



# CNotes

---

## User Guide

Version 1.0

March 2021

# Contents

About CNotes .....	3
Installation.....	4
Main Menu.....	5
Getting Started.....	6
The information panel.....	6
Getting Started.....	7
The case panel.....	7
Case Information.....	8
Note taking panel .....	9
Taking Notes.....	10
Generating the Report Package .....	11
Important Information .....	12

# About CNotes

CNotes is an application allowing you to keep track of contemporaneous notes within a digital system, providing many benefits over traditional handwritten notes. Long gone are the days of a hundred notebooks that all need to be written just so in order to satisfy the strict requirements imposed upon the digital forensic investigator and other expert witnesses in a court of law. This software seeks to meet those requirements and make your notes more robust, and frankly, more impressive.

All notes are stored locally in a secure and encrypted database. When you are ready to pass on your notes, you can generate a full note package consisting of a .pdf report and all attached files and screenshots.

This software was created in part fulfilment of a bachelors degree in Digital Forensics at Noroff UC.

Comments and/or issues are welcome in my inbox:  
hjorturbenedikts@gmail.com

## Key features:

- Multiple case support
- Encryption
- Timestamped notes
- Attach files
- Take and attach screenshots
- Generates a .zip file with
  - The attachments
  - The screenshots
  - A .pdf file with all your written notes, with or without the screenshots
  - An .html file that you can easily add to another report

# Installation

In order to install the program, double-click either of these icons. Both must be located in the same folder in order to function.



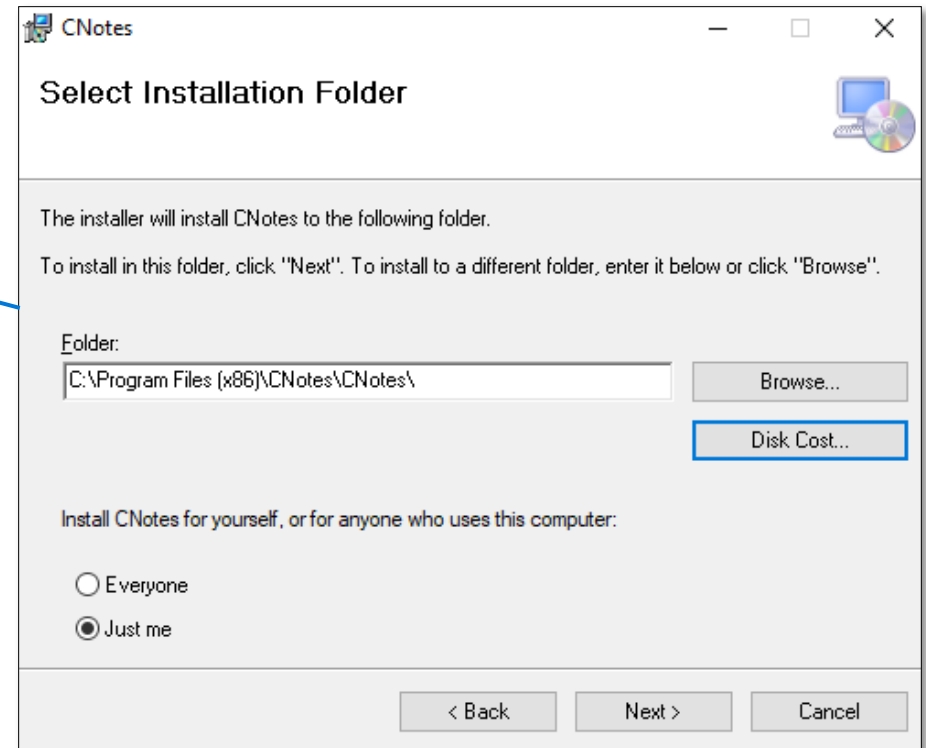
Click “Next” until you come to this screen. Here you can specify a folder where CNotes will be installed. The default location is C:\Program Files\CNotes\CNotes. Click “Next” once you are satisfied with the chosen install location.

Run through the installation process. There might be a security warning from Windows at some point during the installation process. This is normal as CNotes is from an unverified publisher (I’m working on it) and interacts with files on the system.

