

Notesbrowser User Manual

English - Version 2.6
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Notesbrowser

Content

Welcome to the Notesbrowser User Manual!

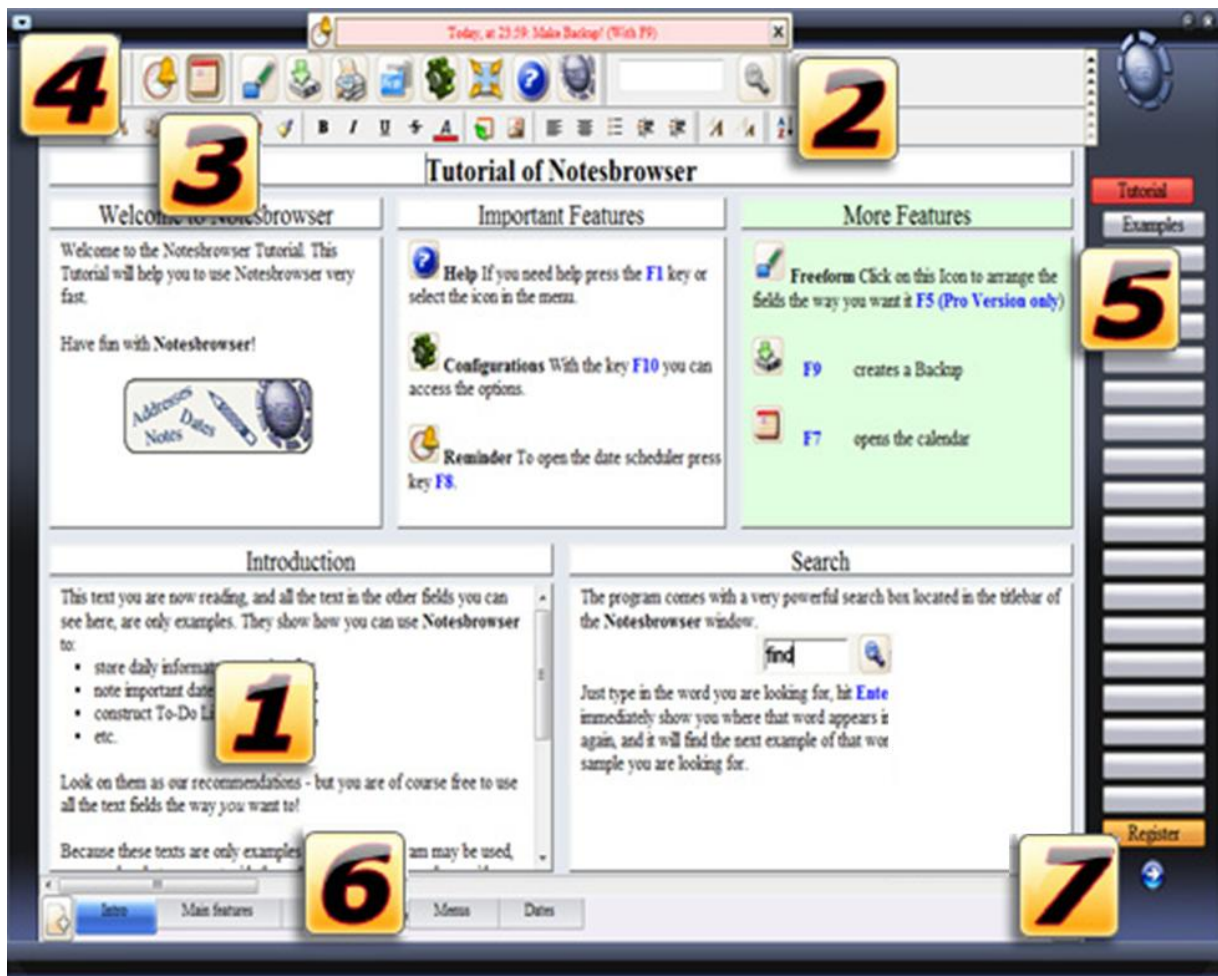
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01. Introduction

Welcome to the Notesbrowser User Manual!

Here is an overview of the main screen of Notesbrowser.

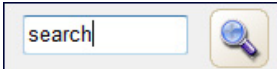
The main screens of our products **Notesbrowser Lite** and **Notesbrowser Editor** look a bit different because they have less features.



1

Most important is the area in the middle of the screen where the notes are entered. You can see five note fields with their description lines.

2

The search is in the icon title bar.  Just enter some letters and press the **Return** key. Immediately you are at the position where the text is (Key **F4**). Continue your search with Key **F3**.

3

Small menu bar to format the text fields.

4

The icon title bar with many useful icons. Can be switched on/off with **CTRL + F2**.

5

On the right side are categories. Each of them can have multiple pages with notes.

6

At the bottom, below the notes, is a tab bar where you can select different pages of the selected category.

7

With the small arrow below the categories, you can access the next column of categories.   There are 3 columns with 20 categories each.

