

# 3x3 Labeler

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## Introduction

### Overview

**3x3 Labeler** produces labels for 3 ½" diskettes. This program supports the **Avery 5196**, which contains three rows of three labels each on an 8 ½" by 11" page, suitable for a laser or inkjet printer. Each label can contain file names, directory names, or multi-line text. Each label can have different fonts, sizes and edge/banner text, or can use the default global values. Different sets of label defaults can be loaded and saved by name.

### Installation

**3x3 Labeler** is distributed as a .ZIP file. Unzip this file into the directory of your choice. Move the THREEED.VBX, CMDIALOG.VBX and MHGTX.VBX files into your \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory. Move the 3x3.DLL file into your \WINDOWS directory. To run, select 3x3.EXE from your shell or desktop.

This program is written in Visual Basic, and requires the run-time library VBRUN300.DLL, which should be available at the bulletin board where you obtained **3x3 Labeler** (It's also included on the registered version disk). COMMDLG.DLL is also required, and is included with Windows 3.1. Place VBRUN300.DLL in your \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory.

**NOTE:** Some versions of **3x3** might contain VBRUN300.DLL.

### Quick Instructions

Turn on label preview by clicking in the Preview box. Select your 3 ½" drive using the drop-down drive list. Insert a diskette into the drive. Click on one of the diskette icons in the **3x3** grid to select a label to work with. This grid corresponds to the **3x3** label format. After selecting a label, you can edit the label information or read the diskette's contents by pressing the **Edit** or **Read** buttons, respectively.

When the program has read the contents of the diskette, the diskette icon changes to a diskette icon with an 'F' or 'D' on the label. You can change the default edge text, banner text, body type and contents, fonts and sizes for the selected label by pressing the **Edit** button. Repeat this process for up to 9 diskettes. Press the **Print** button to send the information to the default printer. Press the **Wipe** button to revert the icons and reset to the default values, or use the **Clear** button to clear just the selected label.

It is not necessary to use all nine labels in each pass. Since you can specify which label to read a disk to, you can print some now and some later. We've had the best luck on partial pages by doing the "bottom" labels first. Banner text will print above the contents listing. Edge text will print above the banner, and will be

on the edge of the diskette when the label is properly applied. Banner text will also print upside-down above the edge text, and will be on the back side of the diskette when the label is properly applied. These options can be saved in 3x3.INI by using the File/Save as Defaults option.

**WARNING:** Printing label pages in multiple passes *may violate the warranty* of your laser printer. Consult your laser printer manual or manufacturer for further information. TANSTAAFL Software assumes no responsibility for any damage incurred by the use of **3x3 Labeler**.

### Credits

Original Idea by Miles Andrews  
User Interface & Software by Dana Cline  
Documentation by Dana Cline  
Beta testing and feedback by:  
    Robert Long  
    Tim Stone  
    Mike Barker  
    Rajan Ramaswami  
    Peggy Pitchford  
    David White  
    Dwight Espe  
    and others...  
Program Created by Visual Basic 3.0  
Custom Text Control by MicroHelp  
Help File Created by Doc-To-Help

## Command Buttons

### Diskette Label Selection

There are nine diskette buttons, in a 3x3 grid. Each button corresponds to a label on the **Avery 5196** page. Press one of these buttons to select the label to work with.. This button can have three states. The non-selected cleared state, is represented by a standard picture of a 3 ½" disk. When a button is selected, the icon changes to a diskette with a red asterisk . After the diskette file names have been read, the icon changes to the **3x3** icon. In the icon, the area of the label body will contain an 'F' to indicate the diskette contains filenames , a 'D' to indicate directory names , or a 'T' to indicate text .

### Drive Listbox

This box should point to your 3 ½" drive. The drive initially points to C:, but you can change the default by changing the drive, then saving the defaults using the menu selection Defaults/Save. When you next run **3x3 Labeler**, the drive listbox will point to your 3 ½" drive, but only if you have a disk in the drive when you start **3x3 Labeler**. This appears to be a Visual Basic quirk.

### Selected Buttons

#### Read

**Read** reads the diskette's contents into the selected label. The current disk drive is used for the read operation.. File or directory names are

organized in three columns and up to twenty rows, for a total of 60 names. The bytes used and free counts are also read from the diskette.

