



User Manual

Version 9

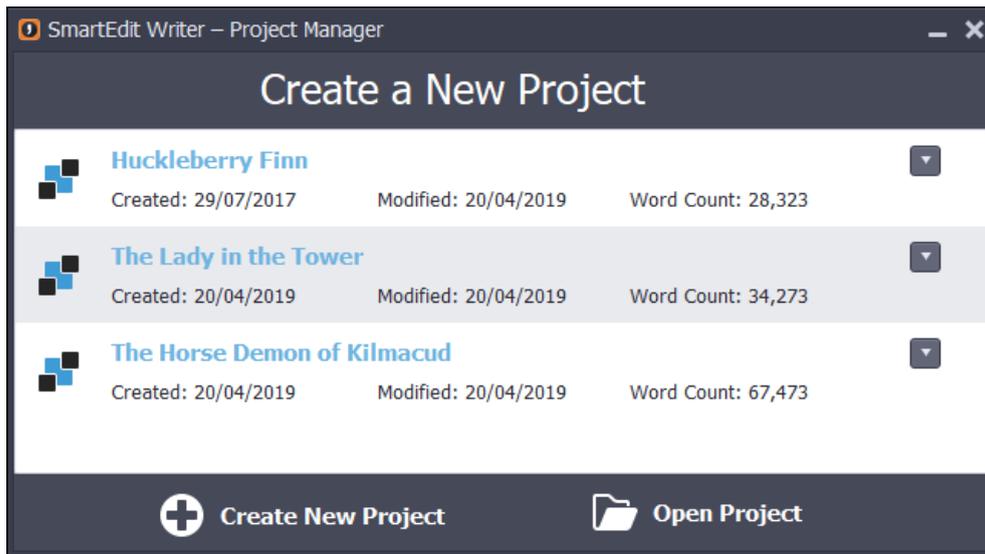
Revision date: April 6, 2021

Getting started

Creating a new project

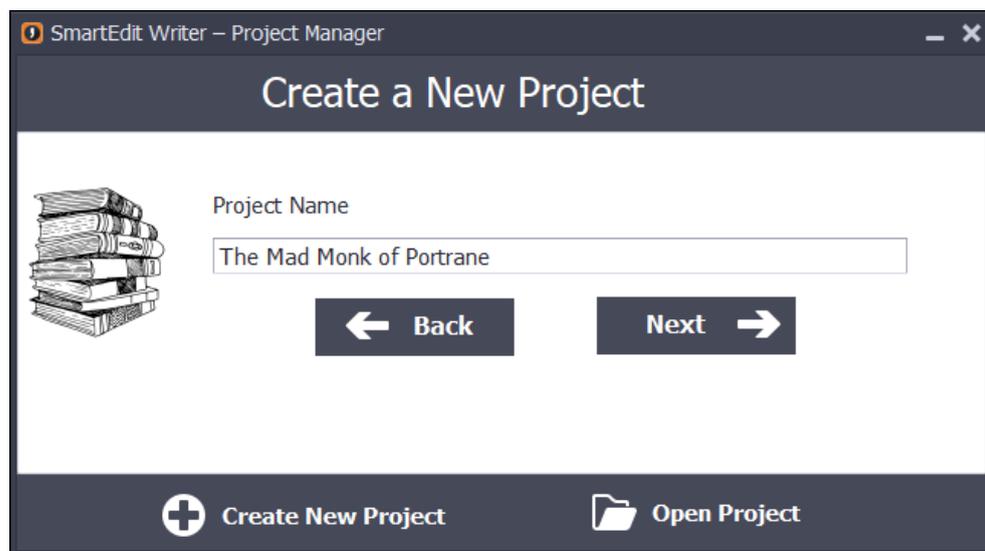
The SmartEdit Writer application consists of two separate parts: the Project Manager, where you open a project or create a new project, and Writer, where you work on an individual project. Writer is where you will do most of your work and all of your creative work.

To get started, double click the desktop icon to launch the Project Manager. The first time you open the Project Manager a single sample project called “Huckleberry Finn” will be there. Once you create your own projects, they will be listed here in the order they were last opened. This provides a quick way to jump into the projects you are currently working on. Clicking on the name of a project will open that project in Writer.



To create a new project, click on the “Create New Project” button at the bottom of the Project Manager dialog. This is the only place where you can create a new project. You cannot create a new project from within the larger Writer application, as Writer can only open for an existing project.

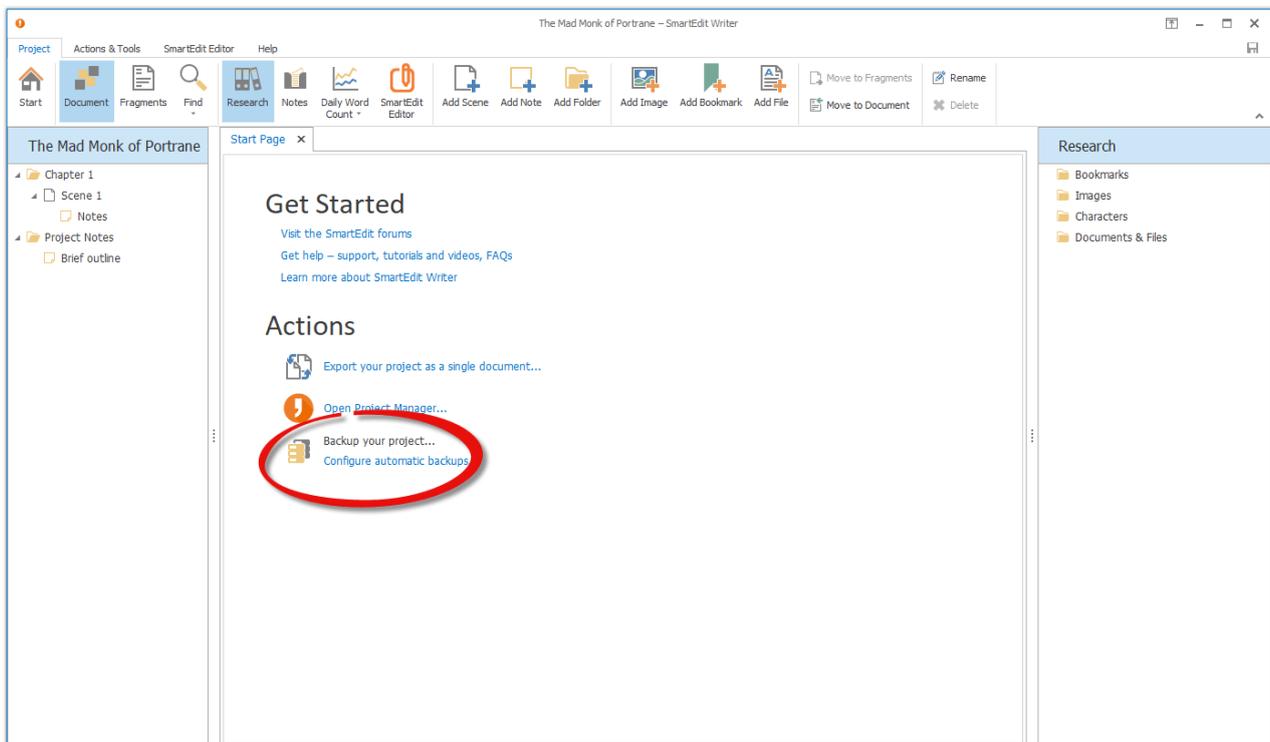
Let’s create a new project and call it “The Mad Monk of Portrane.” Portrane is a small residential area on the coast in north Dublin whose sole claim to fame is the presence of a large Victorian asylum of architectural note.



After choosing a project name, which you can change later, you must choose a location for the project folder. This will default to the SmartEdit Writer folder inside your Windows Documents folder. Unless there is a pressing reason to change this location, you should leave it as is. You should resist any temptation to

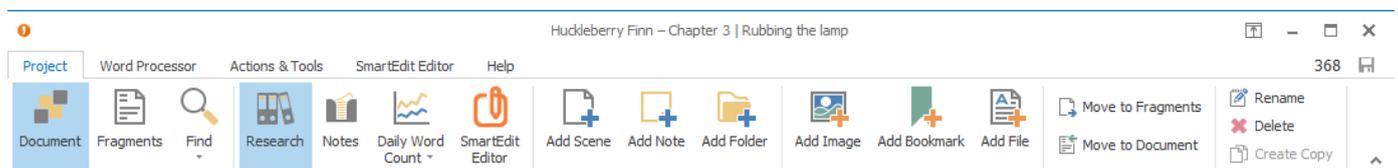
select a Dropbox or other cloud storage folder as the working location, as SmartEdit Writer will not work correctly from within a Cloud storage folder.

After clicking finish, the new project will be set up and opened in SmartEdit Writer. This may take about 5 seconds or so on a slow machine. When the project opens, it will be empty apart from a few default folders and scenes that are created automatically — see the screenshot below.

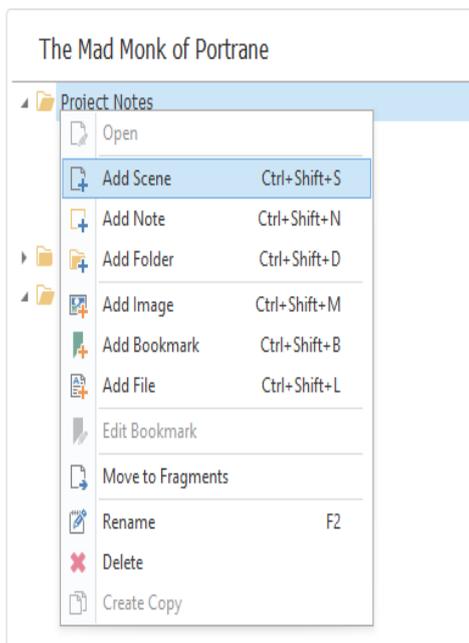


Writer will open on the Start Page. This page contains of a few links back to the website under the Get Started section, as well as some commonly used options under the Actions section. These include exporting to a single Word document, opening the Project Manager, backing up your project and configuring the automatic backups. If you haven't yet set a location for your automatic backups, you should do so now by selecting the Configure automatic backups link.

There are five toolbars in Writer, named Project, Actions & Tools, Word Processor, SmartEdit Editor, and Help. The Project toolbar is where you will find buttons to create new folders, scenes and notes and add images or bookmarks. There are also buttons to move between your main Document tree and the Fragments tree on the left, and between the Research tree, Notes section and Daily Word Count section on the right.



The Document tree is where your novel or short story lives. Here you add scenes and notes, move them around by dragging and dropping them until the structure is the way you want it, and open them in the word processor or in the notes section to the right. Select a folder and click the New Scene button, or open the right click menu and choose New Scene. An empty scene will open in the word processor and the scene will be highlighted in the Document tree so that you can give it a name.



Adding notes and folders works in the same way. To add a folder, scene or note to the top level, select the project name — “The Mad Monk of Portrane” and follow the same steps as above.

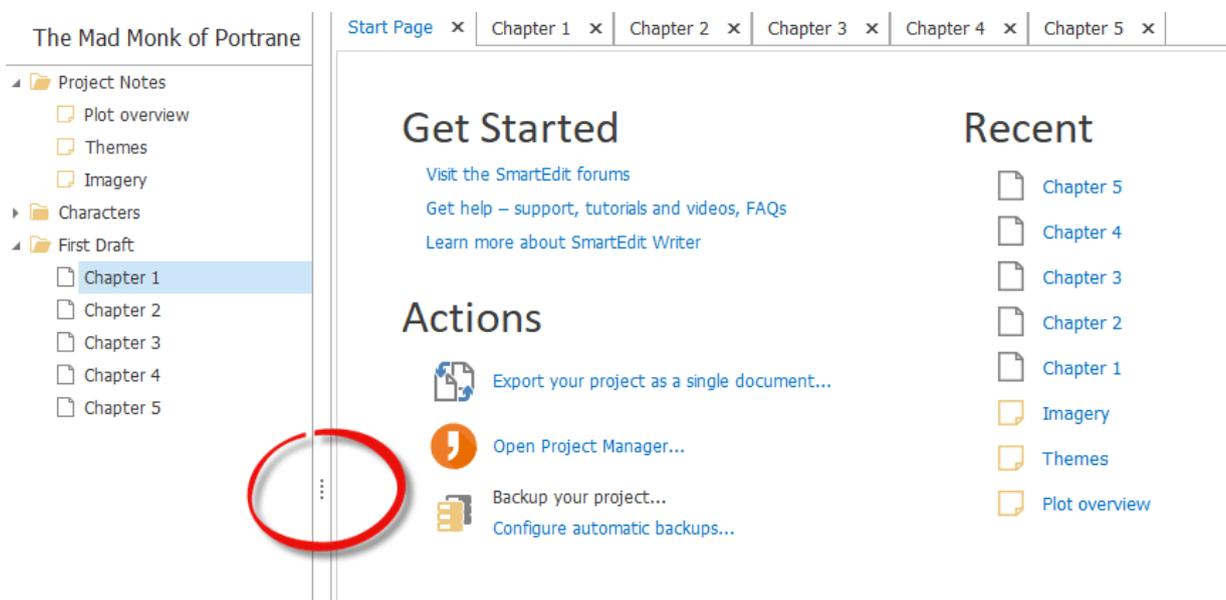
Scenes, notes, folders and even the project itself can be renamed by selecting the item in the tree, opening the right click menu, and choosing rename.

The Research tree to the right is where you store research material such as images, PDF or other files, as well as bookmarks to websites and web pages. You can also build up character profiles and outlines in this section by creating folders, scenes and notes, just as you do in the Document tree. The tree structures are fluid by design — you get to choose how to use them and to decide what goes where.

In the new project, double click on a note. One is called Notes, the other is called Brief Outline. This will open the note in the notes section to the right of the word processor. Notes were designed to hold small bits of text, usually about the scene or folder it is attached to, or about the project as a whole. Some writers like to have a note for each scene outlining the main points to hit in that scene, others prefer notes to sit at the folder level where they document the chapter as a whole. How you structure this is up to you.

Notes can be attached to anything in the any tree — scenes, folders, bookmarks, images, the project itself, even other notes. You decide which structure best suits your writing and organisational style. But remember, you can move these notes around by dragging and dropping at any time.

As you’re new to SmartEdit Writer, this is a good place to mention a quick customisation you may wish to carry out. The left and right sections can be widened if they appear too narrow on your PC. To do this, drag the separator to the right or left as shown below.



If you close and re-open your new project, you will find that any scenes or notes that were open when you closed it will be open when you re-open, allowing you to jump straight back in to your work.

If you prefer to write on a dark background, open the Settings dialog and switch on the Dark Theme. You'll find more about that [here](#).

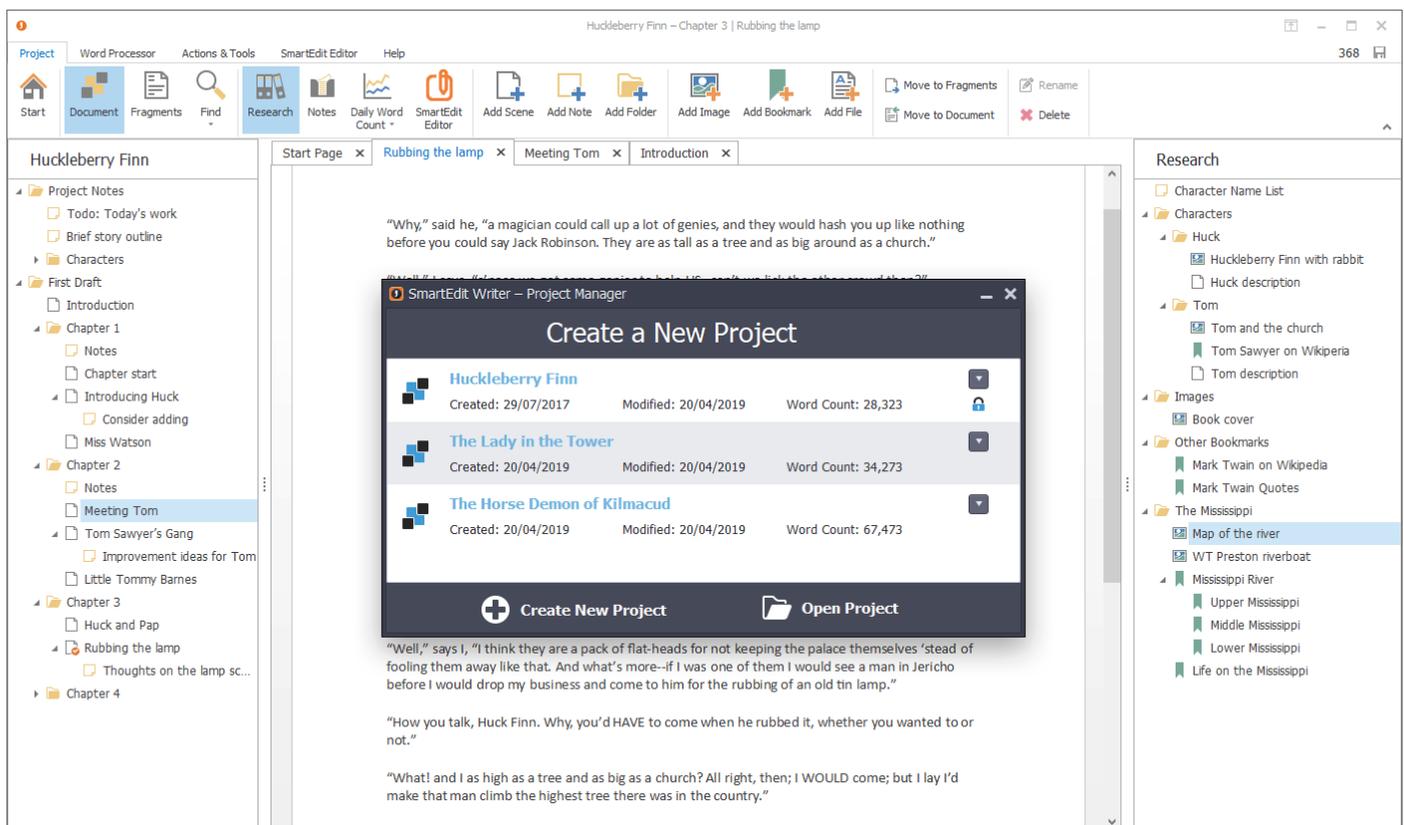
That should be enough to get you started with your project. More advanced functionality such as Fragments, and importing your Word documents is outlined in other topics of this manual.

SmartEdit Writer in 1,200 words

The entry point for SmartEdit Writer is the Project Manager which you access from the icon on your desktop. From the project manager you can open a recent project, create a new project, or browse to a project not shown in the recent list — on a thumb drive for example.

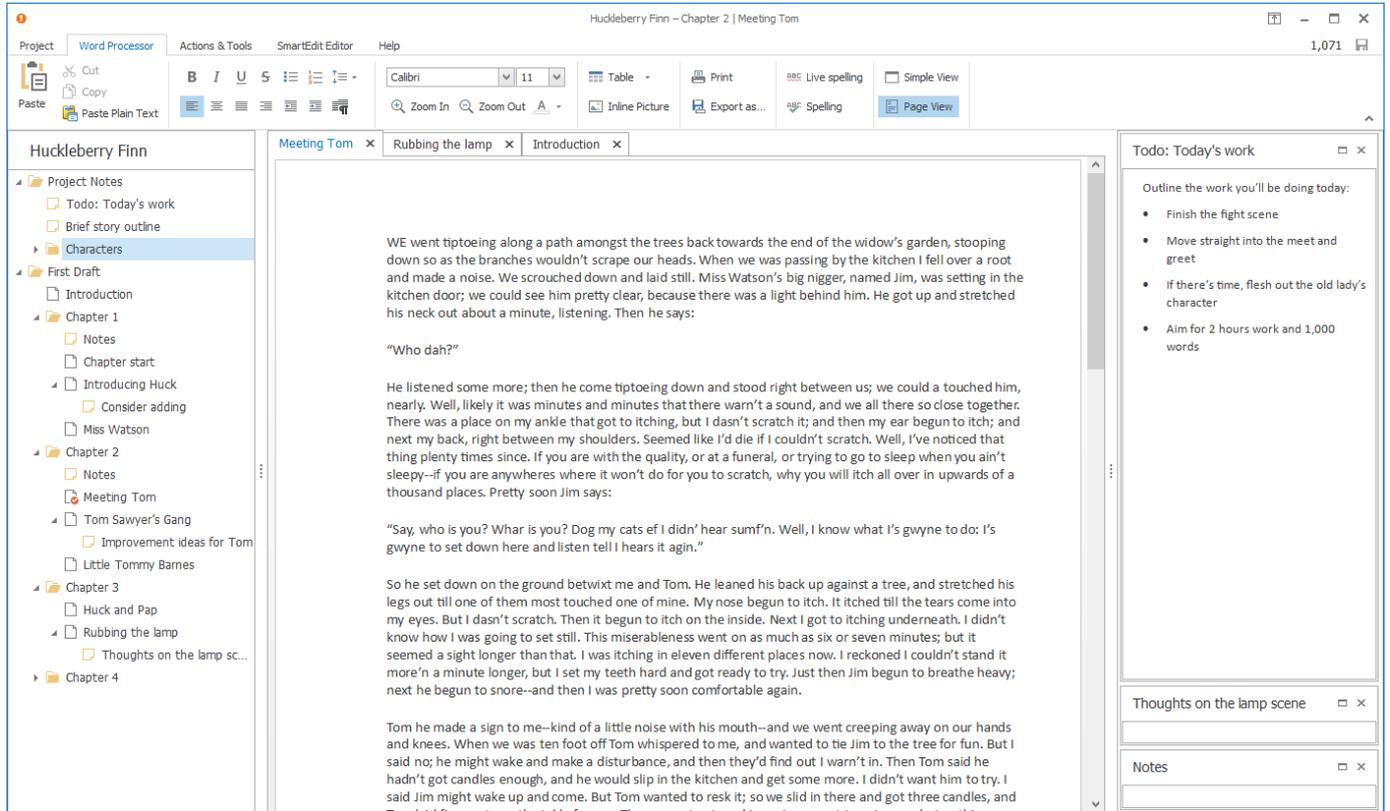


I've kept the Project Manager as simple and clutter free as possible, as the main work of SmartEdit Writer is carried out inside each project. A few points to note. You cannot open the same project twice at the same time. You CAN have multiple projects with the same name. Only projects that are accessible will appear in the Recent Projects list — this means that if you opened a project from a thumb drive yesterday, and the drive is unplugged today, it will not appear in the list. Plug the drive back in and use the Open Project button.