02. Installation

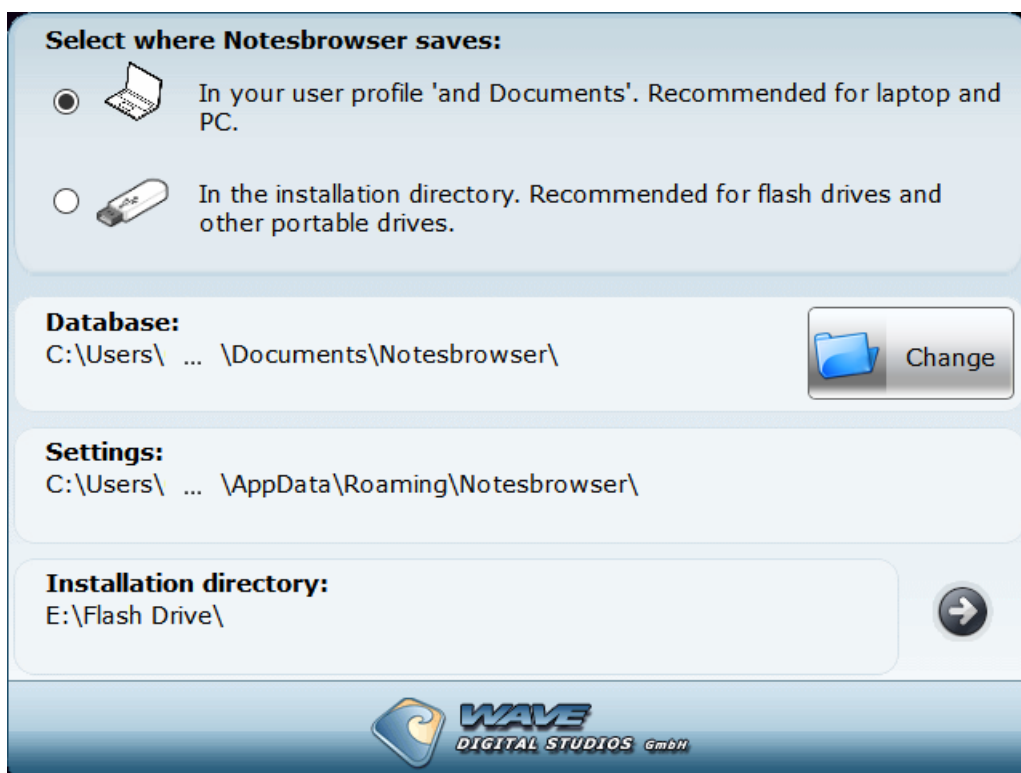
The installation is typical. There is one difference, because Notesbrowser can work on a stationary computer or in a portable environment:

- 1.) During the installation you need to decide: Do you want to use Notesbrowser **only on this actual computer**? This is default and valid for most users. **Or** do you want to use it on a **portable drive** or on a cloud drive?
- 2.) If you want to use it on a single computer, just install it in the recommended folder, usually C:\Program Files\Notesbrowser. This option is default.
- 3.) If you want to use it on a flash drive etc. install it there, e.g. **E:\Notesbrowser** (E: = Flash-drive-letter)

This decision is made during the installation, so you decide where exactly the program is installed. In the next step, you decide where the data will be stored.

At the first start, Notesbrowser greets you with a welcome screen.

Here you can select where Notesbrowser saves its data:



At this screen you decide where Notesbrowser saves its **data**:

- in the standard Windows directories (this option is default) or

- on a flash drive or similar (portable mode).

Your choice will decide where database and settings are located. Installation directory was chosen by you in the in step.

1.) Save into user profile and documents folder

With this choice the default Windows directories will be used:

C:\Program Files\Notesbrowser *Installation-directory*

..\Documents\Notesbrowser *Database*

..\User Profile\AppData\Roaming\Notesbrowser *Settings*

If you don't want to use a flash drive or similar: This is your option.

Notesbrowser saves settings and data in the standard Windows folders.

With this option you can choose button **Change** to select a different path to put your Notesbrowser database. Only if you know what you are doing.

This is for example useful if you want to store your database in a directory on the network or in a cloud folder, e.g. Dropbox but want to keep the installation/program on your local computer.

1.) Save into the Installation directory

This option is useful if you want to **take** (physically!) away Notesbrowser with the installation, the database and the settings.

Example: you have installed Notesbrowser on a flash drive (which you could take away) and this means it has to save its data also on this flash drive. No data will be saved outside this flash drive, because relative paths will be used.

Typical structure, if E: is your flash drive:

E:\Notesbrowser *Installation-directory*

E:\Notesbrowser\Database *Database*

E:\Notesbrowser\Settings *Settings*

Now you can take the flash drive with you and use it on different computers - with your personal database always in place.

Example for portable mode with a flash drive:



Change the mode later (for experienced users!)

If you want to use Notesbrowser the other mode, you can do this:

- 1.) Make a backup (with the inbuilt backup in the settings).
- 2.) Optional: Better also make a full copy of your database with the Windows File Explorer.
- 3.) Deinstall Notesbrowser.
- 4.) Delete the **settings files** manually, or move them to a different location. **If you don't do this**, Notesbrowser will detect the settings files and will use them. It will not ask you about the mode which you want to change!
- 5.) Install Notesbrowser again and choose the right mode at first start this time.
- 6.) Recover your database and settings from the backup path. The recovery will use the mode chosen at installation.

03. The Basics (categories + pages + columns)

Important basic features



Settings: You can open the options with the key **F10**



Freeform: Use the key **F5** to start the Freeform Mode where you can set the size and position of the note fields



Backup: Key **F9** creates a backup at once



Help: To open the help, press key **F1**

Categories

The 20 buttons on the right side are called **categories**.

The first category is named **Tutorial**  at the first start of Notesbrowser and is usually indented, which means it is selected. Select categories with a mouse click.

A category is best described as folder and can hold multiple pages with notes.

With a right mouse click on a category a menu pops up where you can change the name and color, e.g. use red color for important categories.

Pages

Every category consists of **pages**. They can be opened with the tab bar at the bottom of Notesbrowser:



You can change the names of a page. Just do a right mouse click on a tab and a menu will pop up.

You can delete pages with this icon: 

You can add pages with this icon: 

You can change the sequence of the pages with drag & drop of the mouse.

Columns

In Notesbrowser are small arrows below or above the 20 categories. They look different for every skin, for example:  or .

You can switch between **Columns** of 20 categories each with the arrows. If you are in the first column, there is only one arrow below the categories, if you click it, there will also appear an arrow on top of the categories where you can get back to the first 20 categories .

There are 60 categories at all.

Collect notes

The main task of Notesbrowser is storing your notes.

Notesbrowser is designed to run in the background, consuming nearly no CPU time and memory until it is needed.

If it is needed by you, for example if you have an idea or find some useful information in the Internet, just press the **Hotkey F11** and Notesbrowser is in the foreground in less than a second to take your notes. If you are done with the note, press the hotkey again or press key **F12** and Notesbrowser is in the tray again, lurking. Your notes are saved automatic.

Easy note organizing

If you later open Notesbrowser, the last saved note is visible, because Notesbrowser remembers the last opened category and page.

