# Links: Clusters of related files

It's increasingly common for a single feature of your Mac — Internet access, your CD-ROM drive, your scanner, Microsoft Office, and so on — to require a large number of extensions or control panels. Suppose that, one bright morning, you decide to turn off your Microsoft extensions. That's great — as long as you're willing to hunt down each of the pertinent startup files in your Conflict Catcher list and click them off, one at a time.

Conflict Catcher's group links feature makes such tedium a thing of the past. The main Conflict Catcher window shows a list of such required startup-file clusters — groups of extensions and control panels that turn on and off simultaneously with a single click. You can turn off an entire feature just by clicking its name in this list — or by clicking any one of the required extensions or control panels in the main file list.

In fact, although simultaneous on/off switching is the most common use of links, this feature has two other useful abilities:

• An incompatibility link prevents two conflicting extensions from being turned on at the same time. For example, you'd be wise to prevent your Mac from having two screen savers at work simultaneously, or two virus checkers, or two font-management programs. Links can ensure that such a problem never arises; when you turn one on, the other automatically snaps off.

• A forced order link enforces a loading sequence among certain extensions, so that, for example, FaxCrasherPlus always loads before ISO 9660, no matter what.

## To Create a Link

Conflict Catcher comes with a number of useful, predefined links. To save you unnecessary screen clutter, they show up on your main Conflict Catcher screen only if your system actually has the extensions that make up that group.

But suppose you buy a new program whose startup files aren't covered by Conflict Catcher's predefined links. In such a case, you may want to create a link for all its required startup files. To create a new link:

1. From the Special menu, choose Edit Links.

The Edit Links dialog box appears. It lists all of Conflict Catcher's predefined links—including many that don't show up on your main Conflict Catcher screen. This Links list shows all the links Conflict Catcher knows about—almost every conceivable cluster involving software from Apple, Microsoft, and other major software companies.

2.
Click Create.

Now the Create Links dialog box comes up. Conflict Catcher shows you every extension, control panel, and other Conflict Catcher-supervised file in a tall, scrolling list in the middle of the window.

3.
Type a name for the new group you're creating.

Make it as descriptive as you can, such as ATM vs. Suitcase" or "GlobalFax before MS Office" or "Olympus Camera."

4.
To create a group link, make sure the upper-right pop-up menu says Group. Then specify which files you want included in this group.

To include one of these files in your group, double-click the file's name. It appears in the list at the right side of the window, in the column labeled Files in Link. Keep double-clicking until you've added all the files you want to be part of this group.

If you make a mistake, and you want to delete a file's name from the group, double-click its name in the right-side list.

5.
To create an incompatibility link, choose Incompatibility from the upper-right pop-up menu. Then specify which files you want included in this group.

In most cases, you'll choose only two files to be part of this "this-town-ain't-big-enough-for-the-two-of-us" link. Remember, the idea is to identify files that can't coexist. When one of them is on, the other must be turned off.

6.
To create a forced-order link, choose Forced Order from the upper-right pop-up menu. Then specify which files you want included in this group.

Once again, select files from the list at left and add them to the list at right. Then drag the names of these Reorderable files up or down to specify their loading order.

From now on, whenever you turn on the Macintosh, regardless of the currently selected set, your extensions, control panels, and other files will load into the Mac's memory in the order you've specified (relative to each other).

7.
Click OK to close this dialog box; click Done in the next one to return to the main Conflict Catcher window.

Your link is now in effect.

## Managing your links

Conflict Catcher lets you organize and control your links in a number of useful ways. You do most of this organization in the Links dialog box. To get there, choose Edit Links from Conflict Catcher's Special menu. The resulting dialog box offers buttons for creating, modifying, deleting, printing information about, or import/exporting link information to other Conflict Catcher-equipped Macs.