



PLUGIN PRO 
EDITION 99
COMMANDER

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Interface & Logo Artwork: *Copyright 1998/99 by Herve Goussard*

Used Components

Achroma - (c) 2000/2001 by WebSuperGoo

Filter Factory - (c) 1994/1995 by Adobe Systems Inc.

ImageMan® 6 - (c) 1992-1998 by Data Techniques Inc.

Info-ZIP - (c) 1997-1998 by The Info-ZIP Group

Support

www.thepluginsite.com

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1. Features & Facts

Plugin Commander (better known as PiCo) is a tool designed to organize your Photoshop-compatible plugins, Adobe Premiere and After Effects plugins, your Paint Shop Pro materials and many other plugin and file types. It also allows you to create your own Filter Factory plugins, convert between different plugin formats, batch process image files, manage files, to view and edit images and much more.

PiCo can be used as a complementary tool with Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premiere, Adobe After Effects, Jasc Paint Shop Pro, Corel Photo-Paint and many other applications that support plugins. However you can also use PiCo without them.

This is the Plugin Commander Pro Edition feature list:

Organize your Plugins and other Add-ons

- Enable or disable plugins and add-ons to make only those you really need show up in your application
- Support for over 30 different plugin and file types plus the ability to define new plugin types
- Change the category of Photoshop-compatible, Premiere and After Effects plugins to make them display in the sub-menu you want
- Simulation of Photoshop's Filter menu

Preview Plugins and Images

- Instant preview calculation of Photoshop-compatible plugins
- View Paint Shop Pro Tubes, Frames, Masks, Textures, Patterns and Images.
- View different image files e.g. JPG, GIF, BMP, WMF, PNG, PCX
- Different preview possibilities: adjustable preview window, thumbnail browser, picture editor, Filter Factory editor
- Apply Photoshop-compatible plugins directly to images within Plugin Commander to create image effects

Edit your Images in the Picture Editor

- Open and save different image formats
- Acquire images from TWAIN-compatible scanners
- Apply over 15 standard filters
- Apply Photoshop-compatible plugins
- Convert to various color modes (2, 16, 256 & 16 million colors, greyscaled, dithered)
- Print your images

Batch Process Images

- Convert between different image formats
- Create thumbnails of images and Filter Factory plugins

- Apply over 20 special filters during the conversion process
- Apply Filter Factory plugins during the conversion process
- Batch resize your images
- Instant JPG-Quality and Effect Preview

Convert between different Filter Factory Plugin Formats

- Photoshop to Premiere and vice versa
- Macintosh to Windows and vice versa
- Old to new Filter Factory plugin versions and vice versa
- Create Filter Factory plugins with larger previews that work in different color modes, demo plugins and editor plugins
- Decompile Filter Factory plugins to source code files

Archive your Filter Factory Plugins

- Store your Filter Factory plugins inside FFL files with a compression ratio of up to 200:1
- Search function for finding certain filters within FFL files
- Convert FFL files back to plugins

Create your own Plugins with the Filter Factory Editor

- Extended editing capabilities in comparison with the original Filter Factory plugin
- Many additional features like source code printing, memory spots, randomize function, code snippet database, ff expression database
- Several cool graphic interfaces to inspire your creativity

File Management

- Two pane main window to manage folders and files quickly and easily
- Quickly select the recently accessed folders
- 9 different file view mode
- File Operations: copy, move, rename, delete, kill
- Folder Operations: move, rename, kill, create
- Start external applications by double clicking files
- Zip and unzip files

Flexibility & Speed

- Multithreading for doing different tasks at the same time
- Accelerated plugin recognition by caching
- Fast preview of Photoshop-compatible plugins through caching
- Menu lists for quickly swapping folders, preview images and for starting external applications

1.1 Limitations of the free Plugin Commander Light

- The Light Edition is not optimized for speed
- No cooperative multithreading
- No caching of plugins and preview images

- Applying Photoshop-compatible plugins isn't possible
- Changing the category of non-FF plugins doesn't work
- No Enabling and Disabling of plugins in Plugin View (with the exception of FF plugins)
- No simulation of Photoshop's Filter menu

- No Conversion of Filter Factory plugins to Adobe Premiere and Macintosh
- No Browser dialog
- No Preview window for previewing Photoshop-compatible plugins and images on the main window
- Only BMP and JPG files are supported
- No Batch Processing dialog
- Limited features in the Picture Editor
- No Thumbnails command for creating thumbnails of Filter Factory plugins

- No FFL View
- No Create FFL and Add FFL commands
- No enhanced Filter Factory dialog
- No Unzip and Zip commands

1.2 Minimum Requirements

- **Hardware:**
 - Pentium processor
 - 640x480 pixel, 16bit screen display
 - 24 MB RAM
- **Software:**
 - Win95 / 98 / NT
 - Recommended, but not necessary: Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premiere, Paintshop Pro, Corel Photo-Paint, Painter, Picture Publisher or any other application that supports some kind of plugins

1.3 Supported Plugin Types

<i>File or Plugin Types</i>	<i>Plugin View</i>	<i>En-/Disable</i>	<i>Change Category</i>	<i>Preview Window</i>	<i>Browser</i>	<i>Picture Editor</i>	<i>FF Editor</i>
Photoshop-compatible filter plugins	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	Only Filter Factory plugins
Adobe Premiere plugins	yes	yes	Not Recommended	Only Filter Factory plugins	Only Filter Factory plugins	Only Filter Factory plugins	Only Filter Factory plugins
After Effects plugins	yes	yes	yes	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 6 Patterns	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no

PSP 6 Textures	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 7 Textures/Patterns	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 7 Masks	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 7 Tubes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 7 Shapes	yes	yes	no	yes	no*	no	no
PSP 7 Frames	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 7 Images	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 7 Brushes	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 7 Gradients	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 7 Styled Lines	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Textures/Patterns	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 8/9 Masks	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 8/9 Tubes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 8/9 Shapes	yes	yes	no	yes	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Frames	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 8/9 Images	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
PSP 8/9 Brushes	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Gradients	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Styled Lines	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Scripts	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Selections	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PSP 8/9 Deformation Maps	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
ACDSee plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Acrobat plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
ActiveX plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Avid Expresss	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Corel I/E Filter plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Hollywood FX Effects	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Illustrator plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Indesign plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Lightwave plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Maya plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Painter plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Paintshop Pro Tubes	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
PhotoImpact plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photo-Paint plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Actions	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Automation plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Color Picker plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Export plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Extension plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop File Format	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no

plugins							
Photoshop General plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Import plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Parser plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Photoshop Selection plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
QuarkXpress XTensions	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Quick Time Extensions	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
trueSpace plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Ulead Audio plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Ulead Filter plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Ulead FX plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no
Ultimate Paint plugins	yes	yes	no	no*	no*	no	no

* usually not possible, unless there's a preview image for the appropriate plugin available

1.3.1 Supported Filter Factory Versions

- Adobe Photoshop for Windows
 - **Version 3.0** (57344 bytes): released 1994 by Adobe
white background
 - **Version 3.0.4** (49152 bytes): released 1995 by Adobe
grey background
 - **Alf's Power Toys Version** (53760 bytes): created 1995 by Alfredo Mateus
white background
 - **Johann's Version** (49664 bytes): created 1997 by Michael Johannhanwahr
grey background, larger preview, copyright display
- Adobe Photoshop for Macintosh
 - **Version 3.0** (99840 bytes): released 1994 by Adobe
- Adobe Premiere for Windows
 - **English Version 2.51** (50176 bytes): released 1995 by Adobe
smaller preview
 - **English Version 4.2** (50176 bytes): released 1996 by Adobe
larger preview, but slider values and author text overlap preview
 - **German Version 4.2** (50.688 bytes)
 - **English Version 5.0**
 - **English Version 5.1**
 - **English Version 5.1c**

1.3.2 Supported Transition Factory Versions

- Adobe Premiere for Windows
 - **English Version 4.2**
 - **German Version 4.2**
 - **English Version 5**

- **English Version 5.1a/c**

1.3.3 Supported Source Code Files

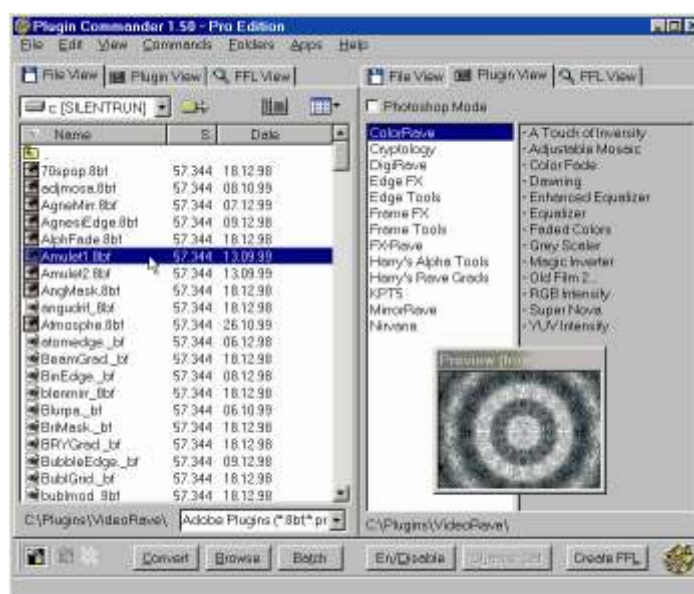
Ext	Description
txt	Text file that contains Filter Factory source code
afs	Photoshop Filter Factory source code file
pff	Premiere Filter Factory source code file
ffl	Filter Factory Library file that can contain up to 100.000 Filter Factory source codes
ffx	Filters Unlimited source code file which isn't fully compatible with Filter Factory

2. Introduction

2.1 Basics Principles

To use Plugin Commander (PiCo) effectively you need to learn some basic principles. If you have used tools like Norton Commander you should find these familiar.

