

About DesignerDraw

DesignerDraw is a program for drawing diagrams. It is useful for such things as structure charts, flow charts, organization charts, dataflow diagrams and other diagrams which have boxes containing text connected by lines. Because connections remain between boxes when the boxes are moved, diagrams are much easier to maintain than when a standard drawing program is used to create them. DesignerDraw deals mainly with boxes which contain blocks of text. When a box is moved, the text in it is moved as well and when it is resized, the text is adjusted to fit.

Version 4.4.1 Fixes some problems in version 4.4. The second time the About box was displayed, it was mis-positioned offscreen and it appeared that the program was hung. Another problem was that if the system had more than 40 fonts installed, the program would crash. (Thanks to Mark Hanrek for discovering the font problem and its solution.) There were other problems with dragging document windows to a second monitor which have also been fixed. Also, many of the box shapes have been redrawn to make them look better when enlarged.

Basic Information

Tool Palette - From top to bottom, the items in the palette are:

Pointer: Used for selecting boxes, annotation symbols, or connector handles.

Text: Used for adding text to boxes or adding text to the diagram.

Box: Used for drawing boxes.

Annotation Symbol: To add an annotation symbol, click here, select a symbol from the dialog box which appears, and then click on the diagram where the symbol should be placed.

Square connector: Click here to make all connectors consist of horizontal and vertical lines.

Straight connector: Click here to make all connectors consist of straight lines.

Arc connector: Click here to make all connectors consist of arcs.

Line thickness settings: Select one of these as the default line thickness.

To draw a box - Select the box drawing tool (the rectangle) from the palette and click where the upper left corner of the box is to go. Or click and drag to set the box size when creating it. Alternatively, a box can be created while another tool is selected by holding down the command key ($\hat{C}\hat{E}\sim$) while clicking. To select a box shape, choose a shape from one of the options in the Shapes menu before creating the box. Once a box is created, its shape can be changed (see additional options, below).

To draw a connection between boxes - First select the starting box by clicking in it (if its not already selected) and then click and drag from one of the open squares at the center of a side to the box where the connection is to end. If you create boxes by command-clicking, connections will be drawn initially from all selected boxes to the new box.

Moving boxes - Make sure the pointer tool is selected, then click in a box and drag. You can select several boxes and drag them all at once.

Moving connections - Click in one of the squares shown along the line (a "handle") and drag the line. The end of the line nearest the square you pick will be moved.

Additional options - Holding down the option key while clicking in a box or on a connector handle will bring up a pop-up menu from which several options are available.

Adjusting Text - After selecting Adjust Text from the Box Pop-Up menu, moving the mouse moves the text inside the box. Holding down the option key while moving the mouse does the following: Moving to the right widens the text margins while moving to the left narrows the margins; moving up narrows the spacing between lines while moving down widens the spacing.

Creating Your Own Box Shapes - You can draw a box shape in a drawing (not painting) program and import it using Import Shape from Clipboard in the Shapes menu. Be sure to create your objects with no fill pattern, or the text will be covered up.

Pictures - Pictures may be pasted from the clipboard into the diagram.

Miscellaneous stuff

Two useful shortcuts: Double clicking in a box switches to text entry mode, and clicking outside of all boxes after editing text switches to pointer mode. This saves a lot of going to the palette to change modes.

Boxes have the default text "Untitled" in them. I did this because it is the only way I could get the default style to take effect. The default style is the combination of font, size, and style which was selected when not in text editing mode. This style is supposed to apply to the text in any new boxes, but doesn't seem to take effect unless some text is put in the boxes right away.

The default justification is Centered, since this is the most commonly used one in diagrams. The default font is Helvetica, if present, or Geneva otherwise.

Moving a connecting line from one box to another causes it to attach itself to the new box. In previous versions of the program, connectors always remained attached to the original box even if they were moved to another box. This meant that the connector moved when the original box moved even though it appeared to be attached to a different box. Now it works like you'd think it should.

If you're using a Mac II series machine, this program runs much faster in black&white mode than in color. Since the program doesn't use color, you might want to switch modes when using it.

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