

PlasmaEPG v2.20
Informative EPG

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1 Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

1.1 How do I get started with PlasmaEPG?

1. Open PlasmaEPG's main view by pressing '*Guide*' key.
2. Go to settings menu by pressing '*Menu*' key.
3. Configure channels from channel settings menu.
4. Do a quick search to get program information shown.
5. Read all other FAQ sections

1.2 How do I know which keys can be used in PlasmaEPG?

Each view and window in PlasmaEPG contains a help feature, which can be activated by pressing '*Mute*' key. The opened dialog shows all available keys in current window and the keys can be also redefined as necessary by pressing '*Ok*' key.

1.3 How do I navigate in PlasmaEPG?

There are two modes in the main view related to the visibility of cursor:

- General view (Cursor not visible)
- Cursor view (Cursor is visible)

The purpose of the general view is to allow fast scrolling of program information and getting the big picture of programs. The cursor view allows channel and program specific operations to be done and also shows program information at the bottom of the screen. Cursor can be toggled on and off by pressing '*Ok*' key.

1.4 How do I define a favorite program?

Programs can be marked as a favorite in PlasmaEPG by pressing '*Fav*' key when a program is selected. When the key is pressed, a favorite edit dialog is shown containing all the properties of a favorite. Favorite's display color can be configured by selecting a proper favorite category. When '*Fav*' key is pressed again in the favorite edit dialog, search results for the favorite are shown. When favorite's properties are set, changes can be saved by pressing *Save* button. Favorite's search text and excluding search text can be defined using wildcards (* and ?) to cover wider range of programs. For more information see 2.2.

1.5 How can I create, modify or delete a timer?

A new timer can be created by pressing '*Record*' key when a program is selected. Existing timers can be deleted or modified using the same key.

1.6 How can I create an automatic timer?

Automatic timers are tightly linked to favorites in PlasmaEPG. A new automatic timer can be created by pressing 'Fav' key when a program is selected. Before saving changes in the opened dialog, *Timer automation* property must be changed to *Automatic (VCR) timer*. Timers are automatically created/updated/deleted when closing the dialog.

1.7 What different views exist in PlasmaEPG?

In addition to the main view, there are 5 subviews in PlasmaEPG: current programs, timers, favorites, favorite categories and movies.

1.7.1 Current programs

Current programs subview can be opened by pressing 'White' key in the main view or 'OK' key in standby. The subview lists all channels and current programs at glance. Next and previous programs can be displayed with 'V+' and 'V-' keys. When pressing 'Recall' key once, current programs are shown again. When pressing twice, the current program in currently watched channel is selected. If you press 'V-' key when current programs are shown, the progress bar will change into remaining time information. This subview cannot be opened directly from standby when watching a recording.

1.7.2 Timers

Timers subview can be opened by pressing 'Red' key in the main view. The subview lists all timers and allows them to be modified or deleted as necessary.

1.7.3 Favorites

Favorites subview can be opened by pressing 'Green' key. The subview summaries all user configured favorites and allows an easy way to adjust favorites' priorities in relation to each other. If 'Record' key is pressed in the subview, a list containing all automatically recorded programs is shown. An alternative way to display the list is to press 'Record' key in the main view when cursor is not visible (general view).

1.7.4 Favorite categories

'Yellow' key opens *Favorite categories* subview. The purpose of this view is to list all favorite programs linked to a certain favorite category. There is also possibility to show all favorite programs in a single list. Press 'Mute' key to see available keys for changing between favorite categories.

1.7.5 Movies

Movies subview can be opened by pressing 'Blue' key. The subview lists all recognized movies and allows them to be sorted either by date, time, timer, name or channel. The same kind sorting feature exist in all subviews. The list is populated by movie recognition algorithm, which is described in more detail in section 1.8.

1.8 How movie recognition works?

PlasmaEPG can be configured to display movies in the GUI with blue color and special marker. Movie recognition is only based on search terms which are used to analyze program name and description. Search terms can be configured in *PlasmaEPG.mov* file found from */ProgramFiles/PlasmaEPG* folder.

1.9 How program information is updated in PlasmaEPG?

There are three ways to get program information updated in PlasmaEPG: quick search, background search and deep search. All searches use the same engine meaning that program information is copied from Topfield's original program info database to PlasmaEPG's database. The difference between searches are their purpose of usage.

1.9.1 Quick search

Quick search can be started manually from Settings Menu. The purpose of quick search is to populate PlasmaEPG's database as soon as possible when some program information is missing. This is to be used only once after channels are (re)configured in PlasmaEPG.

