

AT Quick Guide

About the AlphaSmart 3000



General Information about AlphaSmarts

The AlphaSmart is a portable word processor that allows students to electronically write, edit, and store text without needing to be at a computer station. After writing the unit is connected to a computer (PC or Mac) to download the document/s. Some AlphaSmarts do have the ability to “connect” through infrared beams to the computer or directly to a printer.

Basic use instructions for an AlphaSmart 3000 are on the back of the unit for quick reference. The AlphaSmart automatically saves any document as the unit is turned off. The unit also conserves batteries by turning itself off when inactive.

Getting Started

Step 1 – Charge the AlphaSmart unit (a full charge will last 60 – 150 hours) or make sure 3 fresh AA batteries are in place – alkaline last the longest – 700+ hours). An AC adapter can also be used. The AC adapter should not be used when connect to a computer.

Step 2 – Turn unit on, the last file opened will automatically open. Start typing or choose a new file. The arrow keys are used to move the cursor, backspace is used to erase. There are 8 different files – each about 12.5 pages long.

Step 3 – Spell check as accessed by pressing the spell check key. Follow the directions on the screen to select from choices. The spell check on the AlphaSmart does not contain as many words as a typical word processing program spell check. Spell check can also be disabled (such as for a spelling test) – press cmd>option>spell check and the master password which is available from AlphaSmart technical support – 888-274-2720

Step 4 – Download document to a computer that has a word processing program open with the cursor positioned where you want the text to appear. (The AlphaSmart can be connected with a USB or Y cable that coordinates with your computer. Possible cable configurations are illustrated in the instruction book.) Press the “send” key on the top right.

- Infrared transfer option – If your computer has a built-in infrared module and AlphaBeam or the Get Utility software installed you can send text without cables. Simply point your AlphaSmart 3000 toward the computer’s receiver and press the send key.

Step 5 – Once the document is on the computer it can be “finished” with choices of font style and size, additional spell check, and formatting of the document. Save your new document.

Step 6 – Print your document as any other document from your computer. AlphaSmart 3000 can also be set to print directly to a printer through the use of special cables. When printing directly to a printer no formatting or font choices can be selected. For a PC printer a parallel cable needs to be purchased from AlphaSmart or for a Mac a standard serial cable that goes to a Mac printer is available from a computer store. For details check the AlphaSmart.com web site.

Step 7 – Clear the file from your AlphaSmart by pressing the gray “clear file” key – follow the prompts on the screen.

Applets

The AlphaSmart capabilities can be expanded with applets (programs). Two applets are included with the AlphaSmart. Others can be purchased and added on. To use the applets installed on your AlphaSmart, press the “applets” key.

AlphaWord is an applet included with your AlphaSmart that provides spell check and other features. Pressing the “spell check” button accesses the spell check feature. Refer to the user guide to learn how to access the following advanced features:

- AutoRepeat/Key Repeat Control
- Sticky Keys
- Slow Keys
- Show Marks
- Alternate Keyboard Layouts
- Keyboarding Timer

Calculator is an applet included with your AlphaSmart that allows you to do basic math problems.

Additional applets can be purchased:

- KeyWords – a typing tutor and keyboarding program
- AlphaQuiz – allows quizzes developed on a PC to be downloaded to a classroom set of AlphaSmart 3000s, retrieves the student’s answers for automatic grading and exports the results to gradebook software
- Co:Writer – word prediction software that helps student’s spell and construct sentences
- Inspiration Outliner – helps create outlines of ideas and thoughts as a first step in the writing process. Outline can then be downloaded into Inspiration or Kidspiration.

More Information

The AlphaSmart website (www.alphasmart.com) has a lot of useful information and tips. Click on the Community Center on the Alphasmart home page.



You will find

- AlphaSmart Announcements, Feedback, and Resources
- Examples and Stories: How You Use AlphaSmart Products
- Which Tool Fits Your Needs?
- Neo, AlphaSmart 3000, and Older Models: Product Operation
- Dana by AlphaSmart: Product Operation

Customer service is also available at 888-274-0680.

Ordering Information for MCPS

- AlphaSmarts is available on SEAT computers in Tech Mod 02-05 schools. It is accessible from all computers in Tech Mod 06 schools.
- Schools can order Write:Outloud from the MCPS AT Bid List.
- Parents can order Write:OutLoud from the MD AT Co-op at 410-290-1327.