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Use Track Changes in Word to Collaborate and Keep Track of Editing

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Knowing how to track changes in Microsoft Products allows for collaboration and tracking of edits. Use track changes in the following manner.

1. Individually: Create notes and comments to yourself
2. Collaboratively: Work with your Team to brainstorm and edit
3. In real time: Use a virtual platform such as MS Teams to edit in real time

Many authors use track changes in MS Word, but some features can also be turned on in other programs such as MS Excel and MS PowerPoint.

This tutorial speaks specifically to MS Word; however, the language and usage are similar in the other products.

Turning on Track Changes gives you and your coworkers a way to make changes that are easily visible. These changes are simply suggestions that you can review, and then decide whether to make them.

While you can use the Track Changes tool to leave notes for yourself, it is designed for collaborating on documents with multiple authors. You can either save a copy of a document with tracked changes included which you can then email or otherwise share or save your document to the cloud for everyone to access.

Tracking your changes is superior to back-and-forth edits because it allows your team to get a visual on why, how, and where changes were made. Use comments to promote discussion. (Although they are no longer considered part of Track Changes)

Turn Track Changes on

1. Home Ribbon→Review tab→Tracking→Track Changes

This turns on Track Changes. The following are default settings which may be changed.

- Deletions are marked with a strikethrough
- Additions are marked with an underline
- Different authors' changes are indicated with distinct colors
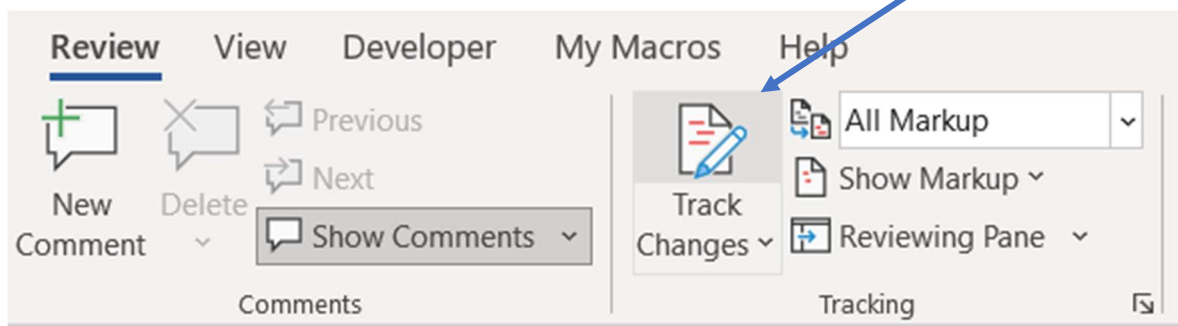
Turn Track Changes Off

1. Home Ribbon→Review tab→Tracking→Track Changes

This toggles Track Changes to the "Off" position.

Word stops marking changes, but the colored underlines and strikethroughs are still in the document.

2. Click "Accept" or "Reject" for that specific insertion or deletion. Accepting a change will add the text to the document and cease tracking it, while rejecting a change will undo it.

PUT

Add the Track Changes indicator to the status bar by right-clicking on the status bar and select Track Changes.
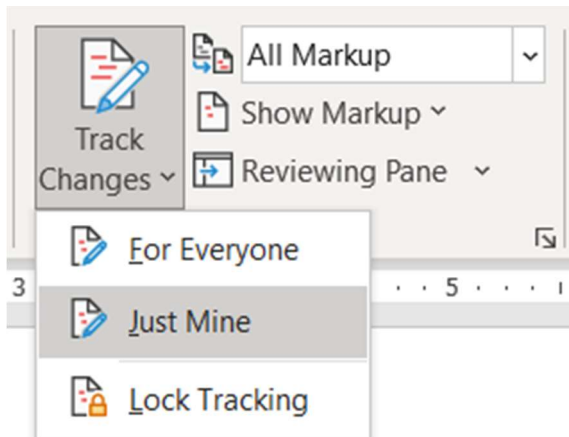
Choose Whose Changes to Track

1. Review Tab→Track Changes→Just Mine

This tracks only your changes

2. Review Tab→Track Changes→For Everyone

This will track everyone's changes

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Use a password to keep others (or yourself!) from turning off Track Changes. Review Tab→Tracking→Track Changes→Lock Tracking.

