

Fyler

File manager for media and metadata

User Guide

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Introduction

We opted to develop an alternative to Windows File Explorer due to the growing demand among both professional and personal users for enhanced efficiency in file management and folder navigation. Users working with media files anticipate features such as the ability to preview file contents (including thumbnails and waveforms) and access embedded metadata, alongside support for various stream formats. Additionally, functionalities like displaying folder sizes, utilizing vector graphics icons are lacking in File Explorer.

Fyler features:

- All metadata are extracted from your audio, MIDI, video and image files. Display, filter, sort by metadata.
- Add custom tags to files, like rating or comments.
- File contents preview: MIDI files, audio waveforms and image thumbnails can be displayed with zooming. One-click playback of MIDI and audio files. Drag any MIDI tracks directly to your DAW.
- Tabbed folder view with tab presets lets you view your project at a glance.
- Very fast folder size calculation.
- Advanced visualization for sizes, dates, or any user tags.
- Assign verbs and vector graphics icon to any file or file type. Set up your own vector icon with overlay. All colors are customizable.
- Batch rename multiple files by inserting metadata or a counter in the filename.
- Quick lookup, selection, filtering of the desired files or file masks by typing. Enable advanced filtering.
- Display formatted metadata.
- Easily access Windows special folders, like AppData and dozens of others.

Fyler is available for Windows only.

Getting started

System requirements

- Supported operating systems: Windows Vista/7/8/10 (32-bit or 64-bit)
- Intel/AMD processor 1.4 GHz minimum

Installation

The installation should be guided and straight-forward. You only have to follow the steps described in the installation program.

The standalone application is installed in

C:\Program Files\Fyler

On 32-bit Windows the 32-bit executable is installed, on 64-bit Windows the 64-bit executable is installed.

Note: FFmpeg executable and its libraries are installed into the **Fyler\bin** directory. It is used only for reading metadata and thumbnail images for video files, as well as for some example verbs for file conversion.

Settings, file type definitions, and other data are installed in your user documents folder:

C:\Users\<username>\Documents\Fyler

Portable use

Portable use is possible by either copying **Documents/Fyler** to the executable folder, or by placing a file called **resources.txt** in the executable folder, that contains a folder name. The folder name should not include "**Fyler**", it is the path where the "**Fyler**" folder can be found.

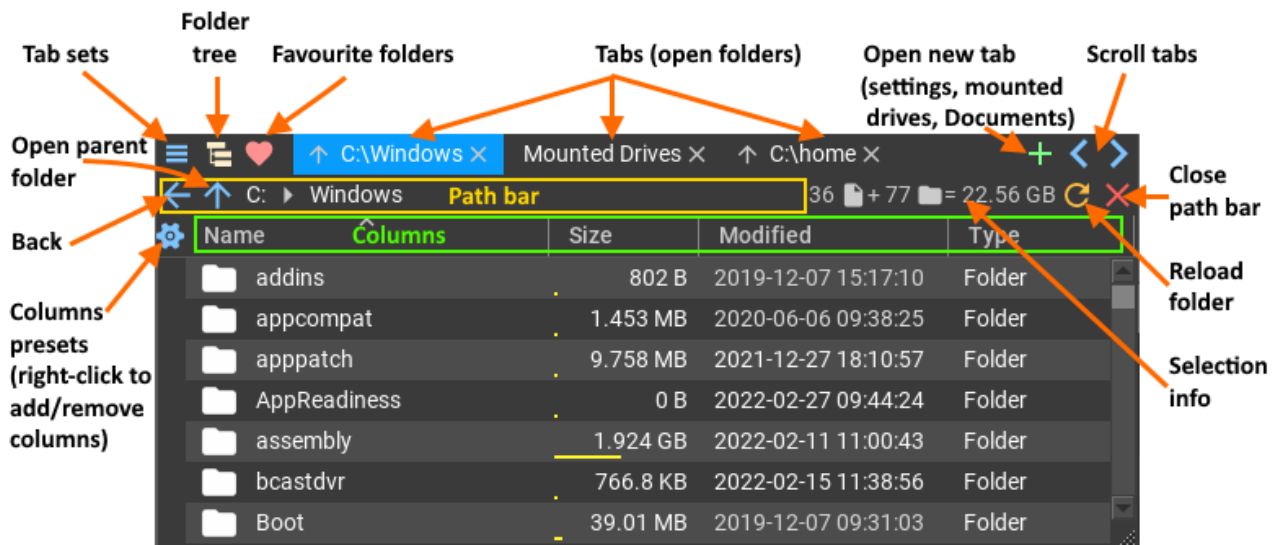
Additional setup

If you intend to play back MIDI files, you need to set a General MIDI soundfont in the settings (Preferences tab). Google for “GM soundfont” if you have no such file available. For RapidComposer users this is automatically filled.

For audio and MIDI playback an audio device must be selected in the settings (Audio tab). The audio engine is started only when you play the first audio or MIDI file.

Overview

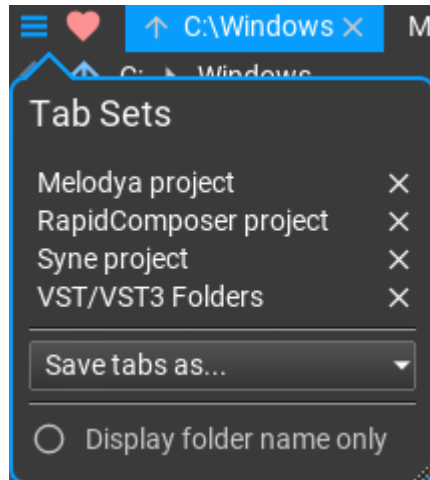
User interface



The user interface consists of a tab bar at the top, the path selector (or path bar) below the tab bar, and the file list with columns as the main workspace.

