

# Tips for Working with Microsoft Word Documents

QUICK HELP

BASIC

EXPANDED

PROFESSIONAL

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**W**ord has a dizzying array of options, but the ones you'll use most as you edit and proofread can be pared down to a relative few. Here's a brief guide to working with Word's primary editing tools.

**Version Alert:** The discussion is based on the default settings in Microsoft Word 2003.



- **To turn Track Changes on or off:** Click the Track Changes button on the Reviewing toolbar, double-click TRK at the bottom of the screen, or press Ctrl > Shift > E.
- **To set markup options:** On the Reviewing toolbar, go to Show > Options and choose colors and styles for different types of changes.
- **To turn balloons on or off:** On the Reviewing toolbar, go to Show > Balloons and choose Always if you want to use them for all your changes, Never if you don't want to use them, or Only for Comments/Formatting if that's your preference. You can also choose balloon settings under Show > Options.
- **To set how changes are viewed:** On the Display for Review toolbar, choose Final Showing Markup while you're working, to see changes as you make them, and Final when you do your final reading, to get a clean view of the finished product.
- **To insert new text:** With Track Changes on, place your cursor where you want the new text and start typing.
- **To delete text:** With Track Changes on, place your cursor at the start of the text you want to delete and hold down the Delete key.
- **To add a comment:** Place your cursor at the spot in the text where you want to insert a comment, then go to the Reviewing toolbar and click Insert Comment. If you're using balloons, one will appear, and you can type your remarks in it. If you're not using balloons, the Reviewing Pane will open; type your comment there. To close the Reviewing Pane, click the Reviewing Pane button in the Reviewing toolbar. (If you want to bypass Word's commenting tool and just type your remark directly in the text, it's a good idea to set it off with something like double braces or asterisks to make searching for comments easy.)



- **To remove a comment:** If you're using balloons, highlight the balloon that contains the comment you want to remove and click the Reject Change/Delete Comment button in the Reviewing toolbar. If you're not using balloons, highlight the comment number bracketed in the text and press Delete, or click the Reject Change/Delete Comment button in the Reviewing toolbar. (Naturally, if you've typed a comment directly in the text, just delete that text.)
- **To accept or reject changes:** Step forward through marked changes by clicking the Next button on the Reviewing toolbar. Step backward through them by clicking the Previous button. To accept a change, make sure it's highlighted, then click the Accept Change button. To reject one, click the Reject Change/Delete Comment button. Be *very* leery of choosing an Accept All or Reject All option.
- **To search:** Use the Find function under the Edit menu. Narrow your search with the options under the More button. Go to the Replace tab to automatically replace text once it's found (but be *very* leery of choosing Replace All).
- **To work with a split screen or multiple documents:** Go to Window and choose Split to create two independent halves of a single document; choose Arrange All to see and work with multiple documents on the screen at the same; and choose Compare Side by Side with... to see and work with two documents side by side.
- **To spell-check your document:** Place the cursor at the beginning of the document and click the Spelling and Grammar button on the Basic toolbar.

### Handy Keyboard Shortcuts

For your convenience, here's a list of some keys that can save you time and mousing. (Note: If you're working on a laptop or have a keyboard with a nonstandard configuration, in a few cases you might need to use different keys.)

Close	Ctrl+W
Copy	Ctrl+C
Create new document	Ctrl+N
Cut	Ctrl+X
Find	Ctrl+F
Go to	Ctrl+G
Help	F1 key
Insert a comment	Alt+Ctrl+M



Insert an em dash	Alt+Ctrl+minus sign (not hyphen)
Insert an en dash	Ctrl+minus sign (not hyphen)
Open	Ctrl+O
Paste	Ctrl+V
Print	Ctrl+P
Print Preview	Ctrl+F2 key
Repeat an action	Ctrl+Y
Replace	Ctrl+H
Save	Ctrl+S
Save As	F12 key
Spelling and Grammar	F7 key
Split (screen)	Ctrl+Alt+S
Thesaurus	Shift+F7 key
Turn track changes on and off	Ctrl+Shift+E
Undo an action	Ctrl+Z

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*For more pointers on the basics and nice-to-know extras, choose the job aid **Tips for Working with Microsoft Word Documents – Basic**; for even more details, as well as screenshots and examples of the basics and beyond, choose the **Expanded** version. Both aids are based on The McGraw-Hill Desk Reference for Editors, Writers, and Proofreaders book and CD (McGraw-Hill, 2006, K.D. Sullivan and Merilee Eggleston). And for even more help in the world of words, see our entire set of easy-to-use [Job Aids for Effective Communication](#) that give you quick, clear guidance as you prepare anything from a memo to a manual to a web page.*

