

FLATTRAK USER'S MANUAL

Version 1.0



FlatTrak

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Version 1.0

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Complexity Made Simple

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Version History

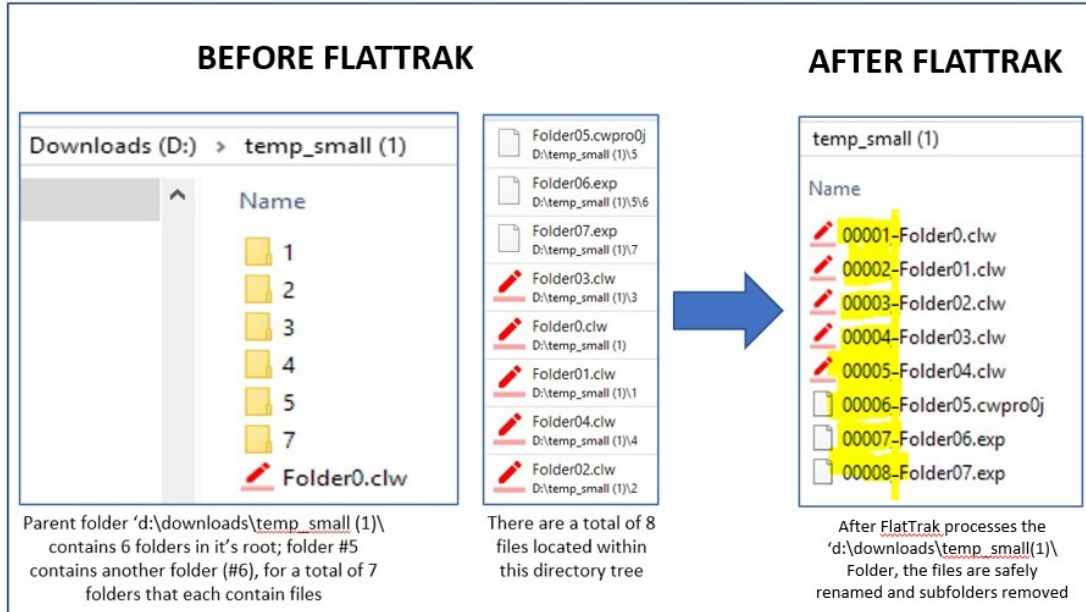
Version	Description
1.0	Initial release

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Introduction

FlatTrak safely merges files contained within nested subfolders into the parent folder. A graphical representation of FlatTrak's purpose is depicted below:



Safeguards

FlatTrak, unlike the handful of command line utilities/Powershell scripts that are floating on the Internet to merge (or 'collapse') subfolder content into the parent folder, has internal 'safety' features to protect users from making a folder merge operation that they will later regret:

- Configuration option to display a Yes/No popup window to confirm that FlatTrak should move forward with the merge process
- Each file in the parent folder and subfolder(s) are renamed with a standardized prefix of a six-digit number (starting at 00001) and a hyphen character that is added to each file to ensure every filename is unique before being moved to the parent folder
- If a file cannot be moved into the parent folder it is left in its original location and its subfolder is not deleted (e.g. a file contained within a subfolder is open by another application/network computer)

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System Requirements

- Windows 8 (or higher)
- All Windows applications “like” computer memory – a starting point for any Windows machine should really be 16GB of memory. If this application starts running slower, check your Windows Task Manager for applications that are leeching memory (and then start closing them)
- This application runs comfortably within 10MB of disc space
- A decent color monitor capable of displaying 1024x768 (or higher resolution)

U.S. Government Use

U.S. government agencies, to include the Department of Defense, are NOT permitted to use this application without written consent from the author. A per-seat usage fee will be assessed prior to that written authorization being granted to the requester.

Configuration

FlatTrak is NOT a standalone operation – it is purposely designed to be integrated within a Windows file management application (e.g. Double Commander, Total Commander, FreeCommander). Please reference this user manual (see below) to learn how to integrate FlatTrak for your favorite Windows file management software tool.