Tab sets

You can save multiple open tabs as a preset, called tab sets. This is useful for recalling multiple open folders later, e.g. project folders or VST/VST3 plug-in folders.



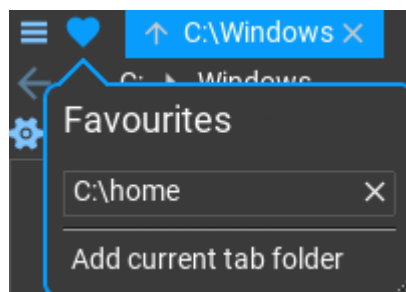
You can save the current tabs by clicking on the “Save tabs as...” menu.

Sometimes it is useful to display the folder names instead of the full path in the tabs. To achieve that, tick “Display folder name only”.

The folder tree 📁

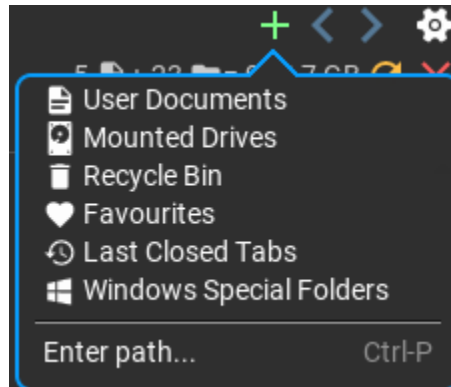
The folder tree displays collapsible folders on a drive, on the left side of the window. It is useful for quick navigation. Dragging files on the folders will expand or collapse the folders as you hover the mouse over them. Depending on a setting, either single-click or double-click sets the current folder in the opened tab. Any folder can be easily located in the tree by clicking “Locate in folder tree” in the context menu. Folders can be opened in a new tab or new window in the folder tree context menu.

Favourite folders ❤️



Add a folder to the 'favourites' menu either by highlighting the tab and clicking on "Add current tab folder" in the menu, or in the "Get info" window for that folder.

Add tab



Click to open a new tab:

- **User Documents:** the user Documents folder, typically
C:\Users\<username>\Documents
- **Mounted drives:** all physical and network drives mounted
- **Recycle bin:** the recycle bin folder with all deleted but recoverable files and folders
- **Favourites:** favourite folders. The same folder list is available in the 'favourites' menu
- **Last closed tabs:** the tabs that have been closed recently.
You can set the number of folders stored under

Settings /

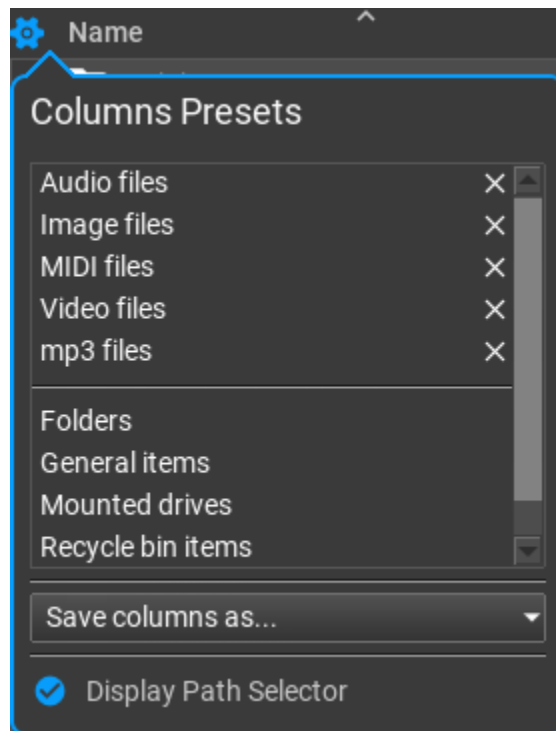
Preferences tab.

- **Windows Special Folders:** dozens of special folders in Windows, like AppData, Downloads, Desktop, Common Files, etc
- **Enter path:** press **Ctrl-P** anywhere to type a pathname to open in a new tab

Columns presets

Left-click will display the columns presets. There are column headers optimized for audio, video, image, MIDI, mp3 files but you can save any column layout here.

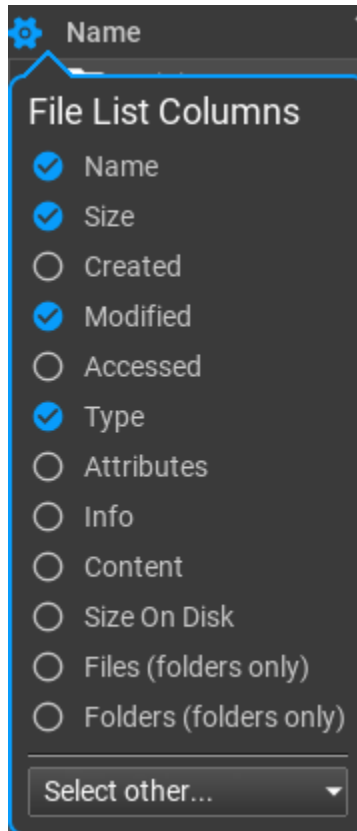
Note: “General items” is used when a folder is opened, so you need to overwrite that to change the default folder view.



