

The Dr Companion Reference Suite

Dr Companion is an application designed to be used with multiple operating platforms. It is available on an adaptable memory module that can convert from an SD card to a USB stick through the removal of an adaptor plate.

The central data store is in a common format but the application comes with a variety of different executables that allow the following different operating systems to be used:



This means that, in theory, most makes of PDAs, Smartphones and computers will be able to run Dr Companion if the correct memory card slot is available.

The Dr Companion Memory Card



The memory card can be used in a variety of ways – it can be directly inserted into a suitable slot on a PDA or a multimedia card in a PC or laptop. Additionally, you can also use the card in a USB slot by carefully removing the small plastic adaptor plate from one corner of the card. It is inserted into USB from one end, SD slot at the opposite end. Do not confuse these.

Inserting the card into a device.

If this card is inserted into a PDA, depending on how that device is configured, Dr Companion may start up immediately.

In the example below, the USB card was plugged into a PC. Ensure that the memory card has the blank plate removed and is inserted into the USB port with the gold strips *normally* facing UP. If it is incorrectly inserted it will not get stuck, the PC will just not detect the card.

When the computer picks up the USB device, go to 'My Computer' and navigate to the drive mapping allocated to the USB card (Fig 1).

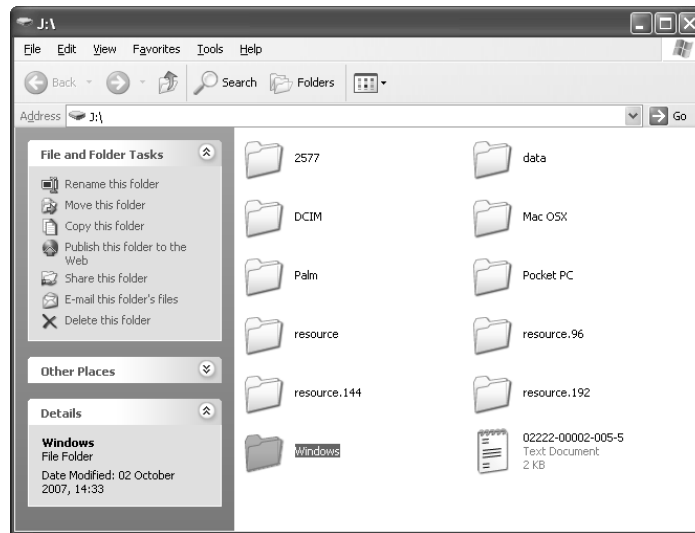


Fig 1

Select the folder relating to Windows or Mac and double click the executable (Fig 2). Dr Companion should open. You do not need to copy any files to the PC as the entire program is self-contained on the card.

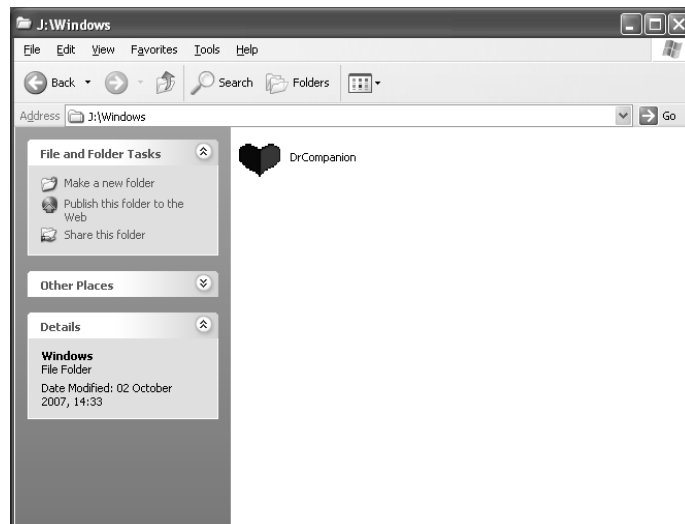


Fig 2

The Dr Companion Application

Dr Companion has a fairly simple interface that utilises the minimum of controls. When the user opens the application, the main home page is shown (Fig 3):



Fig 3

The User Interface

Controls

The control interface is also simple to use and master. All the control buttons are shown at Fig 4.

