Dock Application Launchers

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Aquí hi ha una llista d'uns quants llançadors d'aplicacions útils en diferents formes. Es pot triar entre els programes substitutius de llançadors d'aplicacions portàtils, menú Inici i barra de tasques, i llançadors orientats a teclat.

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Dock Application Launchers
Docks are graphical application launchers that enhance and organize your desktop. They are generally very customizable and extendable.

RocketDock
RocketDock is an application launcher, or dock, for Windows that sits along one edge of your desktop. It's modeled after the Mac OS X launch toolbar and contains shortcuts for launching programs and opening files and folders. You can also extend the functionality of the dock using docklets and the look of the dock is customizable.

We've previously shown you how to install, use, and extend RocketDock and how to make RocketDock portable.

ObjectDock
ObjectDock is another dock for Windows that is similar to RocketDock. It allows you to organize your shortcuts, programs, and running tasks on an attractive, animated dock. You can also add extra functionality to your dock as widgets, such as a weather widget, a clock, a calendar, and a battery status widget. Setup your dock quickly by importing your Quick Launch shortcuts and pinned Taskbar items. Your dock can be placed on any edge of your screen.

There is also a paid version ($19.95) of ObjectDock that allows you to create as many docks as you want and to add tabs to your docks. It also provides Aero-Peek-like functionality for improved task switching and allows you to access your system tray icons on your dock.

RK Launcher
RK Launcher is another free dock utility for Windows that provides a visually pleasing bar on the edge of your screen to which you can easily add shortcuts to programs, files and folders. The dock can be placed on any edge of your screen or in one of the corners. You can completely customize the appearance with themes and custom icons and add functionality with docklets. It's many features and the ability to minimize programs to the dock makes RK Launcher a great Taskbar replacement.

XWindows Dock

XWindows Dock is a free dock program for Windows that emulates the Mac launcher toolbar. It's completely customizable and contains graphics effects like reflections, transparency, shadow, blur, etc. Their site claims that they use only the latest technologies and that "you get the most powerful, stable and fastest dock for Windows platform." The new plugin manager also provides a new stack container, similar to the Stacks docklet available for RocketDock, with fan/grid views.

Sliderdock

Sliderdock is a free dock program for Windows that is different from the dock programs we have showed you so far. It allows you to easily add program shortcuts, files, and folders to each circular dock, or ring, by dragging and dropping. You can have multiple rings of icons. Rotating the mouse wheel in each ring rotates the icons providing quick access to the icons. You can also use keyboard shortcuts to access the icons on your dock. Sliderdock is completely customizable, from the appearance of the rings and icons to the behavior of the dock.

Circle Dock

Circle Dock is another free, circular dock program for Windows, but different from Sliderdock. When you activate Circle Dock, it can display right at your mouse cursor, even if your mouse is at the edge of the screen. Any icons on the dock that are off the screen can be accessed using the mouse wheel or arrow keys. You can add unlimited folders, shortcuts, links, and managements across sub-levels. The background and icons on your dock are fully customizable. Circle Dock supports multiple monitors and virtual desktops and is portable. To run it, simply extract the files and run the .exe file.

Winstep Nexus Dock

Winstep Nexus Dock is a free, completely customizable dock program for Windows that provides live icon reflections among many other eye candy effects. The drag-and-drop capabilities of Nexus Dock make it easy to manage your applications, files, printers, etc. Use drag-and-drop to move, copy, and rearrange objects on and off the dock. Drop documents onto application objects on your dock to automatically load them in the appropriate programs. Drag items such as Control Panel and My Computer to your dock using Nexus Dock's virtual file system support. Documents, pictures, and video files dragged onto your dock displays as thumbnails for easy identification. Change the appearance of the icons on your dock by dragging and dropping your favorite .ico, .png, or .tif files onto objects on the dock. Nexus Dock can also act as a Taskbar replacement with its ability to show minimized, running programs and the system tray on your dock.

There is a paid (from $24.95) Ultimate version of Nexus Dock that has additional features, such as multiple docks and the ability to group shortcuts into nested sub-docks, tabbed docks, and the ability to duplicate, delete and disable and enable existing docks.

WinLaunch

WinLaunch is a free, portable application launcher for Windows taken from Mac OS X Lion. It starts minimized and activates, initially, using the Shift + Tab keyboard shortcut. When activated, the Windows desktop icons are hidden and the Windows background blurred, showing icons on the launcher. Icons can be grouped as you do in iOS; drag and drop one icon onto another one to create a group that can be renamed, as displayed in the following image. You can also move and delete items and create new folders using "Jiggle mode," which is activated by holding down the mouse on an item. Add icons to the launcher by pressing the "F" key, reducing the launcher to a movable window onto which you can drag shortcuts, files, or folders.

NOTE: WinLaunch requires Microsoft .NET Framework 4, which can be downloaded using one of the following links:

Standalone Installer
Web Installer (internet access required during installation)

Portable Application Launchers

The following is a list of applications launchers that are portable. They are useful for launching portable applications on USB flash drives, or if you don't want to install yet another software program on your PC.

PortableApps.com

PortableApps.com is a very popular, portable software solution for Windows allowing you to take your favorite software with you on any portable storage device (USB flash drive, iPod, memory card, portable hard drive, etc.), as well as on local storage and in the cloud. It's a fully open source and free platform and provides many useful portable programs. It essentially acts as a portable desktop and you can save all your settings and preferences for all your portable programs. It comes with it's own application launcher, providing easy access to your programs.