

Watch 4 Folder v2.5 User Guide

By LeeLu Soft 2013

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Introduction

Watch 4 Folder is a simple to use and powerful monitoring and automation tool to monitor folders and files activities.

It is a small, portable (registered version only) and simple to use utility.



Watch 4 Folder 2.5 is a folder monitoring and automation utility, it can monitor up to 4 different folders simultaneously for 12 kinds of events.

And that is not all, it can also react for each event with different kind of actions like writing to a log file, display different kind of messages or executing a program, batch or script.

W4F can also return the changed object (file, folder, etc.) as an argument to the executed program batch or script so you can predefine automation process for this object, for example you can monitor a folder for new files and when a new file is created you can print the new file or move the file to a different location, open it with a program you want or any other manipulation you need.

The program maintains a live log that logs every event, action or settings changes.

W4F can run in the background from the system tray and use minimum resources and can auto start with different configurations using command line parameters.

W4F 2.5 versions differences:

- **Free version** – this version is limited to a single folder monitoring, which means you can monitor only one folder at a time, this version is free to download and use with no other limitations.
The free version is distributed as installation package, after the installation process, the program is portable and can be moved and executed from a different location or different computer.
- **Registered version** – this version let you monitor up to four folders simultaneously.
The registered version is distributed with no installation in a single ZIP archive file, it is portable and can be moved and executed from any location on the same computer, but can't be executed from a different computer (registration is per machine).

Changes from last published version (2.3):

- Most of the code was rewritten
- Can monitor up to four folders simultaneously (registered version only)
- Add the "Wait for file process to finish" option
- Working with arguments in auto event selection only
- Bug fix when trying to use the execute option on massive changes events
- Major GUI changes

Installation

Free Version:

Follow the installer wizard to extract W4F into your destination folder, the installer will let you create start menu, quick launch and desktop shortcuts and will extract W4F25.exe and the user guide to your destination folder.

After this on time installation, you can move W4F25.exe to any location on your computer or on a different computer and execute it.

Registered version:

W4F registered version is a portable application, just extract all the files from the ZIP archive into any target folder you select.

This version can be also moved and executed from any location on the same computer but you can't use it on a different computer as the use license is per machine.

Start using W4F

Execute W4F25.exe to start using Watch 4 Folder.



Executing W4F25.exe will open W4F home screen, on the top of the screen there are four navigation tabs:

Home, Watch Settings, Watch List, and Live Log.



