LEARNING MADE EASY

Covers Word 2021 & Office 365 version

Microsoft® Word

for dummies®

A Wiley Brand

Collaborate to create and edit documents

Save time with styles and templates

Discover amazing features and shortcuts

Dan Gookin

Author of *Microsoft Word for Professionals For Dummies*

Microsoft® Word

for dummies®
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Microsoft® Word

by Dan Gookin

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Microsoft® Word For Dummies®

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Introduction

The only thing standing between you and your writing is your word processor. Yeah, I know: It's supposed to be helpful. Well, it tries. Computers can do only so much. But you, as a smart person, are capable of so much more, which is why I'm guessing you opened this book.

Welcome to *Word For Dummies,* which removes the pain from using Microsoft's greatest and most confusing word processing software ever! This book is your friendly, informative, and entertaining guide to getting the most from Word.

Be warned: I'm not out to force you to love Word. This book won't make you enjoy the program. Use it, yes. Tolerate it, of course. The only promise I'm offering is to ease the pain that most people feel from using Microsoft Word. Along the way, I kick Word in the butt, and I hope you enjoy reading about it.

About This Book

I don't intend for you to read this book from cover to cover. It's not a novel, and if it were, it would be a political space opera with an antihero and a princess fighting corrupt elected officials who are in cahoots with an evil intergalactic urban renewal development corporation. The ending would be extremely satisfying.

This book is a reference. Each chapter covers a specific topic or task you can accomplish by using Word. Within each chapter, you find self-contained sections, each of which describes how to perform a specific task or get something done. Here are some sample topics you encounter in this book:

- Moving a block
- Check your spelling
- Save your stuff!
- Text-formatting techniques

- Working with tables in Word
- Plopping down a picture
- Mail merge, ho!

I give you no codes to memorize, no secret incantations, no tricks, no presentations to sleep through, and no wall charts. Instead, each section explains a topic as though it's the first thing you read in this book. Nothing is assumed, and everything is cross-referenced. Technical terms and topics, when they come up, are neatly shoved to the side, where you can easily avoid reading them. The idea here isn't for you to master anything. This book's philosophy is to help you look it up, figure it out, and get back to work.

How to Use This Book

You hold in your hands an active book. The topics between this book's yellow-and-black covers are all geared toward getting things done in Word. All you need to do is find the topic that interests you and then read.

Word uses the mouse and keyboard to get things done, but mostly the keyboard.

I use the word *click* to describe the action of clicking the mouse's main (left) button.

This is a keyboard shortcut: Ctrl+P. Press and hold down the Ctrl (Control) key and type the letter *P*, just as you would press Shift+P to create a capital *P*.

Sometimes, you must press more than two keys at the same time, such as Ctrl+Shift+T. Press Ctrl and Shift together and then press the T key. Release all three keys.

Commands in Word exist as *command buttons* on the Ribbon interface. I may refer to the tab, the command group, and then the button itself to help you locate that command button.

Menu commands are listed like this: Table➪Insert Table. This direction tells you to click the Table command button and then choose the Insert Table item from the menu that appears.

Some of Word's key commands dwell on the File screen. To access that screen, click the File tab on the Ribbon. To return to the document, click the Back button, found in the upper left corner of the File screen and shown in the margin. Or you can press the Esc key.

When I describe a message or some text you see onscreen, it looks like this:

```
Why should I bother to love Evelyn, when robots will
eventually destroy the human race?
```

If you need further help with operating your computer, I can recommend my book *PCs For Dummies* (Wiley). It contains lots of useful information to supplement what you find in this book.

Foolish Assumptions

This book was written with a few assumptions. Foremost, I assume that you're a human being, though you might also be an alien visiting from another planet. If so, welcome to Earth. Try the tacos. When you conquer our planet, please destroy Idaho last. Thanks.

Another foolish assumption I make is that you use Windows as the computer's operating system. Windows 10 is current, though Windows 11 is on the horizon and may be current by the time you read this introduction — assuming that you're still reading this Introduction. This book doesn't cover Windows.