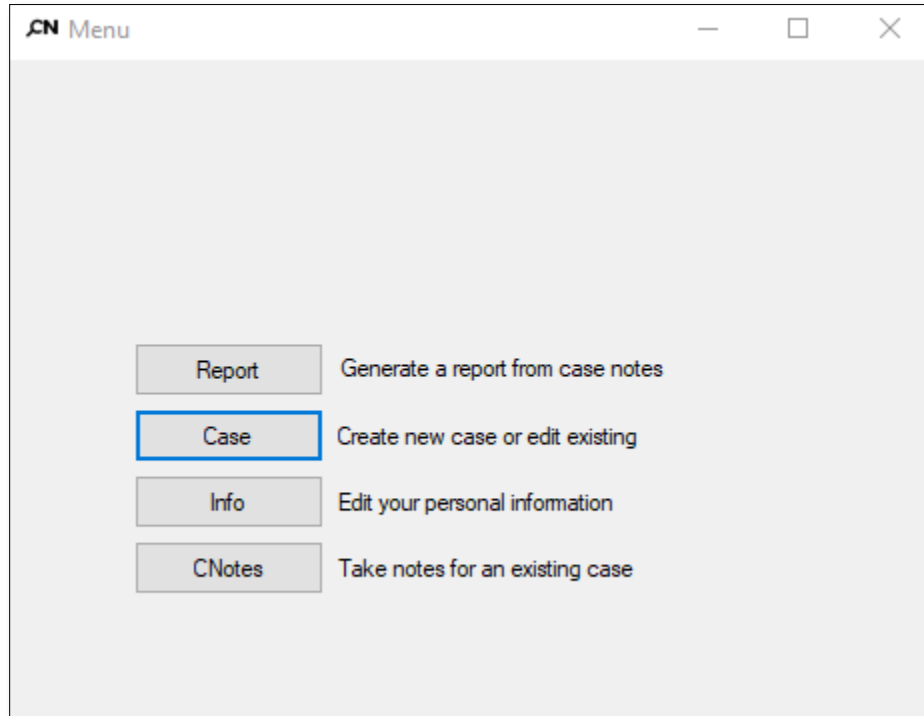
There should now be a CNotes shortcut on your desktop, similar to this. There is also a shortcut in your start menu!



**In order for the software to run as intended, it must be run as administrator.**



# Main Menu



## Report

- Where you can generate your report package

## Case

- Where you create new cases, and manage existing

## Info

- Where you enter details about yourself

## CNotes

- Where you can take contemporaneous notes

# Getting Started

## The information panel

**In order for the software to run as intended, it must be run as administrator.** To do that, locate the CNotes icon in your start menu, right click it, and under “More”, select “Run as administrator”.

You should then be greeted by the Main Menu, an overview of which can be seen on the previous page.

Your first course of action should be to click the “Info” button on the Main Menu and fill in your personal information in the “Info” panel. Your information, personal or generated with the use of this software, is only ever stored on your machine.

When you first run the software, this will all be blank, so feel free to put in your own information and then press the “Submit Changes” button. The panel on the right side of the software should update and now be displaying your information.

## Information stored in the database

CN Info2

Here you can modify the personal and contact information shown on you generated report.

First Name:	<input type="text" value="Hjörtur"/>
Last Name:	<input type="text" value="Benediktsson"/>
Company:	<input type="text" value="Noroff UC"/>
Department:	<input type="text" value="Digital Forensics"/>
Contact Email:	<input type="text"/>

First name: Hjörtur  
Last name: Benediktsson  
Company: Noroff UC  
Department: Digital Forensics  
Contact email:

**Remember to click the button in order to save your changes!**

# Getting Started

## The case panel

Before you can begin taking notes like never before, you must create a case to link them to. So go ahead and press “X” on the information panel, thus returning you to the Main Menu. Once there, press “Case”. You are now in your case manager. The list on the left shows you all the cases you have created. In order to create a new case, press the “New Case” button. You are then greeted with a panel where you can put in the information about your case.

Once you have filled in the details press “Submit” and that should throw you back to the panel displayed on the right.

If you are ever in the middle of creating a new case and you decide that you actually don’t want to anymore, just press the “X” on the top right and that also throws you back to the panel displayed on the right.

After you have created a case and you realize that you have made a mistake, you can select that case from the case list on the left side and edit the information in the text fields. Just remember to press “Submit” in order to save the changes! These changes are not logged anywhere.

## Case list

**CN Case Manager**

ID	Case ID
1	NUC-2021-0001
2	NUC-2021-0002
3	NUC-2021-0003
4	NUC-2021-0007

Case Number:

Case Name:

Case Start Date:

Case End Date:

**CN NewCase**

Case Number:

Case Name:

Case Start Date:

Case End Date:

# Case Information

## Case Number:

This is how your organization, or company, makes sure each and every case has a unique identifier. This will be printed out as a part of the report generated.

## Case Name:

This is something you can assign to the case and is unique to you. It will show up when you are in the note taking panel, and will not be a part of the generated report. It is simply to help you distinguish better between the plethora of cases you have going on at any given time.

## Case Start Date:

When did the case start. This is printed out as a part of the report generated but does not affect how cases are listed, as they follow the creation date, not the assigned date.

## Case End Date:

If the case is no longer being worked on, that is if the case is closed, check the box and pick the correct date. This does not affect any functionality of the program but does get printed out with the report



# Note taking panel

Drop-down menu of cases.

Listed by their Case Name

Press this if you would like to attach a file to your note

(only one file per note)

The screenshot shows a window titled 'CNotes'. At the top, there is a drop-down menu currently displaying 'Flash drive 16 GB'. Below this is a table with two columns: 'Time' and 'Note'. The 'Note' column contains the text 'Notes you have made on the selected case would show up here'. Below the table is a large text input area with the placeholder text 'Here you type in your notes'. To the right of this input area is a 'Submit' button. At the bottom of the window, there are two buttons: 'Attach' and 'Screenshot'.

