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No matter how long you've been using Microsoft Word, you can always learn new techniques to help you work faster and smarter. Here are some of TechRepublic's favorite tips and tricks for Word 97, 2000, 2002(XP), 2003, and 2007, organized into four sections: The Basics, Advanced Tips, Things You Don't Have to Do, and New to Word 2007.

## The Basics

- 1. Learn to use Undo** – Make a mistake? Press [Ctrl]Z or choose Undo from the Edit menu right away. Keep pressing [Ctrl]Z to backtrack through and undo the most recent editing changes you've made. In 2007, the Undo button is on the Quick Access toolbar in the top-left corner. Redo does double duty with the new Repeat button.
- 2. Save often** – Press [Ctrl]S or click the Save button on the Standard toolbar. Save your work frequently. You can also instruct Word to automatically save your work periodically. Open the Tools menu, select Options, click the Save tab, and activate the Save AutoRecovery Info Every option. You can specify an interval from 1 to 120 minutes. In 2007, click the Office button (in the top-left corner) and then click the Word Options button at the bottom right of the resulting dialog box. Now, click Save. You'll find the Save AutoRecovery Information Every option in the Save Documents section.
- 3. Quickly move to the beginning or end of a document** – To move to the top of a document, press [Ctrl][Home]. To move to the bottom of a document, press [Ctrl][End].
- 4. Open menus and select commands with the keyboard** – Press [Alt] plus the letter that's underlined to open a menu, such as File, Edit, View, and so on. Once a menu is open, you don't need to press [Alt] to select a command; just press the underlined letter of the command you want to select. Here are some common examples: Quick Print: [Alt]F, P. Quick Save As: [Alt]F,A. Quickly reopen the first document in the most recently used file list: [Alt]F,1.  
  
Most of the standard shortcuts still work in Word 2007, but the display is different. When you press [Alt] in Word 2007, you'll see KeyTips (letters and numbers that denote keyboard accelerators) displayed for each button. Just press the appropriate KeyTip and then press the additional keys as indicated by the labels. For example, [Alt],P,M will activate KeyTips, select the Page Layout tab, and display the Margins drop-down list.
- 5. Select a block of text** – Here are four selection tricks. (1) Use the mouse. Just click and drag the mouse to select text. (2) Use [Shift] plus the arrow keys. Hold down [Shift] and press an arrow key to select text in the desired direction. (3) To select a word at a time, press [Ctrl][Shift] and the left or right arrow key. (4) Use the mouse with the [Shift] key. Move the mouse pointer away from the insertion point position, hold down [Shift] and click to select all the text between the insertion point and the place where you clicked.  
  
Frustrated when you try to select text with the mouse past the bottom of the currently visible page and Word leaps past what you want to select? Those are the times to use [Shift] plus the down arrow key instead of the mouse.
- 6. Select a word** – Double-click on it. If a space immediately follows the word you select, the space gets selected, too. Punctuation is ignored.
- 7. Select a sentence** – Hold down [Ctrl] and click anywhere in the sentence.

8. **Select a paragraph** – Triple-click within the paragraph or move the mouse just past the left margin of the paragraph. When the pointer changes to a right-pointing arrow, double-click to select the whole paragraph.
9. **Select a table** – Select a table by holding down [Alt] and double-clicking anywhere in the table, but only in versions up to 2002. This trick is broken in versions 2003 and 2007. It still selects the table, but it also opens the Research pane. If you can live with that, you may still want to use it.
10. **Select cells in large tables using the keyboard (Word 2002 and later)** – As the size of a table increases, it becomes harder to use the mouse as your sole means of navigation within it. For example, to select a column with the mouse, you need to move the pointer along the top gridline of the first cell in the column until it changes to a down arrow and then click. However, using the keyboard simplifies this process. Position the pointer anywhere in the column, press [Alt], and select any cell (in versions 2003 and 2007, this sequence opens the Research pane instead). To use the keyboard to select an entire table, click anywhere in the table and, with Num Lock off, press [Alt]5 on the numeric keyboard (in all versions). Like Excel, Word 2002 and later versions let you press [Ctrl] to select nonadjacent cells. For example, to select columns 1 and 3, select column 1, hold down [Ctrl] and select column 3.
11. **Select all the text between the insertion point and...** – To select all the text between the insertion point and the end of the current line, press [Shift][End]. To select the text from the insertion point through the end of the current paragraph, press [Ctrl][Shift] and the down arrow. To select the text from the insertion point to the end of the document, press [Ctrl][Shift][End].
12. **Select multiple, noncontiguous words (Word 2002 and later)** – Select a word, then hold [Ctrl] and double-click an additional word or words. This will select the words regardless of whether they are adjacent to each other.
13. **Select an entire document** – Press [Ctrl]A. This is handy when you need to change the font or add or remove formatting. Once you've selected the entire document, apply the formatting to everything and either leave it applied or apply it again to remove it. For example, suppose some text in your document is underlined and you want nothing underlined. To avoid spending time visiting each underlined section of text and un-underlining it, select the whole document with [Ctrl]A. Press [Ctrl]U to apply underlining to the entire document and then press [Ctrl]U again to remove the underlining.  
  
