In This Appendix

- Learn how to recover your data in the event of a power failure or if Word stops responding.

- Use the Open and Repair option to repair damaged files.

- Use the Recover Text from Any File converter to extract the text from a corrupted document.

- Enable the Always Create Backup Copy option to create a backup copy of a document every time you save.

A

Recovering from a System Crash

It can happen to anyone. You're working along and, suddenly, your system stops responding. You're mentally calculating how long it has been since you saved the document (if you have saved at all) and hoping you haven't lost too much work. In many cases, Office can recover the documents you were working on.

Because this process isn't perfect, the next objective is to prevent, or at least reduce, the loss of data if your system crashes again. There are several built-in mechanisms that only need to be activated for you to rest easy.

Recovering Your Documents

The latest release of Microsoft Office offers more control when Word stops responding. You can opt to recover the application through the Microsoft Office Application Recovery utility. When you do, a document analyzer scans the documents you were working on and attempts to recover as much information as possible.

You can take this process a step further with the Auto Recover feature. Here, you set an interval and Auto Recover saves a temporary copy of the file you are working on. In the event that Word stops responding, or your system locks up, you can open the Auto Recover file.

Using Microsoft Office Application Recovery

NEW

If Word stops responding, don't waste any time trying to figure out why. Take it from me, even if you could figure out the problem, you probably don't want to know. The important thing is getting to your data and not losing hours of work.

If an Office 2003 application stops responding, you can use the Microsoft Office Application Recovery utility to recover an application, along with the files you were working on. You also have an opportunity to file a report with Microsoft so the developers there can figure out what went wrong and try to fix the problem in the next update.

Follow these steps to use the Microsoft Office Application Recovery utility:

1. Choose **Start**, **All Programs**, **Microsoft Office**, **Microsoft Office Tools**, **Microsoft Office Application Recovery**. The Microsoft Office Application Recovery dialog box appears (see Figure A.1).

FIGURE A.1

The Microsoft Office Application Recovery utility is a valuable tool when Word stops responding.

2. If necessary, select **Microsoft Office Word**.

3. Choose **Recover Application** if you want Office to attempt to recover your files or choose **End Application** if you aren't worried about trying to preserve your changes. A Microsoft Office Word message box appears asking whether you want to send a report to Microsoft (see Figure A.2).

FIGURE A.2

When Office applications encounter problems, you have an opportunity to submit a report electronically to Microsoft.
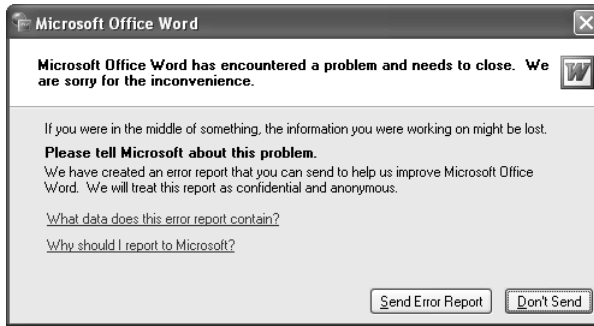
4. Choose **Send Error Report** or **Don't Send**. If you don't have an active Internet connection, choose **Send Report Later** to be prompted to send the report the next time you connect.

Turning on AutoRecover

AutoRecover gives you more control because you can decide how often you want to save your work. I have mine set to every 5 minutes; you may set yours to every 10. The time you set really just depends on the types of documents you work on and your personal work habits.

To turn on AutoRecover, follow these steps:

1. Choose **Tools**, **Options** to open the Options dialog box.
2. Click the **Save** tab to display those options (see Figure A.3).
3. Place a check mark next to the **Save AutoRecover info every:** check box.
4. Type the number of minutes in the **minutes** text box or click the spinner arrows to adjust the value.

Opening the Recovered Copy of a Document

If Word stops responding, Office 2003 analyzes the documents you were working on and tries to recover them. If the recovery operation is successful, the recovered files are listed in a Document Recovery pane so you can select and save them.

FIGURE A.3

Turn on
AutoRecover
and set a save
interval on the
Save tab of the
Options dialog
box.
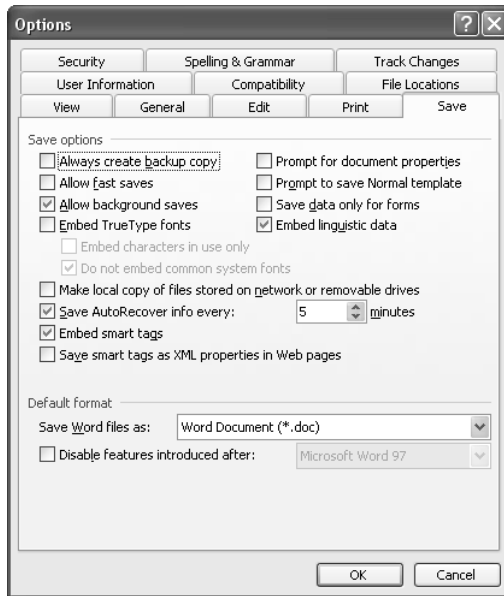
The same goes for the AutoRecover temporary file. If you've turned on AutoRecover, and your system stops responding, you can open the AutoRecover temporary file from the Document Recovery pane. This file contains everything that was in the document the last time AutoRecover saved it.

