.   You can choose which corner of the screen and in which direction to arrange from, and you can also choose the horizontal and vertical spacing.   By default the floaters are arranged in a single row or column, but you can have them arranged in 2 or more rows or columns by typing the number into the Cols/rows box.

DeZkTop will not overlap floater captions even if you set the spacing to 0.   If you want to make the floaters butt right up to each other then you have to remove their captions.   You can do this in the Configure Floater dialog box by setting the title to a single space.

Finally Arrange Floaters box has two buttons which lock and unlock all the Floaters to make them fixed or immoveable respectively.

3.7 Making a Floater Fixed

Normally floaters can be dragged around with the mouse, but you may wish to "lock" a floater to make it immoveable.   Floaters can be locked one at a time or all together.

To lock or unlock a floater open the <u>Configure</u> dialog box by right clicking on the folder and check or uncheck the box labelled Immoveable.   To lock or unlock all the floaters click on the <u>Arrange</u> button and click either Lock all or Free all.

Floaters can be made permanently immoveable using a <u>restriction</u>.

3.8 Making a Floater Always on Top

Normally floaters are hidden if another window is covering them.   This is the normal behaviour for windows, but you can set floaters to be always on top, in which case they will always appear on top of other windows even when they dont have the focus.

To make a floater always on top open the <u>Configure</u> dialog box by right clicking on the folder and check the box labelled Always on top.

3.9 Making a Floater Link to a Menu

A floater can act as a link to a menu window.   In effect this gives you a minimised menu window which you can move around and arrange with the other floaters.   To make a link simply set the Program setting of the floater to >Title, where Title is the title of the menu window you want to link to.

For example suppose you have a menu window called Accessories.   Hold down control and click on the desktop to create a floater and then enter >Accessories in the Program field of the Configure.   Now when you click on the floater the Accessories window will open. Alternatively simply drag the Accessories icon out of the menu window and onto the desktop.

4. Hot-Keys

Hot-keys are a way of starting an application with a single keypress.   For example I have control shift F set as a hot-key to start File Manager.   That way if I need to copy or find a file etc I just press control shift F and File Manager jumps up ready for use.

Note that Hot-keys will not work inside a Dos box because Dos boxes do not use the normal Windows method for handling keystrokes.

Using Hot-Keys for Task Switching
Turning Hot-Keys On and Off
Adding Hot-Keys
Editting Hot-Keys
Deleting Hot-Keys
Displaying the Hot-Key Window

4.1 Using Hot-Keys for Task Switching

Normally the Program field in a hotkey is set to the name of an executable file.   However you can use an entry of the form:

> @<window title>|<exefile>

When this is run DeZkTop looks for a window titled <window title> and if found, the focus is set to that window.   If the window isnt run then the program <exefile> is run instead.   The wildcards * and ? can be used in the window title, for example:

> @Notepad*|notepad.exe

will switch to any window whose title begins Notepad or if no such window exists it will run notepad.exe instead. You have to use the * wildcard here because the Notepad window title will typically be Notepad - afile.txt or Notepad - (Untitled).

This facility allows DeZkTop to be used as a task switcher.   Just set up hot-keys for your favourite apps using the @ syntax and you can either run or switch to your app with a single keypress.

4.2 Turning Hot-Keys On and Off

If you don't need the hot-keys, or they interfere with other applications then you can turn them off.
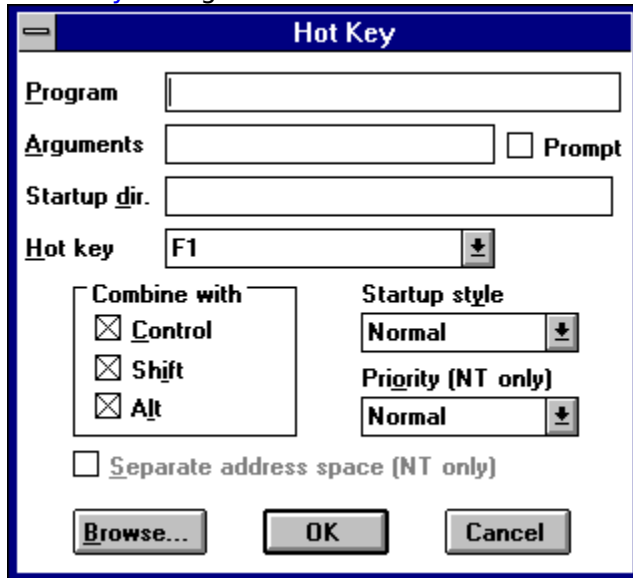
There are two ways to turn hot-keys on and off:

1.   If the Hot-Key window is visible then select the Hot-Keys On or Hot-Keys Off command from the Hot-Key window system menu.

