

DISCBASE

INSTRUCTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

DISCBASE enables the Amstrad CPC user to load **CATalogues** of his or her discs into the **DISCBASE** database in memory and **SAVE** the database as a File, called the *DataFile*, to disc. Each separate **DISCBASE** *DataFile* must be given a unique name, which may have 1 to 3 characters. (This name will appear as the filetype of each **DISCBASE** *DataFile* and each Descriptor - see Appendix 2.)

You may have as many **DISCBASE** files as you need, and any Disc may be saved on more than one *DataFile*.

DISCBASE is not copy protected. We recommend that you make a copy of the disc, eg using **DISCCOPY**. Use your copy for running **DISCBASE** and saving your *DataFiles*. Use another disc for saving your backup copies of your *DataFiles*.

DISCBASE is menu driven and is largely self-explanatory. Most actions such as choices at the Main and Disc Utilities Menus require you only to press a key. String entries, eg for searches, require a [RETURN] or [ENTER] before they are accepted. All dangerous moves, eg to **ERASE** a file give a warning and the option to back out. [ESC] will normally take you back to the previous menu etc.

First, make one or more *DataFiles* by *Adding* your discs. Then, after each session in which disc filenames have changed, load up **DISCBASE** and the *DataFile* and update with the discs that have been changed that day. Thus you will maintain an up-to-date *DataFile* for searching whenever you need it.

If you get into trouble, first read the relevant instructions carefully. If you are still stuck, then ask a friend to read it with you. "Two heads are better than one" is often true in computing.

As a last resort, phone Greyhound Software, preferably between 6 pm and 8 pm, but never on a Sunday, please! We will do our best to help.

DISCBASE — 2 — **USER** **INSTRUCTIONS**

SPAN 1.0

START-UP

Switch on...

Insert the DISCBASE disc and type RUN "DISC" [ENTER].

To Load an existing DISCBASE DataFile,
press R (for RECORD) and follow the instructions.

The usual key presses will be R L Y [ENTER].

To start a new DISCBASE file,

press A (for ADD discs to database) - and you will be prompted for the name by which that DISCBASE file will be known. Then add Discs to DISCBASE, saving the DataFile regularly, till you are finished or the computer memory is full! When Adding, try to keep about 200 bytes free (Bytes free are shown on the Main Menu) - to provide space for Updating and other overheads.

Each side of a disc is called a Disc in DISCBASE itself because you have to turn the physical disc over to use the other side. We DO take account of the two sides of a disc when it's necessary.

ORGANISING YOUR DISCS

DISCBASE stores your discs in the order of the number you assign to them. You may number discs using XXX.Y where XXX may be 0 to 250 and Y may be 0 to 9. If you don't use .Y then .0 is assumed. The two sides are also referred to as A and B, as usual. Therefore, although the main Disc List is called DISCS, it is really a list of sides, just as a standard disc CAT refers to a disc side.

Each DISCBASE DataFile can store about 1200 files. If you have more than this, consider how you might group the discs into the different DataFiles when entering them. Remember that you can have overlaps; discCATs can appear on as many DataFiles as you want.

MAIN MENU OPTIONS

Ctrl A and Ctrl B will change drive, IF a disc is present.
(These options are not shown on screen.)

A : ADD disc to *DISCBASE* file in memory. Press A to enter this option and follow the instructions - carefully. The *Title* is a name (max 20 characters) which is stored in the *DataFile* and displayed in the Lists. Although it is logical, the disc operations may not be in the order that you expect. A Descriptor is a special Filename; for more details see the Appendix 2.

Do not try to put the name on a READ-only Disc.

If you are adding a Disc already having a Descriptor, then *DISCBASE* will interpret that side as a Single Side, even if it is a Side A, and finish with an "Another Disc?" prompt.

Only if no *DataFile* is present in memory will it prompt for the *DISCBASE* Name. If you have a *DISCBASE* *DataFile* in memory, and you want to start a new *DataFile*, then you will need first to erase the current *DISCBASE* *DataFile*, using E on the Main Menu.