View the Markup (Tracked Changes)

1. Review Tab→Tracking→All Markup drop-down arrow
2. Select an Option
   - Simple Markup: displays tracked changes with a red line in the margin.
   - All Markup: displays tracked changes with distinct colors of text and lines for each reviewer.
   - No Markup: hides the markup to show the document with changes incorporated.
   - Original: displays the original document without tracked changes and comments showing. However, any tracked changes or comments in the document that have not been accepted, rejected, or deleted remain in the document.

PUT

In document editing or Reviewing mode, select a tracked change to view an editor's full, suggested change in a card that displays. Hove over the Accept or Reject button to see a preview of the consequences of the action on your document.

Display Tracked Changes in Balloons

1. Review Tab→Tracking→Show Markup
2. Select Balloons
3. Choose an Option
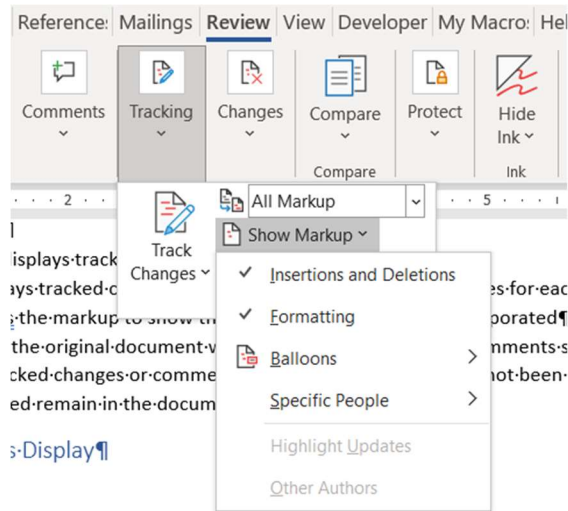
- Show Revisions in Balloons
- Show All Revisions Inline
- Show Only Formatting in Balloons

PUT

To see tracked changes in balloons, you must be in Print Layout or Web Layout view.

Display Tracked Changes by Type of Edit

1. Review Tab→Tracking→Show Markup
2. Select the type of edit preferred. (Insertions, Deletions and Formatting are the default settings)

Display Tracked Changes by Reviewer(s)

Determine what reviewer's changes you would like to see.

1. Review Tab→Tracking→Show Markup
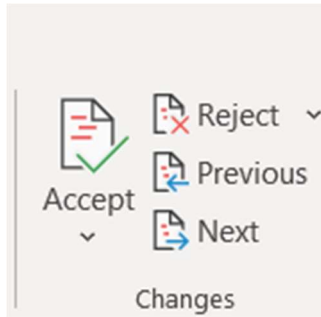2. Select Specific People using Checkboxes

PUT

Hiding markup by clearing it on the Show Markup menu will not permanently hide it. It will display each time the document is opened by you or another reviewer.

Navigate Through the Tracked Changes

Look at each of the changes and decide whether to keep (accept) or delete (reject) them.

Review Tab→Changes→Previous or Next

Accept or Reject Tracked Changes

Move to the tracked change and decide whether to keep or discard it.

1. Review Tab→Changes→Next
2. Select Accept or Reject

As soon as you make your choice your focus will move to the next tracked change.

You may also wish to accept **ALL** the changes or **REJECT** all the changes by clicking on the drop-down arrow beside the Reject Tool.

Accept changes using the Accept Tool
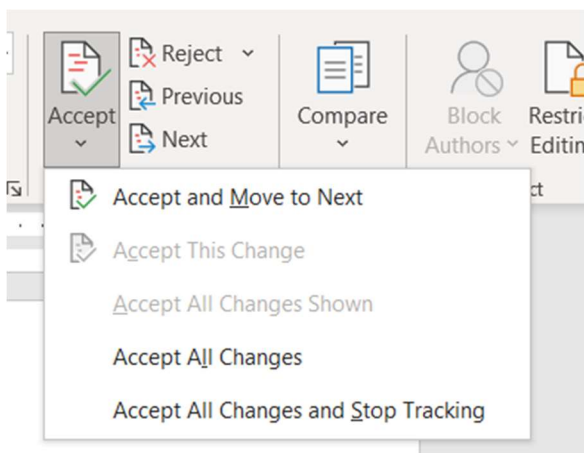
1. Review Tab→ Changes→ Accept
2. Select one of the options.
    - Accept and Move to Next
    - Accept This Change
    - Accept All Changes
    - Accept All Changes and Stop Tracking