When Word restarts automatically, a Document Recovery pane appears (see Figure A.4). You can review these files and decide which one(s) to keep. If **[Recovered]** appears next to the filename, this file usually has more information than the file with **[Original]** next to the filename.

If you were working with more than one document when Word stopped responding, you'll have more than one document window open. Press **Ctrl+F6** to cycle through the document windows so you can deal with each recovered document.

If you're curious, you can view the repairs that were made to a file. Point to the filename in the Document Recovery pane. Click the arrow that appears next to the filename and then choose **Show Repairs**.

If you can't figure out which version is the most recent, open both copies and save the best one. Point to the filename in the Document Recovery pane. Click the arrow that appears next to the filename. Choose **Open** if you want to work with the file; choose **Save As** to save the file for later review.

FIGURE A.4

The Document Recovery pane contains a list of documents that were recovered.
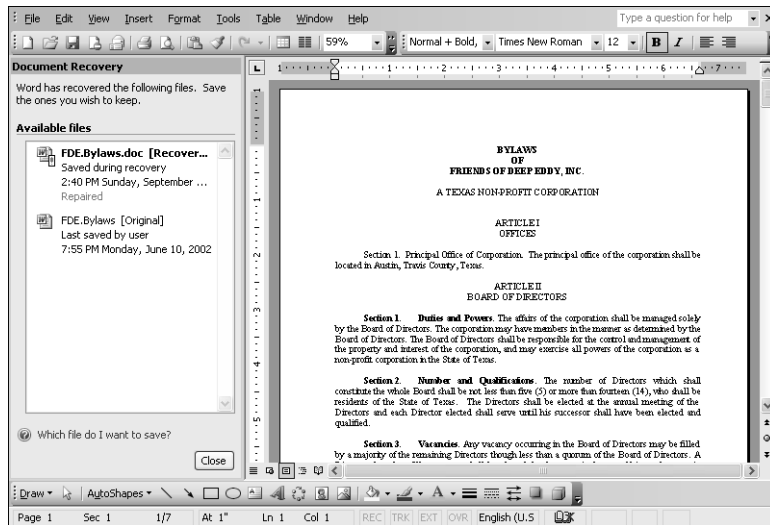
If you try to close a recovered document, Word displays a warning message (see Figure A.5). Choose **Save As** if you want to save the file and look it over later or **Delete** if you want to stick with your original copy. I really like this feature because sometimes I get in a hurry when I'm closing more than one document.

FIGURE A.5

Word doesn't let you accidentally close a recovered document without saving or deleting it.
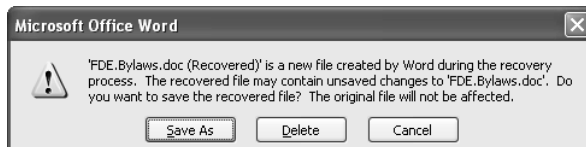
When you are finished opening or saving files, choose **Close** to close the Document Recovery pane.

Using the Recover Text Converter

If a recovered document is in really bad shape, don't give up yet; you still have a couple of options. You can try the Open and Repair feature in the Open dialog box and see whether it improves things.

If this approach doesn't work to your satisfaction, you can run the document through the Recover Text From Any File file converter. Unfortunately, this converter can only extract the text, so you lose all your formatting. Still, using this converter is better than starting over.

Follow these steps to use the Open and Repair feature:

1. Choose **File**, **Open** to display the Open dialog box.
2. Navigate to the folder where the damaged document resides.
3. Select the document.
4. Click the arrow on the Open button and choose **Open and Repair**.

To use the Recover Text From Any File converter, do the following:

1. Choose **Tools**, **Options** and then click the **General** tab.
2. Verify that the **Confirm conversion at Open** option is enabled.
3. Choose **OK**.
4. Choose **File**, **Open** to display the Open dialog box.
5. Select the corrupted file.
6. Click the **Files of type** drop-down list arrow and choose **Recover Text From Any File (*.*)**.
7. Choose **Open**. You may see a message box indicating that Word needs to install the converter (see Figure A.6).
8. Choose **Yes** to install the converter. Next, you see a status message box showing the status of the installation process. When the install is complete, the file is opened in the document window with a Show Repairs dialog box (see Figure A.7).

tip

When you restart Word after a power failure or lockup, Word automatically opens any recovered files. If, for some reason, Word doesn't open any files, you can open them yourself. Choose **File**, **Open** and then navigate to the folder that is specified for AutoRecover files on the File Locations tab of the Options dialog box. Click the **Files of type** drop-down arrow and choose **All Files (*.*)**. Each recovered file is named `AutoRecovery save of <filename>`. Select the file(s) you want to recover and then choose **Open**.

