

Technical Writing Samples

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A Student's Guide to Changing Default Settings in Microsoft Word 2016

Word is perfect tool for users of all ages and ranges of computer knowledge. Features of Word documents, such as font, font size, spacing, and margins are easy to change, but many users find it frustrating to make the same changes to every new document they create. To eliminate this frustration, it is best to select different default settings to better suit the work a user most often does in Word, such as students who use the program for writing papers. The following sections explain how to modify some default settings in Microsoft Word 2016.

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Setting a Default Font and Font Size

1. Open a new, blank Word document. The document will open to the “Home” tab.

2. Find the “Font” section of the tool bar at the top of the document window. To the right of the word, “Font” there is a small icon of a square with an arrow (as shown in image A.). This symbol is the “dialog box launcher.” Click on the dialog box launcher.



A. dialog box launcher

3. Using the “Font” tab of the new window (also called the dialog box), select the font and font size desired as the default.

- For example, students may choose to set their default font to “Times New Roman” and their default size to “12” to ensure that their documents will meet the style most often requested for their assignments.

4. After selecting the desired font and font size, click the “Set As Default” button in the bottom left hand corner of the dialog box. To make these changes the default on all new documents, select the option, “All documents based on the Normal template” when prompted. Click “OK” to set the default.

Notes

- To double check that the new default font and font size is in place, close the current word document. Then, open a new, blank word document. The new default should be visible in the “Font” section of the tool bar.
- These changes and many other font changes can be done on individual documents or selected portions of text using the same dialog window. Rather than selecting the “Set As Default” button, click the “OK” button after choosing the desired options in the dialog box.
- Default changes will apply to new Word documents, not those previously created.
- Templates in addition to the “Normal” template can be created with other default settings. Seek further instruction to explore this option

Removing Additional Line Spacing Before and After Paragraph Enters

1. Open a new, blank Word document. The document will open to the “Home” tab.
2. Find the “Paragraph” section of the tool bar. To the right of the word “Paragraph,” locate and click the dialog box launcher.
 - See [step 2](#) of “Setting a Default Font and Font size” for a description of a dialog box launcher.
3. Using the “Indents and Spacing” tab of the dialog box, locate the “Before:” and “After:” options in the “Spacing” section. Set both of these options to “0 pt.”
 - This same “Indents and Spacing” tab of the dialog box is used to change line spacing. See [step 3](#) of “Setting Default Line Spacing” to incorporate both changes at the same time.
4. Locate the “Set As Default” button at the bottom of the dialog box. To make these changes the default on all new documents, select the option, “All documents based on the Normal template” when prompted, then click “OK” to set the default.

Notes

- This change can be double checked by opening a new word document, typing at least two full lines of text, pressing enter, and then beginning a new line of text. The spacing should now be the same between the continuous lines of text and the entered line. This change is particularly noticeable in double-spaced documents.
- The same paragraph dialog box can be accessed using the “Paragraph” section of the “Layout” tab, rather than the “Home” tab.
- These changes as well as changes to the tab settings can be done on individual documents using the paragraph dialog box. Rather than selecting the “Set As Default” button, click the neighboring “OK” button. This way changes will only affect the working document.
- This change will apply to new Word documents, not those previously created.
- Templates in addition to the “Normal” template can be created with other default settings. Seek further instruction to explore this option.

Setting Default Line Spacing

1. Open a new, blank Word document. The document will open to the “Home” tab.
2. Find the “Paragraph” section of the tool bar. To the right of the word “Paragraph,” locate and click the dialog box launcher.
 - See [step 2](#) of “Setting a Default Font and Font Size” for a description of a dialog box launcher.
3. Using the “Indents and Spacing” tab of the dialog box, locate the “Line Spacing” and “At” options in the “Spacing” section. Set both of these options to the desired spacing between lines of text.
 - For students looking to set “double-spaced” as their default there are two options.
 - a. Set “Line Spacing” to “Multiple” and set “At” to 2.0.
 - b. Set “Line Spacing” to “Double.” “At” will become blank; do not type a number or use the arrows to select a number, leave the box blank.
 - This same menu is used to change line spacing. See [step 3](#) of “Removing Additional Line Spacing Before and After Paragraph Enters” to incorporate both changes at the same time.
4. Locate the “Set As Default” button at the bottom of the dialog box. To make these changes the default on all new documents, select the option, “All documents based on the Normal template” when prompted, then click “OK” to set the default.

