



TopicScape

Student Edition

The 3D concept-mapper,
and study aid

Quickstart Guide (TopicScape Student Edition)

Also available in the Start | Programs | TopicScapeSE menu
and on-line at <http://www.topicscape.com/>



**Some have a photographic memory . . .
the rest of us use Topicscape**

Create a new Topicscape – a walkthrough

This is not a manual for 3D Topicscape Student Edition (SE). It is a step-by-step guide to building a small sample Topicscape and aims to give you a quick start. For more detail later, when you need help on a specific action, please refer to Topicscape SE's Help system.

Do try the demonstrations that you can run from the Help menu inside Topicscape SE as well. These built-in demonstrations run at start-up until you suppress them. The first shows the keyboard flying controls (you can fly with the mouse as well). The second auto-runs through a similar set of actions to those below, but it makes a Topicscape about dinosaurs instead. This shows you how to add association types, which are often important in concept maps, to show how or why concepts/topics are connected. Association types are not covered below. Once you have turned the demo off with the checkboxes that appear in the demo panel, you can run it again any time with Help | Demonstrations | Topicscape operations.

You can open this Quickstart guide again from the Programs menu (Start | Programs | Topicscape | Quickstart Guide). You may want to print it out for easier reference while trying Topicscape for the first time.

If you have not previously started Topicscape since you installed it, you will need to work through the three steps 10 – 12, described in the 3D Topicscape Student Edition, Installation Guide first.

1 First, open Topicscape SE

- Then select File | New Topicscape.
- Key in “Computer security” when asked for a new name (no quotes).
- Soon you'll see a cone called “Computer security”, left-click on it once.
- You'll see a blue panel - the details panel. More about that later, but for now drag the panel to the bottom right of the window, using its title bar.
- Left-click on the cone, hold the mouse button down and drag the dot that appears to the dark green field – release it there.
- Topicscape SE will ask for a new topic name.
- Type "- Hardware | - Software | Network | Policies | Internal users | External attackers" excluding the quotes. (The | character is Shift+\ on common keyboards)
- Click Add (or press Enter). You will see six new cones for the topics just entered.
- Click one of these new child topics.
- You'll see a strong yellow association line from the topic to its parent. You can toggle this type of line on and off with F8. They only show the connection to a parent when a topic (cone or pyramid) is selected.



2 Try Undo and Redo

- Press Ctrl+Z, then press Ctrl+Y. Undo and redo are available for most operations that result in changes to your Topicscapes.



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3 Add more topics

- Single left-click on the “Software” cone, drag its green dot to the dark green field and release it.
- When asked for a new topic name, type: Defenses | Vulnerabilities

4 If the lettering is getting too small – increase the window size or . . . fly!

You can make the Topicscape window full screen (double-click the title bar), or fly closer to a group of topics using cursor keys or the mouse. The scene-size adjusts with the window, and, as Topicscape uses 3D graphics, you will not experience 'blocky' or jagged edges.

- To start with, try using the four cursor-control keys: ←↑↓→
- then try these with the Shift key held down.
- Try the PageUp and PageDown keys, too.
- For full help on flying, you can left-click on the little aircraft image next to 'Level of Detail' in the blue toolbar across the top of the window or you can watch the 3D Flight controls demo - the first one that appeared when you ran Topicscape SE.
- To see a top view, press Shift+End.
- If you get lost when flying, press Home. To see everything, press Shift+Home.
- Finally, please try the Quickzoom: Hold down Shift and with the mouse click on any topic cone or pyramid and hold the mouse button. Your viewpoint will be zoomed to place the selected topic near the center of the screen and at a comfortable viewing distance. Release the mouse button and you will be back where you started. If instead of releasing the mouse button you release Shift first, the viewing point will remain there when you then release the mouse button.

5 Make some children of “Vulnerabilities”

- Click on “Vulnerabilities” and drag the green dot that appears from it to the field on which the cones sit.
- In the box that appears, type new names: "Viruses|Worms|Trojans|Spyware" (again, please don't key in the quotes).

6 Focus the Topicscape on a new area

- Double-RIGHT click on “Policies” (or right-click and select 'Make topic current').
- The 'Scape re-organises itself around the “Policies” topic (“Software” appears as a parent, “Computer security” as a grand-parent. All the rest will be siblings and their children).

7 Introduce a file to the Topicscape

Make a text file on your desktop. Drag it from there and drop it on the Policies cone – the cone shows light blue to confirm the destination topic.

- Click OK.
- Double-LEFT click on the Policies cone (or right-click and select 'Go to Topic Centre'). You'll go inside the cone and see the file you just dropped there. An item like this in a topic is called an occurrence.
- Double click on the occurrence and it will open, usually in Notepad, but you may have a different text editor associated with .txt files, in which case that will open.
- Close Notepad and click on Topicscape's window to give it the focus.
- Hover over the name in the details panel and you'll see a text insertion cursor indicating that you can edit the name, author, description, source or authority. Click and try it. Press Enter.



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Topicscape

- Press the “**Backspace**” key or the left-pointing blue arrow in the toolbar. You'll be outside again. Backspace allows you to backtrack over your path whether you have been flying, making a different cone the Current Topic or entering a topic's cone.
- If Topicscape does not grab the focus when you drag a file over its window, you may wish to change this behaviour. This can be done with a PowerToy from Microsoft: – TweakUI.

