



The Scrambler[©]

Vocabsoft[®]

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Introduction

Do you enjoy playing games? Why play a game that at the end you get nothing out of it? When you play The Scrambler[®], by the end of the game you will walk away with more than just the scores. You will gain a set of new vocabulary words that you can use in your daily speeches, readings, or writings. Best of all, you accomplish this by playing a simple game.

How do you learn new vocabulary words? Most of us just create flash cards, and then sit quietly in a room flipping through the cards. Flash cards can be effective, however has a few drawbacks:

1. Flash cards are cumbersome. Flash cards are useful if you're just learning a few words. However, if you want to learn hundreds or thousands of words, managing the flash cards quickly becomes a nightmare.
2. Creating flash cards is a very time consuming process.
3. Blank flash cards are expensive.
4. Flash cards wear out easily. If you wrote the flash cards with a pen, the ink can smear. If you wrote them in pencil, they can smudge. They can wrinkle or even rip. You would end up replacing them by creating new flash cards, which means more time wasted.
5. Flipping through a stack of flash cards is a boring activity. The flash cards, which you've spent so much time creating, usually end-up not being used at all.

Purpose

The primary purpose of The Scrambler[®] is to help you to build your vocabulary while having fun playing a simple game. The game is designed to entice your interest, to focus your attention, and to challenge you. The Scrambler[®] promotes greater memory retention and recall. It will also help you to remember the spelling of the words. The Scrambler[®] focuses your attention so that you learn each word and its definition precisely.

It is extremely important to learn the precise definition of a word. If you don't exactly what a word mean, you will misuse it, which will cause unnecessary miscommunications and frustrations.

For example:

On my first day at a job, my boss came to me with several volumes of technical manuals, and asked me to “**peruse**” them. What exactly did she want me to do? Did she want me to skim through the manuals or did she want me to study the manuals thoroughly? According to the Webster dictionary, “peruse” actually means “to examine in detail; to scrutinize; to read carefully or thoroughly.”

The Scrambler[®] overcomes the drawbacks of the flash cards. There are no clumsy cards to manage. It saves you time because inputting new words is done very quickly and easily. In addition, you can import and export wordlists, allowing you to share wordlists among your friends, saving you many hours of typing.

Short-Term, Long-Term, and Permanent Memory

Tammy: Hi! My name is Tammy.
(Her name was immediately recorded in my short-term memory.)
Andy: Nice to meet you. My name is Andy.
(Two minutes later...)
Andy: I'm sorry. What did you say your name was?
Tammy: My name is Tammy.
(Now, her name gets sink into my long-term memory.)

The above scenario is very common when you met someone for the first time. Two minutes after she has told you her name, you forgot it. This is because when the first time she said her name, it was registered in your short-term memory, which was quickly overwritten by another piece of information, perhaps her phone number. By asking for her name the second time, it was registered in your long-term memory.

The same is true when you first learned a new word, it is immediately and temporarily stored in your short-term memory. If you had done nothing to register it in your long-term memory, it will vanish without a trace. After several repetitions or usages, you will move it from your short-term memory to a long-term memory. With the new word now sits in your long-term memory, you can consider that you have actually “learned” the new word.

However, there is a slight problem with having the word residing in your long-term memory. Your long-term memory also degrades over time. After a period of time, you will eventually forget it. You’ve “learned” it, but you have never really, truly “acquired” it.

I believe there is yet another level to your memory: your permanent memory. To acquire the word, you must bring it to your permanent memory. There it will reside forever, even if you have not used it in many decades. This is why you will never wake up one morning and forget how to walk. They say that once you know how to ride a bicycle, you will never forget how to ride it. I suppose it might be true as well that once you learned to hold a pair of chopstick you will never forget how to use them. Many information and events that happened in our lives get registered into our permanent memory whether consciously or subconsciously. Unless something drastically happened to us, we will vividly remember it until our last breath. That is our goal. We want to help you to register each word into your permanent memory when you play The Scrambler[®].

How our memory work

The human brain is a miraculously intricate organ. Despite the advancement and talent of modern science, we have only begun to barely scratch the surface on the topic of the human mind. I would not dream of broaching such a convoluted subject as the structure and functionality of the brain. However, I would like to shine some lights on how our mind work and what we can do to improve our memory.

In many ways, our mind is very much similar to a computer. A computer has cache for temporary storage, a hard drive for (long-term) storage, and a central processor unit for processing millions of mathematical calculations per seconds. Analogously, our mind has short-term memory, long-term/permanent memory, and a processor that evaluates and makes critical decisions. However, our human mind has something that not even the most powerful computer can ever have, the human emotion. The decisions we make everyday, every hour, and even every second are not based solely on the empirical facts we perceived. They are intertwined with emotions, motivation, and spirituality. That's why our decisions are rarely binary, yes or no. Often there are gray-scaled areas that put us in dilemma.

We can harness the power our emotion, motivation, and spirituality to help us improve on our memory.

Spirituality/State of Mind

Before you begin the task to learn anything, you must put yourself in the right state of mind. If you are religious, you can trust in God that He will comfort you and guide you through your course of study. In any case, you must believe that you will conquer the subject you study. With that state of mind, one might say that you've already won half the battle.

Motivation/Desire

Why are you learning it? What is in it for you? It is money? How much is at stake here? Is it to do well on the SAT so that you can go to any college of your choice? How badly do you desire it? Do you want it bad enough that you would say no to friends who asked you out to parties? Do you desire it bad enough that you would say no to the cutest girl in your class who asked if you are free to go on a date on the weekend? (Well, ok... maybe you don't want it that badly.) Motivation and desire are the fuels that drive you to learn.

Emotion

We experience our world and our existence through our five senses: hear, touch, see, taste, and smell. Through these sensory, we feel happiness, sadness, boredom, love, pride, guilt, sorrow, humor, and fear, just to name a few of our emotions. Our emotions are like our mental super glue. When something happened to us the affect our emotion deeply, we will never forget it. Therefore, our emotions are powerful tools for building our vocabulary.

How do we apply them?