The many categories and pages give you space to save to-do lists and address-lists, project information and more.

Launch Internet pages, files and folders

In every note field you can start links:

- Internet links can be launched with a single mouse click
- Files and folders, entered with full path, can be started with a double click

- Email addresses can be started with a double click – your Standard email program will be launched
- You can move files per drag & drop from the file explorer in Notesbrowser:
 - You can move and drop the files directly into a notes field to insert them as OLE links.

Attention: This will work with single files only, and is only basically implemented at this time.

- Or you can drop the files on the border(!) of Notesbrowser to insert them with full qualified path - this will work also with multiple files. They are inserted in the first notes field on the page.
- You can start mp3s with full qualified paths, for example:
C:\Music\Wham - Last Christmas.mp3
- A program needs to be installed that can handle the file type, for mp3 e.g. Winamp, because Notesbrowser does not launch files directly but directs them to Windows to start them

Notesbrowser is easy to learn

Most of the icons and buttons in Notesbrowser have a helpful tool tip hint if you move the mouse over the element. Do this with all icons you do not know!

If you don't know what an icon or button does, just try it. You cannot destroy anything! Also try a right mouse click in different areas, because there are many different menus!

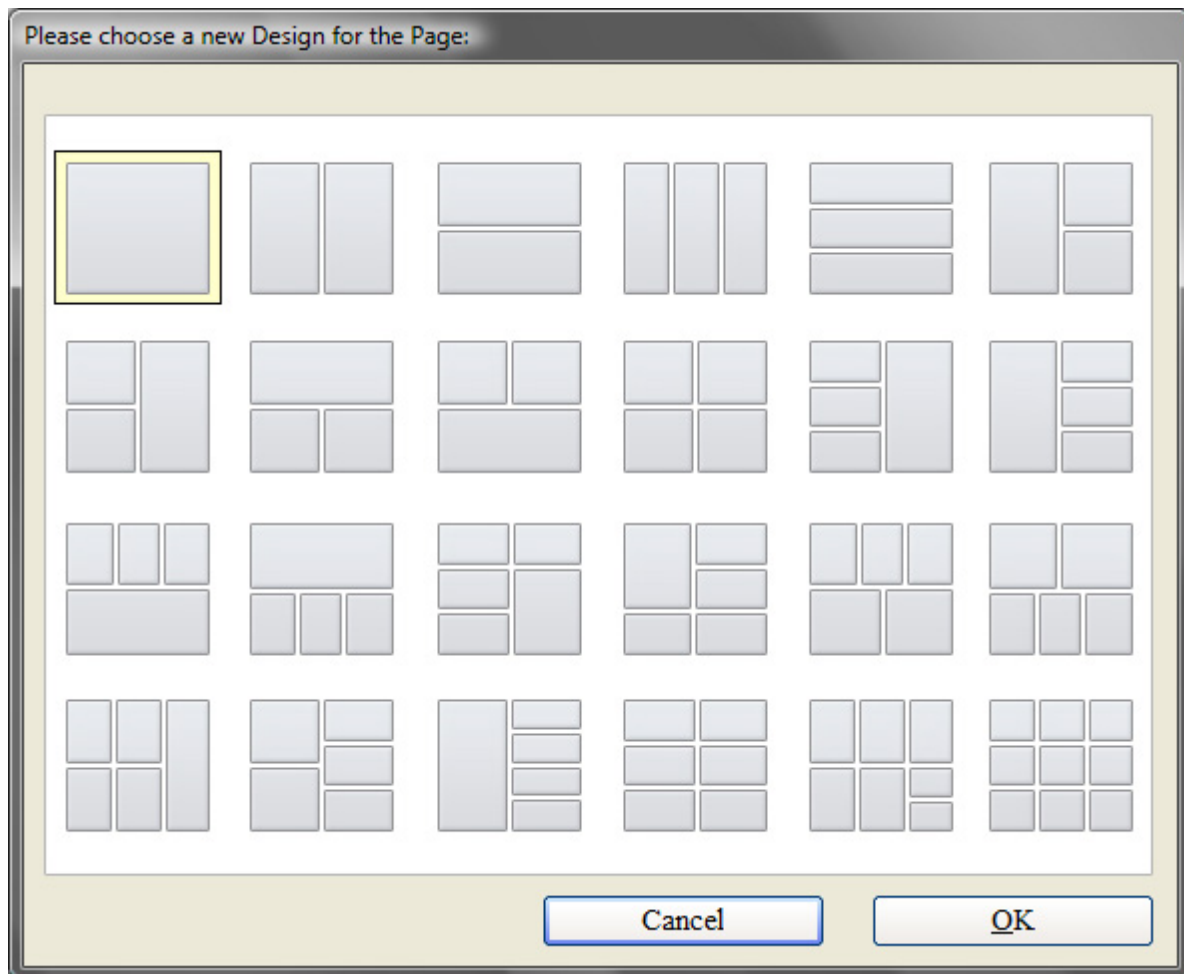
04. Change the field layout of a page

To change the arrangement of the text fields, you can:

- Change the page layout
- Use the Freeform mode (next chapter!)

To change the **page** layout, right click on a page name in the tab bar below. Select **Page Design** 

These are the arrangements for page layout:

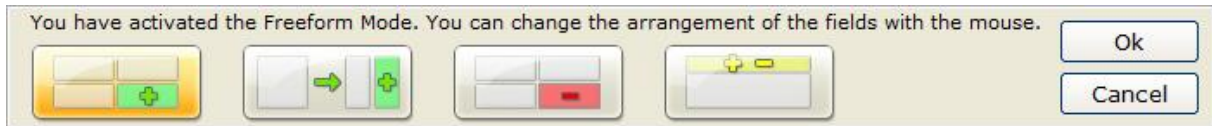


05. Free field arrangement (Freeform Mode)

Text fields can be arranged completely free.

Click on this icon  (or key **F5**) to start the **Freeform mode**.

You will have new icons in this mode:



Here is how the icons operate:



Add a new field to the page (also with the **Insert** key). Be sure there is space for a new field.



