

# VIDEO: User Guide

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## Welcome to the Word Search Puzzle Generator!

This guide will help you understand and make the most of the application's powerful features to create unique and professional puzzle books.

For an efficient workflow, we recommend following these steps:

1. Start in the Words section to input and manage all your themes and vocabulary. This is the "heart" of your book.
2. Next, customize the general appearance and rules in the **Puzzle Settings, Shape, Word List, Layout, and Styling sections**. This is where your creativity comes to life.
3. Finally, use the **Book Manager** to arrange, review, and export your entire book into a finished product.

Below you will find a detailed guide for each section.

### \*User Guide: The "Words" Section

The "Words" section is your starting point and the most important area for creating your puzzles. This is where you will input and manage all the words that will appear in your puzzle book.

The core idea: **Each "Theme" you create will become a separate puzzle page.**

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#### 1. Managing Themed Word Lists

This is the main area where you will add, edit, and delete your puzzles.

- **Add a New Theme:** Click the "Add New Theme" button. An empty theme will appear.

- **Name Your Theme:** In the "Theme Title" field, enter a name for your theme. This name will automatically become the **subtitle** on its puzzle page. (e.g., "Flower Types," "Summer Fruits").
  - **Enter Your Words:** In the "Word List" box, type the words you want players to find. You can separate words with a **space**, **comma**, or a **new line**. The word count is updated automatically.
  - **Delete a Theme:** Click the trash can icon in the top-right corner of a theme to remove it.
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## 2. Bulk Import

This feature saves you time by allowing you to paste many word lists and themes at once.

1. Click the **"Bulk Import"** button.
  2. A new window will appear. Paste your text using the following format:
    - The first line of a block is the **Theme Name**.
    - The following lines are the words for that theme.
    - **Leave a blank line** to separate different themes.
  3. **Example:**
    - Breeds
    - Persian
    - Siamese
    - Maine Coon
    - British Shorthair
    - Bengal
    - Ragdoll
    - Scottish Fold
    - Sphynx
    - Abyssinian
    - Burmese
  4. Click **"Import Lists,"** and the application will automatically create the corresponding themes for you.
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## 3. AI Word Generator

If you're out of ideas or want to create a word list quickly, use the AI tool.

- **Requirement:** This feature requires a **Gemini API Key**. You can add your key by clicking the **"API Keys"** button in the left-hand toolbar.
  - **How to Use:**
    1. In the "AI Word Generator" box, enter the topic you want in the input field (e.g., "Jungle Animals," "Kitchen Utensils").
    2. Select the number of words you want to generate.
    3. Click the **"Generate New Theme"** button.
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  - The AI will generate a word list and add it as a new theme to your collection.
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### Tips & Suggestions:

- For the best-looking puzzles, try to avoid extremely long words, as they can be difficult to fit into the grid.
  - Use the AI generator to quickly brainstorm ideas for new themes.
  - Once your word lists are ready, move on to the **Puzzle, Shape, Layout, and Styling** sections to customize your puzzle's appearance!
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## \*User Guide: Puzzle Settings

This is where you'll configure the core rules and overall appearance of your puzzles. These settings act as a general "template" that will be applied to all puzzles generated from your themed lists.

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### 1. Book Title

- This is the **main title** that will appear at the top of every puzzle page. For example: "Fun Word Search Book," "Animal Puzzles."
  - **Title Customization:** You can change the font, size, color, boldness, scale, and position of the title to match your book's style.
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### 2. Default Subtitle

- This is a **preview-only** subtitle. When you generate the actual puzzles from your themes, the **title of each theme will automatically replace** this subtitle.
  - For example, if your theme is "Flower Types," then "Flower Types" will become the subtitle on that specific puzzle page.
  - **Subtitle Customization:** Just like the main title, you can fully customize the appearance of the subtitle.
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### 3. Grid Size

- Use the slider to adjust the dimensions of the word search grid (e.g., 15x15, 20x20).
  - **A larger grid** allows for longer words and more of them, increasing the puzzle's complexity.
  - **A smaller grid** is suitable for simpler puzzles or for children.
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### 4. Preview Aspect Ratio

- This option changes the shape of the preview canvas to match common book sizes on Amazon KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing).
  - **Why is this important?** Choosing the correct size helps you accurately visualize how your puzzle will look when printed, ensuring everything is well-proportioned and nothing gets cut off.
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### 5. Difficulty

This option controls the directions in which words can be placed in the grid:

- **Basic:** Horizontal (left-to-right) and Vertical (top-to-bottom) only.
  - **Intermediate:** Adds reversed horizontal and vertical (right-to-left, bottom-to-top).
  - **Advanced:** Adds diagonals (top-left to bottom-right and top-right to bottom-left).
  - **Expert:** Includes all 8 directions (horizontal, vertical, diagonal, and all reverse directions).
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### 6. Grid Customization

This section allows you to fine-tune the visual details of the puzzle grid itself.

