

WRITER'S TOOLS

code.google.com/p/writertools

DRAFT

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Preface

About this user guide

Writer's User Guide designed to help you to get started with the Writer's Tools extension for OpenOffice.org.

Conventions used in this guide

Plain text – Indicates menu titles, menu items, buttons, and keyboard shortcuts such as Shift and Ctrl.

Italic text – Indicates books and other publications as well as certain menu items to avoid ambiguity.

Monospaced text – Indicates file extensions, commands, file names, and hyperlinks.

Underlined monospaced text – Indicates working hyperlinks.

`Code` – Indicates code examples, commands options, functions, HTML examples, and output from commands.

TIP – Tips and notes are set off by lines above and below.

Language and formats

The guide was written in US English, using the *Oxford Style Manual* and *Read Me First! A Style Guide for the Computer Industry* as main references. Since the guide caters for international readers, the metric system was chosen for all units of measurement.

Technical notes

This guide was written entirely in OpenOffice.org 2.1 (www.openoffice.org) running on Windows XP and Ubuntu (www.ubuntu.com). The Bitstream Vera Sans, Bitstream Vera Sans Mono, and COM4t Sans Medium (<http://com4t-fff.seesaa.net/>) fonts were used throughout the guide. Some screenshots were edited in The GIMP (www.gimp.org). The book's cover was designed using The GIMP and Inkscape (www.inkscape.org).

About the author

Dmitri Popov holds a degree in Russian language and computer linguistics. He has been working as a technical translator and freelancer contributor as well as teaching translation theory and Russian language. He has published over 500 articles covering productivity software, mobile computing, web applications, and other computer-related topics. His articles have appeared in Danish, British, US, German, and Russian magazines and websites.

About Writer's Tools

Writer's Tools is an all-around tool designed to help OpenOffice.org users to perform a wide range of tasks. It makes easier to backup documents, look up and translate words and phrases, manage text snippets, and keep tabs on document statistics.

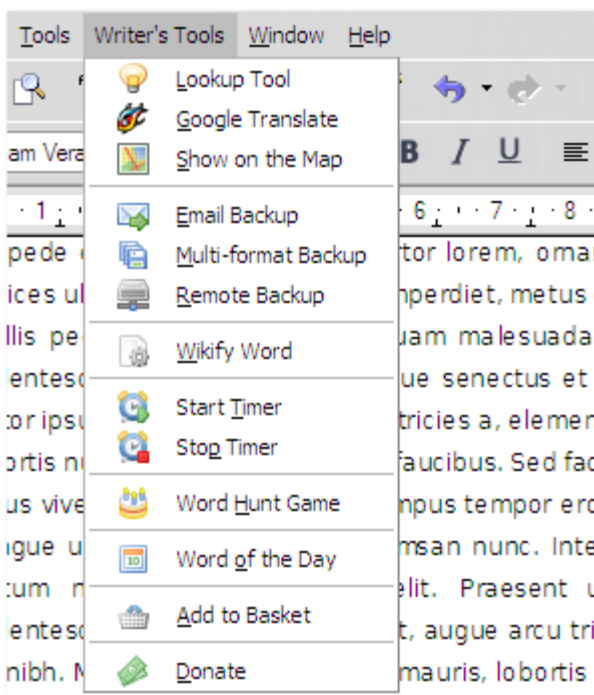


Figure 1: Writer's Tools

Writer's Tools includes the following utilities:

- **Lookup Tool** allows you to lookup the currently selected word in several online references, including Cambridge Dictionaries, WordNet, Ask Oxford, Google Define, and BEOLINGUS.

- **Google Translate** allows users to quickly translate selected text fragments between different languages using the Google Translate service.
- **Show on the Map** tool allows you to select a city, a street name, or a postal code and map it using the Multimap service.
- **Email Backup** can be used to quickly send a backup copy of the currently opened document to a specified email address.
- **Multi-format Backup** saves the currently opened Writer document in the Word, RTF, and TXT formats. The backup files are stored in a separate folder with a date stamp. On Linux, the macro also archives the resulting folder using the tar utility.
- **Remote Backup** allows you to quickly save a backup copy of the current document on a FTP server.
- **Wikify Word** tool links a selected word or text fragment in the current document to a created on the fly Writer document. For example, if the word “Monkey” is selected, the macro automatically links it to the created Monkey.odt document.
- **Start/Stop Timer** tool can be used to keep tabs on time spent on the currently opened document and save the time data (the document name, used time, and date) in the accompanying WriterDB database.
- **Word Hunt Game** is a simple game, where you have to guess the word randomly picked by Writer.
- **Word of the Day** tool picks and displays a random word and its definition from the from the accompanying WriterDB database. As a writer, you may often come across a new word or an interesting expression. The WriterDB database allows you to store your language findings in one place, while the Word of the Day tool helps you to keep them active in your memory.

