MAXIDOS

A Meddler's Utility

from

MicroStyle

PROCOPY is now included on the Maxidos disc. To read the instructions, load PROCOPY.DOC into any word processor or type TYPE from CPM.

PROCOPY is a disc to disc transfer utility that can cope with many protected discs. However, it will not be able to cope with some of the very latest protections.

It may be necessary to obtain the copyright holder's permission to make working and back-up copies of some software.

Sotware piracy is theft. PROCOPY is not intended to be used for theft but for legal purposes only.

MAXIDOS and PROCOPY are supplied free on a 3½" disc, with our 3½" disc drive. The disc is formatted in Amsdos and the programs can be copied onto a 3" disc, using Maxidos, as easily as from an FD1 B drive.

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PROCOPY, HACKPACK & DOODAH were, until very recently, sold for £13.75 each

Every 3½" disc drive is now fitted with a SIDE SWITCH. Until now only one side of each 3½" disc could be used in Amsdos or CPM but with the side switch, both sides of the disc are useable making the drive a genuine alternative 'normal' B drive and the usual 800k megadrive.

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Maxidos Instructions

GENERAL

(RAMDOS/ROMDOS users should first read the end notes)

MAXIDOS is a very powerful disc utility with the added benefit of recognising the RAMDOS/ROMDOS formats D1,D2,D10 and D20. It works as easily with these formats on a 3½" or 5¼" second drive as it does with AMSDOS data and system formats. In use: type the command, followed by the correct parameters, and press ENTER or RETURN. Abreviations of commands to a minimum of 2 letters are acceptable. Typing HELP at any time displays a list of available commands. We recommend using Maxidos with spare discs before getting into any serious work where errors could be costly.

A= or B=

Sets the default drive. The prompt > shows the selected drive.

BACKUP

This is used to BACKUP, or COPY, a complete disc. Since it works by copying data in BLOCKS it requires that the destination disc be of the same format as the source disc.

Syntax: BACKUP [SOURCE DRIVE]: [DESTINATION DRIVE]
examples: BACKUP A: B:
BA B: B: (remember the abreviations?)

BACKUP without parameters is the same as BACKUP A: A: (default)

CAT & CAT "FILENAME.EXT"

Entering CAT alone displays the files on disc much the same as in basic but there are two important differences. Firstly, the drive to be CATalogued can be specified. For example, CAT B: catalogues the disc in drive B (the colon is important). If the drive letter is left out then Maxidos will catalogue the current default drive.

The other difference is that some elements of the file extensions may be highlighted. A highlight on the 1st extension character indicates that the file is READ ONLY. Such files cannot be erased or overwritten. A highlight on the 2nd character indicates a SYSTEM file which is not listed with the basic CAT but which operates normally in every other way. An inverted E after a filename indicates an ERASED file which, of course, doesn't operate in any way and is not listed with the basic CAT or CPM DIR commands.

Typing CAT "FILENAME.EXT" (substituting the actual filename and extension) displays specific details of any file. e.g. CAT CODE.BIN". Wildcards are acceptable. e.g. CAT "CODE.*" displays the details of all files with the filename CODE regardless of their extensions. CAT "K*.*" does the same with all files beginning with the letter K.

CLS

Anyone got any ideas what this command could be used for? Hmm....

COPY

Probably the most useful command. It allows the copying of files from one disc to another using any combination of drives. Because of the way this command analyses the directory, copying from a disc *onto the same disc* cannot be done.

Syntax: COPY [source drive]: "filename.ext" [destination drive]:

Wildcards can be used. If the drives are not specified, Maxidos will use the current default drive.

Examples: To copy all files from drive A to drive A;

```
COPY "*.*"
or    COPY A: "*.*"
or    COPY A: "*.*" A:
or    COPY "*.*",A:
```

(Note the comma intead of a space in that last one. Commas and spaces are interchangeable in Maxidos syntax)

To copy all binary files from drive B to drive A;

```
COPY b: "*.BIN"
or    COPY B: "*.BIN" A:
```

(Note that drive B is specified in both cases. If it weren't then dos would use the default drive A)

To copy all binary files beginning with K from drive A to B;

```
COPY "K???????.BIN" B:
or    COPY A: "K*.BIN" B:
or    COPY A: "K*.BIN B:
```

(Note that the second double quote <"> isn't used in the last example but the first one is compulsary!)