How It Works

When FlatTrak is executed via a file manager application, the following actions occur:

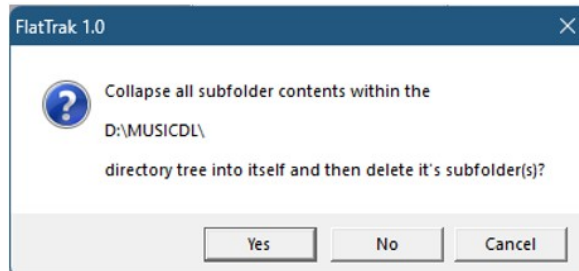
1. FlatTrak checks if a folder was passed as a parameter from the calling file manager. If no parameter was passed to FlatTrak an error message is displayed and FlatTrak will close:



2. Scan the passed path name (e.g. D:\MusicDL\) and build a list of all subfolders and their content into a memory-based TAB delimited file
3. A popup confirmation window is displayed onscreen. If NO is clicked in the window, FlatTrak is terminated and no data is touched:

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4. Starting with the parent folder level and then alphabetically through every subfolder, each folder's contents are retrieved and added to the memory file. Once the last subfolder is scanned, the full path+filename is sorted alphabetically in memory to a memory file
5. Each item within the memory file is then broken apart (filename, extension) and then sequentially renamed in memory with the predefined prefix (nnnnnn-) to ensure every filename will be unique. The prefix number starts at 000001, then 000002, and so on. The number sequence continues incrementing by a value of one
6. Each file is moved to the parent folder with its new filename
7. The subfolders (which should now contain no data) are deleted. If the subfolder is NOT empty, the subfolder is NOT deleted. [Note: This could occur if another Windows application, or another network user, has that file open]
8. FlatTrak closes and control is passed back to the calling application

Technical Information

This application requires less than 5MB of disc space for its files:

- FlatTrak.exe – application file
- FlatTrak.ini – configuration file (editable with Notepad or a text editor)
- WBDXB64I.DLL – runtime file

However, whenever processing large volumes of data, three factors come into play:

1. CPU processor speed
2. Hard drive type/speed (5400RPM / 7200RPM / SSD)
3. Available memory (ideally 16GB or more RAM installed)

It is recommended to close all Windows applications (especially web browsers) before processing large amounts of data to free up memory. A faster hard drive can shave minutes (or even hours) of time required to process data.

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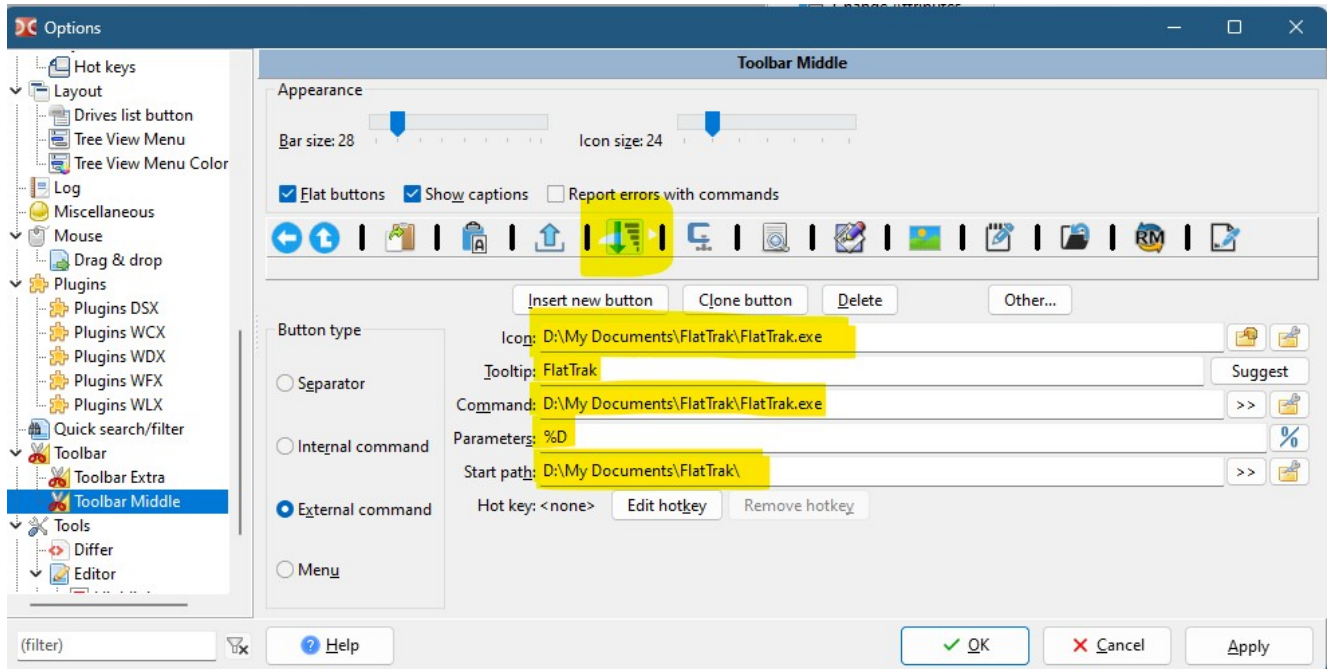
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File Manager Integration

