Hotkeycontrol 8.3

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Getting started

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Overview

Hotkeycontrol is the award winning and easy to use solution for creating keyboard shortcuts for routine tasks like opening files, changing system volume, controlling display brightness, typing frequently used text, controlling active windows and recording macros.

Volume and brightness level are shown smoothly on screen similar to OS X on Macbooks. And, a handy Hotkeypanel ensures that you never need to remember all your hotkeys by letting you execute them quickly from a single easily accessible window. In addition to normal combination hotkeys, you can use single keys such as function or number pad keys.

Additionally, you can remap your keyboard layout at a system level and customize your keyboard's key configuration to improve your productivity.

Key features

- View/use your hotkeys directly from Hotkeypanel
- Use additional keys on your laptop or multimedia keyboard with Hotkeycontrol
- Monitor system volume or display brightness level for changes and display them using the On Screen Display (OSD)
- Remap key layout to customize your keyboard
- Run up to 20 programs or open webpages, files, folders via hotkeys
- Change system volume and notebook display brightness level
- Capture/playback macros to automate keyboard and mouse actions
- Universal auto fill to type/expand frequently used text
- Control active windows - hide/show, set always on top, set translucent, close window
- Turn off monitor or notebook display and Eject cdrom drives
- Shutdown/restart/hibernate/suspend your computer
- Can use single keys such as function keys instead of combination hotkeys
- Extend features by using plugins
- Designed for Windows 8/Windows 7 and optimized for laptop usage

Using Hotkeycontrol

When Hotkeycontrol starts (usually along with the operating system), it starts monitoring the configured hotkeys i.e. it starts in the **monitoring mode**. In monitoring mode, Hotkeycontrol displays a tray icon.

Note: In the monitoring mode, when a Hotkey is pressed and the action if performed, no further hotkeys are monitored until the action completes and during this time the tray icon will turn red.

(i) With Hotkeycontrol, you do not need to remember your hotkeys. Just press Alt+F1 or click the tray icon for quick access to Hotkeypanel to view/launch configured actions. To execute an action, double click it or select it and hit the enter key. Hit escape key or the same Hotkey to dismiss Hotkeypanel.

You can temporarily stop Hotkeycontrol from monitoring hotkeys by right clicking the tray icon and selecting **Pause hotkey monitoring**. This can be useful when you are playing a game which uses the same set of keys or in similar situations.
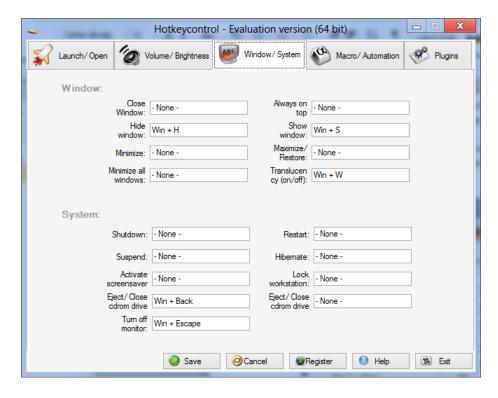
To configure Hotkeycontrol, right click the tray icon and click Configure Hotkeys. This will display the configuration window and the program enters into **configuration mode**.

(i) Hotkeys are not monitored in the configuration mode i.e. if the configuration window is visible and you press a hotkey, the action will not be performed.

In the configuration window, you will find a set of toggle buttons on the top which are the various hotkey categories. Each category has hotkeys which can be configured. After hotkeys are configured, press Save to save the settings and return to monitoring mode. Press Cancel to discard the changes and return to monitoring mode.

Note: Any extra (multimedia) keys on your keyboard are blocked when the configuration window is open, so that you can configure the key in Hotkeycontrol without executing the actual function.

Note: Closing the Configuration window is equivalent to pressing the cancel button. If you want to quit Hotkeycontrol, press the Exit button in the configuration window rather than closing it.

