



What is Symboloud?

Symboloud is an easy-to-use communication app designed to support people who use symbols to augment communication and express themselves. It provides a structured vocabulary organised into folders and tiles, with symbols and spoken words to help users build sentences, share feelings, and take part in everyday conversations. Whether at home, school, or in the community, Symboloud gives users quick access to core words and personalised vocabulary, helping them to communicate more independently and confidently.

Through the built-in editor, users and supporters can also create their own tiles and folders, choosing from over 72,000 SymbolStix symbols or adding photos from the device — including pictures taken live with the camera — to make vocabulary as meaningful and personal as possible.

Symboloud does not include built-in voices. Instead, it works with the system voices already available on your Android device, or with any additional voices you choose to download from the Google Play Store. This means you can select a voice that suits the user's age, gender, language, or accent, making communication more natural and personalised.

Symboloud comes with a pre-set communication grid based on best practice from UK speech and language therapy, using the Fitzgerald Key colour coding system.

This grid organises words into clear categories (such as actions, describing words, people, and objects) and colour-codes them to make it easier for users to recognise different word types at a glance. For example, verbs, nouns, pronouns, and adjectives are each given a consistent colour, helping users learn how words fit together to build sentences.

This grid provides a strong foundation for communication and language development, but it can also be customised. New folders and tiles can be added through the editor, and these can use the same colour coding, or be personalised with different colours, photographs, and additional vocabulary to reflect each user's needs and environment.

The initial grid is colour coded as follows:

Word type / category	Colour	Example words from the grid
Verbs / Actions	Green	go, want, like, look, make
Nouns	Orange	dog, cat, rabbit, horse, cow
Describing words / Adjectives	Blue	big, small, hot, cold, good
Pronouns	Yellow	I, you, he, she, they
Social words / Quick phrases	Pink	hello, thank you, please stop, I need help, come here
Folders & Functions	Grey	

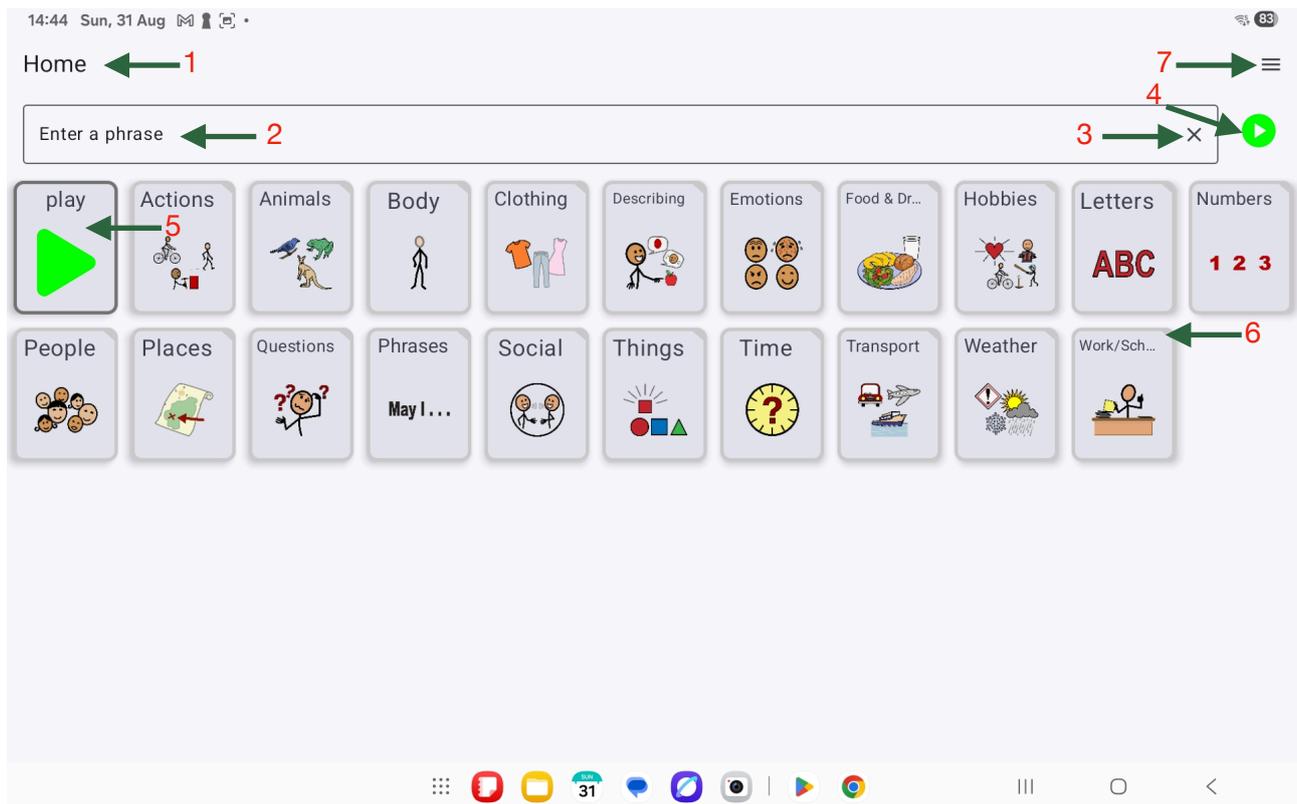
Symboloud is designed to grow with each user, starting with the core grid and expanding as new words, folders, and personal symbols are added.

