

By Jody Gilbert

Over the years, successive versions of Word have introduced some solid innovations, some mind-boggling changes-for-change's-sake, and a few usability-crushing "enhancements." But through it all, one thing has remained constant: Buried within Word are lots of cool tricks that not too many users have discovered. These are small things--shortcuts that, in some cases, may not look much more efficient than pulling down a menu and heading for the dialog box you need. But if you perform a certain task a thousand times a week, being able to bypass some steps or automatically slap a change into a document without having to stop and think about it can be a welcome convenience. Depending on how you use Word, I'm betting you (or your users) will get addicted to one or two of these tricks.

1 Move table rows up or down

This tip is probably most useful when you're working in a table, although you can use it to reorder paragraphs outside a table, too. Let's say you decide you want the third row of a table to be the top row. Just click within the third row, hold down [Alt][Shift] and press the up arrow key twice. Each time you press the arrow key, Word will move the row up one. You can select multiple rows to move them as a block, and you can use the down arrow key if you want to move text down instead of up.

Using this shortcut gets a little tricky if you're moving big pieces of text outside a table. It's easy to lose track of what's being relocated where, and you might find it easier to take a standard cut-and-paste approach in those situations. But when the text is small and manageable, the shortcut is fairly handy. For example, if you need to move an item up or down within a bulleted or numbered list, you can just click in the item's paragraph and use the [Alt][Shift] and arrow key combo to move the item to the desired spot.

2 Go back to your last editing location when you open a document

One of the confounding things about Word is that when you reopen a document you've been working on, it puts you back at the top of the document. Unlike Excel, which takes you to the spot where you left off last time, Word's short-term memory always wants to start you off at the beginning again. You can work around this if you press [Shift][F5] as soon as the document opens. [Shift][F5] is the Go Back shortcut, which cycles you between your four most recent edits during a Word session. But if you can remember to hit it immediately after opening a document, Word will jump to the last thing you changed before saving and closing that doc.

3 Save changes to all open documents at one time

This simple technique comes in handy when you're working in multiple documents and want to make sure you've saved your changes to all of them. I actually use it most often when I've made a change to a template and want a quick way to save that change on the fly (before I've had a chance to forget I made a change I want to keep). All you have to do is press the [Shift] key and pull down the File menu. Word will add the Save All command to the menu, above the Save As command. Just choose Save All and Word will prompt you to save each document (or template) that has any unsaved changes. This is more efficient than having to navigate to each document individually and click Save.

4 Make a vertical text selection

Here's a trick that seldom appears on the shortcut lists. Most of the time, we select text horizontally—a word, a series of words, a paragraph—from left to right or vice versa. But occasionally, the selection has to be vertical. For instance, suppose you wanted to delete the leading characters in **Figure A**.

To make a vertical selection, hold down [Alt] as you drag down through the text you want to highlight.

Figure B shows the column of unwanted characters selected using this technique. Hit [Delete] and bam, they're gone.

Although we selected text at the beginning of the lines in this example, you can make vertical selections anywhere on the page.

