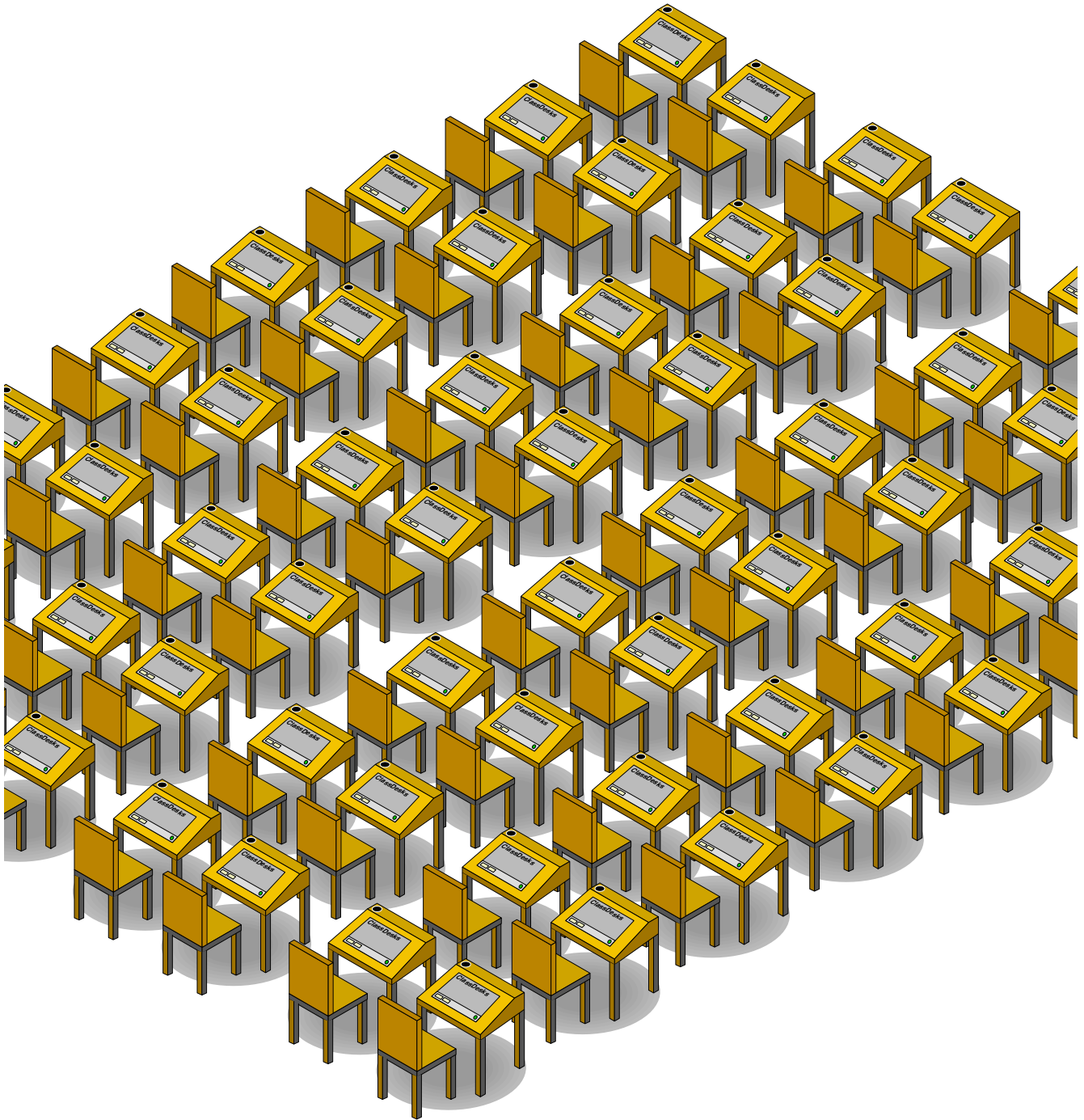




ClassDesks

A protected desktop for RISC OS

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ClassDesks

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If you have found this application and this manual useful please consider making a donation to help cover the costs of cataloguing, documenting, updating and hosting the APDL applications. Scanning the QR code will take you to our donations page.

