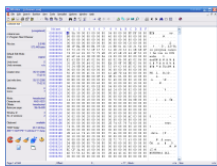


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By: Codrut Nistor, Editor, Software Reviews



## [Enter the Hex Realm!](#)

*Your guide today is Hex. WinHex*

Advanced computer security technology and adjacent domains like cryptography are not something for every one of us, but there are a lot of programs that we use and couldn't exist without. Low-level data processing or computer forensics are not topics enjoyed by everyone, but daily computer use and emergency situations may change this: inspecting and editing all kinds of files and data recovery from hard drives with corrupt file systems or from digital camera cards require hi-end software tools and some advanced knowledge in the field. As always, you can pay for it, or learn something new. A man that is not curious is half of a man. Curiosity and experimentation led the mankind forward, and fear tried to oppose them. If you're a beginner, you'll have to do some research to use this program at basic level, while in order to use WinHex's full potential, a lot of study is required, but I am sure the results will be excellent if you get it right. Oh, my! I already told you the name of today's subject! This program comes as a 1.2MB archive containing the setup files, is easy to install and has an interface a bit outdated. The trial version has some limitations, but if I think better, they are chosen in such a manner that beginners won't have the chance to tear down their computers while using it. First step into WinHex would be to open a file from your disc, any type of file. Notice the data view now. You will see the Hexadecimal and text values of the data from your file, and to the left of the main area, a panel containing many file details and the icons contained, if any. Data blocks from your files can be converted into lot of formats, you can search and replace hexadecimal and text values or search integer values, text strings and floating-point values. File editing can become pretty interesting, but now I want to jump to the strong point of this program, its tools. To access them, you can use the Tools menu (you were expecting something else, maybe??). First function, Open Disk, will read your hard drive's sectors and display their raw contents. You can access individual partitions and even certain areas, like the boot sector or the partition table. Data can also be edited, but direct disk editing should only be done when you perfectly know what you're doing! The Disk Tools can prove quite useful, allowing you to perfectly replicate a logical drive or physical media, recover deleted files, take snapshots and more. Unfortunately you won't be able to recover files larger than 200KB with this trial version... The file tools can concatenate, split, compare or securely delete the files that you chose. The Unify and Dissect options can be used in EEPROM programming, and I'll leave them for the professionals. The Open RAM command can view and edit the physical RAM/main memory and the virtual memory of a process that is running on your computer. The trial version can only view this data, and this is for a good reason, because even the smallest misuse of this feature can lead to an operating system crash. I'll stop at the Specialist area and give you this advice: check the online knowledge base accessible from the Help menu, there's a lot of interesting information available there, and I can assure you it will make your life a lot easier with WinHex. If you want more than just click buttons or drag sliders, get this handy application and enter the hexadecimal innards of your computer. Absolute power is only one click away! **The Good** This program is small, fast and, above everything, powerful. It doesn't have a great Help system and your kids won't like it for sure (unless you're a NASA scientist and your children will finish high school at 10 and college at 12...). The good thing about it is that you have a lot of useful online resources that can really count if you study them well. **The Bad** Most beginners and average users may feel like an old man driving a Formula 1 car when starting their first WinHex experience. The trial version is limited in such a way that for proper advanced use you have to buy the full version, and the Help system looks ancient. **The Truth** If you want to start exploring the hexadecimal world

and what lies beyond it, WinHex is a great way to start. You must arm yourselves with a lot of patience, have a clean head and take it step by step. Hard work always gives satisfaction, but achieving this goal it's only up to you. I wish you good luck and a useful experience!*Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*