- **Scale:** Makes the entire grid larger or smaller within the page frame.
- **Horizontal/Vertical Offset:** Moves the grid left/right or up/down.
- **Border Color:** Changes the color of the cell lines within the grid.
- **Text Color:** Changes the color of the letters in the grid.
- **Font Family, Font Size, Bold:** Customize the font of the letters to match your theme (e.g., a fun font for a kids' book, a clear font for adults).
- **Grid Lines Style:** Choose between Solid, Dashed, Dotted, or None.

After configuring these basic settings, move on to the **Shape**, **Word List**, **Layout**, and **Styling** sections to finalize your puzzle!

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## **\*User Guide: Shape Settings**

This is where you can break free from boring square grids and create uniquely shaped puzzles that match your themes. You can choose from presets or upload your own custom images.

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### **1. Select a Preset Shape**

This is the quickest and easiest way to change the look of your puzzle.

- Click the dropdown menu under **"Shape"**.
  - Choose one of the available presets, such as:
    - Square
    - Circle
    - Heart
    - Star
    - Triangle
    - And more...
  - 
  - The puzzle in the preview window will instantly update to your selected shape.
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### **2. Upload Custom Shape**

This is a powerful feature that allows you to create a puzzle in any shape you can imagine.

1. Click the **"Upload Custom Shape"** button.
2. Choose an image file from your computer. Supported formats are **SVG, PNG, and JPG**.

### Important Tips for Best Results:

- **Use a single-color (black and white) or silhouette image.** The application will treat **any non-white pixel** as part of the letter area.
- **Simple, clean images work best.** Things like kids' coloring pages, simple icons, or clipart with clean outlines are ideal choices.
- Avoid images with lots of small, complex details or colored backgrounds, as they can create undesirable puzzle areas.

**Example:** If you upload an image of a solid black cat on a white background, your puzzle grid will be in the exact shape of that cat.

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### 3. Remove Custom Shape

- After you upload a custom shape, the **"Upload Custom Shape"** button will be replaced by two buttons: **"Change Shape"** and **"Remove Shape"**.
- Click **"Remove Shape"** to delete your uploaded image. The puzzle will automatically revert to the default shape (Square).

## 1. Tips for You (How to Optimize Your Images)

To achieve the most accurate shapes with the current tool, you should prepare your images following these principles:

### ✓ **Top Priority: High Contrast**

The algorithm works best when there's a strong distinction between the shape and the background.

- **Best:** Solid black shape on a pure white background.
- **Avoid:** Drop shadows, gradients, or light gray/cream backgrounds. The algorithm may mistakenly detect these lighter areas as part of the shape.

### ✓ Use THICK and CLEAR Lines

The algorithm activates a grid cell if any pixel of the shape touches that area.

If you use very thin lines, it will still generate a series of “chunky” squares.

By using images with pre-drawn thick lines, the results will more closely match the original image.

### ✓ SVG Format Is the Best Choice

If possible, always use SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics).

Why? SVG doesn't get pixelated when scaled up, ensuring sharp edges. This allows the algorithm to detect shape boundaries with maximum accuracy.

PNG is also fine (especially with a transparent background), but SVG is superior.

### ✓ Use SOLID Shapes Instead of Just Outlines

A filled-in heart shape will produce much better results than a simple heart outline. This is because solid shapes consistently activate all the cells inside.

### ✓ Clean Up Your Image

Make sure your image has no noise pixels, logos, watermarks, or unwanted small details. Any non-white speck may be treated as part of the shape.

**In summary:** An SVG file, with a solid black filled shape on a pure white or transparent background, free from unnecessary details, will produce the most accurate shaped word search results.