Whether used for everyday conversations, learning in school, or sharing important messages, the app provides a reliable and adaptable tool for communication.

With the ability to personalise vocabulary, colours, and voices, every user can make Symboloud truly their own.



Opening the app for the first time



When you first open Symboloud, you will see the **Home screen**. This is the main area where you build and speak phrases.

- **Folder Title (top left, 1):** The word *Home* shows you which folder you are currently in. As you navigate, this will change to match the folder you open.
- **Phrase Box (top centre, 2):** The *Enter a phrase* box is where your sentence is built. Each time you tap on a tile, the word or phrase will appear here.
- **Clear Button (X, 3):** The X at the end of the phrase box clears the current phrase so you can start again.
- **Play Button (green, top right, 4):** The green play button speaks the phrase in the phrase box. While the app is speaking, this button changes to a stop button. If tapped while showing as a stop button, it will stop speaking immediately.

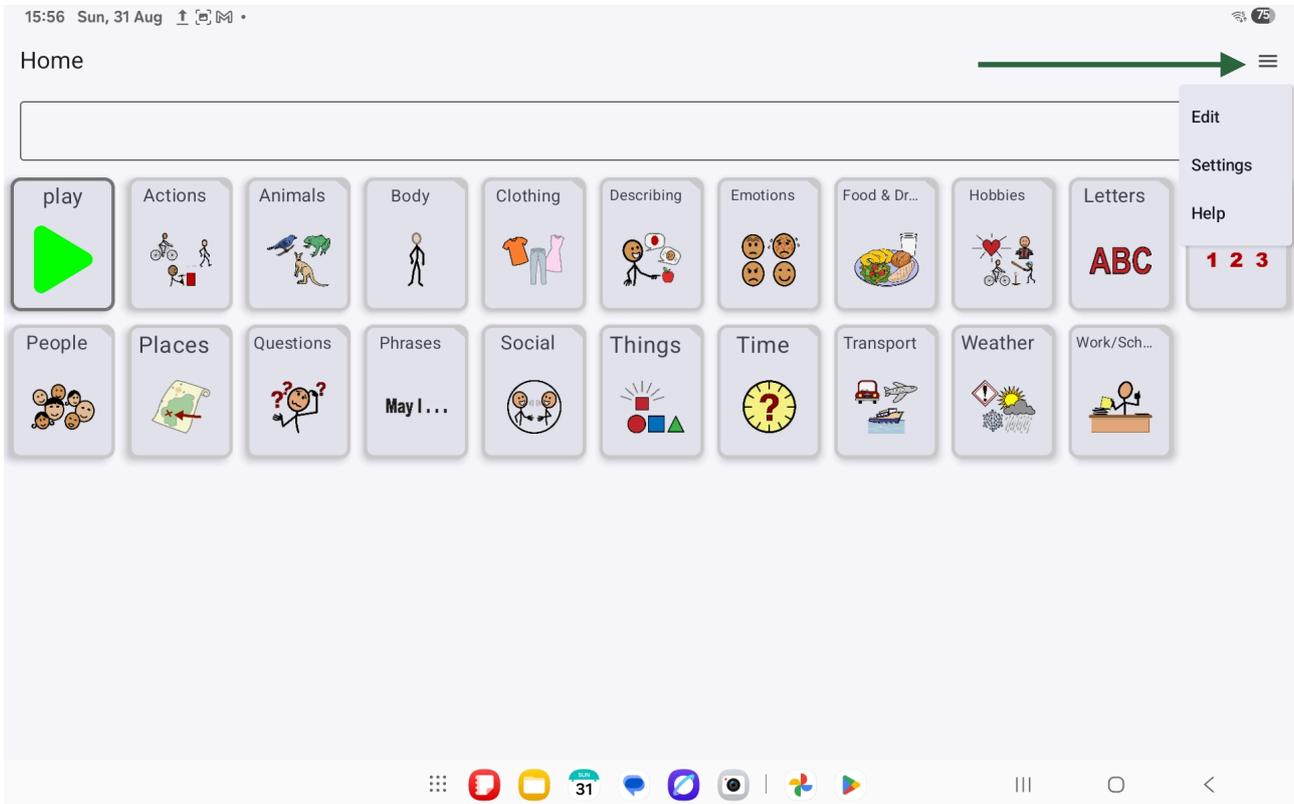
On the first row of tiles:

- **Large Play Button (far left, 5):** This is an optional button that also plays the phrase in the phrase box. This tile works in exactly the same way as the smaller play button at the top right. It will play the phrase in the phrase box, change to a stop button during speech, and can be tapped to stop playback at any time.
- **Grey Folder Tiles (6):** Each folder contains related words. These are organised into content areas, such as *Actions*, *Animals*, *Body*, *Food & Drink*, and more. Folders are shown with a small filled-in corner on the top right of the tile.
- Finally, the **three horizontal lines (top right corner, 7)** open the settings menu, where you can adjust preferences and access additional features.



