



Dexpot 1.5 - The utility for virtual desktops

# Quick Start Guide

Updated: September 29th 2010

© 2009-2010 Dexpot GbR

[info@dexpot.de](mailto:info@dexpot.de)

<http://www.dexpot.de>



## CONTENTS

1.	The concept of virtual desktops.....	2
2.	First steps.....	2
2.1	Launching Dexpot.....	2
2.2	Switching virtual desktops.....	2
3.	Further features.....	4
3.1	Setting up hotkeys.....	4
3.2	Personalizing virtual desktops (Start-ups, Wallpapers, Tools).....	5
3.3	Distributing desktop icons to different virtual desktops.....	6
3.4	Moving windows manually to other virtual desktops.....	8
3.5	Moving windows automatically to other virtual desktops.....	9
3.6	Alt+Tab replacement: Task- and Desktop switcher.....	9
3.7	Window catalogue: Exposé-like overview.....	10
4.	Plugins: valuable add-ons like SevenDex or Dexcube.....	11
4.1	SevenDex: integration into the Windows 7 taskbar.....	11
4.2	Dexcube: 3D transition effects.....	12
5.	Troubleshooting and contact details for further questions.....	12
5.1	Enabling the log file.....	13
5.2	Contact details.....	13

**Note:** the instructions in this Quick Start Guide apply to version 1.5. Users still working with Windows 95, 98, NT4 or ME must use a prior version which is available for download here: <http://download.dexpot.de>

---



## 1. THE CONCEPT OF VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

In your every-day work life with Windows, many open windows pile up, taking up space on both the desktop and the taskbar. When you work with many applications at once, you will have a tough time keeping track of all open windows.

That is where Dexpot comes in. Its virtual desktops offer more work space: switching from one virtual desktop (let us call it “Music”) to another virtual desktop (let us call it “Internet”) results in all open windows (including their taskbar buttons) being hidden. Within this blank work space, you may open new windows for e.g. composing an email.

If you switch back to your previous virtual desktops, you will return to your familiar work space for managing your music library.

## 2. FIRST STEPS

### 2.1 LAUNCHING DEXPOT

We assume that Dexpot has been installed successfully. Launch Dexpot by double-clicking its shortcut on your desktop.

The Dexpot splash screen appears. Subsequently, a small icon of Dexpot is added to your systray (down to the right in your taskbar), indicating that Dexpot is at your command.

### 2.2 SWITCHING VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

In order to illustrate the concept of virtual desktops, we will switch to another virtual desktop in the following. To this end we are using the Dexpot main menu: right-click the

---



Dexpot icon in your systray. Afterwards, the main menu pops up and reveals many of the features Dexpot offers.

At the top of the main menu, there is a list of the available virtual desktops. The entry with a check mark to the left of the desktop name reflects the current virtual desktop.

Please start some applications if you have not already done so.

Click the entry “Desktop 2” in the main menu and keep tabs on what is happening: all open windows are hidden including their taskbar buttons. On the new, blank virtual desktop “Desktop 2”, more applications may be launched. Click “Desktop 1” in the main menu to return to the first virtual desktop. You are back to your usual work space again.

There are many more ways of switching to another virtual desktop with Dexpot. We would like to introduce two of them: Desktop Manager and hotkeys.

## DESKTOP MANAGER

Open up the “Desktop Manager” from the main menu. The Desktop Manager displays the available virtual desktops by means of small icons. A square border marks the current virtual desktop.

If you want to switch virtual desktops, left-click the icon representing the virtual desktop of your choice. **Tip:** right-click an icon to get more options.



## HOTKEYS

Dexpot provides several hotkeys for a huge number of tasks. The default hotkey for switching virtual desktops is: *Alt + virtual desktop-number*

Holding the *Alt* key while simultaneously pressing *number key 2* makes Dexpot switch to virtual desktop number 2. The following chapter 3.1 explains how you define a hotkey that fits your needs.

### 3. FURTHER FEATURES

#### 3.1 SETTING UP HOTKEYS

Click “Settings” from the Dexpot main menu. From the navigation bar on the left of the “Settings” window, pick “Controls”. You can do large-scale changes to your hotkey setup there. Double-click “Switch desktop” to expand the list entry.

In order to define or change a hotkey for virtual desktop 1, click “Desktop 1”. At the rightmost part of the “Hotkeys” tab, you find more details.

Choose at least one of the Alt-, Shift-, Ctrl- and Windows key. Go for the “Define”-button. The content of the text field is highlighted. Press the desired key on your keyboard. Save the settings with the button “OK”.

The procedure just described works for every hotkey you would like to configure in the above list.



### 3.2 PERSONALIZING VIRTUAL DESKTOPS (START-UPS, WALLPAPERS, TOOLS)

Dexpot provides a sophisticated settings window for personalizing virtual desktops. Click “Configure desktops” from the Dexpot main menu.

