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# ASCII Art Hangman for Kids

Jens Getreu <getreu@web.de>

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## Table of Contents

1. Getting started .....	3
1.1. ASCII-Hangman installation .....	3
1.2. ASCII-Hangman invocation: how to start the game .....	3
2. ASCII-Hangman configuration .....	4
2.1. Linux configuration .....	4
2.2. Windows configuration .....	5
2.3. Synopsis and syntax .....	5
2.4. Sample configuration files .....	6
3. Play the game in the classroom .....	8
3.1. Classroom requirements .....	8
3.2. Prepare a configuration file with secret words .....	8
3.3. Suggested game rules for the classroom .....	8
4. Data privacy statement .....	9

*ASCII-Hangman* is a paper and pencil guessing game for two or more players. One player thinks of a word, phrase or sentence and the other tries to guess it by suggesting letters or numbers, within a certain number of guesses. *ASCII-Hangman* is a variant of the game especially designed for children: the computer selects a word, phrase or sentence randomly out of a word-list defined in a configuration file.

In the course of the game, ASCII-Art images - designed for children - are progressively disclosed. There are more than 50 built in ASCII-Art images from which one is chosen randomly at the beginning of the game. Alternatively own ASCII-Art can be provided in the configuration file.

Highlights:

- simple, non distracting user interface,
- setting up word lists is part of the learning process,

- visual non distracting reward system with 50 built-in ASCII-art images,
- no built in traditional gallows image,
- designed for group learning in classroom,
- fully configurable:
  - # design own ASCII-art (depending on the learning subject) and associate it to a word list,
  - # provide the user with hints by disclosing some characters from the start,
- web-application: play without installation,
- desktop versions: play without network access,
- open source software: guaranteed availability, always free of charge.

*ASCII-Hangman* is available as web-application and can be played online here: [ASCII-Hangman Web-App<sup>1</sup>](#).



*Figure 1. ASCII Hangman web-app version*

*ASCII-Hangman* is also available as desktop-terminal-application for Linux, Mac and Windows. Download and installation instruction are here: [ASCII-Hangman Desktop App<sup>2</sup>](#).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/web-app/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/#distribution>

```
File Edit View Terminal Tabs Help
ASCII-Art Hangman for Kids

      ( . . ) _
     /  \  /  \
    (    \  \  /  \
   < ) - \ \ ( )  \
   < ) . > ===== <<
   C - ' ' (>

Lifes: 7      Last guess: k

g o o d   l u _ k

Type a letter, then press [Enter]:
█
```

Figure 2. ASCII Hangman terminal version

The project is hosted on Github: [getreu/ascii-hangman](https://github.com/getreu/ascii-hangman)<sup>3</sup>. The project's webpage is on [getreu.net](http://blog.getreu.net)<sup>4</sup>. There you also find a [pdf rendition](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/ascii-hangman.pdf)<sup>5</sup> of this document and compiled [binaries](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/ascii-hangman.zip)<sup>6</sup>.

## 1. Getting started

### 1.1. ASCII-Hangman installation

The web-app version does not need to be installed on your computer. Just navigate to [ASCII-Hangman Web-App](https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/web-app/)<sup>7</sup> and start playing.

As far as the desktop version is concerned, there is no installation in the proper sense either, as the whole application consists of only one binary file. Download this file here: [ASCII-Hangman Desktop App](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/ascii-hangman.zip)<sup>8</sup> and just execute it.

### 1.2. ASCII-Hangman invocation: how to start the game

#### Web-App

Navigate to [ASCII-Hangman-Web-App](https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/web-app/)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://github.com/getreu/ascii-hangman>

<sup>4</sup> <http://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/>

<sup>5</sup> [https://blog.getreu.net/\\_downloads/ascii-hangman.pdf](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/ascii-hangman.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://blog.getreu.net/\\_downloads/ascii-hangman.zip](https://blog.getreu.net/_downloads/ascii-hangman.zip)

<sup>7</sup> <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/web-app/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/#distribution>

<sup>9</sup> <https://blog.getreu.net/projects/ascii-hangman/web-app>

## Linux

1. Open a terminal.
2. Navigate to a folder containing configuration files, e.g.

```
cd vocabulary-chapter-1
```

3. If the folder contains only one configuration file named `hangman-words.txt` just type:

```
ascii-hangman
```

otherwise type, e.g.:

```
ascii-hangman words-page3.txt words-page5.txt
```

## Windows

1. Open the folder in which the `ascii-hangman.exe` executable file resides.
2. Open a second explorer window and navigate to a folder with a configuration file, e.g. `hangman-words`.
3. Drag and drop one or more configuration files on `ascii-hangman.exe`.

## 2. ASCII-Hangman configuration

*ASCII-Hangman* needs a custom list of secrets it can choose secrets to let the user guess. This list is provided by a configuration file with a very simple syntax explained below. When you start the desktop version for the first time, a sample configuration file, named `ascii-hangman-words.txt`, is created. Adding own secrets to this file can be done with any text editor. Next time *ASCII-Hangman* starts, it will read the modified list of secrets.

The Web-App version of *ASCII-Hangman* works similar. Here the program starts with a configuration page allowing you to enter the list of secrets directly without external editor. If you wish, you can download a prepared list of secrets from a file on your disk. Note, it is possible to select more than one file in the file selector dialogue.

