

THE SPELLING BEE SOFTWARE USER GUIDE

Learn | Train | Compete

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The Spelling Bee - Where Learning Meets Competition

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1. Introduction

The Spelling Bee is a comprehensive desktop software platform designed to make spelling competitions and vocabulary mastery fun, engaging, and accessible for learners, teachers, parents and event organizers. The software combines individual learning, word bank management, progress tracking, competition hosting and classroom use.

The software is available for Windows desktop and on the Microsoft Store as International Spelling Bee.

Who is this guide for?

This guide covers individual learning, word bank management, progress tracking, competition hosting and classroom use. It includes quick-reference guidance for students, parents and teachers.

2. Getting Started

2.1 System Requirements

Requirement	Specification
Operating System	Windows 10 or later (64-bit recommended)
Storage	Minimum 200 MB free disk space
RAM	2 GB RAM or more recommended
Internet	Required for installation and Microsoft Store download
Audio	Speakers or headphones for Text-to-Speech functionality

2.2 Installation

- Download the software from thespellingbee.co.za or search for International Spelling Bee on the Microsoft Store.
- Open the installer or Microsoft Store listing and follow the prompts.
- Launch the application from the desktop icon or Start menu.
- Review and accept the End User License Agreement on first launch.

2.3 Creating a User Profile

- Enter your first name.
- Select your proficiency level, such as Pre-School, Elementary, Middle School or High School.
- Configure your Text-to-Speech language preference.
- Select or create a starting WordBank.

Multiple profiles can be created on the same computer, making the software suitable for families and classrooms where several learners share one device.

3. Software Overview

3.1 Main Interface

- Navigation Bar - access Learn, Practice, Test, Arcade, WordBanks, Reports and Settings.
- Word Display Panel - shows the current word with definition, part of speech, usage example and etymology.
- Input Area - text box where spelling responses are entered.

- Leaderboard - visible on the home screen, showing scores for profiles on the device.
- Settings / Profile - manage profiles, TTS settings and preferences.

3.2 Key Features at a Glance

Feature	Description
Learn Mode	Explore new words with definitions, etymology and usage examples.
Practice Mode	Unscramble words with real-time feedback and color-coded hints.
Test Mode	Timed spelling challenges with instant performance reports.
Arcade Mode	Spell as many words as possible before time runs out.
WordBanks	Create and organize custom word lists for targeted practice.
Bulk Upload	Import words from text files or spreadsheets.
Advanced Filters	Filter by word length, origin, part of speech or status.
Flashcards	Auto-generated flashcards saved as image files for offline review.
Text-to-Speech	Multiple voices and alternative pronunciations.
Progress Reports	Session breakdowns of correct, incorrect, learned and new words.
Leaderboard	Compare scores across profiles on the same device.
Competition Mode	Full competition management with scoring, rounds and live displays.

4. Learning Modes

4.1 Learn Mode

- Presents each word with definition, part of speech, usage in a sentence and etymology.
- Learners type the word while absorbing meaning and context.
- Word order can be randomized to keep sessions dynamic.
- Etymology helps learners identify patterns in Latin, Greek or French word origins.

4.2 Practice Mode

- Builds familiarity with word structure by presenting scrambled words.
- Green highlights indicate correctly placed letters; grey highlights guide corrections.
- A three-chances rule challenges the learner before the correct spelling is revealed.
- Random sequencing keeps sessions unpredictable and challenging.

4.3 Test Mode

- Simulates a real spelling bee experience using timed spelling activities.
- Learners spell each word using the keyboard while hearing it via Text-to-Speech.
- An instant performance report is generated at the end of each session.
- Reports can be saved or printed for review.

4.4 Arcade Mode

- Makes spelling practice an exciting game.
- Learners spell as many words as possible before the timer runs out.
- Words are awarded points and the leaderboard updates automatically.
- Useful for short, high-energy practice sessions or classroom spelling competitions.

