

What is Abandonware

Abandonware refers to **software**, primarily **video games**, that have been abandoned by their original developers and are no longer actively supported or sold. This means they are typically not available for purchase through conventional means and may be distributed for free on warez websites.

The copyright for abandonware has not lapsed, the copyright holder may not be enforcing their rights, leading to a lack of official support or update.

Classic DOS and Windows GUI Applications

Application	Type	Last Major Era
Lotus Approach	Database	Windows 95/98
Lotus 1-2-3	Spreadsheet	DOS / Windows
WordPerfect	Office	DOS / Windows
WordStar	Office	DOS
FoxPro	Database	DOS / Windows
dBASE IV	Database	DOS
Q&A	Database	DOS
Alpha Four	Database	DOS
Microsoft Works	Office	Windows
Norton Commander for Windows	Utility	Windows 3.x
Visual Basic 3.0	Development	Windows 3.x

DOS-Based Office Software Still Worth Trying

Word Processing

- WordPerfect 5.1
- WordPerfect 6.2
- WordStar 4.0
- Microsoft Word for DOS

Spreadsheets

- Lotus 1-2-3
- Microsoft Multiplan

Databases

- Lotus Approach
- FoxBASE
- FoxPro
- dBASE IV

These titles are among the most commonly preserved legacy business applications.

Applications Still Used by Enthusiasts

Users in software communities still mention:

- Picasa
- Winamp
- NoteTab Pro
- Dexpot

These are discontinued or lightly maintained but remain functional on many modern systems.

Safe Sources for Vintage Software

WinWorldPC — Large archive of vintage operating systems and applications.

Vetusware — Extensive collection of DOS, Windows, and database software.

OldVersion.com — Older versions of Windows applications.

FreeDOS Project — Free DOS-compatible operating system for running legacy software.

a curated list of 25–50 programs that still run well under FreeDOS or DOSBox.

Here's a curated list of **40 classic DOS applications that still run well in DOSBox, DOSBox-X, PCem, 86Box, or FreeDOS**. Most can be found on preservation sites such as WinWorldPC and Vetusware. Many remain surprisingly useful today for writing, spreadsheets, databases, programming, and personal information management. (winworldpc.net)

Word Processors

WordPerfect 5.1
WordPerfect 6.2
WordStar 4.0
WordStar 7.0
Microsoft Word 5.5 for DOS
Microsoft Word 6.0 for DOS
Sprint
XyWrite III Plus
PC-Write
Nota Bene

Spreadsheets

Lotus 1-2-3 Release 2.4
Lotus 1-2-3 Release 3.4
Quattro Pro 4.0
Quattro Pro 5.0

Microsoft Excel 2.1 for DOS
Microsoft Multiplan
VP-Planner
Twin

Database Systems

dBASE III Plus
dBASE IV
FoxBASE+
FoxPro 2.5
Clipper 5.2
Paradox 4.5
Q&A Database
DataEase
Alpha Four

Personal Information Managers

Lotus Organizer

SideKick Plus
InfoSelect
GrandView
Tornado Notes

Programming Tools

Turbo Pascal 7.0
Turbo C++ 3.1
QuickBASIC 4.5
PowerBASIC
Microsoft C 6.0
GW-BASIC

Communications & Utilities

Norton Commander
Telix

Word Processors

WordPerfect was the dominant DOS word processor for many years, while WordStar and XyWrite were favorites among writers. (winworldpc.net)

Spreadsheets

Lotus 1-2-3 was the spreadsheet that defined business computing during the 1980s. Later, Quattro Pro became a strong competitor. (winworldpc.net)

Database Systems

FoxPro became popular because it offered dBASE compatibility with significantly better performance. (appserv.winworldpc.com)

Personal Information Managers

These programs were the productivity apps of their day—combining notes, contacts, calendars, and task management before smartphones existed.

Programming Tools

Many hobbyists still use Turbo Pascal and QuickBASIC today because they start instantly and run well inside DOSBox.

Communications & Utilities

Norton Commander pioneered the two-pane file manager interface later copied by countless file managers.

Best "Still Useful" DOS Apps in 2026

If you only want the gems:

Category	Recommended
Word Processor	WordPerfect 5.1
Spreadsheet	Lotus 1-2-3 3.4
Database	FoxPro 2.5
File Manager	Norton Commander
Programming	Turbo Pascal 7.0
BASIC Programming	QuickBASIC 4.5
PIM	Lotus Organizer
Communications	Telix

GUI Applications for DOS

If you want applications with a **graphical interface** rather than text mode:

- GeoWorks Ensemble
- DESQview/X
- PC/GEOS
- Lotus Agenda
- Lotus Jazz
- Microsoft Works for DOS
- Borland Dashboard
- GEM Desktop
- OpenGEM
- Seal 2.0

These provide windows, icons, menus, and mouse support while still running on DOS.

Download Sources

- [WinWorldPC](#)
- [Vetusware](#)
- [FreeDOS Project](#)

a curated list of 25–50 abandoned programs that still run well under Windows

Many classic Windows applications from the 1990s and 2000s have been discontinued but still run surprisingly well on modern Windows 10 and Windows 11 systems thanks to Microsoft's strong backward compatibility. ([PCWorld](#))

Office and Productivity

Microsoft Works
Lotus SmartSuite
Lotus Organizer
WordPerfect Office X3
Microsoft FrontPage 2003
Microsoft Office XP
Microsoft Publisher 2003
InfoSelect

Database Applications

Visual FoxPro 9.0
Paradox 9
dBASE Plus
Alpha Five
Microsoft Access 2003

Graphics and Imaging

Picasa
Paint Shop Pro 4
ACDSee 2.42
Microsoft GIF Animator
IrfanView 3.x

Internet and Communications

Opera 4
Eudora

Pegasus Mail

ICQ

mIRC

Trillian Astra

Multimedia

Winamp 5.666
Media Player Classic Home Cinema
foobar2000 Classic
CDex
Instagiffer

Utilities

Norton Commander for Windows
Filzip
SpaceMonger
Volumouse
Ethernvane Echo
PhotoFiltre 7

Programming and Development

PowerShell ISE
Programmer's File Editor
Borland Delphi 7
Visual Basic 6.0
Help & Manual 3

Visual FoxPro remains particularly popular among businesses maintaining legacy database applications. ([Reddit](#)). Several of these programs have been shown to run on modern Windows versions despite being decades old. ([TechRadar](#)). Winamp remains one of the most famous discontinued Windows applications still widely used today. ([TechRadar](#)). Several of these utilities are still recommended by enthusiasts for Windows 10 and 11. ([Windows Forum](#))

Top 10 Most Useful in 2026

If you want software that is both abandoned/discontinued and still genuinely useful today, these are among the strongest candidates:

- **Winamp 5.666**
- **Picasa**
- **Visual FoxPro 9.0**
- **Lotus Organizer**
- **Microsoft Works**
- **Media Player Classic Home Cinema**
- **Filzip**
- **InfoSelect**
- **WordPerfect Office X3**
- **Paradox 9**

For the strongest combination of nostalgia and practical usefulness, I would especially recommend Lotus SmartSuite, Lotus Organizer, Visual FoxPro, Microsoft Works, and Picasa. Many users still run these successfully on Windows 11, often without needing a virtual machine. ([PCWorld](#))