

Mike Rothwell's Hand Generator

version 4.8

Manual

Hand Generator works with Microsoft Word to make it easy to generate bridge hands and bidding.

Hand Generator works on all versions of Windows and also on Mac computers.

It does not work on Open Office or Word Starter.

Mac users should follow the installation instructions given at the end of this document.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

Hand Generator has been installed by hundreds of users. So if you have a problem, don't give up. It really does work. If you do get stuck then feel free to contact me, preferably by email (details are on the bottom of every page). BUT please do read the instructions first.

If you really do get stuck I can access your computer remotely and set it up for you (provided you have broadband). I can also then demonstrate how it works whilst talking to you. If you want to do this then email me and I will let you know what to do to enable me to get access to your computer. You do, of course, have to give me permission. Provided I am successful in sorting out your problems I would appreciate a small donation.

FEEDBACK

Please let me know if you have any suggestions for improving Hand Generator or the documentation.

MAC USERS

I don't have easy access to a Mac computer but Hand Generator does work. Where these instructions refer to right-click then there are at least two ways of achieving this. Either hold the control key down and click with the mouse or use 2-finger clicking. If you are a Mac user please let me know if these instructions could be improved.

INSTALLATION

Download the installation program from www.thebower.co.uk/handgenerator and then run it. You will get a Windows message asking if it is safe to run the installation program. In Windows 8 you will get the message "Windows protected your PC". Click "More Info" and "Run anyway".

The installation program will offer two options. Option 1 is the recommended option. At the end of the installation you have the option to see the manual and open Word with a document showing you Hand Generator in action.

If you have selected option 1 then Hand Generator is available in all your existing files and any new ones you create.

If you have selected option 2 then you need to follow the instructions in the next section.

MANUAL INSTALLATION

You might experience a problem installing Hand Generator in Windows 10, especially if you use Microsoft Edge. There seem to be no problems if you use Firefox as your browser. If so, you can download Hand Generator from www.thebower.co.uk/handgenerator and save it to your computer.

OPTION 2 (ignore this if you selected option 1)

Using Hand Generator with a new document

Click File (or the Office Button in Word 2007) and New. You should see Hand Generator in “Recent templates” (if not click on “My templates”). Double-click Hand Generator (or right click on Hand Generator and left-click “Create”). Warning: you will now see a blank document – that is correct (lots of people email me to tell me that is all they get – don’t worry!).

Using Hand Generator with an existing document

You might like to use Hand Generator with one of your existing documents. Open that document as normal. For recent versions of Word click on “Developer”, “Document Template”. (If you can’t see the Developer tab, click the File tab, click Options, click Customize Ribbon, under Customize the Ribbon and under Main Tabs, select the Developer check box). For older version click on “Tools”, “Templates and Add-Ins...”. For all versions now click on “Attach...” and then click on “Hand Generator”, click “Open” and then “OK”.

RUNNING HAND GENERATOR

Running Hand Generator in recent versions of Word

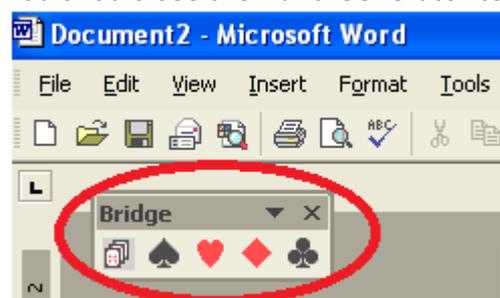
Click on “Add-Ins” and you will see the Hand Generator Toolbar:



Click on the left-hand icon to run Hand Generator. Click on the spade icon to insert a spade symbol ♠ in your document, similarly for the other suits ♥ ♦ ♣.

Running Hand Generator in older versions of Word

You should see the Hand Generator toolbar:



If you don’t, then click on View, Toolbars and then make sure that “Bridge” has a tick in the box next to it. Click on the left-hand icon to run Hand Generator. Click on the spade icon to insert a spade symbol ♠ in your document, similarly for the other suits ♥ ♦ ♣.

Keyboard shortcuts

In all versions of Word you can also run Hand Generator by pressing Ctrl+Shift+G (i.e. hold down the Ctrl and Shift keys and then press the G key). Mac users need to use the command key ⌘ instead of the Ctrl key.

