

User's Guide

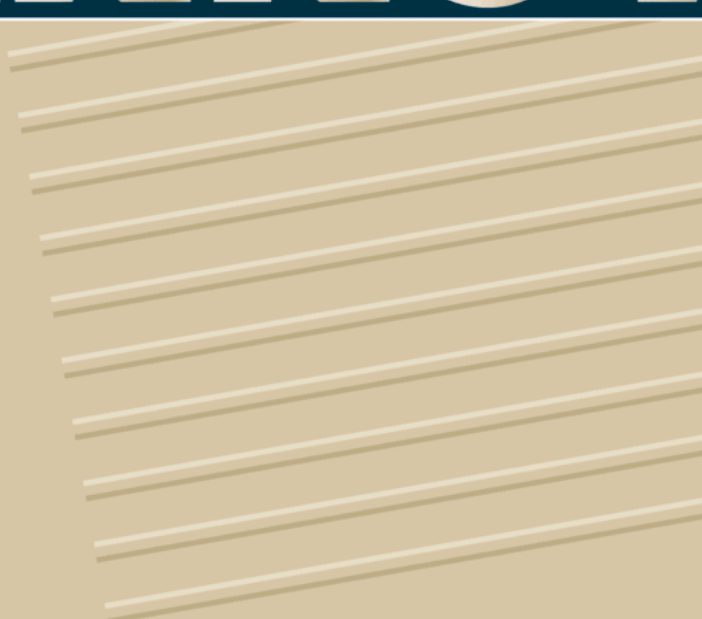
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Windows® 95/98/NT



Prody PARROT™

version **2.0**



Mindmaker, Inc.

User's Guide

Prody Parrot™ 2.0

Mindmaker Ltd.

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Preface

Welcome to Prody Parrot™, the intelligent personal assistant from Mindmaker Ltd. Prody Parrot 2.0 talks and interacts with you as an Intelligent Assistant for your PC, in the form of an animated parrot on your desktop. Ask Prody Parrot to navigate PC programs, look up stocks, notify you when e-mail has arrived, browse the Web by voice, play games and call friends and associates over the Internet using his built in Prodyphone. Prody Parrot can act autonomously on your behalf, taking messages, reminding you about meetings, warning you of events on the stock market, and reporting news, sports, or weather information to you.

As your companion, Prody Parrot swoops here and there on your desktop, commenting on what you are doing, telling jokes, and singing songs. If you need a break from a long, tedious assignment, Prody Parrot is happy to discuss movies or play a game. Or, if you prefer, you can ask him to quiz you on any of several topics, including state and country capitals, fine art, classical music, or U.S. Presidents.

The Prody Parrot 2.0 package includes Mindmaker's TextAssist® 2.1 and VoiceAssist® 2.1 as fully functional products, which Prody Parrot uses for his speech input-output functionality. TextAssist and VoiceAssist use core speech recognition and synthesis technology licensed from Lernout & Hauspie Speech Products. These are also available from Mindmaker separately. Prody Parrot works on any Pentium® 166MHz or higher PC with Windows® 95/98/NT 4.0, 32 MB RAM, and any full-duplex multimedia audio hardware (Creative audio hardware is recommended).

What's in This Manual?

This manual is designed to provide a thorough explanation of each of the major tasks you can accomplish with Prody Parrot. For a quick introduction to the basic features and functions of the program, read "Chapter 3: Quick Tour."

This *User's Guide* contains:

- "Chapter 1: Introducing Prody Parrot": An overview of the assistant application and its features.
- "Chapter 2: Getting Started": Instructions and information on installation and system requirements.
- "Chapter 3: Quick Tour": Step-by-step instructions for performing common tasks.
- "Chapter 4: Communicating with Prody Parrot": description of the various types of commands, how to issue them, and the ways Prody Parrot can communicate with you.

- “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs”: An overview of the procedures for training voice, keyboard, mouse gesture, icon, hot word, and hot spot command input.
- “Chapter 6: Training Actions”: A description of how to train Prody Parrot to perform both simple and complex actions.
- “Chapter 7: Your Intelligent Assistant”: The ways in which Prody Parrot can help you get your work done faster and better.
- “Chapter 8: Your Entertaining Companion”: The ways in which Prody Parrot can entertain you.
- “Chapter 9: Configuring Prody Parrot”: How to change Prody Parrot’s properties and manage user-specific settings.
- “Appendix A: Quick Reference”: A reference and review of the **Assistant Control Panel**, command input descriptions, and audio setup.
- “Appendix B: Troubleshooting”: Tips and suggestions for solving and answering some common issues and questions.
- “Appendix C: Glossary”: A list of terms used in this documentation and their definitions.

Document Conventions

The following typographical conventions are used in this guide:

Bold text

Indicates the name of a dialog box, command button, control item, menu item, or file name.

EXAMPLE: Click **Close** in the **Users** dialog box.

Italicized text

Indicates new terminology or a document title.

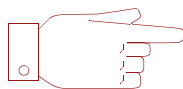
EXAMPLE: It is recommended that you use a *unidirectional* microphone.

“Text inside quotation marks”

Indicates an input command name, something you would say, or something you would type.

EXAMPLE: Issue the command “Start Notepad”.

The pointing hand



Introduces important information.

EXAMPLE: The application will not function unless a user template is selected.

Register and Get Free Updates

Registering as a Prody Parrot user is free and highly recommended. By registering you become eligible for technical support, gain access to free updates, and qualify for special pricing on related products.

When you install the Prody Parrot package, you will be asked if you want to register online, and, if you choose to do so, will be guided through the online registration process. If you do not register upon setup, you can do so at anytime by visiting our web site at <http://www.mindmaker.hu> or by completing and mailing the registration card included in the software package.

Technical Support

Hopefully, this manual and the online Help system will provide you with the information you need to use and take full advantage of the Prody Parrot software program. If you have trouble using the software, please refer first to “Appendix B: Troubleshooting”, which contains common questions regarding to the use of Prody Parrot, and their answers. If the information contained there does not help you with your specific problem, you may contact us for technical support. As a registered user, our technical support staff is available to you via the Internet at our web site:

<http://www.mindmaker.hu>

Chapter 1: Introducing Prody Parrot

This chapter provides a quick overview of the purpose and features of the software. It includes a description of who Prody Parrot is and how you can use him, and a list of his key features.

Who Is Prody Parrot?

Prody Parrot is an intelligent and entertaining personal assistant for Windows® users. He resides on your Windows desktop, and eagerly awaits your commands. He can help you work with applications, monitor your favorite stocks, check if you've received new e-mail messages, help you to schedule meetings, take messages for you, read the news and your e-mail messages to you, and connect you to other users through his Prodyphone.



Besides being a helpful assistant, Prody Parrot can also be an entertaining companion. As your companion, Prody Parrot swoops here and there on your desktop, commenting on what you are doing, telling jokes, and singing songs. If you need a break from a long, boring assignment, Prody Parrot is happy to discuss movies or play a game. Or, if you prefer, you can ask him to quiz you on any of several topics, including state and country capitals, fine art, classical music or U.S. Presidents. He likes it when you give him attention, so feel free to use your mouse to tickle, nudge, drag, and chase him. If you get tired of interacting with Prody Parrot, you can just tell him to be quiet or take a break. Or, you can ask him to introduce you to his colleague, Dr. Sbaitso—an interactive, talking psychotherapist—with whom you can discuss various problems or concerns.

Like a skilled servant, Prody Parrot can perform complex actions with a single command. You simply say the command, and he performs the action. Or, if you don't want to speak out loud, you can tell him what to do using keyboard, mouse gesture, icon, hot spot, or hot word input, or by double-clicking commands.

Prody Parrot can learn new skills from you, and his knowledge and behavior can be updated and extended from the Internet. Through state-of-the-art speech recognition and speech synthesis technology, Prody Parrot understands your spoken commands and responses, and speaks to you using natural language.

What Are Prody Parrot's Key Features?

Assistant Services

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| Stock Monitoring | Prody Parrot can keep an eye on your stock portfolio and let you know if any of your stocks move dramatically up or down. You can easily specify what kind of alerts you want Prody Parrot to give you. |
| Scheduling Assistance | Prody Parrot helps you keep track of all your appointments, meetings, tasks, and daily or annual events, giving you helpful reminders at just the right time. You can use these features in connection with the popular Microsoft® Outlook™ personal information manager, or use Prody Parrot's own built-in scheduler—the choice is yours. Your Assistant will even collaborate with those of other Assistant 2.0 users to resolve schedule conflicts and confirm meeting requests. |
| E-mail Notification | At regular intervals, or on demand, Prody Parrot can check for new messages in your e-mail accounts, then tell you how many messages have arrived, who they are from, and what they are about. You can easily define what information about the mails you want to hear upon notification. |
| News, Sports, and Weather Information Retrieval | Prody Parrot will get the latest news or weather information—or scores for certain sporting events—from the Internet. He can read this information aloud to you while you perform other tasks, or he can show it to you in your Internet browser. |
| Web Navigation | Prody Parrot enables you to navigate the Web by voice. Simply say the name of a hyperlink, and he will take you to the referred Web page, with no training required. |
| Prodyphone | Prody Parrot can quickly contact other Assistant 2.0 (Prody Parrot 2.0 or Zymo the Alien™ 2.0) users with Prodyphone, allowing you real-time voice conversations with your friends and associates. And, if the person you are trying to reach is not available, your Assistant will allow you to send him or her a voice or text message. |

Entertaining Companion Functionality

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| Entertaining Animated Character | Have fun while you work. Prody Parrot will play games with you, tell jokes, make funny comments, sing songs, and move around on your desktop. You can even feed him items from the Treasure Chest. |
| Multimedia Quizzes | Prody Parrot can engage you in conversational quizzes about interesting or amusing topics, complete with music and graphics, ranging from recognizing famous works of art to learning world geography. |
| Interactive Games | At Prody's Playground you can play arcade-style games with Prody Parrot as your companion, commenting on what you are doing and giving you tips. |
| Doctor Sbaitso | For your amusement, allow Prody Parrot to introduce you to his friend, the distinguished Doctor Sbaitso, who will act as your personal psychotherapist. |

Special Features

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| Trainable Behavior | Teach Prody Parrot to respond to your commands in custom ways, such as starting different applications, executing macros, speaking or displaying messages, and performing animated sequences. |
| Pretrained Commands and Actions | Use Prody Parrot for a new application instantly. Prody Parrot extracts and loads menu commands and dialog box buttons, check boxes, etc. from any Windows-based program, and hyperlinks from any HTML document, and immediately knows how to perform the associated actions. Just launch the application and all the commands are available. |
| Customizable and User-Specific Settings | Teach Prody Parrot what to say and adjust the quality of his voice. Store the commands and actions that have been configured or trained for a specific user. Various users can share the same computer, and each can use Prody Parrot in his or her own way. |
| Assistant-Enabled Web sites | Web masters can now embed hidden content in their Web pages which will extend Prody Parrot's knowledge and enable him to be a personal virtual tour guide of the site. When you visit one of these sites with Prody Parrot running, he will immediately use the embedded information to speak and act on the web site owner's behalf. See "Appendix A: Quick Reference" for more details. |
| Speech Recognition and Speech Synthesis | Use natural, continuous speech to issue commands, without any training required. Then hear Prody Parrot respond in high-quality synthetic speech, with a voice that you can customize to your liking. |
| Mouse Gesture Recognition | Use state-of-the-art machine learning technology to communicate with Prody Parrot using mouse gestures. For example, draw a check mark to start Internet Explorer. |

What's new in the 2.0 version?

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| Extended Sound Card Compatibility | Prody Parrot can now run on any Windows 95/98/NT 4.0 compatible, full-duplex, multimedia audio hardware. |
| Additional "Partners" To Your Assistant | Assistant 2.0 can support extra helper or partner characters, such as the incomparable Doctor Sbaitso, your personal talking psychotherapist. Prody Parrot will introduce you to the Doctor, and then join in the conversation that you have with him, to help you solve your problems. |
| Resizable Animation Character | Resize Prody Parrot's animated character between 25% and 100%. |
| Assistant Services | Implement Prody Parrot's stock market monitor, e-mail message checker, personal time scheduler, or Internet telephony service. |
| Navigating the Web | Navigate the Internet using voice commands. Prody Parrot automatically extracts the hyperlinks from the Web page displayed in your Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher browser and voice-enables them. |
| Information Retrieval | Ask Prody Parrot to "Get Information" and he will go to the Internet to obtain the latest news headlines, weather information, sports scores, or stock quotes and read them to you or display them in your browser. |
| Assistant-Enabled Web sites | Web masters can now embed hidden content in their Web pages which will extend Prody Parrot's knowledge and enable him to be a personal virtual tour guide of the site. |
| Application Security | Modify security rights of applications and services which control Prody Parrot's functionality. |
| Hot Word Input | Launch commands by typing a predefined word or phrase in any application. |
| Hot Spot Input | Launch commands by clicking on a predefined hot spot area of an application. |
| Scripting Capability | In addition to training by example, you can now create and edit scripts that may be launched by any command in order to execute a sequence of actions. |
| New Quizzes, Songs, Jokes, and Games | Not only are there many more entertaining topics for you to have fun with Prody Parrot, but also there are pictures, sounds, and music to go along with them. You can even go to Prody's Playground to play arcade-style action games, with your Assistant standing by to provide comments and tips. |
| Sound Effects with Animation | Optionally, hear animation sound effects, such as the flapping of Prody Parrot's wings as he flies around. |

Chapter 2: Getting Started

This chapter guides you through the process of installing the Prody Parrot software package on the Windows platform. It contains information on the minimum hardware and software requirements, as well as guidance for checking your audio setup before you use Prody Parrot's voice input and output features. Finally, it gives instructions for launching Prody Parrot for the first time, and for closing and uninstalling the program.

System Requirements

Requirements for Basic Features

- Microsoft® Windows 95, Windows 98, or Windows NT 4.0.
- PC with a 166 MHz or faster Pentium®-class processor for Windows 95/98/NT 4.0
- At least 32 MB of RAM for Windows 95/98/NT 4.0.
- 65MB of free hard drive space.
- Windows 95/98/NT 4.0 compatible, full-duplex, multimedia audio hardware. Creative audio hardware is recommended.
- Speakers or headphones.
- A *unidirectional* mid- to high-end microphone.



When using speech input, a “headset-style” microphone is strongly recommended, as it often works better than a “stick-style” microphone. When necessary, you can use Prody Parrot without audio, for example by using keyboard and mouse for input, and using text bubbles for output.

Requirements for Advanced Features

- Internet access is necessary in order to operate StockWatcher, news and weather information retrieval, web navigation by voice; Prodyphone, and certain advanced features of the Scheduler.
- A POP3 Internet or MAPI e-mail account is required in order to use MailChecker.
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0 (or higher) or Netscape® Navigator 2.0 (or higher) is needed to play the games in Prody's Playground (with no assistance from Prody Parrot).
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 (or higher) is required in order to navigate the Web by voice, to experience the special effects of Assistant-enabled web pages, and to receive Prody Parrot's assistance while playing the games in Prody's Playground.

Before You Install

Using speech is perhaps the easiest way to issue commands to your Intelligent Assistant and receive information from him. If you plan to take advantage of Prody Parrot's advanced audio input and output features, it is recommended that you connect your microphone and headset or speakers and adjust your audio settings properly before you install the program.

If you do not have the necessary audio hardware (see "System Requirements" on page 5), or you prefer not to use voice input and speech output, there are many other input and output methods available to you. After installing and starting the program, refer to "Chapter 4: Communicating with Prody Parrot" for more information.



If your audio settings are not correctly adjusted, you may not be able to use the voice input and speech output features of Prody Parrot.

Checking the Audio Settings

If you are confident that the microphone, speakers, and audio recording and playback are working properly on your computer, then you can simply test and adjust the microphone input level after you've installed the program. If this is the first time that you are using audio input and output on your computer, or you are unsure that your microphone, speakers, and audio recording and playback are working properly, take a few minutes to check the audio settings on your computer before installing the program. Detailed instructions can be found in the section "Checking Your Audio Setup" in "Appendix A: Quick Reference".

Installing the Program

The Prody Parrot software package includes a single setup that automatically installs all applications included on the CD-ROM.

Installing Prody Parrot

To start the installation:

1. Have the product serial number, which is provided on the registration card, ready.
2. Shutdown all other applications before proceeding with the installation.
3. Insert the CD into your CD-ROM drive. If the setup program does not launch within 30 seconds, click **Start** on the Windows taskbar, then **Run...**, and enter "**d:\install\setup.exe**" (substitute d: with the drive letter of your CD-ROM drive). Click **OK**.
4. Follow the instructions of the setup program.

When you run the setup program for the Prody Parrot software package, all components—Prody Parrot 2.0, VoiceAssist 2.1, and TextAssist 2.1, etc.—are

installed on your computer. The latter components can be used on their own, as well as through the Prody Parrot interface. For detailed information on the features and functions of VoiceAssist and TextAssist, please refer to the *VoiceAssist 2.1 User's Guide* and the *TextAssist 2.1 User's Guide*.

Launching and Closing

Once you've checked your audio settings and installed the program, you are ready to start Prody Parrot and introduce yourself. Prody Parrot will introduce himself to you as well, and provide a brief explanation of his features and functions.

Launching Prody Parrot

To launch Prody Parrot:

1. Click **Start** on the Windows taskbar, then **Programs**, **Assistant**, and **Prody Parrot**.
2. Click **Prody Parrot**.

A splash screen will be shown, then, after a few moments, the **Assistant Control Panel** and the animated character will appear on your desktop.

Completing Your User Profile

The first time you start Prody Parrot, the **User Profile Properties** dialog will be displayed. Your user name will appear automatically; it is the same as your Windows log on name. Prody Parrot will ask you to enter your full name and nickname, so that he will know how to properly address you.

User Profile Properties

Name | Address | Personal | Privacy

User name: JDoe

Full name: John Doe

Nickname: John

Every Prody Parrot user should obtain their own Internet ID to take advantage of special features like the Internet Telephone, the Scheduler, and other Internet enabled services to be introduced later.

Click on the Create ID button to obtain your own Internet ID. Or, if you already have an Internet ID, please enter it below.

Internet ID: 000000001 Create ID...

OK Cancel Help

You will notice that there are several other optional fields on the other tab pages of the **User Profile Properties** dialog box. The data you provide here serves

two purposes: it tells Prody Parrot about you, and it is used to form an entry for you in the directory of Prodyphone users.

For Prody Parrot to become your personal assistant and companion, he needs to know a little bit about you. By knowing your name, date of birth, gender, hobbies, and other information, he can tailor his behavior to you. For example, if you provide your date of birth, he can greet you on your birthday.

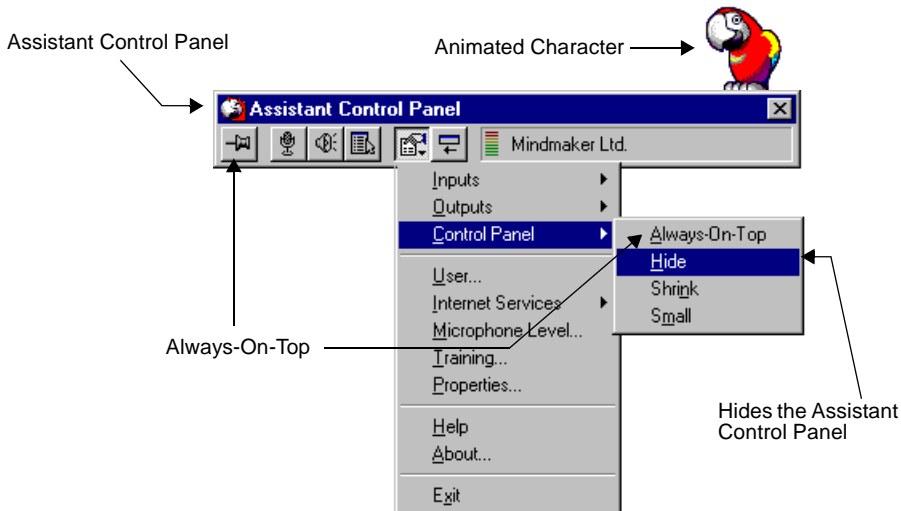
For other Assistant 2.0 users to contact you via Prodyphone, you need to have an Internet ID number and be registered in the directory of Prodyphone users. Go to the **Privacy** tab page of the **User Profile Properties** dialog box to select what information you would like to have included in your directory entry. Then, on the **Name** tab page, click the **Create ID...** button to obtain an Internet ID number. For more information about using Prody Parrot's Internet telephone, refer to "Communicating via the Prodyphone" in "Chapter 7: Your Intelligent Assistant". Click **OK** to close the **User Profile Properties** dialog box and begin interacting with Prody Parrot.

Prody Parrot's Introduction

When you close the **User Profile Properties** dialog box the first time, Prody Parrot will introduce himself to you. He will ask if you would like to hear more about him. Click **Yes** or say "Yes" into your microphone to listen to his brief overview of the features and functions of the software. Or, if you prefer not to hear more at this time, click **No** or say "No" into your microphone.

The Assistant Control Panel

As Prody Parrot mentions in his introduction, the **Assistant Control Panel** gives you access to the main features and functions of Prody Parrot. You will learn more about how to set and adjust these features and functions in later chapters. You can begin by familiarizing yourself with the buttons that allow you to display or hide the **Assistant Control Panel** and the animated character:



If you deactivate the **Always-On-Top** option, other windows on your desktop may cover the **Assistant Control Panel**. If the **Assistant Control Panel** is


covered by another window and you would like to bring it into view, you can do so by clicking the **Assistant Control Panel** button on the Windows taskbar. If you have hidden the **Assistant Control Panel** (which also hides the taskbar button) and you wish to display it again, you may do so by double-clicking the Prody Parrot tasktray icon in the task tray of the Windows taskbar.




You've probably noticed that Prody Parrot is eager to interact with you. Turn to the next chapter, "Chapter 3: Quick Tour", to learn how to start communicating with Prody Parrot and using some of his basic and advanced features.

Closing Prody Parrot

To close Prody Parrot from the Assistant Control Panel:

- Click the  in the upper right corner of the Assistant Control Panel.
- Or

- Click the **Main Menu** button  and then **Exit**.

To close Prody Parrot from the taskbar:

- Right-click the Prody Parrot tasktray icon and then left-click **Exit**.

Uninstalling the Program

There are two ways to uninstall Prody Parrot from your computer. You can either uninstall just Prody Parrot and leave VoiceAssist and TextAssist on your machine, or uninstall the entire Prody Parrot package which removes Prody Parrot, VoiceAssist, and TextAssist.

To uninstall Prody Parrot, but leave VoiceAssist and TextAssist:

1. Click **Start** on the Windows taskbar, select **Programs**, **Assistant**, and then **Prody Parrot**.
2. Click on **Prody Parrot Uninstall**.
3. Follow the instructions of the uninstall program.

To uninstall the entire Prody Parrot Package:

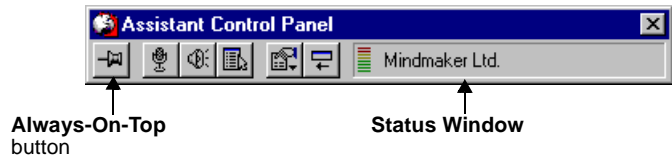
1. Click **Start** on the Windows taskbar, select **Programs**, and then **Assistant**.
2. Click on **Prody Parrot Package Uninstall**.
3. Follow the instructions of the uninstall program.

Chapter 3: Quick Tour

This chapter is designed to show you several of the basic and advanced features of Prody Parrot, and get you started using the program as quickly as possible. It is assumed that you have installed and started the program as described in the previous chapter.

The Status Window

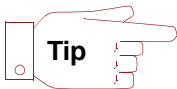
Before you proceed, bring your attention to the **Status Window** on the **Assistant Control Panel**.



The **Status Window** is extremely useful, especially if you are a new user, because it lets you know what Prody Parrot is doing in response to your commands. As you issue commands according to the instructions that follow, watch the **Status Window** to see if Prody Parrot has understood you. To keep the **Assistant Control Panel** in view at all times, to see the **Status Window**, click the **Always-On-Top** button to depress it.


Displaying the Available Commands

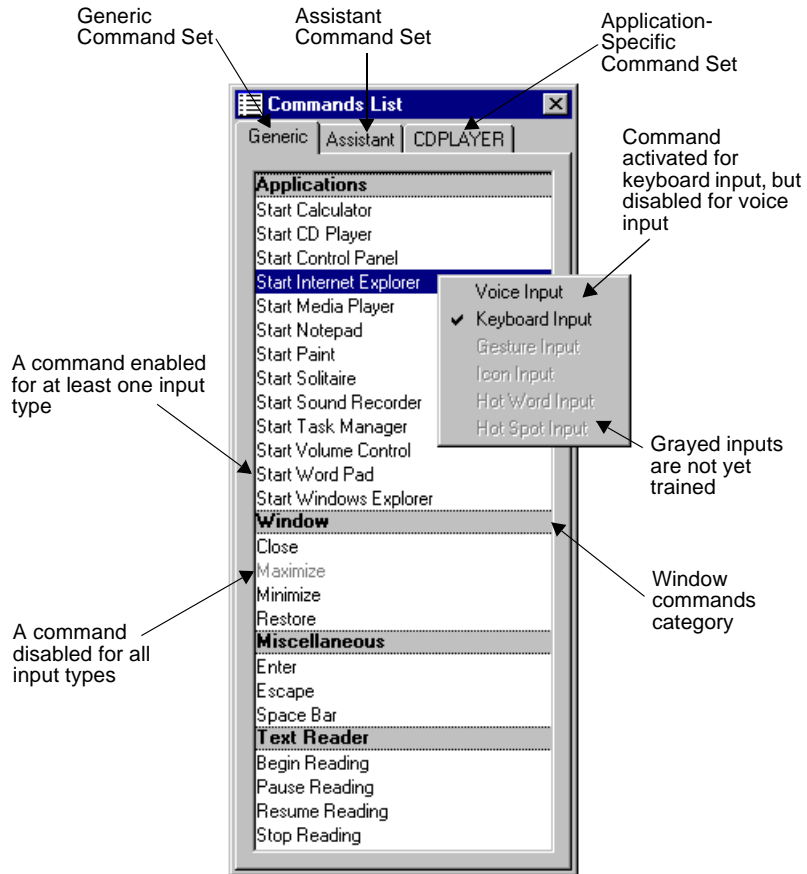
Another helpful tool is the **Commands List** window. This window displays all of the commands that are available at any given time. The commands listed in this window are categorized to make it easy to find what you are looking for. Although you don't have to display the **Commands List** window to interact with the character, you may find it useful.



*It is strongly recommended that new users of Prody Parrot display the **Commands List** window. By displaying the available commands, you can familiarize yourself with Prody Parrot's capabilities more quickly and easily.*

To display the Commands List window:

Click the **Commands List** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, or issue the command “Show Commands” via voice input. The **Commands List** window will appear:




The **Commands List** window is divided into a number of tab pages, each of which contains certain types of commands. First is the *Generic* tab page which contains commands that allow you to perform common Windows actions such as opening and closing programs. Next is the *Assistant* tab page which contains commands that allow you to interact with Prody Parrot and ask him to do certain things. Then, there may be other tab pages for additional applications or services that are currently running. If you have another application open, there will be a tab page named after that application containing commands that are specific to that application. These application-specific commands include menu commands, dialog box command buttons, check boxes, list boxes, and option buttons that Prody Parrot automatically extracts from the application and makes available to you. You can also add your own commands for specific applications, as described in later chapters.

Basic Features

You can start interacting with Prody Parrot right away. There are several basic functions that Prody Parrot can perform immediately upon installation and start up with no special preparation whatsoever. These include all of the generic and application-specific commands, and most of the Assistant commands.

Perhaps voice input is the most convenient method for issuing commands, especially since no training is required. However, if you cannot or do not want to use voice input, you can still communicate with Prody Parrot and follow the examples below by double-clicking commands in the **Commands List** window in order to issue them.

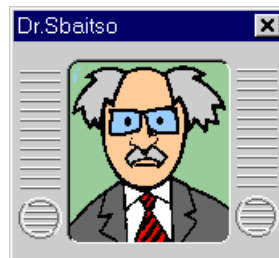
To experiment using Prody Parrot's basic features:

1. Make sure the **Voice Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel** and/or the **Commands List** window is open.
2. Say "tell me a joke" into the microphone (or double-click the command on the **Assistant** tab page of the **Commands List** window). Once Prody Parrot recognizes your command, he'll tell you a joke and then ask you something like: "Did you like the joke?". For fun, say "that was awful". Be warned, though, that you may get a smart-aleck reply.


Issue some of the other commands in the **Conversation**, **Entertainment**, **Actions**, or **Greetings** sections of the **Assistant** tab page. For example, say "What's up?", "fly right", "walk left", "come closer", "go back", "What time is it?", or "Sing a song". If you're in the mood to play a game, say "Let's play" and Prody Parrot will offer you several options including trivia quizzes and spelling games. Have fun, but don't forget to return to the Quick Tour eventually!

3. If you're in the mood for more entertainment, let Prody Parrot introduce you to one of his friends, Dr. Sbaitso the online psychiatrist. Issue the command, "Go to Doctor Sbaitso".

Prody Parrot will say, "Please wait while I get the doctor for you...". With Dr. Sbaitso you can discuss general topics in the style of a modern day psychotherapist.



4. When Dr. Sbaitso appears and introduces himself, enter a statement such as “I want to be a movie star” or “I think I hate my mother” in the **Response** text box and click **Submit**.

Dr. Sbaitso will begin to chat with you. If you proceed long enough, Prody Parrot will probably start to argue with the Doctor. This is because he is watching your conversation, and will sometimes want to express his own opinion, or even come to your defense. After you have chatted for a while, close Dr. Sbaitso by clicking the  in the top right corner of his window.

5. When you're ready to go back to more serious matters, click on the **Generic** tab of the **Commands List** window, and try some of the generic commands. For example, issue the command “Start Calculator”, or “Start Word Pad”. Then, when the program is open, say “Minimize” then “Maximize”. Notice that when a new application is opened, a new tab page appears in the **Commands List** window.
6. Click on the tab page corresponding to the application you had Prody Parrot open. Notice that all of the menu commands for that application appear on the application-specific tab page in the **Commands List** window. You can now issue any of them by voice. For example, if you had Prody Parrot start the Calculator, you can now issue the commands “Scientific” and “Standard” to switch back and forth between those views. When you are done, issue the command “Exit” or “Close” to quit the application.



*Prody Parrot does not respond to commands unless he is awake. If he is asleep and you would like to talk to him or issue a command, first say “wake up” to wake him up. Prody Parrot will also awaken if he is disturbed too much, or if you open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.*

As you can see, there are numerous functions that Prody Parrot can perform right away, with no special training or set up required. He can entertain you with jokes and songs, and open common Windows programs for you and voice-enable them. More detailed instructions for using and customizing Prody Parrot's basic functions can be found in “Chapter 4: Communicating with Prody Parrot”, “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs”, and “Chapter 6: Training Actions”.

The next section shows you how, if you have the necessary system requirements, Prody Parrot can perform many other powerful, fun, and useful functions for you.

Advanced Features

Prody Parrot has several exciting new advanced features and functions, including the ability to retrieve news, sports, and weather information for you from the Internet and read it to you or show it to you in your browser. Prody Parrot now offers stock monitoring, scheduling assistance, e-mail notification, Web navigation by voice, Internet Telephony, multimedia quizzes, interactive games, and more.

Some—but not all—of these advanced features have special requirements (see “Requirements for Advanced Features” in “Chapter 2: Getting Started”). In addition, some of them require a little bit of special preparation, such as providing your e-mail account information or creating a personal stock portfolio. Depending on your particular needs and interests, you can choose which of the advanced features you would like to take advantage of on a regular basis. Follow the steps below to experiment using several of them.

To experiment using Prody Parrot's advanced features:

1. Be sure that the **Voice Input**, **Voice Output**, and **Commands List** buttons are depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**, as shown here:



2. Information Retrieval (requires Internet access).

Get a weather report by saying “Get information”, then proceed like this:

Prody Parrot: Do you want to check out the stock market? (Or something similar.)

User: Weather Forecast.

P: Okay, I'll be with you in a moment. (Or some similar statement. Prody Parrot will then attempt to establish a connection to the Internet.)

I know about the weather in the following cities: Chicago, Denver, London, New York, and San Francisco. In which are you interested?

U: San Francisco.

P: In San Francisco it is currently 75 degrees and sunny with a high of 80 and a low of 65.

P: Do you want to see more information for this city?

U: Yes.

P: Okay, I'll show you the forecast in your browser!

P: Do you want weather information for anywhere else?

U: No. End conversation.

You can just as easily get news reports or sports scores. For example, to catch up on the latest news, issue the command “Get Information”, then, when Prody Parrot responds, say “News Headlines”.

Prody Parrot will pause to get the headlines, then he will offer categories such as “politics” and “health”. Select one by saying it exactly as Prody Parrot has stated it, e.g. “politics”.

Next, Prody Parrot will explain options such as “read summary”, “next headline” and “see full story”. Before he finishes explaining these options, you can interrupt him and say “Next Headline”. Continue listening to the headlines and saying “Next Headline” until you hear one that is of interest to you.

Then say “Read Summary”. Having Prody Parrot read a summary is a nice alternative to opening the full story in your browser. If, however, you wish to see the full story, say “See Full Story”. Prody Parrot will explain that he is going to show the full story in the browser.

When you are ready, you can continue by saying “Next Headline”. Listen to the headlines for as long as you wish, or until Prody Parrot has read them all. Then, you can either ask him to change categories or end the conversation. It is possible to customize Prody Parrot’s information retrieval. Refer to “Chapter 7: Your Intelligent Assistant” for details.

3. Web navigation by voice (requires Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher).

When you have had Prody Parrot bring a news story into your browser, it is an excellent time to navigate web pages by voice. If you have closed your browser, issue the command “Start Internet Explorer” to open it.



Watch the status bar in your browser that shows when a page is finished loading. Do not attempt to use voice navigation until after the page is completely loaded.

Choose one of the hyperlinks and say it exactly as written. Prody Parrot will take you to the corresponding Web page.



This means you must speak abbreviations as they are spelled, not as what they represent, e.g. if you see “Xerox Corp.” then say “Xerox Corp” not “Xerox Corporation”.

When that page is done loading, choose one of its hyperlinks and say it exactly as written. Continue for as long as you like.

4. Assistant-enabled web pages (requires 4.0 version or higher of either Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator).

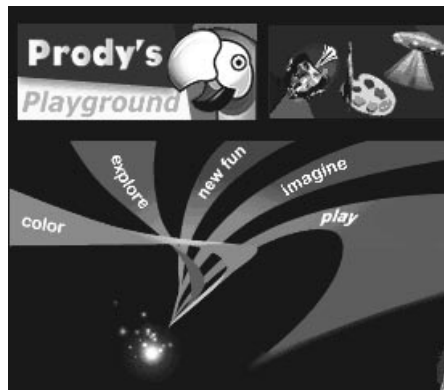
Not only does Prody Parrot let you navigate any web site by voice, but also there are special web sites with hidden content embedded in the pages, which will immediately extend Prody Parrot's knowledge and enable him to be your personal virtual tour guide of the site. You can see this happen by visiting the Mindmaker web site at www.mindmaker.hu.

Prody Parrot will begin narrating the web site, such as "Welcome to Mindmaker, this is where I was born...". Then he will offer options, such as taking you to different sections of the web site. Choose one of his options such as "Products", by saying the command.

At Assistant-enabled web sites, Prody Parrot can quickly tell you information to help you understand what the whole site is about, and he can bring you directly to any page on the site, even if you don't see its hyperlink.

5. Prody's Playground (Requires Internet Explorer 3.0 or higher or Netscape Navigator 2.0 or higher for limited functionality; and Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher for full functionality.)

Next, let's visit Prody's Playground, where you can play all kinds of games, having Prody Parrot as your companion. Simply tell Prody Parrot, "Go to the playground".



In Prody's Playground you will find several games that Prody Parrot can help you play by giving you tips or commenting on what you are doing while you are playing. Simply click one of the games, follow the on-screen instructions, and start having fun! Prody Parrot will watch what you are doing, and contribute his special remarks from time to time. When you are done playing, close the playground.