When you're encountered an unfamiliar word, don't pay attention solely to its definition. Check out its spelling. Did it strike you in anyway strange? Maybe it was spelled entirely

different than the way it was pronounced. Look at the way it was used in a sentence? How did it make you feel? When you write your own sample sentence, do not write a dreary sentence just because you needed a sample sentence. Write about real and concrete materials, instead of abstract subjects. Write a sentence that contains emotions you want to express. If the sentence can make you angry just reading it, then it is a superb sentence. If it made you almost burst into tears, it is an awesome statement. Emotions make the word stick in your memory. This is why it's utterly important to include a sample sentence for each unfamiliar word on your list.

Review, Review, Review

Besides using our emotions, motivation, and spirituality to help you learn, you must review, review, and review. Our mind needs to be challenged. This is why The Scrambler[®] is so effective. It challenges you to think of the word every time when you play it.

Be Focus And Make A Decision To Remember

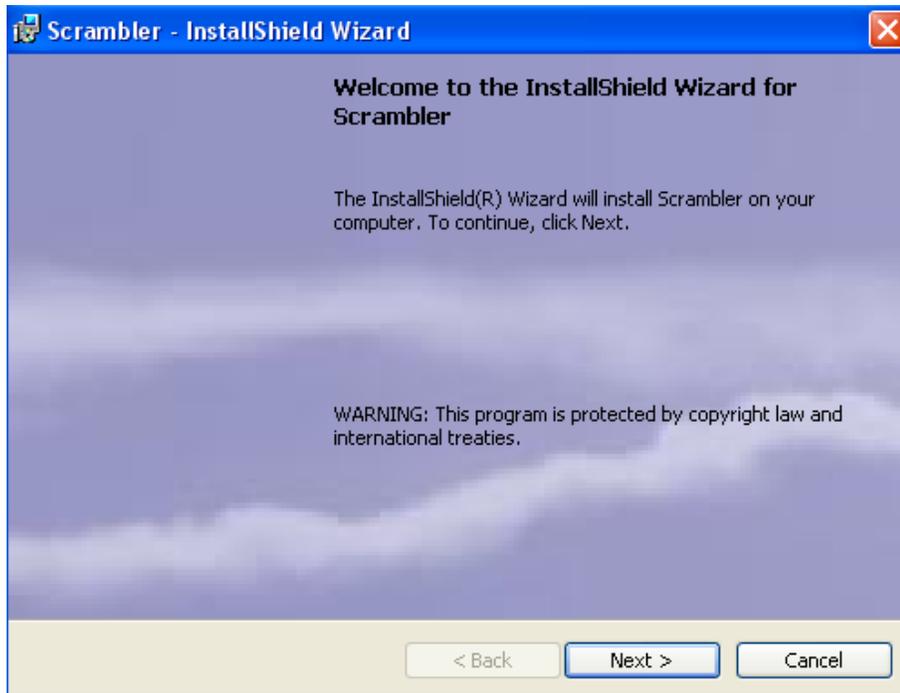
To remember anything, you must be focused and make a decision to remember. Tell yourself the next time you encounter this again, you will know the answer.

Focus, this is another important feature of The Scrambler[®]. It focuses your attention to the word whenever you missed it. It will not allow you to continue until you have indicated that you have learned it by typing the correct word.

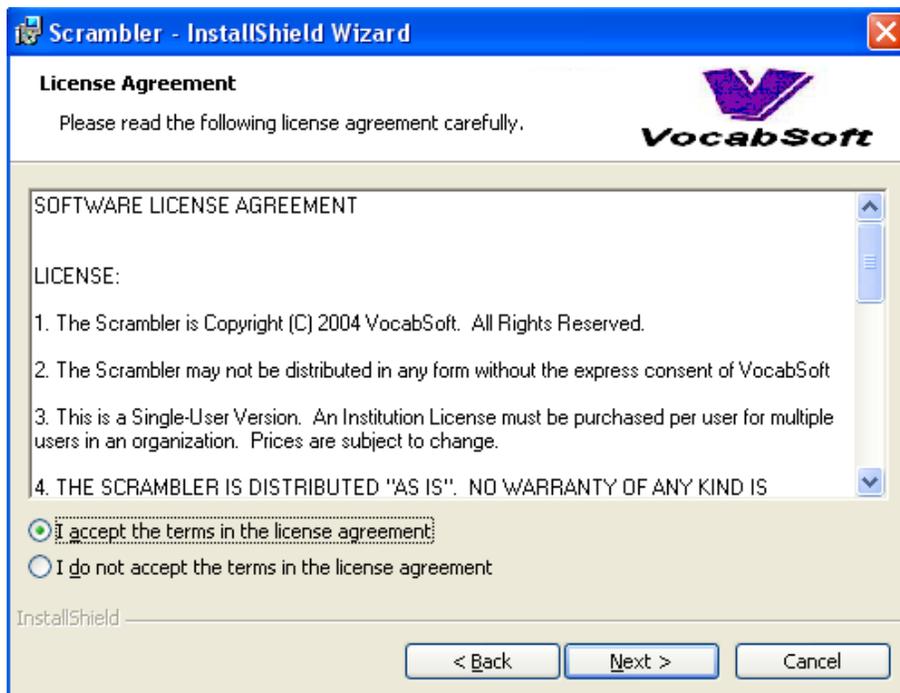
Software Installation

Installing The Scrambler[®]

1. Close all applications that are currently running.
2. Insert The Scrambler[®] CD into your CD-ROM.
3. Installation should begin automatically. If not double click on setup.exe.
4. Click Next.