Before copying any files, MAXIDOS will ask for confirmation for *all* the selected files with the prompt FILENAME.EXT Copy (Y/N)? Because the confirmations takes place before ***ANY*** copying begins, owners of 2 drives can happily get the kettle on whilst the actual copying is taking place. But don't expect to get to drink your coffee before Maxidos is done. It's considerably quicker than AMSSssddooss...sss...ss.....<snore>. With single drive systems MAXIDOS promts for disc changes *and* it checks that nothing silly is done like putting the wrong disc in the drive.

DISPLAY

This command simply changes the paper and pen combinations allowing a personal choice. Several combinations are available.

ERASE

The syntax for ERASE is the same as in Amsdos and CPM. Remember that the first double quote <"> is necessary. Wild cards can be used in the same way as with CAT and COPY.

Example: to erase all files beginning with C and ending with N;

```
ERA "C?N.*"
```

When a file is erased, whether by Maxidos, Amsdos, CPM or whatever, it is not removed from the disc or from the directory

but its directory entry is marked in a special way and the areas of the disc that it occupies become free for other files to use. If other files are saved to the disc then there's a good chance that the erased file's disc area will be overwritten. However, if no other files have been saved then the erased file can be restored with the command UNERASE.

FORMAT

There are two types of format, SYSTEM and DATA. The SYSTEM format is used by CPM. The first 2 tracks (0 and 1) are used to store CPM data and the directory is held on track 2. Whereas the DATA format has its directory in track 0. That's the reason why less space is available for storage on a SYSTEM (CPM) formatted disc. When formatting a SYSTEM disc you are prompted to insert a disc containing the system tracks (0 and 1). This must be a disc which was formatted by either CPM or MAXIDOS.

This command can also format the RAMDOS/ROMDOS formats D1,D2,D10 and D20 but, although formatting a disc in drive A in such a format is possible ***it should only be done with a 3½" or 5¼" drive which has been switched into the A position.*** Doing it with a standard 3" A drive is asking for BIG TROUBLE!!!

HELP

Provides a list of the commands available.

IDENTIFY [DRIVE]

This command displays the format, if recognised, of the disc in the specified drive. IDENTIFY alone displays the format of the default drive.

KILL

KILL completely disposes of any files which have been erased (i.e. files with an inverted E following the filename extension). When a file has been KILLed it cannot, of course, be unerased.

Tip: Doing a KILL "*.*" on a disc before any further erasing (not UNERASing!) can avoid the confusion caused when more than one erased file, with the same name, is left in the directory after an accidental erasure of the wrong file. Maxidos will resurrect the first matching erased file that it finds. KILL *only* destroys previously erased files by removing them *totally* from the directory but it doesn't touch normal files. Obviously KILLed files are beyond any resurrection.

PCAT

Follows the syntax and rules as CAT but directs the output to the printer.

QUIT

Quit MAXIDOS. Prompted for confirmation.

RENAME

Rename files on disc.

```
Syntax:       RENAME [DRIVE]: "OLDNAME.EXT","NEWNAME.EXT"
Examples:     RENAME A: "FRED.BAS","ZIPPY.BAS"
              RENAME "ZIPPY.BAS","GOERGE.BAS"
              RENAME B: "GEORGE.BAS","BUNGLE.BAS"
```

(Note: wildcards *cannot* be used)

When CATaloguing in Amsdos, you might have seen some files with an asterisk <*> after them. They are Read Only files and cannot be erased or written to. Maxidos shows them by highlighting the 1st extension character. RO changes ordinary files to Read Only.

Syntax: RO [DRIVE]: "FILENAME.EXT"

Wildcards can be used and, if the drive isn't specified, the default drive will be used.

RW

This does the opposite of RO by changing a Read Only file back to normal. The syntax is the same as RO.

SETUSER [DRIVE] "FILENAME.EXT" n

Another file status changer where n = the USER NUMBER (0-15) to assign. It can be very useful to chop 800k directories down to smaller, more manageable ones. A "normal" CAT defaults to USER 0 and files in other USER numbers are not displayed.

SYSTEM

It has already been seen how erased files can still be in the directory but not be visible to an Amsdos CAT or CPM DIR command. Another kind of file which is invisible is a SYSTEM file. It can be read from, written to, run, etc. but not listed in a "normal" CAT or DIR, although it is with a MAXIDOS CAT and its 2nd extension character is highlighted. The SYSTEM command allows any file to be set to SYSTEM or NON SYSTEM (known as DIR files).

Syntax: SYSTEM [STATUS]: [DRIVE] "FILENAME.EXT"

Status = ON to make a SYSTEM file and OFF to make a visible (non-system) file. Wildcards can be used.

