



Optimizing the AmiKit

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Following is a small article originally published in French „Amiga Power“ magazine, not only for those who are eager to personalize and improve their AmiKit installation, but also for anyone wishing to gain some bytes on the Workbench.

Certain people told me that AmiKit runs slow or overheats their CPUs. I think the following suggestions will be useful.

Document revision 1.0

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Advanced Installation

AmiKit can be used in several ways, either comfortably installed on your hard disk in various forms (directory, hard-disk file) or on removable media (I know of one who will scream because I borrow this term!), i.e. on an **USB memory stick**.

Yes, WinUAE being very well put together, its operation does not depend on files installed on a dedicated PC. Thus, you can install AmiKit and WinUAE easily on a USB memory stick and use it on any other PC (provided it fills the minimum requirements to make WinUAE work). So then you have the smallest Amiga in the world, usable almost everywhere. For those interested, I will make a demonstration at Alchemy 2007 (WinUAE+AmiKit+WHDload on a USB stick, it is brilliant).



1. The installation is not a problem, it carries out the job of installing AmiKit (links for downloading are presented at the end of the article) on your USB key. The process is a little bit slower if, as in my case, you use an USB 1.1 port (bear in mind, the original Workbench CD is essential). Then start AmiKit to install Boing Bag 1 and 2.

Also carry out the localization of AmiKit and proceed to installing the patches (important, it should be done before upgrading to version 1.3.0)

2. Download the cumulative update of version 1.2.x towards version 1.3.0. Also chose the path to the USB. Restart AmiKit.

The only thing that remains to make functional in Devs/DOSDrivers is CD0 (moved to Storage/DOSDrivers). A solution to this has yet to be found (I think however that the problem comes from the host and not from AmiKit. See the)

3. Then, all that remains is to get the latest version of WinUAE (without installing) and copy the contents to the WinUAE directory in the USB stick.
4. Launch AmiKit from your USB stick and carry out the Live Update to keep AmiKit up to date (current version in April 2007 is v1.3.2)

And now you have a working Amiga environment on your USB memory stick!

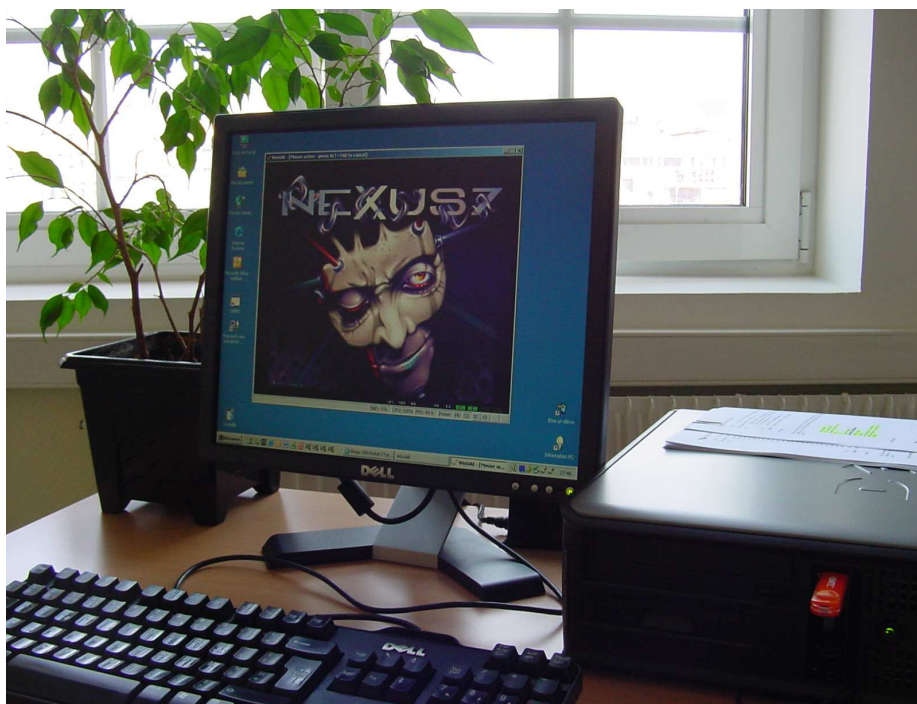
Examples of installation on USB stick:

AmiKit on my home PC



AmiKit on my office PC

It is a coffee break, go hop, a small demo! :-)





It should be noted that other distributions can also be installed on a USB stick, it is not AmiKit feature. Our friend Ness is working on a special USB version (AmigaOS + applications, altogether less than 128MB!).

