

IN THIS CHAPTER

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- Using other languages and custom dictionaries



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CHECKING SPELLING AND GRAMMAR

Spelling and grammar come naturally to some people but not so naturally to others. Throw in simple typing errors, and I'll bet you might welcome some help with spelling and grammar corrections now and then.

Word offers extensive help for spelling, grammar checking, synonyms, and other features to help you make sure your documents are the best they can be. This chapter explains how to use these features and go beyond them to add your own dictionary entries or use custom dictionaries for special purposes. For example, perhaps you work in a medical field and need to check medical terms. This chapter identifies some resources for custom and special-purpose dictionaries.

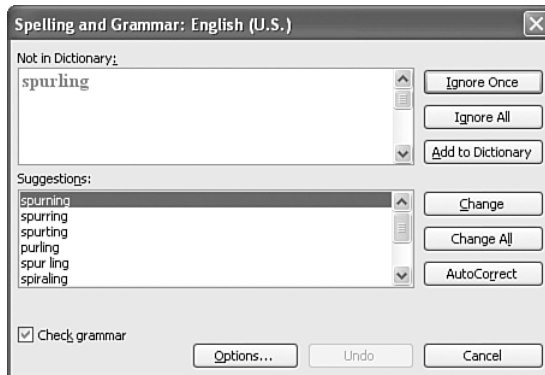
Spell-Checking a Document

As you type, Word checks your spelling by default. Word uses a red squiggly line to underline any words it doesn't find in its dictionary. This doesn't necessarily mean the word is wrong; Word just can't find it.

Word makes some corrections on its own. These corrections are defined in the AutoCorrect entries, which are covered in more detail later in this chapter, in the section "Using Automatic Spell-Checking: AutoCorrect." For now, you just need to understand that Word fixes some of your typos as you go along. For example, if you type **spelling**, Word automatically changes it to *spelling*.

You can easily check spelling of words that are not included in Word's dictionary. To check a single word, click the word and press F7 to open the Spelling and Grammar dialog box, shown in Figure 13.1.

FIGURE 13.1
Use the Spelling and Grammar dialog box to check spelling.



The word in question appears in red in the Not in Dictionary list, and Word offers suggested changes in the Suggestions list. You can use these buttons to accept or reject the change:

- **Ignore Once**—Leave this word alone (that is, reject the correction) and continue to the next misspelled word.
- **Ignore All**—Don't change any occurrence of this word in the document.
- **Add To Dictionary**—Add the unrecognized word to the dictionary so it won't be considered misspelled in the future.
- **Change**—Change the spelling to the selected suggestion.
- **Change All**—Change all occurrences of the word in the document to the selected suggestion.
- **AutoCorrect**—Add the word and its correction to the AutoCorrect list. You should use this option if you frequently misspell or mistype the word in the same way.

If Word doesn't automatically suggest the correct word, you can choose a different word from the Suggestions list. If Word doesn't offer the right suggestion, you can type the correction in the Not in Dictionary box and choose the appropriate action, such as Change or Change All.

You use the same process to check spelling in an entire document. You don't have to start at the top because Word begins where the cursor is placed, searches to the end of the document, and then asks if you want to check starting at the top. To start checking the document, just press F7 to open the Spelling and Grammar dialog box. As you click buttons to select actions, Word cycles through the document.



tip

You should clear the Check Grammar check box if you want to check only spelling and not grammar.

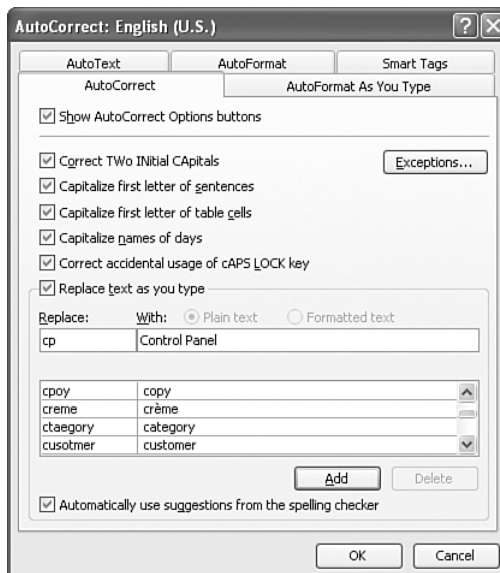
Using Automatic Spell-Checking: AutoCorrect

Word includes a feature called *AutoCorrect* that automatically corrects commonly misspelled words and typographical errors. By default, Word makes these changes without asking you—it just makes the changes as you type. Even though my spelling is usually pretty good, I still like this feature. I type pretty fast, and my brain often gets ahead of my fingers. Word fixes the mistakes as I go along.