- **Add to Basket** tool designed to quickly add text snippets, links, and notes to the supplied database. You can also categorize and tag the added entries.
- **Writer Templates** is a separate extension that contains an article and a book templates.

License and download

The Writer's Tools extension is released under GNU GPL. Writer's Tools is very much a work in progress. Any ideas, improvements, suggestions, comments etc. are welcomed and can be sent to dmpop@openoffice.org. The latest stable release is available at writertools.googlecode.com. The latest development release is available in the following SVN repository writertools.googlecode.com/svn/trunk/

DONATE

If you find Writer's Tools useful, and you would like to support its development, consider donating a few coppers to the author via [PayPal](#). Thank you!

Installing and Configuring Writer's Tools

To install the Writer's Tools extension, download the latest release. Unzip the downloaded file. Launch OpenOffice.org, and choose Tools -> Extension Manager (Package Manager in older versions of OpenOffice.org). Select the My Extensions section, and press the Add button. Select the downloaded extension (the WriterTools.oxt package), and press OK. Restart OpenOffice.org, and you should see the Writer's Tools menu in the Main toolbar.

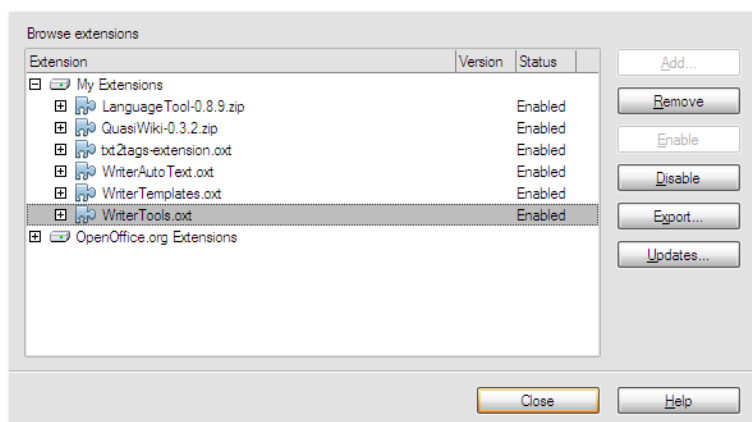


Figure 2: Installing Writer's Tools using the Extension Manager

Upgrading Writer's Tools

To upgrade the existing version of Writer's Tools, install the new version as described above. During installation, OpenOffice.org displays the warning message asking whether you want to install a newer version. Press OK, to overwrite the installed version with the new one.

Registering the WriterDB Database

The Timer Tool, Word of the Day, and Add to Basket tools rely on the WriterDB database that must be registered as an OpenOffice.org data source. To do this, launch OpenOffice.org and choose Tools -> Options. Select OpenOffice.org Base -> Databases and press the New button. Select the WriterDB database and give the new connection the "WriterDB" name as shown in the figure below:

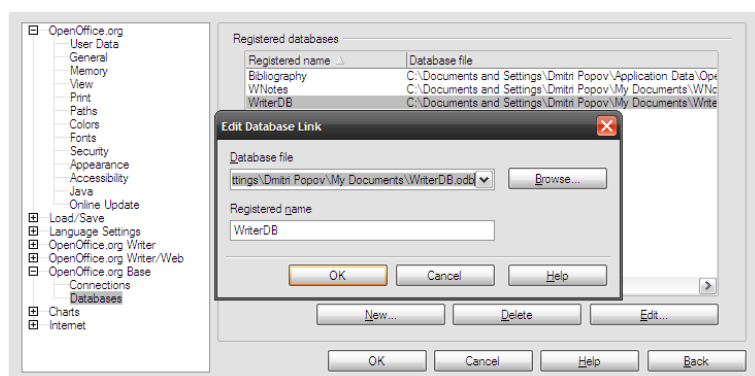


Figure 3: Registering the WriterDB database

Press OK -> OK, and you are done.

Changing the Default Browser

The Writer's Tools extension assumes that you are using Firefox as your default browser. If this is not the case, you have to adjust Writer's Tools settings. To do this, launch OpenOffice.org and choose Tools -> Macros -> Organize Macros -> OpenOffice.org Basic. Select then WriterTools -> Tools -> LookupTool as shown in Figure 4 and press the Edit button.