The window is subdivided into several groups. Click the labeled tabs at the top to switch between groups. The vertical bar in the left part of the window shows the available virtual desktops. A border highlights the virtual desktops you are currently editing. The current virtual desktops is depicted in bold letters. The item “all desktops” lets you customize all virtual desktops in one pass.

In the following, we would like to personalize the second virtual desktop: click “Desktop 2” from the vertical bar on the left.

#### START-UPS

Choose the tab “Start-Up”. The vertical bar indicates to what virtual desktop the program start-up is bound. When “all desktops” is marked, the program will be bound and copied to all virtual desktops.

Click the button “Browse...”. Search for the program you would like to start-up automatically. You can further decide on what condition it should be started or closed. The button “Add” finally adds the application to the start-up list. Double-click the item to edit it. Click “Apply” to save all changes.



## WALLPAPERS

Switch to the “Background” tab. Search for and assign a wallpaper to the second virtual desktop by clicking “Browse...”. Answer a possible prompt for enabling the “Customize background”-feature with “Yes”.

## TOOLS

Change to the “Tools” tab. Amongst other things, you may hide your desktop icons and icon titles. **Note:** with Windows Vista and 7 some features are not available and therefore greyed out.

### 3.3 DISTRIBUTING DESKTOP ICONS TO DIFFERENT VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

#### DISTRIBUTING DESKTOP ICONS

With Dexpot, desktop icons can be distributed to different virtual desktops. They can also be arranged on and removed from virtual desktops. All desktop icon features have been built directly into Depot. So it is not a matter of copying or cutting and pasting desktop icons physically. The components “Desktop Manager” and “Desktop Windows” are particularly convenient. In this example, we make use of the “Desktop Manager”.

**Notice:** this feature is not available under all circumstances if you are using Windows Vista or 7 with UAC (User Account Control) enabled. For more information on this issue, visit: <http://faq.dexpot.de> - “Are there any known issues?”.



Open the main menu. Pick “Desktop Manager” from the list. Right-click a free area. A supplemental menu pops up.

Click “Show additional button”.

To move a desktop icon to a different virtual desktop, drag & drop it to the Desktop Manager, right on the particular virtual desktop of your choice. In this concrete example, we drag & drop the “Mozilla Firefox”-desktop icon to the second virtual desktop.

Switch to “Desktop 2”. The second virtual desktop contains simply one desktop icon, namely: “Mozilla Firefox”. In order to copy the same desktop icon to “Desktop 3”, drag & drop it to the Desktop Manager again while pressing the Ctrl key.

Proceed accordingly for the other virtual desktops. Since version 1.5.1: Dexpot restores the standard desktop icon distribution (like they were before Dexpot was launched) on exit.

#### ARRANGING DESKTOP ICONS

“Settings/Switching Desktops” offers more settings concerning the customization of desktop icons: “Align to grid” and “Auto arrange”.

**Note:** both features do not take effect until a virtual desktop was switched. Furthermore, they are not identical to their Windows equivalent in every situation. For more information on that, visit <http://faq.dexpot.de> - “Are there any known issues?”.



## REMOVING DESKTOP ICONS

For removing a desktop icon, drag & drop it to the Desktop Manager, right on the additional button. Or remove it via “Desktop Windows”, tab “Icons”, right-click the item and hit “Remove”.

**Important:** do *not* remove any desktop icon directly via your desktop (like drag & drop to the recycle bin, or the desktop icon’s context menu, or the Del key), but only via the Dexpot mechanism. If a desktop icon has been removed from all virtual desktops, you will find it in “Desktop Windows”, tab “Icons”. In the bottom left-hand corner click “Hidden”. Right-click the desktop icon’s list item and hit “Show on current desktop”.

## 3.4 MOVING WINDOWS MANUALLY TO OTHER VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

Moving windows to another virtual desktop via “Desktop Windows” is straightforward. The following example demonstrates how to move the “Mozilla Firefox” window to the second virtual desktop. Pick “Desktop Windows” from the Dexpot main menu.

“Desktop Windows” opens up and you will notice a familiar arrangement (cf. chapter 3.2, page 5). You are presented with a list of all open windows of the current virtual desktop in the “Windows” tab.

Right-click a list entry and click “Move”. The menu expands sideward. Select “Desktop 2”.

The window disappears from the list. Switch to Desktop 2. Now, the window “Mozilla Firefox” turns up. The modus operandi is the same for options “Copy” and “Close”.



### 3.5 MOVING WINDOWS AUTOMATICALLY TO OTHER VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

If a window is recognized by a predefined condition, an action can be executed. Open “Desktop Rules” from the main menu. Choose the button “Assistant”. Give the rule a name. We settle for “Firefox”. The button “Next” takes you to the assistant’s next step.

Step 2 asks for the rule’s condition. Use the crosshairs. Drag & Drop it to the window you would like to add a rule for. The text field will be automatically filled with the appropriate data.