About ClassDesks

ClassDesks provides a protected Desktop for all 32bit Acorn Computers. What this means is that users can load applications, save files and produce work, but all under the control of ClassDesks.

Users of the machine will only be able to use the applications that have been designated for them. Each copy of ClassDesks can be configured for a number of different users. Each user can save their work into a special named hard disk drive icon, which will appear on the desktop icon bar.

ClassDesks provides a number of features which are covered on the next few pages. We recommend that you read this part of the manual before installing ClassDesks on your computer(s).

ClassDesks Features

This is a brief overview of the main features. ClassDesks is designed so that only a teacher can change any of its settings. Typically a teacher would install ClassDesks on the required computer(s).

Classes/Pupils

ClassDesks works on the principle of multiple classes, each of which can contain multiple pupils. All of the pupils in the same class have access to the same applications, but can save their work in their own protected segment of the computers hard disk. Pupils can only use the applications that have been set up for them.

Hard disk protection

ClassDesks provides a security system so that pupils cannot interfere with any of the hard disks in the machine they are using.

Configuration protection

ClassDesks also uses techniques to prevent any of the computers being re-configured by over enthusiastic pupils.

Access to the !Configure application, the command line, and the Task Manager is blocked.

The Classdesks Archive

ClassDesks is supplied in a compressed archive downloaded from www.riscos.com. It's suitable for all Acorn computers running RISC OS 3.1 to RISC OS 3.8.

Before continuing we recommend that you make a copy of this archive and store it in a safe place.

If you want to install ClassDesks onto a suite of machines you will need to copy the contents of the ClassDesks archive to a newly formatted RISC OS floppy disc. You will need to insert this floppy into each machine to install ClassDesks and again when you need to make changes using the !SetClass application.

What's included?

The ClassDesks archive includes the following applications.



!ClassDesks - The main application that needs to be installed onto each machine.

Manual - a copy of this manual.

!SetClass - An application designed for Teacher use only.

!SetClass is required in order to alter any aspect of ClassDesks. This application should not be copied to the hard disk of the computer(s). It should be kept on a floppy disk or other removable storage device. Pupils should not have access to this application. If they do then many of ClassDesks protection methods can be easily defeated.

Installing ClassDesks

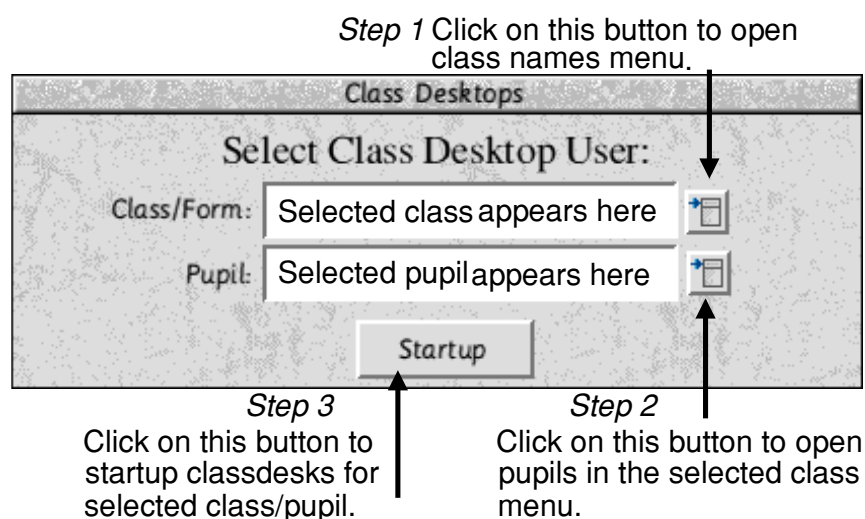
To install ClassDesks on a machine you first need to make a new directory on the hard disk.

*Click on the hard disk icon on the icon bar.
A hard disk filer window will appear.
Press <MENU> in this window.
Go to <New directory>, go past the arrow.
Type the name ClassDesks and press return.
A new directory will now appear on your hard disk window.
Double click on this ClassDesks directory and a blank window will open.
Drag JUST THE !ClassDesk application from the archive into this window.*

Do not drag the manual or the !SetClass application to this directory.

