Instant File Access Frequently Asked Questions
Version 4.00   July 27, 1995

Click on the ? buttons below for answers to each question.

Instant File Access
? What is it?
? Where do I line up to get my copy?

File Description Questions
? How are file descriptions stored?
? How can I see the file description in DOS?
? When I copy a file at the DOS prompt, why does it's description get lost?
? Can I give long descriptive names to directories?

Commonly Asked Questions
? How do I copy the found file list into the clip board.
? How do I hide the IFA desktop icon?
? My file dialog takes a long time to display. How can I fix this?
? Where do I send bug reports?
? Can I preview a file within the Files listbox of the Open dialog?
? Why can't I remove a file database? **(Version 3.??)**
? Can I have more than one set of Floaters and Permanents for an application?
? Can program manager remain active when starting IFA?

Word and Excel Questions
? Why can't I save files other than DOC and XLS in Word and Excel?
? Can I change the file types in Word and Excel?
? How can I temporarily disable IFA when saving in Word and Excel?

All To Common Questions
? What is All To Common?
? Why doesn't the Common dialog appear after replacing with All To Common?
? Why, in some applications, doesn't IFA work in the File dialog?
? Why can't I replace a file dialog using IFA's All To Common feature?

Compatibility Questions
? Will IFA work under Windows NT or Windows 95?
? Can IFA work with Norton Desktop's File Assist?
? Why cant I use the popup menues in PC Tools Desktop?

Support and Registration Questions
? How can I register IFA?
? How do I get support for IFA?

To get help on using this help program, press the F1 key.

💡 Why can't I save files other than DOC and XLS in Word and Excel?

Windows Word versions 2 and 6 and Excel version 5 don't allow files to be saved of different types by simply entering the new file type.   You must first select the file type from the **Files of Type:** combo box, then enter the file name in the **File name:** edit box.

Files of types other than what is shown in the Files of Type: combo box cannot be saved using IFA.   To save files of different types while using IFA with Word or Excel, simply hold down one of the SHIFT keys while selecting the **Save As...** option from the File menu.   This will invoke the original SaveAs dialog box of Word and Excel.   This works for any file dialog that has been converted to an IFA Dialog by the All To Common feature.

A better way is to use the alternate form of All To Common.   This will display the original file dialog of the application with a small Tool bar button to the upper left of the dialog.   When you wish to save a file, simply select **File/Save As...**, then click the small button.   The IFA dialog will appear, allowing you to enter the filename to save.   When you click OK in the IFA dialog, it will dissapear, and place the file name entered into the Filename field of the original dialog.   You can then click OK in that dialog to save the file.

To set this mode of All To Common, simply select the All To Common configuration from the Configuration Dropdown () and check the **Show open button beside dialog** option.

❓ How do I copy the found file list into the clip board?

After performing a File Find, the list of files can be copied to the clipboard and pasted into your application.   To do this, simply click on the **Copy to...** button, select the **Clipboard** checkbox, then click the **OK** button.   You can now paste the list of files into your application.

How do I hide the IFA desktop icon?

To hide IFA's desktop icon when IFA is started, simply add the **/HIDE** parameter to the command line field of the Program Manager.   This can be found in the Startup group, or in the Instant File Access group.   To hide IFA after it has been started, simply select the **Hide** menu item in the IFA desktop icon menu.

My file dialog takes a long time to display. How can I fix this?

It's been known to happen, very infrequently mind you, but under some circumstances IFA can become slow in responding to a File Open or Save As request.   This is because the IFA data file gets corrupted. Why?   We're not exactly sure, but it seems to happen if your Windows system crashes often, with that good old **General Protection Fault** error message.

If you become aware of this slowness in response, the simple solution is to erase the **IFADB.IDX** and **IFADB.DB** files from your IFA directory.   This will, however, destroy all your Floaters, File Histories, and Registration information, but will restore IFA to its original speed.   You will have to re-enter the registration information.

NOTE: If your system crashes often, you should first try to solve **THAT** problem before erasing any files. System crashes can cause other problems in your system to malfunction, not to mention destroy data.

