

OS/2TM

**FEATURES, FUNCTIONS,
and APPLICATIONS**

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Members of the OS/2 Design Team

Standard Edition 1.0

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OS/2

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Preface

THE DECISION TO WRITE this book was an easy one. Since we, the authors, are key members of the OS/2™ design team, we found ourselves with a tremendous amount of knowledge in the depth and breadth of the product. We felt that one way to put this knowledge to good use was to write a book. Unfortunately, that was easier said than done. The amount of information about the product that we have in our heads would fill many volumes. We wanted, however, to write a book that our audience could digest. Most people have real work to do but only a finite amount of time to do it in. The difficult question that we wrestled with was what kind of book we should write. *We wanted to maximize the usefulness of our detailed technical knowledge to best address your needs.* We accomplish this by selectively covering the large amount of information that is generally available on OS/2.

What you have in your hands is the result of our efforts. The book covers what we consider to be the most important aspects of *Operating System/2™: Standard Edition 1.0*. If you are a member of any of the following groups you will find this book very useful:

- Users of DOS on PCs.
- People curious about the applicability of OS/2 to their problems.
- Systems analysts.
- Systems designers.
- Systems planners.
- Application developers.

You do not need to be familiar with the details of IBM Personal Computer DOS (DOS) or Intel® 80286 microprocessors to benefit from this book. We cover background material so you can understand OS/2 and how its power can be applied. In addition, because OS/2 transcends the simple personal computer environment and provides sophisticated large system functions, we explain the operating system concepts used in this book.

This book explains why the capabilities of OS/2 are important to you. It also explains why the problems that OS/2 solves are important to you. We use the capabilities of DOS as a reference point where applicable.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Because of the sheer mass of information and data available on OS/2, we have selectively chosen to describe in this book what we consider to be the most important features of the product. We have also reduced the mass of detail covering each feature to a digestible level. Once you have read this book on the capabilities of OS/2, using the detailed technical references available for the product will be a simple and productive task. We have structured the descriptions of the various OS/2 capabilities into three general levels of detail. These different levels allow you to be flexible in how you navigate through the book.

First, we describe many of the OS/2 capabilities in a generic sense so you can understand the concept, the usefulness of the function provided, and how it can be applied to real problems that you need to solve. We then take you a level deeper into the specifics of a given capability (such as memory management) by describing the corresponding application programming interfaces. At this level, we present the most important details of the interfaces so that you can see how OS/2 achieves the stated capability. This second level of detail is particularly important because it allows you to see how your specific application can be structured to utilize the capabilities of OS/2. We provide a third level of detail for those who want to see how to use the capabilities of OS/2 in actual code. We have included two chapters that demonstrate some of the key capabilities of OS/2 in actual programming examples that can be compiled and run.

By organizing the description of OS/2 into these different levels of detail, we enable you to choose your own path through this book. If you are not interested in programming examples, you can skip them entirely in Chapters 4 and 7. On the other hand, you may prefer to go directly to the memory overcommitment program example in Chapter 4 after reading the introductory discussion of the OS/2 memory capabilities in Chapter 2. After reviewing the programming example, you can then go back to Chapter 2 to read the descriptions of the OS/2 memory programming interfaces that interest you. Or, you may want to read this book from front to back to get the broadest description of OS/2 with the most detail. We have specifically structured this book to allow you to plot your own course through it, depending upon the amount of detail and the order of presentation you prefer.

Contents

Preface	xix
How to Read This Book	xx
Introduction: A Historical Perspective	1
The Early to Mid 70s	1
The Mid to Late 70s	2
The Late 70s to Mid 80s	3
The IBM Personal Computer and DOS	4
1. The OS/2 Perspective	5
Why OS/2?	5
Advancing Workstation Hardware Technologies and Capabilities	5
<i>IBM Hardware Systems Supported by OS/2</i>	7
New Systems Environments	8
Users Maturing in Their Use of Personal Computers	9
The Power of OS/2	10
The DOS Execution Environment and the OS/2 Execution Environment	10
<i>Some DOS Application Restrictions and Considerations</i>	12
Large Real Memory and Virtual Memory	13
Memory Overcommit	14
Multiple Applications	15
Multitasking	16

