EVERYTHING YOU COULD EVER WISH TO KNOW ABOUT:

CyPet 2.0

"the virtual pet for Windows"

from Axe Software

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Credits: *Programmed by Alex Warren. Music by Martyn Townsend.*

Introduction

Welcome to CyPet 2, **the** virtual pet for Windows!

To see what's changed since CyPet 1, see the <u>Version History</u>

To find out about the basics of CyPet, go through the quick t<u>utorial</u>
Have fun!

Tutorial

Work through this simple tutorial and you'll be well on your way to looking after a virtual pet of your very own:

Other Features

<div align="center">

Boss mode
Status View Mode
Pause

</div>

Options

Clicking Pet|Options or clicking the spanner button will bring up the Options screen. From here you can customise the behaviour of the CyPet program. This dialog features help on the left-hand side - just point your mouse to an option and the text at the left of the screen will change to give you help on that particular item.

Here the options are described in more detail:

Speed:
You may want to change the speed of the game to your taste, so move the slider in the "Speed" box to change the speed (in seconds) between updates. The lower the number, the faster your pet will age and the faster it will become more hungry, more bored, etc. Alternatively, if you want a really fast game, click "Turbo".

Automatic loading:
To automatically load a file when CyPet starts, check the "Startup with pet" box. Then click one of the options - either to load the same file every time CyPet starts, open up the last file used (i.e. the pet that you last had on the CyPet screen the last time you played it), prompt for a pet every time CyPet starts up, or start up with a new pet. If you check the "Load pet" option you can either:
  - Type in a filename in the box
  - Click Browse to search for the pet you want
  - Click Use Current File to use the pet that is currently loaded.

You may find this option useful if you set CyPet to start up when Windows starts (by adding a shortcut to it to the "StartUp" folder of the Start menu). This way, CyPet will load itself and your pet automatically without requiring you to press anything.

Alternatively, you may just want to select "Use last loaded pet". Every time CyPet starts, it will load up the last pet you used if this option is selected.

If you select "Prompt for filename", CyPet will prompt you to load a file every time it starts. Checking "Start with new pet" will bring up the "New Pet" window every time CyPet starts.

On exit:
You can choose that the program either:
  - Prompts you to save (Yes, No, or Cancel)
  - Saves automatically,
  - Or, just exits/starts the new pet, with no saving or prompt.

Automatic window opening:
You can choose to have various windows opened when you open a pet - the Stats window and the Discipline window can come up automatically if you check the relevant boxes.

Warnings:
You can have any combination of:
  - A pop-up message (every 20 updates, so if speed is set to 1 you will get a message every 20 seconds; if speed is set to 20 you get one every 20x20=400 seconds)
  - A warning in the status bar
  - A bold label in the stats screen

Other options:
You can set how much time to wait after the boss key has been pressed - see the Boss Mode section.

You can turn off the toolbar - a bit useless but there if you want it.

Sound options are also controlled in the "Miscellaneous options" section. You can turn off sounds altogether by unchecking "Play Sounds", or you can just turn off the random sounds (e.g. "Oy!", "Hello") but keep the music and the event sounds (eg belching when you feed the pet, "Owch!" when you inject it), by entering a value of 0 for the random sounds box. Entering any other value here changes how frequent the sounds are.

"Suspend sounds in Status View Mode" will turn off random sounds only when the Status View mode is currently running.

Version History

01/08/97: CyPet v1.0 Beta 1
14/08/97: CyPet v1.0 Beta 2
21/09/97: CyPet v1.0 - final version

1/1/98: CyPet v2.0 (Beta Release 1)
- CyPet checks for existence of GIF, MIDI, WAV and DAT files when it loads, and terminates if any are not present.
- New Pet dialog's border is now fixed, was resizable (woops!)
- New Pet dialog and the Options dialog have been restructured
- Stats & Discipline dialogs no longer come up in Taskbar
- New option (albeit rather pointless) to hide the toolbar
- New Boss key (F12), new option to set how long until CyPet returns.
- New multimedia sound effects
- New Status View mode
- New Turbo speed setting
- New games selection screen (but only one game still)
- New strength rating for pet
- New look interface
- New look graphics
- New look fonts
- New look splash screen
- New look about box
- +++ more
- New support for multiple types of pet
- +++ more

Mid-January 1998: Beta Release 1a fixed a number of small bugs (well, not that small really - one of them meant you couldn't open any saved pets!)