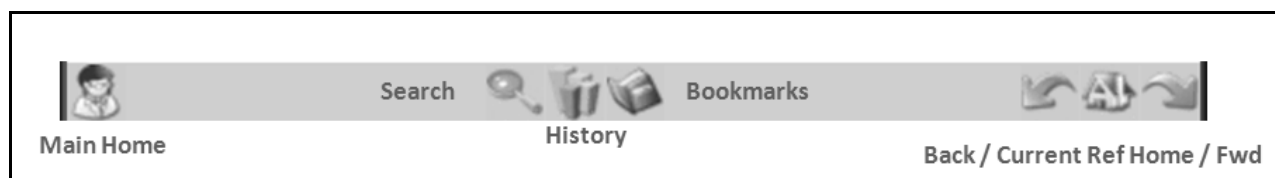


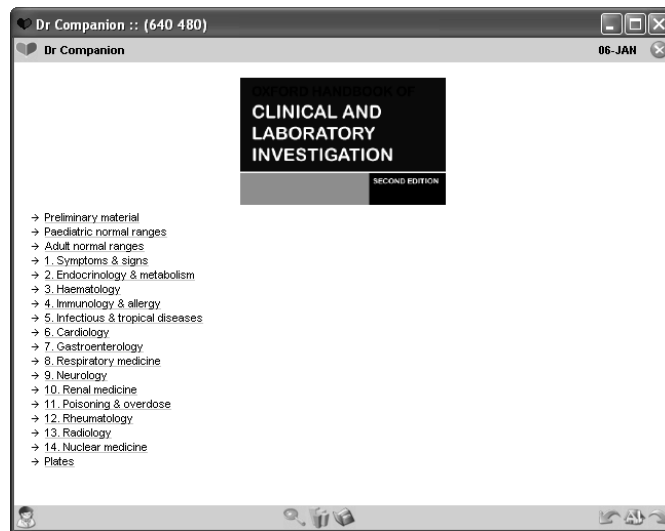
Fig 4

Operations

The **Main Home** and **Back / Current Ref Home / Fwd** buttons are constantly available when the application is open. The **Search / History / Bookmarks** only work when a collection is being used but their functions are self-explanatory. The home button returns the user to the screen at Figure 3.

It is best to treat the application as a cut-down web page with the links between them taking the user to the presented information topics or search results.

Fig 5



When the user wishes to look up the contents of a collection, simply browse the collection they require and click the relevant links therein. Such links are shown in Fig 5 – they simply appear similarly to hyperlinks in a web page and this is how they should be treated. To move back through the collection click on the navigation links in the top left or click the **Current Ref Home** icon to start again in the same collection or the **Main Home** icon to get back to the Dr Companion start page.

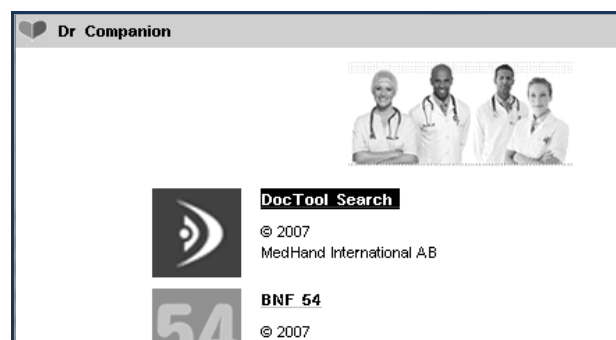
Advanced Operation

The centre three buttons all appear when the user is using a reference guide. The **Search**, **History** and **Bookmark** functions are only pertinent to the reference book in which they are set up (i.e. if the user creates a bookmark in BNF 54, it only applies to that reference series and it cannot be accessed through Cochrane Collection or any other reference book). This is meant to be rectified by the vendors in later editions.

These advanced operations are very handy and will no doubt save time in the use of the application with practice, are easily set up and accessed. The only problem I foresee is that with so many reference series at the fingertips of the user, remembering which series had the bookmarks set for them could be onerous.

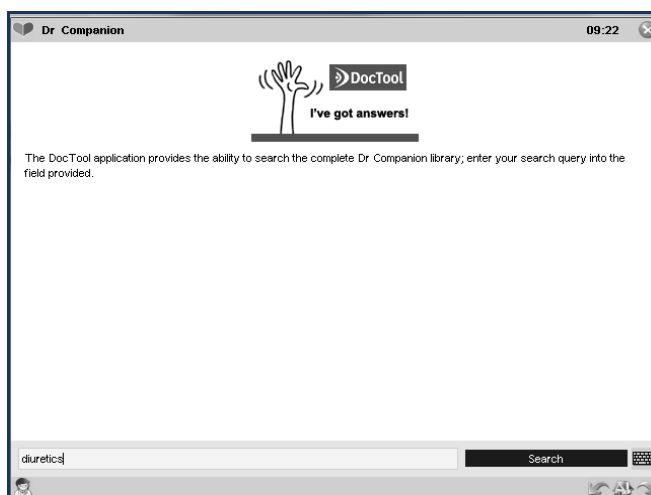
Doc Tool Search (Fig 7)

Doc Tool Search allows you to search all of the collections for the same term, saving you valuable time whilst using Dr Companion.



