

## NewsBin 2.1 Help

**NOTE:** NewsBin 2.14 has additional features that are not documented yet! Check [www.newsbin.com](http://www.newsbin.com) for an updated help file. Until then, this help file should address 80% of your questions.

1. Installation
2. Note to AOL Users
3. Screen Layout and Menu Bar Selections
4. Main Tab
5. Selecting News Servers
6. Selecting Newsgroups
7. Using filters
8. Special settings
9. Using the built in Web Server
10. Firewall support

### 1. Installation

NewsBin comes in a self-extracting ZIP file. The file should be unzipped in the directory from which you want to run NewsBin. When the file is unzipped, you can run NewsBin from the command line, or create a shortcut from your desktop to NewsBin. When you run NewsBin for the first time, NewsBin creates a sub-key for itself in your registry and sets all the configuration parameters to default values. NewsBin only uses about 1K of space in your registry. We have not incorporated use of an installer and uninstaller to keep the download size small. We may do this in the future.

If you have previously configured Internet Explore to access a news server, NewsBin will use this server. If not, NewsBin will ask you to enter your server name. If your server has a username and password, then enter it in the authentication box.

After you have entered your news server and NewsBin has established a connection to it, NewsBin will automatically download a list of newsgroups from the server. A good server will have over 28,000 newsgroups so this may take a while. You can select newsgroups while they are being downloaded but keyword search will not work properly until the download is complete.

When you have selected the newsgroups you want NewsBin to search, click on the "Done" button. You can do this even if all the newsgroups have not been downloaded yet.

Make sure you are in the "Main" tab and click on "Start". NewsBin will go to the first newsgroup in your list and start downloading any binary attachment posted in that group. The binary will be stored in the download directory under the directory where you installed NewsBin.

Read the rest of this help file to learn about how to use NewsBin.

### 2. Note to AOL Users

AOL does not have an NNTP news server. AOL has chosen to take USENET news and re-package it for use by AOL Client software only. If you use AOL and do not also have an ISP with NewsGroup support, there still is hope.

If you are running AOL 3.0 for Windows 95, you can run NewsBin if you sign up

with a News Service. A good one is Supernews ([www.supernews.com](http://www.supernews.com)). They charge \$10/month for unlimited access. Once you have a news server, start AOL, plug in the news server information in NewsBin, and you are on your way.

One problem using AOL is the timeout dialog box that pops up every 45 minutes or so. If you are running NewsBin unattended, AOL will log you out after 45 minutes whether data is passing through it or not. To keep this from happening, you need to download a program called "kill45" that will automatically click that dialog box for you. We are thinking of incorporating that functionality into NewsBin but we need to see how many AOL people we have before we decide that it is worth our time.

### 3. Screen Layout and Menu Bar Selections

#### Screen Layout:

NewsBin 2.1 now has a Tab-style GUI which allows you easier access to configuration options. There are 7 tabs and the functions of each tab is detailed later in this document. The tabs are Main, Groups, Filters, Settings, Servers, Webserver, and Firewall. Whenever you change any settings in a tab screen, switching to another tab saves your changes.

#### Menu Bar Selections:

NewsBin has four selections on its menu bar: File, Register, Setup, and Help.

The File selection has one option. It allows you to exit NewsBin.

The Register selection is where you input your registration key that you receive after ordering NewsBin. It will first display legal information about the program and then will pop up an entry form for you to enter the registration key. The name listed in the "Name" field must be typed exactly as it appears in the email you receive from us containing your key. The registration key has funky characters in it so it is easiest to just cut and past the key from the email into the "Registration ID" field. Once you are a registered user, a dialog box showing the name of the person owning this copy of NewsBin will be displayed.

The Setup selection contains six toggle options. They are:

**Auto Startup Mode:** If this option is selected, NewsBin will automatically start when the program executes. You can use this option if you have a system agent start NewsBin for you at a specific time. If this option is not selected, you have to hit the "Start" button on the Main Tab to get NewsBin going.

**Auto Shutdown Mode:** If this option is selected, NewsBin will exit after all the records are read from the last selected News Group. If you have auto start enabled but hit a key while NewsBin is running, it automatically disables auto shutdown mode for this run. You can use this to modify NewsBin configuration without it exiting out from under you.

**Group Directories Mode:** If this option is selected, NewsBin will generate sub-directories under the "Download" directory using the name of the news group where the binary was found. If this option is not selected, all binaries are dumped in the "download" directory under the install directory for NewsBin.

The Settings Tab allows you to change the name of the download directory if you like. NewsBin will attempt to create the download directory if it doesn't exist.

**File Descriptions:** File Descriptions is a toggle that enables/disables the creation of downloaded file descriptions in a directory beneath the current download directory. These descriptions are used by the built in web server to display information about a file. Each file contains The subject field of the post that created the file.

**Recycle Servers:** Normally when NewsBin finishes downloading it just stops processing. Recycle Servers mode tells NewsBin to restart processing from the beginning again. It will rescan the groups from the beginning and download any new binaries that have been posted since the last download passed through the group.

