Flash!Cards 3.0 for Windows

 Welcome to Flash!Cards Help

What is Flash!Cards?
Getting Started
Tool Bar
Glossary
The Author
The Reason

Tool Bar

The Tool Bar is the front end of the application.   The tool bar contains the most common functions of the application as well as a display of the current card stack, the current display fonts for the cards, and the current topic. Click on menu item below for help:

Create Cards: Displays the Create Cards window to create a new stack.

Edit Cards: Displays the Edit Cards window.   Allows editing of the currently selected stack.

Print Cards: Displays the Print window for printing the currently selected stack.

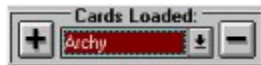**Stepper:**   Runs the Stepper program with the currently selected stack.

Flasher: Runs the Flasher program with the currently selected stack.

Speller: Runs the Speller program with the currently selected stack.

Chooser: Runs the Chooser program with the currently selected stack.

Stacks Display: Display, select, load and remove card stacks.

Topic and Font Display: Topic is displayed on the frame.
In the boxes are the current fonts for the topic,
Front font is on the left, Back font is on the right.

Above the Tool Bar is the Menu Bar.   Many of the same functions performed by the tool bar can be done via the Menu Bar.   For help on these menu options, select from the list below:
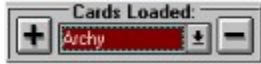File Menu
Run Menu
Topics Menu
Config Menu
Help Menu

Stacks Display

This section of the <u>Tool Bar</u> displays all the <u>Card Stacks</u> that have been loaded into the Flash!Cards environment. The Card Stack displayed in the box is the currently selected Stack, upon which all actions will be performed.   To display and choose another Stack which has been previously loaded, click the 'down arrow' and select one of the stacks displayed.

To load additional cards into the environment, click on the '+' button, which is equivalent to selecting the <u>Load Cards...</u> command from the <u>File Menu.</u>   To remove the selected Card Stack, click on the '-' button.   This is equivalent to selecting the <u>Remove Cards</u> command from the File Menu.

File Menu

File Menu Entries

Create Cards...
Delete Cards...
Load Cards...
Remove Cards
Edit Cards...
Print Cards...
Exit

Load Cards...

To Load a Card Stack off of your disk

This command will show the <u>File Dialog Box,</u> to allow you to select a <u>Card Stack</u> to load into Flash!Cards.   Note that you can load multiple stacks into the computer's memory and switch between them without having to reload them.

Create Cards...

To make a brand new Card Stack

This command takes you to the <u>Create Cards Window,</u> which is where you create a new <u>Card Stack.</u>

Remove Cards

Removing Card Stacks from the environment

This function, the '-' button on the <u>Stack Display,</u> removes the selected <u>Card Stack</u> from the Flash!Cards environment.   This does not remove the file from the disk, rather it removes the Stack data from the computer's memory.

Delete Cards...

To get those unwanted Card Stacks off of your disk

This menu option will bring up the <u>File Dialog Box,</u> which will allow you to select <u>Card Stacks</u> to delete.   Be careful to only delete only the Card Stacks you absolutely don't want!

Edit Cards...

To correct any screwed up Cards in the loaded Card Stack

This command will load the <u>Card Editor Window,</u> which allows you to view the contents of your <u>Card Stack</u> and select and edit any <u>Card</u> that has incorrect information.   This window also allows you to add or delete Cards from the Card Stack, as well as allowing you to change the <u>Topic</u> and <u>Description.</u>

Print Cards...

To print all the Cards in the currently loaded Card Stack

This command loads the Print Window, which allows you to print the current Card Stack to your printer.

Exit

Cease and Desist

For when you've had enough.

Run Menu
Run Menu Entries

Stepper...
Flasher...
Speller...
Chooser...

Stepper...

To step through the cards one at a time

This command will show the Stepper Window, which allows you to step through all the loaded Cards.

Flasher...

This command will show the Flash Time Window, where you enter a set amount of time to display the Cards, and then shows the Flasher Window.

Speller...

This will show the <u>Speller Window,</u> which will step through the <u>Cards</u>, but you get to try to spell the other side of the Card.

Chooser...

