

# Boardmaker v6 for Windows

## Introduction

BoardMaker is a tool for staff to use to prepare materials. It consists of a large library of Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) in either black and white or colour, which can be transferred on to grids or other layouts which are then printed out to make symbol cards, communication boards, worksheets, overlays or other materials. Grids may be already prepared (eg. sized to match the overlay design for well-known communication aids) or created and personalised 'by hand' as required, using the drawing facility in the program. Layouts can be saved as blank templates, to be re-used as required. This Quick Guide will teach you how to make a basic topic chart, for starters.

## USING PRE-PREPARED TEMPLATES TO MAKE SYMBOL GRIDS

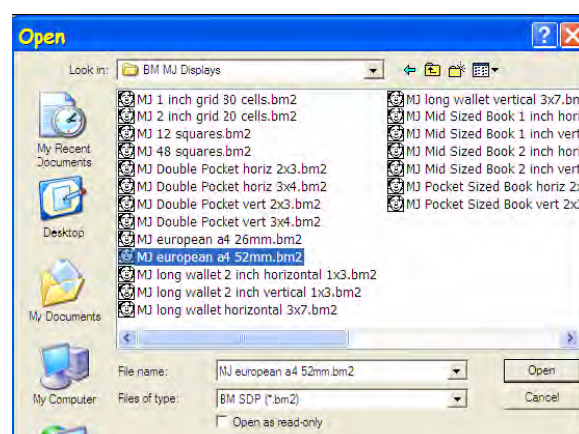
1. Locate the **BoardMaker** shortcut on your desk top (or locate it from the Start menu) and double click to open the program up. A title page then a screen with three choices will come up.



2. Click on the right-most one, **Open a Template**.

3. Double click on **BM MJ Displays** then double click on **MJ European a4 52mm.bm2**

4. A blank 12 location grid will appear.



Look at the title bar along the top - you will see that it has opened up as an 'Untitled 1' BoardMaker document - because the template stays as a template and cannot be overwritten, you will have to save this board with a new & relevant name yourself, to make it a BoardMaker document.

You are going to make a symbol topic chart (eg. food, colours, feelings, etc.). If grid is too big or too small for the window, open **View Menu** then select the size of layout you want to work on ('Fit to Window' is handiest)

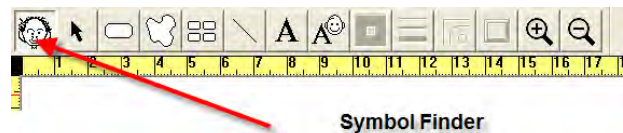
5. As soon as the blank grid is on the screen, open **File Menu** and select **Save As**, in order to name and save it. You will be taken automatically to the folder **My Boards (in My Documents)**. It might be a good idea to create a folder to store particular types of boards. Click on the yellow folder icon with the star sticking out the top. **Name** the folder then **Open** it. Now drag to highlight 'Untitled 1' in the **File Name** window and overwrite it with your chosen file name (eg '12food' - something you will recognize it again later!). Click **Save**.



6. Now your file is ready for symbols! You'll see your file name along the top.

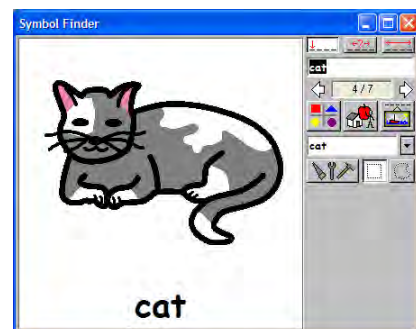
7. Select the 'wee man' icon (top left) to open the Symbol Finder

As soon as the Symbol Finder window opens, the first cell in your board will be highlighted in red, showing that it is waiting to receive a symbol.



(See Appendix I for more information about the Symbol Finder)

The Symbol Finder window will open up alongside your drawing screen, on the right. Look at your photocopied handout of this window to review what each icon represents. If you hold the mouse over each, a window pops up to remind you what each is.



## Finding and Transferring symbols

Check that the Symbol Finder is in the middle setting where it can search for letters anywhere in a word.

