



eXoApple II

eXoApple II GS Owner's Guide





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Preface

What are the eXo Projects?



Figure 1
The naked circuit board

Preservation through Playability is a motto that has defined the eXo projects from the beginning. The phrase encapsulates our goal of encouraging preservation by making games easily accessible and useable, with metadata, scans, and other content which captures the era.

The eXo projects initially started with eXoDOS in 2007. At the time, there were large downloadable packs of MS-DOS games, however it wasn't always easy to get them to run. After a particularly long evening of trying to get a favorite adventure game running, it was decided to create a front end with as many games as possible, ready to play.

Between the installation, configuration, cracking and other tweaks needed to get many games playable, it was clear that all of these challenges negatively impacted preservation of these games. The first collection, eXoDOS, was created to help preserve these games by making them easily accessible.

Preservation through playability.

Since then, other packs have been released such as eXoWin3x, the Retro-Learning Pack, and eXoScummVM. The goal has primarily been to locate systems for which there is a barrier to emulation or a seemingly limited interest being shown from the preservation community at large.

The Apple II series and the Apple II GS both represent a core component of many people's education. For thousands of students, it was their first introduction to a computer. We have decided to begin preserving this era with the Apple II GS. One of the earlier commercial 16-bit home computers, the Apple II GS was a marked improvement in graphics over its predecessor. However, it was early enough that it also faced several limitations.

Please enjoy this collection of games and programs, as the Apple II GS is added to the eXo Projects list.

Credits

eXo

Python

Chapter 1

Getting Started

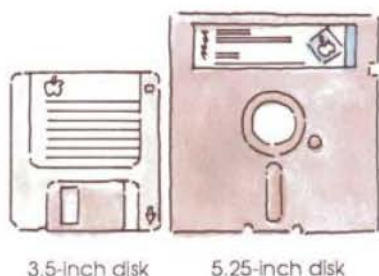


Figure 2
Software

Yes Virginia, software used to be distributed on plastic cartridges that are highly sensitive to any outside forces such as temperature, moisture, magnetism, dirt, and loud noises (possibly, but not proven). Many Apple IIGS systems did not have a hard drive, and relied on these disks for their OS, applications, data storage, as well as their sense of self-worth.

Setting up eXoAppleIIGS is designed to be as simple as possible. Once the collection is downloaded, you will run the *Setup eXoAppleIIGS.bat* file. This file is capable of installing any of the eXo Projects that are released in or after 2022. This setup file will extract all necessary files for the project. It is worth noting that this is a completely portable setup. It can be installed to an external drive, and used on any machine that meets LaunchBox and DOSBox's requirements.

The following files are required by the Setup, and it will refuse to run without them:

```
.content\AppleIIGSmetadata.zip
.content\LaunchBox.zip*
.content\XOAppleIIGSMetadata.zip
.content\AppleIIGS
.exo\util\unzip.exe
.exo\util\utilAppleIIGS
.exo\XoAppleIIGS\*. * (these are the games, without this... goodluck...)
Setup eXoAppleIIGS.bat
```

Your initial question, assuming no other projects are present in the same folder, is whether or not you would like to merge this project with another eXo Project, or install it 'stand alone'. Please see the Merging Projects section for more information on that option.

At this point, the project will be installed and you will be asked a handful of setup questions (Fullscreen vs Window, Desktop Resolution, and Aspect Ratio). These questions will be global settings for all eXo projects which share the same folder (eg: merged projects).

* launchbox.zip is an exception. Setup can continue without it, however you will be warned that the front end will not be available. This creates a 'headless' install, where the games can be run manually but all of the metadata is unused and inaccessible.

You will also be asked if you would like to remove access to 'adult' games from LaunchBox. Selecting **yes** does not remove them from the disk, it simply removes their entry in the front end. Re-running the setup file, and choosing to keep the games will restore access to them. Please note that adult games are defined as those with sexually explicit material. Adult themes such as violence, gore, and bad humor are generally not considered.

Importing into an Existing Setup

eXo Projects can be added to your existing LaunchBox installation if you like. Keep in mind however, if you have platforms with the exact same name as the eXo Project, the newer file will overwrite the older one. For example, this Project is detected by LaunchBox as **Apple IIIGS**. If you already have a platform named that, you would want to rename it if you intend to keep both.

To install to your existing LaunchBox setup, simply place all of the downloaded files in your LaunchBox installation folder, and run the *Setup Apple IIIGS.bat* file.

It will detect that LaunchBox is already installed here, and you will be given several options. To add it to your existing installation, please press 1 to choose
Re-extract eXoAppleIIIGS or Update to a New Version

This will extract the necessary files and install the needed xml files for your LaunchBox installation to use this project.

Please Note:

Storing the game files in a separate folder than LaunchBox is *not* supported due to the relative pathing of the launch files. It can, however, be accomplished using symbolic links. Unfortunately, that is not supported by the installer. It will require some manual setup on your part if you wish to accomplish this. Feel free to login in to our Discord and post in our *#Help Channel* if you need assistance with this.