Setting up ClassDesks

Before using ClassDesks it first needs to be correctly set up. Double click on !ClassDesk on the hard disc. The ClassDesks start logo is displayed, followed by the selection window.



Choose the Class/Form as Master and the Pupil as Teacher (these will be the only options available when you first start ClassDesks). Now click on then Startup button.
Running ClassDesks first time

After having clicked on the ClassDesks Startup button you will be able to see ClassDesks in operation.

As you will be able to see ClassDesks has added two new disk drive icons to the icon bar. Existing hard disk drive icons have been greyed out, as has the Apps directory and the Acorn (Task Manager icon).

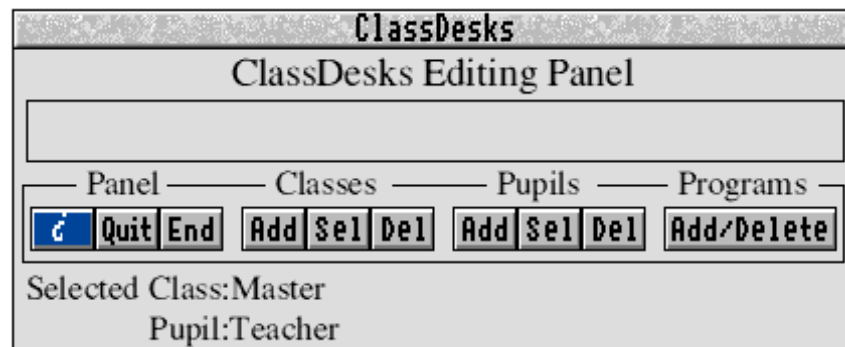
ClassDesks has also locked the normal desktop escape route of pressing the F12 key (you can try this if you like).

The floppy disk drive icon is still available and this allows pupils to load files/applications from this. However applications can no longer be copied from the computers hard disk onto floppy disks.

Note that the Pinboard has been covered by the ClassDesks backdrop, however any Filer windows that were open when ClassDesks was loaded will still remain open. Before loading ClassDesks for a pupil ensure that all Filer windows are closed.

Configuring ClassDesks

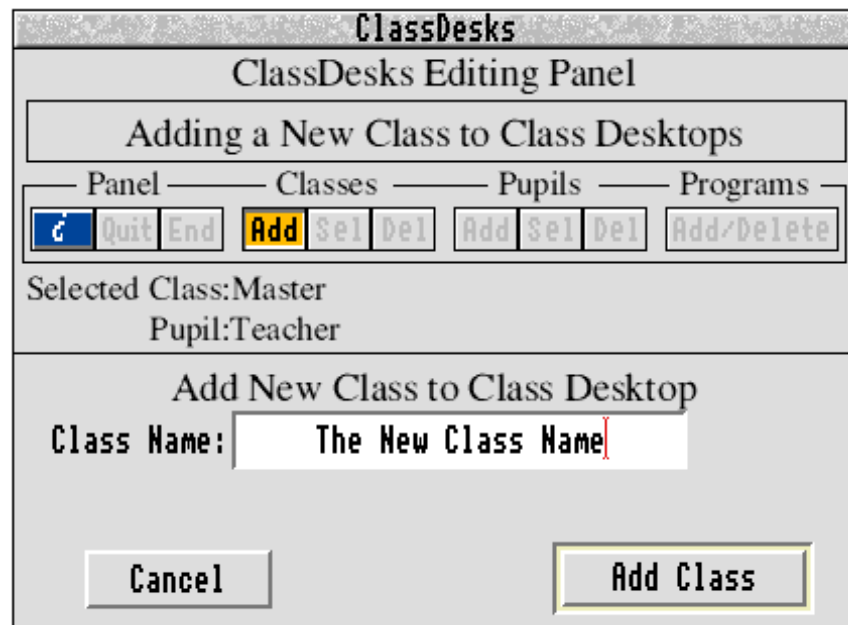
You will now need to configure ClassDesks for use on the computer. ClassDesks cannot be changed in any way without the !SetClass application. If you now double click on the copy of !SetClass on the floppy disk the ClassDesks editing panel will appear.