5. Managing Words and WordBanks

WordBanks organize words into meaningful categories for targeted learning and competition preparation.

Creating and Organizing WordBanks

- Navigate to Manage Words or WordBanks.
- Create a new WordBank with a name such as Grade 5 Vocabulary or Competition Round 1.
- Add words manually, from text files or from spreadsheets.
- Switch between WordBanks during a session using the WordBank selector.

Adding Words Manually

- Click Add Word within a WordBank.
- Enter the word, definition, part of speech, usage example and etymology.
- Save to add the word to the WordBank.

Bulk Upload from a Text File

- Prepare a plain text file containing the words to import.
- Use Manage Words > Bulk Upload > Import from Text File.
- The software detects and imports words of three letters or more.
- Definitions and etymology can be added manually or via spreadsheet import.

Importing from a Spreadsheet

- Prepare a spreadsheet with columns for Word, Definition, Part of Speech, Usage Example and Etymology.
- Use Manage Words > Bulk Upload > Import from Spreadsheet.
- Map columns to fields and confirm the import.

Advanced Filters

- Filter by word length, origin, part of speech or word status.
- Use filters to focus practice on specific word types or difficulty areas.

6. Flashcards

- Generate visual study aids from any WordBank or individual word.
- Flashcards include the word, definition, example sentence and etymology.
- Create flashcards for a single word, an entire WordBank or all words.
- Flashcards are saved as image files for offline revision, printing or sharing.

7. Text-to-Speech (TTS)

- Reads words aloud just as a pronouncer would in a real spelling bee.
- Supports multiple voice options and regional pronunciation standards.
- Includes alternative pronunciations for complex or ambiguous words.
- Speech rate can be slowed down or sped up as required.

8. Progress Tracking and Reports

8.1 Leaderboard

- Displays ranked scores for profiles on the same computer.
- Scores update automatically after each session.
- Useful for classrooms and families.

8.2 Session Reports

Report Metric	Details
Correct Words	Total number of words spelled correctly in the session.
Incorrect Words	Words that were misspelled, with correct spellings shown.
Learned Words	Words fully mastered by the learner.
New Words	Words encountered for the first time.
Success Rate	Percentage score for the session.
Save / Print	Reports can be saved or printed for review.

9. Competition Management Module

- Designed for organizers who need an automated solution for running a spelling bee event.
- Supports competition setup, participant tracking, scoring, round progression and live displays.
- Participant statuses and scores are tracked in real time.
- Multi-screen capabilities allow organizer and audience views to show different information.

10. Guide for Students / Participants

- Set up a profile and select the correct WordBank.
- Start with Learn Mode to build word knowledge.
- Use Practice Mode daily to unscramble words and reinforce spellings.
- Use Test Mode to simulate competition conditions.
- Use Arcade Mode for short, high-energy practice sessions.

11. Guide for Parents

- Create a learner profile and select an appropriate WordBank.
- Set a regular routine for spelling practice.
- Review session reports with the learner.

- Use the leaderboard and flashcards to support motivation and revision.

12. Guide for Teachers

- Create student profiles and WordBanks aligned with classroom content.
- Use Learn Mode for vocabulary introductions.
- Use Practice Mode for reinforcement and Test Mode for assessment.
- Use reports to identify learners who need additional support.
- Use the competition module for class spelling bee events.

13. Frequently Asked Questions

Question	Answer
How do I reset a user profile?	Use Settings > Profiles, select the profile and choose Reset Progress.
How do I add more words?	Use Manage Words to add manually or Bulk Upload to import from text or spreadsheet.
What if TTS is not working?	Check speakers, selected TTS voice and try a different voice or restart.
Can flashcards be printed?	Yes. Flashcards are saved as image files that can be printed.

14. References

- The Spelling Bee website - thespellingbee.co.za
- International Spelling Bee - Microsoft Store
- Participant, Parent and Teacher guide pages on thespellingbee.co.za