To view the AutoCorrect entries, choose Tools, AutoCorrect Options to open the AutoCorrect dialog box (see Figure 13.2).

FIGURE 13.2

You can review and add or modify entries in the AutoCorrect dialog box.



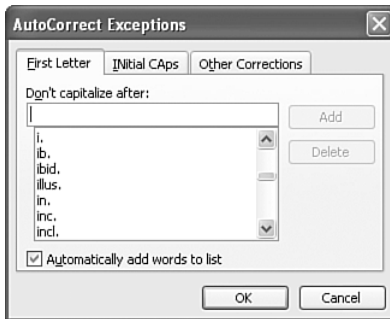
Several options on the AutoCorrect dialog box control the types of AutoCorrect changes Word will make, and these options are generally self-explanatory.

The list near the bottom of the dialog box shows all the existing AutoCorrect entries. To add a new entry, type the incorrect text in the Replace field and type the correct text in the With field.

You might want Word to make a particular AutoCorrect change in most cases but not in every case. To facilitate this, click Exceptions to open the AutoCorrect Exceptions dialog box (shown in Figure 13.3) to specify exceptions to AutoCorrect's rules.

FIGURE 13.3

You can use the AutoCorrect Exceptions dialog box to prevent certain AutoCorrect changes.



You can turn off automatic spell-checking if you prefer. You can also set other options to control other spelling options. In this case, choose Tools, Options to open the Options dialog box and then click the Spelling & Grammar tab, shown in Figure 13.4.

You can clear the Check Spelling as You Type check box if you don't want Word to check for spelling errors as you type. You can still press F7 at any time to check the spelling of a word or the entire document. Select the Hide Spelling Errors in This Document check box if you don't want Word to check spelling in this document. This setting is saved with the document, so if you select this option, the next time you open the document, automatic spell-checking will be turned off.



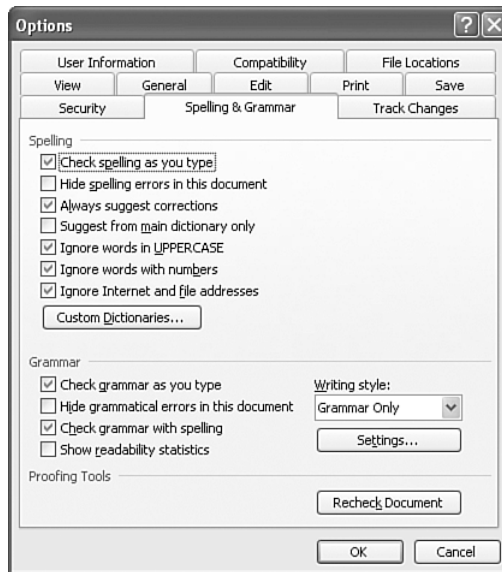
tip

After Word makes an AutoCorrect change, it places a blue line under the first letter of the changed word. You can let the mouse hover over the word if you don't see the blue line.

You can place the mouse over the line to change it to a menu you can use to undo the change or set AutoCorrect options for the change.

FIGURE 13.4

You can control spelling options with the Spelling & Grammar tab.



USING AUTOCORRECT TO SAVE TIME

I write about many of the same topics frequently, and therefore I use certain words or phrases a lot. For example, I get tired of typing `Windows Server 2003`. Fortunately, I can use Word's AutoCorrect feature to quickly replace my own brand of shorthand with the correct words.

For example, I added an AutoCorrect entry that replaces `w23` with `Windows Server 2003`. I just type `w23` whenever I really want `Windows Server 2003`, and Word replaces it for me, saving me a lot of typing. I use a lot of other AutoCorrect entries for other common phrases, such as `Control Panel`, `Network Neighborhood`, and so on.

