

# GuideMaker

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v0.9 (14.10.2011)

[History](#)

Oct 16, 2011

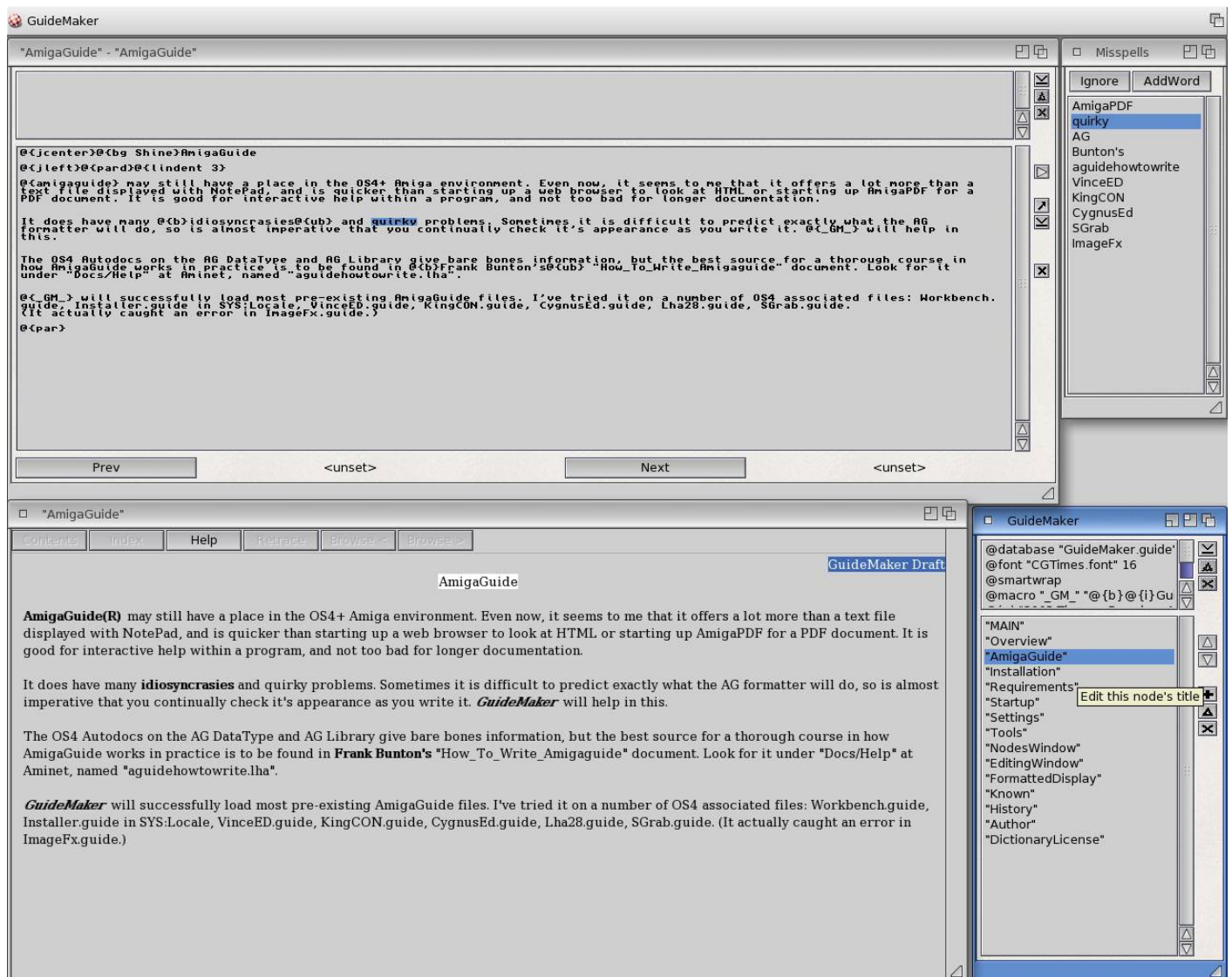
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<a href="#">Requirements</a>	Permission to use, copy, modify and distribute this software and its documentation for any purpose and without fee is hereby granted, provided that the above copyright notice appear in all copies and that both the copyright notice and this permission notice appear in supporting documentation.
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<a href="#">DictionaryLicense</a>	This product includes a wordlist developed by Geoff Kuenning and other unpaid contributors.

## Overview

**GuideMaker** is an **AmigaGuide(R)** file creation utility with support for also providing the documentation in other formats (via RTF file export).

