

A B O U T

What's Up? © is dedicated to many that have contributed and helped in the production and testing phases of its development. In particular, this program is dedicated to my children, Ross, Cameron and Katie, but especially to my partner Sue who, with her support and encouragement, made this program possible.

SoftSpot Software

We are a specialist software house with an avid interest in intellectually challenging word and board games. All our products are written entirely in Delphi 3.0 and are fully Windows 95 / NT compliant.

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WHAT'S UP?

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DICTIONARIES

What's Up? is distributed with 3 dictionaries :

	Filename	No. of Words
 Official (US/UK)	<u>UOff.Up1</u>	153,815
 English (UK)	<u>UGbr.Up1</u>	25,992
 English (US)	<u>UUsa.Up1</u>	50,019

The '**Official What's Up?**' dictionary uses both US and UK words. This dictionary contains :-

No. of Letters	No. of Words	No. of Letters	No. of Words
2	119	3	1208
4	4880	5	10857
6	18988	7	28152
8	34289	9	30848
10	24474		



Dictionary

The Dictionary display comprises a listbox, a small panel, a character keypad, a text edit box and a combo box.

The drop down combo box is used to choose the required language dictionary and can be set as the default by the '[Save Preferences](#)' option. Ideally, no dictionaries should be deleted, any that have will appear in the drop down list as '**Missing**'.

The total number of words in the selected dictionary will be shown in the small panel and the current language will be displayed in the Dictionary Page caption and on the What's Up? menu bar.

By right mouse button pressing any of the characters on the keypad, the listbox will be filled with all dictionary words with that initial letter and the small panel will indicate the number of words found. To delete any word, simply double click the word in the list with the mouse left button. A confirmation dialogue box will appear to confirm that the delete should be actioned.

Words can be added to the current dictionary in two ways :-

1. During game play, any invalid word formed will update the Dictionary Page text edit box with the unrecognised word. Double clicking the edit box with the mouse left button will display a confirmation dialogue to confirm the addition. The listbox will be updated to show the newly inserted word.
2. By using the left mouse button on the character keypad, the corresponding letter will be added to the edit box. The last letter in the edit box can be deleted by using the mouse right button over the edit box. As in (1), double clicking the edit box will bring up a confirmation dialogue and the listbox will be updated.
If the word already exists within the dictionary, the listbox will be updated to show confirmation that the word is present. This operation can be used to quickly locate a word.

FEATURES

What's Up? has numerous features including :-

- ◆ 1 - 4 Players (Computer or Human)
- ◆ 125 Computer Player Skill Levels
- ◆ 3 Language Dictionaries :-



Official (US/UK)

English(UK)

English(US)

- ◆ Dictionary Revision
- ◆ Puzzle Solving
- ◆ Game Save and Load
- ◆ Best Play 'Hint' Option
- ◆ 'Blank Swapping' Game Variation
- ◆ Player Time Option
- ◆ Selectable Background Images



Anagram & Missing Letter Analysis

GAME PLAY

What's Up? is a word game for 1 to 4 players. The play consists of the formation of interconnecting words on the playing board. Each player has a rack that can accommodate seven tiles drawn from the letter bag.

Play commences by each player drawing a random tile from the bag - the lowest character starts the game. The computer can determine the first player or letters can be chosen from the bag by each player. These tiles are then replaced in the bag.

Each player then draws seven tiles from the bag and places them in their rack. Player one starts the game by placing a word, either horizontally or vertically with at least one letter on one of the four central start squares. A word must be two letters or more in length, proper names and abbreviations are not permissible. Player one then replenishes their rack by selecting tiles from the bag. Play then passes to player two who adds additional tiles to the board by placing a word that intersects or adjoins the existing word. Stacking of letter tiles is permissible, up to a maximum depth of 5 tiles - identical letters cannot be stacked. An existing word can also be extended into a new word.

Play then continues in a cyclic order until a player has no tiles left and the bag is empty or all players can not place any tiles. The winner is the player obtaining the maximum score.

