



Whirlwind WordSearch (Lite/Full/Pro)

User Guide

Version 5.3.6

Revision 251015



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1. Introduction

What is *Whirlwind WordSearch*?

Whirlwind WordSearch, a Macintosh word search (a.k.a. "word find") puzzle maker, lets you create and publish uniquely engaging word searches from your own word lists. Many different shapes, sizes, fonts, alphabets/languages, and difficulty levels are supported. You will be creating professional-looking puzzles right away.

Add word searches to newsletters, web pages, or publish your own books. Each puzzle you create is yours to distribute and sell, royalty-free; no commercial license needed. Your puzzles and data stay on your computer. No web-based accounts are ever needed.

Choose from a large variety of built-in puzzle shapes, such as a circle, heart, diamond, crescent moon, pinwheel, and many more. Puzzles can range from as small as four letters across and down, to a puzzle 50x50 letters, and 80x80 in the Pro version.

You can easily increase or decrease the difficulty setting and create a new puzzle. In response, the software automatically adjusts many subtle aspects of the puzzle for you. This lets you quickly fine-tune them, creating different puzzles appropriate for anyone.

Note: Some features are either not available or are limited in this software's Lite version. In contrast, some features are more extensive in the pro version. Those differences are indicated throughout this user guide.

Whirlwind WordSearch has some elegant features that create high-quality "classroom-safe" puzzles. It double-checks every created puzzle and removes any randomly-created naughty or offensive words. As you increase the difficulty setting, more tricks are added into the puzzle. Thus, a tougher solving experience is ensured.

You can save your word search puzzles and open them later or send them to friends. You can also re-open the puzzles and print or export them. Moreover, you can quickly create new puzzles in different shapes and/or sizes from the same word list.

Many puzzle features are customizable, including changing size or shape, colors, letter font, grid size, answer highlight style, export file formats, etc. This user guide will explain all these options and offer new ideas for you to explore.



Note: Sections of this user guide can be read aloud to you by selecting the text and choosing "Speech>Start Speaking" from the "Edit" menu.

2. Let's Make a Simple Puzzle

This section shows you how to make and print a puzzle in just a few steps. You will start a new puzzle, add some words, customize the puzzle's appearance, generate it, and print it.

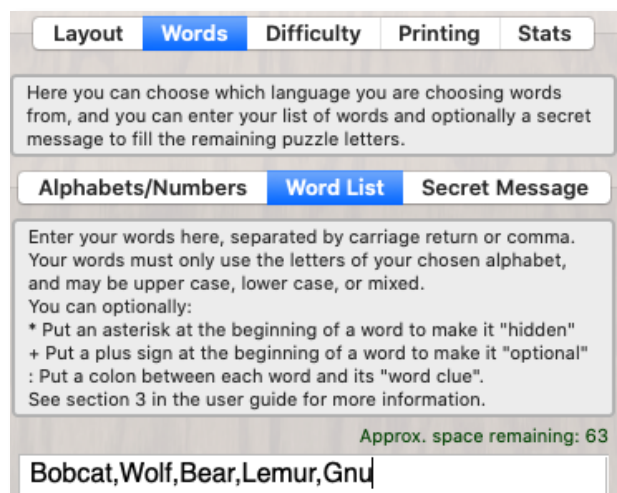
1. **Start:** Find the *Whirlwind WordSearch* program in your “Applications” folder. Double-click its icon to run it. When it starts, it will open a new empty document. “Untitled” will display on the screen in a window. This document will hold your word list and its generated puzzle.



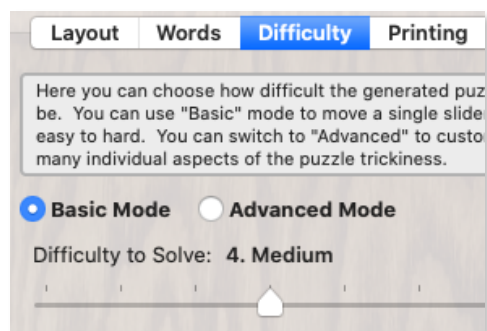
2. **Title:** Tap the “Layout” and “Title” tabs. Then, type in the title: “Furry Mammals.”



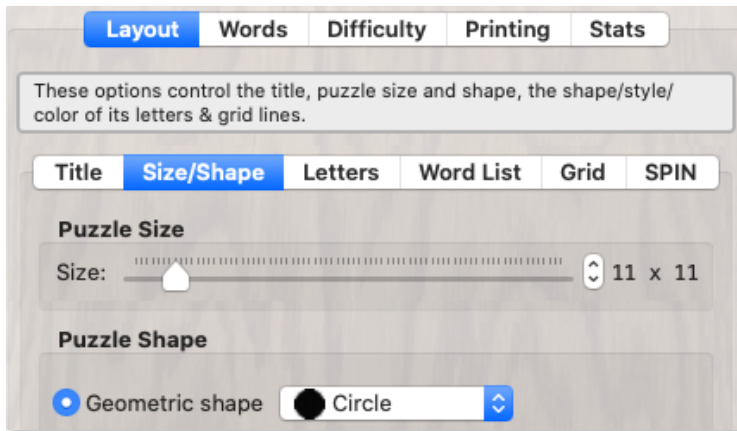
3. **Add Words:** Tap the “Words” and “Word List” tabs. Type some words into the “word list” box below. For now, just type in the following words: bobcat, wolf, bear, lemur, and gnu. Separate the words by either commas or new-lines.



4. **Difficulty:** Tap the “Difficulty” tab. Choose “Basic” difficulty, and set the “Difficulty to Solve” slider to four. Setting it on four indicates a medium level of difficulty.



5. **Size & Shape:** Your longest word (bobcat) is six letters long. Therefore, your puzzle must be at least six letters across and down. Tap the “Layout” and “Size/Shape” tabs. Set the “Puzzle Size” slider to eleven for some extra room. Then, choose a “Circle” puzzle shape.



6. **Build:** Tap the “Build” button, located at the bottom right corner. The Preview Area can display either your created puzzle, or the answer corresponding with the circled words. A different puzzle layout is constructed each time you tap the build button.



7. **Print:** Click the “Print” button at the bottom of the window to print the puzzle and answer pages.

There it is! Creating a customized word search puzzle is as easy as that!

Oh, but wait... there is so much more you can do with *Whirlwind WordSearch*. Keep reading and learn how to unlock many more powerful features. You will quickly be creating world-class word search puzzles.

3. Where Is Everything?

This section gives you a quick overview of the software's main areas and names used within this guide.



3.1. Main Menu Bar

When you start *Whirlwind WordSearch*, the main menu bar, located at the top of the screen, is replaced with menus for this software. Within these menus are different actions you can choose that let you open, save, and close puzzle documents (just like using a word processor.) You can also customize the application's behavior to set your own default values when you open new puzzle documents. Other commands allow you to start or stop building a puzzle. Additionally, you can bulk-build puzzles, or export

the created puzzle its answer files. You can also open this user guide or send me an e-mail. A complete explanation of each command can be found [in this later section](#).

3.2. Document Window

The document window has customizable settings for building a puzzle and its answer. These include constructing its word list, and choosing the puzzle's size and shape. It also displays a quick preview of the finalized puzzle and its answer. This document can be saved as a file, and re-opened later. You can open multiple document winddows at the same time and switch between them as you work on them.

3.3. Control Tab Settings

This section contains multiple tabs, that let you switch between different sets of controls. The puzzle's colors, fonts, sizes, and/or shapes, list of words, etc. are all customizable. As changes occur, the Preview Area will update to show you how the puzzle appears. Each control in the "Control Tab" area is explained [in this later section](#).

Note: Changing some controls will require the puzzle to be re-built, for example changing the puzzle dimension or shape. When you update these specific controls, the Preview window will change and show an empty (un-built) puzzle. You can then build again to create a new puzzle.

3.4. Preview Area

The Preview Area displays an image of your final puzzle and answer key. It contains the puzzle grid, its optional title and sub-title, and its word list. These will be displayed in the fonts and colors you have chosen from the "Control Tab." Extra check boxes at the top of the Preview Area allow you to display some extra information inside the puzzle that isn't normally printed. You can read more details about the Preview Area [in this later section](#).

3.5. Action Buttons

Action buttons, located in the bottom right corner of the document window, provide you quick access to frequently used actions within the software. These actions and others can also be accessed from the Action menu on the main menu bar. These include building a puzzle, printing/exporting a puzzle, or opening this user guide. All these actions are accessible from the "Action Menu." Read more details about these buttons [in this later section](#).

4. Help! Tell Me How To...

Whirlwind WordSearch lets a new user quickly make a puzzle and print the puzzle without much work. It likewise offers the power-user many advanced features for generating high-quality puzzle graphics for newsletters, books, web sites, and other publications. You will also begin to realize how powerful this software is, and how these high-quality puzzles will delight your audience.

Now, many of you with different needs have often asked how to accomplish certain things. I have written this section in response to your questions, hoping to offer step-by-step instructions for doing a variety of things with *Whirlwind WordSearch*. If you don't see your question answered here, please delve deeper into [the next section](#). It covers every menu and control.

4.1. Create a New Puzzle

Each new puzzle you create contains a single list of words, and an accompanying puzzle configuration. It's displayed in its own window. You can create, save, and work on different puzzle documents in this software, either one at a time or simultaneously.

To create a new puzzle document, you can either:

- Open *Whirlwind WordSearch*. It will automatically create a new “Untitled” puzzle document.
- If *Whirlwind WordSearch* is already running, or if it automatically opens a prior document you were working on, simply choose “New” from the “File” menu. It will then open a new “Untitled” puzzle document.

Now you are ready to enter your words, configure the puzzle options, print it, and save it.

4.2. Save a Puzzle Document on Disk for Later

If you have already entered a word list and customized the puzzle's layout, save your work to a document (file) on your computer. Then you can either open it or print more copies later. Do this especially if you want to save your changes or want to share your puzzle with a friend who has *Whirlwind WordSearch*.

Puzzles can be saved even if you've only entered some words but have not yet built a puzzle. This allows you to quit the application, but then later return to the puzzle document to finish working on it.

- After making changes to the document, choose “Save” from the “File” menu.
- You will be prompted for a file name and directory location, depending if this was a new document or it was your first time saving it to disk. Type in a file name, choose a location on your disk, and tap the save button. The file has now been created. Your word list and puzzle settings are stored within it.
- Alternatively, if you have opened an existing document to make changes, saving the document would quietly update it in place. It would update the information and not prompt you for a file name.

The saved document will look like this on disk:



The document will stay open after you saved it. Therefore, you can keep working on it.

Note: The “File” menu has a menu item titled: “Open Recent.” This menu has documents you have recently worked on. You can simply choose one of your recent documents here. It will re-open for you.

4.3. Open my Saved Puzzle Document to Edit/Print

- Using the Finder, locate the *Whirlwind WordSearch* puzzle document you want to open.
- Double-click your document to open it with *Whirlwind WordSearch*. Conversely, choose “Open...” from the *Whirlwind WordSearch* “File” menu; then, navigate to the folder of the puzzle document you want. Select it and tap the “Open” button; or, open the document by dragging and dropping the puzzle document icon onto the *Whirlwind WordSearch* application. You can drop multiple documents at the same time. Each one will open in its own separate window.
- Your puzzle should open and display in a window. It is identical to when you last saved it, because the application will re-build it upon opening. If you had saved the file without first building a puzzle, re-opening it would leave the puzzle empty/unbuilt until you tap the “Build” button.

4.4. Copying my Puzzle to a Different Document

You may want to make a new copy of one puzzle document to edit without changing the original puzzle document.

- Open the original puzzle document. (See [this section link](#).)
- Choose “Duplicate” from the File menu. (Do *not* choose “Save.” Choosing this option will write your changes into your original document.)
- A second copy of the document window will open. Type in a new name for the document at the top of the window. The newly copied file name must be different from the original document.
- Make your changes in the new document’s copy.

You have now “switched over,” and you are working in the new document copy. This means that, when you make changes here and choose “Save,” these changes will be written to the new document and not the original. The original document window is still open behind the new document. You can close it, or make other changes to it separately, since they are now two different files.

4.5. Make a Very Easy Puzzle

Very easy puzzles are likely targeted at an audience who is just learning to read. You can set this up with the following options:

- Select the “Word List” tab. Enter a small number of short words in your word list. Try three to five words. These words should be three to five letters long.

- Select the “Layout” tab. Set the “Puzzle Size” to something fairly small, perhaps between six and nine. **Note:** The larger the “Puzzle Size,” the smaller each letter becomes on the printed puzzle. The entire puzzle will automatically shrink to fit onto a page. You may also want to choose a **SANS-SERIF FONT** that is easier to read. Then, turn off the checkbox that instructs to “Print letters in lowercase.”
- Select the “Difficulty” tab. Slide “Difficulty to Solve” to either very easy or easy. This setting only places words horizontally left-to-right or vertically-down. It additionally fills the remainder of the puzzle with letters *not* in the wordlist. Ultimately, the puzzle is easier to solve.
- Lastly, tap the “Build” button.

4.6. Make a Very Hard/Tricky Puzzle

Very hard puzzles are best suited for more skilled puzzle solvers. These can be set up with the following options:

- Select the “Word List” tab. Enter a large number of words, any where from ten to thirty words of any length.
- Select the “Layout” tab. Make the puzzle large, perhaps between twenty and thirty-five letters. The larger the puzzle’s size, the smaller each letter becomes on the printed puzzle. The entire puzzle will automatically shrink to fit onto a single printed page.
- Select the “Difficulty” tab. Slide “Difficulty to Solve” to at least six (harder) up to eight (diabolically difficult.) These settings place the words in any of the eight compass & diagonal directions, while the remainder of the puzzle is filled with letters from the word list. If you choose one of the highest two difficulty levels, it will also sprinkle some partial pieces of your words into the puzzle as deceptive “decoy wordlet” patterns. Read more about [Decoy Wordlets here](#).
- If you want to make the puzzle visually more unique and ornate, choose an **UNUSUAL FONT** under the “Layout Tab” in the puzzle letters group. Then, turn on “Print letters in lowercase.”
- Or if you want very fine control over the difficulty settings, you can turn on “Advanced” Difficulty Mode. You can then choose the word directions, overlap behavior, and decoy wordlet fill density yourself. [See the “Difficulty Tab:Advanced Difficulty Mode” section link](#).
- Tap the “Build” button to build the puzzle.

Sometimes *Whirlwind WordSearch* takes a long time to build a puzzle because the puzzle you designed is so complicated. In these cases, as it builds a valid puzzle that matches your criteria for dimension, difficulty, layout, etc, it will display a progress bar in the middle of the window. It works to find an answer that fits all the words, while also removing random duplicates and naughty words.

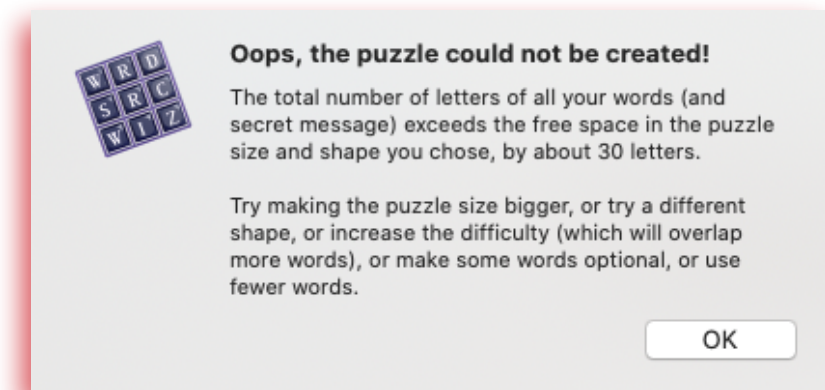
Building your puzzle...

Trying layouts: 27,163 out of 165,086
Doing the whirlwind word shuffle...

16% Cancel

Note: If *Whirlwind WordSearch* is “busy generating” and you need to interrupt its progress to make changes, just tap the cancel button on this “Building your puzzle...” sheet. The puzzle will stop building and you can adjust settings and tap the “Build” button again.

However, if it still cannot fit all your words into the puzzle, it will eventually give up. It will display a helpful error message with suggestions on how to proceed. If this happens, you can adjust some of your puzzle settings (different puzzle size, different shape, different difficulty, or fewer words). Then try your luck again. Tap the build button to try constructing it once more. Each time you tap the Build button, it tries a different approach and creates a completely different puzzle each time.



4.7. Print the Finished Puzzle to the Printer

After you open a puzzle document and create a puzzle layout you like, it's time to print the puzzle and answer. You do not *need* to save your document to disk before printing; however, it is usually a good idea to save your work. To first save before you print, follow the instructions in [this section link](#).

Go to the “Page Details” tab. Ensure that the “Print the Puzzle Page” and “Print the Answer Key Page” are turned on. If both are turned off, or if you have not yet created a puzzle, then the “Print” button and menu item will be disabled. Essentially, there is nothing to print.

You can now print by either:

- Tapping the “Print” button at the bottom of the window.
- Or choose the “Print...” item under the “File” menu, and tap the “Print” button.
- Or tap the <Command>-P keys on the keyboard.

Make any changes you need in the print dialog; then, tap the “Print” button.

You could alternatively choose to save the puzzle and answer as a PNG or PDF files (for attaching to an e-mail, for example). See [this section link](#) for how to do this.

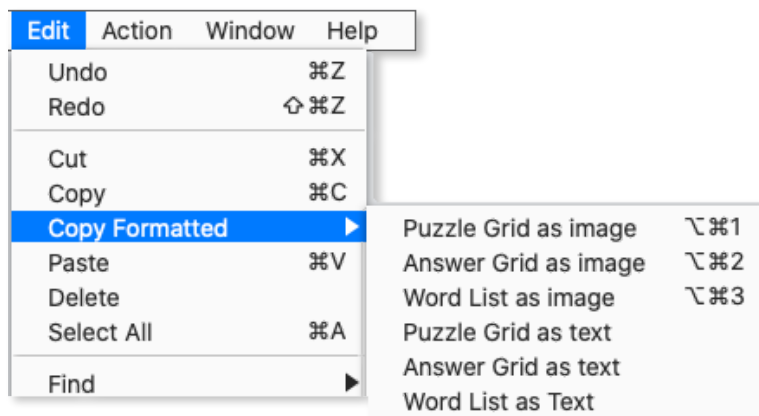
4.8. Export Puzzles for Publishing

Your existing newsletter may be yearning for a puzzle page, or perhaps you want to add your own logo and text in fancy ways around a word search puzzle. Perhaps you need to create a number of different puzzles, and lay them out and publish them in a book. In these instances, you will want to extract just the puzzle grid image, the word list, and its associated answer grid image. You will need to arrange these elements yourself using a separate word processing document. Then, you can do your own page layout. There are a couple of ways to do this.

Export Method 1: Direct Copy & Paste

To quickly copy and paste these elements from *Whirlwind WordSearch* into your word processing document:

- Using *Whirlwind WordSearch*, customize and build the puzzle that you want to use.
- Choose the “Copy Formatted” item from the “Edit” menu. It will open a sub-menu of more options. These options let you copy either the word search puzzle grid or the answer grid as high quality PDF images to the clipboard.
- If you want to keep the grid lines and colors and font style of letters, choose “Copy Formatted:Puzzle Grid as image”¹.



- If instead you are copying into another “table”, for example a spreadsheet grid, or another built-in grid like Canva, then you should choose “Puzzle Grid as text”, then select the upper left cell of the destination, and choose “Paste”, and it should sprinkle each letter into each grid cell for you.
- You must copy the puzzle grid, answer grid, and word list separately. You likely want to place the word list above, below, or wrapped around the puzzle with a different font size. Moreover, you might want to place smaller sized answer grids at the end of the book. So, keeping each puzzle item separate will give you this extra page layout flexibility.
- Now, open your word processing or page layout application. Open the document where you want to add the puzzle.

¹ You could also copy these elements by typing the keyboard shortcuts <Command>-<Option>-1, <Command>-<Option>-2 or <Command>-<Option>-3

- Choose paste from your word processor's "Edit" menu. Move and resize the resulting puzzle to where you want to place it within your document.
- Choose "Edit:Copy Formatted:Word List as Text" from the menu. Paste this text into a textbox in your page layout software. The word list will be formatted as you chose in the "Layout:Word List" tab regarding case, numbering, sorting, etc. Its position, size, font, color, etc., are now changeable within your page layout software. You can even wrap the words around the puzzle.

This copy-and-paste process can be repeated to copy the puzzle's word list and answer grid into a word processing document. If you are creating a small booklet of puzzles, you can easily build many different puzzles, and copy-and-paste the puzzles using this method.

Here's an example of the puzzle dropped into a newsletter with an interesting background behind it:



NOTE! Before we continue, there is something you should know about copying the puzzle. This copied puzzle is a "vector object," not a "bit-mapped object." This is good news, and also bad news.

The *good news* is that when you copy this puzzle into your word processor and resize it, the puzzle retains a crisp, high-quality look. Rather than look fuzzy or blocky, it will remain sharp. It also only copies the letters and lines; so the background will display nicely if you paste it over a texture. This is often what you want to see. (See the example to the left.)

Although, because the letters and lines are thin and it is an object "full of holes," you may find it difficult to click on a part of it to select it, move it, or resize it. To remedy this, increase the magnification or "zoom level" in your word processor. This makes it easier to grab and move this object.

Export Method 2: Saving as Files

For larger projects, you may want to adopt a more professional approach. This method saves these elements as high quality files, while organizing and sorting the word list in multiple ways for you.

Note: Just like the “**Edit:Copy**” command above, the export command exports the puzzle or answer grid image. The exported files will neither include margins, nor will they (normally) include your title or your word list. It is assumed you will be laying out these other elements on the page separately. You can separately extract your word list by either (1) selecting the words in the word list text box and copying them, or (2) choosing “**Edit:Copy Image of:Word List**”, or (3) choosing “**Edit:Copy Puzzle/Answer as Text.**” Paste the entire text block into a text editor, extracting the formatted ordered list of words. In the PRO version, you *can* export the puzzle with its title and word list by choosing “including title and word list” from the top of the export window.

Exporting gives you additional file format options, and higher resolution/quality options. These are useful when importing to other publishing software. After exporting, you can import those files into software where you can nicely format them for publishing. For this more flexible work-flow option, here is how you can export the puzzle and/or answer grid to separate files.

After generating a puzzle you like, export a copy of it by choosing the **File:Export Files...** menu item. You will be presented with an “Export Files” window, which has a variety of options. Here you can choose which items to export, their file format, their file names, etc.

Export Files

Export the Puzzle File ☒ including Title and Word List


☒ and Answer File ☒ and Word-List Text File ☒ and ESP File

File Name: tsuki_Puz

File Format: 1200x1200 dimension PNG files

File Size and Format


Enter the size (width & height) of the exported graphic file in pixels, from 64 to 6000 pixels. Note that 1200 pixels at 72 DPI is 16.7 inches.

Puzzle export file format: 

File Naming

File name text:

☐ Add export-counter to file name, starting at: (currently at 1)

File name layout:  ☐ Add SPIN to file name

Destination Directory

Choose directory for export files:

☒ Warn if about to overwrite existing files

As you change these settings, *Whirlwind Wordsearch* will remember them for future export sessions. A box located at the top of the window will display the proposed filename and your chosen file dimensions and format. These will change as you update any of the settings in the export window.

Export the Puzzle File

When you choose to export, it will always write the puzzle file. You can optionally instruct it to write the answer file and others.

[x] including Title and Word List (*Full & Pro Feature*)

Normally only the puzzle grid is written out when you export the puzzle image's file. Later you will add your own title and subtitle, as well as the word list's text around these puzzles. However, if you turn on this checkbox, the exported puzzle file will be the same height but a narrower rectangle size. It will add the title and subtitle above the puzzle, placing the word list (and optional secret message prompt) below the puzzle. It will include the font, color, size, and formatting you specified in the "Layout" tabs. This is more convenient if you're constructing multiple word puzzles for a book. Moreover, this implies that you are satisfied with *Whirlwind WordSearch*'s layout of the title, subtitle and word list for the puzzle. Keep in mind, though, that this will only add the title and word list to the *puzzle* file; not the *answer* file.

Note: The exported puzzle file layout will *always* be "Portrait Mode." Titles will be listed above, with the word list below. Export file layout is not affected by the "Printing Layout" tab to print puzzles in "Landscape Mode."

[x] And Answer File

The puzzle file will always be exported, but here you can optionally enable writing the answer file too. The exported puzzle and answer files will have the same file names, with the added suffix of either "_Puz" or "_Ans."

[x] And Word List Text File (*Pro Feature*)

Turn this on to export an "Config/INI"-formatted text file, using your formatted word list in multiple ways. There is a complete list of words used, in the sort order and case you that requested in the "Word List" tab. There are also lists of words grouped by the directions they were laid out in the puzzle. Furthermore, lists of words are grouped by length. This text file name will have the suffix "_Wrd."

[x] And ESP File (*Pro Feature*)

This is a JSON-formatted text file that is easily imported into other computer software. It contains all the puzzle and answer information needed to re-create the puzzle in other software. These files can be imported into your publishing workflow to lay out a large number of puzzles where you will want them re-formatted and flowed onto pages in your own way. Or they can be collected and imported into your own interactive game-player engine on the web or in your mobile app. See the Help menu item "ESP File Guide" for detailed information about this file format.

File Size and Format

Size (width and height): The "Size" setting lets you choose how large the puzzle image will be when you export it. This setting is only used for the image formats (PNG, JPEG, PDF, SVG.) Any text-based formats (e.g., ipuz) don't need or use it.

Note: There are fewer export sizes and file formats in the Lite version of this software.

File Format: You can choose what export file format to use when saving your exported puzzles and answer grids.

PDF: This is a high quality (vector) publishing file format, readable by many word processing and page layout applications.

PNG, JPEG: These are graphic image file formats. These are readable by many photo and image editing programs, as well as word processors and page layout applications. PNG supports transparency, JPEG does not

SVG: This is a vector graphic file format. It can be re-sized without losing any quality. Many web browsers, Amazon Kindle, and some page layout or graphic editing applications can read these images. SVG files are non-interactive, but can be directly added to a web page, or imported and used to develop an interactive game. They may even be imported into CNC or 3D printing machines. Let your creative imagination think about these possibilities! It is important to note that SVG files, unlike PDF and PNG/JPEG files, cannot capture and use your computer's fonts for drawing letters. Therefore, the fonts used in SVG files are a "suggestion" for what to use on the end-user's computer. You can change the font-suggestion for SVG files by selecting one from the SVG "Letter Font" menu under "SVG Info" in the Application Settings window.

Text (tab-separated): This is a regular text file format, which will contain the puzzle or answer grid as multiple lines of text, with each line of letters separated by a Tab character. The answer file will only have the letters of your words listed, and non-word positions will hold a blank space.

Text (comma-separated): This is a regular text file format, which will contain the puzzle or answer grid as multiple lines of text, with each line of letters separated by a comma character. The answer file will only have the letters of your words listed, and non-word positions will hold a blank space.

File Naming

File Name Text: This string will be used as the main part of all your export file names.

Use Default File Name: If you saved the current document, this button resets the value of the "file name text" to the currently saved document's file name, otherwise it sets it to the generic "Whirlwind WordSearch."

Add Export-Counter to Exported File Name: Turn this on to add an export counter into the file name that increments upon each export. You can build multiple puzzles with the same puzzle setup, exporting each puzzle with a unique file name, e.g.; "MyPuzzle_1_Puz.png," "MyPuzzle_2_Puz.png," and "MyPuzzle_3_Puz.png."

Note: To display this counter in the title of your puzzles, see the puzzle-macro `$$exportcounter` in [this linked section](#).

..., **Starting At:** If "Add Export Counter.." is turned on, then you're able to choose a starting value for the export counter mentioned above. For example, if you set this to 222 then, every time you start the application and start exporting, your first exported puzzle file will start with that export-counter value

("MyPuzzle_222_Puz.png"). Each time you export again, the subsequent files will get the next-higher export number, e.g., "MyPuzzle_223_Puz.png."

Note: You can reset the internal counter back to your starting value by simply re-typing the starting value in the text field.

File Name Layout: This pop-up menu lets you format the exported file names with the above components in a particular order. Ultimately this will change how they are sorted and grouped in the Finder. As you change this pop-up setting, the file name at the top of this window will update and show you the new layout.

Add SPIN to file name: Turning this on will append the current SPIN number to the file name; therefore, exporting multiple generated puzzles from one document will have unique filenames. They will only differ by the SPIN; where the words got placed. The SPIN will always be placed at the end of the file name.

Destination Directory

Choose Directory for Export Files: This lets you pick a directory to write all your exported puzzle/answer files.

Reveal Directory in Finder: After you have chosen a destination directory, tap this button to open and display it in Finder. This is a quick way to access the exported files.

Warn if about to overwrite existing files: This warns you if you're about to overwrite an existing file. If export finds a file with an identical file name, it will pop up a dialog. This allows you to either overwrite or skip this one or all duplicate files.

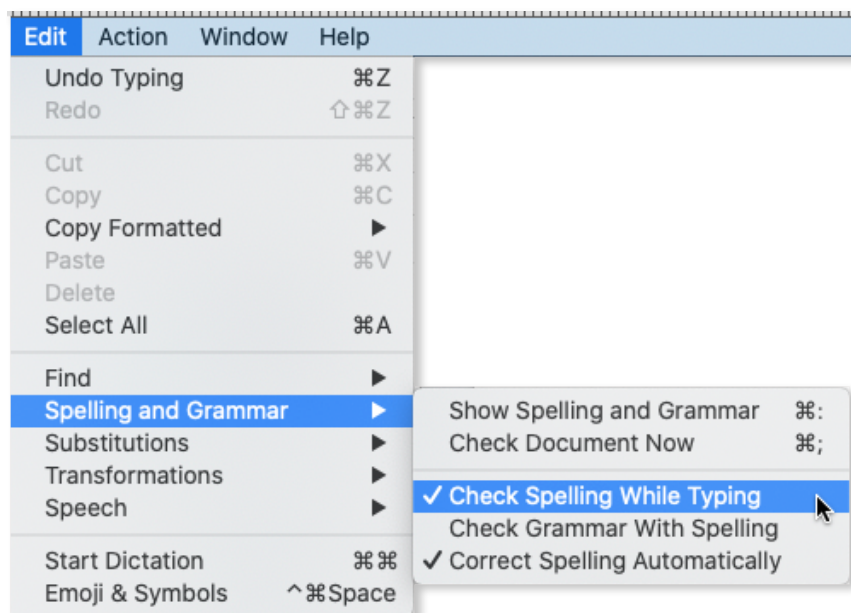
Once you have set the export options, tap the Export button at the bottom of the window, and the appropriate files will be written to the destination directory you chose. If there are any problems, an error message will be shown near the bottom of the window, otherwise the window will automatically close when complete.