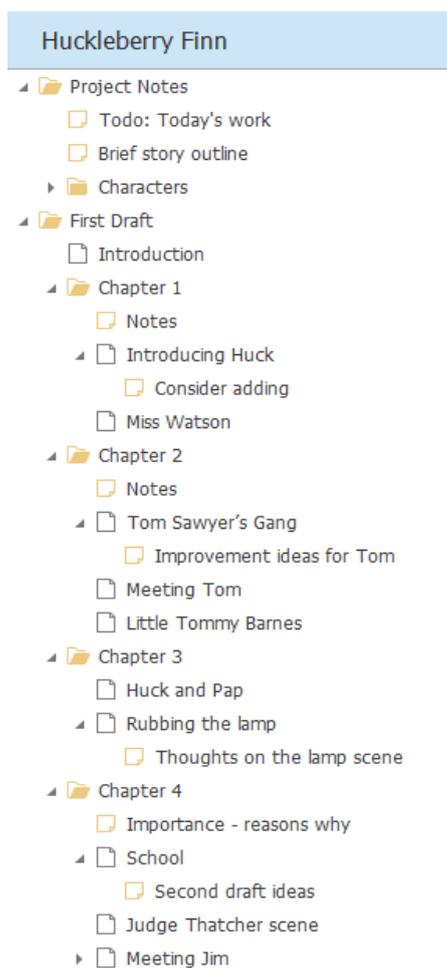


A sample Huckleberry Finn project is included with each installation. Click on the project name in the Project manager to see what it's all about.

The main SmartEdit Writer window has three sections: the Document area to the left, which contains your folders, chapters, scenes and notes, as well as a Fragments section where you store old or misplaced scenes; the tabbed word processor in the centre; the Research and Notes section to the right. Left and right sections can be closed to free up more space for writing (see image next page).



The Document tree is where you organise your project. Here you add new scenes, attach notes to scenes or folders, and reorganise a project by dragging and dropping scenes, folders and notes. It's a fluid design, which means you decide what kind of structure you want to have. In the Huckleberry Finn project, each chapter is given a folder, and scenes exist within that folder. Notes hang off anything, even each other.



There are some restrictions. You can't add a scene or folder to a note, but you can add a scene to another scene. It all comes down to how you want to lay out your work and what suits your way of working.

Fragments

- ▲  Abandoned scenes
 -  Climbing the tree
 -  Meeting Tom for the first time
 -  The knife fight
- ▲  First attempts
 - ▲  Chapter 1
 -  Scene 1 [old]
 -  Scene 1 [third attempt]
 -  Conclusion
- ▲  Notes
 -  Ideas for the raft
 -  Opening lines
 -  The Marshal

The Fragments tree is where you send scenes or notes that you do not want to use in your main Document, or that you may wish to use later. Basically, bits of scenes, dialog, or prose that might be useful down the road. You send a scene, folder or note to Fragments by using the *Move to Fragments* button, or from the right click menu. You open the Fragments tree from the toolbar button. A reverse, *Move to Document* exists on the Fragment tree that allows you to send that scene or note back to the Document tree when its time has come.

Research

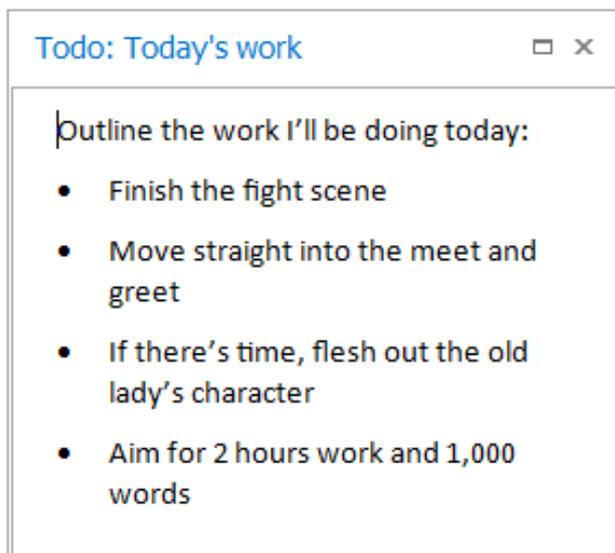
-  Character Name List
- ▲  Characters
 - ▲  Huck
 -  Huckleberry Finn with rabbit
 -  Huck description
 - ▲  Tom
 -  Tom and the church
 -  Tom Sawyer on Wikipedia
 -  Tom description
- ▲  Images
 -  Book cover
- ▲  Other Bookmarks
 -  Mark Twain on Wikipedia
 -  Mark Twain Quotes
- ▲  The Mississippi
 -  Map of the river
 -  WT Preston riverboat
 - ▲  Mississippi River
 -  Upper Mississippi
 -  Middle Mississippi
 -  Lower Mississippi
 -  Life on the Mississippi

The Research tree, introduced in version 2, is where you store information that you collect as you work. You can add images, external files, links to websites and web pages — anything that has relevance to your work-in-progress. Double clicking on any of these files will open that file, image or website immediately.

The Research tree is a good place to store your outlines and character sheets. As with the Document and Fragments trees you can create folders, and add scenes and notes.

The word processor in the centre contains basic word processing functionality. Its menu ribbon is similar to Word's, but lighter. All the usual Word shortcuts will work here, and many options not visible on the menu toolbar will still work if you remember the Word shortcuts.

When you re-open a project, scenes that were previously open will be opened again in the same order, so you can get back to work straight away.



Notes are everywhere. They can be attached to your Document, to folders, to scenes, to other notes, to fragments, to anything. A note is designed to hold a small amount of text, though it does use the same word processor as scenes, allowing you to use bullet lists and text formatting if you wish. Notes open to the right of the word processor, in a list that can be expanded or collapsed. A note can be resized, which means you can have three or four notes visible at the same time as you work on your scene: a brief synopsis, some character descriptions, a couple of sentences you want to use later, whatever takes your fancy.

As with the tabbed word processor, any note that was open when you last opened the project will be open when you re-open a project.

The combination of Document tree, tabbed word processor and notes is what makes SmartEdit Writer what it is. Yes, there will be more features added over time, but it's this core feature set and the easy interaction between them that makes SmartEdit Writer such a productive tool for writers.

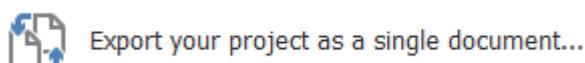
And there's more. Autosave is automatic — you don't get a choice here. SmartEdit Writer will save everything every minute or so, which means the prospect of losing work due to a system crash is small. Each scene is stored in a separate file, making the likelihood of damaging an entire document due to corruption — which can happen with Word — remote.

Automatic backups happen every time you close a project — be sure to configure this when you start using SmartEdit Writer.



Proper handling for curly quotes, em dashes and ellipsis is built in. Even in Word it can be difficult getting something as simple as em dashes to display, not to mention ellipsis. In SmartEdit Writer, two hyphens produce an em dash, and three periods an ellipsis, unless you choose to switch this off in Settings.

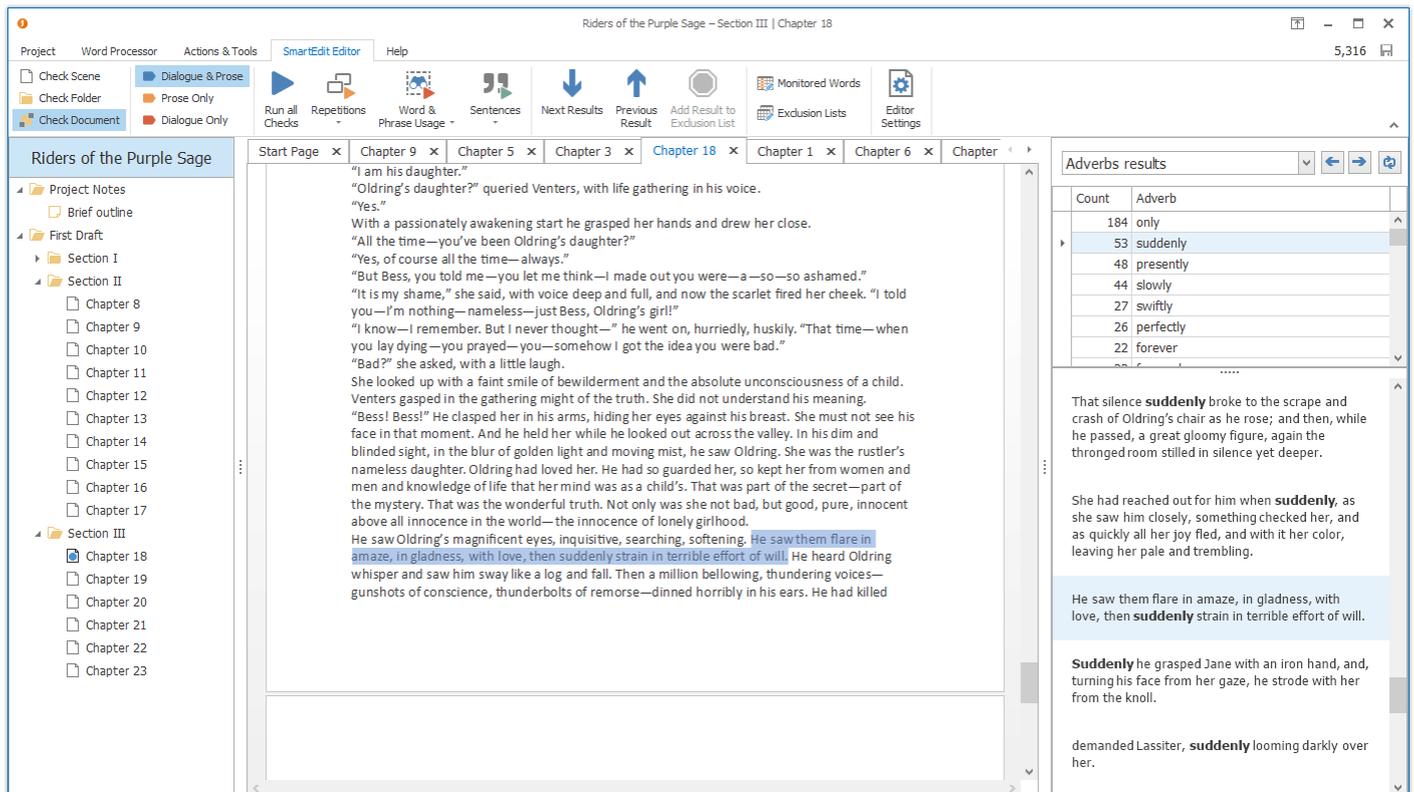
Exporting a combined, complete document is a single click process. The export feature will combine all scenes in your document, in order, from top to bottom, into a single Microsoft Word document. Fragments and notes are not included — only the scenes that sit in your Document tree. This is an area that will be improved over time, but it was important to get at least a rudimentary export option in place for the early version.



Recent version of SmartEdit Writer introduced new features such as a daily word count record, a Dark Theme and a Character Name Generator.

Version 7, released in April 2019, brought the full editing power of SmartEdit for Word into SmartEdit Writer. Editor runs a series of checks on your entire document and highlights areas that you might want to look at. This includes:

- Monitoring word and phrase over-use
- Highlighting adverbs, dialogue tags and redundant words
- Zooming in on punctuation issues
- Identifying long sentences
- Spotting misplaced proper nouns
- Allowing you to easily monitor your crutch words



You can run these checks as a whole on your entire document or individually against a single scene. It all depends on how you work and how you prefer to edit. Select the SmartEdit Editor toolbar and click on the check you want to run.

New releases of SmartEdit Writer are frequent. Keep an eye on the [forum](#) for news and discussion on upcoming changes.

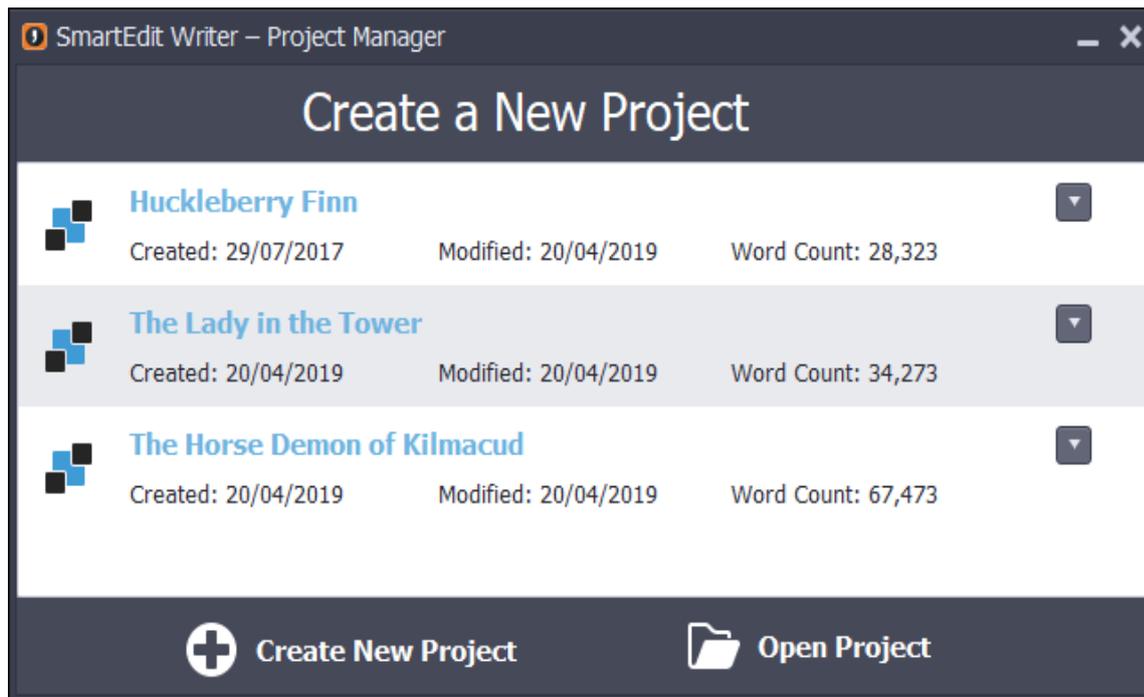
Darren, (April 26th, 2019)

The Project Manager

The Project Manager is where you open existing projects and create new projects. It's the start point for SmartEdit Writer and it's a dialog you will see and use every day.

If you fire up your PC and want to continue working on your novel where you left off yesterday, you open the Project Manager and select that project from the top of the Recently Opened Projects list.

If you plug in a USB drive and want to open a project on that drive, you click the Open Project button in the Project Manager, browse to the USB drive folder and select the atomic.scribbler file in the project that you want to open.



If you want to create a new project, you click the Create New Project button, follow the two step wizard, and your new project is created and opened for you.

Recently Opened Projects list

The recent list is at the heart of the Project Manager. It's rare that you'll be creating new projects, less rare that you'll be opening projects on plug-in drives, but extremely common that you'll want to open one of the last few projects you worked on.

The recent list shows your projects in the order they were last opened, with the most recent at the top. Clicking on the name of the project will open that project so you can get to work. For most users most of the time, this is all you'll be doing inside the Project Manager.

But that's not all it does. Let's take a look at the "Huckleberry Finn" example in the screenshot below.



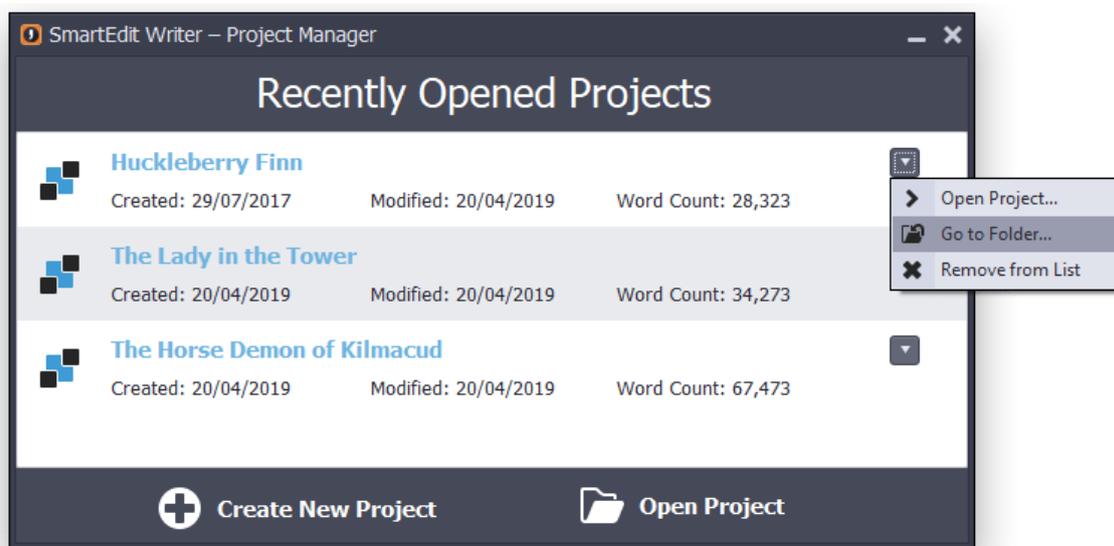
Underneath the project name there are a few pieces of additional information. The created and modified dates for the project, along with a word count. The modified date is especially useful as you may have multiple projects with the same name. The modified date will allow you to quickly identify the project you worked on most recently and distinguish it from an old version that you opened last week.

The word count is not a total word count for the project, it's a word count for all the scenes in your Document tree. Notes are not included in this total, neither are fragments. The word count total is updated every time you close a project, so may be out of sync if you leave the Project Manager open as you work on a project.

When you open a project, you will notice that a padlock icon appears for that entry in the recent list underneath the menu button. This padlock means the project is already open. You cannot open a project twice at the same time. If you close the project this padlock will disappear in a second or two, allowing you to re-open it.

Menu Options

There is a small drop down menu to the right of each entry in the recent list. It's easy to miss, but take a look at the screenshot below.



This menu has only three options: Open Project, Go to Folder, and Remove from List. The first doesn't need an explanation. The second will take you to the folder that contains the project. This will usually be inside your "Documents/SmartEdit Writer" folder, unless you chose a different location when you created the project. Selecting this option is another quick way to identify which project you are opening if you have multiple projects with the same name. I'll discuss this folder in more detail below. Finally, selecting the third menu option, Remove from List, will remove the specified project from the recent list. It will NOT delete or remove the project itself. This is a useful feature if your recent list gets filled up with old projects you no longer wish to see, or copies of projects. Trimming the list down to 3 or 4 recent projects makes things easier to manage.

Creating a new Project

I've already touched on how to create a new project in the Getting Started entry. [You can read more about that here.](#)

Open Project Button

To open a project not in the recent list, click on the Open Project button. This brings up a standard file open dialog, and the location will be preset to whatever location you last opened a project from. This behaviour is standard across SmartEdit Writer. Every time you open a save, open or browse dialog, your previous use of that dialog will be remembered and the folder location pre-selected.

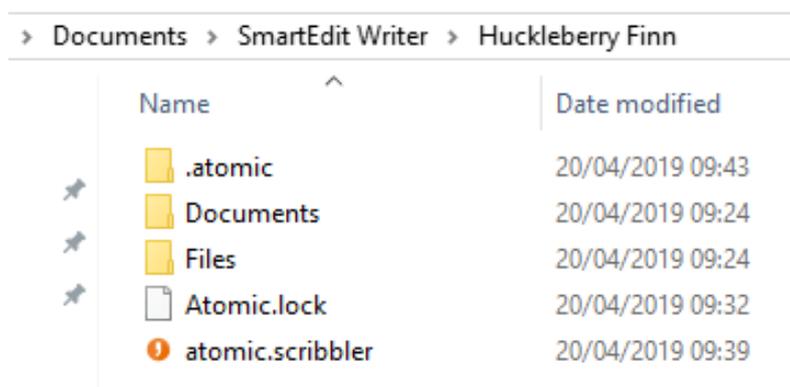
Before outlining how to open a project in this way, it's worth touching on the structure of a SmartEdit Writer project. A project is not a single file, it's a folder of files. This folder can contain many hundreds of documents, images and files, as well as a small database that binds everything in your project together.

Projects are stand alone — they know nothing about each other, and are not inter-related in any way. Changing one project cannot affect another project; deleting one will have no impact on another.

When you create a new project, a folder is created in the folder location you specified to contain all the files of that project. Usually that folder will have the same name as the project, but there are exceptions. For example, if you create a project called “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” and a project/folder already exists with that name in the same location, a new folder called “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn 1” or 2, 3, 4 will be created for the project. Similarly, if you create a project that uses characters that are not allowed in Windows file names, the project folder will trim out those special characters and construct a folder name around them.

What if you create a new project that contains ONLY illegal file name characters? An example would be a project called “<<>>”. In this case, a folder named “SmartEdit Writer Project” or “SmartEdit Writer Project 2” will be created.

What do you select when you want to open a project using the Open Project dialog? Browse to the folder that contains your project. Open that folder and you will see a file called atomic.scribbler — see the screenshot below. This file stands out as it has a SmartEdit icon. Selecting this file will open that project.



Usually when you see a specific icon attached to a file, like the SmartEdit icon above, it means you can double click on the file and open whatever it is in its default application. This holds true for SmartEdit Writer and is a quick way to open a project while bypassing the Project Manager. Say you’re used to opening your Word documents direct by browsing to your Documents folder and double clicking the Word document. You can do the same with your SmartEdit Writer projects — open the folder of the project you want to open and double click on the atomic.scribbler file.

This method is especially useful if you are opening a project from a plug-in drive, as the normal behavior is for that drive to pop open in Explorer, allowing you to see the project folder straight away.

