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Using Braille2000: The Direct Entry Edition

Overview

Braille2000 is a comprehensive tool for creating braille files and getting them embossed on a commercial embosser device attached to the computer. Braille2000 is designed for Windows98, WindowsME, Windows2000, WindowsXP, WindowsVISTA, and Windows7. It can also be used with Windows95 if certain extra conditions are met. Braille2000 will run on WindowsNT but embossing from WindowsNT is not supported.

The Basic Edition (a more simple edition) offers the following capabilities:

- Direct Entry braille editing, six-key braillewriter style, using the keys SDF JKL.
- On-screen display of full braille pages, with braille cells shown as dot patterns.
- Editing via standard Windows mechanisms: backspace, del, insert and replace modes, cut/copy/paste, undo, find, replace.
- Automated page layout, with word-wrap, indent and runover control, and textbook-format page numbering and optional running heads.
- File Management.
- Ink-printing of the braille as dots (SimBraille) or as ASCII-braille characters.
- Internet message and file transmission via B-Mail™

The next level of Braille2000 is the Direct Entry Edition. That tool contains the following major additional features:

- On-screen back-translation of braille into print for proofreading, including the display of typographically correct math expressions when brailing in Nemeth code.
- Comprehensive spelling checkers for English (contracted and uncontracted), French, German, and Spanish (including Puerto Rican Spanish).
- Automated line numbers for poetry, prose, and tables of contents.
- Tab stops.
- Ink-printing modes for proofreading via back-translated print copy derived from the braille.
- Information Cards (as in ED-IT PC) for work notes and administrative data.

The Document Processing Edition adds to the above automatic print-to-braille capabilities.

File Management

A braille transcription is held in the computer in a file. A file used by Braille2000 can be as large as desired, without any limit except the storage capacity of the computer. When a textbook is transcribed, it usually yields many volumes of braille, and the intended approach is to place each braille volume into a file of its own, one file per volume. (This is not because of size restrictions, but because volume size units are handy at braille production centers.)

Braille2000 can be used by transcribers in a variety of ways. The suggested approach is to create a Project for each book being transcribed. A Project is a computer folder where all the files for that book will reside. When Braille2000 is initially installed, there is a default Project called "Miscellaneous". You can put files in this project, or into a new project, or elsewhere on your computer, as you wish. By default, Braille2000 will put new files into the *current* project folder. This is the project whose name shows at the top of the Braille2000 *control panel* (the group of buttons at the left side of the window).

There is a "New" button in the Braille2000 control panel. Via the New button, you can create a new file, a new *volume*, or a new project.

A *Volume* in Braille2000 is a numbered file used to hold the braille for one volume of the current book. Volumes are designated by numbers from 001 to 999. There is a separate series of volumes for each Project (for each book) you do. Except for the three-digit numerical name, a Volume file is just like any other braille file. If you have two projects (i.e., two books) on your computer, each containing volume files (i.e., for each book there would be the first volume file "001.ABT" and so on), the files are distinguished not by name alone but by in which project they are located. Braille2000 identifies volume files by file name and the immediately containing folder name (which is the Braille2000 project name). This relationship (files within a folder) is preserved when you use "Send on Diskette" to write files to a diskette. ("Send on Diskette" is one of a group of File Management tools, reached via the "File Management" button in the upper part of the Braille2000 control panel.)

To start with, you will probably do short transcriptions not really representing a volume of work. You can click the New button and then ask for a New File. You can name the file whatever you wish (subject to Windows syntax limitations). By default the new file will be placed in the current Project folder, but you can put it anywhere on your computer, or on a diskette.

Once you have used New to create a New File or a New Volume, that file is opened and shows on the screen, initially as an all-white empty space. You can begin entering braille, using the SDF JKL keys and the dots will appear on the screen. After each session working on your file, you must Save your work, via the Save button. Then you can close Braille2000 by clicking on the "X" button in the upper right corner of the window. If you close without saving your latest work, a reminder message appears. (There are two "X" buttons, one above the other. The topmost "X" button closes Braille2000. The lower "X" button closes the file being viewed but Braille2000 continues to operate.)

To resume work on a file that already exists, you should click on the Open button. In the menu that appears you will find listed a number of the most recently accessed files. You may select one of those to continue working on that file. Or you can select "Braille File" to select a file anywhere on your computer. To resume work on a Volume file, click the Volume choice and then select your volume, by number, from the listing that appears.

You will find a folder icon for "My Braille" on your Windows desktop. Within this folder you will find a folder for each of your Braille2000 projects. Within a given project folder, you will

find icons for each volume file and for any other files you have stored with your project. You can open a file via the "My Braille" folder (double-clicking on a file icon), or via the Open button in Braille2000, whichever you find more convenient.

Page Layout Techniques

When you enter braille text you do so in braillewriter mode. The cells appear on the screen (which you should think of as virtual braille paper) at the location of the blinking vertical line, called the *cursor*. When you reach the right-hand edge of the braille page, the cursor will automatically jump down a line and continue from the left. Any word that spills over the edge of the page will be brought down to the next line too. This process is called word-wrap.