8 Double-**RIGHT** click on “**Software**” – the landscape will be re-drawn around this topic.

- Then select Defenses and drag its green dot to the - Hardware cone and select 'Defenses is to be a parent of - Hardware'. A new association is formed and both of the affected topics' surroundings change to show that.

9 Add an occurrence from a web page

- Using a web browser, go to www.topicscape.com.
- Drag (with the right mouse button) the browser icon from the address bar to the Software topic cone. (You can only do this with MS Internet Explorer – but see the last item about LEFT-click drag, just below, and look up Other Browsers in Topicscape's Help system)
- It makes an MHT file for you automatically and adds this as an occurrence of Software. It takes a few seconds, but queues up the save and lets you go on working. Don't close Topicscape until the save is done, though.
- If you LEFT-click drag, you'll get a choice of shortcut, plain HTML or MHT file. Other browser users will be glad to know that this one *does* work for you.
- The MHT file-making can save many pages that IE7 cannot.

10 Now try a whole-Topicscape search

- Type (without quotes) “hardware”.
Notice that no preparations are necessary: No Ctrl+F, or F3, or menu item to select, just type the search phrase. Topicscape is always waiting for search words unless you are editing text (or, naturally, if its window doesn't have the focus).
- As you typed the 'h' you will see the Advanced Search panel. When you finish typing 'hardware' and press Enter, you will soon see the 3D hit list.
- Press Ctrl+h and you'll see the 2D hit list. Ctrl+h toggles between the two. You can choose your preference. For long results lists, the 2D list is often more convenient, but for short ones, 3D can be useful.
- When the 3D hit list is visible, you can press End to go to a position at the end of the list that lets you see results. This works, even if you were inside the Topic Center at the time.
- If there's more than one page of results, the arrows at the front of the list let you page through them.
- There is another type of search – a group search that limits your search to one specific concept and its sub-topics. There is more about that in the Help.

11 Multiple parents for any topic

- Double-**RIGHT** click on the - Hardware item in the 3D hit list.
- It will become the new current topic (central topic) around which others are shown with their relationships indicated by their position. Parents are indicated by the red lines that can be toggled on and off with F8. To see all relationships in the visible landscape, you can hold down F7.



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- You'll see that Hardware has two parents: Computer security and Defenses. Topicscape allows as many parents as you like for a topic, unlike the folders/directories of an operating system, or the hierarchy in a mind map.
- This means that if you have a useful article about corporate email policies, you could classify it under 'Corporate security', 'Email', 'Policies', 'Internal users', and so on. It would be multiple instances of the same thing, so if you edited it, they would all be changed.

12 Search variations

- When you searched for 'hardware' above, you were performing a keyword search. If you gave two keywords, both would have to be present in the target for it to be displayed as a hit.
- Phrase search is also supported (enclose the phrase in double quotes).
- There's wildcard support too: a search for a single * will show everything; * with the selection of file types will limit hits to specified file extensions (files of one type); and xxx* gives a prefix search. So searching on v* will show 'viruses' and 'vulnerabilities'.
- File content searching is supported for text files.
- You can limit a search to a specific topic and all its children.

13 There are other drag and drop, copy and paste functions

- For example, you can drag a file to the field (instead of dropping it on a cone) – more details in the Help system.

14 A Topicscape like this would be used to organize study information that you've collected

- You would add to it as you collect information, and refer to when you want to look things up.
- Of course you can look things up in Google and will continue to do so. But this is personalised, focused and contains any of your own material that you want to hold in it.
- The difference is that you can search by concept, by flying and making different topics the current one, as well as doing keyword and phrase searches. And you have a broad view of your material in a subject area that is impossible in 2D.

15 Other types of Topicscape

- The other major use that you will make of Topicscape is in organizing your tasks and studies.
- It has proved useful to many people as a 3D mind-mapping or concept mapping tool, a way to structure the planning for a new research or learning project and a place to keep track of all the information that your study generates over months and years.

16 What happens to the files I drag in?

- The files that form part of an occurrence are copied to the folder in your "My Topicscapes" folder that has the name of the Topicscape. Say you have a Topicscape called 'Family records' and you add a file called 'Family Tree.txt'. If you took the default option for the location of your Topicscape data during installation, Topicscape will copy the file here:
..\My Topicscapes\Family records\Family Tree.txt
If you installed Topicscape with the option that all users of your PC can see your data, the location will be ..\Shared Documents\My Topicscapes\Family records\Family Tree.doc

17 Others – also see 'Help'

- The Toolbar has 'hover' hints to tell you what the buttons do.



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- The Pending Tray allows you to park topics and occurrences while you find somewhere else that you may want to associate them with.
- The History list to the right of the search results (the 'Hit list') show which topics and occurrences you've touched recently. This holds up to 35 entries, from run to run but you can change the limit.
- There's a data repair wizard (Tools menu) which not only repairs errors but also does database housekeeping.
- Structured text files can be imported to build a Topicscape or part of one. FreeMind .mm files can be imported as well. This allows FreeMind mind map files to be transferred to Topicscapes. It also allows a well-structured text file to be imported.