

Notepad User Guide for Developers

By Daniel Friedman

What is Notepad?

Notepad is a text editor application that is included with Microsoft Windows. Notepad is used to create or edit plain text files, which contain text without any formatting. You can use Notepad to save notes or information on your computer that can be shared with others without them needing to install complex or expensive programs.

You can also use Notepad to develop code or structured data files. The advantage to using Notepad to code is that files can be created or edited without requiring the installation or configuration of an Integrated Development Environment (IDE). However, Notepad is designed for simplicity, so it does not provide IDE features such as code color markup or code debugging.

What types of files can be opened in Notepad?

Notepad supports text files that are encoded in UTF-8 format. This includes many file types, including:

- Plain text documents, such as .txt files.
- Source code files. For example, Javascript scripts (.js) and Python scripts (.py) can be edited in Notepad.
- Website content and stylesheets, including HTML pages (.html) and CSS stylesheets (.css).
- Structured data formats, such as CSV files (.csv), XML files (.xml), and JSON files (.json).

Notepad can open binary files, such as Java .class or .jar files, but the content is unlikely to be human readable. This occurs because Notepad opens the file exactly as it is stored on the hard drive, without processing the file to convert the binary data to text format. You would need the appropriate application, such as an IDE, to open binary files.

Opening Notepad using Command Prompt

Notepad can be opened to create a new file from the Command Prompt by entering `notepad`.

Opening files in Notepad using Command Prompt

Notepad can be used to edit existing files by specifying `notepad` and the file name or file path from the Command Prompt. To open a file using the file name, the directory must be open in Command Prompt.

For example, use these steps to open the file `users.txt` in the directory `C:\data`:

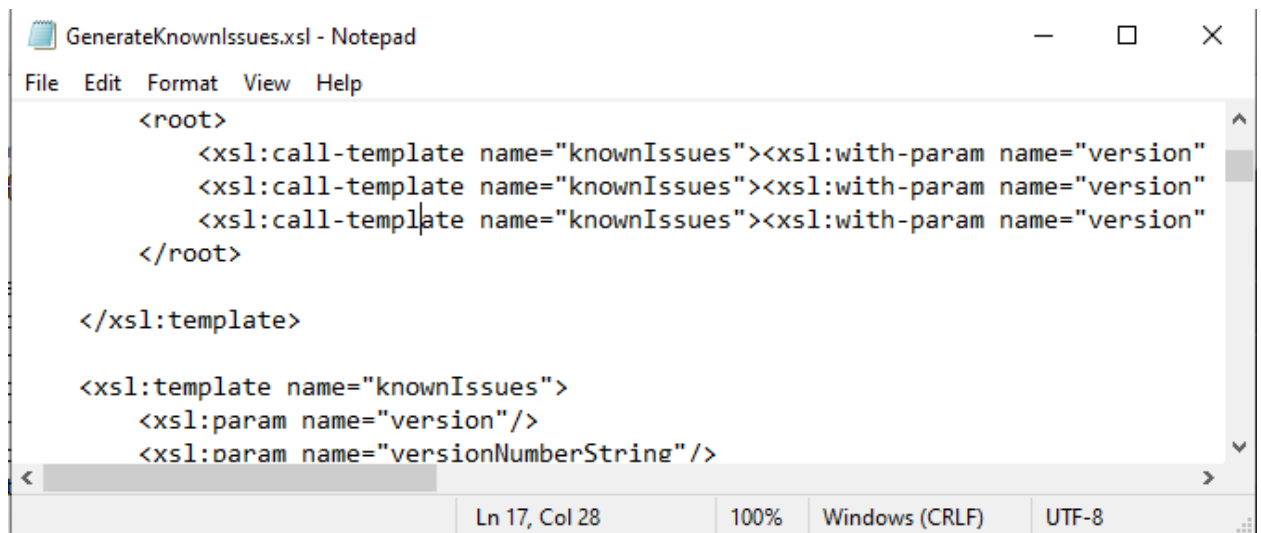
1. Enter `cd C:\data`.
2. Enter `notepad users.txt`.

