



MetalDealer

User manual

by SpinelDusk

Actual program version 1.0.0 / 220726
Curent manual version 1 / 220726

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Summary

MetalDealer is free tool for manipulating MechCommander game files. MetalDealer allows to view, unpack and pack game archives in the following formats:

- FastFile archive:
 - FastFile - *.FST
 - Distribution file - *.DPK
- Checksum index archive:
 - Save file - *.SAV
 - Solo map - *.SOL
 - Multiplayer map - *.MPK
 - Camping start file - *.PPK
- FEEDFACE index archive - *.PAK



FST (FastFile archive)



DPK (Distribution file)



SAV (Save file)



SOL (Solo map)



MPK (Multiplayer map)



PPK (Camping start file)



PAK (FEEDFACE index archive)

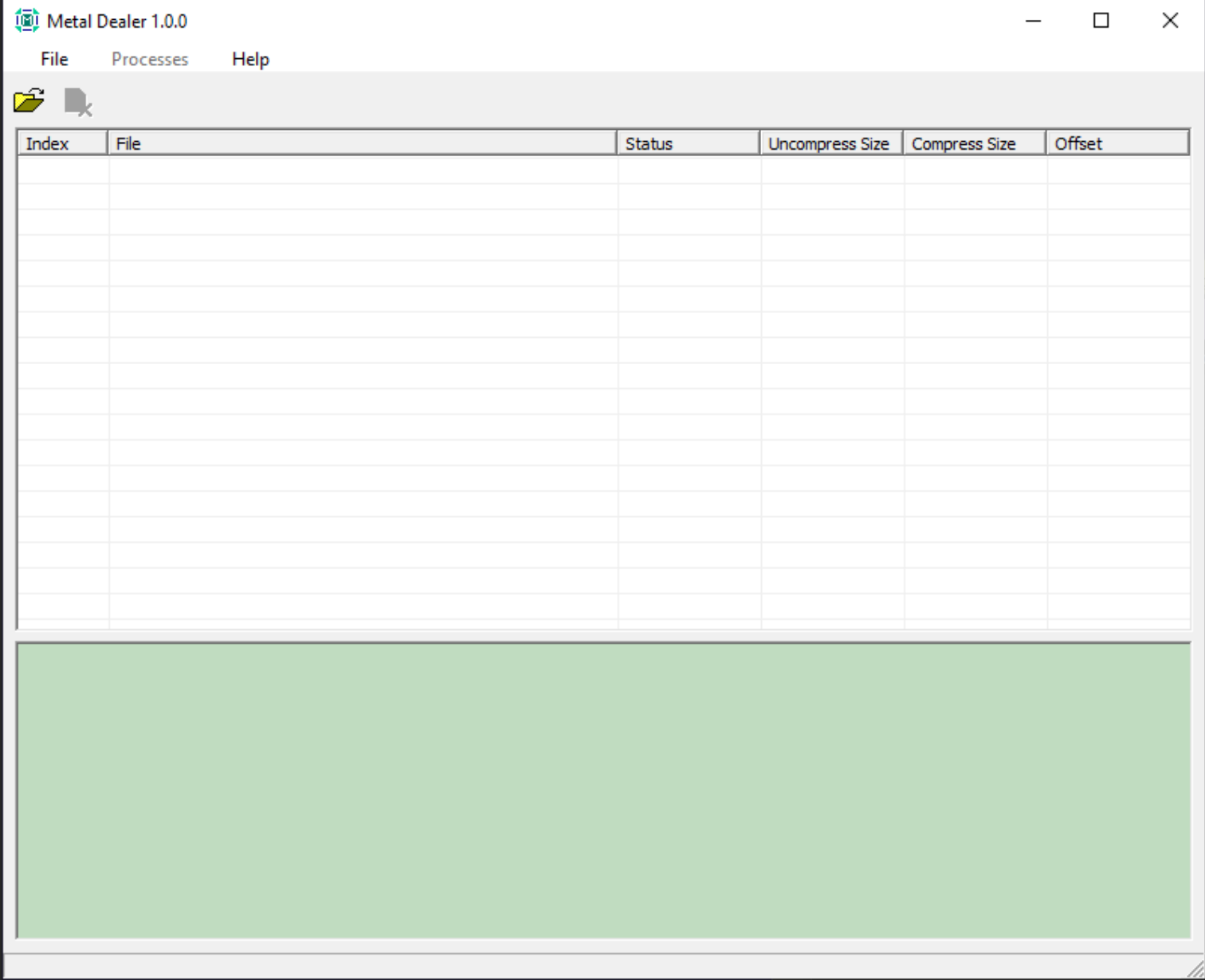
All available types of game archives for processing