Note that all the hard disk icons on the icon bar are now unshaded, as are the Apps directory and the Acorn (Task Manager) icon. A ClassDesks icon has also appeared on the icon bar. This icon has options to Quit ClassDesks and to re-open the Editing Panel should it accidentally get closed.

Adding new classes

The First step is to start adding the classes that are needed into ClassDesks. Click on the Classes Add button in the ClassDesks editing panel.



You can now click with Select in the writable icon that appears and type in the name of the new class. Once you have typed the name click on Add Class. This Class will now appear on the ClassDesks startup menu.

Selecting a Class

Before adding pupils to a class the class must be selected. This is done using the Classes Select button. Clicking on this icon will bring up the Class Selection options. Choose the class that you want from the menu and click on the Select Class button. Classes can also be renamed.

ClassDesks

ClassDesks Editing Panel

Selecting/Editing name of Class

Panel — Classes — Pupils — Programs

 Quit End Add **Sel** Del Add Sel Del Add/Delete

Selected Class: English Year 1
Pupil: Aaron Timbrell

Select Existing Class on Class Desktop

Class Name:  Click for Class Menu

Change to:

Cancel closes window without selecting/editing. Edit changes the class name to new typed name. Selects class shown next to Class Name:

Adding new pupils

New pupils can be added to ClassDesks in much the same way as classes. However first you must select the class that you want to add the pupil to from the ClassDesks editing panel.

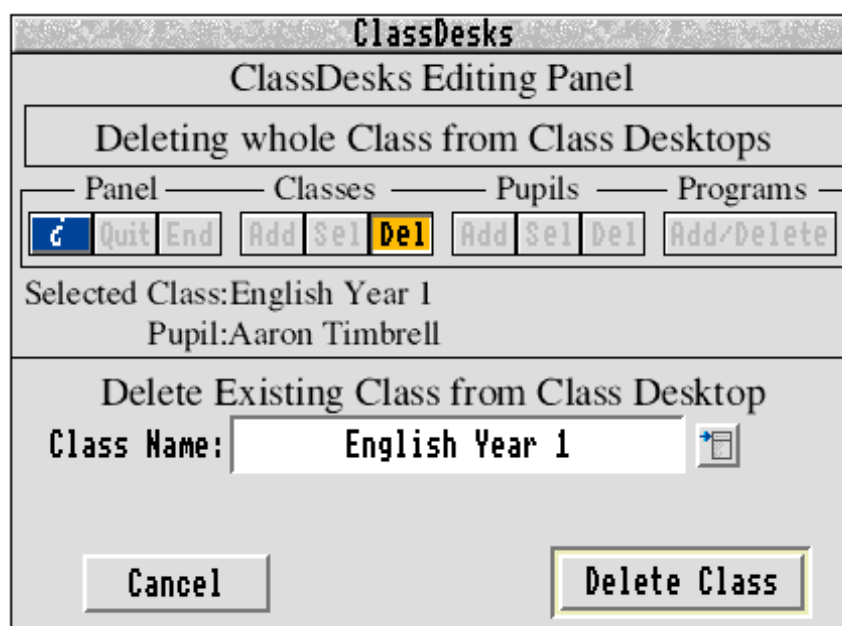
*Click on the Classes Select button.
Choose the Class name from the menu.
Click on the Select Class button.
Now click on the Pupils Add button.
Click in the writable icon.
Type in the name of the new pupil.
Click on the Add Pupil button.*



The screenshot shows the 'Pupils' panel of the ClassDesks application. At the top, there are four tabs: 'Panel', 'Classes', 'Pupils', and 'Programs'. Below the tabs are four groups of buttons: 'Quit', 'End', 'Add', 'Sel', 'Del' (under Classes); 'Add', 'Sel', 'Del' (under Pupils, with 'Add' highlighted in yellow); and 'Add/Delete' (under Programs). Below these buttons, it says 'Selected Class:English Year 1' and 'Pupil:Aaron Timbrell'. The main area of the panel is titled 'Add New Pupil to Class:English Year 1'. It contains a text input field labeled 'Pupil Name:' with the text 'Jim Spriggs' entered. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Add Pupil'.