Be careful when you use [Ctrl]A; you could inadvertently make wholesale changes to all your text. If you accidentally press [Delete] or type a keystroke and delete everything, don't panic. Just press [Ctrl]Z or choose Undo from the Edit menu.
14. **Find multiple instances at once (Word 2002 and later)** – You can use the Find command to count and select the occurrences of a particular word. Open the Find And Replace dialog box by pressing [Ctrl]F. Type the word or words you want to locate in the Find What text box. Select the Highlight All Items Found In check box. (In 2007, choose Highlight All from the Reading Highlight drop-down list.) Click the Find All button, and Word will display the number of instances of that word occurring in your document. It will also select them so that they're easy to spot and edit. This last step isn't necessary in 2007—choosing Highlight All automatically initiates the find task. While Word 2002 and 2003 simply select the occurrences of the text, Word 2007 actually applies a highlight to them that persists if you close the dialog box without choosing Clear Highlighting.
15. **Grow font, shrink font** – Here are three quick ways to change the size of selected text: Choose Font from the Format menu and specify the desired point size in the Font dialog box. (You can open this dialog box by pressing [Ctrl][Shift]P, even in Word 2007.) OR: Click the Font Size button on the Formatting toolbar and select an entry from the drop-down list. (In Word 2007, Font Size is in the Font group on the Home tab.) OR: Use the Grow Font and Shrink Font shortcuts, which are [Ctrl] plus the ] and [ characters, respectively. Just keep hitting ] or [ with [Ctrl] held down to continue growing or shrinking the text.

- 16. Rename an existing document** – Use Save As. When you need to use an existing document as the basis for a new one, don't overwrite the old document. As soon as you open it, press [Alt]F and then press A. Alternatively, press [F12] or open the File menu and choose Save As. (In Word 2007, Save As is on the Office menu.) In the Save As dialog box, just type a new name or change some part of the original one and click Save.
- 17. Print envelopes** – Want to address your envelopes in the printer? Type an address in a blank document or in a letter. Open the Tools menu and select Envelopes And Labels. (Word 2002 users choose Letters And Mailings and then select Envelopes And Labels. In Word 2007, select the address and choose Envelopes from the Create group on the Mailings tab.) Now, in the Envelopes tab, enter the return address if you want one and click Print.
- 18. Expand your vocabulary** – Word has a built-in thesaurus. Press [Shift][F7] or open the Tools menu, select Language, and then choose Thesaurus. Word will display a list of synonyms for the word you've selected or the word closest to the insertion point marker. In 2007, Thesaurus is in the Proofing group on the Review tab. In Word 2000 and later, you can also right-click on a word and choose Synonyms from the shortcut menu to see a list of synonyms, along with the Thesaurus command.
- 19. Make friends with the right mouse button** – Don't be afraid to right-click on a block of text or a table cell. The shortcut menu offers immediate access to some handy formatting options.
- 20. Paste plain text** – When you copy and paste text from a Web page or another document, the text brings its formatting into your document. To get around that behavior, copy the text and place the insertion point marker where you want to insert the copy. Then, open the Edit menu, choose Paste Special, and select the Unformatted Text option. In 2007, the Paste Special command is on the Paste drop-down list. The Paste option is in the Clipboard group on the Home tab.
- 21. Print multiple pages of a document on one sheet (Word 2000 and later)** – If you regularly print large documents or send printed copies of them through the mail, you can save on both paper and postage by using Microsoft Word's Zoom feature. With Zoom, you can print as many as 16 pages on a single sheet of paper. To print four pages to a sheet, choose File | Print. (In 2007, click the Office button and choose Print.) In the Zoom section, select 4 Pages from the Pages Per Sheet drop-down list, make any other print selections, and click OK. Zoom automatically reduces the scale to fit four pages on each sheet. Zoom reduces the size of your printout without changing the document's format or page layout settings.

