Word Search Construction Kit Index

The Word Search Construction Kit is designed to allow you to create word search puzzles of various sizes and shapes and to print them out or import them into your favorite word processor.

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Create Puzzle Window

The Create Puzzle Window allows you to create your own puzzles.   Here you may specify the puzzle Title, Words, Layout (shape) and Direction of Words.

Title

This is the name by which the puzzle will be known.   It will appear in the list of puzzle names as well as on the puzzle printout.

Words

A list box is present which shows all the words that you plan on placing in the puzzle.   Below the list box is an edit box where you may type in a word.   Click on the "Add" button and the word will be placed in the list box.   Clicking on the "Delete" button will remove the currently highlighted word from the list box.   You may also select the "Import" button which will allow you to import a list of words that you have already made up.   The maximum number of words that can be placed in a puzzle is 325.   If more words are present in the list box of words, they will be ignored at the time the puzzle is created.

Layout

One of the exciting features of the Word Search Construction Kit is the ability to select and or design the shape of your puzzle.   A list box is present which shows the available layouts.   There are more than 25 layouts which come standard with the program.   As you scroll through the layouts in the list box, the layout pattern is displayed in the middle of the Window.   It gives you a rough overview of what the puzzle will look like.   Whatever layout is currently highlighted in the list box will be used when the "Create Puzzle" button is clicked on.   Four buttons are available for use with the layouts.   You may create a **new layout** from scratch by clicking on the "New" button.   Or you may create a new layout from an existing layout by clicking on the "Copy" button.   You may also modify and existing layout by use of the "Modify" button.   And you may remove layouts by use of the "Delete" button.   NOTE: The standard layouts that come with the program cannot be modified or deleted.

Word Directions

There are 8 possible directions for words to be placed into the puzzle.   You may select or limit the word directions by simply clicking on the box next to the arrows indicating the word direction.   A check mark indicates that the direction will be used.

Create Puzzle

Once all the information about the puzzle has been specified, you may select the "Create Puzzle" button to build the puzzle.   The puzzle will be built and will be displayed along with a status indicating if all the words could be placed in the puzzle or not.   You may then elect to save the puzzle as is or to cancel and make modifications to the puzzle data.   Puzzles are generated in a random order.   Therefore, you may create the puzzle, cancel it, and then recreate it without changing any of the puzzle information and the generated puzzle will be different.   You may want to cancel the creation of the puzzle if not all your words fit in the puzzle or you simply want to adjust the words, layout, title or directions.

If a word does not fit, you may take several actions to try to make it fit.   The easiest method is to simply choose a larger layout.   If almost all of the words fit, then it is possible that a new random generation of the puzzle will make it fit.   In this case you would simply press the "Create Puzzle" button once again and see if it works.   You may want to try this several times.   Other than these two methods, the only real solution is to remove some words or shorten some.

Puzzle Layout Window

The Puzzle Layout Window allows you to specify a shape which can later be used with a puzzle.   This Window allows you to enter a Title, Dimensions and to manipulate a Grid.

Title

This is the name by which the layout will be known.   This name will appear in the list box of layouts on the **Puzzle Creation Window**.

Dimensions

This allows you to specify the maximum width and height of the puzzle.   The maximum sized puzzle that can be created is 30 x 30.

Grid

A Grid appears on the screen the size specified by the width and height.   The grid may contain white and/or gray blocks.   The gray blocks represent part of the puzzle.   The white blocks represent empty space for the puzzle.   Using the left mouse button toggles the color of a block between white and grey. The right mouse button can be used as a "FILL" .   For example, if a section is surrounded by white blocks, you may position the mouse inside that section on one of the gray blocks.   Click the right mouse button and the whole inside section will become white.   As this can have disastrous results if used accidentally or if a whole area was not closed off, an "Undo" button is available which will undo the last "fill".

Modify Puzzles

You may modify puzzles you have created.   Example puzzles may not be modified, but can be copied. To modify a puzzle, you will need to highlight the desired puzzle in the puzzle list box.   Next, click on the "Modify" button.   This will take you to the **Create Puzzle Window**.   All the puzzle information will be present and ready for you to modify.

Please note that when you save the modified puzzle, it will REPLACE the existing puzzle even if you change the name.   If you desire to have a copy of the puzzle (retain the old one), this can be done. Instead of selecting the "Modify" button, you will need to choose "File" on the menu and select the "Copy" option from within it.   This will bring up all the information of the highlighted puzzle in the Create Puzzle Window.   However, when the modified puzzle is saved, it will be saved as a new puzzle entry.

