

# Taking handwriting recognition to the next level

## Phatware's CalliGrapher 8.0

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CalliGrapher is Phatware's handwriting recognition program that translates cursive, print, or mixed handwriting into text on your Pocket PC. It's no coincidence that it sounds a lot like the Transcriber program built into all Pocket PCs. Both programs are based on the same handwriting recognition engine. However, CalliGrapher is a more feature-rich program, and the latest version (8.0) includes major improvements that may change the way you enter information into your Pocket PC.

### Writing right with CalliGrapher's Write Pad

The biggest improvement to CalliGrapher is the addition of the Write Pad, a small character entry panel similar to the Block Recognizer and Letter Recognizer panels built into the Pocket PC. Previous versions of CalliGrapher recognized and translated text written anywhere on the display, and that feature is still available in version 8.0. But you can also switch to the Write Pad mode via the Pocket PC's input panel, from within any application that supports text entry. For example, you can bring up Write Pad in Word Mobile.

To enter text from Write Pad, you write your characters, numbers, or symbols between the two lines in the "character entry panel" (like you did when you were first learning to write). As CalliGrapher recognizes them, they appear in the "text preview box" immediately above the panel (Fig. 1). The advantages of this approach are numerous. First, if CalliGrapher mistranslates a word, you can tap and hold on the incorrect word in the text preview box to bring up a list of similar words (Fig. 1). Tap on the correct word in this list and it replaces the mistake. Second, the back arrow button to the right of the text preview box lets you delete mistaken characters, which you can then re-enter in the character entry panel. (You can also erase any character in the text preview box by drawing a line over it and holding the stylus down on the screen.) Finally, you can go back and insert words, characters, or punctuation symbols in between other characters in the character entry panel, making the process of editing easier. Once you are satisfied with the content of the text preview box, tap on the Enter button to the right of the text Review Box and the text is pasted into the active application.

### Under-the-hood improvements

In addition to Write Pad, CalliGrapher 8.0 has some new features under the hood, as well. The handwriting recognition engine has been revised to offer faster recognition and enhanced accuracy when using mixed (print and cursive) writing. There is also a new "learning" feature available in Write Pad mode that allows CalliGrapher 8.0 to collect information about how you write. Once enough information is collected (about 2 weeks of average use if you enter approximately 500 words per day) it will be used to further improve overall quality of recognition.

Interface customization has been improved with a new color picker pop-up (Fig. 2). This allows Write Pad users to choose the color of their ink and change the background color. In addition to supporting Windows Mobile 5.0, the latest version of CalliGrapher also includes improved support for landscape mode. And finally, the software now installs alongside Transcriber, instead of replacing it as previous versions did. Long-time CalliGrapher users will be delighted to find that they can switch between CalliGrapher, Write Pad, and Transcriber, if need be, via the input panel selector.

CalliGrapher 8.0 is available for \$39.95 from the PhatWare Corporation ([www.phatware.com](http://www.phatware.com)). A free 30-day trial is available for download. Version 8.0 supports Pocket PC 2003/2003 Second Edition, Pocket PC Phone Edition 2003/2003 Second Edition, and Windows Mobile 5.0. In addition to English, language packs are available for Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese (European), Portuguese (Brazilian), Spanish, and Swedish for \$14.95 each. These language packs enable CalliGrapher to recognize handwriting in the alternate language, feature custom dictionaries, and include a language-specific soft keyboard for CalliGrapher. A Medical Pack provides healthcare workers with a 130,000-word custom recognition dictionary of medical terms, prescription drugs, abbreviations, and more for an additional \$19.95. ■

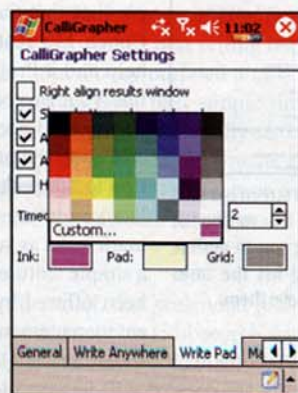


Fig. 2: CalliGrapher's new color picker features 40 standard colors, and the ability to create custom colors for the program's ink, Write Pad and grid.

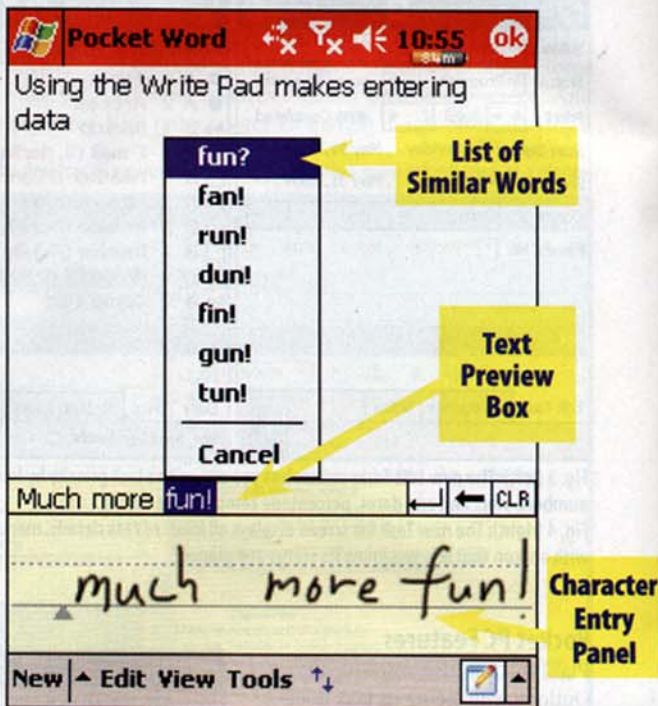


Fig. 1: CalliGrapher's new Write Pad brings real-time recognition and advanced editing features to handwriting recognition.

## About Time To Upgrade?

Users who own a previous version of CalliGrapher can upgrade to 8.0 for \$24.95. If it's been a while since you upgraded, this might be the time. PhatWare lists features new to the various versions on their Web site ([www.phatware.com/calligrapher/cgr/features.html](http://www.phatware.com/calligrapher/cgr/features.html)). Compare your version of CalliGrapher to the highlights of features offered with each upgrade and you can see what you've been missing.