Deleting pupils/Classes

Pupils or classes can be deleted from ClassDesks easily and quickly if required. Simply click on either the Classes Delete button or the Pupils delete button. Then chose the class/pupil you wish to delete from the menu and click on the Delete button.

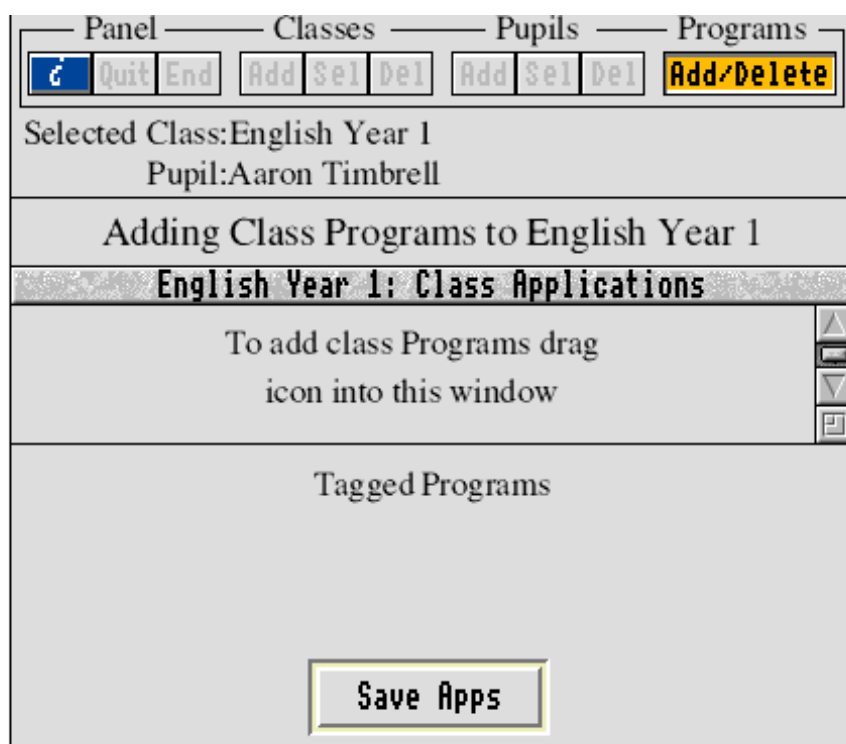


The screenshot shows the 'Classes' panel of the ClassDesks application. At the top, there are four tabs: 'Panel', 'Classes', 'Pupils', and 'Programs'. Below the tabs are four groups of buttons: 'Quit', 'End', 'Add', 'Sel', 'Del' (under Classes, with 'Del' highlighted in yellow); 'Add', 'Sel', 'Del' (under Pupils); and 'Add/Delete' (under Programs). Below these buttons, it says 'Selected Class:English Year 1' and 'Pupil:Aaron Timbrell'. The main area of the panel is titled 'Delete Existing Class from Class Desktop'. It contains a text input field labeled 'Class Name:' with the text 'English Year 1' entered. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Delete Class'.

Adding applications

Having entered all of the Classes and pupils required into ClassDesks it is now simply a matter of setting up the

applications that each Class will be able to use. Before adding any applications make sure that you have selected the correct class to add the applications to.



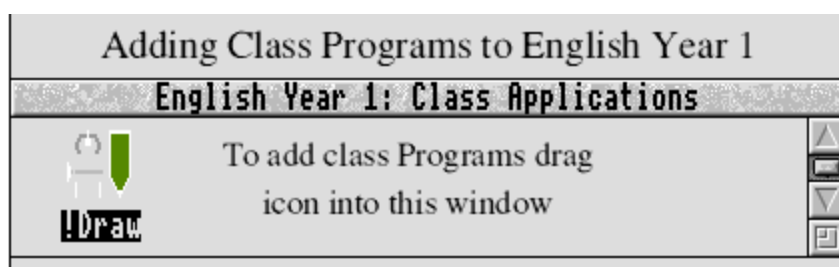
Adding an application to ClassDesks is simply a matter of dragging the relevant application into the Class Applications window.