You can also enter the suit symbols using keyboard shortcuts. Press

Ctrl+Shift+S for ♠

Ctrl+Shift+H for ♥

Ctrl+Shift+D for ♦

Ctrl+Shift+C for ♣

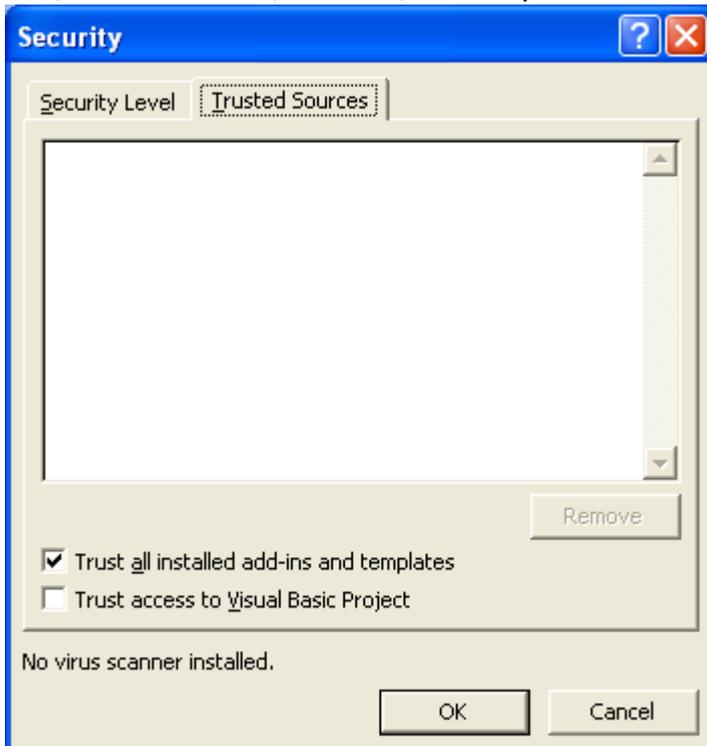
SECURITY SETTINGS

Security settings in older versions of Word

You might get a message such as:



If so, click on "Tools", "Macro", "Security..." and click on the "Trusted Sources" tab.