B : The sequence B X Y will cause a Machine Reset to BASIC, with Abort possible via [ESC] or N.

Alternatively, after B, you are given the option to change the colours of the pen (called *Ink*), paper and border. Each of these has its true INK colour increased by 1 each time I, P or B is pressed. The number of the true ink colour is shown and the colour change takes place immediately.

continued

The switch-on setting is the usual CPC default. When a *DISCBASE* file is saved, the current colours are saved with it. We recommend that you consider I-13 and P-0 for colour monitors. You might find it convenient to use different border colours for different *DISCBASE* files.

C : This gives a normal CATALOGUE from the disc in the current drive. It is exactly the same as CATALOGUE on the Disc Utilities menu.

D : The Disc Utilities has its own menu options.

E : ERASE Database from Memory - only needed if starting a new DataFile, and one already present in memory.

R : RECORD your DataFile onto disc and retrieve, ie Save and Load DataFiles.

The DataFile is saved as a single fixed-length 15 K file called *DATAFILE.nam* where *nam* is the name you have chosen for your database.

NOTE Remember to save your DataFile regularly, on to 2 discs.

S : This takes you to a SIMPLE search, ie deselecting files beforehand.

T : This toggles from SIMPLE to COMPLEX Search and back.

U : Update a disc. Place the relevant disc (& side) in the drive, and follow the instructions. [ESC] to return to the Main Menu.

V : Takes you to the 3 formats for Viewing your Files, Discs and CATs.

VIEWING

The three VIEWING formats may be thought of as two lists, plus the CATalogues. [ESC] to return to the Main Menu.

If a search takes place, then DISCBASE attempts first to show the *Selected Files* list. If there are none, then the Discs List is shown, with toggles changed, if necessary, to produce a list.

To move from one format to another, use the cursor [R]ight and [L]eft keys. You may think of the Discs List as in the middle. Pressing [L] takes you to Selected Files; otherwise, pressing [R] takes you to the CATalogue of the Disc highlighted by the cursor. This CATalogue is read directly from the DISCBASE file in memory and so is displayed more or less instantly. You may move in a "circular" fashion from one format to another by continuing to press [L] or [R].

To move from one file or disc to another in the Lists, press the [UP] or [DOWN] cursor key. If the cursor reaches the bottom or top of the screen, and there are more files or discs, the List will scroll. [SHIFT-UP] and [SHIFT-DOWN] will scroll the List up and down 20 lines at a time. [CTRL-UP] and [CTRL-DOWN] will move the cursor to the top and bottom of the List respectively.

You may move from one CATalogue to another using [UP] and [DOWN], and to the ends using [CTRL-UP] or [CTRL-DOWN], but [SHIFT-UP] and [SHIFT-DOWN] move the display by 10 CATs.

Although Searches can be made from the Main Menu, it is usually more convenient to Search while in VIEWing mode. To do this, press S, and enter the string to be searched for, and pressing Ctrl T first if necessary on a Complex Search. Wild cards may be used and the restrictions are different from those used with DiRectory etc, see below.

On the Discs List, the number Selected is in fact the number of Selected Discs Shown, ie displayed.

Roughly,

? = 1 character, * = anything [0 to 8 characters]
\ = only the number of characters given will fit
_ = 1 blank char

Examples are given to show you how it works.

* selects ALL files

. selects *.____

FILL selects *FILL*.*

*.BAS selects *.BAS

F??L.* selects *F??L*.*

\. selects NO files

\FILL selects FILL____.*

\FILL. selects FILL____.

\CS?? selects CS??.*

\CS??. selects .CS??.____

Searches may be *SIMPLE* or *COMPLEX*.

A *SIMPLE* search deselects all files before the search. The selected files are then displayed in the Files List. According to the toggles set, the Discs List will show either (a) only discs containing Selected Files, or (b) all Discs. On CATalogues, selected files are shown highlighted. If Disc option (a) is on, then only CATs containing selected files will be shown.

