

Archive Manager / Shell (ARCMAN)

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File List - ARCMAN 1.0:

arcman.exe	: the ARCMAN program
arcman.wri	: this document
arcreg.txt	: registration form for ARCMAN
arcnotes.txt	: last minute notes about ARCMAN
file_id.diz	: a brief description of ARCMAN

Introduction:

ARCMAN is an archive manager shell. ARCMAN was created to handle the simple repetitive tasks involved with downloading, testing and managing shareware software; creating directories, extracting the archive, testing the programs, installing them into the WINDOWS Program Manager (PROGMAN) - or deleting the directory. None of the other available programs are comprehensive enough.

ARCMAN does not create or manipulate archives. There are many other shell programs written for this purpose. ARCMAN is strictly for extracting an archive, and manipulating the files and directories that result.

ARCMAN does not directly extract any types of archives. Instead, ARCMAN runs the proper extraction program for each archive type. Because ARCMAN is a shell, so you will need the proper programs to extract files for each archive type that you use. Setting ARCMAN up for a new archive format is as easy as typing in an archive extension : command line in the configuration section.

Requirements:

ARCMAN is WINDOWS 3.0 compatible. ARCMAN does not use any 'tricks' and should work with all systems. ARCMAN is a standalone program and requires no DLLs or other extra files.

Startup - Installation:

Since you have likely extracted the arcman.exe program you can consider it installed. If you change any of the default configuration settings it will create an arcman.ini file in the same directory. ARCMAN can be moved to other directories (along with the ini file) without any problems. ARCMAN can install an ARCMAN icon in the Program Manager if desired.

ARCMAN assumes that the archive extraction software and other utilities utilized are in your DOS environment path. You can specify paths in the configuration section.

Quickstart:

Skip reading this documentation and run the arcman.exe program. You might want to set default paths in the configuration section.

Removing ARCMAN:

If you do not like ARCMAN you can remove it easily. If you have set ARCMAN as the default file handler (in the configuration section) then you should reset this option. ARCMAN will then restore all the previous archive handlers. You can then delete all the ARCMAN files and icons from PROGMAN. ARCMAN does not scatter programs in your win directory or otherwise change anything else.

File management:

ARCMAN can extract/execute/create, move, copy, rename and delete archives, programs and directories (including subdirectories.) ARCMAN can create Program Manager Groups from any directory.

About ARCMAN:

ARCMAN was developed using Microsoft C++ 7.0 and the C++ Foundation Class Library. Not that that made it easy... Developing this program involved learning C, C++ and Microsoft WINDOWS - all at the same time. As such, this program is not optimized. A more powerful optimized version of ARCMAN is being developed from scratch.

ARCMAN was developed on a 486-25 with MS-DOS 4.01. 386Max was used for memory management. WINDOWS hosting Programmer's WorkBench was used as the development platform.

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Jimmy Athens
JJA Software Development
622 Cooper Drive
Charlotte NC 28210-2829

A registration / comment form is provided in the file arc_reg.txt. Printing this form and filling it out will enable me to better know your needs.

In return you will receive a registration number that bypasses the registration screen. Your registration will enable me to continue to create powerful and useful programs. If you would like the latest version of ARCMAN please enclose an additional \$5 for a total of \$30.

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Comments:

Please send any and all comments you might have about ARCMAN. What did you like / not like? What would you like to see added or changed? Please send your comments to the previous address. If you would like a reply please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Technical Support for Bugs and Other Problems:

Technical support is not available at this time. I will attempt to correct bugs and other problems in later versions of ARCMAN. If you find a bug or problem with ARCMAN I would appreciate hearing about it. Please note what section the problem occurred in. Is it repeatable? What were the circumstances? Your help is appreciated. Bugs cannot be corrected on an individual basis, but only through future versions of ARCMAN.

Required Archive Extraction Programs:

These are available through most BBS's - or wherever an archive came from. Most archive programs require registration for archiving use, but not necessarily for extraction purposes - sometimes an alternate program is supplied. Registering this program does not

register or waive registration for any other program.

