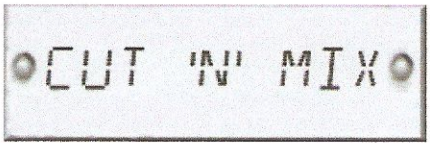


Cut 'n' Mix User Guide (Version 5.4)

Cut'n'Mix Version 5.4 New Features Summary:

- On-the-fly edits to words in the Virtual Cut-up Board
- Text Shuffle (text randomize) is no longer limited to words as the only units acted upon: now the user can select a **group** of words *(snips of size 1-4 words)* as a shuffle unit. Sentences can also be designated as units to be randomized. There is even an option to randomly shuffle the word positionings *inside* each sentence of a text sample.
- Word Statistics is a new function which counts the frequency of words in the output area

Section 1: Cut'n'Mix Basic Theory of Operation:

The Cut 'n' Mix application helps creative writers generate new ideas through the use of different methods of text randomization and manipulation. Back in the early 1990s, the early precursor version of the application (then called "Word Demon") simply tried to automate the "cut-up" technique: a process whereby individual words are cut out of the original context and reordered (either randomly or intentionally). In 1997, the first version of Cut'n'Mix to include multi-source text mixing was released. The intention was to create the same kind of look-and-feel you might find in a 4-track audio cassette recorder but with the capability to mix text instead of sound. Subsequent versions added word shredding and gluing, morphing, swapping, random word fill, web page fill and a "custom wordbook" function to allow users to store their own word databases. Version 5.3 added a new section called "ROBOPOEM" which uses poetry-generating algorithms to rearrange user text into robotic poetry.

How to use Cut'n'Mix

Cut'n'Mix as a Text Randomizer

There are an unlimited number of different ways in which Cut'n'Mix can be used. To use Cut'n'Mix as a basic, automated cut-up engine, type or paste some text or load a text file into the main text area *"Output"*. As of Version 5.4, you can now select which type of shuffle you want to apply from the dropdown placed next to the shuffle button. The options are:

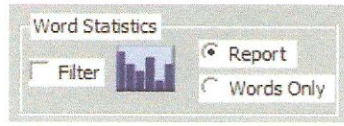
- Words
- Sentences
- Inside Sentences

Click the [shuffle] button (from the "Output Effects" section). Words, word groups or sentences will automatically be rearranged into a new random sequence. Each new click will produce a completely new random rearrangement.

Quick Links to explanations of other text processing functions of Cut'n'Mix:

- for help using the ROBOPOEM functions, read the ROBOPOEM help page
- to find out how to use Cut'n'Mix word *shredding* and *gluing* to help find new names for products, businesses or rock bands, read the Naming help
- to find out how random word pools can be used in creative writing, read about Shakespeare's Brain
- Text mixing and effects processing are described below:

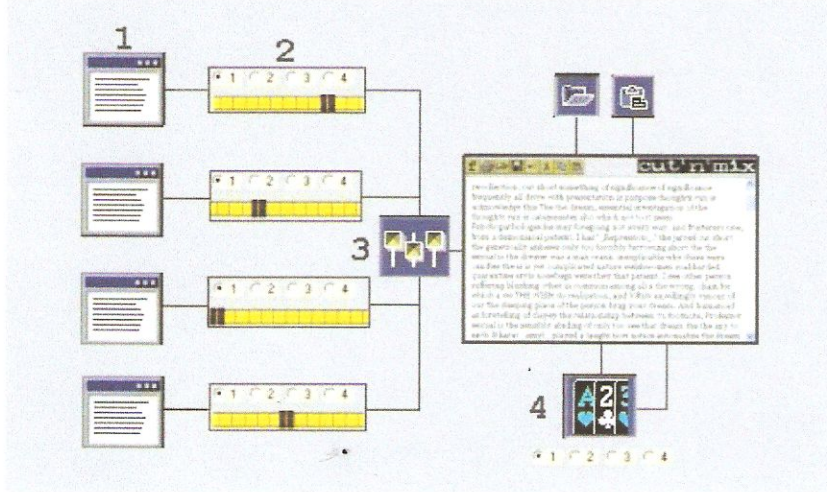
New For V 5.4: Word Statistics



Cut'n'Mix now includes a word counting algorithm which can show how many occurrences of a word are found in a given text sample. ONLY THE TOP 100 WORDS ARE REPORTED. The standard report lists each word followed by the number of times the word occurs and what percentage this represents of the total word pool. Percentages can be helpful to writers of online content who are trying to achieve SEO (search engine optimization) objectives. The "words only" option does not display a report, rather it replaces the word pool provided in the main "Output" area with only the top 100 most frequently occurring words, repeated the number of times counted from the original text sample. The remaining option "Filter" means that the counting algorithm will ignore a preselected batch of commonly occurring words like "a","the","to","it" etc. as these words do not generally indicate anything very interesting about the text sample.

Cut'n'Mix Mixing and Output Effects:

The relationships between the different Cut'n'Mix text mixing components are illustrated below:



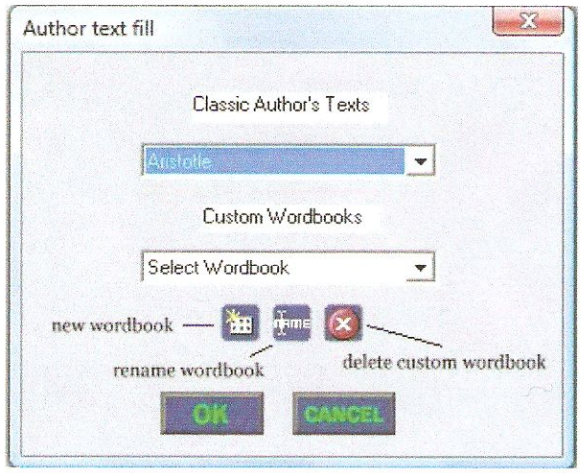
1. **Open and fill input track(s):** Any number or combination of the four tracks can be used.

   Click on the track view button  to open the track viewer for a specific track. Placed next to the track view button, the track indicator  button is green when words are to be drawn from a given track. Even when the track view window is closed, words will continue to be drawn until the track indicator button is clicked to the off (red) position.

   Each of the four input tracks and the output mix text area can be filled with words in a number of different ways:

   1. **File or paste:** either opening a file  or pasting text from the Windows clipboard. (Only plain text files can be loaded, but you can paste directly from word processing applications.)
   2. **Web Page Fill:** if your computer is connected to the Internet, clicking the  "GO" button will grab words from the web page specified by whatever URL has been typed or pasted into the "http://" text input. This function strips out as many formatting codes as possible from the fetched page to try to get a clean sample of the content words.

3. **Random word fill:** A random selection of words are inserted into the track text area.
4. **Author text fill:**



The author text fill gets a pool of random words from any one of a number of different preloaded "wordbooks". There are two dropdown selectors which will determine where the random fill will come from: either from a **"Classic Author's Text"** or from a user - created **"Custom Wordbook"**. Cut 'n' Mix is preloaded with 50 wordbooks containing random samplings of texts by authors such as James Joyce, Coleridge, Plato and Shakespeare. Cut 'n' Mix users can also create their own wordbooks from text files. Creating a custom wordbook has advantages over filling **tracks** directly from text files: The simple text file import only reads text from the first 100 lines of a file, whereas a wordbook can contain the whole contents of a novel. *(The size of a wordbook is really only limited by your patience, as the database load process can be time consuming for very large text files.)* When a text fill is requested from a custom wordbook, the random word selections will be made from any point from throughout the whole length of the original file. Once a wordbook has been loaded, the text is permanently stored in the Cut 'n' Mix database across different sessions, (or until the user chooses to delete it).

2. **Adjust the input track settings:** The way in which words will be drawn from each track is influenced by two settings, ***snip size*** and ***probability fader***: The "snip size" determines how many consecutive words will be included in each cut. The "probability fader" increases or decreases the probability that random picks will be made from the relevant track (when weighed against the probability settings for all of the other active tracks).

