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## What the press is saying

- *“...walks you through the creation of Windows help files in a visual step-by-step process”* - **PC Magazine.**
- *“Fun and simple to use...”* - **Visual Basic Programmer's Journal.**
- *“You don't have to be a programmer to create professional quality help files.”* - **Windows Magazine.**
- *“We were very impressed with Visual Help because of its simplicity and its completeness.”* - **Windows Tech Journal.**

# Introduction

See Also ▼

**Welcome to Visual Help, the Windows WYSIWYG help authoring system.**

Microsoft Windows has become one of the most popular working environments for personal computers today, due in large part to its ease of use. One particular feature that contributes to Windows's *user friendliness* is its on-line help. On-line help provides quick and easy access to information about the features and operation of Windows applications. On-line help systems add professional polish to software programs and make them easier to use. Visual Help is a powerful, easy-to-use development environment that you can use for creating Windows help files.

**See Also:**

- [About Visual Help](#)
- [What is a Windows Help File?](#)
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# About Visual Help

See Also ▼

## **A powerful easy to use help development tool**

Compared to conventional methods of creating Windows help files, Visual Help's intuitive drag-and-drop interface makes the assembly of help systems fast and easy. Visual Help not only streamlines the process of creating Windows help files, but many other on-line documents as well.

## **Easily create on-line documents of all types:**

- Procedures Manuals
- Company Databases
- Multimedia Presentations
- Information Guides
- Readme Files
- Shared Network Information
- Electronic Books
- On-line Tests

## **Compatible, Portable, and Sharable**

Any personal computer running Windows can open help files created with Visual Help. WinHelp (the Windows help system driver supplied with Windows) is all that is required to run your compiled Visual Help projects, making them extremely portable. Visual Help documents are also easily shared across a Windows-based network, making updates less time consuming.

# What is a Windows Help File?



## **Windows Help Engine:**

To provide an efficient and consistent method of providing help to users of Windows-based applications, Microsoft has devised a system that centers around WinHelp. The WinHelp application is referred to as the engine of the help system because it starts up whenever the user requests help. Every time a user opens a help file, Windows starts WINHELP.EXE to load WinHelp.

## **Windows Help File:**

The WinHelp engine opens the Windows help files you will create with Visual Help. These help files have a very specific format and can be recognized by their HLP extensions. Most Windows based systems contain one or more help files for each application installed, but typically just the one copy of WinHelp. In fact, WinHelp is included in Windows setup, and its existence can be expected on any system that is running Windows.

# System Requirements



Before installing Visual Help, check that your computer does meet the following minimum requirements:

- A personal computer using a 80286 or higher micro-processor is required.
- 2 MB of available memory
- VGA, SVGA, XGA, 8514/A or compatible video graphics adapter
- Hard disk with at least 3 MB available
- Mouse of equivalent pointing device
- MS-DOS version 3.1 or later
- Microsoft Windows version 3.1 or later

# Installation



## To install Visual Help:

- 1 From the Window's Program Manager, choose Run from the File menu.
- 2 Type A:SETUP.EXE or B:SETUP.EXE depending on the designation of your floppy disk drive.
- 3 Respond to the prompts presented, and Visual Help will be installed to your hard drive.

# Product Support



Product Support for Visual Help is available to registered users through the WinSIG Bulletin Board System and through CompuServe. Please note **Visual Help Technical Support** some where at the beginning of all your messages.

## **WinSIG BBS**

(714) 363-9802 2400/9600/14400 N-8-1

Please direct your questions to the sysop by selecting 'C' for comments from the main menu.

## **CompuServe**

Please direct your questions to:

WinWare Inc.

CompuServe ID# 70272,1656

## **Internet**

For technical support via Internet, write to [702721656@compuserve.com](mailto:702721656@compuserve.com).

# Testing a Project

See Also ▼

## Runtime Start



At any time during the construction of the help project you can test jumps by clicking on the runtime start button on the main window toolbar. The contents topic is displayed similarly to the way it looks when the compiled version is opened by the user. Be sure that jumps are in place from the contents topic to the sub-contents and regular topics that you wish to test.

## Runtime Stop



Click the runtime end button to halt the simulation and return to the development environment. This button is located to the right of the runtime start button.

**Note:** The runtime test will accurately simulate most of the features within your help file such as jumps, text appearance, and image placement. However, it may not be suitable for testing some of the more advanced features in your help file such as macros, non-scroll areas, buttons, or glossaries. To test any advanced features, you will need to compile your project, and run the help file.

**See Also:**



[Testing a Project](#)



[Compiling a Project](#)



[Environment Options](#)



[Project Options](#)



[Import](#)



[Export Include Files](#)



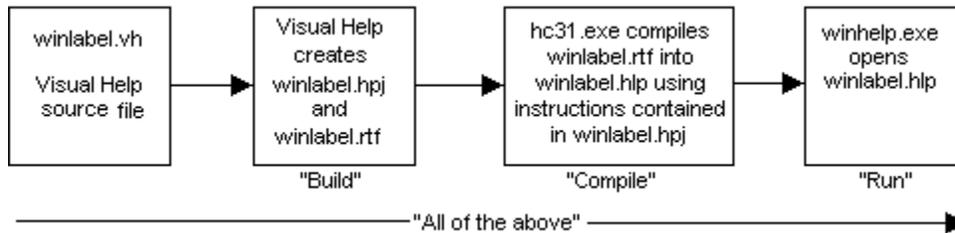
[Export Manual](#)

## Compiling a Project

See Also ▼



After thoroughly testing your help project, you can proceed to compile it and see how the finished help file works. Visual Help automates this process with the *All of the Above* command under the *Compile* menu; also available with the toolbar button. After the help file is compiled, WinHelp will open and display the finished help file in its own window.



### ***Build Process Flow***

**Note:** Before you compile the project, make sure you have a copy of the Microsoft Windows Help Compiler version 3.1 or higher. The file is named HC31.EXE or HCP.EXE. This compiler takes the information from your Visual Help project and converts it into a format recognized by WinHelp. You can modify the path and file name Visual Help uses when compiling help files by, choosing the Environment item from the Options menu. Type in the path and file name of the compiler in the edit box labeled "Compiler" or click the button to browse for it.

# Environment Options

See Also ▼

Environment options control various aspects of the Visual Help working environment that effect all Visual Help projects. Choose Environment from the Options menu to view and modify the following settings:

- [Target File Format](#)
- [Help Compiler Selection](#)
- [Regenerate Context IDs](#)

## Project Options

See Also ▼

Project options control how Visual Help files are created, processed, and optimized. The most likely project options you'll need to adjust are the Title and copyright. The Title option determines the title of the help file when it is opened, and the Copyright contains the text that will be displayed in the About Help window of WinHelp. To edit the either option, select it by clicking on it, and edit the existing value.

# Import

See Also ▼

You can reuse topics created in other Visual Help projects by using the Import feature.

## To import topics into the current project:

- 1 Choose Import from the File menu.
- 2 Locate the desired Visual Help project (.VH) and click OK.
- 3 Select the topics to import from the list provided. Hold down the SHIFT key to select a continuous range of topics. Hold down the CTRL key to select multiple, discontinuous topics
- 4 If you want to import the glossary from the source project, check the Import Glossary checkbox.
- 5 Click Import to copy the topics into the current help project.

**Note:** If duplicate topic names are encountered, Visual Help will prompt you to rename the topic.

## Export Include Files

See Also ▼

An include file is generated by Visual Help for a programmer to include in a project to reference context IDs in the help file. By defining constants for the context IDs which use the name of the topic, the programmer can avoid problems which arise from changing context ID numbers. Include files can be created for BASIC, C/C++, and Pascal programmers.

### To create an include file:

- 1 Choose Export from the File menu.
- 2 Select the *Include File* option and click Continue.
- 3 Select the appropriate development language and click Continue to advance to the next wizard window.
- 4 Enter the file name and path, then click Continue to create the file.

# Export Manual

See Also ▼

A word processing document can be generated from a help project, and can also be used to create a printed manual or be used as way to easily proofread all help topic materials. The document will be in RTF (Rich Text Format), which can be opened by many word processing programs including Microsoft Word.