On the next page you can see some previews of the latest USB beta version 3 environment.

To optimize the starting of AmiKit

Here we will cover a clean install of AmiKit, not of the personalized adjustments of WinUAE which depend on your hardware configuration

- 1) AmiKits author designed the environment to be as complete as possible. Due to this, several installed applications might be useless for you. Moreover, loading all these applications slows down the system startup and occupies a considerable amount of memory.

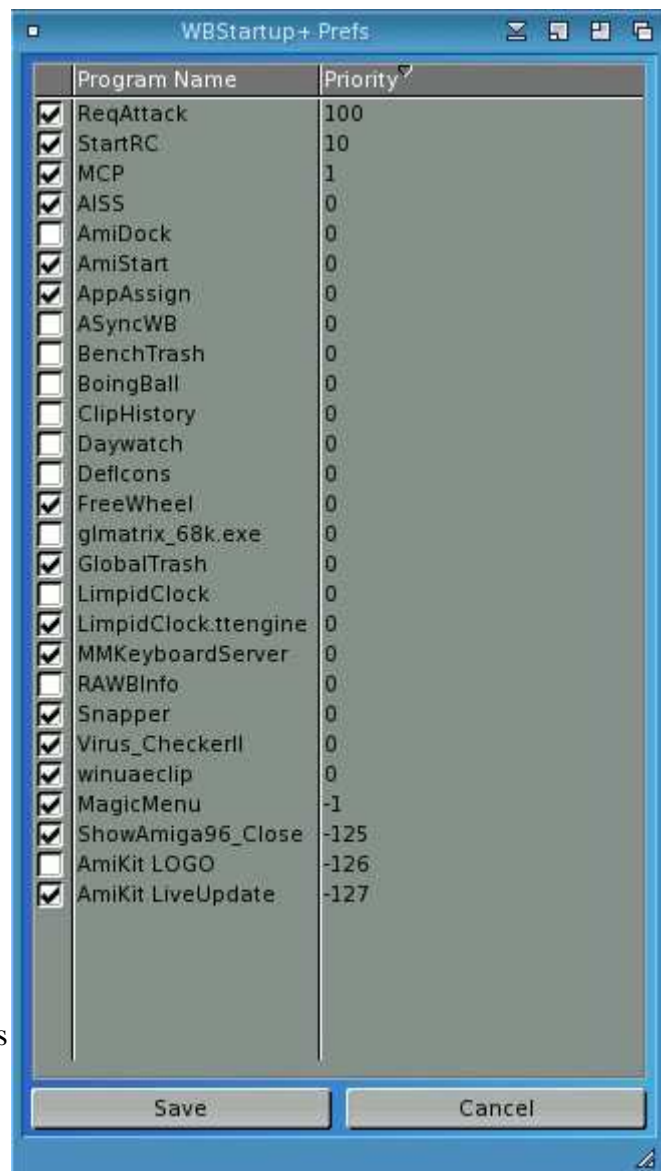
Here are two lists of applications which can be safely removed. You can see what applications suit you and what not. To deselect these applications, just use the WBStartup+Prefs tool as described on the picture. To start the tool, click the taskbar, select Tools -> System -> WBStartup+Prefs program.

Advised to disable

- BoingBall (a blue arrow animated at the bottom-left of your screen)
- Daywatch (if your personal memory is enough for you)
- GIMatrix_68k.exe (a screensaver)
- AmiKit Logo (shows the AmiKit splash logo during the startup)

Optional to disable

- Virus Checker II (if you consider that there are no more risks on Amiga)
- AmiKit Live Update (if the updates do not function with a proxy for example, or if you prefer to update manually)



(an example of my configuration of AmiKit on USB)

Now you get to test the setup, to see if it runs according to taste and need. Are you inclined to be a gamer or office user? It should be noted that all the disabled programs are automatically moved to AmiKit:WBStartup/Disabled/

On my configuration, certain software is deactivated due to the fact that I use Dopus Magellan to replace Workbench, so it should be reactivated if you want to use traditional Workbench (Deficons, RAWBinfo, etc...)

- 2) If you wish to start AmiKit without DOpus Magellan as a replacement of Workbench, it is enough to press and hold the SHIFT key during startup. If you really wish to use Workbench instead of the Opus Magellan regularly, here is a quick guide on how to do it:
 - Click on the boingball located in the bar of task - > Utilities - > System - > Startup-Sequence. At the bottom of this file, there are two lines:
 ; *LoadWB*
 LoadDB
 - Place a semicolon in front of the *LoadDB* line and remove the one in front of the *LoadWB* line so the lines will look like this:
 LoadWB
 ; *LoadDB*.
 - Save and restart.