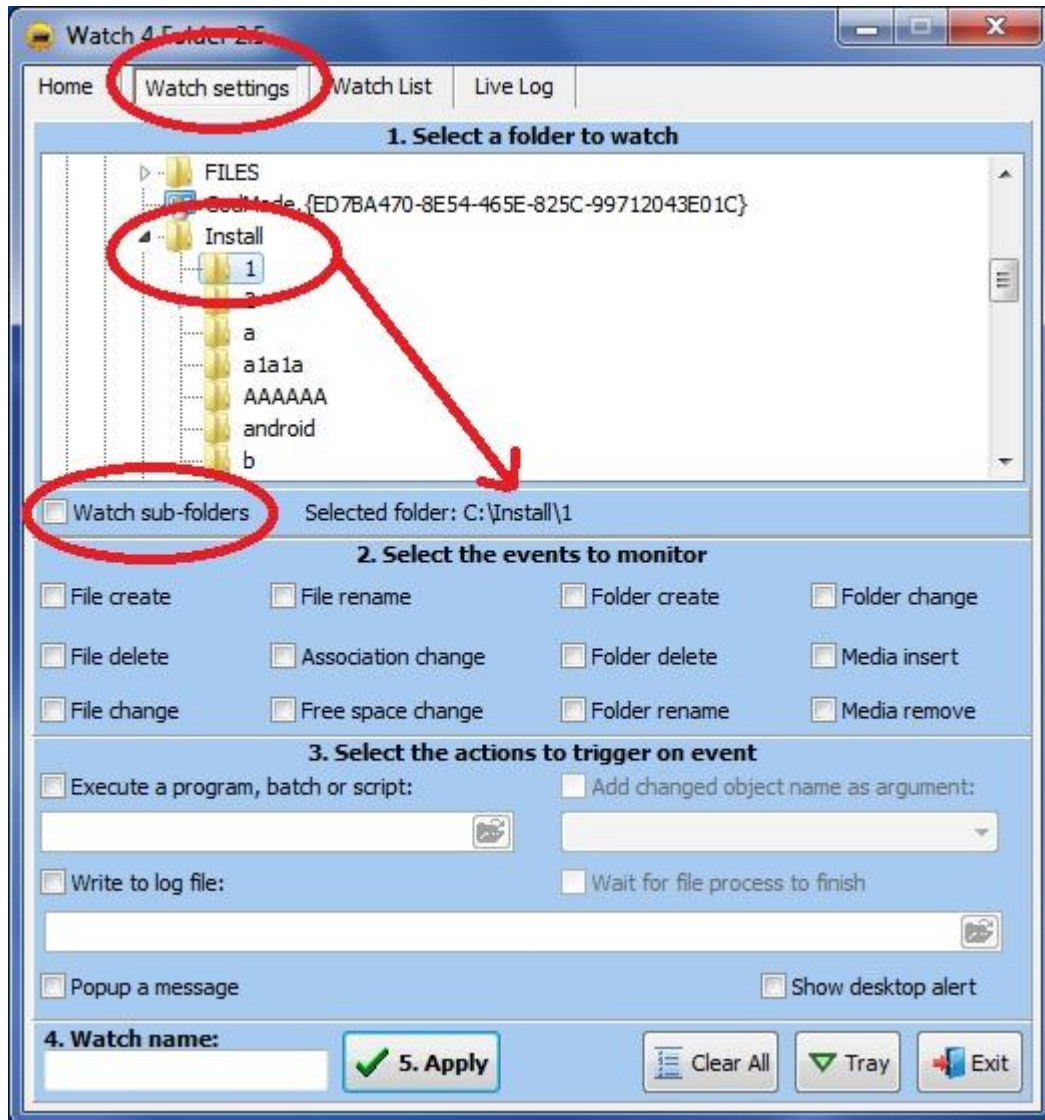
Watch Settings tab

From the Watch settings tab you can set a new watch and add it to your watch list.

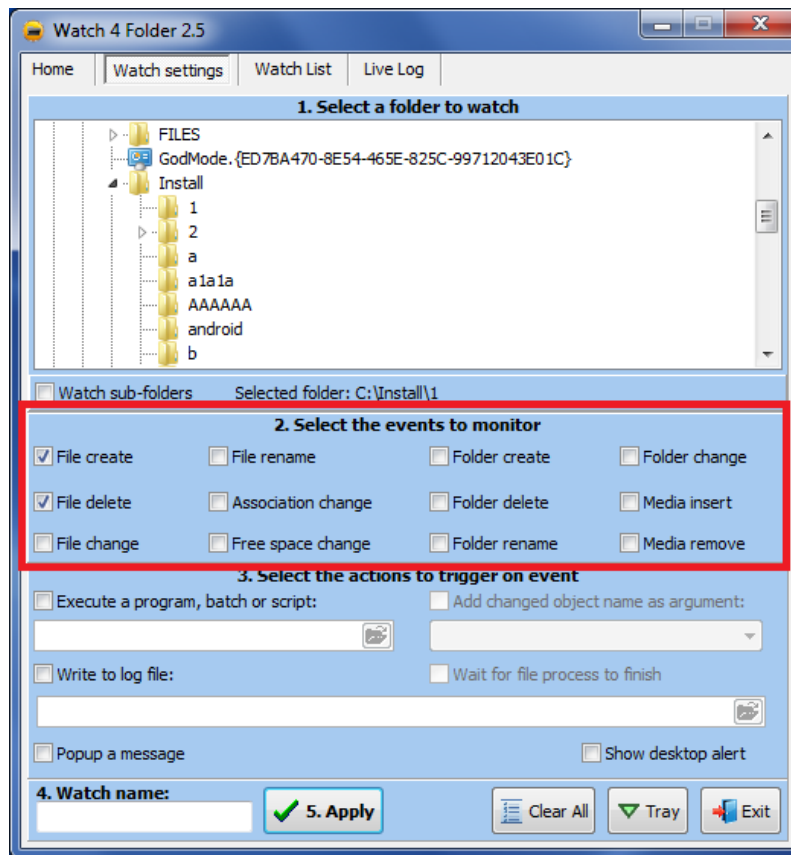
Selecting a folder to monitor

Click on Watch settings tab.

