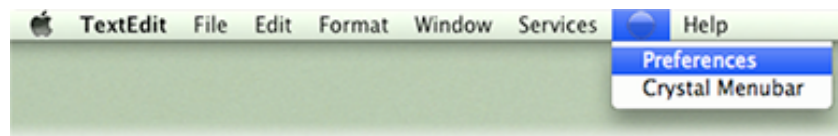


CrystalClear Interface

V. 1.9.1

How To Use This Software

As with the previous versions of CrystalClear Interface, you can access the CCI Preferences window by clicking on the small, round icon in any application in which CCI is loaded. For example, here is where CCI's menu appears in TextEdit:



TAB 1. Adjusting Window Transparency

Once installed, **CrystalClear Interface** will modify windows in all of your running Cocoa applications with the following defaults:

- ✓ The front-most window, as well as all sheets, alert, and "floating" panels will appear prominently with 99.9% opacity.
- ✓ Background windows in your current application will have their opacity reduced to 40%.
- ✓ The windows of "inactive" applications (if they appear at all) will have 25% opacity.

You can use the sliders in the first tab of **CrystalClear Interface** Preferences to modify these defaults either globally, or on a per-application basis. Whenever you adjust the sliders in an application, those settings will be remembered the next time you use it. If you want to set the settings for all applications, simply click the "Set As Default" button for that setting.

More fine-grained control over window transparency is possible if you use the controls in the "Advanced" settings tab.

TAB 2. Customizing Colors

CrystalClear Interface lets you set custom colors (including transparency) for your windows and text backgrounds. By default, the software installs with these settings:

- ✓ Window backgrounds are solid black with 10% opacity. (**Note:** Opacity levels below 10% can cause difficulty in the system detecting mouse clicks.)

- ✓ The background color of "outline view" areas (such as those in iCal, Mail, etc.) are set in a light blue with 70% opacity.

To adjust any of these color settings, simply click on the color well and choose a new color.

CrystalClear Interface also automatically enables transparency in your Color Picker, so you can create semi-transparent colors most places where you encounter customizable color settings (e.g., Xcode, Coda, Smultron, MemoryStick, Activity Monitor, etc.)

TAB 3. Extra Options

This tab provides four "extra" options, three of which are enabled by default.

- ✓ **Window Animations.** This version of the software enables a simple animation each time one of your windows bows out of view. It's enabled by default, but you can turn it off with this control.
- ✓ **Single Application Mode (SAM).** This option is not enabled by default because it isn't fully built yet. I've preferred running Mac OS X with SAM on for years as a way of reducing screen clutter, and I think enabling SAM will provide the most enjoyment from running **CrystalClear Interface**. If you don't use SAM already, I recommend trying it with LiteSwitch (which is what I use). But the SAM function in **CrystalClear Interface** seems to work reasonably well so far.
- ✓ **CrystalClear Menu Item.** By default, the **CrystalClear Interface** icon appears in the main menu of all applications in which it's loaded. You can use this checkbox to move it to the application's first submenu instead if you like. (I put it here by default because a lot of users were having trouble finding SetAlphaValue's controls in the application menu position.)
- ✓ **Window "Reflection Highlight."** By default, **CrystalClear Interface** adds a glassy "shine" to your application windows. You can use this option to turn that effect off if you like.
- ✓ **CrystalClear Graphics.** Using these checkboxes, you can use CrystalClear graphics in place of many default Aqua graphics for buttons and some other window elements. The collection of CrystalClear graphics will be expanded in future releases.

TAB 4. Advanced Transparency Settings

In many cases, you may find it convenient to change—either permanently or temporarily—the transparency setting of individual windows in an application. **CrystalClear Interface** gives you two ways of accomplishing this:

- ✓ **Based on Window Titles.** When you open tab 4, the upper section shows all of the titled windows that are currently open. Click on any of these, and you can adjust its transparency using the slider below. The setting for this window will remain at that level until you remove it, by moving the slider all the way to the left. Using this function, you can, for example, tell Safari to never to dim the Downloads window or the JavaScript Console window. Likewise, in iChat you may always want the buddy list window to remain (nearly) fully opaque. If a window always has the same title, this is a handy way to customize your **CrystalClear Interface**.

- ✓ **Based on Window Size.** In some cases, you may want to customize the alpha transparency of a window that has no title at all. You can use the settings in the bottom part of this tab for that. Simply select the checkbox, specify the size in x (width) and y (height) values, and set the slider. From then on, all windows fitting those dimensions will take on the transparency setting you've selected.

OTHER TIPS AND TROUBLESHOOTING

*Note: Version 1.9.0 and higher of **CrystalClear Interface (CCI)** only runs on Leopard (Mac OS X 10.5). If you are using Tiger (Mac OS X 10.4), you can use the previous version (1.8.12).*

Although there are fewer cases that I know of this time around, you will undoubtedly encounter an application that doesn't work well with CCI turned on. In this case, you should try just disabling CCI for that app by using the checkbox at the top of the CCI Preferences panel.