To accelerate AmiKit

- 1) As I write this article, the version is 1.3.2. I highly recommend to install it because:
 - it improves the speed of drawing the icons via the new version of Afa_OS (three times faster)
 - and the priority of the LimpidClock program is lowered, which improves the system response. Update is automatic and is available via Live Update tool.
- 2) Another method to accelerate the AmiKit consists of transferring the installation to a hardfile. To use a hardfile in the place of a directory has some advantages. According to the speed of your computer, you will be able to note some profits speed by using a file disc. Simply try to make a research with SimpleFind and I think that you will note the difference. There are also some bugs in the filing system of UAE from which you will not suffer by using a file disc. And lately, it is simpler to copy the file disc if you want to carry out a safeguard of your hard disk.

It was also reported on the forum of AmiKit that the last version of WinUAE 1.4.2 (beta) accelerated the operation of AmiKit significantly. Not having tested this version to date, I cannot guarantee this. Will version 1.4.2 support (real) the 68060??? We will see.

To gain space by “cleaning”AmiKit or its Workbench!

Starting weight of AmiKit (version 1.3.2): 426.8 MB

A number of files will be installed by default by AmiKit, that will be of no use to you. It results in a lot of wasted disk space, or in my case, USB memory space. These are mainly consisting of:

- help files in foreign language directories
- files intended for the translation purposes
- foreign catalog files

By following these steps, you can reclaim some precious bytes. If you use the default install of AmiKit, i.e. by using a directory and not a .HDF file, you can do this from the PC-side as well as the Amiga side. If you use a partition, or a .HDF-file, it has to be done from the Amiga side.

- If you installed Opus Magellan, just return to the directories and remove the files
- If you use Workbench, open the directories one by one or use search via Simplefind3, available in the AmiKit directory: Utilities/Simplefind3

Attention, before removing anything, I strongly advise you to backup your installation. If you have any doubt about a space saving feature, don't use it. Certain noted operations can also be carried out on any installation of Workbench 3.9 1

Cleaning of the help files

AmiKit:Locale/Help

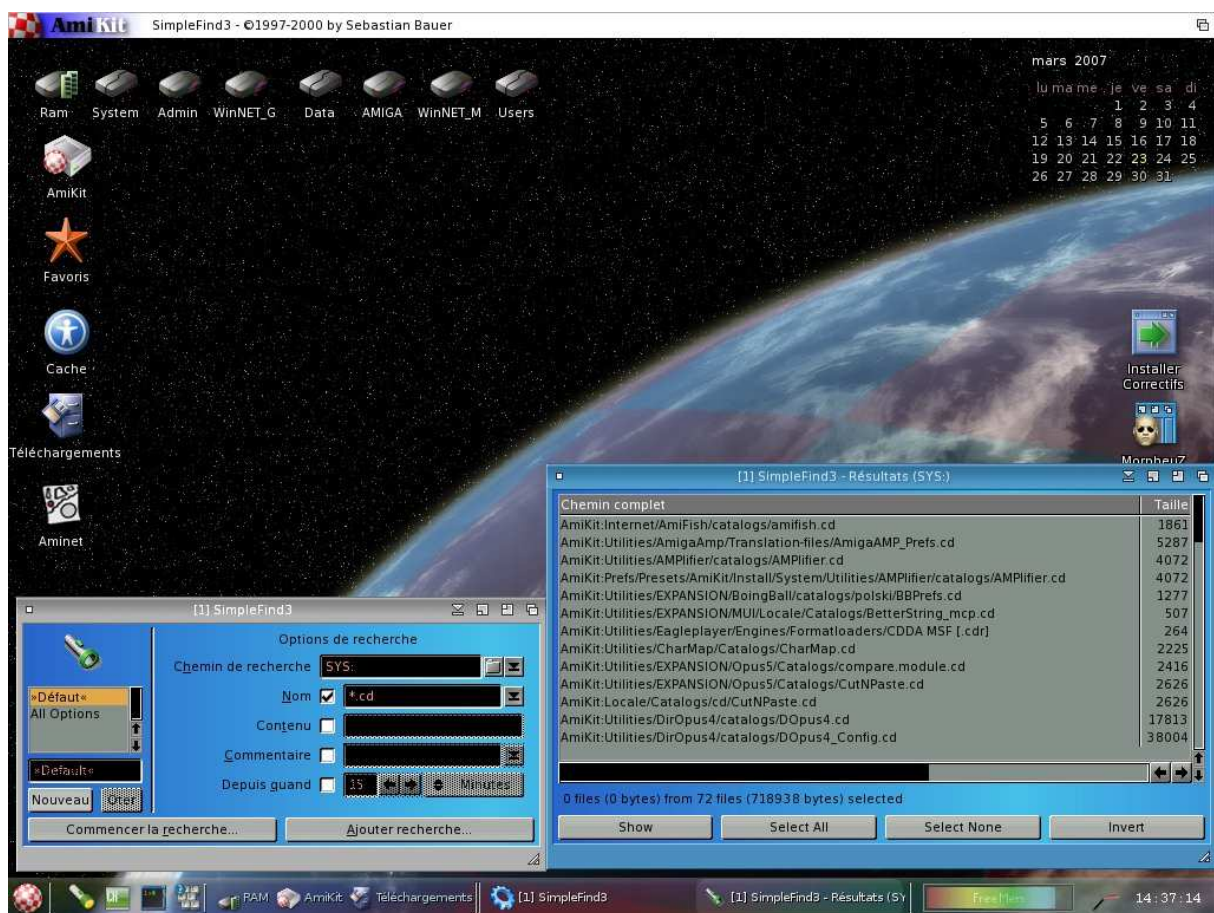
These directories contain help files in various languages. Personally, I preserved only the “French” directories and “English”