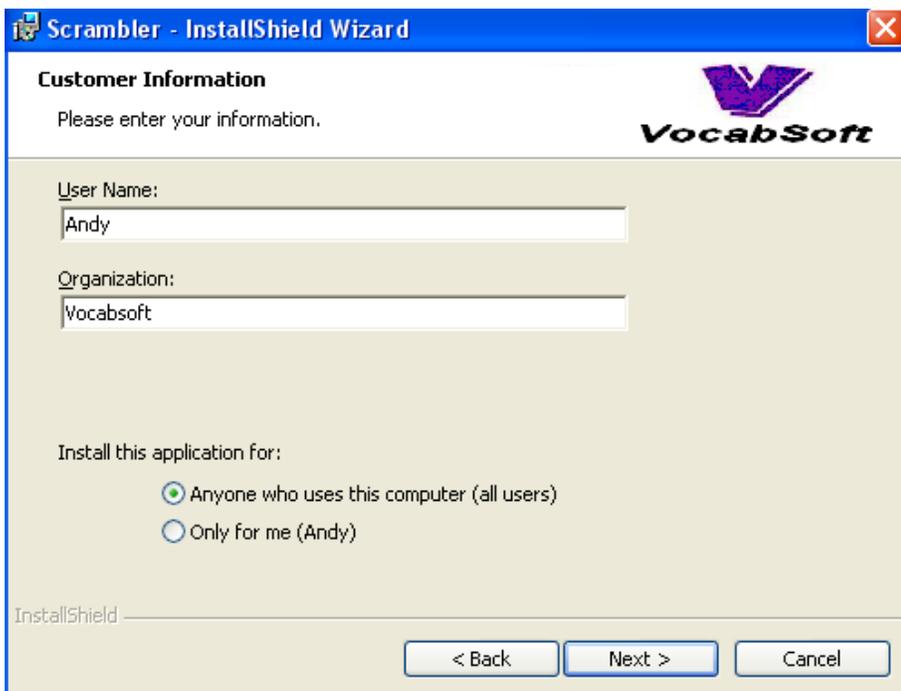


5. Read the License Agreement, then select “I accept the terms in this license agreement”.
6. Click Next.

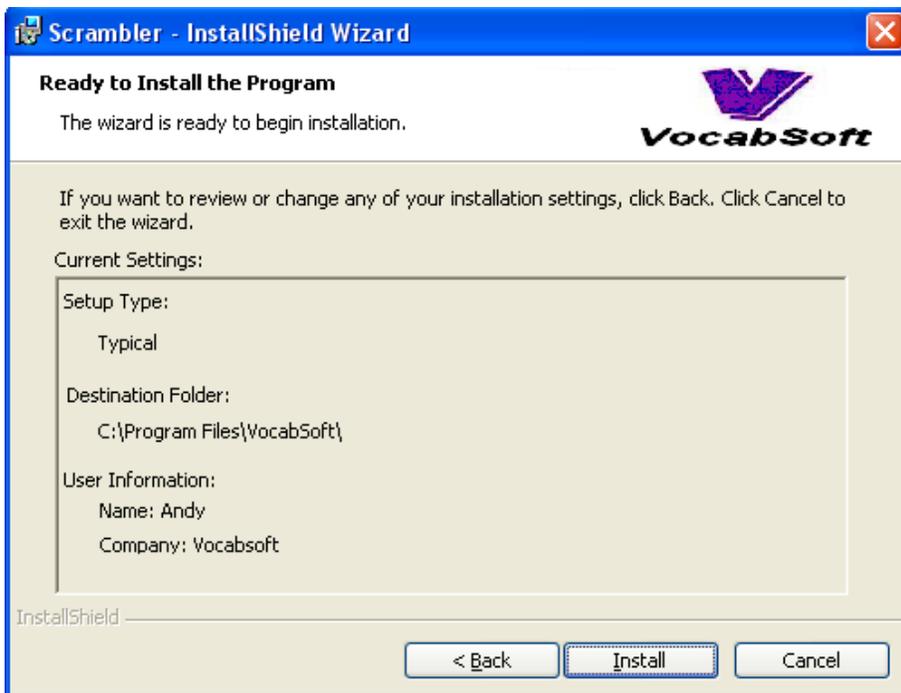


7. Type your name and organization.
8. Select “Anyone who uses this computer (all users)”

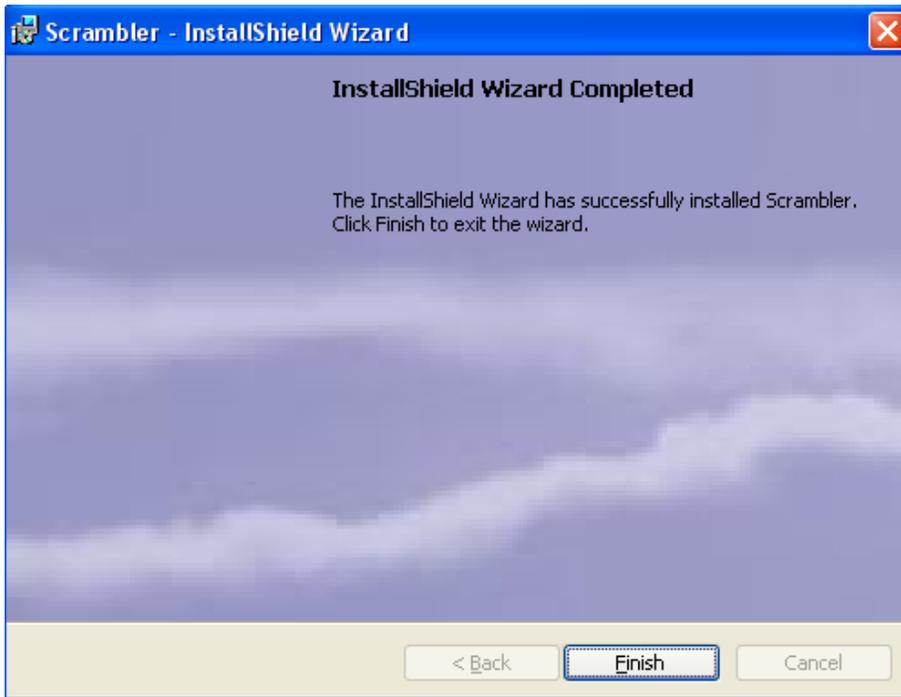
9. Click Next



10. Click Install.



11. Click Finish.



Uninstalling The Scrambler[®]

