

# Quick Guide

Updated for  
Version 2.5



[www.visual-concept.co.uk](http://www.visual-concept.co.uk)

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# Welcome

## Welcome to Visual Concept

Congratulations on choosing Visual Concept - the ultimate tool for developing and expressing ideas and supporting all kinds of thinking processes.

In the new knowledge era, the ability to develop meaning and access knowledge is becoming increasingly vital. With some practice and support, Visual Concept provides you the facility to develop your thinking capacity and harness the knowledge that is vital to your effectiveness.

This Quick Guide provides some basic information to support you in getting up and running.

Please also refer to the on-line help and tutorials.

If you need any help then please get in touch- you'll find our contact details at the back of this guide.

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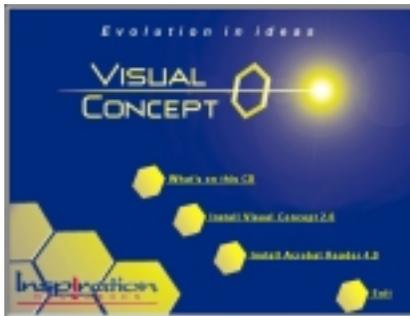
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# Installing VC

## Installing Visual Concept

Close down all applications running on your PC, including virus checkers etc. To do this, use the CTRL+ALT+DEL command to evoke the 'Close Program' dialog from where you can carefully select and close those applications that are running in the background. All that should remain running are 'Explorer' and 'Systray'

Insert the install CD ROM in your CD drive and wait a few seconds for the 'Start' screen to appear.



**The Visual Concept Start Screen**  
Click the 'next' button on the 1st screen then 'Install Visual Concept [ver. no]'

The on-screen prompts will guide you through the installation process.

Once Visual Concept is installed you can return to the CD start screen find out about VC Viewer and browse the other content of the CD, including related services from Inspiration Resources and Centre for Management Creativity. For your convenience, you can also install the latest version of Acrobat Reader.

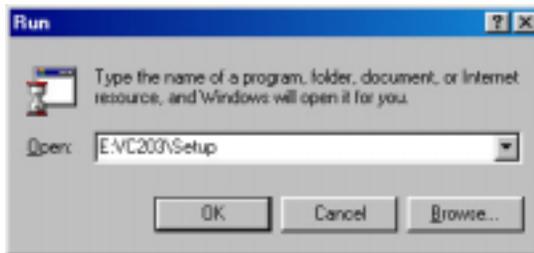
## Important

Once the 'Successful Install' screen appears, be sure to close down the start screen, which will be minimised in your Windows taskbar, before removing the CD ROM from your CD ROM drive. You should also restart your machine so that your virus protection software is re-launched.

## If the Visual Concept start screen does not appear

If the start screen does not appear, then choose 'Run' from the Windows 'Start' menu and type 'E:Start', where 'E' is the letter assigned to your CD-ROM drive.

If the 'Start' screen still fails to appear, it is possibly because your version of Internet Explorer or alternative web browser is not compatible with the 'start' screen. This does not prevent you from successfully installing Visual Concept. Simply return to choosing 'Run' from the Windows 'Start' menu and type 'E:VC203\Setup' where 'E' is the letter assigned to your CD-ROM drive.



### The 'Run' Command

Install Visual Concept using the run command if the CD fails to auto-start.

## How to start Visual Concept

Once Visual Concept is successfully installed you are able to run the Visual Concept application.



From the Windows 'Start' menu, choose 'Programs' and then, from the 'Visual Concept [ver no]' folder, choose Visual Concept

Now either refer to the next section of this guide, **Basics of Visual Concept**, or go straight to Tutorial 1 for a thorough, step-by-step guide to making the most of your new resource.

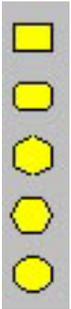
To access the Tutorials, Choose 'Tutorial..' from the Visual Concept 'Help' menu.