As mentioned earlier, Prody Parrot has numerous other useful and entertaining features—many more than we can cover in this quick tour.

Assistant functions:

- Connect you with your friends and associates using his built-in Prodyphone.

- Monitor stock market information.
- Notify you of new e-mail messages, and read them to you.
- Remind you of important dates and appointments, and help you manage your schedule.

Entertaining functions:

- Discuss general topics like computers, sports, and music.
- Play trivia games with you.

Detailed information about all of these advanced features can be found in “Chapter 7: Your Intelligent Assistant” and “Chapter 8: Your Entertaining Companion”.

Also, there are many more ways to issue commands to Prody Parrot in addition to the voice input and double-clicking methods described here. For example, you can use keyboard input, enter mouse gestures, drag and drop icons, enter hot words, or click hot spots. For instructions on using these input methods, see “Chapter 4: Communicating with Prody Parrot”.

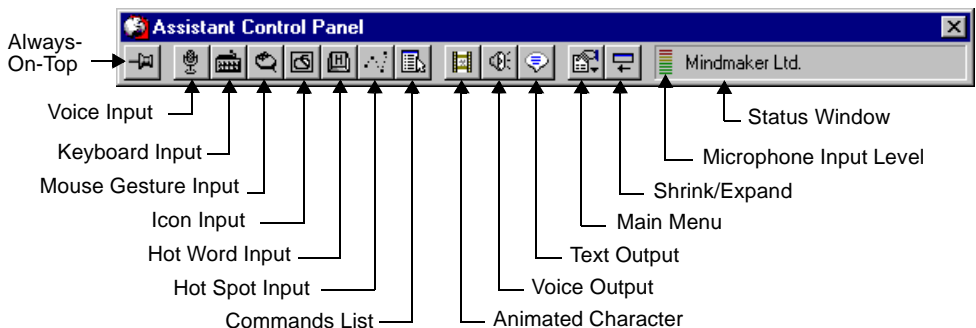
Chapter 4: Communicating with Prody Parrot

There are several ways in which you can communicate with Prody Parrot, and multiple ways in which he can respond or communicate with you. This chapter describes the interaction modes, types of commands, and ways of communicating with Prody Parrot, and explains how to control and use each of the seven command input methods and three output methods.

Adjusting the Assistant Control Panel


Controlling how you communicate with Prody Parrot and how he communicates with you is done from the **Assistant Control Panel**. Therefore, to experiment with all of the communication methods, it is necessary to understand a little bit more about it.

There are several different options for viewing and accessing the functions of the **Assistant Control Panel**. These include using a larger or smaller control panel, displaying or hiding the status window, displaying or hiding the entire control panel, and always keeping the control panel on top of your desktop.




Large or Small Control Panel

There are two basic sizes of the **Assistant Control Panel**—large and small—which allow you to access different control panel buttons.


The small control panel only shows the **Always-On-Top**, **Voice Input**, **Speech Output**, **Commands List**, **Main Menu**, and **Shrink/Expand** buttons . The large, full size **Assistant Control Panel** features all available control panel buttons.


To choose the large control panel:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**. Then select **Control Panel**.
2. Another menu will pop up. Select **Large** from this menu, and the **Assistant Control Panel** will be displayed in its entirety.

To choose the small control panel, follow the same instructions, except choose **Small** instead of **Large**.


Shrink or Expand

You can either shrink or expand the **Assistant Control Panel** depending on whether or not you want to view the **Status Window**. The last button on the right of the **Assistant Control Panel** is the **Shrink/Expand** button .

If you wish to show the **Status Window**, then click on the **Expand** button . This button will also hide the **Status Window**.



Hide or Display

If you do not wish to see the **Assistant Control Panel** on your desktop while Prody Parrot is running, you can hide it using one of two methods.

- Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then select **Control Panel**, then select **Hide** from this menu.
- Simply double-click on the title bar of the **Assistant Control Panel** and it will disappear.

You can view your hidden **Assistant Control Panel** by simply double-clicking on the Prody Parrot taskbar icon.

Always On Top

You can choose to have the **Assistant Control Panel** always showing on your desktop, even when there is another window currently active. To enable this feature, either depress the **Always-On-Top** button , or click the **Main Menu** button  and select **Control Panel**, then **Always-On-Top**.

Interaction Modes

Prody Parrot has the following interaction modes:

- Assistant
- Conversation
- Command
- Sleep


Assistant Mode

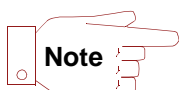
This is the mode Prody Parrot is running in when you first launch the application. In assistant mode, Prody Parrot will fulfill your requests to launch

and control applications, and will also obey your instructions on how he should behave, such as flying around the screen, taking a break, or giving you basic information, like the current time.

Conversation Mode

Conversation Mode is a special interactive mode, which temporarily suspends the normal application-control functions in order for Prody Parrot to concentrate on your conversation. Conversation Mode also includes Prody Parrot quizzing you on particular subjects and playing fun and educational games. You can enter the conversation mode by issuing the “let’s talk” command, and you return to the assistant mode by issuing the “end conversation” command, or by turning animation off and then back on again,



i.e., by clicking the **Animated Character** button  on the large **Assistant Control Panel** twice, or through the **Main Menu** on the small **Assistant Control Panel**.



*In order to enter conversation mode, the **Animated Character** button on the **Assistant Control Panel** must be depressed, or the **Animated Character** item must be checked in the **Output** submenu of the **Main Menu**.*

Command Mode

Command Mode is very similar to assistant mode, except that the animated representation of Prody Parrot disappears completely. This means that all of the commands that apply to the animated character of Prody Parrot himself, such as moving, flying, eating, etc., are disabled, but the command and control functionality of the system is still active.

You can start command mode by clicking the **Animated Character** button  on the large **Assistant Control Panel** so that it is in the up position, or by clicking the **Main Menu** button , then **Outputs**, and **Animated Character** so that the check mark disappears. You will see Prody Parrot leave the screen. When you want him to come back, simply click the same button again to activate it, and he will return in his normal assistant mode.


Sleep Mode

In order to use system resources as efficiently as possible, Prody Parrot can be told to go to sleep when you know you will not be using the program for a while, but you don’t want to close it. Simply issue the command “Go To Sleep”. To bring Prody Parrot out of sleep mode, issue the command “Wake Up”. However, Prody Parrot may awake if you disturb his slumber with your cursor.



*In sleep mode, Prody Parrot will not respond to any kind of input, with the exception of the command “Wake Up”. To bring the program out of sleep mode and reactivate input for all commands, issue the command “Wake Up”. Prody Parrot will awake if he is disturbed too much, or if you open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.*


Types of Commands

Prody Parrot organizes commands into several different categories: generic, assistant, application-specific, and some others depending on what Assistant Services you have open. You can view the currently available commands at any time by clicking the **Commands List** button  which displays the **Commands List** window.

Generic Command Set

The generic command set is a list of the most frequently used Windows commands. It is present at all times and can be used in any Windows application. Generic commands include such common commands as “Close”, “Enter”, “Escape”, etc. Some of the generic commands open commonly used applications such as Calculator and WordPad. You can always add your own commands to this set.

Assistant Command Set

Assistant commands allow you to converse with Prody Parrot and ask him to perform tasks for you, such as getting information or checking the time. As with any other type of command, you may input these via voice, keyboard, mouse gesture, hot words, hot spots, **Commands List** window double-clicking, or icon dropping. For the assistant command set to be available, the **Animated Character** button  on the large **Assistant Control Panel** must be depressed, or the **Animated Character** item must be checked in the **Output** submenu of the **Main Menu**.

Application-Specific Command Set

The application-specific command set is, as its name suggests, a collection of commands intended for a specific application. For example, the application-specific command set for Microsoft Excel contains commands that work within Excel but may have no use in another program. Application-specific command sets contain menu commands (not hot key combinations) as well as additional commands that you create yourself.

Like a diligent assistant, Prody Parrot automatically loads the commands that are specific to the application that is currently in focus on your Windows desktop or creates them on the fly. Consequently, you do not need to load the application-specific command set for the program you are using—Prody Parrot does it for you.

Other Command Sets

Other command sets may appear in the **Commands List** window depending on what other applications you have open. The following are examples of possible command sets:

- An **HTML** command set will appear anytime the active application contains an HTML link.
- The **StockWatcher** command set will appear when you have the StockWatcher service running.
- The **Psychapp** and **Dr. Sbaitso** command sets will appear when you are using Dr. Sbaitso.
- The **MailChecker** command set will appear when you have the MailChecker service running.
- The **Prodyphone** command set will appear when you have the Prodyphone service running.
- The **Assistant Scheduler** command set will appear when you have the Scheduler service running.


If the **Commands List** window is open, you will notice that every time you open or switch to a Windows application, the application-specific command set for the active application appears in the **Commands List**. This command set will appear under a tab labeled with the same name as the active application. You may add to, change, disable, or delete application-specific commands.

Ways of Commanding Prody Parrot

You can command Prody Parrot in seven ways: by voice, by typing on the keyboard, by mouse gesture, hot word input, hot spot input, by double-clicking commands, and by dragging icons. Any command you issue by voice can also be issued using the keyboard or mouse.

Issuing Commands by Voice

To use a voice command to talk to Prody Parrot:


1. Make sure your microphone is properly connected to the computer.
2. Make sure that the **Voice Input** button  is pressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**. Display the **Commands List** window to review the list of available commands.
3. Say the name of any command into the microphone. The **Assistant Control Panel** status window will display the name of the recognized command.



If Prody Parrot does not recognize your command or recognizes it incorrectly, try saying it again as clearly as possible. If Prody Parrot still does not recognize it, see “Appendix B: Troubleshooting”.


Issuing Commands by Keyboard

Commanding Prody Parrot by using the keyboard:

1. Make sure that the **Keyboard Input** button  is pressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Press SHIFT+ESC to display the **Keyboard Input** dialog box.
3. Type the name of any command in the **Keyboard Input** dialog box. Notice that you only have to type the first few letters and Prody Parrot displays the command name. Click **OK** or press ENTER when you want to issue the command.


Issuing Commands by Mouse Gesture

Commanding Prody Parrot by mouse gesture:

1. If you have not trained Prody Parrot to recognize mouse gesture input, do so now (see “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs”).
2. Make sure that the **Mouse Gesture Input** button  is pressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
3. Hold the SHIFT key down with one hand, and, with the other hand, hold the left mouse button down while making the gesture associated with the desired command.


Issuing Commands by Hot Word Input

Commanding Prody Parrot by hot word input:

1. If you have not trained Prody Parrot to recognize hot word input, do so now (see “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs”).
2. Make sure that the **Hot Word Input** button  is pressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
3. Type in the pretrained command in any application and Prody Parrot will execute the associated action.

Issuing Commands by Hot Spot Input

Commanding Prody Parrot by hot spot input:

1. If you have not trained Prody Parrot to recognize hot spot input, do so now (see “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs”).
2. Make sure that the **Hot Spot Input** button  is pressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
3. Click on the predefined hot spot and Prody Parrot will execute the associated action.

Issuing Commands by Double-Clicking Commands

You may view all the available commands in the **Commands List** window, and simply double-click on a command to issue it. The commands listed in this window are categorized to make it easier to find the command you are looking for.

To issue a command from the Commands List window:

1. Click the **Commands List** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel** to display the **Commands List** window.




2. Double-click any command in the list.

Issuing Commands by Dropping Icons

You can train Prody Parrot to perform a certain action when a particular icon is dropped on him.

Commanding Prody Parrot by dropping icons:

1. Make sure that the **Icon Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Locate the icon you wish to use. If you would like to use an icon from the Prody Parrot Treasure Chest, click on the **Start** menu, point to **Programs**, **Assistant**, **Prody Parrot**, **Prody Goodies**, and then click **Treasure Chest**.
3. Select the icon associated with the command, and drag it onto Prody Parrot. He will perform the associated action.



*Icons that you drop onto Prody Parrot must be of the file type *.ico. Icons of other types will not be recognized.*

Availability of Commands


Extraction and Loading of Application-Specific Commands

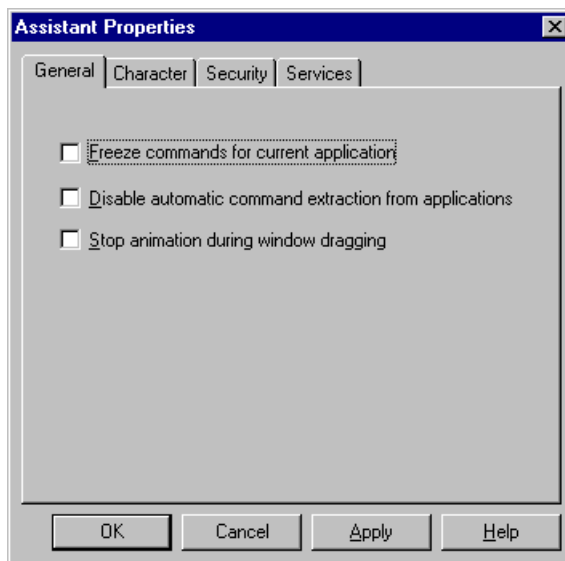
As explained earlier, the generic command set is always available, unless it is turned off by issuing the “Generic commands off” command, or Prody Parrot is in sleep mode. Furthermore, Prody Parrot automatically loads the application-specific command set for the application that is currently active on your Windows desktop, or creates it on-the-fly as needed. In most situations, you will probably find this automatic extraction or loading of application-specific commands very helpful and convenient.

It is possible, however, that you might like to keep the application-specific commands for one particular application loaded, regardless of what other applications are active. For example, you may be working on a document in Microsoft Word, but want to control your CD Player without having to leave Microsoft Word. In this case, you can “freeze” the application command set of the CD player, so the CD player commands are available even when you are working on your document. This way you can tell your CD Player to skip to the next track while you continue composing the next Nobel Prize winning piece of literature, or writing a love letter.

To freeze commands for the current application:

1. Make sure the application which contains the commands you want to freeze is the active one on your desktop.

2. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and select **Properties...**



3. On the **General** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box, select the **Freeze commands for current application** check box, then click **Apply** and **OK**.

Disabling command extraction

There may also be a time when you would like to temporarily but completely disable the automatic extraction or loading of application-specific commands. Notice that you can do this by selecting the **Disable automatic command extraction from applications** check box on the **General** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box.

Stop animation during window dragging

On slower machines, Prody Parrot may leave a trail behind him on the desktop when you move a window or application. Select the **Stop animation during window dragging** check box to avoid this situation.


Controlling How Prody Parrot Communicates with You

The following section details ways in which you can customize the way Prody Parrot communicates with you. This includes controlling his voice, text bubbles, and body language. You can also receive feedback for when Prody Parrot recognizes and doesn't recognize your commands.

Prody Parrot's Voice

The easiest way to change Prody Parrot's voice is to select one of the default voices that are available. Follow the instructions below to choose a default voice. You can further customize Prody Parrot's voice by creating a new voice or adjusting the voice characteristics and parameters of an existing one. To fully customize a voice, see "Changing the Assistant Properties" on page 129.

To select one of the default voices:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel** and then click **Properties...**
2. In the **Assistant Properties** dialog box, click the **Character** tab.
3. Click **Voice...** to launch the **Voice Editor** dialog box.
4. Select one of the default voices from the **Voice** drop-down combo box. Click on the **Close** button.

Prody Parrot's Text Bubbles

Everything that Prody Parrot says to you can be presented in writing as well as speech. At times when you don't want Prody Parrot's speech to distract those around you, it is convenient to turn off his speech output and turn on his text output. You can turn Prody Parrot's text bubbles on or off by clicking the **Text**

Output button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**.


Prody Parrot's Body Language

Prody Parrot makes numerous animated responses to your commands. For example, he jumps if you speak to him while he is taking a break, and he scratches his head if you issue a command by voice that is difficult for him to understand.

Feedback for Commands

In addition to his body language and text bubbles, Prody Parrot can provide additional visual feedback on whether or not he recognizes your commands, and what command he recognizes. This is done through the **Status Window** on the **Assistant Control Panel**.

To display command input feedback:

Make sure the **Status Window** on the **Assistant Control Panel** is showing by clicking on the **Shrink/Expand** button .

The **Status Window** will either display the name of the current application, the name of the recognized command, or the message "Not recognized".

Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs

A command input is what you do in order to issue a command. If you followed the steps in “Chapter 3: Quick Tour” or “Chapter 4: Communicating with Prody Parrot”, you’ve seen that you can say commands into your microphone, type in the **Keyboard Input** dialog box, or double-click commands in the **Commands List** window to issue them without doing any training. If you wish to use any of the other input methods, however, it is necessary to do some training. This chapter introduces the **Assistant Training** dialog box, and describes how to train new input or inputs to be associated with a command.

Overview of the Training Process

Prody Parrot automatically trains himself to recognize commands issued by voice and keyboard, and to carry out the action or sequence of actions associated with the commands. You may optionally expand Prody Parrot’s capabilities by training him to recognize various other inputs, as discussed in this chapter, and/or to perform customized actions, as described in “Chapter 6: Training Actions”.

Command Components

In order to train Prody Parrot correctly, you should be familiar with the three parts that make up each command:

- The command name
- The input
- The action

The command name

The *command name* is simply the name of the command. You use the command name when you issue commands and train the system. Command names are usually descriptive of their associated actions, e.g., the “Close” command closes a window.

The input

The *input* is what you do in order to issue a command. You can issue a command in seven different ways: voice, keyboard, mouse gesture, hot word input, hot spot input, icon drag-and-drop, and double-clicking the command in the **Commands List** window.

The action

The *action* is the procedure that Prody Parrot carries out when he recognizes a command. This action could range from simply minimizing a window to executing a complex macro or script.

Automatic Training

To make things easy, Prody Parrot automatically trains the three parts of a command—name, input, and action—whenever possible.

All of the default generic commands, assistant commands, and HTML commands already have names, of course, but Prody Parrot also assigns a name to each application-specific command. For your convenience, he simply uses the same names that appear in the menus and dialog boxes of the application, and the links as they appear on an HTML document. The only time you need to train Prody Parrot for a command name is when you add a new command or change the name of an existing command.


Prody Parrot automatically trains commands for all types of input except mouse gesture, hot spot, hot word, and icon. Every command Prody Parrot already knows and every command you add is trained by default to respond to voice input of the command name, keyboard input of the command name, and **Commands List** window input of the command name. Generally, the only time you need to train Prody Parrot for input is when you want to use mouse gesture, hot spot, hot word, or icon input, or when you'd like to change the pre-existing input associated with a command.

Finally, Prody Parrot learns the basic action for all of the commands which are automatically available. As you would expect, all of the default generic commands and assistant commands are automatically trained for actions. However, Prody Parrot can also teach himself the actions for the application-specific commands of any Windows program you open. For example, when you open Microsoft Word, Prody Parrot automatically knows how to “Select All”, “Print”, “Find”, etc. The only time you need to train Prody Parrot for actions is when you add a new command or would like to change the action of an existing command.

The Assistant Training Dialog Box

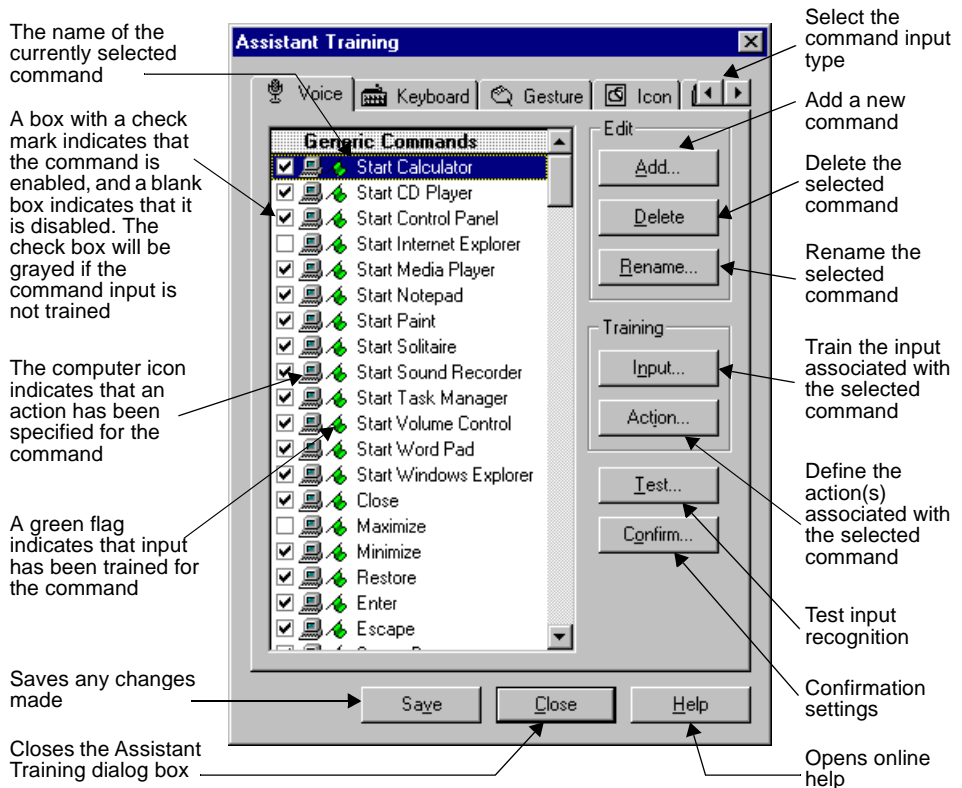
You use the **Assistant Training** dialog box to train Prody Parrot. Before beginning, familiarize yourself with the training environment.

To open the Assistant Training dialog box:

Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel** and click **Training...**

Understanding the Assistant Training Dialog Box

The **Assistant Training** dialog box allows you to select the commands you want to train as well as create new commands and actions. The **Assistant Training** dialog box follows:



Basic Input Training Procedures

Prody Parrot is designed to make training as easy as possible. The basic training procedures and special options are the same for each type of input. For detailed information, see the following sections on training for voice, keyboard, mouse gesture, icon, hot word, and hot spot input. For instructions on training actions, refer to the next chapter.

Associating Inputs with Commands

To train command inputs:

1. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click the tab corresponding to the appropriate input: **Voice**, **Keyboard**, **Gesture**, **Icon**, **Hot Word**, or **Hot Spot**.
2. In the command list window, select the command you want to train.

3. Click on the **Input...** button. Train the command for input as described in the later sections in this chapter (i.e. “Training for Voice Input” on page 32).

Using Special Options

Apply to all similar commands check box

By checking this box, you are allowing all of the input training that you do for the current command to be applied for all other relevant applications. For example, if you perform mouse gesture input training for the Microsoft Word “Print” command and select the **Apply to all similar commands** check box, the mouse gesture input that you trained can be used to issue the “Print” command in all other applications that contain the command. If you want your input training to apply only to one specific application, do not select this option.

Add/New option buttons

The **Add/New** option buttons make it possible to either train additional inputs for the same command or train new input that replaces existing input for the command. If **Add** is selected, then you will be adding a new input to the existing training data. If you select **New**, then you will be replacing the old training data with new input.

Training for Voice Input

Since voice input is always trained automatically for commands, whatever voice training you do is actually retraining. Such retraining is required only where you want to add an additional voice input word or phrase, or there is some difficulty or limitation with the automatically trained voice command. Many times, there are other, easier solutions to this problem.



If the reason you want to retrain a command is poor recognition accuracy, first consult “Appendix B: Troubleshooting”. Then, if you still experience poor recognition accuracy, you should try renaming the command to a different word or phrase before retraining it. Renaming a voice command solves most speech recognition difficulties in the best and easiest way.

Renaming a Command

To rename a command:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
2. Click the command you wish to rename in the command list window. The selected command will be highlighted.
3. Click **Rename...** The **Rename Command** dialog box is displayed. Enter a new name for the command in the **Enter new name** text box, then click **OK**.
4. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click **Save**, then **Close**.

You may want to test Prody Parrot's recognition of the renamed command. See "Testing Voice Input Recognition" on page 37.

Preparing for Voice Input Retraining

You should retrain voice input for a command only after you have tried all of the other troubleshooting techniques presented in "Appendix B: Troubleshooting", and are still experiencing difficulty. Follow these guidelines when preparing to retrain:

- Train in a quiet environment.
- Speak in a natural, conversational, and relaxed tone.
- Avoid prolonged pauses between the words of a command.
- Try to use the same vocal tone and speed during training that you will use when you execute the command.
- If using a hand-held microphone, position the microphone between 5 and 11 inches from your mouth.
- Use a unidirectional or high-quality hands-free headset microphone for optimum recognition results.
- Refer to the section "Before You Install" in "Chapter 2: Getting Started" for instructions on how to check your audio setup.


Now that you know the recipe for easy and successful voice training, you can move on to retraining commands for voice input.

Retraining a Command for Voice Input

The **User Training** tab page allows you to train a command using your own voice. Before you start training your input by voice, familiarize yourself with the **Add/New** radio button options.

The **Add/New** radio buttons, which appear in the **Mode** group box, let you add additional similar input methods to, or completely replace the original command. If **Add** is selected, then you will be adding a new input command to the existing list. If you select **New**, then you will be replacing the old list with a brand new one.

Training the voice input command by speaking:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and then click **Training...** The **Assistant Training** dialog box will appear. See "The Assistant Training Dialog Box" on page 30.
2. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click the **Voice** tab.
3. Click on the command you want to train, for example "Close". The selected command is highlighted.

- Click on the **Input...** button, and the **Voice Training** dialog box will display:



- Select the **User Training** tab, where you can train the input by speaking the command three times. The counter in the **Trainings** group box indicates how many times you need to repeat the command to complete the input training.
- When you are ready to start recording your new input command, click **Start**.
- Say the name of the command displayed in the **Command name** window, which in this case is “Close”. (Of course, you are not obligated to say the name of the command name. You can always pick a new input word or phrase for this command. We simply suggest the command name.) As you say the name, you should see green bars indicating the level of your voice in the box above the **Start** button. If Prody Parrot does not understand your command, then the number in the **Trainings** box will not change. If your voice input is longer than 7 seconds, the program will indicate that you should choose a shorter input. If Prody Parrot does understand the command, the number changes to **2**. Say the command name two more times.

Once you have finished training the command, you will automatically be returned to the **Assistant Training** dialog box.



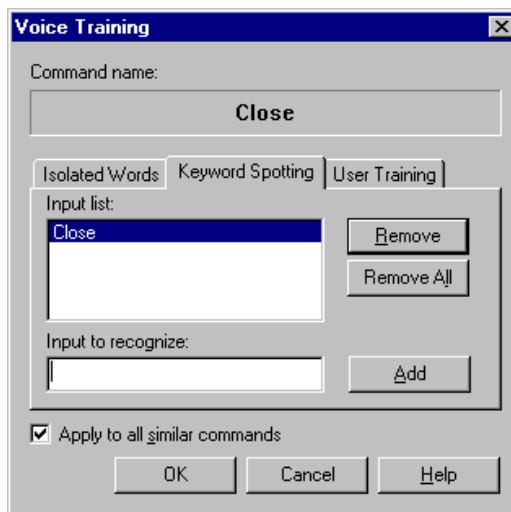
*A check mark beside a command name in the **Assistant Training** dialog box indicates that the command is enabled for the respective type of input. A green flag indicates that the command has been trained.*

Keyword Spotting

For added flexibility in the way you issue voice commands, Prody Parrot supports *keyword spotting*. This means that Prody Parrot can listen for the voice command as part of a larger phrase. For example, if you activate keyword spotting for the “Close” command, you can issue the command via voice by saying “Close”, “Please Close”, “Close this program now”, etc. Essentially, this command will be recognized anytime “close” is said clearly.

To activate keyword spotting for a command:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box, and select the **Voice** tab. See “The Assistant Training Dialog Box” on page 30.
2. Now select the command for which you would like to activate keyword spotting.
3. Click **Input...**, and the **Voice Training** dialog box will appear. Click on the **Keyword Spotting** tab.



4. In the **Input to recognize** edit field, you can insert the command input you would like Prody Parrot to listen for while you speak. After typing in the input, click **Add** then **OK**.



The more commands that are enabled for keyword spotting, the more complex voice recognition becomes for Prody Parrot. If you enable keyword spotting for too many commands, Prody Parrot's recognition speed and accuracy may be adversely affected.


To deactivate keyword spotting for a command:

1. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click on the **Voice** tab, and select the command for which you would like to deactivate keyword spotting.
2. Click **Input...** and the **Voice Training** dialog box will be displayed. Select the **Keyword Spotting** tab. Here, you can remove the inputs that were specified for keyword spotting.
3. Select an input by clicking on the name of the input. Now click the **Remove** button to remove the selected item. Notice that there is a **Remove All** button as well. You can click on this if you want to remove all the inputs from keyword spotting.

Isolated Words

For added flexibility in the way you issue voice commands, Prody Parrot supports *isolated words*. This means that Prody Parrot will only recognize the command only if the word or phrase is said alone. For example, if you activate isolated words for the “Restore” command, you can only issue the command via voice by saying “Restore”, and not “Restore window”, or “Restore Notepad”.

To activate isolated words for a command:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and then click **Training...** The **Assistant Training** dialog box will appear. See “The Assistant Training Dialog Box” on page 30.
2. Select the **Voice** tab page.
3. Click the command you want to train, for example “Close”. The selected command is highlighted.

4. Click on the **Input...** button, and the **Voice Training** dialog box will be displayed:



5. Click the **Isolated Words** tab.
6. In the **Input to recognize** edit field, you can insert the command input you would like Prody Parrot to listen for while you say that word or phrase only. After typing in the input, click **Add**, then **OK**.

Deleting voice training inputs

To remove a voice input command, simply select the input you would like to delete by clicking on it in the **Voice Training** dialog box, then press the **Remove** button. If you want to delete all the voice inputs, then click the **Remove All** button.

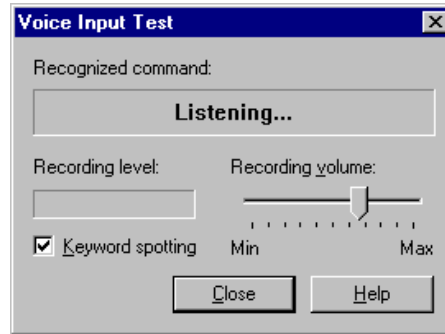
Testing Voice Input Recognition

You can test Prody Parrot's recognition of your voice input through the **Voice Input Test** dialog box. If you have a particularly soft or loud speaking voice, you can also adjust the recording volume to optimize voice input recognition.

To test voice recognition:

1. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click on the **Voice** tab.

2. Click **Test...** to display the **Voice Input Test** dialog box:



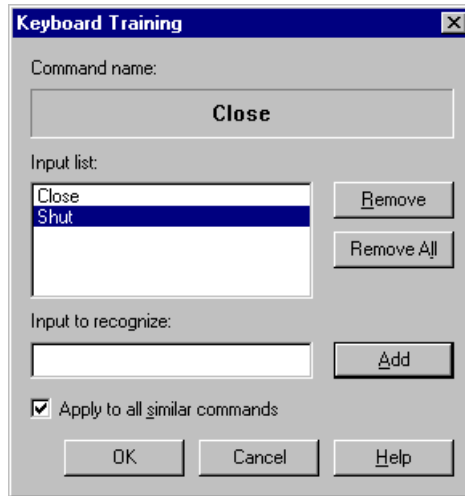
3. Say the name of a command into your microphone. If Prody Parrot recognizes the command, he displays the command name in the **Recognized command** field. If Prody Parrot fails to recognize your command, he displays the **Not recognized** message. Speak several commands such as "Start Word Pad" and "Enter". Your voice should register on the **Recording level** meter, and you should see about 3 to 7 green bars fluctuate as you speak. The commands you say should be correctly displayed in the **Recognized command** field. If this is not the case, adjust the **Recording volume** slider left or right, until you achieve the desired results. Keyword spotting allows Prody Parrot to recognize the command imbedded in a sentence.
4. Click **Close** when you have finished testing.

Training for Keyboard Input

All commands are automatically trained and ready for keyboard input. Simply type in the command name to issue the command. However, if you want to change or add to the default keyboard input, you can do so in the **Keyboard Training** dialog box.

To train commands for keyboard:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box and click the **Keyboard** tab. Scroll down the commands list and click a command, e.g., the “Close” command in the generic command set.
2. Click **Input...** to display the **Keyboard Training** dialog box:



The command name appears in the **Command name** and **Input list** box.

3. In the **Input to recognize** edit field, type the text you want Prody Parrot to recognize for this command. Click **Add**, then click **OK**.

Deleting keyboard training inputs

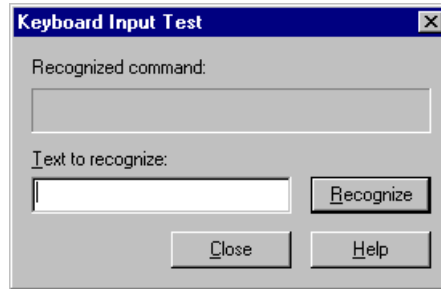
Removal of keyboard command inputs is also done in the **Keyboard Training** dialog box. Simply select the input you would like to delete by clicking on it, then press the **Remove** button. If you want to delete all the keyboard inputs, then click the **Remove All** button.

Testing Keyboard Input Recognition

You can test your keyboard input to make sure that Prody Parrot recognizes your commands.

To test keyboard recognition:

1. Click **Test...** to display the **Keyboard Input Test** dialog box:



Type the name of any command in the **Text to Recognize** edit field.

2. Click **Recognize** or press ENTER. If Prody Parrot recognizes the command, the command name is displayed. If he fails to recognize it, the message “Not recognized” is displayed, in which case verify that you typed in the command with the correct spelling.
3. Repeat this procedure for each command you wish to test, then click **Close**.

Training for Mouse Gesture Input

Mouse gestures are movements you make with your mouse while holding down the SHIFT and left mouse button. You can make gestures anywhere on your computer screen, on top of any application. However, mouse gestures are one of the inputs that are not automatically trained. So if you want to issue commands by mouse gesture input, you must first teach Prody Parrot the input gesture(s) you would like to use. Follow the steps below to train a mouse gesture input.

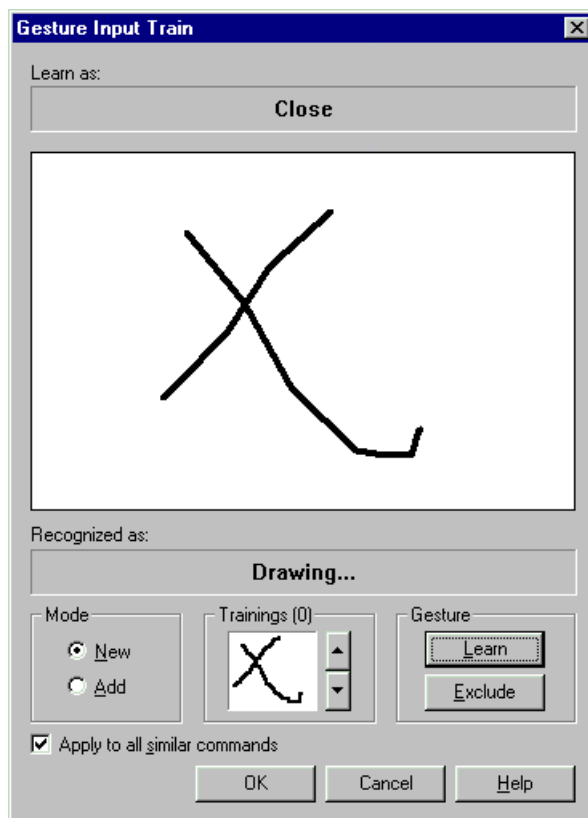
Training for Mouse Gesture Input

To train for mouse gesture input:

1. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click the **Gesture** tab. See “The Assistant Training Dialog Box” on page 30.
2. Click on a command, e.g., “Close”.
3. Click **Input...** The **Gesture Input Train** dialog box is displayed.

Make sure that **New** is selected in the **Mode** box.