There are *two panes* in the main PiCo window. Each contains the [File View](#), [Plugin View](#) and [FFL View](#) tabs. One of the panes is always active, the other always passive. When you click on one of the panes, it becomes active and the opposite pane becomes passive. The background of the list box in the passive pane is grey. In the picture below the right pane is the passive one.



Before pressing a button or selecting a command from the menu, you have to select one or more files, plugins or FFL entries from one of the panes. All commands are related to the active pane. Some commands like Copy, Move, Add to FFL, Create FFL, Plugin List and Convert use the folder displayed in the passive pane as the destination folder. This folder is then displayed by default in the [Select Folder dialog](#) which appears when you execute one of the commands. You can select another folder or keep the default one. Pressing Ok will finally execute the command.

Below the two panes is a [button bar](#) for easy access to frequently used commands. At the bottom of the window is a status bar for displaying a progress bar and various information like the number of files or the time needed to finish a command.

Tip: If you don't know what a certain button, check box or other control does, just hover the cursor over it for a few seconds. A small tool tip explanation will appear. Pressing the F1 key will always display the appropriate help page.

2.2 Step by Step Instructions

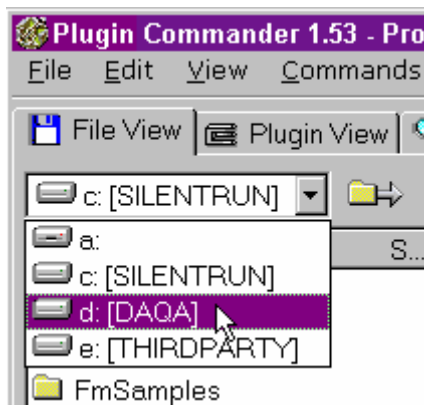
2.2.1 Navigating in File View

Choosing a pane to work with

When opening Plugin Commander you will see a main window with two large tabbed panes, one on the left and one on the right. One pane, the source pane, is always active while the other pane, the destination pane, is always partially grayed out. It doesn't matter with which pane you are working, both let you do the same things.

To choose a pane as the active pane simply click somewhere in the file list of the pane. The other pane will automatically become the passive one and will become partially gray.


Choosing a specific drive



1. To choose the drive, e.g. where your plugins are located, click on the arrow down sign of the drive box which is located at the left top of a pane.
2. From the appearing list select the drive you want to switch to.

Choosing a specific folder

When opening Plugin Commander for the first time the File View will be set to the folder in which Plugin Commander is located. To choose another folder, e.g. your plugin folder, it is recommended to switch to the root folder of your hard drive.

1. If the root folder of your hard drive isn't displayed in the active pane, press the Del key several times until the file list doesn't change anymore. As an alternative you can also click the  ..symbol (located in the first line of the file list) several times.


2. In the root folder of the drive, you can switch to one of the folders by double clicking it.

3. To reach a specific sub folder simply make your way through the folder hierarchy by double clicking the folders.

The current folder path is always displayed, sometimes truncated, at the left bottom of the pane.

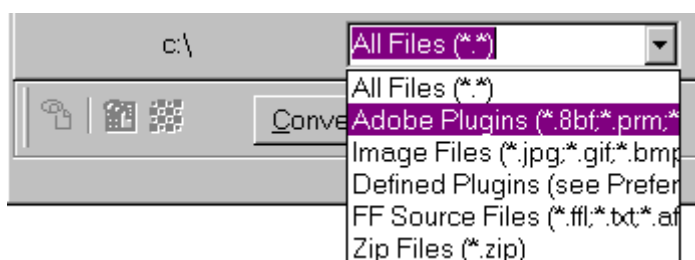
Switching View Modes

By default the *Details* File View mode is displayed. This mode corresponds to the Details View of the Internet Explorer. If you don't like this mode, you can also switch to a different mode.

1. To switch to a different File View mode, click on the  symbol at the right top of the pane.
2. A context menu will appear which lets you choose between different modes.
3. After clicking on the mode you would like to be displayed, the File View appearance will change.
4. To switch back to the recent mode, simply repeat step 1 to 3.

Displaying only certain file types

By default all available file types will be displayed in the file list. If you only want to see certain file types, e.g. only Photoshop-compatible plugins, you can use the File Type box.

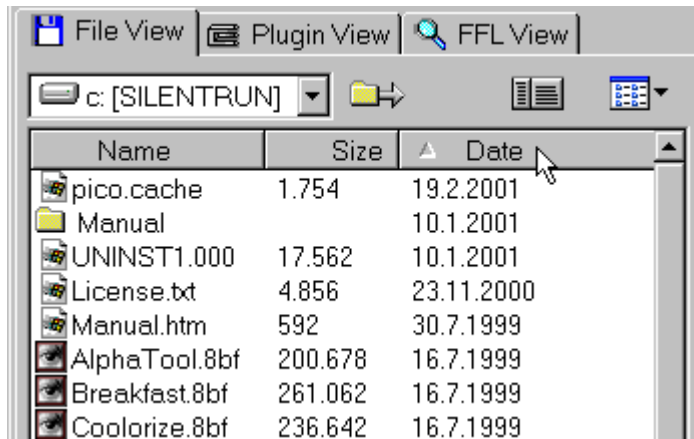


1. To display a list of predefined file types click on the arrow down handle of the box located at the right bottom of the pane.

2. From the appearing list choose the file types you would like to see displayed. Alternatively you can also enter a file pattern in the box. For example entering *.8bf will display all file with the .8bf file extension.

Sorting the file list

By default the file list is sorted by file name in alphabetically ascending order. But sometimes it is quite useful to have the file list sorted, e.g. by file creation date, to find recently saved or modified files faster.



1a. To sort the file list by file date, click on the Date column header at the right top of the file list. Clicking again sorts the list in the opposite direction.

1b. To sort the file list by file size, click on the Size column header at the middle top of the file list. Clicking again sorts the list in the opposite direction.

1c. To switch back to alphabetical sort order, click on the Name column header at the left top of the file list.

2.2.2 General Tasks

Opening your own preview image

Plugin Commander needs an image to be able to calculate and display plugins effects. This preview image can be changed by the user at any time. By default Plugin Commander uses Test.bmp, which is located in the Plugin Commander folder, as a preview image.

1. To open your own preview image, choose *Open Preview Image* from the File menu.

2. In the appearing file dialog choose an image and press the Open button.

3. The selected image will now be used as a preview image when previewing or executing plugins. To display it select *Picture Editor* from the View menu.


All opened images will automatically be added to the image list directly on the File Menu. The next time you want to open a certain preview image, you just need to click the appropriate image on the File menu.

Previewing and applying Filter Factory plugins

The Light Version of Plugin Commander can only preview and apply the effects of Filter Factory plugins with the help of the FF Editor. Filter Factory plugins are a special kind of Photoshop-compatible plugins which also have the .8bf file extension, but are usually only 49.152 bytes or 57.344 bytes large.


1. If you want to apply a plugin effect to a certain image, open the image by choosing *Open Preview Image* from the file menu.
2. To see the effect of a Filter Factory plugin simply double click one (in File View, Plugin View or FFL View).
3. The FF Editor will appear with the current preview image in the preview box.
4. After setting all parameters press the *Apply* or *Big View* button to apply the plugin effect to the current preview image. If you just wanted to take a look at the plugin effect without applying it, please switch back to the main window of Plugin Commander.
5. The image with the effect applied to it will finally appear in the Picture Editor window where you can save it if you like.

Previewing images, plugin effects and PSP files (*Pro Version only*)

1. To preview an image, plugin or PSP file, select it by clicking on it (in the file list of the File View, the plugin list in the Plugin View or the ffl list in the FFL View).
2. Choose *Preview* from the View menu or press the  button which is located at the left bottom of the main window.



3. The Preview window will pop up and display the image, plugin effect or PSP image.

4. The size of the Preview window can be changed by clicking and dragging the borders of the Preview window.
5. As long as the Preview window is displayed, selecting any other image, plugin or PSP file will instantly display it.
6. To close the Preview window choose *Preview* from the View menu or press the  button again.

Executing or Applying plugins (*Pro Version only*)

Plugin Commander can execute and apply the effects of Photoshop-compatible plugin to images. Photoshop-compatible filter plugins can be recognized by the file extension .8bf. The Light Version of Plugin Commander can only run FilterFactory plugins with in the FF Editor.

1. If you want to apply a plugin effect to a certain image, open the image by choosing *Open Preview Image* from the file menu.
2. To execute a plugin, simply double click it (in File View, Plugin View or FFL View).
3. The plugin's dialog will appear with the current preview image in the preview box.
4. After setting all parameters press the OK button to apply the plugin effect to the current preview image. If you just wanted to take a look at the plugin without applying, simply press the Cancel button.
5. The image with the plugin effect will finally appear in the Picture Editor window where you can save it if you like.

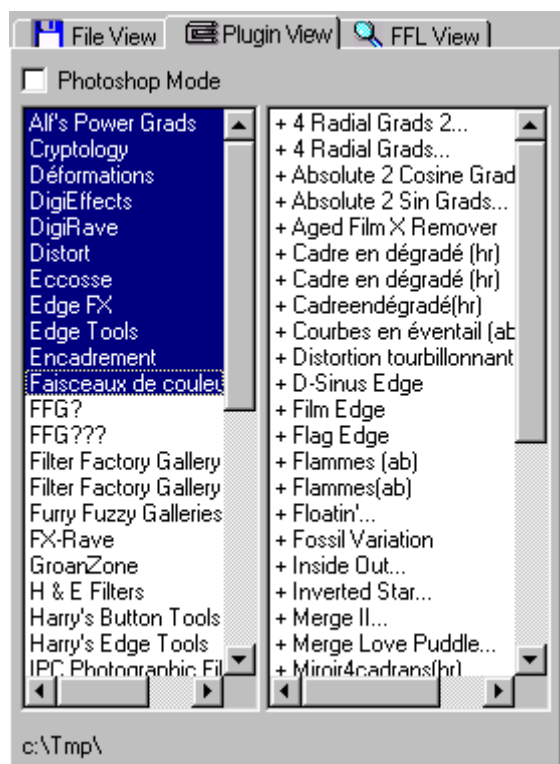
Browsing (*Pro Version only*)

1. To preview certain images or plugin effects as thumbnails in the Browser, select the appropriate images or plugins (in the File Plugin or Plugin View). If you want to browse all files in the current folder or plugin list, make sure that only one image or plugin is selected.
2. To run the Browser simply press the Browse button at the bottom of the main window or choose *Browser* from the View menu.

