



RegSvr

User Manual

Overview

RegSvr is a context menu extension for Microsoft Explorer that lets you register and un-register Active-X/COM servers (.DLL files) directly from the right-click menu. Besides convenient registration, it provides features that are especially useful for developers, such as overcoming a locked .DLL that can't be overwritten after un-registering, and a built-in tool to inspect which shell extensions are currently registered and active on your system.

When RegSvr is installed, right-clicking a .DLL file in Explorer shows a RegSvr menu with entries to Register, UnRegister, show all active shell extensions, configure RegSvr, and get help.

Installing RegSvr (Registering the DLL)

Before RegSvr's context menu is available, RegSvr.dll itself must be registered with Windows. This is done manually, on purpose - so you can see and understand how registering and unregistering DLL-based Active-X/COM servers actually works.

1. Download the RegSvr.dll file from the RegSvr website.
2. Copy the file to a folder in your file system.
3. Open the Command line (CMD) and run in Administrator mode.
4. Change directory to the folder where you copied RegSvr.dll (cd xxx).
5. Register RegSvr.dll with the following command: `regsvr32 RegSvr.dll`

Once registered, right-clicking any .DLL file in Explorer will show the RegSvr menu described below. To remove RegSvr later, run "`regsvr32 /u RegSvr.dll`" the same way.

The RegSvr Context Menu

Right-click any .DLL file to see the RegSvr menu:

- Register (default action - also runs on double-click)
- UnRegister
- Show Active Shell Extensions
- Configuration (submenu)
- Help



Register

Register is the default action of RegSvr. It runs when you double-click the RegSvr menu item, or click Register directly. Register calls the Windows registration command, `regsvr32.exe`, with administrator

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rights, so Windows will ask for permission to run elevated - this is required to register an Active-X/COM server.

When permission is given, the server is registered. In Silent mode (see Configuration) a message is only shown if the registration failed.

The Register action is the same as: 1) opening the command line (CMD) in admin mode, 2) calling "regsvr32 <full file name>" (or "regsvr32 /s <full file name>" in Silent mode).



UnRegister

UnRegister deregisters the Active-X/COM server. It also requires administrator privileges. In Silent mode, RegSvr only reports if the unregistration failed.

The UnRegister action is the same as: 1) opening the command line (CMD) in admin mode, 2) calling "regsvr32 /u <full file name>" (or "regsvr32 /u /s <full file name>" in Silent mode).



Show Active Shell Extensions

This opens a list of every context-menu shell extension currently registered on your system - not just RegSvr's own. For each one it shows the category it is registered under, its name, its CLSID, the path to its .DLL, and whether that .DLL is currently loaded (Active) in a running Explorer process.

This is especially useful when a shell extension misbehaves or will not unload: you can check whether it is still active without digging through the registry by hand. A search box filters the list by name, CLSID, or path as you type, and a "Hide system DLLs" checkbox (ticked by default) hides Windows' own built-in extensions so you can focus on third-party ones.

For Shell Extension Developers

RegSvr provides features that are especially useful for developers who build Windows Shell Extensions. Developers need to register and unregister the DLL containing the Shell Extension very often, to test and update the code. When unregistering a Shell Extension, Explorer still keeps the DLL locked, so the DLL cannot be overwritten or deleted - and building a new version fails. Normally this needs manual workarounds, like restarting Explorer or rebooting.

RegSvr solves this two ways, both configurable under RegSvr > Configuration:

- Open New Explorer: after UnRegister, closes the original Explorer window and opens a new one at the same path. Quick and unobtrusive, but only affects the one Explorer window you were working in.
- Confirm & Restart Explorer: after Register or UnRegister, asks for confirmation, then closes all open Explorer windows and restarts Explorer entirely, reopening every window at the path it was at before. This is the more thorough option when a shell extension still will not fully unload after just reopening one window.



Configuration

RegSvr is configured directly from the context menu, under RegSvr > Configuration - a submenu of

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checkable options, no separate window needed. Each item shows a checkmark for its current state, and clicking it toggles that setting immediately.

- Open New Explorer: see "For Shell Extension Developers" above. Checked by default.
- Silent: Register and UnRegister will only show a message if the command actually failed. Checked by default.
- Confirm & Restart Explorer: see "For Shell Extension Developers" above. Unchecked by default, since it is more disruptive.
- Win11 Classic Context Menu: restores the full Windows 10-style context menu for all applications, system-wide, so entries like RegSvr's appear directly instead of behind "Show more options." This is a systemwide Windows setting, not specific to RegSvr, so use it if you would generally prefer the classic menu back. Toggling it asks to restart Explorer to apply the change. Unchecked by default.

Windows 11 Note

On Windows 11, the RegSvr menu (like all classic shell extensions) appears under "Show more options" rather than directly in the top-level right-click menu. You can either select "Show more options" each time, use SHIFT+RIGHT-CLICK as a shortcut, or enable the Win11 Classic Context Menu option described above to restore the full classic menu everywhere.

Version History

v1.0: initial release. Known issue: in Silent Mode, UnRegister could crash Explorer and leave the DLL unregistered.

v1.1: fixed the Silent Mode UnRegister crash.

v2.0: hardened the UnRegister flow against a crash that could occur if the administrator prompt was cancelled; added the Show Active Shell Extensions tool; added the Confirm & Restart Explorer and Win11 Classic Context Menu options; moved Configuration into the context menu as checkable items; simplified Help.



Help

Help shows a quick popup with a short summary of RegSvr and how to reach us - no separate window to manage, just the essentials.

Contact and Feedback

If you have any friendly feedback, please contact: delphi@ugarbe.de