Save a new columns preset (or overwrite an existing one) by clicking on “Save columns as...”.

The path selector can be displayed here if it was hidden (“Display path selector”).

Right-clicking on  will let you select/deselect individual columns.



Click on “Select other...” to add metadata or user tag as a column, like Title, Album, Artist, Duration, and others.

Working with files and folders

Quick selection and filtering

Type filename: jump to the file beginning with the typed characters

Left-shift + type: select files with the typed characters. File masks can be used e.g. for selecting all WAV files, type "*.wav". The left Shift must be held only at the first typed character.

Right-shift + type: display files with the typed characters. File masks can be used e.g. for displaying all WAV files, type "*.wav". The right Shift must be held only at the first typed character.

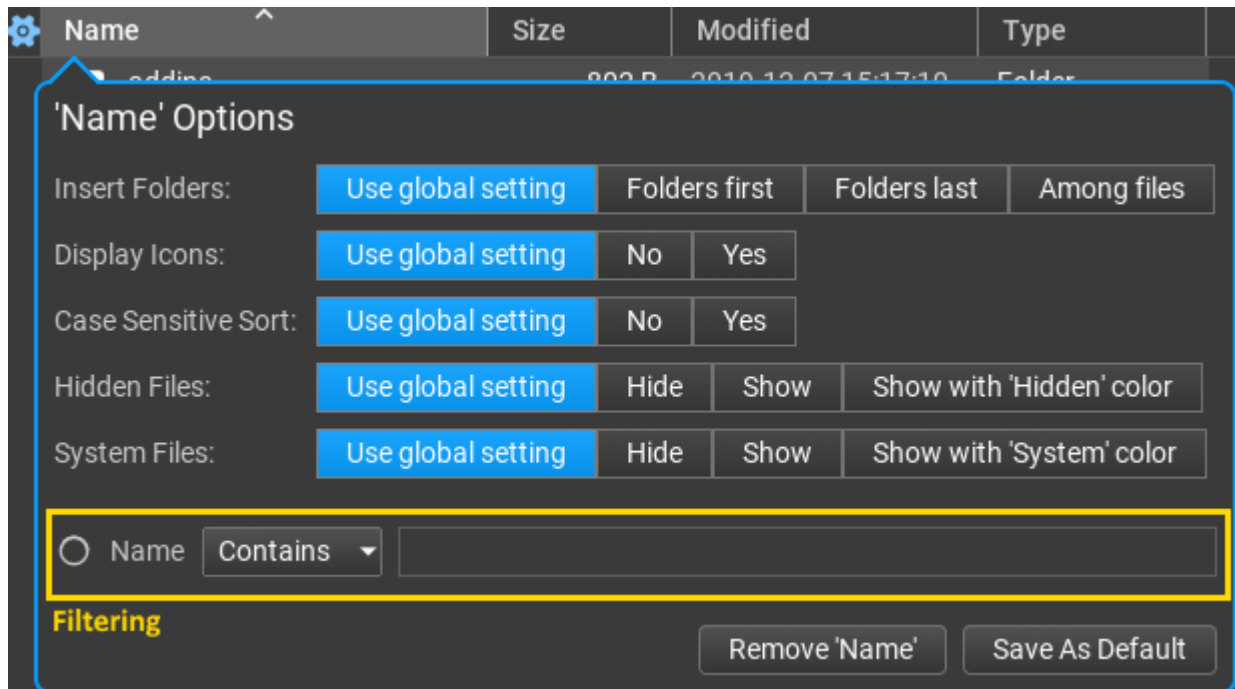
Columns and filtering

Click on column head: sort in ascending/descending order

Alt-click: no sorting

Ctrl-click: enable/disable filtering

Right-click: open column options. E.g. options for **Name**:



The bottom part beginning with the checkbox has the “filtering” conditions. Displaying files within a size or date range is possible. Each column has its own filtering that can be made active independently.

Dragging files and folders

You can drag and drop files just like in Windows Explorer, except that you can drag the files over another tab, ‘open parent folder’ buttons, or on menus where dragging the files over menu items will open them. As an example you can drag files over the “tab sets” menu or the “add tab” menu.

Simply dragging files will move them, if you hold Ctrl, the files will be copied, holding Ctrl+Shift will create a link to the files, just like in Windows Explorer.

Note: to create symbolic links, **Fyler** must be started with Administrator privileges. Without this Windows does not allow creation of symbolic links!