2.   If the Hot-Key window is not visible then then click on the desktop to bring up the top menu window.   Select Preferences from the menu window system menu, and then check or uncheck the box labelled Hot-keys on to turn hot-keys on or off.

Note that hot-keys are on by default.

4.3 Adding Hot-Keys

To add a hot key <u>display</u> the Hot-Key window and click the Add button.   This brings up the Hot-Key dialog box.

To add the hot-key you:

1) Type the application file name in the <u>Program</u> box.   You can click the Browse button to find an application name if you can't remember it.

2) If the application needs arguments type them into the Arguments box.   If you check the Prompt box then the arguments will be prompted for when the application is run.

3) If you want the application to start up in a particular directory type the directory name into the Startup dir. box.

4) Choose the key to use as the hot-key from the Hot-key drop-down list.

5) Select which key modifiers you want from the Combine with check boxes.

6) Choose how you want the application to be started from the Startup options box.

7) Click OK to add the hot-key or Cancel to abandon it.

4.4 Editting Hot-Keys

To edit a hot key <u>display</u> the Hot-Key window, select the hot-key you want to edit and then click the Edit button.   You can short-cut this by just double-clicking the hot-key you want to edit.

Make any changes and then click OK to save the editted hot-key.

4.5 Deleting Hot-Keys

To delete a hot key <u>display</u> the Hot-Key window, select the hot-key you want to delete and then click the Delete button.
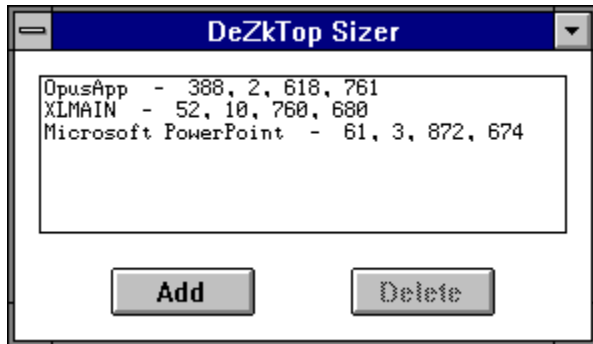
4.6 Displaying the Hot-Key Window

If the Hot-Key window is not visible then click on the desktop to bring up the top menu window.   Select Preferences from the menu window system menu, and then click the button labelled Hot-key window.

Hot-Key

Select the hotkey you want from the drop down list and check any combination of the Control, Shift and Alt boxes to set the modifiers for the hotkey.   Any key can be used as a hotkey, but some keys are less sensible than others.   For example you could make the A key a hot-key, but then you wouldnt be able to type a letter A in any application!

5. Sizing


```
DeZkTop Sizer

OpusApp  -  388, 2, 618, 761
XLMAIN  -  52, 10, 760, 680
Microsoft PowerPoint  -  61, 3, 872, 674


        Add              Delete
```

These days most Windows applications remember where they where and what size they were and will reappear in the same place next time they are run.   However a few still don't, in particular two of my favourite programs Word and Excel.   To get around this DeZkTop has a facility to detect when a window is being created and automatically set it to a predetermined position and size.   Note that this will work even if the application is not launched from DeZkTop, as long as DeZkTop is running.

Turning Sizing On and Off
Adding a Size
Deleting a Size
Changing a Size
Displaying the Sizing Window
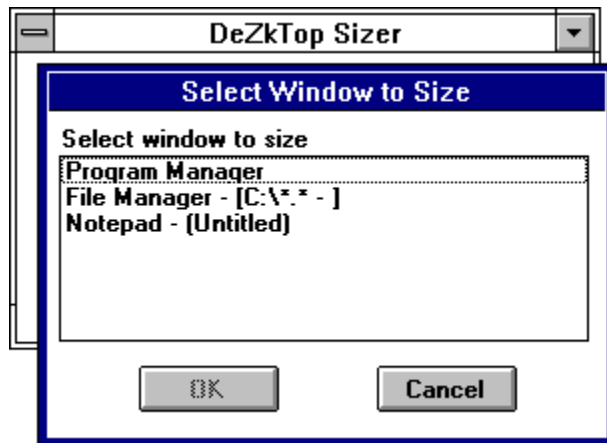
5.1 Turning Sizing On and Off

Sizing inevitably imposes a system overhead, and on some machines you may find it makes the screen refreshing slow.   If this is unacceptable and/or you don't need the sizing facility you can turn sizing off.

There are two ways to turn sizing on and off:

1.   If the Sizing window is visible then select the Sizing On or Sizing Off command from the Sizing window system menu.

2.   If the Sizing window is not visible then then click on the desktop to bring up the top menu window.   Select Preferences from the menu window system menu, and then check or uncheck the box labelled "Sizing on" to turn sizing on or off.

Note that sizing is on by default.

