

Adding a Spell Checker to Outpost

Jim Oberhofer KN6PE

January 2012

Revision 1

Introduction

Outpost does not have a native spell checker, and there are times when one would be pretty useful. So, here is a way to add a spell checker to Outpost. In fact, with this small utility, you can spell-check almost any application where you enter text. Special thanks to Carl W4YRB for letting us know about this solution!

Introducing *tinySpell*

Take a look at the *tinySpell* website... <http://tinyspell.numerit.com/>. Here is what they have to say...

“Occasionally you need to check spelling in an application that does not include a spelling checker and you don't want to launch your word processor just for that. This is when *tinySpell* becomes handy. It is a small utility that allows you to easily and quickly check and correct the spelling in any Windows application.

“*tinySpell* can watch your typing on the fly and alert you whenever it detects a misspelled word. It can also check the spelling of text that you copy to the clipboard.

“*tinySpell* installs itself in the system tray for easy access.”

There is a free version (*tinySpell*) and a paid version (*tinySpell+*), both described here (<http://tinyspell.numerit.com/#variants>). The free version is more than adequate to get started with Outpost.

Installing *tinySpell*

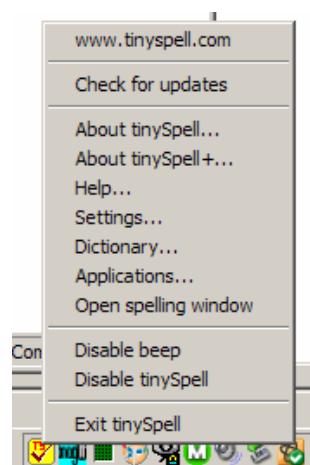
1. Download *tinySpell* located here... (<http://tinyspell.numerit.com/#download>).
2. Unzip and run the install program. When done, you will see the *tinySpell* icon in your system tray on the right .



Configuring *tinySpell*

3. Once it is installed, RIGHT-CLICK on the *tinySpell* icon in the system tray. An options selection form opens and shows the different things you can do.

We will focus on the **Settings** and **Applications** options.



4. Click on the **Settings** option. All of the settings are fairly self-explanatory, and for the most part, I used

- the defaults as listed.
5. However, in the middle of this form, I made the following changes (personal preference)...
 - Changed **Small** to **Large** (font), and checked **BOLD**.
 - Unchecked **Open Word list with [] Left-Shift click**
 - Checked **Open Word list with [✓] Down Arrow**. You will see how this works later.
 6. Check **OK** when done.

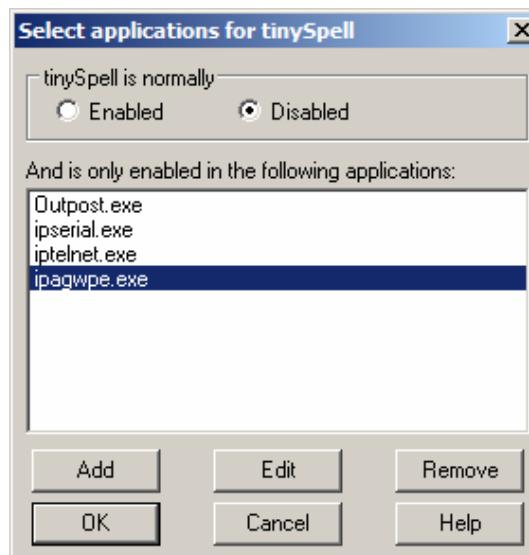
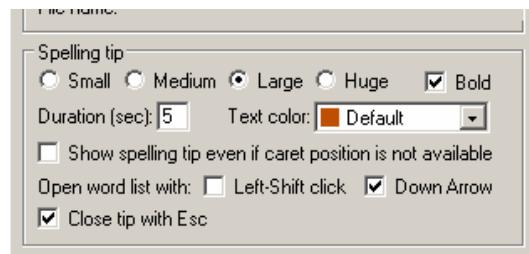
NOTE: The **Run tinySpell at startup** option is checked. This is a good idea since you may want spell checking on when Outpost loads.