## To create a Manual File:

- 1 Choose Export from the File menu (the Export Wizard window will open).
- 2 Click on the Manual Document button, then click Continue.
- 3 Click the RTF file option, then click the Continue button.
- 4 Enter the desired file name, then click Continue to create the RTF file using the specified name.

During the export process, Visual Help's styles are translated as follows:

<b>Title</b>	»	<b>Heading1</b>
<b>Heading</b>	»	<b>Heading2</b>
<b>Sub-heading</b>	»	<b>Heading3</b>
<b>Paragraph</b>	»	<b>Normal</b>

**Note:** The structure of the manual will mirror the Visual Help outline view.

# Editing Topics



Editing topics is usually where you will spend the majority of your time when developing a help file. The Topic Design Window includes many features that automate and assist you whenever you are editing a particular topic.

## Adding a Topic

You can add a topic to your current project by:

- Clicking the new topic button from the main window toolbar
- Selecting the New Topic menu item from the File Menu

## Removing a Topic

You can remove a topic by selecting the *Remove Topic* item from the File menu. When selected, you will be prompted with a message box to confirm that you want to permanently remove the current topic.

## Saving the Current Topic

You can save the current topic at any time by clicking the save toolbar button.

## Closing the Current Topic

You can close a topic, by selecting the Close item from the system menu of the Topic Design Window. This will also save the topic at the same time. If you do not want to save changes made to the current topic, you can click the  button.

## Browse Sequence

Visual Help automatically generates the *Browse Sequence* for you, as you develop your topics and assign links between them, Visual Help will assign the browse indexes depending on the hierarchy of the topics.

**Note:** topics that are only jumped to from within hypergraphics or by using the glossary window will not be assigned browse indexes since Visual Help cannot accurately determine their proper sequence.

# Topic Properties

See Also ▼

The Properties Window can be accessed from the Properties button on the [Topic Design Toolbar](#).

## **Context ID:**

You may enter up to a 7 digit numeric context ID that you can use to support a context sensitive application.

## **Topic Title:**

By default, the Topic Title will have the same value as the Topic Name Field on the Topic Design Window; however, the two are not the same. The Topic Name is only used within Visual Help to uniquely identify a topic. The Topic Title is used to identify the topic within the compiled help file, and can also accept extended ASCII characters when it is necessary to produce non-English characters.

## **Context String:**

The Context String field cannot be edited, but is automatically generated from the Topic Title.

**See Also:**



[Topic Design Window](#)



[Topic Properties](#)



[Topic Keywords](#)



[Topic Name](#)



[Attaching a Topic Note](#)



[Setting the Non-Scroll Area](#)



[Viewing and Printing Topics](#)



[Popup Menu](#)



[Searching for Topics](#)



[Editing Topics](#)

# Topic Design Window

Using Topics ▼    Using Objects ▼

## Topic Design Toolbar

The toolbar on the Topic Design window provides easy access to a number of commonly used topic specific commands.

	Topic Name		Displays the image file dialog
	Saves topic to disk		Inserts the non-scroll area
	Closes topic without saving		Left aligns text
	Displays the keyword window		Right aligns text
	Properties window		Moves current object up
	Note window		Moves current object down
	Action window		Deletes the current object

## Topic Keywords

See Also ▼

WinHelp's search dialog relies on a keyword list to help the end user find topics based on words and phrases related to the topics. You can open Visual Help's help file by choosing Search from the Help menu (or by choosing Contents from the Help menu and clicking on the search button along the top of the window) to see an example of how this works. By default, Visual Help assigns all topic names to the keyword list, but you can add additional keywords by using the *Keywords* option.

### To add a keyword:

- 1 Open the desired topic.
- 2 Click on the Keyword toolbar button.
- 3 If no keywords yet exist in the dialog for this topic, then just start typing in the first new keyword. Otherwise, click on the insert button to enter a new keyword.
- 4 Repeat these steps for each keyword you want to add.

## Topic Name

See Also ▼

The topic name is used within Visual Help to uniquely identify a topic. By default, the Topic Title is also set to the same value as the name; unless changed by the user. The properties window can be used to modify the topic title.

### **Default Setting:**

When you add a new topic, Visual Help will set its name to a default value. This value is unique and initially set to Topicn, where n is 1, 2, 3, and so on. Visual Help names the first topic Topic1, the second Topic2, and the third Topic3. The default name can be kept as is, but when you have added several Topics, it makes sense to change their names to something more descriptive.

### **Setting the Title Object:**

You may notice that new topics always have a title object included. This feature is provided for convenience as it does save a few steps when creating a new topic. After you have created the new topic, the name field will be active, you may type in the name, then press TAB to move to the Title object, and at the same time change the text of it to duplicate the topic name.

# Attaching a Topic Note

See Also ▼

Visual Help provides capabilities for attaching notes to individual topics to help remind you of changes or updates that need to be done, to communicate with another person working on the project, or store any other information related to the topic. This is a development tool available only while working in Visual Help; the end user won't see or have access to these notes.

## To attach a note to a topic:

- 1 Open the topic.
- 2 Click on the Note button.  
(The note edit window will appear, stamped with the current date and time).
- 3 Enter your note and close the dialog to save it.  
(The note indicator will appear just to the right of the topic name field).

**Note:** If you want to edit or add to the note in the future, just click on the note button or the note indicator while the topic is open.

## Setting the Nonscroll Area

See Also ▼

Often a topic is too long to fit into one regular sized help window. If the help information extends below the bottom of the window, a scroll bar automatically appears that allows the user to view everything contained in the window by scrolling. It is often helpful in such topics to freeze the title to remind the user which topic is currently being viewed.

### To set the non-scroll area:

- 1 Select the topic above where you want the non-scroll area to start.
- 2 Click on the non-scroll area button.

### To remove the non-scroll area:

- 1 Click on the object above the line to select it.
- 2 Click on the non-scroll area button again to toggle it off.

**Note:** a line is placed into the topic showing the boundary between the non-scrolling and scrolling areas of the window; this line is not a line object. The non-scroll area will be functional only in the compiled help file.

# Viewing and Printing Topics



## To view a topic:

From the View menu, choose one of these two view options to display the View Topic window which will list all topics in the selected format.

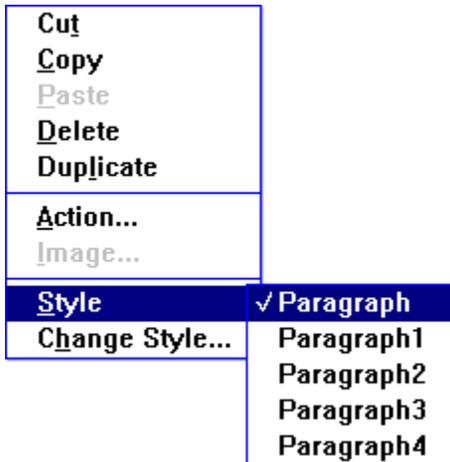
- **Outline:** Topics are listed in multi-leveled list representing the structure of your help file.
- **Browse:** Topics are listed in their assigned browse sequence. Browse sequences are automatically generated for you, as you develop your topics, and will be based on the hierarchy of the topics.

## To print topics:

- 1 Select the Print item from the File menu to display the Print window.
- 2 Choose either *All Loaded Topics* or just the *Current Topic*.

# Popup Menu

Using Topics ▼ Using Objects ▼



The popup menu provides instant access to the commands you will use most frequently while editing objects. You can easily display the popup menu by clicking the **right** mouse button over any object within the topic design window.

## Searching for Topics



The Search window can be activated by using the **Edit** menu. You can limit the search by checking the **Match Whole Word Only** option. Pressing F3 will perform another search for the next occurrence of the specified text within a topic name, and SHIFT+F3 will search for a previous occurrence.

# Editing Objects

See Also ▼

Editing Topics

Defining Jumps ▼

One of the first steps in creating a help file is to create the topics. Using the Topic Design Window in combination with the objects toolbox, developers can simply drag and drop objects to create very sophisticated topics. The following sections describe the many ways that you may work with topics in your help project using Visual Help.

