

The Kontakt Handbook

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The Kontakt Handbook

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Abstract

Contact is the integrated solution to your personal information management (PIM) needs. It combines well-known KDE applications such as KMail, KOrganizer and KAddressBook into a single interface to provide easy access to mail, scheduling, address book and other PIM functionality.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Kontact is the integrated solution for personal information management. It combines the well-known KDE applications for email, scheduling, address book, and notes (KMail, KOrganizer, KAddressBook, and KNotes) into a single interface. Being based on a true component framework Kontact provides exactly the same functionality as the stand-alone applications, and adds more features, by making use of the integrated way Kontact runs the applications as components. Users still retain the choice of which applications are run within Kontact and which are run stand-alone.

In addition to the functionality of the individual applications Kontact provides a summary view and advanced drag & drop features between components.

Chapter 2

Kontact Components

Kontact integrates the following applications. See the individual application manuals for details on how to use them. These apply to running them as components inside Kontact just as well as running them stand-alone.

KMail

The KDE mail client.

KOrganizer

The KDE calendar and scheduling application.

KAddressBook

The KDE contact manager.

KNotes

The KDE sticky notes application.

Akregator

The KDE RSS feed reader.

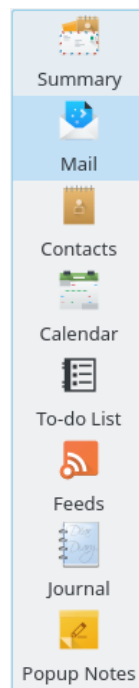
Chapter 3

The Kontact Main Window

The Main Window consists of a side pane on the left showing the icons of the available components, a main view on the right which contains the main window of the active component and the usual menu, tool and status bars.

3.1 Side Pane

The Side Pane serves multiple purposes. It allows for switching between components, shows which component is active and serves as the target for drag & drop operations to the different applications.



Kontact's Side Pane

For switching between components simply click on the corresponding icon. The main window of the component is shown and the menu, tool and status bars are adapted to reflect the functionality of the active component. If you activate a component for the first time there might be

a small delay until the main view is changed, because components are loaded on demand. This means you don't waste memory for components not in use.

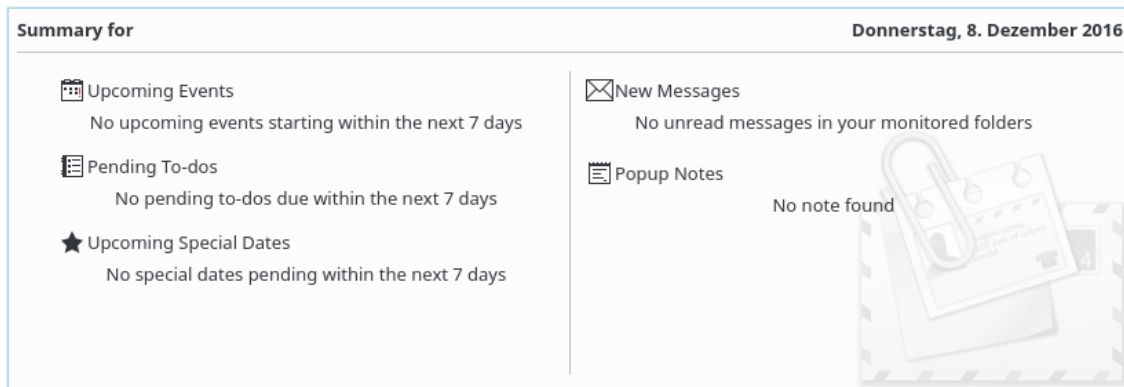
The icons in the Side Pane can also be used as targets for drag & drop operations. For example, you can drag a mail message from the mail part and drop it on the icon of the to-do list or the calendar to create a to-do or event associated with this mail.

Finally, you can change the size of the icons in the Side Pane. Right-clicking on the Side Pane will give you the option to use Large, Normal, or Small icons, as well as the option to use text only instead of icons.

If you dislike the Side Pane, you can simply hide it by dragging the splitter. An alternative navigation between parts is provided by the **Navigator** toolbar, which can be freely positioned. See Section 3.3 for more on the **Navigator** toolbar.

3.2 Main View

The view on the right which takes up most of the area of the Kontakt main window shows the active component. This exactly corresponds to the main window the component uses when run as a stand-alone application. The highlighted icon in the Side Pane indicates to which application the Main View belongs. Kontakt remembers the active component when exiting, so the next time Kontakt starts it initially displays that component in the Main View.

