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How to initialize X on the NeXTStation

The X windowing system can now be used on the NeXT computer (scarlett), using an X server program called “co-Xist”. But before you can use co-Xist, you must perform the following initialization steps. You need only do this once.

1. The NeXTStation has a two-button mouse, but the default operation is to treat the mouse as if it only has one button. To use X you often need a three-button mouse. The third (middle) button of the three-button mouse is simulated by pressing both buttons on the two-button mouse at the same time. However, before you can do this you must enable the right mouse button. To do so double-click on the “Preferences” item in the “dock,” in the upper right corner of the screen (the thing with the date and time on it). You should be in the mouse menu. In the “menu button” section you should select “Enabled” to enable the two-button mouse. Then quit the “Preferences” tool.
2. Before you can use X you must copy some start-up files to you home directory. In a shell window give the following commands:

```
% cp ~myers/fortran/sample.xinitrc ~/.xinitrc
% cp ~myers/fortran/sample.Xdefaults ~/.Xdefaults
% cp ~myers/fortran/sample.twmrc ~/.twmrc
```

The `.xinitrc` file is executed by the X server when it is first started, and contains commands for starting shell windows and other tools, as well as starting the window manager, `twm`. The `.Xdefaults` file contains defaults for fonts, window colors and sizes and such. The `.twmrc` file is read by the `twm` window manager when it is first started and contains the definitions for the buttons and menus and other features of the window manager.

3. To make it easy to start the X server from NextStep (the usual windowing system on the NeXT machine) do the following: In the File Viewer window click on “NextApps” and then drag the icon which has the X logo on it, called “co-Xist.app”, to the bottom of the “dock” at the right hand side of the screen (by holding the mouse button down while the pointer is on the icon). The icons in the “dock” will always be there whenever you log in.
4. To start X you need only double click on the co-Xist icon that you dragged to the dock. You should do so now.
5. When the X server is started its actions are either integrated with those of the existing NextStep window system, or it can take over the entire screen. If you

are already accustomed to X then you probably want to make it take over the whole screen. To do so, select the “Info” item on the “co-Xist” menu, then select “Preferences” and push the “Screen Mode” button until it says “Take Over”. You should also select “Full Screen” in the “Root Display” section.

Important: When the X server has taken over the screen you can toggle back to NextStep by holding down the “Command” key on the keyboard and pressing the left mouse button. Repeating this returns you to X.

6. The X server should terminate when you exit the window manager (using the right mouse button pull-down to exit twm), but if it does not you can exit by toggling back to NextStep (Command/Left mouse button) and selecting “quit” in the co-Xist menu.
7. Remember that whenever you run an X program on another computer you will need to somehow specify the display on which the output is to be shown. The easiest way to do this is to set the DISPLAY environment variable, like so

```
% setenv DISPLAY scarlett:0
```

You can also specify the display on the command line when giving an X command, as in this simple example:

```
% xeyes -display scarlett:0
```

If you fail to set or specify the display you will receive the error message “Error: can’t open display:”.