

Check Spelling, Grammar, and Readability

 Microsoft



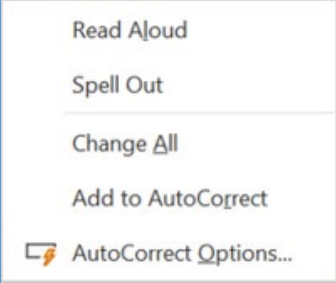
Word 2021

Spelling and Grammar Check Options

Word provides you with the capability to check the spelling and grammar usage in a document against a built-in dictionary and set of grammar rules. To check the text, on the **Review** tab, in the **Proofing** group, select the **Spelling & Grammar** button. If no spelling or grammar errors are detected, a message indicates this.

When a spelling or grammar error is found, the **Proofing** pane opens for you to fix the problem, including adding the word to the dictionary. At the top of the pane, the type of error is identified along with a **Suggestions** list that includes a list of possible corrections and their definitions.

Spelling and Grammar Check Options

Option	Description
Select the word in the Suggestions list	Replaces the found text with the selected correction from the Suggestions list box, and continues searching for the next error.
Select the drop-down arrow for a suggestion 	Displays a menu of options for handling the spelling error, including Change All to replace all occurrences of the found text with the selected correction.
Ignore Once	Instructs Word to skip the occurrence of the error this time, but find the next occurrence. In this way, you can correct errors on a case-by-case basis.
Ignore All	Instructs Word to ignore all instances of the highlighted error, and continue searching for the next error.
Add to Dictionary	Instructs Word to add the occurrence of the word or phrase to the dictionary. This will enable Word to recognize the occurrence as correct when you check spelling in the future.

Spelling and Grammar Check Options

The grammar check looks for certain patterns that might indicate a grammar problem. While it is not a substitute for a good human proofreader, it can help you spot possible errors or problems. Word identifies mechanical problems such as capitalization of proper nouns, run-on sentences and fragments, misused words, use of double negatives, and so forth. You can control which grammar rules are checked by changing settings in the **Word Options** dialog box, in the **Proofing** section. You should review the current settings to make sure that the settings meet your needs. For example, your organization might require two spaces between sentences or might require only one space.

The Dictionary

When you type, or when you run the **Spelling & Grammar** command, Word compares the words in your document to its internal dictionary. If you have misspelled a word, or if you have used a specialized word that is not in the dictionary, the spelling checker will give you a list of possible suggestions. The main dictionary is the primary dictionary used to check for errors. The main dictionary can be neither edited nor viewed. Word also has a default custom dictionary to which you can add words or names.

Custom Dictionaries

You can also create or import custom dictionaries and remove custom dictionaries when you no longer need them. To manage custom dictionaries, open the **Word Options** dialog box, select the **Proofing** tab, and then select **Custom Dictionaries**.

The Readability Statistics Dialog Box

Readability statistics are ratings that provide numeric data on the readability of your text. If you have enabled readability statistics in Word, the **Readability Statistics** dialog box is displayed after you check the grammar usage. This dialog box provides detailed information on the total number of characters, words, sentences, and paragraphs in a document; and also the average number of words per sentence, sentences per paragraph, and characters per word in the document. It also reports the readability scores for the content in the document. This option is not enabled by default. If you want to use it, you have to turn it on through the **Word Options** dialog box.

Readability Scores

Word's readability scores are based on the Flesch Reading Ease and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level scales. These scales evaluate the readability and complexity of the document based on the average number of syllables per word and words per sentence. A low Flesch Reading Ease score correlates to a high grade level, while a low Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score correlates to a high reading ease level. You can lower the grade level by using simple sentences. Readability scores should match your target audience. For business users, this can be a helpful tool to help you determine whether your documents can be read by your audience.

The Word Count Dialog Box

The **Readability Statistics** dialog box also displays the word count after a spelling and grammar check. However, you can also track the word count as you work on your document. This is important if your document must conform to certain length limits. When you select the word count on the status bar, or when you select the **Review → Word Count** command, the **Word Count** dialog box opens. This dialog box helps you keep track of the number of pages, words, characters, paragraphs, and lines in a document. As you enter text in a document, Word displays a live word count on the status bar.

- If you have text selected when you perform a word count, the word count is only for the selected text.

Use Research Tools

The **Readability Statistics** dialog box also displays the word count after a spelling and grammar check. However, you can also track the word count as you work on your document. This is important if your document must conform to certain length limits. When you select the word count on the status bar, or when you select the **Review → Word Count** command, the **Word Count** dialog box opens. This dialog box helps you keep track of the number of pages, words, characters, paragraphs, and lines in a document. As you enter text in a document, Word displays a live word count on the status bar.