## Advanced tips

- 22. Instantly AutoCorrect** – Right-click on a word that's flagged as misspelled to display the Edit shortcut menu. Word will list possible alternatives at the top. If you don't see the right word, choose AutoCorrect and then select the correct version of the word from the submenu to create an AutoCorrect entry.
- 23. Enter AutoText effortlessly** – Take advantage of Word's AutoComplete option to quickly insert common text. Just open the Tools menu, select AutoCorrect Options, click the AutoText tab, and select Show AutoComplete Suggestions. With this option enabled, Word will show a ScreenTip after you begin typing an AutoText item. Just press [Enter] and Word will insert the item for you. (This feature also works with dates and days of the week.)

Word 2007 doesn't offer a ScreenTip display for AutoText entries. To insert AutoText, you must either open the Quick Parts drop-down list (located in the Text group on the Insert tab), choose Building Blocks Organizer, select the item, and click Insert or type the first few letters of the AutoText name in your document and press [F3]. Note: If you rely heavily on AutoText, you may want to add the AutoText command to your Quick Access Toolbar.

**24. Get on your mark(ers)** – Work with paragraph markers and tab marks displayed. Simply click the Show/Hide ¶ button on the Standard toolbar. In Word 2007, click the Office button, click Word Options, and then choose Display in the left pane to find options for displaying formatting marks. (The [Ctrl][Shift]8 shortcut works in all versions and acts just like the Show/Hide ¶ button.) Displaying those normally hidden characters helps you avoid inadvertently deleting objects or changing formatting; it also helps you figure out funky alignment and extra white space problems.

**25. Use AutoCorrect as a text expander** – You don't have to keep typing that long string of words you have trouble with. Come up with a three- or four-letter abbreviation for it and add it to your AutoCorrect list. For example, say you often need to type *Indianapolis*. Enter that text and select it. Then press [Alt]T (to open the Tools menu) and press A to select AutoCorrect. (Pressing [Alt] in Word 2007 will display KeyTips on all the buttons -- you can then continue by pressing T and A to access the AutoCorrect dialog box.) *Indianapolis* will appear in the With text box, so just type *indy* in the Replace text box and click OK twice. Now, any time you type *indy* followed by a space or any punctuation (or if you press [Enter]), Word will automatically "correct" that spelling and replace it with *Indianapolis*. You can save up to 255 characters in an AutoCorrect entry. (If you need more characters or you want to include pictures along with text, save it as an AutoText entry.)

**26. Clear the table** – If you need to delete the contents of all the cells in a table, just select the table and press [Delete] (not [Backspace]). Pressing [Backspace] will delete the text and the table.

**27. Display built-in styles** – When you create a document, Word starts you out with a handful of basic styles. (Later versions are a bit more generous, but they still offer a limited list.) If you need to apply a more specialized style, hold down [Shift] and click on the arrow beside the Style box on the Formatting toolbar. Word will expand the Style list to include all its built-in styles. Just select the one you need and Word will apply that style and add it to your document.

This also works in 2007, but you must first add the Style list to the Quick Access Toolbar. Choose More Commands from the toolbar's drop-down list. Select Customize in the left pane, and then select Popular Commands from the Choose Commands From list. Select Style, click Add, and then OK.

**28. Calculate a table column total** – Performing addition in a Word table is simple. Click in an empty cell at the bottom of a column of numbers. Open the Table menu, select Formula, and click OK to accept the default Sum function.

In Word 2007, whenever you're in a table, you'll see the Table Tools tab -- which displays the Design and Layout subtabs. For this trick, position the insertion point below a column of numbers, click the Layout subtab, and then click Formula in the Data group. The Formula dialog box will appear as in earlier versions, and you can click OK to insert the Sum function.

**29. Create styles on the fly** – Format a paragraph the way you want, type a name in the Style box on the Formatting toolbar, and press [Enter]. This also works in Word 2007, but you must first add the Style drop-down list to the Quick Access Toolbar as described in tip 27.

**30. Quickly toggle fields** – Press [Alt][F9] to quickly toggle field code display on and off.

**31. Add a border to a page** – To jazz up a document by adding page borders, open the Format menu, select the Borders And Shading command, and click the Page Border tab. You can then select the desired formatting and designs for the border. In 2007, click the Borders And Shading button in the Paragraph group on the Home tab.