This will show the <u>Chooser Window,</u> which will step through the <u>Cards,</u> but you have to select the correct back of the Card from among four choices.

Config Menu

To configure and change topics

Add Topic...
Delete Topic...
Change Keys...
Change Font...

Add Topic...

This option will load the Config Window, which will allow you to enter a new Topic into your FLSHCRDS.INI file.

Delete Topic...

This option will load the <u>Config Window,</u> which will allow you to delete a <u>Topic</u> from your <u>FLSHCRDS.INI</u> file.

Change Keys...

This option will load the Key Assignments Window, which will allow you to add, change or delete Key Assignments from the currently selected Topic.   This will change your FLSHCRDS.INI file.

Change Font...

This option will load the <u>Font Change Window,</u> which will allow you to change the fonts which are used in displaying the Cards.   Use this for utilizing modified font sets.   Note that the fonts must be installed in Windows first.

Key Assignments Window

For getting those accent marks

This window allows you to enter or change <u>Key Assignments</u> for the selected <u>Topic.</u>   The screen consists of the **Add Keys** list, which is a list of all the keys displayed in the appropriate font (not in order though - based on an order which makes sense only in the default font), a combo box for either selecting a suggested key combination or typing your own, and a list of the current Key Assignments for the Topic.   The Key Assignments are sometimes preceded with a '[B]' or a '[F]'.   These are side-specific assignments.   Otherwise, the assignment will work for both sides (albeit they might not look the same if the Fonts aren't the same.)

To add Key Assignments, select the character from the **Add Keys** (the ASCII code of the selected key will be displayed above the list), type or select a key combination from the **Select** box, and then click the **Action** button.   Note that the **Action** button will contain the ASCII code for the key and the Key Assignment you are creating.

To delete a Key Assignment, select it from the **Key Assignments** list and click the **Action** button.   Note that again the **Action** button will display the action performed.

Command Help:
    Action - This button will contain the Key Assignment being added or deleted.   Displays the action (Add or Delete), the ASCII code, and the Key Assignment.
    Cancel - Resets the **Action** button.
    Done - Finish the assignments and save the information.
    More... - Loads the <u>More Keys Window</u> to allow easier view of keys.
    Options Buttons - Selects side specific assignments :
        Front - If this is selected, the assignment will be for the front side only and the **Add Keys** will display the keys in the Front Font type.
        Back - If this is selected, the assignment will be for the back side only and the **Add Keys** will display the keys in the Back Font type.
        Select them both to make a general assignment for both sides.   Note that the **Add Keys** will display in the Default System font.

Finder Window

Where is that word?

This Window allows you to search your Card Stack for the occurrence of a word or words.   You can use the check boxes to limit the search to a side, and/or to check the case of the spelling.   Type the word or words in the text box, select your options, if any, and click **OK**.   Note that the words you type in the box will be the words searched for by the **Find Next** command from the Editor.

Command Help:
   OK - Click this button to start the search with the entered word.
   Cancel - Return to the Editor.
   Options Buttons:
      Front - If this is selected, Finder will only search the Front side.
      Back - If this is selected, Finder will only search the Back side.
      (Select them both to search both sides.)
      Case Sensitive - Select this if you wish the search to be Case Sensitive.   In other words, normally Finder will ignore capitilization.   With this option on, Finder will check capitilization to make sure the word is EXACTLY equivalent.
      Keys - Menu or window of Key Assignments.   If the display font for the current side is not the default Windows System font, then the Keys Menu will be displayed if there are any Key Assignments.   Otherwise, the menu will display a list of the Key Assignments as well as the More Keys... menu option.   Note that the specific menu will be enabled only when focus is on the text box.

Card Editor Window

Tidy up those messy Card Stacks

The Card Editor allows editing of the loaded Card Stack, including Topic and Description changing.   The list box contains all the Card entries.   Select the Card for editing from this area, and make the changes in the text boxes. **Card Count** contains the number of the selected Card.

