

UNIT 3 CREATING MENU APPLICATIONS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the basic features of the Graphical User Interface (GUI) is that it enables the user to select the operations to be performed through menus with the aid of the mouse. In this unit the student is introduced to the rudiments of creating a menu application.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to identify the steps involved in creating visual basic applications with menu.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Creating Menu Applications

You can generate menus for your applications using the application wizard. After you click the menu options and submenus you want in your applications, the Application wizard generates the appropriate menu controls and places them in the generated application.

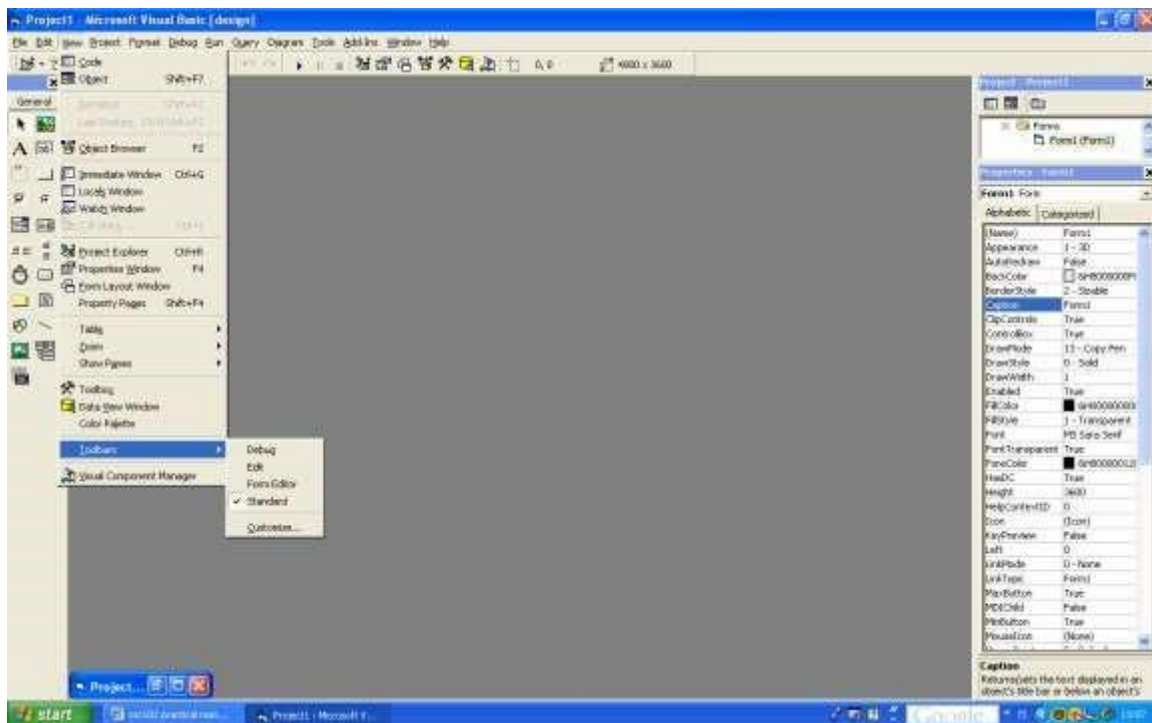
The Toolbox window does not contain any menu-creation tools. Instead, Microsoft offers a special menu tool called the Menu Editor, shown in Figure 14.1 that you use to create menus. From the Form window, you can press Ctrl+E to display the Menu Editor.

The Menu Editor helps you design menus for your applications. In a way, the Menu Editor acts as a Properties window for the menu bar because you will designate the names of the menu controls as well as the captions that the users see on the menus and other related information from within the Menu Editor.



Menu control list box

Fig. 28 displays the menu bar and its parts.
A menu bar offers a special kind of control that lets you select options and issue commands.



Fig

.28

Separator

Submenu

Checked
option

Enabled options

Selected option

Shortcut

Disable
d options

Menu bar

Practice creating menu applications with the following exercise.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Create an application with three menu options and a label. Your screen should look like what you have in Fig. 29.