The tutorials are well worth the time you will need to work through them.

# Basics for VC

## Basics for Visual Concept

### Creating Idea objects



On the top right-hand side of the screen you'll find a toolbar with some basic yellow shapes on it. These are used as 'physical' representations of your ideas, issues, parts of a process etc.

You can 'drop' these on the modelling area by left-clicking your mouse cursor on them, then left clicking the modelling area.

### Writing on objects & entering notes



You can double left-click the objects you have dropped to enter text and notes into them. Or use the text tool.

### Entering ideas quickly



Use the brainstorm mode to rapidly create ideas and show them in a list as you enter.

### Dragging objects

Holding down a left-click on an object and moving the mouse enables you to drag objects around.

### Clustering



You can easily group objects of the same shape by selecting the first object with one left-click then, holding down the SHIFT key on your keyboard, repeatedly left-clicking the rest of the objects you want to group and then clicking the 'Create cluster' tool.

## De-selecting loaded tools



If you find you keep dropping an object or performing some other operation when you're trying to move things around, you may find your cursor is still loaded with a tool. To de-select a tool, click on the Selection tool or press the ESC key on your keyboard.

## Scaling



As you run out of room on your modelling area, alter the scale of your model by clicking the 'scale down' tool.



Use the 'Re-size to encompass all shapes' tool if some of your ideas run off the sides of the modelling area.

## Zooming in and out



There are several tools to enable you to view your work at various degrees of magnification, and an overview window to give you a map-view of what you are looking at in relation to the whole. (The overview window will only be active when you are zoomed in to an aspect smaller than the whole model).

## Right-click for properties

Right clicking any object or the modelling area itself will enable you to edit the properties of an object.

## Defaults



To edit the properties of all the objects and to set Visual Concept up to your preferences, Apply your changed settings in 'Default' options.

## Further Support

Refer to the tutorials, accessible from the Help menu, for comprehensive step-by-step support. The tutorials are also available in Word and Acrobat formats on the installation CD if you want a printed copy.

# Applications for VC

## Main applications for Visual Concept

### Supporting Effective Thinking

Visual Concept supports any kind of thinking process. Use Visual Concept for:

- Planning your time
- Prioritising
- Problem Solving
- Conflict resolution
- Brainstorming
- Creative thinking
- Visioning
- Sorting out the complexities of a project or strategy
- Structuring arguments and hypotheses for effective and clear communication
- Essay and report writing
- Developing meaning

### Systems Design and Architecture

Use Visual Concept to rapidly create and communicate simple outlines for complex systems:

- Websites
- Intranets
- Processes
- procedures
- call handling
- contact management

### **Managing Knowledge, knowledge sharing & Interfacing Systems**

Use Visual Concept as an intuitive front-end using links to access all kinds of data in other applications and on the web or company intranet:

- Any kind of business system!
- Daily routines
- Idea gathering
- Suggestion schemes
- Notice boards

### **Group Process Support and Rapid Capture**

Use Visual Concept to support thinking, shared understanding and efficiently record outcomes from group sessions:

- Brainstorming
- Creating rich pictures
- Capturing the essence of discussions
- Distilling meaning
- Reaching consensus
- Annotating
- Recording minutes in meetings
- Recording models created using Post-its or MagNotes

### **Effective & Dynamic communications**

Use Visual Concept as a superior means of communicating concepts, ideas and the structure of systems by following links to and from different levels of abstraction and detail:

- Communicating a strategy
- Sharing meaning
- Sales presentations
- Induction training

..and any kind of presentation that can benefit from being more dynamic than linear.

You will find aspects of the Visual Concept Tutorials and Help system cover all these applications in one form or other, but if you require further assistance then please contact Inspiration Resources for support.

