

# AppControlPanel

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## User's Guide

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## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	2
Introduction.....	3
System Requirements.....	3
Installation .....	3
Program Setup.....	4
Application Settings.....	4
Program Settings.....	6
Program Operation.....	6
System Tray Icon & Menu .....	7
Starting/Stopping Multiple Programs .....	8
Software License Agreement .....	9
About the Author .....	9
Revision History .....	10

## INTRODUCTION

**AppControlPanel** is a utility to start or stop programs, script files, or batch files on computers running the Windows® operating system.

## SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

**AppControlPanel** requires Windows 10 or later. It may be possible for it to run on earlier versions of Windows, but there are no guarantees, and it is not supported on older versions.

**AppControlPanel** is a 32-bit application and therefore will run on a computer with either a 32-bit or a 64-bit processor.

**Adobe Acrobat Reader®**, or a similar program capable of displaying .pdf files, is required to view the program documentation.

## INSTALLATION

Run the installation package file, **AppControlPanelSetup.exe**. This will install **AppControlPanel.exe** and all required files on your computer. The installer will suggest a default location for the program file. You may change the location or leave it at the default, it does not matter.

## PROGRAM SETUP

You must set up at least one application to be controlled. Therefore, the first time you start the program, the program settings window will be displayed.

### APPLICATION SETTINGS

The screenshot shows a software configuration window titled "Setup Application #1". It features a tabbed interface with "Setup Applications" and "Program Settings". The "Setup Applications" tab is selected, displaying a list of configured applications on the left and a "Sort Applications" button. The main configuration area on the right includes fields for "Application Path & File Name" (with a "Browse" button), "Application Working Directory" (with a "Browse" button), and "Command-Line Parameters". It also has a "Start Minimized" checkbox and two list boxes for "Must Already Be Running" and "Must Not Be Running". At the bottom, there are buttons for "Save Application", "Cancel Changes", "Delete Application", "Save Changes & Close Window", and "Discard Changes & Close Window".

To set up an application, enter the following information:

- **Application Path & File Name (required)** -- Enter the full path & name of the program you wish to control with this button. Clicking on the "Browse" button will open a file dialog which will allow you navigate to the file and select it.
- **Application Working Directory (optional)** -- Some programs required a specific start-up directory in order to start properly. If this is the case, enter the full path of the required directory in this box. Clicking on the "Browse" button will open a dialog which will allow you to navigate to the directory and select it.
- **Command-Line Parameters (optional)** -- Some programs allow you to specify parameters on the command line to control how the program starts. Enter any desired command-line parameters in this box. Multiple parameters are separated by a space.
- **Start Minimized -- (optional)** Checking this box will cause the program to be minimized to the task bar when it starts.
- **Must Already Be Running (optional)** -- This box allows you to specify one or more programs which must already be running before this program is allowed to start. Enter the name of the program, with or without the file extension. For example: If you want Notepad to be running before you can start the program, you can enter either "Notepad" or "Notepad.exe".
  - You can also specify command-line parameters for the prerequisite program. Add a comma (,) after the program name and then enter one or more command-line parameters separated by spaces. If you specify one or more command-line parameters, the program will not be considered to be running unless it was started with the specified parameter(s).
  - If you wish to specify multiple programs, enter each program on a separate line.
- **Must Not Be Running (optional)** -- This box allows you to specify one or more programs which must not be running before this program can be allowed to start. Enter the name of the program, with or without the file

extension. For example: If you want Notepad to be running before you can start the program, you can enter either "Notepad" or "Notepad.exe".

- You can also specify command-line parameters for the excluded program. Add a comma (,) after the program name and then enter one or more command line parameters separated by spaces. If you specify one or more command-line parameters, the program will not be considered to be running unless it was started with the specified parameter(s).
- If you wish to specify multiple programs, enter each program on a separate line.

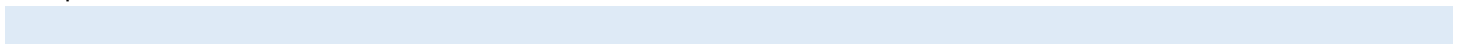
After all desired information has been entered, click on the "Save Application" to save the data.

If you wish to set up additional applications, click on "-- Add New --", and enter the information for the new application.

To modify an application that you have already set up, click on it in the list, make your changes, and click on "Save Application". To discard any changes that you have made to the application, click on "Cancel Changes".

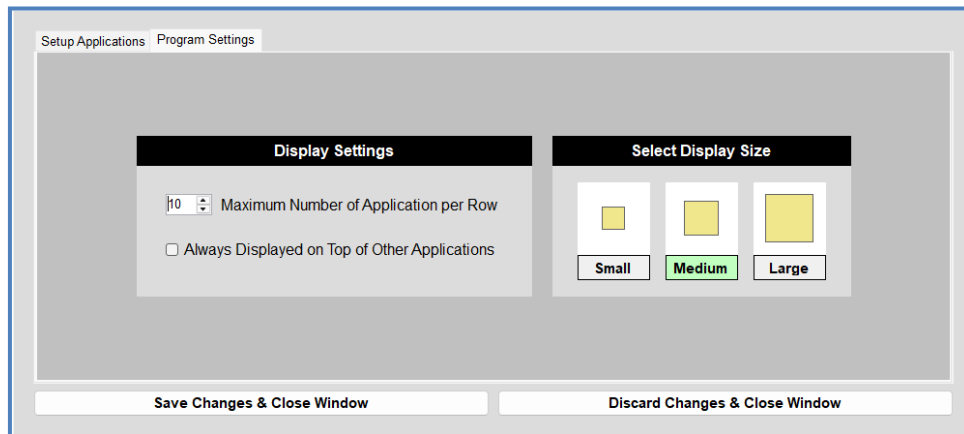
To delete an application, click on the application in the list, and then click on "Delete Application".