SFX (Self Extracting) Programs:

A self extracting archive is typically an EXE or COM program. When run it automatically extracts its contents into the current directory (and possibly creates new subdirectories.) ARCMAN does not scan EXE or COM programs to see if they are valid archives. You can probably remove the COM entry from the configuration section, as they are rarely used. If you do not use EXE archives this entry can also be deleted, resulting in a much simpler and more valid archive directory. Of course if you keep only archives in the archive directory then the changes are unnecessary. **Problems With SFX Archives:** For some unknown reason, sometimes some SFX's (notably LHA's SFX (c)) create a new directory somewhere in the current path, and install themselves into it. If you extract an SFX and find an empty directory afterward, you should try browsing the root directories of the current path looking for a new directory.

Usage Information:

The ARCMAN screen is divided into three directories or sections: Archives, Directories, and Programs. These are list boxes that contain archives, directories to extract the archives into, or directories of the extracted archives (programs). Each directory can be set to two default directories. A Test directory and a Keep directory. They are selected using radio buttons above each directory. Each default directory can be changed to a current directory. Switching a directory will bring up the other current directory. Reselecting a current directory will restore/refresh the default directory. The directories can be changed by double clicking a [directory] or [-drive-]. A context specific pop-up menu for a directory can be activated by pressing the right mouse button while the cursor is in the directory.

List Box Contents:

Each List box contains the broken up current path, all valid files, all subdirectories, and all valid drives. All directories are enclosed with [**dir**], and also show the creation date (except for the Directories box). All drives are enclosed with [**-d-**] - with **d** being the drive name. The current path is broken up and placed in the beginning. You can easily and quickly move through the directory tree by double clicking. Double clicking a drive will take you to the last used directory on that drive (unknown). Files are shown with the creation date, size and attributes. The directories are sorted if the Sort Directories option is set. Below each directory is a list of the number of files, subdirectories and bytes used. **Note:** This list only updated when rereading the directory. Any changes to the directory will **not** update this list (feature to be implemented later).

Directory Movement:

Each list box contains the subdirectory of the current directory and a selection of all active drives. The list box path is broken down into sections at the top. To move to another directory or drive just double click the item. You can go back to the default directory by selecting the directory button.

Directory buttons:

Each list box is controlled by two directory buttons directly above the list box. Each directory button holds a current path - shown, and a default path. If the list box path is changed, the directory button is updated to reflect the change (current directory). You can always go back to the default directory by reselecting the button. One directory button is shown as 'selected' - the list box is set to that path. The other button is the destination for all moves and copies occurring in the list box. Selecting the other directory button sets the list box to its current path. Now all file operations are reversed. I recommend that the lower button should be set to a test directory, the upper button a keep directory. This allows for easy tracking of files. When a button is empty, or points to an invalid path, it reads in the current directory when it is selected.

Programs: These directory buttons are different from the others. The upper button points to

a default directory like the other buttons. The lower button however cannot have a default directory. The Directories box will fill this button when displaying a directory or extracting an archive. When this button is blank, it reads in the last accessed directory.

Example of a directory button / list box combination:

```
[ ] c:\comm\upload      ;click for current alternate directory
[X] c:\comm\newfiles   ;click to reload default
=====
[c:\]                   ;dclick for root (c:\)
 [comm]                 ;dclick for (c:\comm)
  [newfiles]           ;click to select c:\comm\newfiles as a
                       ;directory, or dclick to reload directory
[asubdir]              02/08/92      ;click to select, dclick to change to
                       ;For Directories, click then slowly click again
                       ;to display in the Programs directory
[another]              02/08/95
aprogram.exe          02/08/85 93950 A      ;click to select
                       ;dclick to extract or run
arc.zip                02/08/92 9190 A      ;archive with archive bit set.
                       ;If the Auto-reset Archive flag
                       ;option is set, ARCMAN will reset
                       ;this bit upon extraction
arc.lzh                02/08/93 9100      ;archive with archive bit reset
hide.pak              02/08/93 9100 AH    ;hidden archive, shows up only if
                       ;Show Hidden\system files set
[-a-]                 ;dclick to change to current directory of drive
=====
(2) files (2) dirs (112240) bytes      ;directory information
```

Fonts:

ARCMAN uses a fixed pitch font for all the list boxes. This allows for a cleaner and easier to read display.

Menus and Pop Up Menus:

Each directory has a menu associated with it that can be accessed by pressing Alt+Archives/Directories/Programs. In addition when the cursor is within one of the directories, you can click the right mouse button to pop up the menu for that directory.