**NNTP Detail Mode:** This toggles the level of detail that the program displays to the status dialog box. When Enabled, NNTP detail mode will show the actual commands and responses that are sent to and received from the NNTP server. This toggle is normally only used for troubleshooting connection or file download problems.

The Help selection has two options: About and How To Use. The About option displays information about how to register NewsBin and displays the version number and the name of the person who owns this copy of NewsBin. The "How To Use" option displays this text.

#### 4. Main Tab

The NewsBin Main Tab shows current activity and gives you control if you are monitoring NewsBin while it works. Here is a list of the fields and buttons displayed and what they mean or do:

**Bytes Decoded:** This is the total number of bytes of encoded binary images that NewsBin has received and decoded.

**Current News Server:** This is the current news server that NewsBin is connected to. You have the option of entering multiple news servers which NewsBin will hit for you in sequence. Whatever newsgroups you select will be searched on each news server. With NewsBin's built in duplicate detection, you will not get duplicate binaries from the different servers.

**Skip Server:** If you have multiple servers defined and you are currently on one that is running dog slow, hit the Skip Server button to tell NewsBin to disconnect from this server and try the next one. There will be a delay as NewsBin closes down the connections for each thread before it will go on to the next News Server.

**Status box:** This box tells you what NewsBin is up to. It tells you when it connects to a server, shows the header of each post NewsBin reads, and if NNTP Detail mode is selected (under the setup drop down menu) it will show you the gory details of NNTP.

**Records Counter:** This bar gauge counts up the number of posts examined from the current News Group. The default is 400 and you can set it under the "Settings" tab.

Current News Group: This box lists the current news group being examined.

Skip Group: If you hit a group that you decide you do not want NewsBin to go through, this button will skip the group much like the "Skip Server" button. There may be a delayed reaction while the currently processed files complete before going to the next group.

Downloading Files: This box shows the name of a file that was found in a post. The name, size, and number of parts are displayed here. A thread is assigned the task of downloading this file and, since NewsBin is multi-threaded, this file may scroll out of the box before it is actually downloaded.

Start/Pause: This button starts NewsBin going. After you click on "Start" the button switches to say "Pause". If you hit "Pause", all threads will stop processing. Clicking the button again will start them up. This is a good way to do something on the Internet without stopping NewsBin. If you leave the pause button on too long, the news server will probably disconnect the connections and several files might be lost.

Close: This will exit NewsBin. If NewsBin is currently running, you will lose any files in the process of being downloaded unless you set the number of threads to 0. In either case, you must wait for all activity to halt before hitting the Close button if you do not want to lose the last few files.

Date Rate: This bar gauge shows the effective data rate NewsBin is achieving. It averages the last 10 seconds in a sliding window to give a smoother representation of the data rate. The scale increases each time the bar hits the max on the right side.

Threads: This spinner allows you to adjust the number of threads NewsBin spawns to download binaries. NewsBin will run up to 6 threads, which means it will download up to 6 binaries simultaneously. This allows you to optimize use of your bandwidth. If you have a 28.8 connection, NewsBin runs best around 2-3 threads. ISDN and higher can run all 6 threads. If the spinner is set to 0, NewsBin will queue up a few files for download but will do nothing. You can spin it down to 0 if you want to shut down NewsBin without losing the last few files being downloaded. In our testing, 6 threads are all we needed to use the full bandwidth of a T1. We have had reports that 6 threads work great on Cable Modems, too.

Download Bars: NewsBin has 6 download status bars, one for each thread. The status bar shows the current status of the thread it represents. The different status messages are:

- Idle - Thread is currently doing nothing.
- Connecting - Thread was given some work to do and is establishing a separate connection to the news server.
- Connected - Thread successfully connected to the news server.
- Working - Thread is determining the file name, type, and size of the post.
- Filename - The name of the file that the thread is downloading is displayed.

While the file is being downloaded, a bar will grow to the right indicating download progress. If you see a filename you know you do not want, you can click on it and NewsBin will dump it and move on to another. This comes in handy if you come across a large zip or movie file and you don't want to stick around to download it.

## 5. Selecting News Servers

Click on the "Servers" tab. From this tab, you can Add, Delete, and Edit the domain name of the news server (i.e. news.supernews.com). The port for news servers is 119 but if you are going through a firewall you may need to specify a different port. If your news server requires a username and password, type it in under the authentication box in the User ID and Password fields. If you enter multiple news servers you can change the search order of the news servers by highlighting a specific server (single click) and clicking the "up" or "down" button until it is in the position you want.

## 6. Selecting Newsgroups

As soon as you have a valid news server specified, NewsBin will connect and download all the newsgroups that the server stores. The Newsgroups it finds on the server will be displayed in the "Groups" list box. With as many as 30,000 newsgroups to go through, we have added a keyword search feature labeled "Display Groups Which Contain:". It defaults to a wildcard ("\*") but as you enter characters, only the groups containing those characters will be displayed. For example, if you enter "sounds" then only newsgroup with the word "sounds" in them will be displayed.