4. Move the cursor over the drawing window. The cursor turns into a cross. While holding down the SHIFT key and the left mouse button, make a gesture with your mouse, e.g., an **X**:



5. If you are satisfied with the gesture, click **Learn**. Prody Parrot will now associate the mouse gesture with the “Close” command. To try again, hold down the SHIFT key and, with the cursor over the window, click the left mouse button. Your previous drawing will disappear and you can make another one. Notice that when you release the SHIFT key, Prody Parrot will try to recognize your gesture. Once you are satisfied, click **OK**. You will be returned to the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
6. Click **Close** to exit the **Assistant Training** dialog box. A window will ask you whether you want to save your changes. Click **Yes**.

Retraining for Mouse Gesture Input

The **Gesture Input Train** dialog box allows you to retrain or refine a mouse gesture command by positive (**Learn** button) and negative (**Exclude** button) examples. There are three main reasons for retraining a mouse gesture input:

- To change the input gesture associated with a command.
- To broaden the range of recognized gestures for a command.

- To narrow the range of recognized gestures for a command.

To change or broaden a mouse gesture input:

1. In the commands list window, click the name of the command you want to retrain, e.g., “Start Notepad”.
2. Click **Input...** The **Gesture Input Train** dialog box appears. If you wish to change the input gesture associated with the command, click **New** to erase all previous training data and replace it with the current data. If you wish to broaden the range of recognized gestures for the command, click **Add** to add more trainings to the existing data.
3. Train as usual. Click **OK** when you are finished.

To narrow a mouse gesture input:

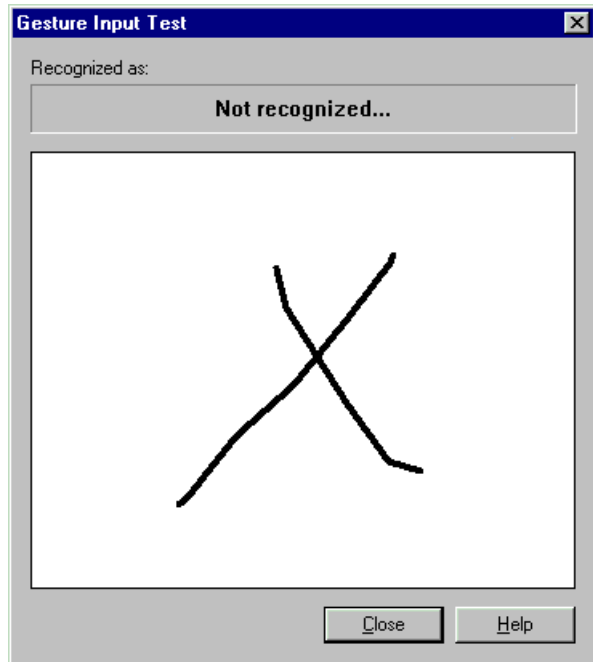
1. In the list of commands window, select the name of the command you want to retrain, e.g., “Start Paint”.
2. Click **Input...** The **Gesture Input Train** dialog box appears. Hold down the SHIFT key and the left mouse button. Draw the gesture that you would like to ensure that Prody Parrot doesn’t recognize as an input for the “Start Paint” command (or whatever command you are retraining). Release the SHIFT key and left mouse button.
3. If Prody Parrot recognizes the input as the gesture for “Start Paint”, that command name will appear in the **Recognized as** window, and the **Exclude** button will become active. Click **Exclude**. If Prody Parrot does not recognize the new input as the gesture for “Start Paint”, then exclusion is not necessary.

Testing Mouse Gesture Input Recognition

It is recommended that you test the mouse gestures that you trained to verify that Prody Parrot learned them correctly.

To test for mouse gesture input:

1. After you have trained several mouse gesture commands, click the **Test...** button in the **Assistant Training** dialog box, while the **Gesture** tab page is selected. The **Gesture Input Test** dialog box will be displayed:



2. Hold down the SHIFT key and the left mouse button as you draw a gesture in the window. Notice that when you release the SHIFT key, Prody Parrot will try to recognize your gesture. If he recognizes the gesture, the command name will be displayed in the **Recognized as** window. If Prody Parrot fails to recognize the gesture or recognizes it incorrectly, either draw the gesture again more carefully or retrain the command.
3. Click **Close**.



Mouse gesture input recognition is most accurate when at least four commands are trained to recognize this method of input.

Training for Icon Input

You can feed Prody Parrot by dragging food icons from the **Treasure Chest** onto Prody Parrot's animated character. For example, dragging the cheese icon onto Prody Parrot executes the "cheese" command in the assistant command set.

If you choose, you can associate a new icon with a command. For example, you can associate an icon with the "Fly around" command, so that if you drag that icon onto the character, Prody Parrot starts to fly around your Windows desktop. Any icon file (*.ico) may be associated with a command.

To associate an icon with a command:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box and click the **Icon** tab. See "The Assistant Training Dialog Box" on page 30.
2. Scroll down the commands list and select the command with which you wish to associate an icon, e.g., "Fly around".
3. Click **Input...** to display the **Icon Training** dialog box:



4. Using your mouse, drag an icon file (*.ico) onto the square in the middle of the dialog box. Click **OK**.

Testing Icon Input Recognition

You can test your training to make sure Prody Parrot recognizes your icon input.

To test a command for icon input:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box and click the **Icon** tab.

2. Click **Test...** to display the **Icon Test** dialog box:




3. Drag an icon that you have trained onto the window in the middle of the dialog box. If Prody Parrot recognizes the command, he displays the command name in the **Recognized Command** window. If Prody Parrot fails to recognize your command, he displays the “Not recognized” message, in which case make sure you are using the correct icon for testing. Click **Close** when you have finished testing.

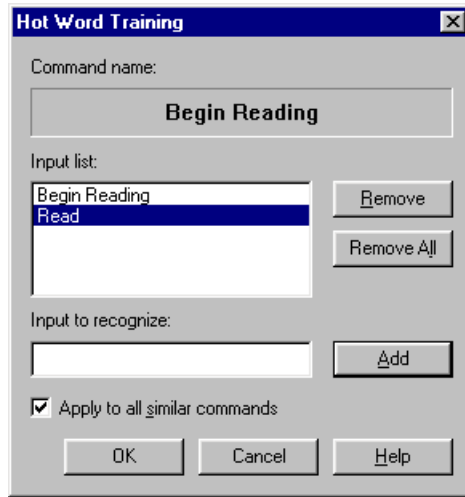
Training for Hot Word Input

Hot word input is similar to the keyboard input method in that you type in a command using the keyboard. However hot word input recognizes the commands you type in any application.

To train for hot word input:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then click **Training...** to open the **Assistant Training** dialog box. See “The Assistant Training Dialog Box” on page 30.
2. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click the **Hot Word** tab page.
3. Select the command you want to train.

- Click **Input...** and the **Hot Word Training** dialog box will be displayed.




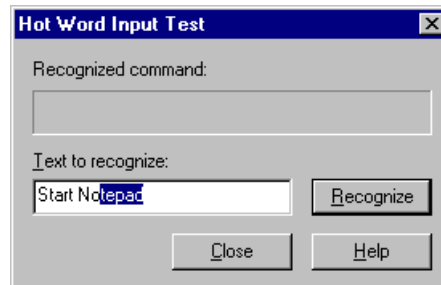
- Type in the word you want to be trained into the **Input to recognize** edit field. Click **Add**.
- You may have more than one word or phrase to be recognized as the command, so repeat step 5 as many times as you wish.
- When you are done, click **Add**, and then **OK**.

Testing Hot Word Input Recognition

You can test your hot word Input to make sure that Prody Parrot recognizes your commands.

To test a command for hot word input:

- Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
- Click **Training...** to open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
- In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click the **Hot Word** tab.
- Click **Test...** to display the **Hot Word Input Test** dialog box:



5. Type in the command input you want to test in the **Text to recognize** edit field. If the input is recognized correctly, then the associated action will be displayed in the **Recognized command** window.
6. Repeat this procedure for each command you wish to test, then click **Close**.


Click **Close** to exit the **Assistant Training** dialog box. A window will ask you whether you want to save your changes. Click **Yes**.

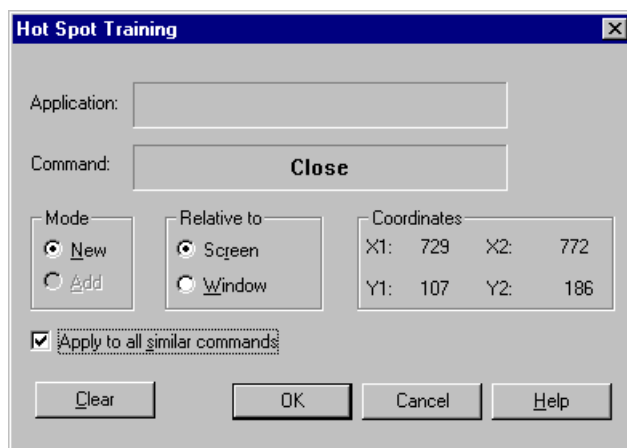
Training for Hot Spot Input

In any application you may define a rectangular area that works as a hot spot. Essentially, a hot spot is a fully customized invisible button. You can define how big you want the hot spot to be, and more importantly, what action you want it to execute when clicked.

The application area under this hot spot is not active. Therefore, it is not recommended that you define this area over the menu or tool bar of the particular application.

To train for hot spot input:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then click **Training...** to open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
2. Select the **Hot Spot** tab page.
3. Make sure the application for which you want to train the hot spot is the current application.
4. Click the command you want to train.
5. Click **Input...** and the **Hot Spot Training** dialog box will display.




6. If you want this to be the only button to trigger the action, select the **New** radio button. If you want this to be an additional button for Prody Parrot to recognize for this action, then select the **Add** radio button.
7. While holding down the SHIFT key and the left mouse button, drag the mouse to draw a box which defines the position and size of the hot spot area. Notice that the hot spot you have created is invisible.
8. Once you are satisfied, click **OK**.

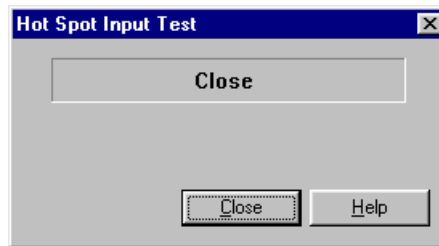
Click **Close** to exit the **Assistant Training** dialog box. A window will ask you whether you want to save your changes. Click **Yes**.

Testing Hot Spot Input Recognition

You may want to test the hot spot you created to make sure it does not conflict with any of the application's own buttons or menus underneath the hot spot.

To test a command for hot spot input:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then click **Training...** to open the **Assistant Training** dialog box. See “The Assistant Training Dialog Box” on page 30.
2. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box, click the **Hot Spot** tab.
3. Click **Test...** to display the **Hot Spot Input Test** dialog box:



4. Click your pretrained area to see if Prody Parrot recognizes the input. If the input is recognized, then the associated command name will be displayed in the **Hot Spot Input Test** dialog box. Otherwise “Not Recognized” will be displayed.
5. Repeat this procedure for each command you wish to test, then click **Close**.

Chapter 6: Training Actions

This chapter explains how to train the action or actions associated with a command. It provides detailed instructions for training simple actions as well as creating complex actions using *MiniScript*. After reviewing this chapter, you will be ready to train Prody Parrot to do virtually anything in the Windows environment.

Training an Action

After creating a new command, you have to teach Prody Parrot the action or series of actions to be executed when you issue that command.

All actions, including those that Prody Parrot already knows and those that you have taught him, are described in a simple scripting language called MiniScript.

The three methods of creating MiniScript:

1. Manually type the script directly in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box.
2. Use simple drag-and-drop to create script in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box.
3. Describe the action in the simpler **Action Training** dialog box, and let Prody Parrot automatically generate the script. With this method you will never see the underlying script in the **Action Training** dialog box.

The third method, in which you specify the actions in the **Action Training** dialog box is much easier to do, but it doesn't allow for as many possibilities. Editing MiniScript in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box gives you the most control when specifying the actions associated with the given command.

Selecting the command

When selecting a command in the **Assistant Training** dialog box, it is possible to switch between the various input tabs. However, you will notice that the same commands appear under every input tab. Notice that when you modify an action, it applies to the command regardless of the input type.

The Action Training Dialog Box

The **Action Training** dialog box is where you can easily specify the sequence of actions you would like your command to execute. Whatever you specify in the **Action Training** dialog box will automatically be generated into MiniScript. MiniScript and the **ScriptEditor** dialog box are further explained in the “Advanced Action Training with MiniScript” on page 54 in this chapter.


The **Action Training** dialog box allows you to specify the following types of actions:

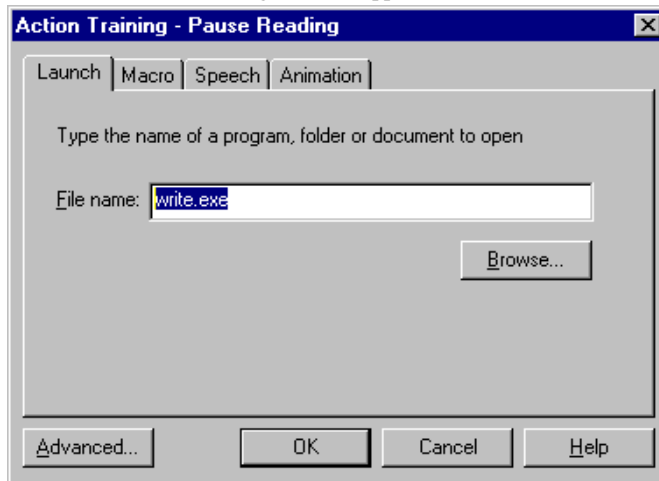
- **Launch**—start a program or open a file.
- **Macro**—perform mouse and/or keyboard actions.

- **Speech**—teach Prody Parrot what you want him to say, and when to say it.
- **Animation**—specify what animation actions you want Prody Parrot to perform.
- **Advanced...**—open the **ScriptEditor** dialog box to create MiniScript. (See “What is MiniScript?” on page 54.)

The tabs in the **Action Training** dialog box allow you to specify these types of actions. You can also execute a combination of these actions for one command.

To access the Action Training dialog box:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box by clicking on the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then select **Training...**. Now select the command for which you want to train the action. Remember, to select an application-specific command, the corresponding application must be open.
2. Click on the **Action...** button in the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
3. The **Action Training** dialog box will appear.




Select the appropriate tab(s) and train the action(s). In order to train more complicated actions or view the MiniScript, click on the **Advanced...** button to open the **ScriptEditor** dialog box.

The Launch Tab Page

To train the action to open a file or launch an application, select the **Launch** tab page.

To launch a file or application:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box by clicking on the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then selecting **Training...**

Select the command for which you want to train the action. Remember, to select an application-specific command, the corresponding application must be open.


2. Now click on the **Action...** button in the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
3. The **Action Training** dialog box will appear. Select the **Launch** tab page. In the **File name** edit field, type in the name of the file you want the command to open. (You will have to specify the path of the file if it is not in the *Windows system path*.) Click on the **Browse...** button to find the file.
4. Click **OK**.

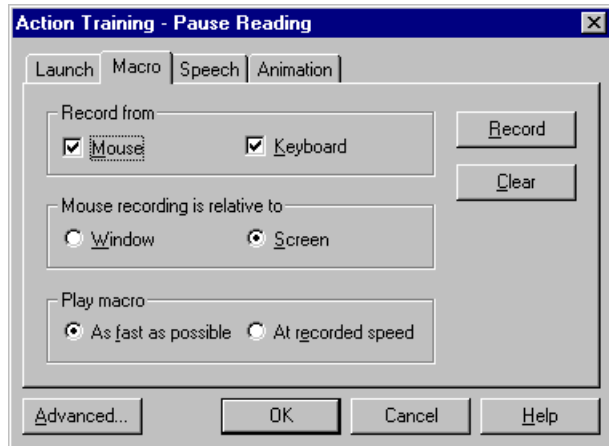
This command is now trained to launch the file you specified.

The Macro Tab Page

If you want to train keyboard and/or mouse actions for your command, you can do so on the **Macro** tab page.

To record a macro:

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box by clicking on the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then select **Training....** Select the command for which you want to train the action. In order to select an application-specific command, the corresponding application must be open.
2. Click on the **Action...** button in the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
3. The **Action Training** dialog box will appear. Select the **Macro** tab.



4. There are several options available to customize the macro. In the **Record from** group box, check the appropriate box according to the inputs you will give your macro. Check **Keyboard** to use the keyboard, and **Mouse** to use the mouse during recording. Of course you can check both **Keyboard** and **Mouse** to use both types of actions to define the macro.

5. Now choose if you want the macro to be recorded relative to the active window or to the whole screen. For example, if you are recording an action involving something that may not always be at the same place on the screen (like the play button on your CD player) then select **Window**. Conversely, if you are recording an action on something that is always in the same place on the screen (like the **Start** menu of the Windows taskbar) then select **Screen**.
6. Finally, in the **Play macro** group box choose if you want the macro to be executed as fast as possible or at the speed which it is recorded.
7. Now you are ready to press **Record** to start recording the macro.
8. Perform the sequence of actions that you want to associate with the command. For example, click the **Address** window of Internet Explorer and then type “www.mindmaker.hu” to go to the Mindmaker web site.

In the case of this macro, you would select **Window** in the **Record from** group box since the action will be executed in the Internet Explorer window. You would also need to select both **Mouse** and **Keyboard**, since this macro will involve both mouse and keyboard actions.

9. To stop macro recording, press the PAUSE key, which is located in the upper-right area of the keyboard.
10. Click **OK** to save the recorded macro. You will be returned to the **Assistant Training** dialog box.




Macros will not work properly if a window which is involved in the macro action is minimized or not open. However, the same window can be inactive and behind other windows on your desktop, and the macro will execute as trained. Of course you can always train the action to first open the necessary window and then execute the original action.

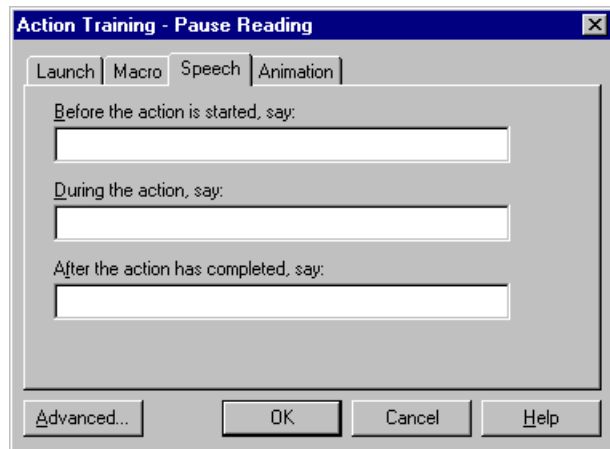
To stop macro recording and playback

As described in the previous section, you can stop macro recording by pressing the PAUSE key. The macro recording will also stop if you press the key combination of CTRL+ALT+DELETE. Both of these methods can be used to stop a macro playback. In the case that you want to interrupt a macro action, press either the PAUSE key or the key combination of CTRL+ALT+DELETE.

The Speech Tab Page

In the **Action Training** dialog box, you also have the option to train Prody Parrot to say something before, during, and/or after executing a command. For example, you can create a command called “My Resume”, then train Prody Parrot to open your resume (using the **Launch** tab page) and to say “Don’t forget to put resume paper in the printer!” (using the **Speech** tab page) when you issue the command.


1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box by clicking on the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then selecting **Training...** Now select the command for which you want to train the action. Remember, to select an application-specific command, the corresponding application must be open.
2. Now click on the **Action...** button in the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
3. The **Action Training** dialog box will appear. Click on the **Speech** tab.



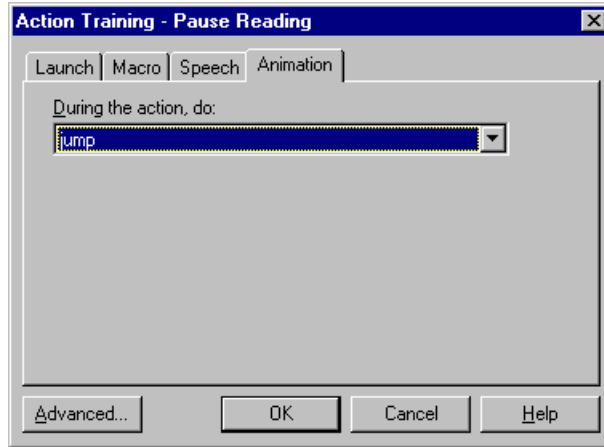
4. Here you can specify what you want Prody Parrot to say before, during, and/or after the command is executed. Simply type in the text you would like Prody Parrot to say, in the appropriate text box.
5. When finished, click **OK**.

The Animation Tab Page

You can also train Prody Parrot to perform animated responses when a command is executed. For example, you could teach Prody Parrot to look interested whenever you launch your web browser.

1. Open the **Assistant Training** dialog box by clicking on the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then selecting **Training...** Now select the command for which you want to train the action. Remember, to select an application-specific command, the corresponding application must be open.
2. Now click on the **Action...** button in the **Assistant Training** dialog box.

3. The **Action Training** dialog box will appear. Click on the **Animation** tab.



4. Click on the drop-down arrow next to the **During the action, do** text box. Here you are given several options for Prody Parrot's animation. From the drop-down combo box, select the animated response you would like Prody Parrot to perform when your command is executed.
5. When you are finished click **OK**.

Advanced Action Training with MiniScript


What is MiniScript?

MiniScript is a simple scripting language developed by Mindmaker, which allows you to describe complex actions to execute for each command. Although using MiniScript to describe an action requires a bit more attention than using the **Action Training** dialog box, it has significant advantages. First, it is easier to specify exactly what action you want Prody Parrot to perform. With MiniScript, you can modify and edit a variety of different components of the action without completely retraining it, and it offers a much larger variety of action types. All in all, MiniScript simply gives you more control over the actions you associate with the command. MiniScript is edited in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box.

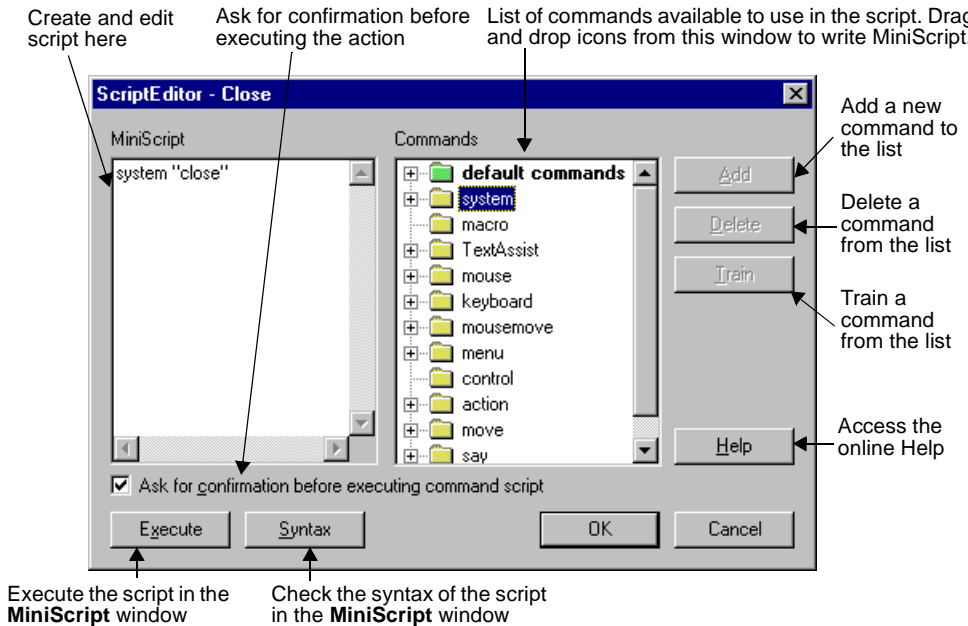
The ScriptEditor

If you want to train your command for more sophisticated actions or view the existing MiniScript, you can do so in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box.

To access the ScriptEditor dialog box:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and then select **Training...** This will display the **Assistant Training** dialog box.
2. In the **Assistant Training** dialog box select the command for which you would like to train the action. For example, select the "Close" command.

3. Click the **Action...** button to display the **Action Training** dialog box, and then click the **Advanced...** button. The **ScriptEditor** dialog box will appear.



4. The following section explains how to edit script in the **ScriptEditor** and what other options are available in this dialog box.
5. When you are done editing and testing the script, click **OK** to return to the **Assistant Training** dialog box.

Editing MiniScript

In the **ScriptEditor** dialog box, you may create, modify and test the script associated with the selected command.

The **Commands** window contains a list of folders in which a variety of actions you can choose to be executed within MiniScript. Descriptions of each script command type are found later in this chapter.

Edit the script by either typing directly into the **MiniScript** window, or drag-and-drop the script commands from the list in the **Commands** window. If the script command requires parameters, a dialog box will be displayed where you can specify the desired parameter. Notice that the script engine can only execute commands that are available.

When your done editing the script, click on the **Syntax** button to verify that the syntax of the script is correct. If the MiniScript syntax is correct, a message highlighted in green will appear at the bottom of the **MiniScript** window, informing you that the script is okay to use. If there is a syntactical error in the script, then the line of script which contains the error will be highlighted in red.

Click **Execute** if you want to test the script by executing it. Prody Parrot will execute the action you have specified in MiniScript.

Adding, deleting, and training script commands

The **Add**, **Delete**, and **Train** buttons in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box apply to the script commands that appear in the list of the **Commands** window. These buttons may or may not be available depending on the type of command currently selected in the list.

Confirmation setting

Select or clear the **Ask for confirmation before executing command script** check box, depending on whether you want Prody Parrot to ask you for confirmation before executing the script associated with the command.



*Once you have created a MiniScript for a command, and you click **Action...** on the **Assistant Training** dialog box, the **ScriptEditor** dialog box will appear directly. You will no longer see the **Action Training** dialog box appear for that command.*

Understanding MiniScript Syntax

The commands used in MiniScript are typically followed by one or more parameters to specify the details of what the script command does. You do not have to remember the number and type of parameters for each command, because the editor shows you the syntax for each one as you are creating the script.

See “The ScriptEditor” on page 54 and “Script Command Types” on page 57 for detailed explanations of the ScriptEditor and the various script command types

Script command typography

Each command is followed by a space, and one or more parameters. If more than one parameter is used, then the parameters must be separated by a comma. To make the script easier to read, you may separate the parameters using a comma followed by a space.

The following is a specific example of the “mouse” script command, which requires three parameters:

```
mouse buttndown, MB_LEFT, TRUE
```

Some script commands require a string parameter. A string parameter is always surrounded by two quotation marks. The string between the quotation marks may contain any character, including spaces. The following is another example that shows the proper syntax for writing a string parameter:

```
say text, "Hello!"
```



With the exception of the string parameters for the “say”, “keyboard”, and “launch” script commands, all command parameters are case sensitive.

Commented lines

You may place comments between the line of the script you are writing. Simply start the line with an apostrophe to exclude it from execution.

Example:

```
'this script starts the notepad program  
'wait 1000  
launch "notepad.exe"
```

In this example, the first two lines of the script are ignored, and only the third line is executed.

Script Command Types

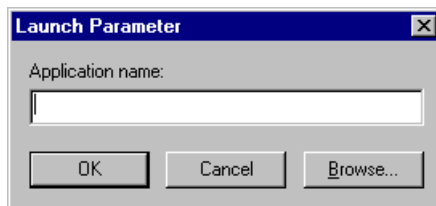
MiniScript supports a variety of script command types. Each requires different parameters, which are described in the following sections.

Default commands

There are three default commands that are always available to be included in the script.

Launch

When you drag-and-drop this command from the **Commands** window, the **Launch Parameter** dialog box appears where you can type in the file name you want to launch. Optionally, you can manually navigate to find the file by pressing the **Browse...** button.



With the second parameter of this script command you may specify which file the application should open when it is launched.

Example:

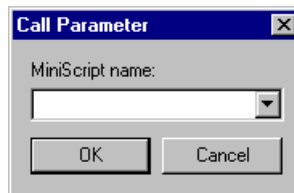
```
launch "notepad.exe", "text.txt"
```



Here is a trick to easily create a line of MiniScript to launch a file. Drag the icon of the file you would like to launch to the **MiniScript** window. A script line should appear, which will now launch the file that you selected.

Call

This command can execute other pre-existing MiniScript actions. When you drag the **call** script command from the **Commands** window to the **MiniScript** window the **Call Parameter** dialog box will display.



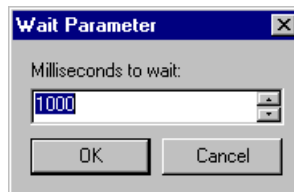
Here you can type in the name of the MiniScript action you would like to execute, or click on the arrow to select the action from the drop-down combo box. If you create an infinite loop with the **call** command, then the action will be terminated after 10 loops.

Example:

```
call "test"
```

Wait

The **wait** script command allows your action to pause for a specified amount of time. This is particularly useful when your MiniScript action is waiting for another action to process. When you drag the **wait** script command in the MiniScript window, the **Wait Parameter** dialog box will appear.



Specify how many milliseconds you would like the system to wait. Remember, 1000 ms equals 1 second.

Example:

```
Wait 1000
```

System commands

These are available to all commands to use. However, you cannot add to, delete, or train the system commands. These commands appear in the **Generic**

Commands list of the **Assistant Training** dialog box and **Commands List** window. They will execute the specified action in the active application.

The second parameter is an integer number (1-65000), and it specifies the number of times the line will be executed. This parameter is optional, and if not used then the line is executed only once.

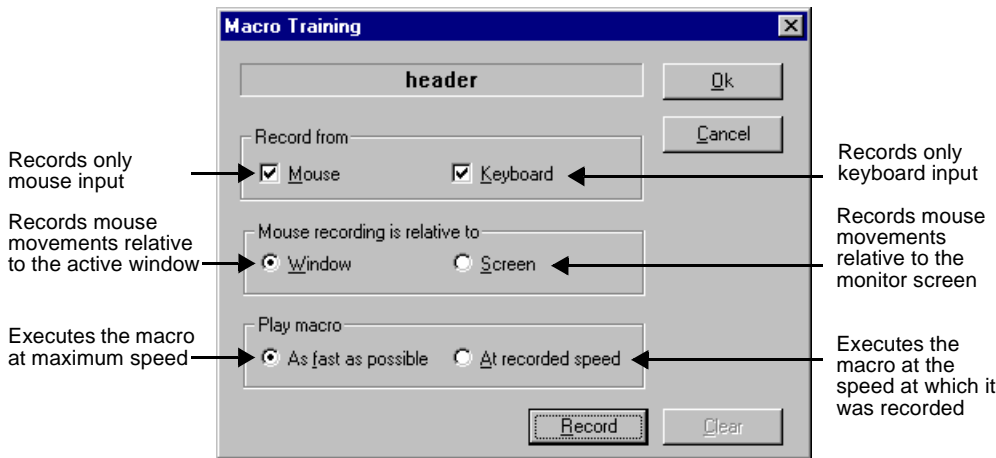
Example:

```
system "page down", 4
```

Macro commands

You may add, delete or train macros. Macros that you have created and trained are available to all other commands. Therefore their names must be unique.

```
macro "My name and address"
```



To create a new macro in the **ScriptEditor** dialog box, select the **macro** folder in the **Commands** window, and then click the **Add** button.

You train macros in exactly the same manner as training macros in the **Action Training** dialog box. See the section, “The Macro Tab Page”, on page 51 for more details.



*Once a macro has been trained, it will be available for you to use whenever you are creating MiniScript. Just look under the **macro** folder in the **Commands** window of the **ScriptEditor** dialog box.*

TextAssist commands

TextAssist commands can automatically start TextAssist to read an open document aloud. If you want to include these commands within a MiniScript, make sure that you have opened the right document before launching

TextAssist. If not, TextAssist will start to read a text from the currently active application.

There are four TextAssist commands that are available in the ScriptEditor:

- TextAssist “start”: TextAssist is started and begins to read the currently opened document.
- TextAssist “pause”: Reading is paused. To restart it, you have to use the TextAssist resume command later in the MiniScript.
- TextAssist “resume”: TextAssist continues reading from where it paused.
- TextAssist “stop”: TextAssist stops reading.

Mouse commands

For these commands you need to specify two parameters: the mouse button and the animation. You can either type the mouse command directly in the **MiniScript** window or drag it from the **mouse** folder and select the parameter in the **Mouse Parameter Editor**:



There are four mouse commands that are available in the ScriptEditor.

The mouse command allows you to perform four mouse button actions:

1. Has the effect of clicking and holding down the mouse button.
`mouse buttondown, <button name>, <animation>`
2. Releases the previously held down mouse button (reverses the “mouse buttondown” command).
`mouse buttonup, <button name>, <animation>`
3. Executes a double-click with the mouse.
`mouse doubleclick, <button name>, <animation>`
4. Executes a mouse click.
`mouse buttonclick, <button name>, <animation>`

Mouse command parameters

`<button name>`

Means the mouse button that executes the action. It can be MB_LEFT, MB_CENTER, or MB_RIGHT. You can select it from the drop-down list in the **Mouse Parameter Editor** or type directly in the edit window.

`<animation>`

This parameter can be either **TRUE** (with animation), or **FALSE** (without animation). In the **Mouse Parameter Editor** you just select or clear the check box.

Example:

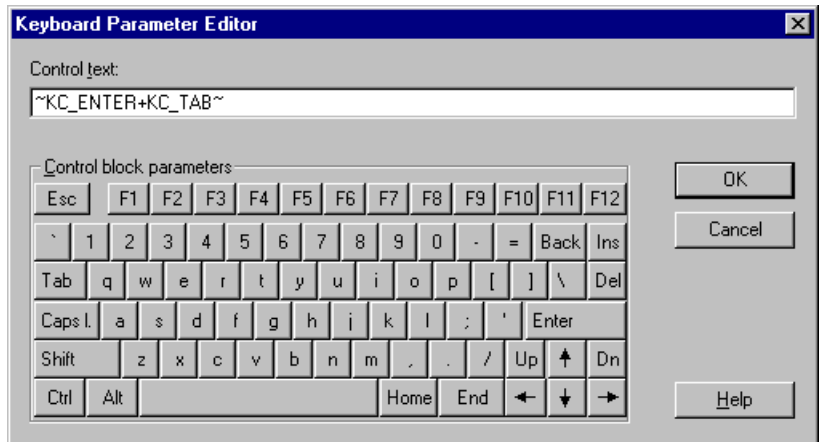
```
mouse buttonclick,MB_LEFT,TRUE
```

Keyboard commands

Keyboard commands allows you to execute a sequence of keyboard actions in a single command. This line of code contains the command type and parameter:

```
keyboard type,"~KC_ENTER+KC_TAB~"
```

Click on the **Keyboard** folder, drag the **type** icon to the **MiniScript** window and the **Keyboard Parameter Editor** will be displayed. You can either type in the **Control text** edit field, or click the keyboard buttons in this dialog box. If you want to insert capital letters or symbols that are **SHIFT** key combinations, simply click on the **SHIFT** button and then the other character button. For example, if you want to insert the **@** symbol, click the **SHIFT** button, then **2**. The example below will insert a new line and a tab.



You can type the **keyboard** script command directly in the **MiniScript** window, but carefully observe where to include the tilde and quotation marks.

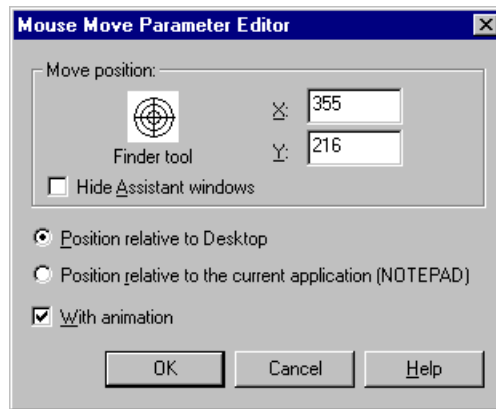
Example:

```
keyboard type,"~KC_ENTER+KC_TAB~"
```

Mouse move commands

Using the **mousemove** command you can move the cursor on the screen to a specified point. Drag the command into the script editor to display the **Mouse Move Parameter Editor** dialog box. Click and hold the left mouse button on the **Finder tool** and drag it on the screen wherever you want it to be moved. The coordinates will dynamically change while you are moving the **Finder**

tool. If you don't want the Assistant windows to be displayed while you are dragging the tool, select **Hide Assistant windows**.