2.2.3 Using Plugin View

Switching to Plugin View and Using it

Before you switch to Plugin View, please make sure that a folder with your plugins is displayed in the active pane. To activate Plugin View please click on the tab button with the same name. It may take some time until all plugins are displayed, because Plugin Commander will now scan through the current folder and its sub folder for plugins.



At the left side of the plugin view is a list with all categories that have been found in the scanned plugins. Clicking on one of the items will display the names of the plugins with that category in the right list box. For Photoshop-compatible plugins the categories are identical with the sub menus that are displayed on the Filter or Effects menu of Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro. You can also select more than one category in the left list box if you like.

Enabling and disabling plugins

If you disable plugins, these plugins won't be recognized by the host application, e.g. Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro, and won't be displayed on the Filter or Effects menu. This can help if the Filter or Effects menu got too crowded because of a large amount of plugins. Disabling the less useful plugins, lets you remove them from your host application without the need to uninstall them. When you need them again, you can enable them again in Plugin Commander.

You can enable or disable plugins in the File View as well as the Plugin View. The Light Version of Plugin Commander only lets you disable Filter Factory plugins in the Plugin View, but you can still disable other plugin types in File View. In Plugin View enabled plugins are displayed with + in front of their name and disabled plugin have a - in front of their name. In File View the file extension of disabled plugins is usually altered with an underscore or minus letter.

Here are the instructions:

1. Select the plugin(s) that should be enabled or disabled.
2. Click on the *En/Disable* button at the bottom or choose *Enable/Disable* from the Commands menu.
3. All plugins that are enabled will now be disabled and all plugins that are disabled are now enabled.

Changing the category of plugins

As mentioned before the categories of Photoshop-compatible plugins are identical with the sub menus that are displayed on the Filter or Effects menu of Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro or other image editing applications. So changing the category of a plugin makes it display in a different sub menu.

1. Select the plugins whose category you want to change in the right list box of the Plugin View.
2. Click on the *Change Cat* button at the bottom of the window or select *Change Category* from the Commands menu.
3. In the appearing dialog you can enter a new category name or choose an existing category from the drop down list.
4. After clicking OK, the changes will be made to the plugins.

Using Photoshop Mode

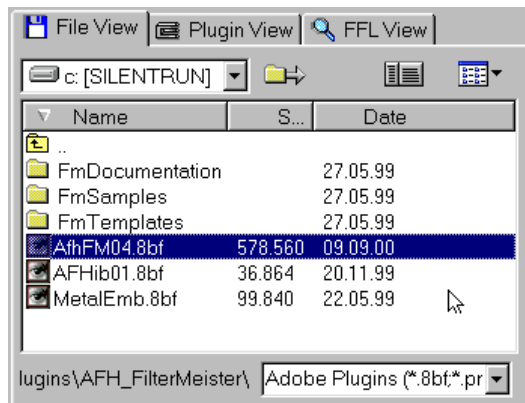
Activating the Photoshop Mode check box at the top of Plugin View displays the additional sub menus that are available on Photoshop's Filter Menu. Some of these categories include virtual plugin entries which represent the items that are displayed in Photoshop, but are actually built into Photoshop and not real plugins. You can't do anything with these virtual items, they are just there for completeness.

The Old Photoshop Mode check box cuts off the number of categories that are displayed in the left list box of Plugin View and places the rest of the plugins

in the Other category. By doing so it almost exactly simulates what Photoshop 3, 4 and 5 did with its Filter menu.

3. File / Plugin / FFL View

3.1 File View



The File View tab is displayed by default. It lets you work with files and folders in a manner similar to Windows Explorer.

The top right icon above the Date column header lets you switch between 5 different **File View modes**: 4 of them are available in the Windows Explorer, too, and the last one, called Classic, is a Win16 style dialog. You can even have up to 8 different File View modes by additionally using the **folder list icon** which is located left of the File View icon.

The **arrow icon** right beside the drive box can be used to synchronize both panes. That means that the folder of the current pane will be displayed in the opposite pane. Clicking the Name, Size and Date **column headers** sorts the files and folders according to their names, sizes and creation dates.

At the bottom of the tab there's a label that displays the current folder path. In Classic mode the file size will be displayed instead. The **drop down menu** to the right contains different file patterns for excluding or including certain file types in the File View. But you can also enter your own file pattern. For example entering *.bmp;*.gif;*.jpg will only display bmp, gif and jpg files.

Double clicking a Filter Factory plugin will load it into the [FF Editor](#), double clicking other Photoshop-compatible plugins will execute them. Double clicking an image will display it in the [Picture Editor](#). If the [Preview icon](#) is active and you click on a plugin, PSP add-on or image, you will see a preview of it in the Preview window. Double clicking other files will launch the associated application. Right clicking on a file will display the **Commands context menu**, whereas right clicking on a folder or clicking on the folder label will display the **Folders context menu**.

You can move files to a folder in the opposite pane by dragging them. You can also drag files over a sub folder in the same pane to move them into that sub folder.

3.2 Plugin View

Pressing the Plugin View tab will scan the current folder (and all sub folders, if not deactivated in [Preferences](#)) for plugins. By holding the shift key and pressing the Plugin View tab only Filter Factory plugins will be displayed. You can cancel the plugin scan with the Esc key.

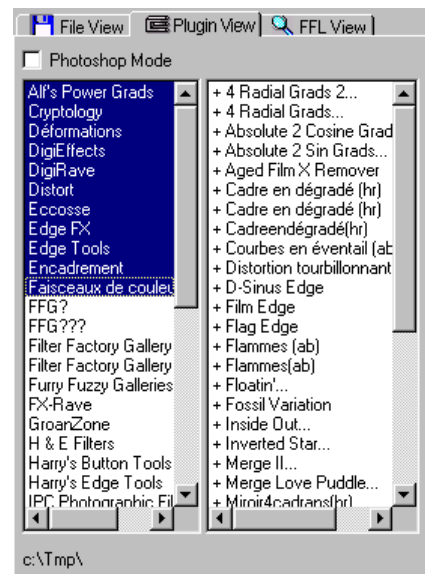
PiCo displays recognized plugins and other file types in a **two list view**. The categories of plugins and other add-ons are displayed on the left side while the right shows plugins which

belong to the selected category. Many host applications use these categories to build up a menu tree for displaying the plugins. So categories correspond to the sub menus that are displaying in your some image application's Filter, Image or Effect menu. For other file types e.g. PSP tubes there is no real category available. In this case you will see the name of this file type in brackets e.g. [PSP Tubes].

A "+" in front of the plugin or add-on name means that the plugin is enabled, a "-" means that this effect is currently disabled and won't be recognized by the host application.

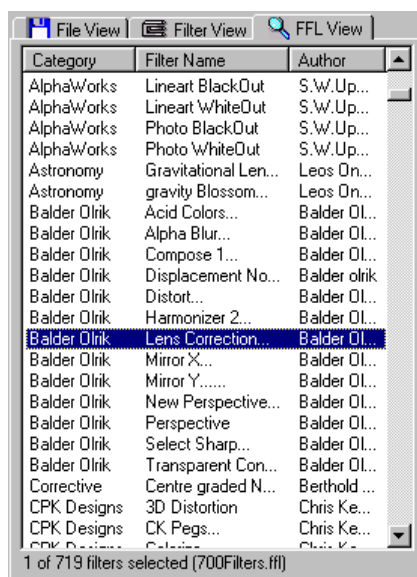
If you activate the **Photoshop Mode** check box (*Pro Edition only*), Plugin Commander will simulate Adobe Photoshop's Filter menu. By doing this, disabled plugins won't be visible any more and some categories will disappear, too. These will be moved to the 'Other' category just like in Photoshop. Some filters which are built into Photoshop will appear to make the Photoshop mode more realistic, but they aren't editable.

At the bottom of the Plugin View there's a label that displays the path, name and file size of the currently selected plugin. Double clicking a Filter Factory plugin will load it into PiCo's FF Editor, double clicking other Photoshop-compatible plugins will execute them and double clicking other files will show up the [Plugin Information](#) dialog. Right clicking on the right list box displays the Commands context menu.



By dragging plugins to a different category and dropping them there, they will be moved to that category if possible. You can also move plugins to the folder displayed in the passive pane by dragging them there.

3.3 FFL View (*Pro Edition only*)



The FFL View displays the contents of a FFL file. FFL files contain Filter Factory source code and other information for recompiling plugins.

The FFL View will be displayed if you double click a FFL file. If you press the FFL View tab, Plugin Commander will grab the first FFL file in the file list or display a previously opened FFL file. If there's no FFL file available, PiCo will automatically switch back to the File View tab.


Double clicking a FFL entry will load it into the [FF Editor](#) or in case the [Preview icon](#) is activate, clicking on a FFL entry will display its effect in the Preview window.

Dragging and dropping files/plugins from the File or Plugin View to the FFL View triggers the Add to FFL command and adds the selected Filter Factory plugins to the FFL file. Dragging and dropping FFL entries from the FFL View to the File or Plugin View triggers the Convert command.

4. The Button Bar

Plugin Commander has a button bar right below the two panes for selecting the most commonly used commands.