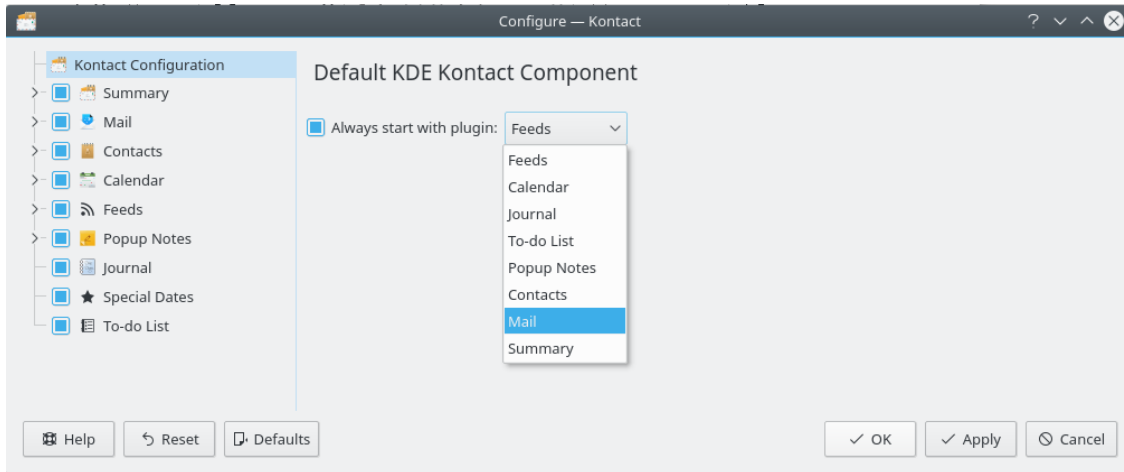


Kontakt's Main View

In addition, there are two ways of overriding the component that Kontakt starts with. The first is supplying an argument to the Kontakt program call (see chapter 6). The second is a setting in the Kontakt Settings dialog that will allow you to always start Kontakt in a certain mode.

To get to it, go to **Settings** → **Configure Kontakt** and click on **Kontakt** in the list.

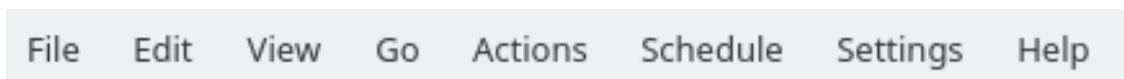
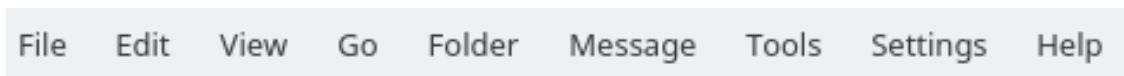
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Kontakt Starting Component Setting

3.3 Menu, Tool and Status Bars

The menu, tool and status bars are adapted to the active component. That means that, in addition to some common functions like the help menu which are shown for all components, there are actions which are switched when the active component is switched. These actions available for each component are the same as those available when running the application stand-alone.



Views of Kontakt's menubars in the Summary View, Mail View, and Calendar View.

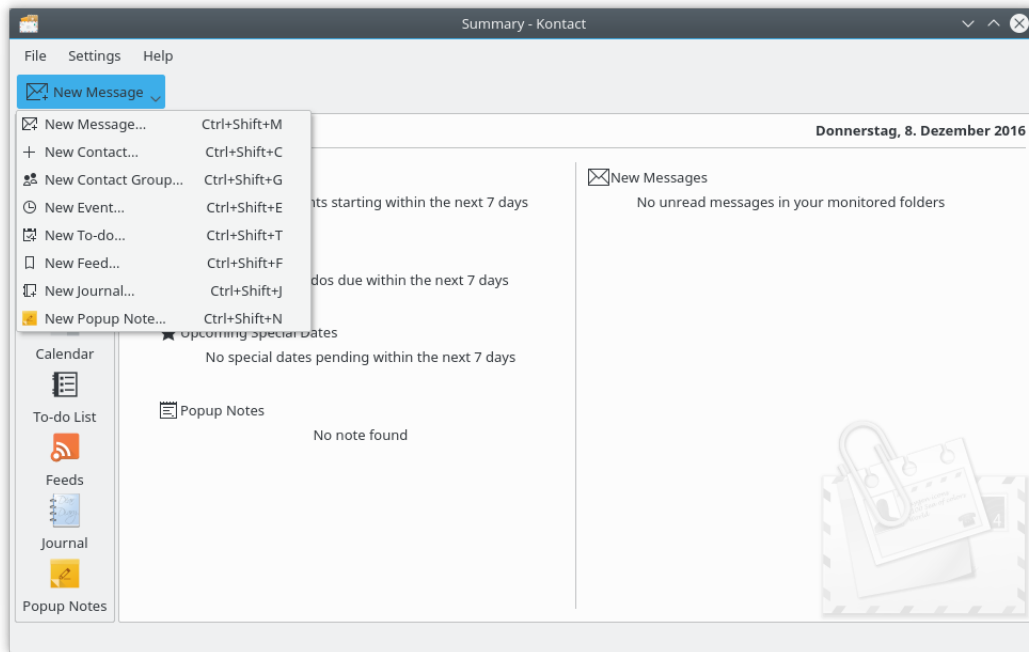
In addition, Kontakt can show the **Navigator** toolbar, which allows you access to the Kontakt components very much as the Side Pane does. However, unlike the Side Pane, buttons in the **Navigator** toolbar cannot be used for drag & drop operations to other components.