TYPE "FILENAME.EXT"

Similar to the CPM command, except that it will deal with ANY file, displaying only the ASCII content of the file. If a value is read that *would* be a character but for the fact that BIT 7 is set, then it is displayed in inverse. Output to the printer is selectable.

UNERASE

The Amsdos erase command has long been the subject of much frustration for many of us. More than once the wrong file has been erased only to find that it's gone for good. Amsdos takes the same line on this as the Amstrad Customer Complaints Dept. - "tough cheese matey". Fortunately MAXIDOS's UNERASE solves the problem. To recover an erased file type:-

UNERASE [DRIVE]: "FILENAME.EXT"

and the file rematerialises. For example, if a file, on drive B, called "MININSTR.TXT" were erased by mistake, then typing:-

UNERASE B: "MININSTR.TXT"

when in MAXIDOS would unerase it. Please note that wild cards *cannot* be used with this command.

USER n

Instructs MAXIDOS to confine it's activities to the specified USER - n. By default MAXIDOS treats all user areas the same, but honours the area in all copying procedures. For instance, if USER 7 has been set with the command, USER 7, then the wildcard "*" can be used to return to *all* the areas recognised:- USER *

The USER command can be used in conjunction with other commands, here are some examples:

```
CAT B: USER 7 (CAT all files in user 7 area)
CAT A: USER 5 "*.BIN" (Extended CAT on BIN files in area 5)
COPY A: USER 0 "*.*" B: USER 7 (Copy all files on drive A
                    User 0 to drive B user 7)
RO USER 9 "*.*" (Set all files in user area 9 to read only)
```

KILL, RENAME, & UNERASE only operate with ***all*** user areas but there is a drawback. It cannot perform operations which would write an already existing filename to disc, ***even if*** the existing file of the same name is in a different user area. This is the only way of maintaining the unique ability to work on files irrespective of their user area.

VERIFY [DRIVE]

For RAMDOS/ROMDOS users this is possibly one of the more important commands, although it is still valid and useful for 3" drives. Default drive is the SELECTED DRIVE. Verify does just what it says; it reads through the disc, a BLOCK at a time, checking it's "goodness". A "read fail" at any point prompts the well known "Retry or Cancel" message. On non standard drives and discs it is advisable to press "R" for "Retry" several times before giving up and pressing "C" for "Cancel". In the event of a "Cancel" VERIFY will skip the questionable BLOCK and report on the remainder of the disc in the same way. If any BLOCKS have "failed" these are summarised at the end of the procedure. RAMDOS users who have experienced difficulties with certain discs now have the means to find out why. It may pay to invest in better quality discs, or at least see if the "Slow Disc" option presented with the disc menu helps.

OPTIMIZER

Imagine a disc that has been filled with a miscellany files, occupying nearly all of the available space. Being thrifty you you realise that a number of files are no longer needed so you erase them. Now consider the sector situation - scattered all over the disc are unused sectors as a result of the erasures! If you write another file to this disc it could well occupy several different sectors on widely separated tracks. It'll certainly take longer to load than a neatly organised file. So what? Well, OPTIMIZE re-organises the disc files so that they use sequential sectors - Good stuff? A snag? Yes. There must be at least 16K free on the disc for OPTIMIZER to work with. There are three choices on the OPTIMIZER menu:-

(1) DETAILS (2) OPTIMIZE (3) DRIVE A

Pressing 3 toggles between A and B as the SELECTED DRIVE.
Pressing 1 identifies and displays details of the disc.

Press 2 to begin OPTIMIZING. Initially the disc is VERIFIED, as it would be pointless to start moving files about with a "duff" block on the disc. Provided that all is well, the major task begins. The screen displays a visual representation of the work as it proceeds as well as the initial disc state, showing occupied and unused areas. W and R indicate the areas being Written and Read. If a "Read Fail" message appears, then there is no choice but to press "R" for "Retry" as "Cancel" would leave the disc full of jumbled files with no chance of recovery. "C" is disabled anyway. To avoid any disasters OPTIMIZER takes the precaution of verifying the disc ***before*** commencing the work. It is, therefore, very unlikely that a "Read Fail" would occur that couldn't respond to "Retry". Users of RAMDOS discs might prefer to use the "Slow Disc" option before using OPTIMIZE.

THE SECTOR EDITOR

Modifying disc sectors is one of those "tricks" that some have learnt to put to good use. Others may know *how* to do it, but not *why!* This isn't an explanation of *what* to use it for but rather a brief summary of the commands available. In truth, you shouldn't have any difficulty using it without reading any further but some clarification might help if you care to read on.