4.1 The three icons at the left bottom of the main window (*Pro Edition only*)


 **The Preview Icon:** You can enter the preview mode by choosing 'Preview' from the View menu or by pressing this icon. If a plugin, PSP add-on or image is selected in preview mode, the Preview window will pop up and show you a preview of the selected file. The preview is calculated in real-time for Photoshop-compatible 8bf plugins and rendered by PSP for PSP add-ons. For other files Plugin Commander searches for a preview image in the Preview sub folder. If one is found, it is displayed. Please read the [text file](#) in the Preview sub folder for information on creating your own preview pictures for certain files.


In the title bar of the Preview window behind the word 'Preview' there are some words in brackets that explain how the displayed image was created. **(from cache)** means that Plugin Commander already calculated an effect preview for the selected plugin and loaded the cached image. **(calculated)** means that the effect of the image was just calculated with the help of the current preview image and the plugin. **(preview folder)** means that an image that has the same name as the plugin was loaded from the preview sub folder. **(rendered by PSP)** means that Paint Shop Pro was executed invisible in the background to render the preview. If Plugin Commander was problems displaying an image in the Preview image, it will be left blank or 'Plugin Problem' will be displayed.



The **Preview window** can be placed anywhere you like by dragging the title bar. You can resize it by dragging its borders. However with a larger Preview window it may take longer to calculate a plugin preview, but it will have no influence on the rendering speed of images and PSP add-ons. The size and position of this window will be saved and restored the next time you start Plugin Commander.

If a Filter Factory plugin is selected, double clicking the image in the Preview window will calculate a random effect. Right clicking on it will display a part of the [File menu](#). You can leave the Preview mode by clicking on the Preview icon again or by choosing 'Preview' from the View menu a second time.

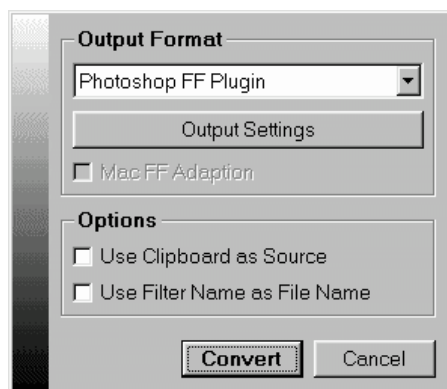
 **The Overlay Icon:** This feature will only be available if the Preview icon is active. It only works in conjunction with Photoshop-compatible plugins including Filter Factory plugins. If the Overlay icon is activated, the plugin effect applied to the preview image will remain and won't be removed when selecting a new plugin. That way you can preview the effect of consecutive applied plugins.

 **The Alpha Icon:** Like the Overlay icon it will only work if the Preview icon is activated. It only works for Filter Factory plugins. If the currently selected Filter Factory plugin contains

code for manipulating the alpha channel, this feature will make it visible as a greyscaled or blue/yellow effect.

4.2 The Convert Button

The Convert command allows you to convert between different Filter Factory formats and source code files. To use it you have to select one or more files and then press the Convert button. As a result the Convert dialog will pop up.



The Output Format drop down menu lets you select one of 6 different formats. The **Output Settings** button will pop up the FF/TF tab of the Preferences dialog to allow you to specify different options for the supported formats. See [Preferences](#) for further instructions.

The **Mac FF Adaption** check box (*Pro Edition only*) is only accessible if one of the last three source code formats (AFS, PFF, TXT) is selected. If you activate it, the source code will be rewritten to work on Macintosh. If necessary this will be done automatically for the first three plugin formats.

The **Use Clipboard as Source** check box will ignore the previously selected files and grab the Filter Factory source code from the clipboard for doing the conversion. The **Use Filter Name as File Name** check box can be useful if you want to change the usual 8+3 file names of your plugins to a more meaningful file name. Pressing the **Start** button will trigger the conversion process.

4.3 The Browse Button (*Pro Edition only*)

Clicking on the Browse button will display the Browser dialog. The Browser will only display thumbnails of Photoshop-compatible plugins and images.

If just one file or no files are selected when the Browse button is pressed, all files in the current folder will be displayed. If two or more files are selected, only the selected files will be displayed.

While the thumbnails are displayed you can interrupt this process by pressing the ESC key or by selecting **Stop Scanning** from the Browse menu. To continue the scan process select **Continue Scanning**. The **Thumb Size** menu item lets you choose between three thumbnail resolutions: 90x60, 120x90 and 160x120. The middle resolution is set by default. The **Refresh** menu item refreshes the content of the Browser window in case a file was edited outside of the Browser.

Double clicking an image will display it in the [Picture Editor](#), double clicking a Filter Factory plugin will display it in the [Filter Factory Editor](#). Double clicking other Photoshop-compatible plugins will execute them while for other file the associated application will be started.

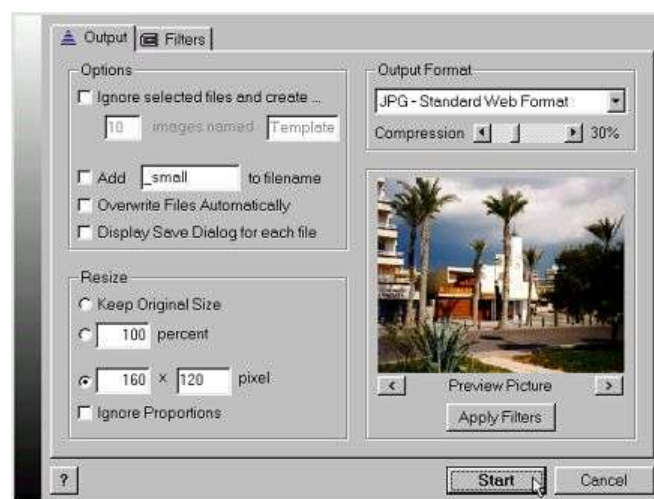


Right clicking one of the thumbnails will display the **Command menu** from the main window as a context menu. With this context menu you can perform various tasks directly within the browser.

4.4 The Batch Button (*Pro Edition only*)

Before pressing the Batch button, select one or more images or Filter Factory plugins. After pressing Batch button the Batch Processing dialog will display.

This dialog enables you to change the format, size or color depth and apply filters to a large number of images with one click. You can use it to automatically apply selected Filter Factory plugins to the default preview image. You can also create thumbnails of Filter Factory plugins by using the Resize option. Finally you can also create random textures.



Options

If you select the **Ignore selected Files and create** check box, all files that have been selected in the main window will be ignored. Instead you can specify the number and default names of empty images that will be created. This feature only makes sense if you use it in connection with the **Filters tab sheet** and the *** button** (see below!) to create random textures.

The **Add ... to filename** feature lets you append some text to the names of the processed files. For example, if you want to create thumbnails of some files and place them in the same folder as the originals, you could add e.g. "_small" to the file name to avoid overwriting the original files.

An active **Overwrite Files Automatically** check box will suppress the Overwrite prompt. **Display Save Dialog for each file** will let you choose a new folder and enter a new file name for each processed file.

Output Format

The Output Format drop down menu in the Output tab contains different image formats to choose from: JPG, GIF, BMP, PCX, PNG, TIF and EPS. If you select JPG, the **Compression scroll bar** will let you select the JPG compression ratio. Moving this bar will be reflected in the Test Preview, so you immediately get an impression of the JPG output quality.

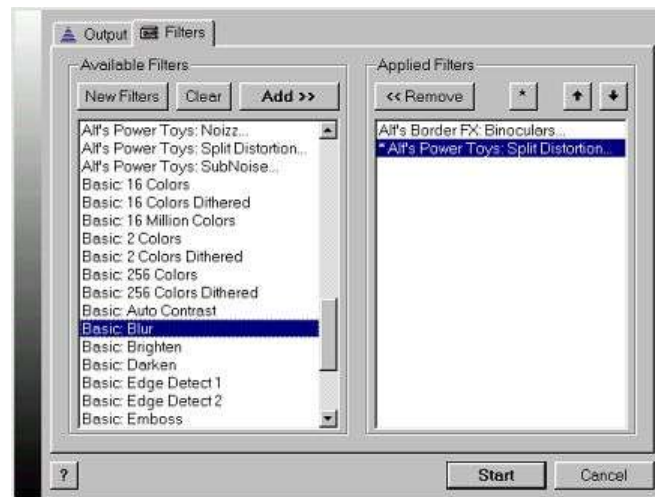
Resize

The Resize frame contains three options to change the size of the images. **Keep Original Size** won't do any changes to the images. The **second option** button lets you specify a certain image size in pixels. Activating the **Ignore Proportions** check box will resize the images to the exactly specified pixel size, otherwise the aspect ratio of the images will be retained. The **third option** will resize the images by the specified percent value.

Preview

The Preview frame contains a image preview. At first the default preview image is displayed, but you can switch through all selected files by pressing the **< and > buttons**. The **Apply Filters** button will apply the selected filters from the Filters tab (see below!) to the Test Preview.

The Filters tab lets you select different filters that will be applied during the batch process. The Available Filters frame contains a list of basic filters. This list of available effects can be extended by adding Filter Factory plugins. The available effects can be added to Applied Filters list. So only the filters listed in the Applied Filters list will actually be applied during the batch process.



Available Filters

This frame contains some built-in filter which start with "Basic:" and lets you add Filter Factory plugins to the list. To add them press the **New Filters** button and select a folder with Filter Factory plugins. To remove all added Filter Factor filters simply click the **Clear** button. To add a filter to the Applied Filters list select one from the Available Filters list box and press the **Add >>** button or simply double click the filter. It will then be displayed in the Applied Filters list box to the right.

Applied Filters

To remove a filter from this list again, press the **<< Remove** button. Use the **Arrow** buttons to change the order in which the filters are applied. The ***** button can be used to make the applied Filter Factory plugins generate random slider values. If you press this button a * will be placed in front of the filter name to indicate that this filter will be applied with random slider values. Pressing the button again will remove the *. However this button doesn't work with the basic filters. This feature can for example be used to create random textures with Filter Factory plugins in conjunction with the **Ignore selected Files and create** check box (see above!).