Select the newsgroups you want by either double clicking on the group or by highlighting and clicking on "Add". If you have multiple newsgroups, you can change the search order by selecting the news group you want to move and clicking the "up" or "down" arrow to move it to the desired search position.

If you know a newsgroup you want, you can enter it in the box titled "Manually Add Group". Type it in and hit "Submit" and it will add it the "Subscribed Groups" list box.

The "Newsgroup Count" box shows the total number of newsgroups you have to select from.

The "Update groups" button will update the groups available from the server. You may want to do this every month or so to catch new groups that may be added.

You cannot add additional groups while NewsBin is processing. Once you hit the "Start" button from the Main tab, changing newsgroups is locked out until you shut down NewsBin and restart.

## 7. Using filters

New for version NewsBin 2.1 is the capability to filter files based on their names. These filters can be updated at any time so if you run into a batch of Spam that you don't like you can just add a filter on the fly. To add filters, click on the "Filters" tab. There are two check boxes: "Enable Filename Filters" and "Accept Only Matching". The first option enables the filtering option, the second controls the mode of the filter; either filter based on the filter entries or accepts by matching filter entries. To apply any changes, move out of the filter tab (i.e. click on the "Main" tab).

The filter supports full regular expression parsing as well as more basic filters, the most DOS users are familiar with. Question marks "?" can be used to wild card individual characters. For example to prevent the download of HTML files you'd add the filter:

```
"*.htm"  
"*.html"
```

To prevent the download of more detailed filenames you enter more explicit filters. Let's say you want to prevent the download of all file indexes. You could do that by applying the filter:

```
"*idx*.*"
```

Normally the filter prevents the download of files that are listed in the list box. You can reverse the mode though by selecting "Accept Only Matching". If for example you only want to download ZIP files. You'd select matching and add "\*.zip" to the filter list.

## 8. Special settings

The "Settings" tab allows you to modify many NewsBin configuration options. They are the following:

**Download Path:** This specifies where NewsBin will deposit the binaries it downloads. The default is a subdirectory under the NewsBin install directory called "download".

**Max Spammer:** This setting tells NewsBin to ignore any articles that were cross posted to more than X newsgroups. A setting of 1 will pull down articles posted to that specific newsgroup only. A setting of 0 will pull down everything regardless of number of cross posts.

**Back Track:** This is the number of posts to examine in a news group. The default is 400. This saves NewsBin from going through tons of old posts and helps get only the latest stuff.

**Min File Size:** This is another filter on top of the filename filter function available under the "Filter" tab. It will disregard binaries that are less than X in size. Size of 0 disables this filter.

**Max File Size:** This can eliminate the download of huge files if you don't want them. Set to 100000 to keep files downloaded less than 100K. Entering "-1" disables this filter. The display will show a "-1" as "4294967295", the maximum number that fits in 32 bits.

**Database Age:** This is the number of days of information to keep in the cache for the duplicate detection feature. The larger the number, the fewer duplicates that will be downloaded and the larger the cache file gets. If you clean out your binary directory and want to re-download binaries that are getting dup-checked out, delete the files "cache" and "sigfile.dat" from the directory where NewsBin is installed.

**Disk Threshold:** This option will keep NewsBin from using every byte of available disk space for binaries. Setting to 0 disables this feature. Setting to 100 will make NewsBin pop up warning messages when available disk space gets close to 100K and will tell NewsBin to stop downloading when available disk space is reduced to 100K bytes.

Once any setting has been modified, click on any other tab to apply the changes.

## 9. Using the built in Web Server

When NewsBin is running, it has the ability to allow any Internet browser to connect to it. The unregistered version only allows one connection. The registered version allows 64 connections.

On your local machine, you can use your favorite web browser to view the binaries being downloaded by NewsBin. Just connect to your machine at `http://127.0.0.1` and you can browse through the directories and the binaries that NewsBin has downloaded. The file name and the description from the post are displayed. We are working on thumbnail support for a future release.

To configure the Web Server, click on the "Webserver" tab. Click the check box titled "Enable Web Server" to allow yourself access from your browser.

To allow others to access your NewsBin Downloads over a TCP/IP network or the Internet, click on the "Enable Access List" checkbox. Then to the Access List box to the right and enter the IP addresses of the machine you want to allow access. For example, if a buddy of yours is connected to your network (or the Internet) with an IP of 10.1.1.5 and your IP was 10.1.1.1, enter his IP in the list box and have him point his browser to "`http://10.1.1.1`"

Make sure the Web Server Port is set to 80. If you set it to something else (i.e. 8888), you can access it by pointing your browser to "`http://127.0.0.1:8888`". Or, as in the previous example, your friends would connect to "`http://10.1.1.1:8888`". This feature is useful if you don't want someone else on your network, or over the Internet, to access your binaries.

The "Web Threads" box specifies the number of simultaneous connections the web server will handle. Unregistered versions are limited to 1 connection.

## 10. Firewall support

Under the "Firewall" tab, you can configure NewsBin to use a Socks4 Firewall. Simply enter your User ID, Password, and the IP address or host name of your Socks Server.