## **Adding an Object**

You can add an object to your topic by simply dragging it off the Object Toolbox and dropping it on the topic window.

## **Deleting an Object**

Select the object you want to delete by clicking the mouse over it. Then click the trash can button, or select the Edit Delete main menu item, or select the Delete popup menu item.

## **Moving an Object**

An object may be moved within a topic by clicking the appropriate up/down toolbar buttons.

## **Cut, Copy, Paste, and Duplicate**

To cut, copy, paste, or duplicate an object, first select it by clicking the mouse over it (ensure no text is highlighted), and then select the appropriate item from either the main edit menu or the popup menu.

# Text Objects

See Also ▼

One of the most important needs of a help file is to present textual information in a format that allows the user to quickly access the information they are seeking. Visual Help fulfills this need by providing you with 10 different text specific objects representing a large variety of possible formats and styles that you can use within your help project.



**Title**



**Heading**



**Subheading**



**Footnote**



**Paragraph**



**Monospaced Paragraph**



**Bitmap Paragraph**



**Bullet**



**Enumerated Bullet**

**See Also:**



[Text Objects](#)



[Jump Objects](#)



[Graphic and Multimedia Objects](#)



[Applying a Style](#)



[Extended ASCII](#)



[Popup Menu](#)



[Searching for Topics](#)



[Editing Objects](#)

# Jump Objects

See Also ▼

Using Objects ▼

Jump Objects provide the links between topics, and allow help file users to quickly navigate through a large help file. Every jump must have a destination topic, that is, the topic that will be displayed whenever the help file user clicks on the jump. Other options are also supported, such as jumping to another window, or jumping to a topic in another help file. Visual Help provides several jump objects and includes an easy to use Action window for defining all the attributes of a particular jump.



**Jump Label**



**Bitmap Jump**



**Index, Using the Index Object**



**Glossary, Using the Glossary Object**



**Letter Scroll Bar**

# Graphic and Multimedia Objects



Graphics and multimedia are alternate sources of information that can dramatically improve the appearance of your help files by adding style, interest, and visual structure. Visual Help provides you with many different ways to incorporate graphics and multimedia into your help files. This section discusses the various objects that will allow you to use graphics and multimedia.



**Line**



**Image**



**Hot Spot, Using the Hot Spot Object**



**MCI, Using the MCI Object**



**Bitmap Paragraph**

## Applying a Style

See Also ▼   Using Objects ▼

**To apply a substyle to an existing object:**

- 1 Click on the object with the **right** mouse button to bring up the Popup Menu.
- 2 Choose the desired substyle type from the **Style** submenu.

## Extended ASCII

Using Topics ▼

Using Objects ▼

Extended ASCII characters are often used to produce symbols or non-English letters. Visual Help supports extended ASCII by allowing you to insert these characters in any one the available text objects.

### To insert an extended ASCII character:

- 1 Run the Character Map applet by using the Window menu (or by starting it from the Accessories Group).
- 2 Select the same font that was used by the text object.
- 3 Copy the desired characters.
- 4 Select the text object within Visual Help.
- 5 Paste the previously copied characters using the popup menu.

**Example:** ß™ü¼ä

## Object Styles

See Also ▼

Using Objects ▼

Since users of Windows help systems have come to expect a certain look and format, Visual Help has default styles for text objects that follow the WinHelp conventions. However, there are many situations that require alternate styles to be used within your project, and this is where the Define Styles dialog becomes useful. To access this feature, choose the Styles item from the Options menu.

## Window Designer

See Also ▼

Other Features ▼

You may need to vary the size, shape, and color of topic windows depending on the type, quantity, and formatting of the help information inside. The WinHelp application allows the use of multiple windows with varying sizes and shapes. Visual Help provides the capability of creating window styles which determine the appearance of topic windows when they are opened.

# Button Designer

See Also ▼

When WinHelp opens your help file, a button bar is visible across the top of the window. This button bar contains various default buttons that allow the user to: jump to the contents topic, keyword search, display history, go to the previous topic, and go to the next topic. The Visual Help Button Designer enables you to add new buttons to the button bar to provide quick access to the macro functions that you specify.

## To add buttons to the help project:

- 1 Choose *Button Design* from the Window menu to display the Button Designer window.
- 2 If no buttons exist, you can begin typing the caption of the new button, otherwise select insert. The caption is the text that will appear on the menu button.
- 3 Enter a name for the button in the Name box.
- 4 From the Macro box, choose the WinHelp macro that will run when the user clicks the button. If you choose the "Run..." macro, click on the Browse button to select the program to run when that button is selected.

**See Also:**



[Window Designer](#)



[Button Designer](#)



[Image Designer](#)



[Reports](#)

# Image Designer

See Also ▼

The Image Designer allows you to import existing image files (.BMP, .DIB, .ICO, & .WMF) or create new images. Then you can display your bitmap file within your project using any of the Visual Help graphic objects.

## To create a new image:

- 1 Choose the *Image Design* item from the Window menu.
- 2 To load an existing image file, click on the ellipsis (3 dots) button next to Image field.
- 3 Use the available options to add colors, text, 3D effects, or even a Windows button style.
- 4 Select the *Save As* button to save the new image to a bitmap file.

## Reports

See Also ▼

Other Features ▼

Visual Help features useful tools to assist in the development of the help system. The Topics List Report, Topics Outlined Report, and Project Options Report are three of these features. It is often very helpful to refer to a list of topics or an outline showing the structure of the help system in designing or trouble-shooting your project.

## Tips, Tricks, and Advice

- 1 Use the Popup Menu by clicking the right mouse button on any object to access frequently used commands such as: Cut, Paste, Copy, Delete, Duplicate, Action, Image, Active Style, Change Styles, and any other object specific functions.
- 2 When you create a new topic, the generic topic name "Topicn" is highlighted. Simply begin typing the topic name and press TAB to lock in the name and automatically copy it directly to the title object.
- 3 To create a new topic for an existing jump label, press the CTRL key and click on the jump label.
- 4 To go to the topic that is already assigned to a jump label, hold down the CTRL key and click on the jump label.
- 5 Use the runtime testing feature of Visual Help to test jumps, text appearance, graphics, and sound files without having to compile the project.
- 6 Give your topics logical names that will make good keywords for Winhelp search. Visual Help includes topic names in the keyword list by default.
- 7 Use the Search command under the Edit menu to help you locate topics in projects with a large number of topics. You can search by typing in any letter, word, or phrase which is contained in the title object of the topic you are seeking.
- 8 Limit the number of open topic windows to conserve system resources.
- 9 To quickly close all open topic windows, select the Compile Build option, and when the Build Wizard window displays, click on the Cancel button.
- 10 Match the text in jump labels to the name of the topic it jumps to when possible to help you keep track of jumps.
- 11 Help speed the execution of WinHelp by converting 256 color (or greater) bitmaps to 16 color.
- 12 If you experience problems with graphics and you are using a high resolution video driver, try switching to the Windows VGA video driver.
- 13 Wait until the end of the development cycle to link images to your image objects. The help compiler executes faster when no images are included, reducing help system development time. Compilation speed is also improved by deselecting the Generate Index Objects and Generate Glossary Objects check boxes in the build dialog until needed.
- 14 Although the first topic created is assigned by default to be the Contents Topic, you can designate any topic as the Contents topic. The topic window that is designated as the Contents topic is the first topic displayed by Winhelp upon loading the help file. To designate a topic as the Contents topic, select Project from the Options menu. Click on Contents in the list of project options, then select the topic you want to be designated as the Contents topic.
- 15 You can also give your help project a title by selecting Project from the Options menu. Click on Title from the list of project options, then type the title for your help project. This title will appear in the title bar of each window when the help file is compiled and run.
- 16 You can assign a jump, sound, or Winhelp macro to a image by clicking on the action button and choosing the desired action. Bitmaps can also be aligned to the left, center, or right by clicking on the Image Alignment buttons.
- 17 To allow the help compiler to function more efficiently, ensure that your CONFIG.SYS file has the statements: FILES=55 and BUFFERS=8.
- 18 The help compiler does need a significant amount of hard disk space and memory to function properly; make sure you have enough of each to support the size of your project file.
- 19 If your help project takes a long time to compile, you can assign it to work in the background by creating a PIF file for the help compiler which specifies windowing and background attributes. Make sure you also select the "Close window on exit" checkbox.
- 20 If you would like the help compiler window to pause after each compilation, create a PIF file that runs the help compiler (uncheck Close window on exit), and specify the new PIF file in Options

Environment window.