There are two main ways of finding, selecting and sending symbols, (1) Previous / Next or (2) Thumbnails:

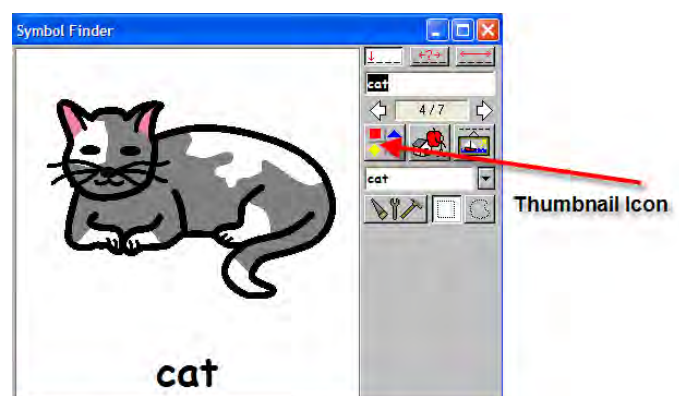
### 1. Previous/Next

- Click in the blank window. Type in 'food' (or whatever). A symbol for food will appear. There may be more than one - a box will display how many there are in total (eg. 1/9)
- Click on the right white arrow (or use the keyboard right arrow key) to see the next possibility then again to see the next, until you reach the end.
- You can use the left arrow to go through backwards through them, to review them.
- When you have got the one you want in the window, hit **ENTER**, and your symbol will jump into the red highlighted square.
- If you don't want to put it in the red highlighted square, click on the square you do want to put it in (it will turn into the 'wee man' position cursor). The symbol and text will automatically be transferred and resized to fit.

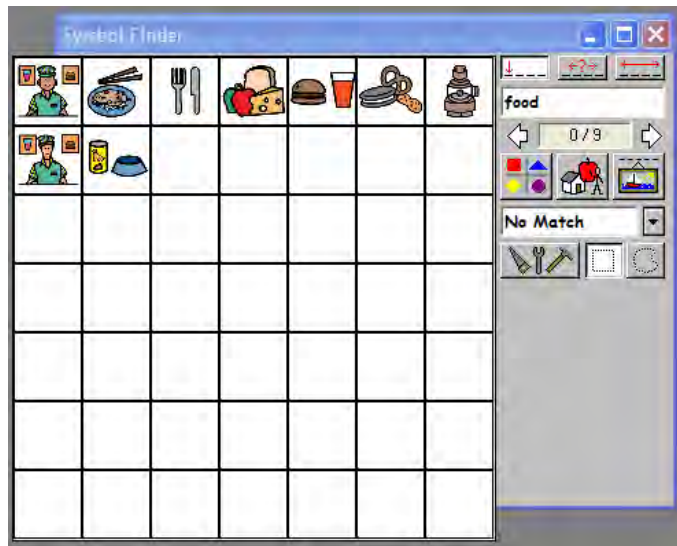
This is a slower method but good if you want to inspect each symbol and its word glossary, or if you want more control over where you put the symbols on the board.

### 2. Thumbnail View Method

Click in the top blank window and type in the name of a food, eg. sandwich (or whatever). Ignoring the first symbol that appears in the window, click on the thumbnail icon (little red square).



- A set of thumbnail pictures of all the symbols will appear (without glossary). Moving the mouse pointer across the cells will display the name in the alternate name field window.



- Position the mouse pointer over the symbol in the thumbnail view that you want to send, and right click. It will appear in your board in the red highlighted square.

This is a potentially faster method of selecting symbols, if you have a regular shaped grid, you have your board planned, you are fairly familiar with the symbols, and you just want to fill it quickly from left to right, top to bottom. It is particularly valuable if you are working with a topic 'set' of symbols that all goes together - see later instructions for **Working with Categories**.

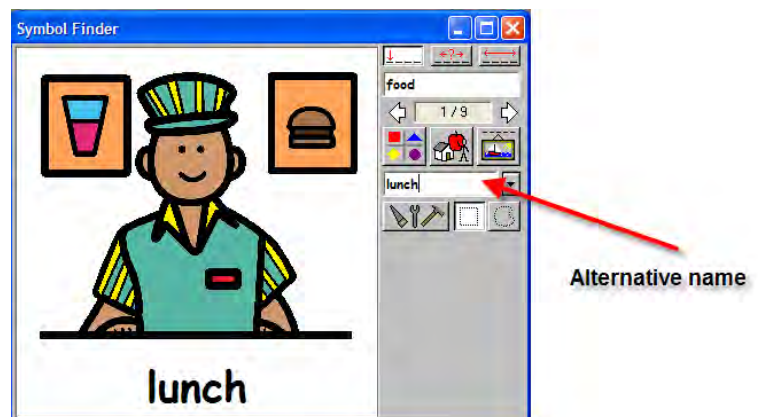
Continue to fill your board with symbols. Remember to keep doing **Save** at regular intervals, as you work - don't wait 'til the end.