If a player either can not place any tiles or considers it to be advantageous to pass, they may do so. Tiles may be exchanged from the bag. The player's turn is then forfeit and the game passes to the next player.

INSTALLATION

What's Up? installs the following files onto your computer :-

Filename	Description	Location
WhatsUp.Exe	What's Up? executable	Default directory
Whats Up.Ini	What's Up? initialisation file	"
Whats Up.Hlp	What's Up? help file	"
Whats Up.Cnt	What's Up? help contents file	"
UOff.Up1	Official What's Up? (US/UK) dictionary	"
UGbr.Up1	English(UK) dictionary	"
UUsa.Up1	English(US) dictionary	"
Carpet.Bmp	Tiled background bitmap	"
Floor.Bmp	"	"
Mat.Bmp	"	"
Lumps.Bmp	"	"
Wall.Bmp	"	"
Wood.Bmp	"	"
Hsun32.Exe	Uninstall executable	Windows directory
Setup.Inf	Install information file	Default directory
Setuplog.Txt	Install log file	"

All files have been analysed by McAfee Associates Virus Scanner V3.02 and are free from identifiable infections.

It is strongly recommended that no files be manually deleted. The files identified in red are integral to the What's Up? program and these files MUST reside in the same directory. Non-essential bitmap files are shown in blue and can be deleted if not required.

To reset What's Up? to its original defaults, the 'Whats Up.Ini' file may be deleted, although the default settings can be individually selected from within the program.

Secondary files that are created after installation are 'Up2' files - Saved games. These can be deleted if no longer needed.

The What's Up? help file also generates a 'hidden' index file - Whats Up.Gid. This file may be deleted but accessing the help file will recreate this file again.
(This is a feature of Windows 95 and not What's Up?).

To cleanly remove What's Up? from your system, either select the uninstall What's Up? icon or use the Add/Remove program option in the Control Panel. Windows 95 maintains a record of file associations within the Registry and manual file deletion can cause residual entries to accumulate.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

What's Up? © has been designed specifically for **Windows 95 / NT** and achieves a very impressive performance. **What's Up?** can complete a game in less than a second whilst maintaining an equally formidable final score !

The computer players are intelligent and are fully configurable. The computer player identifies optimal play strategies through unique **heuristic** algorithms.

Adjustments are available to generate a tendency for an open style of play, where the entire board playing area is used or a more challenging game where the computer maintains a closed and confined form of play.

The supplied dictionaries can be updated to suit your requirements. The English (UK) dictionary contains basic conversational style words and does not contain obscure words such as '**ID**' and '**OB**' that can be found in other dictionaries. These type of words can be added during play as needed.

The '**Official What's Up?**' (US/UK) dictionary contains a wealth of competition standard words and represents the ultimate challenge.

The board can be pre-populated with tiles, as can the player racks. This allows **What's Up?** to be used to solve those challenging puzzles that are now popular in many newspapers.

What's Up? has been developed as a challenging and serious word game. There is a selectable '**Hint**' option but it is recommended that this facility is not used as it can detract from the challenge of the game.



Game Option Settings

These options are set by the toggle action buttons and are enabled when the associated button is up with a tick mark displayed.

