Hired Digital Literacy Series:
Introduction to Microsoft Word

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Introduction

Microsoft Word is an application that helps you create documents like papers for school, a resume and cover letter, or a flyer for an event. You will likely use this application more than any other. This guide will walk you through the basic functions of Word, but there is a lot more you can do. Explore the help tools in the app and look for more tutorials online. Remember, even if the images on the following pages don't look exactly like what you see on your screen, the functions will be the same and what you see will be very similar to the images here.

Getting Started

When you open Word, you'll be prompted to select either a blank document or a template. The picture below shows that screen on a Mac. It will look very similar on a PC.
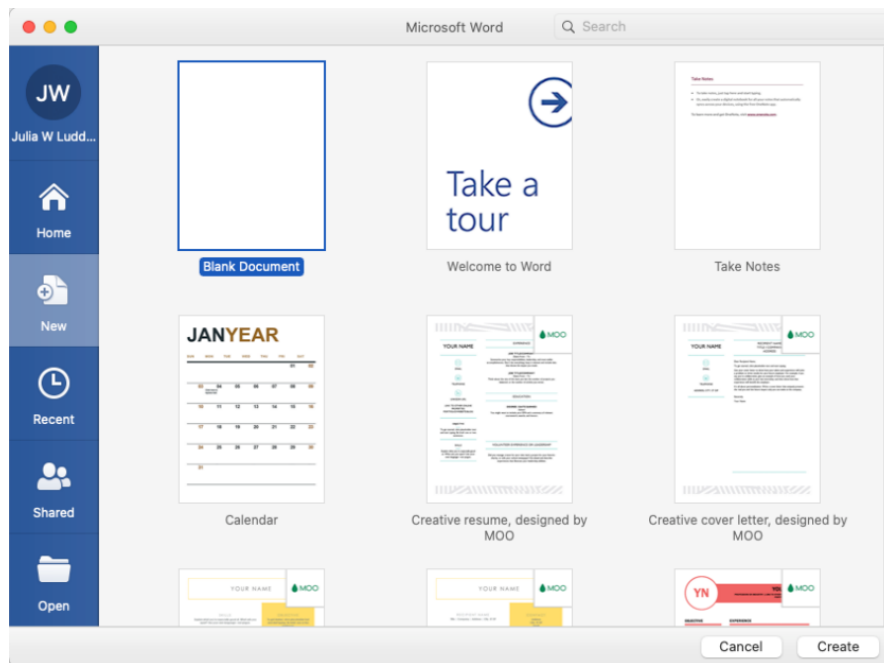
If you have been working with other Word documents recently, you'll see those documents on the left or at the bottom. If you're new to Word, take the tour to become familiar with the different functions of the app. Templates are sorted by categories like calendars, reports, invoices, or cards. Most of the time, you'll be starting with a blank document.

In a blank document, you can change everything from what the text looks like (font) to how big it is to what color it is. You can also change the space between the edge of page and where the words start (margin), how the text lines up on the page, and how much space there is between lines. We'll go over those basic functions in this guide.

All of the formatting tools are located in the ribbon: the space at the top of the document with lots of little symbols in it. It looks like this:
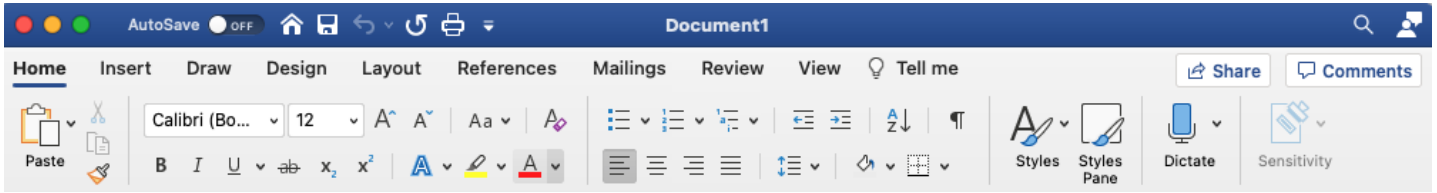

Adjusting the Font

A font is the specific look of the letters on the page.

