

BBAutoComplete 1.0.1 Manual

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1 Introduction

BBAutoComplete adds word-level auto-completion to BBEdit on Mac OS X. You type the start of a word, press a key, and BBAutoComplete types the letters to complete the word. If BBAutoComplete guessed wrong, you can keep pressing the key to cycle through other possible completions, which are gathered from the open BBEdit windows. BBAutoComplete is probably most useful for programmers, who need to remember and type long variable and method names, but I've also used it for normal writing. It's useful any time you need to type long words quickly and accurately.

2 Requirements and Installation

BBAutoComplete has been developed and tested on Mac OS X 10.1.3. I do not have the resources to test it on older systems, although I suspect it will work fine on Mac OS X 10.1 or later. If you use Mac OS 9 or earlier, you might instead try the Word Completion BBEdit plug-in from FL Package¹.

BBAutoComplete is designed to work with BBEdit² from Bare Bones software. I recommend the latest version (6.5.2 as of this writing), but any version after 6.0 should work. Note that BBAutoComplete does not *require* BBEdit; if you know AppleScript, you can hook it up to other scriptable text editors³.

To install, copy the BBAutoComplete application to your hard disk, e.g. into `/Applications`. The `Put in 'BBEdit Support'` folder contains two AppleScripts. One should go into BBEdit's `Scripts` folder, and the other into its `Shutdown Items` folder (as indicated by the folder names).

There's no need to copy this manual to your hard disk. A copy of it is built-into BBAutoComplete, and you can access it by choosing `BBAutoComplete Help` from the `Help` menu.

¹<http://hyperarchive.lcs.mit.edu/HyperArchive/Archive/text/bbe/fl-package-11.hqx>

²<http://www.barebones.com/products/bbedit.html>

³If you do, please send me your glue script, so that I can include it with the BBAutoComplete distribution.

3 Using BBAutoComplete

To use BBAutoComplete, type the first few letters of a long word in BBEdit. Then invoke the BBAutoComplete AppleScript from BBEdit's **Scripts** menu, or use a keyboard shortcut (**Command- /** by default). BBAutoComplete will insert the letters to complete the word. If you aren't happy with the completion BBAutoComplete chose, invoke the BBAutoComplete AppleScript again. You can do this repeatedly to cycle through possible completions.

The order in which BBAutoComplete suggests completions is deterministic. With a little practice you'll be able to predict what BBAutoComplete will suggest, and how many completions you'll need to cycle through to get the one you want. Here are the rules:

- First, BBAutoComplete looks backwards, from the current insertion point to the beginning of the document. That is, the first completion it suggests is the last word you typed (that matches).
- Next, BBAutoComplete looks forwards, from the current insertion point to the end of the document.
- Finally, it looks in the other BBEdit windows, front to back, in layer order.
- Completions are case-sensitive. Letters and numbers are considered word characters; whitespace, punctuation, and other symbols are not. You can add more word characters in the Preferences window.

Note that this auto-completion algorithm is the same as `dabbrev-expand (M- /)` in GNU Emacs⁴. If you don't know what Emacs is, stick with BBEdit; if you do, well, that explains why the auto-completion works differently than, say, ProjectBuilder's.

4 Contact Information

The BBAutoComplete Web site is located at <http://www.c-command.com/bbautocomplete/>. Questions about BBAutoComplete may be sent to <mailto:support@c-command.com>. I'm always looking to improve BBAutoComplete, so please feel free to send any feature requests to that address.

5 Notes and Limitations

- At this time, BBAutoComplete does not support completion of words with accented characters.

⁴<http://www.gnu.org/software/emacs/emacs.html>

6 Version History

1.0.1—February 27, 2002

- The Quit AppleScript is saved as an application now—so it works.

1.0—February 26, 2002

- First public release.

7 Legal Stuff

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Please distribute the unmodified `BBAutoComplete-1.0.1.dmg` file on the Web, LANs, compilation CD-ROMs, etc. Please do not charge for it (beyond a reasonable cost for media), or distribute the contents of the image file in isolation.

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