Overriding Help Balloons for Application Icons

The Finder displays a default help balloon for application icons. By specifying an 'hfdr' resource in your application's resource fork, you can provide your own help balloon for the Finder to display when the user moves the cursor over your application icon.

Note: You cannot override the default help balloon that the Finder uses for document icons.

Shown here is the general format of an 'hfdr' resource.

Component	Finder icon help resource element
Header	**Help Manager** version Options Balloon definition function Variation code
Icon help	Identifier for help balloon content Balloon content for application icon

Use resource ID -5696 for your 'hfdr' resource. If an 'hfdr' resource with that ID exists for an application, the **Help Manager** uses it instead of the default help balloon provided by the Finder.
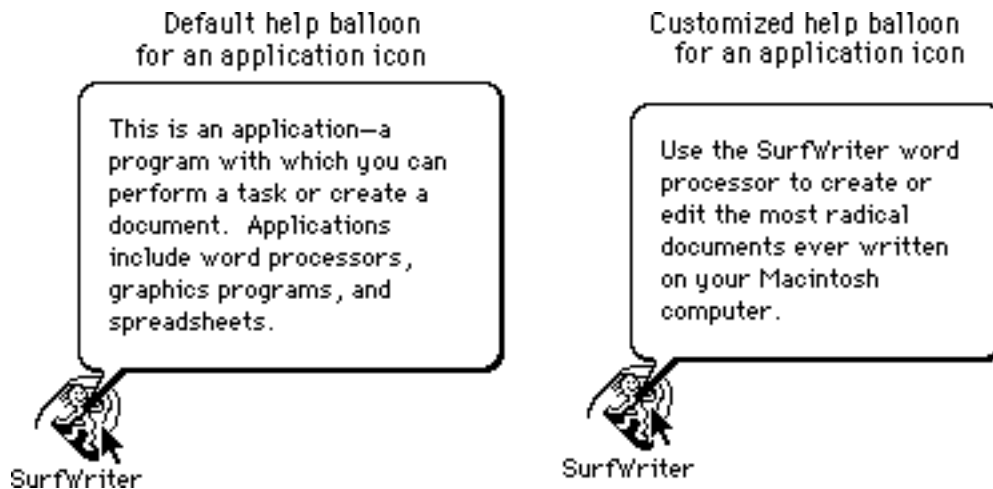
As with the other help resources, specify the HelpMgrVersion constant in the first field of the header component of the 'hfdr' resource. In the options field, specify a constant (normally, hmDefaultOptions) or the sum of several constants' values from this list. (**Specifying Options in Help Resources** describes these options.)

Specify the balloon definition function and variation code (both typically 0) in the third and fourth fields of the header. (These are described in detail in **Providing Help Balloons for Menus**.)

In the icon help component of this resource, specify the format that the help content takes. As with the other help resources, specify the format using one of these identifiers:

Identifier	Help content format
HMStringItem	Pascal string within the help resource
HMPictItem	'PICT' resource
HMStringResItem	'STR#' resource
HMTEResItem	'TEXT' and 'styl' resources
HMSTRResItem	'STR ' resource
HMSkipItem	No content-skip this item

If you specify HMSkipItem, no help balloon appears.

Default help balloon for an application icon

This is an application—a program with which you can perform a task or create a document. Applications include word processors, graphics programs, and spreadsheets.

Customized help balloon for an application icon

Use the SurfWriter word processor to create or edit the most radical documents ever written on your Macintosh computer.

SurfWriter   SurfWriter

Default and customized help balloons for an application icon

The default help balloon for application icons is shown on the left in the Figure above. A customized help balloon for the same icon appears on the right in the Figure above. The customized help balloon is supplied with the resources shown in the Listing below.

Creating a help balloon resource for an application icon

```
resource 'hfdr' (-5696) {   // help balloon for SurfWriter app
                            // icon
    HelpMgrVersion, hmDefaultOptions, 0, 0,   // header information
    {
    HMSTRResItem {  // use 'STR ' resource 1001
        1001
        }
    }
};

resource 'STR ' (1001) {// help message for SurfWriter app
                        // icon
    "Use the SurfWriter word processor to create or edit the most "
    "radical documents ever written on your Macintosh computer."
};
```