- You can set your font before you start typing or you change all or part of the text in the document to a different font at any point.

- The font in the picture above is set to Calibri, a fairly standard default. Times, Cambria, Arial, and Helvetica are other common fonts. This document uses Tahoma.

- To change the font of text you've already typed, select the text you want to change by clicking and dragging over the text. To select the whole document, hold down **Ctrl** and type **A** on a PC, or the **Apple/Command** key and **A** on a Mac.

- Then click the drop down next to the font name and select your desired font.
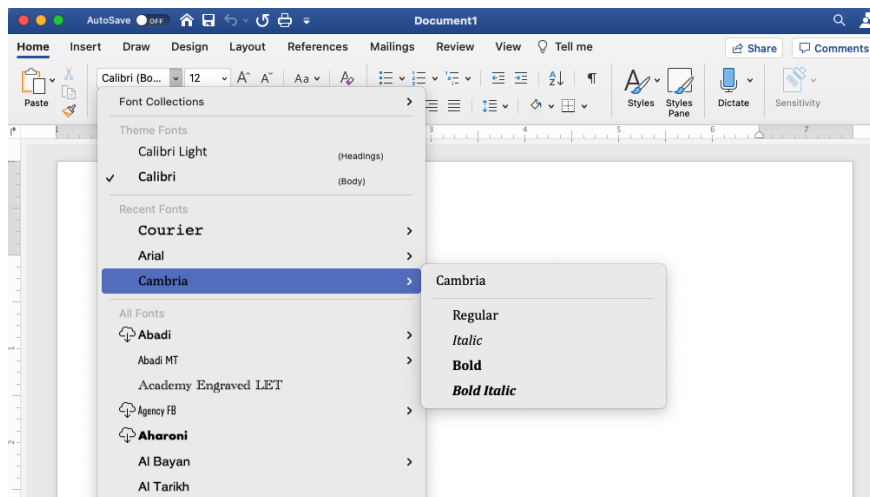
The same technique applies for other adjustments, like size, **bold,** *italics,* underline, or strikethrough, and the picture below is labeled for these options.

- Font size 10-12 is considered standard for most documents. This document has 11 point type and 16 point headers.

- The larger the number, the larger the font.

- Remember that you have to highlight any text you want to change.

- If you don't see the options below, make sure you click **Home** in the upper left.

Size

Home

Bold

Italic Underline ~~Strikethrough~~
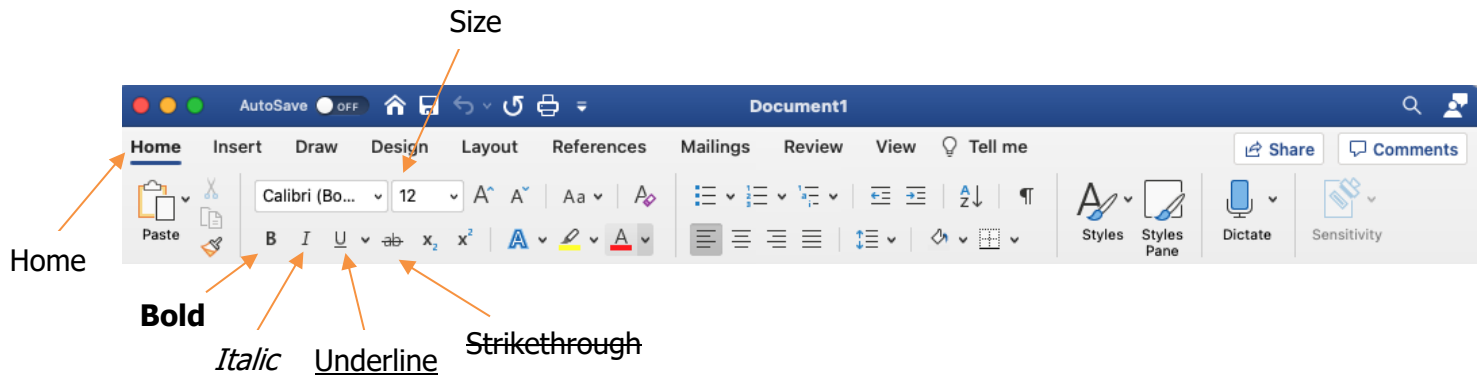
If you're curious about what a symbol on the ribbon means, you can hover your cursor over it for a moment and the name of the button will appear.