FlatTrak is designed to be integrated into popular Windows-based File Management software applications (e.g. Total Commander, FreeCommander). The parameter passed from the file manager application to FlatTrak must be the parent folder's name with a trailing slash character (e.g. D:\Music\), with no quotation marks or apostrophe characters.

Double Commander

Enable the middle toolbar (Options->Layout->Screen Layout->Show middle toolbar). Right click anywhere within the middle toolbar and select 'Edit' from the popup menu. Click the button titled 'Insert new button'. Populate the entry fields for Icon, Tooltip, Command, Parameters, and Start Path as depicted in the below screen capture:



Click the OK button to save the middle toolbar settings and display a FlatTrak button onscreen.

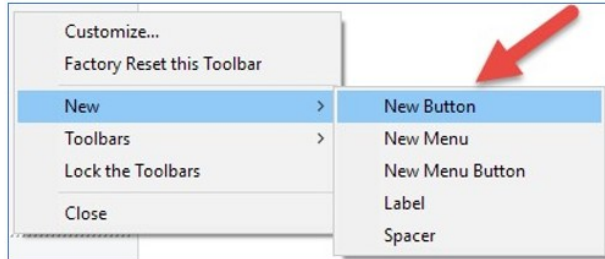
You can select a different icon (e.g. a .ICO file) that you have stored on the hard drive if desired; an icon is embedded within FlatTrak that is used in the above example. You may change the Tooltip to something different – however, be aware that Double Commander will also display that tooltip text to the right of the icon which will widen the middle toolbar. The correct parameter that is passed from Double Commander to FlatTrak is **%D** – do not enter anything different! You can optionally assign a Hotkey to execute FlatTrak (if desired) in the Options screen by clicking the Edit Hotkey button.

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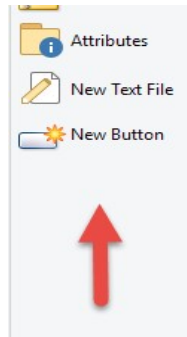
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Directory Opus

Right click on the splitter bar; from the popup menu select '**Customize**'. Right click anywhere within the splitter bar that doesn't have a button already placed within it, select '**New**' from the popup menu and select '**New Button**' from the menu list:



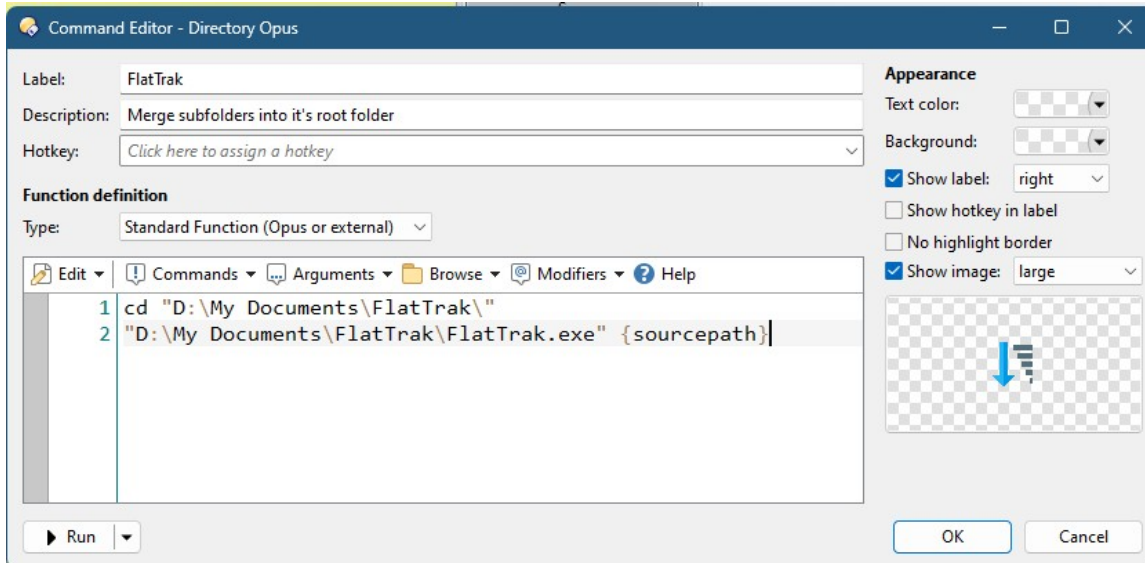
A new button is now placed within the splitter bar:



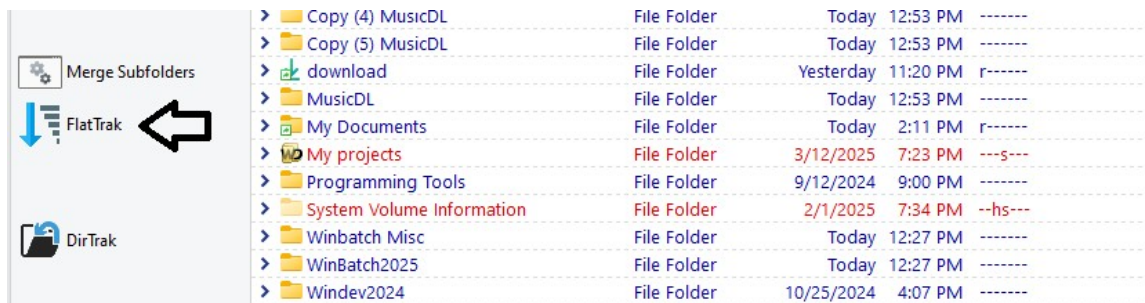
Right click on the '**New Button**' button, and from the popup menu select '**Edit**'. A popup window is displayed onscreen to configure the button when clicked; configure it as such (changing the path to FlatTrak for wherever you installed it into):

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Click **OK** to save the editor window changes and close that window. Click '**OK**' to save the configuration settings. Click '**OK**' within the '**Customize – Directory Opus**' window to close it. The FlatTrak button is now displayed within the Directory Opus splitter bar:

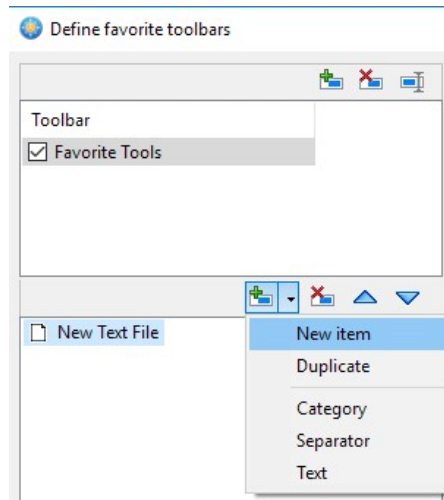


Free Commander

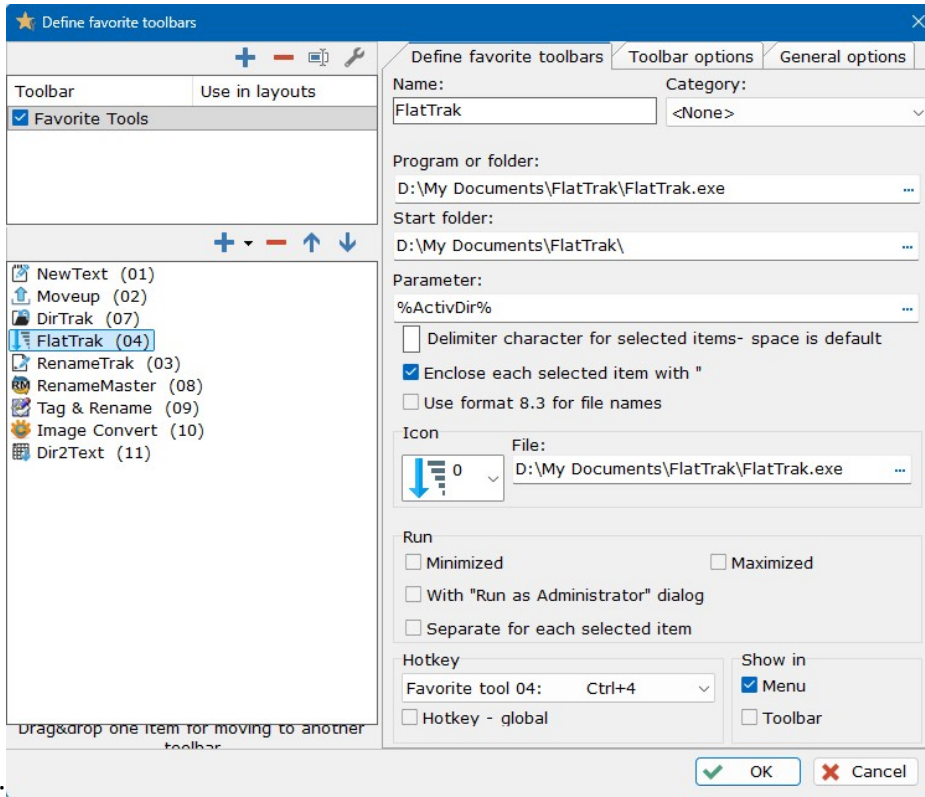
From the main menu, select **Tools**, then **Favorite Tools**, then **Favorite Tools Edit** to display the '**Define favorite toolbars**' window. Click the button with a green '+' symbol and select '**New Item**' from the droplist:

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After selecting the 'New Item' menu item, populate the configuration settings like

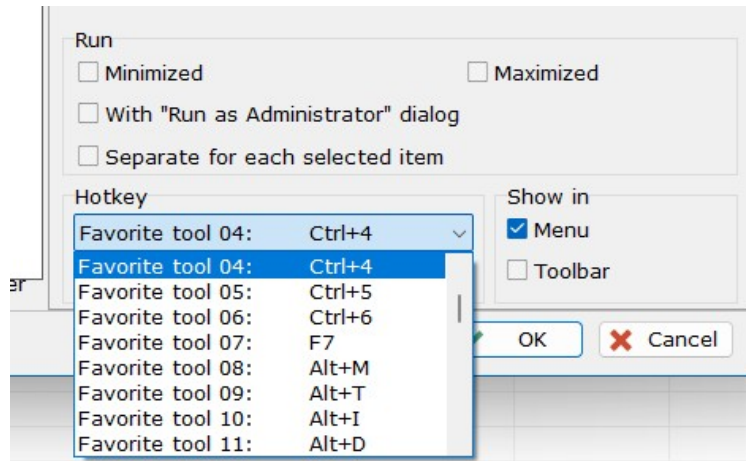


this:

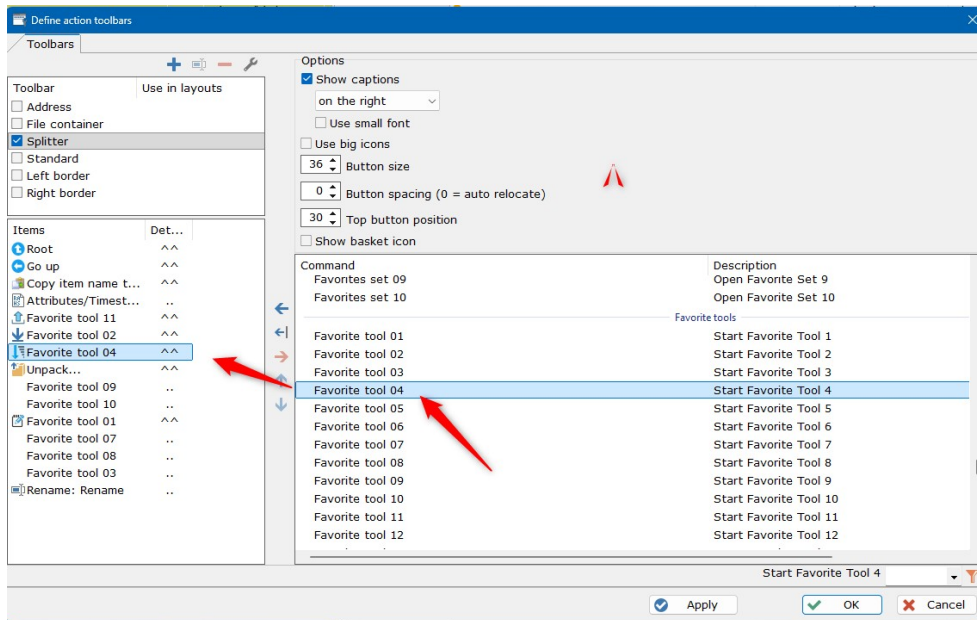
Before clicking the **OK** button, click the **Hotkey** droplist and assign the new **Favorite Tool** to a hotkey so it can be assigned to the FreeCommander splitter bar (in this example, the 'Favorite Tool 04' was assigned to FlatTrak):

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To add a FlatTrak button (i.e. '**Favorite Tool 04**') to the splitter bar, right click anywhere within the splitter bar that does not contain a button; from the popup menu select '**Define action toolbars**'. For my configuration (and as shown above in the screen capture), I assigned '**Favorite Tool 04**' to the FlatTrak favorite tool setting. Scroll down the list of commands in the bottom right window to find '**Favorite Tool 04**' in the list, and the drag it into the left listbox area:

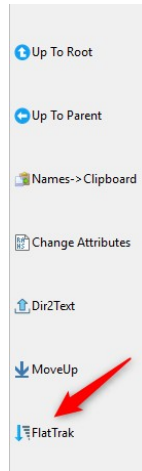


The screen is updated to now show the '**Favorite Tool 04**' listed of items to display in the splitter bar:

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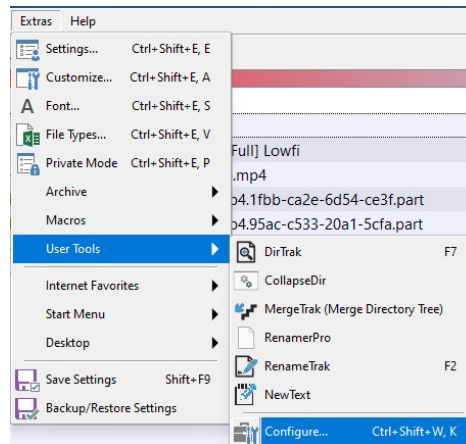
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You can reposition the Favorite Tool 04 (i.e. FlatTrak) up/down within the splitter bar by clicking the up/down arrow buttons. Click the **OK** button to save the Action Toolbar configuration settings. The splitter bar now displays the Merge Subfolders (aka: FlatTrak) button:



SpeedCommander

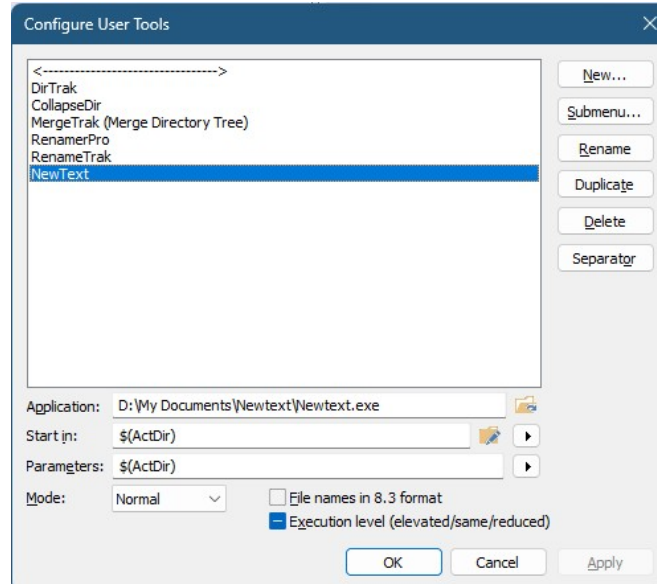
Within its main menu select Extras, then User Tools, the Configure:



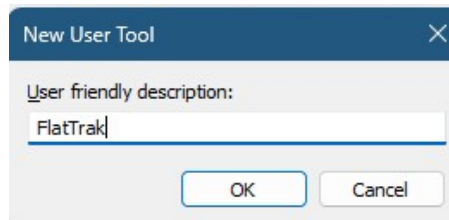
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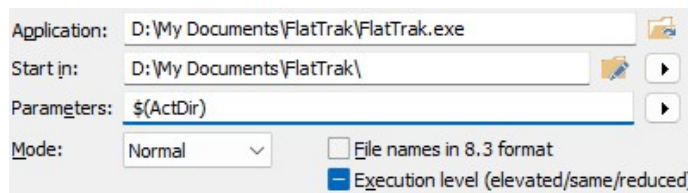
The 'Configure User Tools' window is displayed:



Click the NEW button; a window appears to enter a name for the new User Tool (enter 'FlatTrak' as its name):



Configure the parameters for FlatTrak:

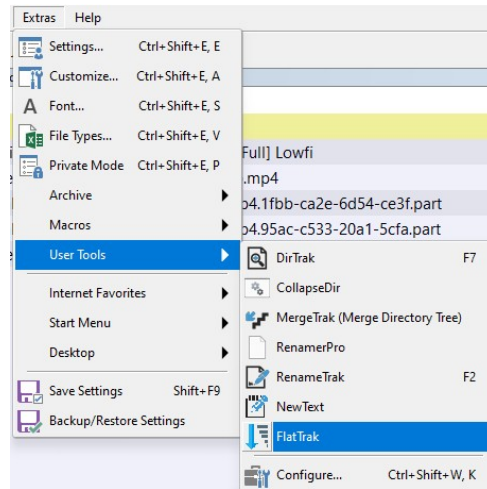


The 'Application' and 'Start in' settings will reflect the path that FlatTak is installed on YOUR machine. The 'Parameters' setting must be entered like this: **\$(ActDir)**

