

# spmenu(1) 1.0 | fancy dynamic menu

## spmenu

spmenu is a program for X11 that reads standard input and allows the user to select items separated by a newline. It's a fork of [suckless's dmenu](#) which is a good more minimal alternative to spmenu.

What makes spmenu different from all the dmenu forks is that spmenu has features like color support, Vim-like modes, image support, proper mouse/keybind configuration, and more.

It should be noted that most of these features may be disabled by the user, either during compile time or through configuration.

## Usage

On runtime, spmenu reads from standard input (stdin). spmenu items are separated by a newline (`\n`). When (by default) Enter is pressed, the selected item will be piped to stdout.

This allows things like `printf "Apple\nOrange\nPear\n" | spmenu`. This command will spawn an spmenu window with three items, 'Apple', 'Orange' and 'Pear'. This can be used in shell scripts to create interactive menus.

On top of this, you can specify arguments to change the behavior of spmenu. See a list below for a list.

## Arguments

You may use long, descriptive arguments or the shorter arguments.

-mh, --line-height height  
Set spmenu line height to height

-mw, --min-width width  
Set minimum width to width

-g, --columns grid  
Set the number of grids to grid

-gc, --generate-cache  
Generate image cache

-ngc, --no-generate-cache  
Don't generate image cache

-mc, --max-cache size  
Set max image cache size to size

-rw, --relative-width  
Enable relative input width

-nrw, --no-relative-width  
Disable relative input width

-f, --fast  
Grabs keyboard before reading stdin

-F, --fuzzy  
Enable fuzzy matching

-NF, --no-fuzzy  
Disable fuzzy matching

-P, --password  
Hide characters

-nP, --no-password  
Don't hide characters

-p, --prompt text  
Set spmenu prompt text to text

-It, --input text  
Set initial input text to text

-ip, --indent  
Indent items to prompt width

-nip, --no-indent  
Don't indent items to prompt width

-ci, --color-items  
Color items

-nci, --no-color-items  
Don't color items

-sgr, --sgr  
Interpret SGR sequences

-nsgr, --no-sgr  
Display SGR sequences as text

-a, --alpha  
Enable alpha

-na, --no-alpha  
Disable alpha

-tp, --allow-typing  
Allow the user to type

-nt, --no-allow-typing  
Don't allow typing, the user must select an option

-x, --x-position x offset  
Offset spmenu x position by x offset

-y, --y-position y offset  
Offset spmenu y position by y offset

-n, --preselect line  
Preselect line line in the list of items

-z, --width width  
Width of the spmenu window

-nmt, --normal-mode-text text  
Set normal mode text to text

-imt, --insert-mode-text text  
Set insert mode text to text

-clon, --caps-lock-on-text text  
Set caps lock on text to text

-clof, --caps-lock-off-text text  
Set caps lock off text to text

-bw, --border-width width  
Set width of the border to width . 0 will disable the border

-so, --sort  
Sort matches

-nso, --no-sort  
Don't sort matches

-pri, --priority pri1,pri2,pri3  
Specify a list of items that take priority

-s, --case-sensitive  
Use case-sensitive matching

-ns, --case-insensitive  
Use case-insensitive matching

-nm, --normal  
Start spmenu in normal mode

-im, --insert  
Start spmenu in insert mode

-t, --top  
Position spmenu at the top of the screen

-b, --bottom  
Position spmenu at the bottom of the screen

-c, --center  
Position spmenu at the center of the screen

-hm, --hide-mode  
Hide mode indicator

-hit, --hide-item  
Hide items

-hmc, --hide-match-count  
Hide match count

-hla, --hide-left-arrow  
Hide left arrow

-hra, --hide-right-arrow  
Hide right arrow

-hpr, --hide-prompt  
Hide prompt

-hip, --hide-input  
Hide input

-hpl, --hide-powerline  
Hide powerline

-hc, --hide-caret, --hide-cursor  
Hide caret

-hhl, --hide-highlighting  
Hide highlight

-hi, --hide-image  
Hide image

-hcl, --hide-caps  
Hide caps lock indicator

-sm, --show-mode  
Show mode indicator

-sit, --show-item  
Show items

-smc, --show-match-count  
Show match count

-sla, --show-left-arrow  
Show left arrow

-sra, --show-right-arrow  
Show right arrow

-spr, --show-prompt  
Show prompt

-sin, --show-input  
Show input

-spl, --show-powerline  
Show powerline

-sc, --show-caret, --show-cursor  
Show caret

-shl, --show-highlighting  
Show highlight

-si, --show-image  
Show image

-scl, --show-caps  
Show caps lock indicator

-xrdb, --xrdb  
Load .Xresources on runtime

-nxd, --no-xrdb  
Don't load .Xresources on runtime

-gbc, --global-colors  
Recognize global colors (such as \*.color1) on runtime

-ngbc, --no-global-colors  
Don't recognize global colors (such as \*.color1) on runtime