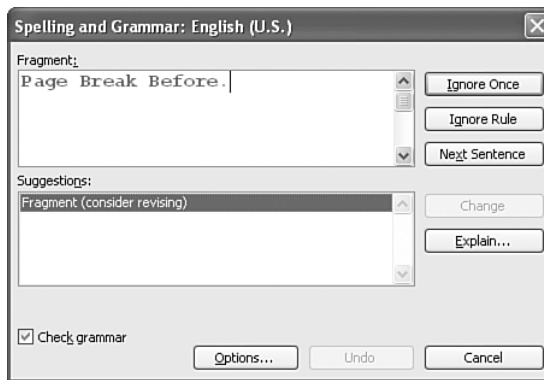
As you gain more experience with Word, think about the words you use often and create AutoCorrect shortcuts for them. Define enough shortcuts, and soon you'll be typing 300 words per minute!

Checking That Grammar!

Word doesn't stop at checking your spelling; it also checks your grammar. When it finds a word or phrase it thinks is grammatically incorrect, Word underlines the word or phrase with a green squiggly line. As explained in the previous section, Word also checks grammar when it checks spelling. However, you might want to check grammar in an identified phrase immediately. If that case, you just click anywhere in the phrase and press F7 to open the Spelling and Grammar dialog box, shown in Figure 13.5.

FIGURE 13.5

You can use the Spelling and Grammar dialog box to check for grammatical errors.



You can use the following buttons to specify what action you want Word to take:

- **Ignore Once**—Ignore the current occurrence of the grammatical error.
- **Ignore Rule**—Ignore all occurrences of the grammatical error.
- **Next Sentence**—Skip to the next sentence to continue checking.
- **Change**—Apply the change you have specified in the Fragment text box.
- **Explain**—Display a description of the problem and some suggested corrections.

You can set a handful of options that control Word's grammar-checking feature. Choose Tools, Options to open the Options dialog box and then click the Spelling & Grammar tab (refer to Figure 13.4). Then clear the Check Grammar as You Type option to prevent Word from checking grammar or underlining in green those words or phrases it considers grammatical errors. Use the Writing Style drop-down list box to choose between checking grammar only or checking grammar and style. See Word's Help documentation for more information on style and grammar checking.

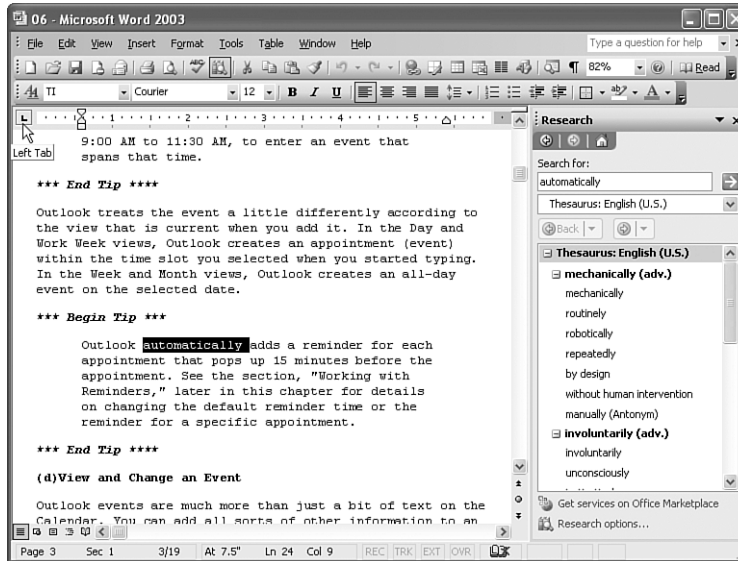
Can You Say "Thesaurus"?

Most days I can't say *thesaurus* without holding my mouth just right, but at least I know what it is. Fortunately, I can just press a couple keys in Word to bring up the thesaurus when I need to find a *synonym*—a different word with the same meaning. I don't often use Word's thesaurus when writing technical books, but it's great for finding just the right word for a bit of fiction. I'm sure you'll have other uses for it, as well.

To look up synonyms, first double-click the word you want to replace to highlight the word. Then press Shift+F7. Word opens a Research pane (shown in Figure 13.6) that offers suggested synonyms.

FIGURE 13.6

You can use the Research pane to look up synonyms.



If you see the word you want to use, click the small arrow beside the word and choose Insert to insert it in the document, replacing the selected word. Or you can choose Copy to copy it to the Clipboard.