? Can I change the file types in Word and Excel?

Since the file dialogs of Word and Excel are replaced by the All To Common feature of IFA, you can find there configurations in the **All To Common** configuration dialog box.   This is accessed by clicking on the IFA desktop icon, selecting **Configure IFA...** from the menu, then clicking on the **All To Common** button. The dialog box shown will display all file dialog substitutions, as well as all file types contained within those dialogs.   To modify the file types of an application, simply modify the text within the **File types:** box.

NOTE: If the desktop icon of IFA is not visible, double click on the IFA icon in the Instant File Access program manager group and it will appear.

How can I temporarily disable IFA when saving in Word and Excel?

To use the original file dialogs of Word, Excel, or any applications which have had their file dialogs replaced by All To Common, simply hold down the **SHIFT** key while selecting the file operation.   In some applications, such as Excel version 5, pressing the SHIFT key while clicking on a toolbar button changes the purpose of the button.   To avoid this, select the equivalent option from the menu instead.

❓ **Will IFA work under Windows NT or Windows 95?**
Currently, Instant File Access version 3.02 and 4.00 work under Windows NT version 3.5 with 16 bit Windows applications.   However, since IFA wasn't designed to work under anything other than Windows 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups 3.11, Alexoft cannot guarantee it's stability under any other operating system.   Alexoft is currently working on this, and will release a new IFA for the Windows 95 operating system shortly after Windows 95 is released.

How do I get support for IFA?

Alexoft can be reached at the following addresses...

CompuServe:	**72154,15**
Internet:	**72154.15@compuserve.com**
Phone:	**(514) 762-1792**
	8:00am - 9:00am and 5:00pm - 9:00pm (Eastern Standard Time)
Post:	**507 de la Metairie**
	Nuns' Island, Quebec
	CANADA H3E 1S4

❓ Why can't I replace a file dialog using IFA's All To Common feature?

For the All To Common feature to work, the file dialog being replaced must contain an edit box for the file name.   Some applications produce this field as a picture rather than an actual edit box, which defeats the workings of All To Common.   If you have attempted to replace a file dialog using All To Common, and it has not worked, then you've probably stumbled upon such a beast.   Alexoft would greatly appreciate knowing about any application you come across with this problem.

❓ How can I register IFA?

Instant File Access can be registered in 3 ways...

1. Run the IFAREG.EXE utility in the Instant File Access program manager group.   Enter the information, and print the order form.   Then send it to us and we will send you the registration number.   You can also fill in and print the **REGISTER.WRI** file and mail it to Alexoft.   You will be mailed a registration number by post.   Or, if you specify your Email address, your registration information will be sent to you by Email.

2. Type **GO SWREG** on CompuServe, and enter **7008** as the registration number.   Your registration information will be sent to you in a reply message on CompuServe.

3. You can order with MasterCard, Visa, Amex, or Discover from Public (software) Library by...
    - Calling (800) 2424-PsL or (713) 524-6394
    - FAX to (713) 524-6398
    - CompuServe Email to 71355,470
    - Internet Email to 71355.470@compuserve.com
    - Regular mail to PsL at P.O.Box 35705, Houston, TX 77235-5705.

PsL requires the following information:

Credit Card: MasterCard

                          VISA

                          AMEX

                          Discover

Credit Card Number: _____
Expiration Date: _____
Name On Card: _____
Billing Address: _____
                          _____
                          _____

> **PLEASE INCLUDE THE STANDARD IFA ORDER FORM WHEN SENDING YOUR ORDER BY FAX OR EMAIL TO PsL.**

NOTE: THE ABOVE NUMBERS ARE FOR CREDIT CARD ORDERS ONLY.

ALEXOFT CANNOT BE REACHED AT THESE NUMBERS. PsL IS A CREDIT CARD ORDERING SERVICE. THEY DO NOT OFFER CUSTOMER SUPPORT FOR INSTANT FILE ACCESS.

Any questions about the status of the shipment of the order, refunds, registration options, product details, technical support, volume discounts, dealer pricing, site licenses, non-credit card orders, etc, must be directed to Alexoft.