7. Click on the **Applications** option. This is where you tell *tinySpell* what applications to spell-check.
8. Check the **Disabled** option for starters (see the note below).
9. Press the **Add** button. A form opens for you to enter different program names, one at a time. For instance, I added the following four programs to *tinySpell*:
 - Outpost.exe
 - ipserial.exe
 - iptelnet.exe
 - ipagwpe.exe
10. You can also add other packet programs, or any program that takes text input, such as Notepad.exe and Hyperterm.exe.
11. Press the **OK** when done.

NOTE: For the **Enabled/Disabled** options, read the form header carefully to get the choice correct. The example to the right shows **Disabled** for everything except the programs that you enter. The other alternative is check **Enabled** for everything and leave the program list blank. But you will hear a lot of beeping!

NOTE: All configuration forms must be closed for Spell checking to occur.

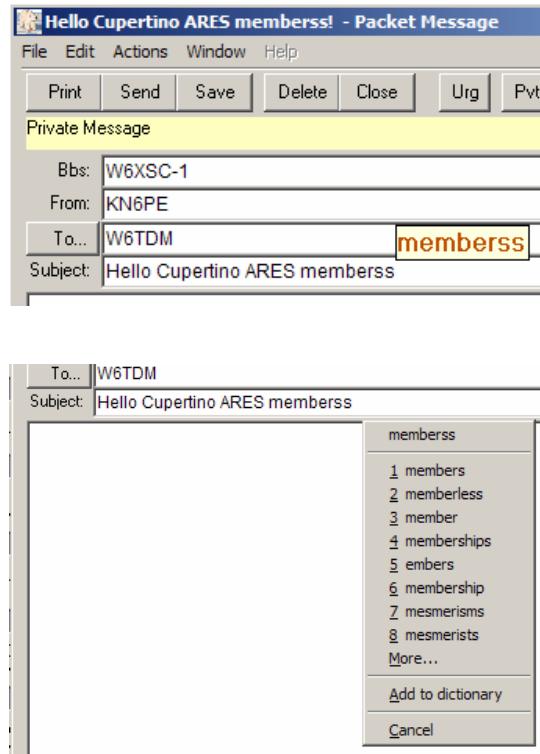
That's it! *tinySpell* is now configured.



Using *tinySpell* with Outpost

With *tinySpell* running, its time to run Outpost and correct those spelling mistakes.

12. Run Outpost, and press New to open a new message form. As I fill in the form, *tinySpell* will alert me of spelling errors, like the one on the right...
13. Note that *tinySpell* points out what word has a problem as soon as you move press space after the offending word. Also, note the color and font size of the mistyped word. This is what you configured earlier with the **Settings** option.
14. With the error reported, If you want to correct it, you have 5 seconds to press the **Down Arrow** on your keyboard (see step 5 above, the default Duration was "5", and can be changed).
15. If this was a legitimate word or abbreviation that your organization uses, you can also press the **Add to dictionary** entry.
16. A list of possible corrections is displayed. Use your cursor to pick the right word, or press "**More...**" if it is not shown, or now that you know it is misspelled, you can press **ESC** key to close this form and type in the correction.



Considerations

1. *tinySpell* is a great way to flag spelling errors as they occur. Usually, I just backspace and correct the problem once it is detected. I imagine you will figure out the best way to use this utility as you play with it.
2. The program allows you to preload words up front that are typically not usual words, like RACES, ARES, QST, etc. Check out the **Dictionary** option for editing or updating words previously loaded or adding words before they are flagged in your messages.
3. The beep is a great reminder when an error occurs. However, the program constantly pointing out my spelling errors does grate on my self-esteem ☺, and I have, on occasion, turned the beep off (**Settings**, Beep Sound).
4. I haven't played with the *tinySpell+*; if anyone buys that version, if you think it is useful, please let me know.
5. Take a look at the on-line help. There are more features than are covered here, and you could find something that you just can't live without!