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Quick Start Guide:

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ArcSoft Greeting Card Creator™



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Overview

ArcSoft Greeting Card Creator creates personalized greeting cards using built-in media as well as personal photos and text. These cards are ideal for all occasions, and can be emailed directly from within the program.

System Requirements

- Windows 98/ME/2000/XP
- Pentium II-based PC or equivalent
- 300 MB free hard disk space
- 64 MB RAM (128 MB recommended)
- 16-bit color display

Installation

Insert the Greeting Card Creator CD into your CD-ROM drive. The installer should start automatically.

Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the installation. Take note as to where the program is installing, and where it can be found in the Start menu.

Note: If the installer does not start automatically, you will need to run it manually:

1. Click Start>Run.
2. In the Run dialog, type "X:\setup.exe". ("X" is the letter associated with your CD-ROM drive. This letter will vary from system to system.)
3. Click Okay.
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the installation.

Starting the Program

Click Start.

Select Programs>ArcSoft Greeting Card Creator>Greeting Card Creator.

Note: Directories may vary from version to version. Monitor the installation process to verify the location in the Start menu. Also, you may start the program by double-clicking the desktop icon (if available).

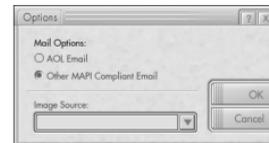
The program may prompt you to select the paper type for your project. Select the type from the pull-down.

You can change this setting as you create your greeting card. On other screens, you will see the pull-down along the top of the desktop.



Email and Acquire Options

The program contains a simple options screen that allows you to select your preferred email program and image acquire device. On the Main Screen, click the Options button. The Options window will appear (see right).



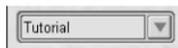
Choose between AOL and another MAPI-compliant mail program. From the Image Source pull-down, select the device that you'll be using to acquire images (digital cameras, scanners, etc.). You can change these settings at any time.

Albums

“Albums” are frequently used in ArcSoft programs. They essentially consist of thumbnails (small images) that link to actual image (or other) files. Albums are great for categorizing and browsing files that are stored on your system. Think of albums as sets of links on the Web. The links themselves are descriptive so you can easily find what you’re looking for. But the links are just that—links. When you click on them, they take you to another place on the Web. Similarly, album thumbnails link to the actual files. When you select a thumbnail, the program recalls the actual file stored on your system, and loads it into the program. Different steps within the creation process offer you different sets of albums.

Let’s take a look at the album components:

Album Pull-down



This pull-down is used to select the album you wish to view. To create a new album, select “[New Album].”

Add



Click this button to add thumbnails to the current album. A standard Windows Open dialog will appear. Locate the files you wish to link to the album, highlight them, and then click Open within the window.

Note: You can only add files to custom albums. You cannot edit albums that are included with the program.

Delete



Clicking this button allows you to remove album content in a variety of ways. You can choose to delete selected thumbnails only (leaving the actual files on your system intact). Alternately, you can choose to remove the thumbnail and delete the actual file to which the thumbnail links. Lastly, you can delete the entire album (this will not delete the actual files referenced in the album).

Acquire



Click this button to run the driver for your selected image acquire device (see the previous section). Once you do this, follow the directions provided by your device manufacturer to acquire an image and link it into your album.

Sort



Clicking this button lets you sort the contents of your album in one of the following orders: file name, type, size, and date. You can sort in either ascending or descending order. Simply select your choice and click OK.

Album Contents

Below the album pull-down and buttons, you will see the contents of the selected album. Double-click a thumbnail to place that file on your greeting card. Right-click a thumbnail and select “Properties” to view information on the file to which the thumbnail links.



Creating a Greeting Card

There are six simple steps to creating a greeting card. Each step is listed vertically along the left side of the Main Screen. Simply follow each step and your greeting card will be created in no time.

Step 1: Select Design (Choose a preset or custom “design” or greeting card theme)

Step 2: Get Photo (Place a custom photo on the front of your card)

Step 3: Add Title (Add text to the front of your card)

Step 4: Import Clip Art (Insert clip art to add variety and uniqueness to your card)

Step 5: Show Inside (Display and edit the inside content of your card)

Step 6: Print Preview (Preview and print your card)



Step 1: Select Design

The first step in creating a greeting card involves selecting an image for the front of the card that represents the theme or occasion. To select your greeting card design:

Click Select Design on the Main Screen.

Choose the orientation of the card, either Portrait or Landscape.

From the album pull-down, select the desired album (see the section “Albums” to learn more about albums).

Click the design that you’d like to use.

Check the “Best Fit” box to have the program automatically size and orient the design on the card. (Alternately, you can click and drag the design to any location on the card.)

To edit the design, click *Edit*.

The following commands are available for design editing:

Enlarge



Click this button to make the design larger on the card. You can click this option multiple times.

Reduce



This command makes the design smaller. You can click this option multiple times.

Flip



This command “flips” the design, creating a mirror image. Click the command again to revert to the original orientation.

Rotate 90°



Clicking this button rotates the design in 90-degree increments.

Brightness & Contrast



Use these sliders to adjust the design’s brightness and contrast.

Position Pad



Click the arrows on this pad to move the design about the front of the card. (You can also click and drag the design directly to move it.) Clicking the center of the pad will center the design on the card.