- Sound Effects** What's Up? uses several sound effects throughout the game to indicate current actions. By disabling this function, no sound effects will be used.
- Play Fast** When enabled, all computer delays are disabled and the game proceeds in the shortest time possible. By disabling this function, it is easier to see the computer player moves as the tiles appear on the board one by one and remain highlighted until the move is completed.
- See Player Tiles** When enabled, the computer player tiles will be shown 'face-up', both in the tabbed notebook and in the player rack during the computer player's turn. This permits the human player to gain an unfair advantage, usually called cheating, as the human player is able to block potentially good word positions that the computer might use. Disabling this option hides the face letters from view. (At the end of a game, all unplayed tiles are turned face-up).
- Blank Tile Exchange** A variant of What's Up? allows the player to exchange a tile for a previously played blank tile - the exchange tile must be the same letter as that represented by the blank tile. To exchange a tile, move the tile from the player rack and 'drop' the tile onto the existing board blank tile. This move does not forfeit the player's turn. This variant therefore allows the blank tiles to remain in circulation throughout the game.
- Auto Tile Select** What's Up? does not cheat when issuing tiles to the human players and the tiles are selected randomly from the bag. By disabling 'Auto Tile Select', the human player can select their tiles manually from the bag. By left mouse clicking a bag tile, that tile will be moved from the bag to the player's rack. If this option is disabled at the start of a new game, each player must select a tile from the bag, the player with the lowest letter commences the game.
- Player Time Limit** With this option enabled, each player has a maximum of 2 minutes to complete their turn. After 2 minutes have elapsed, the player's turn is forfeit and play moves to the next player.
- Hints Enabled** With this option enabled, a '**HINT**' button is displayed on the play screen. During a player's turn, pressing this 'Hint' button will provide a suggested best possible move. It is recommended that 'Hint' option should not be enabled as it becomes too easy to select during a game and does detract from the challenge of beating the What's Up? computer opponent(s). (The suggested move does not use any 'intelligence' nor the misuse of an 'S' or blank tile. The word suggested will be simply the highest possible scoring word).

File Operations

- Load Game** Pressing this button will display an 'Open' file dialogue menu for the selection of previously saved games. This option is not available if there is a game in progress. Saved game files have an 'UP2' suffix.
- Save Game** Pressing this button will display a 'Save' file dialogue menu. This option is not available if there is not a current game in progress. Saved game files have an 'UP2' suffix.
- Save Preferences** Selecting this button will save all current settings to disk. These settings will be the default settings for all subsequent games. This operation will store all player settings, skill levels, names, dictionary language and game option settings including the board bonus square layout and tiled background file. The configuration file is 'Whats Up.Ini' which will be stored in the installation folder for What's Up?. This file can be deleted to restore all original defaults in one operation but it must not be edited manually, nor should any of the other saved files from the other options.
- Change Background** To change the default hessian screen background, this option displays an 'Open' file dialogue. What's Up? is distributed with a selection of tileable background images but any standard bitmap

file (BMP) can be used. The background image can be saved as the default for all subsequent games by the 'Save Preferences' option described above.
(To restore the default background, select the 'default' option from the 'Open' file dialogue.).



Player 1

The player pages display a detailed listing of all words played, their scores and a running total score. This page also contains the player control options and provides a player name editor. At the bottom of the page is a miniature rack containing tiles held by that player. If the option settings prohibit viewing of tiles, then this rack will show face-down tiles if there is a game in progress and the player is a computer.

Player Name By left clicking the mouse in the page title, at the top of the page, the player's name can be edited using the keyboard.

Player List Box The list box displays all words played including the score for that word. All secondary words created by the addition of a word are shown in lowercase text.

Player Score This box displays the current total score for the player.

Player Controls :-

Player Type The combo box allows the selection of either no player, a computer player or human. If the selected player is a computer, a drop down panel appears containing the player controls. There are three slider bars entitled 'Long/Short', 'Open/Closed' and 'Easy/Hard'. These controls can be moved by dragging the slider bar or by clicking the left mouse button at either side of the slider. The settings for these controls can be saved as a default for all subsequent games by saving the preferences from the Options page.

Long / Short All three controls are interactive, to a degree, and are used to control the intelligence for the computer player. Long / Short can be adjusted to force the computer player to generate long or short words. The consequence of this setting is to give a better spread of letters over the entire playing board.

Open / Closed This control adjusts the style of the computer's play with regard to the number of interlocking and multiple words that are produced by the addition of a single word. As with the previous control, the result will be either a widely open board or a very confined spread of play. There is obviously some interaction between this control and the 'Long / Short' control.