Cut/copy/paste files and folders

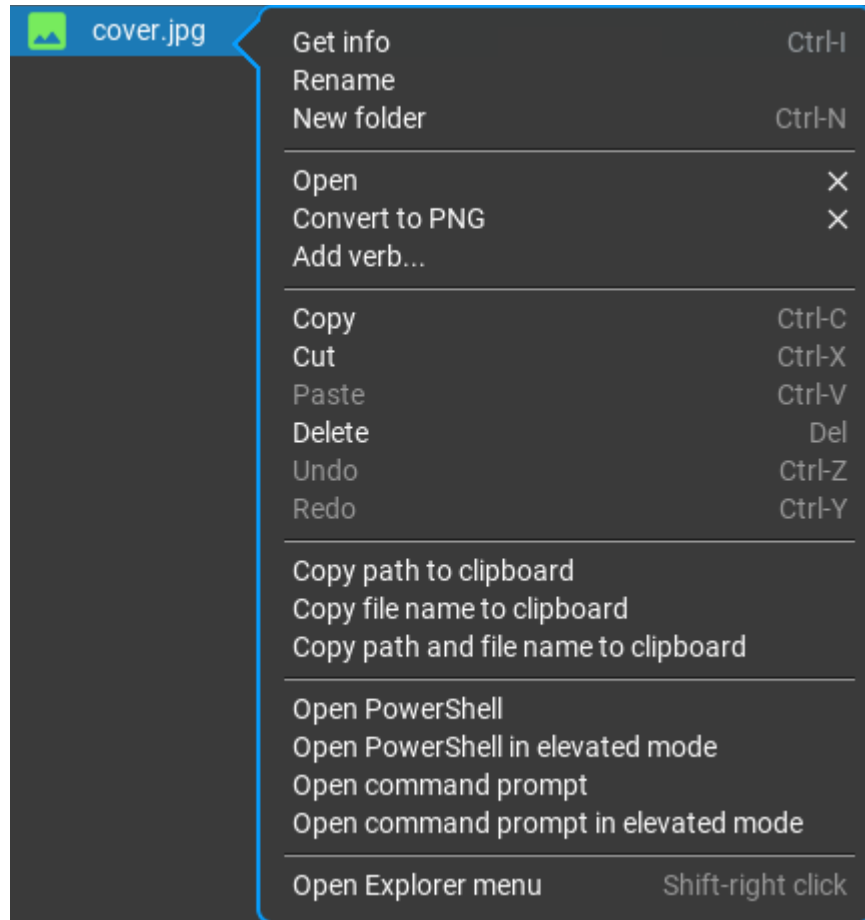
The usual keyboard shortcuts work for copying files to the clipboard (**Ctrl-C**), cutting files (**Ctrl-X**) and pasting files from the clipboard (**Ctrl-V**)

Using undo and redo

Any file operations can be undone! Moving, copying, deleting (moving to trash), renaming, pasting files can be undone by pressing **Ctrl-Z**. The shortcut for “redo” is **Ctrl-Y**.

The context menu

Right-clicking on selected files/folders will open the context menu. The contents of this menu can be configured in the settings. If you don't often need placing the file name or path to the clipboard, or opening the Powershell or command prompt, you can remove them from the menu. Displaying “Add verb...” and “Open Explorer menu” is also optional.



Besides the usual “Get info”, “Rename” and “New folder” menu items, all the verbs are displayed here. You can add a new verb to the file type, edit an existing verb by right-clicking on it, or removing a verb entirely by clicking on the small cross at the right side of the items.

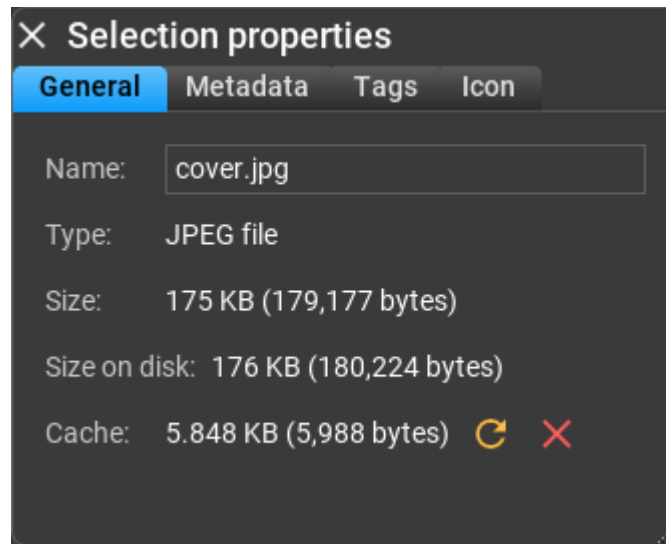
File information


Clicking on “Get info” in the context menu will display information about the selected file(s).


Note: depending on your preferences, either a single “Get info” window is opened that is updated automatically for selected files, or separate “Get info” windows are opened for each click on “Get info”.

The “Get info” window usually consists of 4 tabs: **General**, **Metadata**, **Tags**, **Icon**.

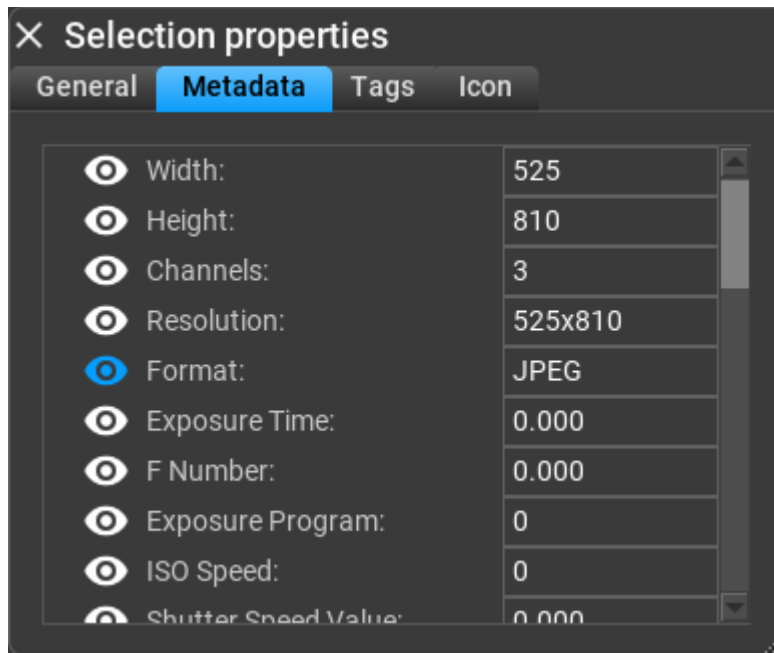
The **General** tab displays file name and type, file sizes and cache usage for the file.