3. **Execute Mix:** Each time the mix button is clicked, a new, unique mix of all open tracks is created. Words *(or **word clusters** in cases where snip size is greater than 1)* are randomly drawn and inserted into the output text area. Alternately, the random selection process can be defeated and replaced with sequential selection by toggling the "sequential mix" indicator underneath the mix button. The sequential process draws words or sentence fragments from tracks 1 to 4 in sequence (ignoring the probability fader positions).

4. **Output Effects:** The contents of the main text area can be processed with the use of different output effects:

   - **Shuffle -** Individual words, multi-word clips OR sentences from the main "Output" text area are randomly rearranged. *Hint:* The larger the unit to be shuffled, the more likely the

output will tend to retain some semblence of "meaning".

- 

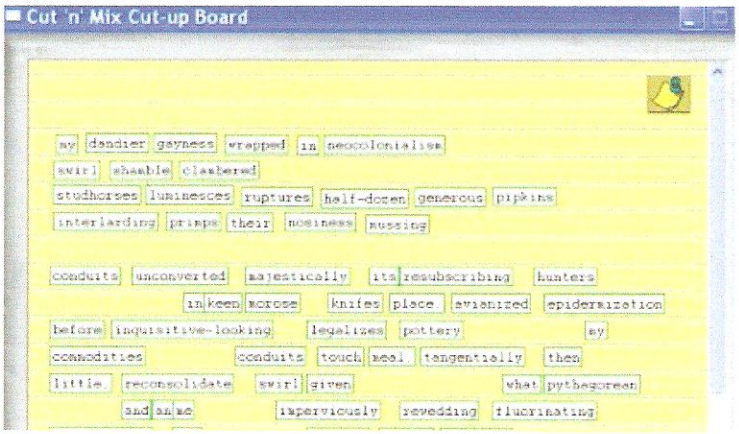
  Morph - Slightly skews the meaning of text by replacing each word with a randomly selected synonym (a word which means the same thing or at least something similar).

- 

  Replacer - This effect analyzes each word in the output area and assigns it to one of several predefined categories. From within the identified category, a randomly selected replacement is made.

- 

  Virtual Cut-up Board - Works like the popular "fridge magnet poetry". The first 100 words from the main text area are sent to a different interactive window where they can be dragged around with the mouse. Click and hold down the left mouse button over a word to drag it around the cut-up board.



This provides a quick way of *intentionally* reordering the words (or word fragments) in any output mix. In the top right hand corner of the board there is a button to take a snapshot of the reordered words in the sequence which they are currently displayed:

Clicking this button will trigger a read-only popup window containing text ordered in the same way as it has been arranged on the screen *(a standard clipboard cut or copy method won't work in the Cut-up board because the new sequence is not recognized)*. Do a **Ctrl+C** keboard sequence *(standard Windows hotkey for "copy")* to get this text into the Windows clipboard. After closing the cut-up board, the copied, reordered text can be pasted back into the Cut 'n' Mix output text area or into another word processing application.

On-the-fly edits: As of Version 5.4, the first letter of each word is also a link which triggers an edit window. You can click on this link to change any word on the Cut-up board. (Unfortunately, due to technical limitations, each word can be edited only once in a single session).

** NOTE: Other Cut 'n' Mix functions are not accessible while the Cut-up board is open*

- 

  Ransom Note Builder - Creates a "ransom note" out of the OUTPUT area words. (Words are rebuilt in a graphic format where each letter is represented in magazine or newspaper cutout fonts.) A browser is launched to display the ransom notes to allow for easy saving or printing of the results.

Note - because computer resoures are heavily taxed by these effects, only a limited chunk of the output text is

processed each time. (Allowing large text samples to be effected would tie up the computer's CPU for long periods of time).

5. **Output functions:** The input tracks and the main text area have several common text editing options. Aside from the familiar cut/copy/paste there are three functions that will work a little differently than in a regular word processing application:

    1. **Fonts -** Any font changes apply to the whole output area. Because the words are rearranged constantly, it is technically beyond the capabilities of the application to maintain multiple font formatting options within the output text area.
    2. **Printing -** The output area is routed directly to your default printer. No formatting options are available.
    3. **Open file -** Only plain text (.txt) files will load. If you want to use files saved in other formats, you can resave them first as plain text from within your main word processing application. Only the first chunk of large texts is loaded into the output (and input) areas - this prevents excessive wait times for processing functions.
    4. **Saving -** Files can be saved either as plain or rich text. If you want to retain the font formatting for further editing in other word processing apps, save as rtf . If you want to keep an output for further processing in a future Cut 'n' Mix session, it is preferable to save as txt . (You can also paste back into the output area after reloading rtf into another application to retain the font formatting).