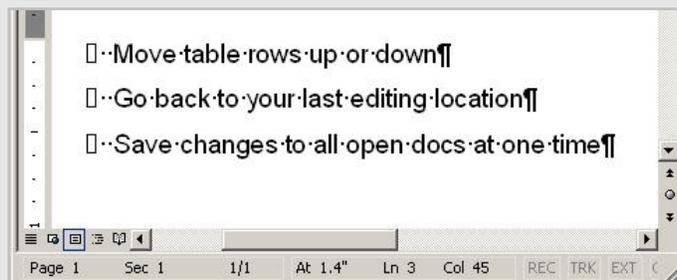


Figure A

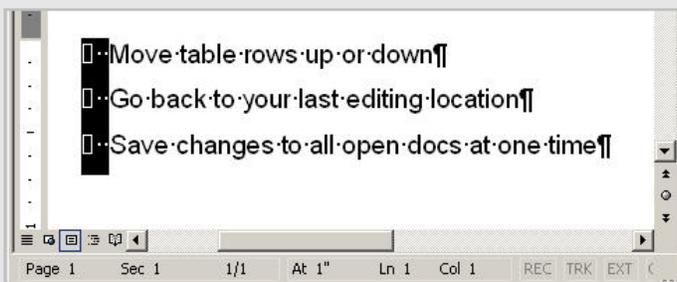


Figure B

5 Quickly add a series of numbers

There are plenty of tools you can rely on to perform sophisticated or complex calculations. But Word offers a command that can be handy when you just need to sum a few numbers without dragging out another application. The command is Tools Calculate, and although it doesn't appear on any toolbars, it's easy to add.

1. Choose Tools | Customize (or double-click an empty spot on any toolbar) to open the Customize dialog box.
2. Click the Commands tab and choose All Commands from the Categories list box.
3. Click in the Commands list box and scroll down to select ToolsCalculate (**Figure C**).
4. Drag the ToolsCalculate item to the toolbar where you want it to appear.
5. Click Close to close the Customize dialog box.

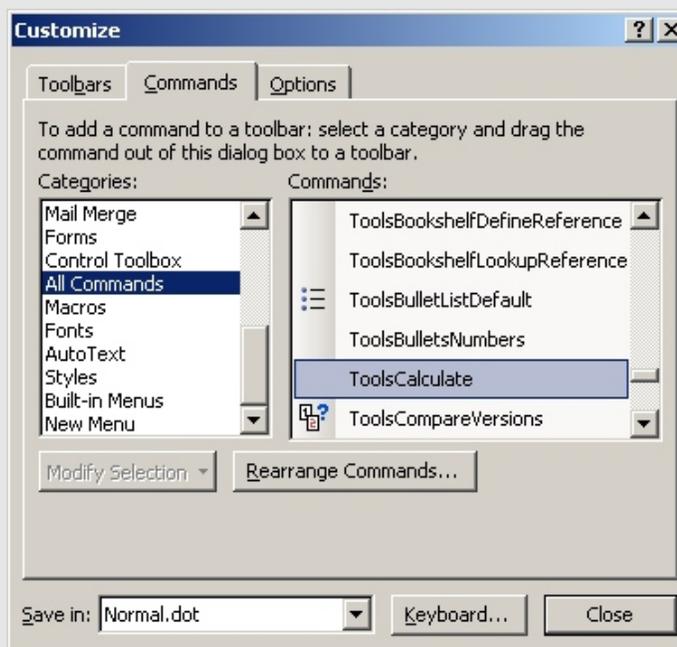


Figure C

Once you have access to the Calculate command, here's how you use it. Simply highlight a series of numbers (either horizontally or vertically) and click your Tools Calculate button. Word will display the sum in the status bar, as shown in **Figure D**. It will also place that sum on the clipboard, so if you need to paste it into a document, just click in the desired spot and press [Ctrl]V or click Paste.

It's important to note that the Calculate command works differently from the AutoSum button on the Tables and Borders toolbar. To use AutoSum, you have to be in an empty cell and then click the button to insert a formula that will add the numbers in the cells above or to the left of the current cell. It's a sort of light-duty version of Excel's =Sum() function. By contrast, the Calculate command gives you a quick total without requiring you to make a place for the results in your document.