## Changing the Symbol Name/ Text glossary

### 1. Temporary change

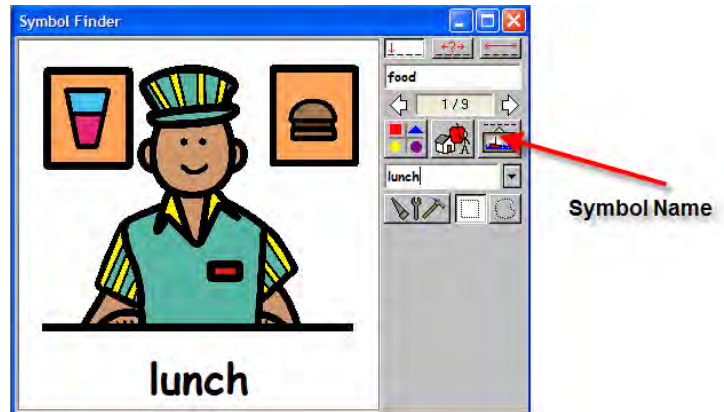
You may find a symbol that you want, but would like to change its text. For a one-off, click in the lower text box in the Symbol Finder window and type in the word you want to use e.g. typing 'lunch' to the name field for 'sandwich'. You will see the name changing as you type.

Press Enter or click to transfer the symbol with its new name to the board.

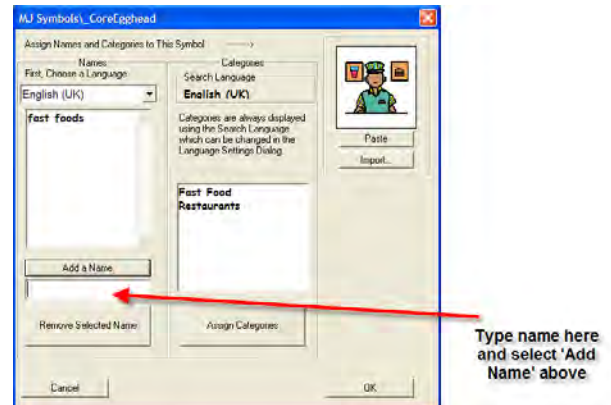


## 2. Permanent change

- Click on the Symbol Name button



- When the window opens up, type the new name into the 'Add a Name' box, then click on **Add a Name**. The new name will be entered into the Names box permanently.



- Then click on **Assign Categories** and click to choose the categories in which the newly named symbol will appear.

To undo this change, select the alternate name and choose **Remove Selected Name**.

## Replacing Symbols

If you make a mistake, you can easily change a symbol you have already placed in the board.

- Just find the symbol that you would rather have, click on it in the Symbol Finder window, then click on the square you want to put it in.
- A window will pop up asking if you want to cancel, add to or replace the existing symbol. For now, click on **Replace**.
- (If you click on **Add** you can add multiple symbols to the same square, to make a personalised or new image. You will need to adjust the symbol sizes and text, see below.)

### Adjusting Symbols

- Once the symbol has been transferred into the grid, you can adjust it by selecting the arrow pointer tool and clicking on the symbol. It will be surrounded by a dotted orange box (double-check it is just the symbol you have selected, not the whole square!)
- Then you can resize it by selecting the corner and pulling or pushing it to the size wanted. Or you can drag it to another location. It can also be copied and pasted into other areas, re-coloured, flipped rotated etc. (see later instructions).

### Adjusting the Text

- To move the text, or alter font and size, select the arrow pointer tool and click on the text. This creates a green dotted box around the text.
- This block can now be moved independently of the symbol, and fonts and text size altered (from the Text Menu).
- To edit wording, after the text has been placed, select the (A) text tool and click on the text you want to change. Edit as if it was a word processor.

Remember to **Save** at regular intervals, as you work - don't wait 'til the end.