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1 SaveScan Help

1.1 SaveScan in Brief

SaveScan exists to receive a scan from a TWAIN source and immediately save it to a sequentially numbered file. When the TWAIN standard was set up, the desktop computer didn't have enough power to both scan and edit photos at the same time. You typically would scan an image, shut TWAIN down, and then edit and work with the image. Opening a TWAIN device in a photo application paralyzed the photo application while TWAIN was open.

Modern (2004) computers have more than enough power to scan and edit simultaneously, and many modern scanners can do batch scanning. Some scanner applications keep data in RAM until you save it manually. This isn't as safe as saving each scan as it is performed. I like data to be saved on the hard drive as it comes in, as automatically as possible, including automatic file naming.

SaveScan is my idea of how this should work. It allows you to have a TWAIN device working without tying up a more elaborate piece of software and large quantities of your computer's resources. It receives multiple scans for batch scanning. It can save to three popular types of files. You can change file names and folders while you are scanning. And, it's freeware.

1.2 Using SaveScan

SaveScan's work flow goes from top to bottom of the **SaveScan** form.

1) Choose the folder where you want the scanned files saved. You can paste a path from Windows Explorer into the space provided in the folder text control. Open a **Browse for folder** dialog by either double-clicking on the text control or clicking on the command button labelled **..** at the top right of the form. Or, use **Alt-** (Alt-period) as a keyboard command to open the folder browse dialog. I find that using the dialog is slower than just entering a drive designation and clicking in the folder tree immediately below. The **Browse for folder** dialog recognizes network paths. I find it safer to save files on a local drive in the machine you're scanning on.

The folder list shows the folder tree on the current drive. Click on folders to move around in the tree.

The **Create New folder** command button opens a dialog for entering a name for the new folder. I supply a default folder name built around 4 digit numbers; see the [Folder naming](#) topic for the details. When you click on OK, the new folder is created and becomes the destination for the scans.

Once you've chosen or set up a folder, the file list will show all files of the chosen image type that have names with the current prefix and an additional 5 characters. **SaveScan** looks at the list and generates the next filename that follows in numerical sequence of the files. The next number appears in the **Next number** text box. You can edit this value, but only 5 digit numbers are allowed. See the [Automatic file naming](#) topic for the details.

The **Open TWAIN Source** command is disabled until you have chosen a folder to receive the scan files.

2) Choose the **Image Format** for your saved scans. The default is JPEG, with moderate compression. I haven't provided any access to the JPEG settings. If you want total control, scan the files as uncompressed TIFF or BMP, and compress with your favorite photo software or utility. When you choose an **Image Format**, the file list and **Next name** are updated based on the files in the folder.

Then, enter a prefix for the file name, if you want one. The File list shows only files that have the prefix you enter followed by 5 characters. The list is updated whenever you change the prefix or the file type.

3) Confirm the TWAIN source, or change it if you want. The **Select source** command button (**Alt-S**) opens the Windows TWAIN source select dialog. All TWAIN sources that are installed on a computer are included in the list, whether or not they are actually connected or turned on. The current TWAIN source is listed just below the file list box. Trying to open a TWAIN source that isn't working will display an uninformative error message at the bottom of the **SaveScan** window.

4) Open the TWAIN source by clicking on the **Open TWAIN source** command button. This opens the scanner manufacturer's dialog. Scan in the usual way, and when a scan is complete, **SaveScan** saves it as a file. Most scanner dialogs will remain open so you can continue scanning. Some will close after each scan; this is something the manufacturers do, and is out of **SaveScan**'s control.

5) When you're done, close the TWAIN source dialog and then exit **SaveScan**. Closing **SaveScan** will also close the TWAIN source's dialog, but it's probably wisest to shut TWAIN down first and then **SaveScan**.

1.3 Dos and Don'ts

SaveScan is reasonably robust. All of its controls remain active when the TWAIN source's dialog or controls are open. You can make changes while the scanner is actually scanning, but you really shouldn't make changes right at the moment when the scan is being saved to a file.

1) You can change the folder for the scans any time. Changing the folder will update the **Next name**. I recommend not using the **Browse for folder** dialog while you're scanning. This is a Windows browse dialog, seems to interfere with the scanner software, and doesn't always appear where you can easily get to it. Instead, you can copy a path from Windows Explorer and paste it into the **Path** text control, enter a path manually, or move around in the folder list.

2) You can change the type of file to save at any time. Making a change will update **Next name**.

3) You can make changes to the **Prefix** and **Next name** at any time as well.

Errors will still occur. When they happen, the error message appears below the **Select TWAIN source** command button. Even with this message, there's usually not much you can do besides shut the scanner down and/or restart the computer, hoping that this will reset everything and let you start scanning again.

1.4 Automatic file naming

SaveScan automatically generates file names for your scans. I have chosen what I think is a very simple system, consisting of a prefix and a 5 digit number. The extension changes as you change the type of file you want to save.

I chose 5 digit numbers because some versions of Windows only allow a maximum of 32,767 files in any one folder. A 5 digit number allows 100,000 different files in a sequence (starting at 00000), more than Windows allows. Large numbers of files in a folder get unwieldy. Organizing your files is up to you.

When you choose a folder for your scans, **SaveScan** checks for files that have the current prefix followed by 5 characters and the current extension. It looks for the largest number in the last 5 characters, adds 1, and displays the next file name it will use. Leading zeroes always pad the numbers to 5 digits. The default numbering starts at 10000.

Only numbers are allowed in the **Next number** field.. If you try to enter letters or more than 5 digits here, the number will stubbornly revert to the next 5 digit number in the current sequence. You can edit the **Prefix** at any time when you want to change the file names. **SaveScan** checks to make sure that the **Prefix** and **Next number** will make a valid file name that isn't already in use in the current folder.

Leaving the **Prefix** blank will result in file names that consist only of the 5 digit numbers.

1.5 Folder naming

SaveScan enters a default folder name in the dialog that opens when you click on **Create New Folder**. It's a four digit number intended to be a prefix for a descriptive folder name. It's there because one of the things I'm doing with **SaveScan** is making animated movies.

A movie consists of a sequence of shots, each of which contains frames. The sequential frame filenames keep the frames of the movie in order, and I use sequentially numbered folders to keep the shots in a movie in order. The default folder name (or prefix) is a four digit number that would follow after the last similarly named folder in the list of folders in the folder browser control. Using this number would add a "shot" (folder) at the end of the current "movie" (list of folders).

I increment the folder numbers by 10s to let me put new folders in between existing folders. You can actually put any number of folders in between any pair of folders just by adding more digits to the numeric prefix, as well. I can rearrange the shots by changing the numbers in the folder prefix.

Four digit numbers will handle more shots than are in a typical feature movie. Dramatic movies average about 6 - 10 shots a minute, so a 100 minute movie might contain 1,000 shots. All of the shots (and frames) in a feature will fit comfortably into the subfolders of one folder, if you have enough storage space. At 24 frames per second, a 100 minute movie contains 144,000 frames.

1.6 License

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