

JDarkRoom

User Guide

Version 14

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User Community

JDarkRoom is very fortunate to have an active user community, via the web. If the main website does not offer a solution, often someone else has already solved the same problem.

Website

The JDarkRoom website URL is:

<http://www.codealchemists.com/jdarkroom>

Where to ask for help

JDarkRoom has a Google Group where you can see previous and up-to-date discussion:

<http://groups.google.com/group/jdarkroom>

Where to report bugs

If you are certain the bug has not been reported before via the Google Group, please search the bug tracker (<http://bugs.codealchemists.com>) for JDarkRoom-related bugs. Either add your comments to an existing bug, or submit a new bug report. Although you must create an account before reporting a bug, this is quick and painless (and deters automated spam scripts).

Please consider attaching the output from the “Dump Debugging Details” button on the Settings (F6) screen. If relevant JDarkRoom can also write a screenshot of the current screen by pressing Ctrl-F11. The screenshot will be a PNG file in the application’s directory.

Installation

If you have downloaded JDarkRoom from the website, follow the installation instructions, which usually consist of either running an installer, or copying the JAR file to your chosen directory.

Configuration File(s)

JDarkRoom saves configuration preferences in a file called `jdarkroom.conf`. From version 13 and onwards, all configuration is saved into the directory `$HOME/.jdarkroom` (note the `.` prefix). `$HOME` represents your home directory, which is probably something along the lines of:

Windows: `C:\Documents and Settings\<<your-username>`

Mac OS X: `/Users/<your-username>`

Linux: /home/<your-username>

A detailed list of each configuration property is included in the appendix.

Prior to version 13, the configuration directory was (by default) `./conf` (relative to the directory where JDarkRoom was installed).

The location of the configuration directory can be customized by setting the `JDARKROOM_CONF` environment variable (if you don't know how to do this on your system, please look it up via Google).

It is important to note that if you change a setting in your `jdkarkroom.conf`, JDarkRoom must not be running (i.e. use a different editor to edit this file). This is because JDarkRoom saves its settings when it exits, which would otherwise overwrite your changes.

Upgrading / Installing over a previous version

To install a new version of JDarkRoom, simply run the new installer file, or copy the downloaded JDarkRoom.jar file over the existing file on your system. Your preferences and existing files are stored separately and will not be affected.

Specific Installation Instructions

Some platforms require a few tweaks to JDarkRoom to get it running:

Ubuntu Linux

Modify your `jdkarkroom.conf` file (as described above; create one if it doesn't exist) to contain

```
suppress.native.look.and.feel=true
force.full.screen=true
```

.. then start JDarkRoom.

Asus Eee

Modify your `jdkarkroom.conf` file (as described above; create one if it doesn't exist) to contain

```
force.full.screen=true
```

.. then start JDarkRoom.

Windows Vista

The “Aero” UI of Windows Vista doesn’t always look right with the new graphical Settings (F6) screen. To correct this, add the following to `jdkdarkroom.conf`:

```
override.native.look.and.feel=com.sun.java.swing.plaf.windows.WindowsClassicLookAndFeel
```

.. then start `JDarkRoom`.

Apple OS X

There should be no special tweaks required for OS X, but please be aware that `JDarkRoom` (as of version 14) no longer uses “real” full-screen mode. Please see “Features – Simulated Full Screen Mode”, below.

Features

Colours

The colour of the background, text, selected text and caret can be adjusted graphically via the Settings (F6) screen.

Font choice

The proportional fonts available to Java are listed via the Settings screen (F6). Please see the **configuration properties** in the Appendix for more details.

Caret (cursor)

Laptop screens sometimes do not display a thin caret (cursor) very clearly. The thickness of the caret and whether it flashes can be adjusted via the Settings screen.

Adjustable margins

The blank margins around the top, bottom, left and right of the screen can be adjusted via the Settings screen. This, in combination with adjustment of the font size, can be used to effectively tailor the number of characters that fit across the screen for your particular system. If you find the margins have become changed, you may reapply your chosen settings by pressing Ctrl-. The margins may also be reset to their calculated defaults by pressing F9.

Antialiasing

Text antialiasing can be toggled on/off. Sometimes this is clearer, sometimes not. Your experience may vary depending on your operating system, screen type, and version of Java.

Search

Simple text search can be activated by Ctrl-F.