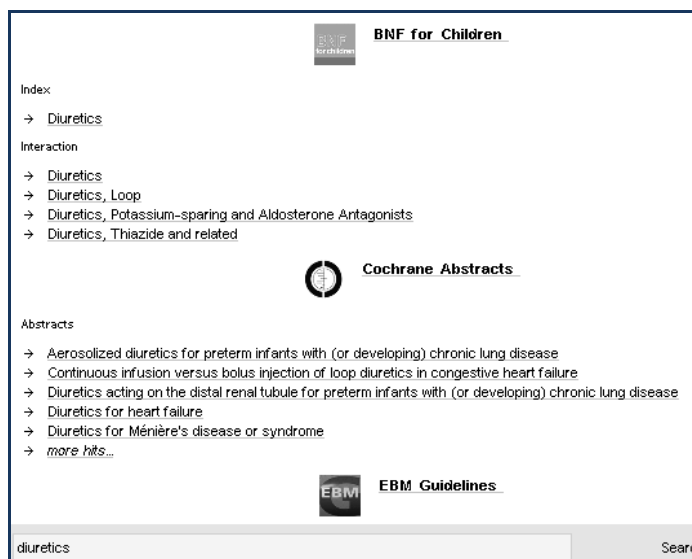
Operation (Fig 8)

Enter your search term in the text box (or use the internal keyboard icon at Fig 10) to enter text, click 'SEARCH'



Results

Your results will be grouped by literature collection (Fig 9)



On-Screen Keyboard

The on screen keyboard can be used if you only have a stylus with your PDA rather than a full keyboard.

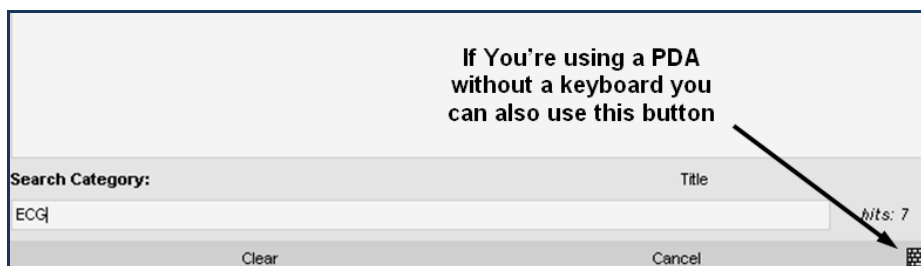


Fig 10

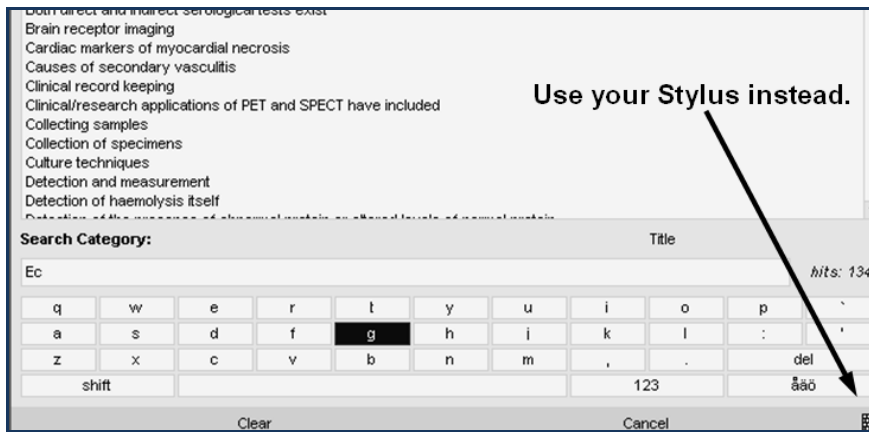


Fig 11

History and Bookmarks

Both these functions are very similar to a web browser. History and Bookmarks **only apply only within the collection selected**. The best way to utilise this is to use the Doc Search Tool first to search all collections and form Bookmarks in the individual collections.