To activate the toolbar, select **Settings** → **Toolbars Shown** → **Navigator**.



Kontakt's Navigator toolbar.

A special action common to all components is the **New** action. It allows creation of new objects including emails, contacts, appointments and to-dos independently of which component is active. The component responsible for processing the selected object is started, if required, and takes over the created object.



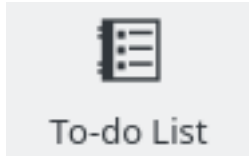
Kontakt's New Menu

3.4 Drag and Drop Functionality

Kontakt provides advanced drag and drop functionality between the programs it contains. Following is a brief description of each of the specific drag and drop operations that can be used and the result of each.

3.4.1 KMail -> KOrganizer To-do List

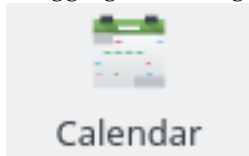
Dragging a message from [KMail's Headers pane](#) to the icon for KOrganizer's To-do list (



) will create a new To-do with **Mail: Subject** as the title and **From: Sender To: Receiver Subject: Subject** as the contents (where text that looks *like this* is information from the message itself), as well as the email message itself as an attachment.

3.4.2 KMail -> KOrganizer Calendar

Dragging a message from [KMail's Headers pane](#) to the icon for KOrganizer's Calendar (

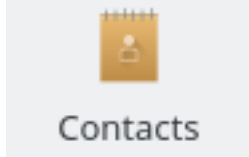


) will create a new Event with **Mail: Subject** as the title and **From: Sender To: Receiver Subject: Subject** as the contents (where text that looks *like this* is information from the message itself), as well as the email message itself as an attachment.

Note that dragging onto the To-do button creates a To-do, whereas dragging onto the Calendar creates an Event. More on this distinction is available in the [KOrganizer documentation](#)

3.4.3 KMail -> KAddressBook

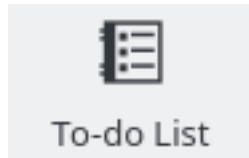
Dragging a message from [KMail's Headers pane](#) to the icon for KAddressBook (



) will create a contact from the email address of the sender, unless a contact with that name already exists. A dialog box notifies you of this action.

3.4.4 KAddressBook -> KOrganizer To-do List

Dragging any number of entries from [KAddressBook's main window](#) to the icon for KOrganizer's To-do List (

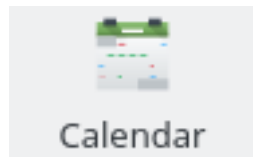


) will create a new To-do with "Meeting" as the title and the selected contacts as attendees.

Note that dragging onto the To-do button creates a To-do, whereas dragging onto the Calendar creates an Event. More on this distinction is available in the [KOrganizer documentation](#)

3.4.5 KAddressBook -> KOrganizer Calendar

Dragging any number of entries from [KAddressBook's main window](#) to the icon for KOrganizer's Calendar (



