VB AHA!!!

[Introduction](#)
[Requirements](#)
[Getting Started](#)
[Overview](#)
[Using with Visual Basic](#)
[Customer Support](#)
[Registering](#)

Press F1 to get help on using Help.

For context sensitive help select a window and press F1.

Text Setup

All changes will be previewed in the textbox at the bottom of the window. You may enter whatever text you want into that textbox to see what effect your changes will have on it.

Font Name

Choose a font from the list of all available fonts.

Font Size

Choose a font size from the list or enter your own.

Bold

The text will be bold.

Italic

The text will be italic.

Left

Left margin for the text in inches.

Right

Right margin for the text in inches.

Text Alignment

There are 3 text alignment options:

Left - text will be aligned to the left side of the window.

Right - text will be aligned to the right side of the window.

Center - text will be centered in the window.

Color

Click on the button that is the color that you want the text to be.

Topic
Editing
Toolbar

Click on any Toolbar button below for further info on it.

All of the text field buttons in the toolbar may be right clicked with the mouse to edit their default values.

Add text or graphics to your topic

Click on one of the toolbar's buttons in the first group to add a text field or graphic to the end of your topic. To place it above an already existing field drag the toolbar button that you want over the field and release the mouse button. There is currently a limit of 50 fields per topic.

Adding multiple fields

To add multiple fields (of the same type) in the middle of a topic, drag the toolbar button you want to use with the left mouse button, and while holding it down, click the right mouse button over the field you want the new one to be created above.   You may continue clicking the right mouse button to create more fields.

Delete a text field or graphic from your topic

Drag the trashcan button over the text/graphic that you want to delete and release the button. (text fields may also be deleted if they have the input focus and you either click on the trashcan or you select the Delete menu item).

Changing defaults for any field

When you right click with the mouse on any field in the topic a menu will be displayed which you may choose an option from. See menus below.

[Menus](#)

Topics List

New

This creates a new topic and brings up the Topic Setup window.

Delete

Removes a topic from your project.

Edit

This will bring up the Topic Setup window for the topic selected in the list.

View

This will open the selected topic so you may edit it. You may also just double click on the topic you want to view in the list to open it.

[Menus](#)

Topic Setup

Name

This is what you will use to refer to this topic in the rest of your project. The Topic name must not have any spaces in it. Valid names may contain any of the following characters: "A-Z", " a-z", "0-9", "." and "_". You may not have any spaces in the name.

Title

This is the topics name in the compiled help file, it is what you will see in the History window and the lower pane of the search window. Titles may contain any characters you want. Use CHARMAP.EXE to get special characters. Titles over 50 characters long will be truncated.

Browse Sequence

This is used to construct the browse order for the browse buttons to use. Generally you can just let VB AHA!!! handle this for you.   It must be in the following format: SequenceName:Index. There can be no spaces and the Index will be sorted alphabetically. So, use Index's like 001, 002... 010, etc... If you let it, VB AHA!!! will construct the Browse Sequences for you, see Build Options.

Build Name

You may give each topic a build name that will allow you to selectively compile only those topics that are in your Build Expression see Project Setup (Options|Project...).

Keywords

These are the word(s) that will appear in the top pane of the search window that will allow you to find this topic. Only use one keyword per line. Keywords may be any number of words each examples: "Setup", "Getting Started", etc... (Don't use the quotes though, unless you want them in your keyword). You may use any characters you want in a keyword. Use CHARMAP.EXE to get special characters.

Project Setup

Any time you need to select a file you may click on the "B" button to the left of that textbox to browse your drives for the file you want.

Root Directory

This tells the help compiler where to find the files to make your help file.   The default is to look in the same directory as the .AHA file.

Graphics Directory

This tells the help compiler where to find the graphics in your help file (It already looks in the Root Directory that you selected).

Error Log File

Name of the file that you want the help compiler to write any errors that it finds to.

Icon

Icon that that you want displayed when your help file is minimized. Leave blank to use the defualt icon.

Title

Text that you want displayed in the title bar of your help file.