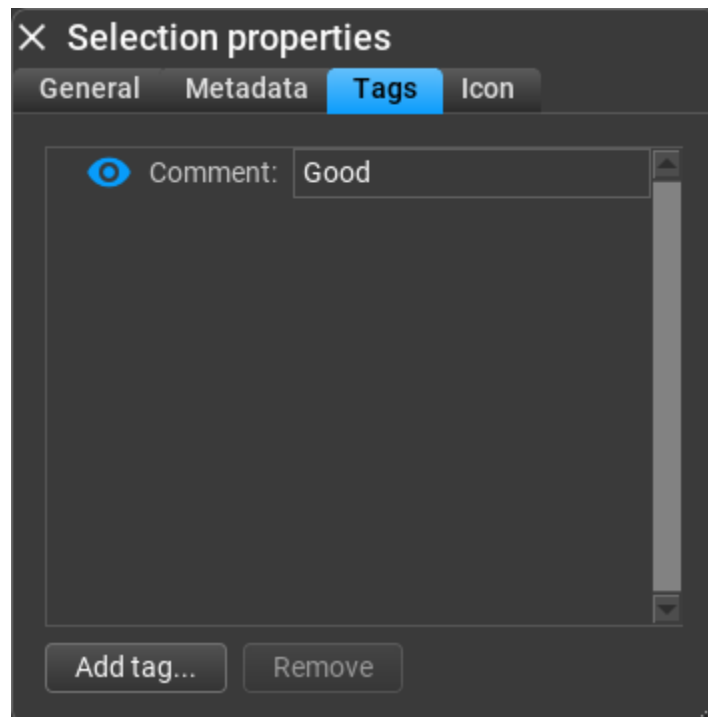
: Refresh the cache which will re-scan the file for metadata and content. Your custom tags are not lost.

: Delete the cached data. This will also re-scan the file for metadata and content but your custom tags are lost.

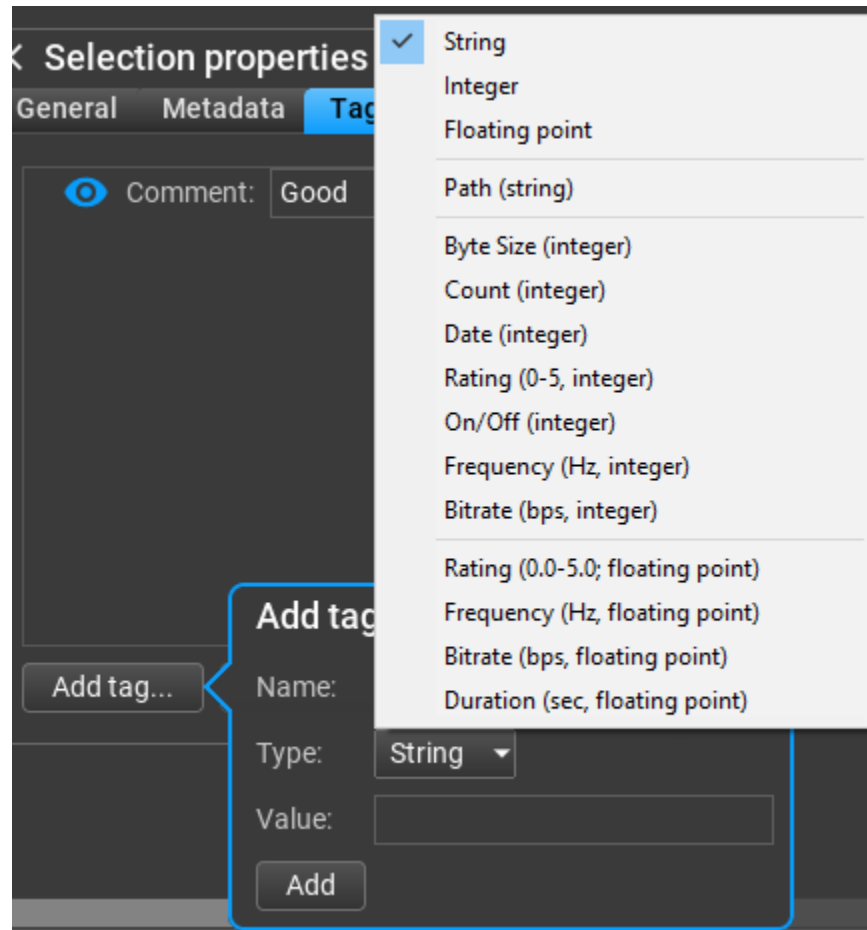
The **Metadata** tab will list all metadata found in the file. Display any of the data in the list by highlighting the ‘eye’ icon. Note: the metadata usually cannot be edited, except for mp3 files for which a metadata writer is included.