All available commands are displayed on screen, except that CTRL + ENTER re-boots the menu from scratch. It should be quite clear that having used CLR [the key !] to enter the MODIFY mode that all commands are still available. Use COPY to toggle between the ASCII and HEX display for modifying, ARROW keys move around the display [non-destructive]. Note that SHIFT + a key gives LOWER case, UPPER CASE is normal entry, CTRL + a key (EXCEPT W & R!!!- these are read & write sector commands!) sets bit 7 in addition to writing the character. CLR or ESC ends the MODIFY mode and returns to the PASSIVE mode. IF YOU MODIFY A SECTOR and choose to WRITE SECTOR - the changes that you make are NOT REVERSIBLE.....unless you've a good memory, of course! FUNCTION keys are used for some of the major commands. To the right of the command display is a "status" display which is up-dated as necessary.

FUNCTION keys:

```
F0 - DRIVE SELECT      [Enter selected drive at cursor position.]
F1 - TRACK SELECT       [Enter track at cursor position]
F2 - SECTOR SELECT      [              ditto              ]
F3 - SIDE SELECT        [Only applies to DSDD 80 TRACK formats]
F4 - FILE MAP          [Sets up internal map of file for searches
                         and F7/F8 stepping]
F4 + SHIFT - FILE MAP [as above + list of sectors/sides/tracks
                         to screen or printer]
F5 - PRINT SECTOR       [make sure the printer is on-line]
F6 - OTHER PAGE
```

In common with all other sector editors (except the one on BONZO's DOODAH) the data for each sector is stored as two "pages". Bytes 00 to &FF on one and &100 to &1FF on the other. F6 toggles the display between the two.

```
F7 - PREVIOUS SECTOR  [self explanatory]
F8 - NEXT SECTOR      [      ditto      ]
```

Note that these appear in inverse, indicating that SHIFT + F7 works as well. One way moves sectors consecutively through the disc, the other moves ONLY within the selected file as determined by F4. Why not find out which does what?

F9 + SHIFT	LOG DISC (MUST be used when changing discs)
	No "straight" F9 in use.
? [NOT with SHIFT]	Selects a string to be searched for.
? + SHIFT	Restarts search for repetitions of string.
TAB KEY	Catalogue disc in selected drive.
TAB + SHIFT	Extended CAT, as in MAXIDOS.
R + CONTROL	Read and Display sector.
W + CONTROL	Write sector ******* USE CAUTION ******
CLR KEY	Toggles between MODIFY and PASSIVE modes.
COPY KEY	Toggles ASCII and HEX in modify mode .

Note that "R" and "W" are used with CONTROL only. They are deliberately made difficult to use, accidentally or otherwise.

When entering search BYTES remember to enter in hex form only, and with a space or comma between each byte.

That's the lot. Do you need the warning that applies to any sector editor? No? Even so it would be irresponsible not to point out that this is one of the most powerful tools that a computer "Junkie" can own. It is capable of destroying data just as fast as you can press a key - so do take all precautions, and keep all precious discs WRITE PROTECTED.

We cannot accept responsibility for any loss of data, loss of mind, or even sector-edit compulsion. Have fun.....

ARCHIVE

Hardly an inspired name, but we couldn't think of anything else to explain what it does. Yes, it saves an entire disc, of any of the MAXIDOS recognised formats to TAPE. We reckon you'll need a very long tape for those 796K jobs, especially if they are full. Archive presents a seven choice menu:-

(1) ARCHIVE [Set about the main job]

(2) RESTORE [Create a disc from the tape archive]

(3) SCAN TAPE [Returns the archive filename and disc format]

(4) DETAILS [Returns the source disc details]

(5) FORMAT [Formats an intended destination disc]

(6) 1500 BAUD [Toggles tape speed 1000-3000 baud. 1500 is reliable.]

(7) DRIVE A [Toggles the selected drive between A and B]

To CREATE an archive put a suitable tape in the tape deck and wind it past the leader. Select DRIVE by pressing "7", and get the details from "4". Select your BAUD rate with "6", (we suggest 1500 baud is very reliable - but you might experiment with faster speeds). Now get to it with "1". Enter a filename for the archive

at the prompt. See that all appears to be normal and visit the local pub whilst it does it's stuff. To RESTORE a taped archive to disc, a suitably formatted disc is needed. If you forget the filename or format, "3" for SCAN TAPE will soon put you wise, and you can then format the disc with "5". Having made sure that the selected drive is correct you can now re-wind the tape, and press "2" to begin the RESTORE. The setting of BAUD RATE is not needed with RESTORE - so go to the pub again. And there you have it; a tape archive of your disc, a disc created from your archive and an alcoholic haze to boot! Nothing could be simpler, and the money you save on discs "backups" might well justify another trip out with the dog. Store your "archives" in a cool dry place, tapes are not as sturdy at retaining data as discs but they should last for years!