Browse and select the folder or the device you want to monitor, if you want also to monitor sub folders under the target folder, check the "Watch sub folders" checkbox.



Selecting the monitoring events



Select the monitoring events you want to monitor, the available monitoring events are:

- File create – will trigger when a new file was created
- File Delete – will trigger when a file was deleted
- File Change – this is a **general** event, it will trigger on any file change, file rename, file permissions or attributes changed, etc.
- File Rename – will trigger on file rename
- Association Change – will trigger when a file association was changed
- Free Space change – will trigger when a drive free space was changed
- Folder Create – will trigger when a new folder was created
- Folder Delete – will trigger when a folder was deleted
- Folder Rename – will trigger when a folder was renamed
- Folder Change – will trigger when a folder permissions changed
- Media Insert – will trigger when a new media (CD or DVD) inserted
- Media Remove - will trigger when a new media (CD or DVD) removed

Notice: a single system event can create several Monitoring events.

So it is better to select specific events or general event but not both.

Also, Different versions of Windows operating systems behave in different ways with the Shell Notification Windows API, so you may need (in some situations) to try a few combinations of monitoring events until you will get the desired results.

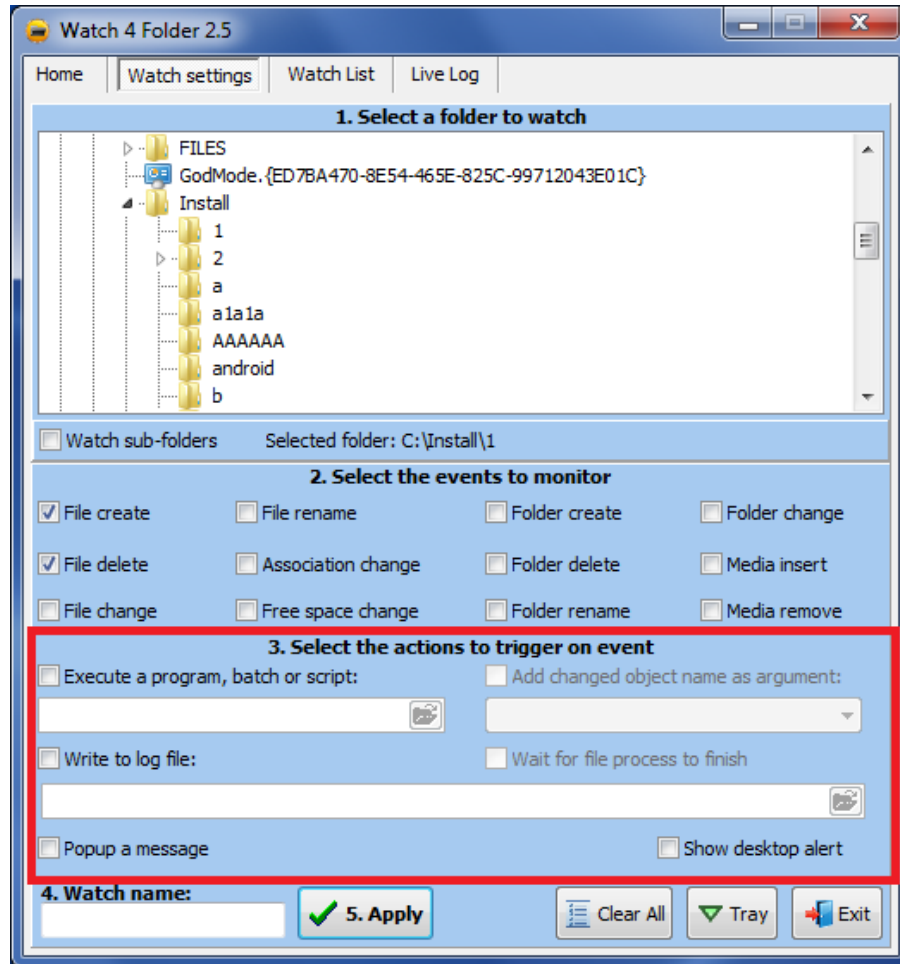
Same thing for network folders, different Windows versions behave in different ways.

Notice: some computer systems and configuration may trigger two events when selecting File Create event with large files

Actions

Actions are the way you select W4F to react to events, actually it tells W4F what to do when the monitor identify an event at the monitored folder.