Word wrap

The word wrap feature in Notepad can be enabled to break long lines in a file across multiple lines. Word wrap can improve readability of files. Text is displayed in the way it

would be printed in a book, and you do not need to scroll horizontally to read long lines in your file.

For example, with word wrap disabled, the `<xsl:call-template>` lines in this XSLT stylesheet are cut off horizontally so the entire line cannot be read at the same time.

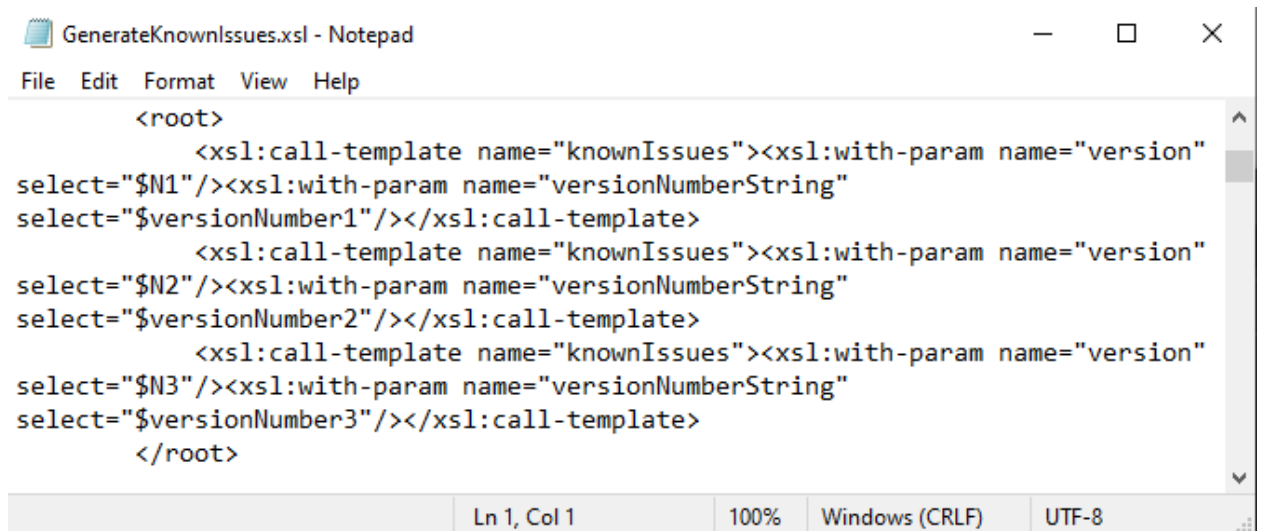


```
GenerateKnownIssues.xml - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
<root>
  <xsl:call-template name="knownIssues"><xsl:with-param name="version"
  <xsl:call-template name="knownIssues"><xsl:with-param name="version"
  <xsl:call-template name="knownIssues"><xsl:with-param name="version"
</root>

</xsl:template>

<xsl:template name="knownIssues">
  <xsl:param name="version"/>
  <xsl:param name="versionNumberString"/>
Ln 17, Col 28 100% Windows (CRLF) UTF-8
```

With word wrap enabled, these lines are broken across multiple lines and can be read without scrolling.



```
GenerateKnownIssues.xml - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
<root>
  <xsl:call-template name="knownIssues"><xsl:with-param name="version"
select="$N1"/><xsl:with-param name="versionNumberString"
select="$versionNumber1"/></xsl:call-template>
  <xsl:call-template name="knownIssues"><xsl:with-param name="version"
select="$N2"/><xsl:with-param name="versionNumberString"
select="$versionNumber2"/></xsl:call-template>
  <xsl:call-template name="knownIssues"><xsl:with-param name="version"
select="$N3"/><xsl:with-param name="versionNumberString"
select="$versionNumber3"/></xsl:call-template>
</root>
Ln 1, Col 1 100% Windows (CRLF) UTF-8
```

