

Amstrad
PCW
8256/
8512

The DESKTOP Publisher

User guide

DATABASE SOFTWARE

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All about your Desktop Publisher

Desktop publishing is a term used to describe a method of producing drawings and text, laying them out electronically and printing the result – all from the same system. With such a program it is possible to produce smart, professional newsletters, reports, leaflets and such like, exactly as you want them with a minimum of skill or expertise.

The Desktop Publisher (DTP for short) is an all-in-one typesetting and artwork package for the PCW, designed for use with a mouse or from the keyboard. It consists of three modules, each of which performs a series of specific tasks. The three modules are:

- A Page Editor
- A Text Editor
- A Graphics Editor

This manual shows how to use each of these in order to give the best possible results.

The Page Editor

To design a page you must first get a rough idea of how you want it to look. For instance, you need to know how much space you wish to devote to text and graphics. The Page Editor helps you to do this by displaying a representation of the finished page showing the positions of text and graphics windows that you have created to your own dimensions. It also allows you to move these around the page until

the layout is exactly as you require it.

These windows can be processed at any time using the Text or Graphics editors. When everything is complete and to your liking, the page can be printed out in either draft or NLQ (near letter quality) format.

The Text Editor

Text windows are processed with the Text Editor. It contains all the functions required to make formatting and justification as simple as possible. Character styles such as bold or italic are displayed on the screen exactly as they will be printed out.

When sufficient text has been written to fill a window, a message is displayed so that you can extend the window if you wish. You can also import text in the form of Ascii files created using LocoScript or other word processors such as WordStar.

The Graphics Editor

The Graphics Editor simplifies the production of clear, accurate drawings, graphs and charts. With it you can:

- Draw freehand
- Create single or multiple lines and rays
- Draw boxes, triangles and ellipses
- Paint or fill areas in a variety of patterns
- Edit detail by magnifying areas
- Copy or move areas
- Create enlarged text.

In addition you can incorporate images taken from the Rombo Digitiser or Dart Scanner and reduce or enlarge them to fit a pre-defined graphics window.

Getting started

You can operate DTP using either a mouse or the keyboard. On power up the package is set for keyboard control. This can be easily changed to cater for a mouse using the Options menu (see later).

If you intend to use a mouse, first make sure it is plugged in with the machine switched off.

Next load CP/M by placing your Amstrad system disc in drive A and switching on the computer. When it has finished loading your screen will display the A> prompt. At this point remove the disc and insert your DTP disc. Type:

DTP

and press Return.

Once the software has loaded (this takes a little while so be patient) a row of menu options will appear at the top of the screen.

Of menus and pointers

DTP is a drop-down menu-driven system. This means that rather than having to learn and remember various command sequences to get the program to perform a specific task, you select the option you require from the list (menu) displayed on the screen, using a pointer.

To do this you simply move the pointer to the desired item, which will then be shown in reverse colour. Then press the Select (Enter) key, or the mouse Select button. From now on we will refer to this action as 'clicking', which is standard mouse

terminology.

You move the pointer using either the arrow keys (with Shift pressed for a slower rate), or the mouse. Pressing Alt and one of the arrow keys will cause the pointer to move immediately to the edge of the screen dependant on the arrow key pressed. For example Alt + ↑ will move to the top of the screen.

To cancel a menu, click on the Cancel option within the menu, or hit either the Can or Relay keys. Throughout the DTP package pressing these keys will always take you back to the start of an operation. You can see the functions allocated to the keys in the diagram opposite.

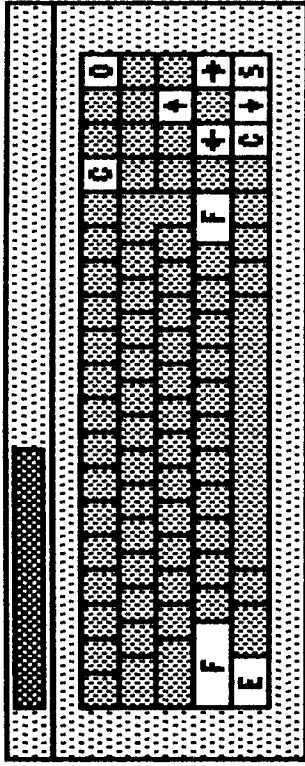
The drop-down menu system is an extremely simple and safe way to perform your tasks, so feel free to experiment. Rest assured that there is nothing you can do to damage the software. If you do happen to make a mistake, the software will inform you and no action will take place.