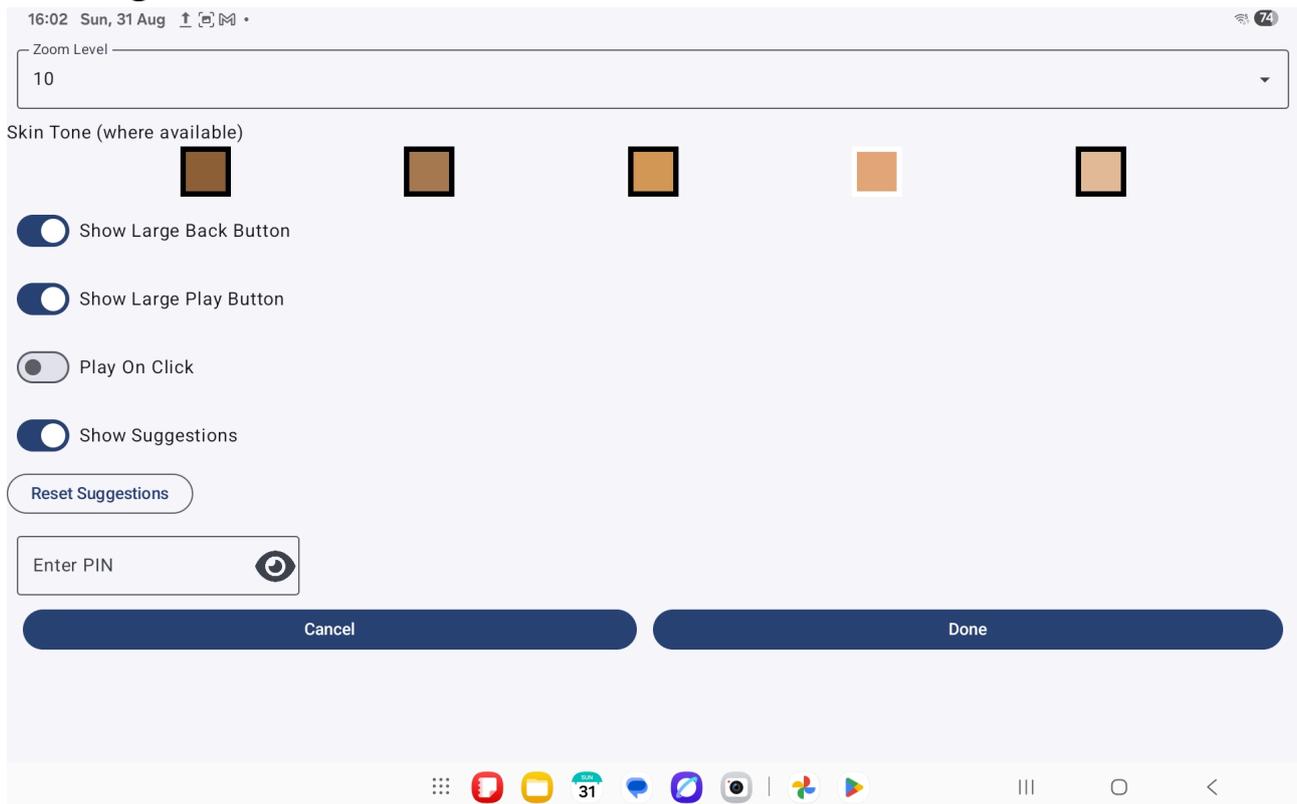
Inside the settings menu

The Symboloud settings menu has been designed to be simple and lightweight, giving users and supporters an easy and understandable experience. By tapping the three-line menu button in the top right corner of the screen, you'll see three straightforward options: **Edit, Settings, and Help**. These options keep everything uncluttered and accessible, so you can quickly find what you need without navigating through complicated menus.