### 2.1. Linux configuration

1. Run *ASCII-Hangman* once. It creates a configuration file `ascii-hangman-words.txt` in the current working directory.

2. Edit the configuration file

```
.....  
nano ascii-hangman-words.txt  
.....
```

3. Start the game

```
.....  
./ascii-hangman  
.....
```

## 2.2. Windows configuration

1. Generate a configuration file in your working directory

Double click on `ascii-hangman.exe`

This creates the file `ascii-hangman_words.txt`

2. Edit the configuration file

Double-click on `ascii-hangman-words.txt`. This opens the file in the `Notepad` editor. Add own secrets, one per line.

3. Start the game

Double-click on `ascii-hangman.exe`.

## 2.3. Synopsis and syntax

```
.....  
Usage: ascii-hangman  
       ascii-hangman [FILE]...  
       ascii-hangman -h|--help  
       asciiart-ascii-hangman-for-kids -V|--version  
.....
```

`[FILE]` are configuration files containing word-lists and optionally Ascii-Art images.

When no `[FILE]` argument is given, `[FILE]` defaults to `ascii-hangman-words.txt`. In case no `[FILE]` is found, a template configuration file `ascii-hangman-words.txt` is written into the current working directory. Multiple `[FILE]`'s are concatenated.

`[FILE]` is a UTF-8 file containing 4 different line-types:

- lines starting with a letter, a digit or '-' are secret strings. At the beginning of the game one line is randomly chosen and all characters are hidden. If you want to give an additional hint, enclose some characters with `_`. The enclosed is then displayed in clear when the game starts. For example the configuration line:

```
Guess _me_
```

```
is shown in the game as:
```

```
_ _ _ _ _ _ m e
```

- lines starting with `#` are ignored. This can be used for comments.
- lines starting with `|` are part of an optional custom ASCII-Art image shown progressively in the course of the game. If not defined here, built in ASCII-Art images are used instead.
- lines starting with `:` are game modifier. They change the logic how the image is progressively disclosed:

```
`:success-rewarding`      Every guessed character shows a bit more of  
                           the image. This mode is default.  
`:traditional-rewarding`  Every lost live discloses a bit more of the  
                           image. Choose this mode together with a  
                           traditional gallows image (not built in).
```

## 2.4. Sample configuration files

### Simple configuration file

```
guess me  
hangman  
good luck  
3*7=21
```

### Simple configuration file with hints

```
guess me  
hang_man_  
_good l_uck  
_3*_7_=21_
```

### Configuration file with custom image

A configuration file may contain a custom image. The image is gradually disclosed after each right guess.

```
- _guess_ me
```

- hang\_man\_
- good luck
- \_3\*\_7\_=21\_

:success-rewarding

```
|      !!!!!\\ \\
|      '!_  ||| |
|      ` \'-'' |
|      ` \  /
|      )\  \
| ejm   /  \  \
|      \ |
```

# Author: ejm

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It is also possible to split the word list and the image into two files and load them separately:

```
ascii-hangman wordlist.txt custom-image.txt
```

---

## Configuration file with traditional gallows image

The following image has a different rewarding mode: The image is gradually disclosed after each lost life.

- \_guess \_me
- hang\_man\_
- \_good l\_uck

:traditional-rewarding

```
|  _____
|  |         |
|  |         o
|  |        /|\
|  |         |
|  |        / \
|__|_____|
||         |__
||_____||
```

---

Note: The gallows image is not part of the built-in ASCII-art. If wished for, it can be provided through the configuration file.

## 3. Play the game in the classroom

The game is designed for classroom usage, but can be played alone as well.

### 3.1. Classroom requirements

- Bigger screen or projector
- Browser with Internet access - or -
- Windows or Linux Computer with the `ascii-hangman.exe` (Windows) or `Ascii-Hangman` (MacOs and Linux) binary installed.

### 3.2. Prepare a configuration file with secret words

The following may serve as a suggestion how to integrate the game in a lesson in class:

The aim of the game is to consolidate recently learned vocabulary. For this purpose the class composes a vocabulary list of words or expressions, hereafter referred to as list of secrets words.

- The class composes the list of secrets together with the teacher. To optimize the learning progress, it is most useful to involve the pupils in the preparation of the list of secrets, e.g.: One pupil types the suggested words into the configuration file, the others follow on the screen and correct spelling mistakes.
- The list of secrets can be recent vocabulary or even some simple calculation exercises. A secret is always encoded as one line in the configuration file. This can be a word or a whole sentence or expression.
- To give an additional hint it, is possible to tag some letters of the secret sentence (see examples above). This part will be disclosed immediately when the game starts.
- At the beginning of the game, the computer chooses randomly one secret out of the list. When a secret is guessed correctly, it will not be asked again. The game ends, when all secrets are guessed correctly.

### 3.3. Suggested game rules for the classroom

The following rules are designed to stimulate the participation of the whole group of learners. Vary them according to your needs.

1. Each pupil is asked to write down all already guessed letters on a sheet of paper.
2. A player is allowed to guess once more, when the last guess was right.



3. When he fails, he passes the turn to the next player. In bigger groups the next player may be chosen randomly. This keeps more pupils concentrated, as nobody knows who will be the next.
4. A player is not allowed to ask others what letters are guessed already. He has to solely rely on his own notes.
5. The winner of the game is the player who discloses the last letter of the secret word.

Alternatively, as activation activity, the game can be played in a more disorganized manner: First the group chooses a game master. he will then type in the guesses the group calls in loudly.

## 4. Data privacy statement

All desktop versions of *ASCII-Hangman* run locally on your computer and do not collect or transfer any data.

This applies to the web application version of *ASCII-Hangman* also: due to its Web-Assembly-technology, the program runs - once started - entirely in your Web-Browser's sandbox and never connects to the Internet.