New Features in *TimeTabler 2018*

'Trial a Year' feasibility test   at   `Check & Validate`   ➭   `🖩 Trial a Year`
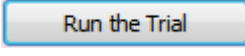
This is a quick but essential test **to see if a Year will timetable by itself**. After all, if Year 7 will not schedule by itself then it certainly won't be possible with all the other Years! Now you can do this test more easily.

First choose a Year `Year 7 ▾` and then `Run the Trial`.
After a short while you can look at the Class Timetable Screen to see whether it is satisfactory.

The best way of using it is detailed in: www.timetabler.com/PDFs/HowCanICheckMyDataBatches.pdf
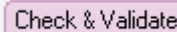
Note: You can run this test even if your activities are not fully staffed ...but the results will not be definitive.
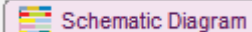You can also, now, use the Scheduling part of *TimeTabler* even if your batches are not fully staffed.

When an unstaffed lesson is assigned, *TimeTabler* gives it any (semi-random) teacher who is free in that period, just as a place-holder or as an example of a teacher who could take the lesson.
For example, if the lesson is for French, then where possible a teacher whose 'main subject' is French is chosen …next best is a teacher whose 2nd-subject is French …and finally any teacher will be chosen!

This shows why using it with unstaffed activities, although possible, is not a definitive Test.

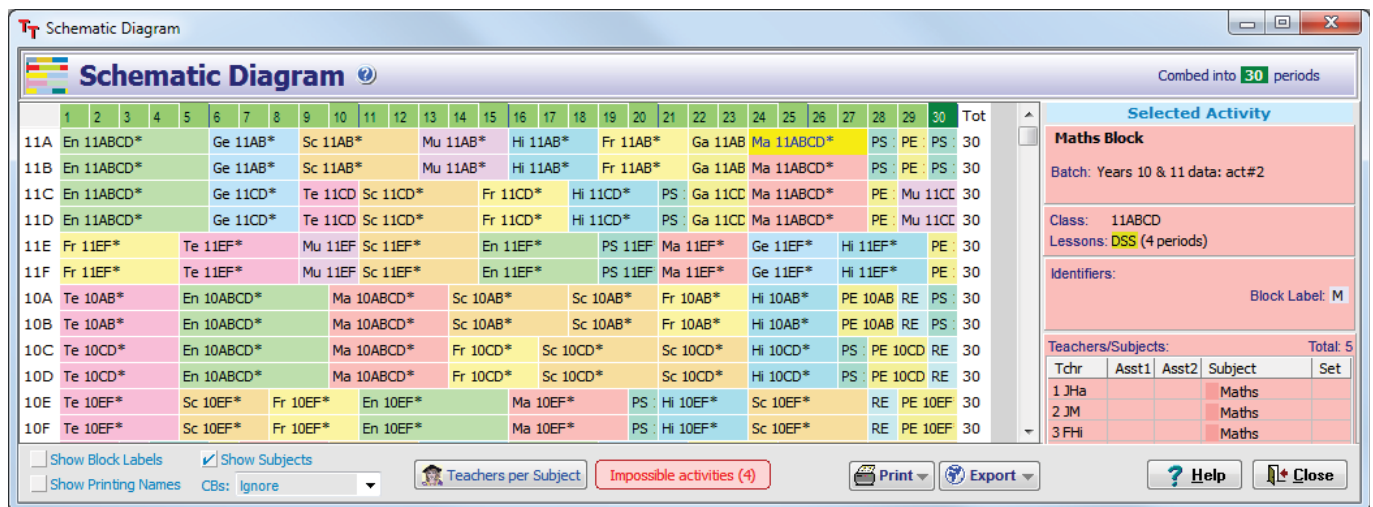## 'Schematic Diagram' feasibility test   at   `Check & Validate`   ➭   `▤ Schematic Diagram`

This new test is particularly useful if your curricular structure has changed this year.
It tests if your blocks and class-groupings could fit into the timetable cycle.
The principles are explained in Chapter 4 in 'The Timetabler's Cookbook', www.timetabler.com/book
Like the 'Trial a Year' test (above) it is a quick test and has some limitations, explained on the HelpScreen.

When you run the feature, you first need to tell *TimeTabler* what is the max. number of lessons of Maths (say) that can be taught in any given period. So if you have 8 Maths teachers, you may set this figure as 8. However, if some are part-timers, or teach other subjects too, then you may wish to decrease this figure to 7 or 6. Similarly for every other subject.
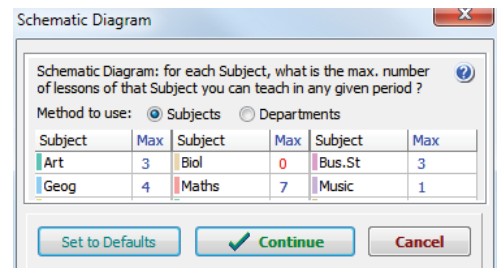If you only have 1 Music teacher, it's important to say so here.
Or if you have 2 Music teachers but only 1 room, you should enter 1 here. Enter zero if you want the subject to be omitted.
These figures are remembered thereafter, so you don't need to re-enter them each time you run the test.