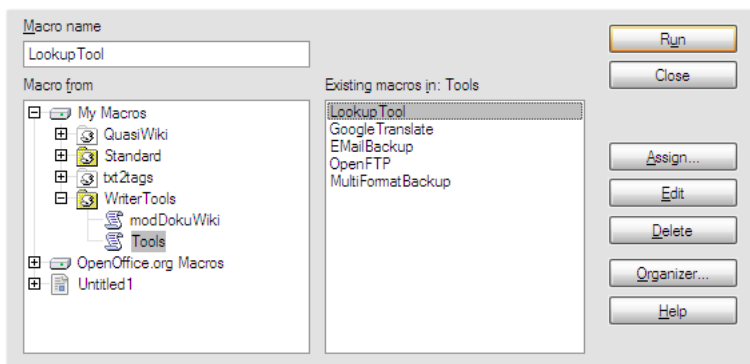


Figure 4: Opening the LookupTool macro

Locate the following line at right under the copyright notice:

```
Global Const DefaultWindowsBrowser="C:\Program Files\Mozilla  
Firefox\firefox.exe"
```

Then specify the correct path to your browser, for example:

```
Global Const DefaultWindowsBrowser="C:\Program  
Files\Opera\opera.exe"
```

Save the changes, and you are done. In a similar manner, you can change the default browser on Linux by modifying the following code:

```
Global Const DefaultLinuxBrowser="firefox"
```

Adding Email Address to the Email Backup Tool

Using the Email Backup command, you can email a backup copy of the current document to a specified email address. If you are using a specific email address for all your backups, you might want to add it to the command, so you don't have to type it every single time. To do this, launch OpenOffice.org and choose Tools -> Macros -> Organize Macros -> OpenOffice.org Basic. Select then WriterTools -> Tools -> EmailBackup and press the Edit button. Locate the following line:

```
MailAddress=InputBox("Email address")
```

and replace the `InputBox("Email address")` part with your actual email address, for example: `MailAddress="user@email.org"`

NOTE

The Email Backup tool can only send backups using an external email client. This means that you must have a properly configured email application installed on your machine before you can use the Email Backup tool.

Adding FTP Address to the Remote Backup Tool

Using the Remote Backup command, you can upload a backup copy of the current document to a specified FTP server. If you are using a specific FTP address for all your backups, you might want to add it to the command, so you don't have to type it every single time. To do this, launch OpenOffice.org and choose Tools -> Macros -> Organize Macros -> OpenOffice.org Basic. Select then WriterTools -> Remote Backup -> SaveFTPDocument and press the Edit button. Locate the following code block:

```
ConnectionString=InputBox("Enter the FTP address", "Remote Backup" , "ftp://user:password@192.168.1.7/pub/")  
If ConnectionString="" then MsgBox ("The FTP address field is empty!", , "Attention!") : End
```

and replace it with:

```
ConnectionString="ftp://user:password@192.168.1.7/pub/"
```

where the string in the quotes should be the actual FTP address.

Editing the List of References in the Lookup Tool

You can easily edit the default references in the Lookup Tool and add the new ones, by modifying the LookupTool macro. To do this, launch OpenOffice.org and choose Tools -> Macros -> Organize Macros -> OpenOffice.org Basic. Select then WriterTools -> Tools -> LookupTool and press the Edit button. Locate the following code:

```
URLArray=Array("http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/",_
"http://dictionary.cambridge.org/results.asp?searchword=",_
"http://www.google.com/search?q=define%3A",_
"http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=",_
"http://www.askoxford.com/results/?view=searchresults&freesea-
rch=")
```

Let's say you want to add the Dictionary.com reference (dictionary.reference.com) to the Lookup Tool. First of all, do a simple search, and note the query URL. It should look something like this:

```
http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/{SEARCHTERM}
```

All you have to do is to add it to the URLArray as follows:

```
URLArray=Array("http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/",_
"http://dictionary.cambridge.org/results.asp?searchword=",_
"http://www.google.com/search?q=define%3A",_
"http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn?s=",_
"http://www.askoxford.com/results/?view=searchresults&freesea-
rch=",_
"http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/")
```

Next, you have to add the Dictionary.com entry to the drop-down list in the Lookup dialog. Click on the LookupDialog tab at the bottom of the OpenOffice.org Basic IDE, then double-click on the drop-down list (Figure 5). In the Properties window, add the Dictionary.com item in the List entries drop-down list (use Shift+Enter to add new line). Save the changes, and you are done.