A *COMPLEX* search gives the choice of

FORCED ie files are deselected before the search
or *OR* ie files are added to those already selected
or *AND* ie files are deselected unless they fulfil the extra condition set (besides ones fulfilled previously).

TOGGLES and Other Keys used with VIEWING

VIEWED

The following **Ctrl+Letters** *toggle* the function between Shown and Not-Shown. See also the diagram of the display header.

Ctrl B on Discs List will toggle Back-up Discs.
When shown, [B] appears beside the disc.

Ctrl U on Disc List will toggle Unselected Discs.

Ctrl H on any List will toggle Hidden Files.
When shown, ! appears against the filename.

When cursor is on a Disc,
B makes it Back-up & **Shift B** undoes Back-up.

When cursor is on a File,
H makes it Hidden & **Shift H** undoes Hide.

To bring back Hidden Files and Backup Discs,
first Show them.

In the Selected Files List,
[CLR] Deselects the File at the Cursor.

When the cursor is on a Disc,
T enables you to change the Title of the Disc, as held by the database and stored in the DataFile. Note that the Title is not saved on to the disc in the Descriptor.

To delete a disc from the database, see Disc Utilities,
Option X, opposite, for details.

P will provide a printout on your printer if you have one and it is set up ready to print. Press [ESC] to stop.

For details of printing, see Appendix 3, on page 10.

- A/B Change Drive, IF there is a disc in the new drive.
- C Display a CATalogue (same as C on Main Menu)
- D Display a DIRectory, using wildcards, as usual in this case, ie as described in the Amsoft Manuals.
- E ERAse a file from disc, with a wild card option.

A CATalogue is displayed automatically, and the name(s) of the files to be deleted is requested.

The file(s) to be deleted will be listed.

You will be asked to Confirm or Abandon deletion (as a set of files).

- R REName a file.

A CATalogue is displayed automatically, and the names of the files requested. No confirmation is sought, but you may back out using [ESC].

- U The USER option gives a choice of turning ON or OFF the User facility or changing a User number. Default is OFF. [See Appendix 1]

- X This option provides an easy way to delete a Descriptor from a disc when the Disc has been deleted from a DISCbase DataFile.

To Delete a Disc from the database, VIEW the Discs List, place the cursor on that Disc and press Ctrl D; then Y to confirm or N to abort. If you need to delete the Descriptor, go to the Disc Utilities and use this Option X. (The request to specify the DataFile name Descriptor is made in case you have a disc stored with more than one DataFile Descriptor.)

APPENDICES

1. USER numbers are available for those who need them. The default situation is USER 0.

To change USER, go to Disc Utilities and press U. You will be asked first to turn On or Off, and if On, then to set the USER Number.

The default number is NO CHANGE. If you turn it Off, then of course you return directly to the Disc Utilities Menu.

ALL Saving and Loading is done using USER 0.

2. A *Descriptor* is a special filename normally stored on the disc to identify that Disc when it is being read, for Updating. You can choose not to add it, and, of course, it cannot be written on to a Read-only disc - but that disc is not going to be changed!

The Descriptor has the form "XXX-YS".*nam*, where XXX.Y is the number of the disc, S is the side A or B, and *nam* is the name of the DataFile. The Descriptor will not appear in the database until the disc has been subsequently updated.

3. PRINTING CATS and Lists on your printer:

CATS : Press P to print the CAT shown. Selected files are shown in EMPHASIZED print.

FILES & DISCS : Place cursor on file or disc at which printing is to start, before pressing P.

To stop printing, press [ESC] and [ENTER] to return to viewing. On [ESC], the cursor moves to the last file or disc printed; therefore, if you press P after returning to Viewing, printing will continue from there.

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x indicates that Hidden Files and
Unselected Files will not be shown

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The
is
the

TWO SUGGESTIONS :

which is the same as the one in the previous section.

program loader and its constituent parts. Only the loader would be needed to show the presence of those files on a particular disc.

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We thank ARNOR Ltd whose MAXAM 1.5 was used to develop the machine code sections of DISCBASE, and whose PROTEXT was used to write the instructions booklet.

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