

WELCOME TO SEWCAT©

EMBROIDERY FILE CATALOG SOFTWARE

SewCat (© S & S Computing, Inc) is software that allows you to organize your embroidery files into catalogs. These catalogs can be either *virtual* folders (which are stored temporarily in computer memory and later saved to disk as a very small database file) or actual directory folders on your hard drive or removable media. SewCat allows you to easily view the stitch patterns encoded in your embroidery files, making it easy to sort and optionally rename files in meaningful ways. The virtual cataloging that SewCat performs leaves your original embroidery files undisturbed. This is in contrast to the Explorer cataloging option which reorganizes files into folders on your hard drive.

There are several advantages to each form of cataloging. In creating virtual catalogs, any mistakes – such as inadvertent file or folder deletions – are not permanent and the original embroidery files are never altered or deleted. Second, when a virtual catalog is saved to disk, it takes up very little space. This allows you to create several different catalogs (with different themes, for example) containing the same files, while occupying (almost) no additional disk space. However, a disadvantage of the virtual catalog (compared with a *real* catalog) is that only *links* to the cataloged files are saved. Thus, if you change the location on your hard drive, or remove the external media (CD or floppy) containing the cataloged files, those files will no longer be viewable when you reopen the saved catalog file. In the Explorer (or real) catalog mode, the catalog folders are created on your hard drive and the files you move around (either by copying or moving them with your mouse) are actually saved on the hard drive. Thus, they will occupy additional space on the hard drive, but since there are no virtual links, you will always be able to view the catalog folder contents. SewCat gives you the choice of using virtual or real catalogs, depending on your needs.

Below is a **quick start** summary of the features and functionality available with SewCat. It is, however, recommended to read the short user's guide that follows the summary, to get an in-depth description of the various SewCat features. Starting with v1.32, embroidery files that are compressed in Zip archive files can be viewed and cataloged by SewCat. Zipped files appearing in the icon view pane will be marked with an asterisk (*).

SewCat Feature Summary

Open files to view for cataloging

In the directory list (left) panel, click the "+" with the left mouse button (⇧Ⓜ) to expand (open for viewing) a directory and click the box to view any embroidery files in that directory or its immediate child folders. Icons of embroidery patterns contained in the selected files will appear in the central view (or icon) panel. Clicking the "-" will collapse that branch of the directory tree. Clicking a checked box will remove the check mark and the central panel view will no longer display icons for the files in unchecked directories.

Open a previously saved catalog

From the File menu, click the Open option.

Save a catalog

From the File menu, click the Save, or Save As, option. Starting with v2.75, this will also save a copy of the state of the left-panel directory tree. When the catalog is re-opened, the directory tree will also be restored to its prior state.

Select files to move into the catalog

Click with the left mouse button the icon(s) in the central panel that you wish to move. This will select the associated files and a selection rectangle will be drawn around them. Hold down the Ctrl or Shift key to select multiple icons for moving. Clicking in the area outside any of the icons will clear the icons previously selected. This left-button behavior is similar to that of Windows Explorer.

Display a resizable view of a single file

Double-click (with the left mouse button) the file icon in the middle pane OR single-click the catalog pane file icon to show a resizable view of the stitch pattern. You can resize the viewing pane by click-dragging the resize bars around the pattern view. If the file can not be found in the path stored in the catalog (this can happen if the file has been moved or deleted since the catalog was created), then a message related to this "orphaned" file will be displayed.

Move files into the catalog

After selecting the icon(s) to move, hold down the left mouse button (while the mouse cursor is over one of the selected files) and *drag* the file into the right catalog panel. Release the mouse over the catalog folder and *drop* the file(s) into the target folder.

Add catalog folders

Select (left-click) the folder where you want to add the new folder. Press the Insert key or click the Edit menu, Insert item. You may also click "Import Folders" on the Tools menu to add folders (just the folders – not the files in them) that are selected in the left panel directory tree. This is a time-saving way of adding lots of folders very easily.

Delete catalog files and folders

Select (left click) the file or folder to delete. Press the Delete key or click the Edit menu, Delete item.