**32. Get there fast** – Double-click the left end of the status bar to bring up the Go To tab so you can jump to an item in your document, such as bookmark, a specific page, a table, a section, and so on.

- 33. Visit Splitsville** – See two parts of a document at the same time by choosing Split from the Window menu and clicking to place the split bar where you want to divide the document window. Separate vertical scroll bars allow you to bring different portions of text into view—and you can set different view preferences for each pane. To restore the panes to a single window, just double-click the split bar or drag it beyond the top or bottom of the window. In Word 2007, Split Window is in the Window group on the View tab.
- 34. Be selective when counting words** – Need to know how many words, characters, paragraphs, or lines appear in a portion of a document? Just select the desired text before choosing Word Count from the Tools menu. In Word 2007, it's even easier because 2007 displays word count on the Status Bar. Just select the text and 2007 updates the count accordingly.
- 35. Trim ragged text by turning on hyphenation** – When text contains many long words and your left and right margins are close to one another, your right margin can look ragged. To help smooth out that edge, choose Language from the Tools menu, choose Hyphenation, select the Automatically Hyphenate Document check box, and click OK. In Word 2007, choose Automatic from the Hyphenation drop-down list. This option is in the Page Setup group on the Page Layout tab.
- 36. Slap a new coat of formatting on your text** – To copy the formatting from a selected word or paragraph, click the Format Painter button on the Standard toolbar and then select the word or block of text to which you want to apply that formatting. To copy the same formatting to more than one block of text, double-click on the Format Painter button. Then, you can apply the formatting to several blocks of text. To turn off the Format Painter, just click the button again or press [Esc]. You'll find Format Painter in the Clipboard group on Word 2007's Home tab.
- 37. Jump quickly between documents** – If you work with a lot of open, overlapping documents, here's a quick way to cycle between them: Press [Ctrl][F6] to jump from one to the next; [Ctrl][Shift][F6] will jump you backward.
- 38. Insert and format symbols** – For instant access to thousands of special symbols, like foreign characters and wild and crazy icons, open the Insert menu, choose Symbol, and look through the selections available for different fonts and subsets of fonts. After you insert a special character or symbol, you can then select it and adjust its size, if necessary. In Word 2007, choose More Symbols from the Symbol drop-down list, which you'll find in the Symbols group on the Insert tab.
- 39. Create a desktop shortcut to a document (Versions prior to Word 2007)** – To create a document shortcut, first highlight some text to serve as a target in the document and click the Copy button. Next, minimize the Word window or drag it out of the way so you can see the Windows desktop. Then, hold down [Ctrl], right-click on the desktop, and choose Paste Shortcut. You'll probably want to change the shortcut name to something more meaningful. To do this, click on the shortcut to select it and then press [F2] to activate the label for editing. Type the desired name and press [Enter]. Close your document, clicking Yes to save your changes. You can even exit Word, if you want. Then, simply double-click on the desktop shortcut. Word will open the associated document, navigate to your target text, and select it.
- 40. Pick up where you left off (Versions prior to Word 2007)** – When you open a document you've been working on, it would be nice if Word took you back to the last place you were working. Unfortunately, it always puts you at the top of the document instead. You can jump straight to your most recent editing location if you remember to press [Shift][F5] before doing anything else in the document when it opens. This is Word's Go Back shortcut, and it will remember the last place you made an edit and take you to it.