# Alignment, Spacing, and Lists

Other common formatting options on the ribbon include line spacing, text alignment, and bullets and numbers.

- Line spacing refers to how much room there is between each line of text. This document is set to 1.15, which is the default. Setting the line spacing between 1.15 and 1.5 makes the document easier to read.

- Text alignment tells you if the text in a document is aligned to the left-hand side, like this document; centered (usually for headers or cover pages); aligned to the right (rare); or justified (the text is spread to touch both the left and right margins).

- The circle to the left of this sentence is called a bullet, and this sentence is part of a bulleted list. If you click the icons for bullets or numbers, a bullet or a number one will automatically appear where your cursor is. When you hit **Enter** or **Return** on your keyboard, the cursor will drop down and start a new bullet or insert the next number. To exit the bulleted list and continue typing normally, hit **Enter** or **Return** twice.

Bullets   Numbers

Align left (standard)

Center   Align right

Justify

Line spacing
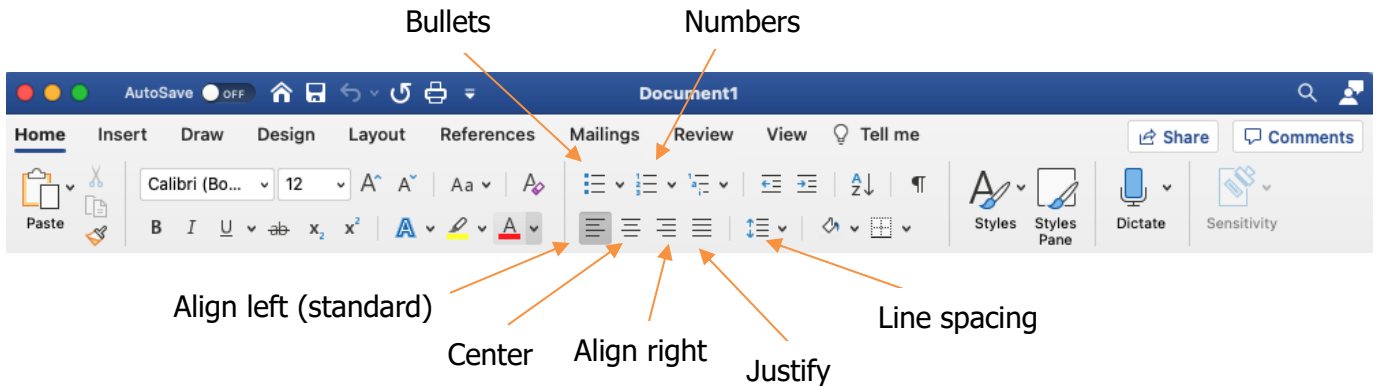
Margins

Margins are the spaces between the edge of the document and the text. A standard margin is 1" all the way around. To adjust your margins, start by clicking **Layout** at the top of the ribbon. You will see a new set of icons on the ribbon. Click the **Margins** icon, then select **Normal**. Normal is the default. You might use the other options, or set custom margins, if you are making a flyer or poster.

