

The Independent JPEG Group' s JPEG software

README for release 6b of 27-Mar-1998

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Serious users of this software (particularly those incorporating it into larger programs) should contact IJG at jpeg-info@uunet.uu.net to be added to our electronic mailing list. Mailing list members are notified of updates and have a chance to participate in technical discussions, etc.

This software is the work of Tom Lane, Philip Gladstone, Jim Boucher, Lee Crocker, Julian Minguillon, Luis Ortiz, George Phillips, Davide Rossi, Guido Vollbeding, Ge' Weijers, and other members of the Independent JPEG Group.

IJG is not affiliated with the official ISO JPEG standards committee.

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The Unix configuration script "configure" was produced with GNU Autoconf. It is copyright by the Free Software Foundation but is freely distributable. The same holds for its supporting scripts (config.guess, config.sub, ltconfig, ltmain.sh). Another support script, install-sh, is copyright by M. I. T. but is also freely distributable.

It appears that the arithmetic coding option of the JPEG spec is covered by patents owned by IBM, AT&T, and Mitsubishi. Hence arithmetic coding cannot legally be used without obtaining one or more licenses. For this reason, support for arithmetic coding has been removed from the free JPEG software. (Since arithmetic coding provides only a marginal gain over the unpatented Huffman mode, it is unlikely that very many implementations will support it.) So far as we are aware, there are no patent restrictions on the remaining code.

The IJG distribution formerly included code to read and write GIF files. To avoid entanglement with the Unisys LZW patent, GIF reading support has been removed altogether, and the GIF writer has been simplified to produce "uncompressed GIFs" . This technique does not use the LZW algorithm; the resulting GIF files are larger than usual, but are readable by all standard GIF decoders.

We are required to state that

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