Split a selected field in two text fields (key **End**).

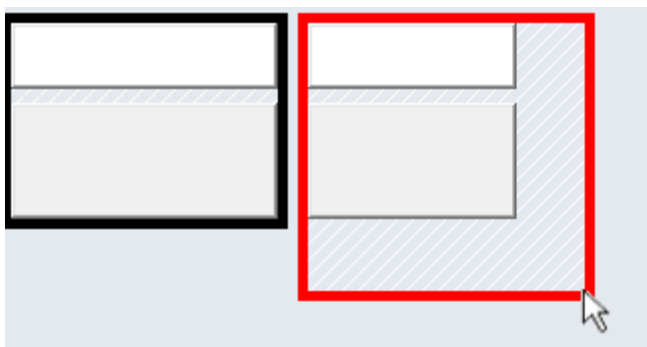


Delete a selected field (key **Del**)



Toggle description line of selected field (key **Home/Pos 1**).

To change the arrangement of the fields use your mouse and drag & drop the text fields with it.



To resize text fields, click at a boarder, hold the mouse button and move the mouse around.

You can exit the Freeform mode with the buttons **Ok** or **Cancel** – you can alternatively use the keys **Return** or **ESC**.

Keyboard support

Use the keyboard in the Freeform mode: E.g. key sequence **F5 - Insert - Return** comes in handy to add a new field very fast.

06. Categories

If you click on a category button with the right mouse button, you can choose some useful actions from the menu. You can rename it, delete it, change color, open the print preview and more.

Move a category

You can move the selected category up or down. You can also change the sequence of the categories with drag & drop of the mouse.

Move a category into a different column

You can drag & drop a category below or above an arrow to move it to a different column.

07. Save

Notesbrowser saves automatic, if you:

- click on this icon  or press **CTRL + S**
- exit Notesbrowser (also at shutdown of Windows)
- change ore move the category
- minimize Notesbrowser
- open the settings

08. Search

The search is a main feature. It is very fast and direct: Enter some letters of what you look for and start the search.



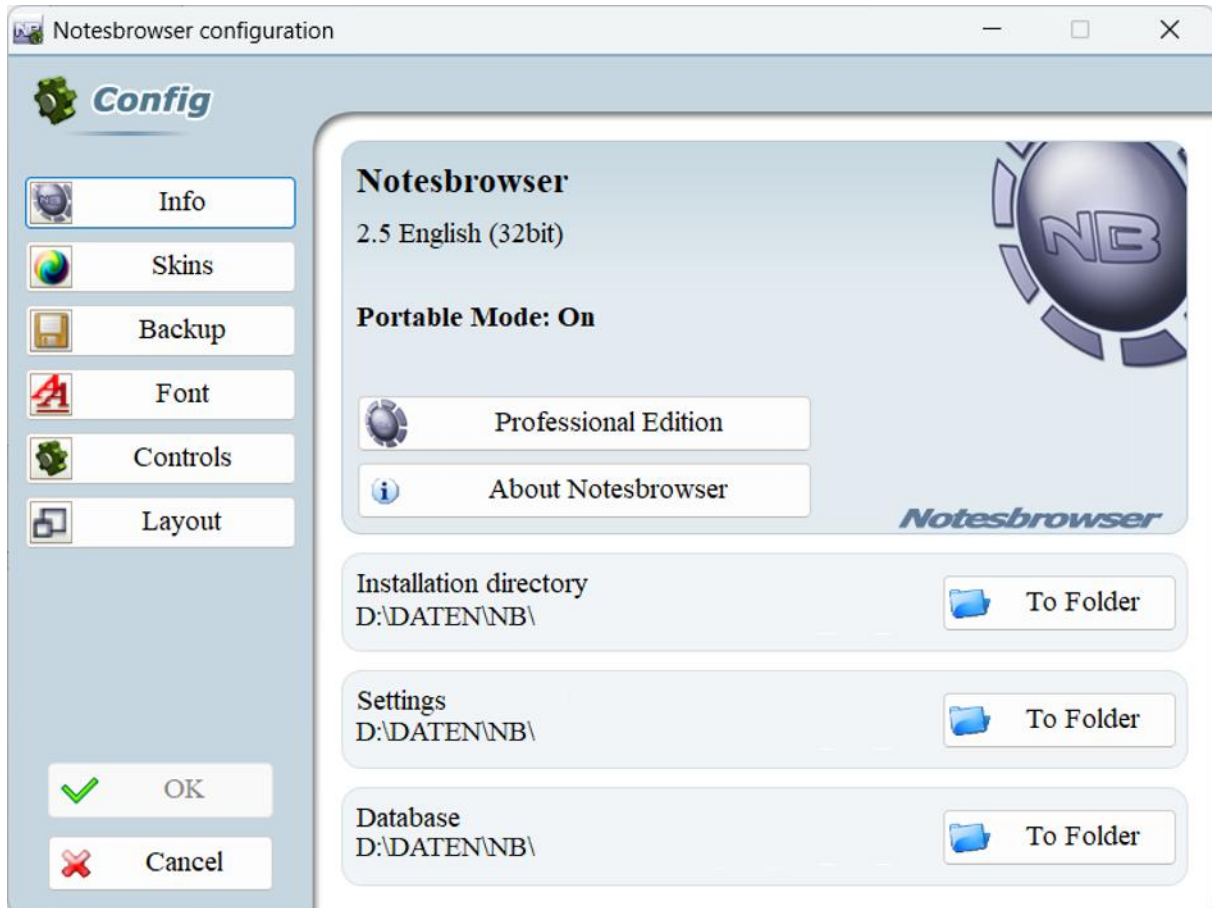
The search box is located at the top of Notesbrowser. It can be accessed with the Key **F4**. With **Return** or key **F3** you can search subsequently! To stop a running search press **ESC**.

At the end of the search the page will be opened where the search was started. If the search was not successful, the text in the search box is red.

09. The settings



With a click on the settings icon (key **F10**) you open the settings of Notesbrowser:



On the left side you can choose the detail pages of the settings:

Settings: Info

On the info page you can see the Notesbrowser Version, installation path, the settings path and the database path.