Merging Projects



Figure 3
Mouse belly

When fondling a **mouse belly** it is imperative that you use slow, methodical movements. Sudden movements may scare the mouse causing the mouse ball to ascend. If your mouse ball ascends, you must wait for it to descend before continuing usage. Failure to do so will cause the mouse belly to drag on the surface, which is not covered by your warranty.

Merging eXo Projects allows multiple eXo Projects to be installed into the same folder. This will enable the ability for LaunchBox to show all of the merged platforms, rather than just one project at a time. Previously, merging was a very manual process. Going forward, the Setup file will recognize eXo Projects, and automatically merge them together.

During the setup process you will be asked if you would like to merge projects. Choosing yes will open a dialog which allows you to point to the project you would like to merge with. Next, you will be given the option to copy the files into the same folder or move them. Copying is preferable when you wish to keep a clean copy of the project files (such as for seeding) while moving the files will help you save space.

The setup process will check your target drive's available space beforehand and let you know if there is a problem.

In the event you have already copied the files from more than one eXo Project into the same folder, the setup process will ask you which one you are trying to setup. At this point, you can follow the instructions for **Importing into an Existing Setup**.

Please note that this process only works with eXo Projects released in 2022 or later. For instructions on manually merging this project with older eXo Projects, please stop by our Discord server and we will be glad to help.

As there are several different versions, there is no singular universal method that can be described here.

Chapter 2

Playing the Games



Figure 4
Disk operating system

Controls

Many Apple II GS games are mouse controlled. For those which rely on the keyboard there is slight variation in the controls based on which of the three emulators is being used.

GS Plus

- F1 or ALT - Command (Open-Apple)
- F2 or WIN - Option (Closed-Apple)
- Shift + F11 - Scanlines Toggle

GSport and MAME

- F1 or L_ALT - Command (Open-Apple)
- F2 or R_ALT - Option (Closed-Apple)
- F3 - ESC

Common (GSPlus & GSport)

- F11 - Fullscreen Toggle
- F12 - Reset (Works in MAME as well)
- Right Click Mouse - Cycle Speed Setting
- Alt + F4 - Close Emulator

A handful of games, and the OS, use a combination to access the control panel to adjust settings. This includes saving and loading, sound options, and more. The original keyboard combination for this is *Ctrl + Open Apple + ESC*.

For GSport and MAME this is done easily via *L_CTRL + L_ALT + F3*.

GSPlus is trickier in that it must use the actual ESC key, which can cause problems with common windows shortcuts. The trick appears to be to press the keys in this order: *SHIFT_ESC + L_CTRL + L_ALT*.

Emulators

eXoAppleIIGS currently uses three emulators to present these software titles in a useable manner. This is due to the variances in how different emulators work along with the various needs of different games & software.

GSport is based on the KEGS emulator. Unfortunately there has not been any progress on this emulator in 5 years.

GSplus is based on a combination of the added GSport features as well as the original KEGS code. While several modern features were added, this emulator has not had any commits to its codebase in 3 years.

Finally, we are also using MAME. Once MAME absorbed MESS (multi emulator super system), it became a viable source for emulating consoles and personal computers.

Please note that while there are global option settings, they only apply to GSplus & MAME. GSport has no ability to have a window resolution greater than the original OS or use command line options to set fullscreen/window modes. Please use F11 to enable fullscreen in GSport, as it will always start within a window.

Once you exit a game, the emulators will drop you back to the OS. You may use ALT+F4 to close the emulator, or if in window mode, simply close it by closing the window. Please note, ALT+F4 does not work in MAME.

Chapter 3

Support

The best place to get help with the project is our Discord Server. We have knowledgeable staff, friendly members, and clean bathrooms.



Figure 5
QR Codes

What are these **strange glyphs**? Unknown in the Apple II GS era, the idea of a camera in your pocket that could scan a glyph and automatically forward you to a dynamic information source full of helpful people and infinite knowledge would have been considered witch craft.

Updater

eXoAppleIIGS comes with a handy updater utility. To check for an update, go to the eXoAppleIIGS entry in LaunchBox (one of the first listed games) and right click, and choose:

Additional App(s) -> Check for Updates

This will check the current version available and compare it to yours. In the event a newer version is available, you will be given the choice to download it. These updates will generally contain bug fixes for current games, however new games may be added via this method as well.

Website

All current projects can be downloaded from the Retro eXo website. Links to our FAQ, community sites, and project information pages can all be found at:

<https://www.retro-exo.com>

Contact

If online communities scare you (hey, you like Apple II stuff, being social may not be your thing), you can always reach eXo directly at

retroexo@gmail.com

Thanks

While this project was built in Python & eXo's spare time, it still took the efforts of many other people to bring this pack to fruition.

The following people all deserve credit for assisting us with this collection (whether they realized it or not)

<https://www.whatisthe2gs.apple2.org.za/>

GS Plus

GS Port

MAME

KEGS

Jason Carr & the LaunchBox Team

The eXo Projects Team

The eXoDOS Discord Server