Command Help:
   Edit - Click this button the bring the Card from the list into the edit boxes.   (Short Cut - double-click on the item in the list to begin editing.)
   Add Cards - Append new Cards.   Loads the Create Cards Window.
   Delete Card - Removes the selected Card from the file.   Notice that this simply strikes out the card on the list. No permanent deletes will take place until you have saved the edited file.   To undelete a deleted item, click **Delete Card** on it again.
   Save/End - Saves the changes you made to disk.   Loads the File Dialog Window.
   Cancel/Abort - Returns to the Tool Bar.   CHANGES WILL NOT BE SAVED TO DISK!
   Keys Menu -   Menu or window of Key Assignments.   If the display font for the current side is not the default Windows System font, then the Keys Menu will be displayed if there are any Key Assignments.   Otherwise, the menu will display a list of the Key Assignments as well as the More Keys... menu option.   Note that the specific menu will be enabled only when focus is on one of the text boxes.
   Change Menu:
      Topic - For changing the Topic of the file.   Loads the Config Window.
      Description - For changing the Description of the file.   Loads the Descriptions Window.
      Find - Searches the Cards for specified text.   Loads the Finder Window.
      Find Next - Searches for the next occurrence of the word last searched for.

Print Window

Making a hard copy

I didn't have access to any other printers to test this on, so I wrote what I hope is a generic printing routine.   You choose the fonts, the font sizes, and the margin width, and the program does the rest.   The text is sent to the Windows Print Manager.   Note that some fonts will not correctly display the extended characters nor will they look good with the routine I wrote.   The default values worked fine on my Epson LX-800 tractor feed.   If problems occur, check your printer configuration in the Windows Control Panel, and/or check your Windows manual. Different combinations of **Font Name** and **Size** may make some Card Stacks print better.

Command Help:
    OK - Click this to commence printing.
    Cancel - Return to the Tool Bar.
    Font Names - Choose from the list of fonts available for your printer, then click **OK** to print with that selected font.
    Font Sizes - Type the value for font size.   Note that your printer will determine which values are allowed.
    Margin - Type the margin size you would like (in characters).
    Preview Window - Click on these windows to show an example of the selected fonts and sizes.

Stepper and Flasher Window

The Heart of the Program

This is the memory drill window.   The loaded <u>Cards</u> are shuffled and then displayed one at a time.   In Stepper, the words are displayed one at a time.   Flasher is similar, except that the side shown first is only displayed for the previously set unit of time, as set in the <u>Flash Time Window.</u>   The option buttons on the lower right determine which side of the Card is shown first, the **Next** and **Redo** buttons show either the other side of the Card or the next Card in the stack.   The Counter in the upper right displays how many Cards have been completed so far.

Command Help:
    Next - Depending on what comes next, a new Card is selected or the other side of the Card is displayed.
    Redo - Places the Card back in the stack to be displayed again.
    Quit - Return to <u>Tool Bar.</u>
    Options Buttons - Selects the viewing order of the Cards:
        Front->Back displays the front word first.
        Back->Front displays the back word first.

Flash Time Window

Setting the Timer for the Flasher

In this window, you select the time interval you want the first side of the <u>Card</u> to be displayed in the <u>Flash Window.</u> Select one of the options and click the **Ok** button, or select **Other** and type a value (in milliseconds) to set your own time.   **Cancel** returns you to the <u>Tool Bar.</u>

Description Window

What was this file again?

Type a <u>Description</u> of the file contents and click the **Ok** button.   **Cancel** returns you to the <u>Editor.</u>

Config Window

Adding and Deleting Topics

Depending on which option you selected to get to this window, this will allow you to add or delete <u>Topics</u>.   For adding, type the new Topic name in the text box and click **Continue** to continue on to the <u>Key Assignments Window.</u>   For deleting, select the Topic from the list and click **Delete**.   In both cases, **Cancel** will return you to the <u>Tool Bar.</u>

Speller Window
Flash!Cards checks your spelling!

This window is similar to the Stepper and Flasher Window.   The loaded Cards are displayed one at a time.   However, the reverse side of the displayed Card must be spelled in the **Spell** text box.   If the word or phrase is spelled correctly, the RIGHT box will flash and its Counter will increase by one.   Similarly, if the word is spelled incorrectly, the WRONG box will flash and its Counter will be increased.   In either case, the correct spelling will be displayed.   Speller will not differentiate between upper and lower case.   The Counter in the upper right corner displays the number of Cards completed.