5.2 Adding a Size

To add a size take the following steps:

1. Start the application you want to size and move its window around until it is the size and in the place you want.

2. If necessary <u>display</u> the Sizing window.

3. Click on the Add button and a dialog will appear showing the titles of all the windows DeZkTop can size.

4. Select the window you want to size by clicking on it in the list then click OK.   If you decide not to add the size click Cancel.

There are some points to note.

i)   You should not attempt to size controls like buttons or list boxes.   DeZkTop will normally not allow you to do this anyway, but if you do succeed it will mess up all your dialog boxes.

ii)   Some apps deliberately change their window size, and there is little DeZkTop can do to control these.

iii) Note also that the names which appear in the list of apps monitored are window class names, which need not bear much relation to the app name.   For example while Harvard Graphics for Windows sensibly calls its window class "Harvard Graphics", Word Perfect 5.1 calls its "pmrtMain"!

5.3 Deleting a Size

To delete a size simply display the Sizing window, click on the size you want to remove to select it, and then click Delete.

5.4 Changing a Size

You cannot change a size once it has been defined (except possibly by manually editting dezksize.ini, not a task for the faint hearted!).   If you want to change a size simply <u>delete</u> it and then <u>add</u> it again.

5.5 Displaying the Sizing Window

If the Sizing window is not visible then click on the desktop to bring up the top menu window.   Select Preferences from the menu window system menu, and then click the button labelled "Sizing window".

6. Restrictions

Occasionally it may be useful to restrict the DeZkTop features available.   For example when setting up DeZkTop for naive users you may wish to prevent them accidently deleting menu items or floaters.   Various restrictions are possible by manually editting the file desktop.ini.   The restrictions possible are given below together with their default settings.

[Restrictions]
DisableChangePrefs=0
DisableEditMenu=0
DisableResizeMenu=0
DisableCreateFloater=0
DisableEditFloater=0
DisableMoveFloater=0
DisableReload=1

6.1 DisableChangePrefs

Putting DisableChangePrefs=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini prevents the user from opening the Change Preferences dialog box.

Default = 0

6.2 DisableEditMenu

Putting DisableEditMenu=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini prevents the user from opening the Configure Application or Floater dialog boxes to customise icons in a menu window.

Default = 0

6.3 DisableResizeMenu

Putting DisableResizeMenu=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini prevents the user from resizing any menu windows.

Default = 0

6.4 DisableCreateFloater

Putting DisableCreateFloater=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini prevents the user from creating any new floaters.

Default = 0

6.5 DisableEditFloater

Putting DisableEditFloater=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini prevents the user from opening the Configure Application dialog box to customise floaters.

Default = 0

6.6 DisableMoveFloater

Putting DisableMoveFloater=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini prevents the user from moving any floater.

Default = 0

6.7 DisableReload

Putting DisableReload=1 in the [Restrictions] section of dezktop.ini removes the Reload menu command from the menu window system menu.   Setting this to zero allows the dezkmenu.ini to be manually editted then reloaded.

Default = 1

Registration

DeZkTop is shareware.   If you like it enough to use it then please do the decent thing and register.

You can register on Compuserve using the SWREG facility.   Type GO SWREG and then choose the Register Shareware option.   The id number for DeZkTop is 2943.   Alternatively you can register by sending ten pounds sterling or 15 US dollars to
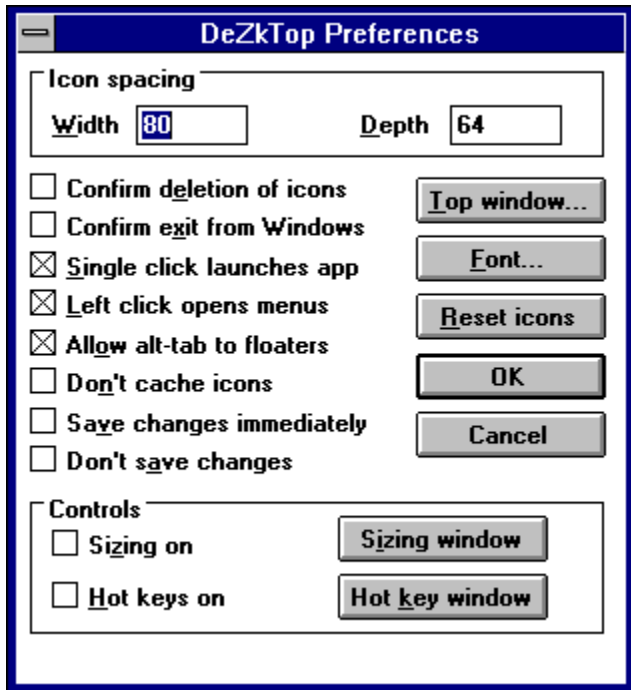
      John Rennie
      18 Shaftesbury Avenue,
      Vicars Cross,
      Chester.   CH3 5LQ
      United Kingdom

email to jrennie@cix.compulink.co.uk or 100270,2376 on Compuserve

I'm afraid I can't take credit card registrations, but cheques against UK banks or indeed cash are more than welcome.   Please note that when you have registered one copy further upgrades are free, and that if you use both the W3.1 and NT versions then one registration covers both platforms.   This will apply to the Windows 95 version too as soon as it is released.