This is an optional step, here you can select the actions to take in case of an event trigger.



Execute a program

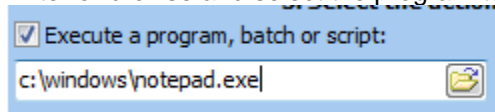
This action will let you execute a program or batch file when event occurs, checking this checkbox will let you browse and select or enter the full path to the executable or batch file.

Supported executable formats are:

- .exe
- .bat
- .vbs
- .cmd

To use the execute feature check the **Execute a program, batch or script** checkbox.

Enter or browse and select the program to execute:



Using Arguments

With arguments you can return the changed object name (file name, folder name, etc.) as argument to the executed program.

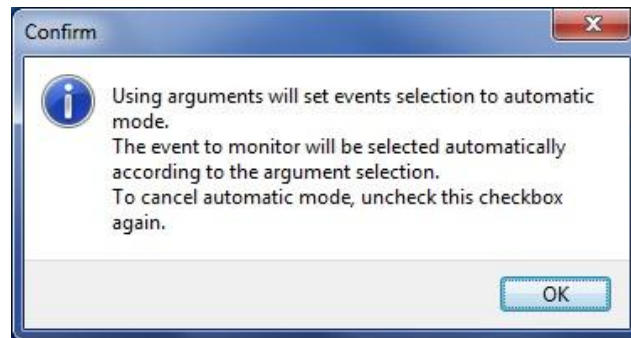
For example if a file was renamed you can trigger a batch file that will move this file into a different folder.

Notice: Arguments represent the full path of the changed object warped with double quotation, example: "c:\MyFolder\MyFile.ext".

Add changed object as argument, can be activated only if execute a program is selected, this option will enable sending the changed object name (file, folder, etc.) as an argument to the executed program, batch or script, checking this checkbox will set W4F to **"auto event type selection mode"** and also enables the available arguments dropdown list.

Auto event type selection mode:

Checking the "Add changed object as argument" checkbox will pop up a message to inform you that event selection is changed to auto mode.



In this mode, W4F will auto select the event type to monitor according to your argument selection, for example, if you select the argument "File create – file name" W4F will automatically select only the File create event, the result of this is when a new file is created inside the target folder, W4F will execute the program you selected to execute with the new created file name as argument.

Unchecking the "Add changed object as argument" will restore the manual mode.

The Arguments dropdown list, from here you can select the returned argument to the executed program, you can select only one kind of an argument at a time for one specific monitoring event. The next picture shows the "File Create – file name" argument selected.

The event is File Create.

The argument is file name.

The executed program is notepad.exe

The result in this case is when a new file is created in the target folder, it will trigger a File Create event and this will automatically open the new created file with notepad.exe:

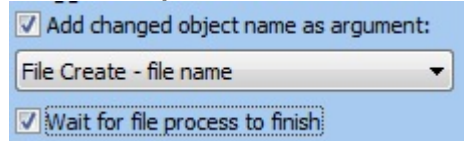


Some alerts can create two arguments for example renaming a file can return two arguments the old name and the new name, select from the drop down list the desired arguments.

For the rename example you can select to return both new name and old name, only new name or only old name.

Check the usage examples at the end of the user guide.

Wait for file process to finish:



In some cases, like when you copy a file, it can take some time for the process to finish, W4F trigger the file create event immediately when the OS reports on a new file, but in case of large files the copy process is not finished yet, checking "Wait for file process to finish" will hold the executed action and let W4F wait until the copy process is finished, this option is available only for a single kind of argument: "File Create – file name".

Notice: some computer systems and configuration may trigger two events when using the "Wait for file process" on large files

Log File

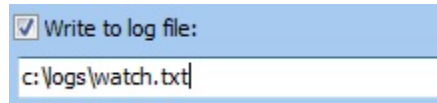
Write to a log file will automatically write a line to the log file when setting changes or when event occurs.

Check the **Write to log file** checkbox ,now you can browse and create the log file.

If the file doesn't exists it will be created, if the file exists the new log lines will be appended at the end of the existing file, the log file is in a text format (*.txt).

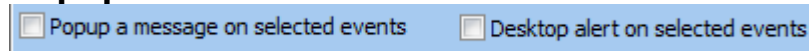
You can create a different log file for each monitor.

Notice: Do not save the log file inside the folder you are going to monitor !