- 21 To copy a topic, use the Save As item from the File menu to save the current project to another file. Then reload the original file, choose File Import , select the new file you previously saved, and import the desired topic.
- 22 If your project (VH) file experiences corruption, first try to recover using the BAK file which is a mirror image of your VH file (the BAK file is saved every time you save your VH file). Secondly, you can use the AGIFIX.EXE utility (located in your Visual Help directory) to repair your corrupted file. To use Agifix: go to the DOS Prompt, and type AGIFIX YOURFILE.VH.
- 23 If you are panning on including large blocks of text (>16K) within your project as paragraphs, you should be aware that Visual Help does perform more efficiently when you place the text among multiple paragraph objects. Visually, there should be no difference in your resulting help file as opposed to using a single paragraph object.
- 24 If you are using TAB characters within your text objects for text formatting, you should be aware that tab spacing in Visual Help is set at every .5 inches; whereas, WinHelp tab spacing is every 1 inch.
- 25 To quickly add glossary terms as you are editing a text object, just highlight the term, click the Right mouse button to activate the popup menu, select the Action menu item, the Glossary Window will appear with the highlighted term already entered in the list, and then you can complete the process by just entering the definition text.
- 26 Visual Help automatically generates the Browse Sequence for you, as you develop your topics and assign links between them, Visual Help will assign the browse indexes depending on the hierarchy of the topics.  
**Note:** topics that are only jumped to from within hypergraphics or by using the glossary window will not be assigned browse indexes since Visual Help cannot accurately determine their proper sequence.
- 27 Although you may have adequate system memory, the Help Compiler may occasionally experience 'Out of Memory' errors when attempting to process your project. If this happens, first try exiting any other running DOS applications. Second, try increasing the memory settings in your \_default.pif file using the Pif editor provided with Windows.

# Calling Help from Visual Basic

Copy

## Global Definitions/Declarations

Place the following global definitions and declarations in a module file within your Visual Basic Project. Be sure to type the function declarations each on a single line.

```
Global Const HELP_CONTEXT = &H1
Global Const HELP_QUIT = &H2
Global Const HELP_INDEX = &H3
Global Const HELP_HELPONHELP = &H4
Global Const HELP_PARTIALKEY = &H105
```

Declare Function WinHelp Lib "User" (ByVal hWnd As Integer, ByVal lpHelpFile As String, ByVal wCommand As Integer, ByVal dwData as Any) As Integer

## Help Menu Code

The following code should be placed in the click events of your Help menu.

**Note:** As part of your application initialization, you will need to set the *HelpFile* property of the *App* object to contain the location of your help file as shown in the following example:

```
App.HelpFile = "C:\YOUR.HLP"
```

### Sub mnuHelpContents\_Click

```
Dim Result%
    **** Display the contents topic of your help file
    Result% = WinHelp(Me.hWnd, App.HelpFile, HELP_INDEX, cLng(0))
```

**End Sub**

### Sub mnuHelpSearch\_Click

```
Dim Result%
Dim Temp$
    **** Display search window for your help file
    Result% = WinHelp(Me.hWnd, App.HelpFile, HELP_PARTIALKEY, Temp$)
```

**End Sub**

### Sub mnuHelpOnHelp\_Click

```
Dim Result%
    **** Display WinHelp's Help File
    Result% = WinHelp(Me.hWnd, App.HelpFile, HELP_HELPONHELP, cLng(0))
```

**End Sub**

### Sub mnuHelpTechSupport\_Click

```
Dim Result%
    **** Open your help file to a particular topic by context ID
    Result% = WinHelp(Me.hWnd, App.HelpFile, HELP_CONTEXT, 41067)
```

**End Sub**

### Sub CloseHelp()

```
Dim Result%
    **** Before your application terminates, call this sub to close your help file
    Result% = WinHelp(Me.hWnd, "", HELP_QUIT, 0&)
```

**End Sub**

# Glossary



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## Visual Help - How to order

Visual Help is shareware and requires **\$49.00** plus shipping and handling registration fee.

### Telephone

To register using your credit card directly through WinWare, call 1-714-586-4492

### Fax

To register using your credit card directly through WinWare, Fax your order to WinWare Inc. at 714-586-9792. Make sure you include:

- Name of credit card holder.
- VISA or MASTER CARD number.
- Expiration date of the credit card.

### Mail

To register by mail select the jump below and print the registration form.



[Registration Form](#)

### CompuServe

To register through CompuServe, you need to have a CompuServe account.

- Log on to Compuserve
- At any prompt type "GO SWREG"
- Select registration Id# "891".

The registration fee will be billed to your CompuServe account.

### Public Software Library

You can order with MC, Visa, Amex, or Discover from Public Software Library by calling:

- 800-2424-PSL
- 713-524-6394
- 713-524-6398 (FAX)

THE ABOVE NUMBERS ARE FOR ORDERS ONLY. Any questions about the status of the shipment of the order, registration options, product details, technical support, volume discounts, dealer pricing, site licenses, etc, must be directed to WinWare Inc. at CIS Email 70272,1656 or the address bellow.

WinWare Inc.  
P.O. BOX 2923  
Mission Viejo CA 92690

# Visual Help Registration Form

(To print the following form, select Print Topic from the File menu.)

Name:

Company:

Address1:

Address2:

City:

State:

Zip:

Country:

Tel:

Fax:

Email:

## **Single-User Registration**

Single user .....\$49.00 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Multi-User Registration (Site license)**

10 to 20 users .....\$400.00 \_\_\_\_\_

21 to unlimited .....\$700.00 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Shipping and handling**

U.S. ....\$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Canada and Mexico .....\$7.00 \_\_\_\_\_

All Others .....\$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_

## **Total**

..... \_\_\_\_\_

*Please Note that for international orders we cannot accept Eurocheques or International bank checks, we accept company checks only. Please indicate funds in U.S. Dollars. We also accept VISA and MASTER CARD.*

**Visa or MasterCard**

Card Holder Name .....  
VISA or MC card number .....  
Expiration Date .....  
  
Sign Here .....

**Send completed form with payment to**

WinWare  
P.O. Box 2923  
Mission Viejo, CA 92690  
USA

**Where did you hear about Visual Help?**

# Visual Help Pro

The object oriented help development tool.



[What the press is saying](#)



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## What is Visual Help Pro

It is the professional version of Visual Help, with more features such as:

- Spell Checker with 100,000+ word dictionary.
- Elastic or Fixed width tables.
- Outline control for cascading menus.
- Global Search and Replace of text within topics.

## Why Visual Help

The answer is right in front of you. It's the completely integrated help development environment. Visual Help enables you to produce your help files and on-line documentation quickly and easily. You may have used some of the other help authoring tools that require you to type in special codes and use a separately purchased word processor. But when you're using Visual Help, development time can be cut down from days to just minutes!, YES just minutes!!!

## Wizardry

To start a new help file, you simply just use the Project Wizard, answer the questions, and click the finish button. A base project will then be created with all the initial elements that you have selected: title, icon, copyright, contents topic, glossary topic, glossary terms and definitions, index topic, and all formatted in one of three styles. From this base project, you can then add additional topics, drag and drop any of the object types, and most importantly -- enter your help text.

## Power

The ease of use of Visual Help does not hinder its power, you will be able to access all the professional features of the windows help environment such as macros, secondary windows, menu buttons, segmented hyper graphics, and non-scroll regions, all with the ease of click drag and drop. This makes Visual Help the right choice for the advanced users as well as the novice. Another power feature also include the ability to export your help project to an RTF user manual, which provides you with the first draft of hard copy documentaion.