Layout

Margins
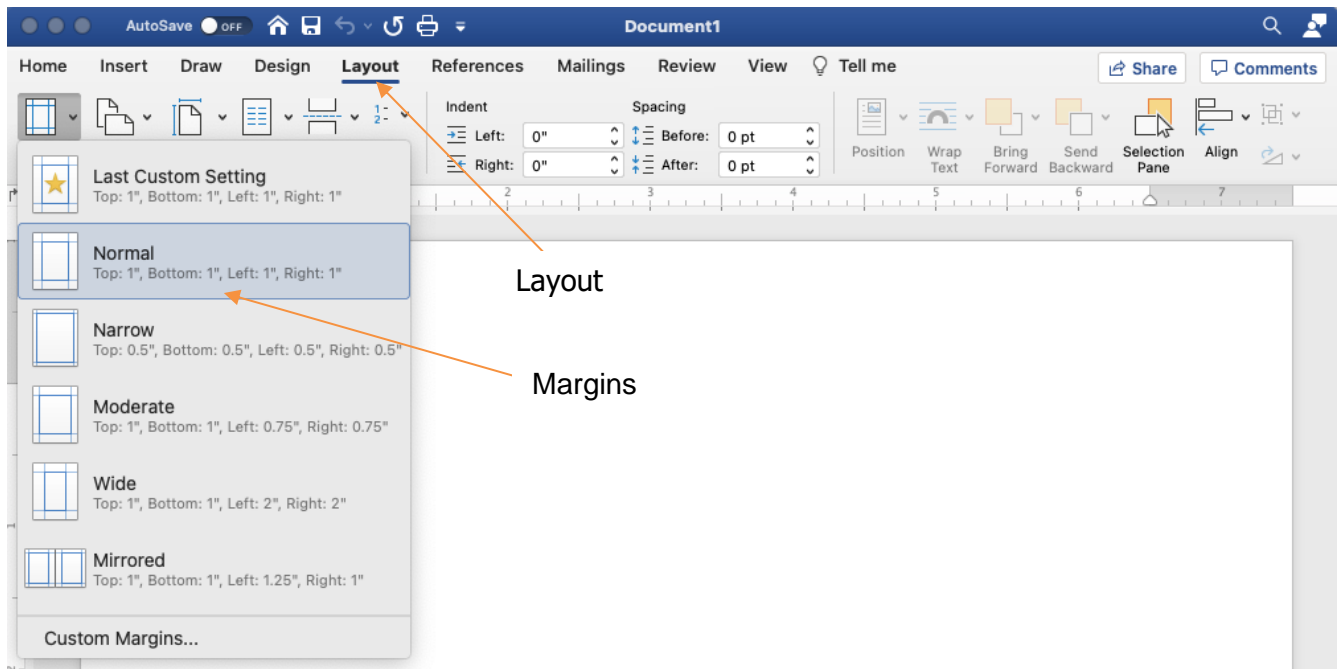
Adding Images

A Word document can include more than just text. You can add pictures, shapes or designs from your computer or the internet as well. To start, click **Insert** on the ribbon and then click the **Pictures** icon.


Insert

Pictures
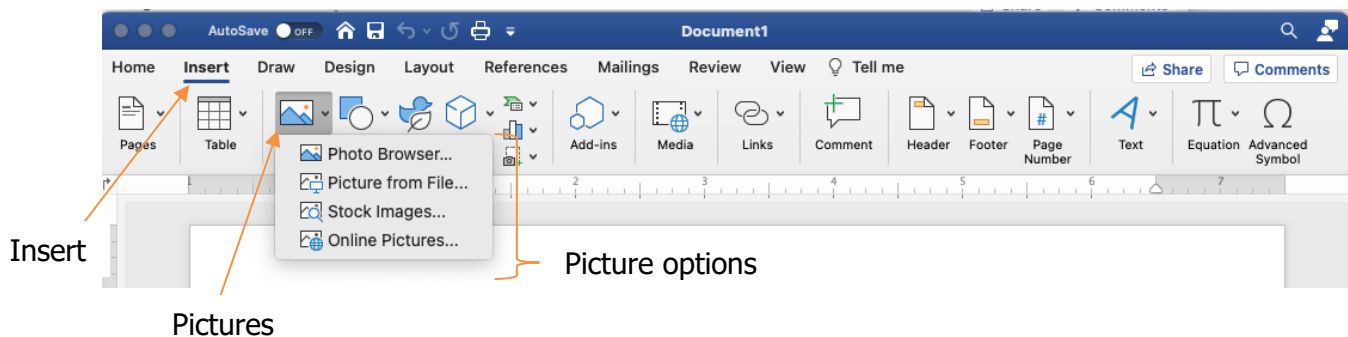
Picture options

From here you have four options:

- **Photo Browser** – Opens a window for you to select an image that is on your computer. If you have a lot of photos on your computer, it may take a moment to load. You will actually see small versions of the pictures to choose from.

