Arrow Launcher Labyrith Studios

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Thank you for purchasing the Arrow Launcher, the first dedicated, fully customizable application launcher for Unity.

Arrow Launchers can be built using ANY method you choose in Unity, we use the Unity UI system as it has proven to be the most powerful tool for both menus and other UI elements alike.

Arrow does not limit your launcher capabilities to a video game, or entertainment product, but can point to any executable in Windows and can be used to build a launcher or branding splash screen for any application or file.

Throughout this document, we will be covering the basics of creating a professional, borderless window in Arrow, automatically centring it and some basic UI features as well, to help you build your launcher, if you feel as though we have left something out or would like to know more about Arrow, feel free to contact us at our [Contact](http://www.labyrith.co.uk/contact-us/) page.

As shown in the next few pages, Arrow can be used to produce or replicate an almost unlimited number of styles, you are only limited by what you can put into the Unity UI.

Examples of Design

These are just a few of the styles we have created using Arrow.

**Visual Studio Installer**

In this example, we recreated the Visual Studio 2012 installer from a screenshot during installation, this recreation took about 30 minutes to build in the Unity UI, and 5 minutes to implement functional buttons and links.

For the functionality, we used the UIManager script (see UIManager), this is a Unity UI script for managing button and menu functionality, including hyperlinks, menu switching and application quitting.

All rights to Visual Studio belong to Microsoft.

**LauncherV1**

This is the main demo for Arrow, it was built in about 1 hour total, and all artwork used in it is included with Arrow Launcher.

This demo is the first to take full advantage of both the Arrow Driver and UIManager, it includes hyperlinks, menu links, website links, application quitting, back buttons and more.

How to make a Launcher

Arrow makes creating launchers in Unity a breeze, and has been laid out as simply as possible, but a few things do need to be explained.

**Step One – Design your Menu**

This is the bit we can’t help you with, this is something you have to decide for yourself.

When using Arrow, most people prefer not to worry about rescaling, as most launchers will fit almost every monitor resolution anyway, this makes designing your launcher much easier.

Make sure you add menu items such as buttons as actual buttons (Right-Click in Hierarchy, UI/Button), and position them how you like.

If you are having issues evenly distributing your buttons, create a Panel (UI/Panel) and place it over the area you wish to contain your buttons, this will act as a bounding box so make sure you have it in the correct place, this can be moved and modified later.

In the Panel, go to “Add Component”, “Layout” and select either “Horizontal Layout Group” or “Vertical Layout Group”, depending on the desired orientation of your menu.

After this, you can child all your buttons to the Panel (drop them in the Hierarchy).

**Step Two – Using UIManager**

The next step is adding your functionality, please not that using UIManager is **NOT** required for using Arrow, it is simply there as a starting point for customers.

Add UIManager to an empty GameObject and set the Menus dropdown to 4, Element 0 is set to accept Main Menu, 1 is set to Options, 2 is set to Extras and 3 is set to Credits, if this is not the order or layout of your menu, some basic modification of UIManager will be required (or you could use your own).

From here, click on a button, at the bottom of the Button component in the Inspector should be an event box called On Click (), click the small + symbol in the bottom corner, you will be presented with a small box, drag the object containing UIManager into the slot.

From the dropdown shown on the right of the box, select UIManager, and the respective effect you want.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Function** | **Result** |
| ChangeScene() | Allows the button to open a new scene. |
| CreditsMenu() | Switches to the Credits Menu. |
| ExitApp() | This exits/closes the launcher. |
| ExtrasMenu() | Switches to the Extras Menu. |
| LoadWebsite() | This acts in the same way as a hyperlink. |
| MainMenu() | Switches to the Main Menu. |
| MinimiseWindow() | Minimises the window. |
| OpenApplication() | Opens executable at path. |
| OptionsMenu() | Switches to the Options Menu. |

Once you have all your menus set up and working the way you want them to, you can move onto step three.

**Step Three – Setting up the Arrow Window Driver**

We are now going to be building Arrow into our launcher, this controls effects like:

* Removing Windows Borders (cleaner, more professional look)
* Automatic Screen Centring (centres the launcher by default to any resolution)
* Window Dragging (Replaces the dragging functionality removed with borders)
* Launcher Size Override (Force the size of the launcher

We have kept all the main functionality of Arrow in the background to make the script easier to work with, **those new to programming or not familiar with the Windows API should not attempt to edit it.**



In the Arrow Window Driver, the only thing that needs to be set is the intended resolution of your window, the LauncherV1 example uses 900x400, it is best to design the launcher or splash using the same resolution as you set, otherwise some stretching may occur.

The rest of Arrow is controlled from the backend, and this is all you need to do to setup Arrow, from here all you need to do is Build the project to an executable.

**Please note:** Anyone using Unity Personal (Free) will only have Borderless launchers once the “Made with Unity” splash screen has completed, and switched to your launcher.

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Arrow Launcher 1

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