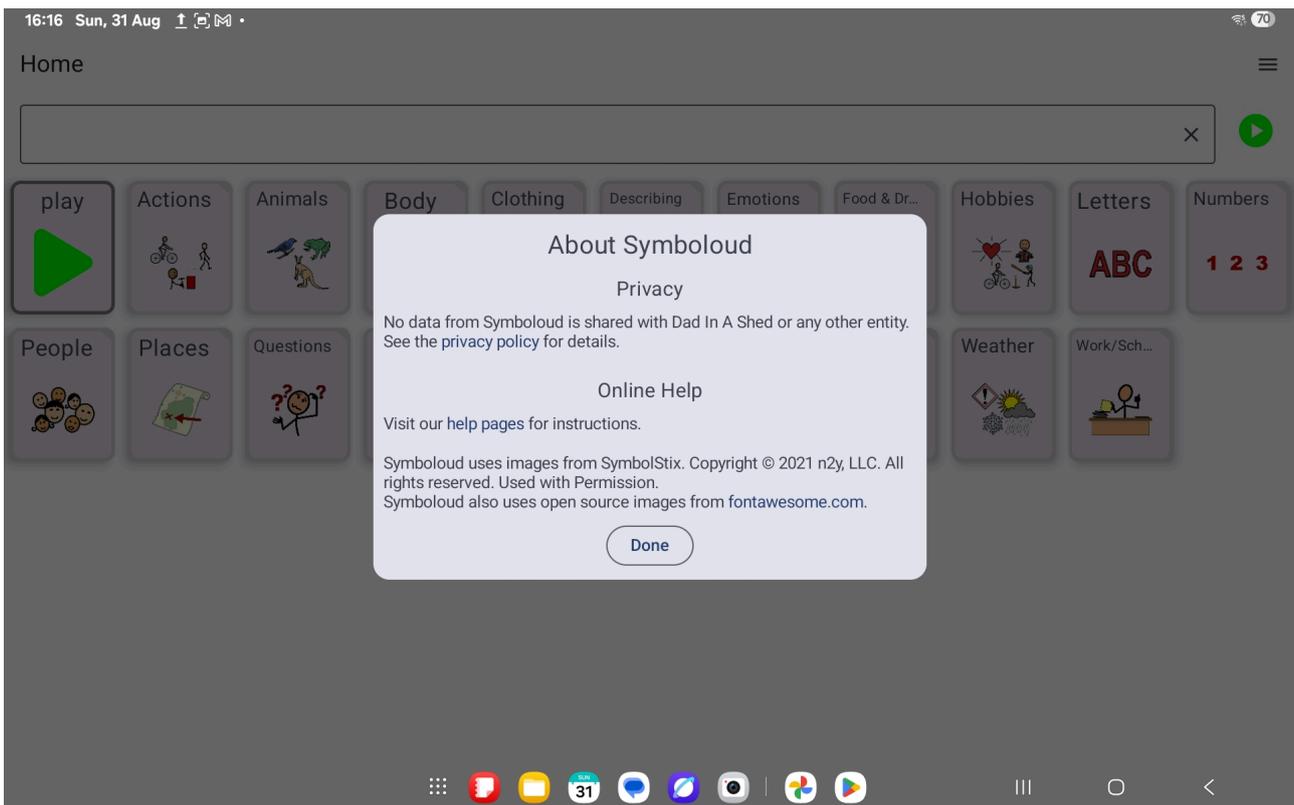
Settings



- **Zoom Level (1–10):** This drop-down menu controls how many cells appear across each row of the grid. The higher the number, the more cells are shown side-by-side. Grids always scroll vertically.
- **Skin Tone (where available):** Choose the skin tone you'd like SymbolStix symbols to use, for any symbols that support multiple skin tone options.
- **Show Large Back Button:** A toggle switch that adds a large back button to the first position in every folder grid, making navigation quicker.
- **Show Large Play Button:** A toggle switch that adds a large play button into the grid. If the back button is enabled, it appears in position 2; if not, it appears in position 1.
- **Play on Click:** When turned on, each tile will speak its word or phrase immediately when pressed. When off, tiles remain silent until the full phrase is built and played.
- **Show Suggestions:** When enabled, Symboloud will learn your most common word sequences and suggest likely next words as half-height cells above the grid. For example, after selecting *l*, it may suggest *want*, then *a*, then *cup*, and so on.
- **Reset Suggestions:** Clears all learned predictions and usage patterns, restoring the system to its starting state.
- **Enter PIN:** Lets you add a PIN code to protect the settings and editing features from accidental changes.

At the bottom of the page, use **Cancel** to exit without saving, or **Done** to confirm your changes.

Help



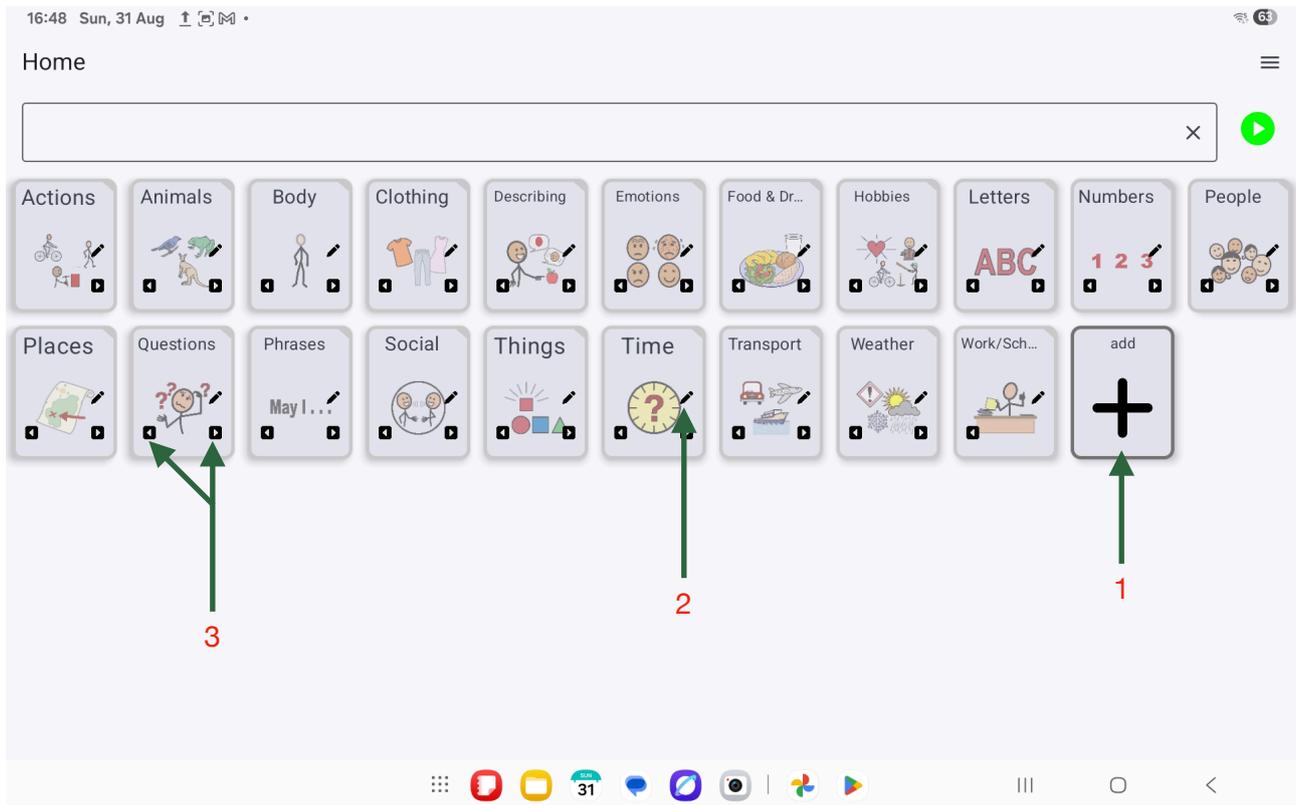
When you select **Help** from the settings menu, a pop-up window appears with key information.

