



RELEASE NOTES · OCTOBER 2026

W5 Modeler 8

What's new and what's fixed since version 7



W5 Modeler 8 brings W5 up to date. It looks and works like today's Microsoft Office and Windows 11, it makes every report without Microsoft Office and makes reports far easier to set up, and it brings AI into modelling: describe a business in your own words and the AI builds the model, checks it against the W5 method and answers your questions about it, using a model on your own PC or the cloud AI of your choice. It also fixes a long list of problems, including several that could crash W5 or lose unsaved work.

At a glance

AI builds your models

Describe a business or a process in plain words. The AI writes a complete W5 model, W5 checks it against the method and draws it.

AI checks and explains them

Ask about any model: who is responsible, what is missing, and where it departs from the W5 method.

Your AI, your choice

A model on your own PC, cloud AI with your own key, or Claude Desktop with a Claude subscription.

Better reports, no Office

Word, Excel, PowerPoint and PDF reports made by W5 itself, set up by choosing from your own model.

A fresh, faster W5

An Office-style window, new icons, a new Start page, and twice as fast to start.

Safer with your work

Crashes and lost-work problems fixed, and your models come back after Windows restarts.

AI that builds, checks and explains your models

The new AI tab puts an assistant that knows the W5 method beside your models, in W5's own chat window or in Claude Desktop.

Build a model from a description

- **Describe it in your own words.** Choose New Model from Description and tell the AI what the business or process does, who does the work, where and when, and the information it uses. The AI asks about anything you left out, then writes the whole model: the activity tree, the roles and organisations, the places and times, the information with its states, and a process for each workflow you describe, with its decisions.
- **Checked before it opens.** W5 checks every model the AI writes against the W5 method and its own rules before opening it. When something is wrong, such as a role that is used but never defined, the AI is told exactly what and fixes it itself. It asks you before accepting anything that goes against the method's guidance.
- **Drawn and ready to use.** W5 opens the model with every diagram drawn, laid out and numbered, as if you had built it by hand: the WHAT tree, the WHO, WHERE and WHEN charts, the WHICH network, and a HOW diagram for each process. It is saved in your Documents\W5 Models folder.

- **Refine it by asking.** Ask for changes in the same chat and the AI sends a new version, which takes the place of the draft as long as you haven't edited it yourself. If you have, your version stays and the new one opens beside it.

Validate a model against the W5 method

- **A method review on request.** Ask the AI to check a model and it runs the W5 method check, then explains each finding and how to fix it. It finds activity names that aren't an action and its object, activities with no Responsible role or more than one Accountable, parents with only one child or more than ten, roles, places, times and information that no activity uses, plural or duplicate names, processes without a start or an end, and decision points that neither split nor join.
- **As narrow as you like.** Ask about one process, one role or one rule, and the AI checks just that.
- **You stay in control.** The AI can't change a model you have open. It tells you which element to change, in which dimension and what to set, for you to make.

Ask questions about a model

- **Who does what:** who is Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed for any activity, and everything a role takes part in.
- **The full picture of an activity:** who, where and when, the information it reads and produces, the process steps it appears in, and what comes before and after.
- **Follow the information.** For each kind of information, its states and the steps that create, change and use it, so the AI can point out information that is created but never used.
- **Find anything** by name, by activity number or by words in descriptions. Answers cite activity numbers and exact names.
- **Live and straight.** The AI reads the model as it is on your screen, unsaved changes included, and says plainly when the model doesn't record something rather than guessing.

Your AI, your choice

- **A model on your own PC.** Run an AI model locally, with Ollama or LM Studio for example, and W5's chat uses it: your models never leave your PC, and there is no charge per question. You can also point W5 at your organisation's own AI service. W5 tells you if the model you pick can't work with it.
- **Cloud AI with your own key.** Use an API key from Anthropic (Claude), OpenAI, OpenRouter or your organisation's Azure OpenAI, and pay your provider for what you use. AI Settings lists the models your key can use and tests the connection. Keys are stored encrypted for your Windows account, and Claude Sonnet 5 is the default for Claude, for its lower cost.
- **Claude Desktop, with a Claude subscription.** Add to Claude Desktop gives you W5's extension and shows how to install it. Share with AI App then lets Claude read and check a model you choose while it is open, and Let AI Apps Create Models lets Claude build new models that open in W5, with no separate API key. W5 remembers this setting.
- **Your data, your rules.** With a cloud AI, what the AI reads goes to that provider under your plan's terms, so share only models you are allowed to.

