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## ResEdit Guide

*A beginner's guide to Apple's resource editor.*

A beginner's guide to Apple's resource editor. Download ResEdit [here](#).

Now, the guide:

### ResEdit Guide v2.0.1 by Dog Cow ©2004 Mac GUI

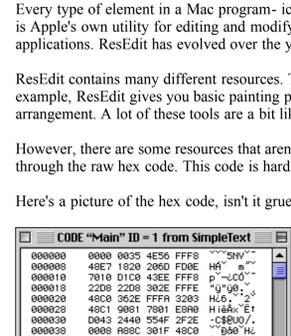
ResEdit, resource editor, is a powerful utility for both programmers and non-programmers. What is ResEdit, you ask? Let's find out.

Every type of element in a Mac program- icons, windows, menus, dialog boxes, cursors, sounds, etc- are stored in the application and are called resources. ResEdit is Apple's own utility for editing and modifying resources. Apple originally developed ResEdit to allow programmers to manipulate the basic controls of applications. ResEdit has evolved over the years into a more user-friendly version, version 2.1.3.

ResEdit contains many different resources. The Mac OS 9 system file contains over 150! Most resources are actually very easy to edit. To work with icons, for example, ResEdit gives you basic painting program tools. For editing menus and dialog boxes, there are different tools for changing the text, color, size, and arrangement. A lot of these tools are a bit like those found in a drawing program.

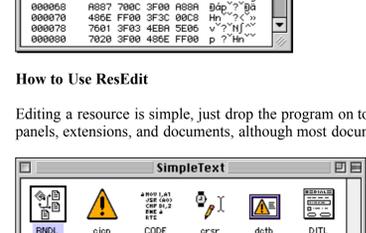
However, there are some resources that aren't so easy to handle. There are some resources in which ResEdit does not have an editor for, and they must be edited through the raw hex code. This code is hard to edit if you don't know what you're looking for. Fortunately, I'll show you everything you need to know in this guide.

Here's a picture of the hex code, isn't it gruesome?



### How to Use ResEdit

Editing a resource is simple, just drop the program on top of ResEdit's icon, or just use the Open command. You can open most anything: applications, control panels, extensions, and documents, although most documents don't have resources. Doing so reveals a window with icons depicting each of the file's resources.



As you can see, each resource is depicted by both an icon and a four-letter code, like FOND, DLOG, or STR#. A lot of codes and icons are little hints into what they contain. The ICON resource is where you edit icons, the CURS where you edit cursors, and so on.

Look for the resource you want to edit, then double-click its icon. A window will open, listing individual resources of the same type. All the resources are tagged with an ID number.

That's really all you need to know to use ResEdit, the rest of this guide will walk you through different tricks that you can do. But first,...

### The Peril Factor

ResEdit, in all its power and usefulness, has the ability to screw up files. For good. To avoid this, follow these tips three:

- 1) Always edit on a backup and make backups of files you're editing.
- 2) You can look in a file with out messing anything up- just don't save changes before quitting.
- 3) After you've made a change to a program, save, then examine your results. This way, if something goes wrong, you'll know what it is.

### Customizing Menus

One of the most fun and interesting abilities of ResEdit is to edit program's menus, changing command names and command key sequences. These are both very good skills to learn. Among other things, you can also add your own menu colors, dividers, and even, icons! Excited? Read on.

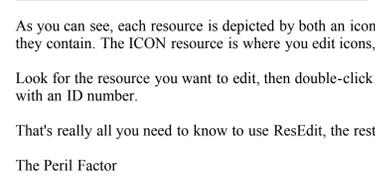
#### Adding a keyboard command to a menu item

Open the application you wish to edit, in this example, I'll use SimpleText. Double-click to open its MENU resource. (You won't find a MENU resource in the Finder. Well, you will, but it will be something different.)

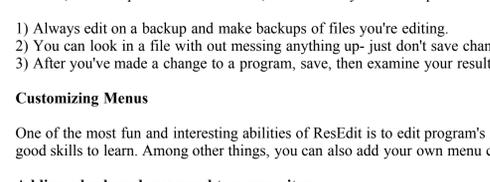


MENU

When the MENU resource opens up, it will display all of the application's menus and commands. For example, if you opened up SimpleText, it would show a window like this:

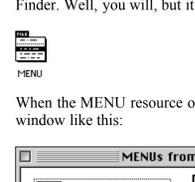


Simply scroll down to the menu you want and double-click it to display the editor. A window showing a more detailed view of the menu opens. Let's say you want to add a keyboard equivalent to the Clear command in SimpleText's Edit menu. Just select the command and then press Tab twice. This selects the command-key field in the lower-right part of the window. Just type in the letter you want (in this case, D) and it's automatically added to the menu. Save changes, then step back to admire your handy-work!