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## \*User Guide: Word List Settings

This section gives you complete control over how the list of findable words is displayed on the puzzle page, from its position and layout to fine details like fonts and borders.

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### 1. Word List Position

This option determines where the word list is located relative to the puzzle grid.

- **Top:** The word list will be above the grid.
- **Bottom:** The word list will be below the grid (this is the most common placement).
- **Left:** The word list will be to the left of the grid.
- **Right:** The word list will be to the right of the grid.

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## 2. Word List Columns

- Use the slider to adjust the number of columns the word list is divided into.
  - **Note:** This option is **only active** when the display style is set to "Columns".
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## 3. Word Case

Controls the capitalization of the words in the list.

- **UPPERCASE:** All letters will be CAPITALIZED.
  - **lowercase:** All letters will be in lowercase.
  - **Capitalize:** Only the first letter of each word will be capitalized.
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## 4. Word List Display Style

Changes the overall format of the word list.

- **Columns:** Words are arranged neatly into vertical columns.
  - **Block:** Words are displayed one after another, separated by commas, like a paragraph.
  - **Boxed:** Each word is placed inside its own individual box or "tag."
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## 5. Word List Text Customization

This section lets you fine-tune the appearance of the words themselves.

- **Font Family, Font Size, Color:** Choose the font, size, and color for the text.
  - **Bold:** Toggle bold formatting for the words.
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## 6. Word List Container Styling

This section is for styling the box (container) that surrounds the entire word list.



- **Background Color & Border Color:** Set the background and border colors for the container.
  - **Padding:** Adjust the amount of space between the words and the edge of the container.
  - **Border Style:** Choose a border style (solid, dashed, dotted, etc.).
  - **Border Width & Radius:** Adjust the thickness of the border and the roundness of the corners.
  - **Enable Shadow:** Add a subtle drop-shadow effect to the container.
  - **Scale (Horizontal/Vertical):** Make the entire container wider/narrower or taller/shorter.
  - **Offset (Horizontal/Vertical):** Move the entire container left/right or up/down for precise positioning.
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## \*User Guide: Page Layout

This section lets you control the elements surrounding the main puzzle, such as the instructions, header, footer, and the border for the entire page.

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### 1. Instructions Text

- **Instructions Text:** Type the directions for the player in this box. For example: "Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Words can be found in all directions."
  - **Show border:** Check this box to add a simple border around the instructions text box.
  - **Instructions Customization:**
    - Expand this section to get full control over the look of the instructions box.
    - You can change the **font, size, color, boldness, scale (zoom), position (horizontal/vertical), and the width and height** of the text box.
    - You can also customize the **border color** (if enabled).
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### 2. Footer Text

- This is where you can add text at the very bottom of the page. It's commonly used for copyright information (e.g., "Copyright © 2024 by [Your Name]").
  - **Show Footer Text:** Toggle this on or off to show or hide this line of text.
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### 3. Container Border Page

- This section allows you to add and customize a border that frames the entire puzzle page.
  - **Enable Custom Border:** Check this box to turn on the custom border.
  - **Thickness:** Use the slider to adjust how thick the border line is.
  - **Color:** Choose a color for the border.
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### 4. Name/Date Header

- Check the **"Show 'Name/Date' Header"** box to add blank lines at the top of the page.
  - This is a very useful feature if you're creating activity books for kids or materials for a classroom, allowing the player to write their name and the date.
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## \*User Guide: Styling

This is where you can add visual flair and finishing touches to make your puzzle pages vibrant and unique. You can set a global font, add a background image, and place small decorative images.

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### 1. Global Font Family

- **Purpose:** This option allows you to choose a single font that will be applied to **all text elements** on the page (title, instructions, grid, word list) to create a consistent and professional look.
  - **How to Use:**
    1. Click the dropdown menu under "Global Font Family".
    2. Select a font from the categorized list (e.g., Modern, Fun, Handwritten, Themed).
    3. The preview will update instantly to show the change.
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### 2. Background Image

- **Purpose:** Add a background image to your entire puzzle page. This is great for creating themed pages (e.g., a space background for a puzzle about planets).
- **How to Use:**

1. Click the **"Upload Background Image"** button to select an image file from your computer.
2. Once the image is uploaded, the following options will appear:
  - **Remove Image:** Deletes the background image.
  - **Opacity:** Adjusts the transparency of the image. Drag it to the left to make the image fainter, which helps make the puzzle letters easier to read.
  - **Scale:** Makes the background image larger or smaller.
  - **Horizontal/Vertical Offset:** Moves the background image left/right or up/down.