1.9.2 Background search

Background search populates PlasmaEPG's program information database in the background at certain intervals. The interval and other settings related to program database can be configured in *Settings* -> *General settings*. With newer firmware versions (3.xx), it is enough to run background search only once about 5 minutes from Topfield's startup, because newer firmwares populate program information for all channels in the background. If there are channels that broadcast program information only a couple of hours ahead, it may be necessary to set background interval for an hour or two.

1.9.3 Deep search

Deep search can be used instead of background search if program information is desired to be updated once at the night time. Deep search is suggested to be used with older firmwares (2.xx), because Topfield's program information database is not populated completely in the background. Deep search starts each configured channel for defined time period and activates Topfield's internal program information search. This takes some time and therefore deep search is suggested to be used only at the night time. Deep search does not start until Topfield is set on when search is scheduled to be started. Therefore a VCR timer must be created manually for the whole time period of deep search (1 hour should be enough).

2 Menus and dialogs

2.1 Timer

In timer menu the user can modify timer's file name, date, start and stop times, start and stop paddings and timer type. In addition to the delete button, a timer can also be deleted directly by pressing '*Stop*' key.

2.2 Favorite

Favorite's search terms and timer automation properties can be modified in favorite menu. When defining favorite's search text or excluding search text, wildcards (* and ?) can be used to cover wider range of programs at once. For example, if favorite's search text is defined as **news**, all programs containing a word *news* are marked as a favorite. It is important to notice that search texts are **case insensitive!**

Favorite's search results can be listed directly from the menu by pressing '*Fav*' key. The default value of each property in the menu can be restored by pressing '*Recall*' key when the cursor is on the property. All properties not having the default value are emphasized with red color.

All timers covered by the favorite being edited are updated when closing the menu. In addition to the delete button, a favorite can also be deleted directly by pressing '*Stop*' key.

2.2.1 General properties

- ***Search text***
Favorite's search text which can include wildcards.
- ***Search target***
Favorite's search target can be program name, description or the both.
- ***Shortcut key***
A shortcut key can be defined for each favorite allowing favorite's search results to be shown with a single key press in the main view. If any of main view's keys in use is mapped to the same key, the shortcut key won't work.
- ***Priority***
Priority affects to the favorite program coloring in GUI when two favorites cover the same program. Priority affects also to the order in which automatic timers are created.
- ***Favorite category***
Category defines display color for the favorite.

2.2.2 Timer automation

- ***Timer automation***
Defines whether programs covered by the favorite are recorded automatically. Record or VCR timer mode can be selected.

- **Validity**
Defines start date for automatic timer creation.
- **Start padding**
Defines start padding for an automatic timer.
- **Stop padding**
Defines stop padding for an automatic timer.
- **Preserve paddings**
Preserving paddings means that in two timer conflict situation, paddings defined for this favorite are tried to be preserved even though the timer related to the conflicting favorite would not cover the whole program.
- **Tuner**
A tuner used with automatic timer creation. Options are T1, T2 and T4 (automatic). If set-top-box doesn't support tuner T4 (combo models), automatic timers are created using the correct tuner automatically. Thus, by selecting tuner T1 or T2 in combo model, automatic timer creation can be restricted for those channels that are linked to the tuner.

2.2.3 Search restrictions

- **Channels**
Restricts the set of channels to be the searched.
- **Days of week**
Restricts the set of weekdays to be the searched. Commonly used weekday combinations can be selected quickly with 'V+' and 'V-' keys.
- **Search window start**
Restricts the time window smaller.
- **Search window end**
Restricts the time window smaller.
- **Excluding search text**
If program's target field for excluding search text contains this text, the program is not covered by the favorite. Excluding search text can contain wildcards. Commonly used texts can be selected easily by pressing 'V+' ja 'V-' keys. The list of predefined text templates can be found in *PlasmaEPG.ini* file by searching section *ExcludingSearchStringTemplates*. '|' character is used as a list separator.
- **Excluding search text target**
Favorite's excluding search text target can be program name, description or the both.

2.3 Key configuration

Keys linked to different actions can be defined in key configuration menu for each view separately. The current key of an action can be changed by pressing 'Ok' key.

2.4 Settings

2.4.1 Start quick search...

Starts a quick search for program information (see 1.9.1).