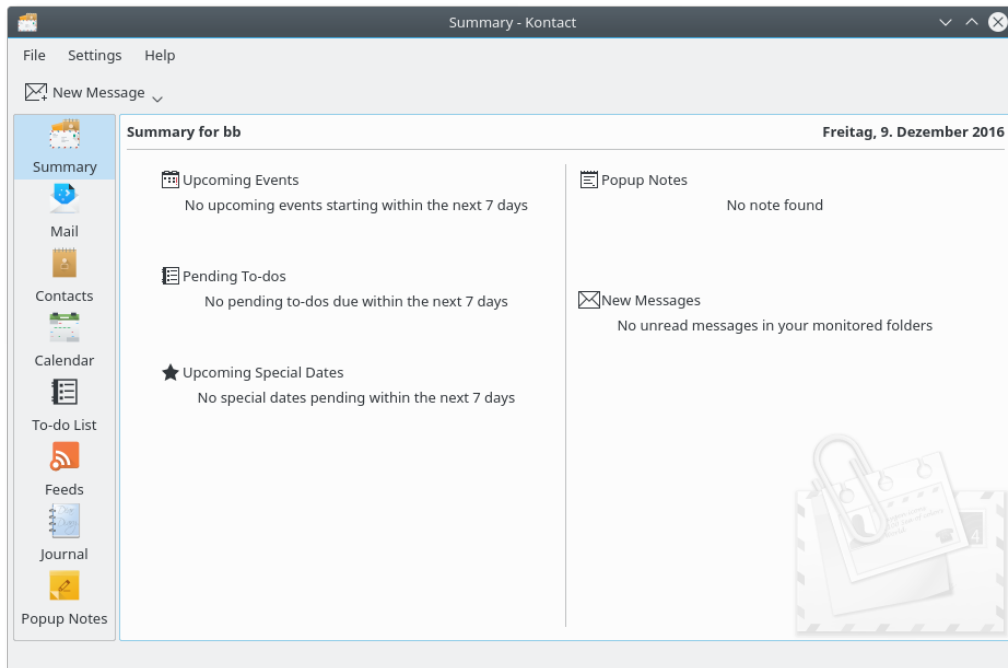
) will create a new Event with "Meeting" as the title and the selected contacts as attendees.

Note that dragging onto the To-do button creates a To-do, whereas dragging onto the Calendar creates an Event. More on this distinction is available in the [KOrganizer documentation](#)

Chapter 4

The Summary View

The default view when starting Kontact for the first time is the Summary View. It shows an overview of the most relevant information provided by the selected Kontact components. These can be notes, imminent appointments or birthdays, due to-dos, new messages etc. Which information is shown is configurable by selecting the corresponding components in the [Kontact configuration dialog](#).



Kontact's Summary View

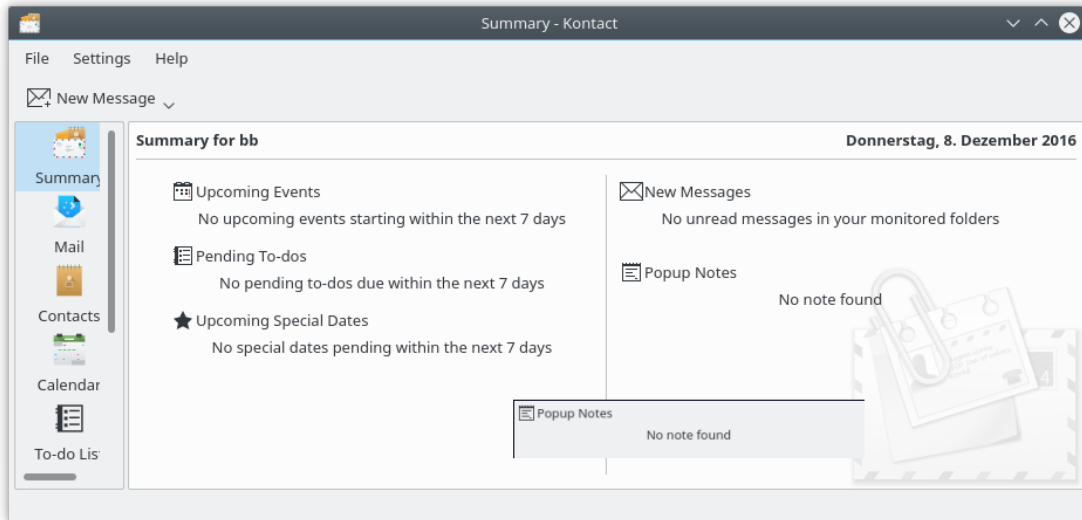
4.1 Repositioning Summary View Components

The Summary View allows you to change where the components are in the view itself. So, if you prefer to have your Special Dates in the lower left and your To-dos in the upper right, you can rearrange the Summary View to reflect that.

Repositioning components in the Summary View is as simple as dragging them to the new location you want them to be in. Hold down the **Ctrl** key, click and hold on the gray title area of the

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component and drag the component to wherever you want it to be. Note that this positioning is done compared to other components. So you can move the Mail component to be below the To-do component in the view, but you cannot place it in a specific position. If you have only one component in your Summary View, the only option is to move it between the two columns of the view; two components can either be two in one column or one in each column; and so on and so forth. Whenever you are dragging a component, you will see a small preview box following your mouse around showing you the component.