- **Privacy:** The message makes it clear that *no data from Symboloud is ever collected or shared*. Nothing is sent to Dad In A Shed or to any other organisation. This means families can be completely reassured that their personal information and their child's communication are safe and private. For professionals, it also means there are no GDPR concerns, as the app does not transmit or store user data outside the device.
- **Online Help:** A direct link is provided to the Symboloud help pages at *symboloud.com*, where you can find guides, tips, and support if you need further assistance.
- **Licensing Acknowledgements:** The final section explains that Symboloud uses licensed images from SymbolStix (n2y, LLC) and open-source icons from Font Awesome.

Tap **Done** to close the pop-up and return to the app.



Editing



When you press **Edit** from the settings menu, the app switches into *editing mode*. This allows you to make changes to the grid so that Symboloud can be personalised to your needs. Edit mode has two main functions, here we'll explain the first.

This first function of Edit Mode is about **changing and organising what's already in the grid**. In the next section, we'll look at the second function, which focuses on creating and editing the details of tiles and folders.

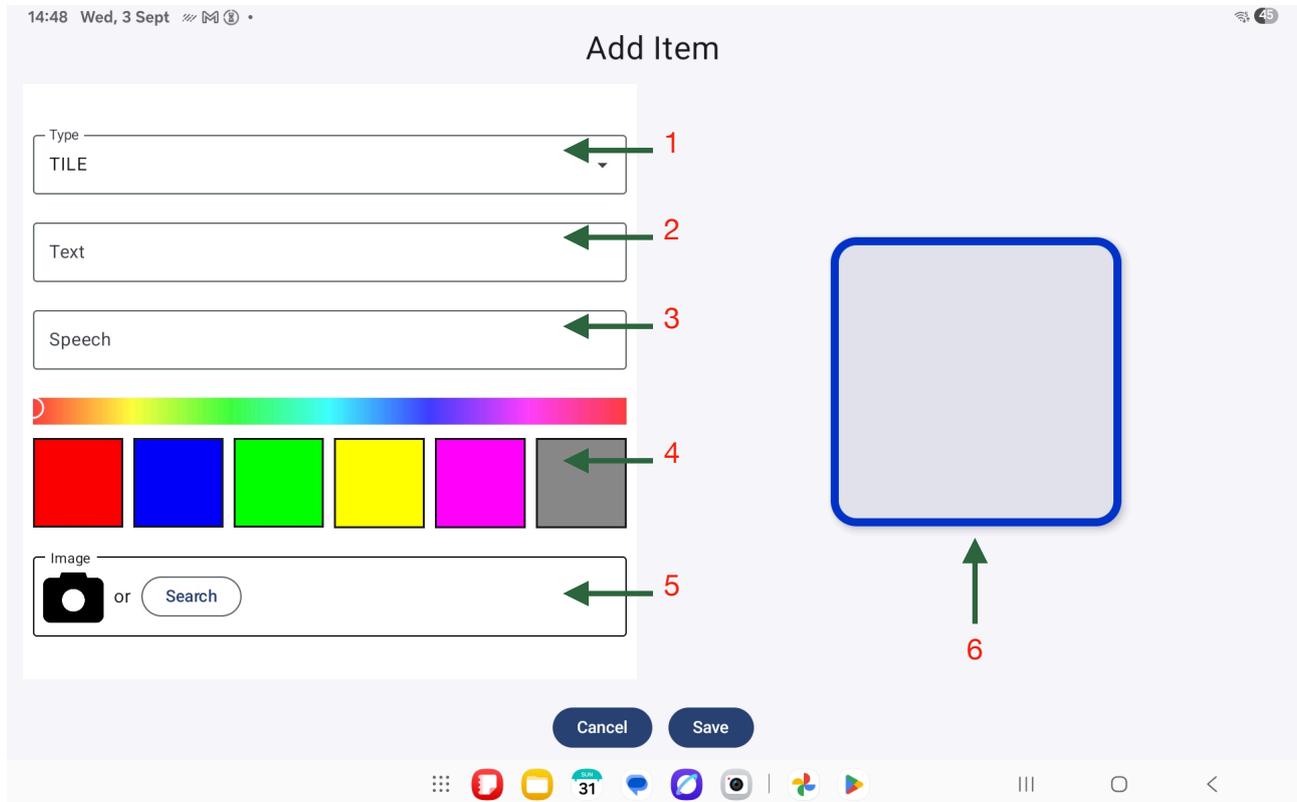
In editing mode you will see:

- **Add Button (1):** A large **Add (+)** button appears at the bottom right of the grid. Tapping this opens the editor, where you can create a new folder or tile.
- **Pencil Icon(2):** Each existing tile and folder now has a small pencil icon. Selecting this lets you edit that specific tile or folder — for example changing its label, symbol, colour, or speech output.
- **Move Arrows(3):** Left and right arrows appear on each tile or folder. These allow you to move the item's position within the grid, so you can arrange vocabulary in the order that works best for the user.



The Editor

To enter the editor, first press **Edit** from the settings menu. Once you are in editing mode, you can open the editor in two ways: by pressing the large **Add (+)** tile to create something new, or by pressing the **pencil icon** on any existing tile or folder to edit it.

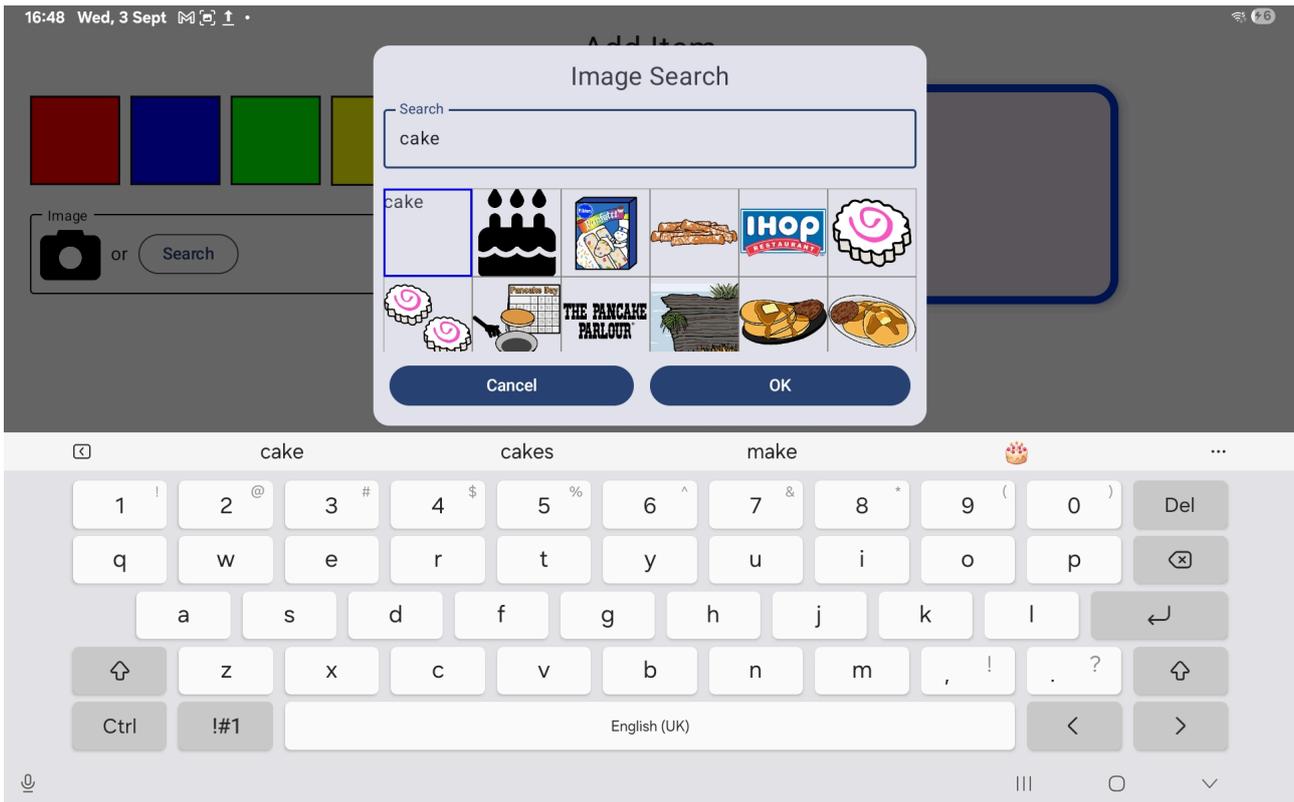


The editor has been designed to be as straightforward and intuitive as possible, so you can quickly create or adjust tiles and folders without complexity.

