

Planning Grids

Help Sheet 6

When making anything within the program WWS2000 it is a good idea to spend a short time planning what it is you want to make. It may be that the plan highlights some problems with the original idea, so that it can be changed before a lot of work has gone into creating resources. If you are planning one grid or an environment it may be useful to roughly draw out the grids on paper. Then imagine how the user will use the grid. Will the links made between grids allow them to move between grids as you had envisaged?

Planning Grids

When planning a grid, first draw it onto a piece of paper. This will allow you to see if the layout of the cells will be suitable for the user you have in mind. It is frustrating to set up a complex grid layout, perhaps with grouped cells, only to find that each cell is too small to contain the data you want at a size that can be viewed easily.

If you are making a communication book, or sheet for an Overlay Keyboard, you may also want to add some extra cells that will be above the main symbol area in which you can put a heading or key words. Remember, a grid document is made up from identical sized cells, but for printed materials (i.e. grids that are not to be scanned) you can group cells, to make irregular layouts. You can also 'turn off' cell walls so that some areas do not look as though they are in a grid – see next page.

Print Margins

You will need to think about where the grid is to be used. Will it only ever be used on the screen or will it be printed out? If it is to be printed out then you need to think about the print margins that are needed. This can be important when planning to make a grid for a communication aid overlay or a page in a communication book. The **Print Margins...** can be set from within the **File Menu**. The smallest Print margin that you can set is dependent on your printer. Typically it will be about 4-6 mm.

The size of the grid in millimeters is the size it will be printed out.

Printing Portrait or Landscape

The program will automatically set the paper into Portrait or Landscape from your grid settings. It will choose landscape if the grid is wider than it is high. If you want to override this, you can alter this in the **Print Setup...** section of the **File Menu**.

Paper Size

Although you may only be able to print onto A4 paper, you may want to make a grid that will be trimmed to fit a specific size, for example a Filofax. It is quite difficult to visualise a small document on a large piece of paper, and so you may find it helpful to change the paper size in the Print Set-up dialog box. This means that the paper shown in Print Preview will more closely match your finished product. For most printers it does not matter if you set a smaller paper size, but if it causes problems then re-set the size to A4 just before printing.

Print Preview

It is always worth checking the document in Print Preview before setting margins or printing the layout for the first time. Print preview is under the **File** menu, or on the normal icon bar.

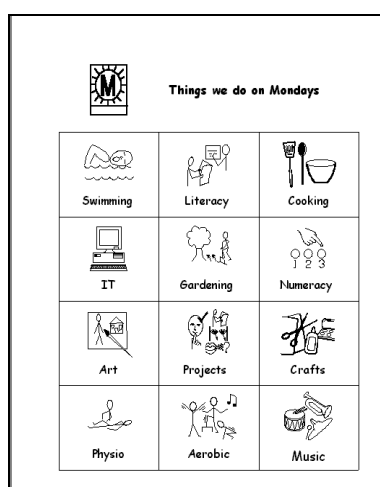
Saving your grid

If the grid is one that you are likely to use again then it would be a good idea to make a blank grid and save it as a template. The templates folder is a protected area where you can save new grids, but you cannot re-save into. This means that you are protected from over-saving your blank. The filled-in pages made from templates have to be saved in a different folder. See Help Sheet 8: **Making and Using Templates**.

Exercise:

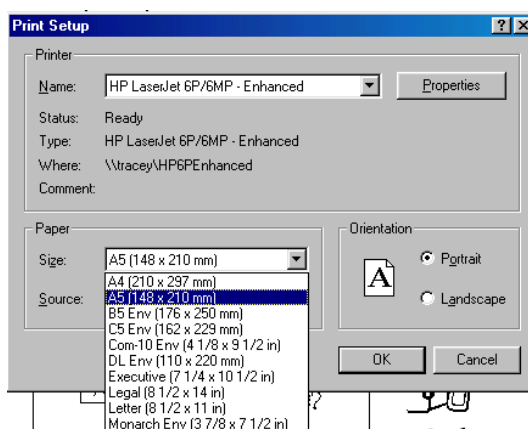
To make a page for a communication book, which is not a standard A4 page.

Let's suppose we have a folder that is slightly smaller than A5 and that we decide on a layout something like the one shown below. When the layout is sketched it seems that a grid size of 110 mm wide by height of 150 mm would look good. Since this layout will be used many times over we would also want to save the blank grid as a template. The grid has 3 cells across and 5 down, that is 4 rows for symbols and one row at the top for a heading. The paper will be trimmed slightly when it is finished.



Open the grid with these settings. In the top row the two right hand cells should be grouped together to give space for text like "Things we do on Mondays". Having grouped these cells press **F10** to make it into a text box. You will find a font size of **14** is suitable. Click on the **Left Justify** icon on the toolbar so that any text you type will be at the left of the cell. To make the text appear half way down the cell click **Centre vertically** from the **Grid** menu. The top, left and right hand walls of the two cells in the top row are then made to have zero thickness so they are not seen. Use **Set wall thickness** from the **Grids** menu. This will set up the heading cells ready to use.

You can look at the grid in Print Preview to get a better idea of the appearance. To do this correctly you should first set up the paper size to be A5, otherwise viewing on A4 paper would give a false impression of the finished document. Go to **Print Setup** to set the smaller A5 paper size:



Click on the down arrow beside the size box, and you will see all the paper sizes that your printer can support. Select the one you want, set **Portrait** or **Landscape** as required and click **OK**.

The page size on the screen will now reflect these settings. (Don't worry you can go back and change this at any time.)

Now look at the grid in **print preview**, and you will get a better feel of the finished product.

The margins need to be set to leave room for holes to be punched. **Print Margins** can be found under the **File** menu. Set the left margin to **23** and the top margin to **18**. Don't worry about the right and bottom settings, these will take care of themselves.

If you are unhappy with the grid you can now make alterations to the grid size from the **Grids** menu. You can also insert and delete rows if you have made a mistake. If you are going to use this layout regularly now is the time to save the grid as a Template – See worksheet 8.

Fill in the content of the cells with symbols with your own choice of vocabulary. Making any necessary adjustments to the graphic and text sizes to give a consistent feel to the grid. If you want a number of cells to have the same settings you can highlight all of the cells and change them all together rather than one at a time.

To add the heading at the top, Type **Monday** into the first cell, and then from the **Grid** menu, Un-check the item **Show Text**. You can now make the symbol a little larger so that it fills the cell.

Save the finished file before printing. (This is always a good habit).

The last step is to return your paper size to A4 but set the orientation to Landscape, In this way the grid will be printed on the left half of the page making it easier to trim.

See also: Activity 4 Making Grids for printing