If you are registering from outside the UK and cannot easily get UK currency then the best option is to send me US dollars in cash, or failing this send the approximate equivalent in the local currency.

The Preferences Dialog Box

The Preferences dialog is used to change general DeZkTop options.

Icon Spacing in Menu Windows
Confirm Deletion of Icons and Floaters
Single Click Launches Apps
Left Click Opens Menus
Allow alt-tab to floaters
Dont cache icons
Save changes immediately
Dont save changes
Sizing Control
Hot-Key Control
Top menu window settings
Font Used by DeZkTop
Reset icons

Preferences: Icon Spacing in Menu Windows

The Preferences dialog allows you to change the spacing between icons in a menu window. By default the icons in a menu window are arranged on a regular grid 80 pixels wide and 64 pixels deep, which leaves enough width for quite long titles and enough depth for the title to wrap onto two lines.   If you do not need long titles for icons you can make the menu windows more compact by reducing the width and depth.   I find 72 wide by 52 deep works well.

The spacing between floaters is controlled separately when you use the Arrange Floaters command.

Preferences: Confirm Deletion of Icons

When you delete an icon from a menu window or a floater you can choose whether DeZkTop asks you for confirmation.   Check the Confirm deletion of icons box in the Prefences dialog to ask for confirmation or uncheck it for no confirmation.   Checking this box helps guard against accidental deletion.

By default DeZkTop asks for confirmation.

Preferences: Confirm Exit from Windows

When you use DeZkTop to exit from Windows you can choose whether DeZkTop asks you for confirmation using the Confirm exit from Windows box in the Prefences dialog.   Check this box if you want confirmation and uncheck it if you don't.   Checking the box helps guard against exitting Windows by accident.

By default DeZkTop asks for confirmation.

Preferences: Single Click Launches Apps

Icons in a menu window or floaters are run by clicking on them.   You can choose whether they are started by just a single click or whether a double click is needed using the Single click launches apps box in the Preferences dialog box.   Checking this box means a double click is needed, which is the same as Program manager.   If you uncheck this box then a single click will start the app.   This is non-standard, but it is quicker and more convenient.

By default a single click launches apps.

Preferences: Left Click Opens Menus

Normally the top menu window is hidden, and you have to click on the desktop (ie the Windows background) to display it.   You can choose whether a left or right-click is needed to display the menu.   Check the Left click opens menus box in the Preferences dialog box if you prefer a left click or uncheck if you prefer a right click.

By default a right click is needed.

Preferences: Allow alt-tab to Floaters

If you use alt-tab to switch between applications then you will see that as you cycle through the applications running an icon appears for DeZkTop.   If you alt-tab to DeZkTop in this way then normally any floaters will come to the front and you can click on one.   A side effect of this is that clicking on any one floater pops all the others to the top as well.   Usually this is not a problem, but if you prefer floaters to be firmly fixed to the background then uncheck the Allow alt-tab to floaters box.   This will keep floaters firmly fixed in the background and they will never appear over other windows.

Preferences: Dont Cache Icons

Normally DeZkTop keeps a copy of the icons it uses in floaters and menu windows.   This means it doesnt have to read the icons each time it starts which makes the startup faster, especially on Windows NT.   If for whatever reason you prefer deZkTop to reread the icons each time it starts then simply check the Dont cache icons box.

One reason for doing this might be to alert you if a network connection or CD is not available.   If the icons are not being cached then DeZkTop will read the icons when it starts.   If an app is on a network drive or CD which isnt available then DeZkTop will be unable to read its icon and the app will appear with the default icon.   This gives you a warning that the app isnt available.

Preferences: Save Changes Immediately

DeZkTop normally doesnt save any changes you make to its menus or floaters until it exits. If you prefers all changes to be saved immediately then check the Save changes immediately box.   Checking this box will make the editting of complex menus slower.

Preferences: Dont Save Changes

Normally when you modify menus or arrangements of floaters DeZkTop will save your changes.   This can be inconvenient if you want to make temporary modifications.   If you check the Dont save changes box then any changes you make will not be saved, so the next time DeZkTop restarts the changes will be lost.   Remember to uncheck this box again if you want changes to be saved.

Preferences: Sizing Control

From the Preferences dialog box you can change set Sizing on or off by checking the Sizing on box.   If you want to use the Sizing window to add or delete sizes but it is not visible then you can click on the Sizing window button to display the Sizing window.