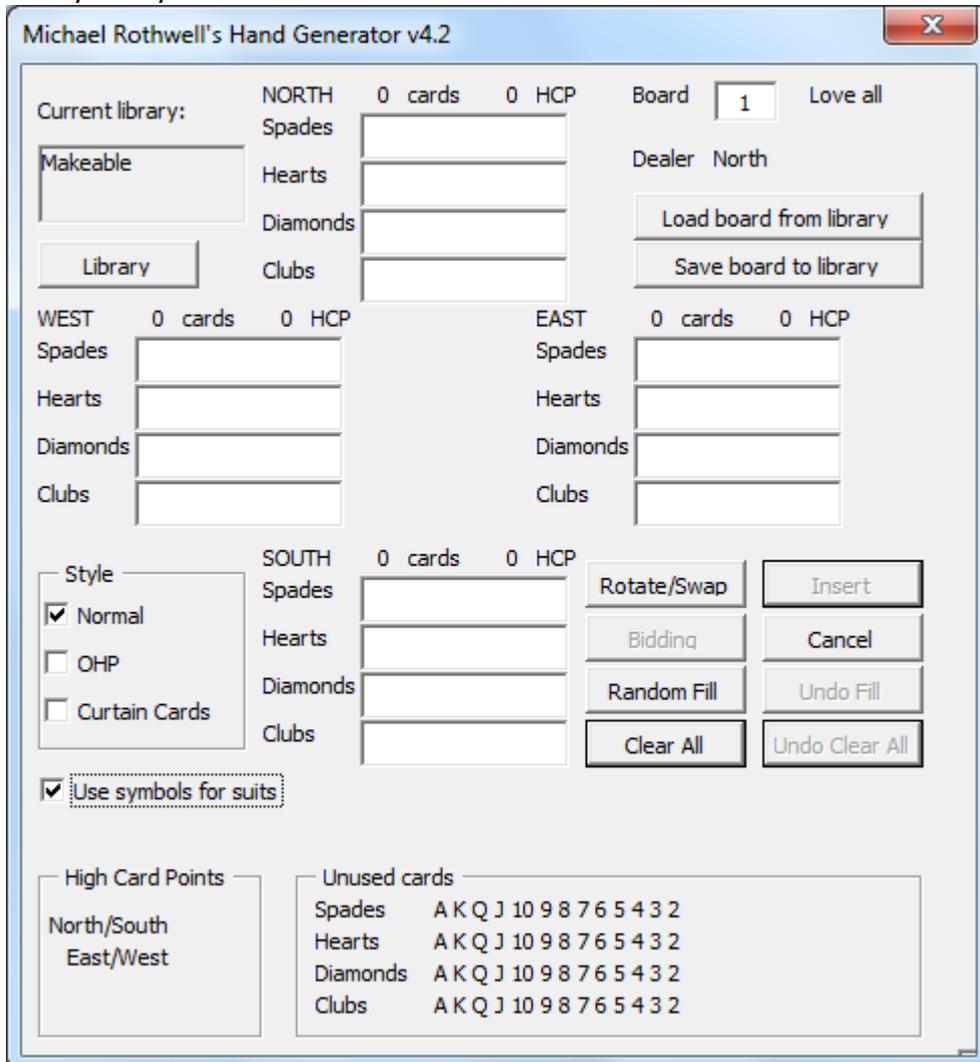


Make sure that the "Trust all installed add-ins and templates" box is ticked as shown above. Any change you make here won't take effect until you exit Word and then load it again.

USING HAND GENERATOR

First Use

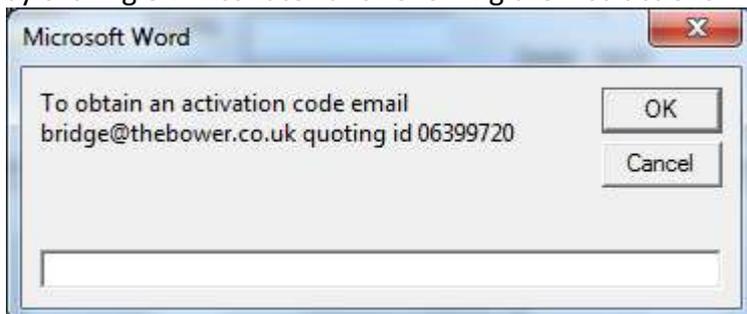
The first time you run the Hand Generator (by clicking on the icon or pressing Ctrl+Shift+G) you will be asked for the name of a folder where your libraries of hands will be kept. It can be a new or existing folder. You will then be given a library called "Default" where your bridge hands will be stored by default. When you subsequently use Hand Generator, it will open the library that you last used. You will then see:



The name of the current library is shown at the top left.

Activation

You can use Hand Generator for a trial period of 30 days. If you wish to continue using it then you need to obtain an activation code for which there is a small one-off charge (unless you have been on an approved EBU course). You can activate Hand Generator as soon as you wish by clicking on "Activate" and following the instructions.



Entering a Hand

The macro is intended to be obvious to use! Cards are entered in any order and the macro puts them into the correct sequence for you. The 10 can be entered by pressing 1 or t or 10. If the program beeps, then you have done something wrong. For example if you want to give West the ♠4 and that card is already in North then you must first delete it from North. Or if West already has 13 cards then you must remove one before you can add any more.

To make it easier to enter hands, you can also use the numeric keypad. To enter the honour cards A, K, Q, J use the four keys on the keypad from left to right, i.e. “/”, “*”, “-” and “+”. With a little bit of practice it becomes very quick to enter hands this way.

Random Fill

You can click on Random Fill to complete the remainder of the hand with random cards. Click on Undo Fill to undo the random fill.

Rotate/Swap

You can rotate the hand or swap two hands by clicking on Rotate/Swap.

Clear All

Clicking on Clear All removes all the cards from the hand. Click on Undo Clear All to undo this action.

Bidding

When you have entered the complete hand you can, if you wish, enter the bidding. The macro displays a table of useful information to help you determine the final contract for both North-South and East-West. If there is a suit fit, the table shows the number of the losers using the Losing Trick Count. Using this and the number of points the table shows possible final contracts that you might explore. The table displays the number of cards in the best suit fit and then the contracts that the Law of Total Tricks suggests.

Entering the Hand

When you have completed everything click on any or all of the “Style” options – normal, OHP or curtain cards. Try the different style options to see what happens! Then click on Insert to insert the hand as a table in your Word document.