-m, --monitor monitor  
Specify a monitor to run spmenu on

-w, --embed window id  
Embed spmenu inside window id

-H, --hist-file hist file  
Specify a path to save the history to

-ig, --image-gaps gaps  
Set image gaps to gaps

-txp, --text-padding padding  
Set text padding to padding

-vem, --vertical-margin margin  
Set the vertical margin

-hem, --horizontal-margin margin  
Set the horizontal margin

-lp, --vertical-padding padding  
Set the vertical padding

-hp, --horizontal-padding padding  
Set the horizontal padding

-la, --left-arrow-symbol symbol  
Set the left arrow to symbol

-ra, --right-arrow-symbol symbol  
Set the right arrow to symbol

-is, --image-size size  
Image size

-it, --image-top  
Position the image at the top

-ib, --image-bottom  
Position the image at the bottom

-ic, --image-center  
Position the image in the center

-itc, --image-topcenter  
Position the image in the top center

-wm, --managed, --x11-client  
Spawn spmenu as a window manager controlled client/window.  
Useful for testing

-nwm, --unmanaged  
Don't spawn spmenu as a window manager controlled client/  
window. Useful for testing

-cf, --config-file file  
Set config file to load to file

-lcfg, --load-config  
Load spmenu configuration (~/.config/spmenu/spmenu.conf,  
~/.spmenurc or ~/.config/spmenu/spmenurc)

-ncfg, --no-load-config  
Don't load spmenu configuration (~/.config/spmenu/spmenu.conf,  
~/.spmenurc or ~/.config/spmenu/spmenurc)

-v, --version  
Print spmenu version to stdout

-fn, --font font  
Set the spmenu font to font

-nif, --normal-item-foreground color  
Set the normal item foreground color

-nib, --normal-item-background color  
Set the normal item background color

-sif, --selected-item-foreground color  
Set the selected item foreground color

-sib, --selected-item-background color  
Set the selected item background color

-npf, --normal-item-priority-foreground color  
Set the normal item (high priority) foreground color

-npb, --normal-item-priority-background color  
Set the normal item (high priority) background color

-spf, --selected-item-priority-foreground color  
Set the selected item (high priority) foreground color

-spb, --selected-item-priority-background color  
Set the selected item (high priority) background color

-pfg, --prompt-foreground color  
Set the prompt foreground color

-pbg, --prompt-background color  
Set the prompt background color

-ifg, --input-foreground color  
Set input foreground color

-ibg, --input-background color  
Set input background color

-mnb, --menu-background color  
Set the menu background color

-nhf, --normal-highlight-foreground color  
Set the normal highlight foreground color

-nhb, --normal-highlight-background color  
Set the normal highlight background color

-shf, --selected-highlight-foreground color  
Set the selected highlight foreground color

-shb, --selected-highlight-background color  
Set the selected highlight background color

-nfg, --number-foreground color  
Set the foreground color for the match count

-nbg, --number-background color  
Set the background color for the match count

-mfg, --mode-foreground color  
Set the foreground color for the mode indicator

-mbg, --mode-background color  
Set the background color for the mode indicator

-laf, --left-arrow-foreground color  
Set the left arrow foreground color

-raf, --right-arrow-foreground color  
Set the right arrow foreground color

-lab, --left-arrow-background color  
Set the left arrow background color

-rab, --right-arrow-background color  
Set the right arrow background color

-cfc, --caret-foreground color  
Set the caret foreground color

-cbc, --caret-background color  
Set the caret background color

-bc, --border-background color  
Set the border color

-sgr0, --sgr0 color  
Set the SGR 0 color

-sgr1, --sgr1 color  
Set the SGR 1 color

-sgr2, --sgr2 color  
Set the SGR 2 color

-sgr3, --sgr3 color  
Set the SGR 3 color

-sgr4, --sgr4 color  
Set the SGR 4 color

-sgr5, --sgr5 color  
Set the SGR 5 color

-sgr6, --sgr6 color  
Set the SGR 6 color

-sgr7, --sgr7 color  
Set the SGR 7 color  
-sgr8, --sgr8 color  
Set the SGR 8 color  
-sgr9, --sgr9 color  
Set the SGR 9 color  
-sgr10, --sgr10 color  
Set the SGR 10 color  
-sgr11, --sgr11 color  
Set the SGR 11 color  
-sgr12, --sgr12 color  
Set the SGR 12 color  
-sgr13, --sgr13 color  
Set the SGR 13 color  
-sgr14, --sgr14 color  
Set the SGR 14 color  
-sgr15, --sgr15 color  
Set the SGR 15 color

dmenu compatibility can be achieved using these arguments:

-S  
Don't sort matches  
-i  
Use case-insensitive matching  
-nb color  
Set the normal background color  
-nf color  
Set the normal foreground color  
-sb color  
Set the selected background color  
-sf color  
Set the selected foreground color

## Keybinds

You can set keybinds through the config file. A default config file is available after installing spmenu. This configuration file has identical keybindings to the default hardcoded keybinds.