# Outputs from VC

## Sharing your outputs

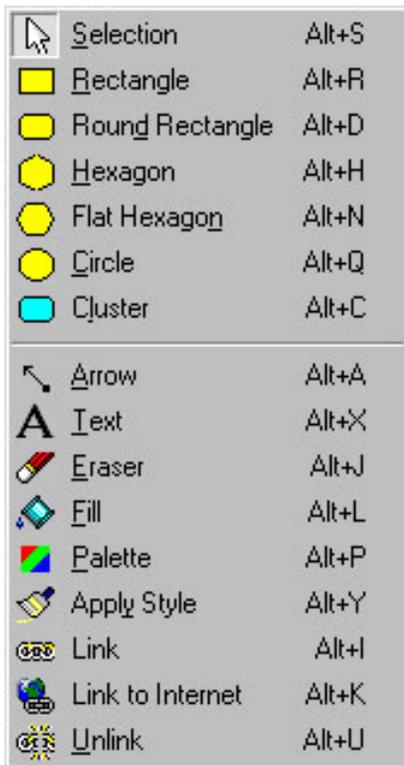
Visual Concept enables you to effectively develop ideas and meaning that you may often need, or want, to share with others. You can:

- Present your work direct from Visual Concept
- Print out models at any scale
- e-mail models or put them on a floppy disc with the free VC Viewer
- Export models to HTM format for posting on websites or intranets
- Save models as pictures and insert them into other applications
- Export text to a Word Processor

You will find aspects of the Visual Concept Tutorials and Help system cover all these methods, but if you require further assistance then please contact Inspiration Resources for support.

# Quick Reference

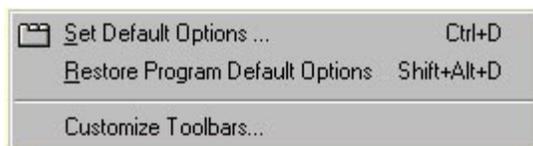
## Tools Menu



Selects & Moves objects, cancels other tools  
left click to drop rectangle objects  
left click to drop rounded rectangle objects  
left click to drop point-up Hexagon objects  
left click to drop flat hexagon objects  
left click to drop circle objects  
Drag to define cluster

Create arrow with Drag from / to object  
left click to enter text on object or page  
left click to delete objects  
left click to apply selected colour  
Reveal colour palette  
Changes shape of selected object to...  
Left click creates link to other files  
Left click creates link to web resource  
Left click to remove link

## Options Menu



Set up Visual Concept to suit you  
Restore settings to their original state  
Add and remove tools from your toolbars

## File Menu

 <b>N</b> ew	Ctrl+N
New From Template...	
 <b>O</b> pen...	Ctrl+O
Edit Template...	
<b>C</b> lose	Ctrl+F4
 <b>S</b> ave	Ctrl+S
Save As...	
Save As Template...	
Save As Text File...	
 Save As Picture...	
 Save As HTML...	
Import Text File...	
 Export to Word processor	
 Send by e-mail...	
 Summary Info...	Ctrl+I
 Print...	Ctrl+P
 Print Preview	Ctrl+Alt+P
 Page Setup...	Ctrl+Shift+P
1 Model2.vcm	
<b>E</b> xit	Alt+F4

