

COMPUTER BASICS

Jacqueline A. Jones

Using Pull-Down Menus

Dev-C++'s integrated environment has pull-down menus that can be activated with a mouse or with keyboard commands. The list of items across the top of the window is called the **main menu**. There is also a hidden list, or **pull-down menu**, of choices for each item in the main menu; the pull-down menu becomes visible on the screen when the item is selected; selecting File from the main menu pulls down the File menu, shown in Figure 9.

As you move through a menu, each of the entries in turn will be highlighted. If an item on a menu may not be selected, it appears in gray. If an item has an icon to its left, you can initiate the action by clicking that icon in the main window. If an icon has a set of keys to the right (like Ctrl+O), you can initiate the action using that set of keystrokes. If an item has an arrow to the right, it indicates a further submenu (the submenu for File | Open is shown below). You can select an item from a menu with the mouse or through the keyboard.

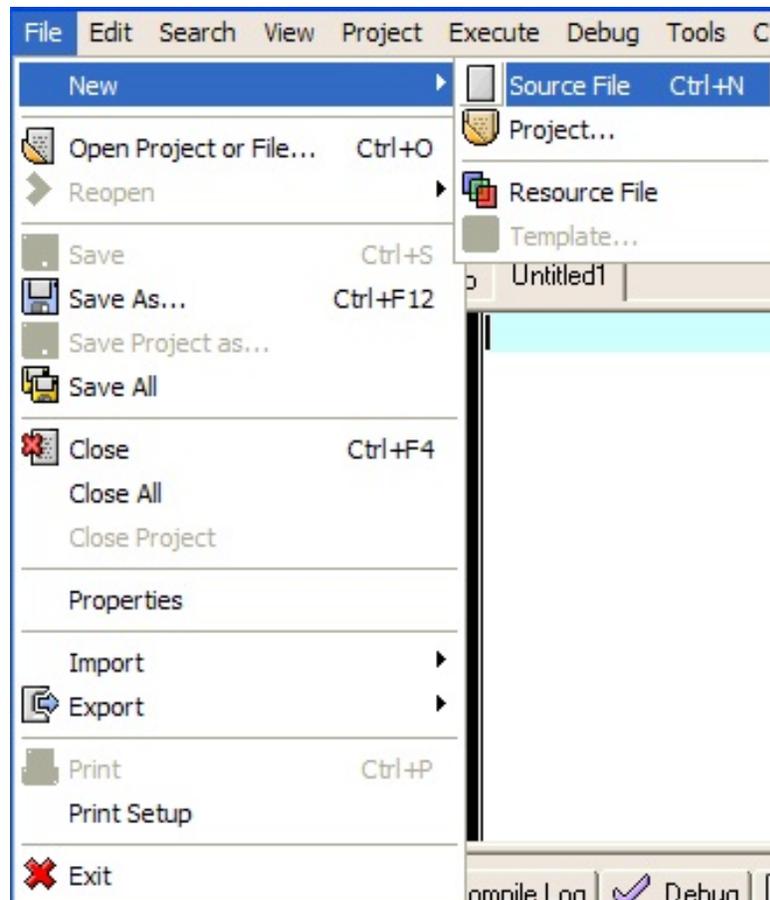


Figure 1 File Menu

Mouse Menu Selection

The left button on the mouse is the **<Select>** or **<Enter>** button. Three actions that can be performed with this button are clicking, double clicking, and dragging; here is the meaning of each term:

Click	press the left button once
Double click	press the left button twice in rapid succession
Drag	press the left button down and hold it while moving the mouse

To select a menu item:

- Move the mouse to the item and click on the item.

To close a menu:

- Click somewhere else in the window.

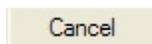
To close a dialog box without performing an action:

- Click on the close icon in the upper right corner of the box.



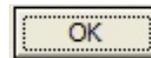
or

- Click on the Cancel button.



To perform some action and then exit from the box:

- Click on the OK button, or on some button specific to the task.



Keyboard Menu Selection

Pressing **<Alt>** plus the first letter of the main menu item pulls down its menu. For example, **<Alt>-F** brings down the menu shown in Figure 1. Once the main menu is activated, the left and right cursor keys will move through the main menu selections (from File to Edit to Search to View to Project to Execute, etc.), and the up and down cursor keys will move from item to item within a given pull-down menu.

To make a selection from a pull-down menu:

- Use the cursor keys to move to the selected entry and then press **<Enter>**, or
- Type the highlighted letter of the selected entry (this is usually the first letter of the entry).

