

Start E-Prime from Authorware

Thanks to Paul de Groot from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam it's possible to start E-Prime from other applications, as Authorware, without having to fill in subject numbers or condition settings and still get your data stored correctly for each participant. Here's how:

To make life a lot easier, put all the files you will be using in the same folder. You need at least these four files: your Authorware file, your E-Prime (the runtime version ending with .ebs), a batch file you'll make yourself and the program E-Kick. E-Kick is a small command line utility created by Paul de Groot, and you can download it here: <http://step.psy.cmu.edu/scripts-plus/>. Now what we will do is tell Authorware to run a batch file, and in the batch file we will write down the command to let E-Kick start our E-Prime program. This might seem complicated, but really it isn't.

To start another program from Authorware, we can use the system function JumpOut or, if we want to come back to Authorware to ask some questions about the reaction time part participants performed in E-Prime, we can use JumpOutReturn. As we can read from the description of the function in the functions window: JumpOutReturn opens the application you specify in program and then Authorware continues its presentation in the background. Use JumpOutReturn only in calculation icons. Now we don't want to start an application, but a batch file, but that's no problem. Furthermore, although the description of the function isn't very clear about this, it's also possible to give along values of variables from the Authorware program you are running to the program you start as is explained in the JumpFile and JumpFileReturn functions specifically for opening other Authorware pieces. To accomplish this, drop a calculation icon on the flowline on the point where you want to start E-Prime, and inside write:

```
JumpOutReturn(FileLocation^"\NameOfBatchFile.bat"; VariableNameToPass).
```



What does this line do? It tells Authorware to JumpOut (but return afterwards) to the file at the location your Authorware file itself is (so in the same folder) named NameOfBatchFile.bat, and transferring the value of a specific variable (most likely your participant number, but you can also add more variables, for example condition, as long as you put ; in between the variables) to the batch file.

A batch file is nothing more than a text file containing a series of commands you could also type in on the command prompt of your computer. A batch file can start a program in a desired configuration, and that is exactly why we are using it here. We want E-Kick to start E-Prime in a specific configuration, namely with a participant number and perhaps condition number inserted without being prompted to type one in. To make a batch file, just create a new text file and save it as NameOfBatchFile.bat instead of NameOfBatchFile.txt. Inside the text file, write the following command on one line: `E-kick.exe NameOfE-PrimeExperiment.ebs subject=%1`. What does this mean? Basically, it tells your computer to start E-Kick (which has to be in the same folder) and use E-Kick to start a specific E-Prime experiment. E-Kick then configures your E-Prime program so that the subject variable is identical to the VariableNameToPass form the calculation icon in Authorware. You could also add `session=%1` if you also want to specify a condition in E-Prime. If you run the Authorware file, the command line will quickly pop-up:

```
C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe
C:\Documents and Settings\d.lakens\Mijn documenten\Eprime\Fram5DecLong>E-kick.exe Exp1A.ebs subject=
EKick Version 1.1.1

Warning: setting attribute to empty value: subject
Loaded 2024 lines from Exp1A.ebs
Setting attribute value: subject =
Saved 2024 lines in C:\Documents and Settings\d.lakens\Mijn documenten\Eprime\Fram5DecLong\Exp1A_ekick.ebs
Starting E-Run:
"C:\Program Files\PST\E-Prime\Program\E-Run.exe" /a "C:\Documents and Settings\d.lakens\Mijn documenten\Eprime\Fram5DecLong\Exp1A_ekick.ebs"
Waiting for E-Run to finish
```

It will shut down again after E-Prime closes, and your Authorware piece will continue. That's it! E-Kick has some more advanced functions (read the read me file included in the download for more information) but this is most likely all you need to know.