

Manual for OmniRemote V1.171

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Chapter 1: Quick start (the important stuff)

Upgrading from previous versions:

Do not remove the old OmniRemote before installing the new one. Install the Remote.PRC file. Do not install the OmniRemote.PDB file. If you do, you will lose your training. Beaming OmniRemote from another Palm will also cause the receiving Palm to lose its training.

New installation:

Use your Palm Install Tool (in Windows 95 this is on your Start menu) to install the files Remote.PRC and OmniRemote.PDB. Remote.PRC is the application itself and OmniRemote.PDB contains sample screens of buttons for commonly used devices. If you don't want the sample screens, you don't need to install the PDB file. If in the future you wish to wipe all of the screens you've created and replace them with the samples you can re-install this file (Warning, if you re-install the PDB later all of your training will also be lost).

What is it?

OmniRemote is an IR learning remote control. It uses infrared light to communicate with TV's, VCR's and many other devices (nearly any device that uses IR). Because of this you need a way of transmitting

IR on your Palm. Palm III and above has IR built in, but older Pilots will require that an OmniRemote Module be purchased and plugged into the bottom of the Pilot. With this device installed, the Pilot is held upside-down and the "Flip screen" mode is used.

If you're trying to use the built-in IR, make sure it's turned on in Menu|Options|Preferences.

When you start the software you'll see a blank screen. Here you can create buttons wherever you wish with the text icons and sizes you choose, then train them for the exact functions you want. But most people won't want to create all of the buttons themselves. That's why we created the sample PDB file. Change categories (to TV for example) and find that we've created a useful layout for you.

"Out of the box" this software won't control anything. Because it's a learning remote control it requires a training period before it can

be used. What this method loses in convenience it gains in flexibility. Once the buttons have been created (either buttons you created or the samples) you can train them using Menu|Modes|Training (menus pop up either by clicking the Menu silk button or by tapping the bar at the top of the screen). While in training mode, align your

remote (explained in detail in chapter 2), double click the button you

want to train, then press the equivalent button on your remote control. For buttons that can be held down during use (such as some rewind and volume buttons) hold the button until the Learn IR screen disappears rather than quickly pressing and releasing the button. Continue doing this until every button has been trained, then

choose Menu|Modes|Normal. You can tell which buttons need to be trained because untrained normal buttons are displayed with a "dotty" grey border.

After that you're ready to go!

Version limitations:

All versions require Palm OS version 2.0 or greater.

The unregistered "evaluation version" is restricted to 15 days of use

and only buttons in the "TV" category will operate. You can train any device in the TV category, not just TV's. A registration code can be purchased from Pacific Neo-Tek's order page which will allow full unrestricted use of the software. This code should be entered in the registration dialog (click Menu|Options|Registration|Register)

For Pacific Neo-Tek's order page, go to: www.pacificneotek.com

History:

- V1.171 Added support for Handspring Prism and Platinum
- V1.17 Changed text in test dialog
Zeroed unique IDs in database will be automatically corrected
(this solves problems with hard keys, timers and macros)
- V1.16 Compatible with Palm IIIc
Fixed bug in repeating buttons
Support for special hardware for Handspring Visor handheld renamed ReadMe.txt to Manual.txt
- V1.15 Compatible with Handspring Visor handheld
On Visor handheld, Flip Screen mode rotates screen
- V1.14 Compatible with Palm V, Palm IIIx and Symbol SPT1500
Detects other apps interfering with serial port
Moved English strings into resources
- V1.12 Fixed infinite loop (up/down button during training)
- V1.11 Fixes battery drain bug in V1.1
- V1.1 Supports IR on OS3.0 upgrade card
Added 56.0 button in preferences
Auto Frequency detect doesn't get "stuck" anymore

Chapter 2: Avoiding problems

If you have poor range, or if buttons work intermittently or not at all try the following steps:

- o Try re-training the button you are having trouble with. Use: Menu|Buttons|Edit|choose button|Retrain or use the training mode. It is unlikely that you will train every button perfectly the first time. Some buttons will probably require re-training.
- o Use fresh alkaline batteries. We've received a startling number of reports that this makes a significant difference. It seems that as the battery voltage drops, the IR circuit quits before the rest of the Palm.
- o If you're trying to use the internal IR, make sure it's turned on in Menu|Options|Preferences.