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### 3. Decorative Images

- **Purpose:** Add smaller images (like clipart, icons, or characters) on top of your puzzle page for decoration. You can add multiple images and place them wherever you like.
- **How to Use:**
  1. Click the **plus icon (+)** to upload your first decorative image.
  2. Once uploaded, a new tab (e.g., "Image 1") will appear. Click this tab to begin editing it.
  3. In the image's control panel, you can adjust:
    - **Position:** Choose a preset location (e.g., Top Left, Middle Center, Bottom Right).
    - **Opacity:** Adjust the transparency.
    - **Scale:** Change the size.
    - **Rotation:** Rotate the image.
    - **Horizontal/Vertical Offset:** Fine-tune the image's exact position relative to its preset location.
  - 4.
  5. Click the **plus icon (+)** again to add more decorative images. Each image will get its own tab for independent editing.

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This is where you'll assemble, edit, and export your entire collection of puzzles into a finished book or as individual files.

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## 1. Managing Your Puzzle List

After you use the **"Add [X] to Book"** button, all your generated puzzles will appear here as a list.

- **Information Displayed:** Each puzzle in the list will show:
    - **Sequence number:** (01, 02, 03,...)
    - **Title and Subtitle:** (e.g., "My Word Search" and "Flower Types").
    - The **number of words** in that puzzle.
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## 2. Editing Individual Puzzles

You can fine-tune the title and subtitle for each puzzle page independently.

1. Click the **edit icon** (pencil) next to the puzzle you want to change.
  2. The title and subtitle text fields will become editable boxes.
  3. Change the text as desired.
  4. Click the **Save icon** (floppy disk) to confirm the changes, or the **Cancel icon** (circled X) to discard them.
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## 3. Previewing Puzzles

- If you want to review what a specific puzzle looks like, click the **Preview icon** (eye).
  - This will temporarily close the Book Manager and load that puzzle into the main preview area.
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## 4. Selecting Puzzles for Export

- **Select Individually:** Use the checkboxes at the start of each row to select or deselect individual puzzles.
- **Select All:** Check the box at the very top of the list to select or deselect all puzzles at once.

- A counter will show how many puzzles you have selected (e.g., "15 / 20 selected").
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## 5. Export Settings

Before exporting, configure these options:

- **Book/Slide Size:** Choose the final page dimensions. This is crucial if you plan to publish on platforms like **Amazon KDP**. Standard sizes are pre-configured (e.g., 8.5" x 11", 6" x 9").
  - **Include Solutions:** Check this box if you want to include the answer key pages in your exported file. Uncheck it if you only want the puzzle pages.
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## 6. Export Formats

You have three options for exporting your selected puzzles:

- **Export as PDF:**
    - **Best for:** Creating a complete, print-ready book to upload to KDP.
    - **Result:** A single PDF file containing all puzzle pages (and solution pages, if selected).
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  - **Export as PNG:**
    - **Best for:** Using the puzzles in other design software like Canva, PowerPoint, or for posting online.
    - **Result:** A ZIP file containing each puzzle page as a separate, high-quality PNG image file.
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  - **Export as SVG:**
    - **Best for:** Advanced users who need a vector format for editing in software like Adobe Illustrator. SVGs can be scaled infinitely without losing quality.
    - **Result:** A ZIP file containing each puzzle page as a separate SVG vector file.
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**\*User Guide: Save & Load Project**

These features allow you to save your entire work-in-progress to a single file on your computer and reload it later to continue working.