To edit one of the filters in the [Filter Factory Editor](#) simply double click it. The FF Editor with the double clicked filter will appear. Clicking the Save As button will save the changes, close the FF Editor and return to the Batch dialog. To return to the Batch dialog without saving the settings, click on the **x** icon at the top of the dialog. The 'Basic' filters aren't editable, because they aren't Filter Factory plugins.

The order of the filters in the Applied Filter frame is crucial, especially if you use one of the Color Depth filters. Most filters will only work, if the image has 16 million colors (24 bit). So if you should use one of the Color Depth filters (e.g. the 256 Colors filter) please make sure that is the last one in the row.

As mentioned above, you can switch back to the Output tab and preview the effect of the filters by pressing the **Apply Filters** button. You can even preview the effect on every selected file by additionally using the **< and > buttons**.

After selecting all your preferred settings, press the **Start** button. To stop the batch processing simply press and hold the ESC key.

4.5 The En/Disable Button

By pressing the En/Disable button the state of the selected files will be inverted: all selected files which are currently enabled will be disabled and all disabled files will be enabled.

For example the .8bf file extension will be renamed to ._bf, .prm to _prm, .aex to _aex or vice versa. All files will be disabled by replacing the . point with an _ underscore. The only exceptions are Photoshop-compatible plugins because some plugins misbehave if you try to use them without a file extension. Enabled plugins are marked with a + and disabled ones with a - in Plugin View.

Disabled plugins won't show up in the appropriate host application anymore. This is an useful feature to prevent your image or video application from getting cluttered up with plugins and other add-ons. Without this feature you would have to manually rename them or uninstall/reinstall your effects.

4.6 The Change Cat(egory) Button

Changing the category of Photoshop-compatible plugins and After Effects plugins makes them appear in a different sub-menu in the host application. You can use the Change Category command or alternatively just drag and drop plugins into another category. The Change Category button only works in Plugin View.

Only plugins for Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premiere 5 and Adobe After Effects contain real categories. Other files (e.g. Adobe Premiere 4.2 plugins, MediaStudio plugins PSP tubes etc.) do not contain have one. If no category is available then the plugin type description, enclosed within brackets, is displayed in place of the category in Plugin View.

Warning: We do not recommend changing the category of Premiere 5.x or 6.x plugins, as they may show up somewhere you don't want them.

4.7 The Create FFL Button *(Pro Edition only)*

You can archive Filter Factory plugins in a FFL file using this button. Plugins that weren't created with Filter Factory or PiCo's FF Editor cannot be placed into a FFL file.

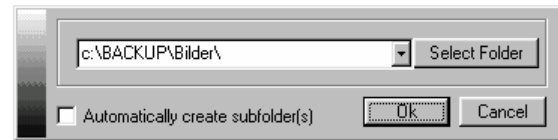
When executing this command you will be prompted to enter a file name for the new FFL file, then the Select Folder dialog will appear to allow you to select a destination folder.

You can view the newly created FFL file in the FFL View by double clicking it.

4.8 The Select Folder Dialog

If you do not activate the **Suppress Select Folder dialog** check box in Preferences, the Select Folder dialog will appear after you select a command that needs a destination folder. Examples of such commands are Copy, Move, Convert and Batch.

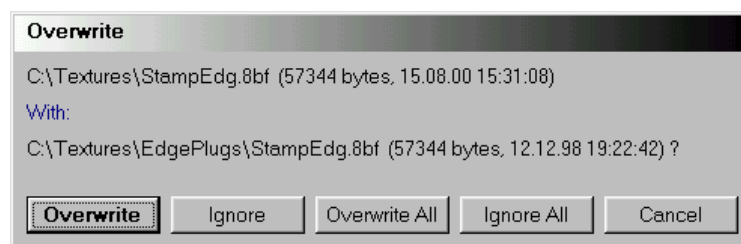
The folder of the opposite pane is automatically displayed as the default choice. The second item of the drop down menu is the folder of the active pane. You can also choose another folder from the drop down menu (which are added from the Folder menu), press the **Select Folder** button or manually enter a new folder. If the entered folder doesn't exist, you will be prompted to created it.



If you convert a FFL file or unzip a zip file, there will also be an **Automatically create sub folder(s)** check box. Activating this check box, will automatically create a sub folder with the name of the FFL or zip file. This option helps to avoid some file chaos.

4.9 The Overwrite Dialog

The Overwrite dialog will appear every time Plugin Commander tries to create a file which already exists. In such a case the following dialog will appear:



The dialog asks you if you want to overwrite the existing file. As a small hint the size and date of the existing file that would be overwritten is displayed. This should help you to decide if the existing file should be overwritten or not. For commands like Copy and Move the size and date of the source file will be displayed as well.

You have five different buttons to tell Plugin Commander what to do. Pressing the **Overwrite** button will overwrite the displayed file, pressing the **Ignore** button won't overwrite it. But in both cases the Overwrite dialog will appear again, if another file has to be overwritten. On the contrary the **Overwrite All** button will tell Plugin Commander to overwrite all files that still have to be processed and **Ignore All** won't overwrite any files. In both cases the Overwrite dialog won't appear again before all files are processed. Finally pressing the **Cancel** button will abort the whole operation and stop all file processing.

5. The Menu

5.1 The File Menu

Open Preview Image

Lets you open a new image which will be used for previewing and applying plugins.

Save Preview (*Pro Edition only*)

Lets you save the image displayed in the [Preview window](#).

Randomize (*Pro Edition only*)

This item is only active when the [Preview window](#) is visible and a Filter Factory plugin is selected. It will create random slider values for displaying the plugin effect. The same effect can be achieved by double clicking on the image in the Preview window.

Update (*Pro Edition only*)

This menu item will only be active, if the Preview Cache in [Preferences](#) is activated, the [Preview window](#) is visible and the image in the Preview windows was fetched from a cache file. The Update command will recalculate the effect and overwrite the old cache image.

Set as Wallpaper (*Pro Edition only*)

This item is only active if the [Preview window](#) is visible. Sets the image displayed in the Preview window as the desktop wallpaper.

The Image items

There's a list of images in the File menu. These images that have been opened recently with the Open Picture command or were added to this menu in [Preferences](#). Selecting one of them will load it as the current preview image for previewing plugins. Selecting **Edit Folder List** at the top of this list will display the Images tab of the [Preferences](#) dialog for editing the image list.

Preferences

Displays the [Preferences](#) dialog.

Exit

Quits this program.

5.2 The Edit Menu

Refresh

Refreshes the contents of the File, Plugin or FFL View of the active pane.

Toggle Select

Deselects all selected items and select all deselected items in the File, Plugin or FFL View of the active pane.

Select All

Selects all items in the File, Plugin or FFL View of the active pane.

5.3 The View Menu

Preview

Activates the [Preview mode](#). The same effect can achieved by clicking the [Preview icon](#) in the button bar at the bottom of the main window.

File View / Plugin View / FFL View

Switches the active pane to File, Plugin or FFL View. These menu items have the same effect as pressing the appropriate tab in the active pane.

Browser *(Pro Edition only)*

Displays the [Browser](#).

FF Editor

Display the [Filter Factory Editor](#).

Picture Editor

Displays the [Picture Editor](#).

Batch Processing (*Pro Edition only*)

Displays the [Batch Processing](#) dialog.

FX Download

Displays the FX Download dialog. The first tab of this dialog lets you connect to popular web sites which contain tons of free plugins and effects and the second contains hundreds of category sorted links to Paint Shop Pro tubes.

Double clicking one of the URLs from the list or selecting **Connect** from the File menu will start your web browser and connect you to that site. **Save** will save the current URL list. **Share** will display the path of the file the list was saved to. With Exit you can leave this dialog.

Choosing **Copy URL** from the Edit menu will copy the selected URL to the clipboard. With **Add** you can add a new URL to the list. **Edit Name** and **Edit URL** let you edit the name and URL of a selected entry. **Delete** will delete the selected entry from the list.

You can **change the position** of an list item by holding down the Alt key and pressing the cursor keys.

5.4 The Command Menu

Commands that generally apply to File View

Rename

If only one file is selected you will be prompted to enter a new name for it. If more than one file is selected, you will be prompted for a new file extension for these files.

If a folder is selected, the **Rename Folder** command from the Folders menu will be triggered.

Copy

Copies all selected files to a different folder.

Move

Moves all selected files to a new folder. That means that they are copied to a new folder and the files in the old folder are deleted.

If a folder is selected, the **Move Folder** command from the Folder menu will be triggered.

Delete

Deletes all selected files by moving them to the trash can. You can still recover these files by using the trash can.

If a folder is selected, the **Kill Folder(s)** command from the Folder menu will be triggered.

Kill

Deletes all selected file *without* moving them to the trash can. So they will be lost.

If a folder is selected, the **Kill Folder(s)** command from the Folder menu will be triggered.

Properties

Shows the Properties dialog of a selected file or folder. Pressing Alt + Return does the same.

Find (*Pro Edition only*)

The Find command behaves differently in the three Views. In File View and Plugin View the standard Windows Find dialog is displayed for searching for certain files or expressions within files. In FFL View a PiCo dialog is displayed for searching for certain filters. For an description of the Windows Find dialog, please refer to a Windows documentation.

The FFL View Find dialog has a **Case Sensitive** check box that can be activated, if you like to do a case sensitive search. You can enter one or two key words. If you want to enter two keywords, you have to separate them with one of the following *search operators*:

- **&** means Logical AND
- **!** means Logical NOT
- **|** (use Alt + Ctl+ <) means Logical OR

Here are some *search examples*:

- `Gallery` searches for the string "Gallery" in the filter name, category, author and copyright fields.