By default, the configuration file will ignore all hardcoded keybindings to prevent keybind conflicts, but if you do not like this behaviour you can simply set `ignoreglobalkeys = 1`.

## Modes

One of the features that separate spmenu from dmenu is spmenu's different modes. As of version 0.2, there are two modes. Normal mode and Insert mode. These modes are of course similar to Vim.

Normal mode is the mode spmenu starts in unless a mode argument is specified. In normal mode, all keys perform some action, but you cannot type any actual text to filter items. This mode is used for navigation, as well as quickly selecting an item.

Insert mode is entered through (by default) pressing `i` in normal mode. In this mode, most keybinds do nothing. When you are in insert mode, you filter items by typing text into the field. Once you're done with insert mode, you can press Escape to enter normal mode again.

## -p option

spmenu has a `-p` option, which stands for prompt. It allows you to specify text to display next to the item list. It is displayed on the left side of the spmenu window. It should be noted that the prompt is purely visual though.

## Images

spmenu supports drawing images. This image is placed on the left side of the menu window. To use an image, pipe `IMG:/path/to/image` to spmenu. If you want you can specify arguments like usual. Note that you should add a Tab (`\t`) character after the path to the image file. Otherwise the text after will be interpreted as part of the filename and the image will not be drawn.

Any text after the Tab character will be interpreted as a regular item. In practice, drawing an image might look like this:

```
printf "IMG:/path/to/image\tLook at that image, isn't it awesome?  
\n" | spmenu
```

There are also a few image related arguments, such as:

`-is`, `-ig`, `-it`, `-ib`, `-ic`, `-itc` and `-gc`.

NOTE: Vector images (such as `.svg`) can be displayed too.

## Colored text

spmenu supports colored text through SGR sequences. This is the same colors that you might already be using in your shell scripts. This means you can pipe practically any colored shell script straight into spmenu, no need to filter the output or anything.

Not only does it support colored text, but it also supports colored backgrounds. This allows something similar to the emoji highlight patch, except even more useful. Example:

```
printf "\033[0;44m😊\033[0m Emoji highlighting\n" | spmenu --  
columns 1
```

For 256 color support to work, you must add to the array. See `libs/color.h` if you want this.

See ‘SGR sequences’ for more information.

## SGR sequences

A basic supported SGR sequence looks like this: `\033[X;YZm`

Here, X specifies if you want normal or bright colors. Y specifies if you want background or foreground. Z specifies the color number.

Foreground colors: 30 through 37 Background colors: 40 through 47  
Reset: 0

NOTE: `;` is a separator, and in this example it separates the color number and normal/bright. `\033` may also be written as `^]` or simply `ESC`. The separator may be omitted for some sequences, such as `\033[0m` which resets the colorscheme.

spmenu supports most color sequences, although not true color by default (unless `-sgr` arguments are used).

There are a few arguments, you can override SGR colors on-the-fly using the `-sgrX` arguments. See ‘Arguments’ for more information.

Just as a tip, you can pipe your colored spmenu output to `sed -e 's/\x1b\[ [0-9;]*m//g'`. This will clear the SGR sequences from the output. This is useful when you want to check what the output actually is.

# Pango markup

If spmenu was compiled with Pango enabled (default), you should be able to utilize Pango markup in every part of spmenu. That is, the mode indicator, items, input, prompt, etc.

Pango markup allows you to style text similar to an HTML document. It also provides the `<span>` tag, which can be used to do surprisingly complex things.

There are many convenient tags as well which can be used to avoid using a `<span>` tag, such as:

```
<b>
    Bold text (<b>Bold</b>)
<i>
    Italic text (<i>Italic</i>)
<s>
    Strikethrough text (<s>Strikethrough</s>)
<u>
    Underline text (<u>Underline</u>)
<sub>
    Subscript (<sub>Subscript</sub>)
<sup>
    Superscript (<sup>Superscript</sup>)
<tt>
    Monospace font (<tt>Monospaced font is used here</tt>)
<small>
    Small text (<small>text is so small here</small>)
<big>
    Big text (<big>text is so big here</big>)
```

Note that Pango markup is NOT escaped, and is piped to stdout. Therefore you need to parse it manually. Doing so with `sed` is very easy. For example: `... | spmenu ... | sed 's/<big>//g; s/</big>//g'`

See [this page](#) for more information.