Next Section: Cut 'n' Mix ROBOPOEM functions

Robopoem: Automatic Poems and Song Lyrics

If you are asked to describe two main factors that distinguishes poetry from prose, you will probably answer **rhythm** and **rhyme**. If you have some academic background in the subject, you might elaborate further using terms like "meter", "measure", "metric", "stresses", "iambic pentameter" etc. What it all boils down to is that poets, either consciously or unconsciously, arrange the words of a poem into a rhythmic structure. One way to *consciously* create a rhythmic poem is to match the syllable counts in each of the individual lines that make up a poem. Or, the syllable counts might be matched in alternating lines, or in even more complex arrangements. (For example, a Japanese Haiku poem follows a very strict form: each haiku has 3 lines, the first and last line are 5 syllables each and the middle line is 7.) A syllable can be thought of as a beat: it is the natural rhythmic unit of a spoken word. In the case of song lyrics (which are really sung poems), the syllables usually sync up to the notes in a melody: For example, if you had a piano player and a singer both performing the same lead melody in a song, the start point of each **syllable** being sung would match the start point of each note being played. (The singer would not typically start each **word** of a lyric at each piano note start point because the result would probably not be rhythmic.)

The ROBOPOEM functions of Cut 'n' Mix can help in the process of writing poems and song lyrics by automatically assembling words into lines of approximately the same number of syllables. The ROBOPOEM process analyzes the contents of the main (output) text area and calculates the syllable count for each word. The words are then reordered into lines that cannot exceed the specified syllable count. Random words are also thrown into the mix to achieve the desired syllable count and rhyme the last words in each pair of lines.

To use the ROBOPOEM functions of Cut 'n' Mix: type, paste or "random fill" words into the main text area and then click one of the four ROBOPOEM buttons. Alternately, you can generate a poem with a blank output area: in this case Cut'n'Mix will get a random selection of words from it's internal database.

Robopoem Control Panel:

The ROBOPOEM control panel contains two syllable count selectors (**beats per line**) and two rhyming format options. Selecting the **Pairs** option with the same beat count for lines one and two will produce a poem made of "couplets". The **Alternating** structure might be used to produce a rhyming structure often found in song lyrics, where line 1 of a verse may rhyme with line 3, line 2 with 4 etc...

Available Poem Generator Types:

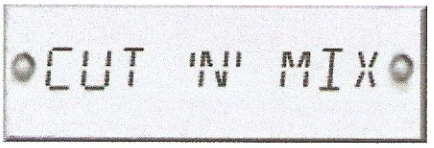
**** As of version 5.4, the available types are selected from a drop-down in the ROBOPOEM section, NOT with the buttons displayed below.***

Regular Poem This method takes the user text found in the main text area and attempts to use as much words as possible to assemble a poem which conforms to the structure defined in the settings panel.

Shakespeare Mixes user text with random picks from a custom database of words extracted from the plays of **William Shakespeare**.

Nonsense Mixes user text with nonsense words in the tradition of Lewis Carroll's Jabberwocky. *James Joyce was another writer who made heavy use of "nonsense" words in his masterpiece Finnegan's Wake.*

Haiku Combines a mixture of user text and random words into the traditional Japanese Haiku form with 3 lines of 5, 7, then 5 syllables.