## Advantage

The real advantage of Visual Help is its object oriented interface. This is most evident whenever editing the contents of a particular topic; an area you'll be spending 90% of your time. Whenever you edit a topic, it is opened in its own special "Design Window" containing its own toolbar and status line. You can then add paragraphs, headings, bullets, jumps, bitmaps, sound, video, and other objects by dragging them off the toolbox and dropping them onto topic window. All properties of each object such as style, action, and links can be easily changed within the topic window by clicking the right mouse button to display the popup Menu Assistant. This floating menu provides instant access to the most common commands and properties -- a definite time saver.

## **Multimedia**

Add multimedia elements in your help file without the need for dynamic link libraries or any other files to re-distribute with your help file. Visual Help supports the use of Windows audio/video files (AVI), multimedia movie files (MMM), and MIDI files (MID). Visual Help also support Microsoft Multimedia Viewer, just flip a switch and Visual Help will do the rest.

## **Programmer Support**

Generate reports about your project or view an outline of the hierarchy of your help topics. Assign context ID's manually or let Visual Help automatically assign them for you. Also an include file is generated by Visual Help for the programmer to include in a project to reference context IDs in the help file. By defining constants for the context IDs which use the name of the topic, the programmer can avoid problems which arise from changing context ID numbers. This results in saving time and effort when integrating help with your programs, or just maintaining it.

## **The Price**

Is Visual Help affordable? In a word, YES. Other comparable help development tools have been priced as high as \$495! At WinWare, we acknowledge the importance of a high quality at a low price, and feel that creating on-line documentation shouldn't take a big cut out of your budget. That's why we're offering Visual Help for only a fraction of the price! This is a spectacular value considering all the powerful features that are included in Visual Help.

## **System Requirements**

- A personal computer using a 80286 or higher micro-processor is required. 80386 or higher recommended.
- 2 MB of available memory.
- VGA or compatible video graphics adapter.
- A hard disk with 3MB available.
- Mouse or equivalent pointing device.
- MS-DOS version 3.1 or later.
- Microsoft Windows version 3.1 or later.

## **Visual Help Pro - How to order**

Visual Help Pro is **\$189.00** plus shipping and handling

### **Telephone**

Have you VISA or MASTER CARD ready and call 1-714-586-4492

### **Fax**

To register using your credit card directly through WinWare, Fax your order to WinWare Inc. at 714-586-9792. Make sure you include:

- Name of credit card holder.
- VISA or MASTER CARD number.
- Expiration date of the credit card.

# Features

## Project Wizard

With just a few clicks of the mouse you can create a custom help file structure in just seconds!

## User-Defined Object Styles

You can define your own custom styles for each object type allowing you more control over colors, fonts, and margins.

## WinHelp Macro Support

Jump to a topic in another help file, copy topic to clipboard, print topic, run an executable program, and many others.

## Multimedia Support

Supports these file formats: AVI, WAV, MID, and MMM. Simply click on an environment option and your help file can be recompiled as a Multimedia Viewer file!

## Spell Checker

Proof your help topics using the built in spell checker, with support to check one topic at a time or all topics within the project.

## Image Designer

Imports existing files (.bmp, .dib, .ico, & .wmf) or create new bitmaps; you can add colors, text, 3d effects, and even a Windows button style.

## Glossary Definition

makes managing your glossary easy. Just select a term, choose, the scope, and enter a definition.

## Help Window Designer

lets you have complete control of the size, position, color, and caption of each different window.

## Help Button Designer

lets you add menu-buttons to your help window to call supported WinHelp macros.

## Tables

Add elastic or fixed width tables to your help file, use them to present data or just to organize the contents of your help document.

## Outlines

Create cascading outlines with branches and leaves, to give your help files the maximum screen real-estate, and the look of professional help documents.

## Letter Scroll Bar

Create a professional looking index or glossary with a complete Alphabetic Toolbar allowing immediate access to any selected letter.

## **File-Export**

Generate either a manual document or an include file containing context ID declarations.

## Action Window



The Action window is used to define an action for an object. There are three basic types of actions:

- 1 **Jump to Topic:** select a destination topic and window.
- 2 **WinHelp Macro:** select one of the listed macros, and enter any required parameters.
- 3 **Play Media:** select a media file to play  
(file must reside in the current directory).

To define the jump, you need to access the Action window by clicking on the toolbar button or choosing the *Action* item from the popup menu. Depending on which Action Type you choose, other options will be offered for further selection.

## Applying a Window

See Also ▼

Other Features ▼

**To apply a window style to a particular topic:**

- 1 Select the jump label that jumps to that topic.
- 2 Click on the Action button to bring up the Action or Glossary dialog.
- 3 Choose the window name from the list at the bottom of the dialog.

**Note:** You won't be able to see the effects of the formatting until you compile and run the help project.

## Defining a Style

See Also ▼

Using Objects ▼

### To modify or create a style:

- 1 Choose the *Styles* item from the Options menu.
- 2 Select a style item from the list or click on the New Substyle button to define a substyle (substyles are useful if you need to have several related styles for a particular object type).
- 3 Choose the desired options from the accompanying style fields: Font Name, Font Size, Margins, Text Color, and Text format. An example of how the style will look is displayed in the Sample box.
- 4 Click the OK button to accept changes or Cancel to disregard and close the dialog.

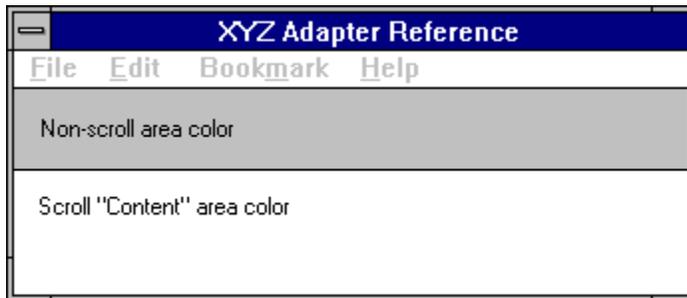
**Note:** any existing topics which contain the altered style(s) will be changed to reflect the new style. Visual Help only offers the standard Windows fonts for selection in the styles dialog.

## Designing a Window

See Also ▼

Other Features ▼

To set the shape of a help window, drag the corners of the sample window to the desired size and shape while the name of the window you want to designate a size and shape for is in the Name list box in the Window Design window. Set the attributes and shapes of the windows you want to define and click the OK button on the Window Design window to accept the changes.



Visual Help's window design mode also provides information for help developers who want to account for users who have different video monitor types. While in the window design mode, notice along the left side on the screen labels indicating the size of EGA and VGA monitors:

EGA 640x350

VGA 640x480

If you are developing help for multiple monitor resolutions, use these lines as guides to create windows which will be displayed on a specific monitor type.

# Glossary Object

Defining Jumps ▼

Using Objects ▼



The Glossary object is used to provide a list of the Definition Terms included in your help file. Like the Index object, this list consists of separately labeled sections sorted alphabetically. Within each section, Terms are listed as popup jump labels; each assigned to their respective definitions. The user can easily locate an entry within the Glossary and click on it to display the associated definition.

## **Example:**

Click on the following jump to see an example of the Glossary Object being used in this help file.

[Visual Help Glossary](#)

**Note:** the list produced by the Glossary object will only be visible within the compiled help file; within Visual Help the presence of a Glossary object in a topic is represented by the existence of its toolbox icon.

# Glossary Window



You can access the Glossary window by choosing the *Glossary* item from the Window menu or by highlighting some text within a topic and selecting the Action command. This window has primarily two main functions: entry of Glossary Terms, and the insertion of paragraph jumps.

## To enter a new glossary term:

- 1 Click on the *Insert* button.
- 2 Type in the new term.
- 3 Enter the definition text which may include line feeds or Extended ASCII. You can insert line feeds in your definition by pressing CTRL+ENTER, or insert Extended ASCII by using the Character Map Applet (available in the Windows menu or in the Accessories Group).
- 4 In the Scope box, you may leave the default choice as Global to place popup jumps in all topics or you may select a single topic from the list to just affect one topic.
- 5 Check the *All Occurrences* box to place popup jumps at every occurrence of the term, or you may uncheck this option to only affect the first occurrence within the scope
- 6 Check the *Case Sensitive* box to force a case sensitive match whenever placing a popup jump, or uncheck this option to place popup jumps regardless of whether the case matches.

