

How to play Word Search

A word search is a puzzle with a grid of letters that hides a list of words. Find each word on the list and mark it by drawing a line over its letters. Words run in a straight line: across, down or diagonally, and often backwards. You win when every word on the list is found.

Goal

Find every word on the list in the grid of letters. Each word is hidden in a straight line, and you finish when the list is complete.

Setup

- You see a square grid of letters, and under it a list of the words you must find.
- In Wordtide each grid has a theme, such as Beach or Garden, so the words belong together.
- A counter shows how many words you have found, for example 5/9.
- One extra secret word is hidden in every grid. It is not on the list.

How to play

1. Read the word list and the theme. Knowing the theme helps you guess what you will see.
2. Pick a word and look in the grid for its first letter.
3. Check the letters around it. The next letter of the word should sit next to it in one of the directions.
4. Follow that line to see if the whole word is there.
5. Press the first letter and drag to the last letter. In Wordtide a found word locks under a coloured band and leaves the list.
6. If you drag the wrong letters, nothing is lost. The band just fades.
7. Work through the list. Longer words and words with unusual letters, like Z or X, are the easiest to spot first.
8. Finish the list, and look for the secret word for a bonus.

Key rules

What are the rules of word search?

In a word search you find the words from a list that are hidden in a grid of letters. Each word runs in a straight line, either across, down or diagonally, and sometimes backwards. Mark each word by drawing over its letters. You finish the puzzle when every word on the list has been found.

Which directions can words go in a word search?

Words can run left to right, top to bottom and along both diagonals. In harder puzzles they can also run backwards: right to left, bottom to top, and diagonally up. In Wordtide the early Journey levels use only across and down. More directions unlock as you play, and Daily and Hard grids use all eight.

Can words overlap in a word search?

Yes. Words in a word search can cross each other and share a letter. A single letter can be part of two words. In Wordtide this happens often, and the colour bands show each word separately. Each word appears exactly once in the grid, so you never need to search for a second copy.

How do you mark a word in a word search?

On paper you circle the word or draw a line through it. In Wordtide you press the first letter and drag to the last letter in one line. If the letters make a word on the list, the word locks under a coloured band. If they do not, the line fades and you try again.

Do the letters fill every square in a word search?

Yes. The squares that are not part of a hidden word are filled with random letters, to make the words harder to see. In Wordtide the grid is built by a generator, and the filler letters follow the letter patterns of the language you play in.

What is Hard mode in Wordtide?

Hard mode in Wordtide is a bigger puzzle: a 15 by 15 grid that hides 20 words, with all eight directions. It is meant for players who already enjoy normal grids. You get one free hint per grid, as in other modes.

What is the Daily Grid in Wordtide?

The Daily Grid is one word search each day, and it is the same for every player. Solving it adds to your streak, and completing a whole month earns a trophy. You can open the calendar to see which days you have solved.

Winning and scoring

There is no way to lose a grid in Wordtide. A wrong drag just fades, and the clock only records your time. In the Journey you earn stars on each level: one for finishing, a second for beating the target time or for using no hint, and three for doing both. Finding the secret word in a grid pays coins.

Tips

- Start with the longest word, or the word with the rarest letter. There are fewer places it can be.
- Scan the grid for one letter at a time. A quick sweep for every Q, Z or X finds many candidates.
- Look at the corners and edges. Words often start or end there.
- Read the theme. If every word is about the beach, you can guess the next word before you find it.
- Try reading the grid diagonally and backwards if you are stuck. Your eyes are used to left to right.
- Look for pairs of letters that are rare in words, such as QU or KN, and check around them.
- Use the hint when you need a place to start. In Wordtide it lights the first letter of a word for three seconds.
- Take your time. A word search is a relaxing puzzle, not a race.

Avoid these mistakes

- Looking only for words across and down and forgetting diagonals and backwards words.
- Looking for the whole word instead of its first letter. Search for one rare letter first, then check around it.
- Stopping at the first match of a letter. The same letter appears many times, so check the next letter before you drag.
- Dragging past the last letter, so the line does not match the word.
- Forgetting that one hidden word is not on the list. In Wordtide, the secret word is worth looking for.

Words to know

Grid: The square of letters that hides the words.

Word list: The words you must find. In Wordtide each found word leaves the list.

Diagonal: A line of letters that goes from corner to corner at an angle.

Backwards word: A word that is written from right to left, bottom to top, or diagonally up.

Filler letters: Letters that are not part of any word and only make the puzzle harder.

Secret word: In Wordtide, one extra hidden word that is not on the list. Finding it pays coins.