In Step 3, you pick an action that is executed if the window is recognized. Here: “Move” and “Desktop 2”. You may configure various actions like Copy, Close, and many more.

The rule assistant reveals a summary of the new rule in its last step. Quit the rule assistant via the button “Done”. You are displayed the “Desktop Rules” main window again. The new rule is listed. It takes effect once you hit the button “Apply”.

### 3.6 ALT+TAB REPLACEMENT: TASK- AND DESKTOP SWITCHER

Open “Settings” from the main menu. Switch to “Controls/Hotkeys”. Expand “Dexpot components”. You may set a hotkey for both components “Task switcher” and “Desktop switcher” (cf. chapter 3.1, page 4).



#### TASK SWITCHER (DEFAULT: WINDOWS KEY+Q)

Press the Task switcher hotkey. When you choose a window from the list, Dexpot brings it to front, regardless on what virtual desktop it resides. Apart from releasing the hotkey, you can also select a window by scrolling your mouse wheel or clicking a list item.

#### DESKTOP SWITCHER (DEFAULT: WINDOWS KEY+W)

Press the Desktop switcher hotkey. If at least one window is open on the selected virtual desktop, you can activate a window by clicking its small icon at the top of the Desktop switcher. If you just want to switch to the respective virtual desktop: click the preview. The Desktop switcher supports mouse wheel interaction, too.

“Settings/Components/DexTab” provides more options for configuring both components.

**Note:** password-protected virtual desktops will be hidden in both components.

#### 3.7 WINDOW CATALOGUE: EXPOSÉ-LIKE OVERVIEW

Pick “Window catalogue” from the Dexpot main menu. All open windows of the current virtual desktops are drawn at small scale in a grid layout.

The horizontal bar at the top allows you to switch between virtual desktops. Alternatively, you may select a virtual desktop with a right- or left-click on its name. By choosing “all desktops”, Dexpot displays all windows of all virtual desktops. The red button in the top-most right position closes the Window catalogue. The Esc key works as well.



**Windows Vista and 7:** with “Aero” enabled, the content of windows in the Windows catalogue is live. Press the space key to zoom in on the selected window.

#### 4. PLUGINS: VALUABLE ADD-ONS LIKE SEVENDEX OR DEXCUBE

Plugins are disabled by default. You have to enable them manually via “Settings/Plugins and Extras”. Click the small box next to the plugin’s name to enable it. It will henceforth be started along with Dexpot.

Via the button “Configure” the plugin can be customized. If no further options are available, the button will be greyed out.

##### 4.1 SEVENDEX: INTEGRATION INTO THE WINDOWS 7 TASKBAR

The plugin “SevenDex” integrates the Dexpot virtual desktops into the new Windows 7 taskbar. Enable it via “Settings/Plugins and Extras”.

Clicking the SevenDex icon displays an overview of available virtual desktops. Hovering over the thumbnail of your current virtual desktop, you get a peek through all windows (“Aero Peek”). Hover over a different thumbnail, and a full-screen preview of your virtual desktop appears.

**Tip:** pin SevenDex to your taskbar. Clicking it will launch Dexpot if it is not running.



## 4.2 DEXCUBE: 3D TRANSITION EFFECTS

The plugin Dexcube offers nifty 3d transition effects while switching through virtual desktops. Enable Dexcube via “Settings/Plugins and Extras”. This plugin requires DirectX 9.

**Tip:** press *Ctrl+Alt* and *Up-arrow*. Keep *Ctrl+Alt* pressed, additionally press *Right-arrow* or *Left-arrow* to rotate the cube.

## 5. TROUBLESHOOTING AND CONTACT DETAILS FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS

Click “Settings” from the main menu. Choose “Plugins und Extras”. You find relevant debugging options here. We will advise you of these options in our support emails if required.

### 5.1 ENABLING THE LOG FILE

Activate “Enable log file” and save with “OK”. From now on, Dexpot actions will be recorded. Afterwards you will find a “dexpot.log” in your user folder. Your user folder is located here:

*Windows 2000, XP and 2003 (32 and 64-bit)*

X:\Documents and Settings\\*user name\*\Application Data\Dexpot

*Windows 2008, Vista, 7 (32 and 64-bit)*

X:\User\\*user name\*\AppData\Roaming\Dexpot

**Important:** the portable version stores the log file in the Dexpot main directory. The path usually is: X:\Program Files\Dexpot.



“X” point to the drive letter where your user folder is located

(very often “C”)

“\*user name\*” refers to the currently logged-in user

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) are updated constantly.

Please visit <http://faq.dexpot.de> for more information and known issues.

## 5.2 CONTACT DETAILS

We are available, preferably via email, during the usual business hours.

Dexpot GbR

Bergerfurth 38

D-46487 Wesel

Tel.: +49 (201) 45844435

Fax: +49 (911) 3084464441

Email: [info@dexpot.de](mailto:info@dexpot.de)

Web: <http://www.dexpot.de>