# Getting Started with the Core Word Vocabulary

Proloquo2Go's Core Word Vocabulary is designed for users who are able to put 2 or more words together to make sentences. Core words are words that are used most frequently in conversation and writing. Research has shown that a small number of core words such as "I", "you", "want", "it" make up the majority of what we say or write. Proloquo2Go's Core Word vocabulary provides home pages with quick access to these core words, so users can quickly produce complete sentences. The top level, or "home" pages of the 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 column core word vocabulary configurations are shown below:
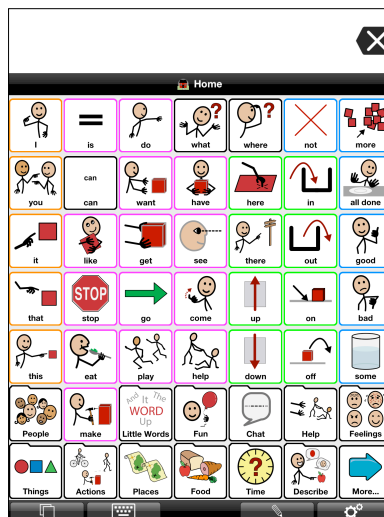
Core words alone are not sufficient for specific and detailed communication. For that, less frequently used words (called fringe words) such as "cat", "octopus", "sleepy", and "gold" are needed. At the bottom "fringe" of the home page, folder-shaped buttons provide access to fringe vocabulary, organized by category (e.g. people, feelings, places, verbs, etc.)

Some fringe words are used frequently - for example, friend and family names, favorite foods and places, and frequently used social phrases such as "How are you?". Other fringe words are used much less frequently, but are very useful for talking about new topics, participating in school, or expanding expressive vocabulary. Proloquo2Go's Core Word vocabulary was created using published research on the frequency of use of common words by children in preschool and early

elementary school. Using this data to determine how frequently the majority of users will use the most common words works well. But the frequency of use of fringe words such as types of foods, clothing, TV shows, etc., is very individual. To handle this, Proloquo2Go uses a feature called VocaPriority™. Each folder in Proloquo2Go 2.0 actually contains three different pages of buttons, divided based on their priority level to the individual user:

• Primary Level: Words that almost everyone uses frequently. Example for a Meats folder: chicken. Words in the Primary level are visible on the first page of a folder.
• Secondary Level: Words that many people would use occasionally, but are useful to have access to. Example for a Meats folder: salmon. Words in the Secondary level are access using a "More..." button on the bottom right corner of the first page of the folder.
• Storage Level: Words that most people will never use, but which a few people may need. Example for a Meats folder: haggis. Words in Storage are only visible during editing.

What should be in each priority level can vary significantly for each individual. In Proloquo2Go, you can easily "promote" buttons to a higher level, or "demote" buttons to a lower level, to quickly construct a fringe folder that matches a user's preferences. See the tutorial on Promoting and Demoting for detailed instructions.
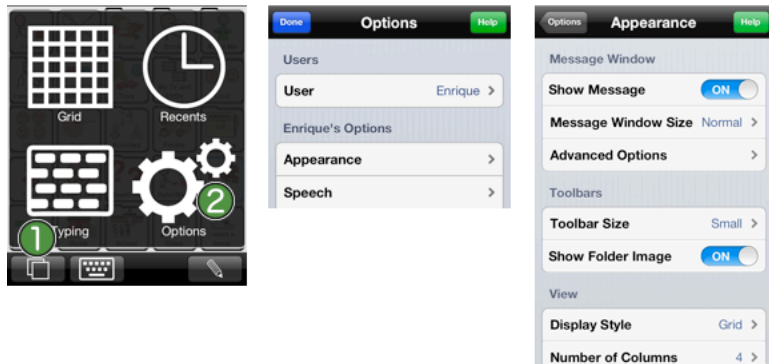
Configuring Core Word Vocabulary

Core Word can be used in configurations of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8 columns per page. To switch between configurations, go to Options > Appearance, and set the number of columns as needed. Core Word will not display properly if you set the number of rows to be different than the number of columns.