- o Try a different IR carrier frequency. This setting is in Menu|Options|Training Settings it is used during training. Once the optimum setting is determined, it should be used for all buttons on that remote. To determine the optimum setting, perform the following steps:

Press the Auto detect button. Hold your remote up to the IR sensor on your Palm or your OmniRemote Module. Hold down or repeatedly press one of your remote's buttons. On the screen the word Testing should be followed by changing numbers as it scans for the correct frequency. Very slowly pull your remote away from the Palm until slow beeping begins. Hold remote still and continue holding or pressing button while beeps continue. Test will complete in a few seconds.

Auto detect will only try scanning the lower five built-in frequencies and the one typed on the blank (under the Auto detect button). 39.2 is the most commonly used frequency.

- o When training try holding the button on your remote a little longer rather than just a "tap".
- o Training must be performed with the remote aimed at the IR receiver (either the small window at the top of the Palm or the middle bump on an OmniRemote Module) never more than an inch away (except during auto frequency testing). Training should not be attempted in bright light, if necessary use your hand or another object to shade the receiver.
- o When training, try positioning the Palm and remote a different distance apart. Generally closer is better, but on some remotes the LED is not in the middle, if it's near the side and you make the Palm's receiver touch the middle of the remote, you might miss it entirely, in which case a half inch apart might be better. Make sure the remote's LED and the Palm's receiver are at the same height and sitting on a stable surface (rather than in your hand). The beeps in training mode are helpful as a guide, but aren't a guarantee that you have them aligned perfectly. Don't attempt to train while in bright light (such as sunlight).
- o When testing, hold the Palm near the device you are trying to control, but not within six inches. Keep the Palm aimed at the device's receiver and don't sit at an angle to the front of the device. Glass doors or other obstacles between the Palm and the device can cause poor range.
- o If you are using the internal IR on a Palm III, IIIx, Palm V, Palm VII or Visor you may experience range problems. This is

because the Palm's internal IR LED's are not very bright. This may be more noticeable when controlling certain devices. If this causes you problems, you may wish to purchase the OmniRemote Module which fits in the bottom of your Palm and has its own brighter LEDs. It is available from:

www.pacificneotek.com

The IR on 3Com's OS3.0 upgrade card does not have this range problem. The OmniRemote Module will not offer improved range for users of the upgrade card. The range on a Palm V is slightly better than that of a Palm III, but not as good as the OS3.0 upgrade card for older Pilots. The OmniRemote module does not fit the connector on the Palm V.

- o If your Palm has internal IR, you might get slightly better performance from the Palm's internal receiver than the OmniRemote Module's receiver.
- o If using timers, make sure OmniRemote is running when the timer goes off, or if the Palm is off that OmniRemote was the program running when it was turned off.

Chapter 3: Basic features in detail

This chapter assumes that you have the program running and know how to perform training successfully. If this is not the case you should read over the previous chapters.

To create a button choose Menu|Buttons|Create. You will hear a beep and the message "Draw button where you want it" will be displayed at the top of the screen. Many features use this area of the screen to display messages, so remember to look here for important instructions.

Place your stylus on the screen and drag it diagonally (toward the lower right for example). A rectangular button will "rubber band out". When it's the size and shape you want, lift the stylus.

Don't

worry if it's not in the right place. After you've created your button a dialog will be displayed. This is the same dialog that would

be displayed if you used the Menu|Buttons|Edit... feature. Now you can give your button a name. The name will be displayed inside the button. A name is not required but it will be convenient when it comes time to program macros. If you don't want the name displayed press the "hidden" button. An icon can be displayed instead of a name by pressing the icon button.

