


Managing Fonts, Plug-ins, and Other Files

Conflict Catcher's features go far beyond startup-file management. It can manage all kinds of other files equally well, such as fonts, Apple menu items, plug-ins for Web and graphics programs, and so on, letting you turn them on or off whenever you like.

- **Fonts.** You can associate selected fonts with your Conflict Catcher sets so that, for example, your fancy design fonts are automatically available whenever you switch to your Graphic Design startup-file set. You can also create Conflict Catcher sets that manage only fonts, and otherwise leave your System Folder files alone.
- **Startup Items.** Suppose the first thing you do every morning is check your email. Thanks to the Mac's startup items feature, your Mac can launch your email program automatically every time the computer starts up — just place an alias of this email program into the Startup Items folder, which is in your System Folder.

Conflict Catcher can control which of these startup items get launched when you turn on the Mac. You can make these startup files part of your Conflict Catcher sets, so that, for example, whenever your Internet Only set is selected, your email and Web browser programs are launched automatically when the Mac turns on.

- **Shutdown Items.** Another standard Mac feature is the Shutdown Items folder, which is also inside the System Folder. Any icon (or alias thereof) in this folder gets “double-clicked” when you shutdown the computer. (Backup programs and sound files that say “th-th-th-that's all, folks!” are the usual examples.) These, too, can be made part of Conflict Catcher's repertoire.
- **Apple Menu Items.** Conflict Catcher can even control which files show up in your  menu. It does so by manipulating which icons are in the Apple Menu Items folder, located in your System Folder.
- **Contextual Menu Items.** Mac OS 8 and later offers a useful shortcut feature. If you click anywhere in the Finder — in a window, on an icon, on the desktop, and so on — while pressing the Control key, a pop-up menu appears at your cursor tip, listing commands that pertain to whatever you're clicking. For example, if you Control-click an icon, you're offered such choices as Move to Trash, Open, and Get Info.

If you're a power user, however, you may have discovered the wealth of add-on contextual menu items available as shareware and freeware from the Internet. Each of these add-on modules gets installed inside your System

Folder, in a folder called Contextual Menu Items. Each adds new commands to those Control-key menus. You can use Conflict Catcher to control which of these items appears in your Control-key pop-up menus.

- **Control Strip Modules.** The Control Strip is the handy floating row of tiles that control various aspects of your Mac. Using the pop-up menus that appear when you click these various tiles (or modules), you can control your Mac's speaker volume, monitor setting, music CD playback, and so on. Conflict Catcher can control which tiles appear in your Control Strip.
- **Location Manager Modules.** Location Manager is an Apple control panel that lets you switch a variety of Mac control panel settings — the time zone, speaker volume, network and printer choices, even the local Internet phone number — with a single click. Conflict Catcher can control which of these options are available.
- **OpenDoc Parts.** OpenDoc is a now-abandoned Apple technology that was originally designed to let you buy software in pieces, feature by feature, to avoid the feature bloat that affects many of today's programs. If you still use this fledgling technology, Conflict Catcher can control which of those software pieces — known as parts — are available to your Mac.
- **Plug-ins and Xtensions.** Plug-ins are add-on modules that enhance the programs you already own. Each plug-in is a file in a special Plug-ins folder, which is found in (for example) the Photoshop, Netscape Navigator, Microsoft Internet Explorer, Adobe Illustrator, or QuarkXPress folder. Unfortunately, each of these plug-ins inflates the memory requirement of its parent program and makes the program take longer to load.

For that reason, Conflict Catcher's ability to turn these plug-ins on and off can be extremely useful. If you're not going to be importing any graphics from an IBM or Silicon Graphics computer, for example, you may as well turn off the six Photoshop plug-ins that have to do with translating those kinds of files.

You don't have to restart the computer when turning plug-ins on or off — just make your selection in the Conflict Catcher window (or by changing Conflict Catcher sets) before you launch the program in question.

- **Other System Folders or application folders.** Conflict Catcher can actually turn on or off the contents of any folder inside the System Folder. For example, Conflict Catcher can let you turn off the modem driver files for all modem brands except the one you actually use — just tell Conflict Catcher that you want it to show you the contents of the Modem Scripts folder, which is inside your Extensions folder.

In the same vein, Conflict Catcher can manage the contents of any folder that contains enhancements for an application. The day that some future version of SimpleText, America Online, or Microsoft Word gets a plug-in folder, Conflict Catcher will be ready.

How to turn on plug-in/System Folder subfolder monitoring

When you first install Conflict Catcher, it doesn't manage any of the extra folders in your System Folder — fonts, Apple menu items, plug-ins, and so on. When you first open Conflict Catcher, all you see is three categories of files: extensions, control panels, and items loose in the System Folder.

To make Conflict Catcher aware of plug-in folders or additional System-Folder folders, follow these steps:

1.
From Conflict Catcher's Edit menu, choose Preferences.

The Preferences window appears.

2.
Click the Folders icon.

The preference window now shows a list of the additional kinds of files — in the System Folder and in plug-in folders — described beginning of this chapter.

To make Conflict Catcher aware of additional System Folder items (such as fonts, Apple menu items, or control strip modules), simply turn on the corresponding checkboxes. (Extensions, Control Panels, and System Folder are permanently checked — you can't turn off these features.)

If you're enabling Conflict Catcher to manage a System Folder subfolder, such as Fonts, your job is done. Click OK to exit the Preferences dialog box.