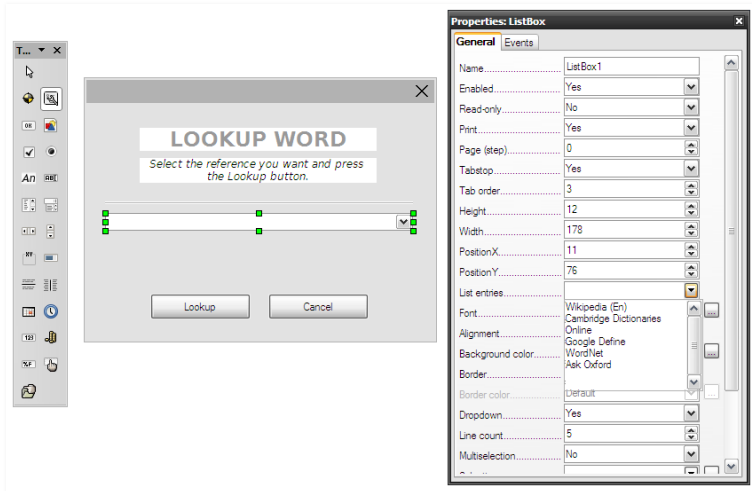


Figure 5: Editing the list of references

Tweaking the Word Hunt Game

Writer's Tools features a simple game, where Writer randomly picks one of five words and your task is to guess it. The default words are: apple, potato, carrot, cucumber, and orange. To change the default set, launch *OpenOffice.org* and choose *Tools -> Macros -> Organize Macros -> OpenOffice.org Basic*. Select then the *WordGame -> WordHunt* macro and press the Edit button. Locate the following code:

```
WordArray=Array("apple", "potato", "carrot", "cucumber",  
"orange")
```

Replace the words in the array with your own.

Importing data into the WriterDB database

The `wnotes` table in the WriterDB database contains a few sample records. However, in some cases, you'd want to import the existing data into the database. The following description shows hoe to import data from a Calc spreadsheet into WriterDB.

Since properly formatted source data can greatly simplify the import procedure, it's worth spending time on some preparatory work. First of all, you need to tweak the spreadsheets structure, so that it becomes identical to the structure of the `wnotes` table. Make sure that the first row contains the field names identical to those in the database table. Ideally, they should also be in the same order. Ensure that all the data bits is in the proper columns.

Now select the data in the sheet and copy it into the Clipboard (*Edit -> Copy* or *Ctrl+C*). Open the database, click on the Tables button, and select the `wnotes` table. Right-click on it and choose Paste. In the Copy table dialog window, type the exact name of the target table (`wnotes`) into the Table name field and select the Attach data option.

In the Assign Columns dialog window, check whether all the fields in the Source table window have been selected and aligned with the respective fields in the Target table window. To align the fields, use the blue Up and Down arrows. Finally, click Create to import the data.

Using Writer Templates

The WriterTemplates.oxt extension contains two OpenOffice.org Writer a generic article and book templates. To install the extension, launch OpenOffice.org, and choose Tools -> Extension Manager. Select the My Extensions section, and press the Add button. Select the downloaded WriterTemples.oxt extension, and press OK.

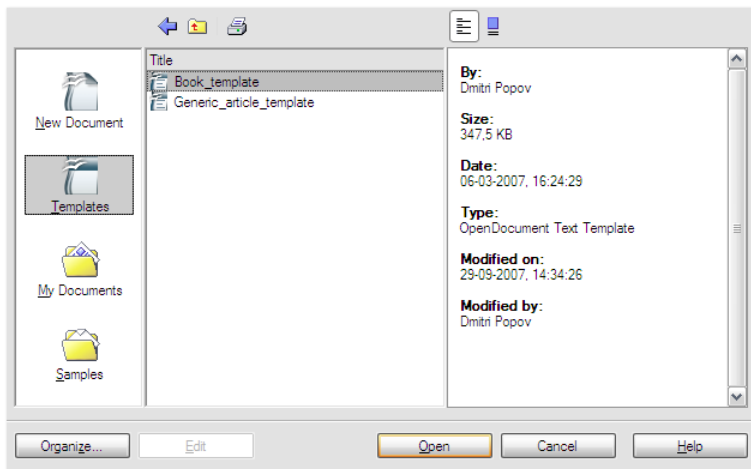


Figure 6: Creating a new document from the template

To create a new document from the desired template, choose File -> New -> Templates and Documents. In the Templates and Documents dialog window, click on Templates, select the template you want, and press Open.

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