- **Picture from File** – This will open a Windows Explorer window on a PC or a Finder window on a Mac. Use this option if you know exactly where the image you want to use is stored on your computer.

- **Stock Images** – A window will open with a searchable selection of stock photos to choose.

- **Online Pictures** – A window will open for you to search the internet for a picture to use in your document.

When you have selected an image from your computer or the internet, it will appear in your document wherever your cursor was.

- You will see eight small squares along the outline of the image and a little post with a circle on it.

- Click and drag on the squares to change the size of the image and use the circle on the post to rotate.

- Here's an image inserted from the internet:

Rotate

Adjust height

Adjust height and width together

Adjust width
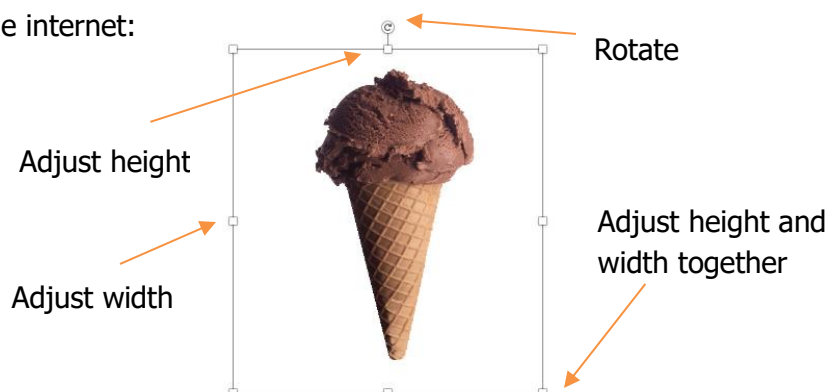
Saving Your Document

Saving your work as you go is a great habit to develop but you **must** save your work before you close the document. There are a few ways to do this.

- On a PC, hold **Ctrl** and **S** to save your work. On a Mac, hold **Apple/Comm**and and **S**. If this is the first time you've tried to save the document, a window will pop up asking you to name the document and decide where to store it. The default name is usually "Document 1" or "Doc1" or similar. Type in a distinct name for your project, decide where it should be stored on your computer, and click **Save**. This is what that looks like on a Mac:
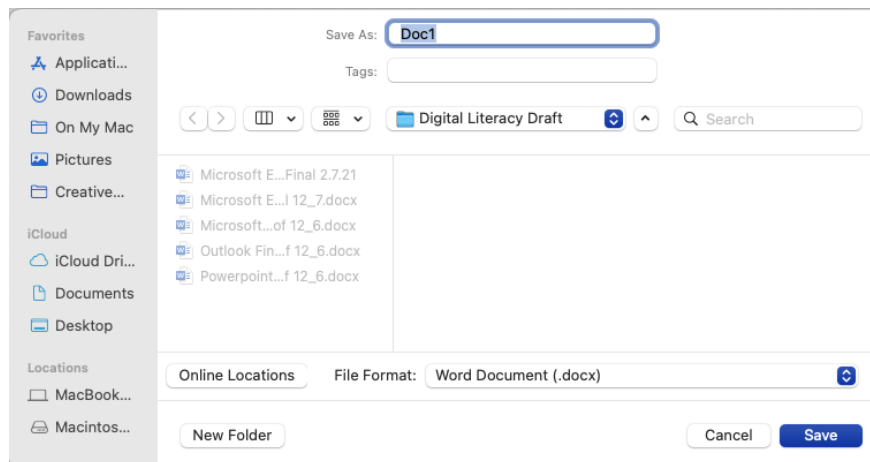
- On a PC, click **File** in the ribbon to bring up the menu.