July 1998: CyPet v2.0 – final version
- New game - Hide and Seek
- New list of names of pets on the "New Pet" window, for the unimaginative :)
- Another new-look splash screen
- Bug fixes
  - Invoking Boss Mode when no pet was loaded caused made a non-existent pet die when CyPet popped back up
  - Status now displayed immediately when Status View mode is invoked
- Status View mode added to Tools menu, new shortcut – F5
- Status View window shrunk to fit more snugly in a title bar
- Status View window now remembers previous position when closed and when CyPet exits.
- +++ various other miscellaneous improvements

CyPet's Website

Information and updates to CyPet can be found on the Axe Software website, at:

http://come.to/axe

Mailing List

If you would like to be emailed when new versions of CyPet and new products from Axe Software are available, please email **mailinglist@dewarr.globalnet.co.uk** with subject *Join Mailing List*. Alternatively, fill out the form on the Mailing List page at the Axe Software website (address below). You will receive emails the moment new software, including beta versions, are released, and will also receive news about forthcoming software.

The Axe Software website is at **http://come.to/axe**

Technical Information

The technical information for CyPet is in the file CPTECH.TXT. It contains information on the .CYP file format, registry information, the cheat, editing the graphics and making your own animals.

Distribution Information

CyPet is **FREEWARE** so PLEASE distribute it! However, the following rules apply:

Charging for distribution:
You may *NOT* sell CyPet or charge for distributing it, unless you have permission. All you may charge is a small disk-copying fee - *no more than £2 (UK) or $3 (US)* if CyPet is being distributed alone (i.e. just CyPet on the disk). If it is being distributed as part of a larger collection, more may be charged so long as there is no extra charge for CyPet. If you wish to charge more than the prices above, please contact me for permission. Permission will usually be granted although a copy of the CD or disk(s) may be required, sent to the Axe Software snail-mail address (available on request).

Wide-scale distribution:
You may distribute CyPet on the Internet or on a cover disk/CD, etc. If it is being distributed regularly (e.g. on the internet where it may be repeatedly downloaded over a number of months, or if it is regularly included on a cover CD, etc.) then please join the mailing list so you can be kept updated with the latest versions of CyPet. Please specify in the body of the message that you plan to distribute CyPet and how you are distributing it. Remember that if you are distributing on disks or CD for more than £2/$3, you must ask permission - see above.

Files:
You **must** include the full, original version of the installation program, with all files in their unmodified forms.

If you are distributing on the internet I would much prefer it if you just included a link to the full install program at the CyPet website, rather than upload the installation program to your site yourself. Either include a link to the page at **http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dewarr/cypet.htm** or a link to the full installation ZIP file (see the CyPet webpage for the address of this link though please be aware that this may well change)

Known Issues

- If ASYCFILT.DLL is not on your hard disk an error 50003 is generated. All other missing files cause an error that tells you that the particular file is missing. There shouldn't be any problems with missing files though, if you have installed CyPet properly.

Bug Reports and Suggestions

If you find a bug in CyPet, please email **bugs@dewarr.globalnet.co.uk**, or if you have a suggestion for improving CyPet, please email **suggest@dewarr.globalnet.co.uk**.

Please note that this is likely to be the last version of CyPet, as I am now concentrating on other projects. However, I don't mind fixing the odd bug or implementing any "little" features that people suggest… who knows, if I get enough interest I may find the time to do a CyPet 3…

What to do if you have a question

If you are not sure how to do something in CyPet or you have any questions regarding CyPet or Axe Software, please email **axesoftware@dewarr.globalnet.co.uk**.

If you need assistance setting up or running CyPet, please email **techsupport@dewarr.globalnet.co.uk**

Creating a pet

Start a new pet by clicking the New button, or selecting New CyPet from the Pet menu. You will be prompted for a name for your pet – you can either type a name or select one from the drop-down listbox. The names in this listbox can be altered by editing the NAMES.DAT file. You will also be asked for the difficulty settings. These are:

- Beginner: Health and behaviour values start at 8, strong pet.
- Intermediate: Health and behaviour values start at 5, averagely strong pet.
- Expert: Health and behaviour values start at 2, weaker pet.
- Random: Random health, behaviour and strength values.
- Custom: You can choose the initial health, behaviour and strength values by dragging the sliders.