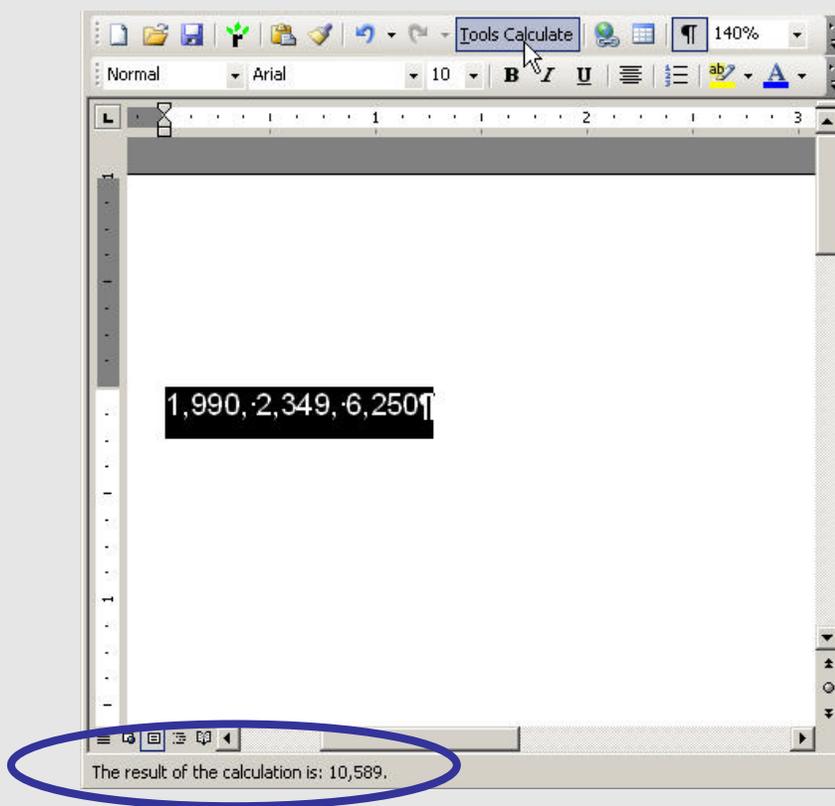


Figure D

6 Gain fast access to formatting/layout options

If you spend a fair bit of time hopping into dialog boxes to tweak the appearance of your text or documents, there are some double-click tricks you might find useful. Here's a sampling of the most common ones. (For a more comprehensive list, see "[34 timesaving mouse tricks for Word users.](#)")

- To open the Page Setup dialog box, double-click on the horizontal or vertical ruler.
- To open the Paragraph dialog box, double-click on an indent marker on the horizontal ruler.
- To access bullet or number options, double-click on a bullet character or number in a numbered list.
- To access AutoShape options, double-click on an AutoShape.
- To open the Table Properties dialog box, double-click the Move Table Column marker (those little dotted squares you see on the horizontal ruler when you're in a table) or the Table Move Handle (the four-headed arrow that appears at the top-left corner of a table in Print Layout view).

7 Use Replace All to globally reformat text

Most users know how to use search and replace features to make certain types of text replacements on a case-by-case basis or throughout a document. But not everyone appreciates the power and versatility of the Replace All option when it comes to adjusting formatting. Here are just a couple of examples.

First, let's say you've received a document in which someone went a little crazy with italics. Instead of manually removing the formatting from each occurrence:

1. Choose Edit | Replace.
2. Leave the Find What and Replace With text boxes blank.
3. Click in the Find What text box and press [Ctrl][I].
4. Click in the Replace With text box and press [Ctrl][I] twice. This will set things up to replace all instances of italicized text with a nonitalicized version (**Figure E**). (Note: You can click Format | Font in the Find And Replace dialog box to access the corresponding options from a list box, but the [Ctrl][I] method is a lot faster.)
5. Click Replace All to unitalicize your document text.

Now suppose you have a document that contains scores of paragraphs that are formatted with some ugly custom style used by another department or external partner. You need the text formatted with your own standard Normal style instead. To make this change throughout the document:

1. Choose Edit | Replace and click More (if necessary) to expand the dialog box.
2. Click in the Find What text box and click Format | Style. Choose the name of the ugly style from the Find Style list box and click OK.
3. Click in the Replace With text box and again click Format | Style. This time, choose Normal from the Find Style list box and click OK. Figure F shows these specifications ready to go.
4. Click Replace All and Word will apply your Normal style to all the paragraphs carrying the style you want to get rid of.