Modifying the Hand

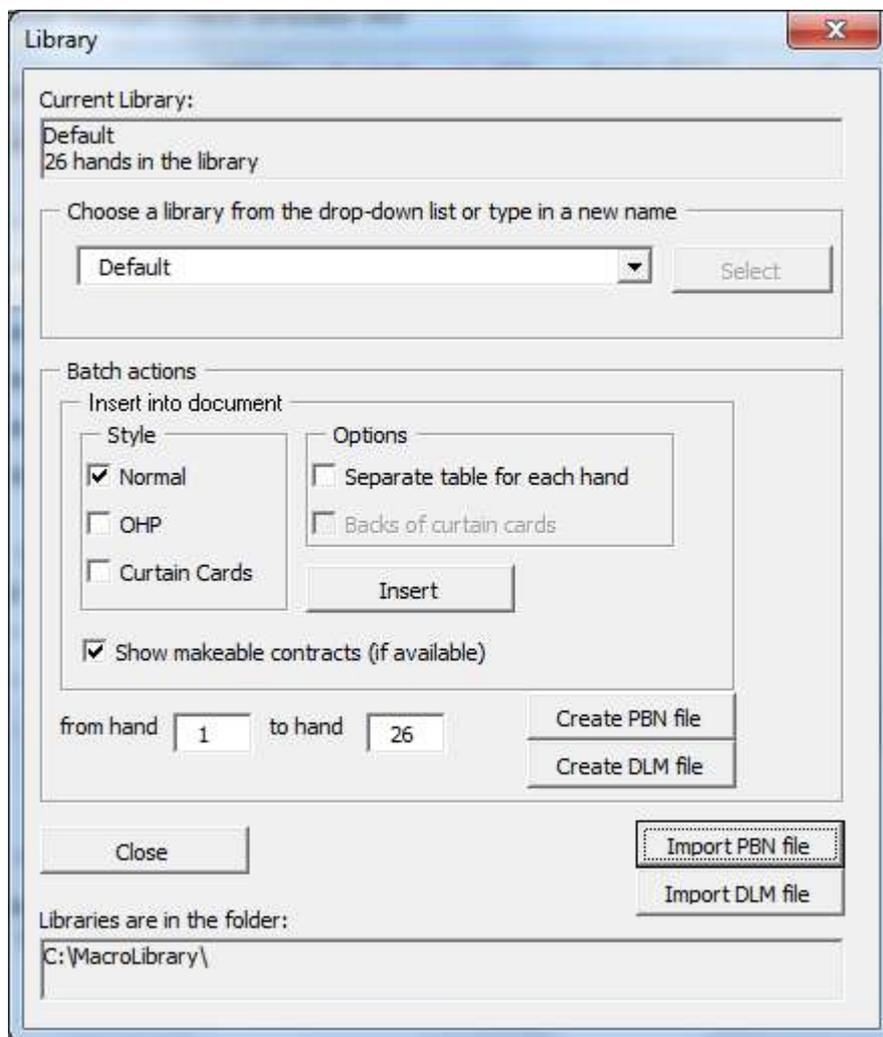
If you want to edit the hand later, then position the cursor in the hand to be changed and then run the macro.

Saving/Retrieving the Hand

Each new hand is automatically stored in the current library. You are warned if there is an existing hand so that it is not automatically overwritten. You can retrieve hands by clicking on Load Board from Library.

Hand Library

Each hand is stored in the current library. Only the hand and the bidding are saved (not any additional comments that you might have added). You can have as many libraries as you want. Click on Library to get to the library options.



You can change to another existing library by selecting it from the drop-down list and then clicking on Select. You can create a new library by entering a new name and clicking on Select.

You can insert all (or just some) of the hands into your document in one go by first selecting the range of hands and then clicking on Insert. You can choose whether to have all the hands in one table or separate tables.

If you insert curtain cards then you can also choose to insert a table showing the backs of the curtain cards (i.e. the board number and compass direction). To make sure that printing lines up then you must make sure that the left and right page margins are identical. Hand Generator checks this for you and warns you if the margins are not the same.

You can export to a PBN or DLM file. Similarly you can import a PBN or DLM file. PBN and DLM formats are used by a variety of other programs, such as the Duplimate system and Blue Chip Bridge. So this facility allows you, for example, to create files for Duplimate or to read Duplimate hands so that you can create a commentary on them.