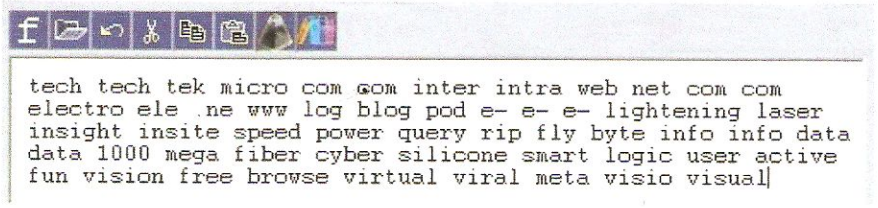


Cut 'n' Mix 5.4 Section 3: Using Cut'n'Mix To Create New Names

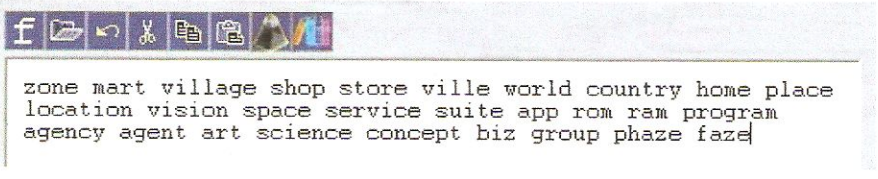
Finding new names for products, bands, businesses, etc.

Finding a good name can be a tricky and time consuming process. It is very unlikely that any computer application could churn out a good name for your enterprise, product or pop group. However, there is one part of the naming process that ***can*** be programmed into a software application: **random selection**. There is usually some element of randomness either in finding the pool of candidate words or in making the final combination. It is commonly known fact that the "Grateful Dead" derived their name from a combination of two words randomly selected from the dictionary. Either they were amazingly lucky to have picked out a catchy combination after only a few tries, or they spent a lot of time trying other random combinations. *(Or maybe it is now impossible to separate all of the mental associations generated by this phrase: associations which the band themselves created over time through the use of it.)* You have probably heard about the hypothetical scenario of a room full of monkeys randomly hitting typewriter keys for an infinite length of time. At some point in time along their endless journey into infinity, these monkeys **must** type the complete works of William Shakespeare. (It is a mathematical certainty). The moral of the story in this context is that the more random combinations of letters and words that you can come up with, the more likely you are to stumble across something worthwhile. That's where computer software comes in...

Naming with Cut 'n' Mix:
Finding a name for a new business or rock band usually involves a process of randomly combining words. Cut 'n' Mix can automate this process. Here is a quick example: Lets say you wanted to come up with a name for a web site having to do with high tech or computing. The first track is filled with some "high tech" words off-the-top-of-your-head:



Next, enter some complimentary words that might seem like logical combinations:

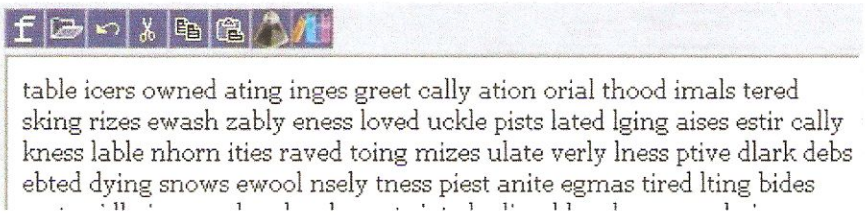


Click a glue button on one of the tracks and try several mixes. Here are some of the better ones that popped up in this quick example:

```
intrascience intraville comville webhome techmart techzone
techvillage comstore  logtechzone powertechmart datacomville
ripsuite siliconestore virtuallocation fazebyte visionsuite
bizbizcom programripsuite agente-viral artbizcom serviceweb
powertechmart compuerphaze  faze1000 viralelectro
```

Then, how about adding some extra twists to the names that appear by 1.) opening a new track 2.) generating a random pool of words 3.) fragmenting the words into 5-letter pieces 3.) applying glue in the mix.

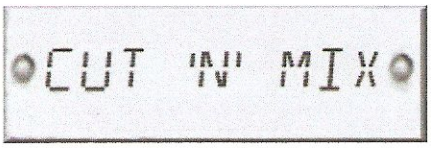
-example of newly added track 3; a randmom FILL which has been fragmented:



In the course of several new permutations, these are some of the words which were generated:

```
cyberonian inforizes podities e-debs laserlated querylamps
infoonian bloglogic powercomraved  siliconesmartiness spacequery
phazemeta spacerizes bloglurch megabloglogic compodities bloginess
dataacked
```

Next Section: Emulate Shakespeare's Brain with Cut'n'Mix



Cut 'n' Mix Version 5.4 Section 4: Shakespeare's Brain

Shakespeare and "Rorschach Word Pool"

Academics claim that William Shakespeare must have had an amazingly large vocabulary: some 20,000 words compared to the 5,000 of the average person. Maybe they imagine that in the process of writing his plays, he was able to draw from this expansive vocabulary to choose the most appropriate words for what he wanted to express in each sentence or stanza. In the course of experimenting with different writing techniques, I have arrived at an alternate hypothesis: he made a conscious effort to use as many different words as possible.