Deleting Puzzles

You may delete puzzles you have created.   Example puzzles which come with the software cannot be deleted.   To delete a puzzle, you will need to highlight the desired puzzle in the puzzle list box.   Next, click on the "Delete" button.   You will be prompted to make sure that you want to delete the puzzle before deletion takes place.

Main Menu

The Menu Bar consists of the three items File, Color and Help.

File

The File menu option invokes a submenu consisting of New, Modify, Copy, Delete, View/Print and Exit. "New" allows you to create a new puzzle and invokes the **Create Puzzle Window**.   "Modify" allows you to **modify** an existing puzzle.   "Copy" allows you to create a new puzzle, but uses the current highlighted puzzle as a starting point for creation.   "Delete" allows you to **remove** an existing puzzle.   "View/Print" takes you to the **Print Options Window**.

Colors

This menu option invokes a Color Selection Window.   Here you may configure the different colors used throughout the different windows of the program.   These include background colors, text title colors, edit boxes and buttons.

Help

This menu option lists a submenu consisting of Contents and About.   "Contents" simply invokes the help system.   "About" shows version number and copyright information regarding the program.

Print Options Window

The Print Options Windows allows you to customize the look of the printed puzzle.   You may select Puzzle Options, a Puzzle Font, a Word List Font and View, Print or Send the puzzle to an Ascii File.

Puzzle Options

Three options are available here.   You may specify that the puzzle letters show up in lower case.   If not selected, they will be all upper case.   You may have a grid placed around all the letters in the puzzle. This may lead to better clarity for lining up words.   You may also select to have an answer key shown. When the answer key is selected, only the puzzle itself shows up with the words circled.   The word list is not present with the answer key.

Puzzle Font

You may choose the font style that is to be used by the puzzle letters.   Selecting the "New" button will display a list of all available True Type Fonts on your system and allow you to choose from one of them. If you simply desire to bold or italicize the font, you may click on the appropriate button instead of selecting the "New" button.

Word List Font

You may choose the font style that is to be used by the word list.   Selecting the "New" button will display a list of all available True Type Fonts on your system and allow you to choose from one of them.   If you simply desire to bold or italicize the font, you may click on the appropriate button instead of selecting the "New" button.

View/Print

Selecting this button will bring up the Puzzle Viewing Window.   Here you may review it and print it out if desired.

Send To File

Clicking on this button will allow you to save the puzzle out to an **ascii text file**.   It will display the "Puzzle to Ascii File" window.   **Please note** that the puzzle options of "Use Grid" and "Answer Key" have no effect on the puzzle being saved to an ascii file.   These options are not available.

Print To Ascii File

You are given the option to send a puzzle to an Ascii file so that it can be easily incorporated into your favorite word processor.   The Puzzle To Ascii File Window contains a drop down list box with a few options.   These options are listed below.   Once an option has been selected, pressing the OK button will allow you to save the puzzle to an Ascii file.

No Spaces, Single Space Line

The puzzle will be created where each letter is right next to the preceding letter.   Each line of letter will be directly below the preceding line with no extra blank lines.

1 Space, Single Space Line

The puzzle will be created where there is one space between each letter.   Each line of letter will be directly below the preceding line with no extra blank lines.

1 Space, Double Space Line

The puzzle will be created where there is one space between each letter. Each line of letter will be separated by one blank line.

Import Words Window

If you wish to create your word lists independently of the word search program, you may do so.   Using your favorite text editor, you may create a list of words.   When inside the **Create Puzzle Window**, press the "Import" button.   This will bring up a new window with the following features.

Open File Button

This brings up the common file dialog that will allow you to select your text file that contains the words you have already created.   Simply select the file, and the words are loading into a list box.

List Box

This displays all of the words which have been loaded in from the text file.   Clicking on a word will select it to be used in the puzzle.   Clicking on the word a second time will deselect the word.

Select All Button

This chooses all words in the list to be selected.   If your text file contains the exact words you want to appear in the puzzle, then you should use this button to choose them all.

Clear Button

This deselects all the words in the list box.   Use this button if you wish to start over in choosing the words you wish to use.

Ok Button

This takes all the selected words in the list box and places them in the word list of the puzzle creation window.

Cancel Button

This simply allows you to back out of the import word process if you decide not to use it.

Main Window

The Main Window consists of the **menu**, a list box and five buttons.   These are described below.

Puzzle List Box

This contains a list of created puzzles.   This will include both the example puzzles and any that you have created.

New Puzzle Button

This allows you to **create** a new puzzle.

Modify Button

This allows you to **modify** one of the puzzles in the Puzzle List Box.

Delete Button

This allows you to **delete** one of the puzzles in the Puzzle List Box.

View/Print Button

This allows you to view or **print** out one of the puzzles in the Puzzle List Box.

Exit Button

This will exit you from the program.