Opens a new model based on default settings

Opens a new model based on a template

Opens an existing model

Opens an existing template for altering

Closes active model

Saves the active model

Prompts for new name to save active model

Saves the active model as a template

Saves the text content of the active model

Saves the active model as a BMP or JPG

Saves the active model as a web page

Converts text files to Visual Concept model

Opens text content in your Word Processor

Launch mail application with model attached

Gives model creation and usage statistics

Prints active model

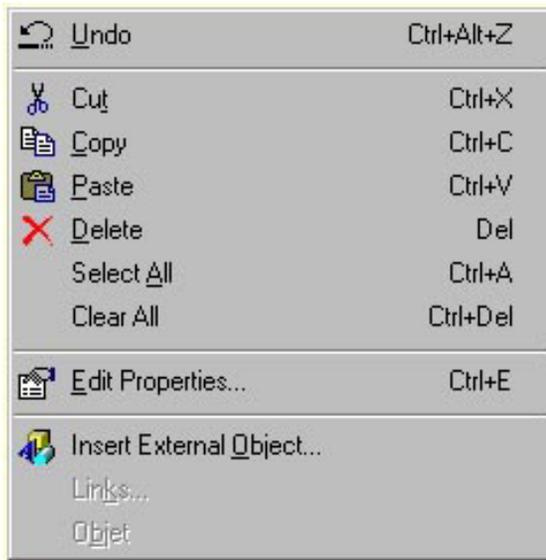
Previews printing of active model

Displays printing settings for active model

Recent file list

Closes down Visual Concept software

## Edit Menu



Undoes the action last performed

Removes the selected items to the clipboard

Copies the selected items to the clipboard

Places the clipboards contents

Deletes the selected item

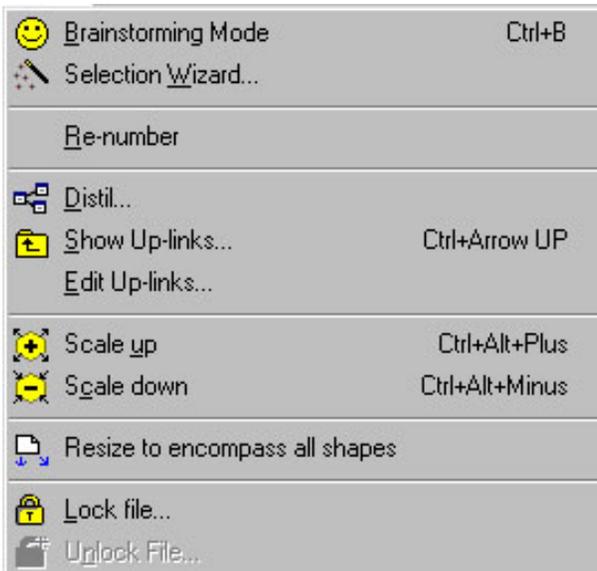
Selects all components in the active model

Deletes all components from the active model

Evokes the properties dialog for the selection

Inserts linked or embedded objects

## Model Menu



Evokes dialog for rapid ideas entry

Evokes Selection Wizard

Re-numbers to take account of deletions

Extracts clusters as ideas in another model

Displays active links returning to previous level

Displays and edits up-links

Increases size of objects in relation to page

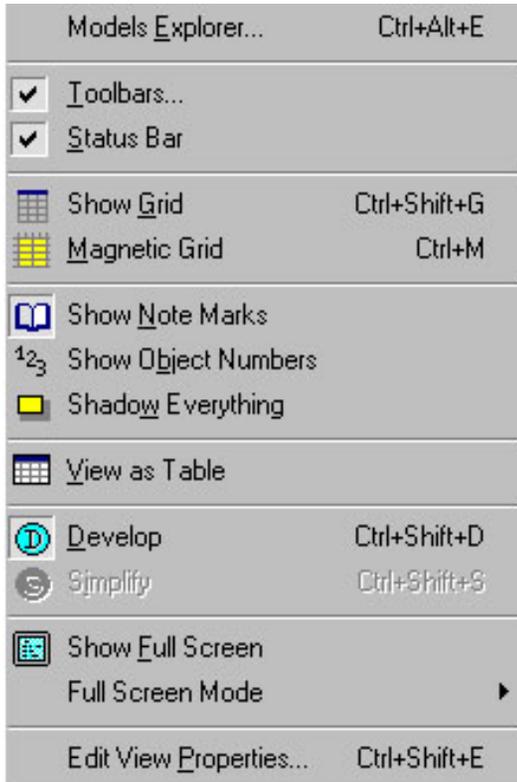
Decreases size of objects in relation to page