A few points to note about the recent list. When the Project Manager opens, if a project that should be in the list cannot be found, it will not appear in the list. This can happen if you opened a project yesterday from a plug-in drive and that plug-in drive is now unplugged. It will not appear again in the recent list until you open it another way, by using the Open Project button or by double clicking on the atomic.scribbler file in the project folder as outlined above.

That’s it for the Project Manager. It’s simple by design. I didn’t want to clutter it with options that might be rarely used. Its primary purpose is to allow you to quickly open a project and to easily create new project.

Scenes, Fragments & Notes

The SmartEdit Writer workflow

You've created your project. You have a basic understanding of what the UI looks like and how it works. Now it's time to get started on fleshing out your novel — adding chapters and scenes, attaching notes to those scenes, and getting on with the job of writing.

I'll begin by explaining the **Document Tree** in some detail. The Document Tree is your manuscript, your novel broken down into its component chapters and scenes. This is where you add a new chapter, add a scene to a chapter, move scenes around until they're in the right place, write notes for scenes or chapters. The Document Tree is where you structure your work in progress. It's highly flexible — you decide how much detail you want to break your novel down into.

The definition of a folder or a scene is up to you. They become whatever you want them to be. For one writer, a folder could be used to contain all the work of a single chapter, in which case their Document Tree might have 30 folders, named "Chapter 1", "Chapter 2", etc. Inside each folder might be 5 or 10 scenes, each containing a single part of that chapter. A descriptive scene, followed by a meeting scene, followed by a fight scene, a discussion, a sex scene, whatever...

For another writer, coming from a long history of working in a single Microsoft Word document, breaking a novel down to such small pieces might be a step too far. They might choose to create a single folder called "First Draft", which might contain 30 scenes numbered "Chapter 1", "Chapter 2", etc., and attach a single note to each scene.

The Mad Monk of Portrane

- ▲  Project Notes
 -  Plot overview
 -  Themes
 -  Imagery
 -  Characters
- ▲  First Draft
 - ▲  Chapter 1
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 2
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 3
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 4
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 5
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 6
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 7
 -  notes
 - ▲  Chapter 8
 -  notes

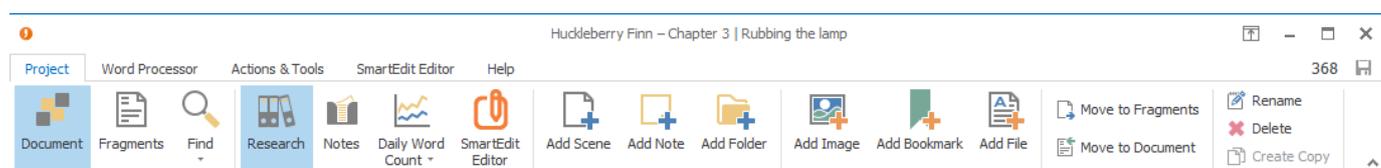
Huckleberry Finn

- ▲  Project Notes
 -  Todo: Today's work
 -  Brief story outline
 - ▶  Characters
- ▲  First Draft
 -  Introduction
 - ▲  Chapter 1
 -  Notes
 - ▲  Introducing Huck
 -  Consider adding
 -  Miss Watson
 - ▲  Chapter 2
 -  Notes
 - ▲  Tom Sawyer's Gang
 -  Improvement ideas for Tom
 -  Meeting Tom
 -  Little Tommy Barnes
 - ▲  Chapter 3
 -  Huck and Pap
 - ▲  Rubbing the lamp
 -  Thoughts on the lamp scene
 - ▲  Chapter 4
 -  Importance - reasons why
 - ▲  School
 -  Second draft ideas
 -  Judge Thatcher scene
 - ▶  Meeting Jim

It really is up to you. Don't let the SmartEdit Writer naming conventions of Folder, Scene and Note confuse you — YOU decide.

Speaking only for myself, I like to break down my work into a series of small scenes. One of the advantages of doing this is if I decide later that a particular 300 word scene should not happen in Chapter 7, where I originally wrote it, but in Chapter 12, I can easily drag it from the Chapter 7 folder and drop it into the Chapter 12 folder. Or I may decide that a scene I wrote a month ago should not be used at all, in which case I select it and click the **Move to Fragments** button, removing it from my Document Tree but maintaining it in Fragments in case I want to read or use it later.

Adding Folders, Scenes, and Notes is easy. You simply select the parent item in the tree and click the button on the toolbar to add a new scene, note or folder. Or right click on the tree and choose from the menu that appears. If you want to add a new item (folder, scene or note) to the top level of your novel, select the project name at the very top of the Document Tree and click an add button in just the same way.



When it comes to adding new items to the Document Tree, there are some limitations. You can add folders to other folders, and you can go as many levels deep as you wish. You can add scenes to folders and you can even add scenes to other scenes. Scenes cannot be added to notes. Speaking of notes, they can be attached or added to anything: to folders, to scenes, even to other notes.

Notes in a SmartEdit Writer project are everywhere. They are incredibly versatile and form a major component of the UI. If you choose not to use notes or to use them sparingly, you will miss out on one of SmartEdit Writer's key features.

Notes really come into their own for writers who are plotters and planners. If you're the sort of writer who sits down without knowing what you're going to write, you may not find notes that useful. But for the writer who plans out each scene in advance, notes are fantastic.

I've tried to make notes a fully integrated part of the user interface, so that when you are working on a scene, you can have the word processor open in the centre of the screen, your Document Tree to the left, and the notes for that scene open to the right. This way you can refer to the notes as you work without having to open different windows or interrupt your flow.

The Notes editor uses the same toolbar as the primary word processor, which means you can use the full range of word processor features such as bold, italic, lists, etc. within a note as you can within the word processor.

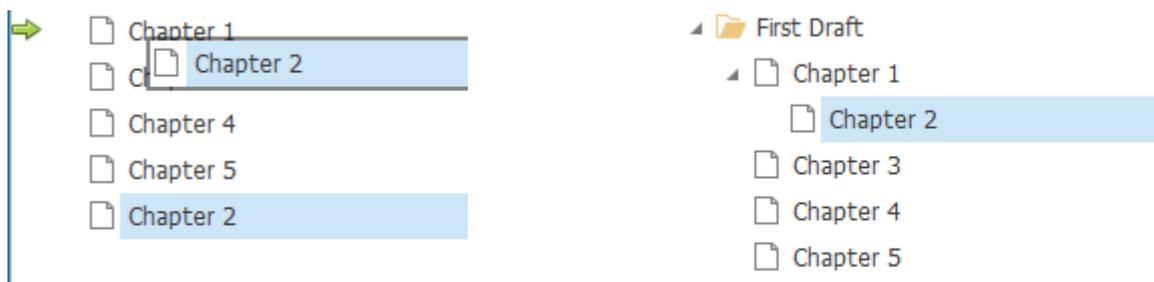
The more time you spend using the Document Tree — adding folders and scenes, creating notes, dragging and dropping items around — the sooner you'll get the hang of it. The key thing to remember is that you decide how your Document is structured. Every writer works differently. You should aim to bend the SmartEdit Writer project structure to meet your way of working rather than feel the need to change the way you work.

Dragging and Dropping

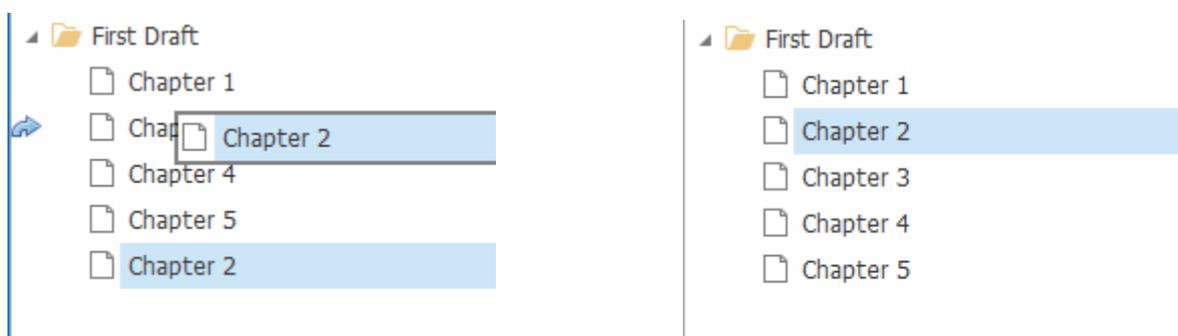
To move things around in the Document, Fragments and Research trees, you need to drag and drop. Positioning something so that it goes where you want it to go using drag and drop can be tricky at first, but once you get the hang of it, you'll find it to be straight forwards.

Once you begin to drag a scene or note, you'll notice a small icon appearing to the right of each item you drag over. In the example below, there's a green arrow just before I drop Chapter 2 on top of Chapter 1.

The green arrow means the item will be dropped inside the other item. In this case, this is not what I want to do, as I'm looking to drag Chapter 2 so that it is next to, and not inside Chapter 1.



If I try again, and move a little more slowly this time, a blue arrow will appear. This blue arrow means Chapter 2 is about to be dropped above Chapter 3, which is the outcome I'm looking for. Keep an eye on the arrows that appear as you move so that you achieve the desired outcome. It may take you a few attempts to get this right as you start out, but will quickly become second nature.



Fragments

Fragments are unique to SmartEdit Writer and are one of my favourite features. I built Fragments into the project because I needed somewhere to store my bits and pieces — scenes or notes about scenes that I no longer need or that I have chosen to exclude, a page of dialog that I penned weeks ago that has nowhere to sit in my novel, scenes involving a character that I've since gotten rid of.

Think of Fragments as a desk drawer for your current work in progress. You toss in things that might or might not be used later, or scenes or chapters that you know will not be used but that you don't want to toss in the bin.

Fragments are always there, a part of your project that you can come back to at any time, but NOT a part of your Document or novel. When the time comes to create a single document or manuscript at the end of the first or second draft stage, any Fragments will be left out.

The Fragments tree is accessible by clicking the Fragments button on the toolbar. It occupies the same space to the left of the word processor and works in the same way as the Document Tree. You can open any scenes or notes it contains, you can move them around by dragging and dropping, you can delete them if you choose. And you can create new folders, scenes and notes from scratch, right inside the Fragments tree.

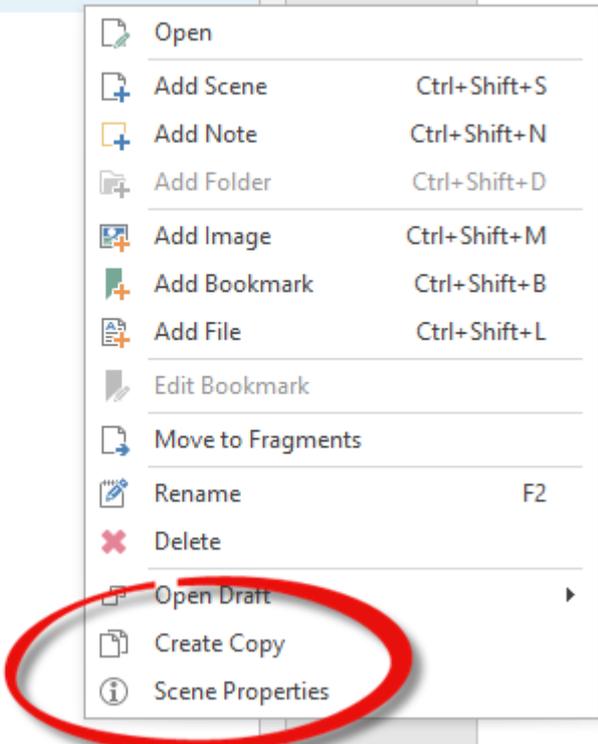
Fragments

- Abandoned scenes
 - Climbing the tree
 - Meeting Tom for the first time
 - The knife fight
- First attempts
 - Chapter 1
 - Scene 1 [old]
 - Scene 1 [third attempt]
 - Conclusion
- Notes
 - Ideas for the raft
 - Opening lines
 - The Marshal

You can move anything from the Document tree to the Fragments tree using the **Move to Fragments** button on the toolbar or from the right click menu. Moving something back from Fragments to your Document works in the same way, by selecting the item in the Fragments tree and choosing **Move to Document**. When you move something in this way it will be placed at the very bottom of the other tree.

By the time you reach the end of the third draft of your 80,000 word novel, you may find that your Fragments tree is larger than your Document tree.

Copying Scenes

- Section II
 - Chapter 8
 - Chapter 9
 - Chapter 10
 - Chapter 11
 - Chapter 12
 - Chapter 13
 - Chapter 14
 - Chapter 15
 - Chapter 16
 - Chapter 17
 - Section III
 - Chapter 18
 - Chapter 19
 - Chapter 20
 - Chapter 21
 - Chapter 22
 - Chapter 23
- 

As you work, you may want to make a copy of a scene before you make a large change, or before you start editing that scene for the day. Version 8 introduced a new “Create Copy” mechanism for scenes. This is accessible from the right click menu after you select a scene, and from the main Project toolbar.

Create Copy

- Section I
 - Chapter 1
 - Copy (06/04/2020)

Create Copy copies the selected scene as a sub-scene within itself. This way you can easily build up a list of old copies for a scene and you always know where they are. The copy has its own unique icon and is dated with the date the copy was made, making them easy to identify and

to work with. In most respects, a copy of a scene behaves in just the same way as every other scene.

You can move it around, edit it, delete it or even rename it. Where copied scenes differ is that when you export your document as a single Word document, copied scenes are excluded. They are also excluded from any checks run by the SmartEdit Editing functionality and from Document level and daily word count totals.

Scene Properties

Introduced in Version 9.

Scene Properties

Name: Introducing Huck

The first time we see Huck.

Description

Date Created: 29/07/2017
Date Modified: 29/07/2017
Word Count: 440
Character Count: 2,203

Exclude from Word Counts
 Exclude from Drafts
 Exclude from Single Document Export
 Exclude from Editor Checks
 Scene is Copy

Save Cancel

Meta data about each scene can be viewed, and in some cases changed, by opening the Scene Properties dialog from the the scene right click menu. This option is below the “Create Copy” menu.

The dialog displays the created and modified dates for the scene, an editable description of that scene, and a series of checkboxes that allow you to configure how that scene is treated during a range of actions.

You may wish to exclude certain scenes from certain actions. For example, you might have a scene that contains character or plot information, a scene that is a working To-Do list, or that contains some other text that should not be part of your final work. Choosing to exclude a scene like this from various actions would make sense.

Exclude from Word Counts

Choose whether or not the scene is included in daily word count and Document word count totals.

Exclude from Drafts

Do not include the scene when creating a full Document Draft.

Exclude from Single Document Export

Do not include the scene as part of any Document Export.

Exclude from Editor Checks

Do not include when running SmartEdit Editor checks at the Document or Folder level.

Scene is Copy

Copied scenes are automatically excluded from all of the above actions. You can remove or add the copy flag from a scene with this option.

Images, Bookmarks & Files

Up until version 6, images, files and bookmarks could only be added to the Research tree. While it is a good idea to keep all research in one place, many users (myself included) wanted the option to add a small selection of links or images directly into the Document tree.

Version 6 opened up these additional options to the Document and Fragments trees. Just as you add a scene, folder or note, you can now add an image, external file or bookmark.

The Research Tree

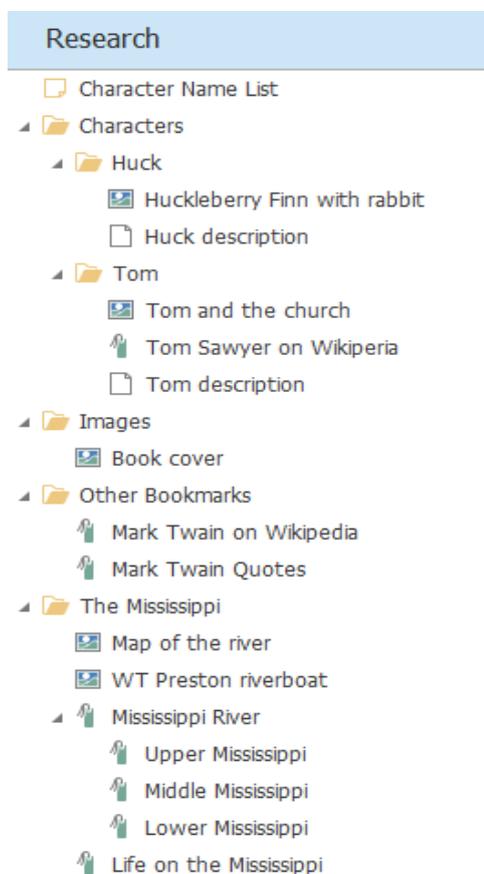
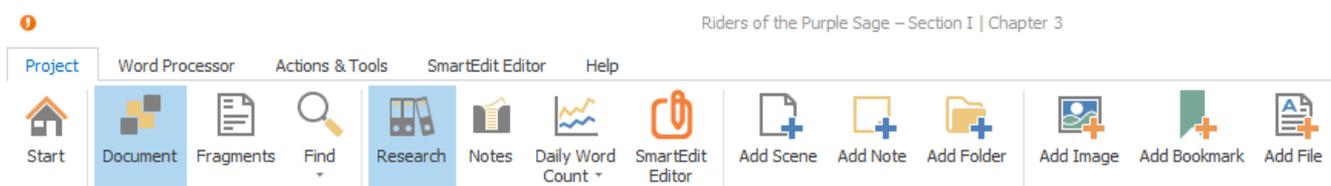
Collecting images, bookmarks and files in your project

Think of the Research tree as a stack of folders filled with bits and pieces that you collect over the course of a year or more, all relating to your novel. You may have begun collecting these bits and pieces months before you began writing, and continued collecting as your novel progressed. Of course, nowadays that physical folder taking up so much space on your desk is online; paper documents are files and PDFs; photographs are images or links to images on websites.

SmartEdit Writer allows you to group your work-in-progress and any research you've built up about it into a single project. In the same way that you add folders, scenes and notes to your Document tree, you add them to your Research tree. Inside the Research tree you can also add files, PDF documents, images, and bookmarks to websites and web pages.

And of course notes, always there are notes.

To open the Research tree select the Research button on the Project toolbar or use the F8 shortcut key. The tree will open to the left of the word processor, occupying the same space as the Document and Fragment trees.



When you create a new project in SmartEdit Writer four folders will be created inside the Research tree. They are Bookmarks, Characters, Images and Documents & Files. If you are opening a project created using version 1 of SmartEdit Writer you will have to add these or other folders yourself. The four default folders are a guide only. You can rename them, drag and drop them to different locations, delete them or add new folders that better suit your requirements.

Add Image — Ctrl+Shift+M

Clicking the Add Image button, or choosing the same option from the tree's right click menu, opens a standard File Open dialog. From here you can select any number of image files to import from your PC into your project. Each image will appear in the tree under the selected item and will have the same name as their original file. After import, you may decide to rename some of the images by using the standard tree rename option (F2 shortcut).

Double clicking an image file in the tree will open that image in your default image viewer — this will vary depending on which software you have installed on your PC. In my case it's IrfanView.

Once added, image files are copied into the project folder. The originals remain where they are.

Add Bookmark — Ctrl+Shift+B

A bookmark is a link to a web page. Bookmarks can be attached to anything in the Research tree — to folders, scenes, files, notes, even other bookmarks. They are a handy way of storing quick links to webpages that have a bearing on your project. They can be links to Wikipedia pages, to online galleries, to books on Amazon, to Facebook pages, to forum posts, to anything online.

SmartEdit Writer does not copy any contents from web pages you bookmark. It simply maintains the web addresses and opens that page in your default web browser when you double click the bookmark in the tree.

The sample project shown above contains bookmarks to different pages on Wikipedia.

Add File — Ctrl+Shift+L

Adding a file works in the very same way as adding an image. The only difference is the icon that appears inside the Research tree after you import. Where possible, the imported file will show an icon common to its file type. If you choose any Word or other text documents to import they will be converted into scenes as part of the import process and can be edited inside SmartEdit Writer.

As with images the files you add are copied into the project, which means the originals remain untouched.

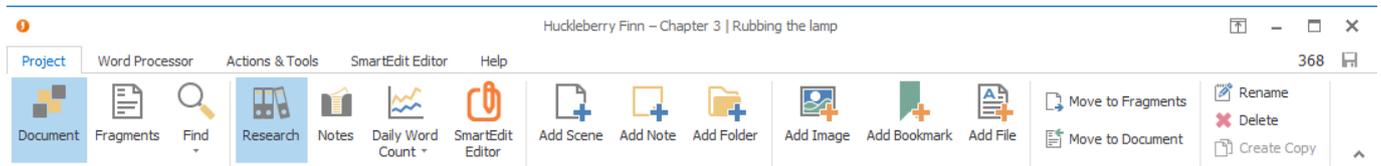
External files imported into your SmartEdit Writer project can be quite large, so they are not backed up when you click the backup button or as part of Automatic Backups. Single images taken with a digital camera could easily be 10 megabytes in size, and video files could be over a gigabyte in size. Allowing these files into your daily backups would fill up your hard drive or Cloud storage folder in a few weeks. You can read more about how to make a backup of your Research files [here](#).

Menus and Toolbars

– An Overview

There are five toolbars in SmartEdit Writer, each focusing on a particular area of the app. Depending on what you're doing a particular toolbar may automatically open. Each toolbar is shown below with a brief description of what its buttons do. Fuller explanations of many of the features mentioned can be found in other Knowledge Base topics.

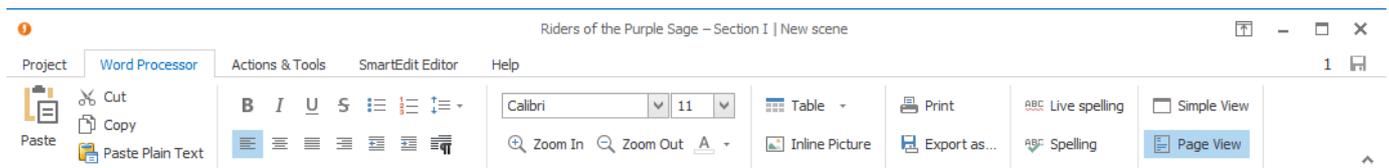
Project



The Project toolbar is where you navigate around your project and add new items to that project. You can open the Start page, choose whether the Document or research trees are visible in the left and right sections, and open the Notes, Daily Word Count and SmartEdit sections.