Note: The changes you made inside this export window are now saved with the document you have exported. If you now **Save** your document, they export options will be saved there too. If you want to keep these changes for new future puzzle documents too, then you can now choose "Save document settings as defaults" from the Whirlwind WordSearch menu, and these export settings will also become the default for all new documents you create.

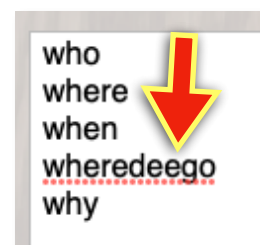
Note: You may want to save each puzzle document once you like it, in case you need to open it later and change and re-build and re-export the files... you know, in case one of those eagle-eyed editors requests a minor change.

4.9. Spellcheck the Words as They Are Entered

There is a built-in spellcheck, which checks words in many different languages. To enable this, open the “Edit” menu on the top menu bar. Select “Spelling and Grammar” to see the options.

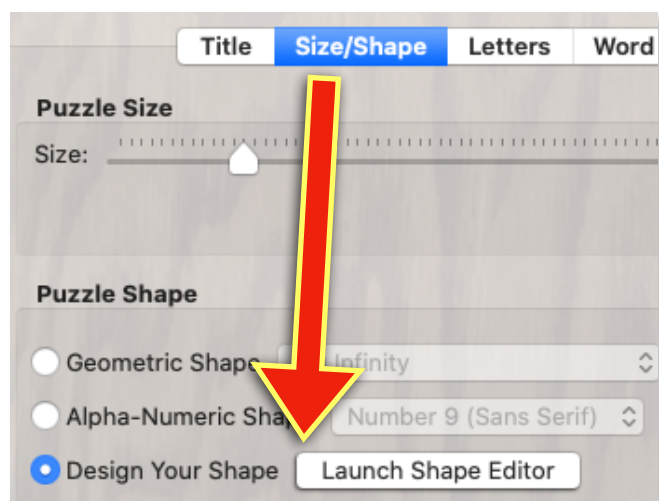


These menu items offer you a visual indication of misspelled words you typed, either in the word list or in the secret message text areas. It further checks for misspelled words in the title and subtitle text areas. You can select and turn on “Check Spelling while typing.” After doing so, you will see a red underline under words that the dictionary does not recognize.



4.10. Design Your Own Puzzle Shape (*Pro Feature*)

You can design your own shape, and build a puzzle with it!



First, select the “Layout” tab. Next, choose “Design Your Shape” under the “Size/Shape” tab in the Puzzle Shape box. Then, tap the “Launch Shape Editor” button. You can also create a shape by going to the top “Action” menu and choosing “Shape Editor.”

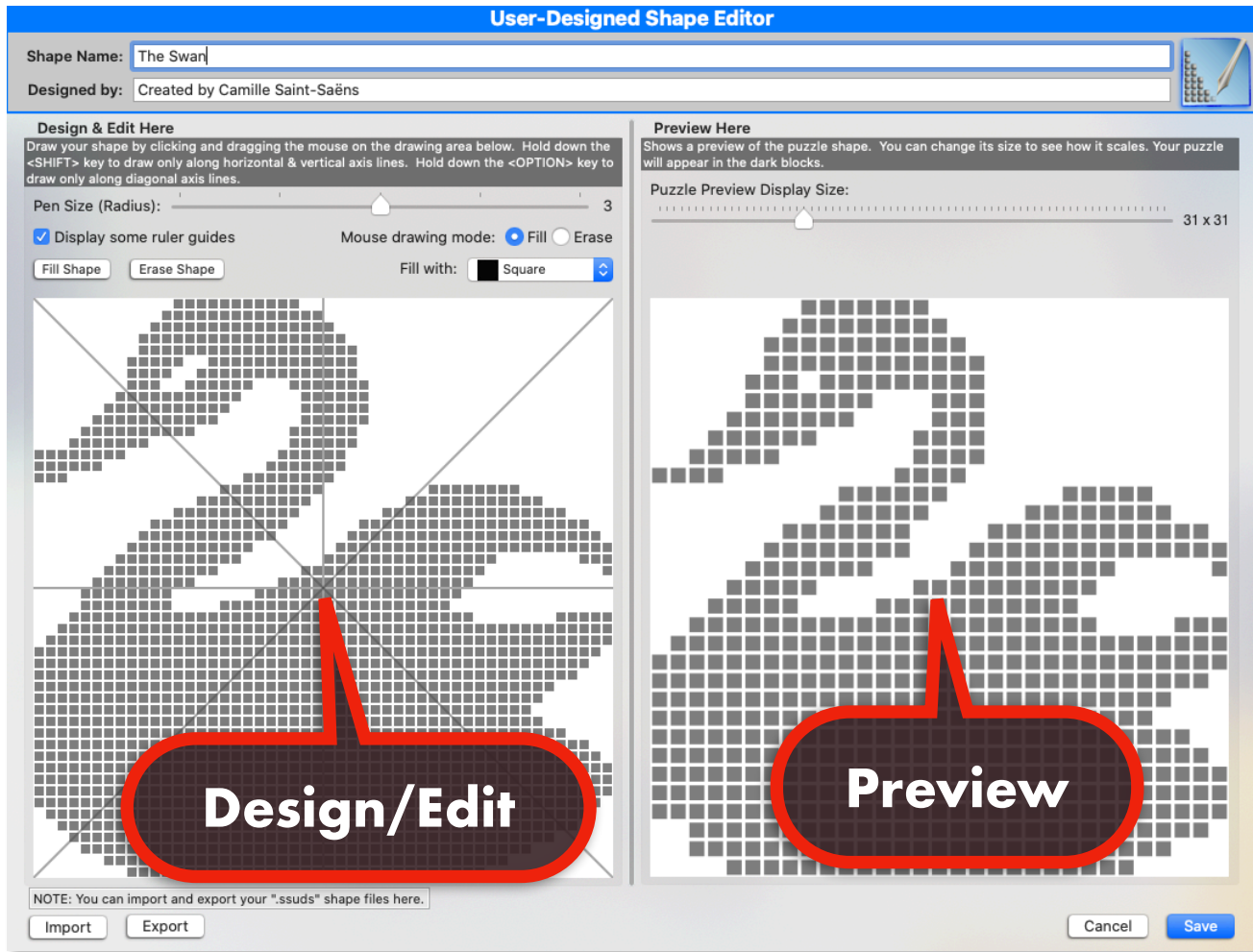
The “User-Designed Shape Editor” sheet is now presented on top of your current puzzle document. It lets you design or edit your own shape for this puzzle.

Make a company logo, an animal, a tree, a holiday shape, or just about anything you can imagine. The “Shape Editor” lets you draw the shape in large puzzle resolution (50x50) in the “Design & Edit Here” grid on the left. It

also shows you a preview of different puzzle sizes in the “Preview Here” grid on the right. If you make a mistake while drawing, erasing, or filling the design area, choose “Undo” from the Edit menu. It lets you

back up a step or more. Opening the “Shape Editor” from a document with an already-created user-designed shape allows that shape to load into the program. Therefore, you can easily edit it. There is only one user-designed shape in each *Whirlwind WordSearch* document.

Note: Every edit action you take in this sheet is “undoable.” You can switch pen size and draw a few strokes. If you don’t like the strokes you made you can undo those changes, which essentially “steps back” to prior versions of your shape. Simply use the “Undo” menu item under the “Edit” menu to undo each change you made.



Shape Name: & Designed By:

Add a “Shape Name” and add your name/copyright to the “Designed by” text fields. They will be saved with the shape if you export the shape file.

Design & Edit Here

Pen Size (Radius)

This lets you change the pen size with which you draw or erase. The left side makes you draw smaller, while the right side lets you draw larger.

Display Some Ruler Guides

Turn this on to display faint ruler lines inside the design grid, thereby helping you line up your drawing.

Mouse Drawing Mode: Fill/Erase

You can select the mouse-dragging behavior to either draw or erase. Drag the mouse around the “Design and Edit” grid with the mouse button down to make your shape.

You can hold down the <Shift> key while drawing to “lock into” horizontal & vertical axis lines.

You can hold down the <Option> key while drawing to “lock into” diagonal axis lines.

Fill Shape: & Erase Shape:

You can completely fill or completely erase the shape area with these buttons. However, when you click these buttons, you will first be asked if it is OK to wipe the shape clean.

Fill With: <Geometric Shape>

The shape area can be filled with a pre-defined geometric shape, which makes it easier to create your own custom shape. When you select a shape from the pop-up menu, you will first be asked if it is OK to wipe the prior shape clean.

Preview Here

Puzzle Preview Display Size

Moving the “Puzzle Preview Display Size” slider to different sizes shows how the puzzle will appear. This lets you fine-tune your drawing so it works well at a specific dimension/ range.

Import

This button loads a [“.ssuds” shape file](#) into the current shape window.

Export

This button saves a copy of your current shape as a separate [“.ssuds” shape file](#). It can be imported later into this software, or other software products that read this file format.

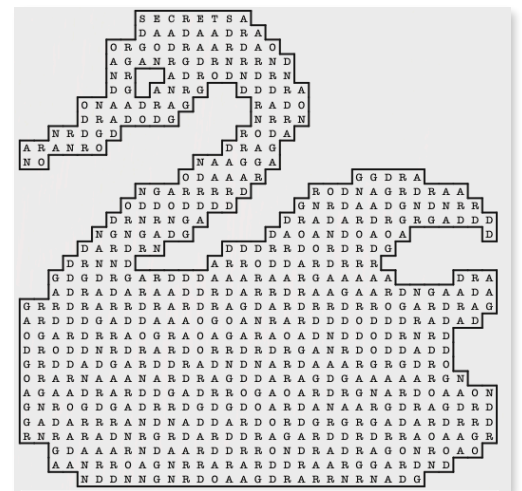
Save/Cancel

Save

Save your shape design back into your currently-opened document. You can now make puzzles from it. Once saved, the "Shape Editor" sheet closes and the shape you have designed is shown in the "Preview" window. If you then save this document to disk as a file, your user-shape is saved inside it as well. It will be available when you re-open this document later.

Cancel

Throws away your current edits, closes the “Shape Editor” window, and leaves the document’s existing user-designed shape unchanged.



Exported “.ssuds” Shape File Format

Upon exporting your user-designed shape, it's saved in a special file format that can be read/imported by any other SchwanSongs software supporting this format. Currently the only two SchwanSongs software applications that support this format are *Minos Maze Maker Pro* and *Whirlwind WordSearch Pro*.

The “.ssuds” file extension stands for “SchwanSongs User-Defined Shape.” The file itself is in XML format, specifically an Apple .Plist file format. It consists of a dictionary of key-value pairs. These define the version of the file, the name/credit strings, width/height dimensions, and the actual two-dimensional bitmap of the shape in Base64 encoding. If you are interested in parsing this yourself, e-mail me a request. I can send you the specification details.

4.11. Remember Your Current Settings as “Default” for Future Puzzles

You may find that every time you start the software, you always go in and change certain settings the way you like. You would prefer that the software to remember your custom settings and open every new maze for you this way. *Whirlwind WordSearch* can do that for you!

Simply open a document and change all the settings to you want all documents to start with, and then choose “Save as Default Settings” from the *Whirlwind WordSearch* menu. It will remember every setting (size, shape, difficulty, colors, page title and font, etc.) and use them for every subsequent new maze.

Any time you want to change these “default” values, simply do those steps again and it will update and use your new settings.

4.12. Make Several Groups of Similar-Looking Puzzles

You may want to set up *multiple* “default” settings and be able to quickly switch between them, to create a group of puzzles that all look similar. For example, you may be creating a book of puzzles with three sections, EASY, MEDIUM, and HARD. You want eleven EASY puzzles of easy difficulty and smaller size, and nine MEDIUM puzzles of medium difficulty and moderate size, and eight HARD puzzles of harder difficulty and a large size. In this case, it is best to create and save three separate puzzle documents, each with its own settings. These puzzle documents can be thought of as “template” files that each hold particular settings for a group of puzzles.

For the above example, simply create, update and save a first puzzle document with the EASY settings for the first eleven puzzles. Then, create and save a second new document (you can duplicate the EASY puzzle file from the File menu or in the Finder, and rename the copy to MEDIUM, for example) with the MEDIUM settings, and create a third document for your HARD settings. Now you can open the first EASY document and create and save eleven EASY puzzles from it. Next, open the MEDIUM document, and make nine different MEDIUM puzzles from it, and open the HARD document and make eight HARD puzzles from it.

Note: If you are using the *Pro* version of the software, you could instead open the EASY document and choose “Bulk-Builder” to set up and automatically make the eleven EASY puzzles, then do the same with your MEDIUM and for the HARD documents. See [this linked section for the Bulk-Builder](#).

4.13. Reset your document's settings to saved “factory defaults”

If you have made a bunch of changes to your document but now want to quickly restore all its settings to the saved default set of values, there's a menu item for that! Choose the menu item “Reset Document Settings to Defaults” under the *Whirlwind WordSearch* main menu. After you choose this, your currently opened document settings will all revert to the currently saved “default” settings for this software.

4.14. Solve a Puzzle On-Screen Without Printing It

There are times when you may want to create a word search puzzle just to work on without printing it. In this case, you do not want to see the answer, but just the puzzle. This is easy to do.

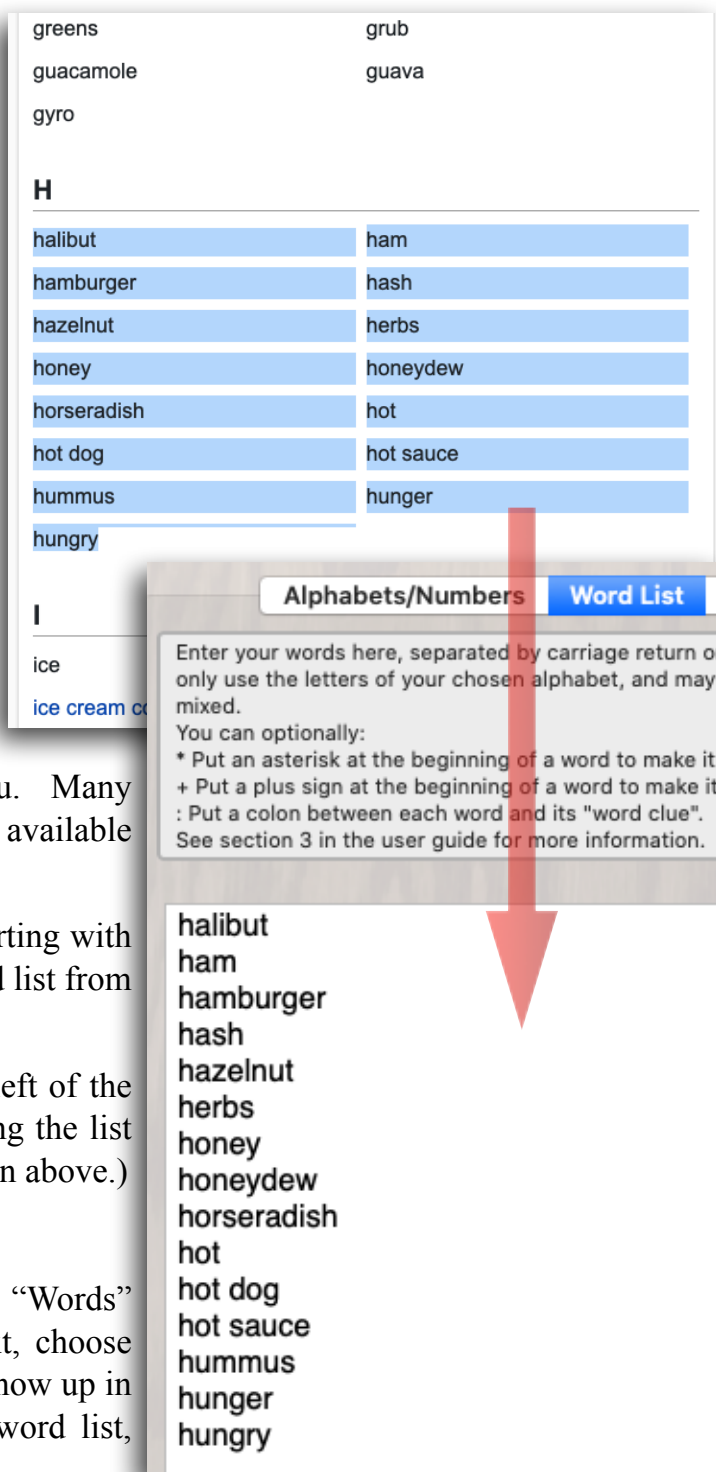
- First, change the “Preview as” style at the top of the “preview area to “Puzzle.”
- Next, *turn off* all the checkboxes in the preview area (above the puzzle display). These display extra indicators on the puzzle.
- Now add your words and build a word search puzzle. It will be displayed on-screen without the answer key or any other hint lines added.
- Once you have visually found all the words, or if you need to peek at the answer grid for a hint, change the “Preview Display:” style to “Answer,” and the answers will all be shown. Switch it back to “Puzzle” to hide the answers.



4.15. Copy a Word List from a Web Page (or Document) into a Puzzle

There are many places to get lists of interesting words for a word search puzzle. You may already have your own list of words in a word processing document, or you may want to find a list of words on the internet. Simply follow these steps to get a list of words from somewhere else into your word search puzzle.

- Create a new puzzle document, as described in [this section link](#).
- Now find and open the word list you want to copy *from*, either on the web or another document.
- Open your word processor, and open the document containing your list of words.
- Alternatively, do a search on the web for “free word search” or “vocabulary words.” Find a site that provides a list of words that appeals to you. Many non-copyrighted word list collections are freely available for you to use.
- Let's say we are studying food-related words starting with the letter “H.” We have found the following word list from a web browser:
- In this browser window, click above the upper left of the word list. Drag down to the lower right, selecting the list of words you want to copy. (See the blue selection above.)
- Next, choose “Copy” from the “Edit” menu.
- Switch back to *Whirlwind WordSearch*. Tap the “Words” tab and click inside the “Word List” box. Next, choose “Paste” from the “Edit” menu. The words will show up in your word list area. You can now edit your word list, adding or deleting words to suit your needs.
- Tap the “Build” button, and you have a word search puzzle ready to go!

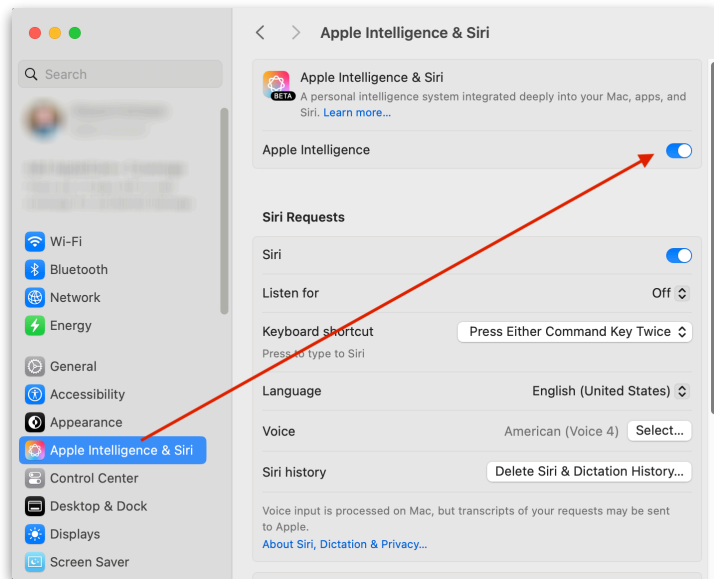


Note 1: The words must be separated by commas or new lines after they are placed in the *Whirlwind WordSearch* “Word List” text field. If they are not, you will have to reformat them after you paste them in. The list is now be ready to be used for creating a puzzle.

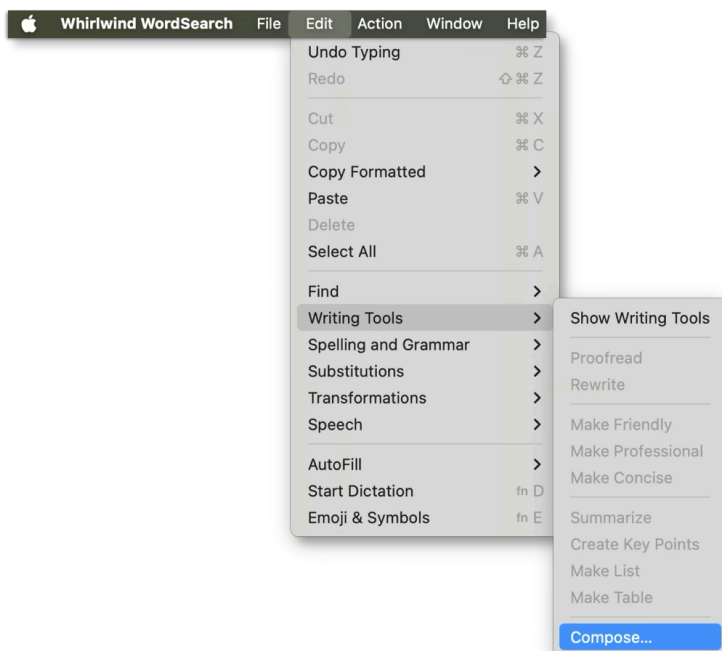
4.16. Create Automatic Word Lists with Apple Intelligence

You can also now directly fill the word list with relevant words using Apple’s latest “A.I.” feature, if you are running an Apple Silicon Mac with Mac OS Sequoia (15.2) or later, and have Apple Intelligence installed and enabled.

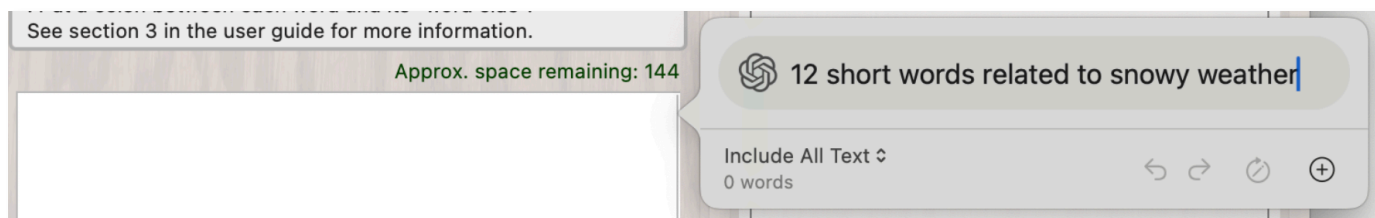
Note: You can quickly determine if you have it by running your System Settings application, and looking for it here:



- With your word search document open, select the “Words:Word List” tab.
- Make sure there are no words in the word list text box, and click inside the word list text box to place the cursor there.
- Now select “Compose...” from the “Edit:Writing Tools” menu.



- You can now type a short text prompt describing what words you want to automatically fill the word list text box. For example, you could type “12 short words related to snowy weather.”



- After a moment, the word list text box will automatically fill with the words that you requested. You can then add to, delete, or edit this list of words.



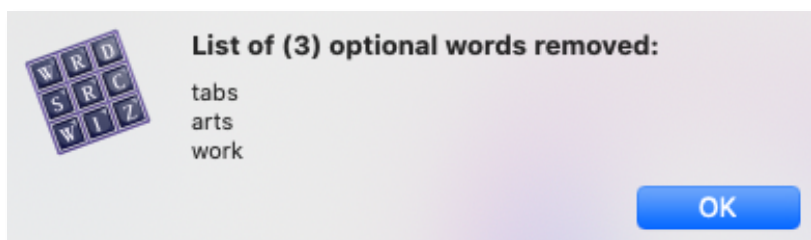
4.17. Automatically Use the Most Words Possible from a Big Word List

Perhaps you want to copy or type in a large list of words. Let the software pick the largest number of those words which would fit into your puzzle’s size and shape. This is possible by tagging some or all of your words as being “optional.” Meanwhile, have *Whirlwind WordSearch* use as many words as it can to make a puzzle.

- If you want to control which words are required, and which ones could be optionally left out, you can individually mark each word you want to be optional by prefixing it with a '+' character. These marked words will then be considered “nice to have” in the puzzle. Essentially these are not required if they don't fit. As the puzzle is created and there are too many words to fit into the puzzle you chose, it will begin removing your optional words. Then, it will try building the puzzle again. When choosing which optional word to remove, *Whirlwind WordSearch* will find the longest optional word to remove first. This guarantees that the fewest number of optional words will be removed before it can successfully make a puzzle. It will remove more optional words, one at a time, and retry until it is successful. If it has removed all the optional words and still cannot build the puzzle, it will then issue an error message that it “could not build the puzzle even after dropping all your optional words from the list.” If this happens, you could either make more words optional, or increase the size of the puzzle.

- If you want to make *all* the words optional, and just see which words it can fit, you can instead turn on the “Make all words Optional in word list” checkbox. It’s located under the “Word List” tab. This will treat all of your words as optional, and it will fit as many as it can.
- If any optional words were dropped when the puzzle was made, you can view the list of them by clicking the “Show Removed 'Optional' Words” button. It will appear near the top of the Preview display after a build whenever there were optional words that were removed.

Clicking that button will display a window that lists which words were removed upon the puzzle’s creation. You can click on and select these words and copy them from the sheet, in case you wish to paste them into another list or puzzle.

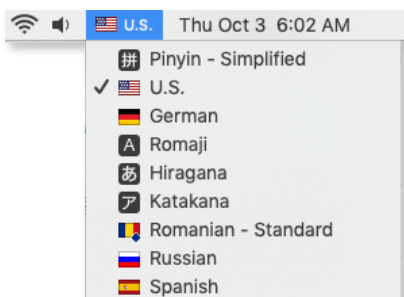
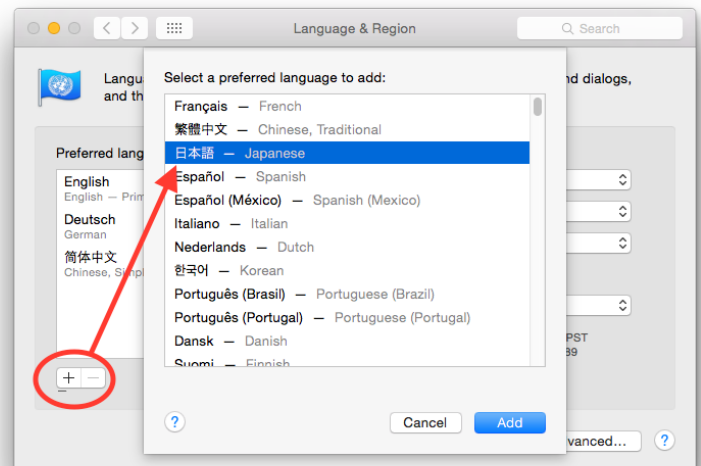
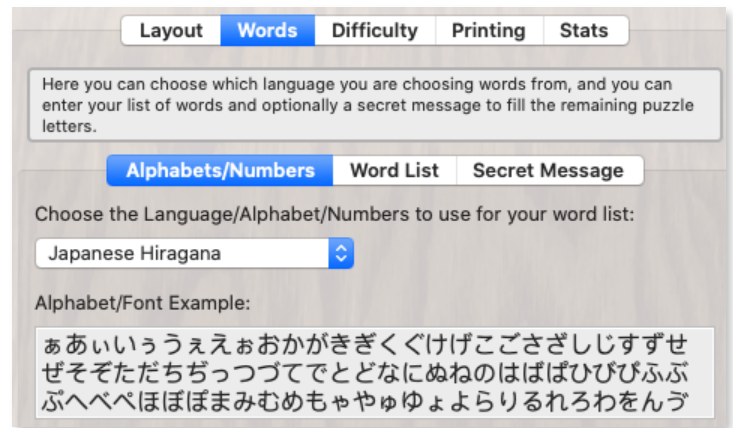


You can also visit the “Stats” tab ([see this section link](#)) to see the “# of optional words removed.”

4.18. Create a Puzzle in a Different Language

Whirlwind WordSearch can create word search puzzles in *many* different languages... not just English or the language your computer is set to use. This makes it easy for you to make puzzles for foreign language vocabulary studies.

- First you must tell *Whirlwind WordSearch* which alphabet/language you want to use for your puzzle. Select the “Words” tab; then the “Alphabet/Numbers” tab. Next, choose the alphabet/language you want to use from the pop-up menu. Choosing the alphabet does several things: It selects which alphabetic letters are allowed in your words. It also tells it which letters with which to fill the rest of the puzzle. It additionally tells it which language's “naughty words” to look for and remove from the puzzle. You have now switched *Whirlwind WordSearch* to expect your words to use a new alphabet/language.
- Next, you need to tell your Macintosh to let you type the letters from this newly chosen alphabet. To do this, first open the “System Preferences” panel in your dock. Choose the “Language and Region” item, and add the language you want from the “Preferred Languages” (or older “Input Sources”) list. Either drag the one you want to the top of the list, or if it isn't listed, tap the [+] button at the bottom of the list to add it first.
- To make an easy shortcut to switch languages, open the “Keyboard” tab in the “System Preferences” panel. Under the “Input Sources” tab, turn on the “Show Input menu in menu bar” option at the bottom of that tab.
- Now, from the menu bar at the top of your screen, choose the same input language for your computer that you chose in *Whirlwind WordSearch* for your words.



This will allow you to type letters in that alphabet. Now, click in the word list box of *Whirlwind WordSearch*. Start typing in this new language.

When you are finished, you can switch back to your regular keyboard language again via the “Input Menu” you just added.

4.19. Add a “Secret Message” Within a Puzzle *(Full & Pro Feature)*

An interesting variation you can add to your word search puzzles is laying out a message in the remaining spaces in-between the word list’s words. That way, after all the words have been found and crossed out, some or all of the remaining letters will spell out a message you have provided.

Select the “Words” tab and the “Secret Message” tab. Type your message into the text box. If it’s left empty, a secret message won’t be added to the puzzle.

The secret message begins on the left-handed side of the puzzle, while the letters are always laid out left to right. The letters appear line by line down the puzzle, skipping over any puzzle words, until the entire message is added to the puzzle. If your message does not completely fill the puzzle, then the remaining puzzle spaces around it are filled with extra letters, just like a regular word search puzzle. Only the alphabetic letters of your typed secret message are used. Any punctuation or spaces or letters that are not in your current alphabet are automatically skipped or removed.

Optionally you can add a prompt on your printed puzzle page, alerting your reader to look for your secret message. To enable this prompt feature, select the “Printing” and the “Puzzle Page” tabs. Type a short hint to print on the puzzle page beneath your puzzle. You may want to type something like “Find the secret message too.”

