

# Ratpoison Window Manager

Ratpoison is a simple window manager that mimics the functionality of terminal multiplexers like GNU screen and tmux. Ratpoison has few dependencies, and does not require any that are not already contained within a full install of Slackware. There are no fancy graphics or other decorative gimmicks in ratpoison. Window management is done entirely with key shortcuts. Ratpoison makes use of prefix maps which precede every other binding which is bound to `Ctrl+T` by default.

## Installation

Ratpoison is available from the SlackBuilds repository. You can download the SlackBuild and source code [here](#). For information on how to use SlackBuilds refer to [SlackBuild Usage HOWTO](#). After installation you will need to run Slackware's **xwmconfig** command line utility in your shell to select the appropriate xinitrc script. Use the arrow keys to select `xinitrc.ratpoison` and then press `Return`. Now ratpoison will start when you run the `startx` command. Do not worry about your compositors and wallpapers; those goodies can be launched via Ratpoison's configuration.

## Configuration

Configuration of ratpoison is done using the `~/.ratpoisonrc` file in the user's home directory or alternatively `/etc/ratpoison`.

## Usage

As mentioned earlier, using ratpoison is very similar to terminal multiplexer programs such as GNU screen and tmux. Windows are described as frames in the documentation. The windows are placed in a full-screen layout where the window is maximized within its frame, and they cannot overlap. Interaction with the window manager is achieved entirely through keystrokes. Ratpoison uses a prefix key combination that precedes all other key presses. Ratpoison key bindings appear in the documentation with the following form: `C-t some key`. Where `C-t` is the prefix combination, `Ctrl+T` and `some key` is another keypress or keypress combination.

Most of the functionality of ratpoison can be performed by issuing commands from the terminal. To try this feature run the command: `ratpoison -c "echo Hello World!"` in xterm.

More information on the usage of ratpoison is available in the man page, `ratpoison(1)`.

## Sdorfefs

Sdorfefs (presumably pronounced starfish) is an updated fork that extends the functionality of Ratpoison and provides eye candies such as: window frame gaps, virtual screens, and more. There is also the inclusion of a named pipe which accepts input that can be directed into the window manager

bar. Many of the configuration options and functionality discussed above about Ratpoison are also applicable to Sdorfehs. Be sure to read the Sdorfehs man page for the options and features that differ. There is currently not a SlackBuild available for Sdorfehs but it can be found here along with build instructions: [Sdorfehs Repoistory](#).

## Sources

[nongnu ratpoison](#)  
[ratpoison wiki](#)  
[ratpoison wiki FAQ](#)  
[ratpoison git source browser](#)

[howtos](#), [window managers](#), [ratpoison](#), [sdorfehs](#), author [cppimmo](#)

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