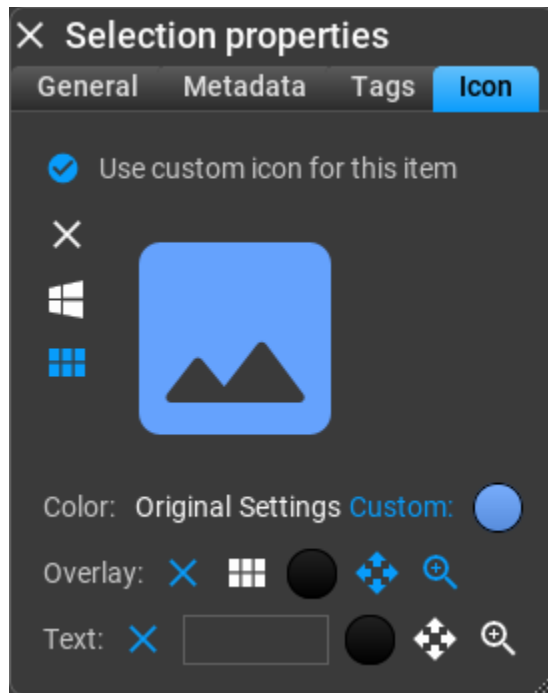
The **Tags** tab allows you to add your custom tags, like comment, rating, or any other string or 64-bit integer or 64-bit floating point data to files:



Click on “Add tag...” to add a custom tag to the file. You need to fill Name, Type and Value. There are many specific types are supported, each with its own settings, filter and display options:

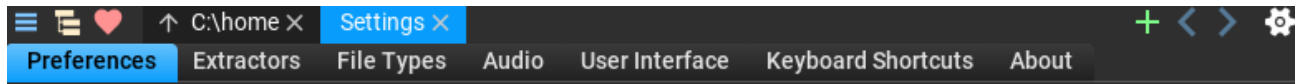


Finally the **Icon** tab lets you define a custom icon for any single file or folder!



Settings

Accessing the program global settings is possible by clicking on the small gear button (⚙️) in the top right corner:



Preferences

Explanations for the various settings on this page:

Caching

- **Cache location:** Central cache folder (by default User Documents\Fyler\FolderCache). Changing the path does not move existing cache files to the new folder! You must delete the old files manually or copy them into the new location. It is best to place the cache on a fast drive.

File List Global Settings

These are the default options for the file list. Most of the options can be overridden locally when you open a folder, by right clicking on the column headers (e.g. Name, Size, etc)

- **Use SI for sizes:** Display the file sizes using the standardized way: when SI is used, 1 Kilobytes is calculated as 1000 bytes, otherwise 1KB=1024 bytes.
- **Read folder sizes:** As a great feature, folder sizes are displayed in **Fyler** for local drives. This can be disabled, e.g. when using very slow hard drives.
- **Sort folders among files:** Folders can be sorted before, after or between files
- **Sort untagged files:** Untagged files are files without a tag to display, e.g. when rating is displayed but not all files actually have a Rating tag (e.g. unrated).

- **Case sensitive sort:** File names are not case sensitive in Windows but sorting can be
- **Display icons:** Icons are typically displayed with 'name' but you can omit them
- **Hidden files:** Select if you want to display hidden files by default. You can use a special 'hidden file' color, found in the User Interface settings
- **System files:** Select if you want to display system files by default. You can use a special 'system file' color, found in the User Interface settings
- **Date format:** Select date format from various options
- **Size format:** Select size format
- **Use commas for thousands:** Select if you want to display commas in the sizes, e.g. 1,000,000 for one million.
- **Display 'B' for bytes:** Select if you want to display a 'B' when the size is in bytes
- **Past closed tabs stored:** Number of folders stored in the "Recently closed tabs" list

User Interface

- **Maximum tab width:** Limit the tab width in pixels
- **Drag over folders wait time:** Set the time to wait for before entering a folder during dragging files.
- **Drag over menus wait time:** Set the time to wait for before entering a menu during dragging files.
- **Display 'Add verb' menu item:** It is possible to display or hide 'Add verb' in the file context menus
- **Display 'Copy path/filename to clipboard' menu items:** It is possible to display or hide 'Copy path', 'Copy file name', etc in the file context menus.
- **Display 'Open Powershell/command prompt' menu item:** It is possible to display or hide 'Open Powershell', 'Open command prompt', etc in the file context menus.
- **Display 'Open Explorer menu' menu item:** It is possible to display or hide 'Open Explorer menu' in the file context menus.

- **Vertical zoom all items equally:** When displaying file contents (images, waveforms, etc) it is possible to make all items the same height when zooming even files without zoomable content.
- **'Get Info' window:** Decide if you want to open a 'Get info' window for each file, or use a single window that is updated when files are selected.
- **'Get Info' window always on top:** You can keep the 'Get info' window on top of all other windows (always visible)
- **In folder tree: change tab folder:** Either a single or double-click changes the current tab folder (or none).
- **Use color icons:** Decide if you prefer to use color icons
- **Content font size:** Set the font size when displaying text content. This is typically the smallest readable font size. Currently opened folders do not reflect the font size change immediately, only when they are opened next time.
- **Show popup help:** You can set the delay before the pop-up help appears or disable it entirely

Helpers (optional)

- **GM soundfont for MIDI playback:** When you want to play back MIDI files, you must supply a General MIDI soundfont. It is not included in the installer but several GM soundfonts can be download from the net.
- **Soundfont gain:** The soundfont playback volume. It is a multiplier, not specified in decibels.
- **FFmpeg location:** FFmpeg is used by the video extractor to read a thumbnail image from video files, and by the video metadata extractor to read video metadata. It is included in the program folder during installation but any ffmpeg folder can be used (ffmpeg.exe and ffprobe.exe is required by the video extractors. ffplay.exe is not required, but used in some example verbs.)