Note that when you save your data, you have saved a file and not a program. Therefore it has to be loaded via the appropriate Load option from the menu. It will not work if you attempt to run it.

The Options menu

You can go directly to the Options menu at any time. You activate it by pressing the Paste key (or combined mouse buttons). It offers facilities to invert the screen, change the default drive (for twin-drive systems) and provides functions for use with the mouse.

Keyboard Designations



- F** Fine movement key
- S** Select key
- O** Options key
- C** Cancel key
- Pointer movement keys
- E** Edge movement key

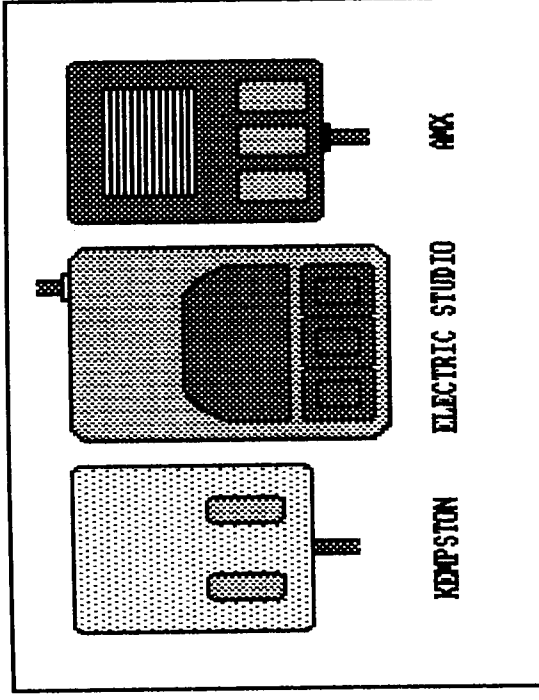
The mouse

If you intend to operate DTP under mouse control, you must use the Options menu to initialise it and select the correct kind of mouse. Once you have done this you will be able to move the small pointer around the screen using the mouse instead of the keyboard. You will be able to save this configuration if you so wish, so that on subsequent occasions when you use DTP it initialises for mouse use automatically.

To select menus and options with the mouse, move the pointer to the label and click the left-hand button. The right-hand button is used for cancelling. If you are fortunate enough to have a middle button fitted to your rodent, you can use this to bring up the Options menu. To obtain the Options menu with a two-button mouse, click the left-hand button while keeping the right-hand button pressed.

Also in the Options menu are the Pad Area choices, which allow coarser or finer movement of the pointer. The best way to find out their effects is to experiment with different settings.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the program and manual, we cannot accept responsibility for any imperfections in them. Our policy is one of continuous improvement and we reserve the right to change any part of DTP.



*Use the Options menu when you wish to operate
The Desktop Publisher under mouse control*

The Tutorial

Learning the ropes

The object of this section of the manual is to provide you with immediate hands-on experience in using DTP's three editors. In order to do this we have included a ready-made page file on the disc along with some text and graphics windows.

You can use these to experiment with some of DTP's facilities. Further information on all options, including those mentioned briefly in this section, can be found in the main part of the manual.

Setting up

If you intend using a mouse for input, the first thing you must do is initialise the system for it. Press the Paste key to produce the Options menu and use the arrow keys to move the pointer to select Mouse. A subsequent menu allows you to select AMX, Kempston or Electric Studio.

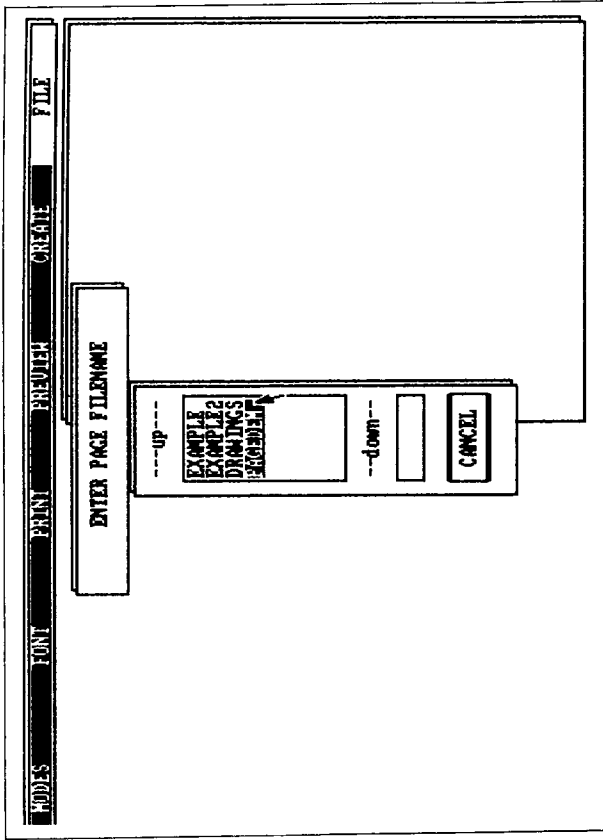
Editing a page

The Page Editor is the section around which everything else revolves. It is where text and graphics windows are created, where the page layout is manipulated and from where the finished copy is printed. Therefore it is logically the best place to start. To get into it simply click Edit Page on the top line of the opening screen.