Interprocess Communications	17
Dynamic Linked Call/Return Interface. High Level Language Support.	17
File System Compatibility with DOS	20
Interrupt-Driven Device Management	20
Video, Keyboard, and Mouse Subsystems	21
National Language Support and Message Handling Facilities	21
Migration of Applications from DOS to OS/2	23
OS/2 Application Programming Interface Characteristics	24
80286 Microprocessor Overview	24
The Personal Computer System	25
<i>System Bus</i>	25
<i>System Memory</i>	26
<i>System Devices</i>	27
<i>Direct Memory Access (DMA)</i>	27
<i>Interrupts</i>	28
<i>Numeric Coprocessor</i>	29
<i>The Microprocessor</i>	29
80286 State Description and Operation	30
80286 Addressing—Real Mode versus Protect Mode	32
<i>Physical Address Generation in Real Mode</i>	32
<i>Physical Address Generation in Protect Mode</i>	34
Protection and Privilege	37
Interrupt Handling	39
Summary	41
<hr/>	
2. OS/2 Memory Capabilities	43
<hr/>	
Major Benefits	44
Memory Overcommitment	45
Memory Protection	46
System Memory Characteristics	46
Segment Preload versus Load on Demand	47
User Settable Characteristics	47
Module Definition File Segment Characteristics	48
Performance and System Considerations	48
Memory Programming Interfaces	49
Capabilities of the Memory Programming Interfaces	49
Managing Memory Segments	50

Sharing Memory Segments	52
Name-Shared Segments	52
Managing Huge Memory Segments	53
Memory Suballocation Package	54
Device Related Memory Management Capabilities	55
Memory Mapped I/O Devices	55
DMA Devices	55

3. Multitasking and Multiple Applications **57**

Multiple Applications	59
Multiple Sessions—A User's Perspective	60
Session Programming Interfaces	61
Processes and Threads	62
Process Programming Interfaces	65
Thread Programming Interfaces	67
Priority Programming Interfaces	68
Interprocess Communications	70
Pipes	70
Queues	71
Signals	74
Semaphores	75
<i>System Semaphore Interfaces</i>	76
<i>Semaphore Ownership Interfaces</i>	77
<i>Semaphore Signalling Interfaces</i>	78
Timer Services	79
Global and Local Infoseg	81

4. Illustrating Concepts in Programming Examples **83**

C Programming Conventions and Syntax Review	84
Compiling	84
Linking	85
Compiling and Linking in One Step	86
Reading an OS/2 Program Written in C	87
I/O with Video and Keyboard	89
Describing the Sample Program	89
OS/2 Function Calls	91

<i>VioWrtTTY</i>	91
<i>KbdStringIn</i>	91
<i>DosExit</i>	92
Completing the Description of the Sample Program	92
Multitasking—One Process with Two Threads	93
OS/2 Function Calls	95
<i>DosSemSet</i>	95
<i>DosSemClear</i>	96
<i>DosSemRequest</i>	96
<i>DosCreateThread</i>	97
<i>KbdCharIn</i>	97
Description of the Multiple Threads Sample Program	98
Multitasking—Two Processes with Multiple Threads	98
OS/2 Function Calls	100
<i>VioScrollUp</i>	100
<i>VioWrtCharStr</i> and <i>VioWrtCharStrAtt</i>	102
<i>VioSetCurPos</i>	104
<i>DosMakePipe</i>	105
<i>DosWrite</i>	107
<i>DosRead</i>	110
<i>DosExecPgm</i>	110
<i>DosSleep</i>	112
Description of the Multiple Process Sample Program	112
Memory Overcommitment	114
OS/2 Function Calls	115
<i>DosAllocSeg</i>	115
Description of the Memory Overcommitment Sample Program	116
<hr/>	
5. Application Input/Output Capabilities	119
<hr/>	
File System I/O	121
File Devices	122
Character Devices	126
Standard Devices	129
Pipe Devices	130
Logical Disk/Diskette Devices	130
General-Purpose Interfaces	131
File-Based Interfaces	134