ⓘ Almost all items in the configuration window have tool tips. Just pause your mouse over any item for a second and additional information about it will pop up.

Hotkey basics

A hotkey is either a combination key (such as Control+T) or a single key (such as F5) which performs a comprehensive action when it is pressed.
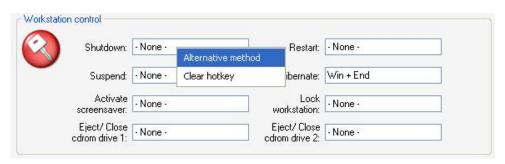
In Hotkeycontrol, hotkeys are set in the configuration window. To set a hotkey, click on the textbox for any hotkey feature and then press the combination of keys which you want to set as a hotkey. The combination can be any key combined with control, alt, win or shift keys.

Note: Some keys might not be displayed as you expect. For ex: Control + 1 would be displayed as Ctrl + D1. This is normal and the hotkeys will work fine.

ⓘ You can't use the "Fn" key on your laptop as a hotkey. This is a hardware limitation and no program can work around it.

To clear a hotkey when you don't require it, right click the textbox and click **Clear hotkey**.

If the text box does not display the hotkey you pressed (for ex: shift+tab or hotkeys being used by other programs), right click the textbox and click **Alternative method**. In the popup window, configure the hotkey and press ok.

Workstation control

Shutdown: - None -   Alternative method   Restart: - None -

Suspend: - None -   Clear hotkey   ibernate: Win + End

Activate screensaver: - None -   Lock workstation: - None -

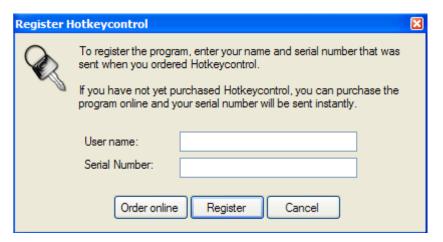Eject/ Close cdrom drive 1: - None -   Eject/ Close cdrom drive 2: - None -

ⓘ Hotkeys don't need to be combination keys. You can use your number pad keys or function keys or the keys on your multimedia keyboard independently.

Registration information

Hotkeycontrol is a shareware program which means that you must buy the program if you continue to use it. The demo version works for 15 days. If you wish to use the program beyond that time, you are required to purchase the program.

You can purchase Hotkeycontrol online at https://inchwest.com/hotkeycontrol/order.php. The whole payment process is secure and a variety of payment methods including Visa, MasterCard, Paypal, Cash, Money order and others are accepted.

After you purchase the program, a serial number will be emailed to you which can be used to unlock the evaluation version. There is no need to download any additional software. To enter your serial number, go to the configuration window and click the Register button.

In the registration window, enter your name and the serial number and click Register. Make sure that you are connected to the internet because the information will be checked against our servers and the process will complete instantaneously.

Configuring

Hotkeycontrol

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Open

The most common feature used with conventional hotkeys is opening files. In Hotkeycontrol you can run up to 20 programs, open files, folders or webpages using hotkeys in this tab.

To select a file or folder which has to be opened when a hotkey is pressed, click the browse button next to the file textbox. To open webpages, directly type the url into the file textbox and if you have used visited this page before, it will suggest an auto complete list for convenience.

Run 4:	NumPad5	File:	C:\Program Files	Br

To run a program with command line parameters, just enter the program path in double quotes followed by the parameter.

For ex: To open notepad with an argument, use
"c:\windows\notepad.exe" 1.txt

Volume & Brightness

Volume control hotkeys control the system volume level on the master channel. Just set a hotkey for various features such as volume up, volume down, mute and you can change the volume directly with your keyboard. This can be especially useful if you use earphones or if the volume slider that came with your speaker is not smooth.

Brightness control hotkeys control the display brightness. Similar to volume control, you can configure hotkeys to either increase or decrease the brightness level.

Media player function hotkeys control the playback of media in Windows Media Player and other players which follow windows media standards.