For example, you can save a file by moving the cursor to Save and pressing **<Enter>**, or else by typing **S**. Similarly, you can exit from Dev-C++ either by moving the cursor to Exit and pressing **<Enter>**, or else by typing **X**.

To leave a menu or a dialog box, press **<Esc>**. Each time you press **<Esc>**, you will close one menu or box, returning to the point at which you entered that menu or box.

Cursor Movement Using the Mouse

Moving the mouse moves the cursor. Click the mouse at the position at which you want to start typing or editing.

Bars, known as **scroll bars**, at the right and bottom of the screen, are used to move quickly through a file using the mouse. The bar on the right represents a continuum from the beginning to the end of the file; the bar on the bottom represents the distance across the current line. A box on each scroll bar represents the cursor position, either in the file or on the line. Dragging the box through the scroll bar will move through the file or across the line.

Cursor Movement Using the Keyboard

When you are typing in a Dev-C++ program, you normally use the keyboard like a typewriter. However, you can change and edit your program without retyping the whole thing. The mouse, the arrow keys, plus the keys shown in Table 2, allow you to move quickly through the file. (*Note:* These keys move only within existing text; for example, you cannot move to the bottom of the screen if there is no text there.)

<Home>	moves the cursor to the beginning of the current line.
<End>	moves the cursor to the end of the current line.
<PgUp>	moves almost a full screen up in the file.
<PgDn>	moves almost a full screen down in the file.
<Ctrl>-<Home>	moves the cursor to the top of the file.
<Ctrl>-<End>	moves the cursor to the bottom of the file.

Table 2 Keys for quick movement through a file

Deletions

<Delete>	erases what appears at the position of the cursor, one character at a time, drawing characters in from the right of the cursor.
<Backspace>	causes the cursor to move left, one character at a time, erasing the characters in its path.
<Ctrl>-Y	erases the entire line on which the cursor is positioned.

The Keyboard

The keys in the middle of the keyboard are, with few exceptions, what you would find on a typewriter. The pad of keys on the right side of the keyboard is known as the number pad or

the numeric keypad. Pressing the keys in these two keypads produces different results, based on the status of the <CapsLock>, <Numlock>, and <Shift> keys. The <Shift> key must be held down while the second key is pressed; holding down the <Shift> key and pressing a letter key will produce a capital letter. The <NumLock> and <CapsLock> keys are toggles, which means that each press of the key switches between its two functions. These two toggles affect the action of the <Shift> key.

The <Ctrl> (Control) and <Alt> keys work like the <Shift> key to cause different actions when a second key is depressed. When we write something like <Alt>-X, we mean to hold down <Alt> while typing X. Here are some other important keys:

<Enter> (↵)	starts a new line; accepts an action in a dialog box.
<Backspace>	moves the cursor backward and erases.
<Tab>	causes the cursor to jump about 8 spaces to the right (or to the left, if used with the <Shift> key).
<Break>	pressing <Ctrl>-<Break> usually stops whatever the PC is doing.
<Esc>	(Escape) gets you out of menus.

Insert vs Overwrite Mode

There are two modes of entering text in Dev-C++, **Insert mode** and **Overwrite mode**. When you enter the program, you are placed in Insert mode. The <Ins> or <Insert> key toggles between Insert mode and Overwrite mode.

- In Insert mode, everything you type in will be inserted into the existing text, moving anything to the right of the cursor further to the right.
- In Overwrite mode, everything you type in replaces whatever was to the right of the cursor.

The mode is indicated in the status line at the bottom of the integrated environment, as shown in Figure 2. The word "Insert" changes to "Overwrite" when the <Insert> key is pressed. The word "Modified" disappears when the program is saved. The numbers at the left indicate the cursor position: line number and position on the line.

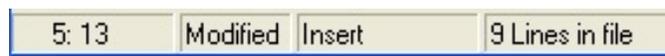


Figure 2 **Status line**

Cursor Movement

To move the cursor around in your program, as well as through menus, you may use the mouse or you can use the **cursor movement** or **arrow keys**: ↑, →, ↓, ←. They may be located on a separate inverted-T shaped keypad, or they may be part of the numeric keypad. If they are part of the numeric keypad, they will function as cursor movement keys only when NumLock is off (see Table 1).

key	action
←	moves cursor left, one space at a time
→	moves cursor right, one space at a time
↑	moves cursor up, one space at a time
↓	moves cursor down, one space at a time

The cursor cannot be moved to any area of the screen where you have not yet typed any text. To do this, you must use the space bar and the <Enter> key.