Menu Commands:

Manager:

About...

describes ARCMAN dialog

Configure...

invokes configuration dialog (described below).

Archives:

<current file>

shows the currently selected file

Extract...

invokes extract dialog (see below)

Move

moves the file to the alternate directory

Copy

copies the file to the alternate directory

Rename...

invokes rename dialog for renaming a file

Delete

if the confirm file delete flag is set, ARCMAN will ask to delete a file, else ARCMAN will delete the file

Directories:

<current directory>

shows the currently selected directory

New...

creates a new subdirectory. If an archive is selected in the Archives directory ARCMAN will suggest a name for the new directory based on the archive name.

Shell into

starts a DOS session in the selected subdirectory

Win Group...

invokes the Create/Install PROGMAN Group dialog (below)

View >>

shows the subdirectory in the Programs directory

Move

moves the directory (and subdirs) to the alternate directory

Copy

copies the directory (and subdirs) to the alternate directory

Rename...

invokes rename dialog for renaming a directory

Delete

Asks if to delete a directory - deletes all files, all subdirectories. (below)

Programs:

<current file>

shows the currently selected file

Extract.../Execute

extract dialog for archives (below), or executes a program or an associated file

Move

moves the file to the alternate directory

Copy

copies the file to the alternate directory

Rename...

invokes rename dialog for renaming a file

List

lists a program file using the configured file viewer

Print

prints a program file using the configured file printer

Delete

if the confirm file delete flag is set, ARCMAN will ask to delete a file, else ARCMAN will delete the file

Help:

Read Documentation

A help facility is not available at present. Use this command to view this document.

Creating a subdirectory:

If an Archive is selected, ARCMAN will suggest a directory name based on the archive name. You can edit this name or cancel.

Directory Manipulation in Directories:

You can move to any directory with a double click. You can copy and move both the current directory or any of its subdirectories. Copying or moving the current directory would be directly into the alternate directory. Copying or moving subdirectories will create a similar

subdirectory in the alternate directory. Only subdirectories can be deleted. This is to prevent accidents. ([C:\] cannot be deleted, only [asubdir]). All move copy and delete operations include subdirectories. **Failures:** sometimes ARCMAN may fail. ARCMAN will report the file/directory and ask to continue, retry or cancel. You can also attempt to remedy the problem and retry later. A failure will result in a partial copy/move/delete operation.

Move and copy will move and copy all files in a directory regardless of attribute. Delete however will use the Show Hidden/System Files option. Delete will not delete hidden or system files unless they are visible.

Note: Sometime when running smartdrive, or a similar disk cache, delete will fail on removing a subdirectory. This happens because a disk cache will buffer the delete files operations and return immediately. If ARCMAN finishes deleting the files and attempts to remove the directory before the disk cache has finished deleting the files, an error will result (directory not empty). Pressing retry will usually work.

Note: Presently ARCMAN does not update the other directories when a directory is moved, changed or deleted. This will be remedied in a future version. For now, reloading a directory will have to do.

Possible Problems:

Not Enough Memory (for moving): try rerunning ARCMAN.

Unable to move\copy\delete (File in use by WINDOWS)
: try closing programs

Directory Exists: Informational - continue

Unable to delete directory: (Directory not empty)
: possible hidden files or smartdrive problem

Example of a Directories listing

```
[ ] c:\comm\upload      ;click for current alternate directory
[X] c:\comm\newfiles   ;click to reload default
=====
[c:\]                  ;dclick for root (c:\)
 [comm]                ;dclick for (c:\comm)
  [newfiles]           ;click to select c:\comm\newfiles as a
                      ;directory, or dclick to reload directory
[Note: select this entry to move or copy this entire directory into the alternate
directory, ie: [c:\comm\newfiles] into c:\comm\upload]
[asubdir]              02/08/92      ;click to select, dclick to change to
                      ;click then slowly click again to display
                      ;in the Programs directory
[Note: a subdirectory will be moved or copied as a subdirectory of the alternate
directory, ie: [asubdir] into c:\comm\upload\asubdir. Only subdirectories can be deleted.]
[another]              02/08/95
[-a-]                  ;dclick to change to current directory of drive
=====
(2) subdirs
```

Extracting an Archive:

To extract an archive either double click the archive or select the Archive Extract command from the menu. This will bring up the extraction screen. You can either create and extract into a new subdirectory of the current Directories or you can extract directly into the presently selected subdirectory (if any). After Extracting, the static Programs directory will display the new programs. When Extracting from an archive do not switch back to ARCMAN before the extract program finishes. This may bring up an incomplete Programs directory.