Notes

- This change can be double checked by opening a new word document, typing at least one full line of text and a partial second line. The spacing between the lines of text should now be at the new default spacing.
- The same paragraph dialog box can be accessed using the “Paragraph” section of the “Layout” tab, rather than the “Home” tab.
- These changes can be done on individual documents using the same dialog box. Rather than selecting the “Set As Default” button, click the neighboring “OK” button. The line spacing changes will only affect the working document.
- Changing the default will apply to new Word documents, not those previously created.
- Templates in addition to the “Normal” template can be created with other default settings. Seek further instruction to explore this option.

Setting Default Page Margins and Sizes

1. Open a new, blank Word document. The document will open to the “Home” tab. Instead, select the “Layout” tab.
2. Find the “Page Setup” section of the tool bar. To the right of the words “Page Setup,” locate and click the dialog box launcher.
 - See [step 2](#) of “Setting a Default Font and Font Size” for a description of a dialog box launcher.
3. Using the “Margins” tab of the dialog box, locate the “Top:,” “Bottom:,” “Left:,” and “Right:” options in the “Margins” section. Adjust each of these to the desired default margins.
 - Papers, cover letters, and most other documents use 1-inch for all four margin measurements and “Portrait” for the document’s orientation.
4. Using the “Paper” tab of the dialog box, locate the “Paper Size” section. The dropdown menu lists common page sizes and automatically fills the measurements for width and height to fit the option selected.
 - Standard printer paper is “Letter-sized” or 8.5 by 11 inches.
5. Locate the “Set As Default” button at the bottom left corner of the dialog box. To make these changes the default on all new documents, select the option, “All documents based on the Normal template” when prompted, then click “OK” to set the default.

Notes

- These changes can be double checked by opening a new document. The margins and page size should be evident in the document window.
- Even though “Margins” and “Paper” appear in separate tabs of the dialog box, the user can make both changes before clicking “Set As Default.” All changes made in the dialog box will become the default settings.
- These changes can be done on individual documents using the same dialog box. Rather than selecting the “Set As Default” button, click the “OK” button instead. The margins, paper size, and any additional changes will only be altered on the working document.
- Changing the default will apply to new Word documents, not those previously created.
- Templates in addition to the “Normal” template can be created with other default settings. Seek further instruction to explore this option.

Changing the Default Language

1. Open a new, blank Word document. The document should open to the “Home” tab. Select the “Review” tab instead.

2. Find the “Language” section of the tool bar. Within the “Language” section of the tool bar is a button called “Language,” which features a small arrow beneath it (see image B). Click on this button and select “Set Proofing Language...” option.



B. Language button

3. In the dialog box, scroll to and select the desired language. To enable spelling and grammar check in the chosen language, make sure the box next to “Do not check spelling and grammar” is not selected.

4. Locate the “Set As Default” button at the bottom left corner of the dialog box. To make these changes the default on all new documents, select the option, “All documents based on the Normal template” when prompted, then click “OK” to set the default.

Notes

- Changing the language can be done on individual documents using the same method. Rather than selecting the “Set As Default” button, click the “OK” button. The language will only be changed on the working document.
- Changing the language may be particularly helpful for students who are taking language classes or who are multilingual.
- There are variations of languages for different regions. For example, both English (United States) and English (United Kingdom) are language options. Because spelling and grammar rules can vary between regions, it important to select the proper region as well as language for a default or for an individual document.
- Changing the default language will apply to new Word documents, not those previously created.
- Templates in addition to the “Normal” template can be created with other default settings. Seek further instruction to explore this option.

Sydney's Modified Chex Mix Recipe

Savory, salty, and crunchy: Chex Mix makes a perfect party snack. But sometimes the store-bought version can make it seem as though I spend more time sifting for my favorite pieces than enjoying a tasty snack. To avoid what I call the “too many pretzels blues,” I’ve modified the classic Chex Mix recipe slightly as followed.