Windows & System

Active windows can be controlled in the following aspects by Hotkeycontrol.

- **Close window:** Closes the active window.

- **Always on top (on/off):** Keeps the active window on top of all other windows. If the window is already having this property then the hotkey turns it off making it a normal window.

- **Hide window:** Completely hides the active window. Note: If Hotkeycontrol is exited or the configuration window is displayed, all hidden windows will be displayed back.

- **Show window:** Unhide windows hidden by using the Hide window hotkey. If multiple windows were hidden, Show window displays windows in the order in which they were hidden.

- **Minimize:** Minimizes the active window.

- **Maximize/Restore:** Maximizes the active window.

- **Minimize all windows:** Minimizes all windows and displays the desktop.

- **Translucency (On/Off):** Adds a see-through effect for the active window and makes it display windows underneath it.

Workstation control hotkeys allow you to power down and alter your machine in a variety of ways.

- **Shutdown/ Restart/ Suspend:** Shutdown/ Restart/ Suspend your machine when the corresponding hotkey is pressed.

- **Hibernate:** Put the machine into Hibernate mode.

- **Activate screensaver:** Start the configured screensaver.

- **Lock workstation:** Lock the workstation so that only the current user can unlock it.

- **Show Hotkeypanel:** Provides a quick access to view/launch actions configured in Hotkeycontrol (same as clicking the tray icon)

- **Eject/Close cdrom drive:** Open & close the tray of the corresponding CDROM drive.

- **Turn off monitor:** Turn off the monitor to enable power saving (move the mouse or press any key to turn the monitor back on).

Macros

Macros are a way of performing repetitive tasks which have been pre-recorded. These can moderate to complex tasks like simulating mouse actions to drag multiple items from one window to another. When used properly, macros can save a huge amount of time spent on doing any task.

> ⓘ For simple text entry, consider using the Universal Auto Fill plugin from the plugins tab instead or recording macros

Hotkeycontrol enables creation of up to 20 macros which can be played back when a hotkey is pressed. To configure a macro, press the configure button corresponding to one of the hotkeys in this tab.

Enter a title which will be displayed in the OSD when the macro hotkey is pressed and then click Capture macro. Next, select whether you want to capture keyboard and mouse actions or only mouse actions.

Recording of macro can be stopped by pressing Escape key twice or restoring the minimized Hotkeycontrol window.

> ⓘ While recording macros, avoided keeping a key pressed since it will be considered as a single key stroke i.e. press the down arrow 10 times rather than keeping it pressed for a couple of seconds. Also, take your time and do the actions a little slower than usual to improve recording accuracy.

It is recommended that you test your macro before using it in actual situations by clicking Test macro. At anytime, playback can be stopped by pressing Escape key twice or moving your mouse. Check the Play this macro at maximum speed checkbox if you want to simulate keyboard and mouse actions a lot faster than you recorded them.

> ⓘ When a macro is playing back, Hotkeycontrol will not monitor other hotkeys. This is done to prevent conflicts.

Plugins

Plugins are small programs which extend the functionality of an application. You can add new plugins (created by InchWest team as well as other Hotkeycontrol users) to Hotkeycontrol by downloading them from https://inchwest.com/hotkeycontrol

Follow these simple steps to install and use new plugins:

1. Copy the <plugin>.dll file into the plugins folder in Hotkeycontrol directory.

2. Go to the Plugins tab in the Configuration screen. You should see the new plugin in the plugin dropdown boxes. In case you don't find it, close the configuration window and open it again.

3. To use a plugin, select it in one of the dropdown box and then press the Configure button. This should bring up the plugin configuration screen. From here on, follow the instruction given by the author of the plugin to configure it.

4. After you are done with the configuration, set a hotkey corresponding to this plugin. Now, in the monitoring mode, when you press the hotkey, the selected plugin will be activated which will perform a task based on the individual configuration associated with this hotkey.