Here are some of the major known bugs in v. 1.9.1:

- Aperture may crash when you terminate it. It works fine otherwise.
- Small scrollbars need a smaller image to go with them. In addition, empty scrollbars may show a small, unnecessary piece of themselves at the top of the scroll track.
- In apps such as Mail and Activity Monitor, the layout of items in a given Preferences panel tab gets messed up if you close and then reopen the panel.
- In some Carbon apps, such as Photoshop, you'll find that the background window color doesn't match the background color of button controls and/or text.
- Buttons don't always get themed when you first open a window or tab item. You can force them to theme themselves by tabbing to a different keyboard input control, or by clicking in an inactive text field.
- The Crystal Menubar still isn't always showing its state correctly in the CCI menu.
- You may find memory usage higher than usual in some apps... although I've done a lot of memory-leak cleanup, you can never do enough, it seems. I find Safari and iWeb, in particular, get draggy over time, but they snap back when I restart them. (I do think CCI makes iWeb more crash-prone than usual.)
- When you have CCI disabled, you may find a window (usually one such as a preference panel or utility window) that refuses to be dragged. This problem occurs when you first disable CCI in an application and will be eliminated by restarting the app.
- If you have CCI disabled and then re-enable it, one of the windows may take on a "shadowy" appearance. This can be worked around by closing the toolbar and reopening it. Or it will go away if you restart the app.
- In Pages with CCI disabled, you will experience a lag in keystrokes initially. To fix the lag, resize the window slightly. The problem will not recur during the current Pages session.
- In Numbers with CCI enabled, attempting to use one of the popup buttons on the toolbar will cause the app to crash. To workaround, either disable CCI or do some work in your spreadsheet before clicking on a toolbar popup button.
- With CCI disabled, some HUD-style, dark-background windows use black text rather than a contrasting white, as they do with CCI enabled.
- CCI will work best on a recent-model Mac with at least 2GB of RAM and a 2Ghz or better processor.

As before, Crystal Clear has much more of an effect on Mac OS X apps that were developed using the “Cocoa” frameworks than it does on apps developed with the older “Carbon” frameworks. Some apps are a mix of the two frameworks, so some windows may get themed “clear,” while others won’t. Most of the applications Apple builds are Cocoa apps, with the notable exceptions of iTunes and the Finder. Nearly all new Mac apps built today use the Cocoa frameworks, but a number of high-profile apps that have been around for years are still built with Carbon. In this latter category are all apps from Microsoft and Adobe, as well as some older apps from Mac vendors that are now building with Cocoa, such as BBEdit (BareBones).

If you experience a particular bug not listed here, please email a report with as much detail as possible: llscotts@fastmail.fm

To uninstall **CrystalClear Interface**, run the installer again and in the Customize option pane, select “Uninstall.” **Note:** *The install program will still label the Uninstall step as an Install step. This is a “feature” of Apple’s Installer-Maker program, which isn’t really intended to make Uninstallers. Sorry about that!*

Important Note: *CrystalClear Interface is a Cocoa InputManager plugin and has been tested on Mac OS X 10.5. However, Apple has now deprecated the InputManager API for Mac OS X, and they may disallow its use entirely in the future. I plan to work with Apple to enable some kind of secure interface that will do the sorts of things Crystal Clear does, but there’s no guarantee I’ll be successful.*

More information about this software is available from Musings from Mars and in the Welcome document that accompanies the software. Note that **CrystalClear Interface** is a separate product from the Crystal Clear theme for ShapeShifter.

LICENSE

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Musings from Mars

Use of this software is free of charge, but redistribution or modification is prohibited without the author’s permission. All rights reserved. The author assumes no responsibility for any damage to your system that may result from the use of this software. Please be sure to read all instructions and information in order to make the most of **CrystalClear Interface**.

VERSION HISTORY

- 03/23/08 03/23/08 Version 1.9.1. Incorporates a program as part of the uninstall process that makes sure the Leopard graphics are fully restored to their original state. This program, GraphicsToggle, is also included separately in the download package for users of CCI 1.9.0 who want to use it after uninstalling.
- 03/12/08 Version 1.9.0. Significant improvement in stability, and numerous extensions in capability. CrystalClear Interface 1.9 begins tackling theming chores previously handled by ShapeShifter, and also makes its presence felt visually on “disabled” apps. The installer optionally installs a system graphics file that replaces some images with those from the ShapeShifter version of

Crystal Clear. Note: Starting with this release, CCI will only run on Mac OS X 10.5 ("Leopard").

- 01/02/08. Version 1.8.12. Additional round of performance optimizations and bug fixes. Targets include iPhoto, iChat, Photo Booth, iWeb, and, on Leopard, Quick Look.
- 12/19/07. Released version 1.8.1. This version adds an option to disable the "window shine", as well as makes a number of improvements to stability and performance.
- 12/02/07. Released version 1.8.0. This is the first public release of **CrystalClear Interface**.