You should enter an entire paragraph at a time. Press the Enter key (carriage return) to separate paragraphs (not lines). If you need to enter a short line, e.g., for a cell-5 heading, press Enter when you get to the end of the line. Then continue brailleing the next paragraph. If you need a blank line, pressing the Enter key will create it. If you need to remove a line, position the cursor at the beginning of the blank line and use backspace. The behavior is exactly the same as with standard Windows editing tools, such as WordPad or Word.

Although BANA no longer requires hyphenating (splitting) words at ends of lines, NLS still does in the preparation of your manuscript. For compound words that do not change spelling when split, you can enter a "breaking hyphen" rather than a plain (non-breaking) hyphen. As needed, the compound word will break following the hyphen (but only if the hyphen is a *breaking* hyphen). For single words that do not change spelling when split, you can enter a "vanishing hyphen". This special hyphen is invisible when not needed, but the location of the vanishing hyphen in the word is known and if the line can profitably break at that location, then a hyphen is added (an automatic hyphen shows with a yellow background) and the word breaks to the next line.

When these line breaks occur, the spelling of the word is not changed. Because of this, you should not use the breaking or vanishing hyphens in words that do change spelling depending on whether the line break occurs in them or not. For special cases of end of line hyphenation, you may have to resort to the old way of doing things: manually add a hyphen and a space at the necessary spot. The special hyphens and a special non-breaking space can be entered via Insert in the Edit menu (click the Menu button, navigate the menu to Edit, and then to Insert, and then to the function you need).

Braille2000 automates the generation of running heads and takes care of positioning and incrementing page numbers. Both of these features manifest themselves at the spots in your transcription where the feature is activated. For example, if you want to begin showing a running head on the second page of your transcription, scroll the braille display so that you see the top of page 2. Point the mouse to the upper left cell position of that page and click the right-hand mouse button. A "popup" menu will appear. Notice the position of the cursor line. It should be just to the left of the first cell position on the first line of the page. (The cursor may be partially obscured by the popup menu.) In the popup menu, select Do and Running Head. Fill in the text you want, click OK, and that text will appear at the top of the current page and each successive page (until you turn the running head off).

The cursor location at the time you turn on running heads (or later, the spot where you elect to change the running head) determines where the running head effect initiates and/or changes. That spot where an effect takes place shifts with the text as you change anything above that location. For example, if you add a paragraph to page 1, after having enabled running heads at the start of page 2, and the addition causes the paragraph that used to begin page 2 to move to the

middle of page 2, that will also have moved the running head "turn on" point into the middle of page two (moving along with the text that gets "pushed down") such that the first running head won't show up now until page 3.

Braille text (such as running heads) that Braille2000 generates on your behalf shows up with a yellow background. Text you enter in the normal way shows with a white background. White or yellow, it embosses the same. The cursor (the blinking vertical bar) will not enter yellow text, and because of that, you cannot change yellow text the same way you can change white text. All yellow text items respond to a right-hand mouse click, and via the popup menu you can change or delete the generated text item. For example, if you put the mouse on a yellow running head line and click the right-hand mouse button and select Make Correction, you will get a control box in which you can edit the text that shows in the running head.

In textbook format braille, a print-reference page number is placed in the upper right corner of each page and a braille page number is placed in the lower right corner of each page (except when doing two-sided, interpoint, braille). The top line on each page may or may not also contain the running head. The bottom line on a page normally has regular prose in it. You can imagine what a hassle it is to editing if you need to adjust any part of the transcription that changes the words that fit on the last line of any page... such a change will also move the braille page number placed there. It can be a real mess. Transcribers don't do that manually any more. Instead they use automatic page numbering.

Different braille codes place page numbers in different locations. There are three basic formats: literary braille, textbook-format braille, and music braille. To activate automatic page numbering, you again point the mouse at the upper left corner of the first page in your file where page numbering is to start or change, and then click the right-hand mouse button. If there is a running head on the page, this will put the cursor just ahead of cell one on line two. If there is no running head, the cursor should be just ahead of cell one on line one. In the popup menu select Do and Page Numbering. Page numbering can be complicated, but for most things, use the controls shown in the *Standard* index tab, setting the kind of page numbering you want in "Quick setup for" and then giving the initial print and braille page numbers. Of course if you are doing literary style numbering, the print number does not matter.

Once you have enabled automatic page numbering, the system will supply print and braille page numbers on subsequent pages. The braille page number is incremented by one for each new page. The print page number proceeds to have letter prefixes, beginning with A on the second page. In a volume, it is usual for the braille page numbers to run sequentially all through the file (with the exception of preliminary pages which have their own sequence). You don't have to adjust them once they are turned on, although they are adjustable.