Select or clear the **With animation** check box according to your preference. When this box is checked, Prody Parrot will participate in the specified action. For example, if the action is to move an icon with the mouse, then Prody Parrot will grab the icon with his beak, and move the icons himself. Select **Position relative to Desktop** if you want the coordinates set relative to the Windows desktop or **Position relative to the current application** if you want the cursor moved within the application.

Mouse move command parameters

If you want to type the commands directly into the ScriptEditor, you will have to specify four parameters:

```
mousemove to X,Y,<position>,<animation>
```

X and Y

These have to be integers, and specify the coordinates of the point you want to move the mouse cursor.

<position>

It may be TRUE if you want to move relative to the desktop, or FALSE if you want the move relative to the current application.

<animation>

Should be TRUE if you want to enable animation, FALSE if you want to disable it.

Example:

```
mousemove to 545,30,FALSE,FALSE
```

Menu commands

The menu items of the active window are available to use, but not to train. When using these commands from the list, you need to make sure that the application you wish to control via the script is open. Only the active application menu commands are available.

Example:

```
menu "Print "
```

Control commands

If a dialog box is opened in the active application, under this list all the controls (buttons, lists, combo boxes, etc.) become available. Dragging them into the MiniScript has the effect of clicking them.

Example:

```
control "OK "
```

Action commands

These commands refer to the activity you want your Assistant to perform, while he is executing the MiniScript. For example, after Prody Parrot opened an application, dragged the mouse or performed some other tasks, he can look tired, or can show his interest while you are writing a letter. Select the action that you want Prody Parrot to perform and drag it from the **Commands** window the **MiniScript** window. Optionally, you can specify the number of repetitions, the action should be performed.

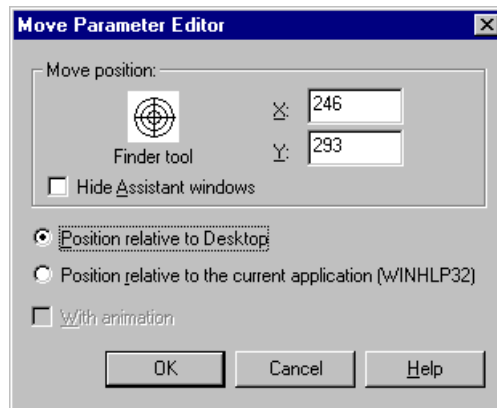
Example:

```
action jump, 3
```

Move commands

You can command Prody Parrot to move from one point of the screen to other with a selected speed. Expand the **move** folder in the **Commands** window and drag the command you want. The **Move Parameter Editor** will appear. Click and hold the **Finder tool** and drag it to the point you want Prody Parrot to move to. The coordinates will dynamically change while you are moving the **Finder**

tool. If you don't want the Assistant windows to be displayed while you are dragging the tool, select **Hide Assistant windows**.



Select **Position relative to Desktop** if you want Prody Parrot to move relative to the desktop, or **Position relative to the current application** if you want Prody Parrot to move in the application window.

There are three commands you can select:

1. Prody Parrot walks to the specified point
`move_slow`
2. Prody Parrot hovers to the specified point.
`move_normal`
3. Prody Parrot flies to the specified point.
`move_fast`

Move command parameters

`<X>, <Y>`

These parameters have to be integers, and specify the coordinates of the point you want to move the mouse cursor.

`<position>`

It may be `TRUE` if you want to move relative to the Desktop, `FALSE` if you want the move relative to the current application.

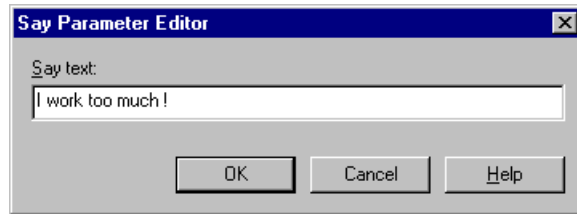
Example:

```
move move_slow,774,554,TRUE
```

Say commands

The **say** command will cause the Assistant character to say the string specified in the parameter. Expand the **say** folder, and drag the **text** file to the MiniScript

window to display the **Say Parameter Editor** dialog box. You simply type the text you want Prody Parrot to say into the **Say Parameter Editor** dialog box.



The **Say** command has an optional parameter, TRUE by default. This means that Prody Parrot first finishes saying the text you specified, and then performs the next action. If you give to this parameter the FALSE value, Prody Parrot will perform the next action while he is saying the text.

Example:

```
say text "I work too much!"
```

Sample MiniScript

Let's presume that you have previously recorded three macros:

1. "Hello": recorded from the keyboard types the word "Hello world!".
2. "Sign": recorded from the keyboard types the word "Prody".
3. "Test": recorded from the keyboard types the word "Test".

The sample script:

```
Launch "notepad.exe"
wait 2000
macro "Hello"
keyboard type,"~KC_ENTER+KC_TAB~"
macro "Sign"
TextAssist "start"
menu "File|Save As..."
control "Edit1"
macro "Test"
mousemove to 545,-30,FALSE,TRUE
mouse buttonclick,MB_LEFT,TRUE
system "close"
action tired
move move_slow,774,554,TRUE
say text,"I work too much"
```

The line-by-line explanation of the above code:

Starts the Notepad application.

Waits two seconds.

Types "Hello world!".

Insert a new line and a tab at the begin of the new line.

Types the word "Prody".

Starts TextAssist and reads "Hello world! Prody".

Opens the File menu and the Save As dialog box.

Position the cursor on the File name edit field.

Type "Test" in the edit filed.

Prody Parrot moves the mouse arrow on the Save button.

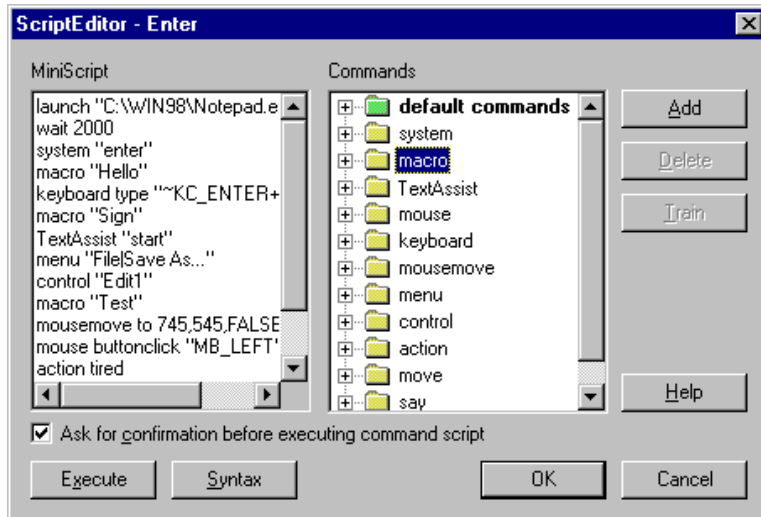
Prody Parrot clicks on the Save button to save the file.

Close Notepad.

Prody Parrot acts tired.

Prody Parrot walks slowly to the right bottom corner of the screen.

Prody Parrot says "I work too much".



Note

It is important to note that a command must fit on a single line, since the script engine can only parse commands on a single line.

Chapter 7: Your Intelligent Assistant

Prody Parrot is your Intelligent Assistant. Sometimes he will act autonomously on your behalf, reminding you about your meeting schedule, warning you of unexpected events on the stock market, checking your mailbox for new e-mail messages, and connecting you with other Prody Parrot 2.0 or Zymo the Alien 2.0 users with his built-in Prodyphone. He can also retrieve news, sports, and weather information for you, and enable you to navigate the Web by voice. This chapter provides detailed instructions for using each of Prody Parrot's Intelligent Assistant functions, and describes how to configure Prody Parrot to start the Assistant Services automatically.

Retrieving Information and Navigating the Web

Prody Parrot can retrieve news, sports, weather, and stock market information from the Internet and read it to you or show it to you in your web browser. Additionally, if you have version 4.0 or higher of Internet Explorer, Prody Parrot can take you from site to site on the Web following your voice commands.

Getting Prody Parrot to Retrieve Information

To make Prody Parrot retrieve information for you:

1. Issue the command "Get information".
2. Depending upon what type of information you would like Prody Parrot to retrieve, issue the command "News headlines", "Sports scores", or "Weather forecast". (Retrieving stock quotes is covered later in the section "Monitoring Stocks with the Help of Your Assistant".) Prody Parrot will ask you to wait while he establishes a connection to the Internet via your regular method (modem, T1, etc.).
3. If you requested news headlines, Prody Parrot will offer you a list of subject categories to choose from. If you requested a weather forecast, he will offer you a list of major cities to choose from. For sports scores, he will offer you selected current games to choose from. You can continue obtaining the information you need by answering Prody Parrot's questions, or, for weather and news information, by using the following commands:

| Weather Forecast | | | News Headlines | |
|------------------|------|--|--------------------------|---|
| Default Choices | City | Chicago Denver London New York San Francisco | Default Category Choices | breaking news sports politics business health technology world news |

| Weather Forecast | | News Headlines | |
|---------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| Information Choices | yes (to see more info.) no (to not see more info.) | Information Choices | repeat headline read summary see full story read next headline change category |



Because sporting events vary by season, the default team choices that Prody Parrot will offer you vary as well, and so are not listed here.

4. When you are done getting information, issue the command “end conversation”.

Customizing Information Retrieval

Prody Parrot uses the general My Yahoo!™ web site to retrieve news, sports, and weather information for you. You can customize the cities and sports teams for which Prody Parrot can retrieve information by registering as a My Yahoo! user and specifying your personal preferences or, if you are already a registered My Yahoo! user, by editing your front page.

To customize the information retrieval function:

1. Open your Internet browser and go to <http://my.yahoo.com>.
2. If you do not already have a free My Yahoo! account, set one up following the online instructions.
3. Click the **Remember my ID & password** check box to select it.
4. Edit the Scoreboard and Weather portfolios on your My Yahoo! front page to include your favorite sports teams and cities.
5. Close your Internet browser.



*Please note that it is very important to select the **Remember my ID & password** option. Otherwise, Prody Parrot may not offer you the appropriate information.*

Navigating the Web by Voice

Using Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher, Prody Parrot can enable you to navigate from site to site on the Web by voice. With the **Voice Input** button depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**, simply open the browser and say the name of any hyperlink on the currently loaded Web page, and Prody Parrot will take you to the corresponding Web page. Once that page is fully loaded, you can say the name of any hyperlink there to go to its corresponding Web page, and so on.



*Although Prody Parrot can understand and execute hyperlinks when you say them, he is not currently able to type a web site address or URL that you say in the **Address** text box and take you to that site. He can, however, be trained to do this for specific web sites you visit frequently. Follow the instructions in “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs” and “Chapter 6: Training Actions” to create a new command and train Prody Parrot to open a particular web site when you issue that command.*

Monitoring Stocks with the Help of Your Assistant

Using StockWatcher, your Assistant can monitor the performance of stocks for you, and provide you with information and alerts. StockWatcher gathers stock data from popular web sites on the Internet and works in tandem with your Assistant to keep you informed of changes in the value of stocks that you specify. StockWatcher also provides you with links to useful related information on the Internet.




StockWatcher is an add-on service of Prody Parrot and it may not be included in the package you installed. This and other add-on services may be purchased separately by visiting the Mindmaker web site at <http://www.mindmaker.hu>.

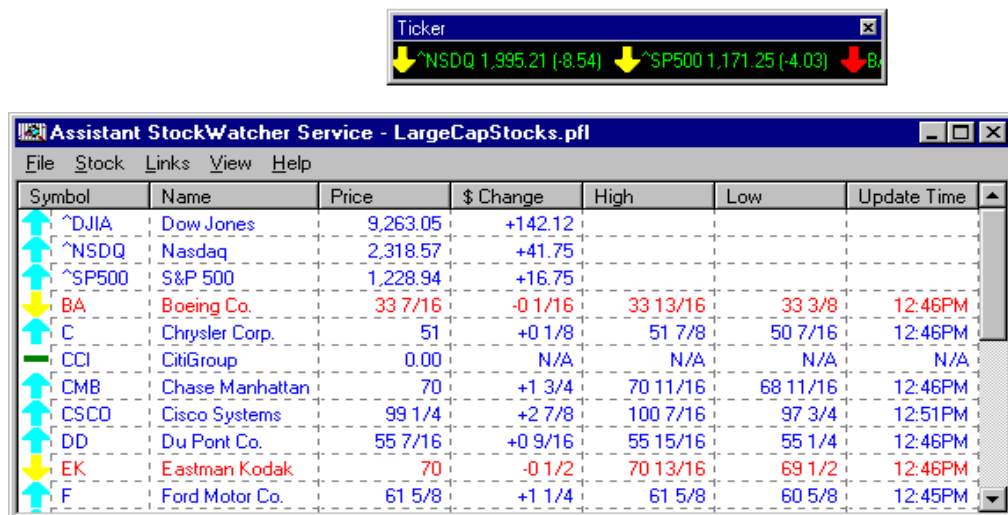
Getting Started with StockWatcher

StockWatcher is automatically installed as part of your Intelligent Assistant package. If you have not configured your Assistant to start StockWatcher automatically, as described in the section “Starting the Assistant Services Automatically” on page 117, you can ask him to open the program at any time by issuing simple commands.

To start StockWatcher:

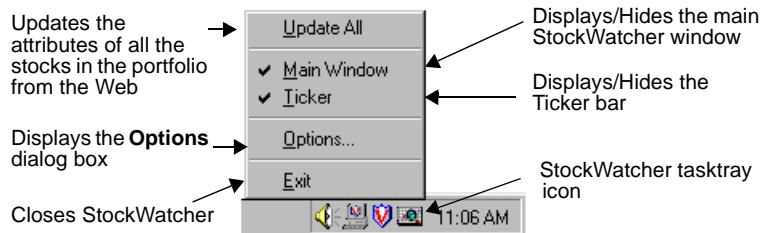
With your Assistant running, issue the command “Get Information”. Then say “Stock quotes”. After a brief delay, the **StockWatcher** icon  will appear on the Windows tasktray, in the lower right corner of your desktop, and the **Assistant StockWatcher Service** main window and **Ticker** bar will be

displayed on your desktop. The features and functions of the **Ticker** bar and main window will be described in detail in later sections.



Tasktray Icon and Menu

The **StockWatcher** tasktray icon provides a convenient means of accessing the features and functions of StockWatcher. To view the menu commands that are available, right-click the **StockWatcher** tasktray icon.



Configuring StockWatcher

As you can see in the main window and on the **Ticker** bar, a "Large Capital Stocks" portfolio appears the first time you open StockWatcher. A portfolio is a file containing certain stocks, stock properties, and monitoring preferences. For your convenience, two pre-configured stock portfolios are included with StockWatcher, the "Large Capital Stocks" portfolio and a "Technology Stocks" portfolio. It is also possible—and easy—to create your own custom stock portfolio.

To create a new portfolio:

1. In the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window, click the **File** menu and select **New**. An empty, untitled portfolio (**Untitled.pfl**) will be created.

2. You will need to know the ticker symbol for each of the stocks you would like to have monitored. If you are not sure of a symbol for a particular stock, click the **Links** menu in the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window and select **Symbol Lookup**. Otherwise, go to the next step.
3. Once you've obtained the ticker symbol for each of the stocks you would like to add to your portfolio, click the **Stock** menu in the **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window and select **Add**. A new stock entry will appear.



4. Enter the symbol for the stock you would like to add and press ENTER. For example, to add Yahoo! to the portfolio, you would enter "YHOO". The stock name and relevant information will appear in the main window.



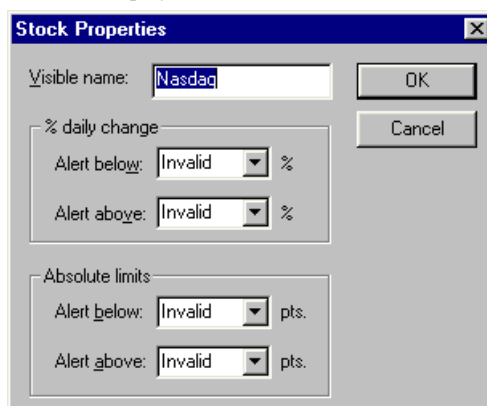
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 for each of the stocks you would like to add.
6. Click the **File** menu, then select **Save**.

7. Enter a file name (*.pfl) for your portfolio and press ENTER or click the **Save** button.

By creating a portfolio, as described above, you can monitor the stocks you entered by watching their movement in the **Ticker** bar. (If the **Ticker** bar is not visible on your desktop, click the **View** menu and select **Ticker**.) If, however, you would also like for your Assistant to notify you of significant changes in the values of the stocks in your portfolio or summarize your portfolio value, you need to specify additional properties for each of your stocks, such as the values at which you would like to be alerted, how many shares you own, and at what price you purchased the shares. This is all done through the **Properties** dialog box.

To specify stock properties:

1. In the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window, select the stock for which you would like to specify properties. The stock will be highlighted.
2. Click the **Stock** menu and select **Properties....** The **Stock Properties** dialog box will be displayed.



3. In the **% daily change** group box, enter the percent change in value at which you would like your Assistant to notify you for this stock. The percent change is based on the opening value of the stock on the current day.
4. In the **Absolute limits** group box, enter the value at which you would like your assistant to alert you for this stock. As shown above, you may enter the **Alert below** and **Alert above** values in either fraction or decimal form.
5. In the **Investment** group box, enter the number of shares purchased and the purchase price per share. These values are used to calculate cumulative figures, such as total gain/loss, for the stock. You can use comma delimiters if you are entering values greater than 1,000. You can enter the purchase price in fractional or decimal format.
6. Click **OK**.

Basic Procedures and Displays

To edit a stock in a portfolio:

1. Click the stock in the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window to select it.
2. Click the **Stock** menu, and select **Edit**.
3. Edit the stock symbol, and press ENTER.

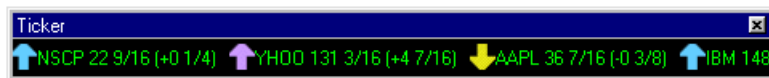
To remove a stock from a portfolio:

1. Click the stock in the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window to select it.
2. Click the **Stock** menu, and select **Remove**.

Once you've created a portfolio and specified properties for each of the stocks, your Assistant will, by default, notify you verbally of any changes that exceed the threshold values you've specified. Additionally, when StockWatcher is running, you can ask your Assistant to summarize the value of your portfolio by issuing the command "Read Summary". Of course, there is also a lot of information available at a glance from the **Ticker** bar and main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window. Descriptions of how the **Ticker** bar and main window work, as well as instructions for how you can customized them, follow.

Ticker bar


The **Ticker** bar provides a convenient way to monitor the essentials of a stock without going into detail, and occupies minimal space on the desktop. The **Ticker** bar is a floating or docked toolbar that displays the attributes of stocks from the current portfolio, and continuously scrolls text horizontally from right to left. For each of the stocks in the current portfolio, the **Ticker** bar displays the stock symbol, price, daily change and an upward or downward arrow indicating an increase or decrease in value.



The color of the arrow depends on the percentage daily change in the price of the stock. The following table gives the meaning of the colors used.

| Color | Percent change from previous day's closing price |
|-------------|--|
| Crimson Red | Below -10% |
| Dark Orange | -10% to -5% |
| Light Brown | -5% to -3% |

| Color | Percent change from previous day's closing price |
|-----------------|--|
| Greenish Yellow | 0 to -3% |
| Green | 0 |
| Light Blue | 0 to +3% |
| Light Violet | +5% to +3% |
| Dark Violet | +10% to +5% |
| Deep Blue | Above +10% |

For your convenience, the **Ticker** bar can be resized to any length, and can be dragged to any location on the desktop. If you drag it to the top or bottom of the desktop, it docks to the corresponding edge. If you do not want to view the **Ticker** bar, you can hide it either by clicking the  in the upper right corner of the bar, clicking the **View** menu in the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window and selecting **Ticker**, or by right-clicking the tasktray icon and selecting **Ticker**.

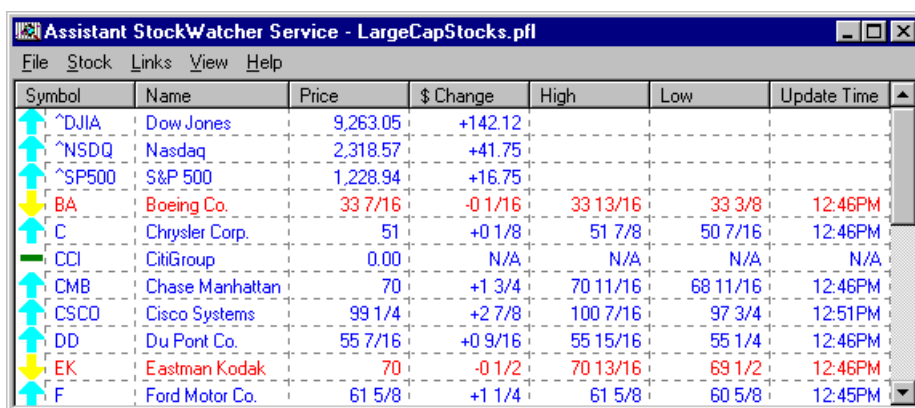
When the **Ticker** bar is docked, you can activate auto hide, making it visible only when your cursor is placed at the edge where it is docked. Do this by right-clicking the **Ticker** bar and selecting **Auto Hide**.

The scrolling speed, text and background colors, and numeric format are customizable from the **Options** dialog box. See the section “Adjusting Optional Parameters” on page 77 later in this chapter for instructions.

Main window

The main window displays various attributes of the stocks from the open portfolio. By default, the ticker symbol, name, price, amount of change in dollars, high, low, and update time are displayed, as shown in the following

picture. Many other attributes are available; instructions for selecting them are found in a later section.



| Symbol | Name | Price | \$ Change | High | Low | Update Time |
|--------|-----------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| ^DJIA | Dow Jones | 9,263.05 | +142.12 | | | |
| ^NSDQ | Nasdaq | 2,318.57 | +41.75 | | | |
| ^SP500 | S&P 500 | 1,228.94 | +16.75 | | | |
| BA | Boeing Co. | 33 7/16 | -0 1/16 | 33 13/16 | 33 3/8 | 12:46PM |
| C | Chrysler Corp. | 51 | +0 1/8 | 51 7/8 | 50 7/16 | 12:46PM |
| CCI | CitiGroup | 0.00 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| CMB | Chase Manhattan | 70 | +1 3/4 | 70 11/16 | 68 11/16 | 12:46PM |
| CSCO | Cisco Systems | 99 1/4 | +2 7/8 | 100 7/16 | 97 3/4 | 12:51PM |
| DD | Du Pont Co. | 55 7/16 | +0 9/16 | 55 15/16 | 55 1/4 | 12:46PM |
| EK | Eastman Kodak | 70 | -0 1/2 | 70 13/16 | 69 1/2 | 12:46PM |
| F | Ford Motor Co. | 61 5/8 | +1 1/4 | 61 5/8 | 60 5/8 | 12:45PM |

The stocks can be sorted based on any of the column attributes by clicking on the corresponding column header. Clicking once on a column header sorts the stocks in ascending order, and clicking thereafter on the same column switches the sort order between descending and ascending.

Obtaining Stock and Portfolio Information

The **Ticker** bar and main **StockWatcher** window make it easy to monitor the stocks in your portfolio. If, however, you do not wish to display either of these on your desktop, you can ask your Assistant for a specific stock quote, quotes on all of the stocks in your portfolio, or even a summary of your portfolio value at any time by issuing simple commands. Remember, **StockWatcher** must be running—although the main window and **Ticker** bar may be minimized—in order for your Assistant to access your portfolio information.

To get a stock quote:

Issue the command “Get quote”. Then, when your Assistant asks, tell him which stock you would like a quote for. You can obtain more details on that or another stock by answering your Assistant’s questions. Otherwise, say “Stop”.

To hear brief quotes:

Issue the command “Read Brief Quotes”, or click the **Stocks** menu and select **Read Brief Quotes**. Your Assistant will read to you the company name, change in price in dollars, and current price in dollars of all stocks in the current portfolio.

To view brief quotes:

If the main **StockWatcher** window is minimized, you can bring it into view by double-clicking the taskbar icon or by issuing the command “Show stocks”.

To hear detailed quotes:

Issue the command “Read Detailed Quotes”, or click the **Stocks** menu and select **Read Detailed Quotes**. Your Assistant will read to you all attributes you've selected for all stocks in the current portfolio. You can select which attributes you would like to have read when you issue this command from the **Fields** tab page of the **Options** dialog box. See the following section “To select what fields are included in detailed quotes:” for instructions.

To update the information for a particular stock:

1. Click the stock in the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window to select it.
2. Click the **View** menu and click **Update Selected**.

To update the information for all stocks:

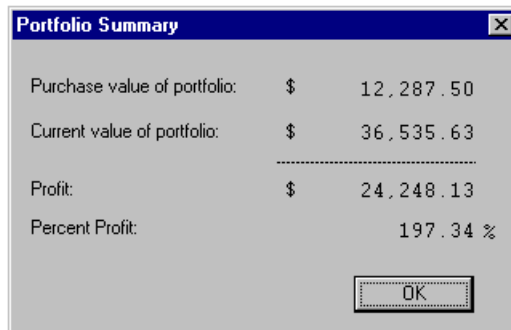
In the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window, click the **View** menu and select **Update All**.

To hear a summary of your portfolio:

Issue the command “Read Portfolio Summary”, or click the **Stocks** menu and select **Read Portfolio Summary**. Your Assistant will read to you the total purchase value, total current value, total profit or loss, and percent profit or loss for the current portfolio.

To view a summary of your portfolio:

Issue the command “Display Summary”, or click the **Stocks** menu and select **Display Summary**. The Portfolio Summary dialog box containing the total purchase value, total current value, total profit or loss, and percent profit or loss for the current portfolio will be displayed.



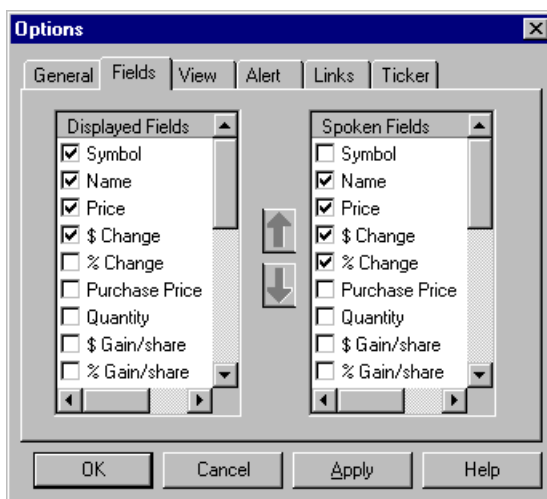
This dialog box summarizes/analyzes your entire portfolio as a whole. The valid stocks in the current portfolio—those ones for which you have entered the number of stocks purchased and the purchase price from the **Stock Properties** dialog box—are used to compute the summary.

Adjusting Optional Parameters

The **Options** dialog box can be used to customize user preferences and application settings. All options selected are restored when the application is restarted.

To select what fields are displayed in the main window:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options....** The **Options** dialog box will be displayed.



2. On the **Fields** tab page, click the check boxes to select the fields you would like to be visible in the main window. Clear the check boxes of those fields you do not wish to see or hear. (For a description of the fields, see the following table.)
3. Click **Apply** and **OK**.

The following table provides a brief description of the various fields.

| Field Name | Description |
|----------------|--|
| Symbol | The symbol used to refer to the stock. |
| Name | The Name of the company referred to by the symbol. |
| Price | The current dollar price. |
| \$ Change | The change in dollar price since the beginning of the day. |
| % Change | The percentage change in price since the beginning of the day. |
| Purchase Price | The price of purchase per stock, in dollars. |
| Quantity | The number of stocks purchased. |

| Field Name | Description |
|---------------|--|
| \$ Gain/share | The gain or loss in price per stock, in dollars. This is the difference between current price and purchase price. |
| % Gain/share | The percentage gain or loss in the stock. This is \$ Gain/share divided by the Purchase price, calculated as a percentage. |
| \$ Gain | This is the total gain or loss in investing in the stock. It is the product of \$ Gain/share and Quantity. |
| High | The highest price of the stock since the beginning of the day. |
| Low | The lowest price of the stock since the beginning of the day. |
| Prev. Close | The closing price of the stock on the previous day traded. |
| Volume | The number of stocks traded that day. |
| Update Time | The time* of last update. |
| Bid | The bidding price in dollars. |
| Ask | The asking price in dollars. |
| EPS | Earnings per share in dollars for the latest available period. |
| Market Cap. | Market Capitalization in Millions(M) or Billions(B) of dollars. |
| P/E | Profit to Earnings Ratio. |
| 52 Week High | The highest price of the stock in the past 52 week period. |
| 52 Week Low | The lowest price of the stock in the past 52 week period. |

*All times are United States Eastern Standard Time or Eastern Daylight Time, as applicable.



Note that, depending on the source of information, some of these fields may not be available.

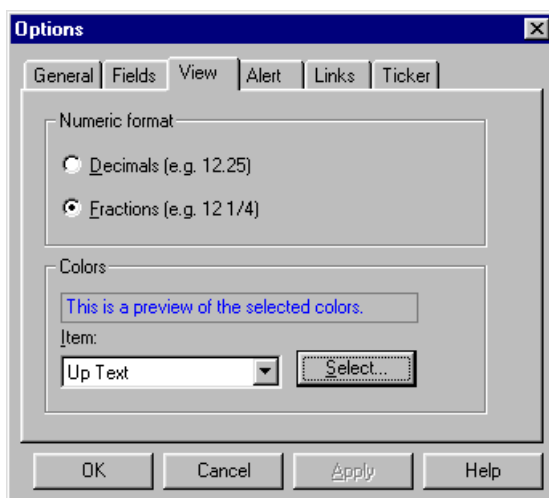
To select what fields are included in detailed quotes:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options...** The **Options** dialog box will be displayed.

2. On the **Fields** tab page, click the check boxes to select the fields you would like to be read to you by your Assistant when you issue the command “Read detailed quotes”. Clear the check boxes of those fields you do not wish to hear. (For a description of the fields, see the previous table.)
3. Click **Apply** or **OK**.

To specify how fields are displayed in the main window:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options...**. The **Options** dialog box will be displayed.
2. Select the **View** tab page.

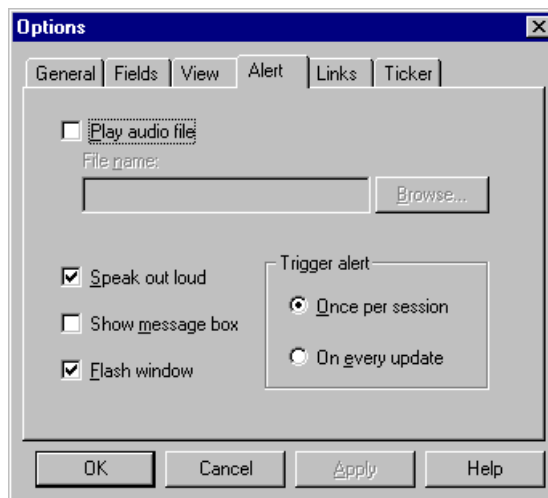


3. In the **Numeric format** group box, select the format—**Decimals** or **Fractions**—in which you would like dollar amounts to be displayed in the main window and **Ticker** bar.
4. Use the **Item** drop down list box and adjacent **Select...** button to select the color of certain items in the main window and **Ticker** bar. The **Preview** window displays a preview of the item selected in the **Item** box.
5. Click **Apply** and **OK**.

To specify how you are alerted of stock value changes:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options...**. The **Options** dialog box will be displayed.

2. Select the **Alert** tab page.

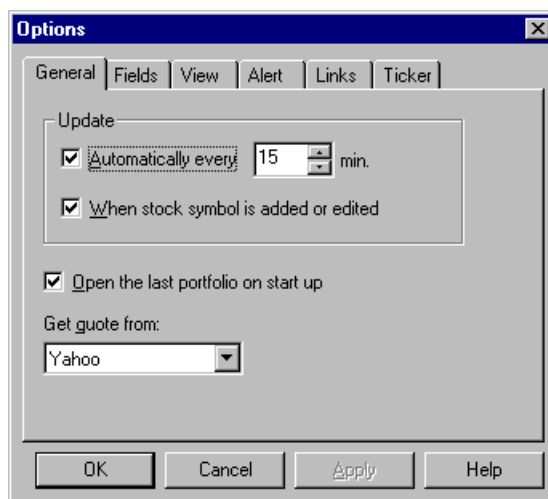


3. Click the **Play audio file** check box to select it if you would like for an audio file to be played when stocks in your portfolio reach an alert state (based on the level you specified in the **Stock Properties** dialog box). Enter the name of the file in the **File name** text box, or use the **Browse...** button to browse for a file.
4. The **Speak out loud** check box is selected by default so that your Assistant will alert you verbally. To deactivate this, click the check box to clear it.
5. Click the **Show message box** check box to select it if you would like a message box to be shown if any of your stocks reach alert state.
6. The **Flash window** check box is selected by default so the main **Assistant StockWatcher Service** window will flash when a stock reaches the alert state. To deactivate this, click the check box to clear it.
7. In the **Trigger alert** group box, select **Once per session** if you would like for alert messages to be displayed or read out only once after a stock has reached the alert state. Select **On every update** if you would like alert messages to be displayed or read out every time StockWatcher is updated until the alert values are reset from the **Stock Properties** dialog box.
8. Click **Apply** and **OK**.

To set general update options:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options...**. The **Options** dialog box will be displayed.

2. Select the **General** tab page.



3. If the **Update** group box, the **Automatically every 15 min.** check box is selected by default; so that StockWatcher updates automatically every 15 minutes. To deactivate automatic updating, click the check box to clear it. Since most stock information is updated every 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the source, it may not be helpful to make the update value less than 15 or 20.

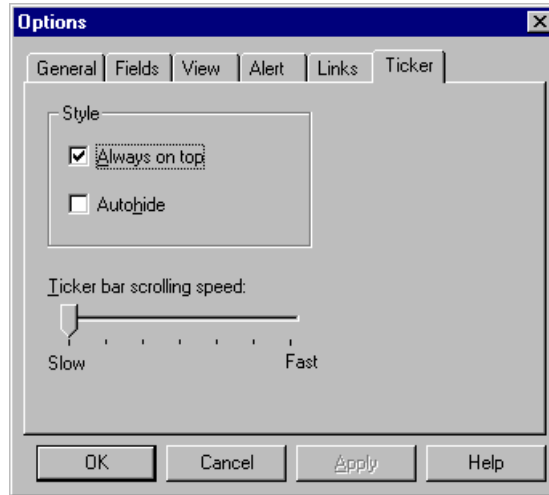
If the **When stock symbol is added or edited** check box is selected, the attributes for a stock will be updated as soon as a symbol is added or edited.

If the **Open the last portfolio on start up** check box is selected, whichever portfolio you had open before closing StockWatcher will automatically be open next time you start the application.

4. If desired, you can use the **Get quote from** drop down list box to change the source from which the stock data is retrieved. Not all stock attributes may be available in all the sources.

To configure the Ticker bar:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options....** The **Options** dialog box will be displayed. Select the **Ticker** tab page.