# Hot Spot Object

Defining Jumps ▼

Using Objects ▼



The Hot Spot object is used to incorporate Segmented HyperGraphics into your help file. This is a special type of bitmap that includes Context Sensitive regions (Hot Spots) that allow a user to click on a graphic region to jump to another topic or display a popup definition. For example, a screen capture of an application's main window can be transformed into a hypergraphic (SHG file format) where a user can click on different parts of the screen to jump to a topic that describes that region of the screen.

## To assign a file to the Hot Spot object:

- 1 Either double-click on the object or select Image from the popup menu.
- 2 From the Image File window, choose the graphic file you want to include.

## Where to get the Hot Spot Editor:

The Hotspot Editor (SHED.EXE) is included with Visual Basic Professional, Microsoft SDK, and other development tools. The Hotspot Editor creates segmented hypergraphic (SHG) files from bitmap (BMP) files.

## Tips for Using the Hot Spot Editor:

- 1 When working in the Hotspot Editor, you should make sure that the context strings you assign to regions of your graphic exactly match the context strings of the topics that they jump to. If you are not sure what the context string of a topic is, open the topic, and click on the properties button.
- 2 Context strings for glossary terms within your project are not accessible from Visual Help, but they can be obtained from the RTF file that is generated whenever you compile your help.
- 3 The jump information in hypergraphic files cannot be determined until the actual compile step; therefore, the effect of these jumps cannot be determined within Visual Help. This may become apparent when using features such as the View-Outline and the Runtime Test.
- 4 For more information about using and creating hypergraphics, refer to the documentation that accompanied your Hotspot Editor.

# Image Object

Defining Jumps ▼

Using Objects ▼



The Image object is used to display any of the supported graphic file formats: DIB, BMP, and WMF.

## To assign a graphic file to the currently selected Image object:

- 1 Either double-click on the object or select Image from the popup menu.
- 2 From the Image File window, choose the graphic file you want to include.

## To assign an Action:

- 1 Click on the image object, and select the Action item from the popup menu or click on the Action toolbar button.
- 2 From the Action window, you can specify the action you want to include.

# Index Object

Defining Jumps ▼

Using Objects ▼



The Index object is used to provide a list of the Topic Titles and Keywords included in your help file. This list consists of separately labeled sections sorted alphabetically. Within each section, topic titles and keywords are listed as jump labels; each assigned to their respective topics. The user can easily locate an entry within the Index and click on it to jump to the associated topic.

## **Example:**

Click on the following jump to see an example of the Index Object being used in this help file.

[Visual Help Index](#)

**Note:** the list produced by the Index object will only be visible within the compiled help file; within Visual Help the presence of an Index object in a topic is represented by the existence of its toolbox icon.

**See Also:**



[Action Window](#)



[Glossary Window](#)



[WinHelp Macros](#)



[Popup Jumps](#)



[Paragraph Jumps](#)



[Jumps to Other Help Files](#)



[Jumps to Run an Executable Program](#)



[Play Media](#)



[Topic Jumps](#)

# WinHelp Macros



The WinHelp application provides macros you can access through Visual Help. These macros automatically perform common WinHelp tasks like moving between topics, printing, and displaying dialog boxes.

Macros are assigned to jump objects. Instead of jumping to another topic, the jump object invokes a macro. WinHelp macros can only run after compilation of the help project, so you won't be able to test changes to the help file without compiling and running it.

<b>List Item in Action Dialog</b>	<b>WinHelp Macro</b>	<b>Description</b>
Copy Topic to Clipboard	CopyTopic	Copies text in the current topic to the Windows clipboard.
Display About Dialog box	About	Displays the About dialog box.
Display Annotation Dialog box	Annotate	Displays the Annotation dialog box
Display Bookmark Dialog Box	Bookmark Define	Displays the Bookmark Define dialog box.
Display Copy Dialog Box	CopyDialog	Displays the Copy dialog box.
Display Help on Help	HelpOn	Displays the Using Help file.
Display History Window	History	Displays the Help History window.
Display More Dialog Box	Bookmark More	Displays the Bookmark More dialog box.
Display	FileOpen	Displays

Open Dialog Box		the Open dialog box.
Display Printer setup Dialog Box	PrinterSetup	Displays the Printer Setup dialog box.
Display Search Dialog Box	Search	Displays the Search dialog Box
Exit Help	Exit	Exits the WinHelp application.
Goto Contents	Contents	Displays the Contents topic of the current help file.
Goto Last Topic	Back	Displays the previous topic in the "Back" list.
Goto Next Topic	Next	Displays the next topic in the <u>browse sequence</u> .
Goto Previous Topic	Prev	Displays the previous topic in the browse sequence.
Print Topic	Print	Send the currently displayed topic to the printer.
Run an Executable Program	ExecProgram	Starts up a Windows application
Jump to Contents	JumpContents	Jumps to another compiled Help file.
Jump to Context String	JumpContext	Jumps to the specified Context String in another

Popup to  
Context  
String

PopupCont  
ext

compiled  
Help file.  
Displays a  
popup  
topic from  
another  
help file.

# Popup Jumps



A popup jump is similar to a topic jump, except the topic is displayed in a non-sizable popup window that disappears whenever the user clicks the mouse.

## To define a popup jump:

- 1 Select the jump object.
- 2 Choose the Action option to display the Action window.
- 3 Select the desired destination topic.
- 4 Choose the popup item from the window list.

# Paragraph Jumps



Visual Help does support topic jumps within paragraph objects by using the Glossary Definition window.

## To create a paragraph jump:

- 1 Highlight the text within the paragraph.
- 2 Click on the Action button.  
(The Glossary Definition window will display)
- 3 From the Scope list, choose the current topic, or Global to affect all topics.
- 4 Select *Jump to Topic* type.
- 5 Choose a destination from the topic list.
- 6 Check the *Case Sensitive* box to use a case sensitive search.
- 7 Check the *All Occurrences* box to affect all matching text within the scope, or leave it unchecked to affect only the first match found within the scope.

**Note:** Within Visual Help, the paragraph text will not visibly change colors, but when compiled the text will appear as a jump in the help file. A paragraph jump may be modified by selecting the Glossary item from the Window menu. The Glossary Definition window will be displayed, you can choose the appropriate item from the Term List, and then make the desired modifications.

# Jumps to Other Help Files



Many times a reference in one help file may require information that is in another help file. Rather than duplicating the information, you can define a jump to load the other help file, and display the desired topic.

## To create a jump to a topic within another help file:

- 1 Select the jump object.
- 2 Display the Action window.
- 3 Choose WinHelp Macro.
- 4 Select *Jump to Context String*.
- 5 Type in the help file name or click the browse button.
- 6 Type in the Context String of the desired topic.

## To create a jump to the Contents of another help file:

- 1 Follow steps 1 through 3 above.
- 2 Select *Jump to Contents*.
- 3 Type in the help file name or click the browse button.

### Example:

The following jump will open the contents topic of NOTEPAD.HLP. Whenever you jump to another help file, you will need to click the Back button to return to the previous help file.

### [Notepad Help Contents](#)

**Note:** this type of jump does have the side effect of unloading the original help file. For defining this type of jump for a Button, select Button Design from the Window menu, and follow steps 3 through 6.

# Jumps to Run an Executable Program



There may be situations in developing your help file that require the use of another application. For example, you may want to define a jump that will start up a spreadsheet application, and display a particular worksheet. This feature allows you to include capabilities in your help file that are not offered in Windows Help.

## To create a jump to Run an Executable Program:

- 1 Select the jump object.
- 2 Display the Action window.
- 3 Choose WinHelp Macro.
- 4 Select *Run an Executable Program*.
- 5 Type in the program file name or click the browse button.
- 6 Continue to type in any program parameters after the file name.

### Example:

The following jump will run CALC.EXE.