Command Help:
   Next - Depending on what comes next, a new Card is selected or the spelling is checked.   Don't click this until you have made an entry into the **Spell** text box.   (Short Cut - Hit the [Enter] key after typing the word in the **Spell** box).
   Redo - Places the Card back in the stack to be displayed again.   Use this for those hard to memorize Cards.
   Quit - Return to the Tool Bar.
   Option Buttons - Select the viewing order of the Cards:
      Front->Back displays the front side first.
      Back->Front displays the back side first.
   Keys - Menu or window of Key Assignments.   If the display font for the current side is not the default Windows System font, then the Keys Menu will be displayed if there are any Key Assignments.   Otherwise, the menu will display a list of the Key Assignments as well as the More Keys... menu option.   Note that the specific menu will be enabled only when focus is on one of the text boxes.

Topics Menu

Selecting a Topic

This menu displays all of the configured <u>Topics</u> that are saved in the <u>FLSHCRD.INI</u> file as well as the ones you've created and saved during the current Flash!Cards session.   The checkmark will be next to the currently selected Topic.   The General Topic is the default Topic category.   It has no special keys, nor can you edit it or delete it.

Create Cards Window

Creating Those New Card Stacks

Type the entries for each <u>Card,</u> clicking the **Continue** after each entry.   The Counter displays how many words you have entered.

Command Help:
   Continue - Depending on what was just entered, this either moves the cursor to the next field or accepts the Card and starts a new one.
   Cancel Entry - Erases the displayed Card.
   Save/Done - Either takes you to the <u>File Save Window</u> or returns to the <u>Editor.</u>
   Cancel All - Erases all Card entries and return to the <u>Tool Bar.</u>
   Keys - Menu or window of <u>Key Assignments.</u>   If the display font for the current side is not the default Windows System font, then the <u>Keys Menu</u> will be displayed if there are any Key Assignments.   Otherwise, the menu will display a list of the Key Assignments as well as the <u>More Keys...</u> menu option.   Note that the specific menu will be enabled only when focus is on one of the text boxes.

File Dialog Box

Loading, Saving, and Deleting Card Stacks

This screen consists of four parts: a disk drive and path specification, a list of the Card Stacks in the specified directory, a text box for entering a file, and a Description section which appears when the **Description** button is clicked.   The default extension for Card Stacks is ".FLC".

The text box can accept wildcards, path names, and drive letters.   It also will take action on a file name if typed correctly.   A short cut to select a file is to double-click on the file name in the list box.   This in effect, types the filename in the text box and clicks the **OK** button.

Command Help:
   OK - When the text box contains a correct file name or path specification, this button will perform the action (Load, etc.)
   Cancel - Erases the text box and returns to the Tool Bar.
   Description - Displays the Topic and Description for the selected file.

Font Change Window

Utilizing Different Font Sets

This window allows you to select the type and size of font for use in displaying and editing Cards.   You may assign a type and size for both sides.   The Font Name selection box displays the names of all the screen fonts installed in Windows.   The Font Size boxes allow you to select which font size looks the best for the selected font.   This feature is necessary because not all 8pt fonts appear to be the same on the screen.   These boxes allow you to compensate for this by changing the base font size.   **Flash!Cards** uses this size as a base to calculate other sizes for the font.   In other words, the value entered here will be treated as the "8pt" size for the program (for use in the Edit screen, etc.)   To make a "12pt" font, **Flash!Cards** takes this value and adds 4 to it to come up with a suitable size for other display screens.   The Preview window at the bottom of the window give a good idea of how the font will appear.   Try to match the sizes of the Front and the Back for optimum results.   Note that due to the variety in fonts, sizes, and displays, no guarantee can be made that all combinations will look good.

Command Help:
    OK - Click this to set the new font type and size for the selected Topic.
    Cancel - Return to Tool Bar.
    Font Name - Choose from the list of fonts available for your system, then click **OK** to use it.
    Font Size - Type the value for font size.   Note that this value need not be entered, for the program will determine the optimum size for the selected font.   Enter a value only if you want to override this function.   Click on the Preview window to test the value entered before clicking **OK**.