Settings: Skins

You can select a **Skin**, this is how the surface of Notesbrowser looks.

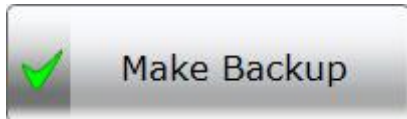
You can download new skins from our homepage. Skins have to be unpacked and every skin needs to be in a single folder below the Notesbrowser\Skins path.

Settings: Backup

You can backup and also recover your database here!

Backup

Select a backup path and click this button. Your database will be copied to the backup path location.



Recover

If you have lost your database, choose the backup path where your backup is located and click the recover button. The database will be copied from the backup to the database folder.



Usually, you will not need to recover if you have accidentally deleted some text. With **CTRL + Z** (undo) you can undo many actions.

You often also don't want to recover the whole database. If you want to recover only single categories, please read in our Forum how to do this!

Also look at chapter 14 for more information.

Settings: Font

You can select the global font. It is always possible to have more than one font in the text fields, but the global font can be used to reset text with **CTRL + N** or **CTRL + Shift + V** and also will be used in empty text fields.

Font size

If you select **Automatic**, the font size will be calculated depending on the Notesbrowser window size and your screen resolution. Adjust this if a particular font is too small or too big for you.

Settings: Controls

Show window on top

Choose this to have Notesbrowser float in the foreground above other programs.

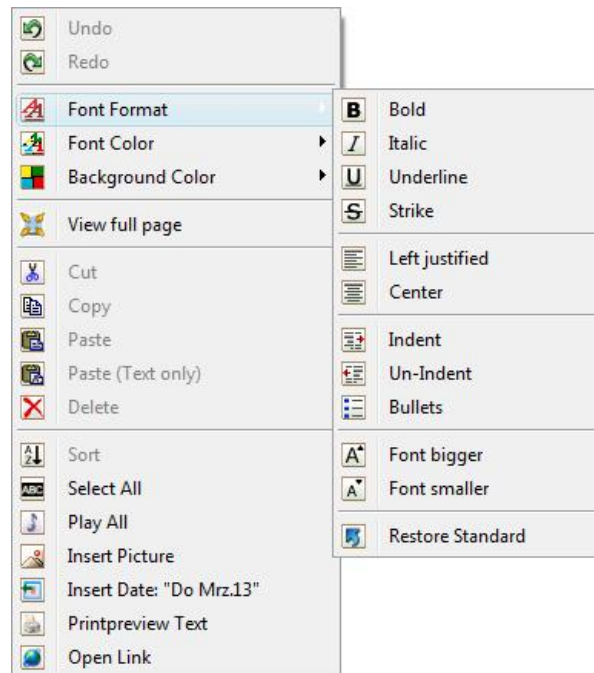
Settings: Layout

Word wrap

The word wrap wraps text lines in all text fields.

10. The right click menus

If you click in a text field with the right mouse button, you have some menu actions you can select from:



There are more right click menu with many actions in different areas of Notesbrowser.

Here is an overview over all right click menus

Right click on:

In text fields
Border (everywhere) & Symbol

On a page tab button
Category button

Menu actions:

Formatting, print field...
Help, configuration,
configure skins...
Rename, Freeform, page layout...
Delete, print, change color...

In some context menus the actions are slightly different, e.g. there are different ways to print: From the text field you can print a single text field, from the page menu a single page and from the category menu all pages.

11. Print

With the print preview icon from the title bar you can see a print preview of the selected category.

The text you can see is generated from your notes and can be edited in the print preview. Trick: if you don't want to print everything: Just delete what you don't need from the print preview and then print.

From the text field right click menu you can print a single text field, from the page menu a single page and from the category menu all pages.

12. Internet- und program links

Internet bookmarks can be managed inside Notesbrowser. Just copy the internet link in Notesbrowser, write some comments and you can click on it to launch the link in your browser. You can make different bookmark categories easily.

You can also click on email addresses or file links.

13. Tables

Tables can be copied into Notesbrowser, e.g. from Excel or Word. Notesbrowser does not support creation of tables and supports them only basically.

You can press **Return** in a Tables last row to add a new row.

To change the columns, you need to copy the table to a different program and the changed table back.

14. Backup and recover

Backup

If your **Notesbrowser** database grows, you will face the problem that you don't want to lose all your information with a crash of your hard drive or Windows.

For this reason, **Notesbrowser** offers three features:

- auto saves your notes
- every **category** will be stored in a single file
- has an inbuilt backup and recovery facility (not available in **Notesbrowser Editor** and **Notesbrowser Lite**)

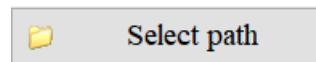
The backup is already inbuilt so you don't have to use another tool.



To make a full backup of all your notes and settings all you have to do is press **F9** or click on the backup icon.

We recommend that you change the backup path in the configurations (**F10**) to another physical hard drive, if you have two. This is because you can lose a whole hard drive in the worst case. But rarely will you lose two hard drives at the same time.

You can change the **Backup path** with the button



The **Notesbrowser** database is very small so that you can back it up to an USB stick - we recommend this on a weekly basis.

Recover

Use the recover feature if you have lost your database and need to recover your data from a previously made backup.

Note: We recommend looking into the Notesbrowser Forum for some very detailed explanation how to restore a database if you have lost parts of the database or are not sure what is happening. Please look in the F.A.Q. section of the forum. The information there is updated often to answer all common questions, and we get a lot of questions about database, backup and restore. You should know what you are doing, or you may destroy your database and backups if you make a mistake:

www.notesbrowser.com/forum/

Recover if you have lost your whole database

- 1) Go to the configurations (**F10**)
- 2) Go to the backup page.
- 3) Click on **Select path** to choose the path where your backup is located
- 4) Click on the **Restore** button
- 5) If you confirm, the database from the selected path is copied to the Notesbrowser path
- 6) Notesbrowser will be restarted with the restored database already loaded

If you want to recover only parts of your database

If you want to recover only a single or a few categories of your database, you have to do this manually **on file basis**.