Features

- **Extract single file** – Unpacking one (selected in the List View) file from archive. The file is placed in folder for unpacking, the folder is located next to the archive. The folder name (by mask) is `%ARCHIVE_NAME%_unpack`, `%ARCHIVE_NAME%` is the name of the archive to be unpacked along with the extension.
- **Unpack archive** – Unpacking all files from archive. Files are unpacked in the same way as in the 'Extract single file' mode – folder for files is created next to the archive.
- **Create list archived files** – Generating list of files from the archive with compression flag. This file can be used to pack a new archive. The file will be created in the archive folder.
Entries in the list are separated from each other by a line break character. A single entry has the format: `<compression flag> <path to file>`. The flag and path are separated from each other by a space.
The flag is a symbol for compression: c – compressed, u – uncompressed; to emulate empty entries in PAK files, it is supported to write empty entries to archive: e – empty. Attempting to use wrong flag or empty flag in archive that does not support empty entries will result in error.
The path to the file is relative. This is necessary for the correct packaging of FST files. This means that list file must be located in same folder, next to files for packing. This rule, however, does not apply to SOL and PAK archives, since they are indexed and do not save paths.
- **Combined mode (Unpack + Create list)** – The mode combines full unpacking of archive and creation of list of files in archive.

How to use

MetalDealer has graphical interface and is, by and large, an application for working with archives: list of files, toolbar with functions for manipulating archive, status bar.



Application main form

The main window of program consists of several graphical elements for manipulating the application and obtaining information about program state. These elements are:

- **Caption** – Application title.
- **Main Menu** – Application control panel.
- **Toolbar** – Control palette duplicates the functionality of ‘Main Menu’, depending on the mode of operation.
- **List View** – Form component showing list of contents of uploaded archive.
- **Test View** – Form component showing information on selected item from ‘List View’.
- **Status Bar** – Form component showing program state.