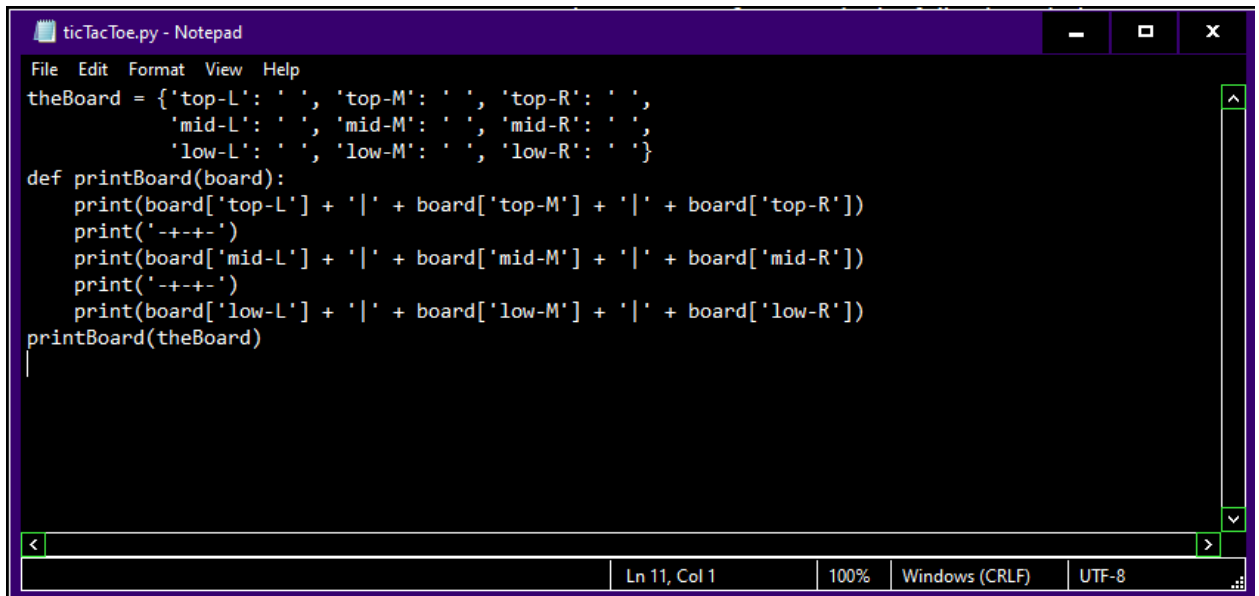
However, word wrap may make it harder to read certain data formats where it is important which line content is included in. For example, CSV files use separate lines to separate each record in the file.

Enabling word wrap

1. Open your file in Notepad.
2. Select **Format > Word Wrap**.

Viewing Notepad in dark mode

Notepad can be viewed in dark mode, to match other IDE applications and help with eye strain.



```
ticTacToe.py - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
theBoard = {'top-L': ' ', 'top-M': ' ', 'top-R': ' ',
            'mid-L': ' ', 'mid-M': ' ', 'mid-R': ' ',
            'low-L': ' ', 'low-M': ' ', 'low-R': ' '}
def printBoard(board):
    print(board['top-L'] + '|' + board['top-M'] + '|' + board['top-R'])
    print('--+')
    print(board['mid-L'] + '|' + board['mid-M'] + '|' + board['mid-R'])
    print('--+')
    print(board['low-L'] + '|' + board['low-M'] + '|' + board['low-R'])
printBoard(theBoard)
```

Ln 11, Col 1 | 100% | Windows (CRLF) | UTF-8

In Windows 10, Notepad is displayed in dark mode if high contrast mode is enabled in Windows. This is an operating system-wide setting, and it affects other applications.

Enabling high contrast mode

1. Press the Windows key and enter **Settings**.
2. In the **Vision** section, select the **High contrast** menu.
3. Slide the **Turn on high contrast** option to **On**.

Windows enables high contrast mode. Notepad will be displayed in dark mode.