Extractors

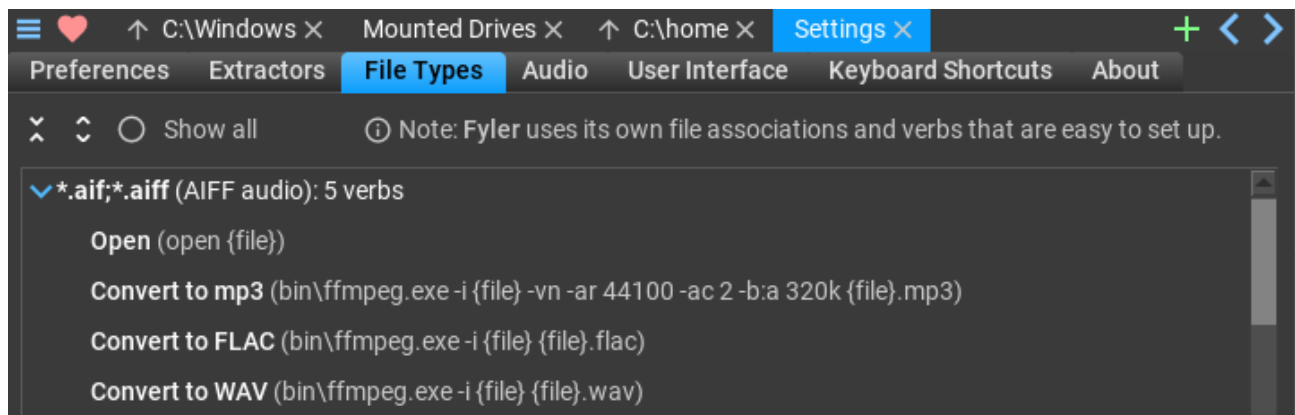
One of the unique features in **Fyler** is the ability to read metadata and cache file contents. The built-in file metadata and content extractors do exactly that. There are a small number of settings for each extractor, like

thumbnail size for images and video, or number of audio frames to cache. In a next version a plug-in API will be provided to allow development of new metadata and content extractors.

File Types

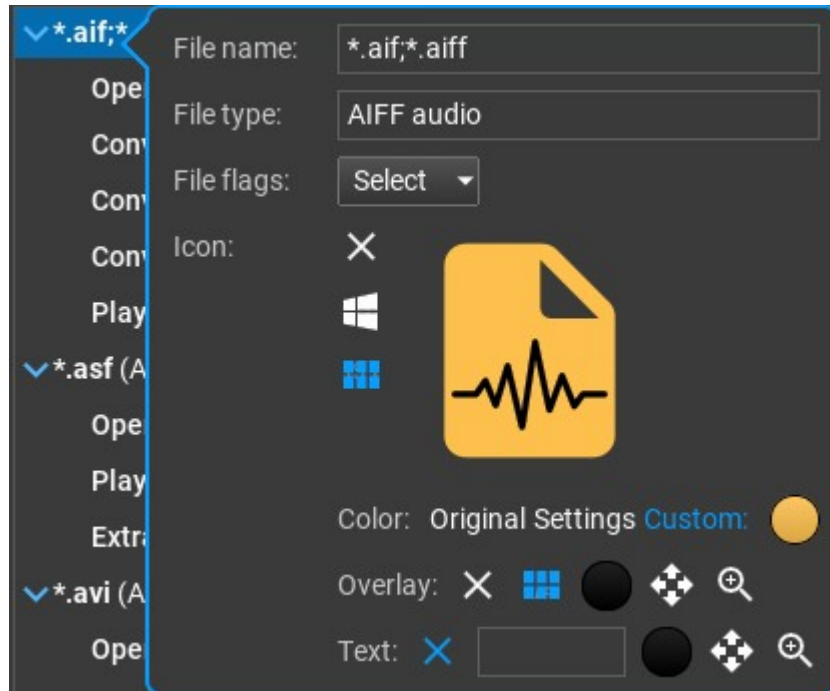
You'll find the list of file types and verbs associated with file types here. You may add/remove file types and verbs here, edit vector graphics icons for the file types. It is possible to export and import file types as a text file.

Note: Fyler uses its own file types and verbs, not the ones in the Windows registry.