Time	Note	Attach
	Notes you have made on the selected case would show up here	

Here you type in your notes

Submit

Attach Screenshot

Press this if you would like to take a screenshot

(only one per note)

The button to press to submit your note to the database

(you can also press enter)

# Taking Notes

If you are still in the Case panel, go ahead and press the “X”. You are now back at the Main Menu. From there you should press the “CNotes” button. This will take you to the panel detailed above.

In order to get started, you must first select a case from the drop-down menu at the top. Notice that the cases are listed not by their number, but their name. This is so you can quickly identify the case in this list by giving them custom names. These are not printed in the generated report.

After you have selected the case you want to work on, you can go ahead and make your first note and either press the “Submit” button, or press “Enter” on your keyboard. The note should now be in the, along with a timestamp.

You also have the option to attach files and screenshots to your notes. However, you can only add one to each note so make sure that you submit the note in order to preserve the attachment. Notice that there are two extra columns in the view panel. These are to see if there is a file or a screenshot attached to that note.

When you press the “Screenshot” button, a window like the one pictured here shows up. You can feel free to drag this around and resize it. It will capture whatever it highlights. Once you are happy with your selection, go ahead and



press the “Capture Area” button. You will then be launched into a new window where you can see the image you just captured. If you are happy with it, press the “Save” button. If you are not happy with it, you can either press the “Cancel” button, or simply close the window. The same goes for this semi opaque window, if you would like to cancel the screenshot, just press the “X”.

# Generating the Report Package

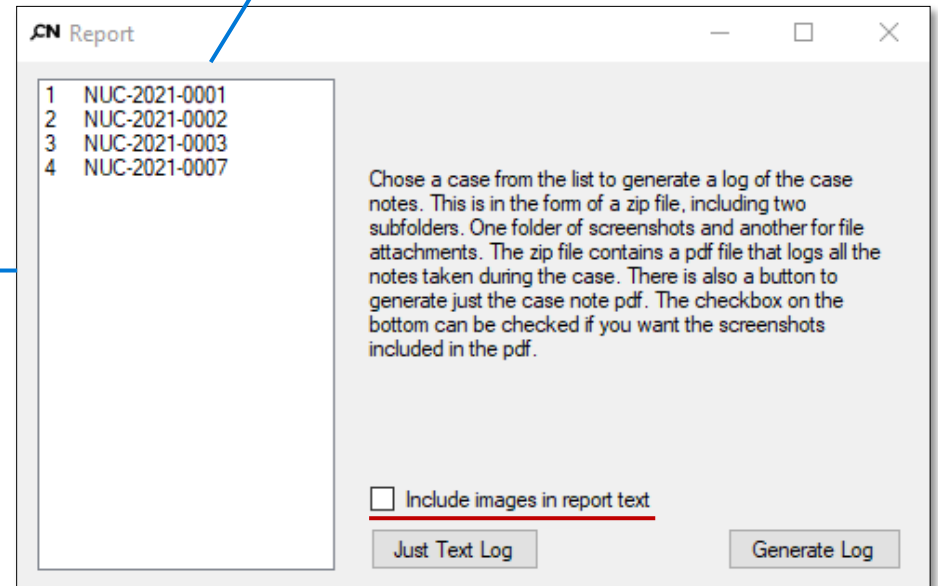
Once you are done with your case, or you simply want to test out the reporting function, go back to the Main Menu by pressing “X” until you get to it. Once there you can press the “Report” button. This will take you to the panel pictured.

Here you just select the case you would like to generate into a report and check the box if you would like to include your screenshots in the .pdf file.

After that, you can press the “Just Text Log” button, generating a .pdf log of your notes in the location where you installed CNotes (default: C:\Program Files\Cnotes\Cnotes\xCaseLog.pdf). The name of this file will be xCaseLog.pdf where “x” is the ID of the case (not related to the case number).

If you press the “Generate Log” button, a save file dialog pops up which allows you to chose a place to save your .zip package. This .zip folder contains all of the files you attached to your notes, all screenshots you took in relation to the case, an .html file of your notes, and a .pdf file (either with or without screenshots, dependant on if you ticked the box).

List of cases, this time listed by their case number



# Important Information

- You must run this software as an administrator, that is if you want it to work.
- You navigate back within the software by closing the panel you are currently viewing. If you press “X” on the Main Menu, you exit the program completely.
- You can run many instances of the program at the same time, even working on the same case in two different windows.
- The database is encrypted and will break your software if you try to tamper with it.
- If you do break your software, in order to fix it you must fully uninstall it and re-install it. This includes deleting the CNotes folder from program files.
- Should not be used for production work, this is an early release application.

This project would not have been possible without the help of my supervisor, Emlyn Butterfield.