Attention: The following instructions are for experienced users only!

First you should open two Windows Explorers, one with the Notesbrowser database folder and the other one with the backup folder.

Notesbrowser files are basically **text files** with some formatting. Each category is saved in a single file (see chapter [Tips and Tricks](#)).

It is recommended to use the **Notesbrowser Editor** to open categories you want to look at. Use the **Notesbrowser Editor** with the **setting** that allows multiple instances.

Open the same category from the Notesbrowser database folder and also from the backup folder to compare them.

To compare two categories directly on file basis and see even small changes, use a text compare tool like the free WinMerge (<http://www.winmerge.org>).

With the above mentioned methods you can spot changes and copy back every change you want from the backup folder to the Notesbrowser folder.

Attention:

The sequence of categories and pages can be changed in Notesbrowser and this is also reflected in the files!

Example: If you compare the actual category files with your backup files but you have moved categories in its sequence after you made the backup, the files where the content is stored may have changed and have a different name. For example, the first category (that on the top) is saved in this file:

01-01-Category.nbw

If you have moved the category to the second position, the content will be saved in **01-02-Category.nbw**

The same applies if you moved or deleted **pages** inside of a category – the pages in a category are always saved in the sequence they are in the category. If you compare the same category but later have changes the sequence, the sequence of the file of the backup may be different.

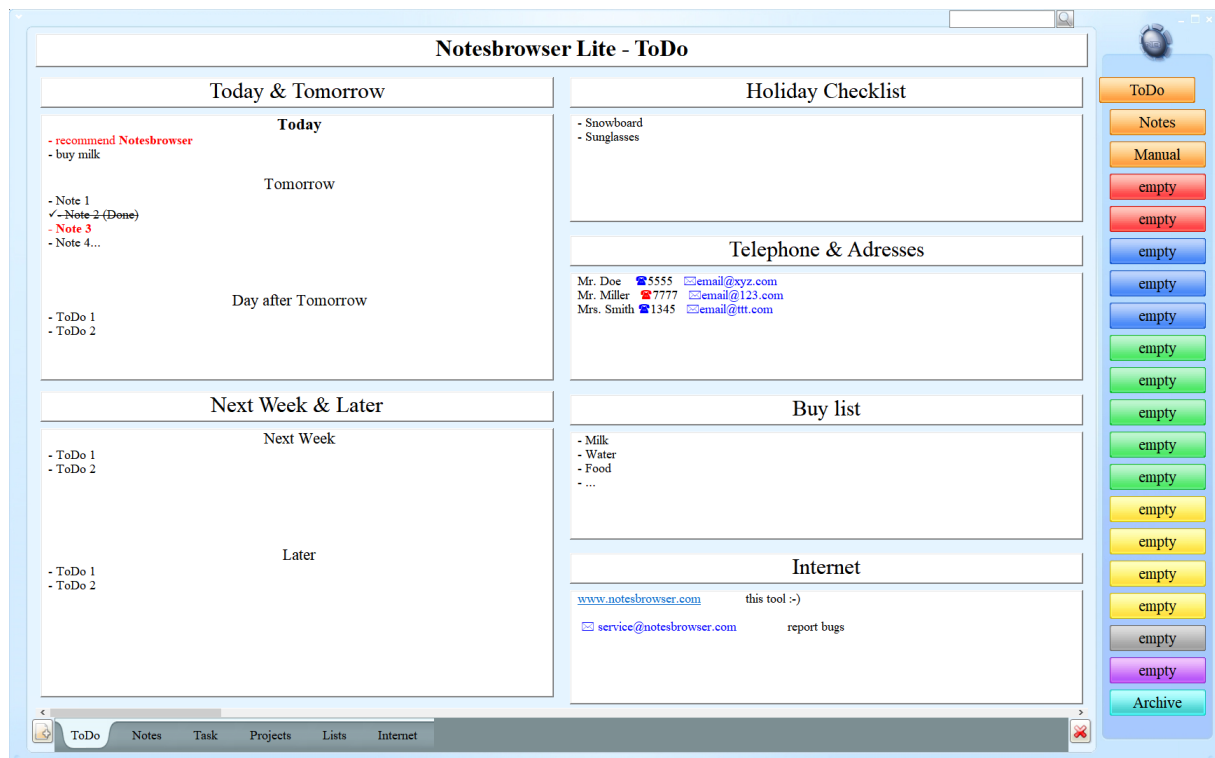
15. Notesbrowser Lite

Notesbrowser Lite is a lightweight version of **Notesbrowser**:

www.notesbrowser.com/en/lite

Notesbrowser Lite is reduced to notes keeping and organizing. There is no skins and no inbuilt backup. Only 20 categories are supported. It is a small program that loads very fast.

Notesbrowser Lite is faster and smaller than Notesbrowser:



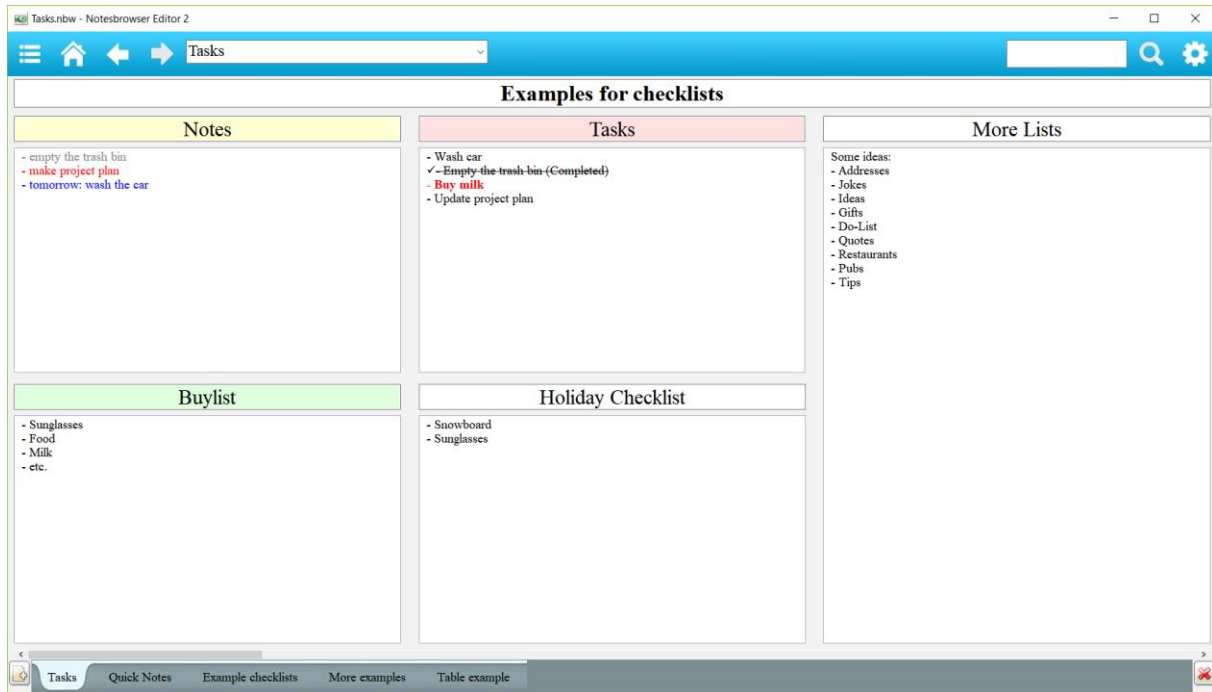
While Notesbrowser offers a lot of space, **Notesbrowser Lite** is more basic but can be used for e.g. current running projects and tasks.

Both programs can be combined very well, for example you could use:

- 1) Notesbrowser **only** for as a filing system and information and topic repository
- 2) Notesbrowser Lite consequently **only** for tasks and To-dos

16. Notesbrowser Editor

Notesbrowser Editor works like a text editor with some features of a browser. But instead of text files it opens and edits Notesbrowser files (.nbw files).



Because it behaves like a text editor, you will not have problems to understand and use it. It also has features of a **browser**, e.g. you can choose a homepage and you have back and forward buttons.

The Editor is a perfect companion for the other Notesbrowser Versions and 100% compatible to **Notesbrowser** and **Notesbrowser Lite**.

It's very lightweight - even lighter than **Notesbrowser Lite** - and has only basic features. It starts instantly and needs nearly no resources.

It includes the **Freeform Mode**. This means you can edit and arrange text fields.

Important features:

- Notesbrowser Editor can only open a single category (one single Notesbrowser file) at a time and does not have a column of categories on the right side.
- It can open Notesbrowser files everywhere on your PC, flash drive or network location (UNC paths are supported).
- Supports drag & drop: Drag a Notesbrowser file on the editor and it will open it. There is also an 'open file dialog'.

- You can associate the editor with .nbw files (Notesbrowser files) and then you can open all Notesbrowser files just with a double click.
- Remembers the last file and location and opens it.
- Single file, no installation necessary. Just unzip it!

Here are more information:

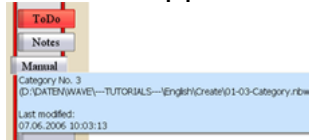
www.notesbrowser.com/editor

17. Tipps and Tricks

Where does Notesbrowser save my data?

In the **configurations** on the **Info** page is a good overview.

Also, to find out where a category file is located, move the mouse over a category button, and a hint box will appear:



In the box you can see where the category is saved in, for example:
C:\Documents\Notesbrowser\01-03-Category.nbw

You can also right click on the category and select **Open folder here** to open the file explorer. It will open the folder with the category file selected. This also works in **Notesbrowser Lite**.

In **Notesbrowser Editor** you can select this feature from the right click menu.

Every category has its own file. They are all in the same folder. All other data like the configuration are stored in the same folder in **XML** files.

Columns 2 and 3 are saved in the files **02-01-Category.nbw** to **03-20-Category.nbw**

Notesbrowser on an USB flash drive

Notesbrowser, **Notesbrowser Lite** and **Notesbrowser Editor** can be used from a flash drive and started everywhere.

Read more in **chapter 02** because this is a decision you should make at installation time (but you can change it later).

Command line parameter

You can run Notesbrowser with the parameter **"-m"**. If you do this, Notesbrowser will start minimized. This makes sense if you use this for a link in the startup folder. The link properties will have an entry like this in the target field:

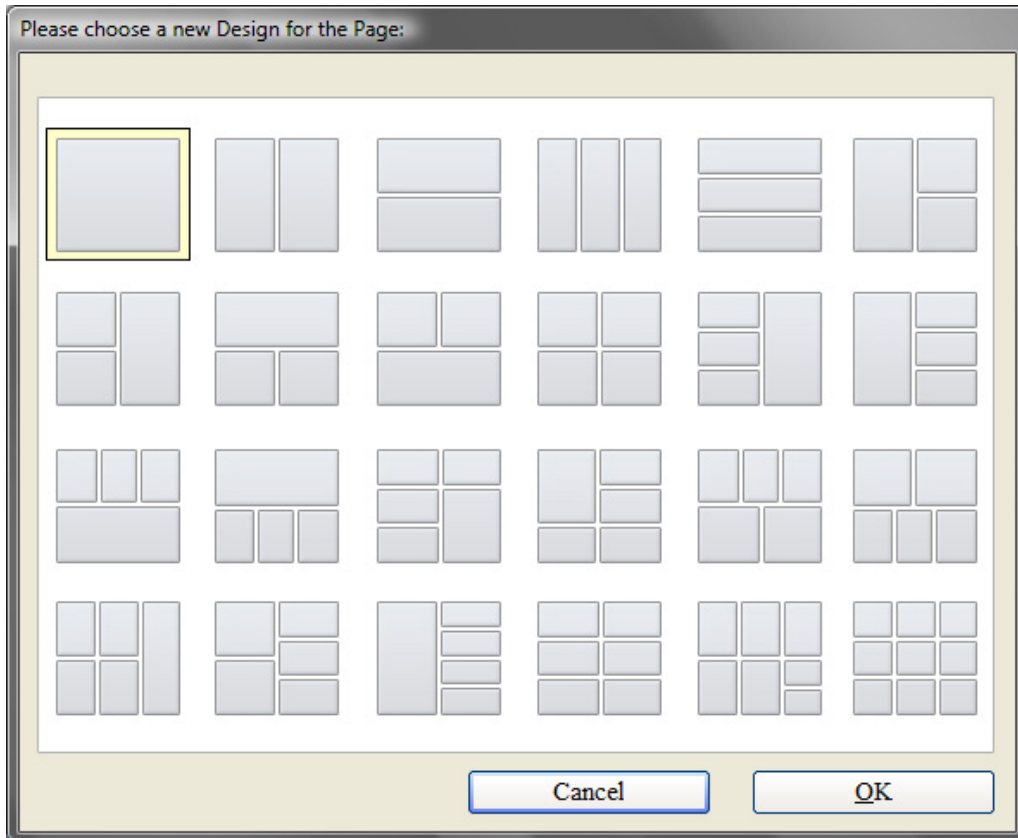
C:\Program Files\Notesbrowser\notesbrowser.exe -m