Deleting applications

Applications can be removed by dragging them out of this window and dropping them onto the backdrop.

Tagged Applications

ClassDesks supports a feature known as tagging. This allows applications to be chained together so that for example loading !Draw causes the !Printers printer manager to be loaded as well. To tag applications together select the master application in the window (e.g. !Draw) with a single click so that it is highlighted. Now drag in the application that will be tagged to it (e.g. !Printers).



Other Editing Panel buttons

The Editing panel also contains three other buttons that so far have not been used. These are at the left hand end of the window under the word panel.

The i (info) button

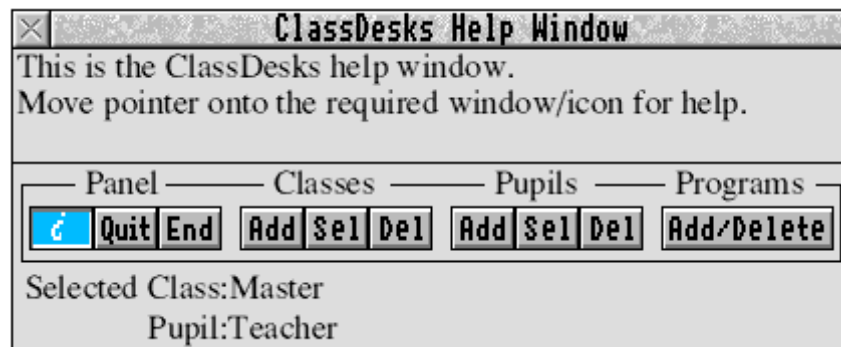
will activate the ClassDesks help feature. This is a window containing further information based upon the current position of the mouse pointer. This is similar to the Acorn Interactive Help feature.

End

This will end the current editing session, save any changes made and reset ClassDesks back into normal mode. Disk drives, the apps icon and the task manager will be greyed out.

Quit

This will quit ClassDesks.



Setting ClassDesks for Pupils

This section tells you quickly how to set up ClassDesks for a pupil.

1. First you will need to load ClassDesks.

Close all the filer (disk) windows on screen except for the one that contains ClassDesks. Double click on ClassDesks with the ADJUST (RIGHT HAND MOUSE BUTTON). The filer window will shut and ClassDesks will load.

2. From the startup screen click on the required class, the class name appears in the selected class area.

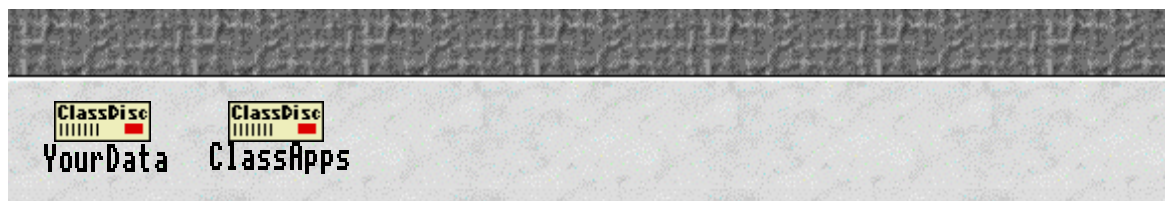
3. Open a menu of pupils in the class. Click on the required pupil, the pupils name appears in the selected pupils area.

4. Click on the Startup button, ClassDesks is now ready for the pupil that you selected.

Pupils use of ClassDesks

While ClassDesks is running the Desktop is modified in the following manner.

The Pinboard is cleared and Apps icon is shaded.
The hard disc icon(s) are shaded.
The Task Manager icon is shaded.
The F12, F12+shift, F12+ctrl, F12+shift+ctrl keypresses are disabled.
Two new hard disc icons appear.



These two hard disk icons are used by the pupil to load & save their data files and their Class programs.