Keys Menu Window
Selecting Non-System Font Key Assignments

This window will display a scrollable list of your <u>Key Assignments</u> if the font type is not the system font.   Windows cannot display non-system fonts in the normal Menu Bar so I added this for use with other fonts.   Either click on the assignment you would like and then click the **Send** button, or simply double-click the assignment.   Click on the scroll bar to see additional assignments.

Command Help:
    Send - Send the selected character back to your input screen.
    More... - Load the <u>More Keys Window</u> to select a key with no assignment.
    Cancel - Abort the operation and return to the input screen.

More Keys Window

This window displays a scrollable list of all the characters for the specified font.   This is used to select keys which haven't been assigned to this topic via <u>Key Assignment.</u>   Either click on the character you would like and then click the **Send** button, or simply double click the character.   The status bars at the bottom of the window display the ASCII code information for the keys.   The one on the left displays the range of the displayed keys and the one on the right shows the ASCII code for the character which you have selected.   Click on the scroll bar to scroll through the list of characters.

Command Help:
   Send - Send the selected character back to your input screen.
   Cancel - Abort the operation and return to the input screen.

Chooser Window

Multiple Choice Testing

This screen is similar to the <u>Speller Window.</u>   The loaded <u>Cards</u> are displayed one at a time.   However, the reverse side is displayed among three other randomly selected Cards.   Click on the option button to select the right choice. If you select correctly, the RIGHT box will flash and its counter will increase by one.   If you choose wrong, though, the WRONG box will flash and its counter will increase by one. After choosing, the correct answer will be highlighted.   The Counter in the upper right corner displays the number of Cards completed.

Command Help:
> **Next** - Depending on what comes next, a new Card is selected or the spelling is checked.
> **Redo** - Places the Card back on the stack to be displayed again.   Use this for those hard to memorize Cards.
> **Quit** - Return to the <u>Tool Bar.</u>
> Option Buttons - Select the viewing order of the Cards.
>> **Front->Back** displays the front side first.
>> **Back->Front** displays the back side first.

Getting Started
Lets get this baby fired up!

Starting Flash!Cards

Flash!Cards can be started in several ways.

1) The Run... command in the File Menu of the Program Manager and File Manager can be used to start the program.

2) If Flash!Cards has been imported into the Program Manager then double clicking on the icon will start the program.

3) From the File Manager, double clicking on the Flash!Cards entry will start the program.

4) Also from File Manager, if you add the .FLC extensions via the Associate option, you can instruct it to load a Card Stack when you click on its icon.

Note that you can specify a Card Stack name as a command line argument. For explanations on any of the above, consult your Windows manual.

When the program starts you will be at the <u>Tool Bar</u> screen.

Creating a new Card Stack

To create a new <u>Card Stack</u> use the **Create Cards...** option from the <u>File Menu</u> or click the Create Icon on the <u>Tool Bar.</u> This will load a window which will allow you to create a new file of <u>Cards.</u>

Loading an Existing Card Stack

To load an existing <u>Card Stack</u> off of disk, select the **Load File...** option from the <u>File Menu</u> or click the '+' button on the <u>Stacks Display</u> which is on the <u>Tool Bar.</u>

Running the Memory Drill Programs

Once a valid Card Stack has been loaded, begin a memory drill by selecting one of the four options under the Run Menu or clicking one of the icons on the Tool Bar.   The four types of memory drills are as follows:

Stepper - Shows the Cards in random order, one side at a time.   No time limits.

Flasher - Shows the Cards in random order, one side at a time, but the first side is only displayed on the screen for a user-selected amount of time.

Speller - Shows the Cards in random order, one side at a time, but the back side of the Card must be spelled in the Spell box.   Counters keep track of how many words you spelled correctly and incorrectly.

Chooser - Shows the Cards in random order, with the front side of the Card being displayed and four choices selected at random from the back of other Cards.   This multiple choice drill also keeps track of correct and incorrect selections.

Help Menu
Help Menu Entries

Index
Using Help
About...

Help Index

Open Help Index.

This function will open the Flash!Cards Help file and go to the main index.

Using Help

How to use the Help Program.

This function will open the Windows Help file.   From this file you can get information on how to use the Windows Help Program.

About...

Opening the About Box

This option displays the About Box, which contains copyright information and the author's address.

Glossary
Definition of Flash!Cards Terms.