For more details see the section on Sizing.

Preferences: Hot-Key Control

From the Preferences dialog box you can change set Hot-keys on or off by checking the Hot-keys on box. If you want to use the Hot-key window to add, edit or delete Hot-keys but it is not visible then you can click on the Hot-key window button to display the Hot-key window.

For more details see the section on Hot-keys.

Preferences: Top Menu Window Settings

To configure a folder, for example to make it <u>permanent</u>, you right click on the icon for the folder to bring up the <u>Configure Folder</u> dialog box.   The top menu window doesnt have an icon, but you can configure it by clicking on the Top window button in the Preferences dialog box.

Preferences: Font Used by DeZkTop

By default DeZkTop uses the smallest available size of the font MS Sans Serif.   You can change the font by clicking the Font button in the Preferences dialog box and choosing a font.
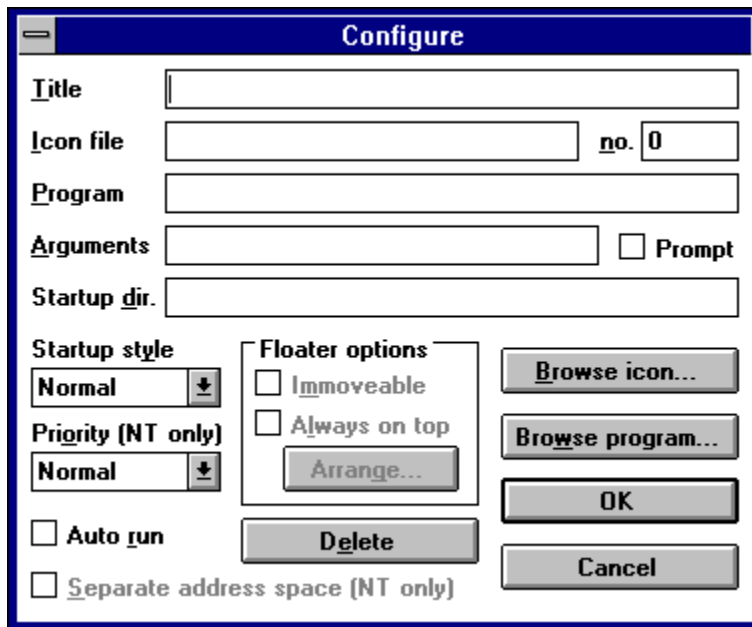
The font colour cannot be selected since it is always chosen to match that used by Windows for icon captions etc.   On a dark background the text is white and on a light background it is black.

Preferences: Reset Icons

DeZkTop keeps a copy of the icons it uses in floaters and menu windows.   However icons are stored as device dependant bitmaps which mean that they change when you switch between 16, 256, 64k or 24 bit colour screen modes.   If you find that the icons become corrupted when you change the number of colours your display works at then simply click the Reset Icons button in the Preferences dialog box.   This will reset the icons to match the new screen mode.

If you change the number of colours a lot and find resetting the icons to be troublesome then you can set DeZkTop to reread the icons each time it starts.   This will ensure the icons are always correct, but it will slow down loading of the menus, especially on Windows NT.

The Configure Dialog Box

You can customise an application by right clicking on it to bring up the Configure Application dialog box.   This is the same for icons in a menu window and for floaters.

From the top left, the controls in the dialog box allow you to
Set the Application Title
Set the Application Icon
Set the Program File
Set the Application Arguments
Set the Startup Directory
Set the Startup Options
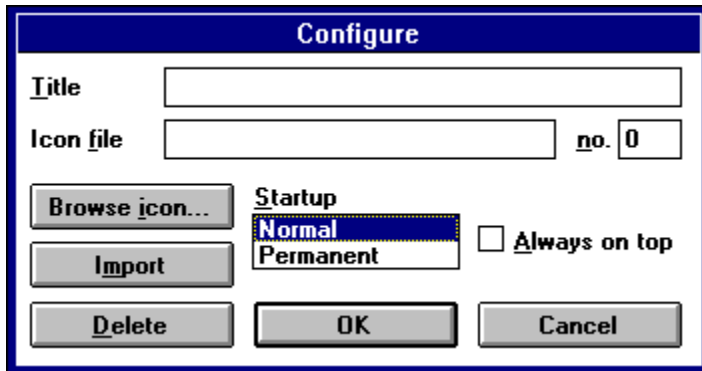Make Floaters Immoveable
Always on Top
Arrange Floaters
Delete an Application
Browse for an Icon
Browse for a Program File

The Configure Folder Dialog Box

You can customise a folder by right clicking on it to bring up the Configure Folder dialog box.