Rename catalog folders and files

Select (by clicking the left mouse button) the catalog folder or file to rename. Then, left click the text label to the right of the folder (file) icon. Edit the text and press either Return (Enter) to accept the new text or Escape to restore the original text.

Edit path to catalog folders and files

If you have moved your folders to a different drive (with a different drive letter), then you can update the Virtual Catalog by using the Edit menu/VC Drive menu item. This opens a dialog box where you may select (by clicking the left mouse button) the drive to rename. Then, left click the text label and edit the text. Press either Return (Enter) to accept the new text or Escape to restore the original text.

Alphabetize catalog folders and files

Select the "Alphabetize" item from the "Tools" menu.

Zoom the center panel icons

From the View menu, click the Zoom Icons item and set its value (100% is the default, no zoom state). Zoom factors larger than 100% will magnify the icons in the center panel, while factors less than 100% will reduce their on-screen size. Use the toolbar (+/-) to expand or contract the icons by increments of 1%.

Enlarge the folders in the catalog

From the View menu, click the Large Catalog Folders menu item. To restore the original size, click this item again.

View file details for all icons in center panel

From the View menu, click the File Details menu item. Use the Units menu item to toggle between American and metric units.

Restrict (Filter) the Types of Embroidery files shown in the center panel

From the Tools menu, click the File Filter menu item. Hold down the Ctrl or Shift key to select multiple filters.

Resize the panels

From the Window menu, click the Resize menu item. This will display resize handles on the separator between the directory panel and the icon view panel. Move this separator to resize the directory and central panel. Alternatively, simply click (with the left mouse button) on either the left or right separators and drag them to resize the respective panel extents.

Perform a Keyword File Search

From the Tools menu, click the Keyword Search option (or press the "w" toolbar button). Enter the name(s) to use to filter the embroidery files that will appear in the icon panel.

Associate Keywords With a Virtual Catalog File

Right-click a file in the virtual catalog. This will display a dialog for adding or modifying keywords for that specific file. Do not hold down the Shift or Ctrl key for this operation.

Add a Prefix or Suffix to a Group of Catalog Files

Left-click the first file in the group. Then holding down the Shift key (or the Ctrl key), right-click the last file to define the group. A dialog will appear for entering a prefix or suffix that will be added to the display name of the selected group of files in the Virtual Catalog.

Toggle between Catalog and Explorer views

From the View menu, click the Catalog/Explorer option.

Find the original file path for a file in the Catalog

Click on the catalog file. The full path of the original file on the hard drive (or other media) will be displayed in the bottom Status Bar. Double click the catalog file to see an enlarged icon view of the pattern in the lower right of the Virtual catalog pane.

Find the location in the Catalog of a file on disk

If the file on disk (shown in the middle panel) has been catalogued, a check-mark will appear under it. You can right-click on the middle-pane file icon to pop-up a list of all the locations in the Virtual catalog referring to that disk file. You can select (with the left mouse button) one of the list items to automatically expand the Virtual Catalog list to show the selected file.

Preview all files in the Catalog

Be sure the View/Catalog menu option is checked. Then click the catalog directory check-boxes besides the catalog folders whose content is to be viewed. All the files in the checked catalog folders will be displayed in the central view panel. Use this in conjunction with the File/Print Album menu to print an album of the selected catalog folders. To return to viewing the left-pane directory files, simply click one of the left panel check boxes.

Print this manual

When there are no icons in the central panel (this manual is visible), click on Print Manual in the File menu.

Print album of icons

When the central panel displays icons of the files you want in the album, click on Print Album in the File menu. The album can contain files from the directory tree, or from the catalog (if the View menu item Catalog Icons is checked).

Starting a SewCat Session

To begin a new SewCat catalog, use the directory folder list appearing in the left panel to navigate through your directories and locate embroidery files to be cataloged. Click the "+" symbol next to the directory folder you wish to open and an expanded directory will appear together with its subdirectory (child) folders. (**Important:** the terms "click" and "select with the mouse" mean to use the **left** mouse button. Right mouse button clicks are generally not used in SewCat.) Click the check box to display icons of the embroidery files contained in that folder and all its subdirectories. Uncheck the box (by clicking it again) to hide the file icons for that folder and its subdirectories. To close (collapse) a branch of the directory tree, click the "-" symbol next to it. This will not affect the display of icons in the middle panel.