Re-scales so all shapes are on modelling area

Password-prevents model editing

Removes password-protection

## View Menu



Shows interconnections between all models

Evokes dialog for changing look of toolbars

Shows & hides status bar at foot of screen

Shows & hides non-printing grid

Activates & deactivates snap-to positioning

Shows & hides icon to denote notes on object

Shows & hides object reference numbers

Applies & removes shadows on everything

Displays active model content in table view

Switches off the Simplify function

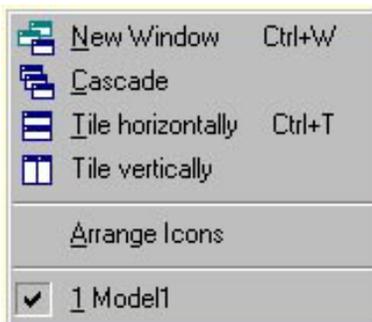
Hides idea-level objects to provide overview

Hides all toolbars for making Presentations

Option to display tools in full screen mode

Evokes dialog for editing page and view properties.

## Window Menu



Opens another active window on the same model

Reveals all open models

Orders open models horizontally

Orders open models vertically

Arranges minimised windows

Lists open models

## Zoom Menu

<table border="1"> <tr><td>Zoom <u>C</u>enter</td><td>▶</td></tr> <tr><td>Zoom <u>P</u>oint</td><td>▶</td></tr> <tr><td>Zoom <u>P</u>ercent</td><td>▶</td></tr> </table>	Zoom <u>C</u> enter	▶	Zoom <u>P</u> oint	▶	Zoom <u>P</u> ercent	▶	See below
Zoom <u>C</u> enter	▶						
Zoom <u>P</u> oint	▶						
Zoom <u>P</u> ercent	▶						
<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>D</u>efine Area to Zoom</td><td>Ctrl+Shift+Z</td></tr> </table>	 <u>D</u> efine Area to Zoom	Ctrl+Shift+Z	Drag to specify Zoom aspect				
 <u>D</u> efine Area to Zoom	Ctrl+Shift+Z						
<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>D</u>rag <u>V</u>iew</td><td></td></tr> </table>	 <u>D</u> rag <u>V</u> iew		Drag to move the aspect in-view				
 <u>D</u> rag <u>V</u> iew							
<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>Z</u>oom to <u>F</u>it</td><td>Ctrl+F</td></tr> </table>	 <u>Z</u> oom to <u>F</u> it	Ctrl+F	Page is made fully visible				
 <u>Z</u> oom to <u>F</u> it	Ctrl+F						
<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>Z</u>oom to view all <u>s</u>hapes</td><td></td></tr> </table>	 <u>Z</u> oom to view all <u>s</u> hapes		All objects are made visible				
 <u>Z</u> oom to view all <u>s</u> hapes							
<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>O</u>verview <u>W</u>indow</td><td>Ctrl+Alt+V</td></tr> </table>	 <u>O</u> verview <u>W</u> indow	Ctrl+Alt+V	Shows overview of aspect in view in relation to whole page				
 <u>O</u> verview <u>W</u> indow	Ctrl+Alt+V						

<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>I</u>n by 25%</td><td>Ctrl+Alt+Plus</td></tr> <tr><td> <u>O</u>t by 25%</td><td>Ctrl+Alt+Minus</td></tr> </table>	 <u>I</u> n by 25%	Ctrl+Alt+Plus	 <u>O</u> t by 25%	Ctrl+Alt+Minus	Increase or decrease the magnification by 25% from models centre
 <u>I</u> n by 25%	Ctrl+Alt+Plus				
 <u>O</u> t by 25%	Ctrl+Alt+Minus				