### [Run Calculator](#)

**Note:** For defining this type of jump for a Button, select *Button Design* from the Window menu, and follow steps 3 through 6.

## Play Media



Visual Help supports the use of Windows sound files (WAV) in a help project. A sound file can be assigned to a jump object just like a topic or WinHelp macro.

### To assign a sound file:

- 1 Select the object to which you want to assign the sound file.
- 2 Click on the Action button.
- 3 Choose Play Media from the Action Type combo box.
- 4 Select the sound file you want from the list.
- 5 Close the Action dialog by clicking OK or by pressing the ENTER key.

### Example:

If you have the proper sound hardware, you will hear a sample whenever you click on the bitmap jump below:



[Play Sound](#)

**Note:** make sure any sound files you want to use are located in the same directory as your project. Sound files will only work on systems that support sound and have the proper drivers installed. If the sound files do not have a WAV extension, you must first convert them to WAV format.

# Topic Jumps



The topic jump is the most common of all jumps and Visual Help makes defining them very easy.

## To create a Topic Jump:

- 1 Select the jump object.
- 2 Choose the *Action* option to display the Action window.
- 3 Click on the desired destination topic from the list.
- 4 Choose the desired secondary window name from the window list (or leave it set to default).  
You can also modify any of the secondary windows by using the Window Design feature.

**Note:** You can click on jump object while at the same time pressing the CTRL key, and Visual Help will automatically define a jump Action and create a new topic. The new topic will have the same name as the jump object's text.

# Managing Projects

[Testing a Project](#)

[Compiling a Project](#)

[Environment Options](#)

[Project Options](#)

[Import](#)

[Export Include Files](#)

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# Manual

[Overview](#)

[Managing Projects](#)

[Using Topics](#)

[Using Objects](#)

[Other Features](#)

[References](#)

# MCI Object

Defining Jumps ▼

Using Objects ▼



The MCI Object is used to add a Multimedia file to your topic. Visual Help supports the use of Windows audio/visual files (AVI), multimedia viewer files (MMM), and MIDI files (MID). You must have the proper hardware and software drivers installed to take advantage of multimedia capabilities in your help project. Refer to the appropriate Windows documentation for more information about configuring Windows to have specific multimedia capabilities.

## To assign a file to the MCI object:

- 1 Either double-click on the object or select Image from the popup menu.
- 2 From the Image File window, choose the graphic file you want to include (the multimedia file must reside in the same directory as your help project file).

## Example:

The following play and stop buttons represent a MCI object. If you have the proper sound hardware, you will hear a sample whenever you click on the play button below:



**Note:** since you cannot test multimedia objects with Visual Help's runtime test feature, you must compile the project to enable the multimedia functions. After you compile the project, a Play and Stop button will be placed into the topic at the location of the MCI object. Click on the Play button to test the multimedia file.

**See Also:**



[Defining a Style](#)



[Applying a Style](#)



[Object Styles: Overview](#)

## Project Options Report



Choose Project Options from the Reports menu. The project file names are listed along with the time and date in the report window. Visual Help then lists all of the open help project options. Project options control how Visual Help files are created, processed, and optimized. Except for the Title and Copyright items, it is usually best to leave these options in their default settings unless you are knowledgeable in the use of these options. The Project Option defaults are set so that no adjustment is necessary for normal operation of Visual Help.

**See Also:**



[Topic List Report](#)



[Topic Outline Report](#)



[Project Options Report](#)



[Reports: Overview](#)

## Topic List Report



Choose Topics List from the Reports menu. All files associated with the project are listed along with the current time and date. Visual Help scans all topics and constructs an alphabetical list of topics. In addition to the topic name, the Context ID and any keywords associated with that topic appear in the window. Click on the Print button to print the list.

# Topic Outline Report



Visual Help scans all topics and constructs a hierarchical outline. The outline starts with the Contents topics and, while proceeding down the branches of the structure of the system, lists all the topics in the order in which they were encountered. Each topic is indented according to its level in the hierarchy. The Browse number for each topic is also listed. The Browse number indicates the order in which topics were encountered, and also determines the topic sequence when the user clicks on the arrow keys to navigate through the application's help file.

If a topic is preceded by "Index: Loop" instead of a number, that topic is "jumped to" from the topic above it that has an Index number. This is helpful for finding every occurrence of a jump to a particular topic. Click on the Print button to print the outline.

## Using Context IDs



Windows supports context-sensitive help. Context-sensitive help provides the ability for the end user to press the F1 key and receive help information about the item that currently has focus. Developing context-sensitive help requires that the help system author and the application programmer agree on a list of context ID's so that WinHelp and the application pass the correct information back and forth. You can assign context ID's arbitrarily, but you should not change them after they have been programmed into the application. Visual Help will also generate context ID's automatically during the build process.

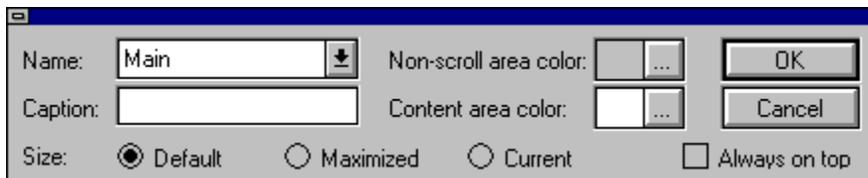
You can manually edit the context ID for a topic by opening the topic and clicking on the topic properties button . Enter the new context ID in the Properties dialog and close the window. You can also edit context ID's from the Outline or Browse windows by highlighting the desired topic and clicking on the Context ID button at the top of the window.

## Setting Window Attributes



Window styles are set by choosing Window Design from the Window menu. Visual Help goes into the Window Design mode, where the main Visual Help workspace is temporarily obscured by the Window design elements. Since Visual Help requires the entire screen to help you determine window attributes, the Window Design functions are modal, which means you cannot perform other Visual Help tasks until you are finished with window design and either click OK or Cancel to return to the topic design environment.

When you choose Window Design from the Window menu, two windows will be displayed on a colored background. The window on top is called the design window.



The Design window contains fields and buttons where you can set various attributes for Visual Help's six available window types. Notice the list box called Name. It contains a list of the six available window types, called Main, Window1,....., Window5. When you select a window from the Name list box, its attributes are displayed in the Design window and the actual size and shape of the window are also shown.

**See Also:**



[Setting Window Attributes](#)



[Designing a Window](#)



[Applying a Window](#)



[Window Designer: Overview](#)

### **Add Topic Name to the Keywords List**

This option, set to true by default, causes Visual Help to automatically include topic names as keywords.

## **Bitmap Jump**

The Bitmap Jump object is a single line of text formatted in a green-underlined regular font. You can also include a graphic file to be displayed on the left or right side of the text.

## **Bitmap Paragraph**

Multiple line text formatted with a small size regular font and full word wrapping is enabled. You can also include a graphic file to be displayed on either the right or left side of the text.

**Bitmap**

An image defined as a rectangular pattern of colored dots (pixels).

## **Browse Sequence**

A sequence of Help topics, accessible by use of the forward and back arrows on the WinHelp menu bar. The Browse sequence is helpful for users who like to read several related topics in a predefined order.

**Bullet**

Multiple line text formatted with small size regular font, word wrapping, and dot style bullet at beginning of line.

## **Button Designer**

When WinHelp opens your help file, a button bar is visible across the top of the window. This button bar contains various default buttons that allow the user to: jump to the contents topic, keyword search, display history, go to the previous topic, and go to the next topic. The Visual Help Button Designer enables you to add new buttons to the button bar to provide quick access to the macro functions that you specify.

## **Compilation**

The process of converting a word processing file into a help file which can be opened by WinHelp. HC31.EXE or HCP.EXE performs the compilation on a help project RTF file.

## **Contents Topic**

The topic that the help system opens when the user invokes the help system. The contents topic should contain an overview of the help system and pathways to other help information.

**Context ID**

A number assigned to a topic which is also programmed into the application so that when a user presses the F1 key in a particular application mode, help information about that mode is immediately displayed.