To insure that you get the latest version, PsL can send you a disk containing the latest version of IFA.   Shipping charges are $4.00 (US Dollars) for Canada and the USA, and $6.00 (US Dollars) for overseas orders.

What does "All To Common" do?

Some applications use their own style of file open and save-as dialog box.   In most cases, this proves to be a problem, since most people are used to the standard file dialog of Windows.   It offers a consistent way to access files in Windows applications.   Instant File Access can replace those non-standard file dialogs with the common file dialogs through a feature known as **All To Common**.   Replacing an old style dialog is as simple as 4 easy steps...

1. Select File/Open in the application containing the dialog to be replaced.
2. Select New Open Dialog in the IFA desktop icon menu.
3. Click the Pick button and select the File Name field.
4. Click the Save button in the All To Common dialog.

At this point, a standard Common file dialog will appear in place of the old one.   Every time you select File/Open in that application, the standard Common File Dialog will appear.

Can IFA work with Norton Desktop's File Assist?

Yes, but you should disable File Assist for IFA to work properly.   To do this, following the steps below...

1. Run Norton's Control Center program.
2. Click the Defaults button.
3. Click the FileAssist button.
4. Uncheck the ***Enable File Assist*** option.

Why doesnt To Common doesnt replace a dialog?

In certain applications, the file dialog cannot be replaced using All To Common of Instant File Access.   The reason is that the file name field is not a true edit box, but another type of control that cannot be detected by All To Common.   When this is the case, the replacement procedure will fail with an error message, or the Common Dialog will not appear when you request the File Open dialog.

❓ Why, in some applications, doesn't IFA work in the File dialog?

When Windows version 3.1 was released, a common form of file access, known as the **Common File Dialog Box**, was created.   All Windows applications have access to this dialog, which makes accessing files consistent amongst different applications running under Windows.   Some applications, however, didn't follow this standard for whatever reason, so the file dialog shown is not that of Windows.

Instant File Access can only attach itself to a real Common File Dialog.   For this reason, the All To Common feature was created to replace non-standard file dialogs with Common File Dialogs.

❓ Where do I send bug reports?

If you spot an inconsistency in Instant File Access, or an error in the documentation, please let us know by filling in and printing BUG.WRI and mailing it to Alexoft.   Or, you can send an Email message to our CompuServe or Internet address.

❓ Can I preview a file within the Files listbox of the Open dialog?

Yes!   Simply hold down the **ALT** key while clicking on the file name in the Files listbox.   If the selected file is a text file, the first few lines will appear in a small preview box beside the cursor.   Otherwise, the application associated with the file will run.

To learn more about associating applications with files, run the File Manager and consult it's on-line help.

Why can't I remove a file database? (Version 3.??)

When a file database is associated (or linked) with an application, Floater, or Permanent, it cannot be removed.   To remove that database, you must first remove all of its links.   Future versions of Instant File Access will fix this hassle.

Application Profiles?

You can create as many profiles per application you wish.   Click on the button in the Toolbar and hold it down.   When the popup menu appears, select the **New...** option.   You will create a new profile for this application, which can have its own set of Floaters, Permanents, and File History Database.   To activate another profile, click and hold the button again, then select the profile you wish to be active.

? Can program manager remain active when starting IFA?
Yes, but only if you start Instant File Access hidden.   See Starting IFA Hidden.

What is it?

Instant File Access is a Windows 3.11 utility which attaches itself to the file dialogs of all Windows applications.

Click HERE to see a regular open file dialog.
Click HERE to see an open file dialog enhanced by Instant File Access.

Instant File Access adds many features to the open dialog such as...

■ It keeps lists of previously opened files for each application.

It lets you create floating windows of frequently accessed files which appear beside the open dialog.

It lets you perform file and directory functions, such as delete, copy, make dir, etc., without leaving your Windows application.

It lets you search for files, or text within files without leaving your Windows application.

It adds a toolbar to the open dialog so you can access all these functions easily.

