

Blackout v1.2

Documentation

Designed by: Andrew Welch

Change History:

1.0 - Initial release on GEnie.

1.1 - A bug which caused Blackout to not work AT ALL on Mac Pluses & SE's was fixed (so much for my Beta tester!)

1.2 - If you set the time until Blackout to more than about 20 minutes, Blackout would freak out and Blackout immediately! This has been fixed and in addition, several other minor changes have been made so that Blackout works more smoothly.

1.21 - Fixed a minor problem with the Control Panel portion of Blackout.

Personal Notes:

Some people have suggested that the stars work in color on Macs that have it... believe me, I tried that but it really doesn't look good at all. I experimented with all sorts of different coloring methods but none of them looked nearly as good as good old black and white!

I may add some other options to Blackout in the future like password protection, etc. depending on how many people are interested.



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Introduction

Blackout is an INIT which you put in your System Folder that provides an automatic screen blanking function for your Macintosh. Blackout is similar to Pyro™ (a commercially available program) except that Blackout is cheaper, and it works. For neophytes, a screen saver is a program that blanks out the Mac's screen so that you won't ruin your monitor by having the same image on it too long.

About 3 years ago when I first bought my Macintosh, I was intrigued by a Desk Accessory called Stars which was meant to be a screen saver. When you chose Stars from the Apple menu, you were sent on a voyage through the galaxy with stars whizzing past you on your Mac's screen. I loved it. The only problem was that it was a hassle to use as a screen saver, as you had to choose it from the Apple menu instead of having it just take over after you hadn't used your Mac for a while. Another minus was that it didn't work on a Mac][(at least the version I had didn't).

So finally I got down to work and wrote Blackout which, like Stars, is a screen saver that sends your Mac on an interstellar voyage to prevent your expensive screen from getting damaged. Blackout is different than Stars in several ways:

- It is an INIT that you put in your System Folder that automatically blanks your screen out after you haven't used your Mac for a while (you don't have to choose anything).
- Blackout is fully configurable through the Control Panel DA; you can change the number of stars, how long until Blackout blanks your screen, and other settings.
- Blackout works on any Mac from the 512KE on up. It works with multiple screen, MultiFinder, and is fully compatible with most popular applications.

Enough said? OK, here's what to do to get Blackout up and running. Simply put the file "Blackout" (it is important that you do not rename Blackout!) in your System Folder and reboot. Next choose your Control Panel from the Apple menu and find Blackout's icon in the scrolling list and click on it. You can now change various settings for Blackout to customize it to suit your needs.

First let's talk about the "Minutes until Blackout". Type in this text box how many minutes you would like for Blackout to wait until it blanks your screen out. It takes quite a while before your screen can be damaged by having the same image on it, so you can set the Minutes until Blackout to an hour or two, but I like to keep mine at 5 minutes or so because it does reduce wear and tear on the monitor and besides if I haven't used my Mac for five minutes I probably need a nice distraction to space out to.

The "Number of Stars" text box allows you to enter how many stars will be on your screen at any one time. For my Mac][, I find that 50 is the perfect number but on an SE or a Plus, 50 stars is just too slow so I usually set it to 20 or 30. These are just suggestions, you can set it to anything you want from 1 to 100 but remember that to more stars you have the slower the animation will be.



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Now on to the mysterious stuff above the Minutes until Blackout. It looks a little weird but it is actually quite simple. Lets say you've been working on your Mac hard for quite some time and you need a break and you decide that it would be nice to fly through the stars. Well Blackout lets you specify a corner of your screen that if you move your mouse into it, Blackout takes over immediately. Just click on the radio button at the corner of the miniature screen subtitled "Blackout Now" to choose which corner of your Mac's screen you move your mouse to to have Blackout take over immediately.

Conversely, there might be times that your are doing something on your Mac for which you are not actively using the it (like reading a letter, etc.) and you don't want Blackout to interrupt you. Well Blackout also lets you specify a corner of the screen that if you move your mouse to it, Blackout will never take over and dim the screen. You set which corner to use the same as above. Notice that you cannot have the Blackout Now corner and the Never Blackout corner set the same.

By Blackout's title graphic, there are two radio buttons which let you turn Blackout on or off if you wish to do so for some reason.

The final parameter you can change is a checkbox titled "Enable Backout Events". If you check this checkbox, Blackout will allow background tasks like printing, etc. to continue when Blackout takes over. Otherwise tasks such as these will simply be suspended until you start using your Mac again. If you do have this option on, you'll notice that Blackout's animation is a little slower (especially under MultiFinder in the Finder) because Blackout doesn't have complete control of your Mac. If you want Blackout's animation to always be as smooth as possible, leave this option off and move your mouse into the Never Blackout corner if you are doing something that you don't want interrupted (like downloading a file).

The changes you make to these settings take effect as soon as you close the Control Panel, so feel free to experiment. After Blackout has blanked out your screen, you can go through hyperspace and get back to your work by moving the mouse, clicking the mouse button, typing a key, or inserting a disk.

I hope you enjoy Blackout, and although it has been thoroughly tested on as many different Mac's in all different configurations, please tell me if you have any problems (A.WELCH1 on GEnie). Also please remember that Blackout is a shareware program which means that if you use Blackout you are obligated to send \$5 to me within 30 days (just print out the registration form included here and send it in!). No, there is no way I could ever find out if you were using Blackout and didn't pay for it but I would really appreciate it if you did because I spent quite a bit of time on Blackout. Although Blackout may seem like a "neat" little program, it can actually save you money by saving your screen and don't forget the entertainment value. Besides if you'd like to see more quality programs like Blackout from me in the future, supporting me by sending \$5 in is the only way to ensure it.

-Andrew Welch March 31st, 1989

Blackout

Registration Form

Name:	
Address:	

What model Macintosh do you use Blackout on? _____

How would you rate Blackout?

Excellent
 Good
 Fair
 Poor

Where did you obtain Blackout? _____

Enclosed is \$5.00 to purchase Blackout.

Just sending you a note!

Send to:

**Andrew Welch
Mark 3 Software
29 Grey Rocks Road
Wilton, CT 06897**

*Please make checks payable to
Andrew Welch*