

LinkStylus Help Documentation

A Note From ACS

Thank you for choosing LinkStylus. We hope that you will find LinkStylus to be an invaluable teaching and demonstration aid in your environment. You are strongly encouraged to read through this text at least once as many of the most common questions will be addressed here. Should you have any questions or comments about LinkStylus, there is a Contact section near the end of this help documentation. Once again, we thank you for your support and look forward to receiving feedback from our community.

-- *Applied Computer Systems*

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Introduction

LinkStylus was designed from the beginning to be an aid to teachers and lecturers. It is a "virtual stylus" of sorts that can be used to highlight certain areas of the speaker's desktop screen or presentation slide. It can be used to call attention to a single area or to make notes on-the-fly. We created LinkStylus with the mindset that it should be simple to use and, for the most part, self-documenting. We give you pens, we give you circles, we give you highlighters, and we give you small and easy-to-navigate menus. If using our product improves the efficiency with which you can communicate ideas, then we have met our objective.

Features

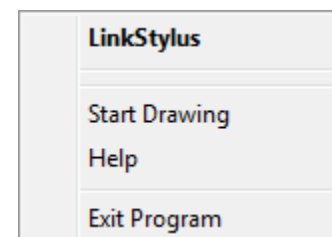
The first thing you might notice when you startup LinkStylus is the balloon-style tooltip in the bottom right-hand corner of your desktop. This popup will tell you that LinkStylus is running and ready for use. In addition, it points to the LinkStylus icon in your system tray.



The System Tray Icon

The System Tray icon is your starting point for LinkStylus. When LinkStylus is launched, it does not assume that you wish to begin marking up your screen that very moment; it simply makes itself available to you inside the System Tray. It can then be activated with a single click, and deactivated from the drawing menu (see **The Drawing Menu** below). Because of the simplicity of activating and deactivating LinkStylus's drawing mode, LinkStylus can be run at every system startup and sit quietly in the System Tray until needed.

LinkStylus will enter drawing mode when you click the left mouse button on the System Tray icon. If you click the right mouse button on the icon, you will see a popup menu with three options: Start Drawing, Help, and Exit Program. The first does exactly the same as a left button click, it enters drawing mode. The Help option will bring you here to this help documentation for LinkStylus. The final option, Exit Program, will shutdown LinkStylus completely and remove the icon from the System Tray.



Drawing Mode Basics

When you enter drawing mode, your screen becomes a sort of freeze-frame, a snapshot of the way it looked just as you entered. From that point on that is your canvas background. Everything you draw will be placed on top of this background, and when the drawing is cleared your background will remain. It is important to note here that only by exiting drawing mode will you be able to interact with the objects in your background. For example, if your background includes a web browser you will not be able to click links, change sites, or print from it until you exit drawing mode. But, as you

probably have guessed, you *will* be able to draw on it until your heart's content.

LinkStylus can draw three basic shapes: lines, rectangles, and circles (ellipses). How to choose which shape to draw will be covered in a few sections (see **Lines and Circles and Squares, Oh My!**). When you enter drawing mode your mouse cursor will switch to the LinkStylus drawing icon. When this icon is visible your next action can be generalized into one of the following categories: Exit drawing mode, change drawing options, or draw something. Before we get into the details, you should memorize this very helpful rule-of-thumb for your mouse:

While in drawing mode the left button draws, the right button does everything else.

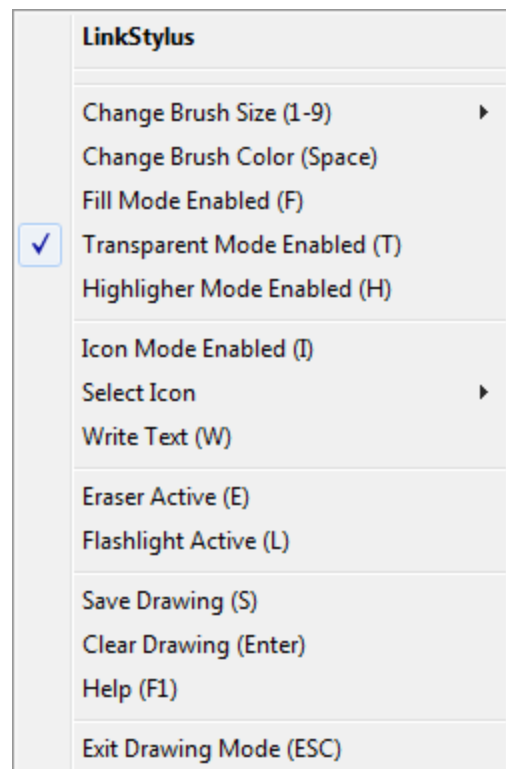
Also, while we will go over the features of LinkStylus in this documentation, the best way to get a solid understanding of the power and versatility it offers is to try it out. Once you have finished reading the information we have to share with you, feel free to click everywhere, change every option, and draw on everything. You can't hurt LinkStylus or your computer from drawing mode, so take some time to get familiar with it.