If you didn't select to write to a log file and you still want to save the log, just select all the text from the **Live Log** window, copy and paste to where you want or use the save button to save it.

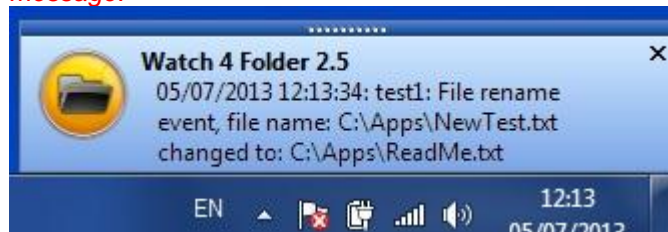
Popups and Alerts



Check the **Popup a message** checkbox to pop up a message when event occurs, *the popup will stay until the OK button is pressed, it will also block other messages and other actions until the user click OK to dismiss the message, use this option only for the right situation.*

Check the **Desktop alert** checkbox to pop up a desktop alert (same as MS Outlook new mail) when event occurs, this popup will fade after a few seconds.

Notice: In case of numerous events at the same time, desktop alert will present only the last message.



A click on the Desktop alert will bring Watch 4 Folder to the front in the live log tab.

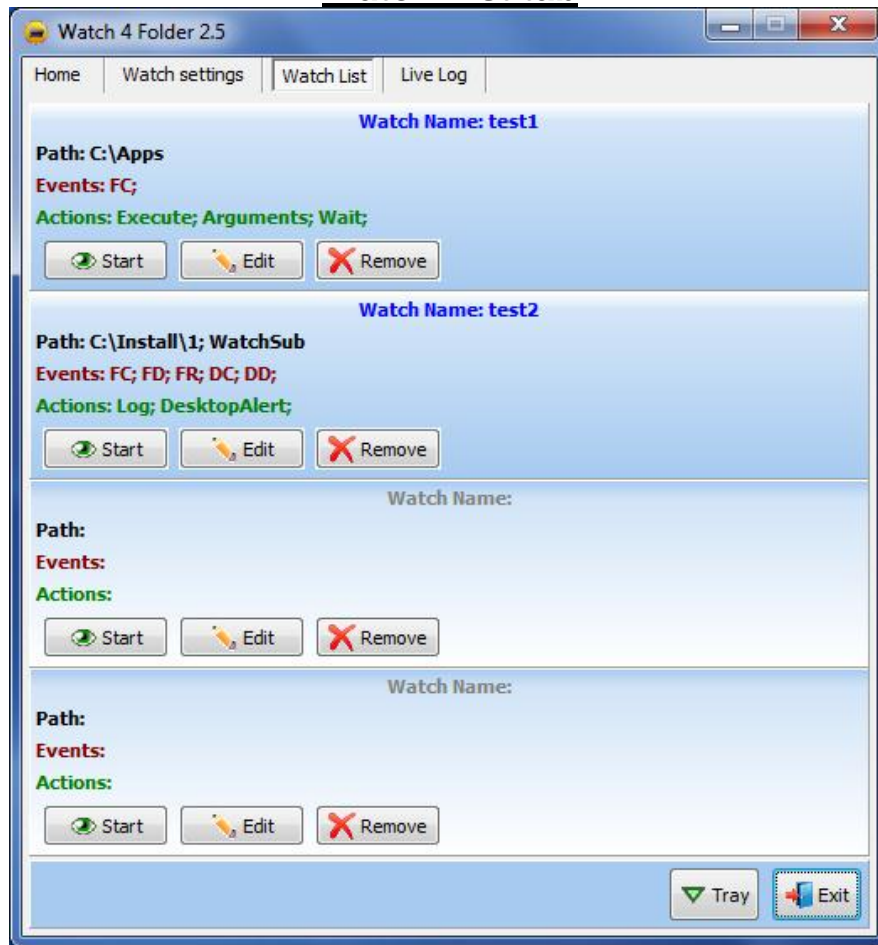
Name the monitor and apply

4. Watch name: test2	 5. Apply
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The last steps in creating a monitor is to give it a name (no spaces in the name, spaces will be ignored) and click Apply.

If your settings are correct, this will take you to the Watch list tab (next section).

Watch List tab



On the Watch List tab you can manage and configured monitors.
In the registered version you can set up to four monitors, while in the free version you can set a single monitor only.