Reports: much easier to set up

Setting a report up no longer means typing internal names into a grid, spelt exactly as the model spells them.

- **Choose from your own model.** The Options button of the report and import wizards lists what is actually in your model: dimensions, object types, levels, profile types, attributes and their values, process models, and the colours and outline styles of its shapes. Each shows how often the model uses it, for example "What (279)".
- **Lists that follow your choices.** Pick a profile type and you choose from its attributes; pick an attribute and you choose from its values; pick a dimension and you choose from its object types. Changing a choice clears the ones that depended on it.
- **The right control for each option:** check boxes for yes-or-no options, a colour picker for colours, a number box for sizes and counts, ticks where a report takes several object types, and "is" or "is not" where a report can leave something out. You type only where a report takes any text, such as a project name.
- **Plain names, grouped under headings.** Each option has a readable name in place of its internal one, and you see only the options that change the report: the settings W5 fills in itself, and the ones a report ignores, no longer appear.
- **No more empty reports by mistake.** Where a report needs a choice to find anything, OK asks you to pick one. A value your model doesn't have, such as one left in a report from another model, is marked "(not in this model)", so you can see why the report would come out empty.
- **Reset to report defaults** puts back the report's own settings, and within one run of a wizard, Options opens again with your last choices.
- **The same in the Advanced wizard.** Its section editor shows each section's options this way too, including a picture's model, size and alignment and an appendix's file type, and grows to fit them.
- **Simpler choices when saving.** Reports save as Word documents, Excel workbooks, web pages or PDF. The picture format and "shrink pictures" options, which made no difference, are gone: W5 always places pictures the best way.

Reports: better documents

- **No Microsoft Office needed.** W5 now makes every report and document itself: Word documents, Excel workbooks, the PowerPoint training deck and web pages. A PC without Office can produce every report, and no Office program opens in the background.
- **Much faster.** Reports no longer start Word and Excel and wait for them: a workbook takes about a second, where it took 6 to 17 seconds.
- **Save reports as PDF.** Any report you can save as a Word document can now be saved as a PDF too, with the same title page, contents linked to each heading, headers and footers with page numbers, and DRAFT watermark.
- **Word documents as before, without Word:** the title page, a contents list linked to the headings, headers and footers, and the page set-up from the report's template and your model's Document Properties (orientation, margins, title, revision and font). Word offers to fill in the contents' page numbers when you open the document.
- **Training decks that are actually made.** A procedure document now comes with its PowerPoint training deck, which version 7 never produced. It is right, too: the processes in order, a slide for each activity with the activity ringed in its process, every responsible role with its RACI letters, the next required and situational steps, and text that fits its slide.

- **Complete, sharp diagrams.** Diagrams are drawn by W5 at print quality, and in full: before, a quarter of each picture was cut off. Word documents get pictures that stay sharp at any zoom, and web pages carry their pictures inside them, so one file is complete. There are no more folders of image files beside your reports, which could grow to gigabytes.
- **Everything the templates asked for.** Documents now include what their templates always meant to show but never did: the DRAFT watermark, the logos, pictures of sub-views and of each procedure section's view, legend pictures, the picture sizes sections ask for, Core Requirement links that go to the right place, and model images as a landscape Word document rather than a folder of pictures.
- **Excel attachments laid out as intended.** Glossaries and notes get a frozen header row and cells aligned top left; matrices also get vertical headings, filters and fitted columns. Show Differences saves its workbook without Excel too.
- **The new BusinessGenetics logo** on title pages, page headers and the training deck, with the six W5 dimensions in their colours in the footer.

A fresh look

- **Looks like today's Office.** A Word-style title bar and ribbon, the quick access toolbar in the title bar, and Windows 11's rounded corners, shadow and snap layouts.
- **New icons throughout,** from the same family as Microsoft Office's, on the ribbon, in the menus, in the explorer and in every window. The toolbox beside each diagram fits its names and shows each shape in its own colour, and the three gateways (DO ALL, DO 1 OR MORE and DO ONLY ONE) finally have different pictures.
- **A new Start page.** Start a model from a card for each dimension, use the quick actions, open recent and sample models with a search, and see what's new. It adapts to the size of the window.
- **A new W5 icon and splash screen,** which lights up the five W's as W5 starts.
- **Cleaner panels and tabs.** The explorer works like Windows 11's File Explorer, every document tab has its own close button, and dialogs match the main window.