It combines the Reaction Text Editor gadget and other Reaction GUI elements, the AmigaGuideAsync program interface, and control software that understands and can manipulate AG format files. The package is the beginnings of a visual development environment for AmigaGuide.

**The information** is presented in four windows on the Screen:



1. The "Node List Window" has the nodes and global commands and gadgets for manipulating them.

2. The "Node Edit Window" contains the contents of the currently selected node and its local commands.
3. The "AmigaGuide Window" shows the formatted display.
4. The "Misspell Window", if spell checking is used, showing possible spelling errors.

## **Why?**

I needed help in writing an AmigaGuide document. AG in spite of its flaws, is still the best way to add slick and quick context-sensitive help to your Amiga program.

The other reason I put **GuideMaker** together now was prove that the native PPC Modula-2 compiler I have been working on could be reasonably used for a non-trivial project.

## AmigaGuide

**AmigaGuide(R)** may still have a place in the OS4+ Amiga environment. Even now, it seems to me that it offers a lot more than a text file displayed with NotePad, and is quicker than starting up a web browser to look at HTML or starting up AmigaPDF for a PDF document. It is good for interactive help within a program, and not too bad for longer documentation.

It does have many **idiosyncrasies** and quirky problems. Sometimes it is difficult to predict exactly what the AG formatter will do, so is almost imperative that you continually check it's appearance as you write it. **GuideMaker** will help in this.

The OS4 Autodocs on the AG DataType and AG Library give bare bones information, but the best source for a thorough course in how AmigaGuide works in practice is to be found in **Frank Bunton's** "How\_To\_Write\_Amigaguide" document. Look for it under "Docs/Help" at Aminet, named "aguidehowtowrite.lha".

**GuideMaker** will successfully load most pre-existing AmigaGuide files. I've tried it on a number of OS4 associated files: Workbench.guide, Installer.guide in SYS:Locale, VinceED.guide, KingCON.guide, CygnusEd.guide, Lha28.guide, SGrab.guide. (It actually caught an error in ImageFx.guide.)

## Installation

Unpack the archive into the directory of your choice.

You will get:

- the GuideMaker executable
- GuideMaker.guide and GuideMaker.pdf
- the Dictionary.wordlist file
- a few JPG files to which GuideMaker.guide has links.
- A readme file.
- The Ispell word list license file.

## Requirements

1. Amiga OS4 (July 2007 update or later).
2. AmigaGuide (v40), distributed with AOS4.
3. "T:" assigned to a temporaries directory.
4. A Reaction Text Editor gadget *later than v52.1* is highly recommended for stability. (ie, you should be using AOS 4.1 or later.)

## Startup

**GuideMaker** is can be started from the **CLI** or the **WB**.

### Template:

```
"FILE,PUBSCREEN/K,MAKEICONS/S,AUTOPREVIEW/S,USETABATTR/S,  
SPELLCHECK/S"
```

If no **FILE** is given, it will open up a file requester and ask for one. If the name given does not exist, it will create a new AG file.

"**PUBSCREEN** <screenname>" will cause the program to startup on one of your predefined Prefs public screens (GuideMaker currently does not create screens). If no **PUBSCREEN** is given it will open on the default public screen.

See the next page for the settings: **MAKEICONS**, **AUTOPREVIEW**,  
**USETABATTR**, **SPELLCHECK**

Any of the template settings can also be used as a ToolType for project icons with GuideMaker as their tool when starting from the WB.

## Settings

**GuideMaker** is has some mode settings available for toggling in the program menu strip:

- "Make Icons"        - If selected, an icon will be saved along with the AmigaGuide file. Its default tool will be *MultiView* .
- "Auto Preview"      - If selected, the preview window will automatically update each time the node editing window goes to a new node.
- "Use @{\tab}"       - If selected, the program will automatically replace any Tab characters encountered with the AG attribute command "@{\tab}" .
- "Spell Check"        - If selected, Each new node loaded into the Edit Window will be spellchecked and potential errors displayed in the Misspells window.

These settings will be retained in the global ENV whenever you change any one of them via the menu. They can be saved permanently (across boots) via the menu item:

"Save Settings (ENVARC:)"

The corresponding CLI switches will turn on the their respective setting, overriding any settings set off by default or by the environment variables. (Currently you cannot turn off any settings from the CLI startup).

## Tools

### Export As RTF

This will write out the current AG file as an RTF formatted file.