If you want to train the button now, you can do so by clicking Retrain

or you can wait, creating all of your buttons now and then training them all later using training mode. If you made your button the wrong size or shape you can re-draw it by pressing Recreate. You can draw the button in a new location this way too, however if it only needs to be moved, Menu|Modes|Move buttons is probably an easier method. If you put the button in the wrong category, Recreate can be used to re-draw the button on a new category screen. Trained buttons will not lose their training when re-drawn in the new category.

The Edit Buttons dialog also lets you change the type of a button to one of four types. So far we've been working with Normal buttons, but there are also three special types of buttons. A Label is basically just a name or an icon without a border around it. It can't be clicked like other buttons. In the example TV category, the words Channel and Volume are labels. When a label is moved or redrawn it is on a finer grid allowing it to be aligned more precisely than other buttons. The icons used on the seek buttons in the example's Amp category are also labels. We did this so that we could have a name and an icon on the same button. The trick is to create a Normal button with a hidden name - for example /Seek+ - then create a label with a name and a label with the arrow icon and put them on top of it.

A Category button is a button that when clicked, changes the current category. Common uses are the TV, VCR and CD buttons in the examples.

If you would prefer to save screen space, create a single Category button that sends the user to a different screen containing only other

Category buttons. To set the button's category, press the Retrain button then choose the category from the drop-down menu in the upper right corner of the screen.

Choosing the Macro checkbox or pressing the Edit Macro button will turn the button into a macro. Macros are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Your changes in the Edit Buttons dialog are saved when you press OK, Retrain or Recreate.

On the Modes menu there are four modes: Normal, Flip screen, Move buttons and Training. Flip screen will flip your screen so that you can turn your Palm over and use it upside-down. This is useful because the OmniRemote Module sticks out of the bottom of the Palm and needs to be pointed at the device that is being controlled.

Menus

aren't supported in Flip screen mode, so activating a menu will flip the display back right-side-up. If you plan to use Flip screen mode most of the time, turn on the checkbox in Preferences and the program

will start in Flip screen mode by default.

Move buttons mode makes it easy to reorganize and find the best layout for your buttons. Simply drag and drop. If two buttons are in the same location, you'll need to move the top one out of the way to get to the bottom one. Buttons cannot be moved to another category. If you need to do that, use the Recreate feature in the Edit buttons dialog.

Training mode is the fastest way to train buttons. After entering Training mode, tap the button you want to train. A test mode screen will be displayed allowing you to get the alignment of your remote correct and to make sure the room is dark enough. Once you are finished testing, one more screen tap will send you to the training screen. Press the button on the remote and you're done and ready to move on to your next button. Once you're sure that the alignment is correct you can even skip the testing and just double tap the button to be trained. Only Normal buttons can be trained in this way (not Category or Macro).

Don't forget to switch back to Normal mode after you are done moving or training your buttons.

At the top of the Preferences dialog you'll see a row of six buttons that look like the six hard keys at the bottom of your Palm. These allow you to redefine the function of each of these keys. Simply tap the picture of the key you want to redefine, then choose which button you want that key to activate. It can be a macro, normal or category button. When you press the key the button's action will occur no matter what category you're currently in. If you want to set it back to its default function (i.e. Address book, Memo pad, etc...) tap it, then tap a blank area of the screen (not on any button).

Chapter 4: Macros

A macro is a very powerful type of button. One press of a macro can activate many functions on multiple devices, simplifying operations that would ordinarily require multiple keypresses, perhaps on numerous remotes. Before attempting to use macros, be sure you've mastered the training methods described in previous chapters. A properly working macro can be very convenient, but a macro that relies on a poorly trained button that behaves intermittently can be more trouble than it's worth.