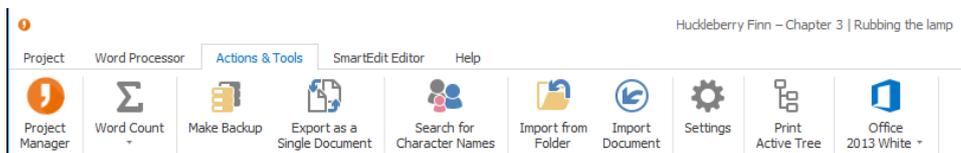
There are also buttons to add new scenes, notes, folders, bookmarks and images to any of the active trees, and to move items between your Document and Fragment trees.

Word Processor



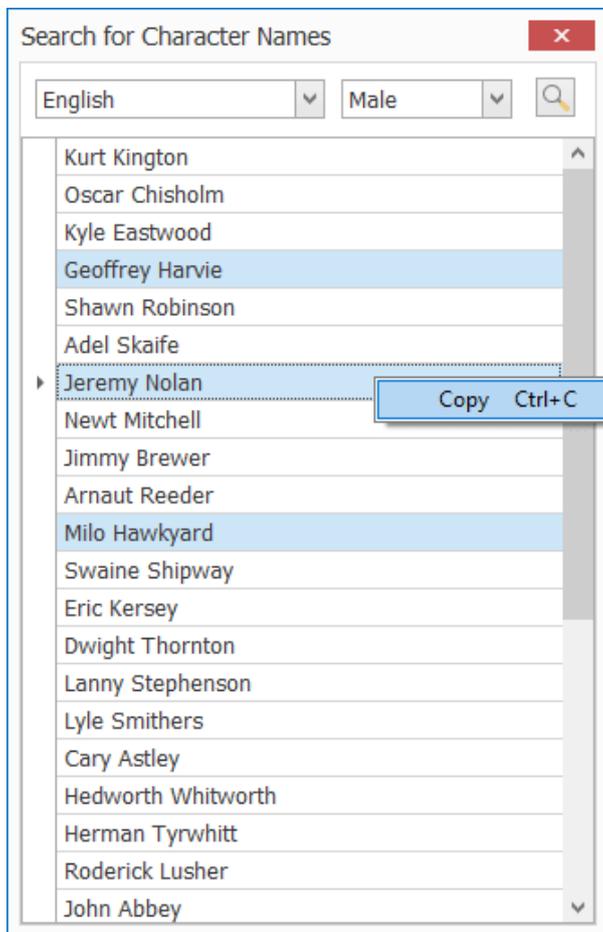
The Word Processor toolbar contains all the available word processing options such as text and paragraph formatting, copy and pasting options, as well as table and image creating and inserting. All the options on this toolbar relate to the currently open and active note or scene. You can print a scene, export that scene out of SmartEdit Writer as a Word document, run a spell check and change the page layout.

Actions & Tools



The Actions & Tools toolbar contains a wide selection of stand-alone options. You can open the Project Manager, run the various word count options on a scene or on your entire document, make an external backup and export all of your scenes as a single Word document.

The last button on the toolbar shows you the currently active theme (skin). In the above screenshot it's "Office 2013 White." A wide selection of themes are available for you to choose from, in varying colors and styles, including many Dark themes. The default theme when you open SmartEdit Writer for the first time is "Office 2013 White" and the default Dark theme used by previous versions is "Office 2016 Black."

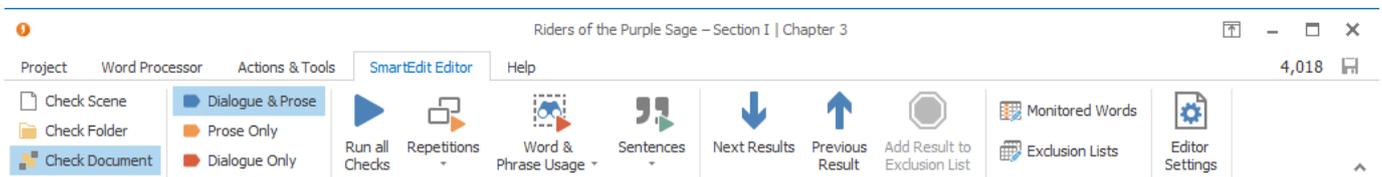


A new feature accessible from this toolbar is the “Search for Character Name” button which opens a dialog listing a host of names from many different countries. From this dialog you can choose a country and a gender, and browse through the many auto-generated names to find one that suits a character you are working on.

A right click menu exists that allows you to copy any selected names, after which you can paste them into a scene or note.

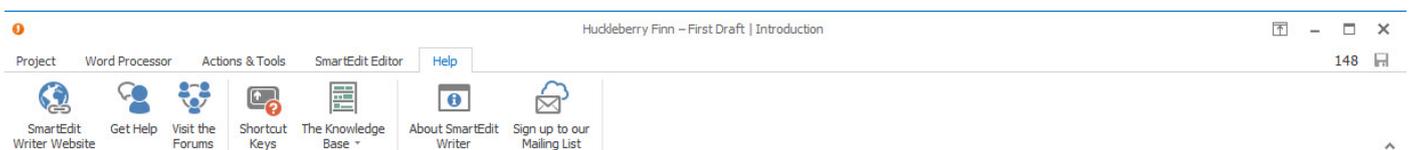
Further buttons on the Actions & Tools toolbar allow you to import a Word document or a folder of documents into your project, to open the project Settings dialog and to go to the Share page on the SmartEdit website where you can share links to SmartEdit on social media.

SmartEdit Editor



The SmartEdit Editor toolbar contains all the novel editing functionality of SmartEdit Writer. From here you can run checks for word and phrase repetition on your current scene or on your entire Document. You can run adverb or proper noun checks on all the dialogue in your novel or only on your prose and you can navigate around the various results and update the Editor settings and exclusion lists.

Help

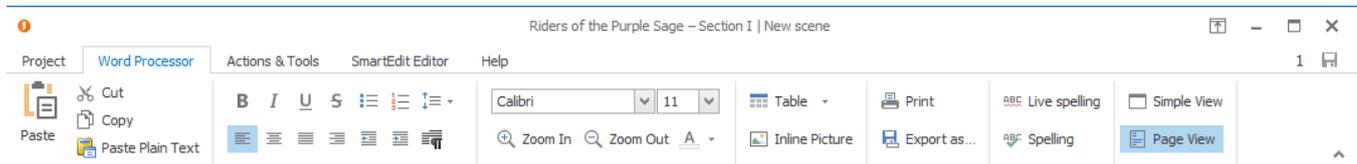


The Help toolbar provides links to all of the SmartEdit resources online. This includes the website, the support forum and direct links to each section in the online Knowledge Base. You can also open the About Dialog and check for updates, and sign up to the SmartEdit mailing list — very important if you want to be kept informed of changes and new SmartEdit releases.

The Word Processor

The Word Processor in SmartEdit Writer has all of the basic and mid-level features that you would expect from a word processor such as Microsoft Word. Many of these features are accessible only via shortcut keys — the same shortcuts as Word. They do not all appear on the toolbar.

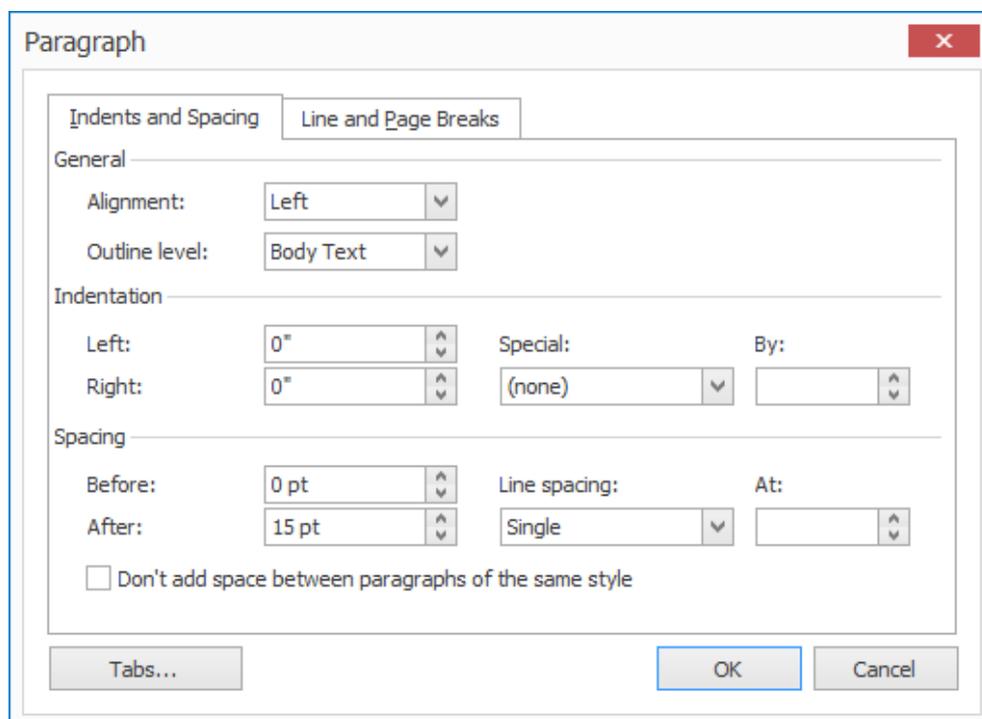
What I tried to do with the word processor design is to limit the visible options to only the basics, all of which have a button on the main Word Processor toolbar. From here you can adjust the fonts, change text formatting to bold or italic, indent paragraphs, adjust line spacing — basic, everyday functionality that all users might use at one point or another. Icons for these buttons should all be familiar to you.



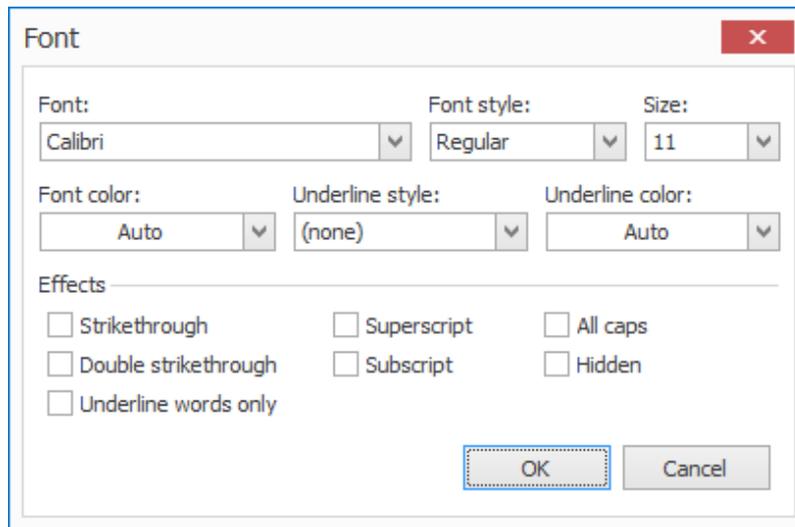
More advanced word processing features such as multi-level lists, advanced table designs and headers and footers are not available. The word processor has been designed with creative writers in mind. Features mentioned above are rarely, if ever, used by fiction writers, at least in the initial draft stage.

While it's true that a polished manuscript that you are sending to a publisher might need headers and page numbers, unusual formatting, and even the ability to track changes, SmartEdit Writer does not contain any of these. When you reach the polishing and formatting stage, you need to look to a more suitable tool such as Word.

So what does the SmartEdit Writer word processor allow? Text justification, underlining, simple bullet and numbered lists, font and colour changes, copy and paste — with a Paste Special option so that you can paste without any formatting — simple tables and image insertion, as well as full paragraph spacing options, accessible from the paragraph button on the toolbar and the right click Paragraph option.

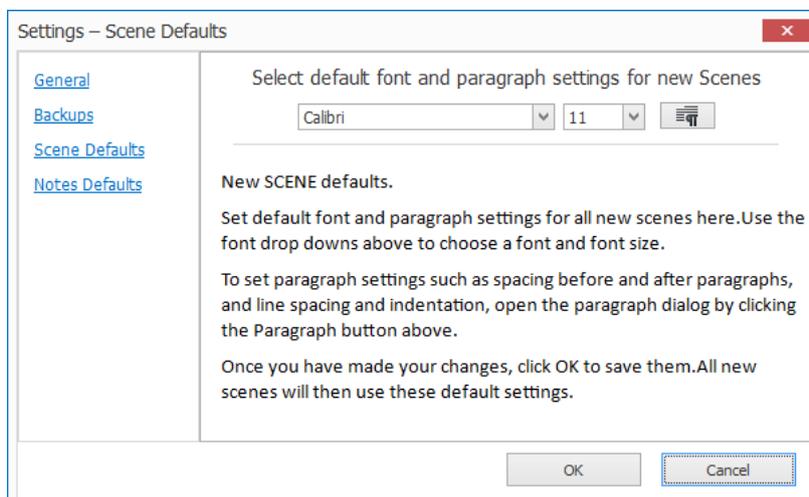
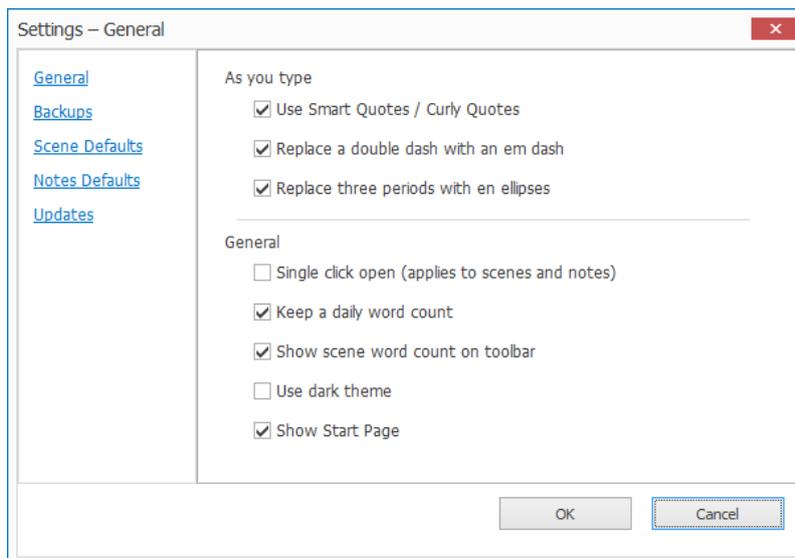


You'll also find a dialog containing the full range of Font options by using the Ctrl+D shortcut, and a Find and Replace dialog, accessible from the toolbar buttons and the commonly used Ctrl+F shortcut.



You can Zoom in and out, making the word processor larger to suit your needs or screen resolution without adjusting the font size. The zoom feature is universal and applies to all open scenes and notes in the project. It is maintained after you close and re-open a project, allowing you to set up a working environment that fully meets your working style and requirements.

A number of options relating to the word processor are accessible on the Settings dialog (Actions & Tools toolbar). From here, you can set default font and paragraph settings for all new scenes and notes, as well as switch smart quotes and em dashes off or on.



A full spell checker exists for the English language and its regional variations. I go into that in detail in the next topic, but for the time being, be aware that the live spell checker (the red underline), can be switched on or off from the “Live Spelling” button on the word processor toolbar.

If you’re looking for an option in the word processor that you can’t find, don’t forget to try the shortcut keys that you might have used previously in your old word processor. There’s a good chance the feature is there, simply not accessible from the toolbar.

Word is a great word processor, but it’s overly complicated for creative writing, especially in the early stages. The multitude of options available can be a distraction for the writer at a time when getting words down on paper is what’s important. I’ve tried to eliminate this by cutting down on visible options, and showing only the basic, commonly used functionality on a single toolbar.

The Spell Checker and Associated Features

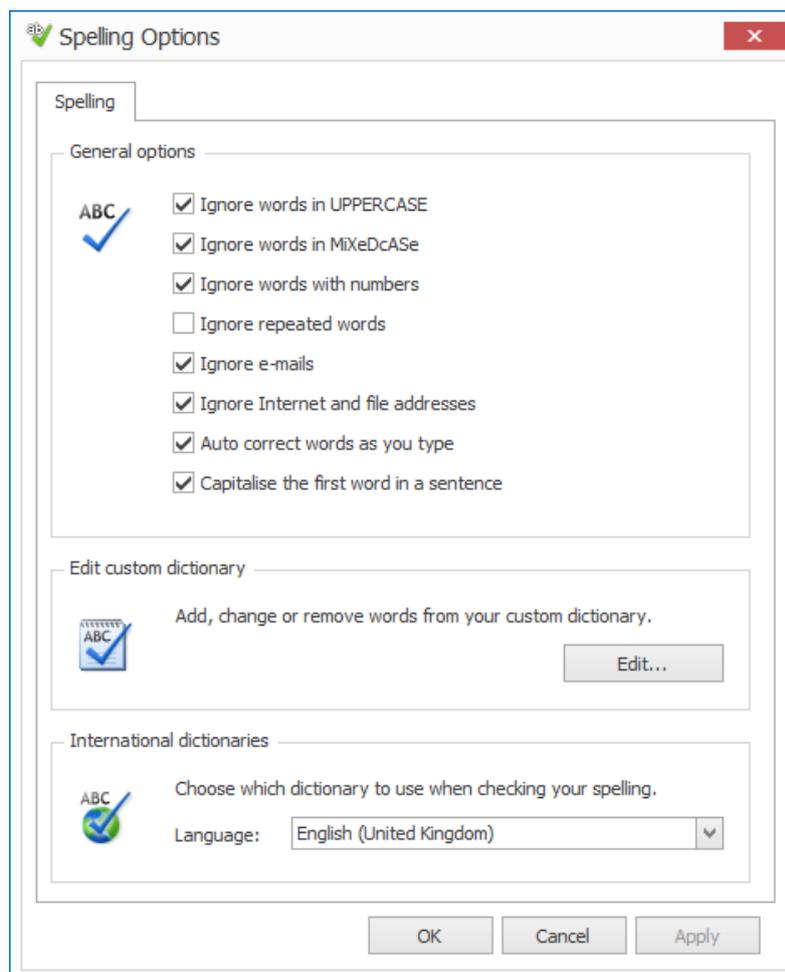
Spell checking is a must-have feature for all word processors, and even though I prefer to do my first draft writing with the live spell checker switched off, I still felt it was a requirement for version 1 of SmartEdit Writer. Not all writers share my distaste with correcting spelling as you type.

The first time you open the sample “Huckleberry Finn” project, the live spell checker (red underline) will be switched on, but only for English language users. If your regional settings are set to any non-English language, the spell checker is off by default, as we have not yet incorporated non-English dictionaries.

English language dictionaries are included for all the common spelling variations of English: American, UK and Ireland, Canada, Australia and South Africa. A Spanish dictionary is also included. Which dictionary your version of SmartEdit Writer uses is determined by the Windows settings on your PC, but you can override this by changing the dictionary from the Spelling Options dialog, discussed below.

As with Microsoft Word, a custom dictionary exists that you can add words to as you work so that they are not marked as misspelled. The first time SmartEdit Writer is opened it will copy your Microsoft Word custom dictionary if it can find one, so that any words you had already whitelisted in Word will be whitelisted in SmartEdit Writer as well.

An autocorrect feature is built in and switched on by default. You will be familiar with this from Word and other word processors. It’s the underlying functionality that converts typos as you type, correcting “teh” to “the” and such. Similarly, there is an auto function that capitalises the first word in each new sentence as you type. These and other options can be changed or switched off by opening the Spelling Options dialog, accessible from the main Spelling dialog.



There is no thesaurus in SmartEdit Writer. I might add one down the road at some point, or I may decide to connect the software to an existing online thesaurus. I've never been sold on built-in thesauruses in word processors, preferring to use online variations where possible, so don't hold your breath on this particular feature being added any time soon. I've always viewed the built-in thesauruses as a complex feature that few writers use — a bit like the built in sat-navs in cars that look outdated from day one, unable to compete with the slicker smartphone apps that change every few months.

Writers writing in languages other than English may find the absence of spell checking dictionaries in their language to be a deterrence. I do plan to add new languages to SmartEdit Writer, but slowly, over time.

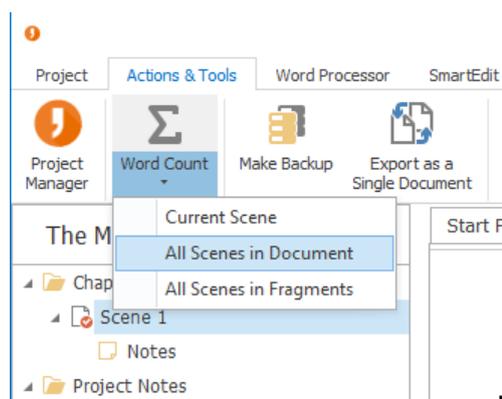
Your Daily Word Count

Keep a daily word count.

There are writers who keep track of how much they write each day and there are writers who don't. For some, a daily word count is a measure of success and achievement; a sign that progress — however slow — is being made. Starting in version 3, SmartEdit Writer keeps track of the daily word count for your project.

With version 5 we introduced SmartEdit Writer's online charts — set monthly word count targets and share your progress in a graphical display on Facebook or Twitter.

A range of Word Count options exists on the Actions & Tools menu.



At a basic level, you can quickly call up a word count for the scene you're working on, or for every scene in your Document or Fragments. If your project is structured in such a way that all scenes that will be in your novel are sitting somewhere in your Document tree, then choosing "All Scenes in Document" from the Word Count drop down will give you an accurate word count for your novel-in-progress. Notes are excluded, as are scenes in your Fragments or Research trees.

Sitting next to the Word Count button is "Daily Word Count." This opens a new section to the right of the word processor — the same section where you normally see your notes. Clicking this button on or off will switch the daily word count list on or off.

