

TickWords press kit

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Overview

TickWords reads your chapters, finds the key terminology, and creates a crossword you can play or print. It runs entirely on your own machine, with no cloud service and no language model involved.

Over 400 crosswords ship with it, written and checked across a range of high school and university subjects, with twelve thousand clues between them. Behind those sits a dictionary of 2.7 million terms and the 11.4 million clues written for them, which is what makes a random crossword on any subject possible.

The software also processes your own digital files, PDF through LaTeX, and builds revision crosswords from the facts and terminology inside them. That gives students a practical new tool to support their learning.

Using this material

Everything in this press kit may be used for **editorial coverage and content creation**. That means reviews, previews, news articles, videos, streams, podcasts and let's plays, and the thumbnails, channel art, overlays and social posts that go with them. No permission is needed and there is no fee.

The layered Krita sources are included deliberately. Open them, pull the elements you want, and build your own artwork from them.

Two things to avoid. Do not present your channel, video or product as endorsed by, sponsored by or affiliated with Reasonetix, and do not adopt the TickWords logo or wordmark as the branding of something that is not TickWords.

This grant covers the press and branding material in this kit. The game itself, its music and its crossword content remain under their own licence. Anything not covered here, just ask: press@reasonetix.com.

Fact sheet

Title

TickWords

Developer

Reasonetix

Lead programmer

Dr Warren Creemers

Based in

Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia

Released

Out now on Steam

Platforms

Windows, Linux and SteamOS, handhelds included. macOS in development.

Price

\$24.99 USD, paid once, with regional pricing on Steam. No subscription.

Website

<https://tickwords.com>

Store page

<https://store.steampowered.com/app/3895070/TickWords/>

Community

<https://discord.gg/QfVFYmNec>

Press contact

press@reasonetix.com. Review keys on request, and there is a person on the other end of that address rather than a form.

Description

For many people crosswords are a relaxing way to study, but building a good one has always been slow and difficult work. TickWords automates it. It scans a document, extracts the important terminology, and generates a tailor-made crossword in seconds.

A printed crossword is a versatile study aid. You can do it during or after reading a chapter, and it works on a bus or a train where unpacking study materials is not practical. There is also something inherently social about it. You can ask a friend “Hey, seven down: pairing of electrons responsible for superconductivity, ends in r?” and they will just join in to solve the puzzle.

While TickWords prints well, there are also advantages to playing in the software:

- Each term can have multiple clues across three difficulty levels, so a subject is worth revisiting at a harder setting.
- Revision crosswords rebuild themselves from the words you skipped, flagged, or took a long time to solve.
- Spaced repetition crosswords help memorise facts, the way flash cards do, but without the flash cards.

By the numbers

- **400+** crosswords included, with 12,000 clues written for them.
- **2.7 million** terms in the dictionary, behind 11.4 million clues.
- **6 hours** of study music, 150 tracks across 15 albums.
- **Zero** cloud accounts, uploads or language models.

Features

- Over 400 crosswords included, sorted by subject, playable the moment you install.
- Imports PDF, docx, ePub, HTML, Markdown, RTF, ODT, LaTeX and plain text.