Executing a Program:

All types of programs and associated files can be directly executed from the Programs directory by double clicking or selecting the Execute/Extract command from the menu. Archives in the Programs directory can also be extracted. They are placed within a subdirectory of that directory. Programs can be listed and printed with user configured viewers.

Shell into...

This starts a DOS session in the selected directory.

Making a Win Group...

ARCMAN can automatically create a Program Manager group from any directory. This group will include all executable files and all executable by association files. ARCMAN will bring up a dialog listing all the files in the directory. Invalid files are enclosed in brackets. You can select all the files you want ARCMAN to install. You can choose to have ARCMAN create a new group (default name is directory name) or ARCMAN can install all the selected files into the topmost group. Program Manager or a PROGMAN DDE compatible program must be running. All files successfully installed are unselected and bracketed.

Errors: Each group can only hold so many files. If ARCMAN fails to install a file it will report an error. You can try installing the remaining files into a new group or creating a new group for them. All the successfully installed files will have been removed from the list.

Command Line:

An archive file can be specified on the ARCMAN command line. ARCMAN will extract and handle the archive according to the command line settings. If ARCMAN is set up to be the default archive handler (except SFX's (EXE & COM)) then ARCMAN will be automatically run (by File Manager or other similar programs) when you attempt to execute an associated archive. ARCMAN will extract the archive. Depending on the settings, ARCMAN will extract to the same directory as the archive or a new (or current) subdirectory based the stripped form of the archive name. ARCMAN can then set up the entire subdirectory as a PROGMAN group. ARCMAN will then exit or remain active.

WINDOWS running DOS Programs:

Unless otherwise specified, WINDOWS uses the settings of _default.pif (in your WINDOWS directory) to control the way all DOS programs run. You can change this pif to customize the way your DOS programs run. Virtually all file extraction programs are DOS programs.

Self Installing WINDOWS Programs:

These are WINDOWS programs that usually extract to a readme, a setup.exe, and hundreds of *.EX_*.DL_*.??_. You run the setup and it automatically creates directories, expands/installs the files, creates groups, etc. I find these programs to be irritating, as virtually all of them contain the same DLLs you probably have anyway. These programs circumvent the ARCMAN scheme of testing, and might require a bit of clean up to remove. PC magazine has a utility available that keeps track of all modifications made by a program while it is installing itself.

Notes About WINDOWS and DOS and ARCMAN Limitations:

WINDOWS merely runs DOS programs. WINDOWS programs easily communicate with other WINDOWS programs. DOS programs easily manipulate the input and output of other DOS programs. However there are no real facilities for communication between WINDOWS and DOS programs. It would have been nice. There are ways to get around this, but I haven't gotten around to that yet. Basically this means there is no View command for archives. It would have been difficult to implement for SFX archives anyway. As things work, it is easy enough to uncompress an archive, view it, and delete it if necessary.

Using ARCMAN with a Ramdisk:

If you have spare memory available for a ramdisk, it is highly recommended. 500K is probably the minimum necessary. 2MB is a very usable number. The default extract test directory can be set to the ramdisk, so that all archive files are automatically extracted to the ramdisk. From there they can be quickly and easily tested - and deleted - or copied to the keep directory.

Configuring ARCMAN:

[Confirm file delete]

Default: **Yes**

Reset this flag to quickly delete files.

[Strip Archive Names]

Default: **Yes**

This option applies to new directories to be created. ARCMAN will suggest a name based on the base name of the currently selected archive. Setting this option will cause ARCMAN to remove spurious characters - leading and trailing non-alphabetic characters. Examples:

larcman.zip becomes arcman.

arcman1a.zip becomes arcman.

#1arcman.zip becomes arcman.

arcm22a.zip becomes arcm.

[Sort Directories]

Default: **Yes**

Set this option for sorted directories.

[Show Hidden/System Files]

Default: **No/No**

Set this option to show hidden and/or system files. ARCMAN will not then show these files in the directories, nor will it delete these files when deleting a subdirectory. ARCMAN will however copy and move all files regardless of these flags.