- If you have text selected when you perform a word count, the word count is only for the selected text.

The Thesaurus

A thesaurus is a reference tool containing a collection of synonyms and antonyms. Unlike a dictionary, a thesaurus does not provide the definition of a word. An electronic thesaurus can suggest and replace words automatically in a document. You can access the Word thesaurus on the **Review** tab, in the **Proofing** group. The thesaurus is also available in **French (France)** and **Spanish (Spain)**.

The Translation Feature

Using the Translation feature in Word, you can select text in the document and have it translated into any of several foreign languages. Word uses built-in bilingual dictionaries, as well as online bilingual dictionaries and online machine translation services. You can look up a translation directly in the **Translator** task pane, or use a shortcut menu to open the task pane and translate the text.

You can translate single words, phrases, or entire documents. For entire documents, the file is uploaded to a service where it is translated and sent back to you in the foreign language.

Use Other Languages

In addition to being able to translate the content of your documents to other languages, you can change the language that you use to edit, display ScreenTips, and find Help. The languages you can use depend on whether you have installed language packs on your computer. If the language you want is not available on your computer, you need to acquire and install the appropriate language pack or language interface pack.

Intelligent Services

The Office intelligent services provides a direct lookup of information you've selected in your document, using web sources such as Bing[®] Snapshot, Wikipedia[®], Bing[®] image search, and the Oxford Dictionary. You could, for example, use this feature to quickly find the definition of a word or to view a Wikipedia article providing you with additional background information. The search uses not only your selected text, but also some surrounding content to get results that are contextually relevant.

The first time you use the review features, you will need to enable intelligent services if it's not already enabled.

Check Accessibility



Word 2021

Accessibility

Alternative Text (Alt Text)

- Add alt text to images, charts, tables, SmartArt, shapes, embedded objects, links, audio/video, and grouped objects.
- Screen readers read this description aloud, helping users understand non-text content.
- Alt text also appears when hovering over objects with the mouse pointer.



Table Accessibility

- Use clear **column headings**.
- Avoid **nested tables**.
- Do not **merge or split cells**.
- Minimize **blank cells** (they may be interpreted as the end of the table).
- Structure tables for **left-to-right, top-to-bottom** reading.

Accessibility

Styles

- Use **paragraph and heading styles** to define document flow.
- Headings should be short (under 20 words).
- Apply heading styles in **descending order** (Heading 1 → Heading 2 → Heading 3).
- Proper heading use also enables automatic **Table of Contents** creation.

Hyperlink ScreenTips

- Add descriptive **ScreenTips** to hyperlinks.
- Avoid showing just the raw URL—describe the destination clearly.

Formatting Practices

- Avoid multiple spaces, tabs, or empty paragraphs (screen readers interpret them as blank).
- Use proper formatting tools for spacing and layout.

Accessibility

Floating Objects

- Use **In line with text** or **Top and Bottom** wrapping for images.
- Other wrapping styles can confuse screen readers.

Watermarks

- Watermarks may be difficult to interpret.
- Provide the same information elsewhere (e.g., in a footer).

Closed Captions

- For audio/video, provide alternative formats: **closed captions, transcripts, or alt text.**

The Check Accessibility Feature

Errors

Items in the following table will be flagged as errors by the Check Accessibility feature.

Rule	Items Checked
All objects have alternate text	Checks that objects in the document have alternate text defined and that the alternate text does not contain any images or file extensions.
Tables specify column header information	Checks that tables use the Table Normal style or have a header row defined.
Long documents use styles to provide structure	Checks that heading styles are used to organize the content. It also checks whether a Table of Contents has been included. One or the other, or both, are required to meet accessibility standards.

The Check Accessibility Feature

Warnings

Items in the following table will be flagged as warnings by the **Check Accessibility** feature.

Rule	Items Checked
Hyperlink text is meaningful	Checks that link text in a hyperlink has a ScreenTip and that it matches the link target.
Table has simple structure	Checks that tables do not contain split cells, merged cells, or nested tables. Any table that is not rectangular will cause the table to be flagged with a warning.
Tables don't use blank cells for formatting	Checks that there are no blank columns or rows in tables.
Avoid the use of repeated 'blank' characters	Checks that multiple blank spaces, tabs, or paragraphs are included in the document.
Headings don't contain too much information	Checks that headings are not too long.
The use of floating objects is avoided	Checks that objects with text wrapping are configured as inline with text.
Check reading order	Checks that different objects in the document are read in a sequence.
Hard-to-read text contrast	Checks that words used in the document are not too difficult to read.