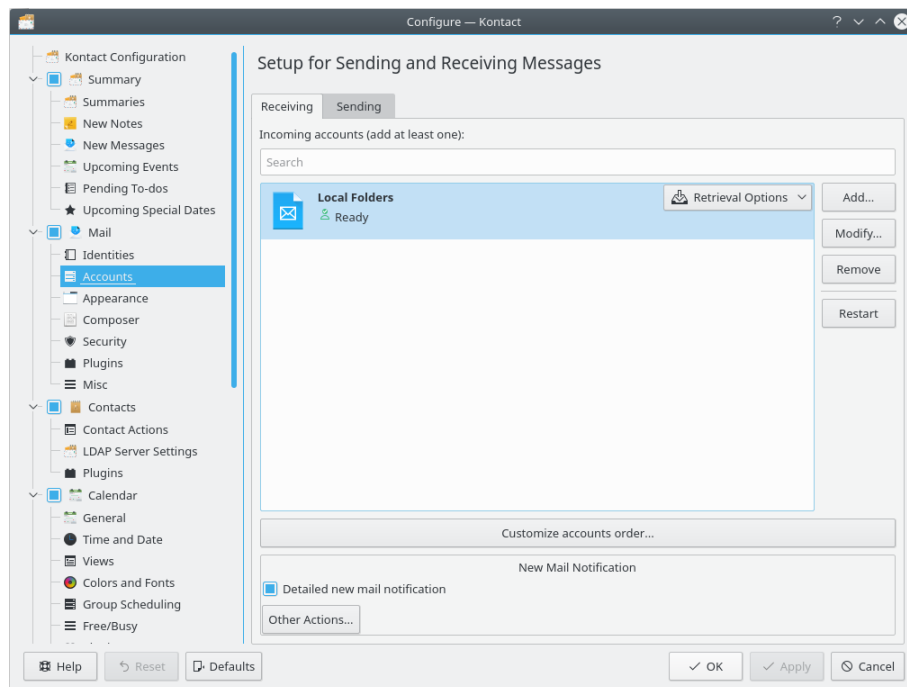
Rearranging Kontakt's Summary View

Chapter 5

Configuring Kontakt

5.1 Kontakt Configuration Window

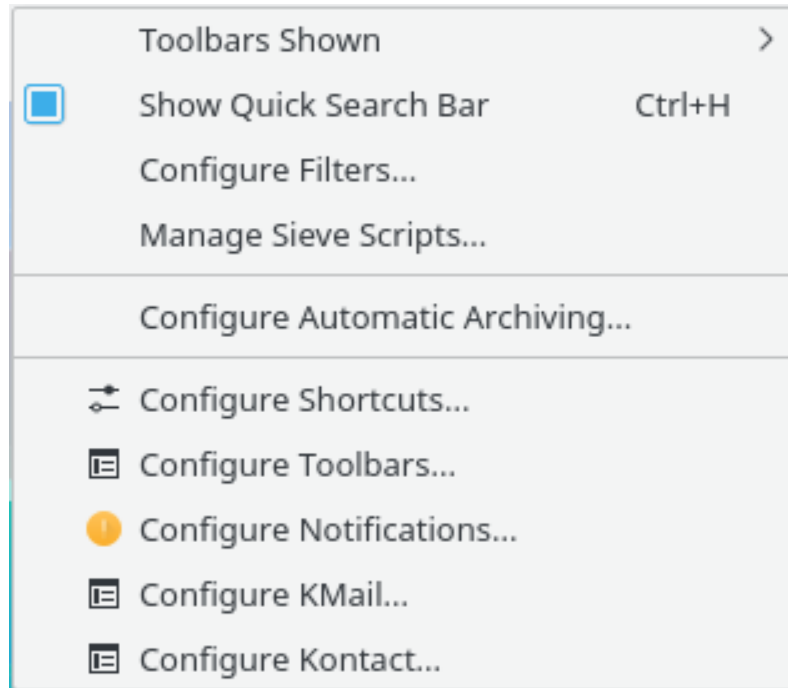
When selecting the **Configure Kontakt** action from the **Settings** menu, the Kontakt configuration dialog is shown. It provides a list of the configurations for all the active components of Kontakt. You can click the > symbol next to the component name to expand the tree so that you can view the options for that component. Selecting one of the configuration options under a heading will bring up that configuration section on the right.



Kontakt's Configuration Window

By checking the box next to the component title you select the component to be visible in the Side Pane and the Summary View. The component is loaded and shown in the Main Window when clicking on its icon in the Side Pane. By unchecking the check box the component is removed from the Side Pane and Summary View. Changes become effective by clicking the **Apply** or **OK** buttons.