[Auto-reset Archive flag]

Default: **No**

This option applies to archives to be extracted. Setting this option will cause ARCMAN to turn off the archive bits of all archives extracted. This makes it easier to find new archives in the Archives directory.

[Install PROGMAN Icon]

This will place an ARCMAN Icon in the topmost PROGMAN group. Use this to install ARCMAN if not otherwise installed.

[Default Programs/Directories]

This is a list of the various default settings for the ARCMAN default directories and also the default file viewer / file printer commands. Double click or press the Edit button to change. See the command format section below for an explanation of how to set up commands.

[Archives]

Format: extension, command

This is a list of archive extensions and the command to extract each extension type. Archives can be added, deleted, edited or completely reset to the default commands. Because I have not used all of the extraction programs the default syntax may not be correct. ARCMAN is a shell. Because of that you will need all of the regular extraction programs. If you never download SFX programs you might want to delete the exe and com entries. Com SFX's are rare anyway. This will provide a more valid Archives section. See the command format section below for an explanation of how to set up commands.

Command format:

Commands are specified in the configuration section. A command is a DOS/WINDOWS program to run, and it can have the following optional parameters:

(arc) means the currently selected path\archive in the Archives section.

(dir) means the currently selected path\directory in the Directories section.

(prog) means the currently selected path\file in the Programs section.

Options are translated and other characters and commands are passed to the WINDOWS file exec function literally. Certain options have no meanings in various contexts. Commands must be found in the path or have a path specified. Commands not ending in exe must have the extension specified. DOS sets the maximum length of a command to 128 characters. Very long directory paths are not recommended as you could wind up with an invalid DOS command.

Examples:

exe: **(arc)** :directly executes the archive
for archive C:\path\archive.exe becomes C:\path\archive.exe

pak: C:\bin\pak e **(arc)** :executes the pak program for the archive
for archive C:\path\archive.pak becomes C:\bin\pak e C:\path\archive.pak

ARCMAN also includes commands for a file browser and a file printer. Notepad.exe is recommended as a browser, however it is limited to files of 50k or less. Write.exe can be used but is slower and more of a hassle.

Examples:

notepad **(prog)** :fast file viewer/edit

write **(prog)** :slower file viewer/edit, handles bigger text files

print **(prog)** :printing

Note: currently there is no way to create or use **(dir)** commands. **(arc)** can only be used within extracting commands. **(prog)** can only be used within the file view/list commands. A future version of ARCMAN will allow user configurable commands for each directory type.

[Command Line >>]

Click this button to bring up a special dialog box controlling the command line settings. ARCMAN can be run with an optional archive command line parameter, ie: ARCMAN %1. ARCMAN will then proceed to process the archive as specified in the command line settings.

[Install ARCMAN as Default Handler]

Default: **No**

Setting this option to **yes** causes ARCMAN to store the previous default handlers for all defined archive types. (The default handlers (or file associations) are defined in Win.ini in the [Extensions] sections). ARCMAN then sets itself as the default handler for all defined archive types. This does not and cannot include any type of SFX (self-extracting EXE or COM) program. Resetting this option removes ARCMAN as the default handler and restores the previous configuration. **Default Handlers** are defined in the win.ini file, the [Extensions] section. They are a way that WINDOWS uses to inform shell programs what program to run for a particular file type. Example: (in win.ini)

[Extensions]

wri=write.exe ^.wri ;WRITE is default handler for *.wri files

arc=Arcman.exe ^.arc ;ARCMAN is default handler for *.arc files

[Extract into new directory]

Default: **Yes**

Normally ARCMAN will create a subdirectory in the archive directory and extract the archive files there. The subdirectory name will be based on the archive name according to the Strip Archive Names setting. Reset this option to have ARCMAN extract the archive to the same directory.

[Auto-create Win Group]

Default: **Yes**

Setting this option will cause ARCMAN to automatically create a new PROGMAN group based on the extract directory. ARCMAN will then place all WINDOWS executables and associations into the new group. The group's name will be the directory path name.

[Exit when finished]

Default: **Yes**

Setting this option will cause ARCMAN to automatically exit when finished processing the command line archive. Otherwise ARCMAN will remain open for a regular session.