YourData

This icon opens a filer window for the pupil to save files in. Files can be deleted from this window by opening a filer menu in a similar way to the normal desktop.

ClassApps

This icon will open a filer window for the class applications that have been set up for this class. Any applications in this window can be loaded by a double click. Apps cannot be dragged out and files can't be saved into this window.

Access is also available to floppy disks but not hard disks. .

Pupil saving/loading

The pupil uses the computer as normal. The two filer windows (class programs and pupil files) have menus similar to the standard desktop filer menus. Some of the options are 'greyed out' so they are not selectable.

All normal loading and saving dragging techniques are used. Pupils familiar with RISC OS will have no difficulty adapting to using ClassDesks.

We recommend that all pupils are given a brief introductory tour by the teacher in charge so that they know how the pupil side of ClassDesks operates.

It should be explained that all of their work is held separately and that no other pupil will have access to it.

Also pupils should be aware that when ClassDesks is used all machines will appear exactly the same.

We do not recommend that you allow any pupil access to a disk with a copy of the !SetClass application on.

Pupils using applications

Pupils can now load only those applications that the teacher has specified. ClassDesks also prevents any unauthorised copying of applications by pupils. Any application is loaded in the normal way with a double click.

If a pupil tries to load an application more than once a warning window appears telling the pupil the application is already running.

When the pupil runs a class program any tagged programs are also loaded. (see page 15) If the pupil quits a class program the tagged programs remain loaded.

If the pupil quits any tagged programs then re-running the application will load the tagged programs.

Auto-booting ClassDesks

It is possible to arrange for ClassDesks to appear on every machine whenever the machine is turned on.

However we only recommend that you attempt this if you are familiar with Acorn !Boot files.

Autoload ClassDesks on machines without the Universal !Boot Sequence

We strongly recommend installing the Universal !Boot sequence on any RISC OS computer. You can download this free of charge from the FTP section of RISCOS.com [Ref 2].

If you don't want to use the Universal !Boot sequence then load your existing !Boot file into !Edit (hold down Shift and double click on !Boot) and add the two lines shown below

```
Filer_Boot <Location of ClassDesks>!ClassDesk
Filer_Run <Location of ClassDesks>!ClassDesk
```

For example if ClassDesks is installed in ADFS::HardDisc4\$.ClassDesk.!ClassDesk then <Location of ClassDesks> would be ADFS::HardDisc4\$.ClassDesks so that the complete Filer commands would be:

```
Filer_Boot ADFS::HardDisc4$.ClassDesks.!ClassDesk
Filer_Run ADFS::HardDisc4$.ClassDesks.!ClassDesk
```

If you are not sure about !Boot files or didn't understand the previous section then we recommend that you load !ClassDesks manually whenever it is required.

AutoBoot using Universal !Boot

Using the Universal !Boot sequence makes running !ClassDesk automatically very easy.

*Hold down Shift and Double click on the !Boot directory
(Normally on the root of your harddisc for example adfs::harddisc4\$.)
The contents of !Boot will now open.
Open the Choices directory.
Open the Boot directory.
Open the Tasks directory.
Hold down Shift and Drag your installed copy of !ClassDesks into this window.
This will move your installed copy of ClassDesks into the !Boot sequence.*

Once the move has completed you can close the !Boot windows and then restart RISC OS.

Each time the computer boots up the main ClassDesks screen will appear from which any class/pupil can be selected.

Appendices

The classes and programs are kept on each computers hard disc allowing each computer to be set up differently.

Max. number of classes allowed = 76

Max. number of pupils per class = 50

Max. number of class / pupil programs = 76 per class/pupil.

Max number of possible applications = 5776

These limits should be more than adequate for normal use in schools.

Cumana SCSI cards

We have discovered that some versions of the Cumana SCSI card will not grey out the harddisk icons correctly on the icon bar. We are sorry but it's very unlikely that this problem will be resolved.

Here are just a few of the other products you will be able to
download from RISCOS.com free of charge
(You can make a donation to help support future product releases but this is entirely voluntary)



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Other Products list last updated 29/2/26