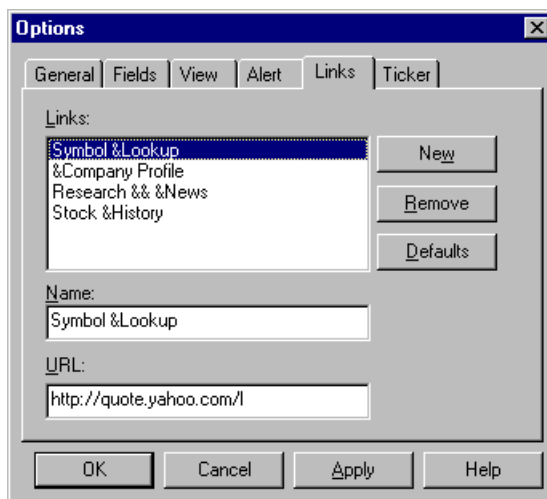


2. In the **Style** group box, the **Always on top** check box is selected by default so that the **Ticker** bar will always be visible on your desktop. To deactivate this feature, click the check box to clear it.
3. Click the **Autohide** check box to hide the ticker bar when the cursor is not positioned over it.
4. Adjust the **Ticker** bar scrolling speed slider to set the speed at which text moves in the **Ticker** bar. Beware that the higher the scrolling speed, the greater the computational power used. On very slow machines, setting the scrolling speed to maximum may temporarily lock up the machine. In such cases reduce the scrolling speed to a more acceptable level.

To modify available links:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options....** The **Options** dialog box will be displayed.

2. Select the **Links** tab page.



3. To add a new link, click **New**. Then enter the name by which you would like to refer to the site in the **Name** text box, and enter the URL in the **URL** text box. For links that depend on a stock symbol, the stock symbol should be replaced by “%s” without the quotes in the URL field.
4. To remove an existing link, click the link to highlight it, then click **Remove**.
5. To remove all new links you've entered and restore only the default links that were pre-configured, click **Defaults**.
6. Click **Apply** and **OK**.



Please keep the following in mind when using StockWatcher:

- Since the data for stocks is retrieved from popular sites such as Yahoo! and CNNfn, and the data format at these sites may change at any time at the discretion of the respective web site, StockWatcher may stop functioning or function improperly under such circumstances. If there is a problem with any of these sites, you can switch to another source from the **General** tab page of the **Options** dialog box.
 - All quotes are delayed by 15 to 20 minutes depending on how often they are updated at the source web site and how often you decide to update the quotes on your machine.
-

Staying on Schedule with Your Assistant

Working with Scheduler, your Assistant can help you keep track of meetings, appointments, tasks, and more. Scheduler provides the functionality of a basic scheduler. Your Assistant monitors your schedule and provides optional verbal reminders of upcoming deadlines and commitments.



You can employ Scheduler to make Prody Parrot remember and announce important reminders such as birthdays and anniversaries. The body of the reminder is spoken by Prody Parrot so that you can make him say whatever you like.


Getting Started with Scheduler

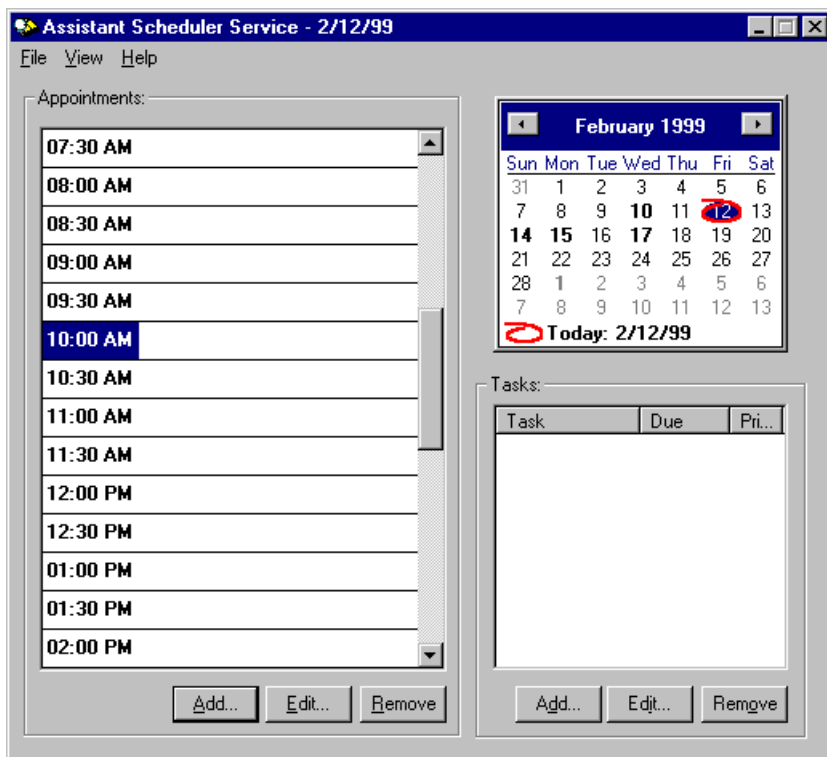
Scheduler is automatically installed as part of your Intelligent Assistant package. If you have not configured your Assistant to start Scheduler automatically, as described in the section “Starting the Assistant Services Automatically” on page 117, you can ask him to open the program at any time by issuing simple commands.



Scheduler is an add-on service of Prody Parrot and it may not be included in the package you installed. This and other add-on services may be purchased separately by visiting the Mindmaker web site at <http://www.mindmaker.hu>.

To start the Scheduler:

1. With your Assistant running, issue the command “Check my schedule”.
2. After a brief delay, the **Scheduler** icon  will appear on the Windows tasktray, and the main **Assistant Scheduler Service** window will appear on your desktop.



Configuring Scheduler

When you start Scheduler for the first time, you will probably want to spend a few moments configuring the program for your personal needs and preferences. You can set the time that your day starts, how you would like to be reminded of tasks and appointments, and several other parameters. Brief instructions for configuring Scheduler are described in the following sections. More detailed explanations of each of the parameters can be found in later sections.

To configure Scheduler:

1. From the **Assistant Scheduler Service** window, click **View**, then select **Options...** to display the **Options** dialog box.

The screenshot shows the 'Options' dialog box with the following settings:

- Appointments:**
 - Start of day: 08:00 AM
 - Interval: 00:30
 - Default reminder: 00:00
 - Always set reminder: ☐
- Tasks:**
 - View: All tasks
 - Reminder time: 08:00 AM
 - Always enable reminder: ☐
- Reminders:**
 - Snooze time: 00:05
 - Popup message notification: ☒
 - Speech notification: ☒
- Collaborative scheduling:**
 - Check for appointment information every 3 minutes: ☒

2. In the **Appointments** group box, use the **Start of day** drop down list box to specify the hours you would like to be displayed by Scheduler. Use the **Interval** list box to select how you would like your day to be divided. Use the **Default reminder** list box to specify how far in advance you would like to be reminded of appointments by default. And, click the **Always set reminder** check box to select it if you would like to activate that option for appointments.
3. In the **Tasks** group box, use the **View** drop down list box to select how you would like your tasks to be displayed. It is recommended that you leave the default setting, **All tasks**. Use the **Reminder time** spin box to specify what time of day you would like to be reminded of task deadlines by default. And, click the **Always enable reminder** check box to select it if you would like to activate that option for tasks.
4. In the **Reminders** group box, use the **Snooze time** spin box to specify how long Scheduler waits between reminders. By default, a message box is displayed and your Assistant reminds you verbally of upcoming appointments and task deadlines. To disable either of these options, click the **Popup message notification** or **Speech notification** check box to clear it.

Basic Procedures

5. Select the **Check for appointment information every** check box, and specify the number of minutes. This option allows you to specify how often Scheduler checks if another Assistant user has included you as an attendee in any of his/her appointments.

The **Assistant Scheduler Service** window provides quick and easy access to all of your schedule information. It is easy to view a particular day and add, remove, edit, and view your appointments and tasks.

Scheduler data types

The Scheduler supports the following basic data types: appointments and tasks.

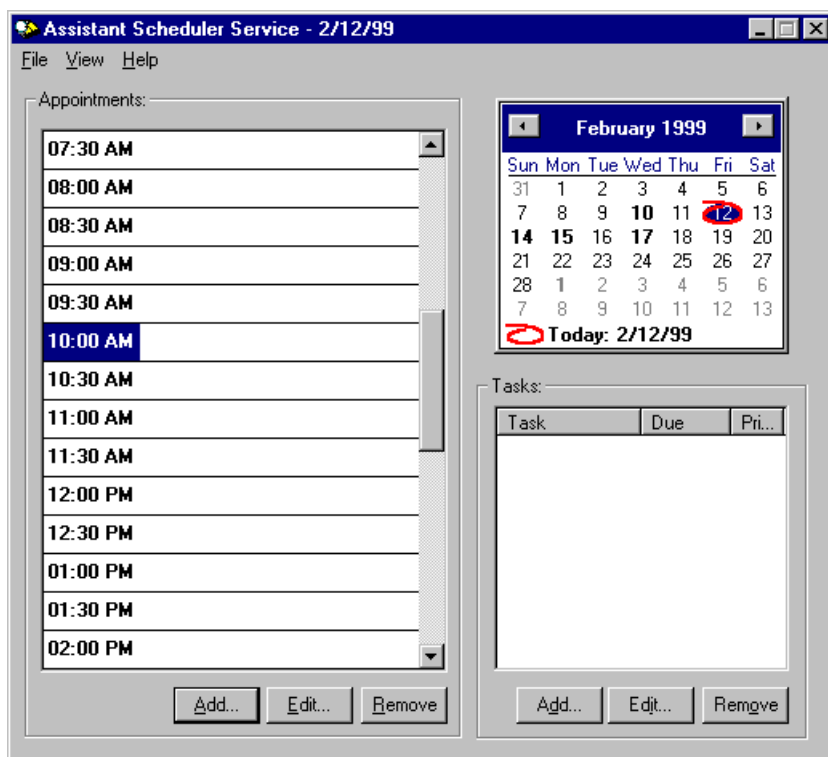
Appointments are schedule items that are associated with a date and time. Appointments can have notes associated with them. The user can set a reminder for an appointment and make it recurring (daily, every two weeks, etc.).

Tasks are “To Do” list type schedule items that are associated with a date. You can set a reminder for a task and mark it as active or completed.

Viewing schedule information

To view or enter schedule information for a particular day click the date on the monthly calendar in the upper right corner. Or, you can go to the present date by clicking on the circle marked **Today** at the bottom of the calendar. If necessary, you can select a month by clicking on the month in the title bar of the calendar and choosing it in the list that pops up; and select a year by clicking on the year in the title bar of the calendar and choosing it in the menu that pops up.

The appointments and tasks for the date you select will appear in main **Assistant Scheduler Service** window.



Appointments

To add an appointment:

1. Issue the command “Make an Appointment” to your Assistant. Alternatively, double-click on the appropriate time slot in the **Appointments** group box. Or, select the appropriate time slot by clicking

in it and then click the **Add...** button. The **Appointment** dialog box will be displayed.

Appointment

Description:
Communication Seminar

Time
Start: 2/12/99 10:00 PM
End: 2/12/99 04:00 AM

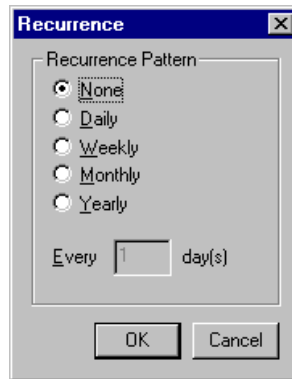
Reminder
☒ Set reminder for 30 minutes beforehand.

Notes:

Attendees... Recurrence... OK Cancel

2. In the **Description** text box, enter a description of the appointment.
3. Verify that the date and time are set correctly in the **Start** and **End** edit fields.
4. In the **Reminder** group box, click the **Set Reminder for** check box to select it if you would like to be reminded of the appointment. If so, specify how far in advance using the **beforehand** drop down list box.
5. In the **Notes** text box, enter any notes regarding the appointment.
6. If it is a recurring appointment, click the **Recurrence...** button. Otherwise, skip to step 8.

7. In the **Recurrence** dialog box, specify how often the appointment will occur.



Then click **OK** to return to the **Appointment** dialog box.

8. Click **OK** to save the appointment information you've entered and return to the main **Assistant Scheduler Service** window.

To edit an appointment:

1. Double-click the appointment in the **Appointments** group box, or select the appointment and click **Edit...** The **Appointment** dialog box will be displayed where you can edit the details of the appointment.
2. Click **OK** when done.

To remove an appointment:

1. Select the appointment in the **Appointments** group box.
2. Click **Remove**.

To schedule an appointment with another Assistant 2.0 user:

1. Issue the command "Make an Appointment" to your Assistant Alternatively, double-click the appropriate time in the **Appointments** group box. Or, click next to the appropriate time and click the **Add...** button. The **Appointment** dialog box will be displayed.
2. Click **Attendees...** to see a list of the Assistant users in your address book. (For instructions on creating an address book, refer to "Using the Prodyphone Address Book" on page 109.)
3. Select any number of users with whom you would like to schedule a meeting.
4. Complete the remaining appointment fields as usual. (See "To add an appointment:" on page 88.)

5. Click **OK**. Your Assistant will submit your “appointment request” to the other Assistant users you specified, and follow up with you if there are any scheduling conflicts.

Tasks

Tasks, or “things to do”, can be entered in the **Tasks** group box.

To add a task:

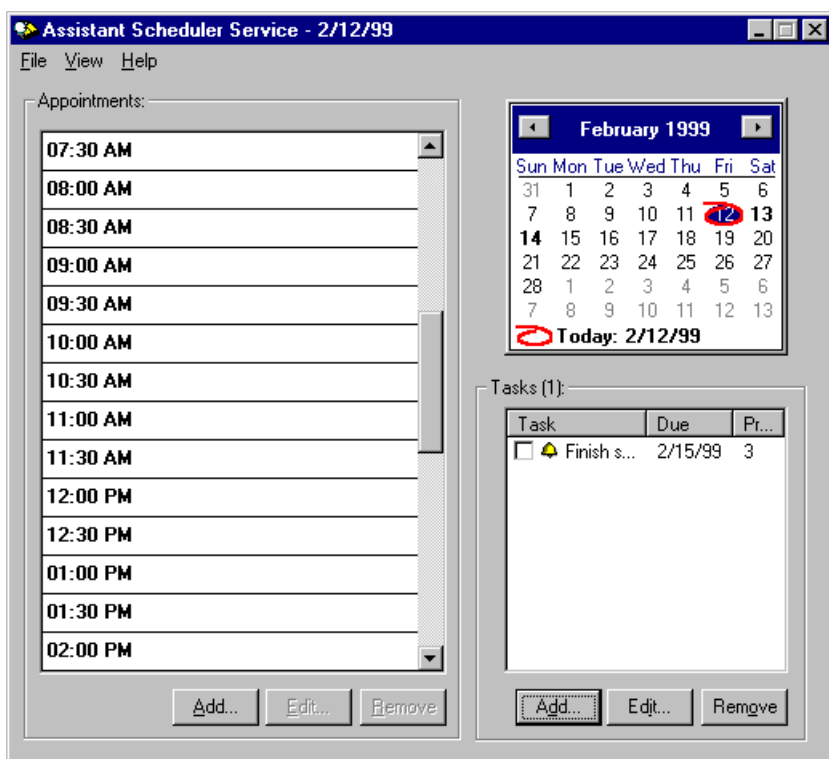
1. Double-click the empty space in the **Tasks** group box, in the lower left corner, or click there once then click **Add...** The **Task** dialog box appears.

The screenshot shows a 'Task' dialog box with the following fields and controls:

- Description:** A text box containing 'Finish sales report'.
- Due:** A dropdown menu showing '2/15/99'.
- Priority:** A dropdown menu showing '3'.
- Completed:** An unchecked checkbox.
- Reminder:** A section containing a checked checkbox labeled 'Set reminder for:', a date dropdown showing '2/15/99', and a time spinner showing '08:00 AM'.
- Notes:** A large empty text box at the bottom.
- Buttons:** 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons at the bottom right.

2. In the **Description** text box, enter a description of the task.
3. In the **Due** list box, enter the due date of the task.
4. In the **Reminder** group box, click the **Set reminder for** check box if you would like to be reminded of the task. If so, specify the date and time of the reminder.
5. In the **Notes** text box, enter any notes regarding the task.

6. Click **OK**. You will return to the **Assistant Scheduler Service** window and the task you entered will appear in the **Tasks** group box.



To mark a task as active/completed:

Click the check box at the left of the task to select or clear it. If the check box is clear, the task is considered active. If the check box is selected, the task is considered completed.

To edit a task:

1. In the **Tasks** group box select a task and click the **Edit...** button.
2. Edit the details of the task in the dialog box that appears.

To remove a task:

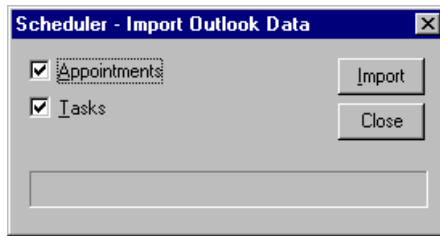
1. Select the task by clicking it; the selected task is highlighted. Note that you can select more than one task by holding down the CTRL button on your keyboard while selecting the tasks.
2. Click the **Remove** button.

Using Scheduler with Outlook

If you currently use Microsoft Outlook you can import appointments and tasks from Outlook to your Assistant's Scheduler and view, add, and edit them there.

To import data from Outlook:

1. Click the **File** menu and select **Import Outlook data...**. The **Import Outlook Data** dialog box will be displayed.



2. Click the **Appointments** and **Tasks** check boxes to select or clear them according to what data you would like to import.
3. Click **Import**. Your appointments and/or tasks will be imported from Outlook to Scheduler to be used as described in the earlier sections of this chapter.



Although there is a one-to-one correspondence between most Outlook appointments and tasks and Scheduler appointments and tasks, certain data from Outlook may not import to Scheduler.

Quitting Scheduler

To exit Scheduler, right-click the **Scheduler** tasktray icon and select **Exit**. Or, if you are using Scheduler in "Standalone" mode, click the in the upper right corner of the main **Assistant Scheduler Service** window.

Having Your Assistant Monitor Your E-mail Accounts

Using MailChecker, your Assistant can monitor your e-mail accounts for new messages, inform you verbally when new e-mail messages have arrived, and even read you portions of the messages. This easy-to-use feature can be set up to check standard Post Office Protocol (POP3) and Microsoft Messaging Application Programming Interface (MAPI) accounts for new e-mail messages as often as you would like, and to notify you of their arrival with visual or auditory cues. Most Internet e-mail users will have a POP3 account. An example of an MAPI compatible application is Microsoft Outlook.


Simply issue the command “Check e-mail” at any time, and using MailChecker, your Assistant will be able tell you how many messages you’ve received, whom they are from, what they are about, when they arrived, and how large they are. Then, if you would like to respond to the messages, issue the command “Launch E-mail Client” and the appropriate e-mail client application(s) will be started.

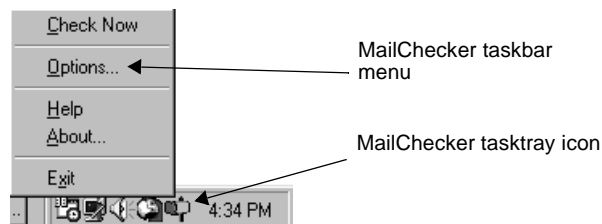
No matter how many e-mail accounts you have, MailChecker enables your Assistant to keep you informed of new e-mail messages in any or all of them.

Getting Started with MailChecker

MailChecker is automatically installed as part of your Intelligent Assistant package. If you have not configured your Assistant to start MailChecker automatically, as described in the section “Starting the Assistant Services Automatically” on page 117, you can ask him to open the program at any time by issuing simple commands.

To start MailChecker:

With your Assistant running, issue the command “Check e-mail”. After a brief delay the **MailChecker** icon  will appear in the Windows taskbar, in the lower right corner of your desktop. The **MailChecker** taskbar icon provides a convenient means of accessing the features and functions of **MailChecker**. To view the menu commands that are available, right-click the **MailChecker** taskbar icon.




More information about the taskbar menu commands can be found in later sections. For now, if you are using MailChecker for the first time, please take a few moments to configure the program for your needs, as described in the section that follows. Once you’ve specified the accounts you’d like to be

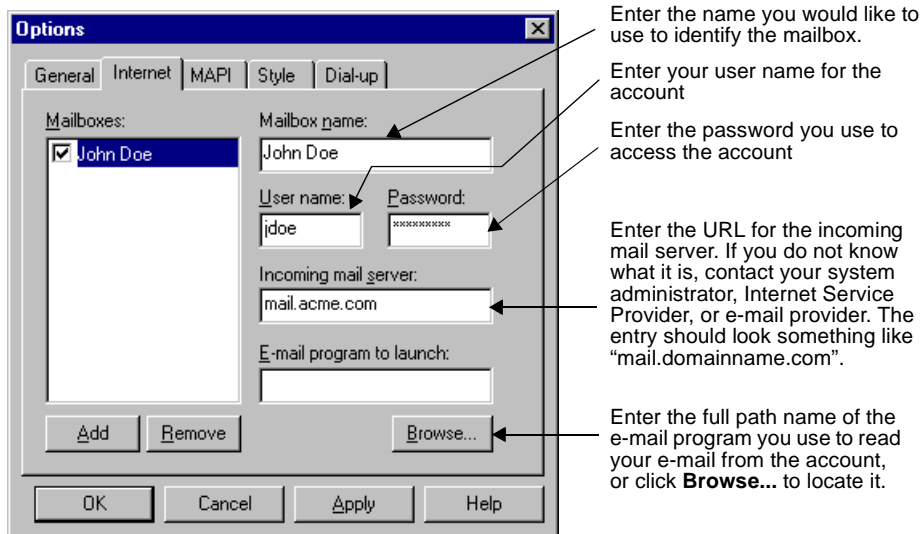
monitored and how you would like to be notified of new messages, you can turn the work over to your Intelligent Assistant!

Configuring MailChecker

When you start MailChecker for the first time, there are a few simple steps that are necessary in order to configure the program to check the e-mail accounts you would like it to monitor. The same general steps would apply if, at a future time, you wish to add additional e-mail accounts for MailChecker to monitor.

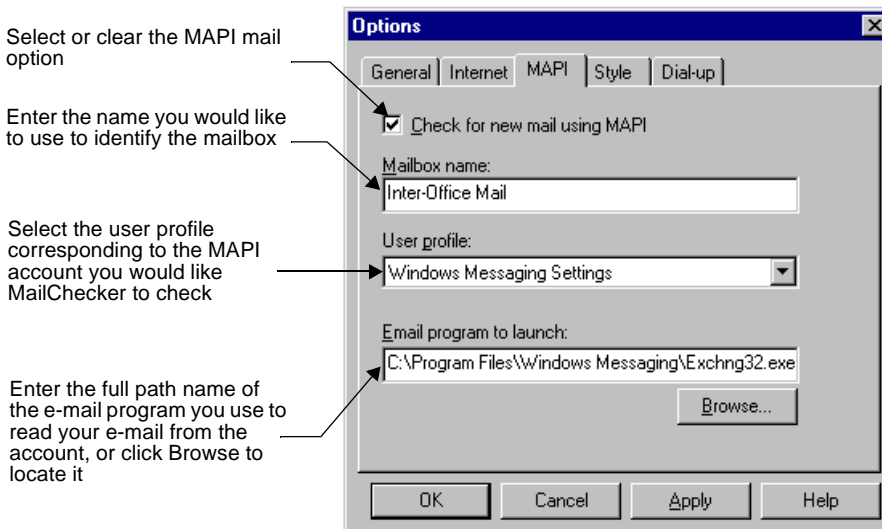
To configure MailChecker for your e-mail accounts:

1. If it is not already started, start MailChecker.
1. Right-click the **MailChecker** icon  in the Windows tasktray and then click **Options...** to open the **Options** dialog box.
2. On the **Internet** tab page, enter the Internet/POP3 mailboxes from which MailChecker should check for new e-mail messages. For each Internet or POP3 account that you would like MailChecker to check, click the **Add** button, then enter the mailbox name, user name, password, and incoming mail server URL in the corresponding text boxes. The **E-mail program to launch** field is optional, and needed only if you want to launch the client e-mail program from MailChecker.

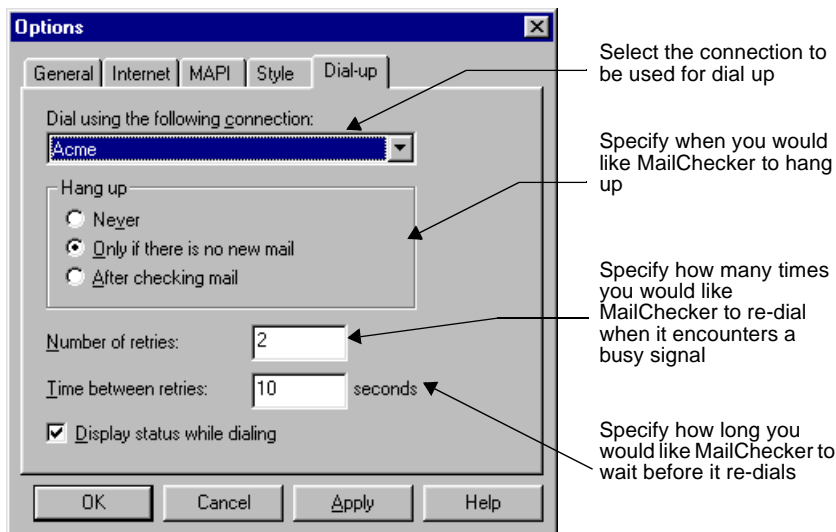


3. On the **MAPI** tab page, the default user profile will appear. If you want MailChecker to check a profile other than the default user profile, select a different one from the **User profile** drop down list box. If you do not use or

do not want MailChecker to check a MAPI account, click the **Check for new mail using MAPI** check box to clear it.



4. The options on the **Style** and **General** tab pages will be covered later. For now, if you connect to your mail server via modem, you will need to provide certain information on the **Dial-up** tab page. Otherwise, you may skip to step 5.




5. Click **Apply** then **OK** to keep your changes and close the **Options** dialog box.

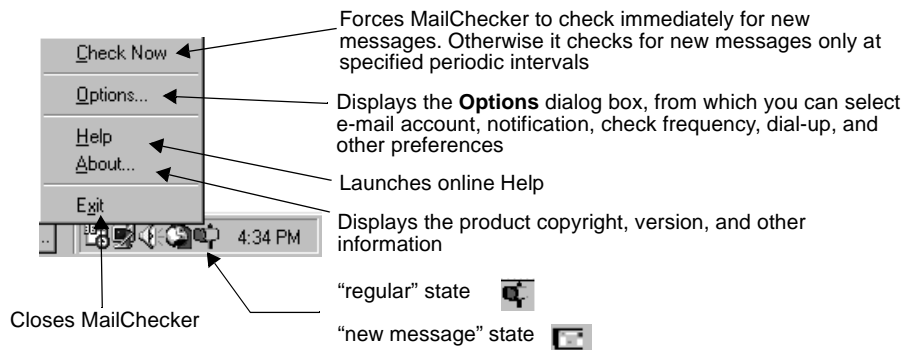
Basic Procedures



Once you've configured MailChecker as described in the previous section, it can be used to easily and efficiently monitor your MAPI e-mail account and all of your POP3 e-mail accounts for new messages. This section describes the functions of the **MailChecker** tasktray icon and menu commands, and the basic procedures for checking and previewing your e-mail using MailChecker.

By default, your Assistant will use MailChecker to check the e-mail accounts you have configured each time you start the program and at ten-minute intervals, and will inform you of new messages by changing the tasktray icon, and telling you that new messages have arrived. If you like these default settings, you can simply sit back and relax—or get to work on that important project—and your Assistant will notify you when new mail arrives. On the other hand, if you would like to change the default settings, it is easy to do so. There are several different automatic notification options. Furthermore, you can manually request that your Assistant check your e-mail. Instructions for these and other functions follow.

Tasktray icon and menu

Whenever MailChecker is running, a **MailChecker** icon  will appear on your Windows tasktray. As you have seen previously, you can right-click the **MailChecker** icon to open the tasktray menu.



The icon appears in its “regular” state  when there are no new messages, and changes to the “new messages” state  when there are new messages in your e-mail accounts.

If you place your mouse pointer over the **MailChecker** icon in the “new messages” state, a tool tip will appear showing the number of new messages you have received.

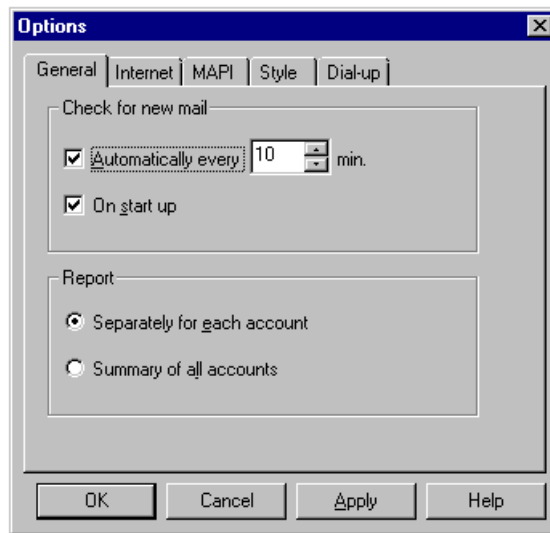


Controlling How You Are Notified of New Messages

MailChecker can notify you of new messages in a variety of ways, ranging from a subtle change in the appearance of the tasktray icon to an audio clip of your favorite song, to a verbal announcement from your Intelligent Assistant. Furthermore, it can report on your e-mail accounts separately or together, and inform you of unread messages only once or until you read them. All of these options are adjustable from the **Style** tab page of the **Options** dialog box.

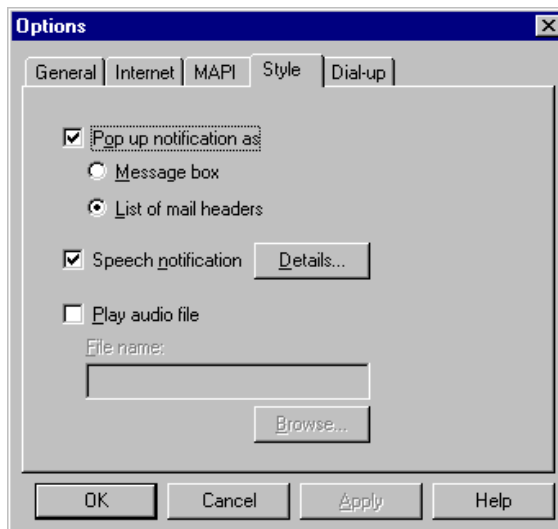
To configure new message notification options:

1. Right-click the **MailChecker** icon on the Windows tasktray and then click **Options...** to open the **Options** dialog box.



2. On the **General** tab page, in the **Report** group box, click the option button to the left of the report option you prefer. When **Separately for each account** is selected, new messages are separated based on the mailbox in which they were received. When the **Summary of all accounts** is selected, all new messages are listed together and sorted by the date and time they were received.

3. Click the **Style** tab to view the **Style** tab page.



4. If the **Pop up notification** check box is selected, your Assistant will display either a brief message box with the number of new e-mail messages received or a list of mail headers, depending on which option is selected. If the **Speech notification** check box is selected, your Assistant will notify you verbally of newly received e-mail messages. If the **Play audio file** check box is selected, your Assistant will play a wave file when you receive new e-mail messages. (For more information about speech notification details, and audio files, see the sections that follow.)
5. Click **Apply** and **OK** to apply your changes and close the **Options** dialog box.

To specify speech notification details:

When speech notification is activated, your Assistant will notify you verbally of how many new e-mail messages have arrived, who they are from, and what they are about. There are other optional details that you can have your Assistant tell you about new messages. You can specify your speech notification preferences in the **Speech Notification Details** dialog box.

1. On the **Style** tab page of the **Options** dialog box, select the **Speech notification** check box if it is not already selected. Then click **Details...**. The **Speech Notification Details** dialog box will appear.



2. Select or clear the check boxes in the **Read the following sections** group box according to your preferences.

If the **Number of mails** check box is selected, your Assistant will read the total number of new e-mail messages received.

If the **Received from** check box is selected, your Assistant will read the sender's name or address for each e-mail message.

If the **Subject** check box is selected, your Assistant will read the subject, or "Re:" field of each e-mail message.

If the **Date and time** check box is selected, your Assistant will read the date and time that each e-mail message was received.

If the **Size** check box is selected, your Assistant will read the size, in KB, of each e-mail message.

In the **Message** drop-down combo box, select how many sentences, if any, of each e-mail message you would like your Assistant to read.

If you enter "0", your Assistant will not read any of the message contents.

If you enter any positive number (e.g., "1", "2", "10"), your Assistant will read that number of sentences of the e-mail message, or the entire message, whichever is lesser.

If you select "All" from the combo box, your Assistant will read the message in its entirety.

3. Click **OK** to return to the **Style** tab page of the **Options** dialog box.
4. Click **Apply** and **OK** to keep your changes and close the **Options** dialog box.

To specify audio files:

If you wish, you can specify an audio (*.wav) file to be played when your Assistant finds new e-mail messages in your accounts.

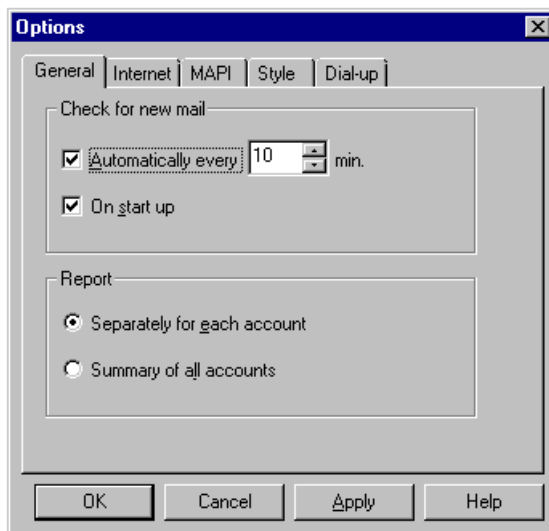
1. On the **Style** tab page of the **Options** dialog box, select **Play audio file** check box if it is not already selected. The **File name** text box will be enabled.
2. Enter the full path name of the audio (*.wav) file that you would like to be played. Or, click the **Browse...** button to locate the file.
3. Click **Apply** and **OK** to keep your changes and close the **Options** dialog box.

Controlling When Your Accounts are Checked

Your Assistant can use MailChecker to automatically monitor your e-mail accounts as frequently or infrequently as you would like. You can also ask him to check your accounts on demand, at any time. By default, your Assistant will check your accounts for new messages when MailChecker is started, and at 10 minute intervals thereafter while MailChecker is running. It is easy to change when and how often your accounts are automatically checked.

To configure automatic checking for new e-mail messages:

1. Right-click the **MailChecker** icon on the Windows tasktray and then click **Options...** to open the **Options** dialog box. Select the **General** tab page.



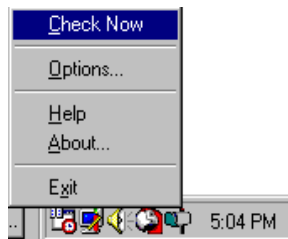
2. In the **Check mail** group box, the **Automatically every 10 min.**, check box is selected by default. You can enter the number of minutes you would like MailChecker to wait between each check in the adjacent spin box, or leave the default setting. If you do not want your Assistant to perform

automatic checking, click the **Automatically every 10 min.**, check box to clear it.

3. If desired, click the **On start up** check box to select or clear it. This controls whether or not MailChecker performs a mail check immediately upon start up.
4. Click **Apply** and **OK** to keep your changes and close the **Options** dialog box.

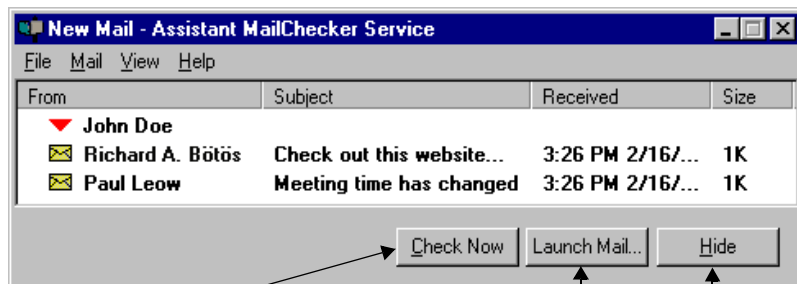
To request that your assistant check for new messages on demand:

Issue the command “Check e-mail”. Or, right-click the **MailChecker** icon on the Windows tasktray and then click **Check Now**.