Since 1983, I have been using an experimental writing technique that I call the **Rorschach Word Pool**. The name "Rorschach Word Pool" is derived from the old Rorschach Ink Blot test used in psychoanalysis. In that test the patient observes a series of cards smudged and splattered with random smears of ink. The patient's perception of the inkblots (whether he sees flowers, guns, demons or whatever) gives the psychoanalyst clues about a prevailing underlying state of mind. In the "Word Pool" version, I prepare a random sample (or "pool") of words. Next, I reorder and morph each word so that the resulting text has **meaning**. In many of my earliest experiments with this technique, there was something about the style of the resulting text which seemed very familiar. At some point I realized that the text output of the word pool process shares something in common with the writing of William Shakespeare.

You may well conclude that this particular type of Rorschach testing has merely revealed my own underlying pathology (DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR?). But I'm not trying to assert that the output of this writing technique is on par with Shakespeare: It may however, share a similar foundation.

Check out an example of the word pool texts:

```
Spirits whisper spectral music, their voices evading time
Engaging children's imaginations to watch, question and believe
Embrace these genius lives - this unspoiled world resource
Before decay wears soft their motivations and poignant thought's disposed
A Siege of Deceptions will purge all honor
'til freedom's transformed by Master Extortionists,
extracting morsels of "Significant Interest" for experimental hypothesis
and documented for later discussion
```

There are a few lines from this excerpt which seem to me to be particularly Shakespearean. In one phrase, I was trying to include the word "software", but couldn't find a way to make it work until I came up with "decay **wears soft** their motivations". Also, "poignant thought's disposed" is not a phrase I would typically come up with, but was forced into due to the constraints of the writing exercise. Compare this to a short excerpt randomly selected from Macbeth:

```
Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts,unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full Of direst cruelty!
make thick my blood; Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature Shake my fell purpose,
nor keep peace between The effect and it!
```

It often seems Shakespeare takes the most inefficient, meandering route to express a simple concept.

He is going for maximum verbiage as if paid by the word. (Maybe he was - I'm not a Shakespeare historian). There must be a more direct way of saying: "compunctious visitings of nature" or "stop up the access and passage to remorse". The point is that if he did replace the preceding phrases with simpler, more economical alternatives the result would be less poetic, less distinctively Shakespearen.

How to be Shakespeare: Random Word Fill

Here is a simple formula for transchanneling the spirit of Shakespeare to add colour and flourish to your own writing: ***Force yourself to use a lot of extra words.***

1. Start with a random pool of words. On the Cut 'n' Mix button bar, click the button with a picture of the salt shaker on it: each click will fill the text area with a different set of random words.
2. Next, click the "cut-up board" output effect button. The random pool of words will be presented as easily draggable squares (like fridge magnet poetry). If you have an idea of what you want to write about, try to express it by reordering the randomly selected words. If you don't know what you are going to write about, try to imagine that the random words already contain some message or meaning which has become obscured because the words got scrambled.
3. Next, save the reordered text to the clipboard by clicking the thumbtack icon.
4. Paste the clipboard contents back into Cut 'n' Mix or a word processing application
5. Fine tune: Add connective or supportive words like "the", "is", "I","at" between the reordered words so that the sentences make more sense. (Allow yourself to use these "connector" words liberally.) Tenses can be changed and words restructured from the root meaning, but try not to add too much additional "meaningful" words. The idea is to stretch the meanings of the words provided from the random pool, in much the same way that Shakespeare was apt to do in his writing.

The optimal conclusion to this exercise sees all words from the random pool used in a new text which makes sense.