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1 Panel

The KDE panel (often referred to as Kicker) is the bar that you'll usually find at the bottom of the screen when you start up KDE for the first time. For detailed help on Kicker's usage you can type <help:/kicker> in Konqueror to read the user manual.

The panel gives you quick access to applications and makes it easier for you to organize your desktop. Using the KDE panel you can:

- launch applications using the K menu or the application buttons
- switch desktops using the panel's pager applet
- switch active windows, and minimize or maximize them
- browse folder using the browser menu functionality
- access panel applets that extend the panel's functionality, offering for example mixers, clocks or a system monitor

1.1 Arrangement

In the Arrangement tab you can configure the size and position of the panel.

If you have more than one panel on screen, you can select at the top of the window which panel you wish to configure.

In the section labeled Position is a set of 12 small buttons arranged in a square. Each button corresponds to a location for the panel. Click on a button and notice where the panel is located on the preview monitor to the right.

TIP

Generally, the available space in kicker is used more efficiently if the panel is aligned horizontally, i.e. attached to the top or bottom screen border.

In the section labeled Length, you can use the combo box and slider to adjust the *minimum* length of the panel. If you place a mark in the checkbox labeled Expand as required to fit contents, the panel will become longer if more space is needed. When less space is required on the panel, the panel will shrink down to the minimum size. If there is no mark in the checkbox, then the panel is fixed to the length specified in this section.

The final section of this table is labeled Size, and refers to the *height* of the panel. The panel's size can be Tiny, Small, Medium, Large or Custom. If you choose Custom mode, you can resize Kicker by specifying a height in the combobox.

If you have multiple monitors, you can configure the panel for each screen entirely independently. If you are not sure which screen is which, Press the Identify and a number will appear centred on each screen.

Then simply choose the screen you wish to configure from the drop down box labelled Xinerama screen, or choose All Screens to have identical configurations on each.

1.2 Hiding

Depending on your screen resolution you may find that the panel takes away too much of your precious screen real estate. To save screen space, the panel offers manual hiding of the panel, an auto hide feature, and the ability to allow other windows to lay on top of the panel. These features are selected in the section entitled Hide Mode.

The Hide Mode section has three options:

Only hide when panel-hiding button is clicked When this option is selected, the panel will remain visible at the location you defined unless you click on the button at the far right (for horizontally oriented) or bottom (for vertically oriented) button. This button has an arrow on it pointed to the edge of the screen.

Once clicked, the panel will disappear. If the button is clicked again, the panel will re-appear at the same location.

Hide automatically If this option is selected, then the panel will automatically disappear after the number of seconds specified in the combo box below the option. To make the panel reappear, simply move the mouse pointer to the edge of the screen where the panel is located, and the panel will reappear immediately.

If you place a mark in the checkbox labeled Show panel when switching desktops, the panel will automatically reappear when you switch desktops. (The panel will disappear again after the specified number of seconds.)

Allow other windows to cover the panel As this option's label implies, the panel is always on the desktop when this option is selected. It is now possible, however, for application windows to lay on top of the panel.

To restore the panel, simply move the mouse cursor to the screen location specified in the drop box labeled Raise when the pointer touches the screen's. You can change this value by selecting one of the choices provided in the drop down box.

Once the panel has moved back on top of the application window, it will stay there until an application window becomes active again.

The next section down is labeled Panel-Hiding Buttons. It consists of two checkboxes: Show left panel-hiding button and Show right panel-hiding button. Use these checkboxes to show and hide the left and right manual panel hiding buttons.

If there is no mark in the checkbox labeled Animate panel hiding, then whenever the toolbar is hidden, it simply disappears. If there is a mark in the checkbox, then the panel appears to slide off the edge of the screen.

You can determine how quickly the panel appears to move by adjusting the slider from Fast to Slow.

1.3 Menus

In the Menus tab you can configure the panel menu's behavior. This affects the K menu you will often use to launch applications, the browser menus you can use to access folders and other menus like the recent documents menu.

The K Menu frame offers you some options to configure the K menu's functionality. This frame consists of 4 items:

- The Menu item format: radio buttons have three options. This determines how the application name (i.e. Konqueror, KWord, etc.) and the description (i.e. Web Browser, Word Processor, etc.) are displayed on the K menu.
- The Optional Menu checkboxes allow you to determine which special menu items appear in the K menu.

The Bookmarks menu allows you to quickly select from the same bookmarks that are available in Konqueror.

The Find menu offers access to the KFind application to search for local files, and a quick link to a search engine to search for things on the Internet.

The Konqueror Profiles menu allows you to launch Konqueror with any of your configured profiles.

The Network Folders menu can launch a Konqueror file manager window displaying any of your configured network folders.

The Preferences menu allows you to launch each KControl module directly from the K menu.

The Print System menu provides several menu entries to help manage the printer(s) attached to your system.

The Quick Browser menu gives you quick links to locations on your hard drive.

The Recent Documents menu lists the most recently edited documents and will automatically launch the application to edit or view this document.

The System menu allows you quick access to some commonly visited places, including your Home folder, and the Trash. You may find this useful instead of having a separate entry for each of these in the K menu

The Terminal Sessions menu provides menu items to launch several different types of terminal programs (command line interfaces).

- Show side image will add a small image to the side of the menu. This is purely decorative.
- The Edit K Menu button launches the KDE menu editor.

In the QuickBrowser Menus area you can configure whether the panel's browser menus will show hidden files or not (hidden files on UNIX® systems are those whose filenames begin with a dot) as well as how many files at most will be shown in a browser menu. The latter option may be especially useful if you have a rather small screen resolution, as then the browser menus will quickly fill up your screen when you browse folders containing many files.

The quick start section in the K menu offers quick access to programs you have used often or recently. In the Quick Start Menu Items frame you can choose whether this section will show the most recently or the most frequently used programs. Using the option Maximum number of entries combo box, you can configure how many programs the quick start section will remember.