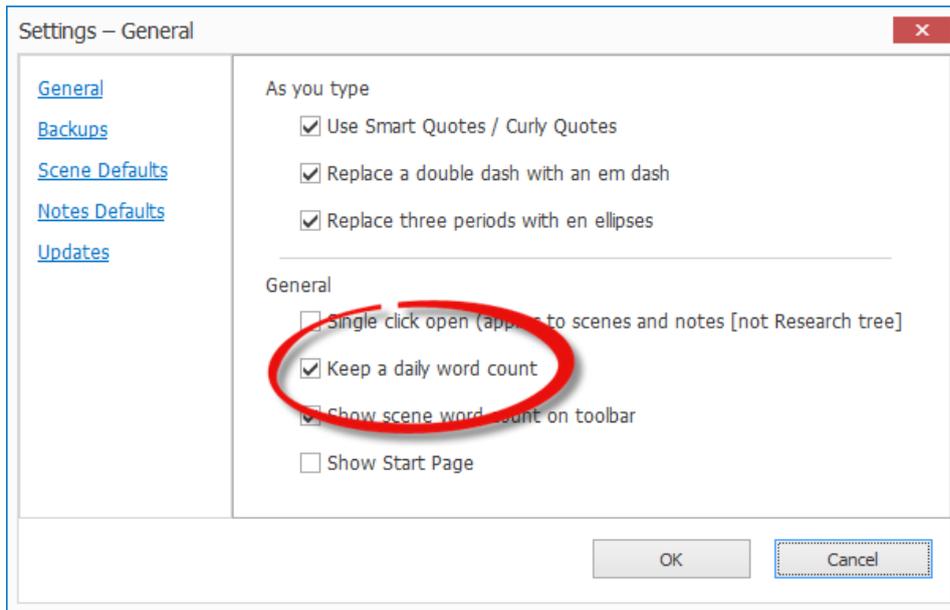
Date	Word Count
25/09/2018	834
24/09/2018	410
23/09/2018	903
22/09/2018	1,242
21/09/2018	891
20/09/2018	605
19/09/2018	645
18/09/2018	792
17/09/2018	1,228
16/09/2018	1,644
15/09/2018	1,130
14/09/2018	356
13/09/2018	0
12/09/2018	511
11/09/2018	804
10/09/2018	1,223
09/09/2018	1,562
08/09/2018	1,302
07/09/2018	1,109
06/09/2018	333
05/09/2018	1,000
04/09/2018	360
03/09/2018	646
02/09/2018	1,354
01/09/2018	1,031
31/08/2018	900
30/08/2018	8,965
Total: 31,780	

Word count totals are saved for that day when you close a project — or just before midnight if you're burning the midnight oil. The first time you open a project in Version 3 of SmartEdit Writer no word count total will be set so the list will be empty. You can force a word count to be taken by clicking the "Refresh word count" button above the list. The example below is taken from the Riders of the Purple Sage project.

Each day you open a project, a word count total is set for your Document and Fragment trees. A daily count is calculated based on the total for today less the total for yesterday. If today's work consists of deleting 1,000 words and writing 500 more, your count for that day will be 0.

The drop down above the list lets you choose which total you wish to see: Document, Fragments, or Document & Fragments. You may have written a number of scenes last week that you later moved to Fragments. Allowing for fragment totals to be included means that even if you later decide to exclude a scene from your finished novel, work done on those scenes still counts towards daily totals. Project totals are at the very bottom of the list.

If you're one of those writers who is repulsed by the very thought of storing daily word count information — I'm sure there are many of you out there — you can switch this feature off by unchecking the "Keep a daily word count" option on the Settings dialog (see next page).



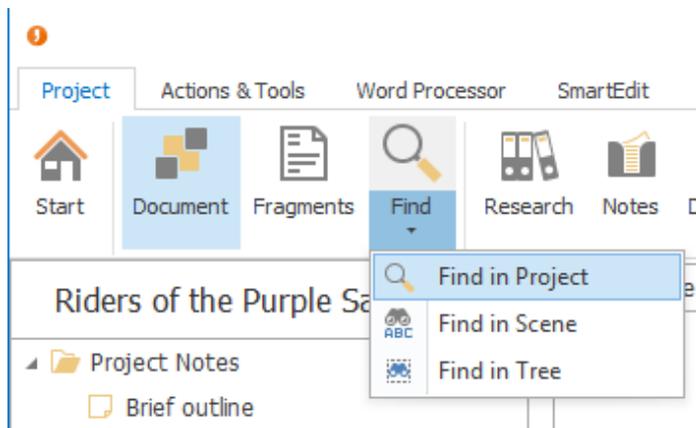
Searching

Finding something in your project

A SmartEdit Writer project is *not a single document*. This is a point that I repeat a quite lot throughout this Knowledge Base and reiterate in blog posts on a regular basis. Your SmartEdit Writer project is a collection of small documents and files, all bound together by a simple database. Finding something in your project is not as simple as running a basic Find operation in another word processor, but once you understand the three different types of search, you'll find it to be fast and easy to understand.

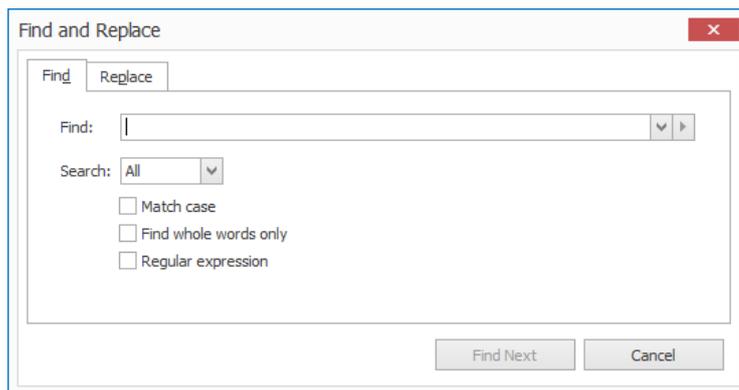
What can you search for?

You can search for a word or phrase and you can search for an item (scene, note, image, bookmark or file) by name. You can search inside the currently open and active scene or note, you can search across all scenes and notes, and you can search by name inside the currently active tree (Document, Fragments or Research tree).



To choose a search type, click the drop down under the Find button on the main toolbar and choose from the three options.

Searching inside the current scene or note



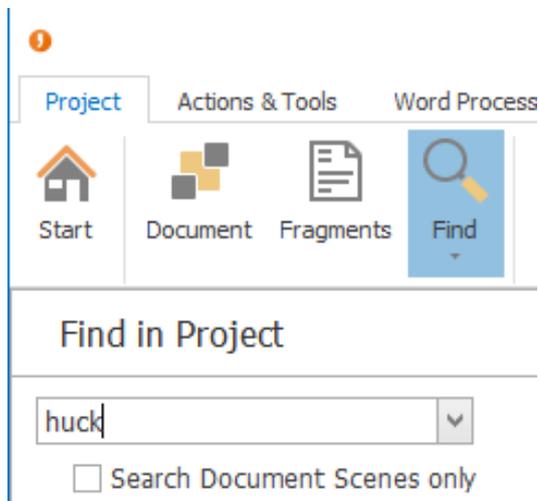
This opens a standard and easily recognisable Find dialog where you can enter the text you are looking for and choose from a limited range of searching options. Only the currently active scene or note is searched.

This operation looks and behaves similar to Find operations in other word processors, and is similar to the Microsoft Word Find in older versions of the software.

The F3 shortcut key will allow you to jump to successive instances of the word or phrase you're searching for.

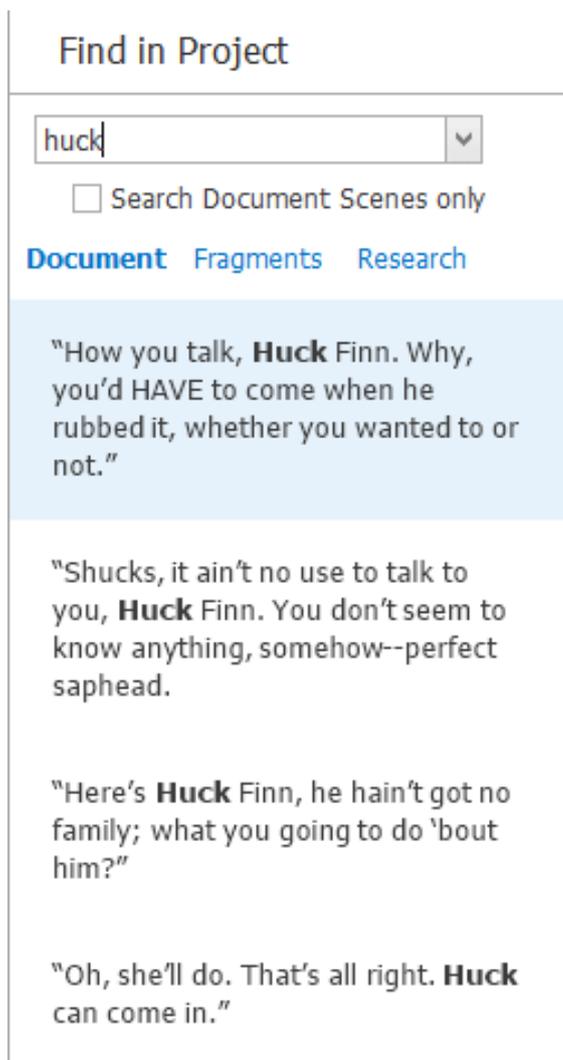
Searching across your entire project

The global search was introduced in version 2 and combines some of the functionality common in recent versions of Word with some extra bits and pieces. It is accessible from the main Find button and from the Ctrl+Shift+F shortcut keys. A new section will open to the left of the word processor replacing whichever tree was previously open.



It looks basic, displaying a simple textbox and a single checkbox. To get started type your word or phrase into the textbox and hit the enter (return key). The search will begin immediately and you should start seeing results as soon as they are found.

Unlike the more basic Find discussed previously, the project level find opens every scene and note in your project — regardless of which section it might be in — and searches for each occurrence of the specified word or phrase. It then displays a result list that comprises the paragraph containing the search phrase, with the phrase highlighted in bold.



The screenshot on the left shows the results after searching for "Huck" in the sample Huckleberry Finn project. Selecting any one result will immediately open that scene or note and jump to the first occurrence of the search phrase in that paragraph.

At the top of the results list are three links: Document, Fragments and Research. Clicking any one of these will change the results list to show only those results from a particular section of your project. The default section is the Document tree, as these are the results most commonly sought.

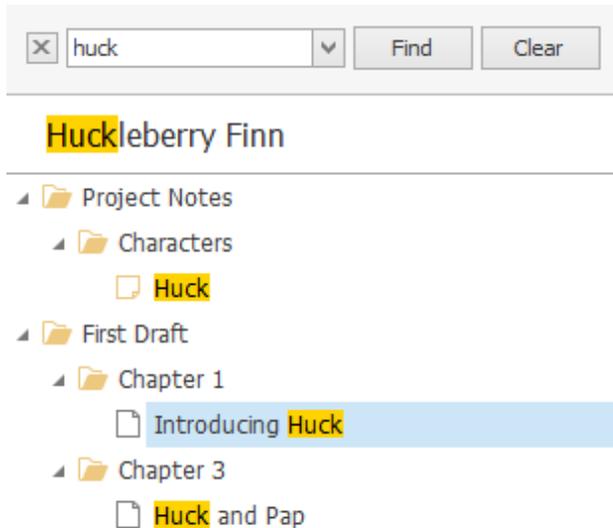
What if you don't want to search inside everything in your project? You may only wish to look inside your Document scenes, as these are the scenes that form part of your final manuscript. To only look inside these scenes, check the "Search Document Scenes only" checkbox and re-run the search.

The project search results list is structured in such a way that you can see the context of each result before deciding to open the scene or not. If you are looking for a particular instance of the search phrase, a quick eyeball of the results list is usually sufficient to locate the single instance you're looking for, at which point you can click on the result, open that scene and make whatever changes you need to make.

Searching by item name

What if you're not looking for a word or phrase within a scene? What if you're looking for a scene somewhere on your Document tree that you named "huck ...?" As your project grows you may find that you have hundreds of scenes, notes and folders in your project, many with similar names.

From the Find button drop down, select Find in Tree. This will open a search box at the very top of the active tree (Document, Fragments or Research). The Ctrl+F shortcut keys will also work as long as the tree is currently selected. All you have to do is begin typing and the tree will be filtered based on the characters you type in. For example, typing "Huck" into the search box for the Document tree in the Huckleberry Finn project will give three results as shown below, inside their parent folders for context.



You may need to open any closed folders if you can't see the item, and you can close the results tree and return to the full Document, Fragments or Research tree by clicking the Close button next to the search box.

These three different types of search cover all of your project and allow you to quickly find anything you're looking for, either by word or phrase, or by name.

Automatic Backups and Automatic Saving

Every writer has a horror story about losing their work. In some cases it's a full novel lost when their only Word document goes up in smoke, in others it's a less traumatic but still significant loss of a day's work when something goes wrong with their PC.

SmartEdit Writer has a number of features built in to lessen the impact of these sorts of occurrences. While I couldn't do anything about a complete hard drive implosion, I could add a few carefully built processes to make it less likely that you will lose any work through human error or forgetfulness, and to mitigate the effects of any software or even hardware issues that might occur.

Firstly, all of your work in a SmartEdit Writer project is saved as you work. When you add a scene, move a folder around, rename something — saving happens there and then. When you write a paragraph or chapter, write a note, edit your work — saving happens within a minute of that change. You never have to click a save button as you do in Word. This is all automated and outside your control.

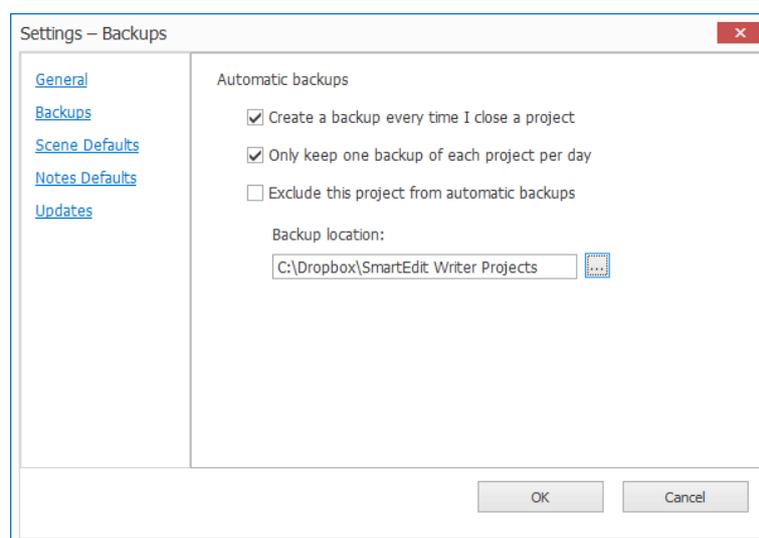
Some users like the save button in Word. They like to have control over when a save action occurs. This is often born from a mistrust of the software. They do this because something happened one time 10 years ago and they no longer trust the software to do its job. You need to trust SmartEdit Writer to save your work for you.

At the top right of the main SmartEdit Writer window you'll find a small save icon tucked away under the close button. When this is blue, it means the word processor has not yet saved its most recent changes. When it's greyed out, those changes have been saved. If you have any trust issues with SmartEdit Writer, keep an eye on this icon and you'll see it change from blue to grey as a save occurs.



You can — if you really, really want to — force the issue by clicking the little icon when it's blue, but this is not necessary. When you close a scene or note in your project, it saves any changes. When you close a project, all outstanding changes are saved.

At the project level, an automatic backup feature exists that saves all editable files in your project to a zip file every time you close that project. But this only happens once you have configured automatic backups. To do this, open the Settings dialog from the Actions & Tools menu and click on Automatic Backups.



Check the box marked “Create a backup every time I close a project”, click the browse button and select the folder or location you want to save that backup to. In the example above I have set my backup location to “C:\Dropbox\SmartEdit Writer Projects”, a folder that I created inside my Dropbox folder.

Setting the automatic backup location to a cloud storage folder is a great idea as it ensures that even after a complete hard drive crash your projects will have been backed up to the cloud. If you do choose a cloud folder, as I have done here, you need to ensure that your cloud storage is backing itself up with frequency, and that you have an Internet connection up and running to allow this. SmartEdit Writer will save a zip file backup to the location you specify, but it's up to your cloud storage provider to carry out any automated syncing with the cloud.

There are two further options available to you when configuring automatic backups. Selecting the “Only keep one backup of each project per day” checkbox will ensure that only a single backup remains in your backup folder at the end of the day for each project. While a backup is taken each time you close the project, that day's backup will be overwritten each time. If you open and close your projects a lot, this will ensure that you don't have an abundance of backups clogging up your backups folder.

The final option, “Exclude this project from automatic backups” is a project specific setting. You may wish to have automatic backups switched on for most projects, but not for all projects — older, archived projects for example, where you no longer make changes but only open them to read or research old material.

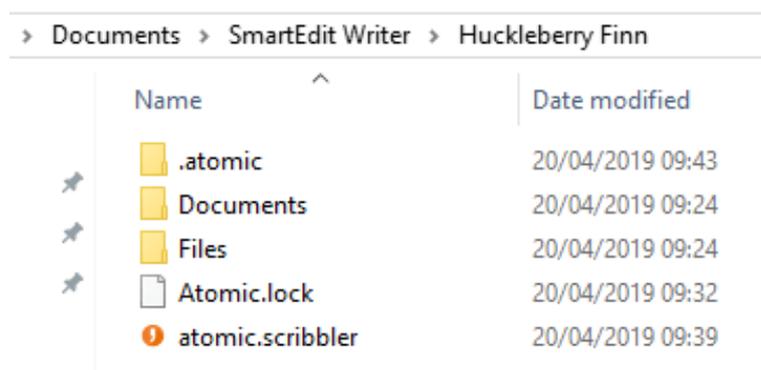
When you set up the automatic backup folder, it makes a backup every time you close a project. This means that if you haven't opened a project in a month, the last backup will be a month ago. It's a good idea to open and close each project once after you first set up the backup location, as this will force a backup in each case.

Backups contain the name of the folder that contains your project as well as a timestamp for the date of the backup. In the case of a project called “Harry Potter”, a backup will be created called “harry-potter-2017-10-06”, because the [backup] day is the 6th of October, 2017.

To extract a project from a backup, you should open the zip file (a double click will usually do this), extract the contents to a new folder, then double click the atomic.scribbler file inside the new folder.

Note: Files and images added to the Research tree are not backed up as part of the backup process. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, these files can be very large. Your Research tree may contain multiple image files as well as videos or other large files. It's quite possible for the size of your Research files to reach hundreds of megabytes. Backing up this content every time you close a project would quickly fill up your hard drive or cloud storage limit. Secondly, none of these files are created or edited inside SmartEdit Writer.

A backup will contain all the names and positions of these entries in the Research tree, as well as full information on bookmarks, but it will not contain any actual Research files.



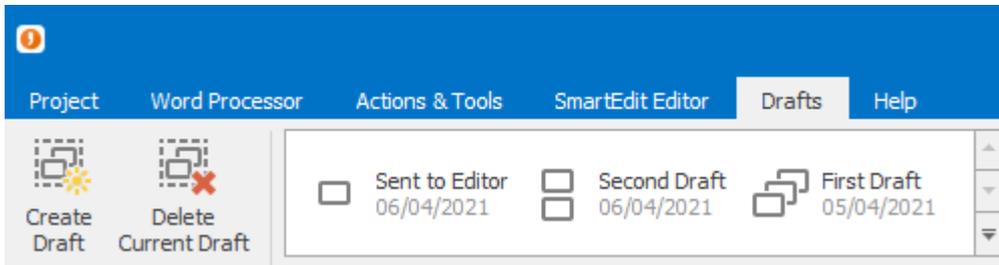
If you wish to back up the Research files, you can do so by copying the “Files” folder inside the SmartEdit Writer project folder, shown on the left.

If you're new to SmartEdit Writer, the first thing you should do is set up Automatic backups as outlined above.

Version 7 of SmartEdit Writer introduced a second automated backup feature called Fail-Safe backups. You can read more about Fail-Safe backups and how they can be used to recover lost work in [this blog post](#).

Document Drafts

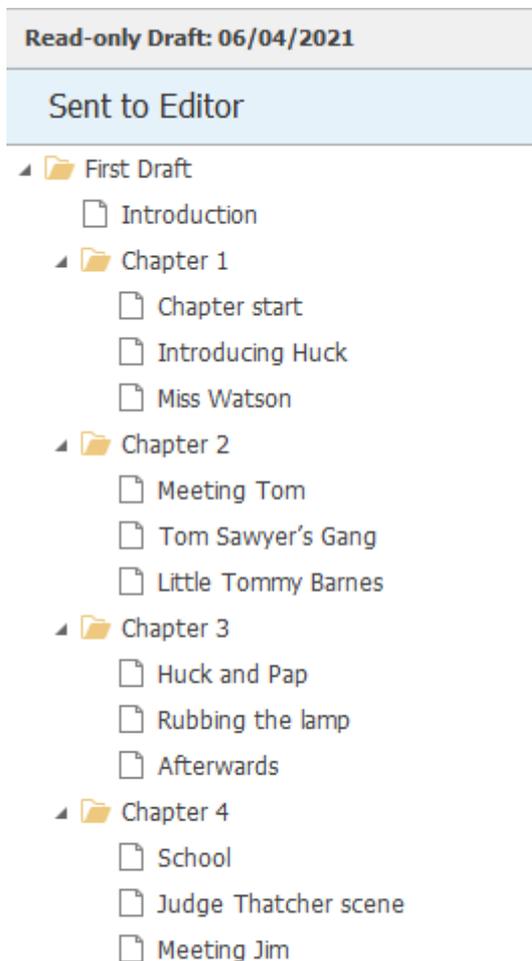
A Document Draft is a full read-only copy of your working Document from the time you made the draft. It contains a copy of your Document tree and a copy of every scene in your Document. It's never changed, never deleted and never affected by any work you do after the draft is made.



Creating a Draft is a great way to take a copy of your Document at a particular moment in time. After you complete a first draft and before you begin editing. Before you send a copy to your editor. Or before you make large changes.

To create a Draft, open the Drafts toolbar and click the “Create Draft” button. Give the Draft a memorable or significant name. A date is automatically added to the draft, so you don't need to include a date in the name.