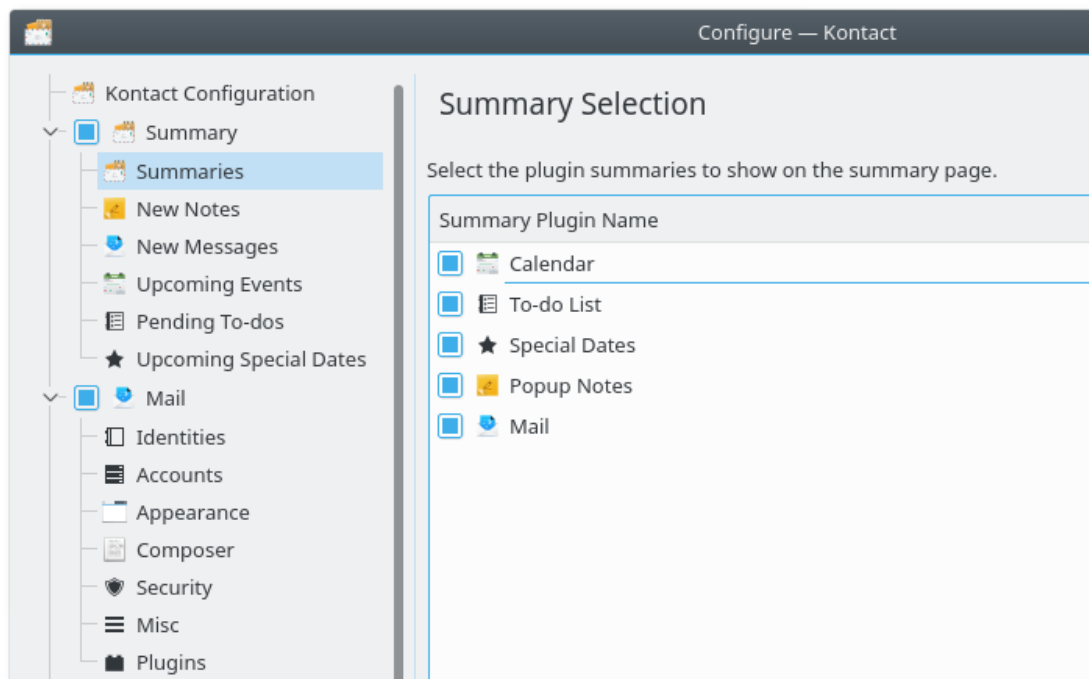
You can also configure individual components by clicking on the corresponding icon in the Side Pane and then selecting the menu item **Configure application name** from the **Settings** menu.



Kontact Settings Menu When KMail is Selected

5.2 Configuring Kontact's Summary View

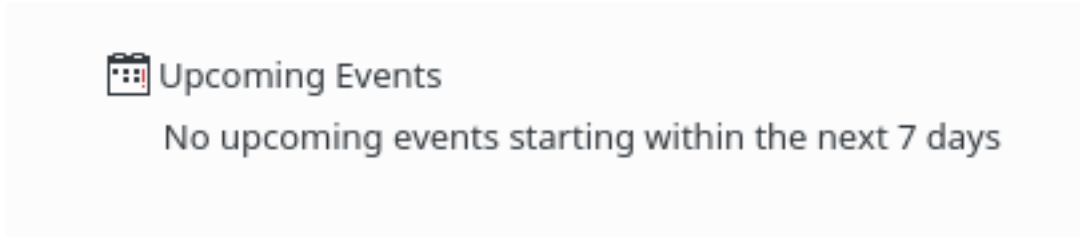
When you select **Summaries** in the Kontact settings dialog, a page is displayed that allows you to select which summary plugins Kontact should show in its summary view. Here is a brief list of the currently available plugins and what they do:



Summary Selection

5.2.1 Kontakt Summary Plugins: Calendar

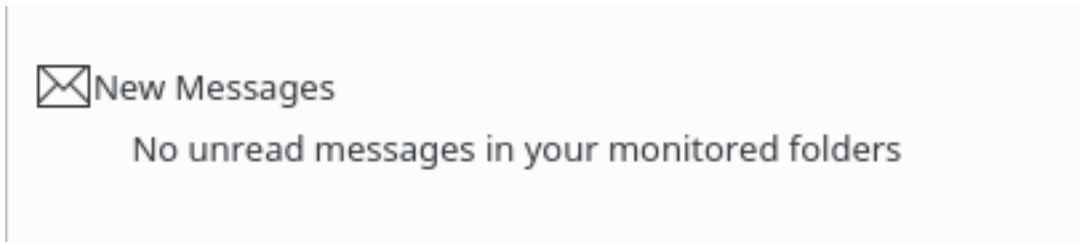
The 'Calendar' plugin for Kontakt's Summary View adds an area in the view labeled **Upcoming Events**. This will display any events that currently apply.