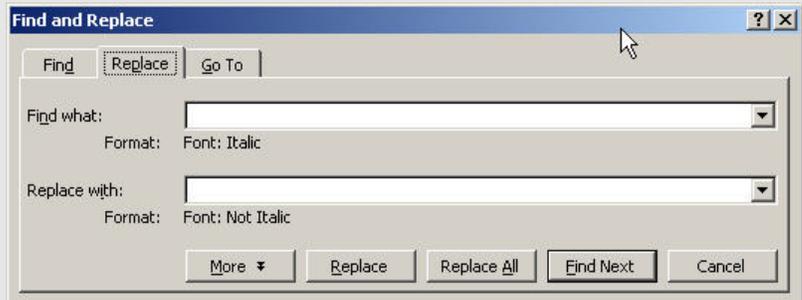


Figure E

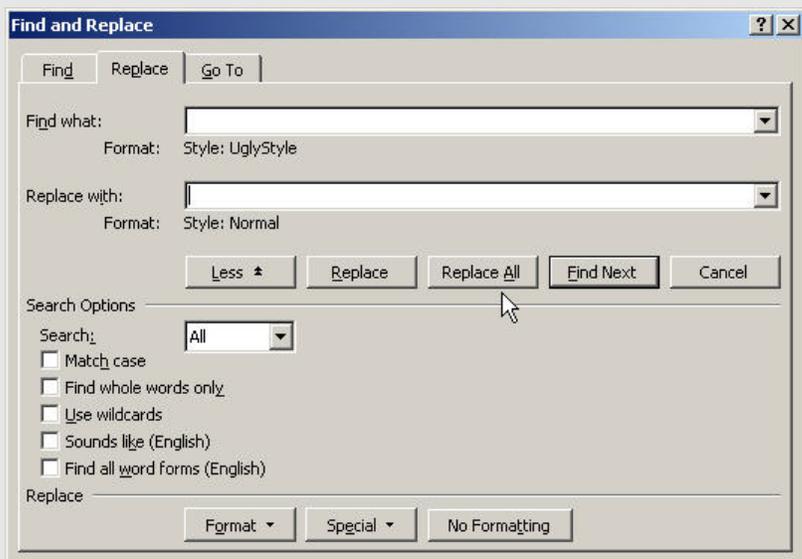


Figure F

8 Quickly transfer formatting from one piece of text to another

Word offers a button called Format Painter that provides a slightly clunky way to copy the formatting from one piece of text and then apply it to another piece of text. You select the text whose formatting you want to transfer, click Format Painter, and then select the text you want to reformat. If you have several pieces of text scattered throughout the document that you want to reformat in this fashion, you can double-click Format Painter and then use the little paintbrush mouse pointer to "paint" the formatting onto those pieces of text. But then you have to turn it off (click the button again) so that you can go back to working in the document. And Format Painter will forget the formatting specs it just transferred for you.

A better approach is to use a shortcut that copies formatting characteristics and then remembers them until you close the document. That way, when you come across other pieces of text that need that particular set of formatting attributes, you can use this trick to instantly apply them.

The shortcuts for this technique are easy to remember because they're cousins to ordinary copy and paste ([Ctrl]C and [Ctrl]V). To copy text formatting, select the desired text and press [Ctrl][Shift]C. To paste that formatting onto other text, select that text and press [Ctrl][Shift]V. If you select part of a paragraph, you'll be transferring character formats (bold, point size, font, etc.). Select an entire paragraph, you'll transfer paragraph formats (line spacing, alignment, indents, etc.) as well.

9 Duplicate selected text or objects using the mouse

This is my favorite technique for copying drawing objects and graphics because you can copy them and drag them into position in one step. Using ordinary copy and paste is often a crap shoot, because objects tend to paste themselves in strange locations depending on the layout options of the original object.

To use this technique, click on the item you want to copy (it can be a selection of text or an object in a document) and hold down [Ctrl] so that the mouse pointer turns into a plus sign. Then drag the item—it will become a copy of the item—to the spot where you want it to go. **Figure G** shows this technique in progress.