To help you see where your message will appear, it can be displayed in the “Preview” area with a darker gray background. Therefore, it is easier for you to see where it is positioned. Show the preview answer, by turning on “Preview as: Answer” at the top of the preview area. Then in the “Preview” area, turn on “Show secret message.” This gray box can display and highlight the final printed answer grid in your exported and/or printed answers. To bring it up, select the “Printing” and “Answer Page” tabs and turn on the checkbox: “Show the secret message on the answer page.”

To add your own secret message to a puzzle, do the following:

The screenshot shows the 'Secret Message' tab selected. It features a text input area with the placeholder text: 'Enter an optional secret message here. This text will lay across the cells from left to right, filling any cell that doesn't have one of your word letters. If you want no secret message, then leave the text box empty.' Below the input area, it says 'Approx. space remaining: 47'. The text 'Furry Mammals' is entered in the box. At the bottom, there is a dropdown menu for 'Secret Message position in puzzle:' set to 'At the top'.

The screenshot shows the 'Printing' tab selected. It contains options for printing the puzzle and answer pages. Under 'Puzzle Page Printing', both 'Print the puzzle page' and 'Print the word list on the puzzle page' are checked. Under 'Secret Message Prompt', there is a text input area with the placeholder: 'Enter a "secret message" prompt to display on the printed puzzle page (or leave empty for none.) A secret message "template" will always be printed.' The text 'Find the 'Secret Message' too!' is entered in the box.

- Create a new puzzle document, as described in [this section link](#). Add bobcat, wolf, bear, lemur, and gnu to the word list.
- Now, “hide” the message “furry mammals” in the rest of the puzzle. Tap the “Words” and “Secret Message” tabs, and type “furry mammals” into the text box.
- You can additionally choose the “position” pop-up menu. This changes where the message shows up in the puzzle: at the top, at the bottom, centered in the middle, or at a random position. You can even require it to exactly fill every additional empty space in the puzzle.
- Now, use the “Layout” and “Difficulty” tabs to set the size and difficulty and shape of the puzzle.
- Lastly, build the puzzle.

If *Whirlwind WordSearch* can successfully fit your words and your secret message in around the words, it will display the “Puzzle Preview” with darkened squares. This indicates where your secret message was added.

If your secret message is too long for the puzzle and its quantity of words - meaning that there was not enough free space to add the entire message - then the puzzle will not be generated. Should this occur, you will get an error letting you know of the problem and hints on how to fix it.

If you chose to “Exactly Fill” the secret message text, the software will lay in all the words. Then, it will attempt to lay out your secret message and *exactly* fill all remaining spaces in the puzzle. If the secret message is too short or too long, however, you will see an error message. It will tell you how many letters to either add or remove. You can then change the puzzle size or shape, word overlapping behavior, the length of the secret message, or add/delete word list words. You can also re-create the puzzle until you get it just right. As you type letters in the secret message box, an “approx. space remaining” prompt displays below the text box. It shows how much space you have left.

Oops, the puzzle could not be created!

Unable to create the puzzle after bazillions of attempts, because there are not enough empty letter spaces in the puzzle to exactly fit your 'Secret Message' text;

You need to increase the puzzle size by 7, or reduce the size of your words or secret message by that many letters.

4.20. Build Many Different Puzzle Layouts from the Same Word List

You might wish to use a single word list and create numerous puzzles from it. Perhaps you are passing them out in a classroom and you want to discourage cheating, or you may just want to add variety by choosing different shapes for each. The technique assumes that you wish to quickly print a bunch of different puzzles and their answer grids from a single word list. This can easily be done.

- Create a new puzzle document, and type in your word list.
- Make all your initial set of changes in the different tabs to set up your first puzzle.
- Tap the “Build” button to make your first puzzle.
- Next, choose “Print” from the File menu. Print this puzzle (and its corresponding answer if you chose that setting.)

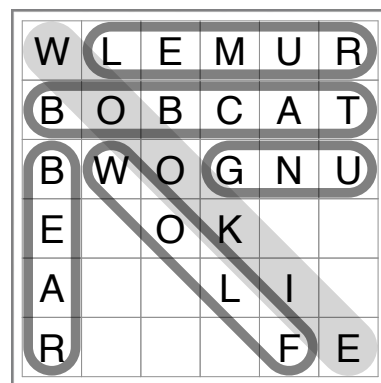
- Now make the changes you want to set up for the next puzzle. Change its shape, or simply tap the “Build” button again to create a different puzzle layout.
- Go to the “File” menu and choose “Print” again. Print this new puzzle.

Repeat these last two steps, changing the puzzle and printing again. Do this as many times as you need. Note that each puzzle and answer page you print will share the same “Specific Puzzle Identification Number” (SPIN) printed at the bottom of the puzzle and answer page. This lets you match up the puzzle and its associated answer grid.

4.21. Add a Word in the Puzzle that’s not Shown in the Word List *(Full & Pro Feature)*

There are times when you may want to put extra words into the puzzle without having them show up in the word list. For example, you may want to add several “unlisted” bonus words in the puzzle, giving extra credit for those who find them. Or, you may want to add your name or company name in there as a kind of “copyright watermark.” This is easy to do.

- Simply put an asterisk “*” at the beginning of a word (with no space between the asterisk and the first letter). By doing this, that word will become “hidden” in the word list. It *will* be placed in the puzzle, but *will not* show up in the printed word list or in the answer grid. For example, if you wanted the word “wookie” to be in the puzzle, but not show up in the printed list of words to find: **lemur**, **gnu**, **bobcat**, ***wookie**, **wolf**, **bear**.
- The hidden words are normally not shown/circled on the answer key page. However you can instead choose to have your hidden words *shown* on the printed/exported answer page. For example, you may want to temporarily do this and print a single master answer key just for yourself, showing *all* the words, regular *and* hidden. To do this, simply select the “Printing” and “Answer Page” tabs. Turn *on* the checkbox labeled: “Show ‘regular’ hidden words in the answer page.” Any “hidden words” in your word list (Wookie, from in the example above) will then show up in the printed answer key with a light gray highlight under them. Remember to toggle it back *off* if you later want to print the answer key without them shown.



If you want to see how the hidden words are placed on the Preview screen, but you do *not* want to see the words highlighted on the final printed/exported answer page, then turn *off* the “Show Regular Hidden Words in the Answer Page” checkbox. Instead, turn *on* the “Show Hidden Words” checkbox under the Preview area.

Tip: You can quickly hide/remove any of your words by prefixing them with an asterisk, wherever they are in your word list. This could also be used to create several different customized puzzles from a single large word list, just by moving the asterisks to different sets of words and re-creating a new puzzle. Although they are not listed in your final word list, they are still placed in the puzzle.

If you find yourself wanting to have a certain hidden word (or words) *always* added to *all of your puzzles*, you can do this by adding the words via the “Extra-Hidden-Words” pane of the Settings window. This is a

simple way to add a “Watermark Word” to all your puzzles to dissuade copy-theft. See [the section, Settings:Extra Hidden Words](#) for more information.

4.22. Add Compound Words with Spaces/Hyphens/Apostrophes

Sometimes you may need to add a single “compound word” (words composed of multiple words). These are normally separated by a space, hyphen, or apostrophe (sometimes called a “single quote character.”) In the printed word list, you would want the compound word displayed with the space, hyphen, or apostrophe. However, inside the puzzle, you want the non-alphabetic character removed. Consequently, the letters would have to run together along the same line.

For example, consider the hyphenated word X-RAY. This word will show the hyphen in the printed word list as “X-RAY,” but will be hidden inside the puzzle as “XRAY.” The hyphen will be left in the word for display, and removed when it is put in the puzzle.

If your word has an apostrophe (’), for example, O’Hara, then the apostrophe will be left in the word for display. The apostrophe will be removed when it is put in the puzzle, treated just like the space or hyphen. Note that it must be the regular apostrophe, and not a “smart/curly” single-quote character which word processors often use.

Finally, to allow a compound word (or phrase) containing spaces, *Whirlwind WordSearch* requires that you separate each “word” in the word list with either a comma or a new line. It will collect all the letters and spaces in-between, treating it as a single compound word or phrase. For example, to use the compound word “blue jay” as a single word, enter it as “blue jay” in your word list. It will display as “blue jay” in the printed key, and will be “BLUEJAY” in the puzzle.

Note: You can even create a word search puzzle of entire phrases instead of single words by separating each phrase with a new-line or comma, e.g. “Stanley Kubrik, It’s full of stars” would become the two phrases “Stanley Kubrik” and “It’s full of stars”.

4.23. Include Numeric Digits in Your Words

Sometimes you want to add words that include numbers in them, for example “Route 66” or “Club 33.”

To add these “Arabic digits” to your words without having the numbers flagged as errors, you must open the “Alphabets/Numbers” tab. Turn on the “Allow Numbers in Words” checkbox. That’s it!

Note: If you have chosen either of the Japanese alphabets, then you are additionally allowed to add Kanji numbers (i.e., 零一三四五六七八九十百千万億兆) to your words as well.

4.24. “Lock” the Word Layout While Changing Other Puzzle Aspects

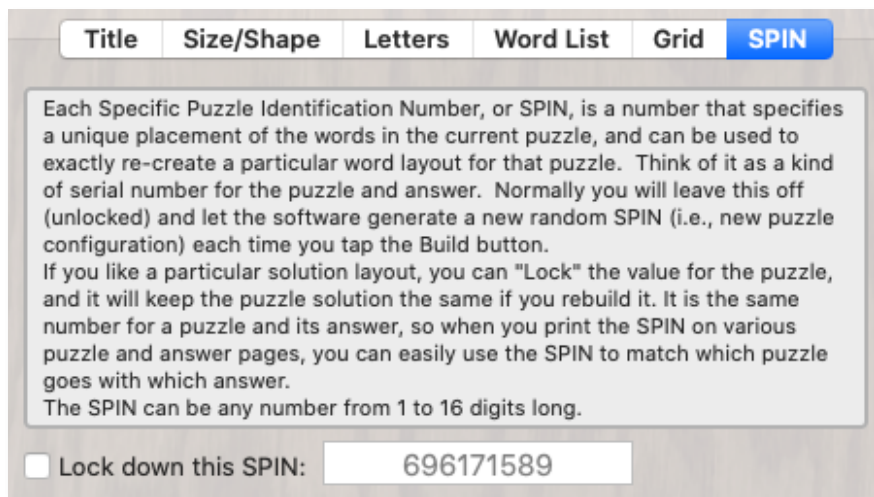
Consider this scenario. You created the perfect puzzle layout and the answer key is sent out; however, your editor now wants you to change the font used for the puzzle letters. Or, they would like you to show (or remove) the grid lines or some other aesthetic change, and re-print the puzzle.

This can be done. You can retain the layout of the words while changing many different aesthetic aspects of the puzzle. The same layout of the puzzle can be re-created. Here's how.

Once you have generated a puzzle you like, and want to lock the words into place, simply go to the “Layout” and “SPIN” tabs. Near the bottom, click “Lock down this SPIN.”

This will lock in and keep using the current SPIN value used to build this puzzle. It can now re-use the same word layout pattern for all your future puzzles, no matter how often you tap “Build.”

Now you can change display-related options such as your puzzle’s title/subtitle, puzzle letter font, the secret message’s hint style, or the grid display. Then, re-create the same puzzle. Your word search words will still be in their original place, based on that unchanging SPIN value.



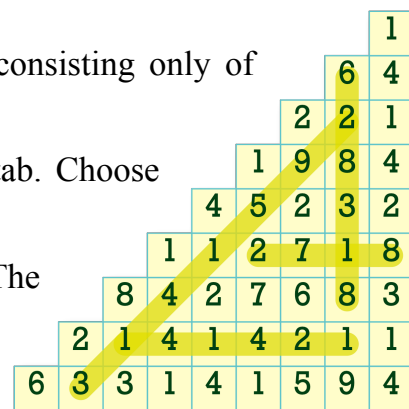
Note: If you change the puzzle’s size, shape, difficulty - or change any of the words or secret message text or secret message position - the puzzle *must* change its layout even though the “SPIN” is still locked. *Whirlwind WordSearch* re-checks the new words or secret message text. It must find new places for them to guarantee no accidentally created duplicate or naughty words snuck into the new positions. That “locked” SPIN will now refer to this new puzzle layout.

4.25. Build a Number Search Puzzle

You may want to build a more challenging puzzle, by making a puzzle consisting only of numbers.

First, select the “Words” tab. Underneath it is the “Alphabets/Numbers” tab. Choose “Numbers (Arabic)” from the pop-up menu.

Enter your list of number sequences into the word list, each on a new line. The rules for lists of numbers are the same for lists of words. Each must be at least two characters long, cannot have duplicates, and cannot be longer than the puzzle dimension..

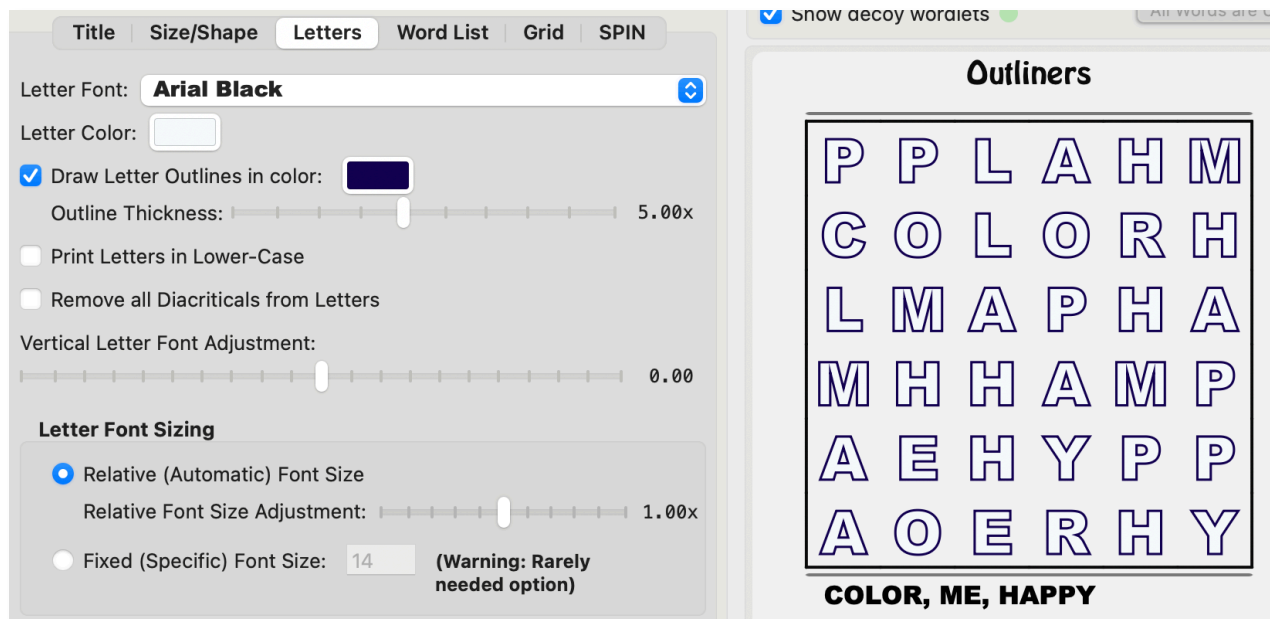


Choose the rest of the puzzle settings, like font, color, and difficulty. Then, tap the “Build” button, and *Whirlwind WordSearch* will make a numbers-only puzzle.

Note: You can allow duplicates or one-digit numbers. Turn on both the “allow duplicate/mirrored” and “allow one-letter words” checkboxes under the “Word List” tab.

4.26. Build a Color-the-Letters Puzzle (*Full & Pro Feature*)

One popular word search puzzle style draws the letters as outlines, so the puzzle solver can find the words and also color in the letters as they go. You can create this kind of puzzle in the following way.



- Under the “Layout:Letters” tab, choose a Letter Font that is fairly thick/bold, so there is space inside each letter to color.
- Change the Letter Color to be white.
- Turn on the checkbox “Draw Letter Outlines in color:”, and set that color to be black.
- Increase the “Outline Thickness” to whatever width you want the outline to be. As you make each of these changes on the left, the preview on the right will immediately update and show you how the puzzle will look.

You may also want to set the Answer highlight to look good with this puzzle style. You can do this by selecting the “Printing:Answer Page” tab, and under “Answer Highlights”, changing the “Highlight Style” to “Solid Oval” and the color to dark gray.

4.27. Build a “Word Clues” Puzzle (*Full & Pro Feature*)

You may want to build a puzzle of words, but instead of printing the list of searchable words, you instead want to print a “word clue” phrase for each word. The user would then have to guess the word from the clue, and find the word in the puzzle. This makes the puzzle a tougher challenge. It further makes a word search puzzle more akin to a crossword puzzle. Note that, although the *puzzle words* must be composed from letters of the chosen alphabet, the *word clue phrases* can be any text in any alphabet or language. This allows for some creative puzzles. For example, offer the clues in a completely different language, offering a fun language-learning puzzle.

To start, you must enter each word and its associated clue together on a single line. The word comes first, followed by a colon character (:). Then, add the word's clue phrase, followed by a new-line. For example:

Your Word List

しろ:White
くろ:Black
あか:Red
あお:Blue
みどり:Green
むらさき:Purple
きいろ:Yellow

Choose the rest of your puzzle settings. Tap the “Build” button, and *Whirlwind WordSearch* will make the puzzle with your words, as usual.

Under the “Layout” and “Word List” tabs, tap the radio button “Word Clues” inside the “What to Display in the Word List” box. You will need to add some word clues in your word list for this option to be available. Selecting this changes how the word list will print/export, and does not affect the generated puzzle. When you print the completed puzzle, it will now print your clues *instead of* your words on the puzzle page. Note that on the answer page, both the words *and* clues will be combined and printed together.

Japanese Vocabulary - Colors! Solve the word clues, then find the words



1. White

2. Black

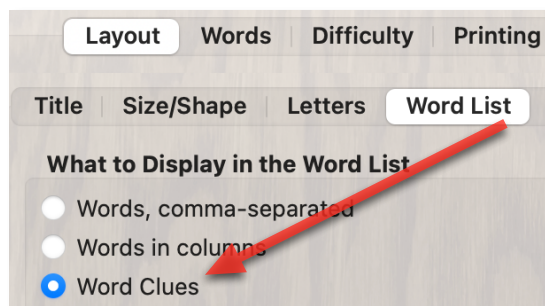
3. Red

4. Blue

5. Green

6. Purple

7. Yellow



If you add clues to one or more words, then *all* your words must have clues. If you forget to add a clue to the end of one of your words, you will get an error that highlights the word *just after* where you forgot to add the clue. It looks like this:

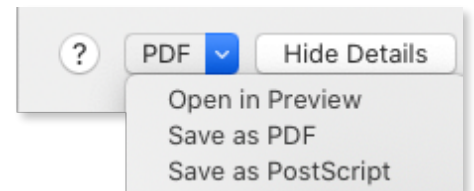


Note: There are always exceptions. For example, If you have hidden words added to your word clue list, they do not need word clues added to them because they will never be displayed in the word list.

4.28. Save the Puzzle Page as a PDF File for E-mailing or Printing

What if you want to save your nicely laid out puzzle and answer pages as a file? Maybe you want to take the puzzle to a copy/print center to get color copies printed. Perhaps you want to send it to somebody else but they do not have this software. Here's how to save the puzzle and/or answer pages as a PDF file, readable by any other computers:

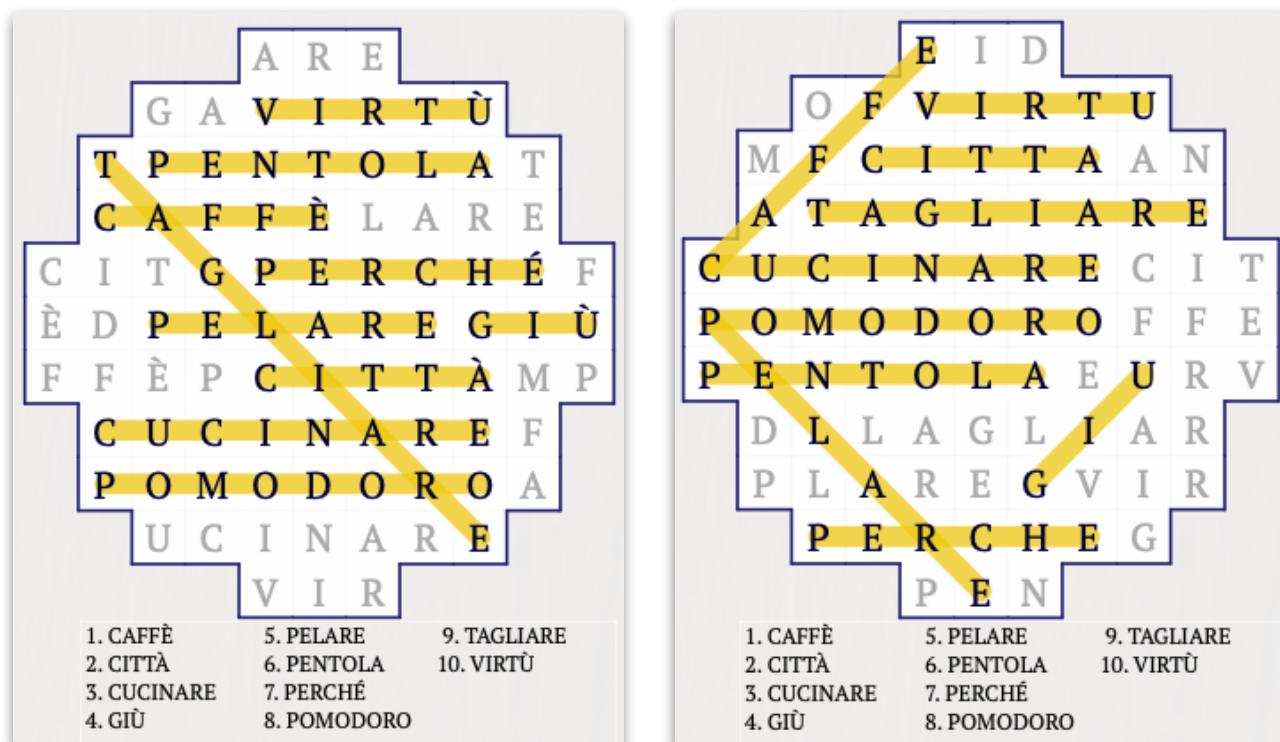
- Set up and create your puzzle.
- Under the "Printing" tab, turn on "Print the Puzzle Page." Next, turn on "Print the Answer Page" if you want to print the answer too.
- Choose "Print" from the File menu.
- Tap the PDF pop-up at the lower left corner of the Print dialog. Choose "Save as PDF" from the menu.
- Pick a file name and location. It will write the two printed pages as a single two-page PDF document.



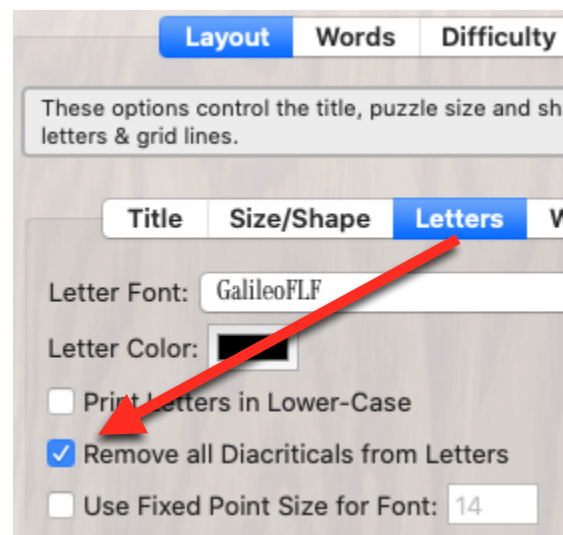
Note: If you want the puzzle and answer pages each saved as separate PDF documents, do these steps twice. First print only the puzzle page to PDF, and then print only the answer page to PDF.

4.29. Remove Diacriticals from Puzzle Letters

Many languages use special letters with diacritical marks on them. These are needed to allow you to spell the words properly. *Whirlwind WordSearch* normally leaves your word's diacriticals intact when they are added into the puzzle, since removing a diacritical can often change the meaning of the word. However, people using certain languages *expect* all diacriticals to be removed when making their word search puzzles². So, here is how you can remove the diacriticals from the puzzle to make it “cleaner” looking:

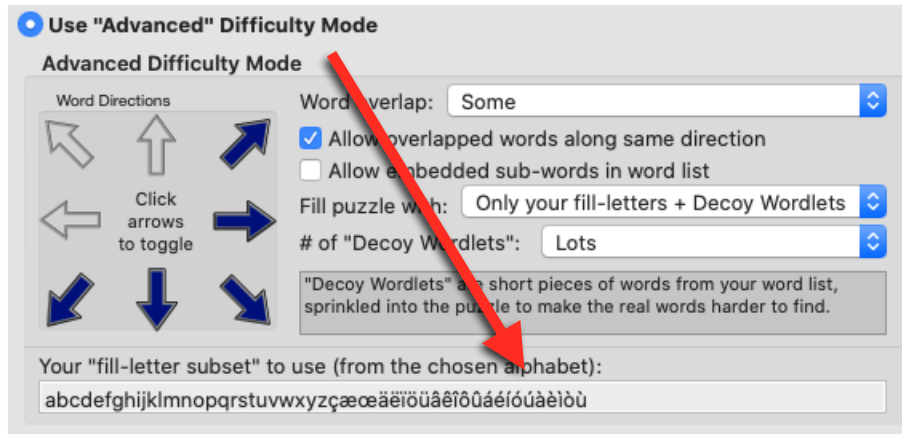


- First, set up your puzzle. Add your word list words properly spelled *with* their diacriticals intact. This will ensure that they are displayed properly with their diacriticals in the word list.
- Under the “Layout” and “Letters” tabs, turn on the “Remove all diacriticals from letters” checkbox. Changing this checkbox does not immediately show any change in the puzzle. The puzzle must be re-built after this change. Also, note that the word list will always show the diacriticals intact.

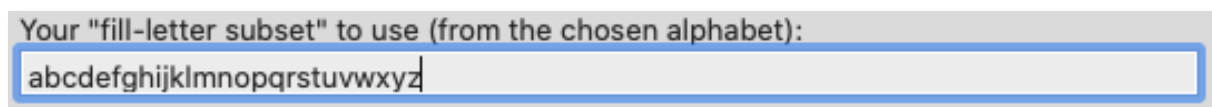


² For example, Italian word-search publishers!

- Optionally, to be extra tidy, choose “Advanced Difficulty Mode” under the Difficulty tab. Choose to fill the puzzle with “Only your fill-letters....” Then look at the “fill-letter subset” letters at the very bottom of the advanced box. Delete any letters in the box that you do not want used as random fill letters.



For example, change it to look like this:



Now, when you create the puzzle again, none of your words or the extra fill letters will have diacriticals in the puzzle.

4.30. Bulk Build Many Puzzles at Once (*Pro Feature*)

Bulk building is most useful for creating a large number of word search puzzle image files that you will later import and arrange into your own book, newsletter, or web page.

Bulk-Build Multiple Puzzles

Automatically make and export multiple unique puzzles with one click. This tool starts with your current document settings and then offers additional ways to alter each generated puzzle. Both puzzles and answers can be generated. Your changes here are saved with the document for next time. Use the "Export To" tab to pick where to save the puzzle/answer files. When you are ready to generate your puzzles, tap the "Start" button. You can interrupt the current bulk-build operation by tapping the "Stop" button. Tap the "Save Settings as Default" button to remember these bulk settings, so that all future new documents you create will start off with these settings.

How Many Settings Randomizer Bulk Word Lists Export To

Choose how many puzzles to build for this bulk-session. You can choose up to 100 unique designs, and additionally you can choose to make up to 10 random variations of that design as separate puzzles.

Number of designs to build: 69

Number of variations of each design to build: 5

☒ Continue building if errors occur

You must first enter some text and tap "Load and Check" under "Batch Word Lists".

Save Settings as Default Close Start

When you choose “Bulk Builder” from the “Action” menu, a sheet is presented on top of your current puzzle document. This sheet lets you configure and then automatically build a large number of different puzzle and answer files. Bulk Builder will then save all the completed files in a directory you choose. These files will be the exported image files, and optionally other informational files you choose to export.

Designs

Here is how the “Bulk Builder” works. Let’s say you want to quickly make ten different puzzles, each with a different word list. I will call each of these ten puzzles it creates a “design.”

Variations

For each of these designs, you can optionally have it build one, two, three... up to five different “variations” on that puzzle design. In other words, for each design, it will re-build that same puzzle (with the same word list) and save it as a new variation. It’s as if you simply tapped the build button again to get a new layout of the same puzzle³. For example, if you ask for three variations of each design, it will generate your ten designs with three variations each. There will be a total of thirty (ten times three)

³ As you know, sometimes a second or third “re-build” of a puzzle gives a much better layout, and this allows you to make several layouts (variations) and then review and choose the best one after they are all built.

different puzzles for you. This lets you review and choose your favorite variation for each puzzle design without having to re-run a new bulk build if there was just one puzzle design that you didn't like.

