BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE FINDER

Part 3: All About Icons
By Steven W. Disbrow

Over the last two months, quite a few of our readers have called or written to tell me how much they either liked or hated these articles. In talking with the folks that like the articles, one subject kept coming up: Icons. "How do they work?", "Why don't mine work?", "How do I use an icon Editor?" So, in this final installment of the Beginner's Guide To The Finder, we will be answering those very questions, and a few others. To begin, the most popular question was, "What are these 'Icon' things anyway?"

Icons are small pictures representing the different devices (disk drives, CD ROMs, printers, etc.) that you have attached to your IIGS. Icons are also used to represent the files stored on those devices (to keep things simple, I will call all of the things that Icons can represent, items). "Where do these Icons 'live'?"

Icons are kept in files which are called, appropriately enough, "Icon files," or just "Icons."

An Icon file can contain any number of Icons, and you can have as many Icon files as you can fit on a disk. However, for the Finder to recognize them, Icon files must be in a folder called Icons, and, the Icons folder must not be inside another folder.

"How do Icons work?"

When you first put a disk in the disk drive, the Finder looks in the Icons folder of the disk to see if there are any Icons. If there are, the Finder then uses these Icons to represent the files stored on the disk. Each of the Icons stored within an Icons file contains within itself, several fields that tell the Finder exactly which device, file, or files this Icon should be used to represent.

All of these fields must match up with the corresponding attributes of an item before a particular Icon can be displayed for an item. "What are these fields?" In no particular order, the main fields that make up the innards of an Icon are:

File Name - The File Name field is used to specify the name of the item that this Icon will represent.

Meeting Notice

The next meeting is January 20, 1994.
7:30 pm
No one has volunteered for a topic still so we still don't have one!

Contents

Meetings - Regular Membership
The regular membership meeting is held on the third Thursday of the month, with a start time of 7:30 p.m.. The meeting is held at:
        "the computer store",
    444 Ferry Street, Salem, OR.
The general public is invited to attend.

Meetings - Board of Directors
The Board of Directors meeting is held before the regular meeting or as otherwise arranged.

Annual Membership Dues
Individual member $15.00

The WAC BBS is currently provided at no charge, however if you would like to make a donation to keep the BBS running, contact:
Neal Layton
P.O. Box 18435
Salem, Oregon 97305

Wac Journal

Authors should submit their articles in hard copy, 3 1/2 inch disk or send it via modem to the editor at the above number by the first of the month.
Copy should be submitted in ANY form you wish. I can read any format from any computer types so if you have something that looks good send it in.

The WAC Journal is published monthly.

Contributing writers are needed, especially for the Who's Who column. This is a member written column dealing with what each individual is doing with their computer, what kind of computer and programs you use, and how long you've had your computer. I can accept your article at any time for this column. Call me!

This newsletter was produced with Appleworks GS and printed on an Hewlett Packard HP DeskJet 550C.

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The Finder will display an icon for an item only if the name of the item and the name specified in this field match. In order to get the Finder to display an icon for more than one item, this field should contain the wildcard character "*". For example, if the File Name field of a particular icon were "Kit*," any item whose name started with "Kit" (i.e. "Kitty," "Kitten," etc.) would be treated as a match. If the File Name field contains only the wildcard character, every item, regardless of its name, would be considered a match.

File Type - This is a number (usually shown in hexadecimal) that is used to specify the File Type of the items that this icon can represent. If this field is zero, it will match with every item, regardless of its file type. In other words, zero is a file type wildcard.

Auxiliary File Type - This is a number (usually shown in hexadecimal) that is used to specify the Auxiliary File Type of the items that this icon can represent. If this field is zero, it will match with every item, regardless of its auxiliary file type. In other words, zero is an auxiliary file type wildcard. (See the "File Types and Auxiliary File Types" sidebar.)

Application Pathname - This field tells the Finder the pathname (see the "What's a Pathname?" sidebar) of the application it needs to run when the user double-clicks on an item represented by this icon.

"What happens if an item matches more than one icon?"

Basically, the Finder uses the first icon that it finds to represent an item that it has to draw. However, it searches for icons beginning with the last disk that appears on the Desktop. As you might imagine, this can get a bit confusing. For instance, the first disk the Finder searches for icons is your startup disk. It then uses those icons to draw all of the items on your Desktop. Now, if you insert another disk, the Finder will search that disk for icons and use those icons to represent any items that it subsequently has to draw.

If there are items that the new disk does not contain icons for, the Finder will use the icons that it found on the startup disk to draw those items. It should be noted that the Finder will not redraw items to use the icons on a new disk, but if it has to draw an item again, it will use the newer icons.

The Finder establishes this icon precedence each time you run the Finder (i.e. when you first start up the computer or when you return to the Finder from another program) and it updates it each time you insert a disk in a drive. So, if the order of your disks has changed, the precedence of the icons on those disks will change the next time you run the Finder. Due to this fact, it is a good idea to keep all of your icons on your startup disk. However, icons can eat up disk space quickly, so (if you don't have a hard disk) you should carefully consider which icons you want to keep.