Editing a file type

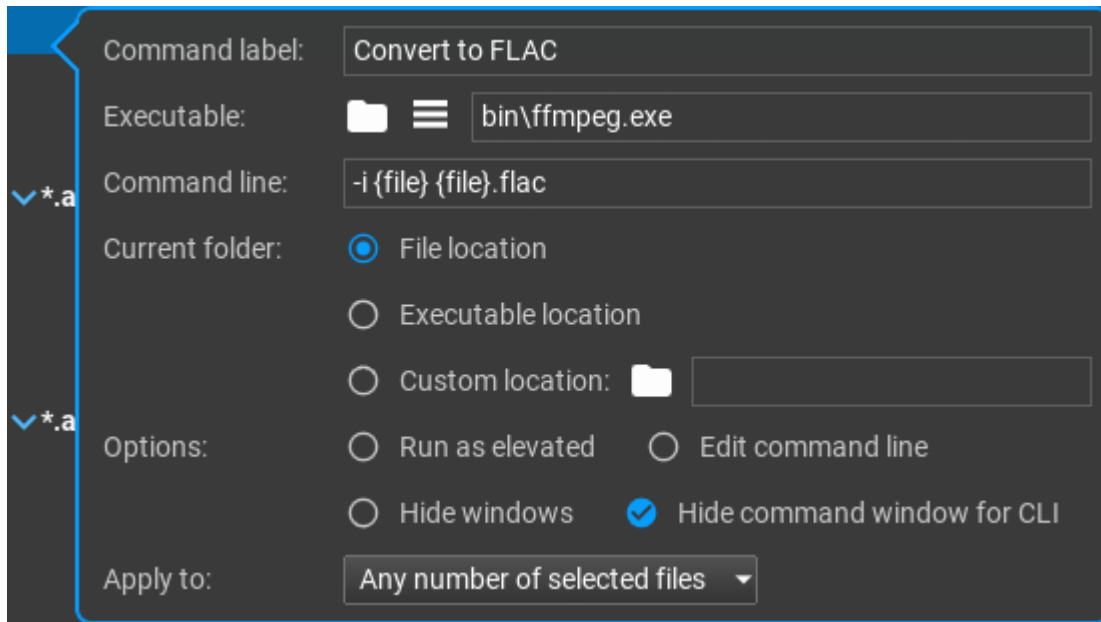
Right-click or double-click on a file type, e.g. on AIFF:



- **File name:** A list of file masks, separated by semicolons, e.g. “*.aif;*.aiff”. Not just file masks, but also a filename or full path can be entered here. E.g. when typing “readme.1st” the file type and its verbs will be used for all “readme.1st” files in all folders. Using full path name allows you to add verbs to a single file in the file system.
- **File type:** Textual description of the file type.
- **File flags:** It is possible to define file types for certain file flags, e.g. for folders or when the archive or read-only flags are set.
- **Icon:** Create a vector graphics (SVG) icon for the file type. (You can assign a custom icon for any single file, in the Get Info window.)
 - Use a generic SVG ‘file’ icon
 - Use the Windows file icon (raster graphics)
 - Use an SVG icon (selected from the folder Documents/Fyler/SVG)
When using an SVG icon, another SVG icon of any size, position and color can be overlaid (selected from the folder Documents/Fyler/SVGOverlay), as well as an optional text overlay can be used (also any color, size and position)

Editing a verb

Right-click or double-click on a verb, e.g. on “Convert to FLAC”:



- **Command label:** The label displayed in the file context menu, verb description
- **Executable:** Textual description of the file type.
- **Command line:** command line to pass to the executable, or a windows verb (open, print, edit, etc). If you use **{file}**, the executable is run once for each selected file, when using **{files}** the executable is run once with the list of files, e.g. “c:\path\to\file1” “c:\path\to\file2”.
It is possible to insert **{file}** more than once in the command line, as on the screenshot above.

When processing a single file (**{file}**), there are other tags you can use:

{filenoext}: the file name with full path but without file extension

{filepath}: the path of the filename

{filename}: the file name without the path

{filenamenoext}: the file name without path and extension

- **Current folder:** The 'current' folder used by the executable
 - **File location:** the current folder is set to where the file is (or files are) located
 - **Executable location:** the current folder is set to where the executable is located
 - **Custom location:** specify current folder
- **Options:** Additional options
 - **Run as elevated:** run the executable with administrator privileges
 - **Edit command line:** you have a chance to edit the command line before executing the executable
 - **Hide windows:** run the application with closed window
 - **Hide command window for CLI:** for command line programs the command window can be hidden
- **Apply to:** the verb is enabled for a certain number of selected files: exactly 1, 2, 3, at least 1,2,3 or any number of selected files

Audio

Note: Setting up audio is required only when you use audio or MIDI playback built into Fyler!

The audio engine is started automatically when you first play an audio or MIDI file. It may take 1-2 seconds to start the audio engine.

You can set the audio API, device, channels, sampling rate, and preferred buffer size. Not all settings are available for all API/device combinations. Check if audio works by clicking on the "Test Audio" button.

Note: *it is recommended to use a low latency driver, like ASIO*

User Interface

Fyler has a very flexible user interface: you can change colors, adjust font sizes, button shapes, shading and import/export UI themes.

Keyboard shortcuts

Navigating with keyboard shortcuts is important, so most tasks are available as a shortcut. At the moment keyboard shortcuts cannot be redefined.

About

Version and build date is displayed on this page. You can check for updates or send bug reports.

Checking for updates

Click on “Check For Updates”. If there is an update available, the program offers downloading it. **Fyler** does not start installation, and does not install anything automatically, you need to start the installer manually.

Reporting bugs

Pressing the “Send Bug Report” button opens the standard “mailto:” URL handler on your computer. In some cases this is not configured (e.g. when using a web mail). In this case please send us your questions, suggestions and bug reports to [info at musicdevelopments dot com](mailto:info@musicdevelopments.com) with as much information as possible: OS version, **Fyler** version, the steps required to reproduce the issue.

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