When you have checked the box of a directory containing embroidery files, images (**icons**) of the patterns contained in those files will appear in the center (viewing) panel. The file name is shown above each icon. An asterisk after the file name indicates it is contained in a Zip archive. To show more details about the files, click the *File Details* item in the *View* menu. To change the displayed size of the icons (zoom), select the *Zoom Icons* item in the *Tools* menu or click the "+" or "-" button on the toolbar. If necessary, a vertical scroll bar will automatically appear on the right of the center panel, as well as a horizontal scroll bar at the bottom of the panel. Click the scroll bar button to activate scrolling in the central panel. Dragging the scroll bar, or using the *Page Up*, *Page Down*, *Home* or *End* keys, will allow you to view all the icons in the opened folder. You can limit (filter) the files appearing in the icon view by selecting the "keyword" option from the *Tools* menu. Enter a single keyword (or a comma-delimited list of keywords) which will be used to display only those embroidery files which contain at least one of the keywords in their name.

Storing Files in Catalog Folders

The catalog appears in panel on the right of the SewCat workspace. It initially contains a few *sample* folders to demonstrate what a catalog might look like. You can delete these folders, or rename them to something more suited to your application (see the discussion below on manipulating folders for more details).

Use the mouse to select files from the center panel (by left-clicking on the file icons). Once selected, drag and drop the icon(s) into the catalog directory tree. Multiple files can be selected by holding down the *Ctrl* or *Shift* key during selection. An icon will appear with a thickened border when it is selected. After it is dropped into the catalog, a box with a check mark will appear below the icon to indicate it has been inserted into the catalog. This behavior is modeled after the folder selection logic of Windows Explorer®. Note that you can clear the selection status of all files by clicking on any blank area in the middle pane.

Interaction of SewCat With Other Applications

You can also drag and drop files from the center panel or from the catalog into another application, such as an embroidery editor (SewWhat!©, for example) or Windows Explorer. For example, by opening *both* SewWhat! and SewCat, you will be able to drag a file from the Catalog (or the center panel) and drop it into the SewWhat! workspace. If the SewWhat! workspace is empty, this will automatically open a new editing pane with the dropped file appearing in it. If there already is a file in the SewWhat! editing pane, then the dropped file(s) will be *merged* with the existing file. This may be used, for example, to combine alphabetical characters (such as monograms) with pictorial sewing patterns.

Manipulating Catalog Folders

Important note: at present these operations can *not* be reversed through the Ctrl-Z *Undo* key combo. Therefore take special care when *Deleting* files or folders from the catalog.

To *create* a new folder in the catalog, first click on the catalog folder that will be the *parent* of the inserted folder. (The new *child* folder will go *below* its parent.) Then press the *Insert* key. This works for both top-level folders and subdirectories. New folders can also be added to the Virtual Catalog by clicking on the Tools Menu *Import Folders* item. This latter method will allow you to insert empty folders into the virtual catalog based on the folders that are selected in the directory view. This is a quick way to populate your Virtual Catalog tree.

To *delete* a folder (and all its contents) or a file from the catalog, first select the folder or file (by clicking it) and then press the *Delete* key. Files and folder in the catalog can also be moved to another *branch* of the catalog (dragged and dropped) or copied (hold down the *Shift* key during the mouse drag to *copy* the folder to a new location).

An existing catalog folder or file may be renamed by first clicking on the appropriate icon to *select* (highlight) it. Next, click the label (the text next to the icon) to initiate *text-editing* mode. (This is important: simply clicking the file or folder will not put you into

editing mode! You *must* click the text label, too.) Once in editing mode a box will appear around the text to be edited, which should now be highlighted and blinking. After you complete the text editing, press either *Return* to accept your changes, or *Escape* to recover the original text. This will exit text-editing mode.