File Naming

“Bulk Builder” will name each file with a number for the design, followed by a letter for the variation. Given the example above with ten designs and three variations, you will get exported files named:

MyPuzzle-1a, MyPuzzle-1b, MyPuzzle-1c,

MyPuzzle-2a, MyPuzzle-2b, and MyPuzzle-2c, ... up to:

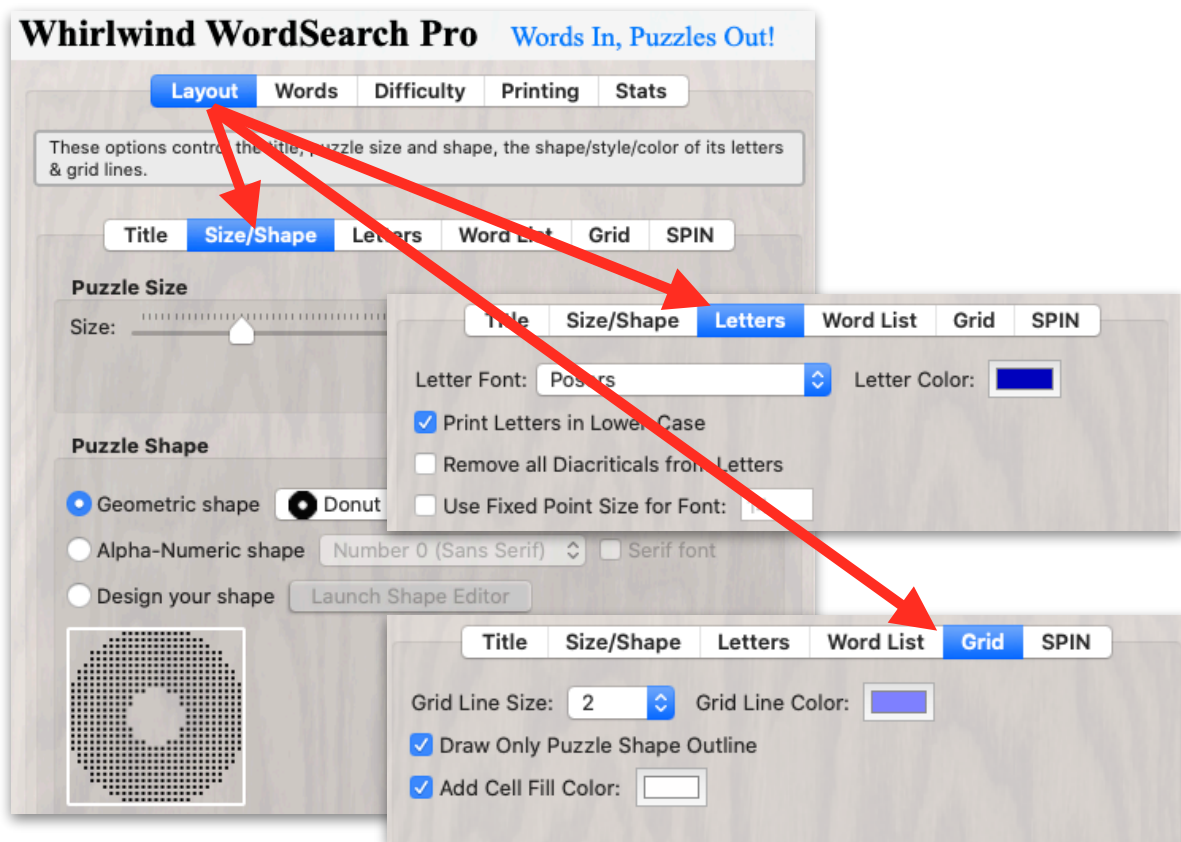
MyPuzzle-10a, MyPuzzle-10b, and MyPuzzle-10c.

Preparing a Puzzle for Bulk Building

Before starting a “Bulk Builder” session, you must first set up a *Whirlwind WordSearch* document with the basic settings you want to use for the puzzles in this bulk run. This document will be your “starting template.” The puzzles created during this run will each start out with the layout you have set up in this document. Then Bulk Builder will use your settings to change certain settings of each created puzzle. You do not need to save this “template” document to a file or even build a puzzle from it. However, you may want to initially build a puzzle with it in order to preview how it looks before committing to the bulk build. You can optionally save this document so you can easily load it back up later to re-run the bulk process.

Note: If you do not want “random” changes to settings, but instead want several groups of puzzles sharing the same settings (for example, 20 easy puzzles, 20 medium puzzles, and 20 difficult puzzles) then you can combine the Bulk-Builder feature with the [“Multiple Template Documents” idea described in this linked section.](#)

To prepare, first open a new document and choose the basic settings you want to use for this group of puzzles. Every bulk-built puzzle will start with these settings.



Now you are ready to configure the settings for the bulk run. Choose “Bulk Builder” from the action menu and open it. The settings are separated and grouped under four main tabs.

How Many

This tab lets you choose how many puzzle designs and variations to create in this bulk run.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Bulk-Build Multiple Puzzles" with a blue header. Below the header is a text box explaining the tool's function: "Automatically make and export multiple unique puzzles with one click. This tool starts with your current document settings and then offers additional ways to alter each generated puzzle. Both puzzles and answers can be generated. Your changes here are saved with the document for next time. Use the 'Export To' tab to pick where to save the puzzle/answer files. When you are ready to generate your puzzles, tap the 'Start' button. You can interrupt the current bulk-build operation by tapping the 'Stop' button. Tap the 'Save Settings as Default' button to remember these bulk settings, so that all future new documents you create will start off with these settings."

Below the text box are four tabs: "How Many" (selected), "Settings Randomizer", "Bulk Word Lists", and "Export To".

Under the "How Many" tab, there is a text box: "Choose how many puzzles to build for this bulk-session. You can choose up to 100 unique designs, and additionally you can choose to make up to 10 random variations of that design as separate puzzles."

Below this is a slider control labeled "Number of designs to build:". The slider has a range from 1 to 100, with a white handle positioned at 69.

Below the slider is a text box labeled "Number of variations of each design to build:" with a dropdown menu showing the value "5".

Below the dropdown is a checkbox labeled "Continue building if errors occur" which is checked.

At the bottom of the dialog, there is a text box: "You must first enter some text and tap 'Load and Check' under 'Batch Word Lists'". Below this text box are three buttons: "Save Settings as Default", "Close", and "Start".

Number of Designs To Build

Choose the number of unique puzzle “designs” you want to bulk-build. When you start the run, it will load the next set of words. The settings that you choose below for each puzzle design will randomly change as it builds each puzzle. It saves the corresponding puzzle file (and an answer & info file) for each design it builds. Each puzzle design will be numbered, 1,2,3, etc.

Number of Variations of Each Design To Build:

Normally you may only want one puzzle built for each design. But there may be times when you want to choose the best from several variations of each puzzle design. Let’s say you want to build forty-two puzzles, but you know that you don’t always like the particular randomized word layout of any given word search puzzle. Therefore, you want a few extra variations of that puzzle design. You can do this by choosing to create more than one variation for a design.

If you choose five variations, then the bulk operation will build forty-two puzzle designs. For each design it sets up, it will build and save five different word search puzzles with that design. In all, a total of 210 word searches will be created. Each of the puzzle design files will be numbered 1,2,3...42, but they will now also have the five variations added to their filenames as a, b ,c, d, and e. So the files will be named:

MyPuzzle_1a, MyPuzzle_1b, MyPuzzle_1c, MyPuzzle_1d, and MyPuzzle_1e.

MyPuzzle_2a, MyPuzzle_2b, MyPuzzle_2c, MyPuzzle_2d, and MyPuzzle_2e.

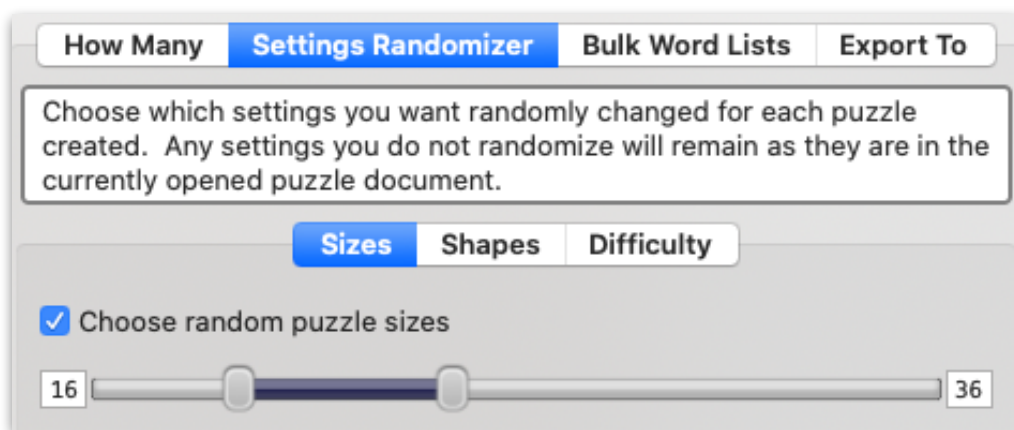
When the bulk build is complete, you can then choose your best variation (a-e) for each of these forty-two word search designs.

Continue Building if Errors Occur

Normally, if there is a problem building or writing a puzzle's file during this long run, immediately stop running the bulk builder. Then, you can fix the problem and restart it. However, if you want it to ignore an error of one puzzle and just charge ahead making the rest of the puzzles, you can turn this checkbox on. Any puzzle that cannot be built will instead write an error text file with information about the puzzle and why it had a problem. This may be useful if you are trying to build many puzzles with secret messages, where sometimes the message doesn't fit the particular randomly chosen puzzle size/shape. In this case, you want to ignore the problem and keep building the other puzzle designs.

Settings Randomizer

This tab lets you select a number of settings in your document. This will randomly change settings of each puzzle design that is built. If you leave a checkbox *off* here, it will use the setting from your underlying puzzle document for all the puzzles you generate in the bulk session.



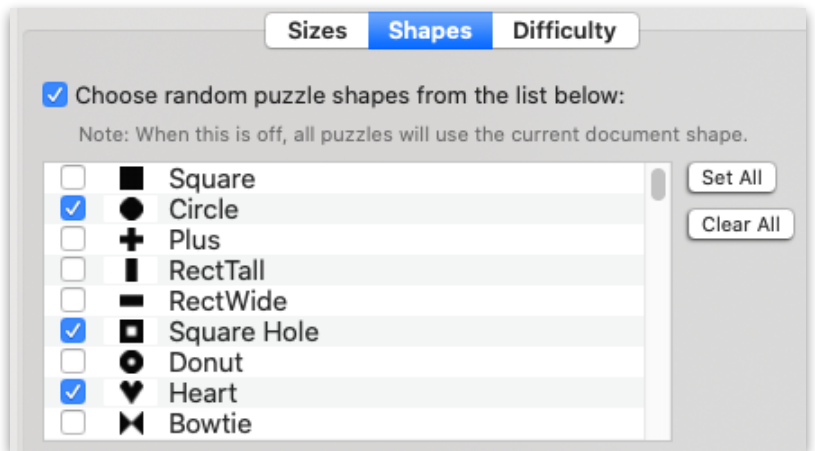
Settings Randomizer: Sizes

To use *Sizes*, leave the “Choose...” checkbox off. Create all the puzzles using the underlying document size setting you have. Or, you can turn on randomness. It will randomly pick any puzzle sizes within the size range you have chosen. If you set the lower range to something below ten (the smallest size that allows shapes), then any puzzles that are randomly created below the size of ten will default to a square shape, no matter what you set for puzzle shape.

Settings Randomizer: Shapes

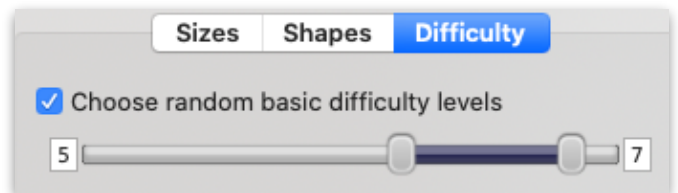
You can turn on any number of the pre-defined geometric or alpha-numeric shapes and build puzzles. *Whirlwind Wordsearch* will choose a different shape from your list for each puzzle design it creates. If you have asked to build more puzzles than chosen shapes, then after *Whirlwind Wordsearch* uses all your shapes once, it will re-fill the shapes and start choosing from your list of shapes again.

You can bulk-build puzzles from your user-designed shape instead. Simply choose your user-designed shape in the document under the “Layout:Size/Shape:Puzzle Shape” tab. Then, turn off “Choose random puzzle shapes” in the “Bulk Builder” window. Your user-designed shape will be used for all bulk puzzle designs.



Settings Randomizer: Difficulty

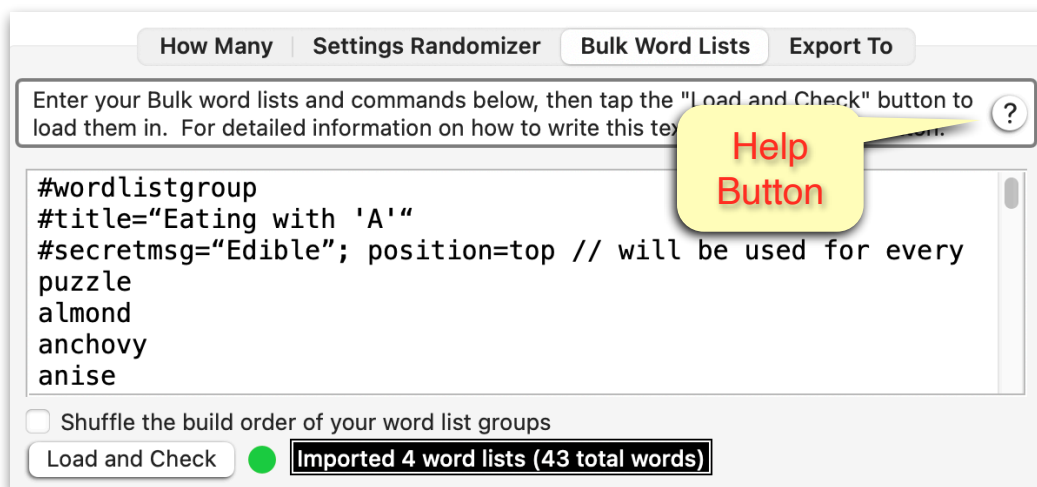
For the “Difficulty” randomizer, you can leave the “Choose...” checkbox off. It will create all your puzzles using the same setting from the underlying document. Or, you can turn this on. In turn, it will randomly pick any puzzle difficulties within the range you choose for each puzzle design.



Bulk Word Lists

This tab lets you type in large lists of words and other useful commands to help guide the automatic puzzle-building process.

Bulk Builder will read and use this corresponding list of words for each puzzle design it builds. You can either type the text here, or copy/paste it in from another document. These text lines are automatically saved and remembered between bulk builds inside your current *Whirlwind WordSearch* document.



Tap the circle “help” button near the top of this tab area to open and view a document that fully explains the format of the Bulk Builder word lists and commands that can be entered here. The document will go into detail on how you can format this text, and what features are available.

Note: You can also access this extra guide anytime by choosing “Bulk Builder Guide” from the Help menu.

Tip: If you want to automatically add the current puzzle design counter into your title (e.g. “Easy Puzzles - #1”, “Easy Puzzles - #2”,) you add the magic “puzzle macro string” **\$\$designcounter** into your Bulk Word list #title command, and it will get automatically filled in for you as you bulk-build the files. See the [“Puzzle Macros” section](#) for more information.

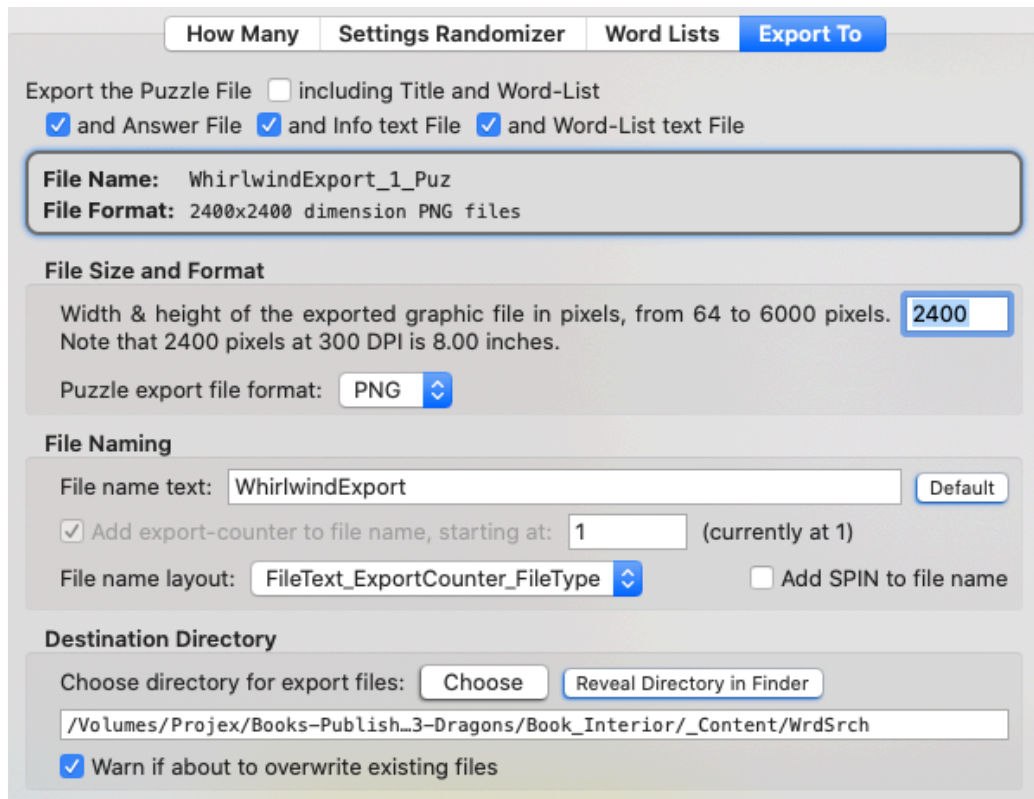
Once you have entered your word list and commands, tap the “Load and Check” button to have the bulk builder load the words and commands. Ensure you entered everything error-free. If the lines loaded alright, then you will see a green dot after the “Load and Check” button. If there was a problem, then there will be a red dot and an error message next to it, explaining what went wrong.

If you are building a word list group, you have the option of building your puzzles in the same order as you entered your groups (group #1 is used for puzzle #1, group #2 for puzzle #2, etc.), or you can shuffle the groups so each puzzle will choose one of your groups at random, using a different group each time. Use the checkbox titled “Shuffle the build order of your word list groups” to change it.

Note: This list of words is completely separate from the single word list in your main document. If you wish to start using the single word list from your document here as well, simply close this bulk window. Switch to the Words:Word List: tab. Copy the entire word list from that text box. Then, re-open this bulk build window and switch to this “Bulk Word Lists” tab. Paste in the word list to this text box. The word lists will be in these two separate spots. You can add to this bulk word list without affecting the main document’s word list.

Export To

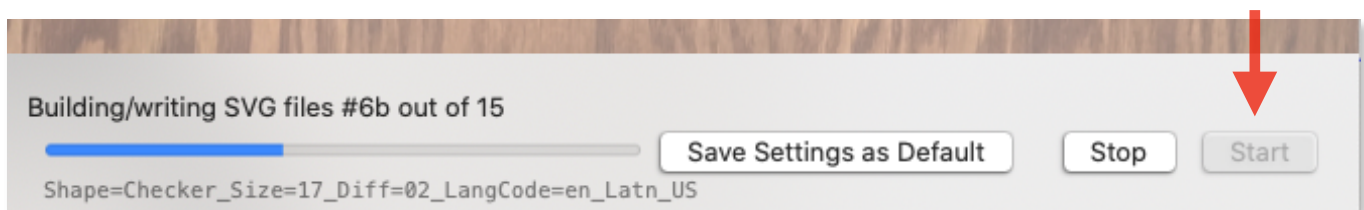
This tab is almost the same as the regular “Export” dialog. (To learn more about exporting, see the [Export section linked here](#).) Although similar, this tab area is used by the bulk builder instead.



The only difference here is that the “Add Export Counter” setting is always *on* for bulk runs. So, that each exported word search will be uniquely numbered. It lets you choose various settings related to the destination files that are exported for each puzzle. For example, it lets you choose what file format to use, what the filenames should look like, and to what directory to write them.

One Button to Build Them All

Finally, tap the **Start** button. The puzzles will be built and exported one by one, along with their puzzle and answer files. Their files will all be saved to the export directory you chose. If your puzzle dimensions are large, this can take several minutes to build a lot of large puzzles.



As it builds each puzzle, the preview area will display the current puzzle it is working on. There is also a visual indication of completion via an upper progress bar for the entire build job. A lower progress bar shows progress for each puzzle being built. It will also attempt to refresh the preview area behind the bulk window as each puzzle is built.

If you want to stop the build process partway through, simply tap the stop button. It will stop building puzzles. It will cleanly stop, and any existing puzzle files that it has already built will remain in the directory. When you start the bulk-build process again, it will restart from the beginning, and attempt to overwrite any prior files.

Once you have all the bulk settings arranged the way you like, you may want to tap the **Save Settings as Default** button to save all the current settings into your document. That way, all future new puzzles you create will start off with these bulk settings.

Bulk Building - Additional Notes

If you have a regular “Secret Message” set in your document, then “Bulk Build” will add that same secret message text to each puzzle. That is, unless you have loaded some “secret message” commands in the “Bulk Word Lists” text.

Note: As mentioned above, if a puzzle cannot be built, then an error text file will be exported in its place, with its filename containing an ..._Err.txt” ending.

If you are making secret messages and also specified the positioning of “Exact Fit” - or turned on bulk random puzzles sizes - then it is possible that, during the bulk operation, it will design a puzzle that cannot place the secret message successfully and it will fail. If you want it to ignore these and continue, thereby getting as many good puzzles as you can, simply turn on the “Continue Building if Errors Occur” checkbox, located beneath the “How Many” tab. It will try creating each secret message design with as many variations as you have set it to.

If you plan on doing multiple bulk-build runs, you may want to do some initial preparation to streamline your workflow. This can be done by choosing where the exported files get written. For example, you may want to either (1) have all your bulk projects go to a single directory, or (2) you may want to have each bulk project go to its own separate directory. For more instructions on how to set up either of these two workflow styles, please read the following two sections below.

4.31. Save Default Bulk-Builder Settings for All Future New Puzzles (*Pro Feature*)

The Pro version of this software allows you to automatically generate a large number of puzzles all at once. If you want most of the bulk puzzle settings to be identical when you use the bulk feature, then here is what you do.

First, open a new puzzle document. Set it up with all the settings you want to use. Then, open the Bulk Builder window and update each of its tabbed settings the way you want them to appear. Make sure to choose the export tab. Then, choose an export format, size, and destination directory.

Now tap the “Save Settings as Default” button at the bottom of the bulk window. Then choose “Save Current Settings as Default” from the *Whirlwind WordSearch Pro* main menu. From now on, all your new documents will be created with all the bulk settings just as you set them here.

You can make changes to this saved “default set”: Open a new puzzle document; Open the Bulk Builder window; Update any settings you want; Choose “Save Current Settings as Default” from the *Whirlwind WordSearch Pro* main menu again.

4.32. Save Different Bulk Settings for Each Bulk Run (*Pro Feature*)

The Pro version of this software allows you to automatically generate a large number of puzzles all at once. However, you may want to set up different bulk settings for different projects. For example, you may have five “beginner” books to make, and five “advanced” books to make. You want to set up a “beginner” bulk setting for those first five books, and a separate “advanced” setting for the other five books. Here is how you can do this.

First, open a new puzzle window, setting it up with all the settings you want to start with for the “beginner” books. Then open the bulk window. Continue to update each of the tabbed bulk settings the way you want for those “beginner” books. Choose the export tab; then, choose a format, size, and destination directory.

Next, save all these settings in this “beginner” puzzle document. Tap “Close” on the bulk window. Then, choose “Save...” from *Whirlwind Wordsearch*’s File menu and type in a name for this beginner “template” puzzle document. For example, you may want to call it “Template-Beginner.” You may also want to create a “Puzzle Templates” directory to save all these template files together. Note that this is simply a regular *Whirlwind WordSearch* document containing all your saved puzzle and bulk settings within it.

Now do all the same steps above to create an “advanced” settings template document. Although, change the puzzle and bulk settings to these new “advanced” settings before saving it.

Now you have two saved *Whirlwind Wordsearch* documents, each with its own saved settings. You can open these at any time and start a bulk build to create all the puzzles for that template.

You are now ready to start building! To work on one bulk-build run with all its settings in place, simply open the appropriate “settings template document” you made earlier. Then, open the bulk window and start the bulk run.

When the bulk run completes, you can open a different template document⁴. Open its bulk window, and start its bulk run. It will use its own settings to build the puzzles.

Upon completing the bulk operations, you can close the template windows.

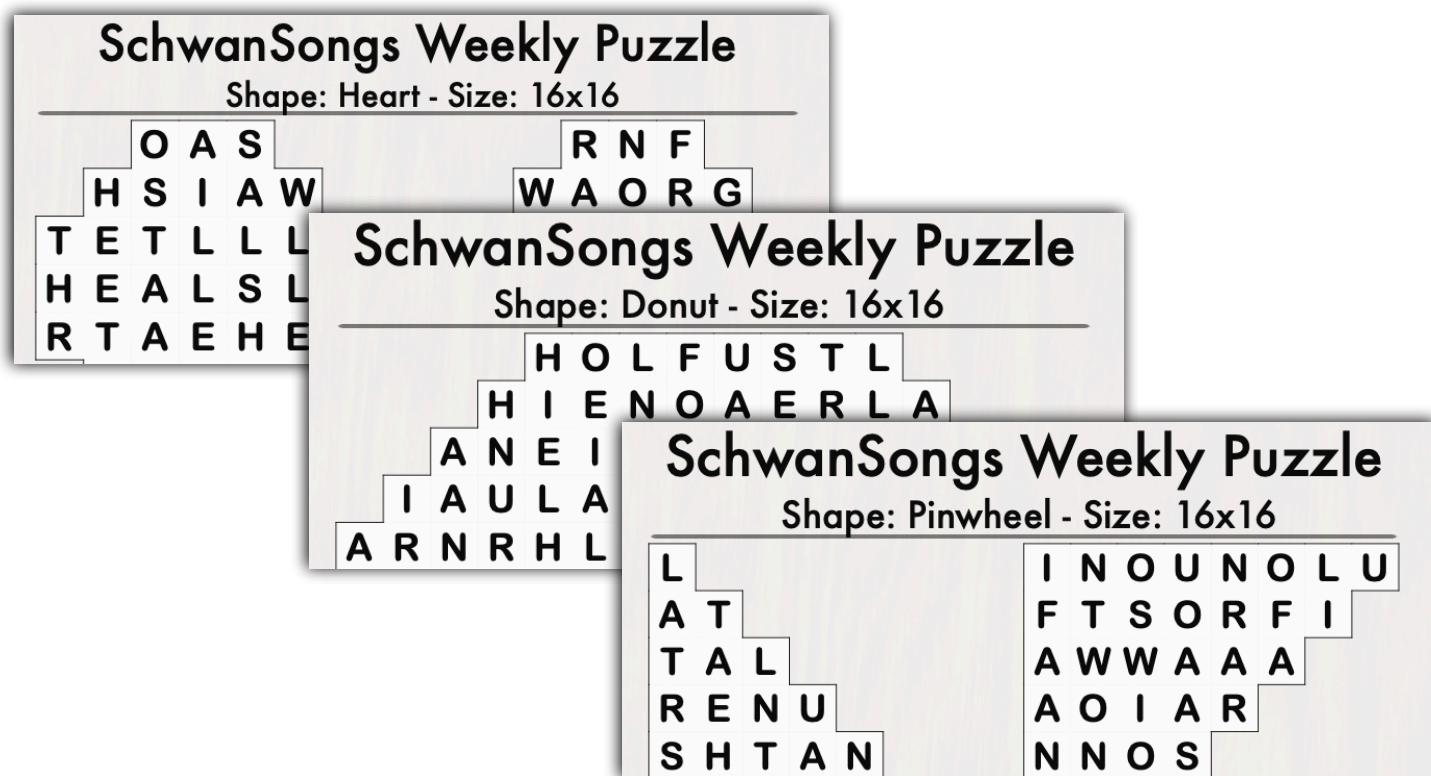
Important: Running a bulk operation on an opened document will automatically update a lot of the document's settings. Overall it **changes** the document's shape, size, difficulty, and answer layout for each puzzle. If you want to keep your underlying document settings as they originally were, then when the bulk build is complete, make sure to close these documents **without** saving any changes.

⁴ Although you can open two windows and run two bulk operations at the same time, I don't recommend running more than one or two at a time. Each running bulk operation gives your computer quite a workout.

4.33. Use Puzzle-Macros in Text (*Full & Pro Feature*)

You might want to have the title, subtitle, or secret message text of your puzzle automatically update with information about the puzzle, a puzzle counter, or the current date, without you updating it each time. For example if you create monthly puzzles, you might want to show the name of the current month and the name of the puzzle shape in the title. You can do this by adding a specially formatted puzzle-macro⁵ in the text field, and when the puzzle is created and printed or exported, the puzzle-macro will be replaced with the actual text it refers to.

Here is an example of a few puzzles with their subtitles automatically updated for each puzzle.



You can achieve this by adding the puzzle-macros **\$\$shape** and **\$\$dimxy** into the text where you want the shape and size to show. Then, when each puzzle is created, the puzzle-macros will be replaced by their current real value in-place. The Preview area will immediately display the filled-in title and subtitle as you type them. To get the subtitle results shown above, you would type your title and subtitle like this:

Screenshot of the puzzle creation interface showing the Title and Subtitle fields. The Title field contains "SchwanSongs Weekly Puzzle". The Subtitle field contains "Shape: \$\$shape - Size: \$\$dimxy".

The text fields that accept puzzle-macros are the **Title**, **Subtitle**, and **Secret Message** text fields.

⁵ In other software applications these are sometimes also called “parameters” or “variables” or “placeholders”.

Puzzle-macros must start with \$\$ and must be all lower-case. If you misspell a puzzle-macro, then it will be displayed unchanged, just as you typed it. After you complete the typing of a puzzle-macro in a text field, it will automatically be shown (in its expanded form) in the Preview area. The list of each puzzle-macro along with its description is below:

- **\$\$shape** - This will insert the name of the shape for this puzzle (from the shape menu.)
- **\$\$dimension** - This will insert the number of letters wide for this puzzle, e.g., “16”. This will always be a single Arabic number.
- **\$\$language** - This will insert the displayable name of the Alphabet/Numbers you choose for this puzzle (or if using Bulk Builder, it will come from the #language command for the current puzzle.)
- **\$\$dimxy** - This will insert the number of letters wide and tall for this puzzle, e.g. “16x16”. These will always be Arabic numbers.
- **\$\$numwordlistwords** - This will insert a count of the number of words displayed in the puzzle's word list. This is the final number of words the user expects to find in the puzzle, so it does not count hidden or dropped optional words.
- **\$\$numhiddenwords** - This will insert a count of the number of hidden words (including any of your extra hidden words).
- **\$\$exportcounter** - This will insert the current “Export counter”, which will begin numbering with the “Export Counter starting” value you choose in the Export dialog, and will increase with each puzzle you export. This can be used to add a “puzzle #” in your puzzle titles, which will correspond with the number in the exported file names of each puzzle. For more information on using the Export Counter, [see this section link](#).
- **\$\$datetoday** - This will insert today’s date (year, month, day), based upon your local country’s region setting on your computer.
- **\$\$thisyear** - This will insert the current 4-digit year, formatted according to your computer’s locale setting.
- **\$\$thismonth** - This will insert the full name of the current month, formatted according to your computer’s locale setting.
- **\$\$thisweekday** - This will insert the name of this day of the week, formatted according to your computer’s locale setting.
- **\$\$nextmonth** - This will insert the full name of the month following this month, formatted according to your computer’s locale setting. This could be useful if you always make a maze ahead of time to publish the following month.
- **\$\$nextweekday** - This will insert the full name of the day of the week for tomorrow, formatted according to your computer’s locale setting. This could be useful if you always make a maze ahead of time to publish the following day.

The following puzzle-macros are available in *Whirlwind WordSearch Pro* for the #title, #subtitle, and #secretmsg commands, when you use the Bulk-Builder feature:

- **\$\$designcounter** - This will insert the current Bulk-Builder design counter, as a value starting at 1 and increasing for each puzzle design to the total number of puzzle designs you wanted to create. This is the overall bulk-created puzzle number.