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Bake Time: 1 hour

Total Time: 1 hour 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 4 cups wheat Chex cereal
- 5 cups corn Chex cereal
- 1 cups small twist pretzels (whole or broken)
- 3 cups bagel chips (of preferred variety, broken to 1-inch or smaller)
- 1 stick (8 tablespoons) butter
- 5 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons seasoned salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder

1. Pre-heat oven to 250° F.
2. In microwave safe bowl, place stick of butter. Cover and microwave for twenty-second intervals until melted. Stir between intervals.
3. To the melted butter, add Worcestershire sauce, seasoned salt, garlic powder, and onion powder. Stir to combine ingredients.
4. Into a large bowl, measure and pour the dry ingredients (wheat Chex, corn Chex, pretzels, and bagel chips). If pretzels and/or bagel chips are large, measure the amount needed then break or crush into smaller pieces.
5. Drizzle half of the butter and seasoning mixture into the bowl of dry ingredients. Stir to distribute seasoning evenly.
6. Place seasoned ingredients onto baking sheet in a single layer. (A baking sheet with a raised side works best.)
7. Drizzle remaining half of butter and seasoning mixture onto the mix.
8. Bake for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes.
9. Cool and store Chex Mix in an air tight container.

“Exploring How Poetry Works” Blog

The image below is a screenshot of a blog and activity materials written by Sydney M. Crago for Simple Solutions. This image shows the blog text, which includes instructions to teachers or parents interested in using the activity, and links to the accompanying PowerPoint presentation and downloadable worksheets.

This blog can be accessed online at: simplesolutions.org/blog/exploring-poetry-works

Exploring How Poetry Works

Let's talk about poetry!



World Poetry Day is March 21st! We know that poetry isn't always students' (or teachers') favorite subject. Oftentimes, poetry can seem difficult to explain or difficult for students to fully understand, especially when dealing with more contemporary poetic forms—those that don't rhyme or follow easy patterns.

But don't let these difficulties stop you! To help students and teachers have fun celebrating World Poetry Day and Poetry Month (April), the Simple Solutions team has put together a list of ideas and helpful tools.

1. Download our PowerPoint presentation, [What is Poetry?](#) Use this to discuss what a poem is and why people write poems.
2. Explore “[How Things Work](#)” by Gary Soto using our “[But it doesn't rhyme!](#)” worksheet. This contemporary poem is kid-friendly and full of images that help students see that not all poetry has to rhyme.
3. Hold a class “poetry slam.” Ask students to select a poem and complete a study of it using our “[What's in my poem?](#)” worksheet. Then, have each student recite the poem for the class (either from memory or by reading it), and explain one thing he or she learned from the poem.

Poetry is...
used to create powerful images.

Poetry uses **imagery** to give readers a clear picture of what the poet wants to say.

Imagery: words or phrases used to create a mental picture

Often, imagery also helps give the poem mood and a perspective.

Mood: the feeling of the writing

Perspective: the point of view the poet uses or how he feels about a certain topic.

Imagery: mountains (of leaves)

Perspective: a man raking leaves and marveling at their weight

Mood: What feelings do you have while reading the poem?

Gathering Leaves
By Robert Lee Frost

Spooks take up leaves
No better than spoons,
And legs, full of leaves
Are light as balloons.

I make a great noise
Of rustling all day
Like rabbit and deer
Flushing away.

But the mountains, I think
Slide my entrance,
Flowing over my arms
And into my face.

I may lead and attend
Again and again
Till I fill the whole sheet,
And what have I then?

Need to nothing for weight,
And since they grow bulky
From contact with earth,
Need to nothing for color.

Need to nothing for use
But a crop is a crop,
And starts to lay waste

Name: _____

But it doesn't rhyme!

Poetry is a type of writing that puts thoughts and feelings into words in condensed form. Poems often rhyme, but they don't have to. “How Things Work” by Gary Soto is a poem that doesn't rhyme.



Instructions: Read this poem, and answer the questions below to explore the thoughts and feelings it contains.

1. The poet lists many items in the poem. List 4 items the poet writes about.
2. Find one example of an action in the poem. Copy the line below.
3. The speaker of the poem is talking to someone. Whom does he address? (Hint: This happens about halfway through the poem.)
4. Find the simile in the poem. Copy it below.

Name: _____

What's in my poem?

Instructions: Choose a poem to study. After reading the poem several times, answer the questions below. Remember to practice reading your poem aloud.

1. What is the poem's title? _____
2. Who wrote the poem? _____
3. Where did you find the poem? Write the book, website, or other location _____
4. How does this poem make you feel? _____
5. What images or actions in the poem are important? _____
6. Does this poem use any figurative language? (List the types of figurative language and copy examples from the poem.) _____