To view an enlarged image of any cataloged file, along with some pattern details (stitches, colors, size), click on the file icon or label in the catalog.

Selecting the *Save As* item from the *File* menu will allow you to choose a name and location for saving the catalog to a small SewCat catalog file (*scc extension). This file stores the information required to restore your virtual catalog in the future. It contains only the names and locations of the embroidery files in your catalog and the associated embroidery files on disk. It does not store any stitch data.

From the *View* menu, choose the *Icon Size* option to change the size of the folder icons appearing in the catalog.

Restoring a Catalog from a File

Another way to begin a SewCat Session is by opening an existing embroidery catalog file saved from a previous editing session. From the *File* menu select *Open* and choose the catalog from a list of available catalog files. Note that the catalog files you create with SewCat are *virtual* directories. That is, they are stored in small catalog files and appear in the SewCat catalog panel, but they do not actually modify the contents of your disk directories. Thus, deleting files and folders in the catalog tree has no impact whatsoever on the embroidery files you have stored on disk. This makes the virtual cataloging system a very safe and user-friendly way of organizing your embroidery files.

Printing Albums and the SewCat Manual

It is possible to print an *album* of the file icons appearing in the center panel. To do this, select *Print Album* (or *Print Preview*) from the *File* menu. If there are no files open for viewing, then this help manual can be printed by selecting *Print Manual* instead. The album icons can be either those associated with the directory (left) panel or the catalog (right) panel, depending in which directory tree the last check-boxes were selected.

Creating a Permanent Catalog: organizing embroidery folders on your hard drive

There may be situations when you want to create permanent catalogs directly on your hard drive (in contrast to producing the *virtual* catalogs described above). SewCat allows

you to do this by choosing the *Catalog/Explorer* item on the *View* menu. An explorer-style directory tree will appear in the right panel overwriting the virtual catalog (which is stored temporarily in memory – be sure to save it before exiting SewCat). All the embroidery files stored on your various drives (floppies, hard drives, CD's, USB media) can now be viewed in the Windows Explorer-like right panel. You may drag/drop files from the center icon panel into this Explorer panel. Now the files you add will be **permanently** stored on the physical media (hard drive, floppy or Zip disk) you drop them onto. In contrast to *virtual* catalogs - which do **not** modify your disk contents - moving files and deleting folders in the Explorer panel **will** change the files and directories on your drive(s). **The result is exactly the same as using Windows Explorer to rearrange your files and folders.** The user should be aware of this important difference between the SewCat Virtual Catalog and Explorer functionality.

Additional Special Features

There is now a “Refresh Tree” button in the Directory View (left) panel. This button may be pressed if, while a SewCat session is open, files or folders are added to or deleted from one of the drives displayed by SewCat. This will update (“refresh”) the SewCat directory tree to display those changes without having to close the active session.

From the “View” menu, you can select various features to control the display of icons in SewCat.

Jump Stitches: check this item if you wish to display view jump stitches in the enlarged right-panel icon view.

Texture: check this item to display a textured view of the icon in the bottom right panel.

From the “Tools” menu, you can adjust various additional features:

Hover Delay: click this item to display a dialog where you can adjust the “hover” time delay. This is the time (in sec) before the folder below a “dragged” file is opened (expanded) automatically. A recommended range of values is between 0.5 and 1.5 seconds. You can also choose from two AutoExpand folder options. Either a folder will automatically expand if you drop a file on it *or* if the hover timeout is exceeded, whichever happens first. The alternative is to autoexpand the folder *only* if the hover timeout is exceeded. This is a useful option if you do not wish to see the contents of a folder each time you drop something onto it.

Background Color: this item will display a dialog for selecting background colors for icons as well as panels.

Icon Layout: this item will allow you to adjust the display of icons in the middle panel (and in the print out) by choosing the number of icons per row and their relative separations.

File Filter: this item will allow you to choose which types of embroidery files – distinguished by their file extension – will appear in the center panel. For example, if you only want to view Brother (“pes” extension) type files when searching the directory folders, then use the File Filter dialog to select “pes”.