AND FINALLY.....

That concludes the run-down of the MAXIDOS facilities. We believe them to be the finest and fastest of their type regardless of whether they are used with a "standard" CPC set-up, or on a system that includes a 3½" or 5¼" disc drive and RAMDOS.

RAMDOS and ROMDOS are the copyright of KDS ELECTRONICS (04853 2076), and our thanks go to them for their assistance in our efforts to produce a utility that stretches the already useful RAMDOS/ROMDOS to a "smooth" operating system.

If you don't already have RAMDOS or ROMDOS with a suitable drive, and have enjoyed using MAXIDOS on a standard system, you might like to consider the advantages afforded by them together with our 3½" drive. Details are available on request.

This version is distributed, together with PROCOPY, by:-

MicroStyle

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TECHNICAL ENQUIRIES:
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THANKS

Many, many thanks to Colin Harris of NEMESIS. Your patience and hard work made it all possible - Kev.

RAMDOS/ROMDOS - MAXIDOS USER NOTES

In the course of preparing, checking and testing MAXIDOS, much use was made of RAMDOS, resulting in many more facilities being included than were originally planned. This is to your advantage. Having got to grips with MAXIDOS (and that's easy), you'll find the only use you have for the RAMDOS disc is for "booting" recognition of your high capacity drive. You may prefer to use the RAMDOS option for disc "cloning" using the "buffer" disc principle, as fewer disc swaps are needed than under MAXIDOS. We could hardly nick the same "buffer" idea, could we? Major gripes of RAMDOS users concern the hassle involved in file transfers, lack of access to the Directory area, suspect formatting, no verify facility, and difficulty in running programs transferred to the RAMDOS format disc. All these problems are largely overcome by MAXIDOS. In fact you have a full suite of utilities that can be used on RAMDOS as well as on "ordinary" discs. One aspect that MAXIDOS doesn't help very much is the running of games from RAMDOS when the machine in use is an unexpanded 464 or 664. The reason being that the substitute DOS used by RAMDOS is situated below HIMEM on these machines, hence ANY file that attempts to load to this area destroys the very routine that tries to load it. We believe that the number of users of RAMDOS with unexpanded machines is quite low. However, help for those with 6128s or expanded CPC's is to hand. On your MAXIDOS disc is a file called:-

MENUB.BAS

Load and list this file. The major work is done by machine code but it is presented in Basic so that it can easily be modified. As it stands, it can be transferred to your FAT disc of games. Boot RAMDOS, select DRIVE B, and RUN"MENUB". Most games will now run, especially those transferred by BONZO SUPER MEDDLER or BLITZ. Exceptions will be those that use the extra banks themselves [RAMDOS uses BANK 7] during loading and thus clash with RAMDOS. HACKPACK transfers should ALL work, as will nearly all OPTIONS 1 to 6,10 and BLITZ transfers. The odd ones that fail will include those that re-assign the DOS workspace to somewhere other than that set by a CALL to &BCCE with HL holding &ABFF, DE with &0040, and C with 7. In point of fact the workspace is re-assigned in OPTION 2X transfers, but where it would have worked with the normal parameters you will find it will run from your FAT disc anyway. The JUMBLOCK calls that would destroy RAMDOS and thus prevent a game from running are indicated in MENUB. You may find that some can be retained (and may need to be in certain "odd" cases). The bytes before the REM KO XXXX etc. can simply be changed to zero to make the call "live" again. You could also adapt MENUB to list from it's own data the names of the files to be run, and delete the earlier ¦DIR command. Note that stand-alone and basic files will probably run direct, and that SOME binary files preceded by a basic loader may need the single line as found in SETALVB.BAS (on the MAXIDOS disc) put in immediately before the CALL to the binary file that has already been loaded. More than that we cannot tell you - but you WILL be able to run the majority of programs from your FAT disc. 3½" discs and drives should have no problem in working at the speed set by RAMDOS/AMSDOS, but certain combinations may benefit from slowing down the access speed. It is more likely that 5¼" drives will need this facility. Use the "Slow Disc" option if you have been getting an inordinate number of read errors. If it is caused by using ultra-cheap-and-nasty discs, then it may not help. RAMDOS users by definition are trying to get the best from their machine - MAXIDOS makes certain that they do.