Caption

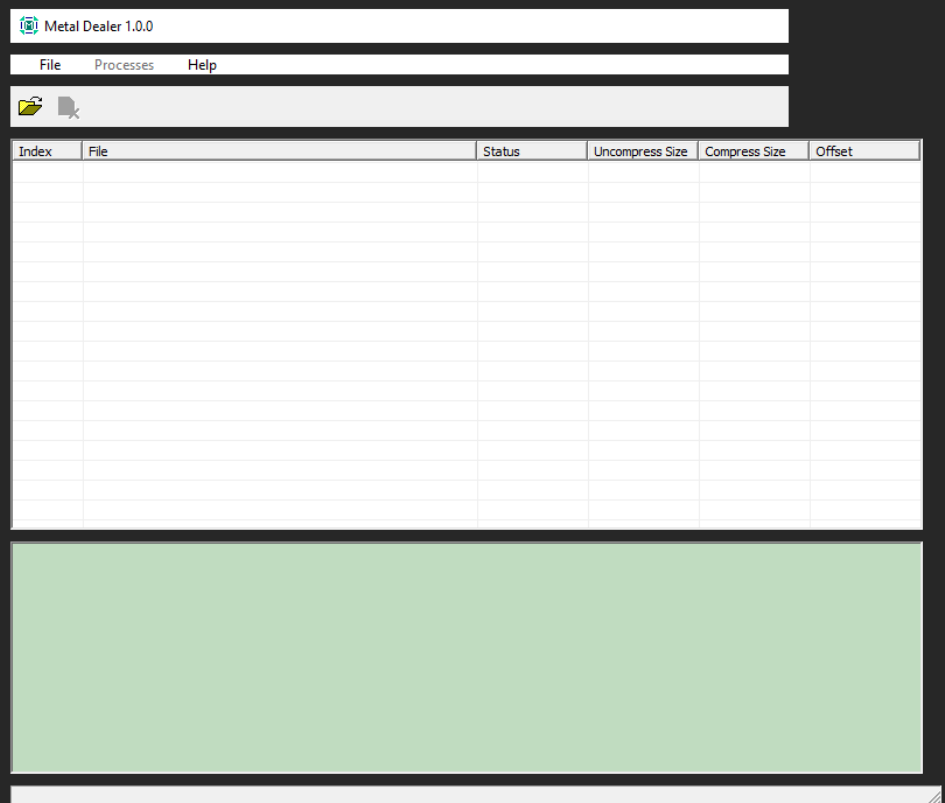
Main menu

Toolbar

List view

Text view

Status bar



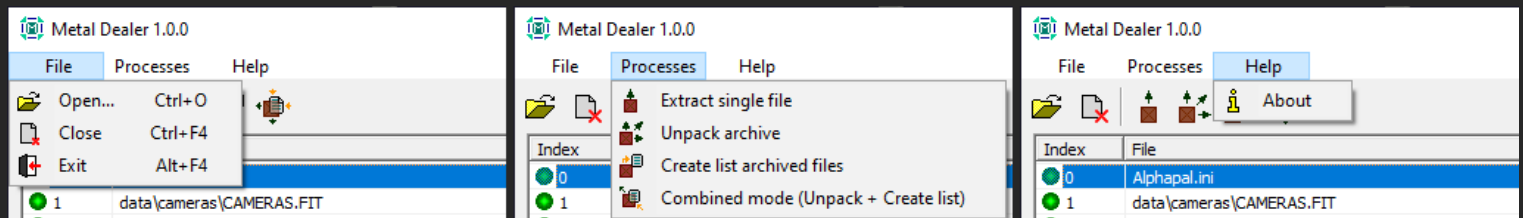
The main window of program with designations of form elements

Caption

The title of the application shows information about file opened in the program, program version and name.