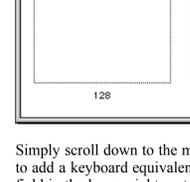
#### Changing the style of menus and menu items

Select a menu item (or the whole menu by clicking its title). Its name pops up in the text field. From there you edit the text color, command-key color, mark color, and text style of menus and their items. You can also rearrange menu items by clicking once, then dragging them around. All of this is extremely intuitive and user-friendly. I'll just put a screen shot for reference.

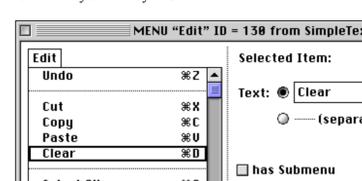


#### Adding icons to commands

After opening the MENU resource, open the menu you want, select the command, and then choose Choose Icon... from the MENU menu.



A dialog box appears, showing a few different options. Click one of the radio buttons on the bottom- you'll probably want to use either normal or reduced icons. Now, click the New button. An icon editor will open up, allowing you to paste in an icon or make one of your own.



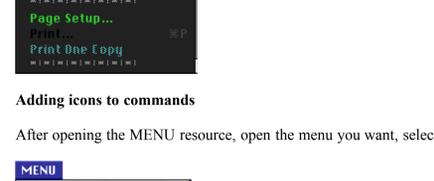
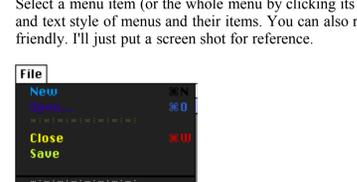
As you can see, I've made a few icons of my own. Once you're done, select the icon and press OK. The icon will now show up in the menu! Do this to all of your applications for a cool effect. Then, invite your friends over and astonish them with your ResEdit mastery! They will surely be amazed.

Icons are a handy way to remember what little-used commands do. Just assign an intuitive icon and it will serve as a reference to what the command does.

#### Customizing dialog boxes

You can customize dialog and alert boxes in any application by editing its DLOG, ALERT, and DITL resources. The DLOG and ALERT, when opened, allow you to change the size, color, position, and window type of a dialog or alert box. The DITL (Dialog ITem List) resources contain the actual contents of the box. Things like knobs, buttons, icons, and text. Everything can be resized, rearranged, or replaced. In fact, those are the three "R"s of ResEdit! Let's continue:

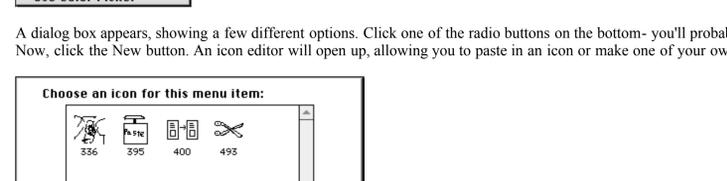
The Save dialog box is pretty well designed, but what if you want to change it? Very simple, as shown:



This is the first, original dialog box. The one on the below is the enhanced version. Highlights include a wider file path box and name box. You want to do this too? Good, I'll show you how.

For this example, I used SimpleText, but any application with a dialog box you want to change is fine, too. The screenshots will vary if you use a different app, but you'll still be able to follow along.

First, open SimpleText with ResEdit and locate DLOG resource number 601. You will see the not-so-technical dialog editor window on your screen. This displays a small version of the dialog box and provides a small set of tools for editing the box itself. Here's a quick run-down:



1) You can drag around the dialog box to change where it appears on screen. Double-clicking anywhere in the mini dialog box opens the corresponding DITL resource, allowing you to change the box's contents.

2) Resize handle. This makes the dialog box larger or smaller.

3) To change the color of the various elements, click the Custom radio button, then select a color from the various pop up menus.

4) Click one of these icons to change the window type. (Ignore the question mark ones)

Well, well! We've covered a lot here! Feel free to take a break to do other stuff. When you're ready to continue, just click go on to **Part 2**.

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