A macro is just a list of normal buttons which should be pressed in sequence. Press the macro and each of the other buttons will be

automatically pressed in order with a fraction of a second delay between them. For example, "Amplifier on, Cable box on, TV on, Set amp source to video". When you press a macro you can hear the clicks as if you were pressing each of the buttons yourself.

You create a macro the same way you would any other button except that you choose the Macro checkbox in the Edit buttons dialog.

After

you press either Ok or Retrain, macro training mode is entered and you'll see the message "Click buttons then Modes|End Macro". At this

point press each of the buttons in sequence, changing categories if necessary. If you want to place a larger pause between buttons, choose the Modes|Macro pause menu. Each time you select this menu item a pause of approximately 3/4 second will be added. When you've finished entering all of the buttons, choose the Modes|End macro menu item. If you want to look over or correct the sequence of events

you've created, press the Edit Macro button in the Edit buttons dialog. This will display the list of events. If there are too many

to fit on one screen there will be an arrow in the lower right corner

of the list box that allows you to scroll down. If you find that you've made a mistake, the three buttons Delete, Insert and Move at the bottom of the screen allow you to correct your error. To delete an item, select the item and click Delete. To move an item to a new position in the list select the item to be moved then click Move then

click the item in the list that you would like it to be inserted AFTER. To add new buttons and/or pauses to the list select the item that you would like them inserted AFTER and choose Insert. You will then be asked to "Click buttons then Modes|End Macro" as before. If you want to delete all of the entries and start over, choose the Retrain button in the Edit buttons dialog.

Chapter 5: Timers

OmniRemote supports up to 32 timers that each allow you to schedule a normal or macro button press to occur while you're away. When using timers, it is very important to test often. Test your macros many times to be sure they're reliable. Make sure the Palm is aimed properly and closely enough that reliable operation is ensured.

Don't put the Palm in a place where cats or people will be likely to move it. Unlike other Palm alarms, the timers will not trigger if another program is active. For example, if you set a timer, then launch the calculator program the timed event will not occur. The Palm does not need to be turned on, but OmniRemote must be the currently running program when the Palm is shut off. These are the

most important things to remember when setting up timers. Ignore them and your timed events may fail.

Timers are set using the Options|Timers... menu. Up to 16 events can be set, each with a Start time and an End time. While they are called Start and End they don't really need to have anything to do with starting or ending anything, they are really just two timers which must be set for the same day and with the same repeat interval.

For example, you could use Start to start taping a show and End to stop and turn off the VCR or you could use Start to turn on your livingroom lights using your X-10 controller and End to turn on your kitchen lights. It's up to you. Because each timer only activates one button, people will usually use it to trigger a macro. The Time and Date buttons allow you to set the time and date of the Start and End timer. The Start and End buttons allow you to set which macro (or normal button) you want activated (pressed) when the timer goes off. Just click the Start or End button then tap the button you want linked to that timer. If you wish to delete a timer,

click the Start or End button then tap a blank area of the screen (not on any button) and the timer will be set to -None-. You can have a Start timer but no End timer or an End timer with no Start timer, but if Start and End are both set to -None-, the whole event entry will be deleted from the list (unless it is the last entry because there is always at least one entry in the list). To scroll through the list of events, use the Next and Prev buttons. The list is not shown in chronological order. The Repeat button is used to select whether the alarm will be reset to a new date in the future after it goes off. If set to Never the timer will only go off once. If set to Daily the timer will go off at the same time every day after and including the specified date. Weekday does the same, but Saturday and Sunday are skipped (i.e. timer goes off on weekdays only)

and Weekly causes the timer to go off at the same time and on the same day of the week every week after and including the specified date and time.

Chapter 6: Support contact

For more information visit:
<http://www.pacificneotek.com>

Many of your questions can be answered by our FAQ page.

For other questions or comments send e-mail to:
support@pacificneotek.com