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## 1. Save Project

- **Purpose:** To save the complete current state of the application, including all your settings, word lists, and generated puzzles. This is useful for taking a break, creating backups, or sharing your setup.
  - **What gets saved?** When you save, a `.wsgen` file is created containing **everything**:
    1. All your **Themes** and **Word Lists**.
    2. All settings from the **Puzzle, Shape, Word List, Layout, and Styling** sections.
    3. All puzzles that have been added to the **Book Manager**.
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  - **How to Save:**
    1. Click the **Save icon** (floppy disk) in the left-hand toolbar.
    2. Your computer's file save dialog will appear.
    3. A filename will be suggested based on your "Book Title" (e.g., `fun_word_search_book.wsgen`).
    4. Choose where you want to save the file on your computer and click **"Save"**.
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## 2. Load Project

- **Purpose:** To open a previously saved project to continue editing or to export it.
  - **IMPORTANT WARNING:** Loading a project will **replace your entire current session**. Make sure you have saved any important changes before loading a new file.
  - **How to Load:**
    1. Click the **Load icon** (folder with an up arrow) in the left-hand toolbar.
    2. Your computer's file browser will open.
    3. Find and select the `.wsgen` project file you wish to open.
    4. Click **"Open"**.
    5. The application will immediately restore to the exact state you had when you saved, allowing you to seamlessly pick up where you left off.
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## \*User Guide: The "Resources" Section

This is a curated list of recommended websites to help you find the perfect high-quality images and vectors to use as custom shapes for your puzzles.

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### 1. What is the purpose of the Resources section?

The main goal is to provide you with reliable sources for finding images, enabling you to create uniquely shaped, themed word searches (e.g., a puzzle in the shape of a cat, an apple, or a rocket ship).

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### 2. Types of Resources Provided

The section is organized into categories for easy browsing:

- **Vector/Clipart Libraries (Free & Paid):**
  - Sites like **Freepik**, **Vecteezy**, and **Pixabay** offer millions of professional icons and illustrations on every imaginable topic.
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- **Coloring Pages:**
  - Sites like **Supercoloring** are a fantastic resource.
  - **Why are they useful?** They provide simple, black-and-white line art. This is the **most ideal** type of image for the application to recognize and use to create a clean, sharp puzzle shape.
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- **PLR / Bundles for KDP & Etsy:**
  - Sites like **Creative Fabrica** and **Design Bundles** allow you to purchase large image packs with commercial usage rights.
  - This is a perfect option if you plan to create many puzzle books for sale on platforms like Amazon KDP.
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- **Create Your Own Shapes:**
  - **Manually:** Use graphics software like Adobe Illustrator (paid) or Inkscape (free) to draw your own shapes.
  - **With AI:** Use an AI image generator (like DALL·E or MidJourney) with a prompt like: "cute line art coloring page of a giraffe, simple, clean lines"

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### 3. How to Use These Resources

1. Click on a link in the "Resources" window to open the corresponding website.
2. Search for and download an image you like (in **SVG**, **PNG**, or **JPG** format).
3. Return to the application and navigate to the **"Shape Settings"** section.
4. Click the **"Upload Custom Shape"** button and select the image file you just downloaded.

**Important Tip:** For the best results, always prioritize choosing **single-color (black and white)**, **silhouette**, or simple, clean **line art** images.

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### \*User Guide: API Key Settings

This section allows you to connect the application to Artificial Intelligence (AI) services to enable advanced features, such as the **"AI Word Generator"**.

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#### 1. Purpose of an API Key

An API (Application Programming Interface) key acts like a secure password that allows this application to access powerful AI models like Google's Gemini.

- **Required:** You **must have a Gemini API Key** to use the feature that automatically generates themed word lists.
  - **Secure:** Your key is stored safely **only within your browser** and is never shared with anyone else.
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#### 2. How to Access API Settings

1. Look at the toolbar on the left side of the screen.
  2. Click the **"API Keys"** icon (gear).
  3. A settings window will appear.
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### 3. Adding Your Gemini API Key

This is the primary key needed to activate the AI features.

1. **Get Your Key:**
    - Click the **"Get your Gemini API key here →"** link in the settings window.
    - You will be taken to the Google AI Studio page. Sign in with your Google account.
    - Click the **"Get API Key"** button, then **"Create API Key"**.
  - 2.
  3. **Copy and Paste:**
    - Copy the entire API key string that was just created.
    - Return to the application and paste it into the **"Gemini API Key"** field.
  - 4.
  5. **View/Hide Key:** You can click the eye icon to show or hide your key for security.
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### 4. OpenAI API Key (Optional)

- This field is for an API key from OpenAI.
  - **Note:** Currently, the application **only uses the Gemini API**. Support for OpenAI may be added in the future. You can leave this field blank.
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### 5. Save and Close

- After pasting your Gemini key, click the **"Save & Close"** button.
- You are now ready to use the AI Word Generator in the **"Words"** section.