The Notesbrowser setup normally creates this link. If you don't want Notesbrowser to start on every system boot, all you will have to do is delete the link from the startup folder.

18. Differences Notesbrowser /Lite / Editor Editions

Notesbrowser Lite and **Notesbrowser Editor** offer:

- Completely free field arrangement  with the Freeform Mode (easy to use)
- layouts for pages:



- Up to **50 pages** per category 

Notesbrowser offers **all features** plus some new features:

- More space: 3 columns - 60 categories  

- **Skins**, e.g.:



19. Report bugs

Notesbrowser is very stable. We spend many years to make it that reliable.

But there is no program that is completely free of bugs.

So, as always with computers, use the backup feature. Also **update** to new Notesbrowser versions that are released.

You can also report bugs in our free Notesbrowser forum. If you do so, please always report the version, windows version and exact steps to reproduce the bug.

www.notesbrowser.com/forum

You can also suggest new features.

20. Appendix A: Keyboard controls

General

ESC	Exit or minimize Notesbrowser (adjustable)
F1	Opens the help
F2	Rename (Category or page, the last one that was active)
F3 or ALT + F	Continues a started search (you can stop it with ESC)
F4	Starts the search (activates the search box)
F5	Freeform Mode (free arrangement of fields)
ALT + F4	Exit program
F11 (adjustable)	Notesbrowser appears in the foreground (Hotkey feature)
F12	Minimize window very useful together with F11)
CTRL + S	Saves the actual category. When Notesbrowser saves the * before the program title disappears.
ALT + T	Toggles Stay on top on/off You can also right mouse click on the Notesbrowser logo to turn this mode on (not in Notesbrowser Editor since there is no logo). It will be indicated with a changed upper left menu icon  and the Notesbrowser window will always remain in the foreground)
ALT + Enter	Turn Full Screen Mode on/off (Maximizes the program)
CTRL + W	Delete actual page
CTRL + T	Insert a new page
CTRL + SHIFT + C	Copy the actual page (can be inserted with CTRL + V)

Keys in text fields

CTRL + C	Copy text
CTRL + X	Cut text
CTRL + V	Insert text (or category or page if copied)
CTRL + SHIFT + V	Insert text only (without formatting)
CTRL + Z	Undo
CTRL + A	Select all text
CTRL + B	Bold
CTRL + I	Italic
CTRL + U	Underline
CTRL + D	Strikeout
CTRL + N	Clears all formatting of selected text (very useful!)
CTRL + +	Makes font bigger
CTRL + -	Makes font smaller
CTRL + TAB	Indent selected text
CTRL + SHIFT + TAB	Un-Indent selected text
CTRL + SHIFT + L	Add bullets to line, press more than once to switch to numbers
CTRL + R	Colors text red
CTRL + G	Colors text grey

CTRL + SHIFT + R	Background color is changed to light red
CTRL + SHIFT + G	Background color is changed to grey
CTRL + ALT + ↑↓	Move category up/down
CTRL + ALT + ←→	Move page left/right
CTRL + Space	Maximizes a small text field for easier editing, or minimizes it back

Navigation

CTRL + 1	Switch to column 1
CTRL + 2	Switch to column 2
CTRL + 3	Switch to column 3
CTRL + Arrow up ↑	Switch to category above
CTRL + Arrow down ↓	Switch to category below
ALT + Arrow ←	Switch to page left of selected
ALT + Arrow →	Switch to page right of selected
Enter	Switch from the description line to the field below it or if a text search is ongoing, continue the running search
SHIFT + Enter	Switch from the text field to the description line
TAB	In a field description line: Switch to the next description line of the field on a page
SHIFT + TAB	In a field description line: Switch back to the previous description line
All Arrow keys ↑↓←→	You can move between text fields and description lines

Navigation only in Notesbrowser Editor

CTRL or ALT + ↑	Forward like in a Browser (Next category)
CTRL or ALT + ↓	Back like in a Browser (Previous category)

Keys only in Notesbrowser

CTRL + F2	Toggles the icon bar
F6 or CTRL + P	Print preview
F9	Immediately makes a Backup of the Notesbrowser database
F10	Opens the Configuration

Keys in the Freeform Mode

Insert	in the Freeform-Mode: Insert a new field
End	in the Freeform-Mode: Split a selected field
Delete (Del)	in the Freeform-Mode: Delete a selected field

Useful key combinations: Move content of a text field

With three key combinations you can easily move all text between two text fields:

1. Press **CTRL + A** to select a field
2. Press **CTRL + X** to cut it
3. Press **CTRL + V** to insert the text into another field!

Key combination: clear text formatting:

With **CTRL + N** you can delete most of the formatting of text you have selected. But some formatting cannot be deleted if they have to do with paragraph formatting. Here is a trick to get rid of these formatting:

1. Select some text with formatting
2. Cut the text with **CTRL + X**
3. Insert it again with **CTRL + SHIFT + V**