During our experiments we will not save anything to disc, so you can position windows anywhere you wish and draw whatever you want. You can abandon it when you've finished.

Loading a page

To begin with we'll load in the sample page from the disc and try out some of the functions in the



Loading a page is simply a matter of clicking on the filename required

Page Editor to see how to manipulate the page layout. So first of all, turn the disc over.

To the right of the screen you will see a rectangular box which represents the A4 page you will be editing. Select File from the top line and choose the Load option from the drop-down menu.

A list of filenames will appear from which you should click on the file PAGEDEM. This will be loaded and you will see three small rectangular boxes positioned on it.

These are text and graphics windows: The graphics windows are shown empty, while text windows are filled with lines. Each line represents a line of text that will be printed on the final copy.

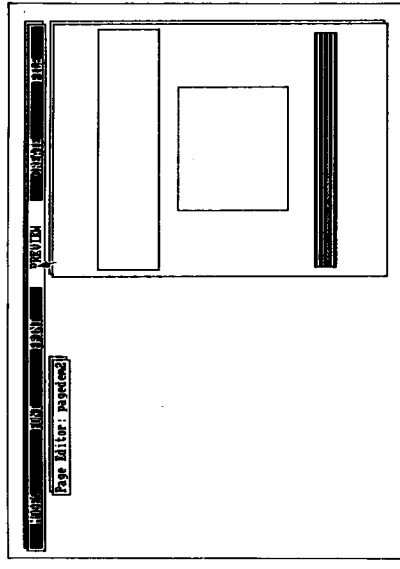
Windows can be repositioned anywhere on the page. To try this out, click Modes and choose the Move Window option. Click on the rectangular graphics window and you will be able to "pick it up" and move it round the page.

By clicking again you can put it down anywhere, even inside another window. Alternatively, clicking Cancel will return the window to its original position.

For this exercise, pick up the window and centre it at the top of the page, a short distance from the top edge. Now pick up the second graphics window (the square one) and middle it under the first.

Now deal with the text window in exactly the same way. You'll find that you can't position it with the pixel accuracy that you could the graphics window, as it falls automatically on a character boundary in order to be printed correctly. Place this

Moving windows



window a short way up from the bottom edge. Your page should now look like the diagram above.

Just like the page you are editing, all windows are individually identified when they are created. To see the names allocated to the files on the disc, choose the Show Window Name option from the Modes menu and click on the window you want to identify. Try each one in turn to reveal its filename - you'll need this information later.

Now we'll try deleting windows from the page. Select Delete Window from the Modes menu then click on the window you want to remove. This does not erase the file from the disc, but just removes any reference to it from the page. Try this out now on each of the three windows you have just positioned.

Name that window

Deleting windows

When you've carried out this exercise correctly you will have a completely blank page. To recover the situation we could reload the whole page, but here's an ideal opportunity to try out the option to add individual windows.

Adding windows

To add a window you select either the Add Graphics Window or Add Text Window option from the Modes menu. Click where you want to locate the top-left corner of the window, bearing in mind that you can always adjust its position afterwards. Click again and you will be prompted for the filename of the window you wish to add.

So, to bring back our sample page:

- Click on Add Graphics Window
- Click location for top-left corner
- Click, then select GRADEM1
- Click on Add Graphics Window
- Click location for top-left corner
- Click, then select GRADEM2
- Click on Add Text Window
- Click location for top-left corner
- Click, then select TEXTDEM

Your page should now be as it was before you started to experiment with the Delete option.

It is worth mentioning here that the only way you can see the contents of any window in full size is by loading it into the appropriate editor or by printing the full page. However, you can see it in reduced form using the Preview option. As we are shortly to use the Text and Graphics Editors we'll also take this opportunity to view the page contents by printing it out in draft form.

First check that your printer is set up and ready, select Draft Quality from the Print option on the top line and the page will be printed out. When printing has finished, follow the prompts to re-install the system disc.