Card
Card Stack
Control-Key Combinations
Description
FLASHCRD.INI
Key Assignments
Topic

Key Assignments

Key Assignments are special <u>Control-Key Combinations</u> which allow the user to display on the screen characters from the Extended ASCII character set, such as foreign letters and symbols.   Key Assignments are created with a new <u>Topic,</u> and are saved with that Topic in the <u>FLSHCRD.INI</u> file.   Key Assignments may be associated with the front, back, or both sides of the <u>Card Stack.</u>   These side-specific Key Assignments are available only when inputting to that side.

Topic

A Topic is a single word or short phrase which describes the subject matter of a <u>Card Stack.</u>   Associated with a Topic is a list of special <u>Key Assignments.</u>   Topics are used to organize and group your Card Stacks and to create a common set of Key Assignments.

Card

A Card consists of two parts of information.   To continue the flash cards analogy, they can be thought of as a front and a back.   On one side, put, for instance, your vocabulary word and on the other, put the definition.   When the time comes for you to go through your Cards, you can select which side you want displayed first.   But remember to be consistent within a Card Stack - don't put definitions on the front for some and on the back for others.

FLSHCRDS.INI

The FLSHCRDS.INI file contains necessary information for all of the <u>Topics</u> that are available.   New Topic information is saved in this file.   If this file doesn't exist, don't worry - Flash!Cards will create one for you.   Should you ever need to, you can edit this file with any editor.

Card Stack

A Card Stack consists of a Topic, a Description of the content, and a group of Cards, up to 300 per file.

Description

A Description for a <u>Card Stack</u> consists of a short (64 letters) description of what sort of words are on the <u>Cards.</u>

Control-Key Combinations

A Control-Key Combination is the typing of a key on the keyboard while holding down any combination of the [Shift], [Ctrl], or [Alt] keys.   I found a few combination that didn't work well and disabled them, so if a combo you choose doesn't work, don't panic - try a different one.   Note that for Flash!Cards, a [Shift] alone is not considered a Control-Key Combination.

What is Flash!Cards?

Flash!Cards
Computer Controlled Flash Cards for Windows

Flash!Cards is a Windows application written in Microsoft Visual Basic.   It is a simple data-base style program designed to help with the memorization of vocabulary words and phrases.   Flash!Cards was especially designed for aiding in foreign language learning, with routines to allow the user to select control-key combinations to enter foreign characters supported by the Windows character set.   You can also select other installed fonts for further flexibility in your language memorization requirements.   With Flash!Cards, you can create multiple stacks of Cards which you can go through at your own pace, or at a user-defined speed.   You can even use it to test your spelling abilities.

Cards are organized into Card Stacks, which is a collection of up to 300 Cards.   The memory drill routines work on one Card Stack at a time.   But Flash!Cards version 3.0 allows you to load more than one Stack into the computer's memory so you can quickly and easily switch Stacks at any time.   You can even start a memory drill program, minimize the window, start a new memory drill program, and switch back to your original drill.   Flash!Cards will keep track of it all for you!

The Author

Who wrote this?

I am a poor starving college student, who, after a brief and unrewarding attempt at a Computer Science degree, became disenchanted with the notion of an 8 to 5 office job and decided to pursue a Liberal Arts degree.

Questions, comments, problems, suggestions, and the $10 shareware fee can all be sent to this address:
Richard Moe
319 13th Pl. N.W.
Puyallup, WA 98371   USA

Internet: wretched@seanews.akita.com

The Reason

Why was this written?

This program grew out of a desire to master the vocabulary of an Italian language class.   My friend, a Germanics major, asked if I could write him a vocabulary quizzer, so I wrote a combined Italian and German language prototype of Flash!Cards.   As I wrote, I realized the potential for expansion, so this program came into existence - a generic vocabulary quizzer for any language and any topic (limited, of course, to Windows fonts).

My next step will be to integrate graphical cards - unfortunately, the language I am studying now, Hindi, doesn't have any Windows fonts, so back to the drawing board.

It is becoming harder and harder these days for the middle-class to afford college.   Please, if you like this program (or even if you don't), help my education by sending $10 or whatever you can.

Richard Moe
319 13th Pl. N.W.
Puyallup, WA 98371   USA

Internet: wretched@seanews.akita.com