Turning on plug-in folders, however, requires a few additional steps.

3.
Click the name of the plug-in folder you want Conflict Catcher to control, such as Photoshop Plug-ins.

Conflict Catcher asks you to locate the plug-ins folder in question.

4.
Click OK. In the next dialog box, click the Application button. Locate and double-click the program whose plug-ins you want Conflict Catcher to

manage.

You return to the previous dialog box.

6.

Click OK to close the Modify Folders dialog box, and then click OK to close the Preferences dialog box.

You wind up back in the main Conflict Catcher window.

From now on, the new kind of files you've switched on are first-class citizens, as far as Conflict Catcher is concerned. You can switch these files on and off by clicking their names in Conflict Catcher's file list, exactly the way you can with extensions or control panels. You can make these additional files part of Conflict Catcher sets, so that you can switch batches of them on or off along with (or even independently of) the start-up files that Conflict Catcher manages. You can use the Scan Files for Damage command (in Conflict Catcher's Special menu) to make sure that these files haven't become corrupted.

When to restart

In most cases, you must restart the Mac after using Conflict Catcher to switch on or off any additional file types that you've taught Conflict Catcher to manage. This is true of fonts, startup items, contextual menu items, Control Strip modules, Location Manager modules, and OpenDoc parts.

Several kinds of files, however, don't require you to restart the computer. You can turn these off or on in the middle of computing session and see immediate results: Apple menu items, Shutdown items, Launcher items, and plug-ins (as long as you haven't yet launched the program whose plug-ins they are).

Defining new folders for Conflict Catcher to manage

Out of the box, Conflict Catcher comes with checkboxes that manage numerous kinds of plug-ins, add-ons, or modules. Fortunately, you can also add new checkboxes — that is, files in new kinds of folders, to accommodate new kinds of programs that may come along — to its Preferences window.

The golden rule is technical, but logical: if the kind of file you want Conflict Catcher to manage is found either (a) in a System Folder folder or (b) in a folder within an application folder, Conflict Catcher can manage it. The first case covers things like Launcher items and Recent Applications; the second case covers plug-ins to Web browsers, graphics programs, and so on.

Here's how to go about training Conflict Catcher to govern the contents of a new kind of folder:

1.

Open Conflict Catcher. From the Edit menu, choose Preferences.

The Preferences window opens.

2.

Click Folders. Click the Add button. From the Starting Folder pop-up menu, specify where the files you're about to add reside.

Your choices are as follows:

Σ Application. Use this option if you're teaching Conflict Catcher to manage a new program's plug-ins. Then click the Application button; navigate to and double-click the name of the program itself; click the Folder button; and navigate to and double-click the plug-ins folder for that program.

Conflict Catcher creates a new folder with the word (Disabled) at the end of its name. For example, if you select the Beekeeper Pro Plug-ins folder, Conflict Catcher creates a folder called Beekeeper Pro Plug-ins (Disabled). Thereafter, whenever you turn off a Beekeeper Pro plug-in, Conflict Catcher moves that plug-in file into the (Disabled) folder.

Σ Apple Menu Items. Since Apple Menu Items is already one of the pre-defined checkboxes in Conflict Catcher's Preferences window, there's little need for you to use this option.

Σ Extensions. Once again, you'll probably use this option only rarely, since Conflict Catcher already manages your Extensions folder.

Σ Control Panels and Fonts. These folders are listed here only for completeness' sake; you'll probably never use them, since Conflict Catcher already manages these two folders.

If your Control Panels or Fonts folder does contain subfolders, click the Folder button to specify which one you want Conflict Catcher to control. (One example: The After Dark screen saver program stores its various display modules in an After Dark Modules folder inside the Control Panels folder. You could conceivably use Conflict Catcher to govern which screen-saver displays are available.)

Σ Preferences. This option could occasionally be useful for controlling files inside of folders that are inside your Preferences folder. For example, macro programs like QuicKeys and OneClick store their macros in folders named

QuickKeys and OneClick — inside the Preferences folder. You could use Conflict Catcher to control which macros are available.

To do so, click the Folder button, and then double-click the name of the subfolder you want Conflict Catcher to know about.

Σ System Folder. In many ways, System Folder is the most useful option in this pop-up menu, because there are so many folders inside the System Folder that Conflict Catcher can usefully control. Every System Folder is different, but a quick glance at yours will confirm that many kinds of folders aren't in Conflict Catcher's pre-defined repertoire: Apple Data Detectors, Launcher Items, PrintMonitor Documents, and so on. To select one of these folders, click the Folders button, and then double-click the one you want.

3.

Type a description for the folder you've just selected.

Whatever you type here in the Description blank will show up in the Preferences dialog box as a new checkbox.

4.

Type a four-letter code into the Abbreviation blank.

Make up something. Conflict Catcher needs a unique four-letter code that it will use internally to refer to the contents of whatever folder you've just specified; it makes no difference what code you choose.

5.

Click OK.

You return at last to the Preferences dialog box, where your newly added folder is listed in the scrolling list. The check mark means that Conflict Catcher is now prepared to begin tracking and managing its contents.

6.

Click OK to return to the main Conflict Catcher window.

If all went well, you should see the names of the new folders Conflict Catcher is prepared to manage. You can now switch the contents of these folders on and off, just as though they were extensions or control panels. On rare occasions, you can even include the special folders in conflict tests — although the Fonts folder is the only one that may contain files capable of bringing down your entire Mac.