It lets you replace old style file dialogs with standard Windows file dialogs with the **All To Common** feature.

It lets you preview a file before you open it, or run the application associated with a file.

⁉ Where do I line up to get my copy?

As of **July 5 1995**, the latest version is **4.00**, and the file is **IFA400.ZIP**.   You can get Instant File Access several ways...

By Mail

Send **$10.00 (US Dollars)** for postage and handling to receive a disk containing the latest version of IFA.   Please specify disk format.

CompuServe

The **WINSHARE** and **WINUTIL** forums of CompuServe always contain the latest version of IFA.   For WINSHARE it is found in the **General Windows Utilities** area.   For WINUTIL it is found in **Library 18**.

Internet
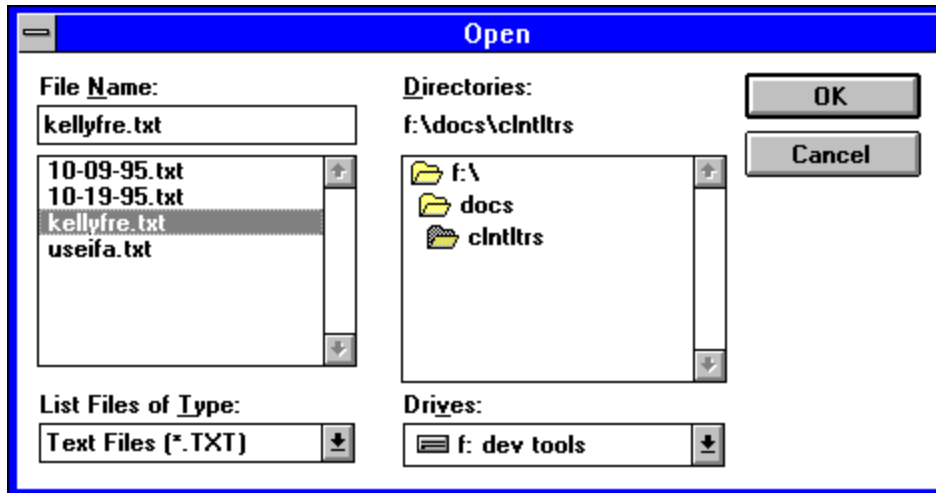
The **US Internet FTP site** at address "**ftp.cica.indiana.edu**" has the latest version of Instant File Access.

Bulletin Boards

Most bulletin boards in North America will have a copy of IFA, but possibly not the latest, and possibly not directly uploaded by Alexoft.

NOTE: *Please be careful to scan the IFA zip file when received to ensure the files did not contract a virus.*

Regular Open File Dialog

Open

File **N**ame:

`kellyfre.txt`

```
10-09-95.txt
10-19-95.txt
kellyfre.txt
useifa.txt
```

List Files of **T**ype:

`Text Files (*.TXT)`

Directories:

f:\docs\clntltrs

```
📂 f:\
  📂 docs
     📂 clntltrs
```

Dri**v**es:

`f: dev tools`

OK

Cancel

Open File Dialog Enhanced by Instant File Access

How are file descriptions stored?

File Descriptions (or Long File Names) are stored in each directory in a file named DESCRIPT.ION.   This files format is compatible with 4DOS, which is a shareware utility available on most bulletin boards and other on-line services.

How can I see the file description in DOS?
To see the file descriptions in DOS you must have a utility called 4DOS.   This utility is available on most bulletin boards and on-line services such as Compuserve.

Disappearing description

If you rename a file with a description associated with it in DOS, you will loose the description association.   To maintain this association, you must rename the file in either IFA using the Rename button in the Toolbar, or through the 4DOS utility in DOS.

Can I give long descriptive names to directories?

You can give long file names to files and directories by selecting the Rename button in the Toolbar and typing the long name in the **Description** field.

Compatibility with PC Tools Desktop?

IFA is compatible with PC Tool Desktop, but the right mouse button is ignored.   This is because PC Tools Desktop sees the mouse before IFA does.   Therefore, it takes effect first, putting up its menu of file commands.   In this situation, use the toolbar buttons instead.