Easy / Hard This control adjusts the 'true' intelligence of the player. At the easiest level, the computer player has little strategy and often plays the first fitting word that it finds. At the other extreme, the computer player analyses all fitting words in relation to possible cost penalties associated with bonus squares that it may expose. It also makes decisions as to the worth of using various tiles such as the blank tile. At the hardest level, the computer will tend to ignore the previous two controls.



Player 2

The player pages display a detailed listing of all words played, their scores and a running total score. This page also contains the player control options and provides a player name editor. At the bottom of the page is a miniature rack containing tiles held by that player. If the option settings prohibit viewing of tiles, then this rack will show face-down tiles if there is a game in progress and the player is a computer.

Player Name By left clicking the mouse in the page title, at the top of the page, the player's name can be edited using the keyboard.

Player List Box The list box displays all words played including the score for that word. All secondary words created by the addition of a word are shown in lowercase text.

Player Score This box displays the current total score for the player.

Player Controls :-

Player Type The combo box allows the selection of either no player, a computer player or human. If the selected player is a computer, a drop down panel appears containing the player controls. There are three slider bars entitled 'Long/Short', 'Open/Closed' and 'Easy/Hard'. These controls can be moved by dragging the slider bar or by clicking the left mouse button at either side of the slider. The settings for these controls can be saved as a default for all subsequent games by saving the preferences from the Options page.

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Player 3

The player pages display a detailed listing of all words played, their scores and a running total score. This page also contains the player control options and provides a player name editor. At the bottom of the page is a miniature rack containing tiles held by that player. If the option settings prohibit viewing of tiles, then this rack will show face-down tiles if there is a game in progress and the player is a computer.

Player Name By left clicking the mouse in the page title, at the top of the page, the player's name can be edited using the keyboard.

Player List Box The list box displays all words played including the score for that word. All secondary words created by the addition of a word are shown in lowercase text.

Player Score This box displays the current total score for the player.

Player Controls :-

Player Type The combo box allows the selection of either no player, a computer player or human. If the selected player is a computer, a drop down panel appears containing the player controls. There are three slider bars entitled 'Long/Short', 'Open/Closed' and 'Easy/Hard'. These controls can be moved by dragging the slider bar or by clicking the left mouse button at either side of the slider. The settings for these controls can be saved as a default for all subsequent games by saving the preferences from the Options page.

Long / Short All three controls are interactive, to a degree, and are used to control the intelligence for the computer player. Long / Short can be adjusted to force the computer player to generate long or short words. The consequence of this setting is to give a better spread of letters over the entire playing board.

Open / Closed This control adjusts the style of the computer's play with regard to the number of interlocking and multiple words that are produced by the addition of a single word. As with the previous control, the result will be either a widely open board or a very confined spread of play. There is obviously some interaction between this control and the 'Long / Short' control.

Easy / Hard This control adjusts the 'true' intelligence of the player. At the easiest level, the computer player has little strategy and often plays the first fitting word that it finds. At the other extreme, the computer player analyses all fitting words in relation to possible cost penalties associated with bonus squares that it may expose. It also makes decisions as to the worth of using various tiles such as the blank tile. At the hardest level, the computer will tend to ignore the previous two controls.



Player 4

The player pages display a detailed listing of all words played, their scores and a running total score. This page also contains the player control options and provides a player name editor. At the bottom of the page is a miniature rack containing tiles held by that player. If the option settings prohibit viewing of tiles, then this rack will show face-down tiles if there is a game in progress and the player is a computer.

Player Name By left clicking the mouse in the page title, at the top of the page, the player's name can be edited using the keyboard.

Player List Box The list box displays all words played including the score for that word. All secondary words created by the addition of a word are shown in lowercase text.

Player Score This box displays the current total score for the player.

Player Controls :-

Player Type The combo box allows the selection of either no player, a computer player or human. If the selected player is a computer, a drop down panel appears containing the player controls. There are three slider bars entitled 'Long/Short', 'Open/Closed' and 'Easy/Hard'. These controls can be moved by dragging the slider bar or by clicking the left mouse button at either side of the slider. The settings for these controls can be saved as a default for all subsequent games by saving the preferences from the Options page.