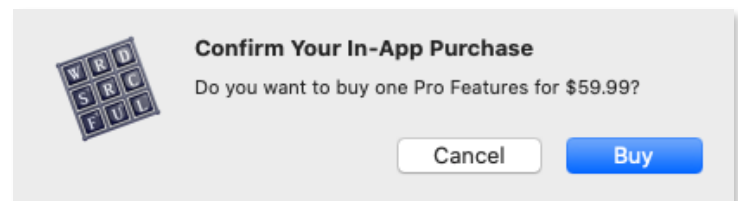
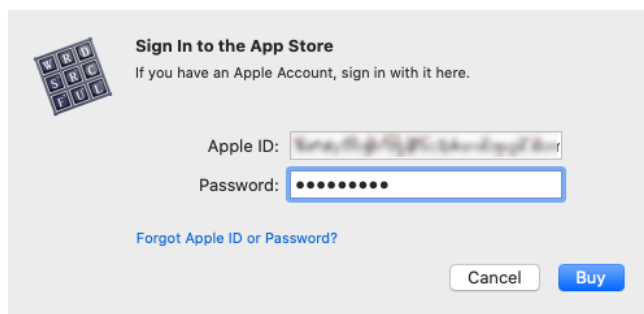
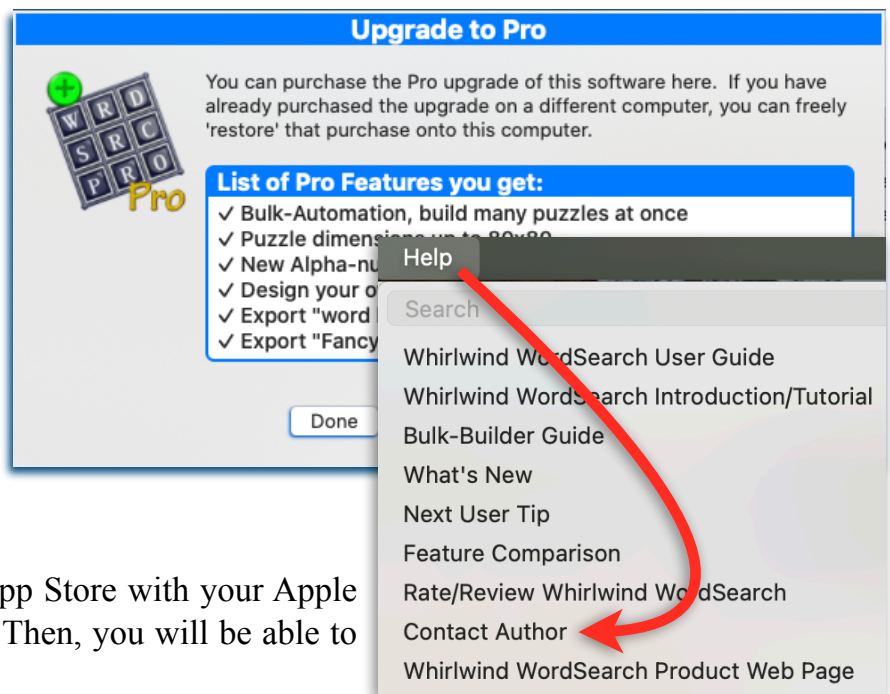
- **\$\$variationcounter** - This will insert the current Bulk-Builder design variation counter, as a letter value starting at 'a' and increasing for each variation of the current puzzle design. If you choose not to have any variations (by setting “number of variations...” to 1), then this puzzle-macro will be empty.

4.34. Upgrade to Get the Pro Features

Run *Whirlwind WordSearch*, and find the “*Whirlwind WordSearch*” application menu at the top left of your screen. Open the menu and select “Pro Upgrade...”. This menu item lets you immediately get all the extra features available in the Professional (Pro) version of this software via a one-time in-app purchase.

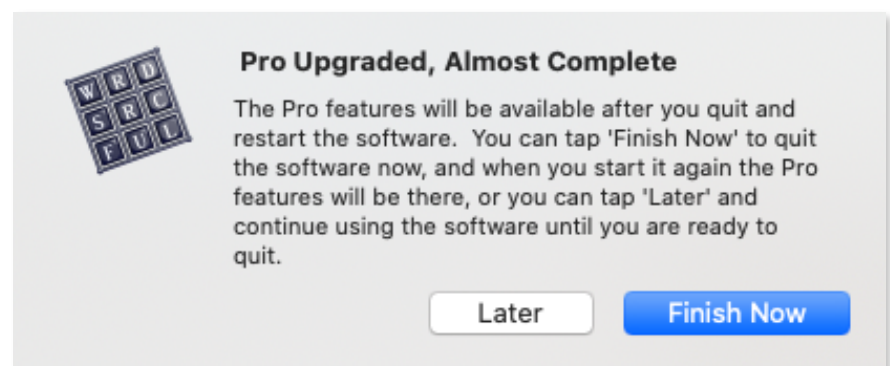
Simply tap the button “Upgrade for \$—” to begin the upgrade. If you have already purchased the Pro upgrade on a different computer and don’t yet have the upgrade license on this computer, you can easily use this dialog to “restore” your Pro purchase onto this computer as well. In that case, simply tap the “Restore Purchase” button instead. Once you have upgraded to Pro, you will be able to receive all future Pro updates. You will also receive new full and pro features for free, forever.

You will be asked to log into the Apple App Store with your Apple ID, which you used to purchase software. Then, you will be able to upgrade or restore it.



After upgrading, you will need to quit and re-start the software. This allow *Whirlwind Wordsearch* to start up with the Pro features.

After that, all the Pro features available will be available to you (bigger puzzles, bulk-builder, user-designed shapes, alpha-numeric shapes, more export styles, etc.)



4.35. Get a Commercial License to Sell Puzzles in your Own Books and Products

You *do not need* any commercial license to sell any of your puzzles created with my software! All exported puzzles and answers are copyright-free and royalty-free without any requirement for you to obtain a commercial-use license. You are explicitly allowed to give away or sell all the puzzles you create with my software. Moreover, you can use the exported information to generate your own games from them. I do not require you to fill out any kind of license, ever! Of course, if you still want to offer me something, please see the next item below.

4.36. Add *Whirlwind WordSearch* Software Credits to your Own Product

You *do not need* to credit my software in your own publications or software that use the puzzles. At the same time, I would certainly appreciate it if you do mention it. After all, doing so will help advertise my own products, which allows me to work on even more features and other software products for you. Win win!

Many people like to read honest reviews about products before getting them. So, I would encourage you to write and publish a review of my software on Apple's App store, in your own blog/newsletter, or on your YouTube channel. Here is a suggestion for a "credits line" that you could add somewhere in your newsletter, book, or web/software product:

These puzzles were designed with Whirlwind WordSearch by SchwanSongs: www.schwansongs.com

You may also want to visit the main Whirlwind WordSearch product web page here:

<http://www.schwansongs.com/whirlwind/#PressKit>

and download a free copy of the Press Kit, which includes text and graphics you might want to use in your review.

4.37. Print This User Guide to a Printer

Here is how you would print a copy of this user guide, instead of viewing it on-screen.

First, open the user guide window by choosing "*Whirlwind WordSearch* * User Guide" from the "Help" menu. With the user guide window displaying, choose "Print" from the "File" menu. It will print the entire user guide to your printer.

You can also download the full PDF file of this file directly from the button at the top of the user guide window, or from the software product page of my web site. Then, you can easily read it elsewhere "offline."

4.38. Find the Hidden “Easter Egg” Features

Why do you think there are extra features hidden in my software? Who told you? I have absolutely no idea what you are talking about. I don’t believe⁶ there are magic words that let you unlock extra features. Of course, if they did exist, I am sure you would be alerted by some kind of “Bat-signal” at the top of the window.



OK, one little secret will out. To print or export a puzzle grid that has not been built yet, simply hold down the <Option> key and open the File menu. This will force the Print and Export menu items to be allowed even if there is no puzzle built yet. You can now create “template” images that are not yet filled with letters. Perhaps useful for creating templates or playing boards for other purposes. This was requested long ago by a user who wanted a template to write in their own word search puzzles.

4.39. Contact the Author with a Bug Report or Feature Idea

If you have found something that isn’t working correctly, or if you wish that this software did something differently, or you would like a new feature added, I would certainly like to know your thoughts. I am constantly adding these to my to-do list from my users and testers. Likewise, I always strive to update my software so that it does what *you* want it to do. You can even write just to let me know that it is working well and you are enjoying it!

The best way to contact me is to run the software and choose “Contact Author” from the Help menu. This will open your e-mail software and automatically create an e-mail to me. This also adds the name and version of the software you are currently using at the bottom of the e-mail, which can be helpful to me when answering your questions.

Send any feedback or correspondence to me at: note@schwansongs.com, or via the “Contact” link on my web site at: www.schwansongs.com.

⁶ Yes, there is a subtle but critically important difference between belief and knowledge.

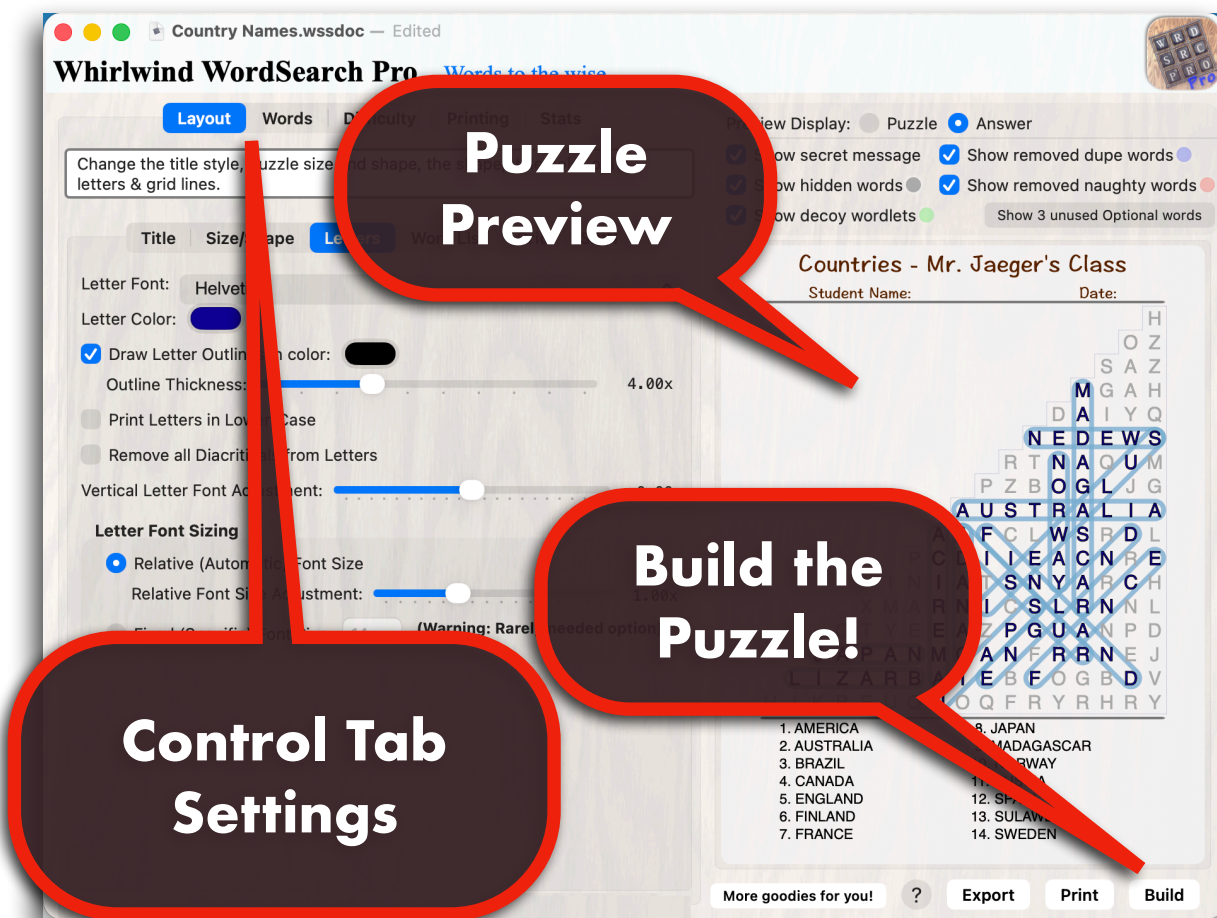
5. Details: What does this thing do?

This section offers more detailed descriptions of each tabs and their individual options. You can also hover your mouse over different options and menus to activate a “tool-tip” text box that will give you additional information about each item.

Note: Some of the features described here are only available in the Full or Pro version, not the Lite version.

5.1. Main Document Window

When you start *Whirlwind WordSearch*, it opens a new “document window.” Configure puzzles by using “Control Tab Settings” located on the left-hand side, while looking to the right-side for the “Puzzle Preview” area. The preview displays the updated puzzle as you design it. Some “Action” buttons along the bottom allow quick access to building, printing, or exporting a puzzle.



This new window can be saved as a document (e.g. file) on your computer. Later, it can be opened (just as you do with word processor documents) to show the puzzle and all its settings, saved just as you left them.

Whirlwind WordSearch allows you to create and open multiple windows at once; although, you will likely just open and work with one at a time.

5.2. Control Tab Settings on the Left

You can use many settings to customize and create unique looking puzzles. They are grouped into sets of “tabs” along the upper left side of the document window. First, there are the “main” tabs along the top. When you choose one of those top tabs, there are often additional secondary tabs underneath. All of these tab-grouped settings are described below.



5.3. Layout:Title - Tab

The “Title” tab is where you choose the title and subtitle to print above your puzzle. It appears on the printed pages, and optionally on the exported puzzle files. These fields are optional and can be left blank if you want no title text displayed.



Title/Subtitle: You can enter text in the title field and/or subtitle field, and that text is then printed at the top of your printed puzzle pages. You can also leave either or both fields blank, since they are optional. The title field is printed in a slightly larger font size, while the subtitle is a little smaller. This allows more text on the subtitle line. If you type in title or subtitle text that is too long, the text will wrap to a second line at the edge of the page when it is printed.

Tip: If you want a lot of title text but no subtitle, you can leave the title string blank and use the subtitle string for your text. This gives you more room for more text, since the subtitle is a smaller font. You can allow even more text by shrinking the “Title font size adjustment” slider.

Note: If you want to refer to the current date or the current puzzle number or puzzle shape/size in your title, e.g. “Heart Puzzle #3 for Monday”, you can add magic “puzzle macro strings” in the title and subtitle fields, and they will get automatically filled in for you as you print or export. See the [“Puzzle Macros” section](#) for more information.

Title Font: You can print the title and subtitle text using any font that is installed on your computer. Please note that not every font can display alphabetic letters in languages other than English, so you may need to experiment to see which ones work and look best for your purposes.

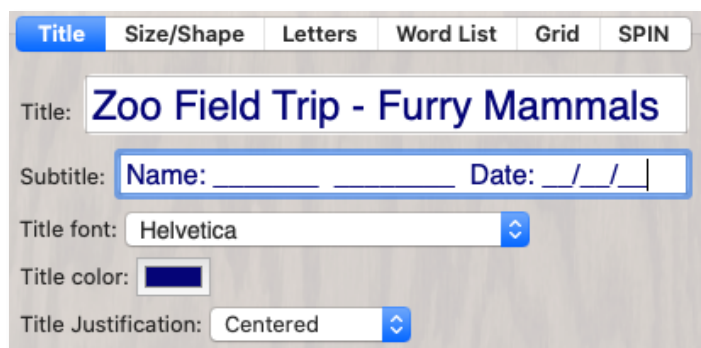
Title Color: Tap the color wheel to choose a new color to use for the titles and the word list. Note that the color of the letters within the puzzle grid are set separately. See the layout tab below.

Title Justification: You can choose left, centered, or right justification for your title/subtitle.

Title font size adjustment: Fine-tune the size of the printed title and subtitle text. Sliding it down to the left will make the text grow smaller, while sliding it to the right of center will make it grow larger. An approximate display of how the text will print is shown above the puzzle in the preview area.

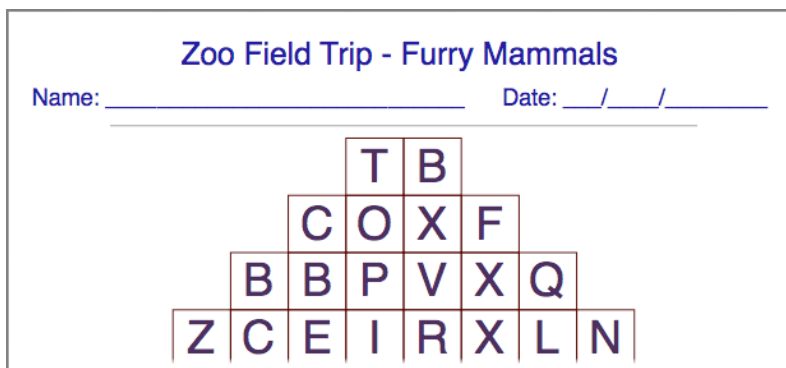
Note: The “font size adjustment” is not available in the Lite version of this software.

As an example, if you typed the following in the title and subtitle fields:



The screenshot shows a software interface with several tabs: Title, Size/Shape, Letters, Word List, Grid, and SPIN. The 'Title' tab is selected. Below the tabs, there are input fields for 'Title' and 'Subtitle'. The 'Title' field contains the text 'Zoo Field Trip - Furry Mammals'. The 'Subtitle' field contains the text 'Name: _____ Date: __/__/____'. Below these fields, there are controls for 'Title font' (set to 'Helvetica'), 'Title color' (a blue color swatch), and 'Title Justification' (set to 'Centered').

The top of the printed page would look like this:



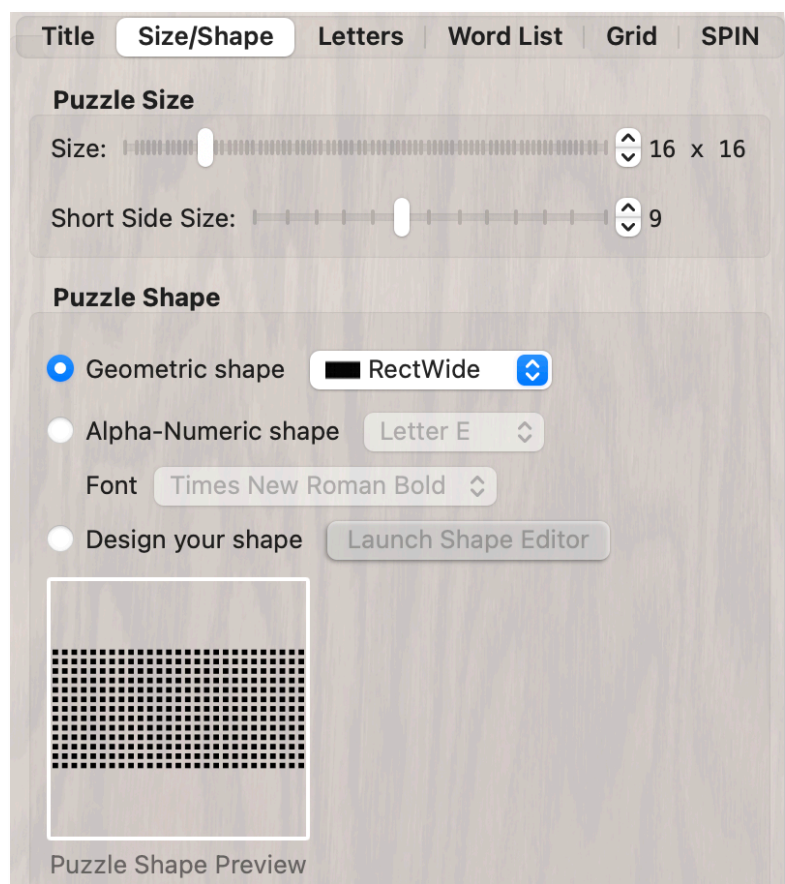
The preview shows the top of a printed page. At the top, the title 'Zoo Field Trip - Furry Mammals' is centered. Below the title, the subtitle 'Name: _____ Date: __/__/____' is displayed. Below the subtitle, there is a word search grid. The grid is a 4x7 rectangle of letters. The letters are arranged as follows:

		T	B			
	C	O	X	F		
B	B	P	V	X	Q	
Z	C	E	I	R	X	N

Show on exported Answer files too: Normally the titles are only shown on the Puzzle files when the puzzle and answer are exported. Turn this on to show them on the exported Answer files too. This will affect regular exports as well as bulk-build exports.

5.4. Layout:Size/Shape - Tab

This tab lets you adjust the overall size of the puzzle. It determines how many letter cells go across and down. Likewise, it lets you instantly choose from a number of additional built-in shapes.



Puzzle Size

This sets the total size (number of letters available) for the puzzle. The puzzle size must be at least as large as the number of letters in your longest word. Otherwise, a word that is any longer than the puzzle size would never fit. *Whirlwind WordSearch* will allow you to type in words that are longer than your puzzle size. It is not until you entered all your words and tap the build button, however, that it double-checks whether your longest words will fit. If a word is still too long for the current puzzle size, then it will give you an error dialog. At this point, it will tell you what the problem is and how to fix it.

Remember, the bigger the puzzle size, the more letter spaces are available. Therefore the more words can fit into the puzzle. Also, as you increase puzzle's size, the overall font size of the letters in the printed puzzle and answer grid will automatically shrink. This makes it possible to fit the entire puzzle onto a single printed page.

Short Side Size

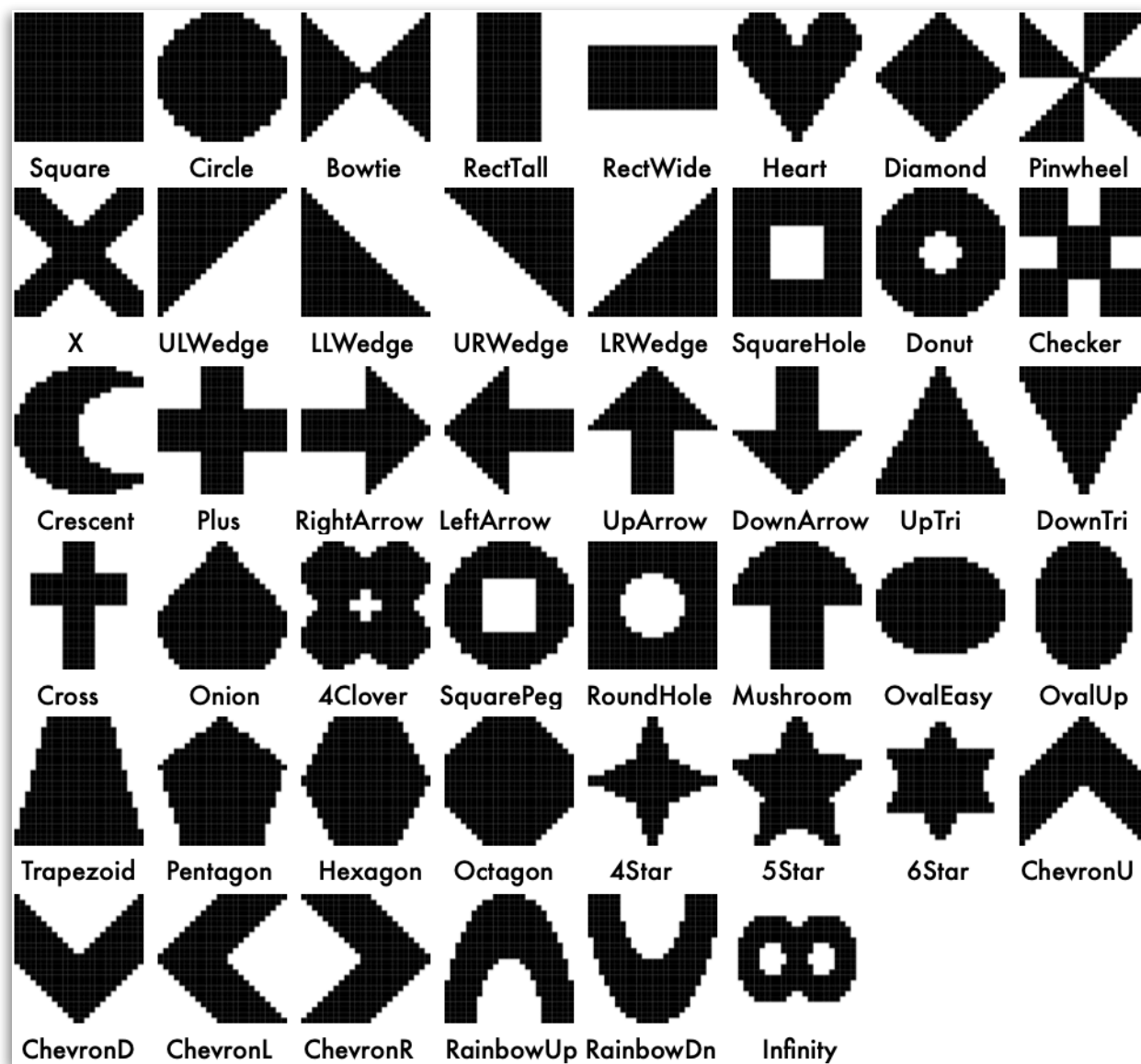
This slider appears when you choose a shape of either “rectangle tall” or “rectangle wide”. It lets you choose the short(er) side size, i.e., the number of cells along the shorter side of the rectangle. The larger the number, the closer to a square it becomes. Changing this allows you to fine-tune your rectangle puzzle to fit either a tall, thin column or a wide, thin row.

Note: Unlike other shapes, once you choose one of the Rectangle shapes you can now make the “Puzzle Size” smaller than ten, in case you want to make 5x9 rectangular puzzles, for example.

Puzzle Shape

You can choose from many different shapes to use. However, the shapes only become available if you have a puzzle size that is ten or bigger. Any puzzles smaller than this must be square.

Geometric Shape: This lets you choose from a variety of preset shapes for the puzzle. Here are the available geometric shapes:



Alpha-Numeric Shape: (Pro Feature) This lets you choose from the uppercase letters A through Z, and the numeric digits zero through nine.

Font: (Pro Feature) You can choose from a variety of fonts to shape the alpha-numeric characters.

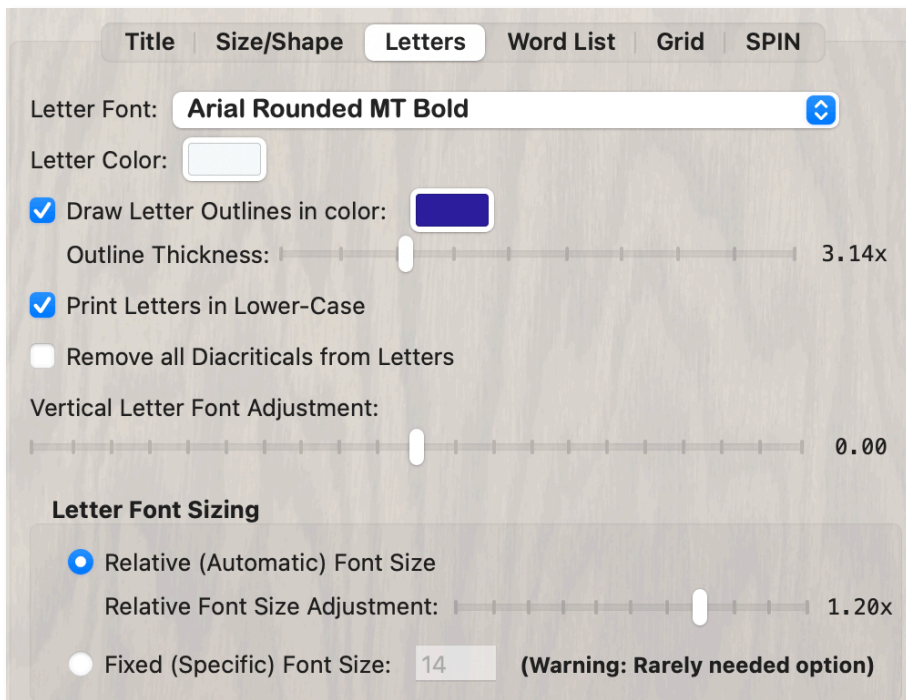
Design your Shape: (Pro Feature) This lets you design your own shapes. A built-in “shape editor” allows you to design a logo or complex shape of your own. You can then use that to create your puzzle.

You can also export your shape to send to others, or import shapes designed by other software users. See the [“Design your own shape” section linked here](#).

Note: When you choose one of these non-square shapes, there are not as many available letter spaces in the puzzle. If you have long words or a lot of words, they may not all fit in these other shapes. To compensate for this and still fit in your words, you will need to increase the puzzle dimension. Furthermore, many of these shapes will look nicer & smoother at larger puzzle sizes.

5.5. Layout:Letters - Tab

This tab lets you adjust the look of the letters inside the puzzle grid.



The screenshot shows the 'Letters' tab in the Whirlwind WordSearch app settings. The tabs at the top are Title, Size/Shape, Letters (selected), Word List, Grid, and SPIN. The settings include: Letter Font set to 'Arial Rounded MT Bold'; Letter Color with a white color wheel; 'Draw Letter Outlines in color' checked with a blue color wheel; Outline Thickness set to 3.14x; 'Print Letters in Lower-Case' checked; 'Remove all Diacriticals from Letters' unchecked; Vertical Letter Font Adjustment set to 0.00; 'Letter Font Sizing' with 'Relative (Automatic) Font Size' selected and 'Relative Font Size Adjustment' set to 1.20x; and 'Fixed (Specific) Font Size' set to 14 with a warning note '(Warning: Rarely needed option)'.

Letter Font: You can display the puzzle letters using any font that is installed on your computer. Please note, though, that not every font can display alphabetic letters in languages other than English. Therefore, you may need to experiment to see which ones work and look best for your purposes. As you switch fonts, the puzzle grid will immediately re-display in this new font.

Letter Color: Tap the color wheel to pick a new color for the puzzle and answer letters inside the puzzle grid.

Draw Letter Outlines in color: Turn this on to draw the puzzle letters with an outline (or “stroke”) color. When this is on, you can choose the outline color, and adjust the “Outline Thickness”.

Note: If you turn this on, set the outline color to black, and set the Letter Color to white, you can create letters that the user can “color in” as they solve the puzzle.

Outline Thickness: This adjusts the relative width of the outline drawn around each letter, from 1 (very thin) to 5 (very thick.)

Print Letters in Lowercase: Turn this on to print the letters of the puzzle and answer key in lowercase, instead of uppercase. You may want to turn this OFF for younger puzzle solvers.

