Spell the right word

MACQUARIE WORDGENIUS REFERENCE LIBRARY

The Macquarie WordGenius Reference Library is a very handy tool when you’re using an application that supports drag-and-drop, for example Microsoft Office. WordGenius is a dictionary, thesaurus and spellchecker on one disc that makes it quick and easy for you to correct your documents without ever having to pick up a dictionary.

With a drag-on feature, you can drag words from any Microsoft application onto the Macquarie drag-on that will either define or give you the synonym/antonym of the word depending on whether you’re using the dictionary or thesaurus. The added bonus of a spellchecker removes all Americanisms from your documents that Microsoft applications normally don’t pick up. It’s a thorough program that is perfect for all Australians.

Installation is quick and easy, taking no more than a few seconds each. Just by simply clicking on the one you want installed and follow the instructions by entering your name and authorisation key — that’s it! Although when installing spellchecker you must follow 11 steps for the changes to take effect. Once installed, the Macquarie dictionary and thesaurus image, called a drag-on, appears at the corner of your desktop. Although it’s a little annoying to have to install each section separately — dictionary, thesaurus and spellchecker. It would’ve been a lot easier to have a button that does all three at once, but seeing as it only takes a few seconds to install each program it’s a minor issue.

When installing spellchecker you must ensure that all Microsoft applications are closed. Once installed, you open up the Microsoft application, for example Microsoft Word, and change the language by going into Tools-Language then selecting English (Australia) and click on Default. The spellchecker corrected all the Americanisms that Word would normally accept. Once you’ve selected the default, all future documents will be corrected with the Macquarie spellchecker, except for documents that were created before it was installed. This can be remedied by going to Tools and going through the steps mentioned previously for each document.

There are various ways of using the dictionary and thesaurus, other than the drag-on tool there is also the standard way of looking up a dictionary by entering the word you want defined, but with added bonuses — such as a pronunciation assistant that pronounces the word for you; a reverse dictionary that will come up with the word appearing in the definition rather than the headword; Australian slang definitions, and if you’re not too sure of the spelling of a word, you can type in question marks in place of the unknown letters (great for puzzles!) or an asterisk in front of or behind a prefix or suffix.

The drag-on boxes could become frustrating after a while. It unfortunately always sits above every program that has a drag-and-drop ability. It even appears above a game of solitaire, widgets, iTunes and MSN messenger, but luckily it does not appear on full screen games. However, it’s a small annoyance for such an efficient tool and can easily be removed by right-clicking and selecting Exit. You can also customise the drag-on to be small, medium or large. The smallest size is a measly 6x8mm and the large 18x25mm. Or go one-step further by customising your own drag-on image which simply has to be in bitmap format.

Macquarie WordGenius Reference Library is incredibly easy to use and doesn’t take up that much space on your hard drive (13MB). You will no longer have to flip through another dictionary ever again. Very useful for everyday use. It takes Word’s spellchecker, thesaurus and dictionary one-step further, plus it’s in Australian English. What more could you ask for?

IRENE MCKNIE

MACQUARIE WORDGENIUS REFERENCE LIBRARY

PRICE $75.95

VENDOR Eurofield Information Solutions

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URL www.wordgenius.com.au

SPECIFICATIONS Thesaurus and Dictionary: Any Windows from Windows 95 to Windows XP with all Windows applications, minimum of 13MB free space; Spellchecker: Microsoft Office program from Office 2000 onwards, including Office XP and Office 2003.