

About the Alias Manager

Information about making an AliasRecord

The **Alias Manager** allows your application to establish and resolve alias records, which are data structures that describe file system objects (that is, files, directories, and volumes). You create an AliasRecord to take a fingerprint of a file system object, usually a file, that you might need to locate again later. You can store the AliasRecord, instead of a standard file specification, and then let the **Alias Manager** find the file again when it's needed. The **Alias Manager** contains algorithms for locating files that have been moved, renamed, copied, or restored from backup.

Note: The **Alias Manager** lets you exploit an AliasRecord. It does not directly manipulate Finder aliases, which are created and managed by the user through the Finder. The **Finder Interface** describes Finder aliases and how your application can accommodate them.

The **Alias Manager** is available only in system software version 7.0 or later. Call the **Gestalt** function, described in the section entitled **Compatibility Guidelines**, to determine whether the **Alias Manager** is present.

Read the accompanying **Alias Manager** sections if you want your application to create and resolve an AliasRecord. You might store an AliasRecord, for example, to identify a customized dictionary from within a word-processing document. When the user runs a spelling checker on the document, your application can ask the **Alias Manager** to resolve the record to find the correct dictionary.

To use these sections, you should be familiar with the **File Manager** conventions for identifying files, directories, and volumes.

The **Alias Manager** will create and resolves an AliasRecord. The next section, **About Alias Records**, describes how you can use an AliasRecord.

In general, you should use the **Alias Manager** to create an AliasRecord whenever you find yourself storing a specific file description, such as filename and parent directory ID. The **Alias Manager** stores this information and more in the AliasRecord, and it also provides a set of search strategies for resolving the record later. The search strategies are described later in the section entitled **Resolving Alias Records** under **Using the Alias Manager**.

You can use the **Alias Manager** to:

- create an AliasRecord
- resolve an AliasRecord
- update an AliasRecord
- get information about an AliasRecord

The **Alias Manager** can track files and directories across volumes. If the target of an AliasRecord is on an unmounted AppleShare volume, the **Alias Manager** automatically mounts the volume when it resolves the alias. If the target object is on an unmounted ejectable volume, the **Alias Manager**

prompts the user to insert the volume.

When the **Alias Manager** creates an AliasRecord, it allocates the storage, fills in the record, and returns a handle to it. Your application is responsible for storing the record and retrieving it when needed. Your application must also supply strategies for handling various alias-resolution problems.

To help you understand and use the **Alias Manager**, the information in the accompanying sections provides:

- an overview of an AliasRecord
- a description of how the **Alias Manager** resolves an AliasRecord
- specific techniques for using the **Alias Manager** in your application.