For the print number, the sequence through the letter prefixes, A, B, C, etc., must start anew when you get to the text that is transcribed from the next page of print. At that point, which could be at a new paragraph or in the middle of some paragraph, you need to indicate that the transcription has shifted to a new page of print. This is done like other things, by pointing the mouse and then clicking the right-hand mouse button. In the popup menu select *Next Print Page*. This action tells Braille2000 that that word (at the cursor) starts the new page of print. Braille2000 increments the print number by one and starts the letter prefixes fresh (initially without any prefix). If the location of this print page transition is in the middle of a braille page, a line of hyphens is generated (the page turn indicator line). If the transition happens to occur at the top or bottom of a braille page, no line of hyphens is generated. It is all automatic. And it is dynamic, such that the layout instantly adjusts to any further editing you do to the file.

This preliminary overview document is not a substitute for comprehensive on-line reference materials (so-called "help" materials). There are numerous "Help" buttons on various dialog boxes. There is the master Help button at the top of the control panel. After you click this button, explore the "Contents" panel that is the left part of the Help window. Contents is arranged hierarchically. Look in "Getting Started", "Fundamentals", and "How To" for good additional information. The left panel can also do "Search": enter keywords and click "List Topics". Then double-click on a topic title to read the text.

You can press the F1 key for help information. And many dialog boxes contain a little "?" button that you click first, and then you can click on any text box or control in the dialog box to find out what it is.

As the program begins, you will see the "Welcome" window. This window can take you to major Help topics covering:

"New: B-Mail™ built-in Internet mail" (a guide to using B-Mail™ to send messages to other Braille2000 users)

"Click to read notes about this release" (release-specific information; what's new)

"ED-IT PC Users: Getting Started" (a discussion of differences between ED-IT PC and Braille2000)

"How do I begin my first transcription?" (additional tips for the new user)

"How do I adjust the display?" (a discussion of Braille2000 window aesthetics)

"How do I attach my embosser?" (embosser setup information)

"An overview of Braille2000 features" (general information)

"Technical support options" (ways to contact Computer Application Specialties Company for information or problem resolution assistance)

Note: if you turn off the "Welcome Window" (via the checkmark at the bottom of this window), you can view it on demand by clicking the Menu button and navigating to Help and then to Welcome.

Problems?

If you have any problems with Braille2000, contact Braille2000, LLC in any of the following ways: (technical assistance is free of charge)

By phone: (402) 423-4782, 8am through 5pm (central time). Sorry, no 800 number.

By fax: (402) 423-5154

By mail: 2840 S. 70th St. #7, Lincoln NE 68506

By web page: www.braille2000.com, click on "Inquires and technical support"

Via Braille2000: use B-Mail™ to send us a message (click the View button and then Mail, our address is <1000CASC0001>)

Note: do not use regular e-mail, it is not reliable

Braille2000 compared to ED-IT PC

Things that are done differently

Menus	Instead of the traditional menu bar at the top, you enter the menu by clicking the "Menu" button at the top of the control panel.
ED-IT Setup	Instead of the "ED-IT Setup" item in the Options menu, you will find a variety of setup and preference-settings items by clicking on the Properties button.
"Do"	Many items in the "Do" menu (Running Head, Page Numbering, etc.) can also be accomplished using the mouse: put the mouse pointer in the text at the spot where the effect is to take place; click the right-hand mouse button; select the "Do" menu item you want from the pop-up menu that appears.
Embossing	If you have your own embosser, you must install the new printer-driver software for the embosser. Instructions for setting up the embosser software can be viewed by clicking on "How do I attach my embosser" in the Braille2000 Beginner's Reference" (an initial window, or if you disable this window, in the Getting Started part of the Help materials.
Multiple Files	Braille2000 makes it easy to open more than one file at a time. Each file open shows in the Braille2000 window in the same place (in the large area to the right of the control panel). A set of sideways-reading index tabs runs up and down between the control panel and the editing area. Click one of these tabs to access a particular open file. Because opening one file does not close the previously opened file, when you are done with a file you have to Close it. You can point the mouse at the index tab for the file you want to close and then click the right-hand mouse button; then select Close.
File Types	Braille2000 can open and edit files created by ED-IT PC. If you Open such a file (assuming it is an .ABT kind of file) and then Save it, the file is written out in a new format that Braille2000 uses but which ED-IT PC can not open. That is fine if you will be using Braille2000 on the new file. If you need to be able to access the file using ED-IT PC, you can write the old-kind of .ABT file (for use with ED-IT PC) by using SaveAs (rather than Save) and setting the "Save as type" choice to "ED-IT PC kind of .ABT file".
Using Diskettes	You can work from diskettes using Braille2000, but the system has been designed to favor storing your work within a Project, which holds the data on your hard drive (normally drive C). Click the File Management button for access to a variety of administrative tools including Backups (saving a copy on diskette) and Send on Diskette (to save a copy to put in the mail).
Page Break	In Braille2000, page break is done via the "Begin braille page" paragraph attribute. When this attribute is "on", the paragraph must begin a new braille page. Braille Page Break in the menu merely sets this attribute for the current paragraph. You can set or clear this attribute via the Style button in the Control Panel.