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O&O VisualDisk Documentation

Follow write activity by process and file, and measure the cost of fragmentation on your drive.

This English user guide explains how to get started, use the main features and interpret the results. Choose a chapter from the sidebar, or follow one of the links below.

- [First Steps](#): complete your first session.
- [Feature Overview](#): find the right workflow.
- [System Requirements](#): check access and prerequisites.
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#): resolve common questions.
- [Support](#): prepare a support request.

O&O VisualDisk is currently supplied as part of O&O Defrag and requires that host product to start.

Feature Overview

Follow write activity by process and file, and measure the cost of fragmentation on your drive.

Feature	Learn how to use it
Write Activity and the Cluster Map	Read the guide
Processes and Files	Read the guide
Running a Fragmentation Benchmark	Read the guide
Understanding Benchmark Results	Read the guide

Start with First Steps for a complete first session. See [System requirements](#) for access and operating requirements.

The chapters describe the controls available in the current application. A feature may be unavailable when its required Windows service, device information or permissions are missing.

System Requirements

Windows and the application package

Use the Windows application package supplied for your computer by O&O Software or by the O&O product that includes this tool. The current application targets Windows 10 and Windows 11. Individual features depend on the operating-system version, services, permissions and hardware available.

Administrator rights and at least one detected fixed drive are required. The current version only starts when O&O Defrag is registered as its installed host product. The benchmark also needs writable free space for temporary test files.

Before starting

Keep the application in a writable, stable location when using a portable distribution. Use the complete O&O-supplied package for your architecture; copying one file out of a development build may omit required runtime components.

A browser is sufficient to read this online manual. The manual itself does not install the Windows application. Network access is needed to open online help and support pages or check for application updates.

First Steps

1. Open **O&O VisualDisk** from your installed O&O Defrag environment. The current version requires O&O Defrag to be registered as its host product.
2. Approve the administrator prompt. Write monitoring uses Windows system tracing.
3. On **Write activity**, choose the drive you want to monitor.
4. Allow normal disk activity to occur. Watch the cluster map, write counters and process list.
5. Select a process to see the files it has written. Select an available file or process to identify its blocks on the map.
6. Choose **Pause** to freeze the display for inspection, then **Resume** to continue. Use **Reset** when you want a fresh observation period.
7. For a read-speed comparison, open **Fragmentation benchmark** and follow Running a benchmark.

VisualDisk works with detected fixed drives, including hard disks and SSDs. If no suitable drive is detected, it cannot start a monitoring session. It does not require the selected drive to be an SSD.

Write Activity and the Cluster Map

The **Write activity** page visualizes writes Windows reports for the selected drive. It helps you see which processes write data and where those writes land.

Understand the map

Legend item	Meaning
Allocated	Space occupied on the drive.
Free	Space available on the drive.
Written just now	Blocks affected by recent writes.
Written earlier	Blocks written during the observation period.
Active writes of the selected process	Recent writes associated with the selected process.

One visible map block represents multiple file-system clusters. The map subtitle tells you the grouping and corresponding size. A highlighted square is therefore not necessarily a single file or one hardware flash page.

Counters

The summary shows data written since the current observation started, write operations, average write size and a recent write-rate history. These describe writes reported by Windows for the selected drive. They are not lifetime SMART totals or direct measurements of SSD wear.

Pause and reset

Pause stops applying new writes to the display, freezing the map and counters. **Resume** continues observation; the paused interval is not added back as a historical recording. **Reset** clears counters, process and file lists and written-block marks for a fresh session.

The page focuses on writes. Use the benchmark page when you want to compare read performance.

Processes and Files

The process list groups observed writes by the process that Windows reports. The **Written** value shows the amount recorded, and **Share** helps compare contributions.

Inspect a writer

1. Choose the drive on **Write activity**.
2. Wait for writes to appear in **Processes**.
3. Select a process. The Files panel changes to show files written by that process.
4. Select an available entry to inspect the corresponding area of the map.
5. Pause the display if you need time to compare the counters and highlighted blocks.

In Settings, **Dim other blocks when something is selected** controls whether unrelated blocks recede. With that option off, a frame marks the selected blocks instead.

Unavailable names

Windows tracing does not always provide a usable process or file name. VisualDisk can show **Process name not available** or **File name not available** while still counting the observed write. An unknown name is not evidence of malware.

Interpret the workload

Updates, downloads, browser caches and backups can generate writes during normal operation. VisualDisk observes these operations; selecting a process does not stop it or change its files. Investigate an unexpected writer in its owning application before deciding whether to change its behavior.

Running a Fragmentation Benchmark

The benchmark compares unbuffered sequential reads of a contiguous test file with reads of a fragmented test file on the same drive. It creates temporary test data and removes it afterwards.