- Gallery N searches for all filters with the category <Filter Factory Gallery N>
- Gallery&Mario searches for filters created by <Mario> and that have the category <Filter Factory Gallery>
- Gallery N&Mario searches for filters created by <Mario> and with the category <Filter Factory Gallery N>
- Gallery!Werner Streidt searches for all filters with the category <Filter Factory Gallery>, but excludes those that are written by <Werner Streidt>
- Mario|Andrew searches for all filter that were created by Mario or Andrew

Unzip (*Pro Edition only*)

Unzips all selected zip files.

Unzip & Run (*Pro Edition only*)

Unzips all selected zip files to a temporary folder and displays a dialog for executing these files. This command can be useful, if you want to look at the contents of a zip file or want to run Setup.exe or Install.exe from within a zip file without unzipping it at first.

You will be automatically prompted to delete the temporary files after you used them and don't need them anymore.

Zip (*Pro Edition only*)

Archives all selected files into a zip file.

Commands that generally apply to Plugin View

Enable/Disable

Enables or disables plugins. See the [En/Disable button](#).

Change Category

Changes the category of plugins. See the [Change Category button](#).

Invoke (*Pro Edition only*)

Executes a selected Photoshop-compatible 8bf plugin in the same way that it is done in image applications by selecting a filter plugin from the menu. You can achieve the same effect by

simply double clicking a 8bf file. After pressing the OK button on the plugin's dialog, the effect will be rendered and displayed in the [Picture Editor](#).

Plugin Commander should be able to execute most Photoshop-compatible filter plugins, but there may be a few which are incompatible, because they are badly coded or don't comply fully with the Photoshop Plugin SDK. In the worst case such a plugin could crash Plugin Commander.

Plugin Information

Shows some information about the selected plugin file.

Plugin About Dialog

Shows the internal About dialog of the selected plugin.

Commands that generally apply to FFL View or FFL files

Create FFL *(Pro Edition only)*

Archives the selected Filter Factory plugins and source files into a FFL file. This command works in all three views: File, Plugin and FFL View (See [Create FFL button](#)).

Add to FFL *(Pro Edition only)*

Adds the selected Filter Factory plugins and source files to a FFL file that is currently displayed in the FFL View of the opposite pane. If both panes display a FFL File, you can use this command to copy filters from one FFL file to the other.

Plugin List

Displays the Plugin List dialog for saving the filter names, categories, file names, author and copyright of the selected plugins to a text file. If the **Copy to Clipboard** check box is active, they will be copied to the clipboard. Otherwise you can enter a file name for the text file to be created. This command works in all three views: File, Plugin and FFL View.

Thumbnail *(Pro Edition only)*

Using the [Batch command](#) to create thumbnails of Filter Factory plugins is easier than using this command. However if you want to produce thumbnails from the FFL View, you have to use this menu item.

It creates thumbnail in BMP format of the selected Filter

Factory plugins. The size of these BMP images depends on the size of the Preview window. So you can use the [Preview icon](#) to display and resize the Preview window before using the Thumbnail command. This command works in all three views: [File](#), [Plugin](#) and [FFL View](#).

5.5 The Folders Menu

Move Folder

Moves the selected sub folder to a new folder.

Rename Folder

If a sub folder is selected, this function lets you rename it. If no sub folder is selected, you will be able to rename the folder that is currently displayed.

Kill Folder(s)

Will completely erase all sub folders and files contained in the selected folder or folders. Be careful with this command!

Create Folder

Prompts you for entering a new folder name and creates it.

The Folder items

At the bottom of the Folders menu there's a list of folders that have been accessed recently or that were added to this menu from [Preferences](#). Selecting one of them will display this folder in the File View of the active pane. Selecting **Edit Folder List** at the top of the list will display the Folder tab of the [Preferences](#) dialog for editing the folder list.

5.6 The Apps Menu

This shows the list of applications added to this menu through the Apps tab of [Preferences](#) or when executed within Plugin Commander. Selecting one of the items will start the appropriate application. If a "%1" is appended to the application name, the currently selected file in File View will be passed to the application as a parameter. So you can use this menu to start image applications or to display files selected in Plugin Commander with an external application.

Selecting **Edit Application List** at the top of this list will display the Apps tab of the [Preferences](#) dialog for editing the application list.

5.7 The Help Menu

Help

Displays the Help files in your web browser.

Tutorials

Displays the Tutorial section of the Help files in your web browser.

Tip of the Day

Displays dozens of show short and helpful tips about Plugin Commander.

Online

The Plugin Site.com

Starts your web browser and automatically connects you to the homepage of Plugin Commander for reading the latest news, getting updates etc.

The PiCo Newsletter

Starts your web browser and automatically connects you to the web page of the Plugin Commander Newsletter. You can subscribe yourself there or read the latest news.

Add URL to Favorites

Adds the URL of The Plugin Site site to Internet Explorer's Favorites menu.

Add URL on Desktop

Creates an icon on your desktop which lets you connect to the The Plugin Site by clicking on it.

Send Email

Comment

Creates a new email in your email application for sending a comment or feedback about Plugin Commander.

Technical Support

Creates a new email in your email application for telling the Plugin Commander Technical Support about a problem.

About

Displays the About dialog with the version number and credits.

6. Filter Factory Editor

6.1 Interface Designs

Using Plugin Commander's Filter Factory Editor you can edit different Filter Factory plugin settings. To load a Filter Factory plugin into the FF Editor just double click it. There are two FF Editor types: a 640x480 pixel large one and one that needs a higher screen resolution and has some additional features. While there are several interface designs for the first type there is just one for the second type - called Rattler Galaxy. This is the default FF Editor design for the pro Edition. The second interface isn't available in the Light Edition of Plugin Commander. If you are going to use Plugin Commander Pro at 640x480 screen resolution, please select one of the other interface designs from [Preferences](#).



Please note that there is also an option in Preferences to select the Original Filter Factory Editor as PiCo's FF Editor. This feature is just included for fun and to demonstrate the contrast between the original FF Editor and PiCo's FF Editor. We do not recommend using it.

6.2 Editing the Filter Settings

Although the FF Editor window doesn't have a title bar you can drag it by clicking anywhere on the window background. If you move the mouse pointer over some of the labels and buttons, you will recognize that they will highlight. This behavior indicates that you can edit the label or trigger the button by clicking on it. The Filename, Category, Filtername, Author, Copyright, Slider 1 to 8, the slider value, A=, R=, G= and B= labels can be edited this way. The slider values can be changed by dragging the slider knob, by clicking on the slider bar or by clicking on the sliders' value labels.

Pressing the **A=**, **R=**, **G=** and **B=** labels will each display a large text box with the Filter Factory source code. Pressing these labels again will make the text box disappear. The source code can be replaced or edited to produce your own Filter Factory plugins.

As a small help you can access all Filter Factory functions and variables with the Functions button. Pressing it will display a menu for pasting them into the code box. Besides that, the Code snippet database button lets you access some useful code snippets. The 1/3 buttons will turn the three R=, G= and B= code boxes into a single C= code box. This way you don't need to enter the same code three times while you are programming a new filter. The F button lets you select the properties of the font that is used for the code boxes.

The **buttons named 1 to 10** are memory spots. Pressing one of them will highlight it and store the current slider settings. Pressing a highlighted memory spot button will restore the saved slider settings and apply them. The Clear All button erases all stored slider settings and the Delete button lets you delete a single memory spot.

The **four check boxes left to the slider names** are for turning the sliders into so called MAP controls. A MAP control consist of two sliders and one slider name. This feature is just included for compatibility reasons and is only used by very few plugins. So don't bother about these check boxes, just forget them...

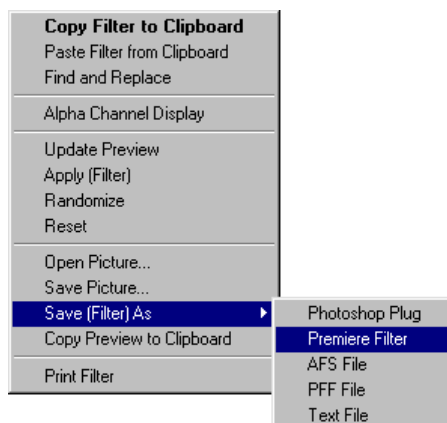
The **Auto Preview check box** determines if the filter preview is updated or not. The **Magnifying Glass button** lets you zoom into the preview by clicking with the left and right mouse buttons on the preview. The **Hand button** has no function at the moment. Left clicking on the preview will update it immediately, right clicking will display a part of the [File menu](#) from PiCo's main window.

The **Open Picture button** lets you select a new image for previewing purposes, while the **Save Picture button** calculates the final image, displays it in the [Picture Editor](#) and opens a file dialog for saving it.

The **Apply (or Big View) button** calculates the final image and displays it in the [Picture Editor](#) window. The **Randomize button** sets random numbers as slider values. So with this button you can explore the different effect that a filter is capable of. Additionally if you like an effect, you can store it as a memory spot. The **Reset button** will completely erase all filter settings. This function is useful if you want to start creating a filter from the scratch. Last but not least, the **Save As** button allows you to save the changes you've done. The filename which is entered in the Filename label is used to save the plugin.

6.3 The Context Menu

There are some hidden functions in the FF Editor. Right clicking on the background will pop up a context menu.



Copy Filter to Clipboard / Paste Filter to Clipboard

These functions will let you copy and paste the Filter Factory source code to and from the clipboard. If you want to exchange filter source codes with someone via email, you can use these commands.

Alpha Channel Display

If this menu item is checked, the Alpha Channel (A= code) will be displayed in the preview as a greyscaled or blue/red effect. It works like the [Alpha Channel icon](#) of the main window.

Update Preview

Will immediately update the preview.

Apply (Filter) / Randomize / Reset / Open Picture / Save (Filter) As

Same functions as the [buttons](#) with the same name. See above.

Print Filter

Print Filter will output the Filter Factory source code to your printer.

7. Picture Editor



To run the Picture Editor simply choose Picture Editor from the [View menu](#) or press the F9 key. You can open or load an image into the Picture Editor by double clicking an image file in the main window or double clicking an image in the [Browser](#). You can also open an image directly in the Picture Editor by using Open, Acquire Image from the File menu or Paste from the Edit menu.