Kontakt Calendar Summary Plugin

5.2.2 Kontakt Summary Plugins: Mail

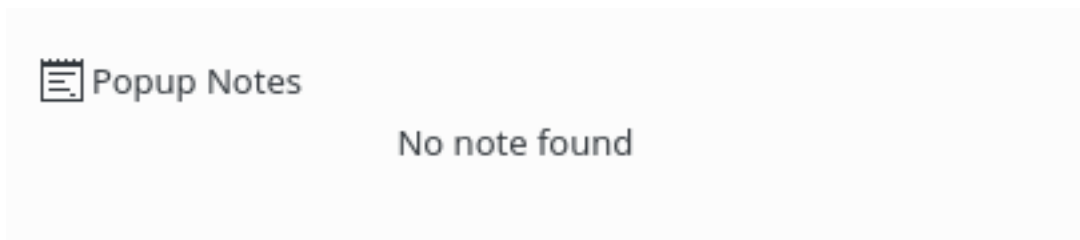
The 'Mail' plugin for Kontakt's Summary View adds an area in the view labeled **New Messages**. This area is updated every time you receive new messages to inform you how many of these messages there are and which folder they are in.



Kontakt Mail Summary Plugin

5.2.3 Kontakt Summary Plugins: Notes

The 'Notes' plugin for Kontakt's Summary View adds an area in the view labeled **Popup Notes**. This area displays all current notes' titles (titles default to the date/time the note was created). Clicking on the title of a note will bring up the Notes area.

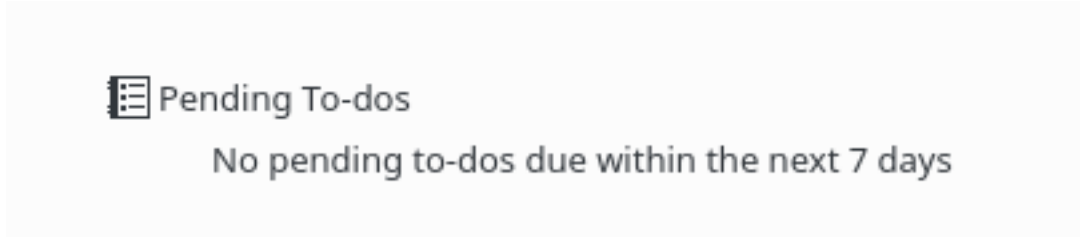


Kontakt Notes Summary Plugin

5.2.4 Kontakt Summary Plugins: To-do List

The 'To-do List' plugin for Kontakt's Summary View adds an area in the view labeled **Pending To-dos**. This area contains all current to-dos, including ones that have been completed. It displays the title of the to-do, the percentage of completion, and the current status of the to-do. Note that

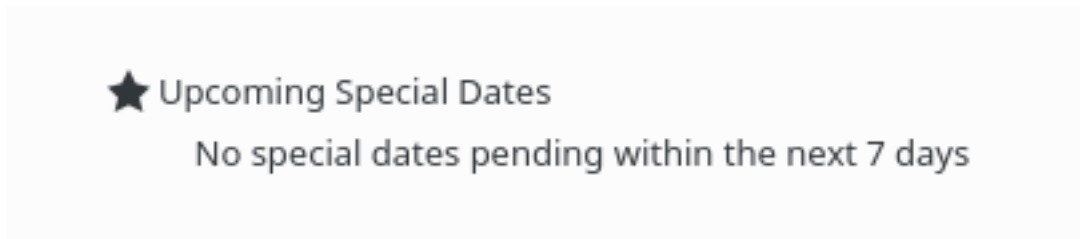
you can purge all completed to-dos via the Kontakt To-do List. Clicking on a to-do's title will currently do nothing.



Kontakt To-do List Summary Plugin

5.2.5 Kontakt Summary Plugins: Special Dates

The 'Special Dates' plugin for Kontakt's Summary View adds an area in the view labeled **Upcoming Special Dates**. This area contains information based on the criteria selected in the configuration area of the plugin in Kontakt's Summary View configuration. The 'Special Dates' plugin is especially useful because it can display birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and special occasions from both the calendar and the contact list in one place.



Kontakt Special Dates Plugin

Chapter 6

Kontakt On the Command Line

Kontakt has several command line arguments that can be used for certain actions.