Long / Short All three controls are interactive, to a degree, and are used to control the intelligence for the computer player. Long / Short can be adjusted to force the computer player to generate long or short words. The consequence of this setting is to give a better spread of letters over the entire playing board.

Open / Closed This control adjusts the style of the computer's play with regard to the number of interlocking and multiple words that are produced by the addition of a single word. As with the previous control, the result will be either a widely open board or a very confined spread of play. There is obviously some interaction between this control and the 'Long / Short' control.

Easy / Hard This control adjusts the 'true' intelligence of the player. At the easiest level, the computer player has little strategy and often plays the first fitting word that it finds. At the other extreme, the computer player analyses all fitting words in relation to possible cost penalties associated with bonus squares that it may expose. It also makes decisions as to the worth of using various tiles such as the blank tile. At the hardest level, the computer will tend to ignore the previous two controls.

SCORING

What's Up? maintains a tally of each player's score throughout a game. A word's score value is determined by the number of stacked tiles - indicated by the number in the bottom left-hand corner of the tile.

Each word letter tile in a word scores the stacking depth of the tile - indicated by the number in the bottom left-hand corner of the tile. Where two words or more are created, each word is scored separately.

Any completed word on the bottom level (i.e. all letters are stacked to a depth of one) scores double points. If all seven tiles are used, there is an additional bonus of 10 points.

The following are bonus letters - 2 points are added to the final word score for using any of these :-



This bonus only applies to the first play of these letters.

At the end of the game, 5 points are deducted for each remaining rack tile.



Summary

The Summary page provides a display of the scores for all players. White player text information shows the active players, the remainder are in black. This page also is used to start a new game or to abandon a game.

For each player, the following information is displayed :-

Player Name	By default the players are entitled 'Player 1', 'Player 2', etc. The player names can be edited from the Player pages.
Player Score	The top 3D box gives the current score for that player.
Average Score	This box displays the average score achieved for that player.
Best Word	This text is updated with the highest scoring word and the box displays the score value for that word.

The button at the bottom of the page is used to start or abandon a game :-

START	Select to start a new game. After selection, the button legend changes to ' ABORT '.
ABORT	Select to abandon the current game. A secondary dialogue is shown to confirm that the game should be stopped.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

The minimum system requirements of What's Up? are :-



Windows 95



8Mbytes RAM



VGA Hi Colour



80486 25MHz



2.0Mbyte HD storage

THE BOARD

The playing board comprises a grid (10x10) of squares. The first word placed must have at least one letter on the four central squares.

Tiles are 'dropped' onto the board by releasing the left mouse button over the desired square whilst 'dragging' a tile. Dropped board tiles can be picked up by pressing and holding the mouse left button and can be placed back into the rack if needed. A quicker procedure for returning tiles to the rack is to right click the mouse button over the tile. Right clicking the mouse on the board over a vacant, or previously scored tile, will return all tiles to the player rack.

After placing a word, pressing the **'DONE'** button causes the word to be accepted, if valid, and the player score is updated. The player rack is replenished and play passes to the next player. If the entered word is invalid, i.e. not contained within the dictionary, the word can be added - see the ['Notebook Dictionary'](#) topic. If a blank tile is played, a small character keypad is displayed. Simply select the corresponding button with the left mouse button.

THE RACK

The rack is shared by all players, the current player is identified by the border colour of the rack. The rack holds seven tiles that can be shuffled by dragging and dropping tiles - select a tile with left mouse button held down, release to drop. If a tile is moved to the right in the rack all tiles up to the tile selected will be moved automatically to the left when the tile is dropped and vice versa. The board itself makes an ideal area for working with the rack tiles to find that elusive word.

