

WAC DOM March 2005

CacheMan 5.50 Free to Try \$10 to Buy cachm550.exe 928KB

With CacheMan, you can adjust the size of your cache, minimizing the need to swap files between your memory and hard drive. Since accessing data from the cache is faster than from the hard drive, the result is improved system performance. There are also automatic settings, so that you can choose the optimization method depending on how you're using your computer; using multiple applications at once, or using a CD-writer, for instance. It also corrects some memory problems on systems with more than 512MB of RAM.

This latest version of CacheMan includes the addition of a command line recovery utility, more efficient recovery, two new profiles, and several new Windows 2000/XP tweak settings.

CoolMon 1.0 Free cmzipped.exe 658KB

CoolMon helps you keep tabs on your PC's internal goings-on. This utility shows you up-to-the-moment information about how many processes are running, how much RAM is being used, and the exact time of day. In its standard configuration, it also tells you important (but easily forgotten) information like your IP address and the name your PC uses on the local network. Best of all, a little extra work and a little in the way of geek smarts will let you configure the window to show exactly what you need it to show--even the local weather.

Darn Passwords Free to Try \$15 to Buy dpsetup_3103.exe 2.52MB

Most of us end up with different passwords for different Web sites. Darn Passwords tries to remedy this memory-testing state of affairs by "remembering" your passwords for you, and it lets you "drag" your passwords onto applications or Web sites that need them. The program also remembers the URLs of password-protected Web sites--so if you use the program as intended, logging on to those sites is almost like running a script. And if you're feeling particularly unimaginative, you can use the program to generate passwords.

FxFoto 2.0 Free FxFotoSetup.exe 1.753 MB

This photo editing and management program provides the major tools for handling your digital photo collection. You have a choice of scrolling window or timeline view, plus keyword and annotation features. You can edit with a one-click image enhancer or adjust attributes manually. It also provides red-eye and blemish erasing, cropping, cloning, and more.

HTTrack Website Copier 3.32-2 Free httrack-332-2.exe 3.655MB

Whether you want to archive sites you visit, copy research information, or back up your own Web site, this handy utility will do the trick. WinHTTrack Website Copier lets you copy or mirror entire Web sites, and while the interface isn't particularly inviting or user-friendly, it is adequate and walks you through the process of copying a site or pages. You can set various parameters (for example, whether to include images; exclude specific URLs; or stay within the URL domain, as opposed to following external site links.) The software handled with aplomb the JavaScript code on one of the sites we downloaded.

iTunes for Windows 4.6 Free

iTunesSetup.exe

21.337 MB

Previously limited to the Mac, Apple's jukebox software is now available for Windows, and it's giving rivals a run for their money. Like others, you can play all types of audio files (MP3, WAV, AIFF, etc.) and optimize them with a 10-band equalizer. You can build playlists. And you can burn files to CD. But iTunes' earthshaking advantage is its online music store, where individual tracks sell for \$0.99. The store offers more than 400,000 songs, all of pristine quality, and its supported by all five major music companies and more than 200 independent labels. The few bucks you spend will be well worth the time you save and protection you gain from viruses; what's more, you'll have a clear conscience you'll have knowing that you won't be sent away to the slammer just for downloading some Zeppelin.

JDiskReport 1.2.1

Free

jdkreport-1_2_1-win.exe

786 KB

Many of us have only a dim idea of which files and folders hog the most space on our PC's hard drives. JDiskReport determines which files and folders could stand a little slimming. This analytical program simplifies your drive's profile; its "perspectives" include pie charts, bar charts, and details tables. Details, such as absolute and relative sizes and size distribution, give you an idea of the tasks that weigh most heavily on your drive space. JDiskReport includes information distribution of modification dates and distribution of file types, helping you to weed out old versions and duplicates. It also collects lists of the 100 largest, oldest, and newest files.

Process Explorer 8.41

Free

procexpnt9.zip

268 KB

Windows Task Manager tells you what applications and processes are running, but some process names aren't very clear. Process Explorer helps you get to the bottom of things by digging down to see which application started a process and which resources that app is currently using. This excavation can be a big help when you're trying to figure out which background processes you dare shut down, and it can help sniff out spyware, too.

Statbar 2.406

Free

statbarsetup.exe

1.694 MB

Just like a car, Windows has many little maintenance items to mind--but Windows lacks a helpful dashboard. Statbar stuffs the skinny on several crucial functions into one svelte status bar. With Statbar, you can keep an eye on your hard disk space, your CPU usage, and the amount of data transferring to and from your PC. Statbar also offers controls such as program launch buttons, a master volume slider, and WinAmp audio controls.

SpywareBlaster 3.2

Free

spywareblastersetup.exe

2.196 MB

If you don't want to keep up with Cydoor and Radiate's latest offerings, you can shut the door on all spyware with this program. SpywareBlaster sets a "kill bit" for spyware's ActiveX controls, but leaves harmless ActiveX controls alone. The Check for Updates feature educates your spyware database about the latest tricks, and blocks the newer spyware as well. SpywareBlaster can also block cookies, and can even shut down spyware already installed on your system. The software is free, but the vendor asks that users donate if they are able.

Tweak UI 1.33

Free

tweakui133.exe

564 KB

Free yourself from the tyranny of ordinary Windows with this extra set of tools (also called PowerToys) created by Microsoft developers. Adjust menu speed and window animation. Move the StartUp folder up the Explorer hierarchy, or move the My Documents folder to another drive. If you get the "No Help topic is associated with this item" message when you access the help menu, Tweak UI may have answers. The tool set also offers quick fixes for adding and removing items to your right-click New menu. And you may get a second chance at recovering lost uninstall options. **(For Windows XP use "TweakPowertoySetup.exe")**

Web Drive 6.03 Free to Try \$40 to Buy Webdrive.exe 4.415 MB

Working with a faraway FTP server can make you think you're telecommuting to Mars, and the software makes you wonder if you're learning Martian to do so. Web Drive, however, makes an FTP server feel as homey as your own PC. This program shows remote directories in Explorer, just as your hard drive and other drives appear. You type the FTP server information into Web Drive, and the program maps it as a network drive.

WinPatrol 8.1.2 Free wpsetup.exe 881 KB

Don't you hate it when you press Ctrl-Alt-Delete and find a dozen mystery programs running you didn't even know were running? WinPatrol gives you greater control over what can run on your machine. You can set it to display additional information about--and approve of--startup programs. You'll also be alerted when something tries to load an IE plug-in or set a cookie. And to get rid of a particularly nasty piece of spyware, you can use the "Delete File on Reboot" feature, so Windows will get rid of it before any other program can protect it or relaunch it. Scotty the Windows Watchdog barks if he spots trouble.

Xplorer2 Lite 1.0.0.2 Free xplorer2_lite.zip 576 KB

Xplorer2 Lite is a Windows Explorer replacement with many useful additions. Instant previews of several kinds of files--text, graphics, and audio/video content--help you keep tabs on the burgeoning data mass inside your PC. Features like mass renaming, side-by-side directory comparison, and split/merge ability let you handle greater amounts of data more efficiently. Keyboard shortcuts and autocompletion keep Xplorer2 Lite easy to use

Also: Prior issues of WACUG's Cursor newsletter

Four A to Z reference Books by Stephen L. Nelson are also included on the disk.

Seattle CPA and Quicken help guru Stephen L. Nelson has written more than 150 books about computers, business software, and accounting, leading the Wall Street Journal to call him the Louis L'Amour of computer books. Four of his 200pp A to Z references on Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook are available for free at his web site. Just click the "Free Stuff" link.

www.stephenlnelson.com