Remove All Diacriticals from Letters: Turn this on to strip any diacritical marks from your words when they are added to the puzzle grid. When your words are displayed in the word list, the diacriticals are always left in place. This “simplified” puzzle display is commonly used in some languages, e.g. Italian. Leaving this off will leave any diacriticals in the letters of your words when placed in the puzzle grid. To add/remove any diacriticals in the fill letters around your words, see the related topic: “Your fill Letter Subset to Use” under the “Advanced Difficulty” [section linked here](#).

Vertical Letter Font Adjustment: This feature lets you fine-tune the letters’ vertical position in the puzzle/answer grid. Sliding it down to the left will slide the letters below center, and sliding it right will slide them above center. This can be useful if you have an unusual font that doesn't display quite centered vertically. In this case, you need to nudge the letters up or down a bit inside the grid.

Relative (Automatic) Font Size: This is the normal automatic-letter-sizing behavior. It will either grow or shrink the letters within the puzzle grid when printing or exporting your puzzle. That is, the letter sizes will look the same on the printed or exported output as they are shown in the preview window.

Relative Font Size Adjustment: This slider lets you fine-tune the size of the letters in the puzzle/answer grid. The basic font size is *automatically* calculated for you based on some factors (size of puzzle, and the size of the printed page). Though, you may find this calculated size “not quite right” for your needs. Perhaps the font that you chose is a little larger or smaller than other fonts and doesn’t fit quite right. The slider's value at 1.0 is the regular size. Sliding it to the left will make the letters grow smaller, and sliding it to the right will make them grow larger.

Fixed (Specific) Font Size: Not many people will need this option turned on. For advanced users, this will force the letter font to be printed at your specified point size, no matter how big or small the puzzle page size is. This overrides the normal behavior where the letter font size automatically shrinks as the puzzle size grows. When you are exporting puzzles with this setting on, the puzzle letter font will not match the “relative” size you see in the preview window. As a result, you will see differences in letter sizes between PDF and PNG file formats. As a PDF-export workaround, you can save a PDF file (that matches the preview) via the print dialog, by following [the section here](#). Describing interactions and calculations of font point size, document size, DPI, and PDF font handling is beyond the scope of this document.

5.6. Layout:Word List - Tab

This tab lets you adjust how the word list is formatted and displayed on the puzzle and answer pages. These options will affect the printed pages, and the export images if you include the word list during export. You can also choose whether to have the word list shown on the puzzle or answer page, or both (or none.)

The screenshot shows the 'Word List' tab in the software's settings window. The 'What to Display in the Word List' section has three radio buttons: 'Words, comma-separated' (unselected), 'Words in columns' (selected), and 'Word Clues' (unselected). To the right, the 'Include Direction Arrows' dropdown is set to 'Never', and a checkbox for 'only on Answer key' is checked. Below this, the 'Number of columns' is set to 'Auto-Calculated'. The 'Word list font' is 'Hannotate SC' with a 'Match Letter Font' button. The 'Word list color' is black with a 'Match Letter Color' button. There are four checkboxes: 'Center the words' (unselected), 'Add numbering to word list' (checked), 'Alphabetize the printed word list' (checked), and 'Print word list as all upper-case' (unselected). Three sliders are shown: 'Word list font size' at 1.00x, 'Left Indent' at 6.9%, and 'Top margin' at 3.0%. At the bottom, the 'Show the word list' dropdown is set to 'on Puzzle+Answer'.

What to Display in the Word List: Here you can choose how the word list is displayed under your puzzle when you print or export it. This also sets how it is formatted if you copy it to the clipboard via the menu item “Edit:Copy Formatted:Word list...”

The word list can be a single comma-separated, word-wrapped line of words. This might be best for puzzles with lots of long words or if the word list is printed with a large font size.

The word list can have each word separated, one-word-per-line, into multiple columns. You can center the words within each column, or you may want to add numbers to each word.

If you are using the word clues feature, you can show just the word clues instead of the words on the puzzle page. For more information on the “word clues” feature, see [this section link](#).

Include Direction Arrows: You may want to add a little direction arrow beside each word on the answer key to help find the words in a large puzzle. You may even want to add these arrows on the puzzle itself, as helpful hints

1. → Chaand	4. ↖ Moon
2. ← Luna	5. ↑ Qamar
3. ↙ Mond	6. ↗ Tsuki

for beginners. To show the arrows on the puzzle too, simply turn off the checkbox “only on Answer key.”

Number of columns: Leave this as “Auto-Calculated” to let Whirlwind WordSearch find the best row and column fit for the word list at the given font size. If you would prefer to force a particular number of columns for the exported/printed output, you can set this to any number from 1 to 8, and it will try to fit all the words into that many columns instead. This control is *not* available when the “Print word list as:” popup is set to “Words with commas.”

Word list font: You can choose any font to display the word list. Usually, it’s best to have it be the same font that is used for the puzzle letters themselves. You can immediately use that same puzzle letter font by tapping the **Match Letter Font** button next to it.

Word list color: You can choose any color to display the word list. It is usually best to have it be the same color that is used for the puzzle letters themselves. You can immediately use that same puzzle letter color by tapping the **Match Letter Color** button next to it.

Center the words: Turn this on to center the words in their columns. Turn this off to leave them left-justified in their columns. You will usually leave this off if you add numbering to the words. This will also center the word list lines if “Print word list as” is set to “comma-separated.”

Add numbering to word list: Turn this on to add numbering (1,2,3,...) before each word in the printed word list. If this is off, the words will be listed without any numbering.

Alphabetize the printed word list: Turn this on to print the list of words sorted in alphabetical order. If this is off, the words will be listed in the order you entered them in your “word list.”

Print word list as all uppercase: Turn this on to fully capitalize the list of words when they are printed. If this is off, the words will remain capitalized as you entered them in the “word list.” This option will be disabled if you have chosen an alphabet that does not have upper/lower case.

Word list font size: You can fine-tune the size of the printed word list words here. The font size is automatically chosen for you based on several factors (number of words, length of words, or the puzzle’s size), but you may find this calculated size is “not quite right” for your needs. Maybe there is one really long word that stretches into the word in the next column and you need to shrink the size a bit. Maybe there are lots of short words, and you want to bump the size up for younger or older readers.

The center position is regular size. Sliding it to the left will make the words grow smaller, while sliding it to the right of center will make them grow larger. The font size of any secret message printed under the puzzle will also gently track this size change.

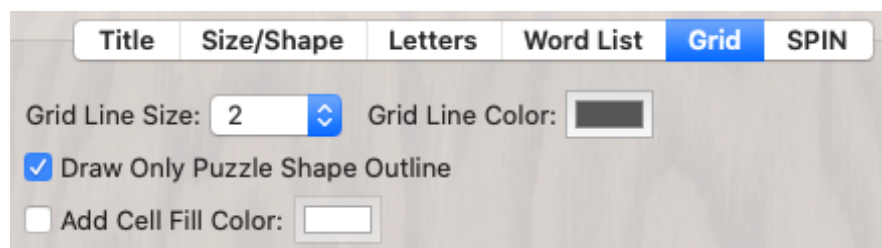
Left indent: This will add a left-edge indent to the word list. It can be from 0% (against the left edge of the puzzle) up to 30% of the width of the word list area.

Top margin: This will move the word list down away from the puzzle above it. It can be from 0% (very close to the bottom of the puzzle) up to 10% of the height of your cousin, because it is relative.

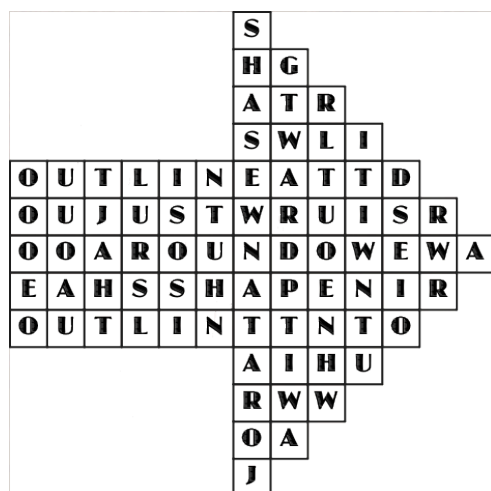
Show the word list: Choose whether to show the word list on the Puzzle page, the Answer page or both or none. This affects both Printing and Export.

5.7. Layout:Grid - Tab

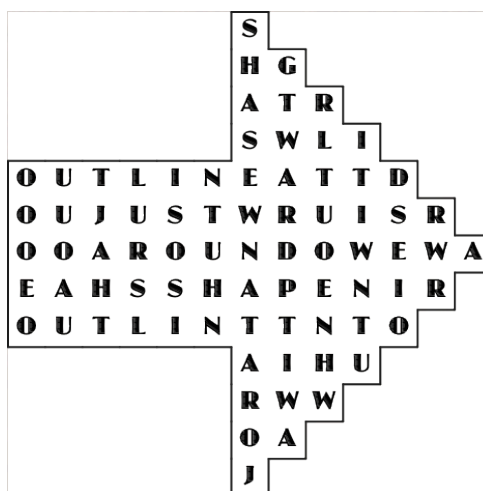
This tab lets you add lines around the letters and puzzle, while also setting the thickness and color of the lines.



Grid Line Size: Tap the pop-up menu to choose a new line thickness (in points) for the separator (grid) lines around each letter on the puzzle. If you choose “none,” it will draw no grid lines around the puzzle. Note that it will *always* draw grid lines around the answer key, since they help show you where the answer words are in the puzzle. 0.5 is a very thin line, and 8.0 is a very thick line.



Draw only shape outline: Off



Draw only shape outline: On

Grid Line Color: Tap the color wheel to pick a new color for the puzzle and answer “grid lines.”

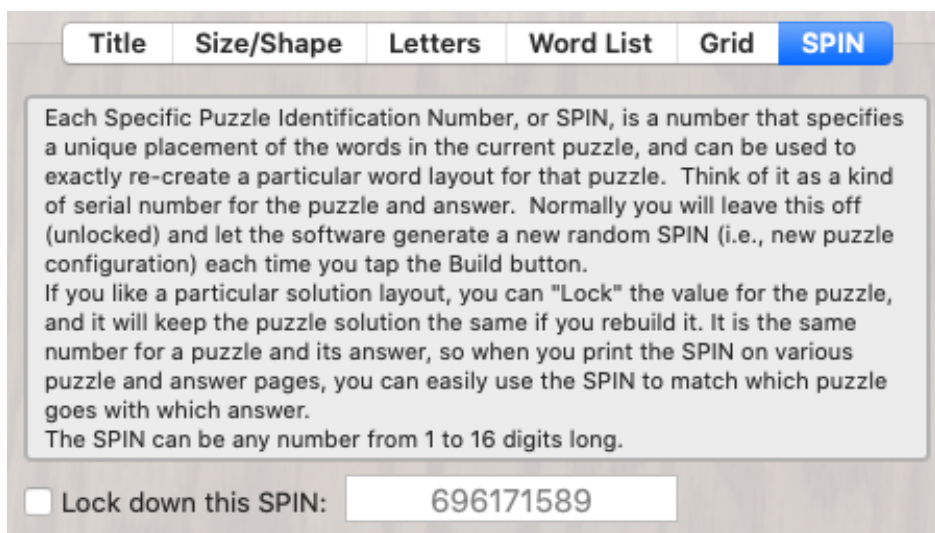
Draw Only Puzzle Shape Outline: Turn this on to draw just the outline around the shape, without inner grid lines around letters. Turn it off to draw grid lines around every letter in the shape.

Add Cell Fill Color: Turn this on to fill each cell square with an opaque background color for printing and for exported image files. If it is on, you can tap the color wheel to pick a new color for the cell-fill color. If this is off, the cells are transparent. Any background will show up behind the letters.

5.8. Layout:SPIN - Tab

Each Specific Puzzle Identification Number, or SPIN, specifies a unique placement of the words in the current puzzle. It can be used to exactly re-create a particular word layout for a puzzle. Think of it as a serial number for the puzzle and its answer. Normally you will leave this *off* (unlocked) and let the software generate its own new random SPIN (i.e., new puzzle configuration) each time you tap the “Build” button.

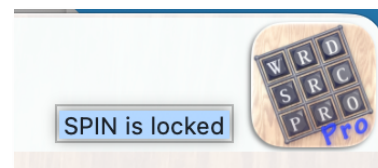
The SPIN can be any positive number from one to sixteen digits long.



Lock Down This SPIN: If you prefer a particular layout for the answer, you can “Lock” the puzzle. Therefore, the current value for the puzzle is unchanged. It keeps the puzzle answer the same if you rebuild it. The SPIN is used for both a puzzle and its answer. When you print the SPIN on various puzzle and answer pages, you can easily use the SPIN to match which puzzle goes with which answer.

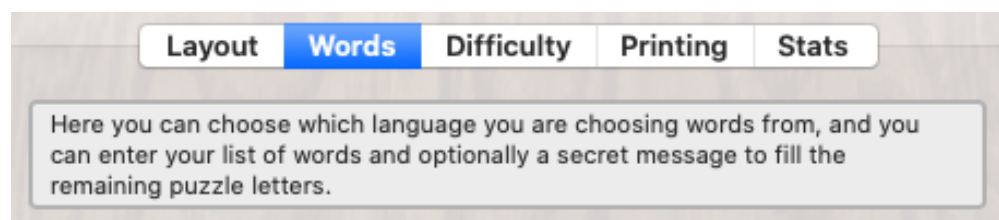
Also, when you lock the SPIN, it allows you to type in your own SPIN as another option. That way, you can re-create a prior puzzle layout.

Upon turning this option on, a small warning will display at the top right corner of the document window. It reminds you that your puzzle configuration is now “locked” in a certain configuration.

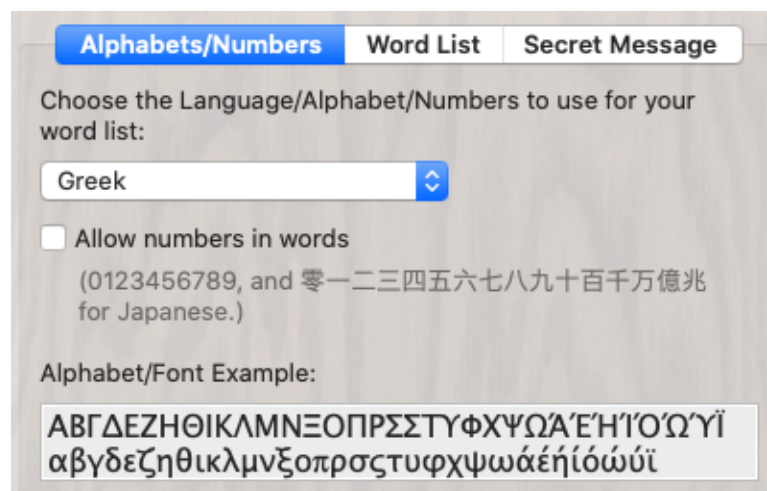


5.9. Words - Tab

This tab lets you choose the alphabetic letters used for your word list. It is where you enter the list of words you want placed into the puzzle. It also has a tab for optionally embedding a “secret message” in your puzzle.



5.10. Words:Alphabets/Numbers - Tab



The screenshot shows a web interface with three tabs: 'Alphabets/Numbers' (selected), 'Word List', and 'Secret Message'. Below the tabs, there is a text prompt: 'Choose the Language/Alphabet/Numbers to use for your word list:'. A dropdown menu is set to 'Greek'. Below this, there is a checkbox labeled 'Allow numbers in words' which is currently unchecked. To the right of the checkbox, there is a note: '(0123456789, and 零一二三四五六七八九十百千万億兆 for Japanese.)'. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'Alphabet/Font Example:' which displays two rows of characters: the first row contains uppercase Greek letters (ΑΒΓΔΕΖΗΘΙΚΛΜΝΞΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩΑΈΗΊΌΨΥΪ) and the second row contains lowercase Greek letters (αβγδεζηθικλμνξοπρσςτυφχψωάήίόύϊ).

Choose the Language/Alphabet/Numbers

This pop-up menu lets you choose a different language (and its alphabet of letters) to use in your puzzle. Your word list and secret message must only contain these letters, otherwise you will get an error message:

When you choose a different alphabet, the list of allowed letters will change to match your new alphabet. It also switches to a list of “naughty words” for that language, using that list to find and remove any randomly created naughty words from each puzzle you generate.



Oops, the puzzle could not be created!

The selected character “β” in your word list is not allowed. It does not match the alphabet you chose, nor is it a comma, hyphen, apostrophe, colon, or space.

Either choose a different alphabet, or use letters from the language you chose.

OK

Allow Numbers in Words

You can turn this checkbox on to let you add Arabic numbers into your words (and secret message.) This would allow you to add words like “Route 66” or “Room 101” to your puzzles.

And yes, if you choose Japanese Hiragana or Katakana, then the Japanese numeric kanji characters (零一二三四五六七八九十百千万億兆) are allowed too.

5.11. Words:Word List - Tab

This tab has a text field for you enter the list of words for your puzzle, and also some controls related to the words.

Alphabets/Numbers **Word List** Secret Message

Enter your words here, separated by carriage return or comma. Your words must only use the letters of your chosen alphabet, and may be upper case, lower case, or mixed. You can optionally:

- * Put an asterisk at the beginning of a word to make it "hidden"
- + Put a plus sign at the beginning of a word to make it "optional"
- : Put a colon between each word and its "word clue".
- Put a dash at the beginning of a word to remove from the puzzle (but leave in the word list.)

See section 5.11 in the user guide for more information.

8 words Approx. space remaining: 155

Espresso
Cappuccino
Latte
Americano
Mocha
Macchiato
Flat White
Cortado

☒ Allow duplicate/mirrored words Copy formatted word list

☐ Make all words "optional" Random word fill

☒ Maximum # of optional words to use: 14

☐ Allow embedded sub-words in word list

☒ Find and remove random "Naughty Words" from puzzle

☐ Allow one-letter words

Word List

Your words must only use the letters available in the alphabet you choose. They can be uppercase, lowercase, or mixed case. Each word must be separated from others by either a comma or a new line. Your word's capitalization and word order will be preserved when they are printed as a list on the puzzle and answer pages, unless you choose to alphabetize and capitalize them via "Layout:Word List" tabs. When the words are placed inside the puzzle grid, though, the case of their letters will all be uppercase, unless you chose the "Print Letters in lower case" checkbox under the "Layout:Letters" tabs.

You can also copy a list of words in from another word processing document or from the internet. Just copy the words from the other application, and then switch to *Whirlwind WordSearch*. Tap inside the word list text box and choose "Paste" from the "Edit" menu. The words will be added to your list. See [this section link](#) for detailed instructions on how to do this.

If you are creating a special word search puzzle that displays a list of "word clue" phrases instead of the list of words themselves, you must enter the word and its associated clue phrase together, each

“word:word-clue” pair on a separate line. See [this section link](#) for detailed information on making this special puzzle style.

You can also create an unusual twist in the word search game, where you display a number of words in the list, but leave one word out of the actual puzzle, and ask people to find which word is “missing.” You can do this by putting a dash (minus sign) before one of the words, and that word will be shown in the word list, but will NOT be added to the puzzle. You can mark multiple words as “missing” too, if you like.

Whirlwind WordSearch is very lenient, and allows you to *initially* type or copy/paste *any* characters into the word list box. However, *before* you create a word search puzzle, you may need to remove extra characters that are not part of your words. Once you tap the “Build” button, *Whirlwind WordSearch* checks that all your words match the alphabet you chose, and will issue an error messages then.

There are special cases that allow for the space, hyphen/dash (-), and for the apostrophe/single-quote ('). These characters will be left in the word list display, but removed when the word is put in the puzzle grid. For more information on this, see [this section link](#).

A word search puzzle's size must be at least as large as the letters of your longest word, or else that word will never fit in the puzzle. *Whirlwind WordSearch* does check all of your words against the puzzle size you have chosen, but only *after* you tap the “Build” button. This gives you freedom to type long words and then change the puzzle size without being interrupted by annoying error messages. Only when you create the puzzle do any problems get detected and reported to you.

Approx. space remaining: #

The “Approx. space remaining” number (above the word list) gives you a rough estimate of how many letters are left in the current puzzle. This is based on the words you entered and the puzzle's current size and shape. As you add words to your word list, the number shrinks to show you are running out of room in the puzzle. It also shrinks as you add text to your secret message, which needs room in the puzzle too. This is just an approximate indicator, and does not prevent you from adding many more words than the currently-configured puzzle could hold. For example, it cannot predict how many words might wind up overlapping until you finally create the puzzle, or how many words may be automatically removed because they are optional. This looseness allows you to later mark certain words as optional ([see this section.](#))

After you tap the “build” button, *Whirlwind WordSearch* will attempt to create the puzzle and determine if it really can fit all your words in. If not, it will then give you an error message stating that it cannot place all your words. You can then fix the problem in a number of ways. Go to the “Layout” tab and increase the puzzle size and/or try a different shape that has more space. Alternatively, increase the difficulty level (which allows words to overlap and go in additional directions), or remove some words. You might also try making some words optional, and then create the puzzle again.

After you have successfully created a puzzle, the total number of words you entered will be listed under your word list. This is to help you verify that all your words or phrases were entered correctly, and that you got the number that you expected.

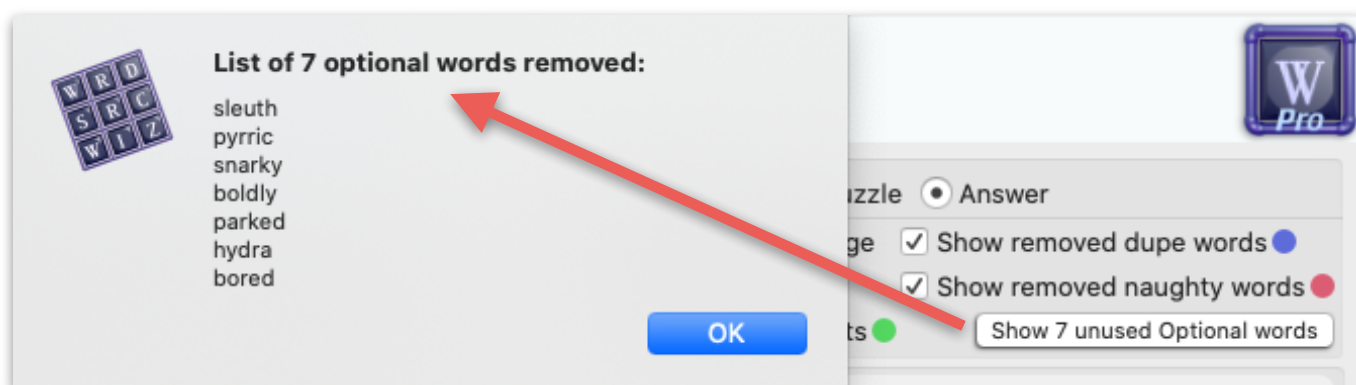
Allow duplicate/mirrored words

Word search puzzles are usually built from a list of *unique* words. However, you may want to create a puzzle that has two or more copies of the same word or words in the puzzle. It will also do this if you want to enter words that are mirrored (e.g. adding “tool” and “loot.”) You can allow this by turning on the checkbox “Allow duplicates in word list.” *Whirlwind WordSearch* will no longer check for duplicate words, but instead will add every instance of any word you type. It does this despite however many copies there are. It will further display each copy in the printed word list.

Make all words “optional”

Turning on this checkbox will have *Whirlwind WordSearch* trying to fit as many of your words as it can to build a puzzle and remove any that could not fit from your list. It will only mark your regular words as “optional.” That way, any hidden words will always remain in the puzzle.

You can then get a list of the removed words it could not fit, by tapping the button “Show *N* removed optional words” in the preview area. See [this section link](#) for more details about working with optional words.



Note: The “Make all words optional” feature can only be toggled on/off in the Full version of this software. It is always on in the Lite version.

Maximum # of optional words to use:

Turning this on will let you enter a maximum limit to the number of optional words that will be added to the puzzle. This lets you add a word list of dozens or hundreds of words, and enter a maximum value here, and each time you build a puzzle it will use no more than that number of words from your list. It will choose a different random subset of your words each time you build the puzzle.

For example, if you add 100 words into your word list, then turn on “Make all words optional”, turn on “Maximum # of optional words to use” and set the value to 20, then all your puzzles will be created with no more than 20 of your words.

Of course it is possible that not even that many words will fit in your puzzle. In that case it will continue to remove more optional words until it can successfully build the puzzle. This is only a maximum limit of words.

Allow embedded sub-words in word list

Turning this *on* allows words in your word list to appear inside other words in your list, like “beard” and “ear”, or “**tarp**” and “rat.” Notice that “**rat**” is mirrored/reversed inside of the word “**tarp**.” *Whirlwind WordSearch* will be allowed to place “rat” completely inside “tarp.”

Turn this *off* to be more strict and detect and flag these “duplicate” embedded words in your word list as errors before you build a puzzle.

Warning: Turning this *on* can cause reader-confusion with the answer key. Essentially there would now be a second “rat” in the puzzle that is not the “rat” in your answer key. The reader could find the “rat” in “tarp,” only to find out it is NOT the rat listed in the answer key. Beware of stray rats.

Find and remove random "Naughty Words" from puzzle

Turning this on finds and removes any randomly-generated naughty words from the puzzle. When off, no naughty-word-checking happens, which can speed up puzzle-generation, and can sometimes allow trickier puzzles to build successfully which might otherwise fail.

Note: Turning this *off* can speed up puzzle-generation, and can allow some puzzles to build when they would otherwise fail. For example, if you are building a 40x40 puzzle with a single word, like “Sass”, you will find that it builds right away with this setting turned off. Of course, there will be lots of random “ass” words left in the puzzle. You will have to decide if you want to let your audience deal with lots of asses. :-)

Allow one-letter words

Normally your words must be two or more letters long. Sometimes you may want to allow one-letter words however.

Turning this on will allow single-letter words to be entered into your word list. It additionally automatically enable some other settings to support this unusual mode. Here is what it also turns on at the same time: Turns on Advanced Difficulty mode; Turns on “Allow embedded sub-words in word list” and sets “Fill Puzzle With:” to fill set and decoys.

Note: After turning on this setting and having it automatically change some above-mentioned settings, you can still manually change back those extra settings. However, if you do manually change some of the extra settings afterward, it will likely cause *Whirlwind WordSearch* to not be able to successfully build your puzzle. So, change them at your own risk! After you change them, you can always reset back to the suggested “1-letter word” settings by simply turning this checkbox off and then on again... Just as you fix most computer things, right?

Copy formatted word list

This will copy the word list as a formatted carriage-return. It is a separated list on the clipboard, which you can then paste into another document. The words will be capitalized, sorted and numbered per your choices in the “Page Details” tab. This button is available *after* you create a puzzle.

Random word fill

This button will replace your current word list with a large list of random words from the dictionary. The length of the words and the number of words will be chosen based on the size of your current puzzle. So, a 6x6 puzzle will only choose several words up to six letters long. The larger the size of the puzzle, the more words will be added. The words are taken from an old built-in dictionary on the Macintosh, and can often be a bit, um, obscure.

Note: This is only available when you have chosen the English language alphabet from the “Alphabets/Numbers” tab.

5.12. Words: Secret Message - Tab *(Full & Pro Feature)*

Alphabets/Numbers Word List **Secret Message**

Enter an optional secret message here. This text will lay across the cells from left to right, filling any cell that doesn't have one of your word letters. If you want no secret message, then leave this text box empty.

Copy Secret Message as Template Approx. space remaining: 264

Turn the Tide

Show the Secret Message prompt: on Puzzle & Answer

Position in puzzle: At the bottom

☒ Highlight the Secret Message letters in the answer key

Secret Message Prompt

Enter an optional text prompt below to add before the secret message template on the printed pages, or leave them empty to display just the template.

Puzzle Page: What does the moon do?

Answer Page: Secret Message:

☒ Add spaces between template underscore letters

This tab allows you to enter a word, phrase, or sentence. You can place it into the puzzle after all your puzzle words are laid out in place, and before it fills the rest of the puzzle with random letters. It lays the secret message out left-to-right, skipping over any word search letters already laid into the puzzle. See [this section link](#) for an example of adding a secret message.

Enter your secret message text into the text box. Only the alphabetic letters of your typed secret message are added into the puzzle. Any other punctuation or spaces or letters that are not in your current alphabet are automatically ignored.

Copy Secret Message as Template

Tap this button to copy your Secret Message text to the clipboard, but with all its alphabetic and numeric letters replaced with underscores. This can then be used as a printed “template” or “place-holder” below your puzzle, for your users to fill in the letters as they find them. For example, here is a secret message, and below it is the template that would be copied for it:

Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

-----, ----!

Note: You can add an extra space between each underscore by turning on the checkbox “Add Spaces Between Template Underscore Letters” described below.

Approx. Space Remaining:

This roughly shows how many letters are available for your secret message, based on the words you entered and the puzzle's current size and shape. As you add text to your secret message, this number shrinks to show you are running out of room in the puzzle. It also shrinks as you add words in your word list, since they need room in the puzzle.

Show the Secret Message prompt

Choose whether to show the Secret Message prompt on the Puzzle page, the Answer page or both or none. This affects both Printing and Export.

Position in Puzzle

You can change where the secret message shows up in the puzzle: at the top, at the bottom, centered in the middle, or at a random position. Conversely, you can require it to exactly fill every remaining space in the puzzle.

Highlight the Secret Message Letters in the Answer Key

Turn this on to print a gray background behind each secret message letter in the printed (or exported) answer key. Turn this off to leave the secret message letters just like any other “non-word” letters in the answer.

Secret Message Prompt

Puzzle Page: Enter an optional secret message “prefix prompt” to print under the puzzle on the **puzzle** page. This lets the user know that there is a secret message to look out for in the puzzle. You can leave this empty or enter a text hint for your secret message. The placeholder template will be added after this text on the puzzle page.

Answer Page: Enter an optional secret message “prefix prompt” to print under the answer key on the **answer** page. You can leave this empty or enter a text prompt introducing your secret message. The secret message itself will be added after this text on the answer page.

Add Spaces Between Template Underscore Letters: Turn this on to add empty space between every template underscore letter, thereby helping separate the letter spots. If this is left off, then the template will exactly match the number of letters of your word search’s phrase. The displayed underscores will also be “shortened” so they don’t run together like normal underscores. Note that some fonts do not show these “short underscores.”

Text: Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

Off: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ !

On: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ !

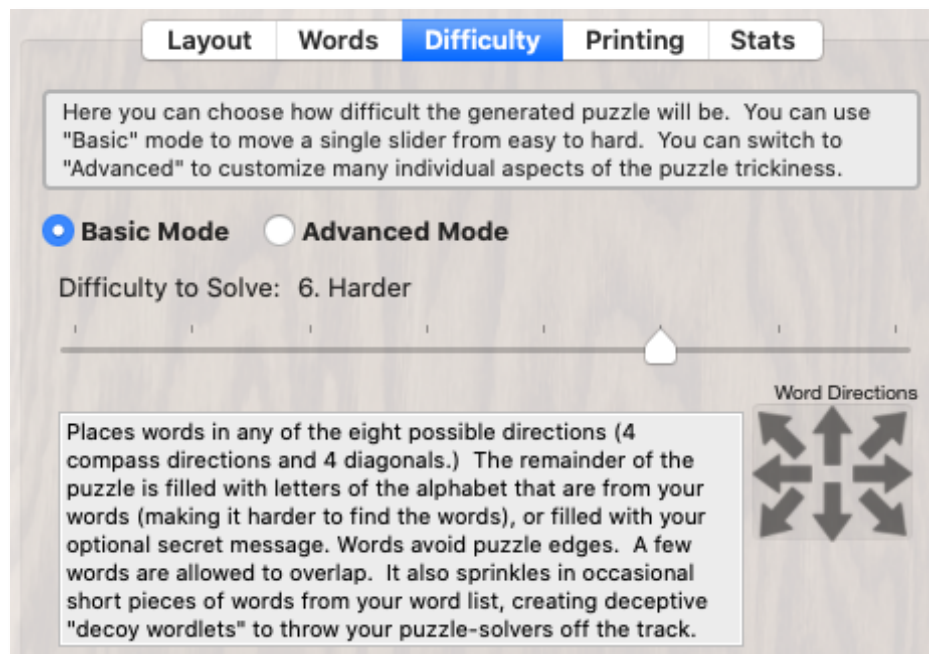
5.13. Difficulty - Tab

The “Difficulty” tab lets you change how tricky the word search puzzles are to solve.

Using the “Basic Difficulty Mode” lets you simply move a slider from “very easy” puzzles to “very hard” puzzles, without worrying about all the details of how it works.

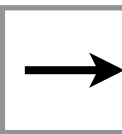
If you want more control, you can switch to the “Advanced Difficulty Mode.” This lets you control each of the fine-grained “difficulty options” yourself. Both the basic and advanced modes are covered below.

Basic Difficulty Mode

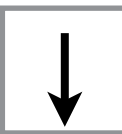


Difficulty to Solve: Changing the “Difficulty to Solve” slider will alter several obvious and not-so-obvious aspects of the generated puzzle. You can change the puzzle from very easy to solve (for younger children) through diabolically difficult to solve (for experienced adults). Each of the difficulty levels creates a puzzle with the following features:

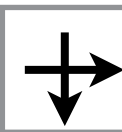
1. Very Easy (across): Places words only left-to-right. The remainder of the puzzle is filled with letters of the alphabet that are not in the words (making it much easier to find the words), or filled with your optional secret message. It also ensures that none of your words overlap each other. It allows words to be along the edges and alongside each other. This easy level is perfect for beginning readers.



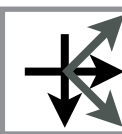
2. Very Easy (down): Places words only top-down. The remainder of the puzzle is filled with letters of the alphabet that are not in the words (making it much easier to find the words), or filled with your optional secret message. None of your words overlap each other. It allows words to be along the edges and alongside each other. This easy level is perfect for beginning readers, and especially for Japanese language puzzles.



3. Easy (across & down): Places words left-to-right or top-down. The remainder of the puzzle is filled with any letters of the alphabet, or filled with your optional secret message. None of your words overlap each other. It allows words to be along the edges and alongside each other.



4. Medium: Places words left-to-right, top-down, or the two diagonals from left-to-right. The remainder of the puzzle is filled with any letters of the alphabet, or filled with your optional secret message. Some of your words may overlap each other. It avoids placing words along the edges and very top/bottom rows, but allows them to be alongside each other.



5. Hard: Places words in 6 of the 8 possible directions (4 compass directions and 2 left-to-right diagonals.) The remainder of the puzzle is filled with any letters of the alphabet, or filled with your optional secret message. Many of your words may overlap each other. It avoids placing words along the edges and very top/bottom rows, but allows them to be alongside each other.



6. Harder: Places words in any of the eight possible directions (4 compass directions and 4 diagonals.) The remainder of the puzzle is filled with letters of the alphabet that are from your words (making it harder to find the words), or filled with your optional secret message. Some of your words may overlap each other. It avoids placing words along the edges and very top/bottom rows, but allows some to be alongside each other. It also sprinkles in a few short pieces of words from your word list ("*decoy wordlets*") to throw your puzzle-solvers off the track. For more information on "decoy wordlets," see the "Advanced Difficulty Mode" section below.



7. Very Difficult: Places words in any of the eight possible directions (4 compass directions and 4 diagonals.) The remainder of the puzzle is filled with letters of the alphabet that are from your words (making it harder to find the words), or filled with your optional secret message. It avoids placing words along the edges and very top/bottom rows, and avoids placing words alongside each other. There are more decoy wordlets.



8. Diabolically Difficult: Places words in any of the eight possible directions (4 compass directions and 4 diagonals.) The remainder of the puzzle is filled with letters of the alphabet that are from your words (making it harder to find the words), or filled with your optional secret message. It avoids placing words along the edges and very top/bottom rows, and avoids placing words alongside each other. Up to half the remaining empty puzzle space is filled with decoy wordlets.



Note: There are fewer difficulty choices available in the Lite version of this software.

Advanced Difficulty Mode *(Full & Pro Feature)*

Switching to this mode replaces the “basic” difficulty slider above with its individual settings below, letting you change each of the difficulty parameters separately. This gives you much finer control⁷ over how your puzzle is created.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Mode' settings interface. At the top, there are two radio buttons: 'Basic Mode' (unselected) and 'Advanced Mode' (selected). Below this is a section titled 'Word Directions' containing a 3x3 grid of arrow icons. The center icon (up arrow) is highlighted with a text overlay that says 'Tap the arrows to toggle'. Below the arrows is a dropdown menu labeled 'Fill puzzle with:' set to 'Only word letters + Decoy Wordlets'. Below that is another dropdown labeled 'Amount of word overlap:' set to 'Some'. There is an unchecked checkbox labeled 'Allow words to overlap along same direction'. Below that is a dropdown labeled 'Allow words to be alongside:' set to 'A Little'. Then another dropdown labeled '# of "Decoy Wordlets" to add:' set to 'Some'. Below that is a checked checkbox labeled 'Avoid laying words along puzzle edges'. At the bottom, there is a text field labeled 'Your "fill-letters" to use (from the chosen alphabet):' containing the letters 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'. Below the text field is a button labeled 'Reset to Default Fill-Letters'.

Word directions (Arrows)

You can choose any number of directions to place your words. Simply tap on any of the direction arrows to toggle that direction “on” or “off.” At least one direction must be left on, of course, but other than that, any combination of directions is allowed. The words for your puzzle will be placed only in one of these chosen directions.

⁷ Whirlwind WordSearch may need to intelligently adjust settings if it cannot easily lay your words into the puzzle you chose. You may have a list of words and options that make it almost impossible to build the puzzle, especially if it has little free space. If that is the case, then as the puzzle progress passes 40% Whirlwind WordSearch will continue building your puzzle, but with fewer restrictions. That is, it will quietly **turn off** some of the settings you have chosen, to see if it has more luck in building the puzzle. For example, if you have turned **on** the setting “Avoid laying words along puzzle edges”, if it cannot build the puzzle with that setting after about 50% of its time trying, it will turn that setting **off** and continue trying. At 70% it will also begin removing any optional words one-by-one as it retries. This means that for these tightly-packed puzzles, some of your initial settings will be overruled and the puzzle may be built a little differently than you expect.

Fill puzzle with:

Here you can choose how to fill the remaining puzzle in different ways:

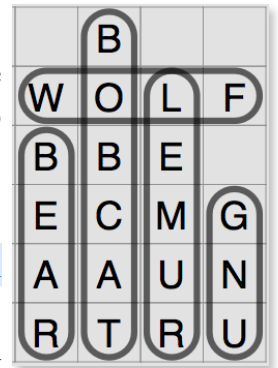
- **Non-Word Letters:** Uses any letters from your alphabet that are not already used in your words. This is an “easy” mode that helps your words stand out more.
- **Only Your Fill Letters:** Uses any letters from your fill letters. This does not add any decoy wordlets.
- **Only Your Fill Letters+Decoy Wordlets:** Uses any of your fill letters, and can add decoy wordlets.
- **Only word letters+Decoy Wordlets:** Uses only letters that are used in your words. It adds decoy wordlets. This is a “difficult” mode that makes your words blend in.

Amount of word overlap

You can change how many word overlaps (word crossings) are in the puzzle.

Easy puzzles often have some overlapping words. This allows you to make the puzzle size a little smaller, with a larger font. Setting the overlap to “lots” will attempt to overlap *almost every* word with another word, if possible. It tries to overlap words, looking for identical letters shared between two words.

Note: Setting the overlap to **lots** or **all** will, of course, cluster the words together in one dense area of the puzzle, which often makes the puzzle a little easier to solve.



Harder and larger puzzles generally will have fewer overlapping words. Thus, it may require a slightly larger puzzle size to fit all the non-overlapping words.

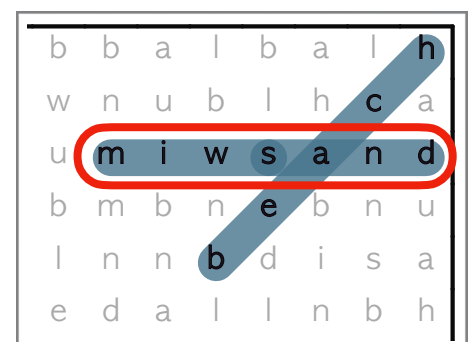
Of course, if you request that **all** words overlap and you have a word that has **no** letters in common with any other words, *Whirlwind WordSearch* will issue a sad, quiet little sigh, roll its eyes and dice, and quietly place your word in a non-overlapping position instead.

Setting the overlap to “all” will *require* every word to overlap some other word, and if this is not possible (for example, you still have that pesky word “xyzyzy” that has no letters in common with any other words), then *Whirlwind WordSearch* will issue an error message. It will indicate that the puzzle could not be created with all words overlapping per your request.

Allow words to overlap along same direction

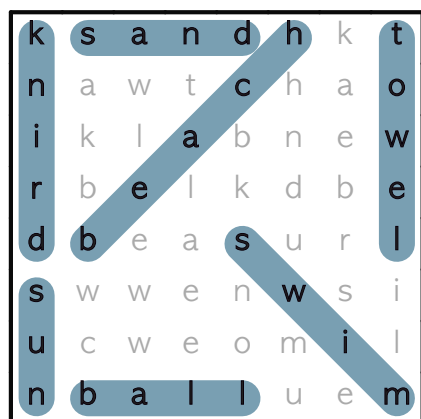
Turning this on allows overlapping words to join along the same direction (collinear.) Turn this off to ensure that overlapped words will always be in different directions from each other. This will make it easier to distinguish overlapping words on the answer key. Otherwise, they tend to run together along a single line and look like a single long word. This option is only available when the “Amount of word overlap” menu is set to something other than “None.”

The example here shows the two words “swim” and “sand” overlapping in the same direction.

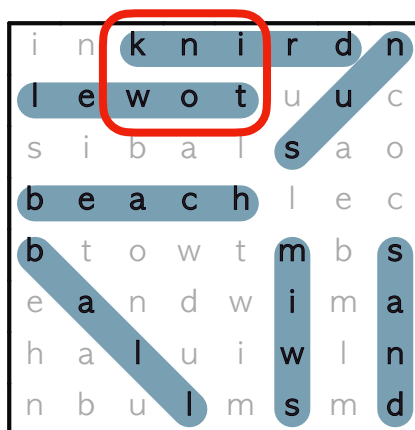


Allow words to be alongside

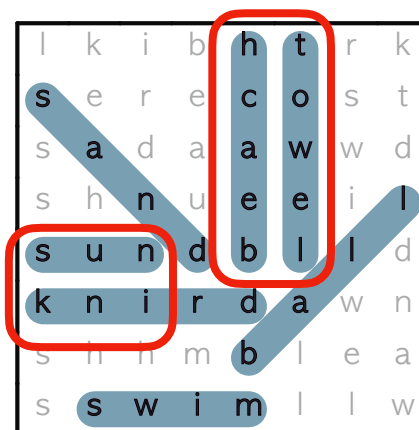
If you have a large puzzle area with a small number of words, you may want the words spread out from each other in the puzzle, and not alongside each other. However, if you are packing a lot of words into a small puzzle with very little free space left, you will need to allow the words to lay side-by-side.



Never



A Little



Anywhere

This setting lets you adjust whether words should **never** be alongside, or allow **a little** side-by-side action. If you set it to **anywhere**, then it will not check for side-by-side words at all, and let them be placed anywhere and thus be alongside at any time.

Note: This is not the same as the “word overlap” setting above, which forces word overlapping (crossings.)

of “Decoy Wordlets” to Add

“Decoy Wordlets” are short pieces of words taken from your word list, sprinkled into the puzzle. They’re designed to throw your puzzle solvers off the track as they look for the words. The decoy wordlets are added into empty areas between your words, along with the other “fill letters. They appear after your secret message has been laid in. You can change how many of these are added, anywhere from none up to “lots.” If you set it to “lots,” *Whirlwind WordSearch* will attempt to fill up to half the remaining empty space within the puzzle with these decoys. This option is only enabled if you chose a “Fill Puzzle With” option that includes “Decoy Wordlets.”

Avoid Laying Words Along Puzzle Edges

Turn this on to avoid laying any words completely along the edge of a puzzle. This makes a word easy to find. *Whirlwind WordSearch* may still eventually lay a word or two along the edge if it is having trouble fitting all the words in overall.

Your Fill Letters to Use (From the Chosen Alphabet)

You can add or remove letters from this list that would normally be used to randomly “fill” the rest of your puzzle. Whenever you choose the “Fill puzzle with” pop-up menu and choose items that refer to “fill letters,” this set of letters will be used to fill random letters. The list is initially filled with every letter of the chosen alphabet, except those with diacritical letters. You can add or delete letters that you don't want to use as fill letters, but you *must* leave at least a few letters. Otherwise, random filling won't work.

Each of these letters *must* be from your chosen alphabet. You may enter either upper- or lowercase letters, since these will be automatically convert and save as lowercase.

For example, in French, you may want to add the letter ç to the fill-letters. Or, if you want to fill the rest of the puzzle with *only* the letters A, B, and Z⁸, then you would set the “Fill puzzle with” menu to “Only your fill-letters...”. Afterward, set this text field to “abz.”

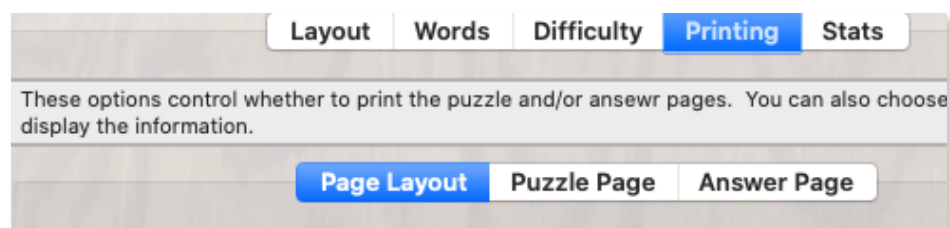
Note: Whenever you change the alphabet to some other language, the fill letters text field automatically gets reset to the default fill letters for that new alphabet.

Reset to Default Fill Letters

Tapping this button will reset the fill letters text to hold every letter of the chosen alphabet, except those with diacritical letters. It will overwrite whatever letters are in there.

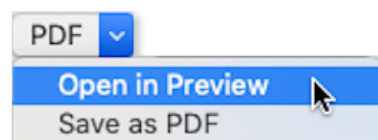
Tip: If you want to quickly add in all the diacriticals, you can simply tap the “Words” tab. Select, copy and paste the entire alphabet line from the “Alphabet/Font Example” display. Then, paste the list of letters here.

5.14. Printing - Tab



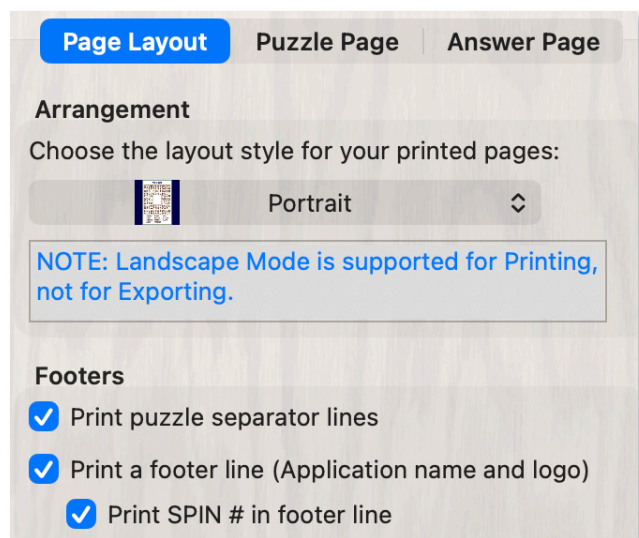
This tab contains many more fine-tuning options for how your printed puzzle and answer pages can be arranged. These settings will not affect your exported puzzle files; only your printed output.

Note: To “preview” what your printed puzzle will look like on the page without having to print it first, choose *Print*. At the bottom of the print dialog, choose “PDF: Open in Preview.” There you can see the final puzzle/answer pages printed to a separate PDF document on-screen.



⁸ Perhaps your name is Uncle Shelby.



5.15. Printing:Page Layout - Tab



Page Layout | Puzzle Page | Answer Page

Arrangement

Choose the layout style for your printed pages:

 Portrait 

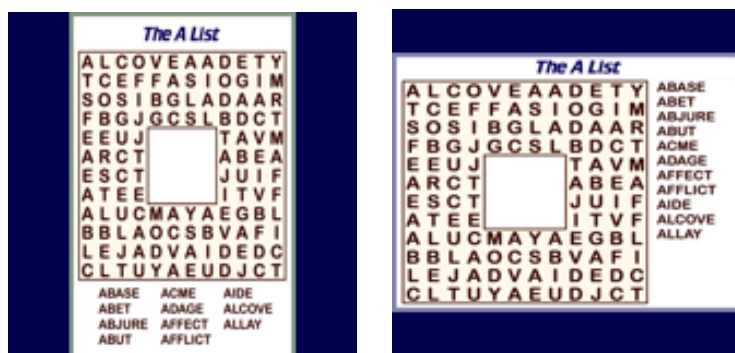
NOTE: Landscape Mode is supported for Printing, not for Exporting.

Footers

- ☒ Print puzzle separator lines
- ☒ Print a footer line (Application name and logo)
- ☒ Print SPIN # in footer line

Arrangement

This allows you to choose the page's orientation, portrait (tall) or landscape (wide). As expected, this changes how the puzzle and word list will be laid out. This setting affects how the puzzle and answer are printed, but does not affect how they are exported.



Footers

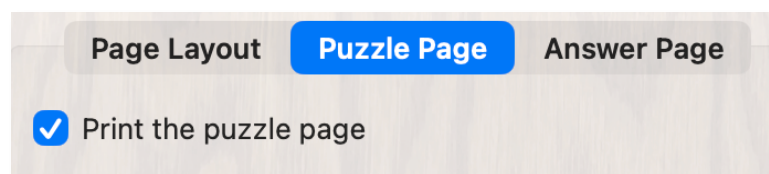
Print puzzle separator lines: Turn this on to print separator lines between title, puzzle, and word list on the printed puzzle and answer pages. Turn this off if you do not want any separator lines printed there. This applies to export too, but only when you turn on the “including Ttitle and Word List” option.

Print a footer line (Application name and swan logo): Turn this on to display a footer line with the application's name and company logo at the bottom of the printed puzzle and answer page.

Note: The “Print a footer line” option is always *on* in the Lite version of this software.

Print SPIN # in footer line: Add the puzzle's SPIN # to the footer line. For more information on the SPIN #, [see this section](#).

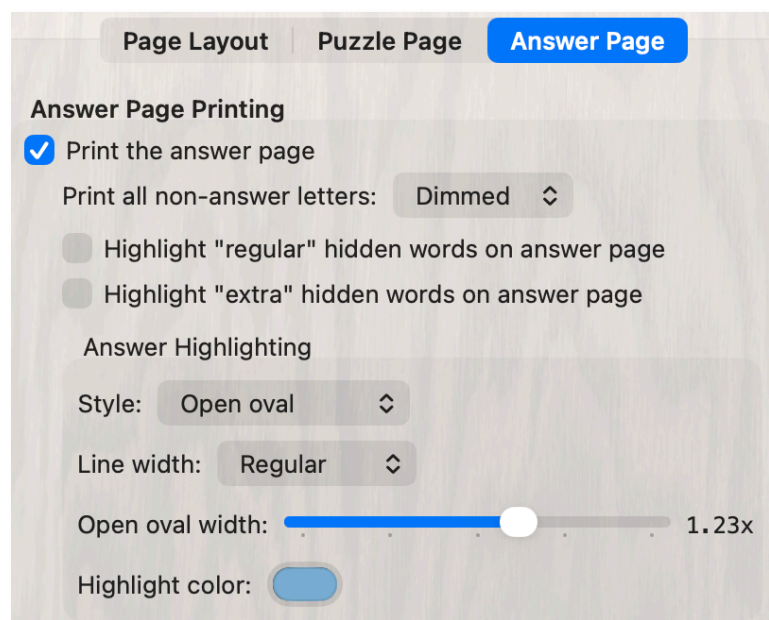
5.16. Printing: Puzzle Page - Tab



Puzzle Page Printing

Print the Puzzle Page: Turn this on to print the page containing only the puzzle. Turn it off to completely skip printing of the puzzle page. For example, you may just need to re-print the answer page.

5.17. Printing: Answer Page - Tab



Answer Page Printing

Print the Answer Page: Turn this on to print the page containing the answer key. Turning this off will skip printing the answer key page altogether. This is useful if you have already printed it and don't need to print it again. Likewise, skip this step if you haven't a need for the answers but only the puzzle.

Print all non-answer letters: This lets you choose how the answer key is filled with “non-answer letters.” The remaining letters can either be NEVER shown, or they can be shown in a DIMMED gray color. Alternatively, they can be shown ALWAYS, or the same color as the answer letters. Note that, if you set this to NEVER, then the grid lines will be forced back on for the answer key. This helps you see where the words are relative to the puzzle.

Highlight 'regular' hidden words on answer page: Normally, any words that you have marked as “hidden” (with a leading asterisk) in your word list will be hidden (not printed) in the word list and will be hidden in the answer key. Turning this on will show (and print) the hidden words in the answer key, and they will be highlighted with an oval background. They will still be omitted from the printed word list.

Highlight 'extra' hidden words on answer page: Normally, any words that you have added in the [“Extra-Hidden-Words” tab of the Settings dialog](#) will be hidden (not printed) in the word list and will be hidden in the answer key. Turning this on will show (and print) the extra hidden words in the answer key, and they will be highlighted with an oval background. They will still be omitted from the printed word list.

Answer Highlighting

Style: You can highlight the answer key words with “open ovals,” “solid ovals,” or “strike-through lines” - whichever you prefer.

Line width: You can adjust the size/thickness of the line to make it thinner or thicker than the regular size.

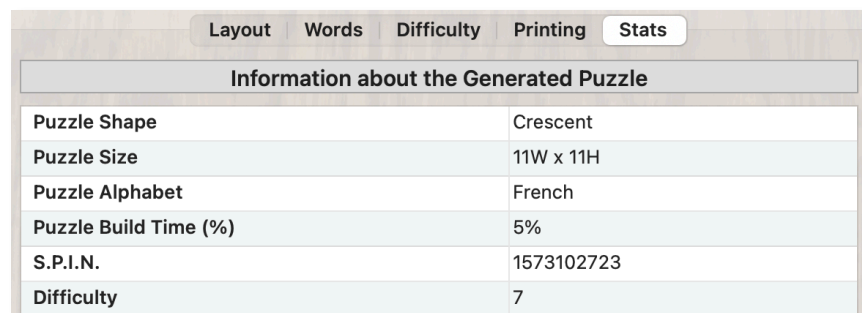
Open oval width: If you chose the “open oval” style, you can widen or narrow the width of the oval/loop a bit, to your liking.

Highlight color: Tap the color wheel to pick a new color for the oval/strike-through lines drawn along the placed words in the answer key.



5.18. Stats - Tab

This tab displays a number of statistics about the generated puzzle. If no puzzle has been created yet, then this page will be empty.



Information about the Generated Puzzle	
Puzzle Shape	Crescent
Puzzle Size	11W x 11H
Puzzle Alphabet	French
Puzzle Build Time (%)	5%
S.P.I.N.	1573102723
Difficulty	7

Puzzle Shape: The name of the puzzle shape you chose.

Puzzle Size: The width and height of the puzzle in letters.

Puzzle Alphabet: The name of the alphabet you have chosen to use for the puzzle words.

S.P.I.N.: The Specific Puzzle Identification Number. It's used to exactly re-create a particular puzzle layout. See [this section link](#) for more SPIN information.

Puzzle Build Time (%): How long it took before finding an answer, as a relative “percentage” of the total allowed number of attempts.

Difficulty: The level of difficulty used (one through eight, or “advanced”).)

Word List Words Total: A count of how many total (non-hidden) words you typed in your word list. It includes all the words you typed whether they got placed in the puzzle or not.

Word List Words Shown: A count of the number of words that are displayed in the puzzle's final word list. This is the number of words the user expects to find in the puzzle, so it does not count hidden or dropped optional words.

Dropped Optional Words: A count of how many +optional word list words that *could not* be placed into the puzzle. Ultimately, these were dropped from the list.

Words in Direction —: A count of how many word list words (for one of the eight layout directions) that got placed into the puzzle.

Total # Letters from Words: A count of how many total letters you used across all the words in your word list.

Unique Letters from Words: A consolidated list of each unique alphabetic letter used across all the words in your word list.

Total # Unique Letters from Words: A count of how many total *unique* letters you used across all the words in your word list.

Decoy Wordlets Added: While the puzzle is being created in the highest difficulty modes, the software sprinkles some pieces of each of your word list words as “decoys” into the puzzle, to trick the puzzle solver. This number is a count of how many decoy wordlets were added. The positions of these added partial words can be shown in the preview window by turning on the “Show Decoy Wordlets” checkbox, described [at this section link](#).

Total Overlapping Letters: How many letters overlap (i.e. are shared between words) in the puzzle.

Total Letters in Puzzle: A count of how many letter spaces there are in the current puzzle's shape. For a 10x10 “square” shape, this would be 100 (10 wide by 10 high.) For a 10x10 “circle”, it will be a little less (76) since the rounded corners are not filled with letters.

Remaining Spaces in Puzzle: A count of how many letter spaces there are in the current puzzle's shape which are not part of the placed words. This is a count of all the empty spaces between the words. These normally get filled with random letters, or with your “secret message.” Although this number can vary by a few spaces each time you make a new puzzle, it gives a good idea how many letters are available for the “secret message phrase” if you want it to exactly fill that space.

Percentage of Puzzle Filled: The total percentage of letters in the puzzle that are filled with letters from your words, or in other words, how densely the puzzle is filled with your words. The higher the percentage, the longer it will take to generate the puzzle.

of Zapped Duplicate Words: A count of how many duplicate words it found and removed from the generated puzzle. These “eliminated” word positions can be shown in the preview window by turning on the “Show removed dupe words” checkbox, described [at this section link](#).

of Zapped Naughty Words: A count of how many naughty words it found and removed from the generated puzzle. These “eliminated” word positions can be displayed by turning on the “Show removed 'Naughty Words'” checkbox in the Preview window. Of course, if you are making a word search puzzle *with* a list of naughty words, those naughty words you intentionally added in your word list will remain in the puzzle. After all, you *wanted* them there!

Total Naughty Words to check: A count of how many naughty words that *Whirlwind WordSearch* knows about. It can eliminate for the language you chose. This includes any “excluded words” you added in the Settings window.

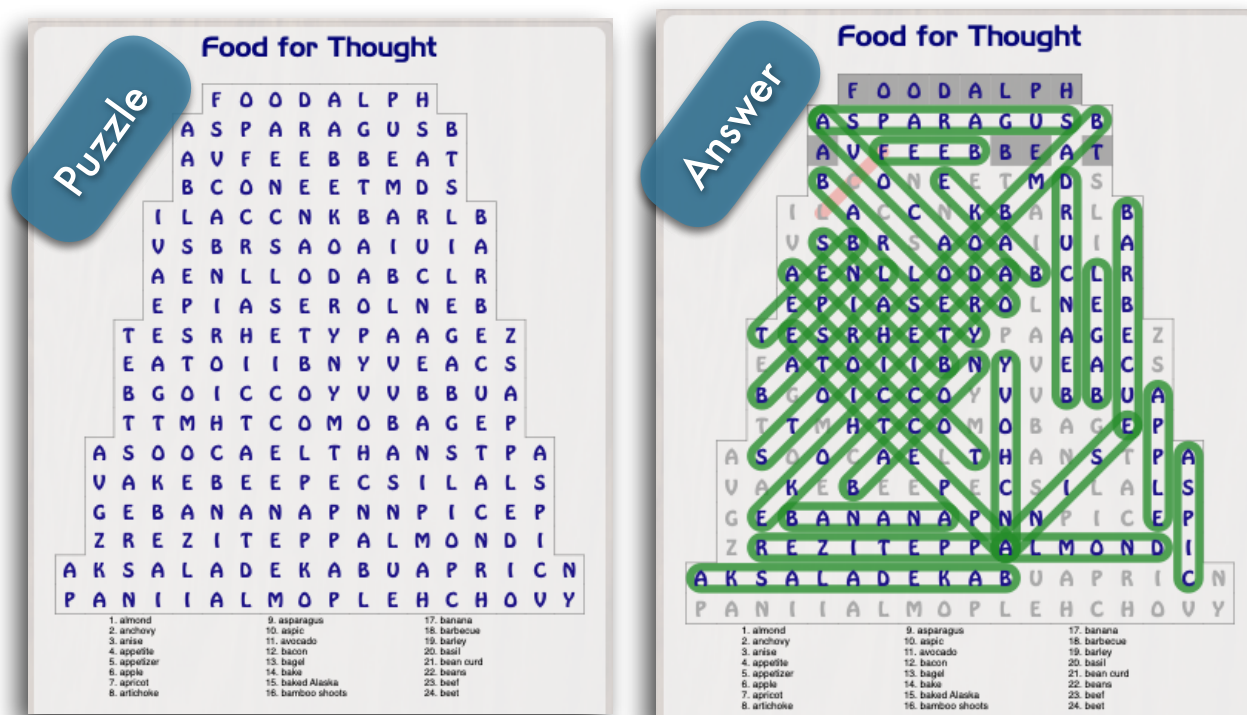
Secret Message Text: The actual text from your secret message. This line will only show if you have some text for a secret message.