Each monitor panel contains the following information and features:

Watch name – this is the name you gave the monitor on the Watch Settings tab.

Path – the path to the monitored folder

Events – the list of the active events for a specific monitor:

FC – file create

FD – file delete

FCh – file change

FR – file rename

Asso – file association change

Spc – drive space change

DC – folder create

DD – folder delete

DR – folder rename

DCh – folder change

MIns – media insert

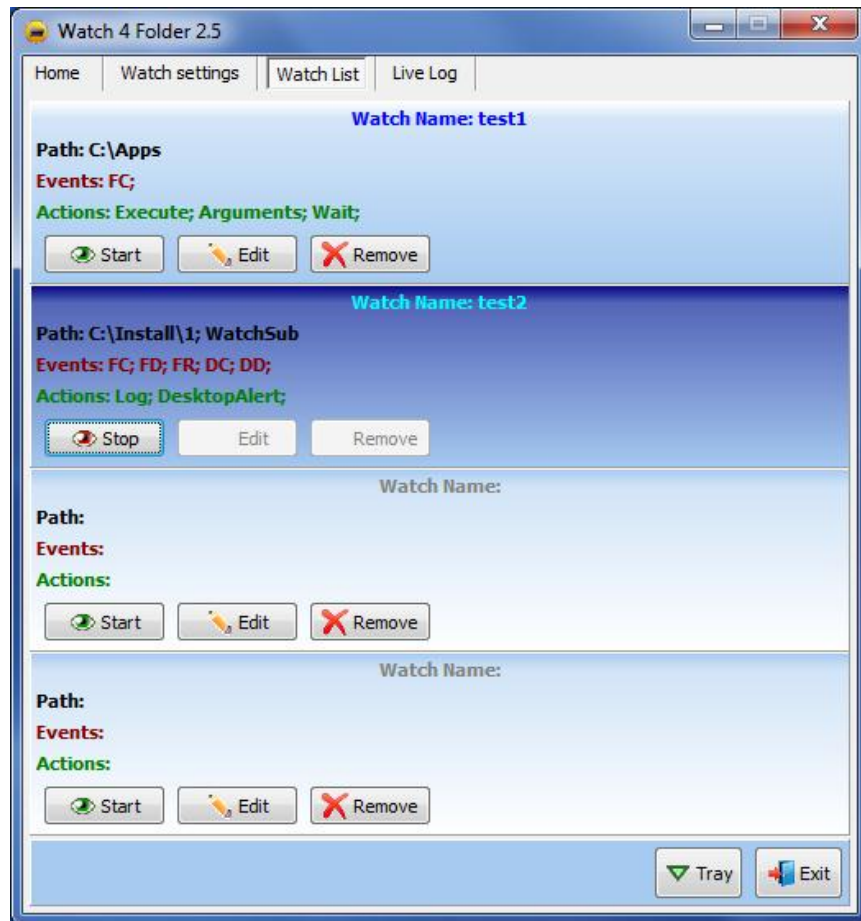
MRem – media remove

Actions – the active actions for this monitor.

Remove – use this button to delete a monitor from the watch list, W4F will ask you to confirm before removing the monitor.

Edit – use this button to change the monitor settings, a click on this button will load this monitor settings back to the **Watch settings** tab, changing the settings will change this existing monitor, changing the name of the monitor will add a new monitor.
A click on the Edit button of an empty panel will open the Watch settings tab and let you create a new monitor for this panel.

Start – use this button to start a monitor, when a monitor is active, this button caption changes to Stop and the monitor color is changing to navy blue:



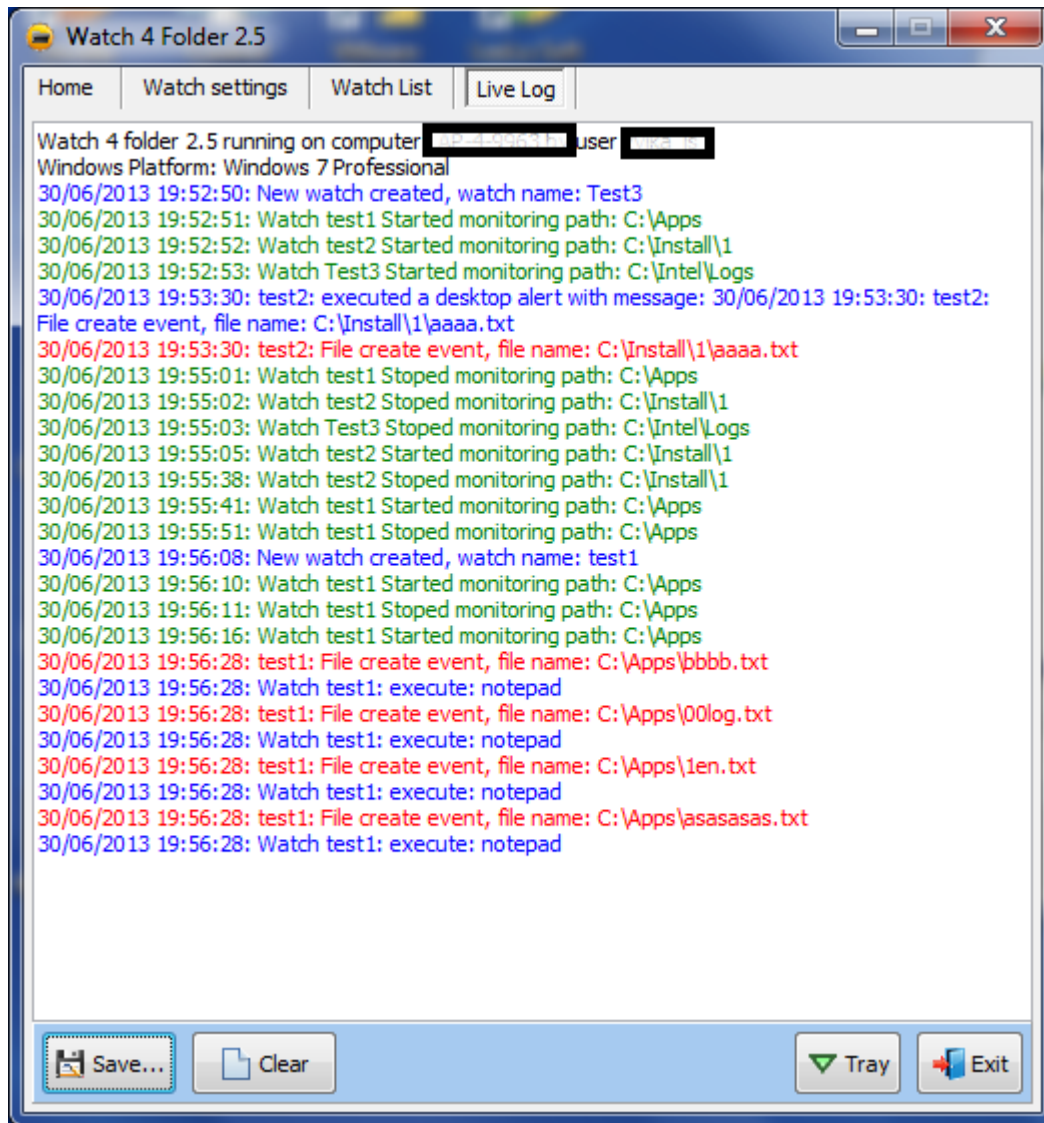
You can activate all four monitors at the same time.

Notice: if you close W4F while a monitor is active, this monitor will auto resume monitoring the next time W4F starts.

Notice: on the free version of W4F, only the first monitor panel is available, so you can monitor only one folder at a time.

Live Log tab

Selecting the **Live Log** tab will let you to watch the monitor activity log while running.



W4F displays the events with different color for each type of event:

Blue = Monitors creation, Actions executed

Green = Stop / Start monitoring

Red = Events

If you didn't select to write to a log file and you still want to save the log, just select all the text from the **Live Log** window, copy and paste to where you want or use the **Save** button.

Notice: live log collect log lines from all the monitors, while the log file is specific for each monitor.

Command Line Options

W4F can be executed directly from the command line (or from a batch file or a shortcut) with different parameters.

Notice:

W4F V2.5 doesn't support any more the settings files used with previous versions.

Executing W4F from the command line options:

Start W4F minimized (system tray):

W4F25.exe -m

Start W4F and auto start a specific monitor:

W4F25.exe Monitor_Name

Start W4F minimized (system tray) and auto start a specific monitor:

W4F25.exe Monitor_Name -m

Start W4F and auto start all configured monitors:

W4F25.exe -all

Start W4F, auto start all configured monitors and minimize (system tray):

W4F25.exe -all -m

All the parameters are case sensitive.