Contents Topic

Topic that will be shown when your help file is first displayed and that can be returned to by pressing the contents button at the top of the help window.   This entry must be filled in with a valid topic name or the help compiler will just use the first topic that it finds as the contents topic.

Copyright Notice

Text that you want displayed in the about box for the help window.

Global Font

Font that you want your entire help file to use (in case you used a font while designing your help file that cannot be distributed or that you decide you don't want to use).

Map Font Size To...

Allows you to map a certain font size or range of font sizes to a different font size. You must put only one per line and in order from smallest to largest like this:
6-10:10
11-15:12
18:16
with these mappings and fonts in your project that are of size 6 to 10 will now be changed to size 10, sizes 11 to 15 will be changed to size 12 and size 18 will be changed to size 16.

Build Expression

Tells the help compiler which topics to include in the final help file. Just leave blank unless you only want to compile topics with a certain Build Tag.

Compression

None - no compression. (fastest during compile)

Medium - average compression.

High - all out attempt at compressing the help file (slower during compile but will generate smaller help files than the other options).

Report

None - no status report during compile.

Status - reports the status of the help compiler's progress.

Warnings

Severe - reports only severe errors.

Moderate - reports moderate and severe errors.

All - reports all errors and warnings.

Picture Setup

Picture

This is the filename of the picture that you want to use. You may use .BMP or .SHG pictures in a help file (If you use a .SHG you must have the .BMP for that picture in the same directory and with the same name as the .SHG if you want to be able to see it while designing your help file. Example: you want to use the file named OPTIONS.SHG so you need to have the file OPTIONS.BMP in the same directory.) You may click on the "B" button to browse for a picture. Whatever picture that you select will be shown in the bottom portion of the window.

Left

This is the left margin in inches for the picture.

Right

This is the right margin in inches for the picture.

Alignment

This is how the picture will be aligned.
1. Left - aligned to the left side of the help window.
2. Right - aligned to the right side.
3. Center - centered in the help window.

Build Options

General

Include Pictures

Includes all .BMP and .SHG files that are in your project into the compiled help file. Leave this option unchecked while you are working on your project, (the Help Compiler will work much faster that way), and only select this option for the final build.

Min. During Build

Minimizes VB AHA!!! while it is writing the data files necessary for the Help Compiler. This option is only useful if you are working on a very large help file that will take awhile to build.
Note: VB AHA!!! does not stay minimzed while the Help Compiler is compiling your help file though.

Global Links

Case Sensitive

Global Text Links will only be created if the text in your project matches exactly ("Register" will only match with "Register" and not with "register"). Leave this option off if you want "register" to match "Register".

Use Default Color

The default color for Popup's and JumpTo's as defined by Windows will be used for globally linked text. Deselect this option if you want your Global Text Links to use the color of the text field that they are in.

Whole Word Only

Global text links will only be made to whole words. (ex: "Build Option" will only link to "Build Option" and not to "Build Options". Deselect this option if you want it to link to both.)

Browsing

Browse Buttons

Include the browse buttons in your help file. («   and »)

Default Layout

VB AHA!!! will construct and standard layout for the browse buttons to use. Deselect this option if you want to use your own layout.

<u>Window Attributes</u>

"" to "Main"

   This will force your Jump To's that don't specify a window to use the Main windows only.   Without this if you select a Jump To in a secondary window the topic that it is linked with will be shown in the secondary window.   Click on "<u>Overview</u>" in the Contents topic to see how this works.

VB Options

Forms

This is a list of all Form types that are in Visual Basic. If you have any new types of forms that are not included in the Standard or Pro versions of Visual Basic then you must add their form type name to this list. (the name will be given in the Properties window of Visual Basic)

No HelpContextID

This is a list of all the controls that do not have a HelpContextID. You need to add to this list if you have any new controls not included in the Standard of Pro versions of Visual Basic that don't have this property. You must use the name of the control type as given in the Properties window of Visual Basic.

Import

These are what <u>VB AHA!!!</u> will create its topics from. Generally you will want to only Import the Forms Only, one exception is stated below under Export.