Formatting is fairly well converted, and intra-document LINKs to AG nodes are preserved as live references to "bookmarks" in RTF. External links (as those to images) are not handled however.

The RTF background is white, while AmigaGuide's is grey. This program will take that into consideration when doing a translate of "@{bg background}", but not "@{bpen 0}".

One of the main benefit of the RTF file is the ability to import it into *OpenOffice* or *LibreOffice* on Linux, Mac, or Windows, and use that program to create a PDF file.

*FinalWriter* on Amiga will usually import the RTF File successfully, but does not handle LINKs nor colored text.

*Cinnamon Writer* 0.75 and 0.751 does not import the RTF File successfully.

### Spell Check

If you turn on spell checking GuideMaker will load a dictionary wordlist file into memory (and also a user wordlist if found). With "Spell Check On" each node is checked at the point it is loaded into the Edit Window, and potential misspellings are displayed in the Misspell Window.

Selecting a word in the Misspell Window will also select it in the Edit window.

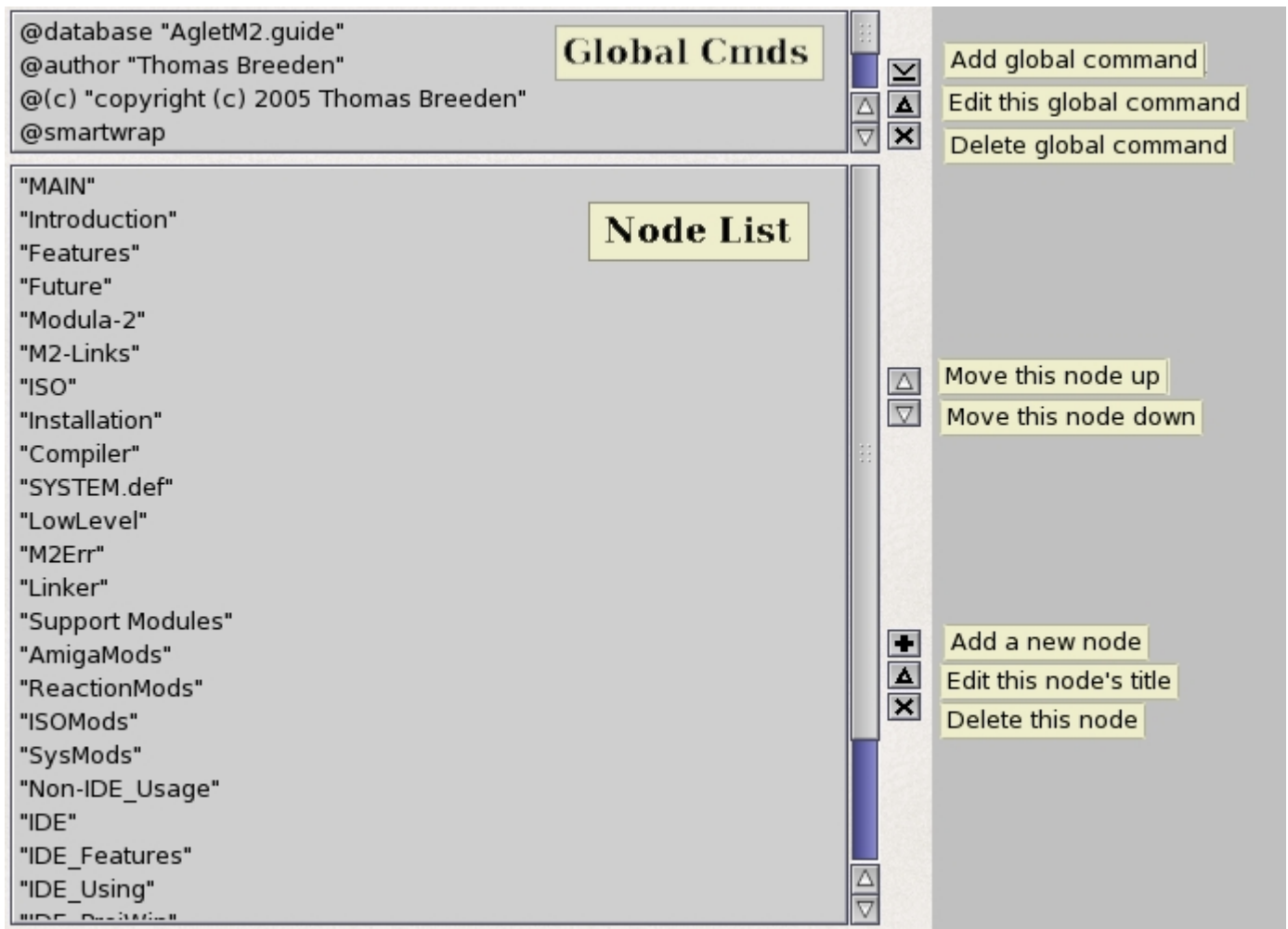
Once loaded (takes about 5 secs on Sam 440 or AmigaOne), the memory hash table uses a good deal of storage (10 to 20 MB), but spell checking is very fast. Spellchecking Environment Variables are:

DICTIONARY_WORDLIST	dictionary name to use, a plain text file one word per line - default is "PROGDIR:Dictionary.wordlist"
WORDLIST	Auxiliary Ispell text words dictionary - default is "PROGDIR:User.wordList"

The supplied "dictionary.wordlist" file is derived from the american medium list supplied with the *ISpell* (ver 3.1.20) package, and as such it is covered by the same copyright and license as *ISpell*.

*ISpell* itself is not used nor is any code from it.

## Nodes Window



The **top** part of the Nodes Window is for inserting the "global" AG commands that will apply to every node in the file (unless overridden by a node-local command within a node). The top three gadgets allow adding a new global command, modifying an existing one, and deleting a selected one.

The rest of the Nodes Window consists of a sequential list of the **current nodes** in the file. Similar gadgets are here for adding new nodes, modifying a node's title, and deleting the selected node. The two additional gadgets are for moving nodes up or down in the list.

**Click** on a node name and it will appear in the [EditingWindow](#).



The **Diagonal Arrow button** is for inserting one of the LinkOp embedded commands: LINK, RX, RSX, and SYSTEM.

The **"x" button** is an Undo-All for this node's text, removing all edits you have made since this node's contents were brought into the Node Editing Window (or since the last File | Save). Note also that the RAmiga-u "undo" keystroke is supported by the TextEditor gadget.

The **Next button** at the bottom will load the appropriate following node into the Node Editing Window - either the one specified by the "@{next xxx}" node-local command, if any, or simply the sequentially next node if there is no such node-local command (and similarly for the **Prev button**).

Note that the displayed name of the next or prev node appears in [color](#) if a node by that name does not exist in the Guide file.

## Formatted Display

**GuideMaker** produces the Formatted Display by writing out files (GuideMakerTmp<pid>.guide) to the "T:" directory, consisting of only one node, the one currently residing in the Node Editing Window, and using the AmigaGuide Datatype in order to display it.

**Note:** The link buttons in this window are not active.

If "Auto Preview" is on, the formatted display will be updated each time you switch to a different node.

## Known Bugs and Deficiencies

Exceptions caused by program errors will be trapped and the location of the error displayed. **GuideMaker** will attempt to abort "gracefully", giving you a chance to save the file before exit.

> Note that if you open your guide file in *MultiView* while you are editing it in **GuideMaker** then a GuideMaker file save will fail. The program will notify you and give you a chance to close *MultiView* and try again so as not to lose your edits.

However, it is always good practice while working to do a "File | Save" from the program menu often rather than wait until all editing is done. Currently **GuideMaker** does not do any timed backups.

- > The optional **line number** parameter of a LINK is not in the input requester.
- > Some AG commands are not yet included: @`{settabs <n>}`, @`{beep}`
- > There is no localization. Lo siento. Tal vez puedo añadir una de Español si haya interés.
- > <add your own to the list here>

Note that a bug seems to have been introduced in AOS4.1 Upd 3 that causes the @`{"Image" LINK "image.jpg/MAIN"}` method of displaying a picture file from within an AmigaGuide document to be very susceptible to causing a **system deadlock** if the enclosing window is resized!