Uninstall using Uninstall Scrambler command

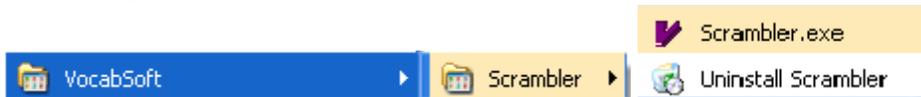
Click on Start 

Select All Programs 

Find and select Vocabsoft

Select Scrambler

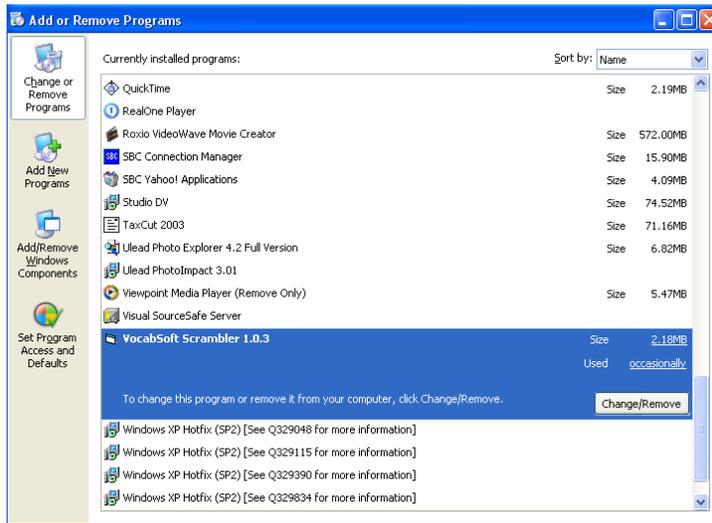
Click on Uninstall Scrambler



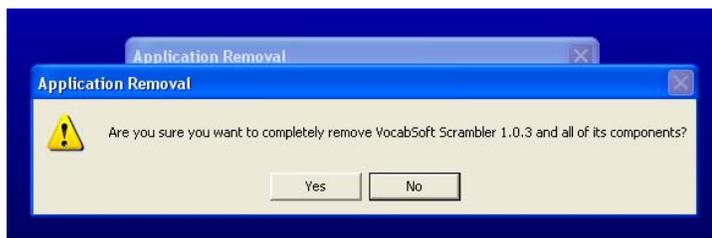
Uninstall using Add or Remove Program

In Windows XP, you can uninstall using Add or Remove Program

1. Click Start.
2. Select Control Panel
3. Double click Add or Remove Programs
4. Find and Select VocabSoft Scrambler



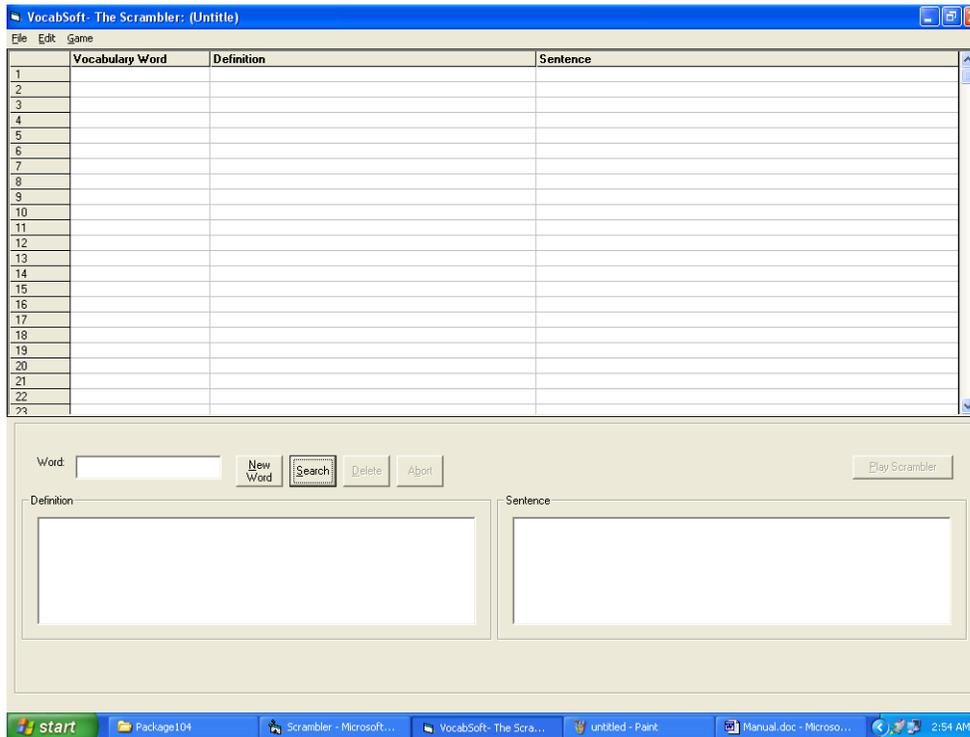
5. Click Change/Remove
6. Click Yes



Using The Scrambler[®]

Creating A New Wordlist

1. If you have just started The Scrambler[®], you are ready to create a new wordlist. The Scrambler[®] starts with a blank page for you to begin immediately.