New Mail Dialog Box

The **New Mail** dialog box displays a list of all mailboxes you have configured and the new messages received in each one. It includes details of the message such as attachments, sender's name, subject, date and time received, and message size. Depending on the options you've selected, the **New Mail** dialog box may appear automatically when you receive new e-mail messages. It can also be accessed manually at any time by double-clicking the **MailChecker** icon on the Windows tasktray. The dialog box, and each of its columns, can be resized to any convenient size.



Checks for new messages and updates the contents of the dialog

Launches all the mail applications associated with the mail boxes

Hides the **New Mail** dialog box

Adding, Editing, and Removing Mailboxes

You can add, edit, or remove Internet/POP3 mailboxes to the list of those you would like checked at any time.

To add an Internet/POP3 mailbox:

1. Open the **Internet** tab page of the **Options** dialog box by right-clicking the **MailChecker** tasktray icon and selecting the **Options...** menu item.
2. Click the **Add...** button. Enter the mailbox name, user name, password and incoming mail server URL fields. The e-mail program field is optional, and needed only if you want to launch the client e-mail program from MailChecker.
3. Click **OK**.

To edit an Internet/POP3 mailbox:

1. Open the **Internet** tab page of the **Options** dialog box by right-clicking the **MailChecker** tasktray icon and selecting the **Options...** menu item.
2. Select the mailbox you want to modify from the **Mailboxes** list by clicking it.
3. Edit the fields as necessary.
4. Click the **OK** button.

To disable an Internet/POP3 mailbox:

Disabling an Internet/POP3 mailbox is useful if you want your Assistant to temporarily ignore that account and not check it for new messages. When you want your Assistant to start checking it again, you can re-enable the mailbox without having to re-enter all of the relevant information.

1. Open the **Internet** tab page of the **Options** dialog box by right-clicking the **MailChecker** tasktray icon and selecting the **Options...** menu item.
2. Click the check box to the left of the mailbox you want to disable to clear it. (To re-enable it again at a later time, click the check box again to select it.)
3. Click the **OK** button.

To remove an Internet/POP3 mailbox:

1. Open the **Internet** tab page of the **Options** dialog box by right-clicking the **MailChecker** tasktray icon and selecting the **Options...** menu item.
2. Select the mailbox you want to remove from the **Mailboxes** list by clicking it.
3. Click the **Remove** button.
4. Click the **OK** button.

All POP3 account passwords that you enter are encrypted and stored securely by MailChecker. They are not used for any other purpose than for accessing the corresponding accounts and checking for new messages.


Internet Services

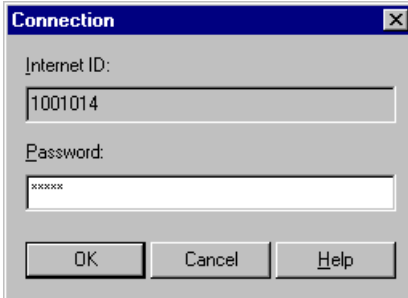
Internet Services provides the infrastructure to establish the connection between two Prodyphone users. In order to use Prodyphone, you have to be connected to Internet Services. When you are connected, you are “online”, and ready to make a call, send messages, check your inbox, and others can contact you. To connect to the Internet Services, you must have an Internet ID number and password. If you have not obtained these, refer to the section “Create Your Internet ID” later in this chapter for instructions.



The Internet Services are an add-on service of Prody Parrot and it may not be included in the package you installed. This and other add-on services may be purchased separately by visiting the Mindmaker web site at <http://www.mindmaker.hu>.

To connect:


1. On the **Assistant Control Panel**, click the **Main Menu** button , then select **Internet Services** and **Connect...**



The image shows a 'Connection' dialog box with a title bar containing a close button. It has two input fields: 'Internet ID:' with the value '1001014' and 'Password:' with masked characters 'xxxxxx'. At the bottom are three buttons: 'OK', 'Cancel', and 'Help'.

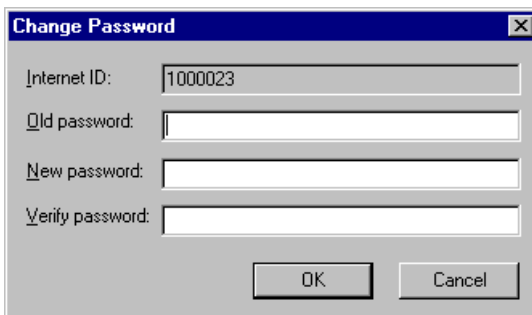
2. Enter the appropriate password and click **OK**.

To disconnect:

1. On the **Assistant Control Panel**, click the **Main Menu** button , then select **Internet Services** and **Disconnect...**
2. Click **Yes** on the confirmation dialog box.


To change your password:

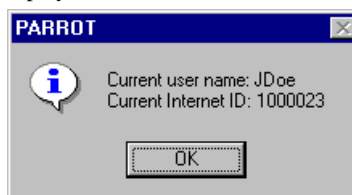
1. In the **Main Menu** select **Internet Services**, and then **Change Password....** The **Change Password** dialog box appears.

A Windows-style dialog box titled "Change Password" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. It contains four text input fields: "Internet ID:" with the value "1000023", "Old password:", "New password:", and "Verify password:". At the bottom right are "OK" and "Cancel" buttons.

2. In the appropriate text fields, type in your old (or current) password, then the new password you want to use from now on, and then verify the new password by entering it a second time. When done click **OK**.

To check the current user and Internet ID number:

1. On the **Assistant Control Panel** click the **Main Menu** button , then **Internet Services**, and **Current User....**
2. The dialog box displays the current user name and the user's Internet ID.

A Windows-style dialog box titled "PARROT" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. It features an information icon (i) in a speech bubble on the left. To the right, it displays "Current user name: JDoe" and "Current Internet ID: 1000023". At the bottom center is an "OK" button.

3. If no Current Internet ID appears, then the current user has not yet obtained one. For instructions, refer to the section "Create Your Internet ID" later in this chapter.

Communicating via the Prodyphone

Using Prodyphone, you can contact friends and associates and have conversations with them over the Internet from your computer. Prodyphone is similar to a traditional telephone in that you can use it to communicate in a real-time voice conversation. Also, just as any person you would like to call using a traditional phone must, of course, have a telephone and telephone service, people you would like to call using Prodyphone must also be Prodyphone users. And, just as many of your friends and colleagues have answering machines and voice mail systems connected to their traditional phone lines, Prodyphone enables you to leave recorded voice messages for other Prodyphone users. It also offers you the option of leaving text messages.

Prodyphone also differs from a traditional telephone in several ways. Firstly, instead of using a “telephone number” to contact others, you use an “Internet ID number”. This is because your Prodyphone calls take place over the Internet rather than over telephone wires. Consequently, no matter how far away the person that you call is—across the street or across the world—you will only incur the expense of connecting to your Internet Service Provider (ISP). Once you are connected to the Internet, the rest is free!

Another way in which Prodyphone is different from a traditional phone is that the number you use—your Internet ID number—identifies you, not the phone jack or computer in your home or office. This means that no matter where you are, other Prodyphone users can contact you using the same Internet ID number. Likewise, using your Internet ID number, you can make and accept calls on any machine that has Internet access and Prodyphone installed.



Prodyphone is an add-on service of Prody Parrot and it may not be included in the package you installed. This and other add-on services may be purchased separately by visiting the Mindmaker web site at <http://www.mindmaker.hu>.

Getting Started with Prodyphone

Prodyphone is automatically installed as part of your Intelligent Assistant package. If you have not configured your Assistant to start Prodyphone automatically, as described in the section “Starting the Assistant Services Automatically” on page 117, you can ask Prody Parrot to open the service at any time by issuing simple commands.

The following sections describe the steps you need to take in order to use this advanced service. You may have completed several of them already.


- “Complete Your User Profile”
- “Create Your Internet ID”
- “Making a Call”

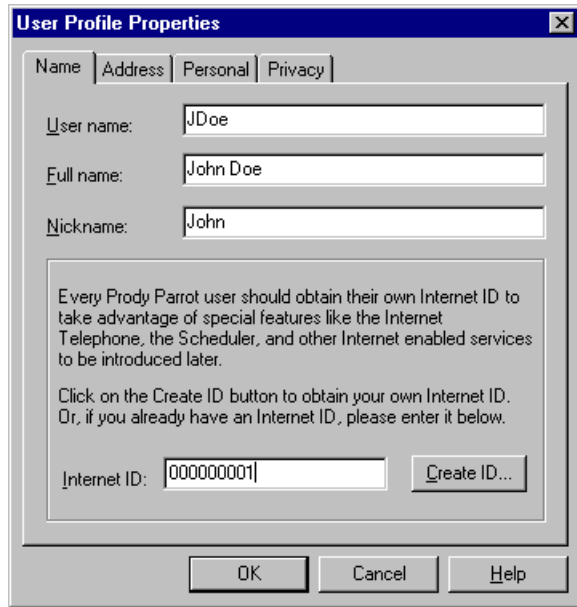
Complete Your User Profile

In order to obtain an Internet ID, you need to have a user profile containing your full name. When you first installed and started your Assistant, you were asked to enter information into your user profile. If you did not do so at that time, you can do so at any time.

Your user profile serves two purposes: it tells your assistant about you, and it tells other Prodyphone users about you. The more details about yourself that you provide to your Assistant, the more he can personalize his service. For your privacy, however, you can select which information you would like to be visible to other Prodyphone users, and which information you would like to be kept private. Your full name is required in order to obtain an Internet ID. All of the other user profile fields are optional.

To complete your user profile:

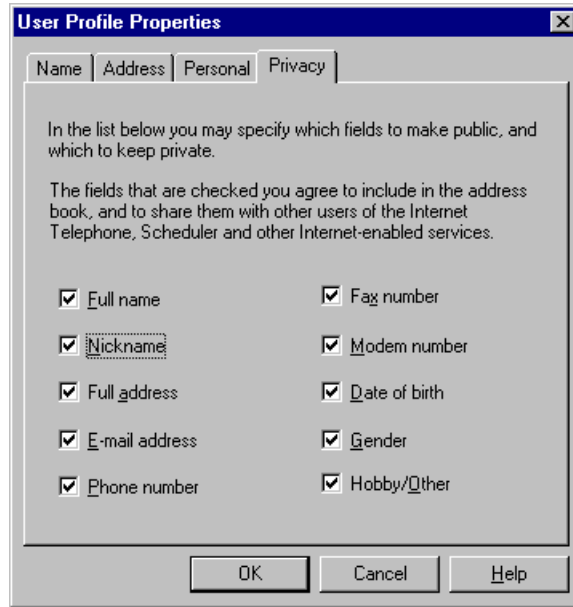
1. On the **Assistant Control Panel** click the **Main Menu** button , then **User...**. The **Assistant User** dialog box appears. In the **User Profiles** group box, there should be at least one item, representing your user profile. By default, the name of your user profile is identical with your Windows log on name. If you don't use a Windows log on name, then the default name of your user profile is "Unknown".
2. Select your user profile and click the **Properties...** button to display the **User Profile Properties** dialog box.



The **User Profile Properties** dialog box has a title bar with a close button. It contains four tabs: **Name**, **Address**, **Personal**, and **Privacy**. The **Name** tab is selected. It features three text input fields: **User name:** (containing "JDoe"), **Full name:** (containing "John Doe"), and **Nickname:** (containing "John"). Below these fields is a text area with the following text: "Every Prody Parrot user should obtain their own Internet ID to take advantage of special features like the Internet Telephone, the Scheduler, and other Internet enabled services to be introduced later. Click on the Create ID button to obtain your own Internet ID. Or, if you already have an Internet ID, please enter it below." Below the text area is an **Internet ID:** field (containing "000000001") and a **Create ID...** button. At the bottom of the dialog are **OK**, **Cancel**, and **Help** buttons.

3. Select the **Name** tab page.
4. Enter your full name in the **Full name** field, and your nickname in the **Nickname** field. As a minimum, your full name is required to obtain an Internet ID.
5. Optionally, enter the other information requested on the **Address**, and **Personal** tab pages. If you already have an Internet ID then you may use it by entering it into the **Internet ID** field on the **Name** tab page. In this case you obviously don't need to create another ID.

6. Finally, select the **Privacy** tab page.




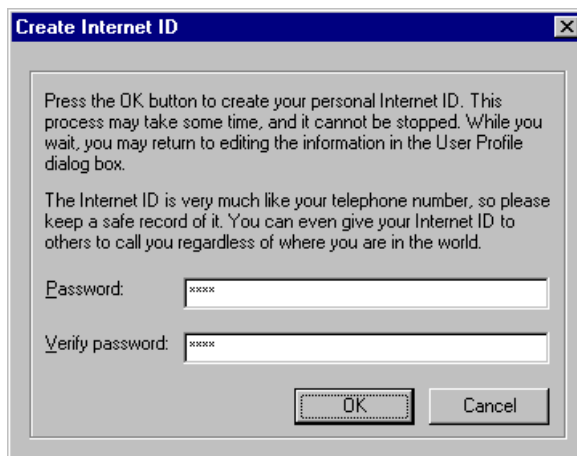
7. Each check box corresponds to a data field on the other tab pages of the **User Profile Properties** dialog box. All check boxes are unchecked by default, which means the data you entered in the corresponding data fields would not be public through the Internet Services. Check those fields that you want to be public to other users of the Internet Services by clicking on the check boxes.
8. When done click **OK**.

Create Your Internet ID

Once you have entered your full name—and any other information you chose to enter—in your user profile, you are ready to create your own Internet ID. Your Internet ID is a unique number very much like a traditional telephone number, however, it is assigned to you as a Prody Parrot user, not to your PC. Using your Internet ID, others can call you regardless of where you are physically located in the world, as long as both the caller and you are connected to the Internet with a computer running Prodyphone.

To create your own Internet ID:

1. Open the **User Profile Properties** dialog box by clicking the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then **User...** and **Properties...**
2. Select the **Name** tab page.
3. Click the **Create ID...** button. The **Create Internet ID** dialog box will appear.



4. Enter a password, which you want to be associated with your Internet ID, in both the **Password** and **Verify password** fields.
5. Click **OK**.

It may take a few minutes for the system to create your Internet ID, so please wait until the process is done. While waiting, you may continue using your computer and Prody Parrot.



Until your Internet ID has been created, do not close Prody Parrot. Otherwise the Internet ID will not be received and saved in your user profile.

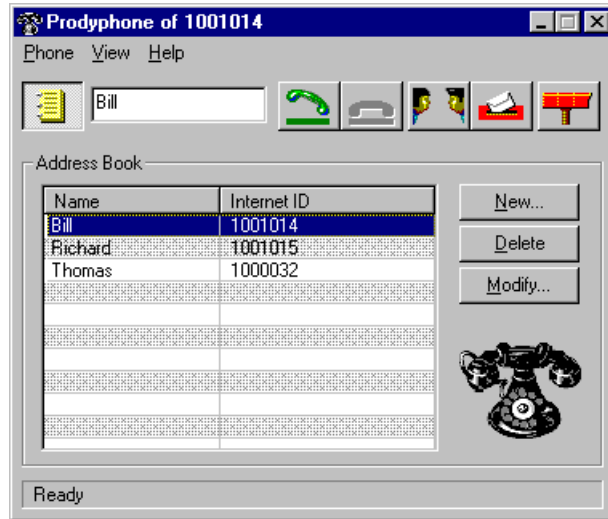
Using the Prodyphone Address Book

You may call, chat, and send messages to anybody whose name and Internet ID has been entered into the Prodyphone Address Book. To enter them into the Address Book you will need to obtain their Internet ID number.

To open the Address Book:

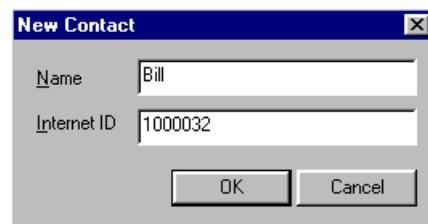
1. Issue the “Make a call” command to start Prodyphone, and click the

Address Book button .



To add a new entry to the Address Book:

1. Click the **New...** button in the **Address Book** group box.
2. Enter the person’s name and Internet ID, and click **OK**.



To delete an entry from the Address Book:

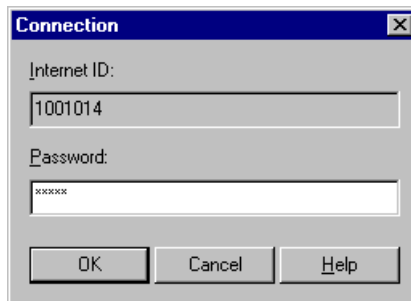
In the **Address Book** list select the name of the contact that you wish to remove, and click **Delete...**

Making a Call


Once you have your Internet ID and at least one other person in the Prodyphone Address Book, you can make a call with Prodyphone. With Prodyphone running, you simply specify who you want to call, and the call will be made.

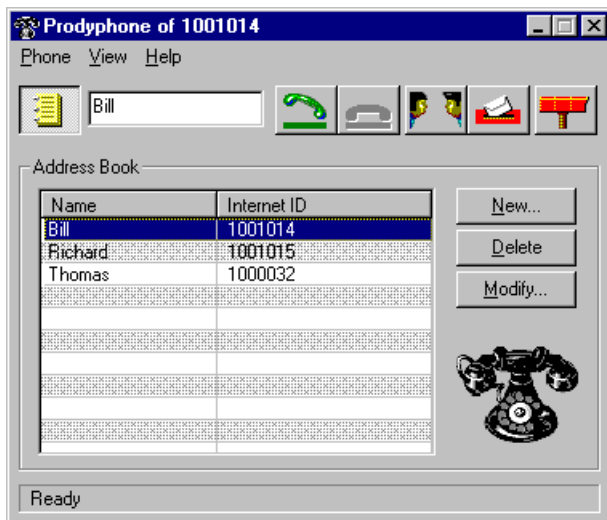
To start Prodyphone:


1. Issue the command “Make a call” to start Prodyphone.
2. If the **Connection** dialog box appears, enter your password and click **OK**. (If this dialog box does not appear, then you are already connected to the Internet Services, and you may continue with the next step.)




The main **Prodyphone** window appears. Open the **Address Book** list by

clicking on the **Address Book** button . The message “Ready...” in the status bar at the bottom of the **Prodyphone** window means that you are ready to receive and initiate calls.





3. Select a contact from the **Address Book** list, and click the **Call** button  or issue the command “Call”.
4. Any of the following scenarios may occur:

- If the called person's Prodyphone is not running then the connection can not be established, and Prody Parrot will notify you of this.
 - The person may already be using Prodyphone, in which case you will get a "Busy" message and he or she will be notified of your attempted call.
 - The connection is established and the phone rings, but nobody answers it. In this case the phone will ring until either you or the receiving party (who apparently doesn't want the call) hangs up.
 - The connection is established (the receiving party's Prodyphone is ringing) and the person answers the call.
5. Assuming that the connection is established, and the other party answers your call, then you may talk with the other party as you would on a traditional telephone.
 6. Issue the command "Hang up", or click the **Hang up** button , when you have finished talking.


Receiving a Call

Once you are connected to the Internet Services, you may also receive phone calls from other Prodyphone users. In the case of an incoming call, you will hear your Prodyphone ringing through your speakers or headphones. Prody Parrot will also notify you of the call.

When you receive a call, you have three choices:

1. You answer the call by issuing the command "Pick up", or clicking the **Pick up** button .
2. You don't pick up the phone, so the caller will have to hang up on their side.
3. You don't want to answer the call and you don't want the phone to ring, so you issue the command "Hang up", or click the **Hang up** button .

Ending a Call

During the course of the conversation, both the caller and the called party may end the call by issuing the command "Hang up", or clicking the **Hang up** button .

If the connection is interrupted for some other reason (i.e. network error), both parties will receive the "Broken line" message.


Sending a Message

You may use Prodyphone to send a message, which may contain voice and/or text content, to other Prodyphone users. Messages are stored on the Internet

Services server, in case the recipient is not connected to the Internet Services at the time.

To send a message:

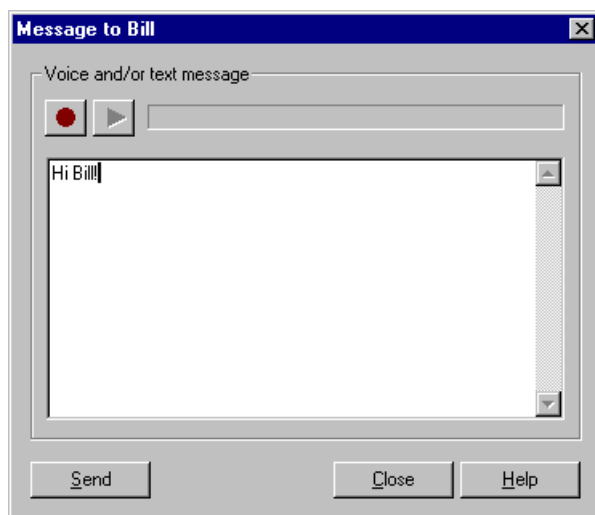
1. Issue the “Make a call” command to start Prodyphone. Display the




Address Book list by clicking on the **Address Book** button .

2. Select a contact from the **Address Book** list, click the **Message** button



, and the **Message to...** dialog box appears.



3. Click the **Record** button  to record your voice message. You have 30 seconds to record the message. Click the **Stop** button  at the end of the message. By clicking on the **Play** button , you may listen to your voice message before sending it.
4. Type the text of your message in the text edit window.
5. When you are done composing both the voice and text components of your message, click the **Send** button to deliver the message to the intended recipient.

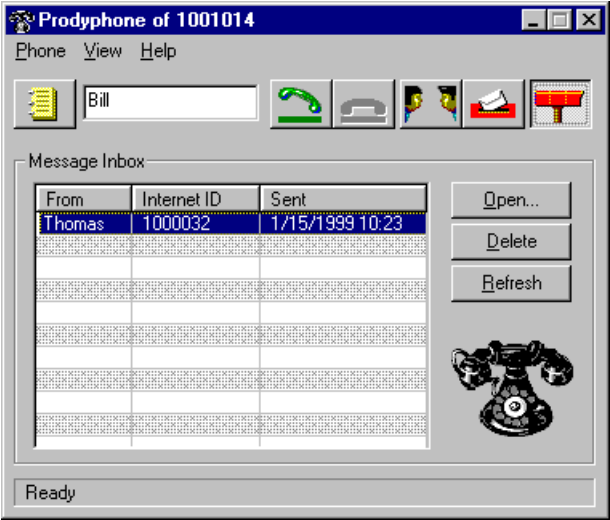
Receiving Messages

Other Prodyphone users may send messages to you. If you are connected to Internet Services, the incoming messages will be periodically and automatically downloaded to your PC, into your **Message Inbox**. However, you also have the option to retrieve any messages from Internet Services at any time, as described later in this section.

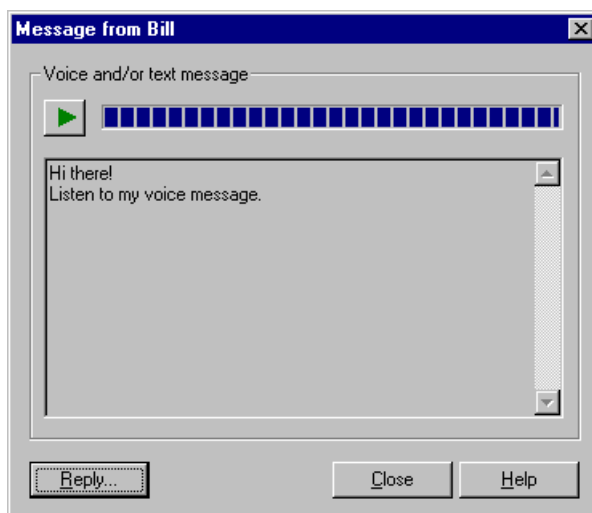
If you are not connected to the Internet Services at the time, the messages are stored for you on the server. The next time you connect to Internet Services, your incoming messages will be automatically downloaded to your PC in the **Message Inbox**.


To view a list of messages in your Message Inbox:

- 1. Click the **Message Inbox** button .



2. From the **Message Inbox** list, select the message you want to hear or read, and click **Open...** The **Message from...** dialog box appears.



3. Click the **Play** button  to hear the voice component of the message.
4. Click **Reply...** to respond to the message.
5. Click **Close** when done reading and listening to the message.



To retrieve new messages:

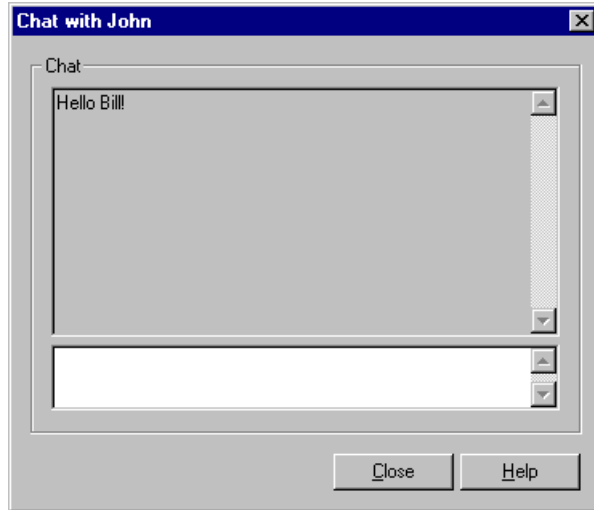
1. Click **Refresh** in the **Message Inbox** group to retrieve any messages stored on the Internet Services server for you.
2. If you have new messages waiting to be downloaded, they will appear in the **Message Inbox** list.

Text Chat

Text chat works much the same way as a telephone conversation on Prodyphone in the sense that you are having a dialog, but you are only sending text messages instead. This differs from sending text and voice messages because the two parties may carry-on a continuous dialog without having to send individual messages back and forth. Additionally, the dialog history is displayed in chronological order in the **Chat with...** window. While “chatting”, you use the keyboard to enter what you have to say, and you read the other party's responses.

To initiate a chat call:

1. Issue the “Make a call” command to start Prodyphone. Display the **Address Book** list by clicking on the **Address Book** button .
2. Select a contact from the **Address Book** list, click the **Chat** button , and the **Chat with...** dialog box appears.



3. Type into the text edit window at the bottom. Press ENTER to send. The whole conversation is displayed in the top window






Pressing ENTER sends your message and does not insert a line break. To continue writing on a new line press Ctrl+ENTER.

Starting the Assistant Services Automatically

If there are certain Assistant Services that you will probably take advantage of every time you use Prody Parrot, you can have them started automatically whenever you start the main Prody Parrot program.

To configure Prody Parrot to start the Assistant Services automatically:

1. On the **Assistant Control Panel** click the **Main Menu** button , then **Properties...**. The **Assistant Properties** dialog box appears.
2. Select the **Services** tab page.
3. In the **Do not start** window select the service you wish to use by clicking it, then click the  button to move the service to the **Start automatically** window. Alternatively, you may click the  button to move all available services to the **Start automatically** window.
4. Click **Apply** and **OK**. The services you moved to the **Start automatically** window will start. Subsequently, when you start Prody Parrot, the services listed in the **Start automatically** window will automatically be started, too.

Chapter 8: Your Entertaining Companion

Besides serving as your personal assistant, Prody Parrot entertains you. He swoops from here to there on your desktop, resting on dialog boxes and windows, telling jokes, singing songs, commenting on what you are doing, etc.

Prody Parrot enjoys interacting with you and will inquire about your interests, play games with you, and give you trivia quizzes if you let him. This chapter describes Prody Parrot's role as an entertaining companion.

Interaction Modes

Prody Parrot has four basic modes of interaction.

Assistant Mode

This is the default mode of Prody Parrot. In assistant mode, Prody Parrot will fulfill your requests to launch and control applications, and will also obey your instructions on how he should behave, such as flying around the screen, taking a break, or giving you the current time, weather, sports, news, and stock information.

Conversation Mode


Conversation mode is a special interactive mode, which temporarily suspends the normal application-control functions of Prody Parrot, in order to concentrate all of his resources on engaging you in an entertaining conversation on popular topics, such as music, computers, and movies, or in playing fun and educational games. You enter this special mode by issuing the "let's talk" command, and you return to the assistant mode by issuing the "end conversation" command.

Command Mode

You can enter command mode by clicking the **Animated Character** button



on the large **Assistant Control Panel** so that it is in the up position; or by

clicking the **Main Menu** button , then **Outputs**, and **Animated Character** so that the check mark disappears. You will see Prody Parrot leave the screen. When you want him to come back, simply click the same button again to activate it, or click the same menu command again. Prody Parrot will return to assistant mode.

Sleep Mode

In order to use system resources as efficiently as possible, Prody Parrot can be told to go to sleep when you know you will not be using Prody Parrot for a while, but you don't want to close it. Simply issue the command "Go To Sleep". To bring Prody Parrot out of sleep mode, issue the command "Wake Up". However, Prody Parrot may awake if you disturb his slumber with your cursor.




*Prody Parrot will not respond to input of any kind if he is in sleep mode, with the exception of the command “Wake Up”. To bring the program out of sleep mode and reactivate input for all commands, issue the command “Wake Up”. Prody Parrot will awake if he is disturbed too much, or if you open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.*

Making Prody Parrot More or Less Talkative

You can determine how interactive you want Prody Parrot to be. For example, you can make him very talkative and eager for attention or relatively quiet and reserved.

To adjust the level of interaction through the **Assistant Properties** dialog:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel** and then click **Properties...**
2. In the **Assistant Properties** dialog box, click the **Character** tab.
3. Adjust the **Interaction** slider to **More** or **Less**, depending on whether you want Prody Parrot to be more talkative or less talkative. Click **OK**.


To adjust the level of interaction with commands:

- When you issue the commands “talk more” and “talk less”, you achieve the same outcome as you do by moving the **Interaction** slider on the **Character** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box to **More** or **Less**.
- When you issue the command “take a break”, Prody Parrot sits quietly and dozes at the bottom of your desktop, and does not speak until spoken to. Unlike when he is in sleep mode, Prody Parrot will wake up and respond to any voice command when he is taking a break.

Caring for Prody Parrot


When real mode is turned on, Prody Parrot requires food. If you do not feed him, he will eventually starve and die. Prody Parrot will appreciate being fed regularly when real mode is on, and he will express his gratitude with words of thanks.

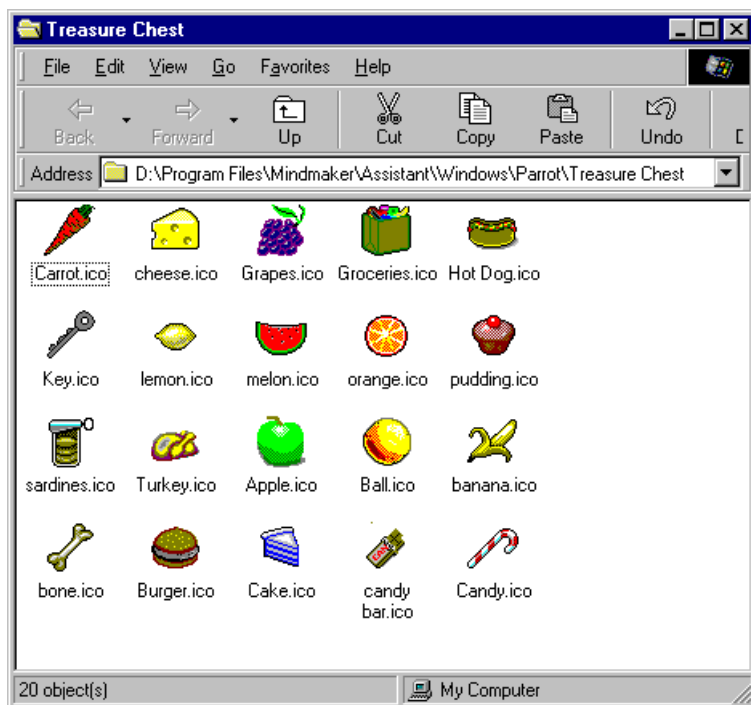
To turn real mode on or off:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel** and then click **Properties...**

2. In the **Assistant Properties** dialog box, click the **Character** tab.
3. Select or clear the **Real mode** check box. Click **OK**.

To feed Prody Parrot:

1. Make sure that **Icon Input** is activated. To do so, click the **Main Menu** button , then select **Inputs**, and verify that a check mark appears to the left of **Icon**.
2. On the **Start** menu, point to **Programs, Assistant, Prody Parrot**, and then **Prody Goodies**.
3. Click **Treasure Chest** to open your store of treats:





4. Click one of the food items, e.g., the carrot, and drag it onto Prody Parrot. Release the mouse button to feed him. Don't worry, Prody Parrot will let you know when he is full.



*Feeding Prody Parrot is necessary if the **Real mode** check box is selected in the **Assistant Properties** dialog box. If this check box is selected and you do not feed him periodically, the animated character dies, i.e., it disappears from the desktop.*

When Prody Parrot dies of starvation, you will be asked whether or not you want to revive him. You can click **Yes**, and Prody Parrot will reappear. If you click **No**, all the functions of Prody Parrot will remain operational, but the animated character will not be present.

To make the animated character come back at any time, just press the **Animated Character** button  on the large **Assistant Control Panel**; or click the **Main Menu** button , then select **Outputs**, and verify that a check mark appears to the left of **Animated Character**.

Petting Prody Parrot

Prody Parrot likes it when you play with him, so feel free to use your mouse to tickle, nudge, drag, and chase him. Prody Parrot also has an ornery side, so sometimes he complains—especially if you bother him when he is trying to take a break.

To pet Prody Parrot:

1. Hold your cursor over Prody Parrot until it turns into a hand.
2. Hold the hand over Prody Parrot and move it in a petting motion.

Let the cursor rest on top of Prody Parrot. Then watch his eyes as you move the cursor in a circle around his head.

Making Prody Parrot Move Around

Since Prody Parrot likes being where the action is, he flies to the active window on your desktop. You can also move Prody Parrot with your mouse or issue behavior commands.

To see Prody Parrot fly to an active window:

1. Open a program or window, or make an open window active. For example, click on the Windows taskbar. If Prody Parrot is not already there, he flies to it.
2. Click the **Assistant Control Panel** to activate it, and Prody Parrot will fly to it.

To move Prody Parrot manually:

1. Move the cursor over the animated character until it turns into a hand.
2. While holding down the left mouse button, drag Prody Parrot to a new location on the desktop.
3. Release the mouse button.


To Make Prody Parrot move using command input:

- Issue any of the assistant commands for movement. These include the following commands for moving around the screen: “fall”, “fly around”, “fly down”, “fly left”, “fly right”, “fly up”, “move around”, “jump”, “walk left”, and “walk right”.
- In addition, the command “come here” prompts Prody Parrot to fly to the Window you are using, and “go home” causes him to go perch in the lower right corner of your desktop. If you issue the command “come closer”, Prody Parrot’s character will grow bigger. If you say “go back”, his size will return to normal. The command “go away” tells Prody Parrot to leave the desktop, and “come back” tells him to come back.

Conversing & Playing with Prody Parrot

Conversation mode allows you to have prompted conversations with Prody Parrot on numerous popular topics, play games, and be tested on your knowledge in certain subject areas. This is not only entertaining, but also can help you learn interesting new things—or remember things you were taught long ago.

While in conversation mode you may also talk to Dr. Sbaitso, the online psychiatrist. Just issue the command “Doctor Sbaitso”.

When Prody Parrot is in conversation mode, and you want to know the available commands just click on the **Commands List** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and then click on the **Conversation** tab page.

To start conversation mode:

- Issue the command, “let’s talk”.



All generic and assistant commands are disabled in conversation mode.

To interact with Prody Parrot in conversation mode:


Simply answer Prody Parrot’s questions with “Yes”, “No”, or other appropriate responses. For example, if Prody Parrot asks, “Do you like music?“, you may

answer, “Yes”. And if he asks, “Do you play, sing, or just listen?”, you may answer “I play”.