The Drawing Menu

The drawing menu is accessible from drawing mode with a click of the right mouse button at any position on the screen. The drawing menu does the following:

- Removes you from drawing mode
- Allows you to view and change your drawing options
- Shows you the most common keyboard shortcuts for LinkStylus
- Allows you to save a copy of your markup into a file
- Opens this help text

The keyboard shortcuts are not required to use LinkStylus but are provided as a convenience to those who prefer them over the popup menu method. For example, at the very bottom of the drawing menu is the item that removes you from drawing mode and it reads "Exit Drawing Mode (ESC)". The "(ESC)" at the end of the item tells you that from the main drawing screen you can press the ESC (escape) button on your keyboard and it will perform the same function as this menu item. The remainder of the menu is presented in the same way; if a feature has a keyboard shortcut key it will be given in parenthesis beside the name of the feature.



Drawing Options

There are two primary drawing options, brush color and brush size. These effect how

all of the LinkStylus shapes are drawn. The drawing menu will allow you, for example, to change your brush width from size 5 to size 7 and your drawing color from blue to red so that the next shape you draw might stand out a little more.

There are two secondary drawing options, Fill Mode and Transparent Mode. Enabling Fill Mode will not change the way lines are drawn, only rectangles and circles. For rectangles and circles if Fill Mode is enabled your brush color will fill the inside of the shape, otherwise it will not. Transparent mode effects all shapes and will make your brush semi-transparent. It will appear to transparent what you draw over when enabled and cover what you draw over otherwise.

Should you need a quick and easy way to call attention to a point on the screen, Icon Mode may be the answer. In icon mode, your mouse cursor becomes one of several symbols (arrows, a bullseye, etc.) that you can leave anywhere on the screen with a click of the left mouse button. When in Icon Mode, the number keys will cycle through the available icons you can drop. You can also select your drop icon from the drawing menu under "Select Icon".

The "Write Text" option will place a typing cursor at the location of the mouse pointer. You can then enter text at that location which will center itself around that point. The color of the text will follow with your selected drawing color, and the text will size itself in proportion with your current drawing size.

The Clear Drawing option simply erases all of your drawing and gives you a fresh canvas to work with, but it does not remove you from drawing mode. The Help item on the drawing menu is the same as the Help item on the System Tray icon's menu; it brings you to this text. It will also remove you from drawing mode so that you can browse the documentation rather than draw on it. The remaining two features, Eraser Mode and Flashlight Mode, will be discussed momentarily.

Lines and Circles and Squares, Oh My!

Remember the rule-of-thumb we gave you? "While in drawing mode the left button draws, the right button does everything else." The right button has been covered above in the sections that describe the drawing menu. Now it's time to talk about the left button...

By default, holding in the left mouse button while in drawing mode and moving the mouse will draw a line. It's that simple. The size, color, and transparency of the line you draw is governed by the drawing menu options. But you can do more than just draw lines. To enclose a particular area of your screen, hold the Shift key while you move your mouse to draw a square (technically a rectangle) around the selected area. Play with the Transparent Mode and Fill Mode options to change the way the square looks, in addition to the basic brush size and color options. Very similarly, hold the Control (Ctrl) key to draw a circle (technically an ellipse) instead of a square.

That's all there is to drawing shapes. Have a look through the next two sections dealing with the special modes of LinkStylus, browse through any FAQs that we've collected, and then jump right in. We think you'll be pleased with the variety of ways we give you to mark up your lectures, demonstrations, and presentations on the spot and in real-time.

Highlighter Mode

Drawing in highlighter mode is very similar to drawing in transparent mode, but they are for different situations. Although you can effectively highlight anything using transparent mode, you will find that highlight mode is better for text and produces sharper results.

Eraser Mode

Eraser mode is the first of the two special modes in LinkStylus. Quite simply, it turns your mouse into an eraser. To use it, enable eraser mode from the drawing menu then press down on your eraser (hold the left mouse button) and scrub away at your drawing. To exit this mode you can use the drawing menu again or simply press the escape button (ESC). Like your brush in drawing mode, the size of your eraser is adjustable and follows the "Brush Size" setting on the drawing menu. It's worth pointing out here that if you intend to erase all of your markings, the "Clear Drawing" item on the drawing menu would be more appropriate.

Flashlight Mode

The other special mode is flashlight mode. Aside from being a pretty neat effect, flashlight mode allows you to call attention to one specific spot on your screen by blacking out everything else. There are no mouse buttons involved, just move your mouse around and the flashlight will follow. The flashlight can be enabled and disabled from the drawing menu. Like eraser mode, the flashlight can also be disabled with the escape (ESC) key and will respond to changes in the brush size.

Saving Your Drawing

LinkStylus will allow you to draw anywhere you like on your screen, but the drawings are not permanent. This is where the "Save Drawing" menu item comes into play. Using this option, you can preserve your screen as-is with all of your drawings in-tact. The screenshot files that LinkStylus creates are very well compressed and extremely portable.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

... none yet. Have one? See our Contact Information below ...

Contact Information

If you have comments or suggestions for us, or if you have read through our help documentation and still need a question or two answered, then please get in contact with us. We are available from 8 in the morning until 5 in the evening Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. To speak with a real person call our toll-free number or send us an email if you would prefer a response in writing. Once again, thank you for choosing LinkStylus!

Applied Computer Systems, Inc.
3060 Johnstown-Utica Rd.
Johnstown, OH 43031
Phone: 740.892.2100
800.237.5465
Fax: 740.892.4838
Email: support@acs-linksystems.com