- Type (dropdown menu):** Choose what kind of item you want to add:
 - **Tile** – a speech tile that outputs spoken text.
 - **Folder** – a container that can hold more tiles, more folders, or a mix of both.
 - **Large Play Button** – a play button that speaks the phrase box contents.
 - **Large Back Button** – a navigation button that takes you back one folder.
 - **Spacer** – an invisible cell used to create space between items, useful for access or grouping.
- Text:** This is the word or phrase displayed on the tile or folder.
- Speech:** This is the text the app will speak when the tile is pressed. Often this will match the text above, but you can make it different (for example, display “WC” but have the speech say “toilet”).
- Border Colour:** Choose the border colour of the tile or folder. You can select a preset colour block or pick from the spectrum strip above.
- Image:** Choose the picture to represent your tile or folder.
 - Tap the **camera icon** to use a saved photo from your device or take a new picture with the camera.
 - Tap **Search** to find a SymbolStix symbol from the built-in library.
- Preview:** A live preview of your tile or folder appears here, updating as you set the type, text, speech, colour, and image.

At the bottom of the screen, press **Save** to keep your changes, or **Cancel** to exit without saving.

The Symbol Picker



When adding or editing a tile or folder, you can choose an image using the built-in symbol search.

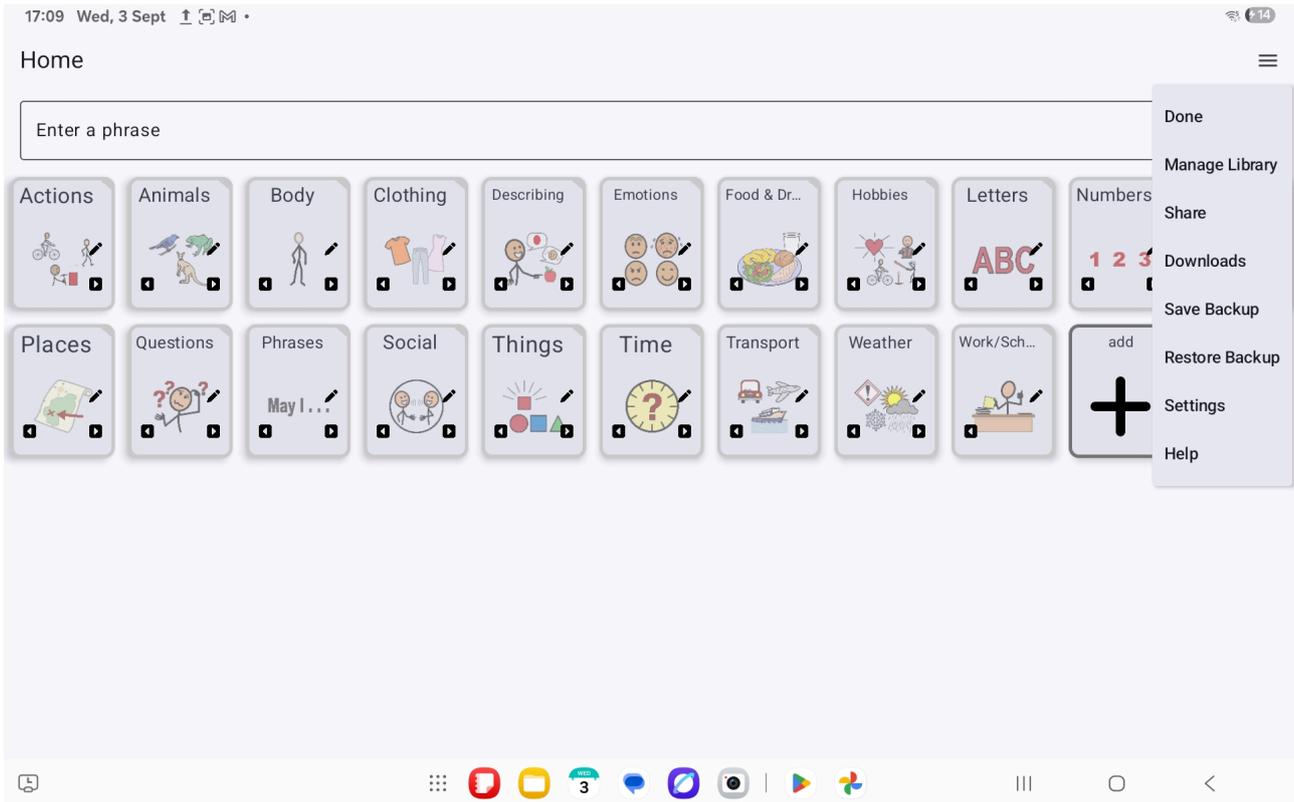
- **Search box:** Type the word you want to find a symbol for. In the example shown, the word *cake* has been entered.
- **Search results:** The symbol picker looks for any images linked to your search word. Sometimes this can include broader results (for example, typing *cake* may also bring up symbols such as *The Pancake Parlour*).
- **Refining your search:** To narrow down results to exactly what you typed, add a space after the word. For instance, typing *cake* followed by a space will reduce the results to only cake-related symbols.
- **Scrolling:** If there are multiple matching symbols, scroll to the side to browse through them.
- **Selecting a symbol:** Tap the image you want to use. It will be highlighted with a blue box. Then press **OK** to confirm your choice, or **Cancel** to return without selecting.
- **Text only option:** If you don't want to use a symbol, the first option shown will simply display the written word. This text will be centred in the tile or folder's image area.

Tip: If you can't find the exact symbol you're looking for, try:

- Adding a space after your word (to narrow down results).
- Using different forms of the word (e.g. *cake*, *cakes*).
- Trying synonyms or related words, for example, searching *toilet* instead of *bathroom*, or *car* instead of *vehicle*. These can often bring up a symbol when the exact word doesn't return what you need.