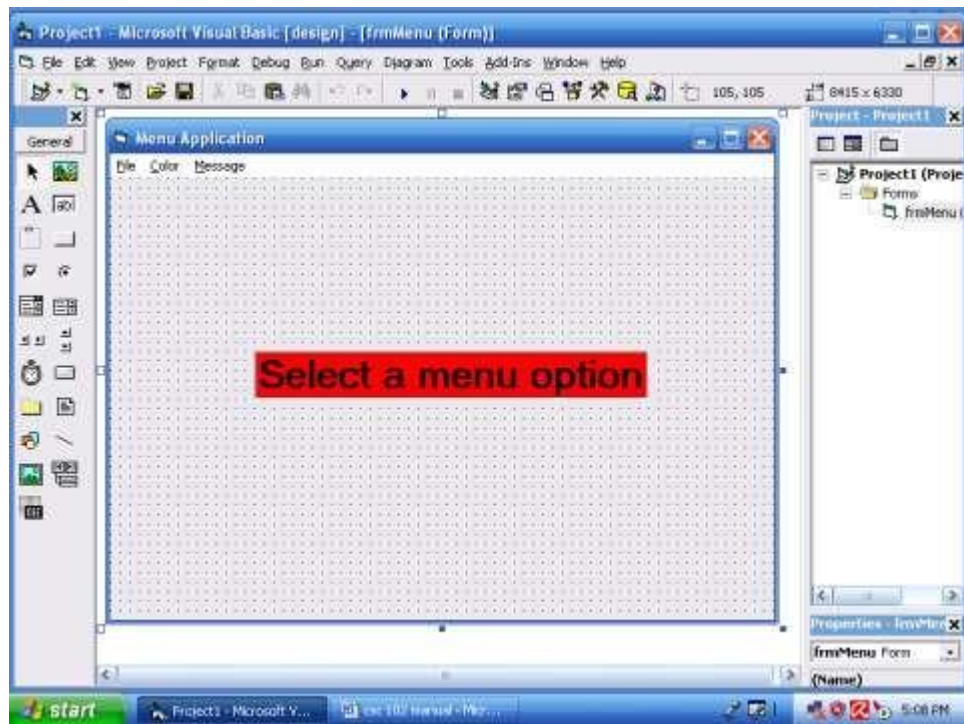


Fig.29

Guide to solution

To create the menu bar, click the form and press Ctrl+E to display the Menu Editor.

- Type &File for the Caption field. As with all other Visual Basic values, the ampersand indicates that the F will be the accelerator key for the menu selection. As you type the caption, Visual Basic displays the caption in the Menu control list box in the bottom half of the Menu Editor.
- Press Tab to move to the Name field. Tab and Shift+Tab shift the focus between the Menu Editor fields.
- Type *mnuFile* for the name of the first menu option.
- Leave all other fields alone and click the Next button to prepare for the remaining menu bar options. The Next button lets the Menu Editor know that you are through with the first option and want to enter another.
- Type &Color for the next menu bar caption and type *menuColor* for the name.

- Click Next to add the next item.
- Type &Message for the third and final menu bar caption and type menu Message for the caption. Your Menu Editor should look like the one in Fig.30.

Fig.30

3.3 Adding a Pull-Down Menu

You can either create pull-down menus as you build the menu bar or add the menus later. If you create the complete menu bar first, however, as you've done in this exercise, you'll have to insert the menu options in their respective locations when you are ready to add them. The Menu Editor's Insert button lets you do just that.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

.Add three checked options: Blue, Green, and Red, to the second menu, Colour. These colors will be mutually exclusive; the label will not be able to be all three colours at once, but only one colour at a time. Such colours make perfect candidates for checked menu options. Your application should like Figure 14.5 after running. Also, include a submenu to the Message menu. Let it contain the checked messages displayed in Figure 14.6 and include a separator bar as shown.

Fig.31

Fig.32

Follow these steps to do these:

- Open the Menu Editor
- Click the Message option in the Menu control list box to highlight that option.
- Click the Insert button and right arrow button three times to add three empty rows for the Color menu options.
- Highlight the first blank row where you'll add the Blue option.
- Type &Blue for the caption and mnuColorBlue in the Name field. When the user first runs the program, the Blue option will be unchecked to indicate that Blue is not currently selected.
- Click Next to enter the next option.
- Type &Green for the caption and mnuColorGreen in the Name field of the next option.
- Click Next to enter the next option.
- Type &Red for the caption and mnuColorRed for the name of the next option.
- The Red option is to be checked when the user first starts the program. Therefore, click the Checked field to place the check mark next to Red.

- Close the Menu Editor and run your application.
- To add the Message menu, display the Menu Editor and click the row beneath &Message in the lower half of the Menu Editor to prepare the Menu editor to receive the next option.
- Follow the steps as for the Color menu.
- To create the separator bar, after entering the first item, clicks Next and type a single hyphen (-) for the caption (all separator bars have this caption). Type mnuMessageSep1 as the separator bar's name.
- Fix the other options appropriately and run the application.

To finalise the menu with a code:

- Open the code window and type the code shown in Figures 33 & 34. The code controls the label's colour and contents.

Fig.33

Fig.34

When the application is run, the screens look like those in Figures 35 & 36. For Figure 35, colour blue was selected with the second message "VB is Simple".

Fig.35

Fig.36

4.0 CONCLUSION

Menus make programs interactive and enable programs to be written in modules.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit shows how to create a menu application.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

.Enumerate the steps involved in creating a menu application.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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