Creating Help with Visual C and the Help Magician
Visual C

From the MFC Tech Notes #28:
The best way to add Help to your application is to check the "Context Sensitive Help" option in AppWizard's Options dialog before creating your application. That way AppWizard automatically adds the necessary message map entries to your CWinApp-derived class to support Help.

If you have already created your application without Help support and now wish to add it, see Chapter 10 of the Class Library User's Guide.

Build Application
When you build your application for the first time, Visual C will create a number of files to be used to build a help system. It will generate two RTF (Rich Text Format) files (typically **afxcore.rtf** and **afxprint.rtf**) that contain generic text for standard menus, etc., a .**hpj** (help project) file, and bitmaps of the controls on the toolbar.

Prepare RTF files for import into the Help Magician
If you have a version of the Help Magician less than 3.0, perform the following steps to prepare the RTF files for import:

1. Open each of the RTF files in MS Word for Windows (if you want your help source to be in a single file, merge the RTF files in Word for Windows).
2. Locate each table and put the cursor on the table.
3. From the **Table** menu, click on **Select Table**.
4. From the **Table** menu, click on **Convert Table to Text** (select the **Tabs** option).
5. Save each file in **RTF** format.

Context Sensitivity
Visual C uses two header files for the Context Sensitive mapping between your application and the help file: **\mfc\include\afxhelp.hm** and **\yourapp\hlp\yourapp.hm**.

The header file, **yourapp.hm** must be updated each time the controls in your application are changed. Visual C writes a batch file called **makehelp.bat** that rewrites **yourapp.hm** and compiles the help file. The path where **makehm.exe** resides must be in your **DOS** path or you can edit the batch file and enter the path before each occurrence of **makehm**.

Note: to avoid the compilation of your help file while creating or updating **yourapp.hm**, comment out the line in **makehelp.bat** that calls the help compiler:

REM hc31 yourapp.hpj

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Help Magician

<u>Version</u>
You must have version 3.00.030 or later of the Help Magician for full support for Visual C.

<u>Root Directory</u>
References to the ***Root*** directory in this document (as defined by Microsoft) refer to the directory that contains the source files, the project file, the RTF files, etc. for the help system. This is also the directory to which the compiled help file will be written.

<u>Build Type</u>
Select one of the build types described below:
A) Single File Build
B) Multiple File Build
C) Project Management

Build Type C, Project Management describes selecting a ***Root*** directory and copying files to that directory before building a help system. The same strategy can be applied to Build Types A and B. If you don't want to build your help system in your Visual C directories, select a ***Root*** directory and copy the necessary file to that directory before proceeding with the instructions for the selected Build Type.

A) Single File Build
Follow these instructions if you merged the RTF files in Word for Windows:

1. Import the combined RTF file into the Help Magician. From the **File** menu, select **Import**. On the **Import** form select **RTF** as the **File Type**. Under **Import** Options, select **Replace Current File**, and under **RTF Import Options**, select **Read from HPJ**. When the file dialog appears, select the **hpj** file in your Visual C application sub directory.

    When the RTF file has been imported, the map filenames will automatically be entered into the Compiler Options.

2. Save the file as an HLX file with the **File/Save File As/New File** sub menu. Rename the file as desired in the **Save File As** dialog. This will become the name of your compiled help system.

3. Edit the file as needed and select **Rebuild All** from the **Build** menu to compile the help file.

Creating Help with Visual C and the Help Magician

B) Multiple File Build

Follow these instructions if you did not merge the RTF files in Word for Windows:

1. Import **afxprint.rtf** file into the Help Magician. From the **File** menu, select **Import**. On the **Import** form select **RTF** as the **File Type**. Under **Import** Options, select **Replace Current File**, and under **RTF Import Options**, select **Read from HPJ**. When the file dialog appears, select the **hpj** file in your Visual C application sub directory.

    When the RTF file has been imported, the map filenames will automatically be entered into the Compiler Options.

2. Save the file as an HLX file with the **File/Save File As/New File** sub menu. Rename the file as desired in the **Save File As** dialog.

3. Write the RTF file by selecting **Write RTF for Compiler** from the **Build** menu.

4. Import **afxcore.rtf** into the Help Magician as described for **afxprint** above.

5. From the **Build** menu, select **Multiple Files**. Enter **afxprint.rtf** into the **Files** list box by clicking on the **Add** button and selecting the file with the file dialog. You will not need to enter a map file in the [MAP] section because you will be using the external maps generated by Visual C.

6. Save the file as an **hlx** file with the **File/Save File As/New File** sub menu. Rename the file as desired in the **Save File As** dialog. This is the "**Master**" file in the Multiple File build and will become the name of your compiled help system.

7. Edit the files as needed and select **Rebuild All** from the **Build** menu to compile the help file. Note that the RTF file must be written for the secondary file(s), **afxprint** in this case, before compiling the help system from the **Master** file.

Creating Help with Visual C and the Help Magician

C) Project Management

Follow these instructions if you did not merge the RTF files in Word for Windows and you want to use the Project Management features of the Help Magician:

1. Select a ***Root*** directory on your system for all of the help related files.

2. Copy the following files to the ***Root*** directory:

    \yourapp\yourapp.hpj
    \yourapp\hlp\afxcore.rtf
    \yourapp\hlp\afxprint.rtf
    \yourapp\hlp\yourapp.hm
    \yourapp\hlp*.bmp
    \visualc\mfc\include\afxhelp.hm

3. From the **File** menu, select **New Project**. In the file dialog, select your help build ***Root*** directory described in step one. Enter a valid filename as the name of the project, with a .**hmp** extension.

4. On the **Project Management** dialog, click on the **Import** button. Set **File Type** to **Rich Text Format (.RTF)**, and select **Read from HPJ** under **RTF Import** Options and click on **Accept**. In the file dialog, select **afxcore.rtf** from your ***Root*** directory. When the second file dialog appears, select the **yourapp.hpj** from your ***Root*** directory. Add the file to the project when prompted.

5. Repeat the steps above for **afxprint.rtf**.

6. Click on the **Done** button.

7. Select **Write RTF for Compiler** from the **Build** menu. Answer **Yes** to overwrite the existing RTF file.

8. Select **Project Management** from the **File** menu. Select **afxcore.hlx** in the file list and click on the **Open** button.

9. Edit the files as needed and select **Rebuild All** from the **Build** menu to compile the help file. Note that the RTF file must be written for members of the project, not currently in use, before compiling the help system from the **Master** file. The **Project Management** dialog shows the status of all the members of the project.

Creating Help with Visual C and the Help Magician
Notes

In the project file (.**hpj**) that Visual C writes, Compression is set to True. This results in a smaller help file but it takes much longer to compile. You may want to turn Compression off (**Options** menu, **Compiler Options**, **Misc** tab, **Compress Help File**) while developing the help file and turn it on again for final compile.

The first page in **afxprint**, as generated by Visual C, is blank. After importing the file(s) into the Help Magician, you can delete this page, if desired, by selecting **Delete Page** from the **Edit** menu.