2.4.2 Channel settings

In order to show program information, channels must be configured to PlasmaEPG before program information search. There are altogether 12 channels slots as a default in PlasmaEPG, but the number of slots can be increased from general settings (see 2.4.3). No gaps are allowed in channel definitions. Channels are displayed in the main view using the order of the list.

2.4.3 General settings

1. *Automatic background search*
Defines whether background search for program information is in use.
2. *Automatic background search interval*
Defines the search interval for background search.
3. *Start delay for automatic background search*
Defines how many minutes are waited before running background search for the first time.
4. *Allow background search during recording*
Defines whether background search is allowed during recording.
5. *Automatic database save to disk*
Defines whether program information database is saved to the disk after search.
6. *Automatic deep search for programs*
Defines whether deep search is enabled.
7. *Start time of deep search*
A time to run deep search.
8. *Search time per channel for deep search*
Search time in seconds for each channel during deep search.
9. *Channel changing threshold for quick search*
A time in seconds that number of found programs is required to be constant before changing to the next channel in quick search.
10. *Channels manually updated from an external source*
A list of channels that are updated from an external source, such as Internet. Program information is never search for these channels by PlasmaEPG.
11. *Description Extender patch*
If the firmware is patched with Description Extender patch, the setting should be enabled.

12. ***Extended program information***
When using extended program information, additional information field is used as a source of program descriptions. If Description Extender TAP is in use, this settings should be enabled. When using extended program information, the program description displayed in PlasmaEPG GUI is formed as a combination of normal short description and extended information if they differ from each other. It's worth noting that some stability issues may arise in some set-top-boxes with newer 3.XX firmwares when this setting is enabled.
13. ***The number of channel slots***
The number of channel slots per channel should be selected as small as possible to minimize memory consumption.
14. ***Maximum amount of programs per channel slot***
Memory consumption can be made smaller by decreasing the amount of programs per channel slot.
15. ***Use logical channel numbers (LCN)***
Using logical channel numbers is recommended if set-top-box has support for them. Otherwise this setting must be disabled and direct Topfield's channel indexes are used instead.
16. ***View navigation model***
Changes behavior of the cursor between channels in the main view.
17. ***Navigation model within a channel***
Changes behavior of the cursor within a channel in the main view.
18. ***Time shift in 3 channel view***
Number of hours shifted when pressing 'P+' or 'P-' key in the 3 channel view.
19. ***Time shift in 6 channel view***
Number of hours shifted when pressing 'P+' or 'P-' key in the 6 channel view.
20. ***Action linked to double click 'Ok'***
Defines the action of double click 'Ok' in the main view.
21. ***Movie markup***
Defines the way of displaying movies in the main view.
22. ***Movie channels***
A list of channels in which all programs are marked as movies.
23. ***Movie markup of movie channels***
Defines the way of displaying movies in the "movie channels" in the main view.
24. ***GUI font***
GUI font can be selected from 3 alternatives.

25. **Font size**
Normal or large font size can be used in PlasmaEPG. If the large font is selected, text size in the main view and all subviews is larger, but text size in submenus and dialogs remains normal. When using the large font, 2 or 4 channels are displayed in the main view instead of 3 or 6. Program description at the bottom of the main view is also restricted to 3 rows with the large font.
26. **EPG fading effect**
Enables or disables fading effect when opening and closing the main view.
27. **Program description at bottom of 3 channel view**
The number of rows used for displaying program description in the 3 channel view.
28. **Program description at bottom of 6 channel view**
The number of rows used for displaying program description in the 6 channel view.
29. **Style for current program**
Progress of the current program can be shown with a progress bar (2 alternatives) or time left information.
30. **A range of program duration to display progress bar**
This settings applies only if current program is displayed using progress bar. In that case, the progress bar is displayed only within the selected procentual range of program's duration. The progress of current program is always displayed using time left information outside the selected range.
31. **EPG transparency level**
EPG transparency level (0%-50%).
32. **Threshold for loading settings after startup**
The number of seconds to wait before loading PlasmaEPG's settings after startup. If the setting is set to 0, PlasmaEPG's settings are loaded immediately resulting longer delay when starting the program.
33. **Restart of recording after power failure**
Defines whether interrupted recordings are restarted after power failure or crash caused by an erroneous program code. The feature may require AutoReboot tap or firmware patch to be installed to set-to-box in order to get it rebooted automatically when needed. Automatic reboot feature is included in standard firmwares of some Topfield models. Recording state is saved to disk to *PlasmaEPG.rrec* file when recording is started and after that using 15 min intervals. If you turn off set-top-box while it's recording and you don't wait until the recording ends, the recording is automatically restarted if set-top-box is turned on again before the original end time of the recording. This happens, because there is no time to update *PlasmaEPG.rrec* file before shutdown.
34. **Open EPG main view on startup**
Defines whether PlasmaEPG's main view is automatically opened when starting the EPG. If any remote key is pressed during EPG's startup, the main view is not opened, even if the setting is enabled.