If you converse with Prody Parrot in this manner for a little while, he will probably coax you into playing a game with him, such as “Word Mania”, or “Who Am I?”. Additionally, if you wish, Prody Parrot will test your knowledge in such areas as U.S. State and Country capitals, Oscar winners, popular music, Shakespeare quotes, fine art, cloning, UFO’s, famous quotations, classical music, or computers. Be sure to check the Mindmaker web site regularly for new activities!

To close conversation mode:

Issue the command “end conversation”. The **Status Window** will return to its normal state, and the generic and assistant commands will be enabled again. Alternatively, you can exit conversation mode by turning animation off and

then back on again, by clicking the **Animated Character** button  on the large **Assistant Control Panel** twice, or through the **Main Menu** on the small **Assistant Control Panel**.

Prody’s Playground

If you feel like playing a computer game, you can do so by going to Prody’s Playground where you can enjoy the interesting arcade-style games.

To tell Prody Parrot you want to play:

1. Issue the command “let’s play”.
2. Prody Parrot will ask you what you want to play. One choice is Prody’s Playground. Reply by saying “Prody’s playground”. The default Internet web browser will start.
3. Select the game you want to play.

The games you’ll find in Prody’s Playground:

Zapper

Zap ‘em with your space bar!

Once again, it is up to you to save earth from these pesky aliens. Shoot these bird-like intruders with your space bar, and move with the arrow keys.

Bolognas

Dodge the gray, eliminate the green!

Your mission is to eliminate all the balls by clicking on the green ones. The tricky part is you **MUST** move your mouse around the board without touching **ANY** gray balls. If you do, the gray balls multiply. Once you clear a board, you move up to the next level. It seems easy, but...

Icebox

Help Pete the Penguin get out of the icebox!

Will this holiday season send Pete the Penguin up in flames? Not if you play this game right! Help Pete extinguish the evil flames that are HOT on his trail and capture the gold coins. Along the way, Pete must crack ice cubes or move them out of the way. Be a hero: save Pete!

How to play:

1. Move Pixel Pete up, down, left and right to capture gold coins and to extinguish the evil flames.
2. Walk against ice cubes to move them out of the way or over evil flames.
3. Walk against ice cube blocks to crack them.
4. Free the gold coins by crushing the ice around them.
5. Watch out for the evil flames!

Scoring:

1. Breaking the ice: 5 points.
2. Putting out evil flames with ice: 50 points.
3. Freeing a coin: 100 points.
4. Taking all coins and advancing to the next level: 1000 points.

Crazy 8's

Your favorite card game....

Everybody knows Crazy 8's. The goal is to get rid of all your cards by matching either the same suit or the same number to the card on the table. If you don't have a card to play, play an 8 or draw from the deck in the center. Get crazy!

How to play:

The object is to get rid of all your cards. Your hand is the top deck. You may discard the same suit or the same value. To discard, click on the card. Crazy 8's may be played at any time; just select whatever suit you want. If you do not have any legal plays, click on the center deck to draw cards.

Good Luck!

Ski Slalom

Steer through the pine trees!

No expensive lift tickets needed for this ski adventure! Click on the screen to start and use your J and L keys or arrow keys to dodge the pine trees. The longer you can stay alive, the higher your score. Blow down the mountain!

Warp

Ready, aim and fire!

This game is a shoot-out! Fire at everything that moves and some of the things that don't move. Some objects blow up, others absorb the blasts. Be sure to stay away from big things that stick out of the ground.

Adios Amoebas

Say Adios Amoebas!

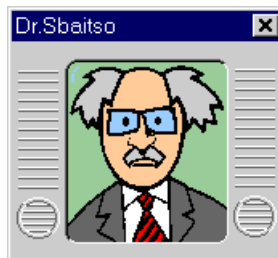
Too fun! You're the little guy and the amoebas are the blobs. Your goal is to trap 'em or zap 'em! Use your arrow keys to move around the board. Collect ammunition and bonus points along the way. Use your space bar to zap.

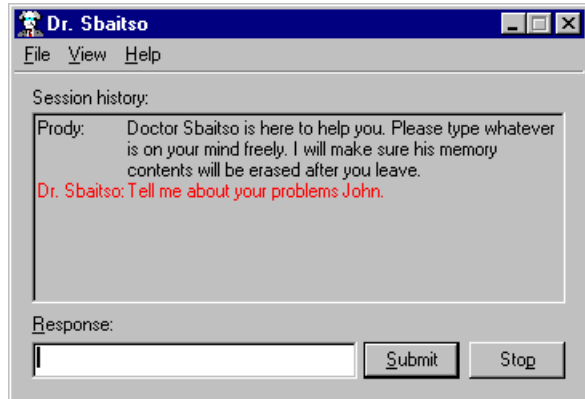
Dr. Sbaitso

Another entertaining component of your Prody Parrot package is the synthetic personality, Dr. Sbaitso (*pronounced "spate-so"*), the online talking psychiatrist. You can visit Dr. Sbaitso in a private, "video conference" session, and work through any problems or concerns you are currently dealing with. Dr. Sbaitso is always willing to listen, and will keep your conversation in strict confidence. And what's more, he doesn't charge a fee!

To start a session with Dr. Sbaitso:

1. Issue the assistant command "Go to Doctor Sbaitso". Or you may configure Prody Parrot to automatically start Dr. Sbaitso as described in Chapter 7. (See "Starting the Assistant Services Automatically" on page 117.)
2. The **Dr. Sbaitso** windows will appear on your desktop. Dr. Sbaitso will usually start the session by asking you what's on your mind. You can watch him talk to you in the **Dr. Sbaitso** video window, and read what he says in the **Session history** box of the main **Dr. Sbaitso** window.

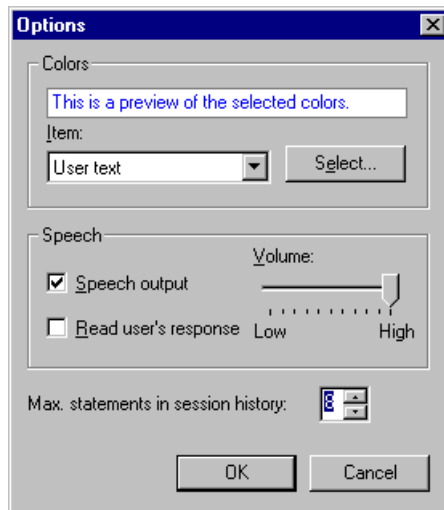




3. To reply, type your response in the **Response** text box and click **Submit** or press ENTER. Your response will appear in the **Session history** box where Dr. Sbaitso will be able to read it.
4. You may work through your problems with Dr. Sbaitso for as long as you wish. Don't be surprised if your assistant occasionally contributes to the conversation. But don't worry, he is bound by the same discretionary rules as the doctor.
5. Click **Stop** to interrupt what Dr. Sbaitso is currently saying.
6. When you are finished, click the **File** menu and select **Exit**.

To adjust optional parameters:

1. Click the **View** menu and select **Options...**



2. In the **Colors** group box, you can change the colors of the text that appears in the **Session history** box. Use the **Item** drop down combo box to select either the **User text**, **Assistant text**, or **Psychiatrist text**. Then, use the **Select** button to choose a color for the selected text.
3. In the **Speech** group box, the **Speech output** check box is selected by default so that you will hear speech output from Dr. Sbaitso. If you do not want to hear speech output, click the check box to clear it. Click the **Read user's response** check box to clear it if you don't want the system to read your own response out loud as well.

Adjust the speech output volume, if desired, using the **Volume** slider.
4. While talking with Dr. Sbaitso you will see your conversation thread in the session history window. You can set how many statements should be saved in this window by adjusting the number in the **Max. statements in session history** spin box.
5. Click **OK** to apply your settings.

To start a new session with Dr. Sbaitso:

Click the **File** menu and select **New Session**.

To quit Dr. Sbaitso:

Click the **File** menu and select **Exit**.

Chapter 9: Configuring Prody Parrot

This chapter teaches you how to configure Prody Parrot to fit your needs and preferences. The parameters that you set are stored in your own user profile. Each user has his or her own profile.

Changing the Assistant Properties

You can configure, customize, and change the majority of the program's properties in the **Assistant Properties** dialog box. These properties include Prody Parrot's voice, his size, his menu extraction, which **Assistant Services** he launches, how much he interacts with you... etc. This dialog box is organized into four different tab pages: **General**, **Character**, **Security**, and **Services**.

To access the **Assistant Properties** dialog box, click the **Main Menu** button

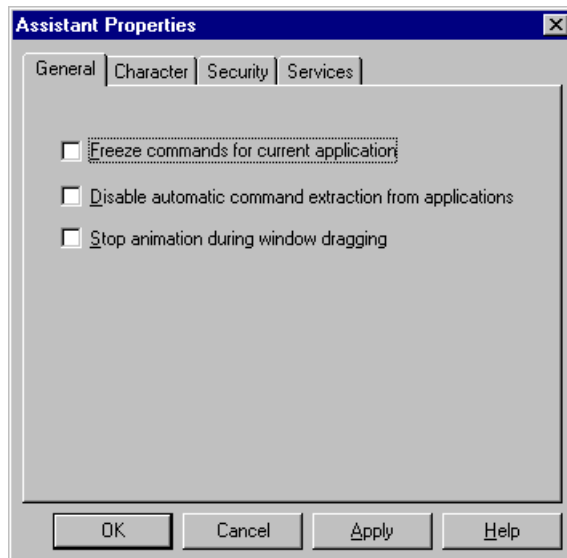


on the **Assistant Control Panel**, then select **Properties...**

The General Tab Page

The **General** tab page consists of three check boxes which affect Prody Parrot's animation and the extraction of commands from applications. These three check boxes are:


- Freeze commands for current application
- Disable automatic command extraction from applications
- Stop animation during window dragging



Freeze commands for current application

It is possible, that you might like to keep the application-specific commands for one particular application loaded, regardless of what other applications are active. For example, you may be working on a document in Microsoft Word, but want to control your CD Player without having to leave Microsoft Word. In this case, you can “freeze” the application command set of the CD player, so the CD player commands are available even when you are working on your document. This way you can tell your CD Player to skip to the next track while you are composing the next Nobel Prize winning piece of literature, or writing a love letter.


To enable this feature:

1. Make sure the application which contains the commands you want to freeze is the active one on your desktop.
2. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and select **Properties...**
3. On the **General** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box (as shown previously), select the **Freeze commands for current application** check box, then click **Apply** and **OK**.

Disable automatic command extraction from applications

There may also be a time when you would like to temporarily but completely disable the automatic extraction or loading of application-specific commands.

To select this option:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and select **Properties...**
2. On the **General** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box (as shown previously), select the **Disable automatic command extraction from applications** check box, then click **Apply** and **OK**.




*Prody Parrot saves the commands it extracts from any application, so it only has to do this only once. This means that the commands for a previously extracted application will be available every time you launch the application, even when **Disable automatic command extraction from applications** option is checked.*

Stop animation during window dragging

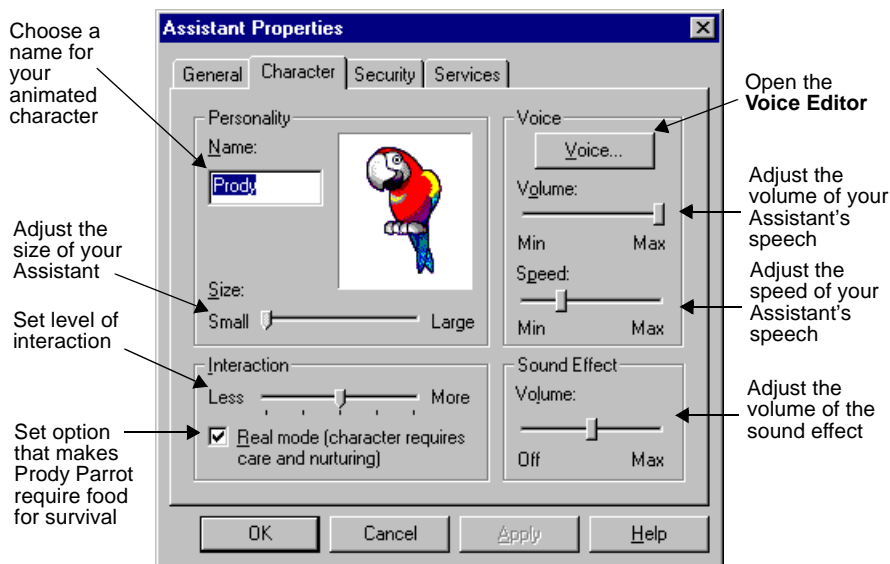
On slower machines, Prody Parrot may leave a trail behind him on the desktop when you move a window or application.

To enable this option:


1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and select **Properties...**
2. On the **General** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box (as shown previously), select the **Stop animation during window dragging** check box, then click **Apply** and **OK**.

The Character Tab Page


The **Character** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box allows you to select the size and voice of Prody Parrot, and determine how talkative he should be. Also, you can make Prody Parrot require food for survival or disable this mode altogether.



To vary the size of Prody Parrot's on-screen character:

1. On the **Assistant Control Panel**, click the **Main Menu** button  and then click **Properties...**
2. In the **Assistant Properties** dialog box, click the **Character** tab and adjust the **Size** slide control according to your preference.


To hear sound effects with the animation:

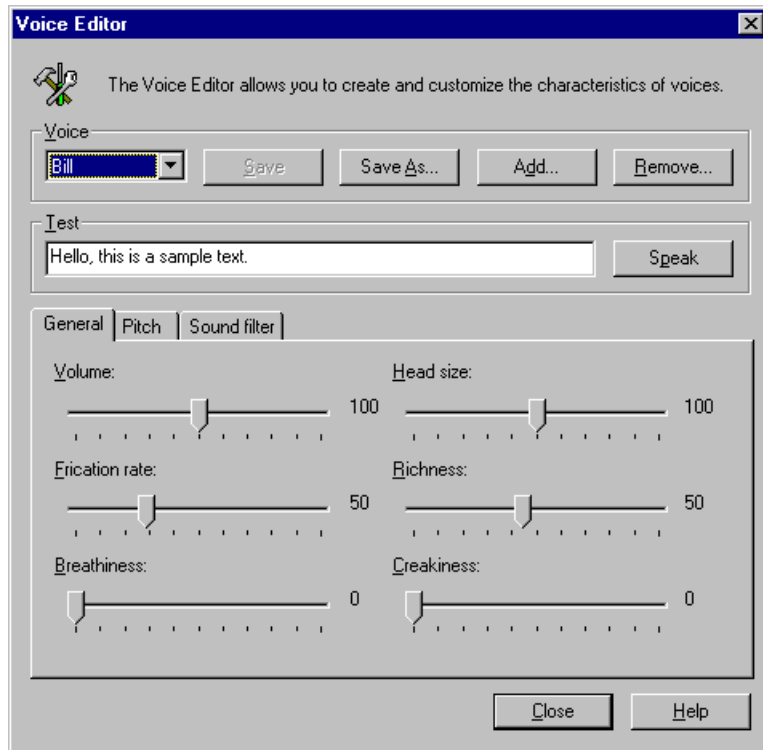
1. On the **Assistant Control Panel**, click the **Main Menu** button  and then click **Properties...**. Select the **Character** tab page.
2. Adjust the volume of the sound effects by moving the **Volume** slide control in the **Sound Effect** group box.

Adjusting Prody Parrot's voice

Prody Parrot enables you to choose, edit, and change his voice. For example, you can give Prody Parrot a deep voice or make him speak fast. A variety of default voices are included, but you can create any number of new voices.

To open the Voice Editor dialog box:

1. On the **Assistant Control Panel**, click the **Main Menu** button  and then click **Properties....** Select the **Character** tab page.
2. Click **Voice...** and the **Voice Editor** dialog box appears.



The **Voice Editor** dialog box allows you not only to adjust the parameters of predefined voices, but also to create new voices according to your preferences.

You will notice that you can modify the selected voice using the sliders under each tab page. The different types of available modifications are organized under three tab pages: **General**, **Pitch**, and **Sound filter**. See “Voice parameters” on page 134 for additional information.

The Voice Editor allows you to do the following:

- Select a voice for Prody Parrot.
- Change the way an existing voice sounds.
- Create new voices, which you may customize according to your own preferences.
- Add and remove voices in the **Voice** drop-down combo box.

To select a voice for Prody Parrot:

1. Open the **Voice Editor** dialog box.
2. Select the voice you want from the **Voice** drop-down combo box.
3. Click **Close** when done.

To change the way a voice sounds:

1. Open the **Voice Editor** dialog box.
2. Select the voice you want to change from the **Voice** drop-down combo box.
3. Adjust the voice parameters on the **General**, **Pitch**, and **Sound filter** tab pages according to your own preferences. See the “Voice parameters” section later in this chapter for details. Click **Speak** to hear the effect of the changes you made.
4. Click **Save** to save your changes, and then **Close**.



*You may modify and save the voices you created, but the default voices shipped with Prody Parrot cannot be changed. You can, however, modify a default voice, then save it with another name by clicking on the **Save As...** button.*

To create a new voice:

1. Open the **Voice Editor** dialog box.
2. From the **Voice** drop-down combo box, select the voice that sounds like the new voice you want to create.
3. Adjust the voice parameters on the **General**, **Pitch**, and **Sound filter** tab pages according to your own preferences. See the “Voice parameters” section later in this chapter for details. Click **Speak** to hear the effect of the changes you made.
4. If you are satisfied with how the voice sounds, click **Save As**. Otherwise, go back to step 3.

5. Enter a file name (*.tav), and then click **Save**. You will return to the **Voice Editor** dialog box, and the new voice name will appear in the **Voice** drop-down combo box.
6. Click **Close** when done.

To add a voice to the Voice combo box:

1. Open the **Voice Editor** dialog box.
2. Click **Add...** and the **Open** dialog box appears.
3. Enter the name (*.tav) of the voice file and click **Open**. The voice name will appear in the **Voice** drop-down combo box.
4. Click **Close** when done.

To remove a voice from the Voice combo box:

1. Open the **Voice Editor** dialog box.
2. From the **Voice** drop-down combo box, select the voice you want to remove.
3. Click **Remove...**, and then **Yes** on the **Confirmation** dialog box.
4. Click **Close** when done.

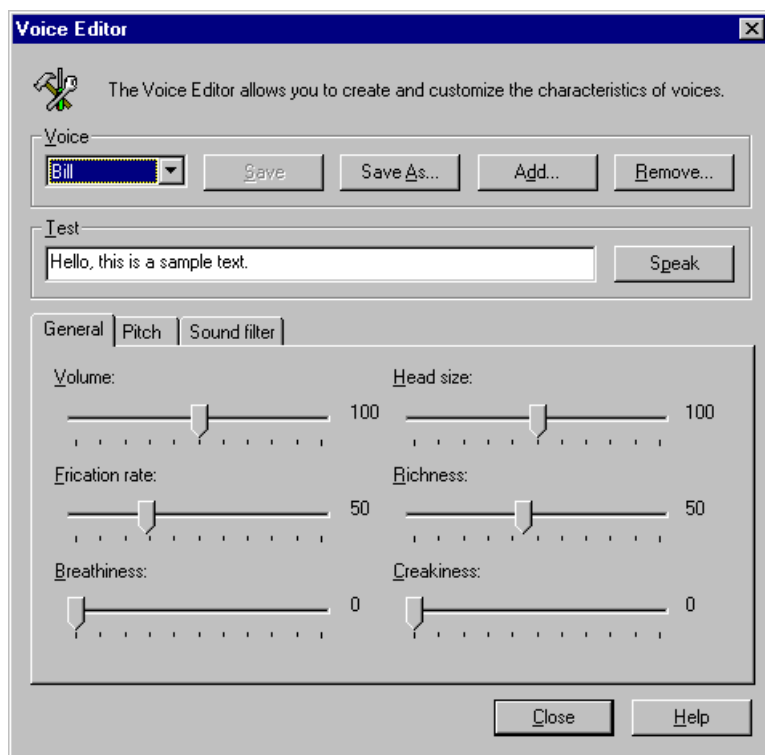
Voice parameters

To hear the effect of the changes you make, click the **Speak** button, and then experiment with adjusting the sliders to various positions. If you don't like the effect of the changes you make, you can always click **Close**, and then **No** on the **Confirmation** dialog box to close the **Voice Editor** dialog box without saving your changes.

General tab page

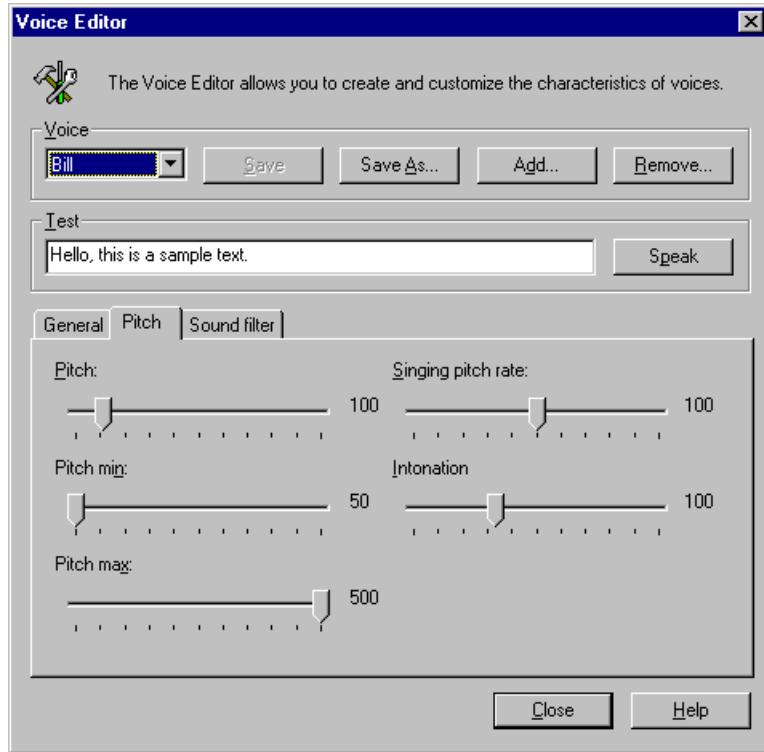
The **General** tab page allows you to change some parameters of the voices, such as **Volume**, **Frication rate**, **Breathiness**, **Head size**, **Richness**, and

Creakiness as displayed in the following diagram. (For definitions see the “Glossary” on page 165).



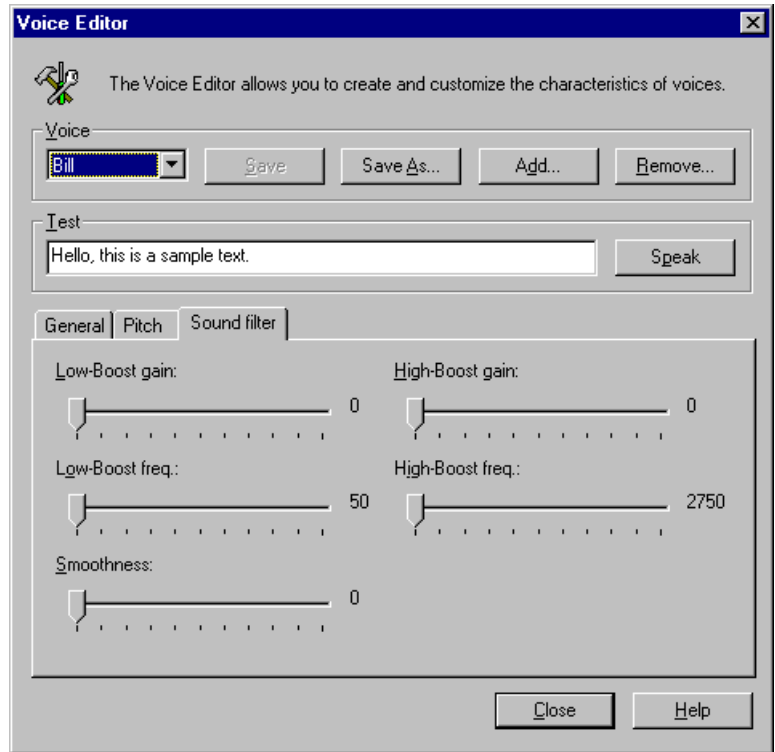
Pitch tab page

The **Pitch** tab page allows you to change voice filters such as **Pitch**, **Pitch min**, **Pitch max**, **Singing pitch rate**, and **Intonation level** as displayed below.



Sound filter tab page

The **Sound filter** tab page allows you to change the voice style parameters such as **High-Boost gain**, **High-Boost frequency**, **Low-Boost gain**, **Low-Boost frequency**, and **Smoothness** as displayed below.



To hear the effect of changing the voice parameters, click the **Speak** button, and then experiment with adjusting the sliders to various positions. If you don't like the effect of the changes you make, you can always close the **Voice Editor** dialog box without saving your changes. If you like the new voice settings then click **Save As...** to save the settings as a new voice, or **Save** if you want to save the settings for the existing voice.




*Adjusting some of the voice parameters may adversely affect the quality of the voice. Therefore, it is recommended that you click the **Speak** button to check the effect of any adjustments you make to Prody Parrot's voice before you save it.*

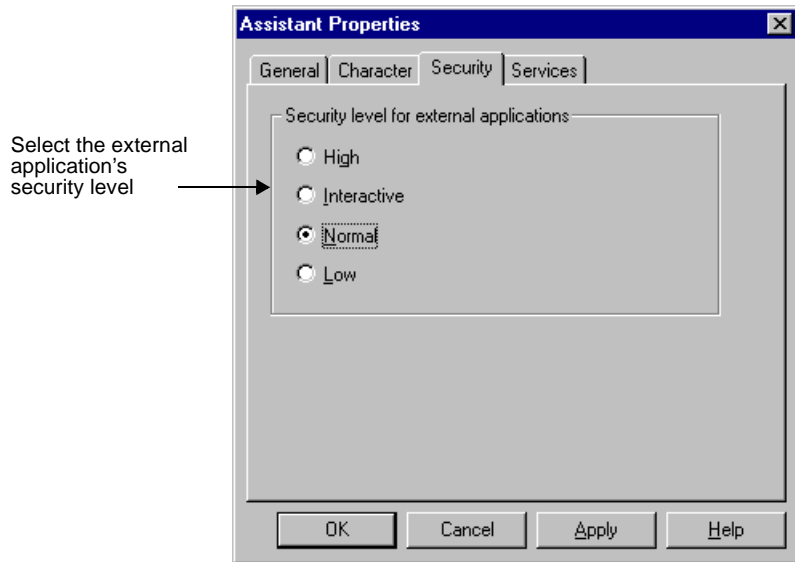
The Security Tab Page

When Prody Parrot starts an application it checks its authentication, and determines what security level it belongs to. On the **Security** tab page you can

assign various rights to external applications, which may try to control Prody Parrot's functionality.

To modify the security level for external applications:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**. Click **Properties...** to open the **Assistant Properties** dialog box. Select the **Security** tab page.




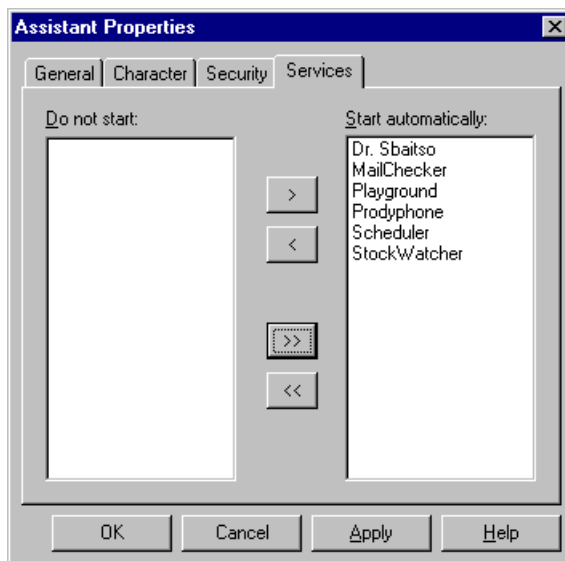
2. From the **Security level for external applications** group select one of the following:
 - **High**—the application is never allowed to take full control of Prody Parrot.
 - **Interactive**—the application is allowed to take control of Prody Parrot only if you allow it. You will be prompted to decide.
 - **Normal**—the application is allowed to take control over certain functions, but for others your permission is required, for which you will be prompted.
 - **Low**—the application is always allowed to take control over Prody Parrot.
3. Click **OK** to accept the changes and exit this dialog box.



The Services Tab Page

You can have Prody Parrot automatically start the services that are registered and appear on the **Services** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box.

To configure Prody Parrot to start the Assistant Services automatically:

1. On the **Assistant Control Panel** click the **Main Menu** button , then **Properties....** The **Assistant Properties** dialog box appears.
2. Select the **Services** tab page.



3. In the **Do not start** window select the service you wish to use by clicking it, then click the  button to move the service to the **Start automatically** window. Alternatively, you may click the  button to move all available services to the **Start automatically** window.
4. Click **Apply** and **OK**.

The services moved to the **Start automatically** window will start. Subsequently, when you start Prody Parrot, the services listed in the **Start automatically** window will be started, too.

Understanding User Profiles and Application Templates

User profiles are files that contain a user's complete training data, and personal information. For example, "JDoe" could be a user's profile that contains John Doe's training data and personal information. *Application templates* are parts of a user profile that contain the training data for each individual application. For instance, an application template called "CD Player", would contain all the training changes and additions for the CD Player application.

The ability to control user profiles and application templates in these various ways can save you lots of time. If another user has added and trained several valuable commands to their Prody Parrot user profile, you can simply import their training data to your user profile and take advantage of their additional commands.


You manage user profiles and application templates in the **Assistant User** dialog box. User profiles hold the personal information, and the commands trained by each user. Whenever a new user profile is created, commands in the generic set are automatically copied into the user file and saved with an ***.aut** extension in the Prody Parrot directory. Application templates, which hold the trained application-specific commands, e.g., the commands for Microsoft Word, are saved with an ***.apt** extension.

The Assistant User Dialog Box

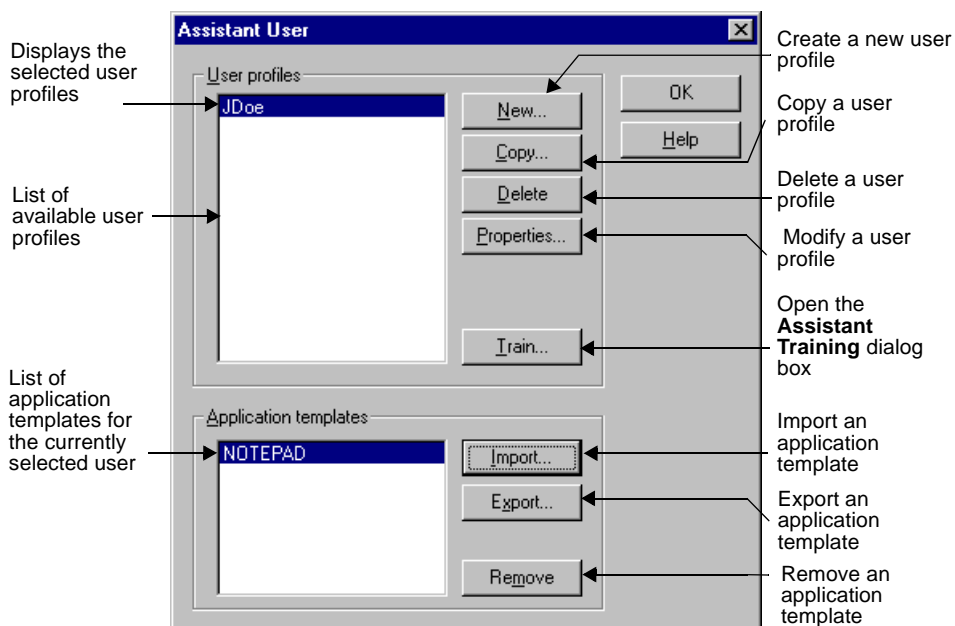
Manipulation of user profiles and application templates takes place in the **Assistant User** dialog box. Before beginning to train, you should familiarize yourself with the training environment.

Opening the Assistant User Dialog Box

To open the Assistant User dialog box:

1. Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Click **User...**

In the **Assistant User** dialog box, you can create, copy, modify and delete user profiles, as well as import, export, and delete application templates.



Managing User Profiles

When you start Prody Parrot for the first time, the **User Profile Properties** dialog box will open, allowing you to define your user name as well as other personal information. The user name entered into the **User Profile Properties** dialog box will be used as your user profile name.

By managing your user profiles, you can effectively reduce the amount of training that is necessary both for yourself and for other users. Prody Parrot allows you to:

- Create new user profiles
- Copy user profiles
- Modify user profiles
- Delete user profiles

Creating User Profiles

To create a new user profile:

1. Click **New...** in the **Assistant User** dialog box to access the **User Profile Properties** dialog box.
2. Complete your user profile with as much detail as possible. However, you always have the option of keeping the information you enter private, by specifying on the **Security** tab page which data fields should be public.

3. Create your own Internet ID by clicking on the **Create ID...** button. In order to do this, your full name is needed. (See “Create Your Internet ID” on page 108 for more information on creating your Internet ID.)
4. When done, click **OK** to save the information you entered and return to the **Assistant User** dialog box.
5. The name of the user profile you just created will appear in the **User profiles** window of the **Assistant User** dialog box.



*Once you have successfully obtained your Internet ID, the new user profile will be saved even if you click **Cancel** on the **User Profile** dialog box. In which case only the Internet ID will be saved, and all other changes you’ve made will be ignored.*

Copying User Profiles

You can use the commands trained by other users by copying their user profiles. Copying existing profiles can dramatically reduce training time for new users.

To copy a user profile:

1. In the **Assistant User** dialog box, select the name of the user profile that you would like to copy.
2. Click **Copy...** to open the **Copy User Profile** dialog box.
3. Type the user profile name you want to copy in the **Enter new name** text field and click **OK**. The new profile will appear in the **User profiles** window.

Modifying User Profiles

You may wish to modify a user profile—for example, if you don’t like the default name given to your user profile.

To modify a user profile:

1. Click on the profile you want to edit in the **User profiles** window in the **Assistant User** dialog box.
2. Click **Properties...** to open the **User Profile Properties** dialog box.
3. Modify the information that appears on any of the tab pages.
4. When done click **OK**.

Deleting User Profiles

Prody Parrot allows you to delete unwanted user profiles.

To delete a user profile:

In the **Assistant User** dialog box, select the profile from the **User profiles** window. Click **Delete**, then click **Yes** to confirm.

Managing Application Templates

Application templates, which use the extension ***.apt**, hold trained commands for specific applications. Whenever you train one or more application-specific commands in Prody Parrot, an application template is automatically created to store the training data. A separate application template is formed for each application in which you perform training. So, if you train at least one command in both Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator, two application templates will be created—one for each application.

Your application templates form part of your user profile. If you copy your user profile, all of your application templates and personal information are copied as well. You can also “copy” individual application templates by importing them from another user or exporting them to another user.



If you, or anyone with whom you would like to share templates, use VoiceAssist, please note that VoiceAssist and Prody Parrot application template files are not totally interchangeable. VoiceAssist templates may be successfully imported and used in Prody Parrot; however, Prody Parrot templates that are imported into VoiceAssist may not work properly.

Creating an Application Template

Application templates are automatically created when you train a new command in a specific application. If you want to create an application template, you must train or edit a command for a specific application. (See “Basic Input Training Procedures” on page 31 in “Chapter 5: Training Command Inputs” of this *User’s Guide*.)

Removing Application Templates

When you no longer want the training data for a specific application, you can delete the corresponding application templates from the user profiles.

To remove an application template from a user profile:

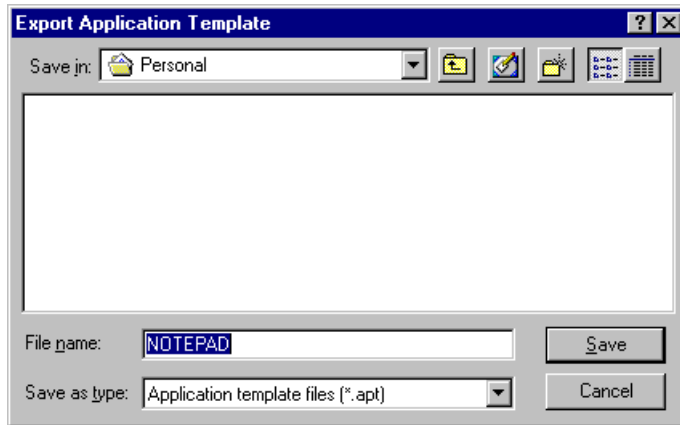
1. Click the relevant user profile in the **Assistant User** dialog box.
2. Select the application template to be deleted from the **Application templates** box.
3. Click **Remove**.