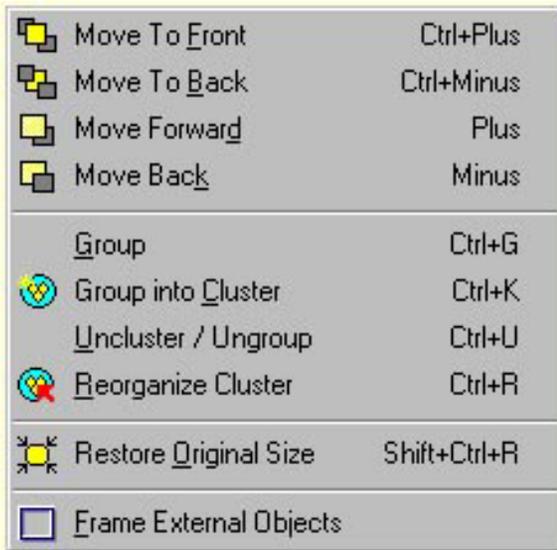
  

<table border="1"> <tr><td> <u>I</u>n by 25%</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td> <u>O</u>t by 25%</td><td></td></tr> </table>	 <u>I</u> n by 25%		 <u>O</u> t by 25%		Increase or decrease the magnification by 25% from point of left click
 <u>I</u> n by 25%					
 <u>O</u> t by 25%					

<table border="1"> <tr><td>5%</td><td>Ctrl+5</td></tr> <tr><td>10%</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>20%</td><td>Ctrl+2</td></tr> <tr><td>50%</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>75%</td><td>Ctrl+7</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2"> </td></tr> <tr><td>100%</td><td>Ctrl+1</td></tr> <tr><td>150%</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>200%</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>300%</td><td>Ctrl+3</td></tr> <tr><td>400%</td><td>Ctrl+4</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2"> </td></tr> <tr><td>Set <u>Z</u>oom factor...</td><td>Ctrl+Z</td></tr> </table>	5%	Ctrl+5	10%		20%	Ctrl+2	50%		75%	Ctrl+7			100%	Ctrl+1	150%		200%		300%	Ctrl+3	400%	Ctrl+4			Set <u>Z</u> oom factor...	Ctrl+Z	Specify the precise degree of magnification from standard settings or to exact requirements.
5%	Ctrl+5																										
10%																											
20%	Ctrl+2																										
50%																											
75%	Ctrl+7																										
100%	Ctrl+1																										
150%																											
200%																											
300%	Ctrl+3																										
400%	Ctrl+4																										
Set <u>Z</u> oom factor...	Ctrl+Z																										

## Object Menu



Puts selected object in front of others

Puts selected object behind others

Moves selected object forward one place

Moves selected object back one place

Tessellates selected objects

Tessellates objects in a boundaried cluster

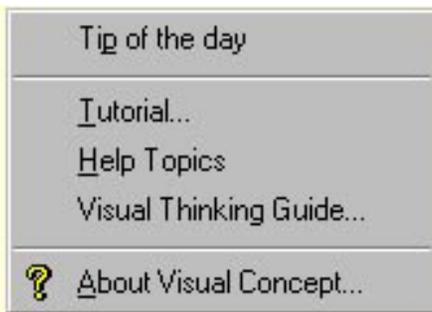
Gives objects independence from cluster

Re-groups the contents of a cluster

Selected object reverts to normal size

Adds & removes border round all externally created objects

## Help Menu



Evokes tips dialog

Opens Help System at the Tutorials

Opens Help System for searching topics

Opens Help System at the Visual Thinking guide

Displays software version, licence and supplier contact details

## Spelling Menu



Displays dialog for customising spell checking function

Enables the customising of dictionaries

specifies the dictionary language

Starts spell-checking the active model

# Keyboard short-cuts

## Keyboard short-cuts

A comprehensive list of Keyboard short-cuts is provided in the previous section by menu, and on the following pages by key.

## Keyboard short-cuts for Presentations

The final part of this section provides a list of those short-cuts most useful in presentation (full screen) mode.