Main Menu

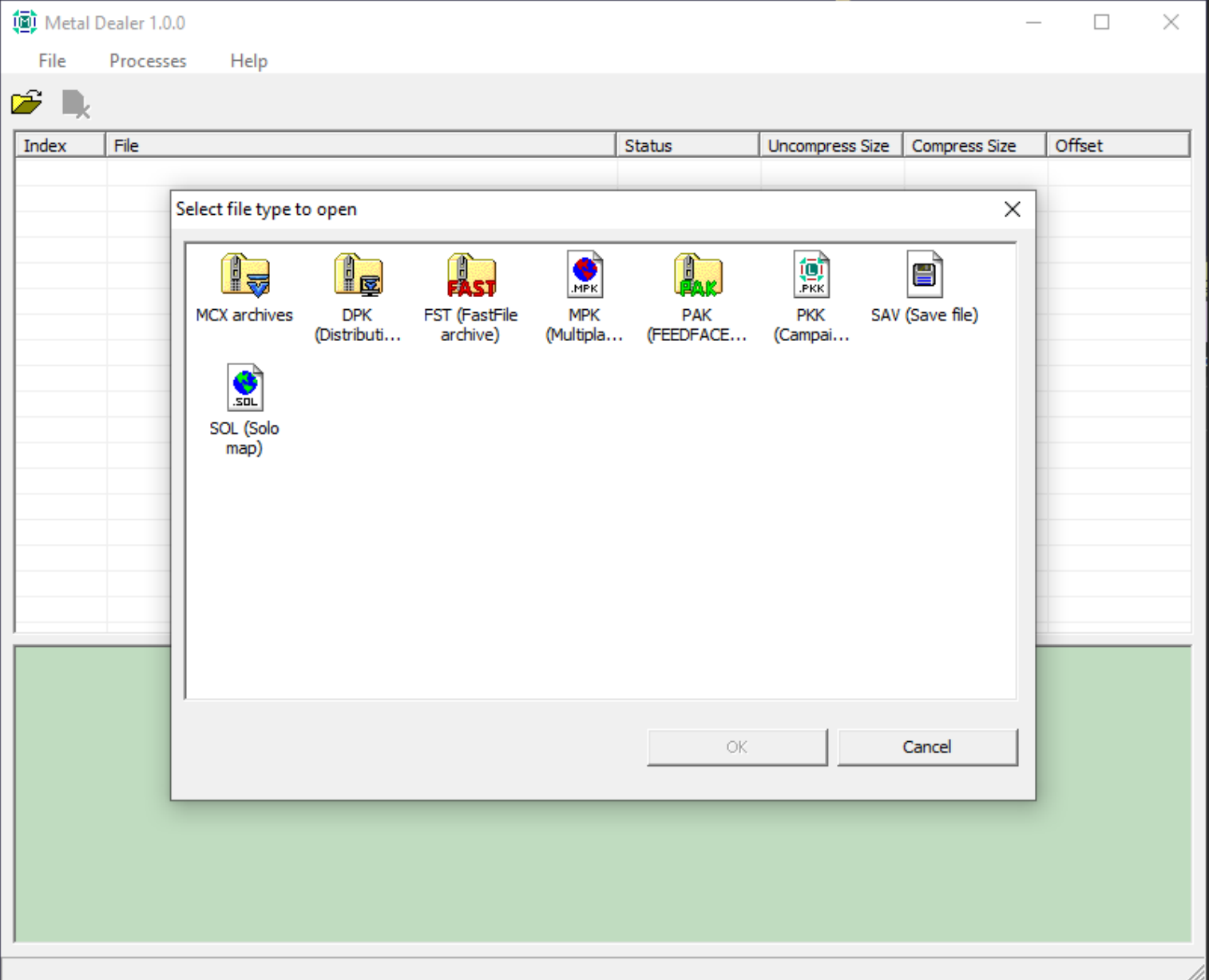
Main menu contains set of commands for managing program and manipulating files.



Expanded tabs with commands from 'Main Menu'