From the top left, the controls in the dialog box allow you to
Set the Folder Title
Set the Folder Icon
Browse for an Icon
Delete a Folder
Import Program Manager Groups
Set the Folder Options
Always on Top

Configure: Title

The Title field in the Configure dialog is used to label an icon in a menu window or a floater, or to set the title for a menu window.   Icon and floater titles are wrapped onto several lines if necessary, and you can deliberately break a title by including the four characters \r\n in the title text.

If you leave the title blank then DeZkTop will make up a title from the name of the program file.   If you want no title then type a single space in the title field, and DeZkTop will interpret this to mean no title.

Configure: Icon File and Number

The Icon file and no. fields in the Configure dialog are used to attach an icon of your choice
to an icon in a menu window or a floater.   You can change the icon by giving the name of a
file containing icons and the number of the icon within that file.   The file can be
a .ICO, .DLL or .EXE.   For example Windows 3.1 comes with a file called moricons.dll which
contains over a hundred icons.   You can click the Browse icon button to search for an icon.

Configure: Program

The Program field in the Configure dialog is the name of the executable file attached to an icon in a menu window or a floater.   This is usually a Windows format .EXE file, but can also be a .PIF file or a DOS .EXE, .COM or .BAT file.

There are a couple of extra tricks you can play with this field.

The Program field can be set to >Title where Title is the title of a menu window.   In this case clicking on the icon opens the menu window titled Title.   This facility allows you to create floaters which open menu windows when clicked on, and you can also create links to menu windows from other menu windows.

As an extension of this The Program field can be set to:

> @<window title>|<exefile>

When this is run DeZkTop looks for a window titled <window title> and if found, the focus is set to that window.   If the window isnt run then the program <exefile> is run instead.   The wildcards * and ? can be used in the window title, for example:

> @Notepad*|notepad.exe

will switch to any window whose title begins Notepad or if no such window exists it will run notepad.exe instead.   Although it was easy to add this has proved very useful since it allows DeZkTop to be used as a task switcher.   Just set up hot-keys for your favourite apps using the @ syntax and you can either run or switch to your app with a single keypress.

Configure: Arguments

The Arguments field in the Configure dialog specifies arguments to passed to the application.   For example if you are working on a document you might want the program name to be write.exe, and the argument to be the name of your document.

If you check the Prompt box then the arguments will be prompted for when the application is run.

Configure: Startup Directory

The Startup directory field in the Configure dialog specifies the directory to be used as the default for the app.   This is not usually necessary, but some applications get upset if the default directory is not the one containing their .EXE file.

Configure: Startup Options

The Startup options field in the Configure dialog allows you to control how an application is run.   The options are:

Startup style

Priority (NT only)

Auto run

Separate address space

Configure: Startup Options

The Startup options field in the Configure dialog allows you to specify whether a sub-menu is <u>permanently</u> visible or whether it disappears after use.   This only applies to sub-menus, to control whether the top menu permanent us the <u>Preferences</u> dialog box.

Configure: Immoveable

The Immoveable check box in the Configure dialog allows you to lock a floater so it cannot be moved.   You can use the Arrange button to lock or unlock all floaters.

The Immoveable check box applies only to floaters.   It is disabled when configuring an icon in a menu window.

Configure: Always on Top

The Always on top check box in the Configure dialog allows you to set a floater or menu window so that it always remains topmost even when it does not have the focus.   This ensures that it will always remain visible.   For menu windows this option is probably best combined with the Permanent setting.

Configure: Arrange

The Arrange button in the Configure dialog box is used to arrange floaters on the desktop. See the entry on arranging floaters in the Floaters section for more details.

The Arrange button applies only to floaters.   It appears when configuring an icon in a menu window, but has no effect.

Configure: Delete

The Delete button in the Configure dialog box is used to delete an icon from a menu window or a floater from the desktop.

Configure: Browse Icon

The Browse icon button in the Configure dialog is used to search for a file containing an icon to attach to an icon in a menu window or a floater.   Typically you would use the Browse Icon facility to find a .ICO, .EXE or .DLL file containing icons.

If there is more than one icon in the file then another dialog opens so you can choose which icon you want.

Configure: Browse Program

The Browse program button in the Configure dialog is used to search for a executable file to attach to an icon in a menu window or a floater.

Startup Style

The startup style determines how an application will appear when DeZkTop executes it. You can make the application appear normally, minimised, maximised or hidden.   However note that applications can determine their startup style themselves, and may ignore the style set in DeZkTop.

Priority

This applies only to Windows NT, not to Windows 3.1.   In Windows 3.1 the Priority combo box is disabled.   In Windows NT you can set the priority that an application runs at.   The possibilities are:

Normal - The usual priority for an application is Normal.

Low - A low priority application will receive CPU time only when no higher priority processes are using the CPU.   Low priority is useful for an app that you want to run only when the PC is otherwise idle.

High - High priority applications will preempt normal and low priority apps.   High priority apps are useful when you want an app to respond immediately no matter what else is running.   Note that when a high priority app is using te CPU normal and low priority apps will be suspended.

