

A Guide to using Doctor Help files

[Return to my original Help file](#)

Introduction

This Guide describes how to read Help files created by [Doctor Help](#). There is already a Help file that tells you how to read normal Windows Help files. All of that information is not reproduced here, but you can see that file by clicking below. When you're finished, click on **Back** or **History** to return to this file.

[Show standard Help on Windows Help](#)

This document describes the special features in this Help file, and also gives a quick run-down on the standard Windows help features. This help file has itself been generated by [Doctor Help](#), a Word for Windows macro that converts word processor documents into Help files.

It transforms hierarchically structured print documents into on-line Help files, **and** it makes it easy for the reader to navigate around the file using additional hypertext features. The next topic, [Reading Methods](#), describes how to read one of these files in terms of your existing reading skills. Click on _

Reading Methods

How can you read one of these files? There are a number of approaches you can take, and you can mix and match them all together.

Turning the Page

You can read the entire file by clicking on the _ button. This is just like turning the page in a book. You can go back through the file with the _ button. This is a standard feature of [Doctor Help](#) files.

You may find in other Help files that the browse sequence is either not implemented, or that a browse sequence only covers a part of any one file. Doctor Help implements a feature as close as possible to what we are all used to.

Use Tables of Contents & Up

At each level in the file, you will see a Table of Contents for the subsidiary sections. You can click on one of these topics ([hotspots](#)), and read it, then press the _ button to return to the menu. You can then choose another topic from that menu. _ will always take you up one level.

Of course, you can combine this with the page turning mode, and choose a topic from a menu, then continue reading page by page using the _ button.

Keyword Search

If you want information on a particular topic, click on the _ button. A dialog box allows you to scroll through the list of defined keywords, or if you want to search for a

particular word, start typing it in the box available

and the nearest word will appear. If you match a particular word, then click on the button to see all the topics for that word:

Double click on whichever topic seems most appropriate.

Cross References & Back

In many places in Doctor Help files, you will find hotspots - like "Doctor Help" above. These are of a different colour and underlined like this: . Click on one of these and you activate a **cross reference** to another part of the current file or to another file. To backtrack, just click on the button. In fact, clicking on topics in the menus that you see are the same type of operation.

Another style of button is the popup, indicated by dashed underlining like this:

Backtracking - Back & History

Since these files are made up of a series of links between the topics, you can backtrack using two methods:

The button takes you back to the previous topic. Click on it again for the one before that and so on. The last 50 topics are kept.

Using the μ § command you can jump back to any one of the previous 50 topics by scrolling through the list of topics and double clicking on it.

Hotspots

Hotspots are fundamental to navigation in hypertext systems like Windows Help. They are areas on the screen on which you click with the mouse, and you are transported to another topic. Hotspots can be either text (in which case they are visually different from the surrounding text) or graphics. See also Cursor shape.

You can backtrack from the current topic which you have accessed via a hotspot by using the Back, History, Contents and Up buttons.

Cursor shape

When you move the cursor over a hotspot, it will change shape to a hand with a pointing finger. Most of the time, you won't need this visual cue, because textual hotspots are underlined, and of a different colour. However, **graphical** hotspots don't have any visual cues - no underlining, and no change of colour, so you have to rely on the cursor indicating which of them is a hotspot.

Up

To specially support the hierarchical structure of most files, the button allows you to

jump back to the last topic you visited at the previous level. You can keep going upwards until you reach the **Contents** page.

Contents

The **Up** button takes you back to the highest level Table of Contents. This is useful if you get lost.

Bookmarks

If you want to be able to return to a particular point in a file, just set a bookmark. You can come back to that point by clicking on **Bookmarks** in the menu and choosing the bookmark that you want.

Features

Overview

Standard Windows Help provides the following features:

1. Click on hotspots to go to other topics,
2. Go back to the previous screen (the **Back** button)
3. Review the last 50 screens and jump to anyone of them (the **History** button)
4. Go to the top table of contents (the **Contents** button)
5. **Search** for a particular word or phrase
6. **Browse** through some topics
7. An **Annotate** feature for adding notes to Help files
8. Ability to define **Bookmarks**
9. **Print** and **Copy** features

To these standard features, Doctor Help adds:

1. automatic creation of intermediate **tables of contents**
 2. Go back to the last table of contents or menu that we read (the **Up** button)
 3. **Browse** through the entire file in linear order (like a book) - the >> and << buttons.
 4. Easy jumps back from supporting help files (when Doctor Help is used for both files)
 5. An **Annotate** button to encourage users to write notes on their help files
 6. A new **Help** menu item that calls up this file
- The **Up** button is invaluable when reading most documents because it allows you to quickly move back up through the various tables of contents.

Browse Buttons

You will find many Windows Help files with these Browse buttons. They allow you to read a document in linear fashion. In the case of this file, you can read from the start to the finish just by clicking on the **Up** button, and you can step through the file in the reverse direction by using the other Browse button **Down**.

Standard Buttons

If you're familiar with Windows Help files, you will know that the following buttons are

available:

- Show the top level contents page

- Search a list of keywords

- Step back to the previous screen

 - Show the last 50 screens visited. Double click on one of them to go to that topic.

 - As well, we have already met the Browse buttons. You will find all of these buttons extremely useful in navigating your way around Help files.

Note that in the Toolbar, all the navigation buttons are on the left. The only exception is the `_` button on the right.

Up

This help file comes with an **Up** button that allows you to backtrack in a hierarchical fashion. These Help files have a basic hierarchical structure. Whereas the `_` button takes you back to the previous topic, **Up** takes you up one level. If you click on it several times, you will get back to the **Contents** page. The **Up** button only handles 4 levels in a hierarchy, but that should be enough.

The **Up** button will sometimes get confused if you branch off to another Help file. In this situation, you may get a "Macro was not found" message. In this case, you'll need to fall back to using the `_` or `µ §` buttons. (`µ §` is probably the more useful).

Annotate

All Windows Help files have a standard **Annotate** facility (available in the `_` menu) that allows you to attach notes to any topic within the Help file. A button `_` has been added to the toolbar to make access to this feature more convenient. These notes are stored in a file with the same name as the Help file but with an ANN extension. For example, if you annotate this file, you will get DRHLPUSR.ANN in your Windows directory.

Copy and Print

Don't forget that you can copy topics or portions of topics to the clipboard (using **Edit/Copy** in the menu bar), which is useful if you want to paste them into other applications, and you can print topics as well (using **File/Print Topic**).

Bookmarks

You can also define Bookmarks so that you can come back to certain topics again. This is accessed via the menu bar as **Bookmark/Define...**

Popups

Popups are used for small amounts of information, and are most similar to footnotes in normal texts. They appear in a separate window overlaying the main window. Click anywhere to make one go away. Doctor Help uses popups for intermediate menus. When an author defines a cross reference, there are sometimes several targets for the jump. In such a case, Doctor Help builds a table of targets from which the reader can select.

Doctor Help

You are using a Windows Help file generated automatically by a Word for Windows macro called **Doctor Help** (DOC to HLP) written by Roger Hadgraft. If you would like information on this macro, contact him by e-mail as roger.hadgraft@eng.monash.edu.au or by fax in Australia on +61 3 565 4944. The macro allows any Word document to be translated into a Help file, as long as it has been constructed with the standard **heading** styles.

Registration is US\$20 and you can obtain an evaluation version DRHELPE4.ZIP from <ftp.cica.indiana.edu> in the **winword** subdirectory. The evaluation version does everything the registered version does, except that it is limited to 30 topics. (The registered version allows 1,000 topics if your memory will).