The Edit Menu

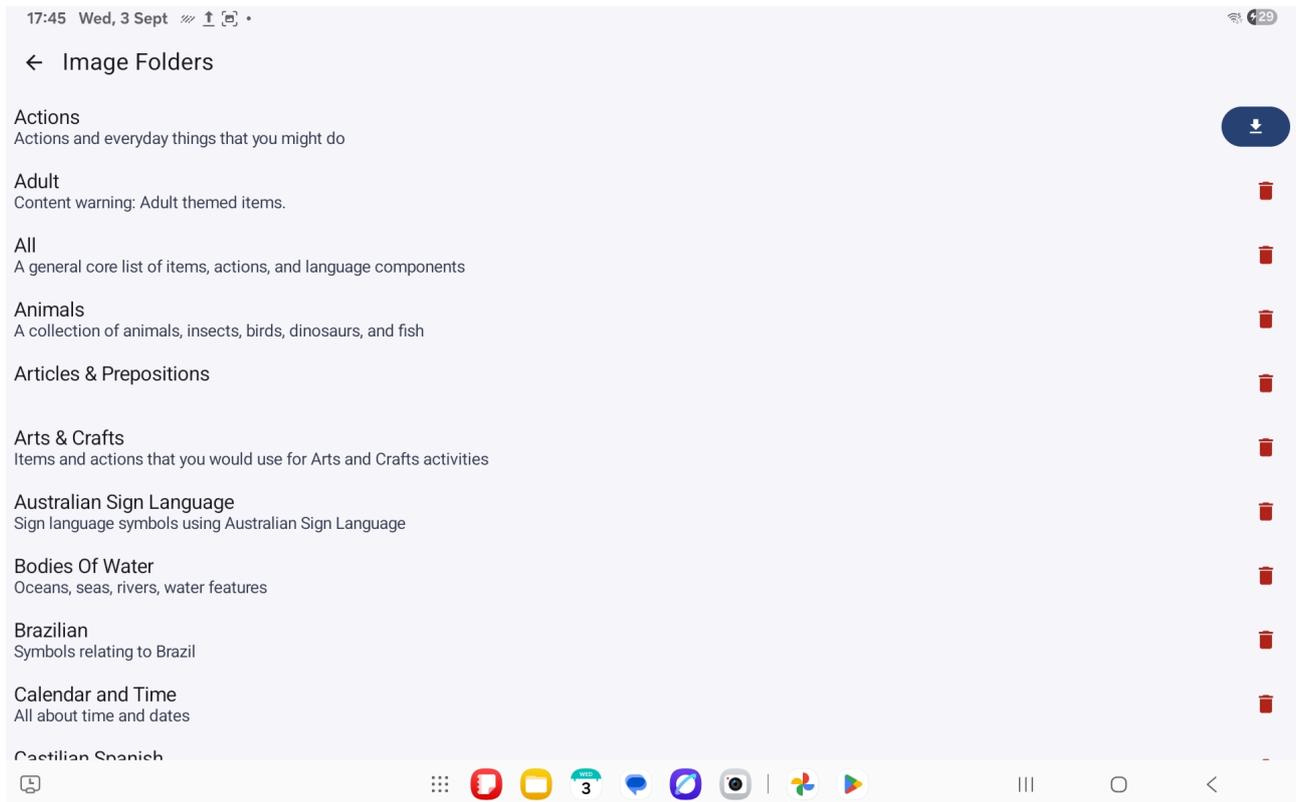


When you first press the **three-line menu button** and select **Edit**, the app enters editing mode. To open the edit menu, press the **three-line button again**. You will then see a list of options that let you manage your vocabulary, backups, and symbol packs:

- **Done:** Commits any changes you have made and exits edit mode, returning you to normal use.
- **Manage Library:** Opens the symbol library manager. From here you can download symbol packs — around 3GB of content is available. These packs are not included by default to keep the app size manageable, so you can choose which packs you want to install.
- **Share:** Lets you share your .symboloud backup file using any available method on your device, such as email, Bluetooth, or cloud storage services.
- **Downloads:** Takes you to *symboloud.com*, where you can download pre-made grids and folders that other users have submitted and shared.
- **Save Backup:** Creates a backup of your current vocabulary as a .symboloud file, stored on your device.
- **Restore Backup:** Allows you to restore a saved backup file. You can choose to either **merge** the backup with your current grids or **replace** them entirely. Once chosen, you can browse your device or cloud storage to select the file.



Managing the Symbol Library



When you press **Manage Library** from the edit menu, you are taken to the symbol library management screen.

- **Browsing Packs:** The library is organised into a scrollable list of symbol packs. Each pack has a **title** and a short **description** explaining what types of symbols it contains.
- **Downloading Packs:** To add a pack to your app, press the **download button** on the right. Once downloaded, the symbols from that pack become available in the symbol search when creating or editing tiles.
- **Deleting Packs:** If you no longer want access to a symbol pack, press the **trash can icon** next to it. This removes the pack from your device, freeing up space, but you can re-download it at any time from the same list.

This system keeps the app lightweight, while still giving you access to the full library of symbols, around 3GB in total, so you can choose only the packs you actually need.