

Communication Aid Overlays & Communication Books

Help Sheet 15

Communication books and overlays for Communication aids are made with Grids. Grids can be defined for any size up to the size of your printer paper. The sizes that you set in the Grid dialog box are exact measurements. You can also specify the print margins so that you can position your grid where you want it on the printed page. This means that it is fairly easy to make grids for books and aids.

The next section looks at general principles of making grids and book pages. There are also some pre-made grids to make the overlays for some common communication aid overlays. These are discussed later.

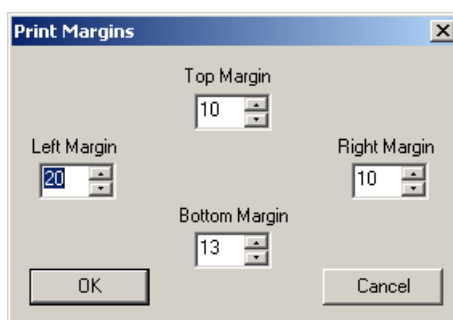
1. Designing the page

If you are making a communication book, you should sketch out the basic layout of the page on a standard size page. This grid should be positioned where you want it to be on the page.

Measure that grid, which will give you a good starting size when you create the grid in Writing with Symbols (See Activity 6, **Creating grids for printing**). If you are making an overlay for an aid, you will need to measure the device precisely, including any offsets from the edge of the paper.

Create the grid with these settings, and look at it in **Print Preview** (Under the **File** menu) to see if it looks right.

Position the grid where you want by setting the print margins. You can try different settings until it is just as you require. You will be told if you try to set margins that are inappropriate for that grid.



There is a minimum margin determined by your printer, which is normally somewhere between 4 and 10.

2. Changing the size of the grid

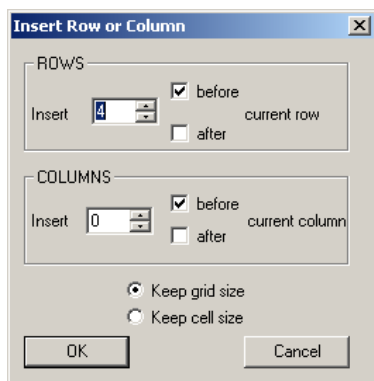
You can make alterations to the grid size from the **Grids** menu. Type the new size in, and click OK. If you try to make the grid too big for the printer, you will be asked to amend it.

3. Changing the number of cells

Many communication aids have alternative layouts, with different numbers of cells for the same size grid, or overlay. Once you have made the set-up for one style, with the correct dimensions and margins, you can easily add rows or columns without changing the overall dimensions.

You can also delete the currently selected row or column, but this will make the grid smaller. These choices are on the Grid menu.

When you choose to insert rows and/or columns you will get this dialog box:



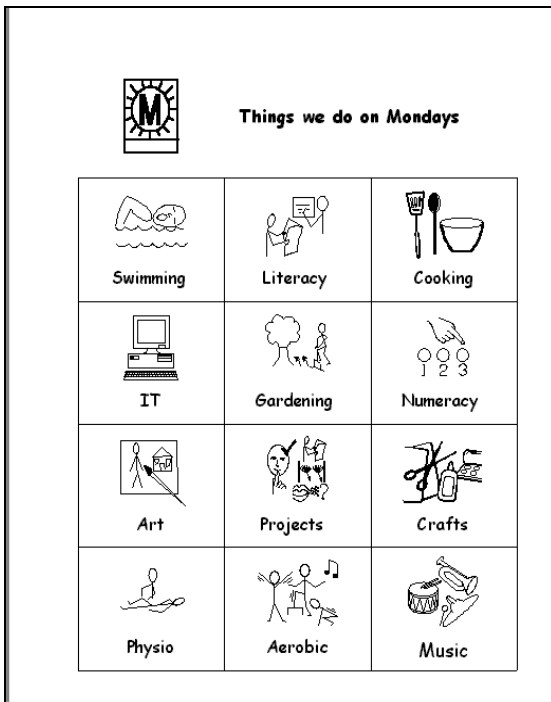
Notice that there are two choices below the row and column boxes: Keep Grid size or Keep Cell size. If you are adding cells to a grid for a communication aid, you will want to keep the grid the same size and reduce the individual cell size. If you choose to keep the cell size it will make the grid that much bigger.

4. Making a communication book

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.

The example below was for a page for a communication book has been made to fit a special book size. It was slightly shorter than a standard A5 sheet. The margins were set so that there was more space on the left for holes to be punched. The top left cell has the Text hidden, and the top right cells have been grouped and set to text mode for the page title. The top and side walls were set to zero thickness to give the impression of a title above a grid.

While the grid was being created, the paper size was set to A5 to give a good impression of how it fitted the page. This was especially helpful when viewing the page up in Print preview. The page size can be set in the Print Set-up dialog.



There are the full details on how to make this grid in **Help Sheet 6: Planning grids**

When the grid was finished, a copy was made, the contents removed and then it was Saved As in the templates folder so that it could be used again. This means that all of the settings will remain and new pages can be made very quickly.

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**)

5. Communication Aid Overlay Templates

There are a number of templates are provided with WWS2000. These are blank overlays and can be found in the Templates folder: **WWS200WorkWritingWorksheetsTemplates** This is found as follows: From the Writing folder, open the Worksheets folder, (This is at the same level at the Hi-Res and Lo-res examples folders) and then the Templates folder:

The electronic voice out put communication aids that have templates made for them include:

Alphatalker The commonly used 128, 32, 8 and 4 areas on an overlay are included. The overlay of the Alphatalker is larger then A4 paper and so the templates are saved in two halves that will need to be printed and joined.

As the overlay of the Alphatalker and **Deltatalker** communication aids are identical the Alphatalker templates can be used to print out overlays for the Deltatalker.

Black hawk This template has A and B sections as the overlay of the Black hawk has two identical areas on its overlay that slot into the machine separately.

Chatbox This template has 16 keys on the overlay.

Eclipse These templates include overlays with 128 and 32 keys. The Eclipse overlay is exactly A4. Not all printers can print this size therefore you may have to adjust the overlay to allow your printer to print it out.

Message mates These communication aids come in a number of different sizes. The examples include an overlay for the Message mate 20 set up for 20 keys and overlays to fit the Message mate 40 set up for 4, 10 and 40 keys on the overlay.

Orac The examples here include overlays with 128, 32 and 8 keys on the overlay.

Speakeasy The example provided shows the overlay with 12 keys.

Overlays for **Universal** or **Concept keyboards** are also included here. These cover 8x4, 4x4, 4x2, and 2x2 overlays. These are A4 size overlays, but can be enlarged on a photocopier to make overlays for A3 boards.

The communication aid overlays that are included in the Templates folder in the program correspond to a selection of the communication aids currently available in the UK. The increased number of possible messages on the same communication aid is an indication of the complexity of language that the communication aid can use. This can be seen in the Alphatalker and ORAC examples. Many users start with a few messages and then build up to being able to communicate more successfully with a larger range of messages.

If you want a different number of cells, open the overlay, go to the Grids menu, and then add or remove cells. Make sure that you check the button **Keep grid size** when you do this.

If the overlay does not quite fit the device you are using, perhaps because of model or printer variations, then you can go to the **Grids** menu and select **Change Size** and make minor adjustments.