This book covers several versions of Microsoft Word. Specifically, it's written to Word 2021, the Microsoft 365 version of Word, and the online version of Word. Most versions of Word 2013 forward are similar, so you should be covered here. Any differences between the various Word versions are covered in this text.

One version of Word not covered here is the Macintosh version of Word. Sorry, Mac users, but the Mac version of Word is too different to present along with the Windows versions covered in this text.

What's Not Here

This book covers using Word for anyone from a bare beginner to a modestly sophisticated scrivener. More advanced material is covered in its companion book, *Word 2016 For Professionals For Dummies*, which I wrote and Wiley published. I recommend this book if you want to dig into advanced topics such as manuscript preparation, Word use in a legal office, macro programming, and other "professional" word processing duties. The title covers Word 2016 specifically, but nearly all of it also applies to the current version of Word.

Icons Used in This Book

TIP This icon flags useful, helpful tips, or shortcuts.

REMEMBER This icon marks a friendly reminder to do something.

WARNING This icon marks a friendly reminder *not* to do something.

TECHNICAL STUFF This icon alerts you to overly nerdy information and technical discussions of the topic at hand. The information is optional reading, but it may enhance your reputation at cocktail parties if you repeat it.

Where to Go from Here

Start reading! Behold the table of contents and find something that interests you. Or look up your puzzle in the index.

Read! Write! Let your brilliance shine!

My email address is `dgookin@wambooli.com`. Yes, this is my real address. I reply to all email I receive, and you get a quick reply if you keep your question short and specific to this book or to Word itself. Although I enjoy saying hi, I cannot answer technical support questions or help you troubleshoot your computer. Thanks for understanding.

You can also visit my web page for more information or as a diversion: `www.wambooli.com`. This book's specific support page can be found at `www.wambooli.com/help/word`. I place errata and updates on that page as well as write frequent blog posts with Word information, tips, and tricks.

My YouTube channel contains hundreds of videos about Word, including tips, tricks, and tutorials. Check it out at `youtube.com/dangookin`

To find this book's online Cheat Sheet, simply go to `www.dummies.com` and search for *Word For Dummies Cheat Sheet* in the Search box.

Enjoy this book. And enjoy Word. Or at least tolerate it.

1

Your Introduction to Word

IN THIS PART . . .

See how to start Word and decipher the Word screen.

Explore differences between Word the program and Word online.

Get to know the computer keyboard and the touchscreen.

Learn how to read the status bar and discover special symbols representing secret characters in your text.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Starting Word
- Deciphering the Word screen
- Understanding the Ribbon
- Zooming in and out
- Quitting Word
- Minimizing Word

Chapter 1

Hello, Word!

According to the popular book *Pencils For Dummies*, the pencil is the ultimate word processing tool. It's easy to use, it's wireless, and it features the original Undo command, in the form of an eraser. And that's all the hilarity you'll find packed into *Pencils For Dummies*.

As a writing tool, the pencil remains popular and relatively easy to figure out, but it's not that technologically advanced. Your typical Ticonderoga #2 lacks many of the powerful capabilities you find in a sophisticated application like Microsoft Word, which is why Word requires a more formal introduction.

Start Your Word Day

Word the program dwells as a digital resident of your PC, a loyal subject of the king of the computer realm, Windows. It also exists in the ethereal realm on the Internet, which you can access if you have the Microsoft 365 subscription. Rousing the program into a state of useful consciousness depends on which flavor you use.

REMEMBER

- Ensure that you sport a proper posture as you write. Your wrists should be even with your elbows. Your head should tilt down only slightly, though it's best to look straight ahead. Keep your shoulders back and relaxed. Have a minion gently massage your feet.
- Obviously, you can't use Word unless your computer is on and toasty.
- The online version of Word can't be used unless you have Internet access.

TECHNICAL STUFF

- Other nerdy terms for starting a program: Run. Launch. Open. Fire up. Beg. Thrash. Whimper.