## Version History

- v0.9 (14.10.2011)**
- Nice custom icon for the program, courtesy of Frank Ruthe. see his icon package at OS4Depot  
[http://os4depot.net/index.php?function=showfile&file=graphics/icon/cha05e90\\_icons\\_2010-3.lha](http://os4depot.net/index.php?function=showfile&file=graphics/icon/cha05e90_icons_2010-3.lha)
  - Synchronized the selected node in the GuideMaker main window with that shown in the editing window. ie, if Next or Prev moves the Edit window node, then the main windows selected node will be updated.
  - Added a Help menu item. For now it simply spawns Multiview  
PROGDIR:GuideMaker.guide.
  - The PgmVersion was not being displayed by the Amiga Version command.
  - The initial program startup was made a little more user friendly w/r/t the guide file name.
  - The temp files created for the AmigaGuide live display are now named with the program's pid, so that possibly two instances of GuideMaker could run at once. Also, GuideMakerShow termination code attempts to delete these files.
  - WriteItOut() now gives a "try again?" requester if it fails, so that the user always has a chance to close Multiview open on the same guide file - the most usual cause of write fail here.
  - If an icon with a Tool already exists, no longer replacing the tool with SYS:Multiview.
  - Spell checking support added. Using a plain text word file derived from the ISpell american.med and american.aff files with a few words added for Amiga. An additional, user wordlist file is also read in if found. If spell checking is used the word list file is completely read into memory (takes about 5 secs on Sam 440 or AmigaOne) and accessed in a hash table. Uses up 10 to 20 MB of memory, but is very fast.  
ISpell itself is not used nor is any code from it.
  - Added option to have the program automatically replace any tab characters encountered in the guide file with the @{tab} attribute.
  - Iconify/Uniconify support added.
  - ENV variable "GuideMaker/GMSwitches" added. If found, used with the four settings MAKEICONS, AUTOPREVIEW, USETABATTR, and SPELLCHECK to set or clear these on startup.
  - Command line template is now  
"FILE,PUBSCREEN/K,MAKEICONS/S,AUTOPREVIEW/S,USETABATTR/S,SPELLCHECK/S"

-Added a couple of keystroke menu commands RAmiga-s for "Save" and RAmiga-q for "Quit".

-When saving with MakeIcons in effect, if an icon with a Tool already exists, no longer replacing the existing Tool with SYS:Multiview.

- v0.8** <not released>
- v0.7** (5.11.2009) -Erratic bug that sometimes caused problems when local or global header commands were deleted should be gone now.
- v0.6** (15.10.2009) -Better match between the *GuideMaker* preview and *Multiview* 's AG display when there is no explicit global "@font" specification in the AG file. *GuideMaker* now also uses the Prefs System Default Font in this case.
- Now if the program is started with a PUBSCREEN <psname> switch or tooltype and no Prefs public screen with that name exists, it will open on the default public screen (Workbench).
- The distributed tool icon had an active PUBSCREEN tooltype used for testing that is now inactivated by parentheses.
- v0.5** (16.9.2009) -"Make Icons" and "Auto Preview" options were added.
- TextEditor gadget now has a scroller.
- If a block is selected in the TextEditor Gadget, inserting one of the character attribute commands (b,i,u) will automatically bracket the block with the appropriate undo attribute.
- Implemented "Export as RTF" option
- v0.4** (27.4.2008) - Again, changed the way I am doing the AmigaGuide Preview. Even using Multiview, it was unstable. Now using the AmigaGuide datatype directly into my own window.
- Even with fixed size fonts, TextEditor Gadget 52.1 (July '07) may freeze the AOS input on clicking along the left border. Probably won't happen if you have few processes running, however.
- Now loading the editor window with the node contents on a single-click in the node list window rather than requiring a double click.
- Fixed LinkOp entry so that a blank target or text is not accepted.
- Appears that Multiview does not like cycles in the prev/next navigation graph. I recommend against it.
- (2.3.2008) -Rebuilt after making some fixes in the compiler.

- V0.3** (23.2.2008) - Changed the way I was doing the AmigaGuide Preview. Could never get the use of AmigaLibrary OpenAmigaGuideAsync() / SendAmigaGuideCmd() / CloseAmigaGuideAsync() to be stable. Instead, now I am having the program startup Multiview and using its ARexx interface to open the temporary preview .guide files.  
- Neatened up the Menus a bit.
- v0.2** (15.1.2008) - first released version, PPC Native. > Preview Unstable
- v0.1** (5.12.2007) - first PPC Native version, never released
- v0.0** (31.12.2006) - M68K version, never released

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Please feel free to send bug reports, suggestions, poetry, songs, etc.

The **GuideMaker** "dictionary.wordlist" file is derived from the american medium list supplied with the *ISpell* (ver 3.1.20) package, and as such it is covered by the same copyright and license as *ISpell* .

*ISpell* can be found at <http://fmg-www.cs.ucla.edu/geoff/ispell.html>.

This word list are under the same copyright as *ISpell* itself:

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