2.4.4 Timer settings

In this menu different settings related to timers can be adjusted to meet the needs of the user. Default padding means time that is added to the start/end of a timer when creating a new timer. Acceptable lacking/extra times are used to allow some difference in start and end times of the timer related to the program information before displaying the timer with a yellow marker in GUI.

1. ***Default start padding***
2. ***Default stop padding***
3. ***Acceptable extra time at the start of a program***
4. ***Acceptable lacking time at the start of a program***
5. ***Acceptable lacking time at the end of a program***
6. ***Acceptable extra time at the end of a program***
7. ***Automatic timer creation***
Defines whether automatic timer creation is in use.
8. ***Automatic timer creation on startup***
If in use, automatic timer creation is always run once on startup.
9. ***Automatic timer creation logging***
Defines whether a log file for automatic timer creation is in use. The log file is rewritten during every timer creation cycle to the file `"/Program Files/PlasmaEPG/PlasmaEPG_AutoTimer.log"`.
10. ***Automatic timer creation time frame forward***
Defines how many full days ahead automatic timers are created.
11. ***Minimum priority required to modify manually created timer***
Minimum favorite priority required to modify manually created timer in timer conflict situation. The main purpose of the setting is to prevent modifying manually created timers if desired.
12. ***Default padding for consecutive timers on the same channel***
When there are two overlapping timers on the same channel, this padding is used at the end of the first timer.
13. ***Default padding for consecutive timers on different channel***
When there are two overlapping timers on different channels, this padding is used at the end of the first timer.
14. ***Default tuner***
Default tuner which is set for automatically created timers. This tuner is also set as a default when creating a new favorite.
15. ***Postfix for recording filename***
Defines whether recording date is appended to a recording file name. Date format can be selected between YYYY-MM-DD and MMDD.
16. ***Fix Windows incompatible recording filenames***
Defines whether all Windows incompatible characters are fixed in the recording filename.

2.4.5 Startup settings

Startup settings stand for a state in which PlasmaEPG's main view is when opening the program guide. Each property can have one of 3 different options: yes, no and keep. With the keep option, property's current state will be preserved when opening the main view, but the saved initial state is always restored when starting PlasmaEPG. Current states of all properties having the keep option are saved as an initial state when pressing the save button in the menu.

- Six channels view
- Show past programs
- Cursor view
- Show program description at the bottom of the main view

2.4.6 Color settings

Colors for different parts of GUI can be defined in this menu.

2.4.7 Main view key configuration

In main view key configuration menu, keys that are used in the main view can be defined. The menu can also be opened directly from the main view by pressing '*Mute*' key.

2.4.8 Standby key configuration

PlasmaEPG's standby mode is used as a definition for the state in which the EPG is when it is not visible. In this menu, keys for opening PlasmaEPG directly to the certain subview can be configured. In addition to this, a key can also be configured for saving the program information database to the disk immediately.

2.4.9 Favorite categories

In PlasmaEPG a program can be marked as a favorite and the favorite is always related to some favorite category. These favorite categories can be modified through this menu. There are 15 different categories whose names and colors can be modified. Favorite programs are always shown in the GUI with the color defined by the linked favorite category. A color for a category can be defined using RGB color model, meaning that the final color is constructed from red, green and blue color components. The value range for each component is 0-255. The value for each component can be changed using two keys (press '*Mute*' key for help). For example, color definition (75, 235, 75) means that red component has value of 75, green value of 233 and blue value of 75.

2.4.10 Program guide position

PlasmaEPG's viewing area can be centered using this command.

3 Troubleshooting

3.1 Logging

There is a built-in logging feature in PlasmaEPG that can be activated by editing *PlasmaEPG_Logging.ini* file. The file contains logging level settings for certain types of functionality. Default logging level is 0 meaning that the functionality is not logged at all. By changing the value to 1, major trace messages are written to the log file. More detailed messages can be printed by increasing the logging level (if supported by a functionality). Log files are written to *PlasmaEPG/Logs* folder. *PlasmaEPG_Logging.ini* must be saved in UNIX file format.