### **Edit**

**Edit** allows you to change the edge text, alignment, font and size, banner text, alignment, font and size, divider style, body style, text, alignment, font and size for the selected label. If the selected label is using the default global edge or banner text, the radio button to the right of the text will be selected. When you change the edge or banner text, the global button will clear. If you turn on either global button, the default text will replace the existing box contents. All text boxes will show the text in the selected font and size. The file pattern text box can be used to specify which file names appear on the label, and is active when the Files button is selected. This box can contain more than one file pattern, separated by a semi-colon (for example, \*.EXE;\*.COM to read just the executable filenames). This box can also contain a directory file pattern or body text. After changing the pattern, you must reread the diskette, if you've already read it. **Reset** will reset the selected label to the current global defaults.

If you want to use the disk volume ID as edge or banner text, just use <VOL> as the text. When you click the **Read** button, the text will be replaced with the volume ID.

### **Clear**

**Clear** deletes any information associated with the selected label, including any edge or banner text. The selected label is then loaded with the global default values.

### **Preview**

**Preview** toggles the label preview window. This window deserves special explanation. It is hard-coded to the size of an individual **Avery** label. The contents of the label preview are updated when exiting the **Edit** box, after **Reading** the contents of a diskette, and when selecting a different label.

## **All Buttons**

### **Print**

**Print** prints the diskette file information to a page of labels. The default printer should be online, in portrait mode, with labels loaded. Each press of this button will print one page of labels.

### **Wipe**

**Wipe** resets the Diskette button icons to show an "empty" diskette. All information about diskette contents are cleared and reset to global values.

# Menu Options

## File

### Load Label Set

This option allows you to load a different set of defaults. A file selection dialog box initially looks for files with the 3x3 extension, in the directory containing **3x3 Labeler**.

### Save as Label Set

This option allows different default values to be saved in named files. When **3x3 Labeler** is first run, it loads the defaults from the 3x3.INI file in the /WINDOWS directory. All label sets follow the same format as the 3x3.INI file, and default to the **3x3** directory and an extension of .3x3. The load and save options allow me to have one set for **3x3**, one set for documents, and another set for another shareware program I sell.

### Save as Defaults

This option saves the default drive, label options, and margins to the 3x3.INI file. Next time **3x3** is started, these defaults are used. Due to a quirk in Visual Basic's drive listbox, **3x3** will change to the floppy drive only if it has a disk in it.

### Print Setup

This option starts the standard Printer Setup dialog box. Changes take effect when returning from the dialog box.

### Exit

This option exits the 3x3 Labeler.

## Defaults

### Label

This option allows you to specify the default label contents. For further information, refer to the command button **Edit**.

### Margins

The margin option allows you to fine-tune label placement to your particular printer. As the top value increases, the text moves down on the page. As the left value increases, the text moves right on the page. All values are in TWIPS, which are 1440/inch, or 20/point. The margin control allows up to a half-inch adjustment in any direction.

## Help

### Contents

This option runs the Windows Help program with 3x3.HLP.

### About

This option shows the About box, containing the program name, version number and other information.

# Troubleshooting

## Unexpected Error: Quitting

This error occurs when first running 3x3. The guys at Microsoft identified it as a VB error message indicating an incorrect version of a custom control. Search for THREEED.VBX, MHGTXT.VBX and CMDIALOG.VBX. Delete any older copies. That should cure it.

## Fonts in Label Preview

If the contents of the body area are unreadable, set the font size smaller. I've noticed that some fonts, rather than "overprint" stuff, kind of get lost and put garbage on the screen. Lowering the font size a point or two should fix it. This is good reason to use label preview.

### **Printer Errors**

The VB manual has one kind of printer error, which makes it difficult to tell where the error really comes from. If there is an error, the software calls AbortDoc, which should flush the page. One thing to try is check the free space on the drive pointed to by the TEMP environment variable. Generally, this is the hard disk but may point to a RAM disk. This drive should have 1.5Mb of free space to hold the spool file. If problem persists, call us.

### **Defaults**

Can't seem to get new default values to take effect? After you change the default label options, save them. Then press the **Wipe** button. This will apply the new defaults to all labels.

### **Alignment Problems**

Several tricks can be used to obtain perfect alignment. 3x3 prints two horizontal lines on the label, between rows 1 and 2 and rows 2 and 3. Vertically, this line should be directly between the two rows. Horizontally, it should align exactly with the middle column of labels.

One problem we've seen is where the label looks good in the preview but is missing parts when it prints. This appears to be a combination of clipping/margin/font problem. The current work-around is to print on regular paper first, and adjust the font size of the offending text.