Once you’ve edited your design, you can save it as a standard image file by clicking Save As. When you click OK, you will return to the Select Design Screen with the modified design.

Now that your design has been selected and edited, click OK to return to the Main Screen, at which point you can proceed to the next step. Your design will be “frozen” on the card, and can only be modified if you return to this first step (which you can do at any time).



Step 2: Get Photo

This step allows you to add your own personal image to the front of the card. For example, if you're creating a birthday card, you might want to insert a picture of the birthday boy or girl.

Click *Get Photo* on the Main Screen.

From the *Get Photo* Screen, select your photo. The album structure here is similar to the structure in the first step. You can create and modify your own personal and unique albums.

Once you select your photo, you can position it on the card to your liking. Simply click and drag it to the desired location. You can resize the photo by clicking and dragging any of the corners. You can rotate the photo by clicking and dragging the “anchor” that extends from the top.

You can further enhance your image by adjusting its brightness and contrast. Use the available sliders to increase/decrease each respective value.

Once you have your photo set, click *OK*. You can still change the photo's orientation and position on the Main Screen. Click the Flip button to make the photo a mirror image of itself. Click Delete (the trash can) to remove the photo from the greeting card layout.



Step 3: Add Title

This step is optional. You can add a personal message or greeting to the front of the card. When you click this option, the Write Message window will appear (see right).

Standard text options are available here. You can adjust the font, size, style (bold, italic), alignment, and text color. In addition, you can add a shadow to the text (check the box). Shadow properties include blur and opacity. Adjust the sliders to your liking. In the small shadow preview window, click and drag to adjust the position of the shadow. The preview will also show your blur and opacity settings.



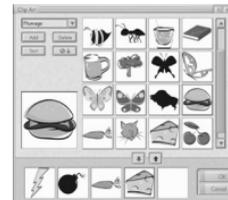
Type your text in the text box (the main area of the Write Message window). When you're finished, click *OK*. You will see your text on your card. Click and drag it to any desired location. You can always go back and edit your text at any time.



Step 4: Import Clip Art

Clip art can add flair to your greeting cards. The program comes with several different clip art designs that you can use. Also, you can import your own clip art. Let's take a look at the Clip Art Screen (see right).

As you can see, there is a basic album layout. You can create your own clip art albums (they can only contain supported clip art files—WMF and EMF). You can add up to five clip art



components to your greeting card. Select the desired clip art from the album, then click the Add button (green arrow). To remove a clip art component, select it and click the Remove button (red/brown arrow).

You can also delete a clip art component directly off of the card on the Main Screen by selecting it and clicking the Delete button (trash can). Clip art can be manipulated the same way as the photo included in Step 2.



Step 5: Show Inside

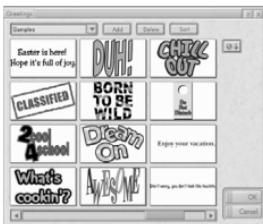
This step allows you to include text and a special greeting on the inside of your card. It's here that you'll be able to type a personal message and choose a catchy greeting.

The main preview area has two sections that allow you to add text. These areas are boxed off. Simply click in the desired area and type your message. Standard text controls are available, including font, size, style, alignment, and color.



The center area of the greeting card can have a special greeting. To remove the greeting altogether, simply uncheck the Greeting box. To select a different greeting, click the Change button. The Greetings Screen will appear (see left).

Greetings are arranged in albums. Here too you can create your own albums and import standard JPEG image files.



Once the inside of your card is set, you can either return to the front of the card or proceed to the next step.

To return to the front of the card, click the Show Front button:



Otherwise, proceed to the next step...



Step 6: Print Preview

From here, you can preview and print your greeting card. You can set the number of copies to be printed (click on the “-“ and “+” buttons to adjust the number of printed copies). Click the Printer Setup button to view and edit your printer settings. Click Print to print; click Done to return to the Main Screen.

There are three different types of prints:



This option prints only the front of your card. After printing, the program may ask you if you wish to print the inside. If you wish to do so, you will need to reinsert the page that just printed into your printer so the inside can be printed on the other side of the paper.



This option prints only the inside of your card. After printing, the program may ask you if you wish to print the front. If you wish to do so, you will need to reinsert the page that just printed into your printer so that the front can be printed on the other side of the paper.



This option prints both sides of the card on one side of the paper. Once it's printed, you can fold the paper (once horizontally, then again vertically) to create the greeting card.

Saving

If you'd like to save your greeting card so that it can be edited, viewed, emailed, or printed at a later date, click the Save As button on the Main Screen. Your greeting card will be saved as a "GCF" file. This file will only be readable by Greeting Card Creator.

Emailing

Click the Send button on the Main Screen to send your greeting card as an email attachment. You can choose between two file formats, EXE (Windows) and MOV (QuickTime).

If the recipient is using a Windows system, you'll likely want to use the Windows (EXE) option. If the recipient is a Macintosh user, you'll want to use the MOV (QuickTime) option.

Notes on Acquiring/Capturing Images

When acquiring images from an external device, it's important to remember that the driver for the respective device runs and transfers the file information over to the program. If you experience any problems when acquiring images, contact the device manufacturer. You may need a driver update.

Additional Help

For additional help, run the online Help file. Click on the "?" button in upper-right corner of the program screen. You can browse various topics and learn more about the different program screens, buttons, and options.