Insert time/date stamp

When writing journals, blogging or taking notes, you may find the 'insert time/date stamp' feature useful. Pressing Ctrl-T inserts the time/date stamp (e.g. "2008/06/22 @ 18:31:48 BST") at the current caret position.

Word/Line/Character count

A count of the current number of words, lines and characters can be displayed along the bottom of the screen by pressing Ctrl-L.

Customize keys

Since JDarkRoom 13, it has been possible to customize the keys that JDarkRoom uses for

commands. JDarkRoom generates a default `keymap.conf` file in your configuration directory the first time it runs, then uses that every time it starts up. See the file for more information and instructions. It can be edited in a normal text editor.

Line endings

Windows, Mac and UNIX-based operating systems all represent the end of a line using different sets of character codes. JDarkRoom auto-detects the correct line-endings for your system and uses the appropriate codes. Should you wish to override the auto-detected defaults, there is an option in the Settings (F6) screen.

UTF-8

JDarkRoom loads and saves your files using the UTF-8 international character set, thereby supporting interesting international characters from most European countries.

Backups

The auto-saving of backups can be enabled via the Settings screen. If your file is called “myfile.txt” then the backup will be saved in the same directory as “.myfile.txt.backup” – note the leading dot / period. This makes the file hidden on some systems.

Command-line use

You can specify a file on the command line and JDarkRoom will open it on startup. Quotes are not needed around the filename, even if it contains spaces.

Export

JDarkRoom 14 introduced the Export feature, whereby your file can be exported via a ‘converter’ which turns your text into some other format. A converter called ‘Markdown’ is supplied, which turns your text into HTML snippets suitable for the web:

For more information on Markdown, see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Markdown>

Switching away from JDarkRoom

Although the aim of JDarkRoom is to provide a distraction-free writing environment, occasionally you may need to temporarily switch to another application. Most systems support the use of Alt-Tab to do this, alternatively JDarkRoom can be temporarily minimized by pressing Ctrl-K.

Simulated Full-Screen Mode

Either running JDarkRoom on Mac OS X, or manually specifying `simulate.full.screen=true` in your `jdarkroom.conf` file forces JDarkRoom to use a full-screen undecorated window rather than switching to “real” full screen mode. The reason for this feature is that Apple have not fixed certain full screen graphics rendering bugs on OS X. The special packaged version of JDarkRoom for the Mac will automatically hide the menubar and dock when JDarkRoom

runs and is therefore recommended as the JAR-only version will not do this.

Emacs-style Key Bindings

To enable Emacs-style key bindings, you should add the following to your `keymap.conf` (in the `$HOME/.jdarkroom` directory) using a different editor (exactly as below):

```
Ctrl-F      = move cursor left
Ctrl-B      = move cursor right
Ctrl-N      = move cursor up
Ctrl-P      = move cursor down
Ctrl-A      = move cursor to beginning of line
Ctrl-E      = move cursor to end of line
```

These are available from version 14.

Appendix

Configuration Properties

Since JDarkRoom version 14 the following configuration properties are available:

```
antialiasing=false
backups.enabled=true
caret.flashing=true
caret.type=thick
colours.background=[0,0,0]
colours.caret=[241,255,190]
colours.foreground=[0,204,0]
colours.selection.background=[34,68,0]
colours.selection.text=[153,255,153]
command.reminder.display=false
command.reminder.text=F1 Open   F2 Save   F3 Save As   F4 New File   F5 Help   F6 Settings
F7 Find
debug.keys=false
export.converter.selected=Markdown
font.check.override=false
font.choices=Monospaced, Lucida sans Typewriter
font.selected=Monospaced
font.size=15
force.full.screen=true
line.endings=unix
margin.left=176
margin.top=40
margin.right=224
margin.bottom=40
suppress.native.look.and.feel=false
simulate.full.screen=false
timestamp.format=yyyy/MM/dd @ HH:mm:ss z
```

Notes

On/Off values are represented as 'true' or 'false'.

Colours are represented as [R,G,B] representing Red, Green and Blue intensities, each from 0 to 255.

The timestamp format (used when inserting a timestamp) uses symbols defined in the Java SimpleDateFormat class:

<http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.5.0/docs/api/java/text/SimpleDateFormat.html>

Available fonts are detected automatically. To override this and specify your own list of fonts, add them to the font.choices property. Note that the font must be available to Java on your system in order to be shown on the list. Please consult Google if expected fonts do not appear to be available.

Valid values for line.endings are: 'unix', 'mac' and 'windows'.