So far we've seen how windows are created, positioned, moved, deleted and added to a page. Now we can take a look at how the contents of the windows are developed in the appropriate editors. To start we'll look at the Text Editor.

Editing text

To get into the Text Editor you first need to select Edit Text from the top line of the main menu screen to which you will have just returned. Click the File option and select TEXTDEM from the list of filenames displayed. The Text Editor's work area will now appear with the file you have selected ready for editing.

Moving around

Move the pointer into the Text Editor window and click Select. The pointer will be replaced by a cursor. From now on text will be entered from the keyboard at this cursor and deleted using the Delete keys.

The cursor is controlled by the arrow keys as normal, with the mouse inoperative. Try deleting some of the existing text and entering some of your own by inserting it into the original or adding it to the end.

Character styles

You can type on the screen in different styles such as italic or bold. To do this, click Cancel and use the pointer to select the Styles option. Choose Bold and click again to bring back the text cursor.

Try typing again and you will see that the text appears on the screen in bold. Now use the menu to remove bold, and enter some more text, this time selecting the Italic option. All styles are shown on the screen more or less as they will appear when the page is finally printed out.

Now you've experimented with the Text Editor we'll move on to look at how graphics windows are made up.

Editing graphics

To get into the Graphics Editor you first need to leave the Text Editor. Get back to the main menu by clicking File and Abort without saving.

The layout

Click the Edit Graphics option to initialise the Graphics Editor and click GRADEMI in the list of filenames.

A drawing will be displayed on the screen: On its left is the patterns menu which contains the designs with which you can paint or fill areas. On the right are the different brush shapes you can use when painting.

So that you can have a clean area to experiment on, you must first remove the previous picture from the screen. Select the Clear option from the top line then either Screen or Window from the drop-down menu – it doesn't matter which for this exercise.

Now click Tools. The drop-down menu that appears contains all the facilities available to you for editing graphics and you select one by clicking the option you require. We'll try some of them out.

Painting

First click the Brush option. Move the pointer over the drawing area, click Select. When you move you will paint the currently selected pattern using the

currently selected brush shape. These are indicated at the bottom left and right of the screen. Pressing Select or Cancel will stop the painting operation to allow you to move the brush to a different area.

Try out some of the different brush shapes and patterns by simply clicking an alternative in the appropriate menu. If you select the pattern representing the screen background, this will provide an ideal means of wiping out errors, with the option to reduce the size of the eraser from the brush shapes menu. Once you are happy with the paint operation, clear the screen as before.

Now let's try out the line drawing facilities. Select Line from the Tools menu, then click the start and end points of the line. Note that the line is not fixed – you can move it to the position required and click again to fix it.

You can experiment here with the facility to lock lines in the position they are initially drawn. Bring up the Options menu, then click on Line Lock: A small arrow alongside will indicate that this is now on. Now draw a new line and note how it is immediately fixed in the position you draw it.

Return to the Tools menu, select Rays, and providing Lock is still on you will be able to draw a series of lines radiating from the same point.

Once you've got the hang of drawing lines, fixed or otherwise, clear the screen and we'll move on.

Before we start with shapes, bring up the Options menu and click on Line Lock. The small arrow will disappear as the option is turned off.

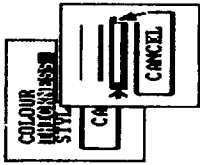
Now select Box from the Tools menu. Click the



Drawing lines



Drawing shapes



point where you want the top-left corner then move and click the opposite corner and an outlined box will appear.

As with line drawing the box's position is not fixed, so you can move it to any position on the screen then click to fix. Note that outlined box drawing has the same options available as line drawing. Try changing the line thickness and style using the options in the Line Style menu.

The other shapes in the Tools menu work in a similar way. Try the triangle and the ellipse – they're just as easy to produce.

The only thing to watch out for is that when you are drawing an ellipse, you first pull a rubber-banded box to the size of the ellipse required. So if you want to draw a circle, remember to create a square first. Try it and see for yourself.