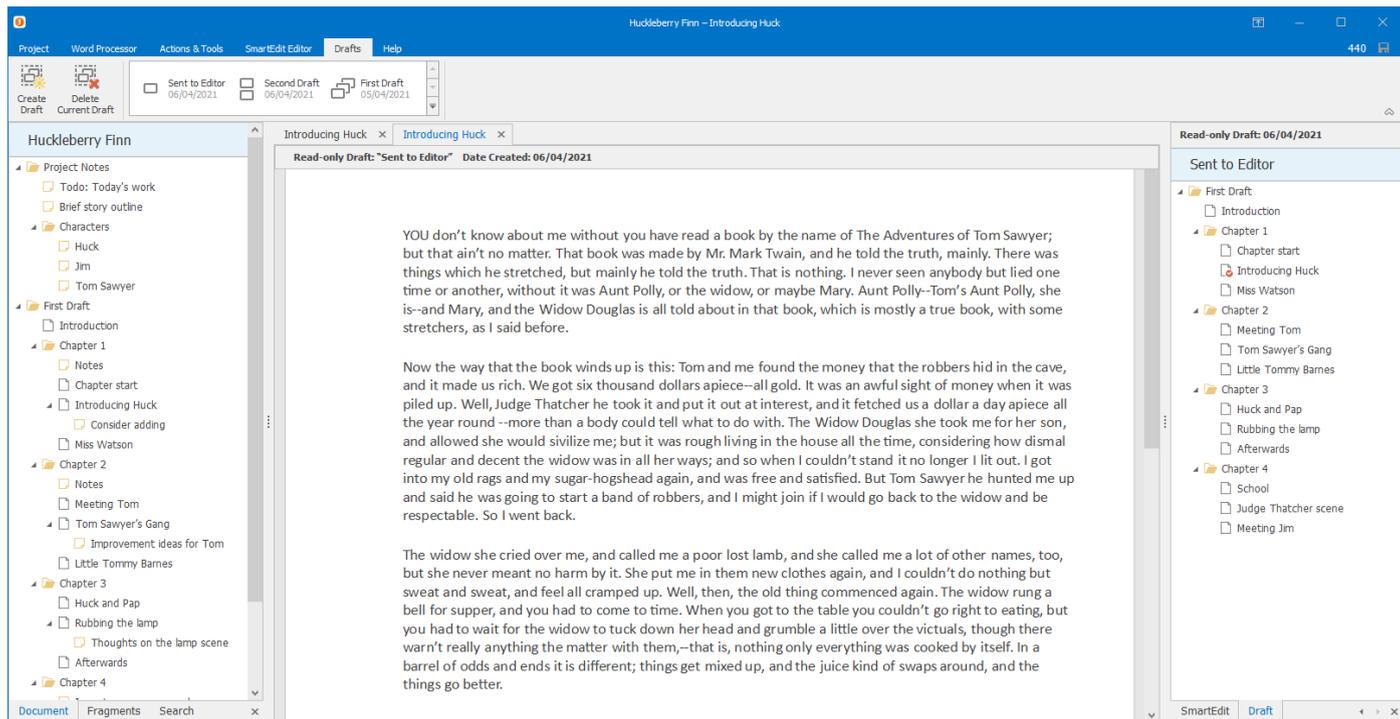
A new Draft tree will open to the right of the word processor.



As you can see from the screenshots on the left and on the next page, only scenes and folders that contain scenes are included in the Draft. Notes, files, bookmarks and empty folders are not included in the draft.

Scenes that are stored in Fragments or in the Research tree are not included. Neither are scenes where you have checked the “Exclude from Drafts” option in the scene's properties.

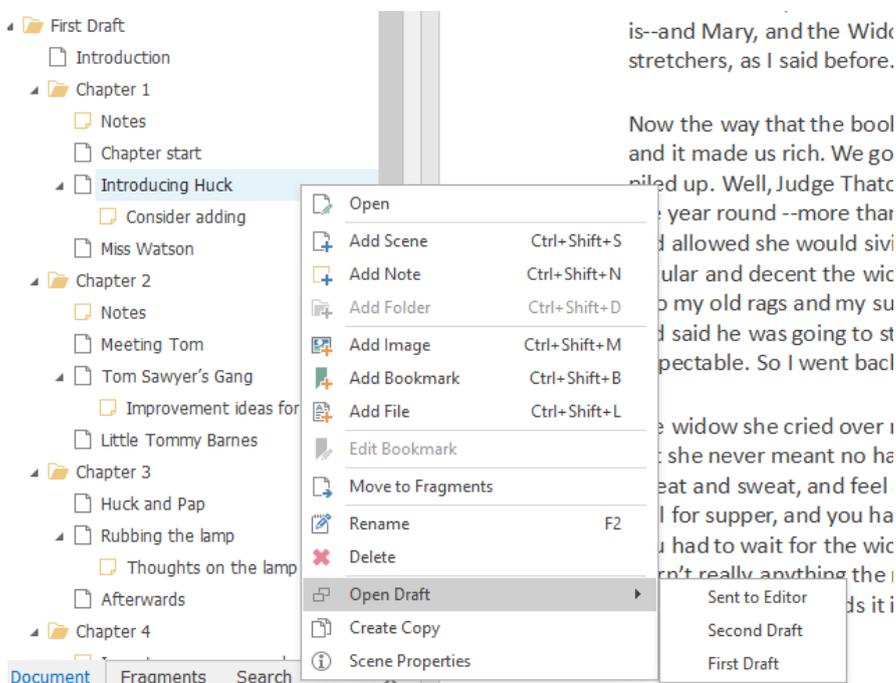
Again, a Draft is a frozen copy of your working Document. It's NOT a copy of your project.



Clicking any scene in the Draft will open that scene in a read-only word processor. You can tell when you're looking at a draft of a scene as it shows the Draft name in a banner at the top of the word processor.

Viewing Drafts for a Particular Scene

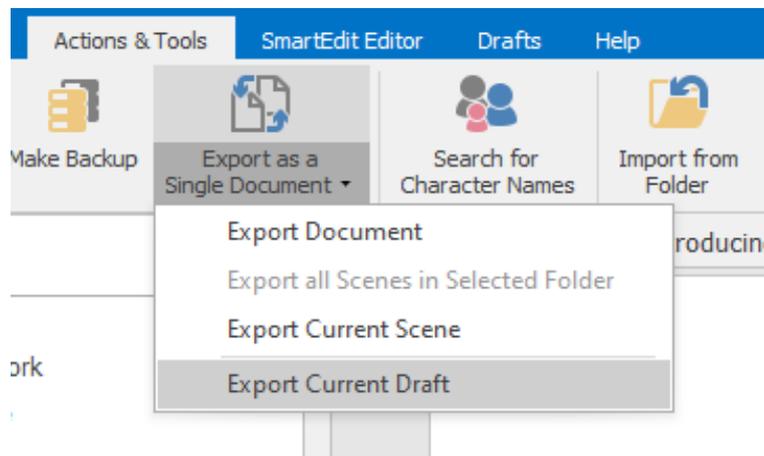
An "Open Draft" menu exists for each scene in your Document. This is populated with the names of any drafts that exist for that scene. In the example above, the "Introducing Huck" scene has three drafts that can be easily opened: "Sent to Editor," "Second Draft" and "First Draft."



If you delete a scene, that scene will still exist in the Draft tree, but the connection back to the original scene in the Document will be lost.

Exporting a Draft

You can export a Draft as a single document in the very same way as exporting your Document. Once you have a Draft open, click on the “Export as a Single Document” menu button and choose “Export Current Draft.”

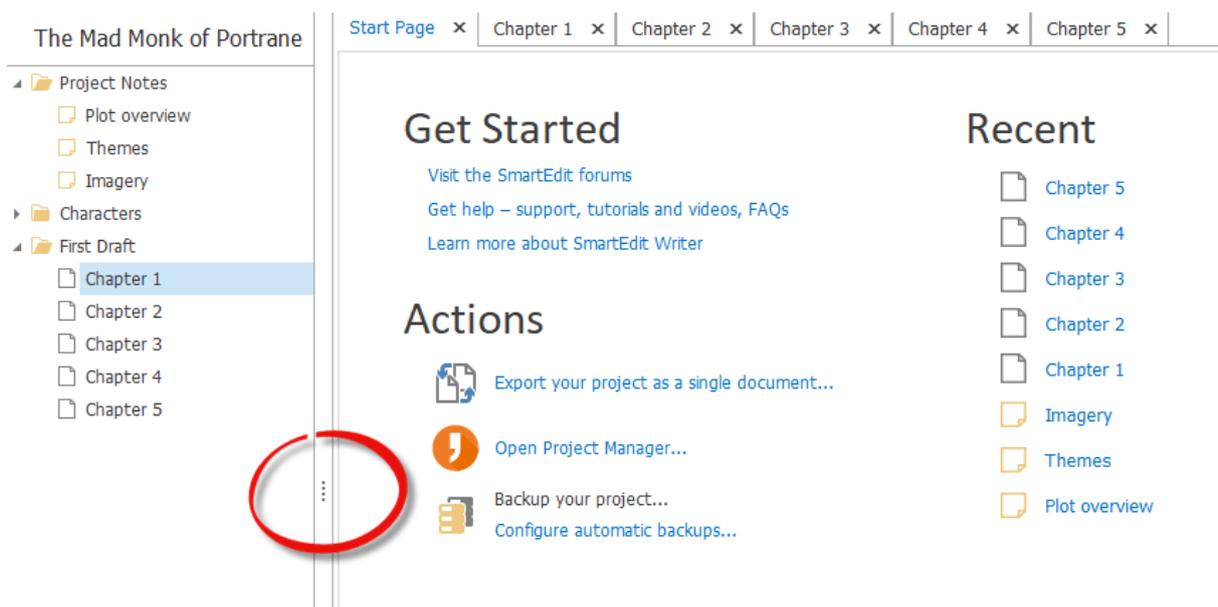


This is a great way of taking a single Word document copy of your work from various stages of completion and comparing them document to document.

Customising the User Interface

The user interface of SmartEdit Writer has been set up in a particular way. Chapters, scenes and notes are stored on the left, the main tabbed word processor sits in the middle, and research and notes open to the right (along with your daily word counts). This basic structure will be maintained as we add new features to the software over the coming year.

On the Word Processor toolbar, there are options to Zoom in or out, enlarging the word processor or making it smaller. There is also an ability to widen the Document Tree and the Notes section by dragging the separator to the left or right. These are project wide settings. Changes to any of these settings will be maintained when you close and re-open a project. You should spend a little time configuring your look and feel, and be confident that SmartEdit Writer will adopt these changes every time it opens that project.



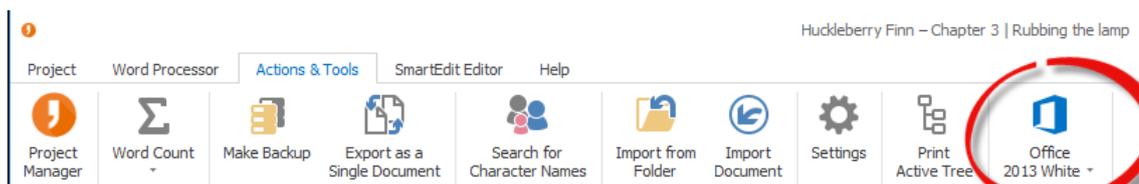
At the top right of the SmartEdit Writer window, next to the minimise button, there is a fourth button that opens a drop down menu. The options available in this drop down are:

“Auto-hide Ribbon”, “Show Tabs”, and “Show Tabs and Commands”.

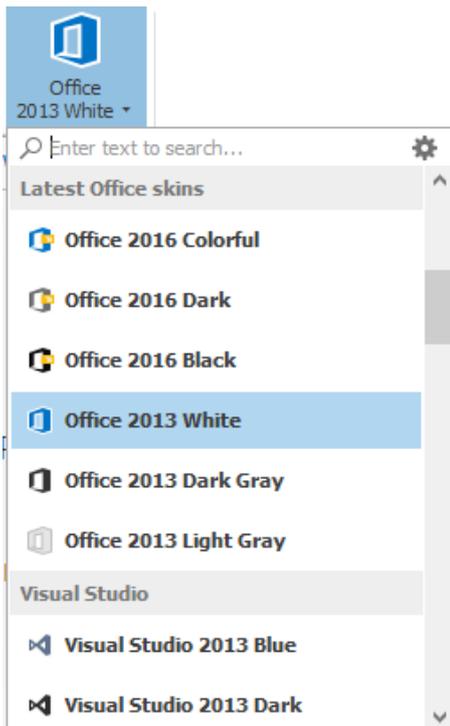


Selecting from these options along with closing the right and left sections gives a close approximation of full screen writing. This is an area we will probably add to in the future.

A range of different themes are available for you to use, from standard Office White and Dark themes, to more unusual themes. They can be accessed from the Actions & Tools menu.



The default theme when you open SmartEdit Writer for the first time is "Office 2013 White" and the default Dark theme used by previous versions is "Office 2016 Black."



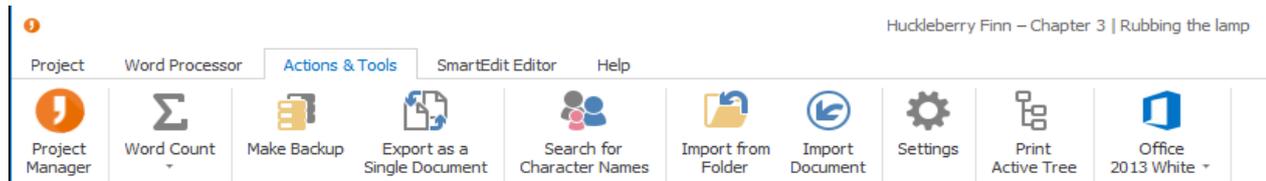
If you do choose to use a dark theme, you'll need to be careful about copying and pasting from Word documents or websites into a scene. In these cases you should use the "Paste Special" option on the toolbar and select "Unformatted Text" from the options available.

If you paste formatted text into a dark themed page, you'll end up with different colored fonts, as formatted text carries font color information of its own into your scene. This is a limitation that every word processor with dark themes faces, and it's the price you pay for that dark background.

Importing Word documents

A new SmartEdit Writer project contains a couple of folders and sample scenes — nothing more. If you're new to SmartEdit Writer, chances are you will have been working on existing projects using some other software such as Microsoft Word. The quickest way to get to work on your existing project in SmartEdit Writer is to import those documents.

There are two import options available to all users from the Actions & Tools menu — “Import Document” and “Import from Folder.” The first allows you to import a single document, the second imports an entire folder of documents. A third import option is available only to users who have PageFour installed on the same PC as SmartEdit Writer. More on that at the end of this topic.



The document import is not restricted to Word documents. Document types that can be imported are docx (Microsoft Word), odt (Open Office), rtf and txt (universal formats used by various software), and doc (the old Microsoft Word format from way back).

To import one document, select the Import Document button and browse to the document you wish to import. When a document is imported, a copy is made of the original. This copy is taken into the SmartEdit Writer project and inserted at the top level. It will appear in your Document tree as the final scene in that tree. You can then double click on it to open it, drag and drop to move it around, etc.

The document is not broken down in any way. If your starting point is a 20,000 word document then the new scene with the same name will contain all 20,000 words. It's up to you to break down that document into smaller scenes by copying and pasting into new scenes, creating folders and such.

Importing Folders of Documents

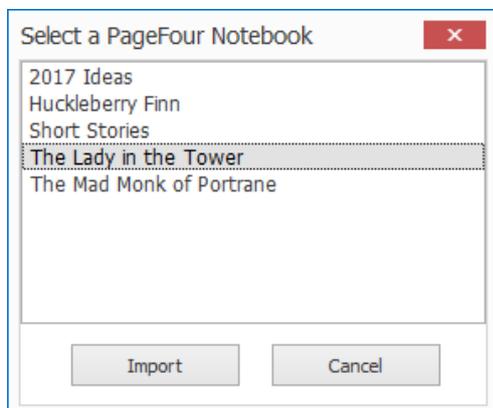
If you have a number of documents you wish to import, select the “Import from Folder” button. This will prompt you to browse to the folder you wish to import. Once you select a folder, a dialog will pop up listing all the folders and documents that are being imported from your source folder. Any documents that are among the permitted types mentioned above will be imported. Any folders found inside the source folder will be created inside your SmartEdit Writer project, and any documents they contain will be imported. There is no limit to the number of documents that can be imported into a project.

Documents inside the source folder that cannot be imported will show a red X beside them in the dialog. Documents that are successfully imported will show a green tick. Once the import process is complete, a message will pop up advising you. You should then close the dialog, after which your Document Tree will be refreshed with all the newly imported documents.

As with importing a single document, your original documents and folders are left untouched — copies are made as they are brought into the SmartEdit Writer project. Each Windows folder is now a folder in your project and each document is now a scene. The order in which the folders and scenes appear is the order in which they were read from your source folder. You may wish to drag and drop them around in order to structure your Document Tree better, or to break down some large scenes into smaller ones using copy and paste.

Importing PageFour Notebooks

I mentioned earlier that an “Import PageFour Notebooks” button will appear for any user that has PageFour installed on their PC. This is to allow you to import entire PageFour Notebooks easily. To use this option, click the button of the same name. A dialog will pop up with a list of all PageFour Notebooks on your PC. Select the Notebook you wish to import and click the Import button.

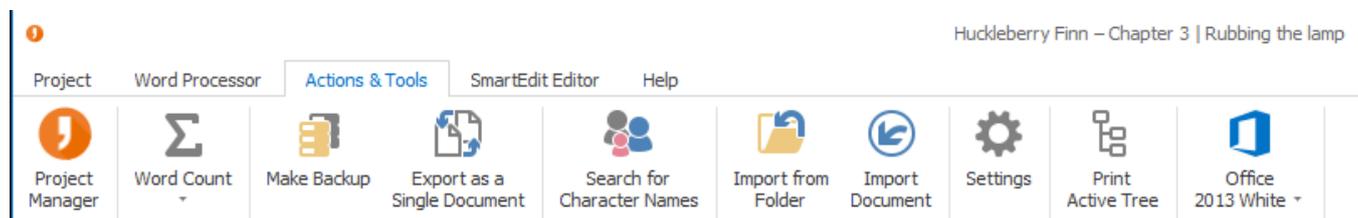


From this point on the process follows that of the folder import process outlined above. All of your PageFour folders and pages will be imported into the SmartEdit Writer project. Each page will become a scene.

Any pages that you had password protected will not be imported, as SmartEdit Writer has no mechanism for opening password protected files.

Exporting Your Finished Novel to a Word Document

The file format used by SmartEdit Writer is docx, which is the Microsoft Word document format. Each scene you write is saved to its own small Word document. But individual scenes are of no use to you when the time comes to send your finished manuscript to an editor, publisher or beta reader. You need a single Word document.



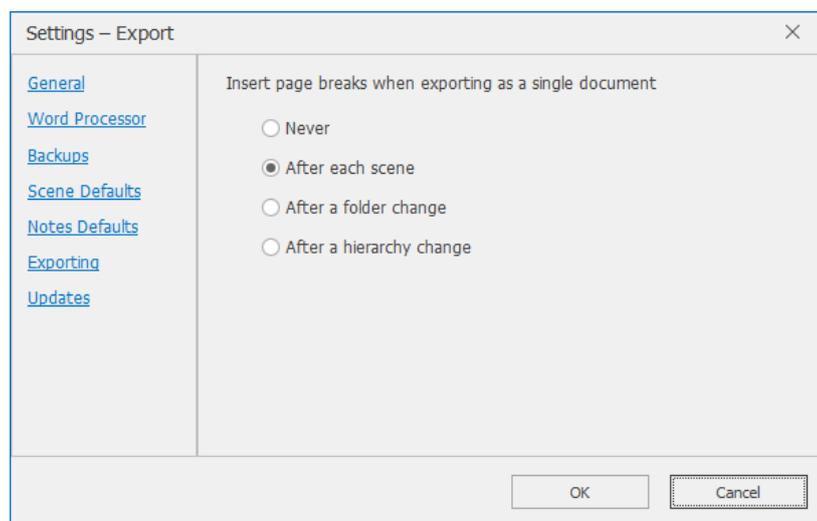
Compiling all of your scenes into one document in SmartEdit Writer is easy. All you have to do is click on the “Export as a Single Document” button on the Actions & Tools menu and choose a document name and location. A single Word document is immediately created.

How is this document produced?

SmartEdit Writer goes through your Document Tree from top to bottom and adds each scene it finds, in order, to a new document. This new document is then saved to the file and location you specified. Folder names are ignored and notes are ignored. Only scenes are added to the new document, and they are always added in the order they appear in the Document Tree.

Before you export your work, take a look at your Document Tree and ensure that the order of the scenes is correct and that no scenes are in the tree that you do not want to appear in your exported document. If something is in the wrong order — Chapter 8 before Chapter 7 for example — use drag and drop to move them around so that they are in the right place. If a scene you no longer want to include in your Document is in the tree, right click on it and Move it to Fragments. Anything in your Fragment tree is ignored when you export as a single document.

Page breaks can be inserted automatically at different locations depending on which options you have pre-configured. On the Settings dialog, click on **Exporting** and choose one of the four options.



Never

No page breaks will be inserted

After each scene

A page break is inserted after each scene. This is ideal if you typically write one chapter per scene.

After a folder change

If you structure your project such that you have one folder per chapter, and each scene inside that folder belongs to that chapter, choose this option.

After a hierarchy change

You may have your project structured such that there are multiple levels of folders and scenes within scenes. In this case, a page break each time the level of the scene changes might be more appropriate.

Working on multiple PCs

SmartEdit Writer works best if you are working on a single PC. It's not cloud based software that syncs to a third party cloud provider such as Dropbox. It's not a web solution that runs in your browser like Google Docs. It's not a single document editor such as Microsoft Word, where all you have to do to work on multiple devices is copy or share that single document.

If multi-PC or multi-device use is one of your must haves for writing software, then do not choose SmartEdit Writer. Pick a web solution with a yearly charge, or a single document solution such as Word, or a package that offers built in syncing with one or more cloud solutions such as Dropbox.

Having said that, you can copy and share SmartEdit Writer projects, and it's not that difficult. But... if you're non-technical in nature, don't know what a file is, don't know what Windows explorer is, then you will find it difficult to copy those projects, as SmartEdit Writer projects are not single files like Microsoft Word documents, and there is no simple "Save as..." menu to allow you to copy a project.