Remember that if your user can handle smaller buttons, but is not ready for some of the reasons for communication listed under a particular configuration, you can always hide the buttons that are not yet appropriate, and unhide them later as the user progresses. For more details about this process, see the Proloquo2Go Manual.

Customizing Your Vocabulary

First, determine the user's preferences on things like food, activities, music, etc., as well as the names of people, places, and things that are important in the user's life. See the Environmental Inventory appendix in the Proloquo2Go manual for a list of information to gather. With this information, you can customize the content of the vocabulary in these important fringe folders:

• *About Me:* This is found inside the Chat folder, and should be customized with the user's personal information (name, address, phone number, age, etc.)

• *Family, Friends, Teachers,* and *Heath care providers:* These folders are found in the People folder, and should be personalized as necessary with the names (and if available, pictures) of the actual people for this user.

• *Help:* This folder should contain messages the user can use to get help quickly. Buttons for common situations such as asking to use the bathroom and feeling sick are included, and additional buttons can be found in the secondary and storage levels.

- *Food:* If this folder is not on the main page for your user, it will be on the secondary level, or reachable through the *Things* folder. For each subfolder in *Food,* use promotions and demotions to make the foods the user is most likely to talk about are on the primary level of each subfolder.

- *Clothing:* Check to make sure any piece of clothing that would never be of interest to a user, is not needed in the user's climate, or is culturally inappropriate, is demoted to secondary or storage levels. Promote buttons that are in secondary or storage that the user may need to refer to frequently.

- *Fun:* In each subcategory, make sure that buttons the user is most interested in are on the primary level, and those of little interest are demoted to secondary or storage. In *Sports* and *TV Shows*, consider finding photos on line of favorite famous people who belong in these categories.

  In *Sports*, there are folders for particular sports. Some of the most popular sports in the US are on the primary level, while folders for sports more popular in other regions such as cricket and rugby can be found on the secondary level. In the storage level of the folder for some sports, you can find buttons with the names of popular teams and players. Use promotion and demotion to make sure that sports and teams that your user wants to talk about are readily available.

- *Personal care, Adaptive Equipment:* Use promotion and demotion to customize the primary level of this folder to reflect the user's needs.

- *Describing words:* If the user has favorite words for describing things, use promotion, demotion, or add new buttons to make sure these words are easily accessible in the subcategories in *Describing words.*

- *Clues:* This folder contains messages that can be used to help fix communication breakdowns - situations where the user is not able to get his or her point across clearly. The *Clues* folder provides a way for the Core Word user to tell his communication partner more about what he was trying to say by telling what type of thing, event, or action his message was about, describing characteristics of what he is talking about (big/little, shape, color), or telling in which locations his topic might be found. It is important to model use of the *Clues* folder for the user so he or she can learn to use it.

- *School:* This folder can be found on the secondary level of the main page. It contains folders that may be useful as part of a school curriculum. It is recommended that this folder be customized in consultation with the user's teacher.

- *Geography:* This folder can be found on the secondary level of the *School* folder. In the secondary level of the *Geography* folder, you will find folders with the Australian states, Canadian Provinces, United Kingdom countries, and US States. If your user needs one of these folders, we recommend you promote it to the primary level of *Geography*, or use copy/paste to move the folder where your user needs it.

- *Money:* Symbols are available for US, Canadian, UK, Swiss, Danish, and Norwegian currencies. They are in separate folders in the Money folder, in either the primary or secondary level. Feel free to use demotion, promotion, hiding, or copy/paste to move the currency the user will need access to into place.

- *Time words:* This folder can be found on the primary or secondary level of the home page, depending on the number of columns selected. It contains categories such as days of the week, months, and seasons, which many special education programs use for daily calendar activities.

- *Religion:* This folder can be found on the secondary level of the home page, or in storage, depending on the number of columns selected. We recommend you look at the primary and secondary levels of this folder and customize it to reflect the user's needs and the local cultural requirements. We have provided basic folders for Christian, Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim religions, but recognize that these folders will need to be customized further to suit individual needs.