Adjusting the Screen Orientation and Font Size

The standard layout is not accessible or comfortable for all users, especially those with small screens or eyesight problems. To alter Font Size, go to **Options** in top left corner (Fig 12)

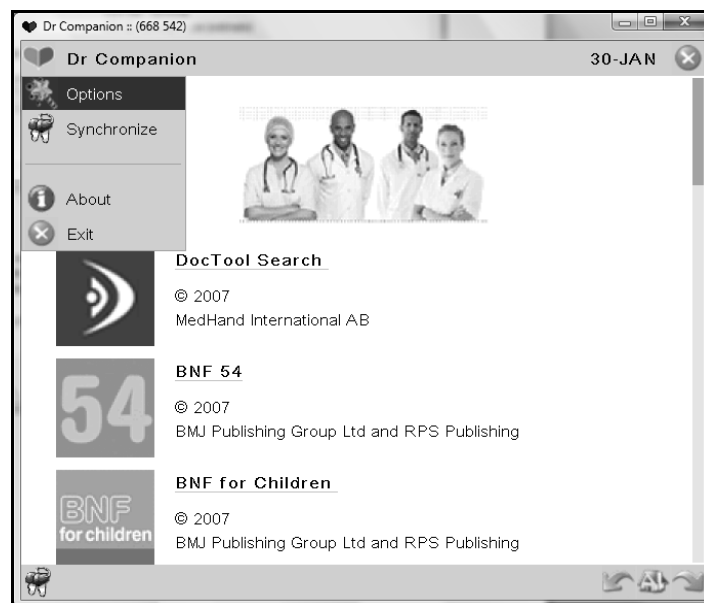


Fig 12

To change Font Size (Fig 13) click on the arrows below the text preview. Default size is Arial 9 Pts which can be increased to 12 or 16. **To change screen orientation** to accommodate PDAs or Smartphones with portrait orientated screens, click the two preview icons below the font size area

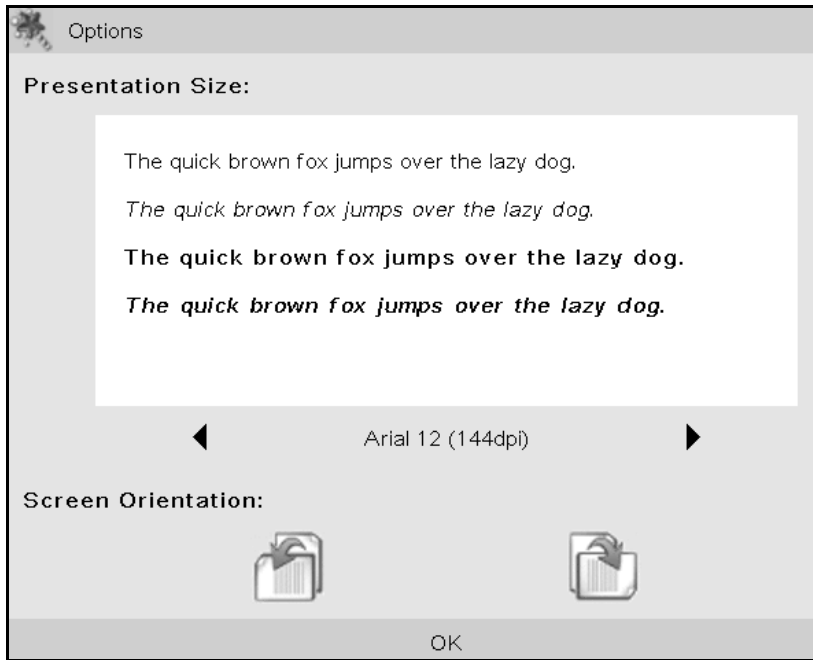


Fig 13

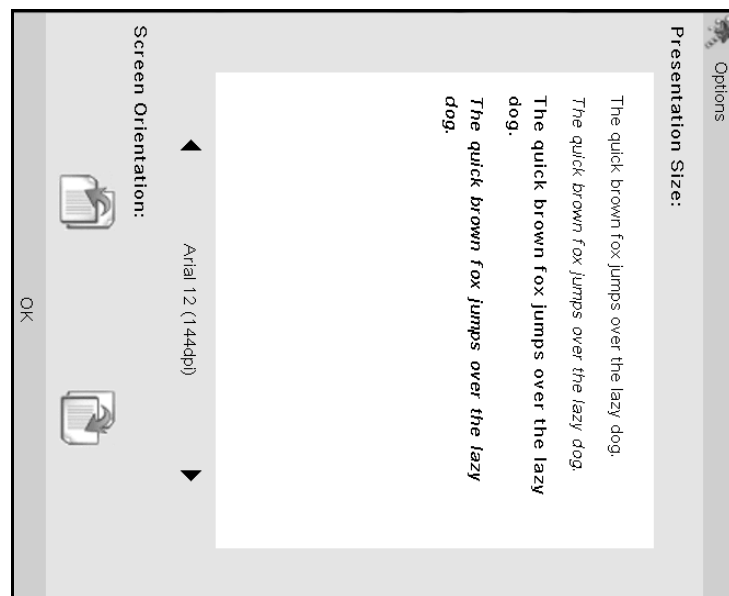


Fig 14

If you are happy with your changes, hit 'OK'