Export

These are the topics that <u>VB AHA!!!</u> will export back into your Visual Basic program. Select Forms Only if you want the context sensitive help to open the help file to a topic that will give help on the whole form. TIP: Import "Forms and Controls" and Export "Forms Only" if you want to use .SHG files on your forms.

.Mak File

This is the location and name of your Visual Basic programs .Mak file.   Once <u>VB AHA!!!</u> has saved the HelpContextID's to your .FRM files then it is a good idea to delete this entry until you need it again(you add some forms or controls to your VB project).

Visual Basic

This tells <u>VB AHA!!!</u> where to find Visual Basic so that it may recompile your .Mak file using the new HelpContextID's that it setup.

Keep all old HelpContextID's that aren't remapped

Select this to keep any old HelpContextID's that aren't remapped by your projects topics. If you don't select this then <u>VB AHA!!!</u> automatically removes all your old HelpContextID's that aren't remapped by your projects topics.

Make backups of the .FRM files

Your .FRM files will be copied to .BAK files before <u>VB AHA!!!</u> saves the HelpContextID's to them. You should always leave this option on as a safety mesasure in case something goes wrong while <u>VB AHA!!!</u> is accessing your .FRM files.

Global Text Link Setup

Global Text to Link

This is the text that will be linked to the Topic that you choose throughout your help file.

[Set Topic Link](#)

Global Text Links

Use these to make links to a word or words that appear anywhere in your help file without having to set a link to each instance.   This is also the only way to make a link to a part of a field instead of the whole field.

Set Link

[Set Topic Link](#)

Double clicking an entry in the list will also open the <u>Set Topic Link</u> window for that global text link.

New

Creates a new Global Text Link.   It will ask you for the text that you want to make a link to then it will show the <u>Set Topic Link</u> window so you can define the link.

Delete

Removes the selected Global Text Link from your project.

Layout of Help file

This window displays the layout of your help file by first showing your contents topic at the top. Below that it has each topic that is linked to the contents topic (these are indented once to the right). This continues with each of these topics until the entire layout of your help file is displayed (like a tree, the contents topic is the root and all of it's linked topics are the branches etc....).

Example Layout

Contents
      Introduction
      Starting
      <u>Overview</u>
            Menus
                  File
                  Edit
                  Options
            Toolbar
      Glossary

Introduction

VB AHA!!! is an inexpensive and easy to use utility for writing Windows help files. You won't need any expensive wordprocessors or have to use any cryptic commands. With simple mouse clicks and Drag n Drop ease you will be able to construct your help files quickly.

If you use Visual Basic then VB AHA!!! will handle all of the HelpContextID values for you and even recompile your programs with the new values. No more hassles of having to insert the values by hand! If you program in C/C++ then VB AHA!!! will create a .H file containing all of the #defines that you will need for context sensitive help in your programs.

For information on using VB AHA!!! read Getting Started and Overview.

Getting Started

Creating New Topics

Click on the New button in the Topics List window or the main toolbar button of a window. Doing this will bring up the Topic Setup window, fill in whatever info you decide to use for your topic and select Ok. You now have a new empty topic.

Adding Text/Graphics to a Topic

Click on one of the toolbar buttons in the first group of the topic window to add a Text field (the first 7 buttons) or a Graphics field (the last button of the first group) to the bottom of the topic. If you want to add a new field somewhere other than the bottom then you can drag the toolbar button to the field that you want the new field to be placed above.

Deleting Fields

To delete a text field you can:

1. Drag the trashcan toolbar button onto the field that you want to delete and drop it.
2. Select the field and click on the trashcan.
3. Select the field (without selecting any text) and press Ctrl-D.
4. Right click the mouse over the field and select Delete from the field menu.

To delete a graphics field you can:

1. Drag the trashcan onto the field that you want deleted and drop it.
2. Right click the mouse over the field and select Delete from the field menu.

Keeping Your Changes

To keep the changes that you have made to the topic you may either select the Topic|Store menu item or the Close item from the control menu (button in the upper left of the topic window).

Discarding Your Changes

To discard your changes to the topic you can select the Topic|Discard menu item.