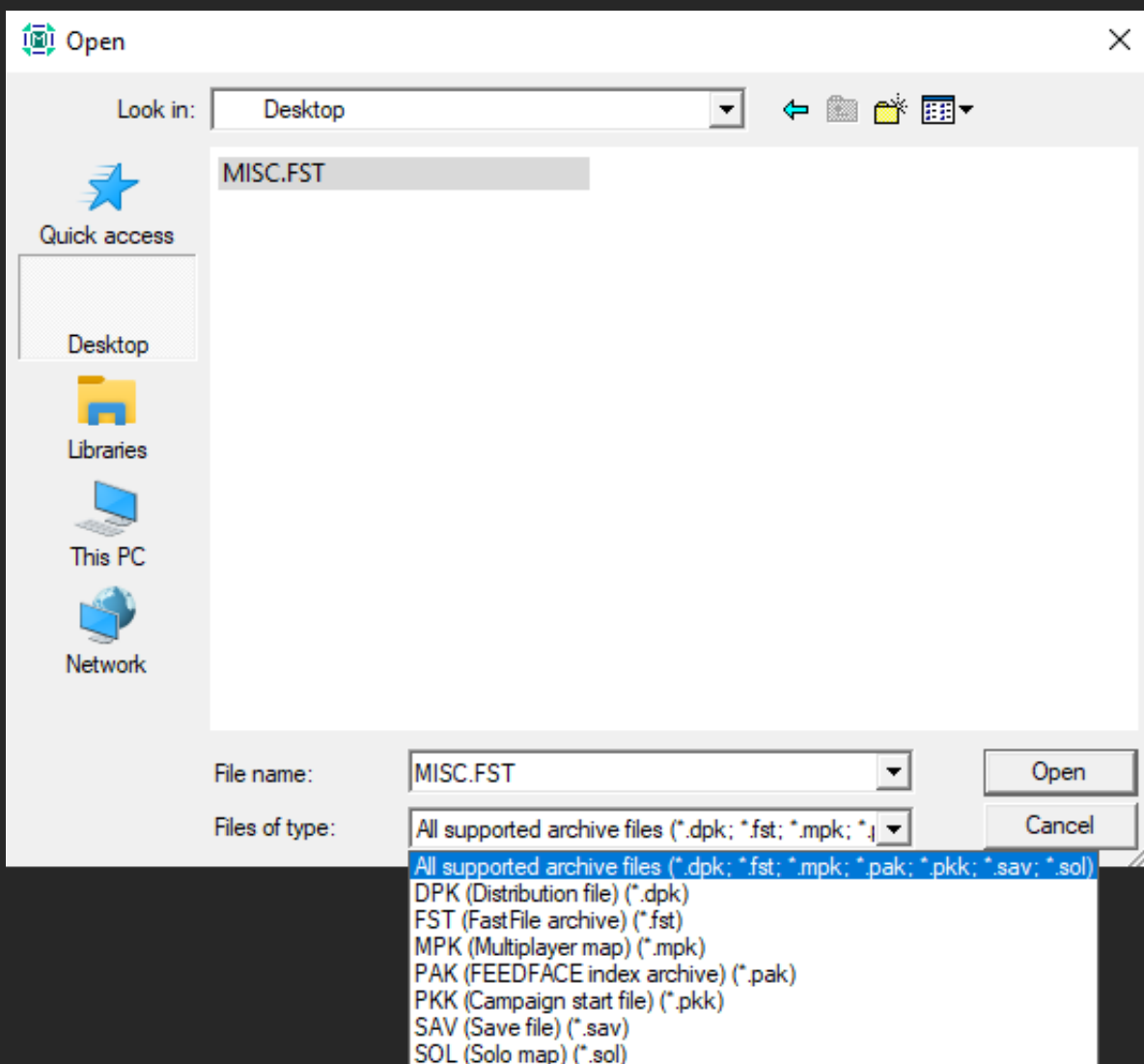
All commands are divided into 3 tabs:

- **File** – Main commands of the program. File load and unload management.
 - **Open...** – Opening file. After clicking, dialog box for selecting the type of loaded file will appear. (Hot key Ctrl+O)



Selecting the type of file to load

After selecting the file type, window will appear directly for selecting file on hard disk.



Hard disk file selection dialog

- **Close** – Closing file. Unloading file from program memory and stopping all manipulations on file contents. (*Hot key Ctrl+F4*)
- **Exit** – Close program. (*Hot key Alt+F4*)
- **Processes** – List of commands for manipulating contents of loaded file.
 - **Extract single file** – Same name mode. Extracting a single file from archive.
 - **Unpack archive** – Same name mode. Unpacking all files from archive.
 - **Create list archived files** – Same name mode. Generating list of files from archive with compression flag.
 - **Combined mode (Unpack + Create list)** – Same name mode. The mode combines full unpacking of archive and creation of list of files from archive.
- **Help** – Information tab.
 - **About** – Modal window with information about author, program version, contacts.