You can also look up a synonym to see synonyms for that word. Just click the word to view its synonyms in the Research pane.

As you click through words, you'll realize two things: You're hopelessly lost and want to get back where you started, and the thesaurus also offers *antonyms*—words that mean the opposite of your selected word. To move back and forth through the pages, you click the Previous Search (Back) and Next Search buttons in the Research pane. You can click an antonym to view its synonyms.

Using Other Languages and Custom Dictionaries

There are bound to be words that Word doesn't recognize, even though they are correct. Names and uncommonly used words are good examples.



tip

Word can translate words and phrases between languages. To try this, select a word or phrase and choose Tools, Language, Translate to open the Research pane and view a translation. You can choose the source and target languages in the Research pane and also view the translation there.

The following sections explain how to customize the dictionary to add entries and also set the language that Word uses to check selected text.

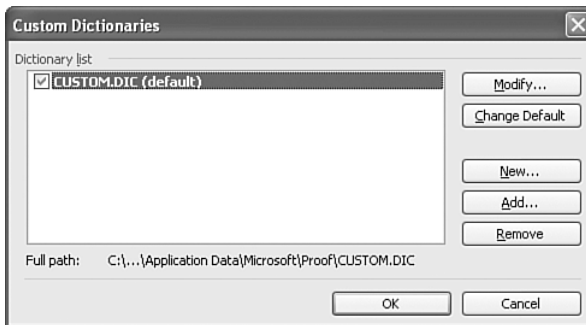
Customizing the Dictionary

Adding a word to the custom dictionary is easy:

1. Choose Tools, Options to open the Options dialog box and then click Custom Dictionaries on the Spelling & Grammar tab. The Custom Dictionaries dialog box (shown in Figure 13.7) appears.
2. Select the `Custom.dic` file and click Modify.

FIGURE 13.7

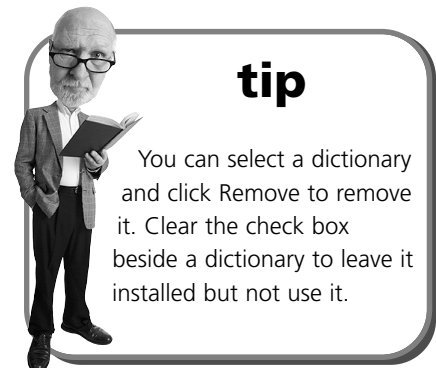
You can choose a custom dictionary from the Custom Dictionaries dialog box.



3. In the Word field, type the word you want to add to the dictionary and then click Add.
4. Add other words as needed and then click OK.

Adding a New Custom Dictionary

A Word dictionary is a text file that has a `.dic` extension. You can create your own dictionary just by creating a text file with one word per line. Several companies offer custom dictionaries targeted to specific purposes, such as medical, legal, and technical fields. For example, you'll find one of the most popular medical dictionaries at www.stedmans.com. A search on Google or another search site for the keywords "Microsoft Word dictionary" should turn up lots of sites.



Follow these steps to add a dictionary to Word:

1. Choose Tools, Options to open the Options dialog box. Select the Spelling & Grammar tab and click Custom Dictionaries.
2. Click Add to open the Add Custom Dictionary dialog box.
3. Browse to the dictionary's .dic file and click OK.

Setting Language for Selected Text

Word uses a particular language for proofing tools, which affects spelling and grammar rules. You can easily choose a different dictionary if you installed one version of Word but primarily write in a different language. To change language, choose Tools, Language, Set Language to open the Language dialog box, shown in Figure 13.8.

FIGURE 13.8

You can choose the desired proofing language in the Language dialog box.



The selection you make in the Language dialog box affects the selected text, marking that text as being the specified language. This means that Word will use that particular language when checking that selection of text. So you could mark a paragraph of French, for example, so that Word would check its spelling in French rather than in English.

To restore the text to its default language, click Default.

THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM

When you're ready to publish or print a document, it's likely that you will want to check the spelling—and perhaps grammar—in the document first. In this chapter you learned how to check spelling and grammar as you write a document, as well as how to check it at any other time.

In this chapter you also explored Word's thesaurus, which you can use to look up synonyms and antonyms. You also learned that you can use dictionaries in other languages to check spelling and grammar for documents written in those languages.

The next chapter takes you through the next logical step: saving, printing, faxing, and emailing documents.