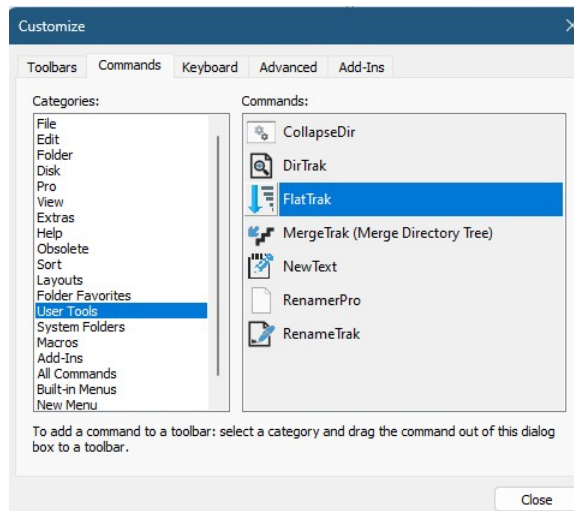
A new menu item titled 'FlatTrak' is now added to the User Tools menu:

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To add a FlatTrak button to the SpeedCommander toolbar (typically displayed at the bottom of the SpeedCommander window), right-click anywhere within the toolbar and select 'Customize' from the popup window.



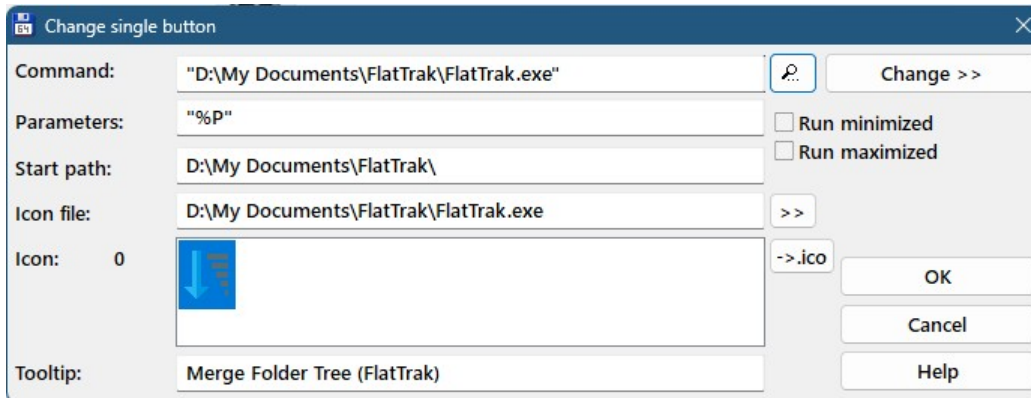
From the popup 'Customize' window scroll down the Categories list to the 'User Tools' category, then select the 'FlatTrak' command from the right list. Drag the 'FlatTrak' entry into the desired location within the toolbar. (Note: buttons may be relocated within the toolbar by dragging them to their desired location while the Customize action is active).

Total Commander

Add a button to its vertical button bar (right click inside of the button bar, select 'Change vertical button bar' from the popup menu, click the ADD button and then populate the button's configuration options as depicted in the screen capture (changing the Command and Start Path entries to where you've installed FlatTrak into):

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You may select a different icon if desired (e.g. an external .ICO file), and you may enter anything desired for the Tooltip. The 'Parameters' field **MUST** be entered exactly like this: **"%P"**

Click the **OK** button and the new button, when clicked, will execute FlatTrak against the currently open folder in the active Total Commander pane.

Support and Registration/Donation

1. Send us an email (scott@sdaughtry.com) that fully describes the problem(s) you're experiencing and we will get back to you as soon as possible. It is prudent for you to fully back up this application's folder (in full) as a precautionary pre-troubleshooting step.
2. This application is distributed as DONORWARE – no features have been removed or crippled from this application. This application's dedicated web page located on our company web site (<http://www.sdaughtry.com>) has a link to donate to continued updates of this application and/or fund the creation of other utility applications.