Note: You can use 20 plugin features (hotkeys) at a time. Some plugins have more features and hence may require more than one hotkey to access all their features while others might just need one per plugin.

To remove a plugin, first make sure that it is not selected in any of the dropdown boxes in the plugin tab, if it is selected, change that dropdown box to use None. Save the settings, quit Hotkeycontrol and then delete the plugin file from the plugins folder in Hotkeycontrol directory and run Hotkeycontrol again.

> ⓘ Even though you might not be using the plugin, to remove the plugin it is mandatory to quit Hotkeycontrol and then delete the plugin.

Developing plugins:

If you know programming in Microsoft .Net, you can create your own plugins to use with Hotkeycontrol. We have built a plugin development kit which has the documentation, samples and other information to make development of plugins a fairly easy task even for novice programmers. You can find the plugin development kit and source code samples at https://inchwest.com/hotkeycontrol

Additional information

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Storing program settings

Settings in Hotkeycontrol refer to all the hotkeys, their corresponding parameters and the program options. You might want to back up your program settings so that you don't need to configure Hotkeycontrol on multiple machines or when you reinstall your operating system. You can load the stored settings at any point of time on any machine and hence avoid configuring the program again.

Settings are saved in the settings folder inside the Hotkeycontrol folder. Settings files are written into settings.hkc file which will be placed in the following directory
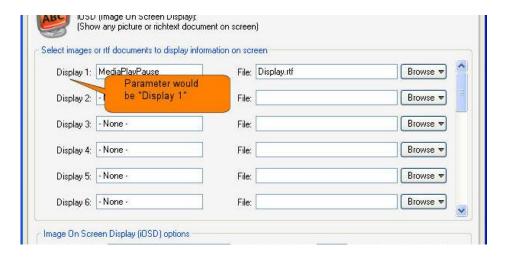
C:\Program Files\Hotkeycontrol\settings\<username>

To backup your settings, simply copy the whole settings directory to a safe location, possibly on another disk. To load these settings on another machine, install Hotkeycontrol on the machine, quit Hotkeycontrol, copy the settings directory into the installed folder and start Hotkeycontrol.

Command line parameters

Hotkeycontrol can be used by other programs to perform actions that would normally be done when a hotkey is pressed. This is a very powerful integration option which can be put to good use. A typical example is if you want to simulate keyboard/mouse actions when your download manager is done with downloading the files. To do this, you need to record a macro the usual way (like when you use a hotkey), but you don't need to set a hotkey for the macro. Now, configure your download manager to run

"C:\Program files\Hotkeycontrol\Hotkeycontrol.exe" "Macro 1"

To perform an action, run Hotkeycontrol with command line parameter which is the Hotkey name (whose action is to be performed) without the colon as shown in the image below.

You can also use this feature to integrate Hotkeycontrol with the software that came with your USB remote or any other input device so that you can perform the action of any hotkey directly by using that device.

ⓘ Hotkeycontrol needs to be already running in the normal monitoring mode for command line parameters to be intercepted.

Hotkeycontrol on the web

Hotkeycontrol is developed and supported by the InchWest team. Be sure to check https://inchwest.com/hotkeycontrol for updates and other goodies.

If you are a registered user, you can get support from Hotkeycontrol crew by filling the form at https://inchwest.com/. If you want to purchase Hotkeycontrol, please visit https://inchwest.com/hotkeycontrol/order.php

> ⓘ Always remember to keep your version of Hotkeycontrol updated. Updates usually address numerous fixes and support is not offered for older versions.

Acknowledgements

The developers of Hotkeycontrol wish to thank all the people who have helped in creating the program directly or indirectly and additionally express their thanks to all the users of Hotkeycontrol.

Credits:
- Keyboard by Paul te Kortschot from The Noun Project
- Cassette by Nithin Davis Nanthikkara from The Noun Project
- Codeproject.com
- Innosetup - http://www.jrsoftware.org/