When closing W4F while a monitor is active, this monitor will auto resume monitoring the next time W4F starts.

In this case you can just start W4F25.exe with the -m parameter, so it will start minimized and auto resume the last active monitors.

Uninstalling W4F25

Free version:

Use the uninstaller icon and follow the wizard.

After the uninstaller is finished, open your local temp folder:

WinKey+R

Type: %temp%

Press enter.

This will open your local temp folder, locate the W4F25 sub-folder and delete it.

That's all.

Registered version:

Delete W4F25.exe and this user guide.

Open your local temp folder:

WinKey+R

Type: %temp%

Press enter.

This will open your local temp folder, locate the W4F25 sub-folder and delete it.

That's all.

W4F Usage Examples

Example 1 – a simple example using arguments, on this example W4F will trigger notepad to auto open a new created text file inside the monitored folder:

1. Open W4F25
2. Go to "Watch settings" tab
3. Select a folder to monitor
4. Check "Execute a program, batch or script"
5. At the edit box enter: notepad
6. Check "Add changed object name as argument"
7. Click OK on the message box
8. Open the combo box and select "File Create – file name"
9. Give the watch a name (no spaces).
10. Click "Apply"
11. On the "Watch list" tab, find the new created watch and click "Start"
12. Grab any text file and copy it to the monitored folder
13. W4F will execute Notepad with the text file you just copied to the monitored folder

Example 2 – a more advanced example using arguments, on this example W4F will monitor a folder for file rename, if a file was renamed W4F will execute a batch file that will create a copy of the file with the original name:

1. Inside the folder you want to monitor, create a batch file (new text file) and name it to run.bat
2. Open the file with notepad and add the following line:
Copy %1 %2
This line tells the OS to copy the first argument (new file name represented as %1) into a the second argument (old file name represented as %2), so actually we are making a copy of the file using the original name
3. Save the batch file and exit notepad
4. Open W4F25 select the folder you want to monitor (the one with the batch file in it).
5. Check "Execute a program, batch or script"
6. Enter full path to or browse and select your batch file (run.bat)
7. Check "Add changed object name as argument"
8. From the arguments dropdown list select "File rename – new file name old file name (this option will return two arguments the new file name (%1) and the old file name (%2)).
9. Give the watch a name (no spaces)
10. Click "Apply"
11. On the "Watch list" tab, locate the new created watch and click start
12. Copy any file you want, or create a new one inside the monitored folder
13. Rename the file
14. W4F will now trigger you batch file and will create a new copy of the file with the original name

Example 3 – How to monitor a folder and send new created files by email (by **Eric Schmitz**)

If you have a folder that you need to monitor for new files and you want to send the new file as attachment by email (outlook only), here are the steps to do it.

Create a batch file and name it whatever you want.

In the batch file enter the next line:

"C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office11\Outlook.exe" /a %1 /m "&subject=Scanned Document from youremail@youremail.com&body="

Replace the subject text (Scanned Document from) with the subject text you want.

Replace the email address (youremail@youremail.com) with your address or any address you want.

Save the batch file.

Now open W4F and set the following settings:

Select the folder you want to monitor.

On the Action panel, check the "Execute a program, batch or script" checkbox.

Browse and select the batch file you just created.

This step will set W4F to execute your batch file when a new file is created.

Check the "Add changed object name as argument" checkbox.

From the arguments drop list, select the first one "File Create – File Name".

This step will set W4F to return the new created file name as argument for the batch file (represented as %1 in the batch).

Give you monitor a name and click "Apply".

Now from the "Watch List" tab, find your new created monitor and click on "Start".

When a new file will be created inside the monitor folder, the new file will be attached automatically into a new email message with your subject and address.

Ordering the registered version

Go to <http://leelusoft.blogspot.com> , locate the **Watch 4 Folder 2.5** post and follow the instructions.

Prices:

Single license: **4.99 USD.**

Group License: contact [LeeLu Soft](#)

OS Support

Watch 4 Folder 2.5 was developed on Windows 7 Professional, it was also tested on Windows XP Professional but should run on other Desktop and Server windows based OS.

Notice: in some cases the Shell Notification API acts differently on different OS versions.

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