## Things you don't have to do

- 41. Worry** – You don't have to worry about doing something wrong. Just get familiar with the program and experiment with Word features. If something looks wrong or funny, that's when you use the Undo feature. Press or type the wrong thing, try [Ctrl]Z to undo whatever you did. Always remember you can press [Ctrl]Z or choose Undo from the Edit menu (or click Undo on the Quick Access Toolbar in Word 2007) to undo changes one at a time. Aside from deleting or failing to save a file, there's almost nothing you can do that isn't reversible. Frequent saves will also help. If the worst happens, you can always revert to the saved file. If you save often, you should lose very little work.
- 42. Move your hands from the keyboard** – You don't have to use the mouse to do things like open menus (or change groups, in Word 2007), select or format text, or move the insertion point marker. You may find you work more efficiently if you're not always moving your hand from the keyboard to the mouse. Press [Home] to move to the beginning of the current line and press [End] to move to the end of the current line. Press [Ctrl] and the left or right arrow to move one word in either direction. Hold down [Shift] while pressing those keys to select the text between the insertion point marker and the beginning or the end of the line, respectively.
- 43. Select an entire paragraph to change formatting or style** – You don't have to select the entire paragraph to change the paragraph's formatting or style. Just click anywhere in the paragraph and choose the desired format or style. A good example is paragraph alignment. Just click anywhere in the paragraph and then click the Align Left, Align Right, or Justify button on the Standard toolbar. (These buttons are in the Home tab's Paragraph group in Word 2007.) Of course, this works only with *paragraph* formats—to apply a character format (such as italics), you have to first select all the characters you want to format.
- 44. Work with only one document at a time** – You don't have to close one Word document before you open another. Open as many at a time as you want to. Use the [Ctrl][F6] keyboard shortcut or the Windows menu to move quickly between open documents.
- 45. Risk missing something you're looking for** – You don't have to visually scan and manually scroll through a document looking for a word or phrase. Use [Ctrl]F to open the Find tab of the Find And Replace dialog box and let Word locate the text for you.
- 46. Waste time during a spelling check** – You don't have to repeatedly click Ignore or Ignore All every time the spell-checker stops on a proper noun or a term that's commonly used in your documents. Click Add (Add To Dictionary in Word 2002 and later) so you don't waste time checking the same words over and over.
- 47. Delete old text you're replacing** – You don't have to delete text you want to replace with new text. Select the old text and start typing the new. The first keystroke replaces the old selected text. Don't waste time pressing [Delete] first.
- 48. Press [Backspace] over and over** – You don't have to press [Backspace] a dozen times to delete a word or phrase. If you type something and then change your mind, pressing [Ctrl][Backspace] to delete a word at a time is much faster. Only one thing is more wasteful: using the mouse to click on the beginning of a word or phrase and then pressing [Delete] repeatedly. (You can use [Ctrl][Delete] to quickly remove words in that situation.) If you get overzealous with [Ctrl][Backspace] or [Ctrl][Delete] and remove one word too many, press [Ctrl]Z to bring it right back.

**49. Use the default toolbar configuration** – You don't have to settle for the default toolbar configuration that shows the Standard and Formatting toolbars. Click View | Toolbars to reveal a list of available toolbars. If you routinely edit documents, the Reviewing toolbar comes in very handy. Use the Tables And Borders toolbar to quickly create tables or the Drawing toolbar to easily manipulate graphics. You can also modify Word's toolbars by clicking View | Toolbars | Customize, which opens the Customize dialog box. When this dialog box is open, you can rearrange a toolbar's buttons, add or remove buttons, or even edit a button's image or create your own special toolbars. Note that this doesn't apply to Word 2007, although you can customize the Quick Access Toolbar to include the items you need. (Just click on the toolbar's drop-down arrow and choose More Commands to access customization options.)

**50. Count words by hand (Word 2000 and later)** – Don't waste time manually counting words. Word's count function will tell you how many words and characters are in a document, paragraph, or selection. Word 2002 and 2003 offer a Count toolbar that even simplifies the process. Click View | Toolbars | Word Count.

Word 2007 keeps a running word count in the status bar; you can double-click there to display the number of pages, characters, paragraphs, and lines.

## New to Word 2007

**51. Make the Quick Access Toolbar your own** – You can add a few common commands, such as Save, Open, and Quick Print to the Quick Access Toolbar in Word 2007 by selecting those commands from the toolbar's drop-down list. Other commands are also available. Just choose More Commands from the Quick Access Toolbar's drop-down list (or click the Office button, click Word Options, and then choose Customize in the left pane.) You can peruse the exhaustive All Commands list for items you need that don't appear in any of the Ribbon groups or that are simply hard to find.

**52. Minimize the Ribbon to free up document space** – Word 2007's Ribbon takes up a lot of room. If you need more space, you can turn the Ribbon display off and on by pressing [Ctrl][F1]. You can also set it to be minimized by right-clicking on its background (not on a button) and selecting Minimize Ribbon. Only the tabs remain, resembling a more traditional menu bar. When you need to access the groups in a particular tab, just click on the tab name and Word will display it. Click the tab name again, and Word will collapse the tab out of view. To turn Ribbon display back on, right-click on the Ribbon and deselect Minimize Ribbon.

**53. Quickly add a cover page** – Word 2007 offers several preformatted cover pages that will help dress up your documents. To insert a cover page, click the Insert tab. Then, in the Pages group, choose a page from the Cover Page drop-down list. To save a cover page you've created, highlight the entire page. Then, click the Insert tab and select Save Selection To Cover Page Gallery from the Cover Page drop-down list.