Super - This is the highest priority possible.   A super priority app has an even higher priority than system software like the mouse.   Super priority apps should be used with care since if such and app goes into a loop it is very difficult to interrupt.

Separate Address Space

This applies only to Windows NT, not to Windows 3.1.   In Windows 3.1 the Separate address space check box is disabled.   Normally Windows NT runs Windows 3.1 apps in the same address space.   This uses least memory, but it means that W3.1 apps do not preemptively multitask, and an errant W3.1 app can cause all the other W3.1 apps running at the same time to crash.

Checking the Separate address space box makes NT run a W3.1 app in a separate address space, which overcomes both these problems at the expense of high memory usage.

Auto Run

If an icon in a menu window or a floater is set to auto run then the application will be started when DeZkTop is started.   This is similar to putting an icon in the Program Manager Startup group, but it is more flexible since any icon can be marked as auto run.

Troubleshooting

There are a few known problems with DeZkTop.

ATM stops the menus working

Double-clicking on a menu window system menu stops the menus working

Floater captions have a blank line in the middle

Menu icons imported from Program Manager behave strangely

DeZkTop v1.8 and v1.8a run very slowly

Troubleshooting: ATM stops the menus working

For some reason Adobe Type Manager can interfere with DeZkTop's sub-classing of the desktop.   The symptom is that no matter how you click on the desktop the menu windows will not appear.   This is ATM's fault but Adobe are not interested in solving the problem.   As a work around you can manually edit dezktop.ini and insert the following entry:

[DeZkTop]

Subclass=0

If the [DeZkTop] heading already exists do not create a second [DeZkTop] heading, instead put Subclass=0 under the existing heading.   This entry causes DeZkTop to use a transparent window to detect mouse-clicks instead of sub-classing the Windows desktop.

This isnt a problem with the NT version.

Troubleshooting: Menu windows disappear

If you want to close a menu window then you can either click its minimise button or double-click its system menu.   However, occasionally double-clicking the system menu can cause the window to be destroyed, after which the menus stop working.   I don't know why this should happen, and I can't reproduce it on my own PC so I can't discover what is going on. The best way to avoid this is to close menus by clicking their minimise button not by double-clicking the system menu.

This doesnt seem to be a problem in the NT version.

Troubleshooting: Floater captions have a blank line in the middle

Occasionally you may find that if the title for a floater has two words in then it may be split over three lines not two.   For example, in the default font you will find that setting the floater title to Remote Access (note the capitals) then it comes out looking like:

Remote

<blank>

Access

This is due to an oddity in one of the Windows text output functions.   The solution is to make the caption Remote\rAccess.   The \r causes a line break and splits the title correctly onto two lines.

Troubleshooting: Importing from Program Manager

After <u>importing</u> groups from Program Manager into DeZkTop some NT users have found that running things like File Manager and Control Panel from DeZkTop causes strange results. This only happens if you have a dual NT/W3.1 installation, and it happens because you are actually running the 16 bit program not the NT version.   This is why it happens.

If you look at the way icons are set up in Program Manager you'll notice that a lot of the exe file names from Progman don't have a path, eg the File Manager icon will be just "winfile.exe" not "c:\windows\system32\winfile.exe".   So when you import into DeZkTop the path wont be in DeZkTop either.   Unfortunately a lot of the NT and Windows 3.1 applets have the same exe name, so if the current directory happens to be \windows, or if \windows is ahead of \windows\system32 on the path then the 16 bit W3.1 app will be run instead of the 32 bit NT app you wanted.   This seems to be an especial problem when DeZkTop is the shell, since for some reason under these circumstances apps seem to be picked up from \windows first.

To fix the problem simply manually edit the icon so that program includes the path, eg change winfile.exe to c:\windows\system32\winfile.exe.

Troubleshooting: v1.8(a) runs very slowly

I have had a handful of complaints that DeZkTop runs very slowly.   There are two possible reasons I know of that can cause this.

Firstly DeZkTop v1.8 and v1.8a have a bug which means that if you have Save changes immediately checked in the Preferences dialog box then they save the data rather more often than necessary.   Since saving data takes a few seconds this can make the response from DeZkTop feel slow.   To fix the problem upgrade to v1.8b or later, or simply unselect Save changes immediately.

Secondly there's a bug in the NT3.5 implementation of full drag.   How do I know it's an NT bug?   Because they fixed it in NT3.51!   DeZkTop contains a workaround for the bug, but this causes the desktop to continuously redraw itself during full window dragging.   If you're using wallpaper, especially if it's a 24 bit image then the slowdown can be very noticeable. To switch off the workaround manually edit dezktop.ini and add:

     RedrawBug =0

to the [DeZkTop] section.   At the time of writing the latest build of NT3.51 I have is 944, and the problem is fixed in this version.