Everyday improvements

- **Save All** on the quick access toolbar saves every model with changes and leaves the others alone, so their backup history is kept. It tells you if a model can't be saved.
- **Share.** File > Share opens Windows' Share, so you can send a model through email, Teams or any other app Windows offers. It replaces Send, which needed Outlook.
- **Validate Diagram checks the W5 method.** It reports activities without a WHO, a Responsible WHO, a WHERE or a WHICH, activity names that don't start with a verb, and the other rules in its settings. In version 7 it never found anything.
- **One W5 at a time.** Double-click a model and it opens in the W5 you already have running. A model that is already open comes to the front.
- **Back after Windows restarts.** When Windows restarts for updates, W5 keeps a recovery copy of each changed model, reopens your models afterwards and offers your unsaved work.

- **Recent models** appear in W5's jump list on the taskbar, and models with the same name in different folders are no longer mixed up.
- **Faster start.** The splash screen appears at once, and the main window in about 2 seconds, down from over 4.
- **Spell check** uses Windows' own spelling checker and dictionaries.
- **Typing slips corrected, as in Word.** When you type fast and hold Shift a moment too long, "The" becomes "The" as soon as the word ends, on diagrams, in the Properties panel and everywhere else you type. Words written that way on purpose, such as IDs, are left alone, and View > Options can turn it off.
- **Copy as picture** now pastes into today's apps, and into Word and PowerPoint at its printed size.

Fixed

- ✓ Some reports crashed W5 on models whose relationships loop back, such as the User Manual and the affinity reports. They now finish.
- ✓ Five Basic reports never ran: JIRA Linkage Report, Simple Affinity Table Enhanced Multiple Objects, Simple Profile Filter Report, UAT Testing and Excel Object Count Report. They now run.
- ✓ The Generic Requirements document failed without a message, and some sections of the Atomic and Extended documents failed. Both are fixed.
- ✓ Many reports sorted outline numbers wrongly, with 1.10 before 1.9. They now sort them in order.
- ✓ The User Stories report showed every priority as N/A. It now shows the priority.
- ✓ Reports whose settings held a placeholder, such as "Enter Profile Name", found nothing. Options now asks you to choose.
- ✓ Diagrams in reports, printouts, print preview, copied pictures and Save As Image lost their right and bottom quarter, and atom pictures in documents had black bands. Fixed, and Save As Image now writes real EMF and WMF files.
- ✓ Excel attachments stopped when the folder or document name was long, leaving the rest unconverted. Fixed.
- ✓ Pressing OK in the Advanced wizard's section editor broke a section that runs a stylesheet. Fixed.
- ✓ Making a procedure document could close a PowerPoint presentation you had open. It no longer touches your PowerPoint.
- ✓ Closing W5 with several changed models asked about the first one only, and closed the others without saving them. W5 now asks about each one.
- ✓ Opening a model marked it as changed, so W5 asked you to save models you hadn't touched. Fixed.
- ✓ After a crash, W5 never offered Modeler users their auto-saved work, and recovering didn't load it. Both are fixed.
- ✓ On PCs that use a comma as the decimal separator, zooming broke (Fit to Window gave an error and Zoom In jumped by thousands of percent), and label text grew a hundredfold after saving. Fixed, and models saved before open correctly.
- ✓ Validate Diagram always said there were no problems. It now runs its rules.

- ✓ Deleting a value from a list of valid values could remove another entry with the same text instead of the one selected. Fixed.
- ✓ The grid could be invisible on some diagrams. Fixed.
- ✓ The About box's text overlapped. Fixed, and a licence that never expires now says so.
- ✓ An expired licence opened the licence window without saying why. W5 now explains.
- ✓ Activating a mistyped serial number showed an empty "Activation Failed" box, and a trial that couldn't reach the licensing server only left a line of text. W5 now says what went wrong, such as an invalid serial number or no connection to the licensing server, and otherwise gives an error number to quote to support.
- ✓ The Start page listed a sample's web page as if it were a model. Fixed.

Removed or replaced

- **Microsoft Office** is no longer needed or used.
- **Old file formats.** Reports are no longer saved as .doc, .xls or web archives (.mht), but as today's Word documents, Excel workbooks and web pages.
- **File > Send** through Outlook is replaced by File > Share.
- **Tools > Convert to Database** is gone, with the Tools tab: it reported success without converting anything.
- **Help > Update** is no longer on the Help tab.
- **Team Foundation Server repositories** are no longer supported, as the server no longer exists. Models checked in before still open, read-only.
- **Getting Started** is no longer on the Start page.

Behind the scenes

- Each release of W5 is now built and tested automatically, with hundreds of automated checks.