## Configuration

Unlike dmenu, spmenu has a configuration file which can be edited by hand. It is located in `~/.config/spmenu/spmenu.conf`, but you can override this by exporting `$XDG_CONFIG_HOME`.

When `spmenu` is installed, it copies a sample configuration to `/usr/share/spmenu/spmenu.conf`. You can copy this to your `.config/spmenu` directory. This configuration file is loaded on startup.

You can also include other configuration files in the configuration file using `@include "path/to/config"`.

## **.Xresources**

`spmenu` also has `.Xresources` (`xrdb`) support built in. It reads the `xrdb` (`.Xresources` database) on runtime. You may disable it by passing `-nxrdb`, or enable it by padding `-xrdb`. You can also set this in the regular config file.

`spmenu` loads `~/.config/spmenu/spmenurc` or alternatively if you're old fashioned, `~/.spmenurc` on startup. This requires that `xrdb` is available on your operating system. Of course, you don't NEED to use them, as you can just `xrdb -override` any `.Xresources` file you want.

You can also use wildcards (such as `*`) to achieve a global colorscheme. Programs like `pywal` do this to apply universal colorschemes.

## **Profiles**

`spmenu` supports profiles. Profiles are like configuration files (See Configuration) that can be switched between quickly using a keybind.

Pressing (by default) `Ctrl+Shift+p` will list out profiles, and also allow you to add/remove existing profiles. Selecting a profile will switch to that profile. The selected profile will now be loaded on startup just like the `spmenurc` until another profile is selected.

Selecting 'Add' allows you to create a new profile. When a new profile is created it is going to use the `spmenu` defaults (copied from `/usr/share/spmenu/example.Xresources`). Profiles are going to be in `~/.config/spmenu/profiles/` and the current profile is in `~/.config/spmenu/.profile`. The profile can simply be edited using any text editor and be configured in `.Xresources` syntax.

Selecting `Remove` will allow you to pick a profile which will be permanently removed. Selecting `Default` will simply load `spmenurc` and nothing else on startup, as if this feature did not exist.

Not only can profiles be used to configure color schemes and fonts, allowing you to swap color schemes quickly, but also any other options you may want.

Note that any profiles are applied ON TOP of the current loaded profile, meaning if any options are missing from the selected profile, the setting in the profile used before will be used in place.

There are a few color schemes for spmenu included in the repository, see the themes/ directory. Feel free to copy those to your profile directory.

## Run launcher

spmenu includes a shell script called spmenu\_run. It lists executable programs in \$PATH and displays them to the user in a list. Not only that but it shows recently run programs first in the list.

spmenu\_run will interpret any arguments as spmenu arguments and pass them to spmenu. Therefore spmenu\_run --prompt 'Run:' will set the prompt to Run:.. While it is similar to dmenu\_run (and achieves the same goal), this version has some extra features.

The selected option is piped to /bin/sh (by default). Unlike dmenu\_run, spmenu\_run has some cool features. For example:

- Prepending # will spawn it in a terminal instead of just a shell.
- Prepending ? will run the command in a function, most of the time used to display the man page.
- Prepending magnet will open a magnet link in \$TORRENT
- Prepending www will open a page in \$BROWSER

Most of the time you don't need to prepend www though, for example typing in https://gnu.org will open gnu.org in \$BROWSER even without the prefix. Same goes for magnet links.

You can also configure the run launcher through editing ~/.config/spmenu/run/config which is configured in shell syntax.

## spmenu\_desktop

In addition to the aforementioned spmenu\_run, the spmenu package also provides spmenu\_desktop which instead of reading \$PATH only lists out .desktop entries.

Unlike the regular run launcher though, `spmenu_desktop` supports displaying an icon for entries that use one.

It can be configured through editing `~/.config/spmenu/desktop/config`. The configuration file can also be moved by setting `${XDG_CONFIG_HOME}`.

## spmenu commands

`spmenu` has a few special commands. These work similar to the images. For example to list the version, in addition to the `--version` argument you can also simply run `printf 'spmenu:version' | spmenu`. There are a few of these.

`spmenu:version`

Print the `spmenu` version

`spmenu:license`

Print the `spmenu` license

`spmenu:test`

Print a test script for `spmenu` which tests various features. Report any weird issues you may have.

## License

`spmenu` is licensed under the MIT license because that's the original suckless license. See the included `LICENSE` file for more information.

## Reporting issues

Please report issues on the [Codeberg repository](#) or alternatively email me.