Start a measurement

1. Open **Fragmentation benchmark**.
2. Choose **Drive**, **File size**, **Fragments** and **Read passes per file**.
3. Read the estimated temporary-write amount below the settings.
4. Choose **Measure now** and confirm the temporary writes.
5. Wait while VisualDisk prepares the drive, writes and reads the contiguous file, writes and reads the fragmented file, and removes the test data.
6. Review the verdict and charts. Choose **Copy report** to preserve the result.

Close unrelated disk-intensive applications for a more comparable measurement. Ensure enough free space for both the test data and normal Windows activity. The test is not a cleanup or defragmentation operation and does not reorganize your existing files.

Cancel or repeat

Cancel finishes the current pass and removes temporary test files, so it may not stop immediately. Let cleanup complete before closing the application.

Use **Measure again** for another run. If you change the setup, the previous result is marked as belonging to the earlier settings until you measure again.

If the benchmark uses the same drive as **Write activity**, you can observe the test-file writes on that page.

Understanding Benchmark Results

The result compares the read behavior of the two test files on the selected drive.

Verdict and comparison

The throughput comparison uses the best read pass for each file. The factor indicates how much slower the fragmented case was in that run. The latency chart compares the time required for read requests, including the median and higher percentiles.

The benchmark reports actual fragments as well as the number requested. If it cannot produce a meaningful fragmented test file, it reports an inconclusive measurement. The requested fragment count alone does not prove that the intended layout was achieved.

Inspect the detail sections

Section	Useful information
All values	Extents, throughput, IOPS, latency, CPU time, device reads and split requests.
Measurement setup	Drive, media type, file system, cluster size, file size, block size and duration.
Individual passes	Values for every read pass, useful for spotting variation.

Higher throughput means more data read per second. Lower latency means less time per request. The 95th and 99th percentiles describe the slower end of the request distribution rather than the average request.

Some device-level values may be unavailable and appear as **n/a**. Treat that as missing measurement data, not zero activity.

Limits of the comparison

The result applies to these test files, parameters and system conditions. It is not a universal prediction for every workload or a drive-health test. If background activity or insufficient free space interferes, address that condition and repeat with the same setup before comparing results.

Settings and Updates

Open **Settings** from the main window. **Show the explanation boxes** controls the introductory text on both pages. **Dim other blocks when something is selected** controls how the map highlights a selected process or file.

Language and appearance

The General settings let you choose a language and display mode. Light and dark modes control the application's appearance; a system-based choice follows Windows. A changed language can require an application restart; follow the message in the dialog and finish active work first.

When this tool runs as part of an O&O product, it can offer an option to follow that product's language and appearance.

Application updates

The **Updates** page controls automatic update checks and shows the last check and its result. Use **Check now** to check manually. A newer version is announced in the main window's status bar; choosing it asks before downloading and applying an update.

The normal automatic check runs at most once per day when the application starts. An available update is not downloaded merely because a background check found it. The update process validates the downloaded application and restarts the tool to replace it.

Finish active work before updating. If the package cannot replace itself, the update action opens the download page instead. Checks are suppressed in a Windows recovery environment.

An application update changes the tool itself. It is separate from the Windows or file-system operations described in the feature chapters.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does VisualDisk say it must be part of O&O Defrag?

The current application requires an installed O&O Defrag host registration. Launch it through your O&O Defrag installation. Repair the host installation if the registration is unexpectedly missing.

Do I need an SSD?

The current UI supports detected fixed drives, including hard disks and SSDs. At least one suitable drive must be available.

Why are no writes shown?

Check the selected drive and whether the page is paused. The drive may be idle. If system tracing cannot start, record the error and confirm that you approved administrator access.

Does the map measure SSD wear?

No. It shows writes reported by Windows and their mapped locations. It is not a direct measurement of flash wear or remaining drive life.

Does the benchmark defragment my files?

No. It creates and reads temporary test files, then removes them. It measures a comparison without reorganizing existing files.

Why is a measurement inconclusive?

The actual test-file fragmentation may be insufficient for a meaningful comparison. Review the reported extents and free space before trying again.

Why does cancellation take time?

The benchmark completes the current pass and cleans up temporary files before finishing cancellation.

Support and More from O&O

Get help

Press **F1** or use the help button to open online help for the current window.

For assistance, visit O&O Software Support. Include:

- The O&O VisualDisk version and your Windows version.
- The steps that led to the problem.
- The exact message and any error code.
- Relevant findings or log excerpts, if available.

Review reports and logs before sharing them: they can include file paths, process names or other machine details.

Product information

See the O&O product catalog for downloads, product descriptions and licensing information for the package you use. If this tool was supplied with another O&O product, include that product's name and version in your support request.

O&O Software also offers tools for backup, recovery, storage optimization and Windows administration. Choose a tool according to the task you need to perform; reading this manual does not install or activate another product.