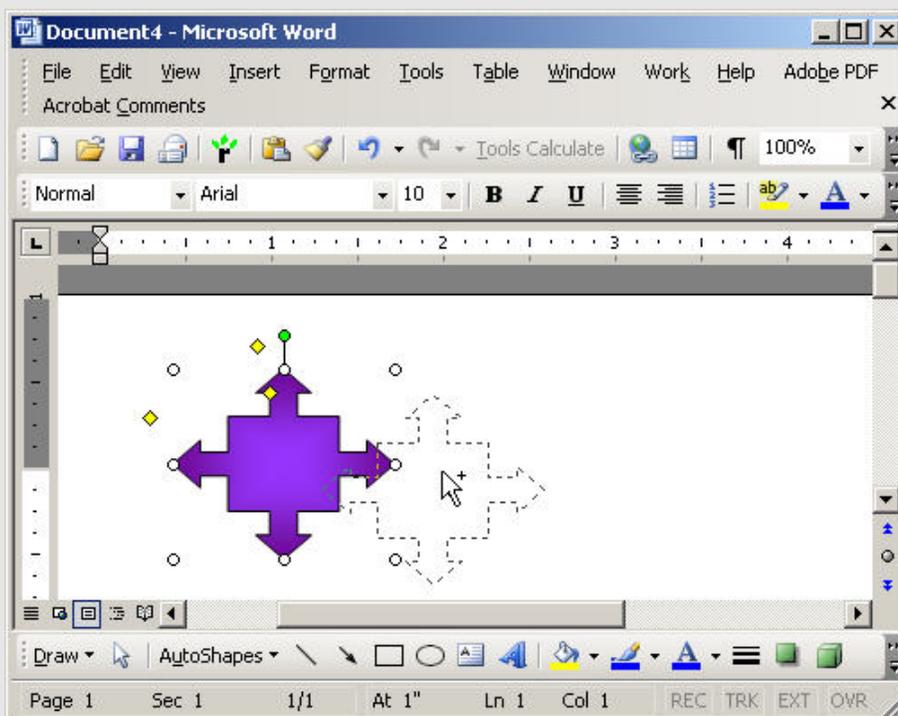


Figure G

10 Create a shortcut to launch Word using a particular template

Ordinarily, Word starts up by opening a new Normal.dot document. But if you routinely create documents based on some other template, a better starting point might be to launch Word using the template you actually need. One easy way to accomplish this is to create a desktop shortcut.

You'll need to know the path to the Winword.exe program (for example, the default location for Word 2003 is C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office11; for Word XP, it's C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office10; and for Word 2000, it's C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office).

You'll also need the path to the template you want to use on startup. If it's one of Word's built-in templates, look in C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Templates\1033. If it's a custom template, the default spot is C:\Documents and Settings*Username*\Application Data\Microsoft\Templates. (If you've used Tools | Options | File Locations to specify a different folder for the User Templates item, you'll need to use that path instead.)

Let's walk through the process of creating the shortcut. We'll assume that we're using Word 2003 and that we have a custom template called DailyReport.dot located in the default folder for custom templates.

1. Right-click on the desktop and choose New | Shortcut.
2. In the Target text box, type the path to the Word program: "C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\OFFICE11\WINWORD.EXE". You need the quote marks because there are spaces in the pathname.
3. Type a space, followed by the startup switch we want, /t.
4. Enter the path to the template, also in quotes: "C:\Documents and Settings*Username*\Application Data\Microsoft\Templates\DailyReport.dot". You don't need a space between the switch and this path. The full entry for the Target text box will look like this:

```
"C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\OFFICE11\WINWORD.EXE" /t"C:\Documents and Settings\Username\Application Data\Microsoft\Templates\DailyReport.dot"
```

5. Click Next, enter a name for your shortcut, and click Finish.

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Version history

Version: 1.0

Published: July 10, 2006

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