The Check Accessibility Feature

Tips

Items in the following table will be flagged as tips by the **Check Accessibility** feature.

Rule	Items Checked
Closed captions are included for inserted audio and video	Checks that audio objects and video objects have been configured to use closed captioning.
Layout Tables are structured for easy navigation	Checks that the order of cells is logical for the language being used and that the tab order is not circular. This means that languages that are read left to right should have tables that read from left to right.
No image watermarks are used	Checks that watermarks are not used in the document.
All headings are in the correct order	Checks that the Heading styles have been applied in order, starting with Heading 1, followed by Heading 2, Heading 3, and so forth.

Save a Document to Other Formats

 Microsoft



Word 2021

Other Document Formats

Word 2021 files are based on a file format known as Open XML, which is compatible with Word 2019, Word 2016, Word 2013, and Word 2010. But if you need to share a document with someone who doesn't have Word 2010 or a more recent version of Word, you'll need to save a copy of your document to a format their application can read. Through the **Save As** dialog box, Word enables you to save a document to a wide variety of other file formats. When you save a document to another format, the **Word Compatibility Checker** dialog box will display a list of features that will be lost when saving in that format.

Saving Word documents in other formats may result in the loss of editability, formatting, graphics, or other document content. For this reason, it is generally best to save your documents in the default Word Document (*.docx) format, and save a copy to an alternative format only when you need to share or publish the document. If you need to make any revisions after sharing or publishing, you would do so in your original Word document file.

File Format Options

File Format	Description
Word Document (*.docx)	The default file format in which Word 2021 documents are saved. Normally, this is the option you should use for your Word documents, to ensure that all document elements and formatting are saved.
Word Macro-Enabled Document (*.docm)	The basic XML file format that can store Visual Basic [®] for Applications (VBA) macro code. Macros are sets of Word commands and instructions grouped as a single command. VBA helps in modifying these macros.
Word 97–2003 Document (*.doc)	The file format that is used to save documents in the 97–2003 versions of Word. It is also used to save documents in the Word 6.0/95 format.
Word Template (*.dotx)	The default format for a Word template. It is used for saving document styles and formatting.
Word Macro-Enabled Template (*.dotm)	The default format for a Word macro-enabled template. Word stores macro code for use with other Word documents. By default, documents are saved as .docx files even when created from a Word XML macro-enabled template.
Word 97–2003 Template (*.dot)	Enables you to save a Word template in the 97–2003 version.

File Format Options

File Format	Description
PDF (*.pdf)	Enables you to save a Word document in the Adobe® Portable Document Format (PDF), like an electronic sheet of paper. It's useful for reading and distribution on the web, but it can't be edited directly in Word once it's created.
XPS Document (*.xps)	An XML Paper Specification (XPS) document is a Microsoft document-sharing format, similar to a PDF file (but not as widely supported on other operating systems).
Single File Web Page (*.mht; *.mhtml)	A type of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) file in which all content, including graphics, is embedded within a single file, similar to an HTML-formatted document sent in email.
Web Page (.htm; *.html)	Enables you to save the document as a web page, using the HTML file format. Graphics and supporting files are saved in a separate folder. This format includes special markup from Word that may be superfluous if the destination is a web server.
Web Page, Filtered (*.htm; *.html)	Similar to Web Page (.htm; *.html) , except that much of the superfluous markup is removed.
Rich Text Format (*.rtf)	A prevalent Word processing file format that preserves most formatting while being readable by a wide variety of applications.

File Format Options

File Format	Description
Plain Text (*.txt)	Strips all formatting information, retaining only the textual content, which is readable in text editors such as Windows Notepad.
Word XML Document (*.xml)	All formatting, text, and graphics are stored within a single XML file that is compatible with Word 2007.
Word 2003 XML Document (*.xml)	All formatting, text, and graphics are stored within a single XML file that is compatible with Word 2003.
Strict Open XML Document (*.docx)	While Word's default file format is essentially Open XML, it may not be completely compatible with other word-processing applications that use the Open XML format. Select this option to ensure that the file is fully compatible with other Open XML–based word processors.
OpenDocument Text (*.odt)	Compatible with open source applications such as OpenOffice® and LibreOffice.