Please refer to page 20

Dead Key 1	Dead Key 2	Letter	Result
CTRL		N	Opens a new empty model
CTRL		O	Displays the Open dialog to open an existing model
CTRL		S	Saves the active model
CTRL		P	Prints the active model
SHIFT		F1	Displays context sensitive help
		F1	Launches the Help system
ESCAPE			Cancels the editing of the active external object. Cancels the active tool. Activates the Selection tool.
CTRL		A	Selects all objects
ALT		A	Selects the Arrow tool
CTRL		B	Displays the Brainstorming Mode dialog for brainstorming
CTRL		C	Copies the selected objects or text to the clipboard
ALT		C	Selects the Cluster tool
CTRL	ALT	C	Displays the Colour dialog for changing the current fill colour
CTRL		D	Displays the Set Default Options dialog for changing the default options
ALT		D	Selects the Round Rectangle tool

Dead Key 1	Dead Key 2	Letter	Result
CTRL	ALT	D	Restores the program default options
CTRL	SHIFT	D	Develops the model by showing hidden shapes
CTRL		E	Displays the Shape Properties dialog for changing the properties of the selected object
CTRL	SHIFT	E	Edit the current View Properties
CTRL	ALT	E	Shows Model explorer
ALT		L	Selects the Fill Colour tool
CTRL		F	Zooms to fit the active window
ALT		N	Selects the Flat Hexagon tool
CTRL		G	Groups the selected shapes
CTRL	SHIFT	G	Toggles the grid on / off
CTRL		I	Displays the Model Properties dialog
ALT		I	Selects the Link tool
ALT		J	Selects the Eraser tool
ALT		K	Selects the Link To The Web tool
CTRL		K	Creates a cluster with the selected shapes
CTRL		L	Displays the Insert Object dialog for inserting an external object
CTRL		M	Toggles the magnetic grid on / off
CTRL	ALT	P	Displays the print preview
ALT		P	Shows / hides the Palette tool (for setting the fill colour)
CTRL	SHIFT	P	Displays the Page Setup dialog for page print settings
ALT		Q	Selects the Circle tool
ALT		R	Selects the Rectangle tool
CTRL		R	Groups the shapes inside the selected cluster and resizes it
CTRL	SHIFT	R	Restores the original size and shape of the selected object
ALT		S	Selects the Selection tool
CTRL	SHIFT	S	Simplifies the model by hiding shapes
CTRL		T	Tiles the windows horizontally
ALT		X	Selects the Text tool
CTRL		U	Sets the selected shape as no longer being part of its cluster
ALT		U	Selects the Unlink tool
CTRL		V	Pastes the contents of the clipboard.
CTRL		W	Opens a new window for the current model
ALT		X	Selects the Hexagon tool
CTRL		X	Cuts the selected objects or text to the clipboard
CTRL		Y	Redoes the last undo action
ALT		Z	Shows / hides the Overview window
CTRL	ALT	Z	Displays the Set Zoom Factor dialog for choosing your own zoom factor
CTRL	ALT	Z	Undoes the last action

Dead Key 1	Dead Key 2	Letter	Result
		ARROW UP	Moves the selected objects up by a small increment
		ARROW DOWN	Moves the selected objects down by a small increment
		ARROW RIGHT	Moves the selected objects right by a small increment
		ARROW LEFT	Moves the selected objects left by a small increment
SHIFT		ARROW UP	Moves the selected objects up by a large increment
SHIFT		ARROW DOWN	Moves the selected objects down by a large increment
SHIFT		ARROW RIGHT	Moves the selected objects right by a large increment
SHIFT		ARROW LEFT	Moves the selected objects left by a large increment
CTRL		ARROW UP	Displays the Select a link (Up-link) dialog for activating a parent model
		DELETE	Deletes the selected shapes
CTRL		DELETE	Deletes all objects
SHIFT		DELETE	Cuts the selected shapes to the clipboard
CTRL	SHIFT	DELETE	Undoes the last action
CTRL		INSERT	Copies the selected shapes to the clipboard
SHIFT		INSERT	Pastes the content of the clipboard
		NUMPAD +	Moves the selected object forward
		NUMPAD -	Moves the selected object backward
ALT		NUMPAD +	Moves the selected object to the front
ALT		NUMPAD -	Moves the selected object to the back
CTRL	SHIFT	NUMPAD +	Zooms in by 25%
CTRL	SHIFT	NUMPAD -	Zooms out by 25%
CTRL	ALT	NUMPAD +	Increases the scale of the objects compared to the modelling area
CTRL	ALT	NUMPAD -	Decreases the scale of the objects compared to the modelling area
CTRL		NUMPAD 1	Applies the 100% zoom factor
CTRL		NUMPAD 2	Applies the 20% zoom factor
CTRL		NUMPAD 3	Applies the 300% zoom factor
CTRL		NUMPAD 4	Applies the 400% zoom factor
CTRL		NUMPAD 5	Applies the 5% zoom factor
CTRL		NUMPAD 7	Applies the 75% zoom factor