The strength rating affects the pet's tolerance to exercise. A weaker pet will need less exercise, and over-exercising it could cause it to become overweight. A stronger pet will lose weight more slowly, but will need more exercise.

Enter a name and choose the type of animal you want, then choose a difficulty setting and click OK. You will then be presented with the CyPet screen. The name of the pet will be in the title bar.

The screen

Going anticlockwise from the top left there is:

- New, Open, Save and Options buttons: These do exactly the same as the New, Open, Save and Options found in the Pet Menu.
- <u>Food button</u>: Click this to feed your pet.
- <u>Play</u>: Clicking here will start a game of peek-a-boo with your yellow blob.
- <u>Inject</u>: Injects your pet to increase its health.
- <u>Discipline</u>: If your pet refuses to eat its lovely green blobs, give it some discipline to get it to eat up.
- <u>Stats</u>: This is a very useful screen that tells you how hungry your pet is, how heavy it is, its age, and more.
- <u>Clean</u>: Cleaning your pet will remove the horrible dirty things it leaves in its cage. This will keep it healthy.

Feeding your pet

You need to feed your pet or it will die (rather obvious, I'd have thought) . However, it won't always want to eat. Whether it wants to eat will depend on how hungry it is, and also on how well behaved and disciplined it is. There is also a small random factor that will affect how much it wants to eat.

Feeding your pet has other beneficial effects apart from stopping it starving to death. It will also make your pet less bored, and will also make it a bit happier. However, how much happier it gets will depend on how much discipline you've given it - it will be pretty upset if you've been too strict, so feeding your pet may cause it to commit suicide after a while.

There is a chance that your pet will die from a heart attack if it gets too overweight, so don't over-feed it! If you find that your pet is getting overweight (you will be able to tell because of the warnings), play with it for a while to burn off that excess blubber. Watch out that you don't over-do the playing though, or it might just become *under*weight!

Keeping your pet healthy

If your pet is low on health, give it a jab by clicking the "Vaccinate" button. Don't expect it to be too happy about it, though.

<u>Playing with your pet</u>

Playing with your pet will make it happier and less bored, and it will also give it much-needed exercise. Beware though: Don't play with it too much, or you will make it lose so much weight it will die. Remember - playing kills!

However, you can alter your pet's tolerance to playing by adjusting its strength rating when you start a new pet. A stronger pet will be able to be played with more, but will need more playing with to give it an appropriate amount of exercise, whereas a weaker pet will need less exercise.

When you click on the Play button you will be presented with the "Choose game" dialog. Select a game to play with your pet.

Peek-a-boo: Click either the left or right button, and the pet will peek from one side of the screen. If you got the correct side, it will become happier, less bored and less heavy. If you got the wrong side, it will still be less bored and less heavy, but not any happier.

Hide 'n' seek: Click around the box to try and find where your naughty CyPet is hiding. If you find it, it will appear and will become happier. Hooray!

NB: It's worth keeping an eye on the Stats as you play (just click Stats to bring up the Stats screen - it can remain on the screen while you do other things) so you don't accidentally kill you pet while playing with it - keep an eye on the Weight value. I suggest setting the warning mode in the options screen so that if your pet becomes underweight, the "weight" label will become bold.

Disciplining your pet

If your pet won't eat its food and it's hungry, you can be pretty sure the behaviour of the pet is not good - it's just being stubborn and wicked, like many children... oh, and pets too. Click discipline and move the slider to change how strict you are with the pet. However, the more discipline you give your pet, the less happy it will be. If you leave the discipline value high even when you are not feeding it, the pet's happiness will go down but the behaviour value will go up.

NB: the behaviour value fluctuates randomly, however much discipline you give it. More discipline will make it go up eventually, though.

Viewing your pet's statistics

On the Stats dialog you can keep and eye on how hungry your pet is, how heavy it is, how happy it is, how bored, how dirty, how old and how well behaved it is. You will see the current values in graphical bars.

If you're beginning to regret calling your pet "Anthea Turner" or some other stupid name, you can change the name of your pet by clicking the   "Change Name..." button on this dialog and entering a new name, like "Arnold Schwarzenegger" or something.

