

## **Crossword Construction Kit Index**

The Crossword Construction Kit is designed to allow you to create theme crossword puzzles of various sizes and shapes and to print them out.

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## Create Puzzle Window

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

### Title

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

### Layout

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

### Words and Clues

A list box is present which shows all the words and clues that you plan on placing in the puzzle. All words and clues are separated by a specific character. This character may be anything you choose and is displayed in an edit box below the list of words and clues. Below the list of words and clues is another edit box where you may type in a word and clue. Click on the "Add" button and they will be placed in the list box. Clicking on the "Delete" button will remove the currently highlighted word and clue from the list box. Clicking on the "Modify" button will remove the currently highlighted word and clue from the list box and place it in the edit box where you can make changes. Simply press the "Add" button after making your changes and the changed word and clue will be inserted back into the list. You may also select the "Import" button which will allow you to **import** a list of words and clues that you have already made up. The maximum number of words that can be placed in a puzzle is 200 (and there is no guarantee that they will all fit). If more words are present in the list box of words, they will be ignored at the time the puzzle is created.

### Create Puzzle Button

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

If a word does not fit, you may take several actions to try to make it fit. The easiest method is to simply choose a larger layout. If almost all of the words fit, then it is possible that a new random generation of the puzzle will make it fit. In this case you would simply press the "Create Puzzle" button once again and see if it works. You may want to try this several times. The last option is to face the reality that all the words you have specified just won't fit. You may change some words, remove some words, or shorten or lengthen some. Some things to consider:

1. An oddball word may never fit. For example, if you use the word "FUZZ" and no other word has an "F", "U", or "Z" in it, then this word will never fit.
2. Lengthening a word may help. Using the example above, changing the word "FUZZ" to "FUZZINESS"

or "FUZZY" may just give the extra letters needed to make the word fit.

3. Shortening words may help. If all words are 25 letters long, then the likelihood of making the words fit is diminished.

## Attempts

When you are ready to create your puzzle, you can indicate to the program the number of times that you want it to try and create the puzzle. Sometimes one attempt will not create the puzzle with all the words. A different random creation just may create it. Instead of manually trying to recreate it each time, you may have the program attempt to do it several times for you. If you specify "5" attempts and the program correctly constructs a puzzle with all the words on the first attempt, then it will not make any more attempts.

## Shrink Puzzle

This will remove borders of the puzzle that do not have any letters from any words in them. You would most likely want to do this if your shape is something like a square or rectangle. However if you chose a specific shape such as a train, then you most likely would not want to trim the puzzle as part of the shape will get trimmed away.

## Puzzle Layout Window

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

### Title

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

### Dimensions

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

### Grid

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

## Modify Puzzles

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

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

## **Deleting Puzzles**

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

## Main Menu

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

### File

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

### Colors

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

### Help

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

## Print Options Window

The Print Options Windows allows you to customize the look of the printed puzzle. You may select Puzzle Options, an Answer Font, a Clue Font and View or Print the puzzle.

### Puzzle Options

Two options are available here. You may specify gray filled boxes instead of black. You may also specify to have the puzzle printed out with the answers filled in.

### Answer Font

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

### Clue Font

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

### View/Print

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



## Import Words and Clues Window

If you wish to create your word lists independently of the crossword program, you may do so. Using your favorite text editor, you may create a list of words and clues. Each word and clue should be on one line separated by the "Word/Clue Separator Character". When inside the **Create Puzzle Window**, press the "Import" button. This will bring up a new window with the following features.

### Open File Button

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

### List Box

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

### Select All Button

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

### Clear Button

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

### Ok Button

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

### Cancel Button

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

## Main Window

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

### Puzzle List Box

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

### New Puzzle Button

This allows you to create a new puzzle.

### Modify Button

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

### Delete Button

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

### View/Print Button

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

### Exit Button

This will exit you from the program.



