

GNU Aspell



maintained by [Kevin Atkinson](mailto:kevina@gnu.org) (kevina@gnu.org)



GNU Aspell is a Free and Open Source spell checker designed to eventually replace Ispell. It can either be used as a library or as an independent spell checker. Its main feature is that it does a superior job of suggesting possible replacements for a misspelled word than just about any other spell checker out there for the English language. Unlike Ispell, Aspell can also easily check documents in UTF-8 without having to use a special dictionary. Aspell will also do its best to respect the current locale setting. Other advantages over Ispell include support for using multiple dictionaries at once and intelligently handling personal dictionaries when more than one Aspell process is open at once.

Try it out for your self using the [Aspell Spell Helper](#) or see some [Test Results](#) Comparing Aspell with other spell checkers.

Quick Links

- Latest Version: [GNU Aspell 0.60.4](#) (Released October, 2005)
- Available [Dictionaries](#) for GNU Aspell.
- <ftp.gnu.org:/gnu/aspell> - For other versions. Or use a [mirror](#)
- [Manual](#)
- [Supported Languages](#)
- [Devel Docs](#)
- [Mailing Lists](#)
- [Sourceforge Tracker](#) - For Bug Reporting, Patches, and Feature Requests
- [CVS Information](#)
- [Savannah Project Page](#)
- [Sourceforge Project Page](#)
- [The Aspell textual domain](#) at the Translation Project
- [Donate](#)

- Previous Version: [0.50.5](#) (Released Feb, 2004)
- 0.50.5 [Manual](#)
- 0.50.5 [Devel Docs](#)

- [Debian Packages](#)
- [Windows Port](#)
- [Information on Aspell 0.33.7 and Pspell.](#)

News

January 19, 2005

New Aspell Dictionaries: gu lt uz. [More](#).

October 19, 2005

GNU Aspell 0.60.4 is now available. This is primary a bug fix release. [More](#).

November 7, 2004

MS Visual C++ Port Now Available for Aspell 0.60 at <ftp.gnu.org/gnu/aspell>. [More](#)

August 27, 2004

GNU Aspell 0.60 is now available. The two major changes in this release, as compared to 0.50.5, are support for affix compression and better Unicode support. [More](#).

April 15, 2004

Thanks to Joseph Blough a small Win32/Linux GUI for Aspell is now available. [More](#).

March 25, 2004

Mirror for czyborra.com/charsets now available.

[Older News](#)

Getting

The latest version of GNU Aspell is 0.60.4. You can find it at <ftp.gnu.org/gnu/aspell> or at a GNU [mirror](#) site. You will also need to download at least one dictionary which can be found at the same location.

If you are looking for Aspell 0.33.7, Pspell, or dictionaries for Aspell 0.33.7 go [here](#).

A patch for ispell.el for improved Aspell support also [available](#). This patch will notify aspell of the replacements one makes so it can improve the suggestion list in the future. A more involved patch can be found [here](#) This one also adds UTF-8 support but will only apply cleanly to Ispell.el 3.7 beta.

Support

Unofficial support for GNU Aspell can be found at the [aspell-user](#) mailing list. You do not need to be subscribed in order to post, however if you don't subscribe your post will need to be approved. The list mailing address is aspell-user@gnu.org. Please direct all problems you have with Aspell to this list and not directly to Kevin.

Additional Information

- [Manual](#)
- [Devel Docs](#)
- [Brave GNU World Questioner](#) - More info than you probably wanted to know about GNU Aspell.
- [Administrative Changes](#) Due to the Release of GNU Aspell 0.50
- [Changes in GNU Aspell 0.50 important to a Packager](#).

Language Bindings

- Perl: [Text::Aspell](#)
- Ruby: [Raspell](#)
- PHP: Uses the old Pspell interface, [Manual](#)

Getting Involved

The easiest thing you can do help out is to try GNU Aspell out and report bugs or even better submit patches to fix problems. Please use the [Sourceforge](#) tools to report bugs and submit patches.

If you are interested in following the latest developments be sure and subscribe to the [aspell-announce](#) mailing list. All posts to aspell-announce also go to aspell-user and aspell-devel so there is no need to subscribe to this list if you are already subscribed to one of the others.