Exporting Application Templates

To make an application template available for another user profile, you need to *export* it, which means creating it as a separate file. You can then copy this file into whichever user profile you choose (see “Importing Application Templates” on page 144).

To export an application template:

1. In the **Assistant User** dialog box, select the user profile which contains the application template you want to export.
2. Select the application template to be exported from the **Application templates** box.
3. Click **Export...** to open the **Export Application Template** dialog box.



4. Select the directory in which you want to save the file, or keep the default directory.
5. Enter a new name in the **File name** box or keep the default name. Make sure to use the ***.apt** extension.
6. Click **Save**. The application template file will now appear in the directory you selected.

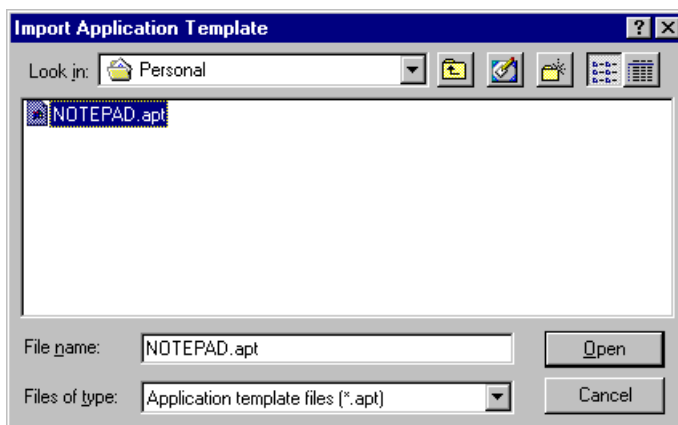
Importing Application Templates

To include an application template in a user profile, you need to *import* it from the directory in which it is stored. You can copy this file into whichever user profile you choose.

To import an application template:

1. In the **Assistant User** dialog box, select the user profile into which you want to copy an application template.

2. Click **Import...** to open the **Import Application Template** dialog box.

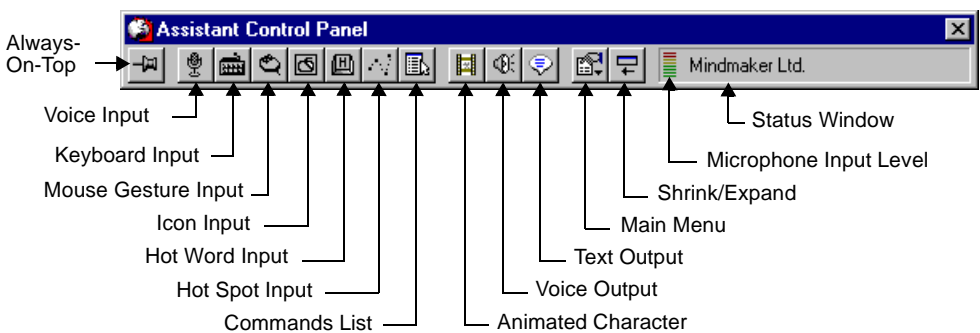


3. Select the Prody Parrot application template file (*.appt) you wish to import.
4. Click **Open**, and the application template file will appear in the **Application templates** window.

Appendix A: Quick Reference

Assistant Control Panel Buttons

The picture and list below describe the large, expanded **Assistant Control Panel**. When you first start Prody Parrot, you may see the small version of the **Assistant Control Panel**, which does not contain all the available buttons. Follow the instruction under the “To choose the large control panel:” on page 20 to display all the **Assistant Control Panel** buttons.




| Button | Function |
|---------------------|---|
| Always-On-Top | When depressed, the Assistant Control Panel will stay on top of all other windows on your desktop, regardless of the active one. |
| Voice Input | When voice input is activated, Prody Parrot will accept the commands you say into the microphone. |
| Keyboard Input | When keyboard input is activated, Prody Parrot will accept the commands you type in the Keyboard Input dialog box, which can be displayed by pressing SHIFT+ESC. |
| Mouse Gesture Input | When mouse gesture input is activated, Prody Parrot will accept your commands issued by gesturing with the mouse. |
| Icon Input | When icon input is activated, Prody Parrot will accept your commands issued by dragging icons (*.ico files) onto him. |
| Hot Word Input | When hot word input is activated, Prody Parrot will accept your commands issued when typing in a pretrained phrase or word in any application. |
| Hot Spot Input | When hot spot input is activated, Prody Parrot will accept your commands issued by clicking on a predefined hot spot area. |

| Button | Function |
|--------------------|---|
| Commands List | When the Commands List window is displayed, you can issue commands by double-clicking them in the appropriate commands list. |
| Animated Character | When depressed, the Prody Parrot animated character appears on your desktop. |
| Voice Output | When voice output is activated, you can hear what Prody Parrot says through your speakers or headphones. |
| Text Output | When text output is activated, you can read what Prody Parrot says in cartoon-style text bubbles next to his beak. |
| Main Menu | When clicked, the main menu appears. |
| Shrink/Expand | Shrink or expand the Assistant Control Panel by clicking this button. |

Issuing Commands

You can issue commands in any of the following seven ways.


To issue commands by voice:

1. Make sure the **Voice Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. If you have not already done so, connect your microphone to the computer and test the audio input (see “Chapter 2: Getting Started” if you need help).
3. Say a command into the microphone.


To issue commands by keyboard:

1. Make sure the **Keyboard Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Press SHIFT+ESC to display the **Keyboard Input** dialog box.
3. Type in a command and click **OK**.


To issue commands by mouse gesture:

1. Make sure the **Mouse Gesture Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. While holding down the SHIFT key and the left mouse button, make a gesture that you have associated with a command.


To issue commands by icon:

1. Make sure the **Icon Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Locate the icon associated with the command you want to execute, e.g., the pudding icon in the **Treasure Chest**.
3. With the left mouse button pressed, drag the icon over the animated character.
4. Release the mouse button to execute the command.


To issue commands by hot word input:

1. Make sure the **Hot Word Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Type in any application and Prody Parrot will perform the appropriate action as soon as the command word or phrase is typed.

To issue commands by hot spot input:

1. Make sure the **Hot Spot Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Click on the predefined hot spot area and Prody Parrot will perform the action you trained him to do.

To issue commands by double-clicking in the Commands List window:

1. Open the **Commands List** window by clicking on the **Commands List** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
2. Double-click any command in the **Commands List**.

Available Commands

Generic Commands

The commands in the generic command set can be used to make Prody Parrot open Windows-based programs and accessories, execute general commands within an application, and control the TextAssist reader. Brief explanations of each command follow:

| Command | Action |
|-------------------------|--|
| Begin Reading | Starts the TextAssist reader. |
| Close | Closes the program in the currently active window. |
| Enter | Performs the action of the ENTER key. |
| Escape | Performs the action of the ESC key. |
| Hide Commands | Closes the Commands List window. |
| Maximize | Maximizes the active window. |
| Minimize | Minimizes the active window. |
| Pause Reading | Pauses the TextAssist reader. |
| Restore | Restores the size of the active window. |
| Show Commands | Opens the Commands List window. |
| Space Bar | Same as pressing the keyboard space bar. |
| Start Calculator | Starts the calculator. |
| Start CD Player | Starts the CD player. |
| Start Control Panel | Opens the Windows Control Panel. |
| Start Windows Explorer | Starts Windows Explorer. |
| Start Internet Explorer | Starts Internet Explorer. |
| Start Media Player | Starts Windows Media Player. |
| Start Paint | Starts Microsoft Paint. |
| Start Notepad | Starts Notepad. |
| Start Solitaire | Starts Solitaire. |
| Start Sound Recorder | Opens the Sound Recorder program. |
| Start Task Manager | Opens the Windows Task Manager dialog box. |

| Command | Action |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Start Volume Control | Opens the Volume Control dialog box. |
| Start Word Pad | Starts WordPad. |
| Stop Reading | Stops TextAssist from reading. |
| Resume Reading | Resumes reading. |

Assistant Commands

Most of the commands in the assistant command set are self-explanatory. For example, the “fly up” command makes Prody Parrot fly up to the top border of your screen, and the “what time is it” command makes Prody Parrot tell you what time it is. There are a few assistant commands, however, that warrant a brief explanation. They are listed below.

| Command | Action |
|----------------------|---|
| be quiet | Makes Prody Parrot stop speaking any statement that he is in the process of uttering, or was about to say. |
| come back | Makes Prody Parrot return to the visible area of the screen (see also “go away”). |
| come closer | Makes Prody Parrot fly toward you. He grows bigger as he gets closer (see also “go back”). |
| come here | Makes Prody Parrot fly to and perch on whatever window you are currently using. |
| don’t talk too much | Sets the Interaction slider to the middle position. |
| end conversation | Exits conversation mode (see also “let’s talk” and “talk to me”). |
| generic commands off | Deactivates the generic commands. |
| generic commands on | Reactivates the generic commands. |
| go away | Makes Prody Parrot fly off the visible area of the screen (see also “come back”). |
| go back | Makes Prody Parrot fly away from you. He returns to his normal size as he gets further away (see also “come closer”). |
| go home | Makes Prody Parrot perch himself in the lower right corner of your screen. |
| let’s talk | Initiates conversation mode. Prody Parrot will prompt you to discuss sports, movies, music, and other popular topics (see also “end conversation”). |

| Command | Action |
|------------------------|---|
| pardon me | Makes Prody Parrot repeat his last statement. |
| real mode off | Turns real mode off so that Prody Parrot no longer requires care and feeding. |
| real mode on | Turns real mode on so that Prody Parrot requires care and feeding. |
| take a break | Makes Prody Parrot perch at the bottom of your screen and doze until you issue a command. |
| talk less | Moves the Interaction slider one notch toward the less end, reducing how much Prody Parrot says. |
| talk more | Moves the Interaction slider one notch toward the more end, increasing how much Prody Parrot says. |
| talk to me | Initiates conversation mode. Prody Parrot will prompt you to discuss sports, movies, music, and other popular topics (see also “end conversation”). |
| tell me about yourself | Makes Prody Parrot give you a brief, 3-minute orientation to the program. |
| Go To Sleep | Disables input for Prody Parrot and directs the character to “go to sleep” at the bottom of the desktop (see also Wake Up). |
| Wake Up | Enables input for Prody Parrot and causes the character to “wake up”, be attentive to your commands, move around the desktop, and interact with you (see also Go To Sleep). |
| let’s play | This command initiates conversation mode. |
| Get information | This command initiated conversation mode. Prody Parrot will ask you what kind of information he can get for you. |
| Make a call | This command starts Prodyphone. |
| Check E-Mail | This command starts the MailChecker Assistant Service. |
| Check my Schedule | This command starts the Scheduler Assistant Service. |
| Go to work | Exits conversation mode (see also “let’s talk” and “talk to me”). Identical to the “End conversation command”. |


Application-Specific Commands

The application-specific command set contains the menu commands, push buttons, radio buttons, check boxes, etc., for the application that is currently in focus on your Windows desktop. Issuing an application-specific command to Prody Parrot has the same effect as clicking the menu command (or any other button, check box, etc.) directly in the application. In other words, if Microsoft Word is the active application on your computer and you issue the “print”

command to Prody Parrot, the **Print** dialog box will appear, just as it would have if you had clicked **File**, then **Print** in the Microsoft Word window.

Checking Your Audio Setup

If you know that audio recording and playback works well on your computer, then you may test and adjust the microphone input level through Prody Parrot.

Click the **Main Menu** button  on the **Assistant Control Panel**, and then select **Microphone Level...** When speaking, you should be able to see the green **Recording level** meter respond to your voice.

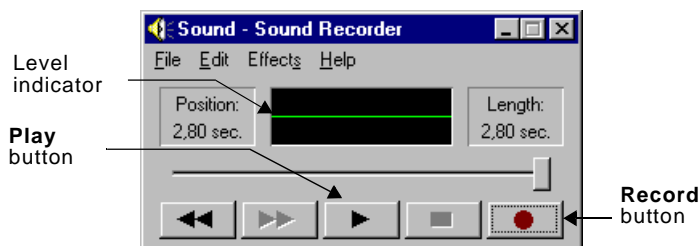
If the meter moves only a little, or moves too much, then you should adjust the **Recording volume** slider until the meter goes about half-way up the scale when you speak in a normal voice.

If the meter does not react to your voice at all, then refer to the following instructions.

To check audio recording and playback:

To check your audio setup, make sure that you can successfully record your own voice using the Windows **Sound Recorder**. For example, in Windows 95 you would do the following steps:

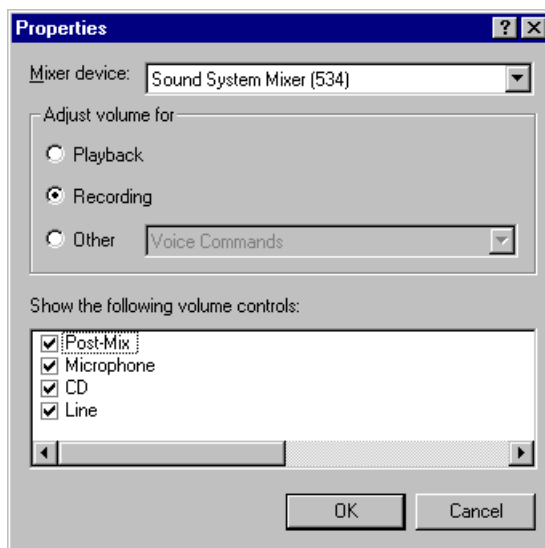
1. Click **Start** on the Windows taskbar, then **Programs**, **Accessories**, **Multimedia**, and **Sound Recorder**.



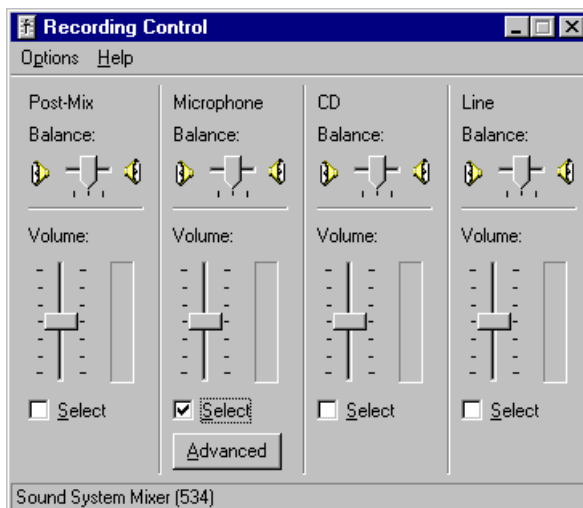
In the **Sound Recorder** dialog box, click the **Record** button and then say a few words into your microphone. You should see the green line in the level indicator box fluctuate as you speak. If it does not, make sure that your microphone is plugged into the correct jack and that your mouth is close enough to the microphone. If the green line still does not fluctuate when you speak, go on to step 2. If the green line does fluctuate when you speak, then your microphone is ready to communicate with Prody Parrot.

2. If you had trouble getting your microphone input to display anything on the level indicator in the previous step, then you will need to verify that the **Mixer** properties for your microphone are correct. Click the Windows **Start** menu button, then **Programs**, **Accessories**, **Multimedia**, and

Volume Control. In the **Options** menu, click **Properties**. The **Properties** dialog box will appear.



3. In the **Adjust volume for** group, select **Recording**. Then, in the **Show the following volume controls** list, make sure that the **Microphone** check box is selected. Click **OK**. The **Recording Control** dialog box will appear.



4. Adjust the **Volume** slider for the **Microphone** and check the **Select** box below it. Clear the **Select** check boxes under all of the other items. When you have finished, click the **X** in the upper right corner of the dialog box to close it. Check your microphone input again (as described in step 1). If

the green line fluctuates in the level indicator box, then you are ready to use Prody Parrot.



In Windows 98 you will follow a similar procedure, but consult your Windows 98 user's guide for details.

For more information on either the **Volume Control** or the **Sound Recorder** application, click the **Help** button in the relevant dialog box.

Assistant-Enabled Web Sites

Web masters can now embed hidden content in their Web pages which will extend Prody Parrot's knowledge and enable him to be a personal virtual tour guide of the site. When you visit one of these sites with Prody Parrot running, he will immediately use the embedded information to speak and act on the web site owner's behalf. To ensure that Parrot will use the embedded information your browser must be configured appropriately.

To configure your browser for Assistant-enabled web sites for Internet Explorer:

1. Open **Internet Explorer** and select the **View** menu.
2. Select **Internet Options...** and the **Internet Options** dialog box will display.
3. Go to the **Security** tab page and select the appropriate zone from the drop-down list box.
4. Now select a security level less than **High**.


For other web browsers, configure them to allow ActiveX controls.

Appendix B: Troubleshooting

This appendix offers tips and suggestions for solving and answering some common issues and questions.

Prody Parrot does not recognize any of my voice commands.

If Prody Parrot is recognizing none, or almost none of your voice commands, try the following steps:

1. Make sure your audio set-up is correct. (See “Before You Install” on page 6.)
2. Check the recording level in the **Voice Input Test** dialog box. (See “Testing Voice Input Recognition” on page 37.)
3. Make sure that Prody Parrot is not in sleep mode (See “Prody Parrot does not respond to any commands issued by any input method.” on page 158.).
4. Make sure that the **Voice Input** button  is depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.
5. Speak in a natural, conversational, and relaxed tone.
6. Avoid prolonged pauses between the words of a command.
7. If you trained some of the voice commands, then try to use the same vocal tone and speed that you used during training.
8. If using a hand-held microphone, position the microphone between 5 and 11 inches from your mouth.
9. Try renaming misrecognized commands to different words or phrases.
10. If the problem still persists, do additional training on the misrecognized words.
11. Use a unidirectional or high-quality hands-free headset microphone for optimum recognition results. Both “headset-style” and “stick-style” microphones are acceptable for use with Prody Parrot. Which style is best for you depends on the environment in which you will be using the software. In general, however, most users find that the headset style provides the most consistent and reliable voice recognition performance.

Prody Parrot does not respond to any commands issued by any input method.

Prody Parrot will not respond to input of any kind, if he is in sleep mode, with the exception of the command “Wake Up”. To bring the program out of sleep mode and reactivate input for all commands, issue the command “Wake Up”. However, Prody Parrot may awake if you disturb his slumber with your cursor, or if you open the **Assistant Training** dialog box.

Prody Parrot sometimes confuses one command for another.

If Prody Parrot recognizes most of your voice commands, but confuses a few of them, then try the following steps:

1. Rename the most commonly misrecognized commands to different words or phrases.
2. Don't use command names that sound similar to other commands—they may be misrecognized.
3. Avoid very short command names. For example, using “Bold Font” instead of just “Bold” yields better results.
4. Check that keyword spotting is not enabled for too many commands.
5. If the problem still persists, do additional training on the misrecognized words.
6. If this problem happens often, you might want to consider trying a different microphone. Some users notice a significant difference in speech recognition accuracy when using one microphone versus another.

See also “Prody Parrot misrecognizes a lot of commands for one particular application.”

Tooltips are not working when Prody Parrot is running.

Due to a limitation of Windows, tooltips cannot function when animation is active. Therefore, when you want to use tooltips, you will need to temporarily turn off the animated character by clicking the **Animated Character** button



on the large **Assistant Control Panel**, or through the **Main Menu** on the small **Assistant Control Panel**.

Prody Parrot frequently pauses in the middle of a word or sentence.

Prody Parrot's speech output may be frequently interrupted when other applications are using a lot of system resources. If you have other applications open, try closing some of them you are not using. If this is not practical, or if the problem persists, you may want to deactivate speech output and just use text bubbles.

Prody Parrot leaves a trail of images when he moves on the screen.

This happens especially on slower machines, or when you are dragging a window on the desktop at the same time that Prody Parrot is flying. To clear these afterimages from the desktop, click on the desktop and press the F5 key.

If you have Microsoft Plus! installed, disabling Font Smoothing will minimize this problem. To disable the Font Smoothing feature in Microsoft Plus! do the following:

1. In Windows **Control Panel**, double-click the **Display** icon
2. On the **Plus!** tab page, clear the **Smooth edges of screen fonts** check box by clicking it. Click **OK**.

See also: Microsoft Knowledge Base Article Q138836

<http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q138/8/36.asp>


If the problem persists, you can prevent Prody Parrot from moving during drag operations by selecting the **Stop animation during window dragging** check box on the **General** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog.

Prody Parrot tries to interpret MIDI or CD music as voice commands.

To solve this problem, in the **Recording Control**, disable the MIDI Input, Line Input, and CD Input as recording sources.

Prody Parrot won't accept food even when hungry.

In order to drag food icons onto Prody Parrot for feeding, you need to have the

Icon Input button  depressed on the **Assistant Control Panel**.

Prody Parrot talks too much (or too little).

You can issue the commands “talk more” or “talk less”, or adjust the **Interaction** slider on the **Character** tab page of the **Assistant Properties** dialog box.

Prody Parrot keeps telling me that I'm talking too soft (or talking too loud).

If you are speaking in your natural voice and Prody Parrot complains that it is too soft or too loud, it is likely that your audio setup needs to be adjusted.

1. Make sure your audio setup is correct. (See “Before You Install” on page 6.)
2. Check the recording level in the **Voice Input Test** dialog box. (See “Testing Voice Input Recognition” on page 37.)

Prody Parrot misrecognizes a lot of commands for one particular application.

Some applications have a large number of commands, and Prody Parrot will try to be ready to recognize any one of them at any given time. You should disable or delete commands that you seldom use from the application-specific command set. This will reduce the number of commands that Prody Parrot has to recognize for that application, thereby improving his recognition accuracy.

Prody Parrot will not allow voice input training.

If Prody Parrot does not let you train voice commands, and indicates that the voice input was too long, this could be due to background noise. In this case, try the following steps:

1. Make sure your audio setup is correct. (See “Before You Install” on page 6.)
2. Check the recording level in the **Voice Input Test** dialog box. (See “Testing Voice Input Recognition” on page 37.)

I need a microphone but I don't know what kind to get.

There are many factors to consider when selecting a microphone to use with your voice recognition product:

- For use with your sound card on your computer, you will need a microphone with an 1/8” plug (as opposed the 1/4” plug size that is commonly used with stereo equipment).
- There are two basic types of microphone elements: dynamic and condensor. As shown in the figure below, they have slightly different plugs. Condensor microphones usually give better performance than dynamic ones; however, unlike dynamic microphones, condensor microphones need power to operate. This power may be supplied by batteries in the microphone, or by the sound card itself.



Dynamic microphone plug




Condensor microphone plug

- If you have, or are planning to buy, a condensor microphone, keep in mind that it needs a power source. Some microphones have a battery to provide this power. Otherwise, the sound card must provide power to the microphone. Make sure your sound card can do this.
- Be aware that the configuration of the microphone jack on some sound cards and the plug on some microphones is not standard. An incompatible

connection between microphone and sound card can result in damage to the microphone, the sound card, or both. If your microphone was not included with your sound card, check the microphone packaging, or with the sound card manufacturer, to make sure the microphone is compatible.

- Microphones are available with different pick up schemes. You should select a *unidirectional* microphone, which picks up sound input from just one direction and suppresses sound input from all other directions. It is the preferred type of microphone for use with speech recognition products because, when positioned properly, it picks up the user's speech and ignores extraneous background noise.
- Both "headset-style" and "stick-style" microphones are acceptable for use with Prody Parrot. Which style is best for you depends on the environment in which you will be using the software. In general, however, most users find that the headset style provides the most consistent and reliable voice recognition performance. Also, many users appreciate the convenience of a headset that has both a microphone for speaking and earphones for listening.
- Do not select a cheap microphone. Although there may be exceptions, most microphones under \$10.00 will not provide the desired level of voice recognition accuracy.

When closing Prody Parrot from the Task Manager, I see a warning message—What should I do?

First, it is not advised that you try to shut down Prody Parrot from the **Task Manager**. Instead, please click the  in the top right corner of the **Assistant Control Panel**, or close the application by right-clicking the tasktray icon, then left-clicking **Exit**.

If you do close Prody Parrot from the **Task Manager**, then you may see a dialog box with a message such as "This application is not responding. It may be busy...". This is because Prody Parrot is taking a little more time to shut itself down than Windows expects. You should either click the **Wait** or the **Cancel** button. Do NOT click the **End Task** button—it may cause Prody Parrot to crash.

I've retrained a command action, but the action is not executing as I specified.

Every action, both previously known to Prody Parrot and those trained by you, are described in MiniScript. This even applies to the actions which you defined in the **Action Training** dialog box. When retraining a command in the **Action Training** dialog box, the existing action still exists, preceding the action you are training. To delete the previous action, remove the MiniScript which describes it. Look in the **Script Editor** dialog box to do this.

I can't move my mouse or type.

Possibly you've trained a long macro that is executing while you are trying to use your mouse or keyboard. While a macro is executing, you do not have control over these two devices. Instead, try retraining your macro to execute as fast as possible, or you could also try specifying your action in MiniScript

I can't access the Assistant Commands.

While the animation button is not active, you do not have access to the assistant functions, commands, and conversation mode. To access these features, activate the animation button on the **Assistant Control Panel** by clicking on it. However, this situation does not apply when the animated character is simply hidden (when you tell him to "go away").

I trained Prody Parrot to a certain mouse gesture, but he recognizes any gesture and launches the command.

Mouse gesture input recognition is most accurate when at least four commands are trained to recognize this method of input. The inherent characteristic of machine learning, which is used by mouse gesture input recognition, is that it requires a few positive and negative example in order to correctly recognize new input.

Prody Parrot won't get weather for the cities I chose.

To ensure that Prody Parrot gets the weather for the cities you configured, always select the **Remember my ID & Password** check box on the My Yahoo! sign-in page. Remember, the weather information will be retrieved for the My Yahoo! user who last selected this check box. See "Retrieving Information and Navigating the Web" on page 67 for detailed instructions.

Prody Parrot gets the wrong weather, sports, and news information.

This may happen if more than one person uses the computer with the same Windows user name. To take advantage of personalized customization feature of Prody Parrot, log on to Windows using your own user name. Refer to the Windows documentation of online Help for instructions on configuring Windows User Profiles.

Sometimes Prody Parrot does not execute the command or commands I issue.

When a command of a certain type (generic or application-specific) is recognized, and the associated action is executing, a second command of the same type cannot be executed. Before issuing the next command of the same type, the current action must first end. This situation may also occur if you define the same hot word or hot spot for more than one command. Keep in mind that only the first command of the same type (generic or application-specific) will execute.

There is a lot of “noise” when Prody Parrot speaks.

If you have configured your audio setup correctly (see “Checking Your Audio Setup” on page 153), and there still background noise, then the problem is most likely with your outdated driver and/or audio hardware. The best solution would be to upgrade your driver and/or audio hardware.

The software freezes when launching.

Perhaps you have launched the software and it brings up the splash screen, but does nothing afterwards. If you encounter this, install the latest version of Internet Explorer, and launch the software again.

The focus changes to another application when I draw a gesture with the mouse.

When drawing a gesture with the mouse to issue an application-specific command, always start the stroke over top of the application the command applies to.

Appendix C: Glossary

action

An *action* is the procedure that Prody Parrot carries out when you issue a command. There are five basic types of actions: opening an application, folder or file, speech output, animation, macros, and MiniScript.

See also command

Address Book

A component of the Internet Services, which allows you to see a list of names, Internet IDs, and other attributes for people you may want to communicate with.

See also Internet Services, Prodyphone

always-on-top

When the **Always-On-Top** button is depressed the **Assistant Control Panel** will be on top of other applications and windows, and it will be always visible.

See **Assistant Control Panel**

application template

A file that contains application-specific command training.

See also user profile

application-specific command

A command that is associated with a specific application. Whenever you open a program, Prody Parrot extracts the menu commands, buttons and other controls, and makes them available for your use. In addition, you can define your own application-specific commands.

See also command, command set

Assistant 2.0

Prody Parrot 2.0 is a part of the family of Assistant 2.0 products of Mindmaker. Prody Parrot is your Assistant.

assistant command

A command that enables you to control or interact with the Prody Parrot character. For example, tell Prody Parrot “hello” or say “walk left”.

See also command, command set

Assistant Control Panel

The **Assistant Control Panel** consists of a toolbar that provides access to the features and functions of Prody Parrot and allows you to determine its input and output modes.

Assistant Properties dialog box

A dialog box that allows you to set general program options as well as adjust the performance of the animated character. Accessible from the **Main Menu** of the **Assistant Control Panel**.

Assistant Services

Applications and services that are offered by Prody Parrot.

Assistant Training dialog box

The dialog box in which you create, edit, and train commands.

See also command, training

automatic training

Prody Parrot automatically self-trains the inputs and actions associated with the menu commands of any application that you open.

breathiness

One of Prody Parrot's adjustable voice parameters. In human speech, "breathy" sounds are produced by allowing a great deal of air to pass through the slightly open vocal cords. Prody Parrot can simulate breathiness in its synthesized speech.

command

An instruction, comment, or question by which the user controls Prody Parrot or prompts him to act. A command has three components: the command name, the input, and the action. There are three types of commands: assistant commands, generic commands, and application-specific commands.

See also input, command name, action

command macro

A macro created on the **Macro** tab page of the **Action** dialog box. This macro applies only to the command for which it was trained.

See also script macro, macro

command name

The name of a command. Prody Parrot pre-assigns names for all generic, assistant, and application-specific commands. You can change generic and application-specific command names if you choose.

command set

A group of commands. Prody Parrot uses five types of command sets: generic commands, assistant commands, and application-specific commands, HTML commands, and several others of various assistant services.

See also command

Commands List window

A window that lists all currently available commands. The commands listed in this window are categorized to make it easier to find the command you are looking for.

See also command

control panel

See **Assistant Control Panel**

creakiness

One of Prody Parrot's adjustable voice parameters. In human speech, creakiness, also called laryngealization, is produced when the rate of vibration of a speaker's vocal cords is slowed down considerably, sometimes so far that you can hear the individual vibrations as the person speaks. Prody Parrot can simulate creakiness in its synthesized speech.

See Voice Editor dialog box

E-mail Client Program

This is the program that you use to read your e-mail. While MailChecker notifies you of new e-mail received, it does not have provisions compose, edit, or reply to messages. You need a separate program to do that. You probably are already using such a program. For example, Eudora, Microsoft Outlook, Windows Messaging and Netscape Communicator are some of the commonly used e-mail client programs.

expanding the control panel

Click on the **Expand/Shrink** button on the **Assistant Control Panel** to display the **Status Window**.

See also Assistant Control Panel

generic command set

Commands that are always available when Prody Parrot is running, except when he is in sleep mode.

See also assistant command, application-specific command, command

head size

One of Prody Parrot's adjustable voice parameters. Increased head size has the effect of giving the voice a deeper resonance.

See also Voice Editor dialog box

hiding the control panel

You may hide the **Assistant Control Panel** so it does not require any space on you Windows desktop. However, the Prody Parrot icon is still visible in the Window tasktray.

See also Assistant Control Panel

hot spot

An area in an application that you define by training input, and use to launch a command.

Internet Services

A technology that transparently connects Assistant 2.0 users over the Internet or intranet.

hot word

A predefined word or phrase that you specify by training input, and used to launch a command.

input

What the user does in order to execute a command. The input modes that Prody Parrot recognizes are voice, keyboard, mouse gesture, and icons, hot spot, hot word, and double-clicking on a command in the **Commands List** window.

See also command

Intelligent Assistant

A computer that uses sophisticated software and hardware to do a variety of useful tasks on the user's behalf.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Keyboard Input box | The dialog box that enables you to issue keyboard commands to Prody Parrot. You open it by pressing SHIFT+ESC. |
| keyword spotting | A feature that enables Prody Parrot to recognize voice commands as part of larger phrases. For example, if you activate keyword spotting for the “Close” command, you can issue the command via voice by saying “Close”, “Please Close”, “Close this program now”, etc. |
| large Assistant Control Panel | When you first start Prody Parrot, you may see the small version of the Assistant Control Panel , which does not contain all the available buttons. Follow the instruction under the “To choose the large control panel:” on page 20 to display all the Assistant Control Panel buttons |
| laryngealization | <i>See</i> creakiness |
| macro | A sequence of actions executed by a single command. For example, you can execute a macro that will open a program, enter text, then save the document whenever you say “Letter”. <i>See also</i> command macro, script macro |
| MAPI | Stands for Microsoft Messaging Application Programming Interface. This is a Microsoft's Windows standard for applications that deal with electronic mail. MailChecker treats mails received through MAPI as being received from a separate mailbox. |
| Mail Server URL | Internet/POP3 mail is stored in a mail server that has an address. This address is called mail server URL. It is usually of the form “mail.domainname.com”. If you do not know what is the mail server URL for your Internet/POP3 account, please contact your system administrator, Internet Service provider, or the organization/person who supplies you the e-mail account. |
| Mailbox | Just like a mail box for snail mail, electronic mail has a similar concept of a mail box. The concept of a mail box allows a single user to receive e-mail through more than one account. Each account should be specified in a separate mailbox. |
| MiniScript | The language you use to describe actions performed in the Windows environment. |
| mouse gesture | A drawing or character made with the mouse by holding down the SHIFT key, and the left mouse button. You can use mouse gestures to execute commands. For example, you can draw a circle to open a program. |
| POP3 | Post Office Protocol, version 3. This is a standard protocol used by most mail servers and clients to communicate between themselves. |

Prodyphone

One of the Assistant Services offered by Prody Parrot, which enables live telephone conversations with other Assistant 2.0 (Prody Parrot and Zymo the Alien) user's over the Internet.

See also Assistant Services

Script Command

A command that appears in the **Commands** window of the **ScriptEditor** dialog box. Use script commands to specify the action associated with an input command.

See also ScriptEditor, Assistant Training dialog box, command

ScriptEditor

The advanced dialog box where you can train the actions of commands. The description of these actions are written in MiniScript.

See also MiniScript

script macro

Macro created on the **ScriptEditor** dialog box. This macro may be used in any script for any command.

See also command macro, macro

showing the control panel

You may show (or unhide) the **Assistant Control Panel** if it is hidden.

See also Assistant Control Panel, hiding the control panel

shrinking the control panel

Click on the **Expand/Shrink** button on the **Assistant Control Panel** to hide the **Status Window**.

See also Assistant Control Panel, expanding the control panel

sound card

A piece of hardware that enables a computer to generate and record sound.

speech recognition

The ability of a program to understand spoken words or sounds. The two types of speech recognition are dictation, which translates spoken words into text, and command-and-control, which uses speech to execute commands. Prody Parrot comes with command-and-control recognition as a built-in feature, using Mindmaker's VoiceAssist technology.

See also speech synthesis

speech synthesis

The ability of a program to generate speech.

See also speech recognition

training

The process by which you train Prody Parrot to recognize a command. You can create a new command name, teach Prody Parrot to recognize your input, and teach Prody Parrot to perform an action.

See also command

unidirectional microphone

A unidirectional microphone picks up sound input from just one direction and suppresses sound input from all other directions. It is the preferred type of microphone for use with speech recognition products because, when positioned properly, it picks up the user's speech and ignores extraneous background noise.

user profile

A file that contains your training data and personal information. Whenever you train Prody Parrot to recognize a command, the information is saved in your user profile. User profile files have an ***.aut** extension.

See also application template

User Profile dialog box

The information you provide in the **User Profile** dialog box is necessary to and Internet ID in order to use Prodyphone.

See also Prodyphone

Voice Editor dialog box

A dialog box that allows you to control Prody Parrot's voice parameters.

Windows system path

The route of a file which allows the operating system to find, sort, and retrieve these files quickly and easily.

Zymo the Alien

Prody Parrot and Zymo the Alien are part of the family of Assistant 2.0 products of Mindmaker.

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