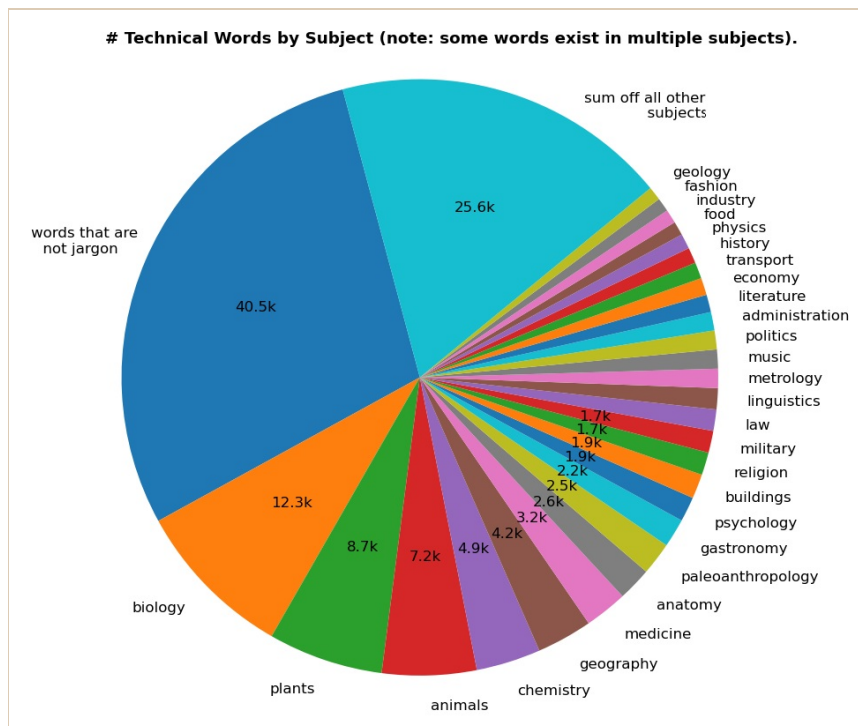
- Crosswords for any page range or chapter of an imported document.
- Random crosswords on any subject, generated from a dictionary of 2.7 million terms.
- Three clue difficulties per term, so the same material is worth revisiting.
- Revision crosswords and spaced repetition built from what you got wrong.
- Print to paper or PDF, and export high resolution images for sharing.
- Six hours of study music, across lo-fi, piano, guitar, ambient and zen.
- All processing is local. Documents never leave your computer, and no account is needed.
- Colourblind safe palettes, a high contrast mode and dyslexic font support.
- Steam Cloud keeps crosswords and progress in step across machines, on the Steam version.

Technology

- Programming language: [Rust](#)
- Graphics engine: [Macroquad](#)
- UI engine: [egui](#)
- Special effects: [GLSL](#)
- Natural language processing: [NLTK](#)
- Audio engine: [Kira](#)

Grappling with jargon

In compiling this work I reviewed ethically sourced public domain datasets used by linguists, such as [NLTK](#) and [WordNet](#). That allowed me to refine a set of 126 subjects, or areas of study, and then establish which English words carry a specific meaning inside those domains. The summary is in the chart below, and it is what tells us which students benefit most from this software.



Development history

This software started in 2013 when I needed a glossary generator for my PhD write up. I am a computer scientist, but my research into electrical detection of human emotions was cross-disciplinary, with a lot of medical and psychological depth. Not relishing the idea of combing my 600-odd pages of work for the key terms a reader would need, I wrote my own glossary analysis algorithm.

I soon discovered how powerful glossary analysis algorithms were, and started researching fact extraction techniques. Later that year I experimented with releasing a free crossword generator, and thought it would be excellent if the two things were combined into one product.

I had to put it down for a while. I had started a young family and had to concentrate on my work at CSIRO and the Australian National University. Recently I moved with my family to a rural Queensland town, to live the country lifestyle. Now, ten years after putting this work aside, I am very happy to be picking it up again.

Author's note

This is not another "learning app". It is a tool built by a former lecturer who got sick of educational software that either treats students like kids who need a dopamine hit, or attempts to replace teachers. This is not gamified homework. It is a focused, low stress way to actually remember what you study.

If you are a parent looking for help, you may be confused by the price. It is a fraction of the cost normally charged for educational software. The reason is that this software is priced so students can afford it. Normal educational software positions itself as a substitute for private tuition, and understands you will pay for results. I am not selling to you, so there is no monthly fee. My

proposition is that the amount asked is something a senior high school student can justify, as a tool that will aid them until they finish university. My business model is not preying on the bank accounts of concerned parents.

If you are an educational institution, this software can definitely help teachers prepare coursework. There is no site or classroom licence option because this is a tool that helps students organise and perform. It is not intended as a substitute for teaching hours. If you see giving students a crossword as a substitute for contact hours with an educator, or as a way to reduce costs, please go and find other software.

This software is built for you, the student. I sell it on Steam because I believe it is a place where great software can find a following. Steam offers a good refund policy and regionally appropriate pricing, keeping this software affordable and accessible to all. I respect that.

What is in the kit

The archives and the individual files are on the press kit page at https://tickwords.com/press_kit.html.

- **Screenshots:** 12 files, 3.7 MB (jpg).
- **Gameplay clips:** 5 files, 13.7 MB (mp4, webp).
- **Print and export samples:** 4 files, 4.5 MB (png, webp).
- **Branding:** 9 files, 1.4 MB (kra, png, svg, webp).
- **Store graphics:** 4 files, 11.5 MB (jpg, kra).
- **Other media:** 2 files, 4.7 MB (png, webp).