FIGURE A.6

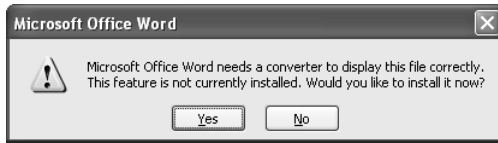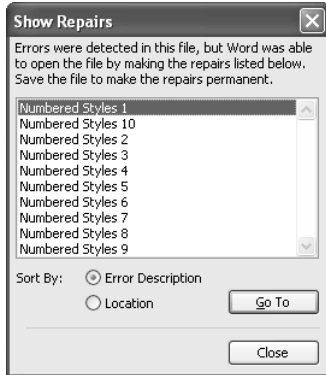The Install on Demand feature may kick in and install the converter for you.

FIGURE A.7

The Show Repairs dialog box lists the errors that were repaired in the document.

9. Choose **Close** to close the dialog box so you can start formatting the text. Make sure you save the document to keep the repairs.

When you use this converter, the text in paragraphs, headers, footers, footnotes, endnotes, and fields is brought in as plain text. Formatting, graphics, drawing objects, field codes, and any other elements that are not just text are not recovered.

If you don't see Recover Text From Any File (*.*) in the list of file types, you need to install the converter with the Microsoft Office 2003 Setup program. Quit all programs. Choose **Start**, **Control Panel**, **Add or Remove Programs**. Select the entry for **Microsoft Office 2003** or **Microsoft Word 2003** and then click the **Change** button. Select **Add or Remove Features** and then click **Next**. Enable the **Choose advanced customization of applications** check box and then click **Next**. Click the plus sign next to **Office Shared Features**. Click the plus sign next to **Converters and Filters**. Click the plus sign next to **Text Converters**. Click the button next to **Recover Text Converter** and choose **Run From My Computer**. Choose **Update**.

Using the Backup Copy Option

Sadly, you may be reading this appendix after experiencing a power failure or other system failure, and you may have already lost some work. Although the recovery
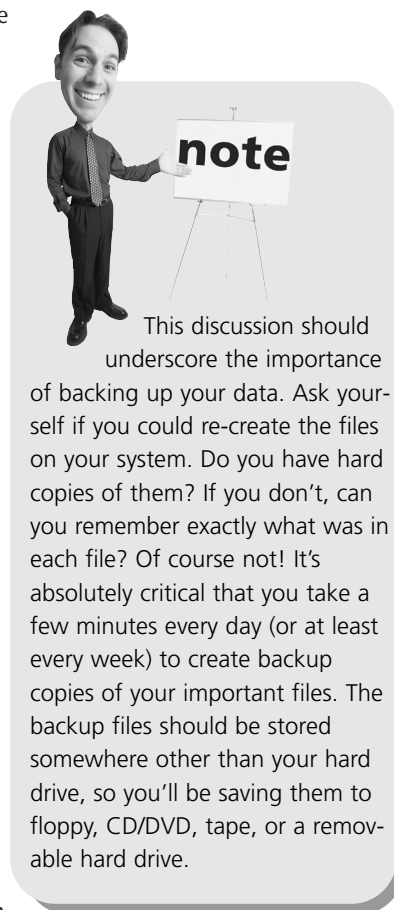
features mentioned in the preceding sections are nice to have, I can't emphasize enough that they are *not* replacements for saving your documents. I make it a habit to press Ctrl+S whenever I stop typing for a few seconds. I rarely lose more than a few minutes of work in case of a problem.

There is one more tool that I want to point out: the Always Create Backup Copy option. When you have this option enabled, Word saves the previous version of your document every time you save it. The previous version is stored in a special backup file that you can open should you ever need to revert to it. I've saved myself a number of times when I discovered I was making changes to the wrong file. I closed the file and opened the backup copy so I could save it over the original.

To turn on the Always Create Backup Copy feature, follow these steps:

1. Choose **<u>T</u>ools**, **<u>O</u>ptions** and then click the **Save** tab.

2. Enable the check box next to **Always cre- ate <u>b</u>ackup copy**.

3. Choose **OK**.

Obviously, the first time you save a document, there isn't a backup, but the second time you save, a file containing the information from the first save is created. The name of the file is `Backup of <filename>.wbk`. When you save the third time, the backup file will have everything from the second save. And so on.

> **note**
>
> This discussion should underscore the importance of backing up your data. Ask yourself if you could re-create the files on your system. Do you have hard copies of them? If you don't, can you remember exactly what was in each file? Of course not! It's absolutely critical that you take a few minutes every day (or at least every week) to create backup copies of your important files. The backup files should be stored somewhere other than your hard drive, so you'll be saving them to floppy, CD/DVD, tape, or a removable hard drive.

THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM

This appendix discussed methods you can use to recover from a system crash.

- You learned how to recover/repair the application through the Microsoft Office Application Recovery utility.

- You saw how the AutoRecover feature can be used to save changes to an AutoRecovery file at a specified interval.

- You learned how to extract the text from a file when all other methods fail to recover a damaged file.

- You learned how to enable the Always Create Backup Copy option to preserve the previous copy of a document every time you save the file.