First of all, Kontakt supports command line arguments that all KDE Frameworks/Qt™ applications support, see the man pages `qt6options` and `kf6options`.

Kontakt also supports several command line arguments specific to it.

6.1 Command Line Arguments

6.1.1 Module-related Arguments

To get a list of available Kontakt modules, you can type:

```
% kontakt --list
```

Then, to start Kontakt with a module active, type:

```
% kontakt --module moduleName
```

Where *moduleName* is one of the modules obtained using the previous command.

6.1.2 Startup-related Arguments

To start Kontakt in iconified mode¹, you can type:

```
% kontakt --iconify
```

¹Iconified mode is also called minimized; it is when the application window is hidden and the application is available only in the taskbar.

Chapter 7

Under The Hood

Kontact makes extensive use of several KDE key technologies, most notably KParts and D-Bus.

The GUI integration of the components is done by plugins providing KParts versions of the applications. This only needs a thin additional layer on top of the already existing code of the stand-alone applications.

For communication between the components D-Bus is used. This has the nice characteristic that it is completely transparent to whether the application is run stand-alone or embedded as KPart into Kontact. When running inside of Kontact an efficient in-process mode of D-Bus is used.

Chapter 8

Credits and License

Kontakt

Program copyright 2001-2021, The KDE Developers

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Appendix A

Administrator's Guide

A.1 Compatibility Issues

This section provides help with how to make Kontact communicate effectively with various groupware solutions.

A.1.1 Outlook and Exchange

In the Kontact configuration dialog, under **Mail** → **Misc** on the **Invitations** page you will find the following options that will help the user communicate with Microsoft Outlook(tm) running in a Kolab environment or in a Microsoft Exchange(tm) environment.

Mangle From:/To: headers in replies to invitations

Enable this option to make Microsoft Outlook(tm) understand your answers to invitation replies.

Microsoft Outlook has a number of shortcomings in its implementation of the iCalendar standard; this option works around one of them. If you have problems with Outlook users not being able to get your replies, try setting this option.

Details: When mailing an iCal invitation this makes the message have the From: header the same as the To: header. It also sets header X-KMail-Identity to the To:'s UIOD and makes sure the BCC: is blank. Outlook will only understand the reply if the From: header is the same as the To: header of the invitation message.

Send invitations in the mail body

Invitations are normally sent as attachments to a mail. This switch changes the invitation to be sent in the text of the mail instead; this is necessary to send invitations and replies to Microsoft Outlook. But, when you do this, you no longer get descriptive text that mail programs can read; so, to people who have email programs that do not understand the invitations, the resulting messages look very odd. People that have email programs that do understand invitations will still be able to work with this.

Details: When mailing an iCal invitation this option makes the message body from the attachment data and sets the Content-Type header to 'text/calendar; method=something; charset="utf-8"'.
Auto-sending is also turned on so there is no human intervention required for composing.

<p>NOTE Encryption and self-signing are disabled.</p>
--

Exchange-compatible invitation naming

Microsoft Outlook, when used in combination with a Microsoft Exchange(tm) server, has a problem understanding standards-compliant groupware email. Enable this option to send groupware invitations in a way that Microsoft Exchange(tm) understands. The invitation will be sent as an attachment with name `ical.ics`.

Details: When mailing an iCal invitation this makes the message have the subject "(Declined | Tentative | Accepted | Delegated): subject". The invitation will be sent as an attachment with name `ical.ics`.

Outlook-compatible attachment naming

Turn this option on to make Outlook(tm) understand attachment names containing non-English characters.

A.2 Behavioral Issues

This section provides instructions on how to make Kontakt behave more like other groupware clients.

A.2.1 Composing Messages

Outlook users are accustomed to typing a list of addresses in the To:, CC: or BCC: fields separated by a semicolon (;) character in addition to a comma (,). By default, Kontakt only allows the comma as an address separator character. To also allow the semicolon, change the `AllowSemicolonAsAddressSeparator` from `false` to `true` in the installed `share/config.kcfg/messagecomposer.kcfg` file.

A.3 RFC Compromises

Kontakt is designed to interoperate as well as is possible with a wide variety of groupware solutions. To that end, we sometimes make design compromises with respect to the various Internet RFCs that provide the basis for low-level libraries on which Kontakt relies heavily.

<p>NOTE We never knowingly violate any RFC.</p>
--

The following list of RFC compromises is made by Kontakt or the low-levels libraries used by Kontakt:

- When writing duration values into iCalendar files, Kontakt never writes the DURATION property in terms of weeks (i.e., 1*DIGIT "W"); instead, the integer number of weeks is always multiplied by 7 and written in terms of days (i.e. 1*DIGIT "D").