Clicking on "Sort Applications" allows you to change the order of the applications in the list by dragging an application to a new position in the list.



## PROGRAM SETTINGS

Click on “Program Settings”, and the window shown in Figure 2 will be displayed.



**Figure 2 – Setup Window (Program Settings)**

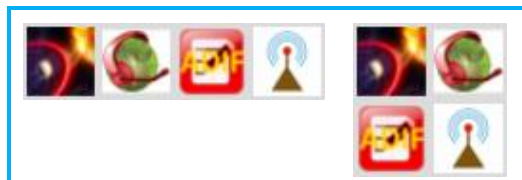
This window allows you to change the program settings.

- **MAXIMUM NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS PER ROW** -- Normally, application icons are displayed next to each other in a row. This setting specifies the maximum number of applications that can be displayed in a single row. If there are more applications than the maximum, rows are added until all applications are displayed. By default, this setting is set to 10, but can be adjusted to any value between 1 and 20.
- **ALWAYS DISPLAYED ON TOP OF OTHER APPLICATIONS** -- Checking this box will cause the main window to be displayed on top of any other programs that may be running. By Default, the box is not checked.
- **SELECT DISPLAY SIZE** -- Clicking on the “Small”, “Medium”, or “Large” buttons will allow you to switch the main window icons between three different sizes. By default, this setting is set to “Medium”.

After you have set up all of your desired applications, and after you have set your desired display settings, click on the button labeled “Save Changes & Close Window” to save your settings and return to normal operation.

## PROGRAM OPERATION

The main **AppControlPanel** display is a group of the icons of the applications being controlled. Examples are shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3 – Main Window Examples**

Click on a program icon to start or stop the program.

Right-clicking on any icon will display the menu.

By holding the Ctrl key down, you can drag the main window to any desired position on the screen.

Each application icon is surrounded by a narrow border that indicates the status of the application.

Border Color	Program Status
Light Gray	The program is not running.
Light Green	The program is running.
Light Red	The program cannot be started because either a required program is not running, or a prohibited program is running.

## SYSTEM TRAY ICON & MENU

**AppControlPanel** displays an icon in the system tray (notification) area of the Windows screen.

Double-clicking on this icon will minimize the main window to the system tray. Double-clicking on it again will restore the main window to its normal state.

Right-clicking on this icon, or by right-clicking on the main window, will display the menu shown in Figure 4.

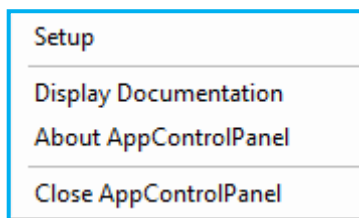


Figure 4 -- Menu

Clicking on one of the items in the menu will perform the following actions:

- **Setup** – Open the settings window.
- **Display Documentation** – Displays the **AppControlPanel** User Guide (this document).
- **About AppControlPanel** -- Displays a window with basic information about **AppControlPanel**.
- **Close AppControlPanel** -- Closes the program.

## STARTING/STOPPING MULTIPLE PROGRAMS

You can start or stop multiple programs with a single button by using VB Script (.vbs) files or batch (.bat) files and setting up the button to start the script or batch file.

Here is an example of a VB Script file that will start four different programs:

```
Dim WshShell
Set WshShell = WScript.CreateObject("WScript.Shell")
WshShell.CurrentDirectory = "C:\Program Files\FlexRadio Systems\SmartSDR CAT"
WshShell.Exec("C:\Program Files\FlexRadio Systems\SmartSDR CAT\Cat.exe")
WScript.Sleep(2000)
WshShell.Exec("C:\Program Files\FlexRadio Systems\SmartSDR v0.13.10\SmartSDR.exe")
WScript.Sleep(1000)
WshShell.CurrentDirectory = "C:\DDUtil_V3"
WshShell.Run "C:\DDUtil_V3\DDUtil_V3.exe /F6K", 7
WScript.Sleep(1000)
WshShell.Exec("C:\DXLab\Launcher\DXLabLauncher.exe")
```

Here is an example of a batch file that stops the programs started by the script file:

```
taskkill /IM SmartSDR.exe
taskkill /IM DDUtil_V3.exe
taskkill /IM DXLabLauncher.exe
taskkill /IM CAT.exe
```



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

***AppControlPanel*** was written by Ray Andrews, K9DUR.

Ray holds an Amateur Extra class license and was first licensed in April 1960. He currently resides in West Terre Haute, IN, and is a retired electronic design engineer and software developer.

For more information, visit Ray's web page:

<https://k9dur.us>

## REVISION HISTORY

v2.2.2 – July 16, 2025 – Complete re-write.

v1.1.4 – September 20, 2013 -- Clicking on "Restore" on system tray menu also brings window to the front.

v1.1.3 – September 14, 2013 -- Fixed bug where StartMinimized setting was not being saved on program exit.

v1.1.2 – September 13, 2013 -- Fixed bug where StartMinimized setting was not being loaded on program startup.

v1.1.1 – September 3, 2013 -- Fixed bug where Clear Button function & Start Minimized setting were not being saved correctly.

v1.1.0 – September 2, 2013 -- Changed program to minimize to system tray & added system tray context menu. Added code to trap the occasional "process not running" error.

v1.0.0 – August 28, 2013 -- Initial Release.

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