Note: when you first use the test (or if you click 'Set to Defaults') then *TimeTabler* will suggest figures for you, by looking at your data. But the figures are likely to be optimistic, so enter suitable figures as above.

You can click on any box of the Schematic Diagram, and on Help, to see more details.

Improvements to the FIT Screen

New features have been added (from the Users' WishList). On the bottom row of the FIT Screen there are now 2 extra buttons to filter results:
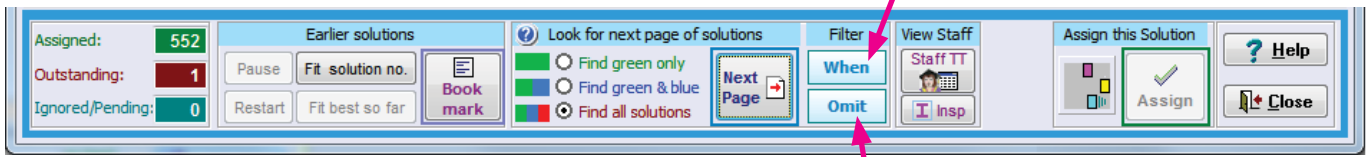
The 'When' button

Sometimes you want the FIT 'musical-chairs' routine to show you only a sub-set of all the possible solutions.
With the new 'When' button you are now offered several filter choices:

After selecting one, it will be applied when you click on 'Next Page'.

- Early (first half of the cycle)
- Late (second half of the cycle)
- Mornings (ie. before Lunch)
- Afternoons (ie. after Lunch)
- A specific day
- A specific Period

The 'Omit' button

Sometimes you feel that a particular FIT solution on an early page is no good because it includes a step that you don't ever want to make. But then later FIT moves may include the same sub-step!

To avoid this, if you see a step you don't want, just click the **number** of the step.
ie. the square box with a number in it.
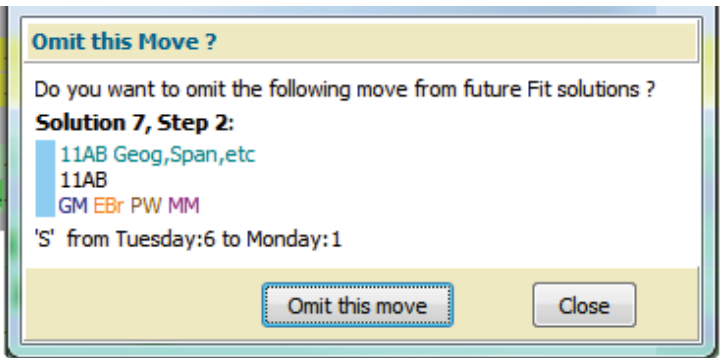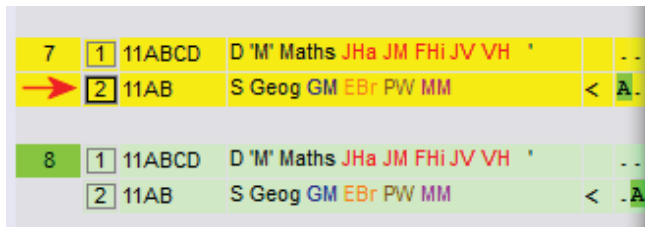
The screen shows you details of the move, and asks if you want to Omit it from further solutions, like this:

Of course if you click on Step 1 then you can prevent the kickout itself from going into that period.

Improvements to Backup & Restore

If you move your data between computers at home and at school, and/or have more than one computer at school … then you may want to see more than simply the last location you backed-up to (or restored from).
Now, if you click on Change the Location (on either the 'TT-Backup' or 'TT-Restore' screens), then you are shown more options than before:
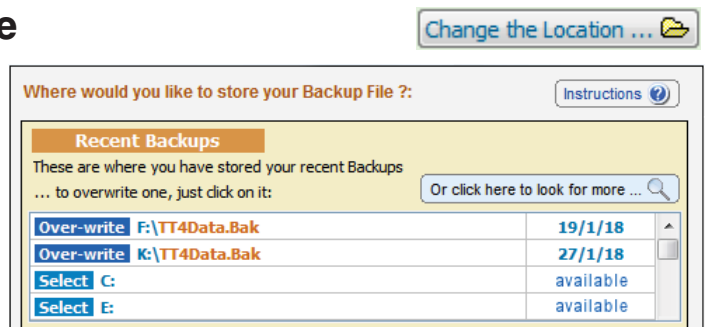
There's a similar screen for 'TT-Restore'.

Other improvements:

- The Simple Block Wizard has been improved, with Re-order and Auto-Set buttons.

- A quick way to enter a big class: you can now use an exclamation mark (**!**) to mean 'All the year'.
  Eg. a class scheduling name of **10!** means 'All of year 10' and will clash with 10A, 10B, 10AB, etc.