Useful Tricks

DeZkTop tends to acquire new features because people ask me to put them in, and this means that they arent always terribly obvious to the new user.   This section lists my favourite useful tricks in DeZkTop.

[Arranging floaters](#)

[Using DeZkTop as a task switcher](#)

[Logging off and shutting down Windows](#)

[Importing menus from Program Manager](#)

[Dragging icons between menus and the desktop](#)

[Using environment variables](#)

[Supporting different users on the same PC](#)

Useful Tricks: Arranging floaters

You have probably found that if you right click on a floater then the <u>Configure</u> that pops up has an <u>Arrange</u> button.   This allows you to arrange all the floaters into a single group. However if all you want to do is move one or two floaters around then you can make the floaters snap to a grid by holding down the control or shift key as you drag the floater.

Hold down the control key while dragging a floater to make the floater snap to a fine grid. Hold down the shift key to make the floater snap to a coarse grid.

Useful Tricks: Using DeZkTop as a task switcher

Normally the <u>Program</u> field in a menu, floater or hotkey is set to the name of an executable file.   However you can use an entry of the form:

@<window title>|<exefile>

When this is run DeZkTop looks for a window titled <window title> and if found, the focus is set to that window.   If the window isnt run then the program <exefile> is run instead.   The wildcards * and ? can be used in the window title, for example:

@Notepad*|notepad.exe

will switch to any window whose title begins Notepad or if no such window exists it will run notepad.exe instead.   You have to use the * wildcard here because the Notepad window title will typically be Notepad - afile.txt or Notepad - (Untitled).

This facility allows DeZkTop to be used as a task switcher.   Just set up hot-keys for your favourite apps using the @ syntax and you can either run or switch to your app with a single keypress.

Useful Tricks: Shutting down Windows

If DeZkTop is the <u>shell</u> then it will automatically shut down Windows 3.1 or log off Windows NT whe you exit DeZkTop.   However you can use DeZkTop to logoff, shutdown or reboot the PC even when DeZkTop isnt the shell.   To do this just exit DeZkTop as normal, by choosing the Exit command from any menu window system menu, but as you click on Exit hold down:

- the control key to logoff NT or shutdown and restart W3.1

- the shift key to shutdown Windows

- the control and shift key to reboot the PC

Useful Tricks: Importing menus from Program Manager

When you are first setting up DeZkTop it can save a lot of time to import the existing Program Manager groups rather than have to re-enter them all manually.   This is also useful to import any new groups created when new applications are installed.

To do this select the New folder command from the system menu of any menu window and in the Configure dialog box click the Import button.   This will show a list of all the Program Manager groups.

Simply select the groups you want to import and click OK.   The groups will be imported as folders in the top level menu window.   You can then simply drag these folders into whichever menu window you want.
As a shortcut, hold down the control key as you select the New folder command from the system menu, and DeZkTop will immediately bring up the Import dialog.

There is one potential problem with importing from Program Manager if you are using a combined NT and Windows 3.1 installation.   See the section in Troubleshooting for more details.

Useful Tricks: Dragging icons between menus and the desktop

You can drag icons out of menus onto the desktop where they appear as floaters, and you can also drag floaters off the desktop into menus where they appear as icons.   Just dragging moves the icon/floater, to make a copy hold down the control key as you drag the icon.

There is one potential problem with this process.   If you drag a folder icon out of a menu onto the desktop then it doesnt copy the whole folder to the desktop, instead it just creates a <u>link floater</u>.   If you drag this floater back into the menu then you will appear to have two copies of the folder, but only one of these is the real folder and the other is the link.   If you delete the wrong one you will find youve completely deleted your folder.   You can tell which is the link, because if you right click on it then the Program field will start with a > character.

Useful Tricks: Using environment variables

You can use environment variables in icons, floaters and hotkeys.   Simply include the environment name surrounded by a % character on either side.   For example putting %TEMP% in the Startup directory field would make the temporary directory the current directory when the icon is executed.

This can be especially useful in NT when several users share the same machine as you can use the USERNAME environment variable to make entries specific to each user.   See the next section for more on users sharing a PC.

Environment variables can be used in the Program, Arguments and Startup directory fields.

Useful Tricks: Supporting different users on the same PC

Sometimes different users have to share the same PC and they need to have different DeZkTop setups.   If you want to do this then set the environment variable DZKDIRECTORY to be a directory name, and DeZkTop will store its data in that directory.   In NT environment variables are specific to each user, so it is simple to set the DZKDIRECTORY to point to a different directory for each user.

In Windows 3.1 life is a bit harder.   You can either use the MSDOS 6 multiple config.sys facility to set the environment variable differently for each user, or you could set up a different <u>desktop</u> for each user, and the user would have to manually switch to their desktop.