Starting Word the program

Word can be started like any old boring program on a computer. I'll be quick:

1. **Press the Windows key on the keyboard.**

   The Windows key is adorned with the Windows logo icon, which I won't illustrate here, because it changes more frequently than teenage fashion. The key is nestled between the Ctrl and Alt keys to the left of the spacebar. A duplicate is found on the right side of the spacebar on desktop computers. Use either key.

2. **Look for Microsoft Word on the Start menu.**

   The item might be titled *Word* and followed by the year or Office release.

   If you don't find Word right away, start typing its name: **word**. Eventually you see matching programs with *word* in their name: *sword*, *crossword*, and eventually *Microsoft Word*.

   Sometimes Word is found on a Microsoft Office submenu.

3. **Click the Word icon to start the program.**

Watch in amazement as the program unfurls on the screen.

Starting Word online

The web-based version of Word is available at this address:

```
office.com/launch/word
```

You must be signed in to Microsoft 365 for this link to successfully lead you to the online version of Word. Fret not: If you're not signed in, the web page prompts you.

TIP

PINNING WORD TO THE TASKBAR

The *best* way to start Word, and the way I do it every day, is to click the Word icon on the taskbar. Word starts simply, quickly, and with a minimum of pain.

The issue, of course, is how to get the Word icon on the taskbar — if the icon doesn't already appear on the taskbar. To add it, first find the Word icon on the Start menu, as described in the nearby section "Starting Word the program." When you find it, right-click the Word icon and choose More, Pin to Taskbar.

The Word icon is *pinned* (permanently added) to the taskbar. From there, you need click it only once to start the program.

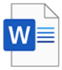
REMEMBER

- The online version of Word is limited from the full power of the Word program. Differences are noted throughout this book.
- You need a Microsoft 365 account to use the online version of Word.
- Word online grants you access to the documents saved to your OneDrive folder. *OneDrive* is Microsoft's cloud application, providing access to your files over the Internet.

Opening a document to start Word

You use Word to create *documents*. These are stored on a computer along with all that other junk you keep but don't know why. Documents are also found on the cloud in your OneDrive account, which allows you to use the online version of Word to edit and otherwise mess with them.

To open a document and start Word, follow these steps:



1. **Locate the document icon.**

   Use your Windows *kung fu* to open the proper folders and hunt down a Word document icon, similar to the one shown in the margin.

   Online, browse your OneDrive folder for Word document icons, though the icon image is often replaced with a thumbnail image showing the document's teeny-tiny contents.

2. **Double-click the icon.**

   On OneDrive, a single click is all you need.

The document is opened and presented on the screen, ready for whatever.

TECHNICAL STUFF

- You use Word to create documents. They're saved to storage on your computer or on the cloud. Details are offered in Chapter 8.
- Documents you create on the cloud stay there — unless you have the OneDrive program installed on your computer. In this setup, the cloud files are also available on your computer. Likewise, files you save to your OneDrive folder (or one of its subfolders) on your computer are also available on the cloud, and you can use the online version of Word to edit them.
- The document name is assigned when it's first saved. Use the name to determine the document's contents — providing that it was properly named when first saved.
- Documents are files. As such, they are managed by Windows. If you need to find a lost document or rename it or organize your documents into a folder, you use Windows, not Word.

Behold the Word Program

I believe that the Word program in Windows is the prototype, the golden Apollo from which the lesser-yet-valiant Word on the Internet gains its inspiration. Between the two versions, many things look and work the same. But no, it's that Word program in Windows that I use as the ideal.

Working the Word Start screen

After starting Word, you may first see something called the Word *Start screen*, shown in Figure 1-1. I admit that the Start screen is friendlier than that ominous, empty page that has intimidated writers since the dawn of paper.

You can use the Start screen to open a previously opened document, start a new document based on a template, or start with a blank document. So, if the Start screen annoys you, click the New button (refer to Figure 1-1) and get writing!

Once you've made your choice — to start a new document, open one shown in the list, or use a template — Word is ready for you to start writing. Word is also equally content if you just stare at the screen and await inspiration.