## Keyboard short-cuts useful for presentation mode

To enter or edit text in an idea, you don't need to change tools, just double click the idea object.

	ESC	Returns to non-presentation mode	
	ALT+S	De-selects tools and returns to SELECTION cursor for moving things around etc.	
	ALT+H	Selects HEXAGON TOOL	
	ALT+A	Selects ARROW tool	
	ALT+X	Selects TEXT tool for titles etc.	
	ALT+Q	Select circle object	
	ALT+R	Select Rectangle object	
	ALT+C	Select Cluster tool	
	CTRL+ALT+PLUS	Scales objects up	<b>(Num pad)</b>
	CTRL+ALT+MINUS	Scales objects down	<b>(Num pad)</b>
	ALT+P	Display Colour pallet	
	CTRL+Arrow up	Display up-links	
	CTRL+PLUS	Zoom in	<b>(Num pad)</b>
	CTRL+MINUS	Zoom out	<b>(Num pad)</b>
	CTRL+SHIFT+Z	Define area to zoom	
	CTRL+ALT+V	Displays overview window	
	CTRL+B	Brainstorm mode	
	CTRL+K	Auto clusters the selection	
	CTR L+R	Reorganises cluster	

**Notes**

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# Further Support

## Further support

### What's This?



Use the 'What's This' tool to access the relevant Help topic on any of the toolbar or menu tools by clicking the 'What's this' tool then clicking the tool on which you require clarification.

### Help

Use the index in the Help system, by choosing 'Help Topics' from the Help menu, to look up any topic on which you require support.

### Tutorials

The tutorials provide an effective step-by-step guide to making the most of Visual Concept. Choose Tutorial.. from the Help menu.

### Telephone Support

Call Inspiration Resources whenever you get stuck. We would much rather help you than leave you to get frustrated! You can also fax or e-mail us with your queries:

**Tel +44 (0)1729 830322**

**Fax +44 (0)1729 830519**

**e-mail: [support@visual-concept.co.uk](mailto:support@visual-concept.co.uk)**

## **Training & Advanced Support**

### **Induction Training**

To arrange induction training tailored to meet your needs contact Inspiration Resources

### **Technical Support & Consultancy**

We can support the development of your systems applications of Visual Concept in a variety of ways from technical advise to the whole-project management of designing and delivering Visual Concept solutions to meet the needs of your team or department. Call Inspiration Resources to find out more.

### **Conference & Facilitation Support**

We can support your group events by providing the technical, logistical and administrative resources to add tremendous value to your events by recording outputs and making these accessible to your clients and participants. Call Inspiration Resources to find out more.

### **Event Design and Facilitation**

As an integral part of Centre for Management Creativity, we design and facilitate events from team meetings, away-days and workshops to large-scale conferences that all leave a lasting impression and deliver tangible outcomes and benefit to participants.

### **Organisational Change**

As an integral part of Centre for Management Creativity, we design and facilitate uniquely holistic change programmes from merger and acquisition talks to whole organisation agenda.

For any aspect of support your first port of call is Inspiration Resources.