If the above describes you, you should content yourself with working on your project on a single PC, or choose one of the alternative offerings for writing such as Google Docs that come with multi device use built in.

SmartEdit Writer projects can contain may hundreds or even thousands of small files, all sitting inside a single project folder, and all connected by a small project database. This project folder is your project. Single files inside that folder cannot be accessed without the surrounding project. The default location for your projects is your "Documents/SmartEdit Writer" folder. For any project you create, a new folder will be created here, or in another destination you choose.

How you should NEVER open a SmartEdit Writer Project

Never create a SmartEdit Writer project inside a cloud folder such as Dropbox. If you do this, and if you then open your project on more than one PC before Dropbox has correctly finished syncing, you will corrupt your project and you will risk losing work as a result. Do not do this.

Never open the same project twice at the same time. There are built in measures to prevent you doing this, but you should be aware that any workarounds you might try to enable this will result in problems.

How you should work on SmartEdit Writer projects on more than one PC

Option 1. Create your project on a shared drive such as a USB stick, a plug in drive or a network drive. In this way, when you finish working on your project on one PC, you can shut down SmartEdit Writer, remove the USB device and plug it into a second PC. If you use this method, ensure that SmartEdit Writer is closed before removing the USB device, otherwise final changes might not be saved.

Option 2. Click the Backup button on the Actions & Tools menu and backup your current project to a zip file. You can then copy this zip file to another PC, email it and open it on another PC, or share it via a cloud folder. When you then open the ZIP file on the other PC, you should extract it to an empty folder and then double click the atomic.scribbler file inside the project folder to open the project. NEVER overwrite an existing folder, as doing so runs the risk of mixing two SmartEdit Writer projects and causing corruption.

Copying all of your SmartEdit Writer Projects from one PC to Another

As mentioned earlier, the default location of your SmartEdit Writer projects is your "Documents/SmartEdit Writer" folder. If you wish to move all of your projects to another PC, you should start by copying the contents of this folder from the first PC to the second.

If you had created or copied projects to a different location on your PC, you should locate these projects and copy the entire folders to the next PC. For example, a project called "Huck Finn" that you created in a "C:\Writing" folder will exist inside a folder called "C:\Writing\Huck Finn". To copy this project you must copy the "Huck Finn" folder in its entirety.

As we can be forgetful about things such as where we chose to save a particular project to, you should always save SmartEdit Writer projects to their default location of "Documents/SmartEdit Writer" unless you are saving to a plug in drive. This way, you always know where the projects are.

To summarise the above, SmartEdit Writer works best if you work on a project on a single PC. If you must work on a project on more than one PC, ensure you have the Windows knowledge to be able to copy folders and files, otherwise refrain from doing so, and maybe look at different solution than SmartEdit Writer to meet your writing needs. Finally, never, under any circumstances, create or open a SmartEdit Writer project from within a cloud folder.

What is SmartEdit Editor?

SmartEdit Editor helps you edit your novel. While SmartEdit Writer is very new software — first released in late 2017 — Editor has existed as a Microsoft Word Add-In for many years. In 2018 we built an Add-In for SmartEdit Writer containing the same functionality as the Word version.

What does SmartEdit Editor do?

It runs a series of checks on your entire document and highlights areas that you might want to look at. Unlike other editing software it does not make suggestions for improvement or tell you what to change. The assumption is that the writer is the creative force behind the work and that the writer makes all decisions about what to change.

SmartEdit Editor presents its findings to you in a simple list to the right of the word processor, complete with the sentence in which the result was found for context. If you choose to make a change, all you have to do is double click the result and the scene will be opened and the sentence highlighted for you so you can begin work.

What exactly does SmartEdit Editor help with and identify:

- Word and phrase repetition
- All adverbs used in your work
- Words and phrases that you choose to highlight, such as common typos or characters you might want to keep an eye on
- Redundancies such as “he fell down” as opposed to falling up
- Misused words and homonyms in your document such as “new” and “knew”, “less than” and “fewer than” which can occur through typos or through misunderstanding the word
- Clichés
- All dialogue tags used — a great way to see any unusual tags that you’ve been using
- Every proper noun — useful to keep track of names and to ensure that old names that you’ve changed aren’t lingering somewhere in chapter 22
- All acronyms — handy for spotting inconsistencies such as FBI and F.B.I.
- It highlights all use of what I call risqué words and phrases - those words that you know will probably offend someone. Which is not to say you should be changing them, but it can be a great help if you want to remove profanity from a character’s dialogue if you change that character and how they speak
- Words and phrases used to begin sentences. Are you starting a host of sentences with “And then...”
- Shows you all your extra-long sentences. The Zane Grey sample novel we use for illustration has one sentence with 92 words.
- A host of punctuation types are highlighted, such as semi-colons and colons, EM and EN dashes, multiple periods, inconsistent spaces, exclamation marks and much more.

You can run these checks as a whole on your entire document or individually against a single scene. It all depends on how you work and how you prefer to edit.

The screenshot on the next page shows the Adverb results for *Riders of the Purple Sage*. Bear in mind that this is a published novel from a well-known author. Try running a first-draft through SmartEdit Editor and see what it finds.

The screenshot shows the SmartEdit Editor interface for a manuscript titled "Riders of the Purple Sage - Section III | Chapter 18". The main window displays a text document with several instances of the adverb "suddenly" highlighted in blue. The right-hand panel, titled "Adverbs results", provides a summary of these findings.

Count	Adverb
184	only
53	suddenly
48	presently
44	slowly
27	swiftly
26	perfectly
22	forever

Below the table, the results panel shows three examples of the highlighted text:

- That silence **suddenly** broke to the scrape and crash of Oldring's chair as he rose; and then, while he passed, a great gloomy figure, again the thronged room stilled in silence yet deeper.
- She had reached out for him when **suddenly**, as she saw him closely, something checked her, and as quickly all her joy fled, and with it her color, leaving her pale and trembling.
- He saw them flare in amaze, in gladness, with love, then **suddenly** strain in terrible effort of will.

The main text window shows the following excerpt with "suddenly" highlighted:

He saw Oldring's magnificent eyes, inquisitive, searching, softening. He saw them flare in amaze, in gladness, with love, then suddenly strain in terrible effort of will. He heard Oldring whisper and saw him sway like a log and fall. Then a million bellowing, thundering voices—gunshots of conscience, thunderbolts of remorse—dinned horribly in his ears. He had killed

That's all there is to it. You browse the results, you take action on those result or not. But remember, SmartEdit Editor is highlighting things for you to look it, it's not telling you to make a change or telling you that something is wrong. Write your first-draft and when it comes time to edit, that's when SmartEdit Editor comes in to play.

Running SmartEdit Editor for the First Time

Editor is an editing tool for creative writers that sits inside SmartEdit Writer. It helps you as you edit your novel or short story by drawing your attention to words, phrases or sentences in your document that you might want to re-visit. It does not instruct you. It does not tell you to change something. It does not offer alternatives or suggestions.



Cast your eye over these buttons but do not dig too deeply just yet. I'll go through them all over the course of this post. For now, ensure you have an open project that contains some content—preferably fiction—select the “Check Document” button on the toolbar if it's not already selected and click the Repetitions button.

Repeated words results

Count	Word
87	might
87	knew
87	after
85	can't
85	strange
85	hands
84	low

The **strange** glow, the austere light which radiated from Tull's face, might have been a holy joy at the spiritual conception of exalted duty.

"A **strange** rider."

It was a bountiful supper and a **strange** company.

"Hush! Talk to me no more of mercy or religion—after to-day. To-day this **strange** coming of Lassiter left me still a man, and now I'll die a man!... Give me my guns."

"Yes. How **strange** of him to know of her! And she lived here ten years and has been dead two. Bern, what do you know of Lassiter? Tell me what he has done—why you spoke of him to Tull—threatening to become another Lassiter yourself?"

"Well, it'd be no news to me. I know Mormons. I've seen their women's **strange** love en' patience en' sacrifice an' silence en' whet I call madness for their idea of God. An' over against that I've seen the tricks of men. They work hand in hand, all together, an' in the dark. No man can hold out against them, unless he takes to packin' guns. For Mormons are slow to kill. That's the only good I ever seen in their religion. Veners, take this from me, these Mormons ain't just right in their minds. Else could a Mormon marry one woman when he already has a wife, an' call it duty?"

After a few seconds the results for the first of the two check you've just run — Repeated Words — will appear. In the example on the left — and throughout this website — we're showing results for Zane Grey's novel *Riders of the Purple Sage*. You may not have any interest in westerns, but we needed a full length novel that was in the public domain and was not written in the Victorian style.

At the top is a list of words with a count next to them. This is a complete list of every word in every scene of your Document tree, alongside the number of occurrences.

Click on any one row in this list and the section below will be populated by every sentence that contains that particular word. In the example above, I selected the 85 instances of **strange**.

Straight away, with no waiting, I can see every use of that word in my document, with the word **strange** highlighted in bold.

The purpose of this expanded sentence section is to show you the context of your use of the word, allowing you to decide if you need to make a change or not without even entering your Document or scenes.

And here's the best part: double clicking on one of these sentence results will immediately jump into the word processor, opening the scene if it's not already open, and take you to that sentence for you to edit.

Every results list in SmartEdit Editor works in the following way:

A list of things Editor found (word and phrase repetition, adverbs, clichés, redundancies, dialogue tags, crutch words, etc.), alongside every sentence they appeared in, with the ability to jump straight into the relevant scene and get to work if required.

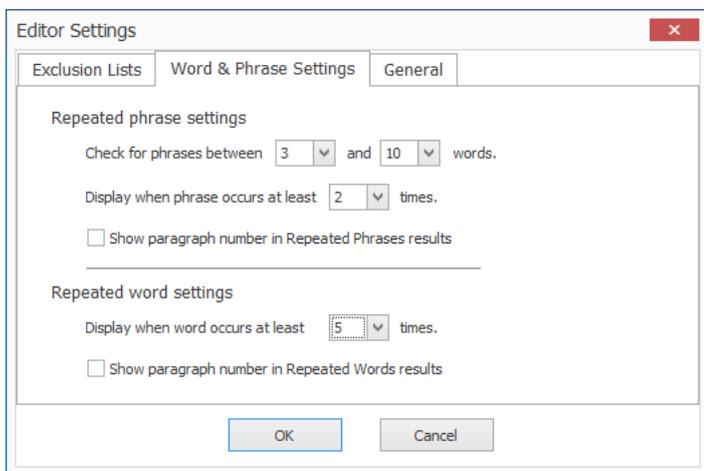
As you work through the SmartEdit Editor results, ignoring some things, making changes in response to others, you may find that changes you make in one area are having a negative effect in another. You replace one over-used phrase with another, improving things in one sentence while making them worse somewhere else. For this reason, it's a good idea to refresh the results list every now and then as you work.



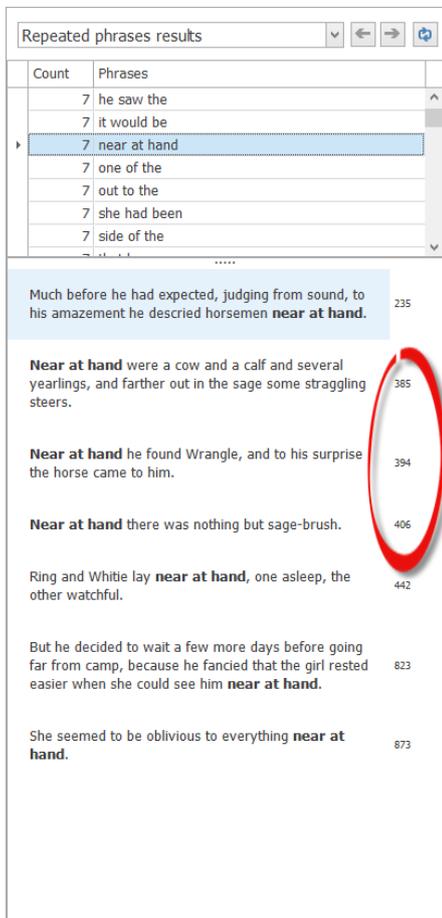
You can do this by selecting the Refresh button in the top right-hand corner of the results list. This re-runs the current check only.

Proximity of Results

When you work through the word and phrase repetition results, it can be useful to know how close one result is to another. The listed results appear in order, starting at the beginning of your document and continuing to the end.



An option exists on the Settings dialog to show the paragraph number of each result to the right of that result. This is useful in that it shows how close together two consecutive results are.



The screenshot on the left shows the phrase repetition results with the phrase **near at hand** highlighted. I've switch on the paragraph number setting, so I can now see that the instances of this phrase are scattered across my scenes, in paragraphs 235, 385, 394, etc. I might decide to look more closely at the second, third and fourth instances, as they are quite close together.

How far apart they actually are depends on the size of your paragraphs, but as a rule of thumb assume 10-15 paragraphs per page. Showing the paragraph number in this way makes it easier to read through the results list without having to enter the document itself to check how far apart two results might be.

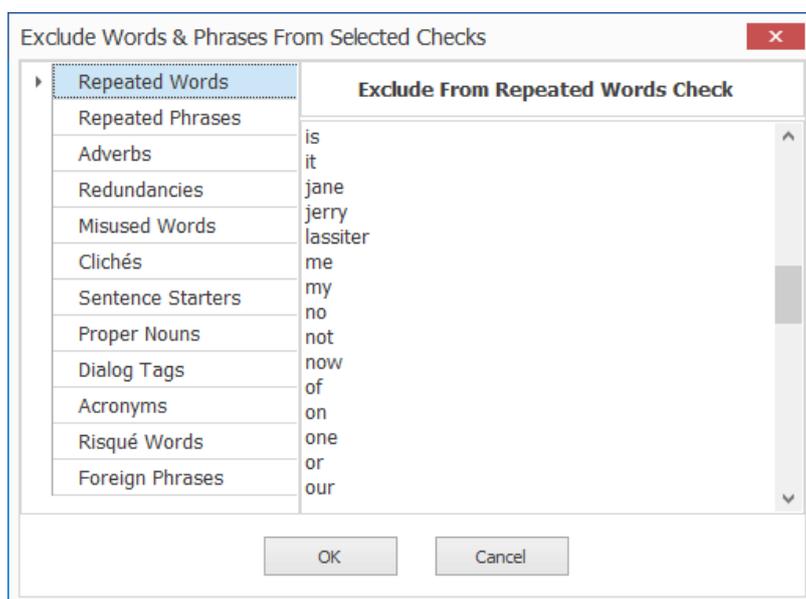
The paragraph number is only shown for the word and phrase repetition results, though we may change this in the future.

Exclusion Lists

The first time you use SmartEdit Editor it will check everything in your Document tree, folder or scene — depending on which you selected — unfiltered. But every novel has words and phrases that are part and parcel of the work. In a Harry Potter novel, you wouldn't be interested in how often Harry or *school* appeared. You can train SmartEdit Editor to ignore certain results, results that you know are not significant.

To do this select a result such as the 92 occurrences of the word **water** in the above results list and click the “Add Result to Exclusion List” button on the SmartEdit Editor toolbar. From that point on, no results will be shown in the Repeated Words list for the word **water**. Every results list has this option and every exclusion list can be edited later to add or remove entries in bulk. The Settings dialog has an option to switch individual exclusion lists on or off, so you can always run a complete check, ignoring the exclusions if you so choose.

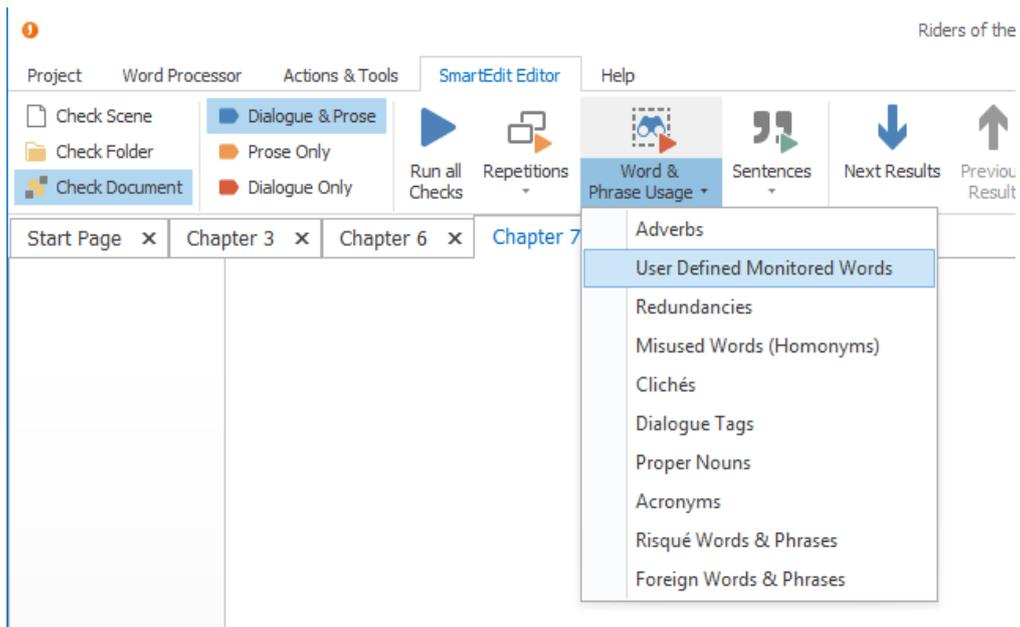
The screenshot below shows the default entries in the exclusion list for Repeated Words.



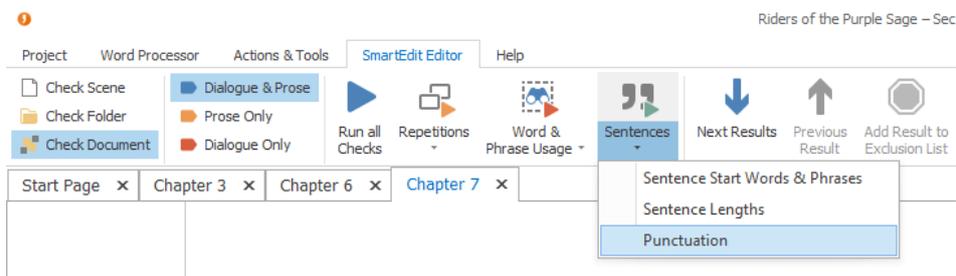
Common words are included alongside some specific entries I made for the Zane Grey novel I've been using, such as Jane, Jerry and Lassiter. It's worth pointing out that most Editor checks are not case sensitive. The exceptions are the Proper Nouns and Acronyms results which extracts values based on their case.

You should now have a basic understanding of how SmartEdit Editor checks and results work and how you work with them. At this point it would be useful to run some of the other checks and examine the varied results they present to you.

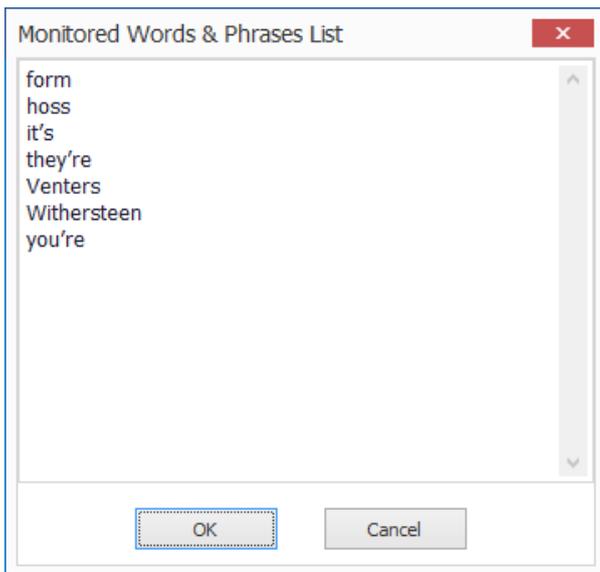
The image below shows a further list of checks SmartEdit Editor runs independent of the repetition checks. You can run these checks one at a time by selecting them from the menu, or all at once by clicking the **Word & Phrase Usage** button.



Sentence checks include a host of punctuation monitors such as your use of semi-colons and colons, EM dashes, excessive exclamation marks, alongside a check that extracts sentences of varying lengths so you can quickly identify long sentences.

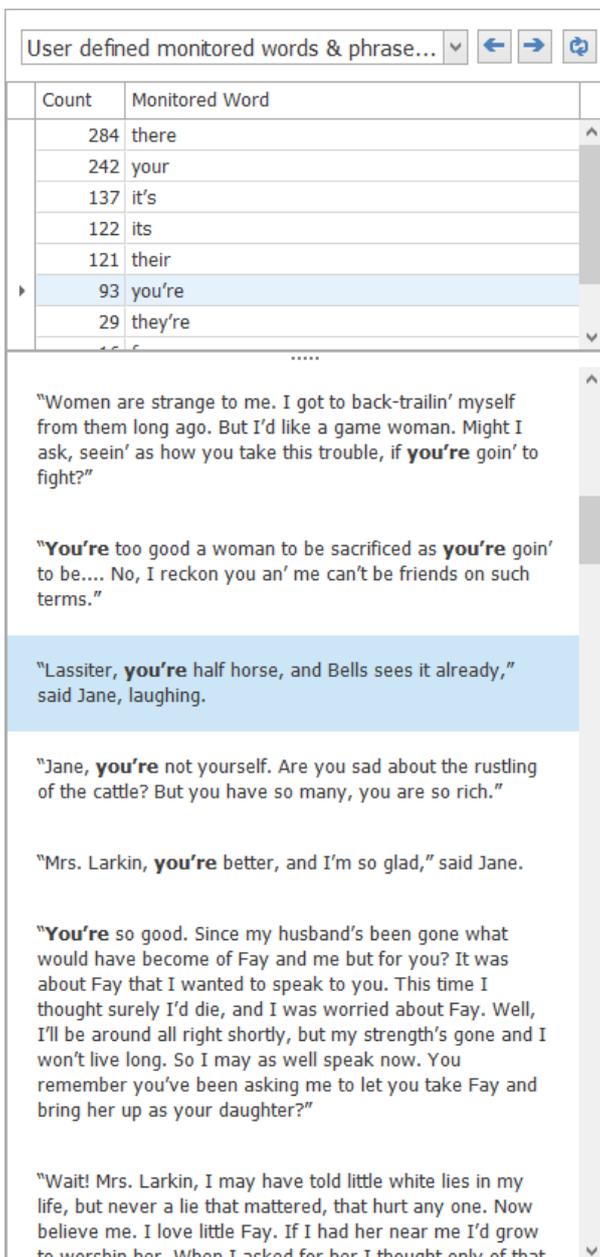


A final check that I will highlight is the “User defined monitored words.” This is where you specify your crutch words, words and phrases that you know you make mistakes or typos on, or simply words that you wish to keep an eye on.