2. If you have been working with another wordlist, and would like to create a new wordlist, click File then select New.

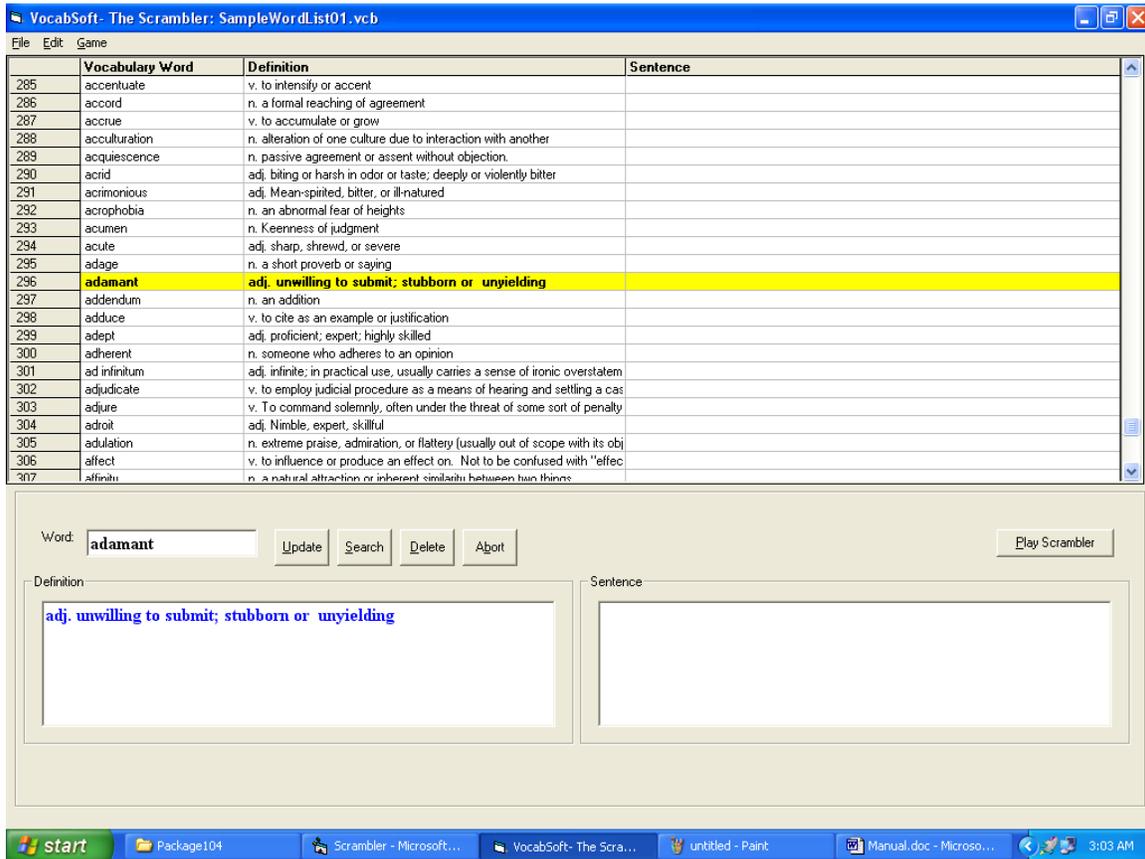
Adding New Words to the Wordlist

1. Click New Word
2. Input the word, definition, and sentence in their relative text boxes.
3. Click Add

Editing/Modifying a Word in the Wordlist

1. If the word is being displayed on the screen, left click on the word, definition, or sentence of that word. It will become highlighted, and the cursor of the respective text box will begin to blink.
2. If the word is not being displayed on the screen, clear the word text box and then type the word you wish to edit. You may ignore the definition and sentence text boxes.
3. Click Search.
4. Make your modification in the text box.

5. If you decide to abort editing, click Abort.
6. Click Update when you're done with all your editing.

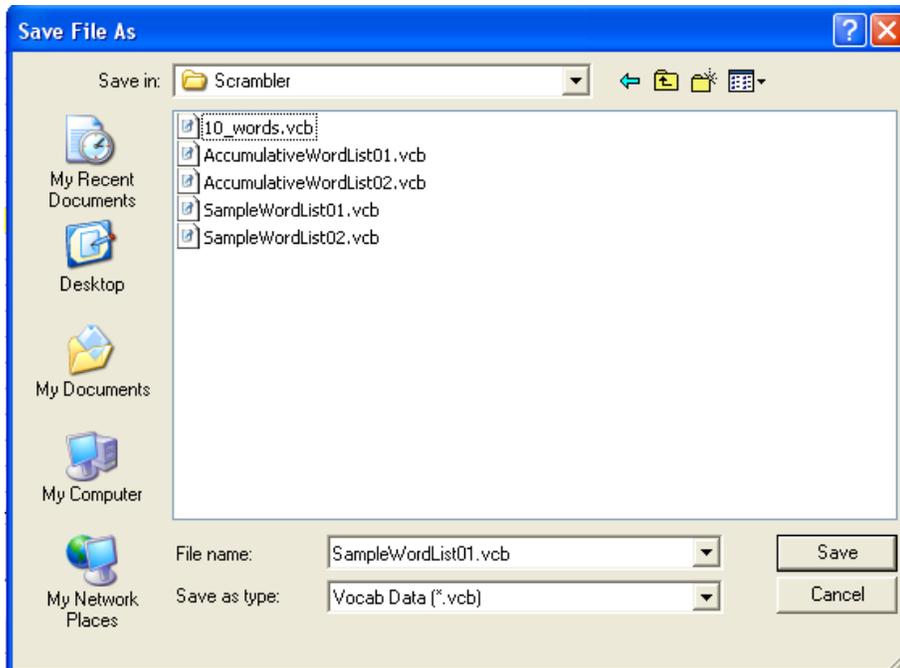


Deleting a Word in the Wordlist

1. If the word is being displayed on the screen, left click on the word, definition, or sentence of that word. It will become highlighted.
2. If the word is not being displayed on the screen, clear the word text box and then type the word you wish to edit. You may ignore the definition and sentence text boxes.
3. Click Search.
4. Click Delete.

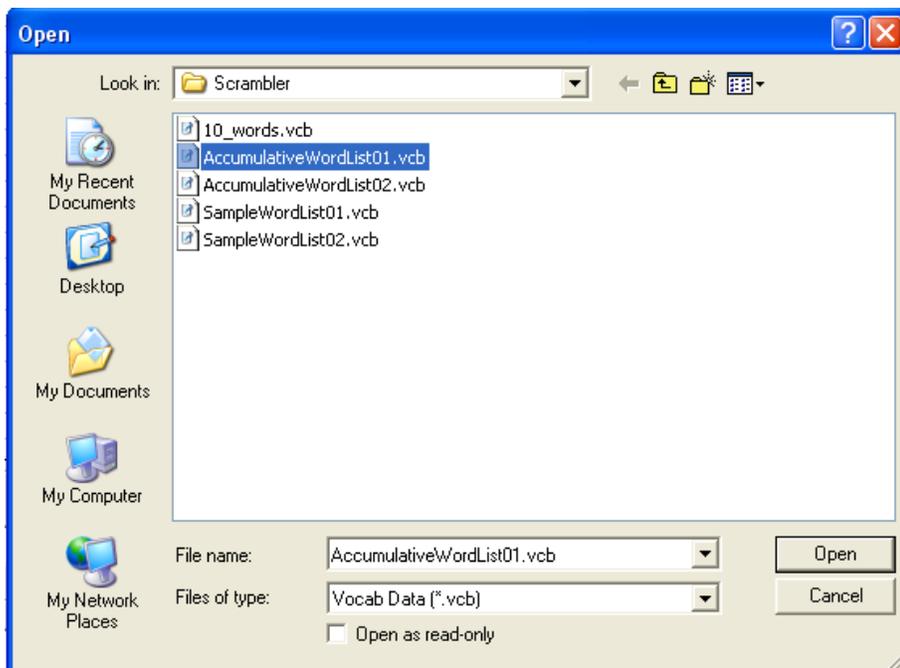
Saving the Wordlist

1. Click File and select SaveAs
2. Provide a file name.
3. Click Save.



Open an Existing File

1. Click File, and select Open
2. Select a File to open



3. Click Open.

Exporting a Wordlist

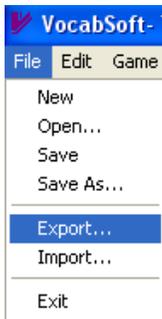
Exporting allows you to transfer words from your current wordlist to a specified file.