Removing these directories will present a bonus effect, namely improving response time showing the help files under AmiStart. This because the system won't need to preload the redundant directories.

Cleaning the locale files

AmiKit:Locale/Catalogs

1. This directory contains all the translations of the software in various languages. I preserved the “French” and “English” only.
2. If you don't want to launch the translation, run Simplefind3 and search for: *.cd You can safely remove all the files corresponding to the descriptive files necessary to the translation. Use the DELETE available in SimpleFind3 (right button of the mouse).



3. In Simplefind3, search for *.ct. It is safe to remove the files corresponding to the .cd
4. In AmiKit:Internet/Download, there is a file named „AmiKit one LSD“ of 28kb which is useless, actually. Throw it away.

Cleaning out the AWeb and IBrowse directories

This is also a matter of removing translation files not useful to you.

Note: this is done in the same way as in Workbench on a classic Amiga, just change the path.

AWeb

AmiKit:Internet/AWeb_APL/Catalogs

IBrowse

AmiKit:Internet/IBrowse/Catalogs

Cleaning the Magellan directory

Here, remove the useless translation files from

AmiKit:Utilities/EXPANSION/Opus5/catalogs and Utilities/EXPANSION/Buttons/

For minimalists

Here are a few more items to search for, using Simplefind3 but for which, I advise you to remove on a case-to-case basis. Remove for example, the docs, the catalogues, and the translations. If in doubt about a file, don't remove it.

- search for czech
- search for deutsch
- search for svenska
- search for Magyar
- (norsk, russian, nederland, espanol, hrvatski, slovak, swedish, spanish)
- search for dansk
- search for polski
- search for italian

All these operations bring us to a weight of approximately 322MB, since like me, you may wish to add other applications, games, demos or mods to your USB stick.

There are still some tricks left to shave off a few bytes. For the benefit of maximum compatibility, AmiKit is delivered with more than one app per service. According to your preference, there are software for which it is possible to make a choice:

- Remove Yam (2.2 MB) or SimpleMail (1.4 MB)
- Remove AWeb (3.4 MB after the 1st cleaning) or IBrowse (6.4 MB after the 1st cleaning)
- MakeCD (2.0 MB) or FryingPan (1.3 MB)

A bit of warning though, some of the software are registered in the startup-sequence and use-startup, these files will have to be modified accordingly. Only perform these operations if:

- the system is backed up as noted in the beginning of the article
- you know what you are doing.

The startup-sequence and use-startup of AmiKit being rather complex, it is very easy to render the system unusable with an erroneous action.

Other software present at the installation may be of less interest, for example STFax (personally, never used it). As indicated previously, all depends on your taste.

Optional: If you still miss space you can always remove the Demo directory which weighs 5.8 MB.

Note: If AmiKit is overheating your CPU, move the „CPU Idle“ slider in WinUAE/CPU setting more to the right. It gives less power to WinUAE and more relax to your CPU :-)

Links

- <http://amikit.amiga.sk/>
- <http://amikit.amiga.sk/knowledge-base.htm>
- <http://amifrance.hw.tc/>
- <http://www.winuae.net/>

Credits

- Original text written in French by Eric Luczyszyn
- English translation by Alan Crandall, M. Wedin (aka Wed)
- Layout by M. Wedin (aka Wed), Jan Zahurancik