## **Context Sensitive**

Receiving help information which pertains to an item that the user is currently viewing by pressing the F1 key. By programming context IDs into different application modes, the user is allowed to bypass contents topics and gets the needed information immediately.

**Context String**

A string that identifies a topic in the Help system. Each context string must be unique; it can be assigned to only one topic in a help project.

## **Enumerated Bullet**

Multiple line text formatted with small size regular font, word wrapping, and number at the beginning of line. A group of Enumerated Bullet objects that are continuous with no other object types separating will maintain numbering sequence. Any separation of another object type will cause numbering to restart at 1.

**Footnote**

Single line text formatted with a small size regular font. Usually placed at the end of a topic to indicate footnote information.

## **Glossary**

The Glossary object is used to provide a list of the Definition Terms included in your help file.

**Heading**

Single line text formatted with a medium size bold font. Usually placed after a Title to indicate another sub-level of information.

## **Help Compiler Selection**

The Windows help compiler, HC31.EXE or HCP.EXE, is executed each time the help project is compiled. The help compiler text box in the Environment Options dialog contains the name and path of help compiler. If the directory which contains HC31.EXE or HCP.EXE is in the "Path" statement of your AUTOEXEC.BAT file, then the name of the help compiler is sufficient. You can also click the Browse button to locate the help compiler.

## **Help Compiler**

The file HC31.EXE or HCP.EXE included with Visual Basic Professional, the Microsoft SDK (Software Development Kit), and most other Windows development tools. This compiler takes the information from your Visual Help project and converts it into a format recognized by the WinHelp engine.

## **Help File**

A file with a very specific format which is recognized by the HLP extension in the file name. The WinHelp engine opens the Windows help files you create with Visual Help. Most Windows-based systems contain one or more help files for each application installed, but typically just the one copy of the WinHelp engine installed with Windows.

## **History Window**

A window that displays the last 40 topics the user has viewed since opening the help file.

## **Hot Spot**

The Hot Spot object is used to incorporate Segmented HyperGraphics (SHG file format) into your help file.

**Hotspot editor**

The Hotspot Editor (SHED.EXE) is included with Visual Basic, Microsoft SDK, and other development tools. The Hotspot Editor creates segmented hypergraphic (.SHG) files from bitmaps (.BMP).

## **Hypergraphic**

A hypergraphic is a bit mapped graphic that can be segmented, with each segment defined as a jump to a topic. Hypergraphics are created using the Hotspot editor.

## **Hypertext**

A type of document management in which the user navigates by reading information presented in the help window, clicking with the mouse on predefined text or graphics in the window, then “jumping” to a different screen in the help file. A new screen is presented with more information and jump options. The user can jump to another topic or return to a previous screen. Hypertext works well for on-line help systems.

**Image**

The Image object is used to display any of the supported graphic file formats: DIB, BMP, and WMF.

**Include File**

A file generated by Visual Help that a programmer can include with a project to reference context IDs in the help file. By defining constants for the context IDs which use the name of the topic, the programmer can avoid problems which arise from changing context ID numbers.

**Index**

The Index object is used to provide a list of the Topic Titles and Keywords included in your help file.

**Jump Label**

The Jump Label object is a single line of text formatted in a green-underlined regular font.

## **Jump**

A predefined text or graphic object which the user clicks on to "jump" to another topic window. A new screen is then presented with more information and jump options. The user can then jump to another topic or return to a previous screen. This type of document management is known as "Hypertext" and works well for on-line help systems.

**Keyword**

A word or phrase you can associate with a topic which appears in an index object you use in your help system. WinHelp's search dialog relies on a "keyword" list to help the end user find topics based on words and phrases related to the topics.

## **Letter Scroll Bar**

The Letter Scroll Bar places buttons for each letter A-Z that a user can click on to scroll immediately to a certain letter in an index or glossary object.

**Line**

You may place a Line object anywhere in your topic to produce a single black line that extends from one side of the help window to the other.

**MCI**

The MCI Object is used to add a Multimedia file your topic. Visual Help supports the use of Windows Audio/visual files (AVI), multimedia viewer files (MMM), and MIDI files (MID).

**Metafile**

A Windows file that stores an image in terms of graphic objects rather than pixels. A metafile preserves an image better than a bitmap when it is resized.

## **Monospaced Paragraph**

Multiple line text formatted with a small size fixed-pitch regular font and word wrapping is disabled.

## **Multiple-Resolution Bitmap**

A bitmap file that contains the bitmap at several resolutions.

## **Non-Scroll Area**

Often a topic is too long to fit into one regular sized help window. If the help information extends below the bottom of the window, a scroll bar automatically appears that allows the user to view everything contained in the window by scrolling. It is often helpful in such topics to freeze the title to remind the user which topic is currently being viewed.

## **Paragraph**

Multiple line text formatted with a small size regular font and full word wrapping is enabled.

**Pop-up window**

A topic which appears in an overlapping window that “pops-up” until the reader clicks the mouse or presses a key.

## **Regenerate Context IDs**

A context ID links a help topic to a specific program object. For example, if the user needs help with a certain dialog box currently on the screen and presses F1 for help, then the context ID programmed into the application will instruct WinHelp to open to the topic which gives information about that dialog box. Visual Help can automatically regenerate context IDs. If the Regenerate Context ID's box is checked in the Environment Options dialog when the project is built, then context IDs will be automatically generated and inserted into each topic. This option is then automatically reset to false so that the context IDs will not be overwritten on the next build. Limit generation of context IDs to certain stages in the development cycle to reduce the chance of incorrect context IDs.

**RTF**

Rich Text Format. Visual Help builds an RTF file for each project which is compiled into a help file by HC31.EXE.

## **Runtime Testing**

A time saving feature of Visual Help which allows the help system developer to test the jumps and sound files in a help project without having to compile the help project.

## **Screen Capture**

The process of converting a screen image to a graphic file that can be used in Visual Help. Press ALT+PRINT SCREEN to capture a bitmap image of what you see in a window and place it on the Windows clipboard. Then paste the graphic into a Paintbrush file to save an image that can be used in your help system.

## **Secondary Window**

A window which displays additional information without closing the original topic window. All Visual Help window styles are secondary windows except for "Main."

## **Style**

Predefined text formatting used for various text objects. Since users of Windows help systems have come to expect a certain look and format, Visual Help has default styles for text objects that follow the WinHelp conventions.

**Sub-contents topic**

A topic which provides a pathway between the main contents topic and topics which contain specific help information. A sub-contents topic is jumped to from the main contents topic, and contains other jumps to topics like Procedures or Commands.

**Subheading**

Single line text formatted with a medium size italic-bold font. Usually placed after a Heading to indicate another sub-level of information.

## **Target File Format**

This list box provides the two file types you can create, Windows Help file or Windows Multimedia Viewer file.

## **Title**

Single line text formatted with a large bold font. As the name implies, it is usually used as a topic title.

## **Topic Note**

Visual Help provides capabilities for attaching notes to individual topics to help remind you of changes or updates that need to be done, to communicate with another person working on the project, or store any other information related to the topic. This is a development tool available only while working in Visual Help; the end user won't see or have access to these notes.

**Topic**

The primary unit of information in a help file. A topic is the help information displayed in one window by WinHelp during runtime. Each topic has its own window in the Visual Help development environment.

## **WinHelp button**

When WinHelp opens your help file, several default buttons are created along the top of the window. These buttons take the user to the contents topic, allow keyword searches, bring up the WinHelp History dialog box, and take the user forward and backward in the help file. Visual Help enables the help system author to add buttons to the default WinHelp buttons, and assign WinHelp macros to the new buttons.

## **WinHelp Macro**

The WinHelp application provides macros you can access through Visual Help. These macros automatically perform common WinHelp tasks like moving between topics, printing, and displaying dialog boxes.

## **WinHelp**

To provide an efficient and consistent method of providing help to users of Windows-based applications, Microsoft has devised a system that centers around WinHelp. The WinHelp application is referred to as the “engine” of the help system because it starts up whenever the user requests help. Every time a user opens a help file, Windows executes the file WINHELP.EXE, and WinHelp is loaded. The WinHelp engine opens the Windows help files you create with Visual Help.