Description of the commands is given in paragraph above, then only correspondence of the glyph and the command will be given:

-  - **Open...** (*Ctrl+O*)
-  - **Close** (*Alt+F4*)
-  - **Extract single file**
-  - **Unpack archive**
-  - **Create list archived files**
-  - **Combined mode (Unpack + Create list)**

List View

This form component provides information about contents of archive loaded into the program as list. The list is divided into 6 columns:

- **Index** – Sequence number of file in archive. The numbering starts from zero. The icon next to index symbolizes compression status: green – compressed, blue – uncompressed, gray – empty entry.
- **File** – Relative path of packed file. Since SOL and PAK files do not save file paths, in reading mode of these files, instead of the path, there will be a “restored” file name – is formed by mask:
%ARCHIVE_NAME%_%INDEX%.%FILE_EXTENSION%
 - **%ARCHIVE_NAME%** – archive name;
 - **%INDEX%** – file index, sequence number;
 - **%FILE_EXTENSION%** – file extension (if MetalDealer cannot determine file format, ‘unk’ extension will be indicated).
- **Status** – File compression status in archive. There are 3 states: compressed, uncompressed, empty. Empty entry is typical only for PAK files.
- **Uncompress Size** – Uncompressed file size. If file is compressed, this value indicates file size after decompression.
- **Compress Size** – Compressed file size. If file in archive is not compressed, then in this column there will be dash character instead of value.
- **Offset** – Offset of file entry in archive.

Text View

This form component provides information about file in archive separately (when file is selected in ‘List View’), as well as partially information about the archive itself.

Metal Dealer 1.0.0 - D:\Desktop\MISC.FST

File Processes Help

Icons: Add, Remove, Copy, Paste, Find, etc.

Index	File	Status	Uncompress Size	Compress Size	Offset
0	Alphapal.ini	Compressed	3889	2096	16772
1	data\cameras\CAMERAS.FIT	Compressed	2385	1073	18868
2	data\cameras\windows.fit	Compressed	85	80	19941
3	data\fonts\BLKFNT.FNT	Compressed	13928	2365	20021
4	data\fonts\BLKFNT10.FNT	Compressed	20436	2690	22386
5	data\fonts\BLKFNT12.FNT	Compressed	27024	2870	25076
6	data\fonts\BLUE.FNT	Compressed	13928	2365	27946
7	data\fonts\BLUE10.FNT	Compressed	20436	2690	30311
8	data\fonts\BLUE12.FNT	Compressed	13520	1697	33001
9	data\fonts\DIM.FNT	Compressed	7016	1560	34698
10	data\fonts\DIM10.FNT	Compressed	12336	2107	36258
11	data\fonts\DIM12.FNT	Compressed	17936	2576	38365
12	data\fonts\GREEN.FNT	Compressed	13928	2365	40941
13	data\fonts\GREEN10.FNT	Compressed	20436	2690	43306
14	data\fonts\GREEN12.FNT	Compressed	13520	1697	45996
15	data\fonts\GRYFNT.FNT	Compressed	13928	2365	47693
16	data\fonts\GRYFNT10.FNT	Compressed	20436	2690	50058

Archive file : D:\Desktop\MISC.FST
Amount of files: 64
File size : 264464
Index of file : 0
Offset of file : 16772
Compress flag : Compress
File in archive: Alphapal.ini
Uncompress size: 3889
Compress size : 2096

Appearance of the program with loaded archive and selected entry

Status Bar

'Status Bar' informs user about program status and processes within the utility.

System requirements

- OS: any Windows OS from XP to 11.
- Minimum screen resolution is 1024x768 (Minimum size of program main window is 800x652).

Known Issues

Unable to open files in the path with Unicode characters. At the moment, you should avoid using Unicode characters in paths to processed files.

Rights and warranties

MetalDealer is free program to distribute and use. The author disclaims responsibility for use of program and results of the utility. Program is based on completely free license - MIT license.

Contacts

For error messages, program incorrect behavior, potential improvements, you can use the following e-mails:

- spinelldusk@mail.ee (most preferred)
- spinelldusk@protonmail.com