

Welcome to...

Danny Goodman's AppleScript Handbook

Quick Reference Apple Guide

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Overview

This quick reference is an Apple Guide that provides on-screen access to Appendix A of my AppleScript book (Danny Goodman's AppleScript Handbook, 2nd edition, [Random House]), plus additional Finder scripting reference data that I find useful. This Apple Guide is intended solely as a refresher when you need that quick reminder about the precise spelling or syntax requirements of a command or language structure.

You will also find a facility for transferring most syntax definitions from the Guide to your AppleScript script editor.

System Requirements

As of this writing (early September 1995), Apple Guide runs only on Macintoshes equipped with System 7.5 or later. An improved version of the Apple Guide system extension is planned to not only improve the speed of Apple Guides appearing on screen, but to allow the use of Guides on Macs equipped with System 7.0 and 7.1.

Since you must be scripting with AppleScript to be interested in this quick reference in the first place, I'll assume you also have the requisite AppleScript system software installed on your Mac.

The other significant requirement for using this Guide to its fullest is the installation of a scripting addition (OSAX) called "Jon's Commands" by Jon Pugh. This OSAX is available from every AppleScript-related on-line library, as well as on the disk accompanying the 2nd edition of my AppleScript Handbook. Be sure this OSAX is copied to the Scripting Additions folder located inside your Extensions folder.

Installation

Drag the "AS Quick Reference" file to the same folder that contains your AppleScript script editor. The next time you start your script editor program, the Help menu will contain an item, "AppleScript Quick Reference," which will start this Guide.

If you write AppleScript scripts in multiple programs (e.g., Scripter and

HyperCard), you can place the Guide file in the folder of one of those programs, and place an alias to the Guide file in the other folder.

Consult the first two items in the Guide's access window listing for further instructions and tips about using the Guide.

Background

This project was an experiment to stretch Apple Guide into the role of a reference publishing medium (and, while I am very familiar with every command that comes with AppleScript, Apple's own OSAXen, and the scriptable Finder, I don't remember every little parameter—I often need quick help myself). While this Guide may not win any awards from Apple--it is an unconventional application of the technology--I find having this reference material handy on screen to be very convenient.

Once you use the Guide for awhile, you will probably agree with me that there are some shortcomings in the Apple Guide technology for the amount of information presented in this Guide. I am sharing this experience with Apple in the hope that these issues will be addressed in future versions of Apple Guide.

How I Made this Guide

Creating this lengthy Guide helped me flex the limits of my own graphical authoring tool, "Apple Guide Starter." I'm proud to say that it came through with flying colors. (The software is part of Danny Goodman's Apple Guide Starter Kit, a book/disk package published by Addison-Wesley.)

I used "Apple Guide Starter" to create the panel text and the structure of the Guide. With the bulk of the work done for me, I then made minor modifications to the intermediate text file in Microsoft Word 5. This allowed me to make panel-specific font changes, include the "Copy" buttons, and attach the 88 AppleScript scripts necessary to accomplish the clipboard feature of this Guide.

I hope you find this quick reference to be a practical addition to your scripting tools. Feel free to share it with your friends, and upload this entire folder to any on-line service, user group, or Internet library where it can be downloaded without payment (beyond standard connect charges).

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Living at Light Speed

by Danny Goodman
Random House (hardcover)