Click on the Monitored Words button on the toolbar. The dialog that pops up allows you to add new words and to remove words you have no interest in.

In the example on the left, I’ve chosen to keep an eye on a few character names along with some potentially embarrassing typos that creep in when I’m typing too fast. The results list for these words allows me to eyeball each instance, satisfy myself that no mistakes have been made, and move on.



And that’s all there is to SmartEdit Editor. You decide what’s important. You decide which, if any, changes you wish to make. And you train Editor so it knows what to ignore and what to draw your attention to.

SmartEdit Editor never alters your scenes directly. There are no automated changes made, which means there is never any danger of your work becoming corrupted or damaged. All the actual editing work is done by you inside SmartEdit Writer.

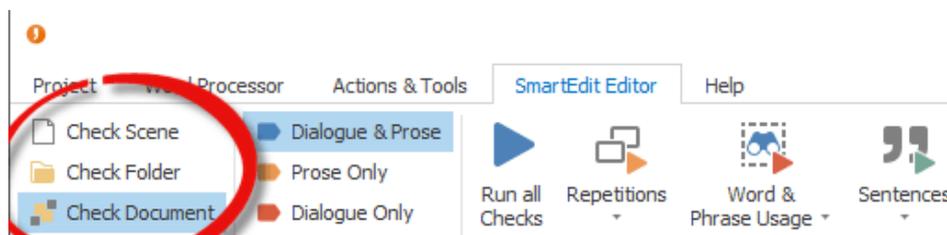
Overview of SmartEdit Editor checks

— adverbs, dialogue tags, homonyms, etc.

In the “Running SmartEdit Editor for the first time” topic I looked in a little detail at the word and phrase repetition checks and gave an overview of how the results lists worked. All the results lists in SmartEdit Editor look, feel and work in the same way. If you haven’t read the previous two topics, you should do so before continuing.

The button and menu options on the SmartEdit Editor toolbar allow you to run individual checks or groups of checks. If you wish to run every check on every scene in your Document tree you can do so by selecting “Check Document” and then clicking the “Run all Checks” button. On an 80,000 document, you should expect this to take a couple of minutes. For a smaller, short story sized work, maybe 20 seconds or so.

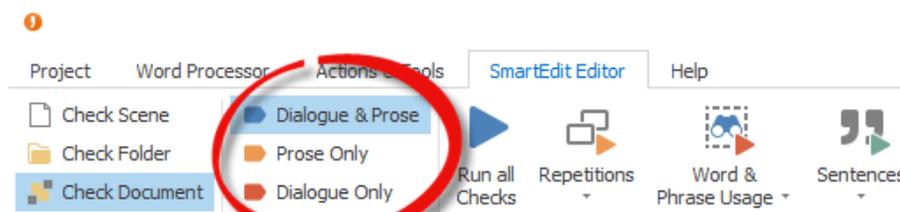
If you wish to run the checks against a single scene or a folder of scenes, you should choose either “Check Scene” or “Check Folder” before running the checks.



After completing the checks, the results section will open inside SmartEdit Writer to the right of the word processor and the first set of results will be visible. This will usually be the Repeated Words list. You can navigate to a different results list by opening the drop down and choosing different results, or by clicking the left or right arrows as shown below.



Whatever checks you choose to run, you have the option of running those checks against your entire document (dialogue and prose), prose only or dialogue only. The default is your entire document, but you can select **Prose** or **Dialogue** from the toolbar buttons shown below. This is a feature that is used by some writers to run a series of checks on character dialogue, or to exclude that dialogue from any results.



For example, you may wish to keep a check on adverbs in your prose and may not be interested in adverbs used by your characters in speech. Or you may wish to seek out clichés in dialogue only.

Adverbs results

Count	Adverb
177	only
52	suddenly
43	slowly
42	presently
27	swiftly
22	forever
22	forward

The mournful earnestness of her gaze **suddenly** shone with unutterable gratitude and wonder.

And as **suddenly** Venters found her eyes beautiful as he had never seen or felt beauty.

Venters turned out of the gorge, and **suddenly** paused stock-still, astounded at the scene before him.

Venters laughed, and **suddenly** caught himself with a quick breath and felt again the little shock.

Then with the wind soon came a shade and a darkening, and **suddenly** the valley was gray.

Like some delicate thing **suddenly** exposed to blasting heat, the girl wilted; her head dropped, and into her white, wasted cheeks crept the red of shame.

Then yawned, quite **suddenly** and wonderfully above him, the great cavern of the cliff-dwellers.

It was as if she had been in a dead, hopeless clamp of inaction and feeling, and had been **suddenly** shot through and through with quivering animation.

Suddenly she stepped swiftly to him, with a look and touch that drove from him any doubt of her quick

Let's take a look at some of the results produced by SmartEdit Editor for "Riders of the Purple Sage," beginning with adverbs. Many writers attempt to limit their use of adverbs and Editor provides a quick and easy way of checking each adverb for overuse and fixing the problem there and then.

Zane Grey makes heavy use of adverbs in this novel, the second most common is **suddenly**. Here we can see a list of all 52 sentences where he uses the word.

As with the word and phrase results lists, double clicking on any one of these sentences will jump into the scene that contains the sentence where you can make a change. The results list usually shows a long enough context for you to decide there and then if a change is required.

A redundancy is when you use more words than required. An example might be "fall down" or "the color red", as opposed to "fall" and "red." The redundancies check in SmartEdit Editor works from a comprehensive list of redundancies and highlights each one in your document.

Redundancies results

Count	Redundancy
4	reason why
4	never before
3	whether or not
2	started off
2	plunge down
2	could possibly
1	sudden impulse

Unlike adverbs, the Zane Grey novel was light on redundancies. Contemporary novels that I've run through SmartEdit Editor — especially unpublished novels — are far more prone to excessive redundancies.

Fay was as delightfully wet as she **could possibly** wish to get.

Venters meant to sheer out into the sage before Tull **could possibly** be sure who rode the blacks.

Dialog tags results

Count	Tags
152	said
83	replied
12	answered
7	cried
6	called
6	muttered
6	laughed

.....

"For years I've seen a storm clouding over her and the village of Cottonwoods," **muttered** Venters, as he strode on.

"She'll die at the gray of dawn," **muttered** Venters, remembering some old woman's fancy.

"A good tracker could trail me," he **muttered**.

"The world seems very far away," he **muttered**, "but it's there—and I'm not yet done with it. Perhaps I never shall be.... Only—how glorious it would be to live here always and never think again!"

"I've dreamed," **muttered** Venters, as he rose.

"I've jest about got time," he **muttered**, and with swift fingers that did not blunder or fumble he loosened the bag and threw it over his shoulder.

The dialogue tags checker is useful in tracking down over-use of unusual tags. The context sentences shown next to each result are very clear and highlight potential issues that should be obvious to any writer.

The general feeling in 2018 amongst those who call themselves *experts* on writing is that any dialogue tag apart from *said* should be removed or made to explain itself.

That doesn't appear to have been the case way back when our sample novel was published, as evidenced by all the muttering, crying and interrupting going on.

Proper nouns results

Count	Proper Noun
140	Tull
112	Fay
111	Wrangle
110	Jane Withersteen
92	Black
89	Mormon
88	In

.....

Jane Withersteen gazed down the wide purple slope with dreamy and troubled eyes.

The rapid beat of hoofs recalled **Jane Withersteen** to the question at hand.

"I've heard of your love for Fay Larkin and that you intend to adopt her. But—**Jane Withersteen**, the child is a Gentile!"

For the first time **Jane Withersteen** felt Venters's real spirit.

"Oh! I know," went on Venters, tauntingly, "it galls you, the idea of beautiful **Jane Withersteen** being friendly to a poor Gentile. You want her all yourself. You're a wiving Mormon. You have use for her—and Withersteen House and Amber Spring and seven thousand head of cattle!"

"That'll do from you. Understand, you'll not be allowed to hold this boy to a friendship that's offensive to your Bishop. **Jane Withersteen**, your father left you wealth and power. It has turned your head. You haven't yet come to see the place of Mormon women. We've reasoned with you, borne with you. We've patiently waited. We've let you have your fling, which is more than I ever saw granted to a Mormon woman. But you haven't come to your senses. Now, once for all, you can't have any further friendship with Venters. He's going to be whipped, and he's got to leave Utah!"

The Proper Nouns results shows a list of all proper nouns found in your document. They will often be character names, place names, company names and such. The example below shows a lot of different variations of character names, such as Withersteen, Miss Withersteen and Jane Withersteen — all the same person.

The proper nouns results list is useful for tracking down mistakes after you change a character's name. For example: say you changed Fred Smith to John Smith and there is no other character called Fred in your novel. If the proper nouns results show an entry for Fred, you know you've missed at least one occurrence and need to make a change.

Extracting proper nouns is not a perfect science and occasionally one may get bypassed or a word or phrase may pop up that is not a proper noun. When this happens it often means there is some unusual or incorrect formatting in your document. For example: a missing period which makes the first word of the next sentence appear as if it were a proper noun as it is capitalized in the middle of a sentence.

Misused words (homonyms) results

Count	Possible Misused Word
7	any more (anymore)
6	allowed (aloud)
6	accept (except)
6	week (weak)
6	less than (fewer than)
6	apart (a part)
5	effect (affect)

It was no **less than** a mountain-side, glistening in the sun like polished granite, with cedar-trees springing as if by magic out of the denuded surface.

Though Jane Withersteen never admitted so to herself, it amounted to no **less than** a system of charity.

"I was here **less than** an hour ago. Then the herd was seven or eight miles south, an' if they ain't bolted yet—"

"They didn't browse that distance—not in **less than** an hour. Cattle aren't sheep."

In **less than** two miles of running Bells began to drop behind the blacks, and Wrangle began to overhaul him.

Venters did not confide in Bess the alarming fact that he had seen horses and smoke **less than** a mile up one of the intersecting canyons.

The misused words (homonyms) check is one of the more interesting checks in SmartEdit Editor and one of the least pleasant to work through.

This check looks at pairs of words that are often confused by writers, either as typos when they type the wrong word by mistake, or as errors due to misunderstanding the word or phrase itself.

It's a difficult result list to work through as it can often highlight your own imperfect understanding of the words themselves, as you scratch your head and wonder which is the correct one to use.

The screenshot on the left gives a good impression of the types of words that are highlighted. In most cases there will be no error, but you should go through the list regardless, focusing on words that you know you often mistype.

One of my own common misspellings in this area is breathe/ breath — not because I don't know which one to use, but because I type without looking at the screen and for some reason have a habit of adding the 'e' when I shouldn't.

The acronyms check is probably not that useful for the majority of fiction writers, but if you're working on a thriller that contains a lot of acronyms — common with law enforcement and government agencies — it can be useful in identifying inconsistencies. For example: CIA, C.I.A., etc.

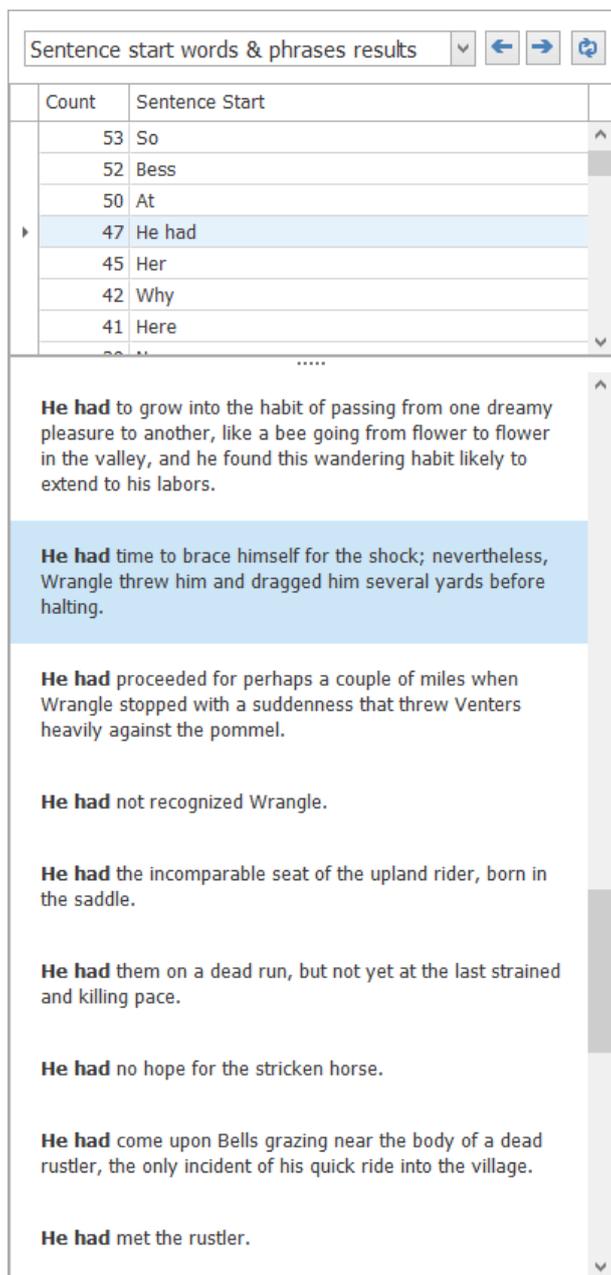
The screenshot shows the SmartEdit Editor interface. The 'Word & Phrase Usage' menu is open, displaying the following options: Adverbs, User Defined Monitored Words, Redundancies, Misused Words (Homonyms), Clichés, Dialogue Tags, Proper Nouns, Acronyms (highlighted), Risqué Words & Phrases, and Foreign Words & Phrases. The background shows a document with tabs for 'Start Page', 'Chapter 3', 'Chapter 6', and 'Chapter 7'.

If you're new to SmartEdit Editor, I'd recommend running each of these checks individually by selecting them from the Word & Phrase Usage drop-down and working out for yourself how useful a particular check might be.

Sentence Structure & Punctuation

As before, if you haven't read the [Running SmartEdit Editor for the first time](#) topic you should read that before continuing.

The Sentence Start check is my own personal favorite of all the SmartEdit Editor checks. I designed it to combat a deficiency in my own writing — a habit of latching on to certain crutch word and phrases and using them to begin sentence after sentence. There's nothing like seeing a long list of sentences beginning with “And ” to make you hate the very sight of the word.



Sentence start words & phrases results

Count	Sentence Start
53	So
52	Bess
50	At
47	He had
45	Her
42	Why
41	Here

.....

He had to grow into the habit of passing from one dreamy pleasure to another, like a bee going from flower to flower in the valley, and he found this wandering habit likely to extend to his labors.

He had time to brace himself for the shock; nevertheless, Wrangle threw him and dragged him several yards before halting.

He had proceeded for perhaps a couple of miles when Wrangle stopped with a suddenness that threw Venters heavily against the pommel.

He had not recognized Wrangle.

He had the incomparable seat of the upland rider, born in the saddle.

He had them on a dead run, but not yet at the last strained and killing pace.

He had no hope for the stricken horse.

He had come upon Bells grazing near the body of a dead rustler, the only incident of his quick ride into the village.

He had met the rustler.

In *Riders of the Purple Sage*, Zane Grey appears to share my fondness for the word, beginning 198 sentences with the word **And**. He also has a liking for phrases such as **He had**, used to open sentences 49 times.

It can be disheartening to see a list of sentences like the ones above — unless the repetition is deliberate. But when it demonstrates a reliance on words and phrases that you were unaware of, resolving it can appear a daunting task.

But ask yourself this: Would you sooner not know about the problem? Sooner stick your head in the sand and send your finished manuscript — warts and all — out to editors and publishers? Only to be rejected without even a note telling you why. Your creative eye may not see what is glaringly obvious to a computer program, but that doesn't mean the problems are not there.

This check is one you should definitely use in conjunction with the exclusion lists. For example, you may not have any interesting in seeing results for sentences beginning with The, She, He, They, etc. In which case, select the result and click the “Add Result to Exclusion List” button and you'll never see it again.

Sentence length results

Count	Word Count
6	46
5	45
11	44
13	43
11	42
19	41
14	40

The rider stepped away from her, moving out with the same slow, measured stride in which he had approached, and the fact that his action placed her wholly to one side, and him no nearer to Tull and his men, had a penetrating significance.

So that at twenty-eight she scarcely thought at all of her wonderful influence for good in the little community where her father had left her practically its beneficent landlord, but cared most for the dream and the assurance and the allurements of her beauty.

On this side of the ranch the outlook was different from that on the other; the immediate foreground was rough and the sage more rugged and less colorful; there were no dark-blue lines of canyons to hold the eye, nor any uprearing rock walls.

And like a scouting Indian Venter crawled through the sage of the oval valley, crossed trail after trail on the north side, and at last entered the canyon out of which headed the cattle trail, and into which he had watched the rustlers disappear.

These sage-freighters, as they were called, hauled grain and flour and merchandise from Sterling, and Jane laughed suddenly in the midst of her humility at the thought that they were her property, as was one of the three stores for which they freighted goods.

How could it be possible for the two things to be true? He

Prior to version 6 SmartEdit Editor produced a graph showing the length of your sentences. It looked impressive, with a highpoint around the 15-25 words mark and a dip tapering off to single digits once the word count got above 40, but it wasn't particularly practical.

Version 6 replaced that graph with a far more useful list, showing you how many sentences had 10, 25 or 43 words, and allowing you to see them there and then and edit them in your document with a single click.

Our sample novel had a number of sentences with over 60 words and one with a whopping 92 words — worse than it sounds, as it only contained a single semi-colon. But just as significant is the large number of sentences containing 30-50 words.

Punctuation Checks

Punctuation results

Count	Punctuation Check
8	Colons
1373	Curly apostrophes
1768	Curly quotes
4	Two or more spaces
733	Em dashes
610	Exclamation marks
541	Hyphens
261	Semicolons
2	Space before punctuation
141	Multiple consecutive periods

.....

She asked only the divine right of all women—freedom; to love and to live as her heart willed.

There was nothing else in his outfit; he had grown used to a scant fire.

But now he sensed action in the immediate present; the day promised another meeting with Lassiter and Jane, perhaps news of the rustlers; on the morrow he meant to take the trail to Deception Pass.

He called them Ring and Whitie; they were sheep-dogs, half collie, half deerhound, superb in build, perfectly trained.

And from there extended the wide green of the village gardens and orchards marked by the graceful poplars; and farther down shone the deep, dark richness of the alfalfa fields.

He did not question; he affirmed.

"I haven't the slightest idea who the Mormon was," replied Venters; "nor has any Gentile in Cottonwoods."

Ducks dotted the glassy surface of the lake; a blue heron

The punctuation checks in SmartEdit Editor are not designed to identify errors. As with other Editor checks their purpose is to highlight areas that you might wish to look at more closely. A semi-colon here and there might be no problem. 261 semi-colons might not be so easy to brush off — unless you're John Irving.

Alongside examining your use of certain types of punctuation, the Punctuation results lists are a good way to pick up on actual problems with your document: a mixture of curly and straight quotes, possible misuse of hyphens in place of EN or EM dashes, multiple periods used where you should be using an ellipsis, inconsistent spacing before and after hyphens and other punctuation, etc.

The lists work in the same way as other SmartEdit Editor lists. You select the results to examine, eyeball the sentences to identify any errors, then jump into your Word document by double clicking to fix the problem.

Shortcut keys in SmartEdit Writer

F1 Opens the GetHelp page on the SmartEdit Writer website

Navigation

F6 Opens the Document tree

F7 Opens the Fragments tree

F8 Opens the Research tree

Ctrl+Tab Move to the next word processor tab

Ctrl+Shift+Tab Move to the previous word processor tab

Adding new items

Ctrl+Shift+S Add a new scene

Ctrl+Shift+N Add a new note

Ctrl+Shift+D Add a new folder

Ctrl+Shift+M Add a new image [Research tree only]

Ctrl+Shift+B Add a new bookmark [Research tree only]

Ctrl+Shift+L Add a new file [Research tree only]

Searching

Ctrl+F When the **word processor** is **active**, opens the Find and Replace dialog

Ctrl+F When a **tree** is **active**, opens the Find in tree box at the top of the tree

Ctrl+Shift+F Opens the global search, so you can search in every scene and note

Tree — Document, Fragments and Research

F2 Renames the current tree item

Del Deletes the current tree item

Word Processor

Ctrl+G Moves the focus from the word processor to the current scene or note in the tree

Ctrl+W Closes the currently active scene

Ctrl+P Prints the active scene or note

Ctrl+A Select all text in scene or note

Ctrl+B Makes selected text bold

Ctrl+I Makes selected text italic

Ctrl+U Makes selected text underlined

Ctrl+Z Undo last change

Ctrl+Y Redo last change

Ctrl+X Cuts the selected text

Ctrl+C Copies the selected text

Ctrl+V Pastes the copied text

Ctrl+Shift+V Pastes the copied text as plain text (no formatting)

Word Processor (cont'd)

Ctrl+J	Justifies the selected text
Ctrl+L	Aligns the selected text to the left
Ctrl+R	Aligns the selected text to the right
Shift+F3	Toggles the selected text between lower case, upper case and title case
Ctrl+F	Opens the Find and Replace dialog
Ctrl+D	Opens the font dialog
Ctrl+[Increase the font size of selected text
Ctrl+]	Decrease the font size of selected text
Ctrl+ Up Arrow	Moves to beginning of paragraph
Ctrl+ Down Arrow	Moves to end of paragraph
Ctrl+Del	Deletes the word to the right of the cursor
Ctrl+Backspace	Deletes the word to the left of the cursor
Ctrl+End	Moves the cursor to the end of the document
Ctrl+Home	Moves the cursor to the beginning of the document