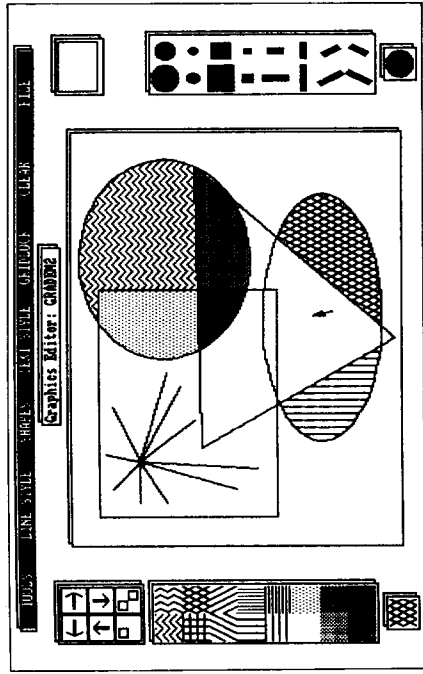
Fill

While you've got a variety of shapes on the screen it's an ideal opportunity to try out the Fill option. This is used to fill an outlined shape with the current pattern.

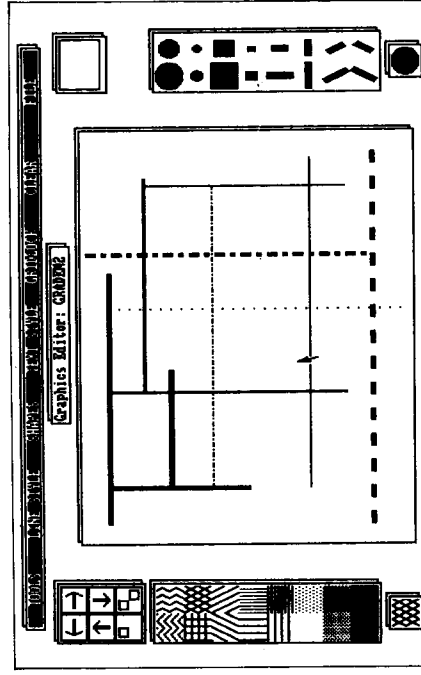
Test this by choosing the Fill option from the Tools menu and place the pointer inside one of the enclosed shapes on the screen. Click Select and the shape will be filled.

Note that if there is any gap in the shape's outline the fill pattern will leak out. You'll see this happen if you attempt to fill any shape which has been created using a dotted outline. In this case click Cancel to stop it.

Once you're happy with the fill options clear the screen again and we'll try some freehand drawing.



You can draw shapes and fill them with patterns . . .



... and lines of varying thickness in 16 different styles

Freehand drawing

Proper freehand drawing is only really efficient when using a mouse, due to the way that your Amstrad reads its keyboard.

Select Freehand from the Tools menu. Use the pointer in exactly the same way as with painting except that your alternative options are in the Line Style menu instead of different patterns and brush shapes.

Clicking Select will draw as you move, while clicking again will halt the drawing operation. Just move around the window drawing lines wherever you wish. Using these lines you can now try out the magnify facility.

Magnify

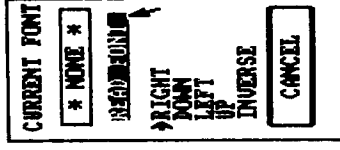
Select Magnify from the Tools menu. Move the pointer on to the drawing area, click once and a box will appear. This is your "magnifying glass". Move it to an area of the screen you would like to enlarge and click Select. Your chosen area will now be displayed in enlarged form. You can set or unset individual pixels by clicking on them. Notice that any changes you make appear on the drawing so you can see what effect they are having. Click Cancel to finish.

Copy

You can copy any area of the screen to another area using this facility. First choose Copy from the Tools menu. Pull a box the size you require by clicking the first corner, then move and click the opposite corner. Move the box over the area you want to copy and click again.

Now move the box to a different part of the screen, click again and the area will be copied.

Text



Each time you click a new copy will be drawn. Try it out several times then click Cancel to finish and clear the screen as before.

Enlarged text can only be produced within the Graphics Editor. You can create areas just like the heading you saw on our sample page. In fact if you select the File option, then load the GRADEMI window you can see what this looks like.

In order to create some of your own you will first have to load a font using the Read Font option in the Text Style menu. Now clear the screen again, then click on the Text option in the Tools menu. To use this facility you first pull a box the size that you want each character. As before, click the first corner, move, then click the opposite corner.

Now move the box to the point you want your characters to start and click again. Anything typed from the keyboard from now on will appear on the screen at your chosen size. Click Cancel to finish.

Use the Text Style option on the top line to write in different directions. For instance, clicking on Up will allow you to write up the screen; clicking Left will allow you to enter text from left to right, that is, upside down. Try out the various options.

Once you have experimented with all these options you should be confident enough to attempt to create your own page. To save your work as you go along, remove the system disc and replace it with one that you can write to.

We have only looked at a few of DTP's facilities in this tutorial section. There's much, much more to come in the main part of the manual.