**54. Get a sneak peek** – Word 2007's Live Preview is one its most useful enhancements. Select some text and then move your mouse over styles in the Styles group on the Home tab. Live Preview will display those changes to the selected text without actually making changes to the document. This feature simply allows you to see what those changes would look like if you applied them. If you find Live Preview distracting, you can disable it by clicking the Office button, clicking the Word Options button, choosing Popular in the left pane, and then deselecting the Enable Live Preview option in the Top Options For Working With Word section.

**55. Find and flag text** – Word's new Reading Highlight feature lets you search for a particular word or phrase and highlight all occurrences of it—then have the highlights remain even after you turn off Find. Start by clicking the Home tab, clicking the Text Highlight Color button in the Font group, and choosing the color you want. (If you don't do this, Word defaults to a yellow highlight.) Next, press [Ctrl]F to open the Find And Replace dialog box. Enter your text in the Find What text box and choose Highlight All from the Reading Highlight drop-down list. All the instances of the specified text will be highlighted in your document. You can click Close and Word will retain the highlighting. Return to the Find And Replace dialog box and choose Clear Highlighting from the Reading Highlight drop-down list to remove the highlights. Or simply press [Ctrl]A to select all your document text and choose No Color from the Text Highlight Color drop-down list.

**56. Pick a prefab page setup** – In Word 2007, you don't have to wrangle with separate margin settings in the Page Setup dialog box (unless you want to). Just click Margins in the Page Setup Group of the Page Layout tab to access a list of layouts, such as Narrow, Moderate, Wide, or Word 2003 Default. A little graphical display will show you how the page will look with the various settings. You also have the option of selecting Last Custom Settings to re-create a layout you previously set.

**57. Change the default document folder** – In Windows, all your Word documents save to the My Documents folder by default. If this doesn't suit you, it's easy to specify a different folder—but the option may be hard to find if you're used to earlier versions of Word. In 2007, you need to click the Office button and click Word Options. Then, choose Save in the left pane and under Save Documents, click the Browse button next to the Default File Location text box. Navigate to and click the folder you want to be your default, then click OK twice.

**58. Assemble slick documents with building blocks** – When you need to quickly produce an important report in Word, you don't want to spend a lot of time formatting it. But that doesn't mean you have to sacrifice appearance. You can still achieve a professional look by assembling the document from Word 2007's built-in components, called building blocks. To add items such as headers, footers, and watermarks, click the Insert tab. Then, click Quick Parts in the Text group and choose Building Blocks Organizer. This will open a gallery of predesigned elements you can insert into your document. Once you insert an item, you can fine-tune it by entering any necessary text, such as the document title, organization name, and so forth.

**59. Use the contextual spell checker to avoid silly mistakes** – Word's spell checker can help you cut down on spelling errors, but what if you type the word *right* and it should be *write*? Until Word 2007, the spell checker would have ignored the error. For those of us who consistently type *to* for *too*, *there* for *their*, or *site* for *sight*, Word 2007 has a new feature that not only checks for the correct spelling but also for the correct context. To enable the contextual spell checker, just click the Options button and click Word Options. Then, choose Proofing in the left pane and select the Use Contextual Spelling check box under When Correcting Spelling And Grammar In Word. Click OK, and then try it out: Type *Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of there country*. Word will underline *there* in blue. You can right-click the word to select the correct spelling: *their*.

**60. Make sure you're compatible** – Before you send out that beautifully formatted Word 2007 document, it's a good idea to check the compatibility of your document with other versions of Word. For example, if your document contains SmartArt (a feature that is not supported in earlier versions of Word), when a Word 2003 user opens your document, the SmartArt graphics will be converted into a single object that can't be edited. To check the document for features that aren't supported in earlier versions, click the Office button and click Word Options. Then, choose Prepare in the left pane and click Run Compatibility Checker. Word will provide a report that lists the document's unsupported features and details what you can do, if anything, to make your document readable in earlier versions.

You can also have Word automatically run a compatibility check every time you save a file. Just select the Check Compatibility When Saving In Word 97-2003 Formats check box in the Word Compatibility Checker dialog box before clicking OK to close the compatibility report.

## Additional resources

- TechRepublic's [Downloads RSS Feed](#) **XML**
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- Sign up for our [Microsoft Office Suite newsletter](#)
- Check out all of TechRepublic's [free newsletters](#)
- [10 annoying Word features \(and how to turn them off\)](#)
- [10 ways you can tweak Word 2007 to fit your working style](#)
- [Microsoft Word 2003 keyboard shortcuts](#)

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