Passing

A player can pass their turn, exchanging tiles as necessary, when play is not possible or there is a strategic advantage to passing. After pressing the '**PASS**' button, any rack tile that is left clicked with the mouse will be removed from the rack. Pressing the '**DONE**' button, signals the end of rack tile removal and the missing rack tiles will be replaced from the Tile Bag. This process is either automatic or the player must select them manually from the Tile Bag depending on the options button - '[Auto Tile Select](#)'. The rejected rack tiles are then added to the bag and lastly the bag is shaken.

If a player passes and the Tile Bag is empty, play passes immediately to the next player.

THE STATUSBAR

The Status Bar is divided into 5 panels, from left to right :-

1. Displays the number of remaining bag tiles.
2. Shows the elapsed time since the game started.
3. This panel presents the 'best word' found by the computer and is regularly updated as the computer completes its board analysis.
4. This panel provides miscellaneous information relating to error messages, last word score and player prompts. Additional hint text is displayed as the mouse moves over the screen control areas - these hints are suppressed during game play. If the **Player Time Limit** is active, then this panel will show the progress of the 2 minute countdown.
5. Shows the current time.



Tile Bag

The Tile Bag page is used during manual tile selection - if the '[Auto Tile Select](#)' option is disabled. Whilst a game is in progress, tiles are selected by left clicking the desired tile. This is used at the start of a game to determine who starts and also to replenish rack tiles during the game.

With no game in progress, all Tile Bag tiles are face-up and can be dragged and dropped onto the board or into the player rack. The desired tile is selected by placing the mouse cursor over the tile and by pressing and holding the left mouse button, the tile can be dragged to the desired location. Releasing the mouse button will drop the tile.

To return all tiles back to the Tile Bag, right click the mouse button in the bag.

This facility can be used to solve puzzles featured in some newspapers and other publications. A board layout can be set up, including the player rack, and the maximum possible word score can then be found by pressing the '**SOLVE**' button.

(It is suggested that the '[Official What's Up?](#)' dictionary is selected for this purpose).

TILE DISTRIBUTION

What's Up? uses 102 letter tiles with the following distribution :-

A	7	
B	3	
C	4	
D	5	
E	8	
F	3	
G	3	
H	3	
I	7	
	1	
K	2	
L	5	
M	5	
N	5	
O	7	
P	3	
	1	
R	5	
S	6	
T	5	
U	5	
	1	
W	2	
	1	
Y	2	
	1	
	2	



Tools

What's Up? can analyse from 2 to 10 letters, indexed against the current word dictionary. By using the character keypad, letters can be entered for analysis. Pressing the 'space' button on the keypad enters a '#' symbol into the edit box, indicating a missing letter. Double left clicking the edit box will start the word analysis, right clicking the edit box will delete the rightmost character.

Anagram Generator

In anagram mode, What's Up? will generate a list of all words that can be constructed from the entered letters. The minimum required word length is determined by the left scroll panel. The default is 2 but can be adjusted by pressing the up / down scroll buttons. The right scroll panel, which by default is blank, can be set to a specific key letter, selected from the entered characters for analysis. If this panel is set to a letter, then all retrieved words will contain this letter.

The search word list is sorted in ascending word length order and the total panel displays the number of words found. If this panel shows '#####', then too many words have been found than can be displayed.

Missing Letter(s) Word Generator

Entering a '#' character signifies that What's Up? should look for words that will match with the other entered letters. For example, entering 'F#####ORD' will return a single search word 'FOREWORD'. It is interesting to note how few letters are necessary to uniquely define a specific word !

The search word list is sorted alphabetically and the total panel displays the number of words found. If this panel shows '#####', then too many words have been found than can be displayed.

In missing letter mode, the two scroll panels disappear as their function is not relevant.

The missing letter mode is a great help in solving crossword puzzles in situations where only two or three letters are known !

Defined as a strategy based on trial and error

The '**Official What's Up?**' dictionary is the ultimate word source, containing 150,000+ words. This dictionary represents a definitive English language reference and provides the ultimate What's Up? challenge. It should be noted that it contains both American and English(UK) word spelling.

Note : A number of listed words may be offensive to some people. However, these words are part of our modern language and, as such, are included.