- The Staff Deployment Analysis Screen has a new feature to let you see quickly
  the effect of adjusting your Contact Ratio, to see how teaching periods are affected.

'Room Sweep' feature for improved rooming at [Check & Tidy] ➡ [🚪🧹 Room Sweep]

This is an improved way of Rooming your completed timetable.
First, it tells you the current situation:

And then it offers to allocate your Rooms in a series of 'sweeps', see items 3 – 10 below:

You can use any order you like, but we suggest the one below, and '**Run All**' will do that for you.
If you want a clean start then use items 1, 2, first.

This method works well, but only if you have first set up:

- **On the Teachers Screen*:**
  a 1st Room Preference for each teacher (and if you wish a 2nd and 3rd Room),

- **On the Preferred Room for each Subject Screen**:**
  which rooms are 'Good' (green) and (optionally) which are Acceptable (yellow) for each subject.

After using these sweeps, go to the Room Timetable Screen to deal with any remaining items manually.

Improved 'Split-teaching' feature at [Check & Tidy] ➡ [🎓 Split-teaching]
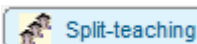
After scheduling your timetable it's always a good idea to check for quality, including looking for bad cases of 'split-teaching'.

You can choose to have it based on the 'Batch Activities' or based on the 'TGNs' (which is better, if you have set them up).

Some examples are shown on this screen:

Example 1 : On the screen shown here, 7A History is split between 2 teachers, GRo and TO. They may be able to teach different aspects or periods of History so this may not be a problem. If it were in the 6th Form it would probably be desirable.

Example 2 : 9B English (see the second row) has 3 lessons split between 2 teachers. DA is highlighted as being the teacher with the fewer lessons; so perhaps the one to consider for changing**?

Example 3 : Blue indicates that they are 'soft' **Pool** lessons for 8A French. ie. the staff have been allocated by *TimeTabler* from the Pools Screen. If you convert** them from 'soft' to 'hard' they turn black.
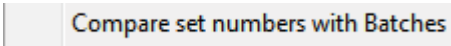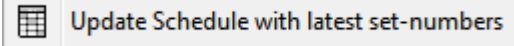
For a language subject like French (or Maths) this split-teaching may be a significant problem.

**To change any of the teachers, just click on the cell (to open the usual Edit Details Screen).
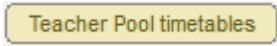
Other improvements, taken from the WishList:

Set Labels

Set-numbers (eg. for Maths sets) can now be updated quickly in more ways, if you forgot to enter them at the start (in the Simple Block Wizard):

- In the schedule, on the Class Timetable Screen, get a report on any problems by right-clicking to select on the menu: `Compare set numbers with Batches`

- In the schedule, at the Edit Details Screen there is a button to automatically allocate set numbers to the groups in a block: `Auto-Set`

- In a Batch, after making changes in the Simple Block Wizard, right-click to select on the menu: `Update Schedule with latest set-numbers`

- The Edit Details Screen now has a quicker way to put a group of staff in the same room (for example, for a meeting). `One room`

Lunches

- You can change the colour & thickness of 'Lunch' lines on all the screens & printouts, at: Check & Tidy ➟ Edit Day & Period Labels ➟ Shading & Colour

- 'L' Lunch availability markers can be shown on the Staff Timetable Printouts. If need be, they can be removed at Staff Timetable Screen ➟ Make Available ➟ Clear all 'L's (lunch markers)

Printouts

- Pool Timetable Printouts can now show TeachingGroupNames (TGNs) to help you or the Head of Subject identify the groups uniquely. `Teacher Pool timetables`

- Scottish schools who scheduled with labels of 'S1', 'S2', etc can now choose just '1', '2', etc in the TGNs for display on the Export matching screen. Visit Curriculum Diagram Screen ➟ TGNs ➟ Set-up & Review ➟ Customize further ➟ Represent the Year like this.
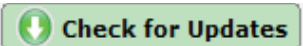
Exports

- There are new or improved exports to: SEEMiS, DoubleFirstEngage, MySchool, HUB, PASS/3sys, SmartClass, RM Integris, Outlook.

Alternative Curriculum

- This new feature will be added during March ...use 'Check for Updates' (below) to get this free update.

Other news

- The free **Gold-Start** Support for New purchasers continues, and in addition New timetablers in existing schools can now purchase this enhanced support.
  Details at: www.timetabler.com/gold-start and on the Upgrade Order Form.

- If you have your own ideas for the WishList, please send them to us.

- There will be further free updates during February & March (for example, to update exports to some MIS), so please use 'Check for Updates' regularly". `Check for Updates`

- The HelpScreens have been updated, and some HelpMovies have been updated. `View Help-Movies`

Please remember : **before** starting your next New timetable,
look *first* at the HelpMovie entitled :

| 8. | Tidying-up last year's data, ready to do a New timetable (How to re-use your data efficiently. Promote, Clone, & Rename batches.) | 14 min | 15MB |