## **Future Features**

### **Filename Columns**

This version will auto-adjust the number of columns based on the number of files or directories to be printed. If there is any interest, the user could specify the column layout or the filenames could be split into name and extension, similar to a DOS DIR command output.

### **Banner Text**

An option under consideration is auto-sizing of the banner text to fit all the way across the label, with centering. Probably 2.0 for this enhancement.

One major feature would allow you to use a .BMP bitmap containing a company logo, for instance. This enhancement would include the ability to print the bitmap upside down for the back side label. This enhancement was planned for 2.0, but may be indefinitely delayed until I get a custom imaging control. In regular Visual Basic, I can easily deal with just .BMP files, but seems like people want to use .PCX and .TIF files too, which require a custom control. We'll see.

### **Diskette Cataloging**

Yes, this is also in the works. Your feedback here is appreciated...What kind of information should it capture? Filenames, sizes, dates? Banner or edge text? Searchable by any field? From **3x3**, or from a separate (included) program?

This option will be the core of the 2.0 version. Plus, it will give us an opportunity to try out VB 3's database engine, and more custom controls.

### **Other Enhancements**

There has been some interest in printing a directory tree of the diskette instead of the columns of filenames. Feedback?.

On the subject of printers, is there much interest in color labels? We hear one user prints fine on an HP inkjet, so color is a distinct possibility. Possibly version 1.60, but might wait until 2.0. Main drawback is borrowing one to test with.

Someday, **3x3** will use a standard Setup program, to allow easier distribution of all of the related files.

Any interest in this same program, but for labels for 5 ¼" floppies instead? It couldn't have edge text, but could have more than 3 columns of files.

Version 1.5 will be modified to create **2x4**, which will handle Avery labels for the European A4 page. Look for it at a BBS near you.

### **User Interface**

Feedback on the user interface will be appreciated. We've tried to make a program that performs with minimum mouse clicks and keystrokes, while still being easy to learn and use. Have we succeeded? Any changes we should make?

## **Order Information**

### **Addresses**

TANSTAAFL Software can be contacted via several methods. All orders should be mailed to the Post Office box. Questions and technical support for registered users can use mail, phone, or several flavors of Email. If you call, please call between the hours of 8 AM and 10 PM, Mountain Time. Since I have to work during the day, the best times to call are in the evening.

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### **Prices**

**3x3 Labeler** is available for **\$20** for the latest version. This is a good deal for two reasons. First, by supporting the concept of shareware, you encourage development by individuals and small companies. Second, your \$20 will likely get you a newer version than the one you may have, with more features or certainly less bugs.

Payment should be in the form of a check or money order. Cash is accepted but discouraged. Sorry, no company P.O.'s. Foreign orders should include **\$5** for shipping, and the check or money order should be payable in US Dollars, on a US Bank. Source code is available. Contact us for further details.

### Order Form

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WHERE DID YOU RECEIVE 3x3? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DISK SIZE NEEDED: [  ] 3-1/2 [  ] 5-1/4  
COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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# Revision History

**12/06/93**      **1.5**

Fixed (embarrassing!) bug in using <VOL> to put volume label in edge and banner text. Added bytes used and free counts to labels containing file or directory names. Added ability to load and save different defaults as named label sets. Added more troubleshooting information to help file.

**11/15/93**      **1.4**

Added printer setup, common font selection dialogs. Now sort files by name and extension. Adjusted positioning of upside-down banner text. Fine-tuning of the printer routines to reduce printer errors. Allow provision for edge or banner text to contain the disk volume ID. Fixed bug where reading directory names would also get file names.

**10/10/93**      **1.3**

Limited release. Added upside-down banner text to both printed and viewed labels. Changed font default from Arial to the first available printer font. Edit boxes for banner, edge and body text no longer use the selected font.

**9/28/93**      **1.2**

Added alignment to all text boxes on labels. Each box (edge, banner, body) can have separate fonts & sizes. Added divider line between banner and body. Added label preview. Fixed a couple of bugs. Added support for label body to contain file names, directory names, or multi-line text. Added fine-tuning for different laser printers. Rearranged label options screen to cram more stuff on it.

**8/15/93**      **1.1**

Added local edge text, local banner text, and local font name and sizes. Changed the user interface to allow easy selection and editing of local data. Improved error handling. Added the ability to change global font name and sizes. Improved help file. Added filename patterns.

**7/5/93**      **1.0**

Original release, did minimum necessary to produce disk labels.