If you are a fairly regular user of Aspell consider subscribing to the [aspell-user](#) mailing list to help other users out with their problems.

If you are interested in helping with the development of Aspell or have an idea you would like to discuss post it to the [aspell-devel](#) mailing list. The aspell-devel mailing list is meant for people interested in the development of

the actual Aspell utility/library. If you have a question about how to use the Aspell library please post to the [aspell-user mailing list](#).

Donating

If you wish to support Aspell consider [donating](#). Your donation will improve Aspell by encouraging Kevin Atkinson, the main developer of Aspell, to continue to spend his time developing Aspell. Without your support Aspell may go into another period of non-development as was the case for most of 2003.

To Do

Lots of jobs remain to be done. Unfortunately, I do not have the time to do all so if you are interested in helping me with one of these tasks please email me at kevina@gnu.org. Good C++ skills are needed for most of these tasks involving coding.

Things that need to be done

These items need to be done before I consider Aspell finished. If you are interested in helping me with one of these tasks please email me. Good C++ skills are needed for most of these tasks involving coding.

- Create a generic filter to handle multi-character letters such as "a or \ "a for ä. This filter should make use of the already existing normalization code if possible.
- Make Aspell **Thread safe**. Even though Aspell itself is not multi-threaded I would like it to be thread safe so that it can be used by multi-threaded programs. There are several areas of Aspell that are potentially thread unsafe (such as accessing a global pool) and several classes which have the potential of being used by more than one thread (such as the personal dictionary). *[In Progress]*.
- Enhance **ispell.el** so that it will work better with GNU Aspell. *[In Progress]*.
- Clean up copyright notices and bring the Aspell package up to **GNU Standards**. *[In Progress]*.

Things I would like to get done

I would like to get these done. However, I may still consider Aspell finished with out. They will probably eventually get implemented. However, I could still use help with them.

- Better support for **compound words**. The support for *conditional* compound words found in Aspell versions 0.50 and earlier is no longer available since no one seems to be using it. Support for *unconditional* compound words will still be available. See [Compound Words](#).
- Be able to accept **words with spaces in them** as many languages have words, such as a word in a foreign phrase, which only make sense when followed by other words. See [Words With Symbols in Them](#).
- Reorganize manual to make it easier to understand and to make it possible to break out useful man pages.
- Support **soundslike lookup with affix compression**. I think it is possible, although I don't know how effective it will be. The basic idea is to affix compress the soundslike codes and then match the codes up with affix compressed words. If you are interested, email aspell-devel@gnu.org, and I will explain it in more detail.
- Use Lawrence Philips' new **Double Metaphone algorithm**. See <http://aspell.net/metaphone/>. The main task involved here is converting the algorithm into table form. This will take some time but there is no real programming experience required. If you want to help with Aspell but don't have any real programming experience, this would be a great place to start.
- Rank suggestions based on **frequency information**. Both global frequency and document specific frequency can be used. The latter will require that the whole document be made available to the spell checker. Also use frequency information to flag words which are found in the dictionary but not in common usage, and thus might not be what was intended.
- Support a "**dual-script**" **mode** where Aspell can use a separate dictionary depending on which script it detects the current word in, the two dictionaries can have nothing in common, ie an English one and a Russian one for example. This will *not* support two languages that use the same script as that is a lot more complicated. For example if the word is misspelled which dictionary should it use for the suggestions?
- Write a **GUI** for the aspell utility. Ideally it should be able to do everything the Aspell utility can do and not just be able to spell check a document.
- Develop a **more powerful C API** for Aspell. Ideally this API should allow one to perform all the tasks the Aspell utility can do. This included the ability to check whole documents, and create dictionaries, among

other things.

- Create a **C++ interface** for Aspell, possibly on top of the C one.

Sub Projects

- Lawrence Philips' [\(Double\) Metaphone Algorithm](#)
 - [SCOWL \(Spell Checker Oriented Word Lists\) and Friends](#)
 - czyborra.com/charsets mirror.
-

Copyright (C) 2004 Kevin Atkinson (kevina@gnu.org). Verbatim copying and distribution of this entire article is permitted in any medium, provided this notice is preserved.

Be sure to check out my [home page](#).