Cleaning your pet

Clean your pet to bring the Dirtiness value down to zero. However, your pet's happiness will also go down. The dirtiness value has an effect on health, so you need to balance how often you clean it so that it doesn't get too unhappy, but doesn't become unhealthy.

Death

Your CyPet can die for a number of reasons. These are:

- Poor health
- Underweight
- Overweight
- Hunger
- Suicide, if the pet gets too unhappy.

Saving your pet

Click Pet|Save As..., Pet|Save or the Save button. If the pet has not already been saved you will be prompted for a filename.

See the Options dialog for details on automatically saving your pet when you exit CyPet.

Boss Mode

This useful little feature used to be in just about every game released in the 1980's, but seems to have dropped out of fashion. Being incredibly unfashionable anyway, I put this feature into CyPet 2.

So, if the boss comes in while you're playing with your cutesy little blob, whack the F12 key and CyPet will (hopefully) vanish from your screen and Windows taskbar. It will come back after the amount of time specified in the Options dialog. So, make sure you set this value high enough so CyPet doesn't pop back up and say hello whilst your boss is going over those figures for last year....

Boss mode **only** works in the normal view – it does **not** work in the Status View mode.

By the way, Axe Software does not claim any responsibility for any reduction in wages caused by playing this game in front of your employer.

Status View Mode

If you want to run CyPet while working on other things, such as typing a letter (i.e. doing *real* work for a change), you can click invoke Status View mode to turn the CyPet window into a small one that remains in view at all times. You can invoke this mode by clicking the "Status View" button on the CyPet window, by clicking Tools|Status View mode, or by pressing F5. It is of a convenient size to fit in any windows title bar, so you can keep a check on your pet whatever you're doing. You could also drag it so it appears over the Windows taskbar, if you've set it to be permanently on-screen. You can move the window around by dragging the status caption (as there is no title bar). Very useful if you have a tedious job. Note that the "Boss View" mode does **not** work in the Status View mode.

There are two buttons - the first one returns the view to normal, and the second toggles the stats dialog, so you can check on all aspects of your pet while tapping away.

The next time you open the Status View window after closing it or exiting CyPet, it will return at the same place as before.

Pause

To pause the game, click Pet|Pause or click on the "Stop" button on the main CyPet window. This will pause the game of CyPet and disable most buttons until you un-pause the game. Pause is included so, for example, if you are running at Turbo speed and the doorbell rings, or you have a sudden diarrhoea attack, your pet doesn't die in your absence.

The making of CyPet

CyPet started as my first game using Visual Basic 5 Pro and so really it was just a learning exercise. I released the first Beta version of CyPet 1 only a week after I'd started making it, and eventually released Beta 2 after about six weeks, and because I made it so quickly, it wasn't that good. It was tested by Steve Lowder's PlayTesters (**www.playtesters.com**) and received an almost universal thumbs-down (and deservedly so)

So, in a desperate bid to make something a bit better, I started making CyPet 2. The PlayTesters' evaluation showed me that CyPet 1 failed due to a number of things: primarily because it was no fun at all, and also partly due to the fact that the whole thing was a load of poo, with rubbish graphics and no sound, and that it wasn't user-friendly at all. So I have tried to make CyPet 2 everything that CyPet 1 wasn't - i.e. fun, good-looking and great-sounding. And, I'd like to think it has succeeded - it certainly looks a lot better and there are wonderful sound effects, together with some rather nice tunes (cheers Martyn!). Also, there is an installation program, which should mean that this time around most people will actually be able to play it!

In making CyPet 2, I've tried to make it just a *little* bit more interesting than all the rest of those dull virtual pet thingies that have come out in the last year or so. Artificially intelligent it ain't, but hopefully it's a bit more interesting than most. Note carefully the use of "hopefully" in that sentence.

Several people suggested the multiple pets feature – this is implemented in CyPet 2, but I'm no good at drawing – if you want to add pets to CyPet, take a look at the CPTECH.TXT file. And, if you make a really nice-looking pet, why not email a copy to me? Who knows – I might put it on the website, opening your door to fame, fortune, and damn lies.

If you have any comments, bug reports or suggestions, please email **alexwarren@writeme.com**. Thanks in advance.

Have fun now...

Alex Warren,
July 1998