One useful application would be to divide a wordlist into several wordlists with few words. For example you can divide a wordlist that contains 500 words into 10 wordlist containing 50 words each.

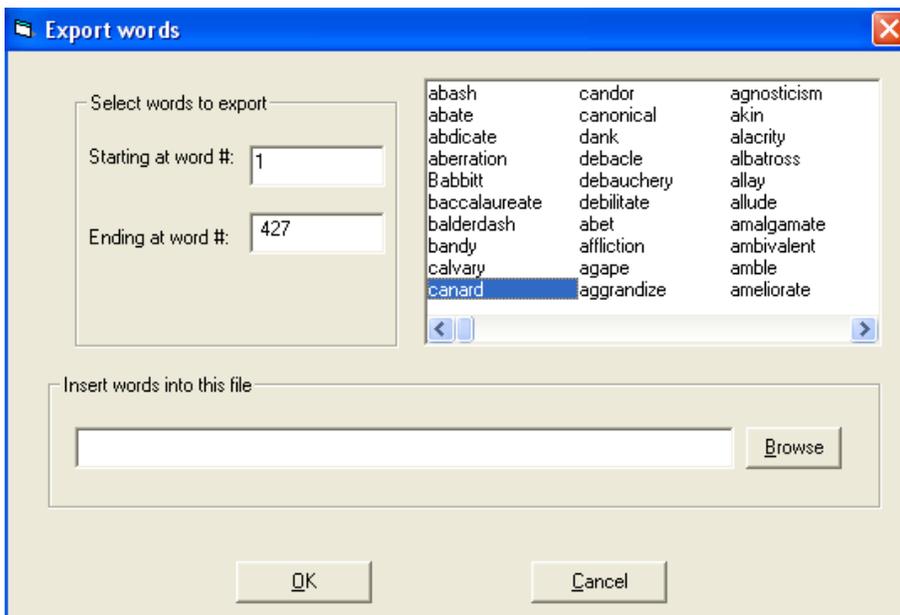
Another useful application would be to extract specific words for a list (perhaps words you have difficulties with) and group them together. For example, you may want to group together words your have difficulties with their spellings. Or you may want to group words you have problem remember their definitions, for some reasons.

To export words from the current wordlist:

1. Before you can export the words from your current wordlist, your current list must have some words in it. Take note of the range of word you want to export. In other words, decide on the starting word and ending word.
2. Click File, then select Export



3. Specify the starting word and ending word.



4. Specify the file name you wish to insert the word.
5. Click OK.

Importing a Wordlist

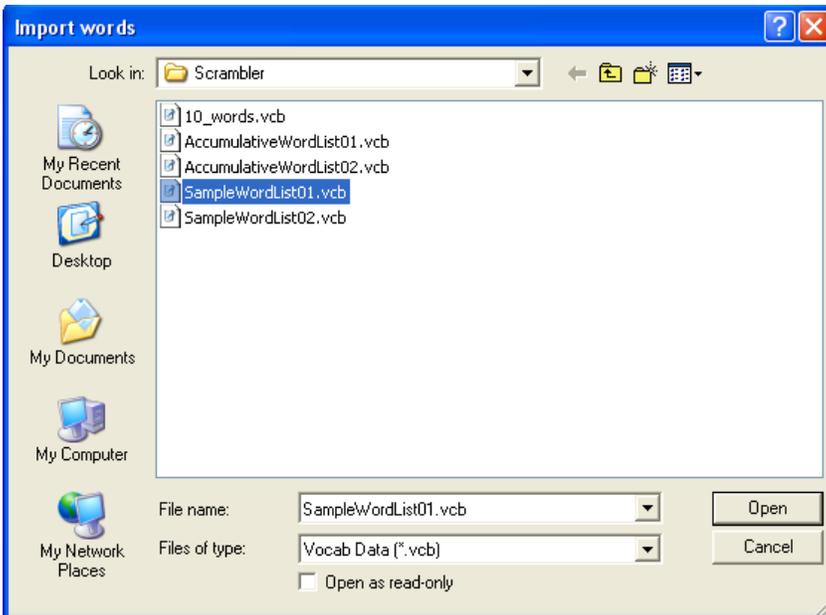
Importing allows you to append words for another wordlist. This means you can accumulate words from different wordlists into one large word list. Suppose you have five wordlists with 50 words in each wordlist. You can combine all words in these five wordlists into one file containing 225 words for an accumulative review. You might name that file as review.vcb, accumulative.vcb, or accumulative_review.vcb. As you learn more and more words, add the words from each list to the accumulative file. Playing The Scrambler with the accumulative list at least once each week will re-enforce and ensure you to remember the words.

To import words from the current wordlist:

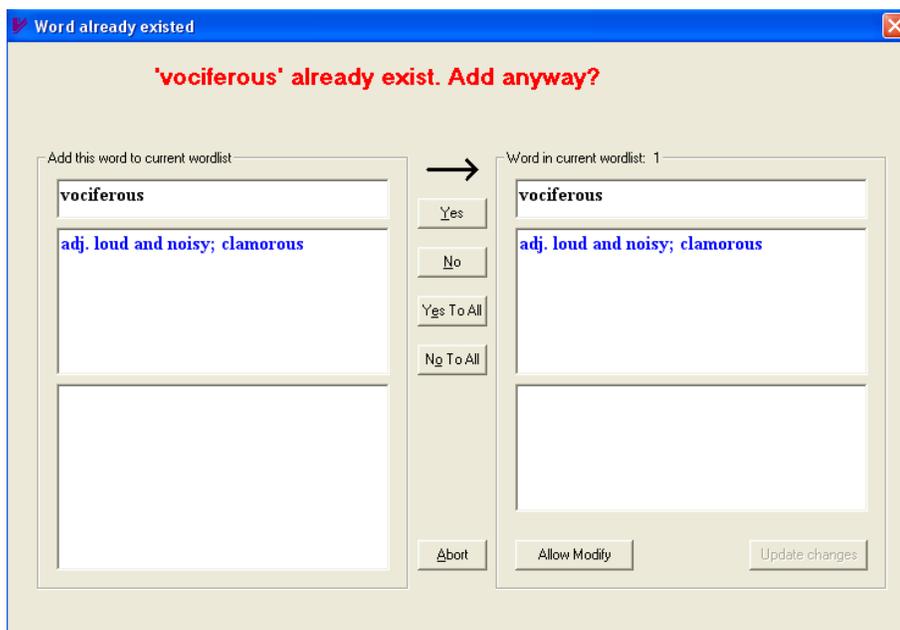
1. Click File, then select Import



2. Select the file you wish to import.
3. Click Open.



- If a word already exist in the current list during the importing process, the follow message will be displayed:



- Click Yes or No if you want to add on a word-per-word basis. You will be required to respond again if another already existed in the current list.
- Click the Yes-To-All button if you want to add all words to the list even if the already exist in the current list.
- Click the No-To-All button if you don't want to add words that already exist in the current list.
- Click Abort if you want to abort the importing process. However, any word that has already been imported will not be removed from the list.

Playing The Scrambler[®]

Objectives of the game

There are really three objectives in playing The Scrambler[®]:

1. The first objective is to unscramble and provide the correct word (with its correct spelling) that corresponds to the definition within 30 seconds.
2. The second objective is to get a high enough score to be on the Top-10 list.
3. The third objective is to become the Champion (First Place) in the Top-10 list.
The ultimate challenge is to be the Champion in the top-10 list.

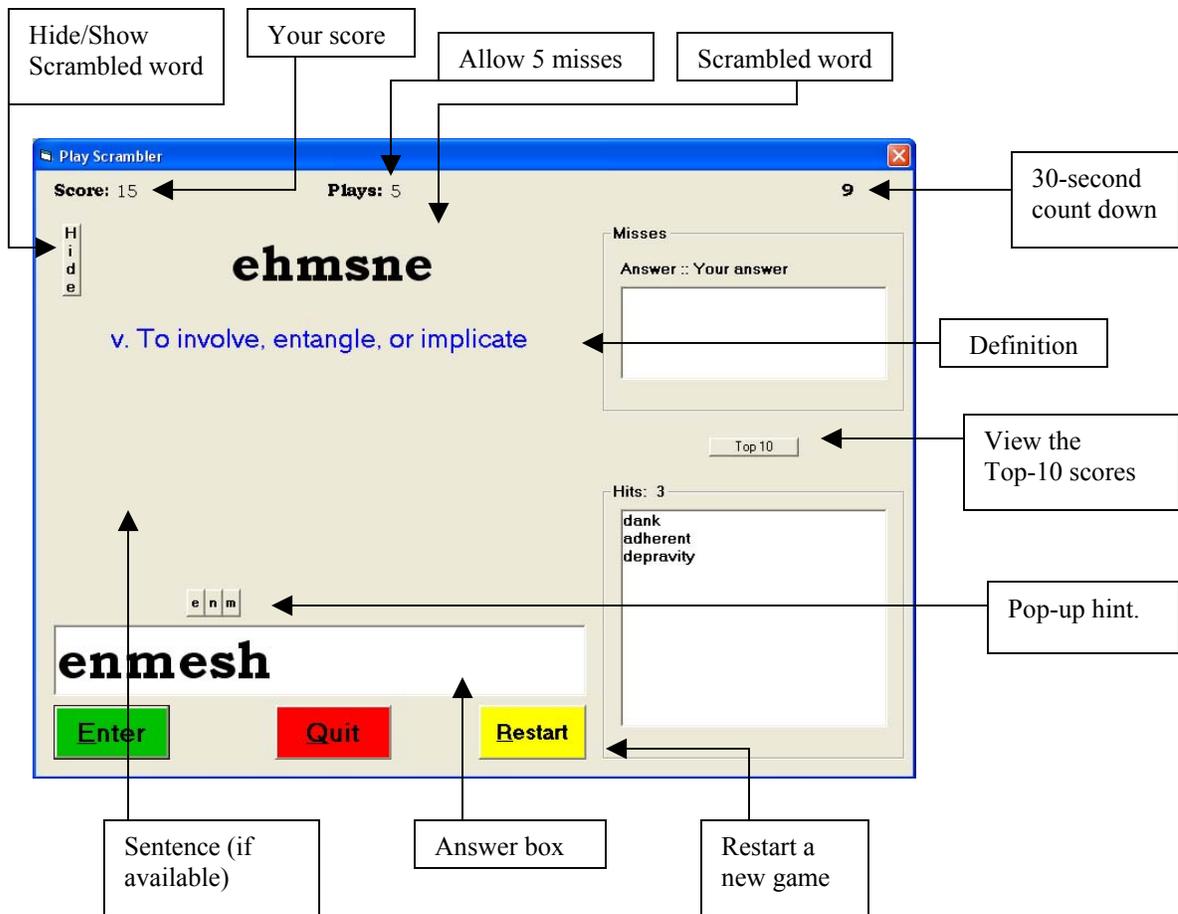


Starting the game

1. Before you can play Scrambler, the current wordlist must have some words.
2. Click Play Scrambler.
3. Click Start to begin.



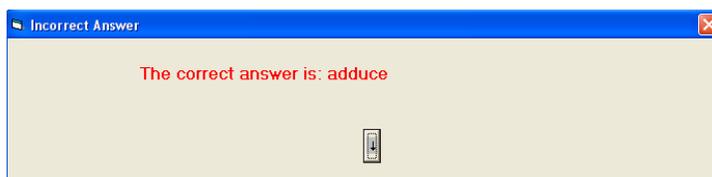
Some key features of the game



- **Hide/Show:** Allow you to hide or show the scrambled word. As you become more and more familiar with the wordlist, you may want to hide the scrambled word and rely on the pop-up hint.
- **Score:** The total award points you received. The number of award points you receive for each correct answer is the number of letters in the word minus the number of letters that appeared in the pop-up hint. Therefore it is advisable to type in the answer as soon as you can to get the maximum number of award points.
- **Plays:** This indicates the number of plays you have left before the current game ends. The number of play is decremented when you missed a word.
- **Scrambled word:** Displays the scrambled vocabulary word.
- **Definition:** Displays the definition of the vocabulary word. It is strongly recommended that you also list out any synonyms along with the definition of the word.
- **Count Down:** You have only 30 seconds to unscramble each word. If no answer was provided before the timer times out, you missed the word. No points will be awarded.
- **View Top-10 Score:** Allows you to view the registered top-10 score.
- **Pop-up hint:** A character will pop-up every few seconds to hint you on the word. The number of award points is equal to the number of letters in the words minus the number of letters appeared in the pop-up hint.
- **Restart button:** Click Restart if you would like to abandon the current game and start all over again. Your score will be reset.
- **Answer box:** Type your answer in the answer box.
- **Sentence:** Display the sample sentence. Although sample sentence is not required, it is highly recommended that you provide it. A sample sentence will help your recall, retention, and usage of the word.