The Picture Editor is also used to display the results of a Photoshop-compatible 8bf plugin which was e.g. double clicked in the main window. Pressing the Apply/Big View button in the [FF Editor](#) will also display the result of the Filter Factory filter in Picture Editor.

7.1 File Menu

Open

Lets you open an image that will be displayed in Picture Editor.

Save / Save As

Saves the currently displayed image.

Select Source

Lets you select a scanning device.

Acquire Image (*Pro Edition only*)

Invokes an TWAIN-compatible scanning dialog for scanning an image.

Print (*Pro Edition only*)

Prints the displayed image in its actual size or scaled to the printing page proportions.

Exit

Exits Picture Editor.

7.2 Edit Menu**Undo**

Restores the state of the image before the last action.

Copy

Copies the image to the clipboard.

Paste

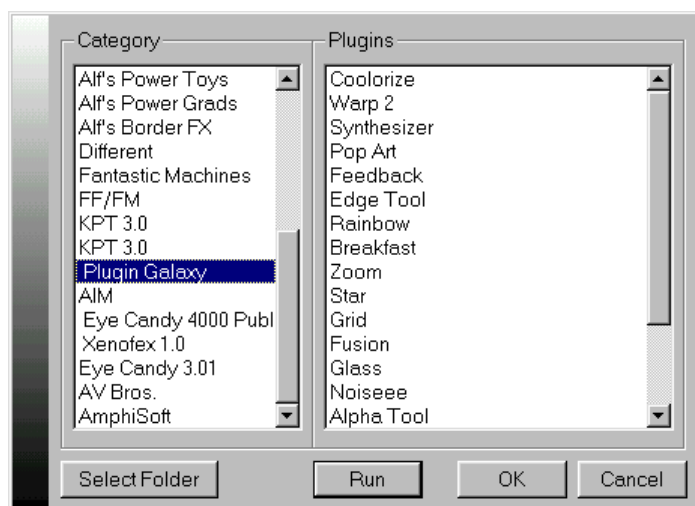
Retrieves an image from the clipboard.

Resize Image (*Pro Edition only*)

Lets you define a new pixel size (e.g. 640x480) or enter a percentage amount for changing the size of the current image.

7.3 Filters Menu (*Pro Edition only*)

You can find different commands in the Filters menu for manipulating the image e.g. **Invert**, **Contrast**, **Brightness**, **Gamma**, **Blur**, **Sharpen**, **Edge Detect**, **Emboss**, **Mirror** and **Rotate**. These are standard functions that you should know from other image editing tools. If you do not know what they do just try them.



The **External Plugins** menu item will display a dialog that lets you apply a Photoshop-compatible plugin to the image displayed in the Picture Editor. The **Select Folder** button lets you select a new folder with plugins. The plugin categories are displayed in the left list box and the plugins in the right one.

To run and apply a plugin effect select a plugin in the right list and press the **Run** button or just double click it. The

calculated effect will be automatically displayed in the Picture Editor window. You can apply several plugins without the need to leave the External Plugins dialog.

When you don't want to apply any more effects, simply click the **OK** button to leave the dialog. If you want to undo all effects you applied from this dialog, click the **Cancel** button. Even if you left the External Plugins dialog with the OK button, you can still undo all changes with the Undo command from the Edit menu.

7.4 Colors Menu (*Pro Edition only*)

The Colors menu offers different color conversion options to choose from. You can change the currently displayed image to 2 color, 16 color, 256 colors by using the standard Octree color reduction or Floyd Steinberg dithering. Additionally a greyscale and 16 million color mode is also offered.

Tip: If you want to save the current image as a gif file, you should select *256 Colors Dithered* from the Colors menu firstly.

8. Preferences

The Preferences dialog can be activated with the F12 key or from the File menu. It lets you change different settings which are essential for using Plugin Commander.

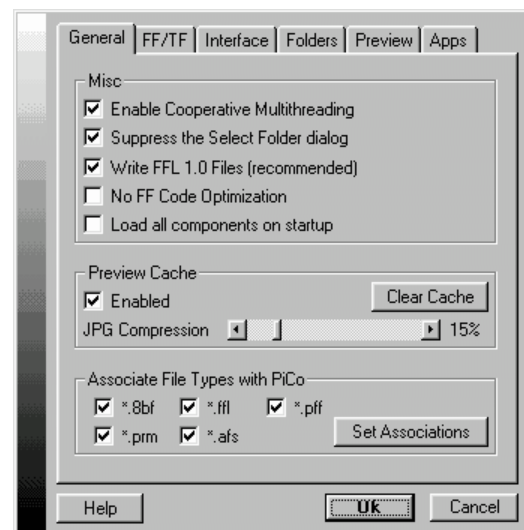
8.1 General Tab

Misc

Enable Cooperative Multithreading (*Pro Edition only*) is quite a useful feature. It allows you to do different tasks at the same time. For example while a FFL file or a folder with plugins is being scanned in one pane, you can do something else in the other pane or load a filter into the FF Editor. There haven't been any complications yet, but if you should encounter problems it would be safer to deactivate this feature. Please notice that not all commands support cooperative multithreading to avoid potential problems.

PiCo uses the Select Folder dialog for selecting a destination folder for some commands. If the **Suppress the Select Folder Dialog** check box is activated, PiCo won't prompt you for a folder and automatically use the folder of the passive pane.

PiCo supports writing FFL 1.1 files. However, older pre 1.0 versions of PiCo only know the FFL 1.0 format. So if you want to distribute a FFL file, please activate the **Write FFL 1.0 Files** check box for compatibility reasons (*Pro Edition only*). FFL 1.1 files are smaller than FFL 1.0 files and PiCo can process them faster.



PiCo automatically optimizes the filter code of Filter Factory plugins. If you want to suppress this feature, activate the **No FF Code Optimization** check box.

Load all components on startup will load all necessary components when starting Plugin Commander. This will slow down the startup process, but avoids waiting later. If you often use Plugin Commander to do some conversion or plugin management, you should deactivate this option. But if you use the image and preview features very often, you should activate this check box.

Preview Cache (*Pro Edition only*)

This feature is enabled by default. Every time a preview is calculated for 8bf plugins, the preview image is saved as a JPG file into the cache sub folder of the PiCo folder. If the same plugin is previewed again, the cached image is displayed instead of recalculating the preview. This feature can speed up the display of plugin effects tremendously, especially in the [Browser](#) dialog.

The **Clear Cache** button erases all cached preview images and frees some hard drive space. The JPG Compression slider lets you adjust the compression of the cached images. A compression ratio of 15% is set as default. A larger value results in less used hard drive space, but worse image quality.

Associate File Types with PiCo

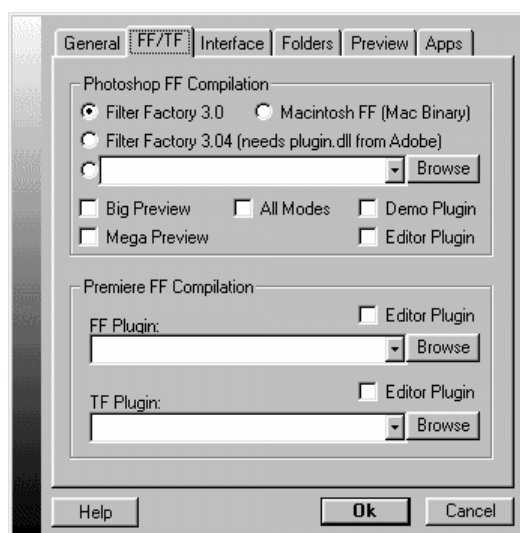
Pressing the Set Associations button will associate the selected file extensions with Plugin Commander. This means that every time you double click a file with one of these file extensions, PiCo will be started.

8.2 FF/TF Tab

Every time Plugin Commander creates a Filter Factory or transitions factory plugin (e.g. when converting or saving plugins) it uses a file template. Filter Factory 3.0 & 3.04 templates are already included with PiCo, but you can also use your own templates.

Photoshop FF Compilation

There are four option buttons for selecting the Filter Factory versions you like PiCo to create. The Macintosh Binary files that will be created with the **Macintosh FF** option (*Pro Edition only*) have to be transferred to a Macintosh machine and converted to Mac Photoshop plugins by using Stuffit Expander. The **fourth option** (*Pro Edition only*) lets you select your own Filter Factory template with the help of the Browse button.



If **Big Preview** or **Mega Preview** (*Pro Edition only*) is activated, PiCo will create Filter Factory plugins with a dialog that has a larger preview box.

Normally Filter Factory plugins only work with RGB images. If the **All Modes** (*Pro Edition only*) check box is activated, the Filter Factory plugins created by PiCo will work in LAB, HSB and YCMK modes, too. But please be careful, these modes may crash your image application, because the Filter Factory plugin wasn't programmed for these modes.

If the **No Dialog** (*Pro Edition only*) check box is activated, the dialog of all created Filter Factory plugins will be suppressed. This option is useful if

you would like to create Filter Factory plugins that directly apply an effect without showing an dialog. The **Demo Plugin** (*Pro Edition only*) feature lets you create Demo versions of Filter Factory plugins by deactivating the OK button in the compiled plugin and making the plugin unrecognizable for Plugin Commander. If the **Editor Plugin** check box is activated, the final Filter Factory plugin will display a window with code boxes instead of the usual filter dialog.

Premiere FF Compilation (*Pro Edition only*)

Please use the Browse button and select the Adobe Premiere Filter Factory (fl-fact.prm) & Transition Factory (fx-fact.prm) plugins from your Premiere plugin folder. These two files will be needed if you want to convert Photoshop Filter Factory plugins to Premiere Filter Factory plugins. The **Editor Plugin** check box has the same effect as described above.