<i>File Name-Based Interfaces</i>	135
<i>File Handle-Based Interfaces</i>	136
Directory-Based Interfaces	137
File Device Interfaces	138
Character Device I/O Subsystems	139
VIO: Video I/O	139
<i>VIO Character I/O</i>	141
<i>VIO Cursor Control</i>	142
<i>VIO Scroll Management</i>	142
<i>VIO Video Device Control</i>	143
<i>VIO Pop-up Management</i>	144
<i>VIO Logical Video Buffer Management</i>	145
<i>VIO Physical Video Buffer Management</i>	145
<i>VIO Function Replacement</i>	148
KBD: Keyboard I/O	148
<i>KBD Character I/O</i>	150
<i>KBD Device Control</i>	151
<i>KBD Logical Keyboard Management</i>	152
<i>KBD Function Replacement</i>	153
MOU: Mouse I/O	153
<i>MOU Data I/O</i>	156
<i>MOU Cursor Control</i>	156
<i>MOU Device Control</i>	157
<i>MOU Function Replacement</i>	159
I/O Control (IOctl) Capabilities	159
Use of Character Device Monitors	161
Direct I/O to Hardware	164
<hr/>	
6. Interrupt-Driven Device Management	167
<hr/>	
The Role of Device Drivers	169
Device Drivers and Application I/O	171
Block Device Commands	175
Character Device Commands	178
System Services for Device Drivers	180
Process Management	181
Semaphore Management	182
Request Queue Management	183

Character Queue Management	183
Memory Management	184
Interrupt Management	185
Timer Services	185
Character Monitor Management	186
Advanced BIOS Management	186
Device Driver Components and Their Contexts	186
The Strategy Routine	186
The Hardware Interrupt Handler	188
The Timer Handler	190
The Software Interrupt Handler	192
Bimodal Considerations	194
Operational Considerations	195
Memory Addressability	195
Synchronization	196
Nesting of Interrupts	198
System Performance	199
Initialization of OS/2 Device Drivers	200
Advanced BIOS and Interrupt Sharing	201
Advanced BIOS	201
Hardware Interrupt Sharing	205
Creating an OS/2 Device Driver	207
Standard Devices on OS/2	211
Clock	212
Disk/Diskette	212
Screen	212
Keyboard	213
Printer	213
Mouse	213
Pointer Draw	213
Asynchronous Communications	214
Virtual Disk	214
External Disk	214
ANSI	214
EGA	215
OS/2 Support of DOS Device Drivers	215

7. Advanced Programming Concepts	217
Linking an Application	217
Preload Segments	219
Load on Demand Segments	219
Dynamic Linking	220
Load Time Dynamic Linking	220
Run Time Dynamic Linking	221
Building a Dynamic Link Library	222
<i>Import Librarian</i>	224
Module Definition File Statements	226
Run Time Dynamic Linking Programming Example	228
Allowing the User to Select the Library	229
<i>VioGetCurType and VioSetCurType</i>	231
<i>DosBeep</i>	232
<i>Description of SelectLibrary</i>	233
A New Process 2	233
<i>DosLoadModule</i>	236
<i>DosGetProcAddress</i>	238
<i>DosFreeModule</i>	239
<i>Description of Process 2</i>	239
The Dynamic Link Library	240
8. Supporting the International Environment	245
OS/2 Language Support	245
Message Facilities	246
Message Facility Summary	250
Configuring the System for Different Countries	251
Country-Dependent Information	251
Code Page Switching	252
Double Byte Character Set (DBCS) Enabling	253
OS/2 NLS Facilities	253
<i>CONFIG.SYS NLS Commands</i>	254
<i>User NLS Commands</i>	254
<i>Dynamic Link NLS API</i>	254

9. Beyond System Defaults: A User's Perspective	257
Configuration Options	259
Interactive Initialization	259
File System Operations	260
Device Support	261
Country Support	261
Protection Scope	262
OS/2 Application Environment	262
Multitasking	263
Memory Management	265
The DOS Environment	265
Automatic Execution	266
Program Selection	267
Batch Files and Batch Language	267
10. Where to Go from Here	269
The Presentation Manager	270
The Database Manager	270
The Communications Manager	271
The Stage Is Set	271
Index	273