Reinforcing your knowledge

Whenever you missed a word, the following message window will appear on the screen to provide you with the correct answer. Here, we are focusing your attention on the word you have just missed. Learn the word now, so that the next time you encounter this word again, you will not miss it again.



1. Take notice of the word and try to remember its spelling as well.
2. Click the Down-arrow button.



3. Type in the correct answer that was provided earlier.
4. Click the Up-arrow button if you want another look at the word.
5. Click OK.

How To Use The Scrambler[®] Effectively

Type up your own wordlist

I enjoy typing up my own wordlist because after I finished typing the words, I almost already know them.

Create multiple wordlists

I recommend that you create multiple wordlists. Each wordlist should contain 50 to 100 words. You may call each wordlist WordList_1, WordList_2, etc. In addition to the individual wordlist, create an accumulative wordlist that merges all wordlists into one. Please be aware that a wordlist can contain only up to 30,000 words. This means that you may need to create multiple accumulative wordlists as well.

Furthermore, it is all right if you duplicated words in multiple wordlists.

Play The Scrambler[®] everyday

It is strongly recommended that you get your entire family involved with playing The Scrambler[®]. Create an atmosphere of competition: brother against brother; sister against sister; brother against sister; father against son; mother against daughter, friend against friend; and everything else in between. You can offer First, Second, and Third prices, or winner-take-all price. However you would like to play it, just remember to have fun.

If you are playing The Scrambler[®] by yourself, you can challenge yourself to beat your Champion score on a particular wordlist. You can further challenge yourself on the accumulated wordlist.

Jot it down

When you come across a new, unfamiliar word during the day (during your reading or even during watching your favorite television show), jot it down, and then add it to your wordlist. Type up the sentence you have read or heard how it was used.

Make a decision to remember

Be focus and make a decision to remember. Peruse the definition and scrutinize its spelling. Tell yourself the next time you see this word you'll know what it means.

Play The Scrambler[®] with Pop-up hint only

Eventually having the scrambled letters displayed makes the game too easy. If that's the case, hide them and play only with the hint provided by the pop-up letters.

Seek out new words

As your vocabulary builds, you will begin to find that the materials you used to read contain fewer unfamiliar words. When this happens to you, I would like to congratulate you from the bottom of my heart. That's what this program is all about. However, do not stop there. I recommend you to constantly seek out new words. Perhaps, find some new reading materials that contain words above your current vocabulary comfort zone.

Share wordlists with friends

It may sound contradictory that while earlier I said to type up your own wordlist, but now I say to share wordlists with your friends. Really it's not. I recommend that you type your own wordlist because it's easy to learn and remember the words you typed. This does not mean that you will not be able to learn from wordlists created by others. Sharing wordlists with your friends will save you tremendous amount of time.

Frequently misspelled words

Besides adding unfamiliar words to your wordlist, you can also input your frequently misspelled words. For example, I frequently misspelled "cherish", "congratulations", and even "misspell". Therefore, I would add these words into one of my wordlist and the accumulative wordlist.

Use the words in your daily life

Find opportunities to use the word in your daily life. When you speak to a friend, try throwing in a few words that you have learned. When you're writing a memo at work, a letter to a friend, your daily diary, or email, try incorporating some of the words from your wordlists. However, I must caution you to not over do it. Otherwise, you might appear to be pretentious. And worst yet, no one will be able to understand what you've just said. Furthermore, be sure you know exactly what the word's definition and what its connotation and usage before you use them. Be cautious; use them only when you are sure you are using them correctly.

Wordlists

We have provided some wordlists containing 50 words in each. The file name for each wordlist starts with “WL” (WL=Word List); followed by the wordlist number. For example: WL001.vcb would be the first wordlist. However we have not provided you their definition. We will leave that task to you.

The installation will not install the wordlist files. Please copy these wordlist files from the CD under MyLists folder. The reason we did not include these wordlists in the installation is because if they were installed during the installation, they will also be deleted during the uninstall procedure.

The easiest and quickest way to get the definition for each word would be to search the word in online dictionary, then copy and paste the definition for that word to The Scrambler.

Here are a few website we recommend:

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

<http://www.webster.com/>

<http://dictionary.reference.com/>

In addition, we have created a wordlist file called Review.vcb. This is intended for your accumulative review. It is essential to review the words you studied. It helps to solidify your knowledge by bringing it from temporary short-term memory to long-term or permanent memory. We strongly recommend that you review at least once a week to reinforce and ensure your learning. To review, all you do is play The Scrambler using the Review.vcb file. As you create more and more wordlists, we recommend that you import words from future wordlists to this file.

To import words into the Review.vcb file, you must first open Review.vcb as the current wordlist, and then follow the instructions under the Importing A Wordlist section.

If you are serious about improving your vocabulary, you must schedule some time each day to play The Scrambler. Let’s suppose you devote an hour a day to studying vocabulary. One way you can schedule your study time would be to study individual wordlists for 30 minutes during one session and then review for 30 minutes during a second session. Another way would be to alternately study individual wordlists on one day and then review the next day. This is especially good if you can only afford 30 min per day.

Glossary

Award Points

The number of points awarded when you provided the correct answer. The number of award points is equal to the number of letters in the words minus the number of letters appeared in the pop-up hint.

Champion:

First Place in the Top-10 list.

Champion score

The highest score in the Top-10 list.

Current file/Current (word) list

The current opened file

Export

To add words from the current wordlist to another wordlist. This allows you to share your file with your friends.

Import

To add words from another wordlist to the current wordlist. This allows you to share your file with your friends.

Pop-up hint

A character will pop-up every few seconds to hint you on the word.

Score

The total award points you received.

vcb file

A vocabulary file (wordlist) is saved with vcb extension.