

About adding comments and keeping track of changes

This topic provides reference information about:

[Using the Word change-tracking feature to track changes to a document](#)

[Inserting comments](#)

[Emphasizing text by highlighting it](#)

[Comparing documents](#)

[Merging tracked changes](#)

[Saving multiple versions of a document in one file](#)

[Using discussions to collaborate on a document](#)

Using the Word change-tracking feature to track changes to a document

If you have a document that you want reviewed by your workgroup and you want final control over which changes to accept or reject, you can prepare copies of a document to distribute to the workgroup for electronic review and markup. When change tracking is turned on, Microsoft Word uses [revision marks](#), the equivalent of "redlining" or "blacklining" in the legal profession, to indicate tracked changes. After the document is reviewed, you can see the changes made by the different reviewers — each reviewer's changes are marked with a different color.

After viewing tracked changes, you can accept or reject each change. You can also choose to show or hide tracked changes on the screen or in the printed document by using the **Highlight Changes** dialog box (**Tools** menu, **Track Changes** submenu, **Highlight Changes** command). [Track changes while you edit](#).

Inserting comments

You and your reviewers can make annotations on the screen without changing the document text

by typing [comments](#) by using **Insert Comment** on the **Reviewing toolbar**. When a comment is added, Word numbers it and records it in a separate comment pane. Word then inserts a comment reference mark in the document and shades the text that's commented on with light yellow. As with revision marks, Word tracks each reviewer's comment reference marks in a distinct color.

You can view comments in [ScreenTips](#) or in the comment pane. Use the comment pane to edit and review all the comments in the document. [Insert a comment](#).

Emphasizing text by highlighting it

When important text is highlighted, it's easier for you and your reviewers to see the text when you scan the document. You can change the color used for highlighting text and remove the highlighting. [Highlight important text](#).

Comparing documents

Comparing documents is useful for viewing changes to a document that was not revised by using change tracking. Open the newer version of the document, and then use the **Compare Documents** command (**Tools** menu, **Track Changes** submenu) to open the document you want to compare it with. When you compare documents, Word marks text that was added to and deleted from the old document, just as it would if change tracking had been turned on. [Compare two copies of a document](#).

Merging tracked changes

If reviewers have returned changes and comments in separate copies of the original document, you can merge all their changes into the original document and then review each change from there. [Merge comments and changes from several reviewers into one document](#).

Saving multiple versions of a document in one file

If you have a document that might be revised in the future, you might want to keep a record of each different draft. You can set up the document so that Word saves a "snapshot" of the current version automatically each time you or another reviewer closes the document after making changes. All versions are stored within one document, although Word displays only the current version by default. You save disk space because Word saves only the differences between versions, not an entire copy of each version.

For each version in the document, Word records the date and time the version was saved and the name of the person making the changes. You can view any one of the previous versions in a separate window by opening that version from the **Versions** dialog box (**File** menu). You can also open, print, and delete earlier versions. [Automatically save a version when closing a document](#).

Compare saving multiple versions with [saving a backup copy of a document](#), which is designed to ensure against data loss or against unintended changes. When backup saving is turned on, a new backup replaces the existing backup each time you save the document.

Using discussions to collaborate on a document

If you're part of a corporate workgroup, and your server administrator has set up a discussion server for your workgroup, you and your co-workers can use the Discussions feature to share and collaborate on a Word document. Learn about [using discussions in Word](#).