Secret Message Position: Top/Middle/Bottom/Exact Fit. This line will only show if you have some text for a secret message.

Secret Message Length in puzzle: The total number of letters in the text from your secret message. This line will only show if you have some text for a secret message.

5.19. Preview on the Right

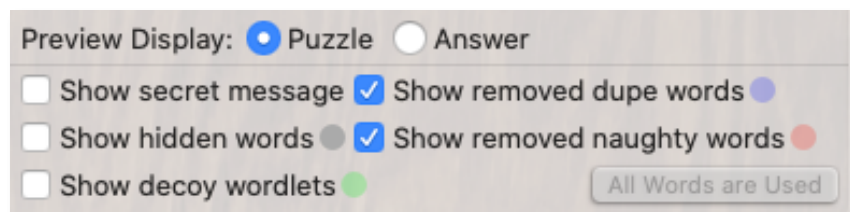
The right side of the window displays a preview of the generated puzzle, or its answer key. If you create a new puzzle, or make changes to the puzzle in the various tabs, they will be shown here.



This shows what your puzzle and answer will look like when you print or export. It also shows the optional puzzle title, subtitle, separator lines, and word list which will be printed around the puzzle. You can always tap the “build” button again until you see a puzzle layout that you like before you decide to export or print it.

As you change the layout settings (e.g. Letter Font, Gridlines, etc.) this preview area will immediately update to show your changes.

Preview Display:



Puzzle/Answer radio buttons: Choose the “Puzzle” radio button to see the puzzle, without highlighting its answer. Choose “Answer” to display what the answer key will look like, displaying the positions of the words using your chosen answer highlight style

Checkboxes: Above the preview display are some checkboxes that can add some display details to the preview area. Changing these checkboxes *does not* affect the final printed or exported puzzles, only what is shown in this preview window. These controls can show some of the extra “behind-the-scenes” work that *Whirlwind WordSearch* does to create your puzzle.

Show secret message: Turn this on to highlight your secret message with a gray background in each cell. If it's turned off, then the secret message will not be specially highlighted this way. Rather, it will simply look like all the other random fill letters.

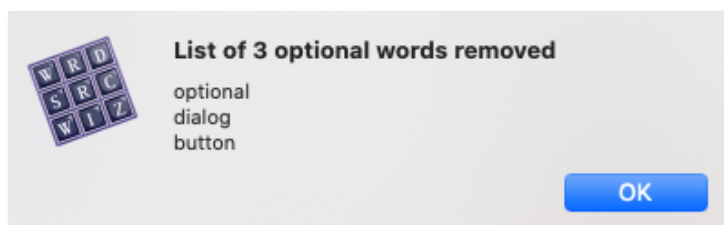
Show Hidden Words: Turn this on to highlight (in a gray answer highlight style) any words you marked as "hidden." This will show both your "regular" hidden words, and any "extra-hidden" words you set up via the Settings dialog. Toggling this setting only affects the preview display. To show or hide the hidden words in your printed or exported output, use the checkboxes under the Printing:Answer Page: tab mentioned [in this section](#).

Show Removed "Naughty Words": Turn this on to highlight (in light red strike-through) any "naughty word" that was detected and removed or altered during the puzzle-making process. The displayed word will already have been "altered." Therefore, it is no longer "naughty." Of course, any naughty words that you intentionally added into your word list will remain in the puzzle, since you *wanted* them there. This only removes naughty words that were randomly added when filling the rest of the puzzle. The internal list of naughty words that are detected is based on which alphabet you chose to make the puzzle along with any that you add via the Settings dialog.

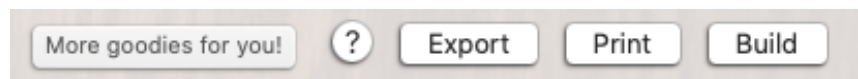
Show "Decoy Wordlets": Turn this on to highlight (in light green strike-through) any partial "[decoy wordlets](#)" that were added during the puzzle-making process.

Show removed duplicate words: Turn this on to highlight (in light blue strike-through) any accidentally-randomly-created duplicate of one of your words that was found during the puzzle-making process. These words were either altered or removed.

Show # Unused Optional Words: If there were optional words in your word list that were not used but removed in order to create the puzzle, this button can be enabled. It is displayed just under the preview checkboxes. Click it to bring up a dialog which lists any unused optional words. You can select and copy this list from the dialog, in case you want to paste these words into a new puzzle's word list. Once a puzzle is built where all the optional words were successfully placed, this button will be disabled. It will simply say: "All Words Used."




5.20. Buttons Along the Bottom Right



More Goodies for You! Button

This button opens a window displaying a list of my other software products and published books. Each has a short description. Simply tap one of the product rows. It will immediately open your web browser to a page that fully describes that product, and how to get it.

Help (User Guide) Button

 The circled-question-mark button is a “help” button. It opens a window with this user guide displayed for quick access. It is the same as choosing “User Guide” from the Help menu.

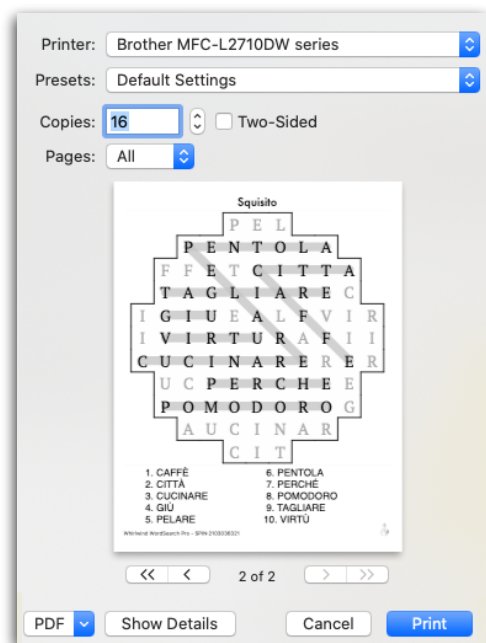
Note: While the user guide window is open, you can tap any "table-of-contents" page number to jump to that page. To search for a word or phrase, enter that text in the Search field. You can type the <Return> key to find the next occurrences of that text.

Export Button

After building the puzzle, you can immediately export the puzzle and answer by tapping the “Export” button in the lower-right corner of the document window. You can also choose “Export Puzzle” from the “File” menu, or tap ⌘-1. This will bring up an export dialog, letting you choose the destination directory and a number of other options. See [the export section](#) for more information.

Print Button

After building the puzzle, you can immediately print it by tapping the “Print” button in the lower-right corner of the document window. You can also choose “Print” from the File menu, or tap ⌘-P. This will bring up the standard print dialog, letting you choose the printer, page layout, number of copies, etc.

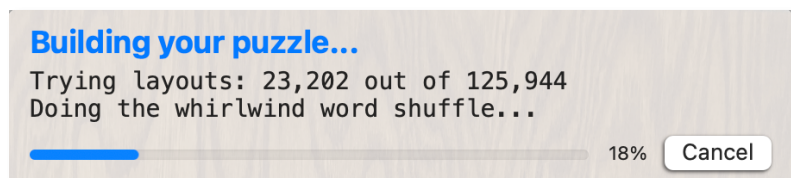


Before you print the pages, you can configure what to print and how the page looks. For example, the page title, footers, and whether to print the word search puzzle or the answer page (or both). You can do this from settings under the main window's "Layout" tabs, described above.

Build Button

After configuring the puzzle, you can tell the software to build it by tapping the "Build" button in the lower-right corner of the document window. You can also choose the "Build the puzzle" menu item on the action menu, or type ⌘-B.

Once the puzzle begins building, a progress window will display:

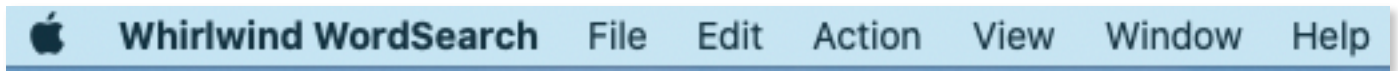


As it tries laying in your words to match the difficulty rules you chose in millions of different positions, it shows the progress as a percentage. This could take anywhere from a few seconds to a minute or two, depending on how large or complex the puzzle is. If you want to stop the building of the puzzle, simply tap the "Cancel" button. The puzzle will stop building and be cleared. You can then make adjustments and try building it again.

If you don't like the final answer layout for the currently built puzzle, simply tap the "Build" button again. Each time you tap it, a new puzzle will be made with a completely different layout of your words.

5.21. Menus at the Top

The menu items along the top “menu bar” contain special commands for opening/closing/printing your documents, etc. You won’t need to use them too often, but the menu items that are specific to *Whirlwind WordSearch* are explained here.



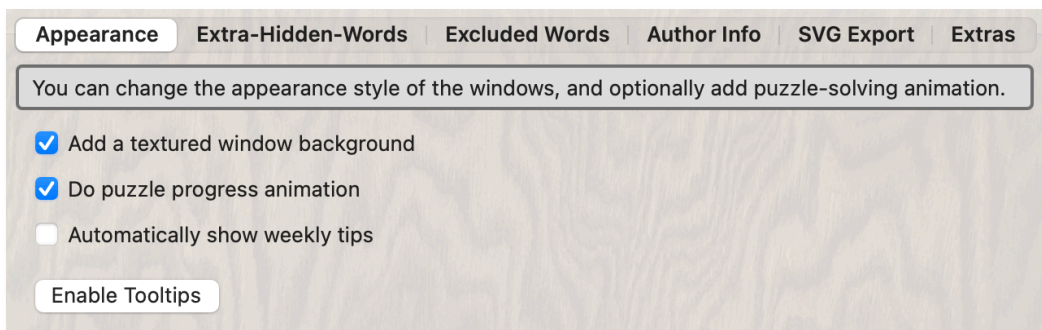
>“Whirlwind WordSearch” - Menu

About Whirlwind WordSearch

Choose this item to display a window that gives credit to all the people who helped make this software happen. Watch them scroll by and wave as you listen to the fun parade music I wrote, or if you have the Pro version, dance to my waltz music.

Settings⁹

Choose this item to open a window that lets you change application-specific settings. When you set the values here, they are used for all future runs of *Whirlwind WordSearch*. They are used for any of your documents, until you change them again here.



Appearance

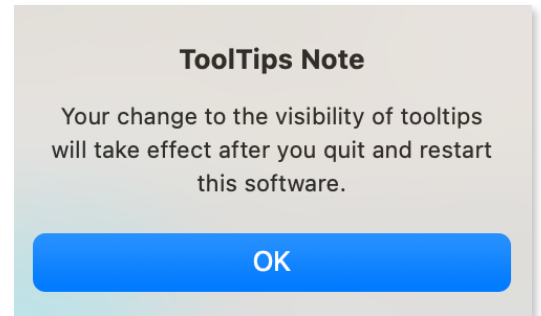
Textured window background: Turn this on to add a wood-grain finish to the windows. Turn it off to have a flat finish. This is aesthetic and only affects the screen view, and does not affect the printed/saved puzzles. This setting change is immediately remembered. All future documents and launches of the app will use your new setting. Unlike the other document-specific settings, this is saved for the application. Therefore, it will affect the look of the windows, no matter which documents you open. After fifty years, it is time for wood grain finishes to be popular again. (However, orange and avocado-green are forever gone.)

Do puzzle progress animation: Turn this on watch the animated attempts to insert words in the preview area while building puzzles. This works by showing a snapshot of every 1,000th attempt to lay out the words in the Preview area as it works through many many many (many) possibilities of word positions.

⁹ Apple changed the menu item name from its original “Preferences” to “Settings” (in MacOS 13/ Ventura) to better align with iPhones, because, well, you know, “a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds.”

Automatically show weekly user tips: This will cause *Whirlwind WordSearch*, once a week, to open with a little window with an interesting tip or suggestion for things you can do with this software. Each week a new tip will be displayed. Turn this off to permanently silence the dialogs. You can always manually read the next one by choosing “Next User Tip” from the Help menu.

Disable/Enable Tooltips: You know those useful text pop-ups that help you learn what each item is before you click on it by floating the text under your mouse cursor? After using the software for awhile, you may want to turn those off, since they sometimes cover up what you are trying to look at. Now you can! Well, you can now turn *most* of them off... the ones on the main document window, the main menu, the export window and bulk-builder window. Simply tap the “Disable Tooltips” button, and (after reading the note) quit and re-start the software, and from now on, the tooltips will be gone. If you want them back, simply repeat this process, as the button will now say “Enable Tooltips”.



Extra Hidden Words (Full & Pro Feature)

You can add extra words here that will *always* be added to *every* puzzle you make. Like your other hidden words, these will not be highlighted in the answer key. You can have a different set of words for each language/alphabet you choose. Each word must be on a separate line and must only consist of letters from the currently chosen language/alphabet. This can be useful for adding your name or company name into every puzzle you make. It can be used as a kind of anti-theft watermark, for example.

Note that it is possible to accidentally add a word that is too long or has letters from other than your currently-chosen alphabet or is a duplicate of other words in your word list. These problems will be detected later when you try to build the puzzle, and an error message will be displayed.

Excluded Words (Full & Pro Feature)

There is currently a built-in list of “naughty words” for which your puzzles are scanned. These are removed if they are randomly created from the extra fill letters in your puzzle. Now you can extend it with your own set of “excluded words”, in case you have your own particular slang/derogatory words you don’t want to accidentally get created in your puzzles.

You can have a different list for each language/alphabet you choose. Each word in the list must be on a separate line and must only consist of letters from the language/alphabet you choose. If a word in your list has letters from other than your currently-chosen language/alphabet, or is a duplicate of one of the built-in known bad words, then it will be quietly ignored.

Author Info (Full & Pro Feature)

When you export your puzzles, you will likely want to insert your name and copyright information into the exported files as a way to protect/watermark your work. Some of the export formats support this embedded information, specifically IPUZ, SVG, ESP Files, and the Text info files. You can enter your information here. By doing so, it will be added to every file you export.

SVG Export (Full & Pro Feature)

When you export your puzzles in “SVG” format, that file will include your specific font name for the title, letters and word list, as well as substitute or fall-back fonts to use in case your specific font choice is not available on the destination user’s computer. Since you have no control over which fonts other people have on their computers, SVG can supply additional general-purpose “fall-back” fonts.

The screenshot shows the 'SVG Export' tab in the software's settings. At the top, there are tabs for 'Appearance', 'Extra-Hidden-Words', 'Excluded Words', 'Author Info', 'SVG Export', and 'Extras'. A text box explains that users can choose to add a list of 'Fall-back SVG fonts' for text items. Below this, a checkbox labeled 'Add "Fall-back" fonts to SVG text' is checked, with a note '(Useful when exporting to web-sites)'. Underneath, three font selection fields are shown: 'Title Font' (set to 'Serif'), 'Letters Font' (set to 'Sans-serif #2'), and 'Word List Font' (set to 'Sans-serif #2'). Each field has a dropdown arrow and a list of fallback fonts. Below the font settings is a section titled 'Approximate SVG Examples' which lists various font styles and their corresponding fallback text: 'Serif: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Sans-serif: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Mono-space: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Rounded: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Cursive: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Fantasy: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Serif #2: ABC,xyz,#123!', 'Sans-serif #2: ABC,xyz,#123!', and 'Mono-space #2: ABC,xyz,#123!'.

Appearance Extra-Hidden-Words Excluded Words Author Info **SVG Export** Extras

Here you can choose to add a list of "Fall-back SVG fonts for text items that will be used in your exported SVG files. This is suggested if you are using the SVG files for the web. If you are immediately importing the SVG files to a page layout document and re-exporting as PDF, then you should leave this off.

☒ Add "Fall-back" fonts to SVG text (Useful when exporting to web-sites)

Title Font: **Serif**

font-family: "Crillee", Times, "Times New Roman", "Bookerly", Georgia, serif;

Letters Font: **Sans-serif #2**

font-family: "Tekton Pro", Verdana, "Futura", ui-sans-serif;

Word List Font: **Sans-serif #2**

font-family: "Hannotate SC", Verdana, "Futura", ui-sans-serif;

Approximate SVG Examples

Serif: ABC,xyz,#123!

Sans-serif: ABC,xyz,#123!

Mono-space: ABC,xyz,#123!

Rounded: ABC,xyz,#123!

Cursive: ABC,xyz,#123!

Fantasy: ABC,xyz,#123!

Serif #2: ABC,xyz,#123!

Sans-serif #2: ABC,xyz,#123!

Mono-space #2: ABC,xyz,#123!

Add “Fall-back” fonts to SVG text: When you are creating SVGs to display directly on the web, you will want to turn *on* the “fallback fonts” that will be substituted if your font isn’t there.

However, if instead you are directly importing your SVG files into another publishing/page layout program on your computer (e.g. InDesign or Affinity Publisher) and you will then be exporting them all to a final PDF file, then you don’t need to specify other “fallback fonts” in case yours is missing. In this case, you should turn *off* the “Add Fall-back...” checkbox.

Below that you can choose which fall-back fonts which will closely match your chosen font for the title, letters, and word list. The font styles you choose here will be used for all future SVG exports.

Below that is a legend showing an approximate example of the fall-back font styles listed in the pop-up menus above, for reference.

Extras (Full & Pro Feature)

Puzzle Grid Aspect Ratio:

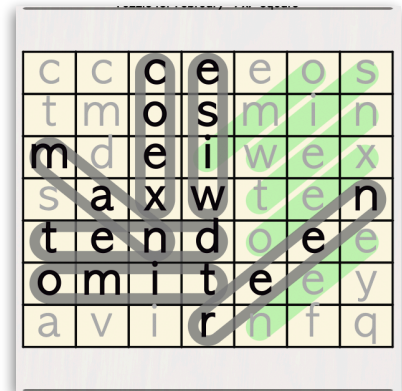
There may be the rare occasion when you might want the printed or exported puzzle grid to be *slightly* stretched to be a little wider than tall, or a little taller than wide. This allows you that fine adjustment. Changing the Width adjustment to 80% makes the puzzle width 80% of its height. The normal setting for exactly square cells is 100%. This adjustment will affect the all your printed and exported puzzles.



80%



100%



120%

Save Document Settings as Defaults

Choose this item to take and save a “snapshot” of the current document's settings (including title, subtitle, puzzle size & shape, printing options, word list, etc.). Afterward, all *new* documents you create with *Whirlwind WordSearch* will start with these default settings. This can be useful if you find that you have certain settings that you *always* want for your projects, e.g. certain fonts, colors or grid line settings or answer highlight styles.

Note: It saves *all* your document settings, including your word list, puzzle title/subtitle, secret message, and puzzle layout. You will probably want to clear these prior to selecting this menu option, to create a cleaner snapshot.

Reset Document Settings to Defaults

Choose this item to reset all the current document's settings to the saved default settings (including title, maze size & shape, printing options, etc.)

Note: This only affects the currently open document settings, and does not change the settings for newly opened documents. To reset the settings for all future new documents, immediately select the “Save Document Settings as Default” menu item after selecting this menu item.

Change Current Colors to B&W

Choose this setting if you are printing a black-and-white book or worksheet, It will quickly change all font/grid colors to black and white (and gray).

Note: This changes the colors in the currently opened document, and does not save them for other documents. If you want all future new documents to have this setting, then immediately select “Save Document Settings as Default” after selecting this menu option.

Pro Upgrade...

This menu item allows you to purchase an in-app upgrade. Immediately it gives you all the extra features available in the Professional (Pro) version of this software. For details, see [this section](#).

>“File” - Menu

New

Creates a new empty document window, where you can build a new puzzle. Save your puzzle document as a file if you want to open it later. You can have multiple windows open at once, switching between each of them periodically.

Open/Save (Full & Pro Feature)

This allows you to save an existing puzzle to a file (including the word list and all your settings), or re-open it. These files can also be sent to other *Whirlwind WordSearch* users. Then they, too, can then open and use the puzzle. These special files can only be opened by *Whirlwind WordSearch*.

Revert to> (Full & Pro Feature)

As you build puzzles from a document, you can periodically **Save** your changes to the current document. It will be remembered as a “snapshot” or “version.” Later on, you can choose this menu item to bring up a list of these past saved versions of this document. Choosing one will instantly restore it back to one of those prior saved file versions. Use this feature to “rewind” back to an earlier puzzle layout you might have liked best.

Export Puzzle...

Choose a file name, and in turn, an image of the puzzle (and optionally an image of the answer) will be converted and saved. This item will be disabled if you have not yet built a puzzle. You can export only the puzzle image, or both the puzzle and answer images together. See the [export section](#) for more detailed information.

Print

This opens the print dialog and allows you to print one or more copies of your puzzle page (and/or answer page) to a printer.

>“Edit” - Menu

Copy Formatted: (as image)

Choose one of these to copy a (PDF) graphic image to the clipboard. These items will be disabled if you have not yet created a puzzle. Capturing each element of the puzzle this way can be useful if you are quickly setting the puzzle page in your own layout, and want the puzzle, word list, answer grid, etc. in different positions on the page.

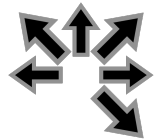
Puzzle Grid as Image

Answer Grid as Image

Word List as Image

Word Direction Arrows as Image

This copies a square image of direction arrows, where each of the eight arrows will be shown if there are any words in the currently built puzzle that lay along that direction. This can be used as an extra clue or legend on the puzzle page for easier puzzles.



Copy Formatted: (as text)

Choose one of these to copy a (PDF) graphic image to the clipboard: the puzzle grid, the answer grid, or the word list. These items will be disabled if you have not yet created a puzzle. **Copy Formatted :**
Puzzle Grid as Text

Answer Grid as Text

Word List as Text

These are most useful if you wish to extract the raw puzzle text, and do your own fancy formatting. The puzzle and answer grid of letters are written in a tab-delimited format. This text can be easily pasted into word processors or spreadsheet programs for further formatting.

Note: When you choose the menu item File:Export and turn on the “and Info Text File” option, it will include the puzzle and answer grids written in two different text format styles (tab and comma-separated.) For more information, [see this section](#).

Spelling and Grammar

These menu items can offer you a visual indication of any misspelled words you either type in the word list or the secret message text areas. It also checks for misspelled words in the title and subtitle. You can select “Check Spelling While Typing” here. Any word that is unrecognizable by the dictionary will have a red underline beneath it.

>“Action” - Menu

Build the Puzzle

This generates a word search puzzle from the words and settings you have chosen. It’s equivalent to tapping the *Build* button on the main window.

Stop

Choose this to interrupt and halt the creation of a word search puzzle in progress. This is the same as tapping the *Cancel* button in the “Building...” progress sheet.

Shape Editor... (*Pro Feature*)

Design your own custom shapes and use them to create puzzles. You can read how to use this powerful feature in [the section linked here](#).

Bulk Builder... (*Pro Feature*)

Choose this to open the Bulk-Builder tool window. You can read how to use this powerful feature in [the section linked here](#).

>“View” - Menu

Enter/Exit Full Screen

Toggle the main window between regular size and full-screen mode.

>“Help” - Menu

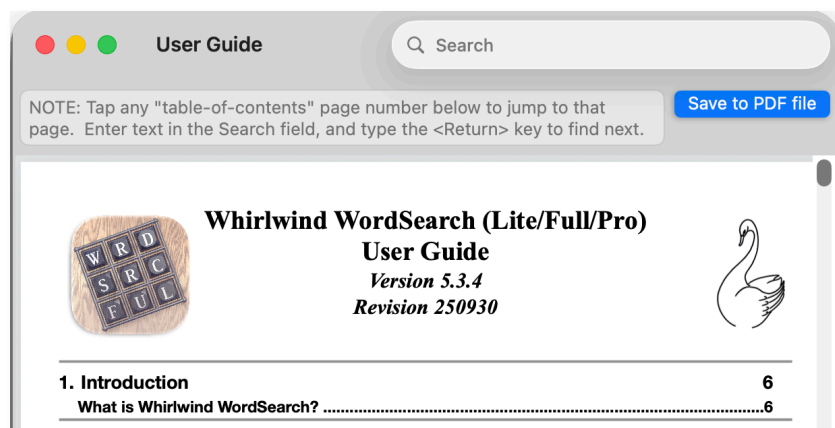
Whirlwind WordSearch User Guide

This menu item opens a window that displays this user guide document. Adjust the size of the text by making the window larger or smaller. Print a copy of this user guide by choosing *Print* from the *File* menu.

Tap the “Save to PDF file” button to save a copy of this user guide as a separate PDF file. You can then open it in a nicer PDF viewer, or copy it to another device for later viewing.

While the user guide window is open, you can tap any "table-of-contents" page number to jump to that page.

To search for a word or phrase in the document, enter that text in the Search field at the top. You can type the <Return> key to find the next occurrences of that text.



Whirlwind WordSearch Introduction

This menu item displays a multi-tabbed quick introduction, illustrating some of the features of the software. It opens each time you run the software, unless you un-check the “Show this window on startup” box at the bottom of the window. You can always open it later, by choosing this menu item.

Bulk-Builder Guide (*Pro Feature*)

This menu item opens a window displaying a document showing you how to enter the large lists of words when generating many puzzles via Bulk-Builder. These lists can be used in the *Bulk Word-List* tab of the Bulk-Builder.

ESP File Export Guide (*Pro Feature*)

This menu item opens a window displaying a document explaining the special ESP File format available in the Export window of the Pro product. This exported file format captures the entire puzzle and answer in a single easily-readable file, and can be used for advanced publishing workflows or as data to power your own interactive web puzzle games.

What's New

This menu item displays a detailed list of all the new features in this software release. There is also a list of known bugs, in case you find something acting strangely and want to see if I already know about it. Moreover, there are notes on prior releases.

Next User Tip

This opens a little window with an interesting tip or suggestion for interesting things you can do with this software. Each time you choose this menu item, a new tip will be displayed.

Feature Comparison

This menu item displays the feature differences between the Lite and Full and Pro versions of this software.

Contact Author

This menu item opens a pre-formatted e-mail. You can easily send me an update with any questions, bugs, or feature requests. It automatically contains some information about which version of this software you are using. Having this information helps me answer your questions.

Rate/Review Whirlwind WordSearch

This menu item opens an Apple App Store window. It lets you add your rating, and write a review for this software. By doing this, you are letting others know how you like it. Please consider rating it and also possibly writing a sentence or three about it!

Whirlwind WordSearch Product Web Page

This menu item opens a browser window that displays the product web page for this software.

More Fun Products

This menu item opens a window that displays a list of many of my other software products and published books. Each has a short description. Simply tap one of the product rows, and it will immediately open your web browser to a page that fully describes that product, and where to get it.

Company Web Site

This menu item opens a browser window that displays my company web page, showing my other products and myriad interests.

6. Writing Word Search Software is Easy, Right?

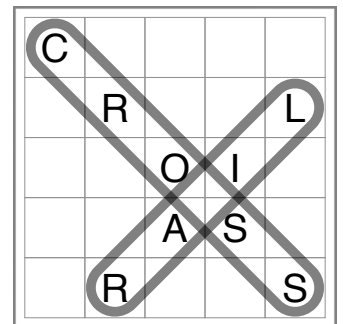
When I began writing this software many years ago, I thought a word search program would be fairly easy to create. After all, the software just needs to lay a list of words randomly into a grid, and fill the rest of the empty spaces with random letters. What's so tricky about that?

As it turns out, some of the free word search web sites and applications out there do just this, and you get what you pay for. However, I quickly found that there were some rather interesting, subtle and complex problems that arise with those generated puzzles if you just stop there.

For example, every once in awhile, those randomly sprinkled letters will happen to accidentally create another copy of one of your own word list words in the puzzle. Uh oh, people will find their word in *two* places, not one. Or worse, they will just find *the wrong one*, and tell you that your answer key is incorrect! So, how did I fix this? After generating a puzzle, my software searches the entire puzzle grid in all directions looking for duplicate copies of each word, and if it finds a randomly created duplicate word, it changes a letter or two to something else. It then re-checks the entire puzzle again in case *that* change in turn creates a duplicate of some other word. It repeats this “clean-up” until no more problems are found.

Or how about this one... sometimes those random letters will form “naughty words.” Uh oh! Perhaps the students may snicker and enjoy finding them, but teachers and parents may not find them so humorous on a school handout. So my software searches for and removes any of these accidentally formed words too. But hold on... the software can make puzzles in different languages!? Yes, you guessed it. It must have a list of “naughty words” in each language as well! By the way, the research I had to do to obtain lists of dirty words in many different languages is probably worthy of a short humorous novel of its own.

Here is a problem that seems quite simple to the user but turns out to be quite complex to the software engineer: how to correctly handle the “*Allow Words to Overlap/Share Letters*” feature. If I simply checked for two words that share one or more letter grid spaces, that is easy. But words can also cross over or between each other at diagonals, such that they don't actually “share” any letters. How do I detect these? It turns out there are some elegant geometry calculations for “Determining if two line segments intersect.” So, I chose one and got it working (in C++) to find out if words “overlap.” My high school teacher was right when he said I would need that geometry someday!



Many other important “finishing touches” were needed to make this software something I am proud of; for example, using terse “user interface” wording on each of the checkboxes and buttons that make sense, writing and updating this giant user guide, adding Pro features like user shapes and bulk-building, testing the software to find and fix yet more complex problems... it is quite a labor of devilishly detailed love. And I hope you love it too! If you do, let me know. Write a review... and tell your friends!

And if you don't love something, let me know that too. Please tell me if anything is broken or confusing. I will endeavor to fix it. If you have more ideas for what you would like to see changed or added, please read the next section below :-)

7. More Information, What's Next?

What new things will be added to this software? Some of that is up to you, the user of this software. Feel free to let me know what features you would most like to see, and I will collect your requests and work on adding the most-requested features into future updates. I have had many people suggest new features or changes over the years, and I continue to add the most requested ones as free updates. Please send your suggestions, critiques, or kudos to note@schwansongs.com or schwansongs@gmail.com

Here are some features that are already on my to-do list. Tell me which you want to see!

- Choose other grid line styles/patterns.
- Other export formats and options.
- Add more alphabets/languages¹⁰.
- More Pro features
- Automagically create/load a “daily puzzle” (different each day.)
- Disclose more of the secret “easter egg” features¹¹.
- Make your own iPhone/iPad “game” that interactively plays these puzzles ([see this section.](#))
- Have some built-in themed word-lists that can be auto-loaded (ahem, in each language.)
- More puzzle-macros ([see this section.](#))
- Make a “universal language” option to mix multiple languages into one puzzle.



www.SchwanSongs.com
Bringing Software to Delight!



¹⁰ Send me an e-mail if you want to help me add your favorite language!

¹¹ You mean like the one where you hold the option key down and click on the icon in the upper right corner?