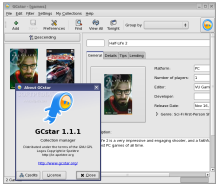


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About GCStar

[GCstar Review](#)

An application for managing your collections.

Have you ever tuned your whole house up-side-down in search of a DVD you desperately need, and after a while, you faintly recalled that you have lent it to a friend, but can't quite remember to which friend? I know I did. More than once. Fortunately, I've found a software that allowed me to categorize my audio CDs and movie DVDs. After a while, I found out I also needed a software to organize books, games and that's how I ended up using about one application per category. I wasn't quite satisfied with the way things were so I've started looking for a program able to manage all types of personal collections. That's how I've found GCstar. GCstar is a free application for managing personal collections such as movies, video games, books, music or even user-defined collections. When possible, detailed information on various items such as audio albums or movies are automatically fetched from the Internet. Additional info can also be optionally added by the user, such as location or whom he/she has lent the item to. One can also search and filter the collection by various criteria. GCstar installation seems quite easy as the homepage provides instructions on how to install the application on various distributions. Additionally, there's a generic Linux tar.gz package which provides a graphical or text installer. Basically, you can install GCstar on any system for which Gtk2-Perl is available, including MS Windows. However, there are some optional requirements which won't block the installation process, but will render certain features unavailable. To find out which optional requirements are missing from your system, either run the graphical installer from the generic package or install GCstar using your distribution's package manager (which will install only the mandatory requirements, not the optional as well), run the application and follow the menu *Help / Dependencies*. Both will list the optional dependencies and the name of the modules that require them. Once installed, you will find the GCstar icon under the *Sound and Video* section in Gnome main menu, or under *Office*, in KDE main menu. When running the application for the first time, it will ask you to create a collection type. You will have to choose from a 'New collection type', which you can customize, or use an existing type: books, movies, music, numismatic or video games. Once you've selected the collection you want to use, start adding items to it. To do this, simply press the Add button, enter a name and press the Fetch Information button. Depending on the collection type, you will be presented with a list of sites from where the application is able to fetch data about your item. For instance, if you have chosen a movie collection, while searching, you will be presented with a list of websites such as iMDB or Amazon, while for video games, the websites will be Gamespot and so on. When you're done adding items in the collection type, simply save it to a custom location. Unfortunately, you will have to create a new database file for each new collection you add. Therefore, you better add a bookmark for each collection type, for quick access to it. The program's interface is very clean and intuitive. The toolbar provides buttons that link to most used functions: add an item to the collection, save the collection, open the preferences dialog, search and so on. Under the toolbar, the program's interface is divided into two sections. The left section will list items from each collection, while the right section will display various information about the item selected in the left section. Here, you'll see different information fields, depending on the collection type chosen. Therefore, if you've chosen movies, you'll see here information fields such as original title, date, director, length, country, genre, cast and so on, while books type collections will display fields like publication date, publisher, pages etc. Of course, the displayed information can be customized from the Settings menu. Also from the Settings menu, one can manage the borrowers. Basically, the whole interface is changing based on the collection type you've

selected. Moreover, if the program is currently displaying items for a movie type collection and you change some options in the preferences dialog, those changes will only apply to movie type collections. Other types will use the default preferences, until they are changed as well. Creating a new collection type has proved a rather difficult thing to achieve, even if the author has done all he could to make it easier. You'll need to add a new field for each piece of information you will like to see in the right section of the interface. Moreover, you'll need to set a type for each field, as well as a group and their parameters and values, when these are available. There's also the possibility of exporting the collection in CVS, HTML, SQL, tar.gz, Tellico or XML format, as well as importing from other software, such as Ant Movie Catalog, CSV, DVD Profiler, CGfilms, Names list, .tar.gz or Tellico. The application can be customized through the Preferences dialog, found under the Settings menu. The preferences are divided into five tabs: Main, Display, Paths, Internet and Features. Almost every tab will display a few additional advanced functions when the 'Expert Mode' check box at the bottom is checked. The Main section allows you to choose the language and the skin, while the Display tab contains options regarding how the items list, layout and toolbar are displayed. The Paths section allows you to change the paths of the programs used by GCstar, while the Internet section allows you to select which sites will be used for searching items information, or whether a list of websites is displayed to the user on each search. Finally, the Features section provides basic GCstar options such as whether to show splash screen, ask for confirmation before deleting item, automatically save collection and load previous collection on start-up, as well as the history size. **The Good**GCstar is a free application for managing personal collections. By default, it can manage movies, video games, books, music or numismatic collections but also allows the user to create a custom collection type. Detailed information on each item can be fetched from Internet websites but also additional information can be manually added by the user. It's quite easy to use and provides a clean interface. It's written in Gtk2-Perl so it's able to run on basically any GNU/Linux system, as well as on MS Windows. **The Bad** Unfortunately, each collection type is saved under a different file, creating a new collection type is very difficult and the items list can't display both the image and text at the same time. **The Truth**GCstar can organize different types of items, for instance movies collections, games, books, music, numismatic or even user defined collections. Unfortunately, creating a new collection is quite difficult. However, it's a pretty good application and you should first give it a try and then decide if you want or don't want to make it a part of your software collection. *Check out some screenshots below:*