"At my Users' Group meeting, I saw someone double-click on an AppleWorks GS word processor document. When he did this, AppleWorks GS started up and the document was automatically loaded so that he could begin working with it. How does this work? Also, why does the Finder sometimes tell me that 'An application can not be found for this document,' when I double-click on an item?"

Let's answer this by example. On my system, AppleWorks GS is kept in a folder named AWGS on my hard disk, which is named Big1. So, on my system, the complete pathname for AppleWorks GS, and the Application Pathname that is stored in the icon used to represent my AppleWorks GS documents is: :Big1:AWGS:AppleWorks.GS. So, when I double-click on an AppleWorks GS document, here (basically) is what the Finder does:

First, the Finder looks at the Application Pathname field inside of the icon for that item. If this field is empty, the Finder reports back that, "An application can not be found for this document."

In this example, the Application Pathname is not empty, so the next thing the Finder needs to do is to verify that the file :Big1:AWGS:AppleWorks.GS actually exists.

If this file does not exist, the Finder reports back that, "The application AppleWorks.GS can't be found for this document." Along with this message, you are given two buttons to choose from, Cancel and Try Again. The Cancel button is used to cancel the operation and the Try Again button gives you an opportunity to insert the disk containing the application.

If the file :Big1:AWGS:AppleWorks.GS does exist, the Finder starts up that application and passes it a message telling it the pathname of the document that the user double-clicked on. AppleWorks GS then uses this message to load the document so that you may begin working with it immediately.

"Well, that's all very wonderful for the Finder and AppleWorks GS, but why won't my icons work like that?"

The number one reason that the "double-click on the icon,

the Application runs, and the document is loaded" feature does not work is that very few applications support this feature. For applications that do support this, the main

cause of problems is hat the application does not have the same pathname as the Application Pathname that is defined in the icon. For example, if you keep your copy of AppleWorks GS on a disk named GSWorks, its pathname is :GSWorks:AppleWorks.GS. If this is not the Application Pathname defined in each of the icons for AppleWorks GS documents, the Finder will not know where to look to find AppleWorks GS.

"So, if this pathname stuff is all screwy, how do I fix it?" You use an Icon Editor.

"Care to elaborate on that?"
Basically, an Icon Editor is a IIGS application that allows you to examine and change both the appearance and attributes of the icons contained in icon files. Two of the more popular Icon Editors available for the IIGS are IconEd and DicEd, both of these are ShareWare and can be downloaded from any of the larger information services (America Online, CompuServe, GEnie), or our own pro-gsplus BBS. You may even be able to find a copy at your next User Group meeting, contact your club's librarian to see if either of these programs is available.
Once you have an Icon Editor, you can use it to change the fields discussed above so that your icons will work correctly with your particular IIGS setup. If you are feeling artistic, you can also use an Icon Editor to change the appearance of the individual icons. It does not take a great deal of artistic talent to do (as I prove in each issue of GS+ Magazine), and it lends a whole new meaning to the term "personal computing."
As for how to actually use a particular Icon Editor... the important thing is to get a basic understanding of how icons work and refer to the documentation that came with your particular Icon Editor. Then, sit down and play with the Icon Editor. In a very short time, you should be able to modify any icons that you might have.
Well, that about does it for our Beginner's Guide to The Finder. If you have made it through all three articles, you should have a fairly good idea of how the Finder works, what it can do, and how to make it do it. If you are still completely lost, here are a couple things you can do:

% Read your manuals. That's what they're for!
% Ask about it at your next User Group meeting. That's

what User Groups are for!

The best thing you could do though, is to sit down at your IIGS and explore on your own. That's what it's for!

{Sidebar}
File Types and Auxiliary File Types

File Types are numbers that GS/OS uses to identify the general nature of the contents of a file. Text files, for example have a File Type number of 4. Since few of us can even remember our zip code, Apple has defined a set of three character strings that are often used to refer to a File Type. To continue this example, the three character string for text files is "TXT."

Auxiliary File Types are numbers that can be used for just about any purpose that a programmer wants it to be used for. However, it is most often used in conjunction with the File Type to more exactly identify the contents of a file.

{Sidebar}
"What's A Pathname?"

Every file has a name. This is called a filename. Now, suppose you have a LOT of files. These files may or may not have anything in common, so it would be nice to be able to store them on a disk in a logical fashion, grouping related files together. To accomplish this, GS/OS lets you store related files in folders (also called directories). These folders may contain files or they may contain other folders, allowing you to further organize your files. A pathname then, is a name made up of the name of the disk the file is on, the names of each of the folders that you must open to get to a particular file, and the name of the file itself. Each of these names is separated by a colon (:). Example: if you have a diskette named Data, and on that disk is a folder called Sales, and within that folder is a file named January.90. The complete pathname of the file January.90 would be: :Data:Sales:January.90.