Setting Options

You will need to select Options|Build... and Options|Project... and fill in the Build Options and the Project Setup windows.   If you are working on a Visual Basic projects help file see Using with Visual Basic.

Saving Your Work

To save the work that you have done you may either click on the toolbar button of a disk(in the main window) or select the File|Save menu item (also in the main window). If this is a new project then you will be presented with the standard windows dialog to select a filename for your project.

Creating a Help File

You must use PIFEDIT.EXE on HC.PIF to tell it where your HC.EXE file is located. Fill in the Project Setup window and the Build Options window first. Then select All form the Build menu.

Registering

Read the file REGISTER.TXT for information on registering <u>VB AHA!!!</u>.

Overview

Deletes the selected text field. Drag over any field (text/graphic) and release to delete that field.

Creates a Title text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: Title

Creates a Subtitle text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: SubTitle

Creates a Heading text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: Heading

Creates a Normal text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.
Example: Normal Text

Creates a Small indented text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: Indented Text

Creates a Jump To text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: Jump To

Creates a Popup text field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: Popup

Creates a Graphic field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Menus

File
Topic
[VB](VB)
Build
Options
Window
Help

Menus

Topic

Store

  Closes this topics window and stores its data in memory.

Discard

  Closes this topics window and ignores any changes that you made to the topic.

Edit

Cut

  Removes the selected text from the text field and stores it in the clipboard.

Copy

  Copies the selected text to the clipboard.

Paste

  Copies the text in the clipboard to the current location in the text field with the focus.

Delete

  If there is selected text in the text field with the input focus then it is deleted otherwise the text field is deleted.

Select All

  Selects all of the text in the text field with the focus.

Field Menu (Right Click on a Field)

Setup

View Linked Topic

  Opens the topic that this field is linked to.

Set Topic Link

  Links this field to another topic.

Clear Topic Link

  Clears any link that this field may have to another topic.

Cut

  Copies the selected field to VB AHA's internal clipboard and then deletes it from this topic.

Copy

  Copies the selected field to VB AHA's internal clipboard.

Paste

  Place a field stored in VB AHA's internal clipboard above the selected field.

Delete

  Deletes the selected field.

Requirements

You must have the following files:

HC.EXE - the <u>Microsoft Help Compiler</u>. Only needed to actually compile the Help file, you can still design it without this program.

VBRUN300.DLL - the <u>Visual Basic runtime library</u>.

SHED.EXE -   Microsofts .SHG file editor. To make graphics that have hotspots (buttons) on them. Not really necessary.

to use <u>VB AHA!!!</u>.

If you don't already have VBRUN300.DLL then you can get it from almost any BBS that carries windows programs or from Microsofts BBS.

Microsoft BBS phone # 1-206-936-6735

If you don't already have the Microsoft Help Compiler you may get it from ftp.cica.indiana.edu on the Internet as what.zip.   Or when you register I will send it and SHED.EXE (for making segmented hypergraphics) to you free of charge.   Please note that these are Microsoft programs and that I am not selling them. I am sending these purely as a convenience to my customers that may not have access to the Internet. I believe that these programs are also available on Microsoft's Developers Network CD's.

Menus

File

Open a .TPC file...

Allows you to add a topic to this project that you previously saved as a .TPC file using the next menu option. If this creates a topic with the same name as a topic that was already in the .AHA project then you must rename one of the topics.

Save Selected Topic as .TPC...

Allows you to save a single topic to a file for use in another project. This is very useful for generic topics that you will use in more than one help file.

Edit

Copy

Copies the selected topics name to the clipboard. You can use this any time that you need to enter a topics name (ie. defining text links).

Using with Visual Basic

To use VB AHA!!! with Visual Basic projects there are several things that you must do.

All of your .FRM files must be saved as text, not in binary format.

Select Options|Visual Basic... and fill in the VB Options.

Use the VB|Open... menu and select the .MAK file for your VB project. Topics will be created using the names of your forms as the topic names. If you chose to import Forms and Controls then a topic will also be created for each control on your forms. Each control will have a name like this: Formname.Controlname.