File

Save As

Store in OneDrive cloud

Store on your computer
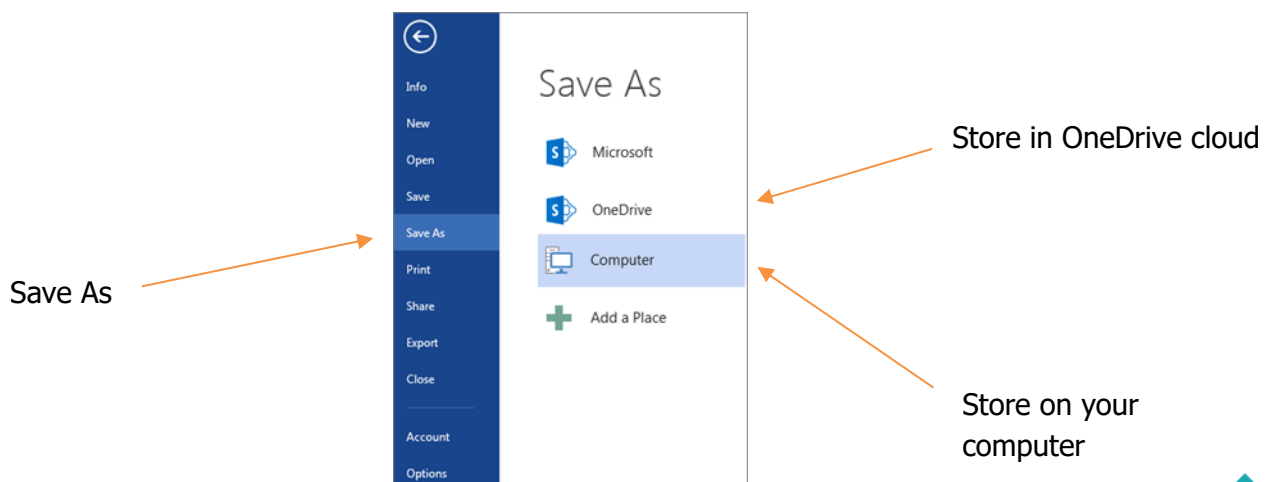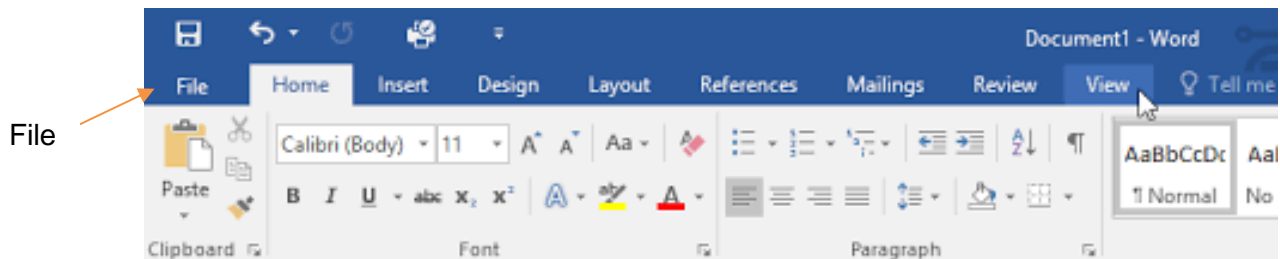
- Name the document, choose where to store it, and click **Save**.

- On a Mac, click **File** in the very top left of your screen. The images will look a little different, but the process is the same – name the document and decide where to store it, then click **Save**.

Note: There is a difference between **Save** and **Save As**. If you are working on a document that you have already named, and you just need to save the work you've done recently, then use **Save**. If you have a new document, or you're making changes to a template and you want the template to stay the same, then use **Save As** to save the work you're doing now with a new name.

Undo

At some point, you will be working on a document and something will go very wrong. All your text will disappear, or something will turn blue, or a page will go missing. First, this is why it's important to save your work as you go. If you have been saving your work regularly, then you can simply close the document and pick you where you last saved. However, there is another way.

If something goes very wrong in your document, stop and don't click or type anything else. On a PC, hold **Ctrl** and type **Z**. On a Mac, hold **Apple/Command** and type **Z**. These key combinations will **Undo** the most recent action. If you highlighted your whole document to change the font and accidentally hit **Delete**, undo will reverse that delete and bring all your text back. **Undo** should always be your first step if something unexpected happens in your document.

Conclusion

Microsoft Word is the most common application you will encounter for making documents. It does much more than you see in this guide, so explore the different options on the ribbon and look at tutorials online. A good understanding of how to use Microsoft Word is essential in most office work environments.

Thank you for reading Hired's
Digital Literacy Series:
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