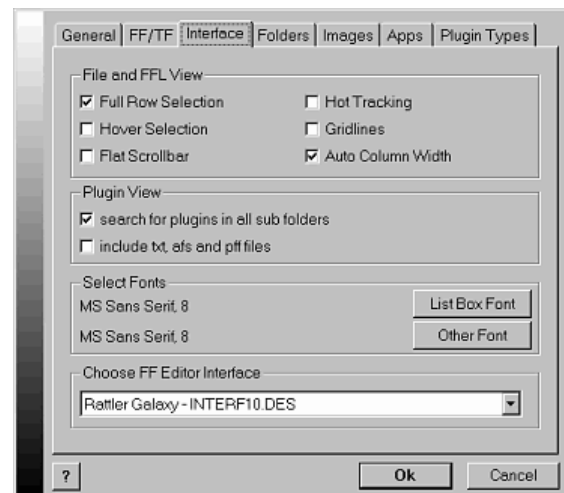
8.3 Interface Tab

File and FFL View

These six check boxes define the behavior of the list box in the File and FFL View.

Full Row Selection makes the full row appear selected and not only one item of a row. **Hover Selection** will make an item selected, if you keep the mouse pointer one second over it. **Flat Scrollbar** makes the scroll bar appear flat. With **Hot Tracking** the items will be highlighted when the mouse pointer moves over them. **Gridlines** will displays grid lines within the list box. **Auto Column Width** will make the size of the column headers adapt automatically to the item size which is very useful if you e.g. always want to see the full file names.

Full Row Selection and Auto Column Width are activated by default. This is the recommended setting.



Plugin View

These two check boxes let you define which files are scanned and displayed in Plugin View. The first check box makes PiCo scan all sub folders of the current folder for plugins. The second check box (*Pro Edition only*) enables TXT, AFS and PFF files to be displayed in Plugin View, too. Please notice that activating the second check box can slow down the scanning process when switching to the Plugin View.

Select Fonts

The two buttons let you select different fonts, font sizes and font attributes for the main window of Plugin Commander. These two options can be very helpful if you use a high screen resolution with a small fonts setting. The List Box Font button selects the font that will be applied to the File, Plugin and FFL View lists. The Other Font button selects the font for all other elements on the main window e.g. the tab headers, the folder label, the file type drop

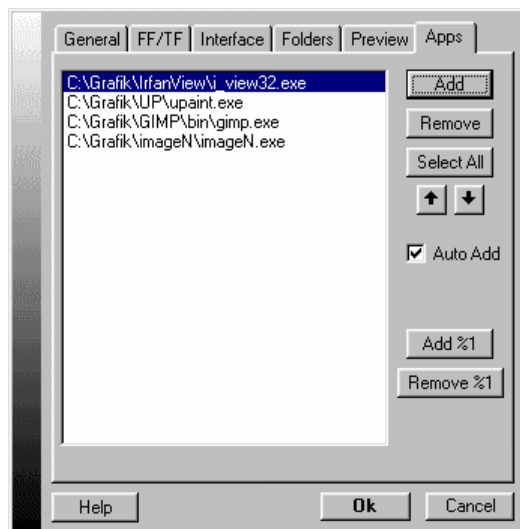
down menu etc. the other fonts Plugin Commander's dialogs are influenced directly by the Windows system settings.

Choose FF Editor Interface

The drop down list contains interface designs (you can call them skins, if you like) for the FF Editor. These interface design consist of a JPG and a DES file which have to be placed in the interface sub folder inside the PiCo folder.

8.4 Folders, Preview & Apps Tabs

Pressing the **Add** button will display a dialog for selecting a folder, image or application. The selected item will be added to the list box on the left. The **Remove** button removes the selected item from the list box and **Select All** lets you select all list box items.



A selected list box item will move up or down with every click on one of the **Arrow** buttons. You can use this feature to sort the list box items. Holding down the Alt key and using the cursor keys will do the same job.

If the **Auto Add** check box is activated, folders, images and applications will be automatically added to the list as they are selected or opened within Plugin Commander.

The **Auto Top** check box is only available in the Folders Tab. If this check box is activated, the latest accessed folders are automatically moved to the top of the Folder list.

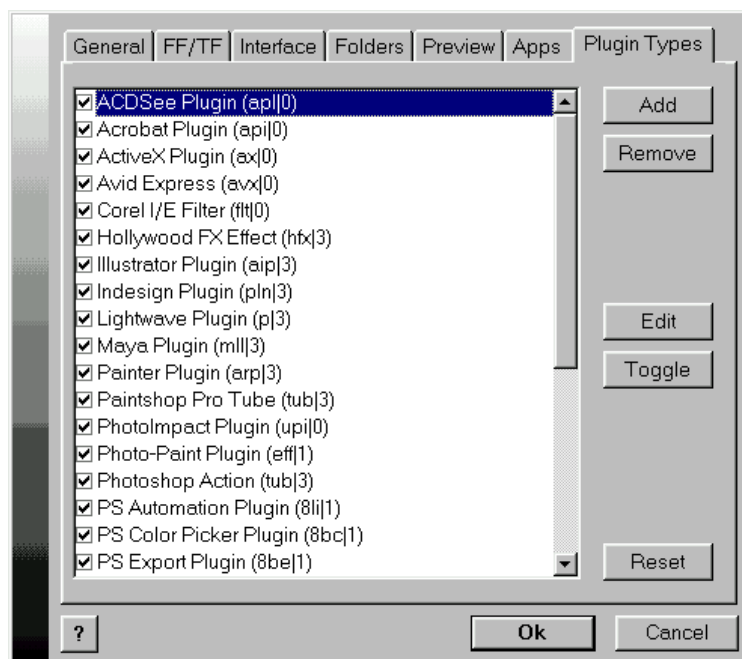
The **Limit to ... entries** text box check box is only available in the Folders Tab. It determines which items will be displayed in the folder list. Limiting the number of displayed items will make the folder list less crowded and more usable.

Add %1 is only available in the Apps Tab. If you added a %1 to an application item, the file that is currently selected in File or Plugin View will automatically be appended as an parameter when running the applications from the Apps menu. This way you can run an external application and specify a file that it should load automatically.

Remove %1 which is only available in the Apps Tab removes the %1 argument, so there will be no file transferred to that application when it is launched from the Apps menu.

8.5 Plugin Types Tab

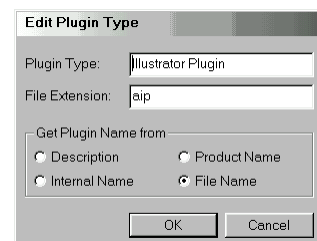
The Plugin Types tab sheet displays all available plugin and file types with the exception of Photoshop filter plugins, Adobe Premiere and After Effects plugins which are built tightly into Plugin Commander. The check box for each plugin or file type determines if this type is used or ignored by Plugin Commander.



The **Add** button lets you add a new plugin or file type, the **Remove** button removes the currently selected plugin or file type from the list, the **Edit** button lets you edit the currently selected type and the **Toggle** button activates or deactivates all of them.

If you press the **Reset** button, the missing default plugin or file types will be added to the list again. The default types are the ones that are delivered with Plugin Commander and not added by the user. This button is useful, if you have removed one or more default types from the list and would like to have them added again. Self defined types won't be erased when pressing the Reset button.

After pressing the **Add** or **Edit** button the 'Add/Edit Plugin Type' dialog will appear. The Plugin Type field should contain the name of the plugin type e.g. "Illustrator plugin" and the File Extension field may be used for entering the file extension of this plugin type e.g. "aip". Remember to enter just the plain file extension (e.g. "aip" rather than ".aip" or "*.aip").



The 'Get Plugin Name from' frame lets you choose one of four methods for extracting the plugin name from the plugin file. If you choose **Description**, **Product Name** or **Internal Name**, Plugin Commander will try to fetch the plugin name from the Version resource of the file. With **File Name** selected the file name will be used as the plugin name. File Name is the fastest method for grabbing a plugin name and will be used by Plugin Commander in case a plugin doesn't contain a Version resource.

For more details on defining your own plugin type, please read the appropriate [tutorial](#).

9. Keyboard Shortcuts

A - Z	In a list boxes and menus: Jump to the first entry beginning with this letter
Esc	Interrupt a command or process
Return / Enter	In a file list: Execute Photoshop Plugin, look at FFL file or launch associated program
F 1	Launch Help file
F 2	Rename a file
F 3	Unzip the selected files (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
F 4	Zip the selected files (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
F 5	Copy a file
F 6	Move a file
F 7	Displays the Browser (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Shift + F 7	Create a new folder
F 8	Displays the Picture View window
F 9	Display the FF Editor window
F 11	Display the FX Download window
F 12	Displays the Preferences dialog
Ctl + F 1	Switch to File View
Ctl + F 2	Switch to Plugin View
Ctl + F 3	Switch to FFL View (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Del	Delete a file by putting it into the trash can
Shift + Del	Delete a file without putting it into the trash can (Kill)
Ctl + A	Select all items in a list or text box
Ctl + B	Thumbnail command (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Ctl + D	Add a file/filter to a Filter Factory Library (FFL) file (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)

Ctl + E	Enable or Disable a Photoshop, Premiere, After Effects or Mediastudio PlugIn
Ctl + F	Displays the Find dialog (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Ctl + H	Change the category of Photoshop PlugIn in the Plugin View
Ctl + I	Show informations on a selected plugin
Ctl + L	Create a FFL file (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Ctl + O	Open an image file
Ctl + R	Refresh File, Plugin or FFL View
Ctl + T	Toggle Select
Ctl + C	In text boxes: Copy to clipboard
Ctl + X	In text boxes: Cut to clipboard
Ctl + V	In text boxes: Paste from clipboard
Ctl + Z	In text boxes: Undo last change
Alt + B	Browse plugins and images (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Alt + C	Convert plugins
Alt + D	Enable/Disable plugins
Alt + H	Change the category of plugins
Alt+ L	Create a FFL (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)
Alt+T	Batch process images and plugins (<i>Pro Edition only</i>)

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