Edit the topics and Delete any that you don't want context sensitive help on.

Select Options|Project... and fill in Project Setup.

Select Options|Build... and fill in Build Options.

Select File|Save or File|Save As... to save your .AHA project.

Select VB|Save to save the HelpContextID's to your .FRM files (This will be done automatically during the Build but it is a good idea to do this anyway in case you don't do your build yet).

Select Build|All or (Build|Support Files, Build|Help File and Build|VB .Mak).

Visual Basic Code

Here's what my Help menu code looks like.

```
Sub mnuHelp_Click (Index As Integer)
    On Error Resume Next
    Dim ret% ' return value for WinHelp API calls

    Select Case Index
        Case H_CONTENTS ' Show the Contents topic
            ret = WinHelp(hWnd, app.HelpFile, HELP_CONTENTS, 0&)
        Case H_SEARCH ' Show the Contents topic and the Search dialog
            ret = WinHelp(hWnd, app.HelpFile, HELP_CONTENTS, 0&)
            ret = WinHelp(hWnd, app.HelpFile, HELP_COMMAND, "Search()")
        Case H_ABOUT
            frmAbout.Show 1
    End Select
End Sub
```

With the following definitions in a .BAS file:

```
Global Const HELP_CONTENTS = &H3
Global Const HELP_COMMAND = &H102

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

The Declare must all be on one line of course.

Visual Basic Automatic Help Author

Version 1.21

Copyright © Craig Villalon 1993

File Menu

New

Clears any project currently in memory and lets you start a new one.

Open

Opens a project that is on disk.

Save

Saves the current project to its current file. If it is a new project then <u>VB AHA!!!</u> will bring up the Save As... dialog.

Save As...

Brings up a dialog box so you can choose a name to save this project as.

Text

C

Writes a .H file for C programmers that contains #defines for context sensitive help.

Visual Basic

Writes a .BAS file for VB programmers that contains constants for context sensitive help (This isn't really necessary since <u>VB AHA!!!</u> handles all of that for you).

Exit

Quit <u>VB AHA!!!</u>   If the current project has changed since the last save you will be prompted to save it.

Topic Menu

[Set Global Link...](#)
[Rename...](#)

Rename...

This will rename a topic in your <u>Topics List</u> and replace any occurrences of the old topic name with the new name (in Global Text Links, Popup's and JumpTo's). However, if you have any links to this topic in a .SHG file then you must use SHED.EXE to manually change those links.

Rename Topic:

Name of the topic that you want to rename.

To:

New name for the topic.

VB Menu

Open...

  Creates topics for <u>VB AHA!!!</u> based on a Visual Basic .Mak (one topic for each form and one for each control if you select that option in the Options|Visual Basic... menu). This will erase any topics that already exist in this .AHA project. Your .FRM files must be saved in text format, this won't work if they were saved in binary format. If they are in binary format, use Save File As... on each form and select the Save As Text checkbox.

Append...

  As Open except that your old topics will not be erased.

Save

  Saves the HelpContextID's to your Visual Basic program. Again the .FRM files must be in text format.

Build Menu

All

Builds the support files, the Visual Basic .Mak file (if you selected a .Mak file to use) and compiles the help file.

Support Files

Build the .RTF and the .HPJ files for the Help Compiler.

Help File

Compiles the help file with the Help Compiler. Be sure to use Pifedit.exe to tell HC.PIF where to find your Help Compiler.

VB .Mak

Compiles your Visual Basic .Mak file.

Options Menu

[Build...](#)
[General...](#)
[Project...](#)
[Visual Basic...](#)

Window Menu

[Topics](#)
[Global Links](#)
[Layout](#)

Help Menu

Contents

Shows the contents of this help file.

Search...

Brings up the Search window for this help file.

About VB AHA!!!

Brings up the About window for <u>VB AHA!!!</u>. It displays various useful statistics: # of topics, memory left and % of resources.

General Options

Open New Topics

When you create a new topic this causes it to be opened automatically so you can edit it. If you like to create several topics at a time without editing them right away then you should turn this option off.

Creates a Combo field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one.

Example: Combo

Creates a Noscroll field at the end of your topic. Drag and drop it on any field (text/graphic) to create the new field above that one. All fields above this one in your help file will not scroll while the fields below this one will.

Combo Setup