Computer Terms Word Search

Submitted by.....Roger Hanthorn

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Y 1 A D M V Y L O T V E H U F Z O K M A Y T Z
R . B R A J B L X U T S H J F W L F I X Y C Q
O 0 I T C M E O N A Q O A A L V J V K M H K U
T . K R I D H J M N U A R W O D U Z O O S H U
C 6 O D N W U Q S H A P D Y P X A D B N G H K
E H L B T W T A T S D P P S P H E B Y P I A D
R M Q L O X Y A B C R L P M Y M W G W K I R S
I E O W S F P Y I U I E R Y K K J X O W M D T
D T I M H T D V R W G W E I D L A B B S E J I
B S Y M H I U W E V A O S W I Z D E V W L D B
U Y D O D O V L T T E R S Q S E N K E Z P I T
S S A P P L E D I I C K E C K I C A L S P S A
N K K A T M P P R D P S D V L I U J E K A K F
N E L K P C D D W Y R W Z N T T P R S M K . S
Y P W G B F J M E A O P O S O W U I T B J C E
C Q U T I Z Y D G K N E D P P T D S H E C N L
A P P N O H P N A E A Y A L C B T P U S J I D
B R Z U V N L L M F O R J I M N M T Q U J Y D
F Y S N X S E F I J K Z P A O G J K I O W C A
A P P L E Z I I E I G I R F H S Q R Q M P A P
D R A O B Y E K K H P Q U Z K S I D I N U W D
G L T A M J H N T N O I S S E R P M O C I F L
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APPLE IIC	COMPRESSION	JOY STICK	PADDLES
APPLE IIE	FATBITS	KEYBOARD	PATH
APPLE IIGS	FLOPPY DISK	MACINTOSH	PICTURES
APPLEWORKS	FONTS	MODEM	QUADRIGA
AUTO ARK	HARD DISK	MOUSE	SUBDIRECTORY
BAUD	HARD PRESSED	NEWTON	RAM DISK
BBS	IMAGEWRITER	ONLINE	UNIDISK
SYSTEM 6.0.1	*WAC INC.*		

THE WORDS HIDDEN IN THIS GRID MAY RUN:
HORIZONTALLY FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND VERTICALLY FROM TOP TO BOTTOM
HORIZONTALLY FROM RIGHT TO LEFT AND VERTICALLY FROM BOTTOM TO TOP
DIAGONALLY IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

Classified:

Wanted-Buy Sell-Trade

WANTED:

I would like to purchase a 3.5" drive for my //GS and was told this was a reasonable place to start looking. Please contact me with any info you have on the possibility of me purchasing a 3.5" drive for my //GS.

Roy Chamberlian   399-9436

For Sale or Trade:

Paint/Write/Draw by Activison	--- $20
Graphics Expander Vol.1	--- $5
Sci-Fi Classics by Infocom	--- $15
5.25" Disk Nothcer (New)	--- $4
Various Apple Manuals	--- $1 - $5

Contact Neal at 370-9527 Voice
                    363-0861 BBS

For those that are interested.....
Tom Zorn
Easy Access Memory
503-461-2046

BBS News
By Neal Layton

Well as a few of you may have noticed already this months issue of the WAC journal takes on a better look. For those of you that didn't notice the difference yet pull out last months newsletter and check out the difference in print quality! Thanks to Santa and a few of his little elves I found quite a package under my tree this year.   After lots of research I had pretty much decided on a Hewlett Packard DeskJet 550C printer for my GS. As a joke on my christmas list for everyone I listed it as something I wanted, just one of those things to fill space basically. As you can probably figure out, one of Santa's helpers thought that I had been good all year and needed something special. Your reading the first official results of it right now. I haven't got it all figured out yet but as I do you'll see it in the newsletter.

As for the BBS, well it's still humming along waiting for all of you to buy modems and get online. If you're a person still interested in the Apple // and are very discouraged by the amount of printed material available on it. (magazines, newsletters, disks, etc.) Then you should get online. It will instantly connect you with thousands of users from coast to coast.   Users with as little or as much knowledge as you have are online everyday.   A great example of this online wealth of knowledge helped me get ny printer up and running in no time. Since HP didn't design the printer for an Apple //GS, getting the correct cable was a major obsticle in getting my printer hooked to the GS. Well I dialed up 'America Online' and in less than 30 min I had all the spefications I needed to buy or even build my own cable. Well being Christmas day I built my own and was printing from Appleworks3.0 in no time. Without AOL and the online help I recieved I would have had to wait until Monday (2 long Days) to even play with my new toy. Support for the Apple// isn't dead it's just moved from paper and print, to online electronic support. It nice to have an online Apple // databank just waiting to answer all of your Apple // questions.

----Neal

Membership Application
Willamette Apple Connection, Inc.
An Apple II & Compatible User Group
P.O.Box 7252 Salem, OR 97303-0053
Voice 838-5870   BBS 363-0861

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Phone _____

Please list computer(s) and software you use regularly:

Please list areas of interest (i.e. DTP, graphics, spreadsheets,etc.):
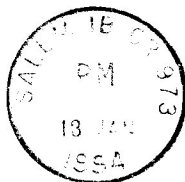
Membership fee is $15.00 annually.

Please make your checks payable to: Willamette Apple Connection, Inc.

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U S E R   G R O U P
C-O-N-N-E-C-T-I-O-N

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