All text changes will be previewed in the textbox at the bottom of the window. You may enter whatever text you want into that textbox to see what effect your changes will have on it. A preview of the picture you have selected will be shown on the right side of the window.

Font Name

Choose a font from the list of all available fonts.

Font Size

Choose a font size from the list or enter your own.

Picture

This is the filename of the picture that you want to use. You may use .BMP or .SHG pictures in a help file (If you use a .SHG you must have the .BMP for that picture in the same directory and with the same name as the .SHG if you want to be able to see it while designing your help file. Example: you want to use the file named OPTIONS.SHG so you need to have the file OPTIONS.BMP in the same directory.) You may click on the "B" button to browse for a picture. Whatever picture that you select will be shown in the bottom portion of the window.

Bold

The text will be bold.

Italic

The text will be italic.

Left

Left margin for the combo field in inches.

Right

Right margin for the combo field in inches.

Pic Alignment

There are 2 combo alignment options:

Left - picture will be on the left side of the window with the text after it.

Right - picture will be on the right side of the window with the text before it.

Color

Click on the button that is the color that you want the text to be.

Field Setup

[Combo field](#)
[Graphics field](#)
[Text field](#)

Set Topic Link

Topic

This is the name of the topic that this link will be made with.

Type

These are the types of links that you may make:

Jump To

When you click on the link in your help file the topic in the will change to the topic you selected.

Popup

When you click on the link a second window will be shown containing the topic you selected until you click the mouse button again.

Sound - Play .WAV file

When you click on the link the selected .WAV file will play.

File

This is the file that you want to make the link with.   The file must either be in the users path or in the same directory as your help file.   When you make links to other help files be sure to set the Topic appropriately for that file.

Window

The name of a window (defined in <u>Window Attributes</u>) that you want this link to be linked with. The drop-down combo box contains a list of all the windows you have defined as well as "Main" (topic will be displayed in the main help window no matter where it was called from) and "" (the topic will be displayed in whatever window it is called from).

Window Attributes

Use this window to define your help's main and secondary window attributes.

List of Windows

Clicking on a window name in this list will fill in the fields to the right for editing.

New

Sets the fields to the right with default values.

Delete

Deletes the currently selected window from the list.

Accept

Click this when you have filled the fields to the right in to keep the changes you made.

Window Name

The name that you will use to refer to this window when setting links.

Caption

Text that will appear in the window's caption area (top)

X, Y, Width and Height

Position and sizes to use for this window.   These coordinates must range from 0 to 1023 no matter what your screen resolution is.   Winhelp.exe maps these coordinates onto your display so that a window with coordinates of 511,511,512,512 will always be displayed in the lower right hand corner and fill 1/4 of the screens space.

Notice that X + Width cannot be greater than 1023 and the same goes for Y + Height.

Background

Sets the background color used in your help file.   Click on the box to the right of the one you want to set and then select a color from the 16 shown.

No-scroll

Sets the background color for the non-scrolling regions.

Regular

Sets the background color for the area of the topics that are below any non-scrolling region.

Options

Other general window formatting options.

Maximized

The window will be maximized when opened regardless of the size settings.

Topmost

The window will remain ("float") above all other windows.

Customer Support

   If you have any problems/questions/suggestions please send me E-mail to one of the following addresses (if at all possible use the internet address. I check it far more often, usually twice a day, morning and night) :

         Internet: villalon@crl.com
         Fidonet Netmail: 1:125/7
         CompuServe: 73261,2665

or regular mail to:

         Craig Villalon
         2074 Pleasant Hill Rd.
         Sebastopol, CA 95472-4948

   If you decide not to register please send me a message describing what you would like to see in <u>VB AHA!!!</u> that you found lacking. I would like a chance to change your mind. I'm constantly adding new capabilities (as you can see in HISTORY.TXT) and I would like to know what you would like to see so I can implement that as well.