Reject changes using the Reject Tool

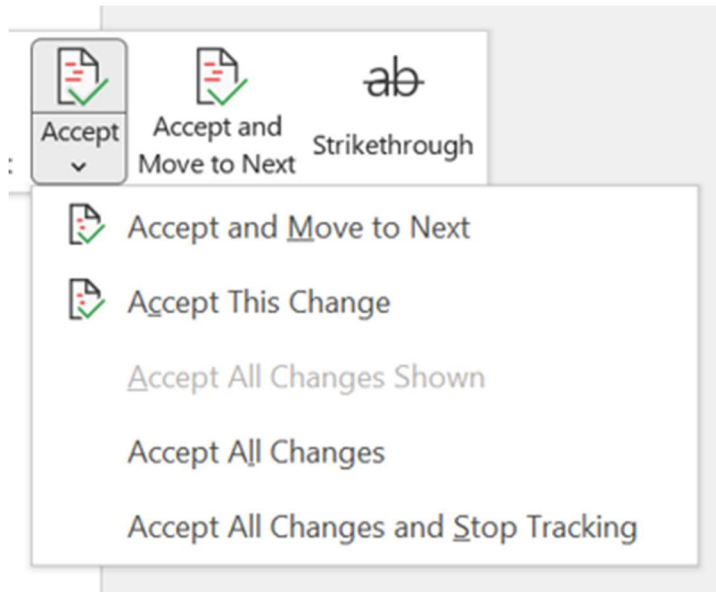1. Review→Changes→Reject

2. Select one of the options
- Reject and Move to Next
- Reject This Change
- Reject All Changes
- Reject All Changes and Stop Tracking

Accept or reject changes Using the Right Click

Right-click on a tracked change to accept or reject the change. This method displays a contextual menu with options.

Accept changes in-line with the right-click banner option

1. Right-click a tracked change in the document to review a single suggestion.
2. On the banner, select one of the following.
- Accept→Accept and Move to Next
- Accept→Accept This Change
- Accept→Accept All Changes
- Accept→Accept All Changes and Stop Tracking
- Accept and Move to Next

Accept changes in-line with the right-click drop-down menu option

1. Right-click a tracked change in the document
2. In the contextual menu, choose:
- Accept Insertion (or Accept Deletion)
- Reject Insertion (or Reject Deletion)
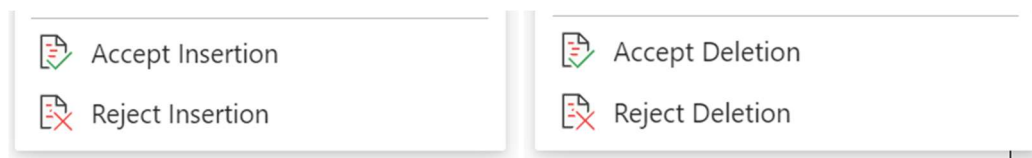
Accept all tracked changes

1. Review Tab→Changes→Accept
2. Select one of the options
   - Accept All Changes Shown
   - Accept All Changes
   - Accept All Changes and Stop Tracking

Reject all tracked changes

1. Review Tab→Changes→Reject

2. Select one of the options.

   - Reject All Changes Shown
   - Reject All Changes
   - Reject All Changes and Stop Tracking

PUT:

Note: When Review→Tracking→Show Markup→Specific People→All Reviewers is selected, the Accept All Changes Shown and Reject All Changes Shown options do not display.

Hide tracked changes and comments when printing

Hiding changes does not remove them from the document. You must use the **Accept** and **Reject** commands in the **Changes** group to remove markup from your document.

1. File Tab→Print→Print All Pages
2. Document Info→Print Markup to clear the check mark.
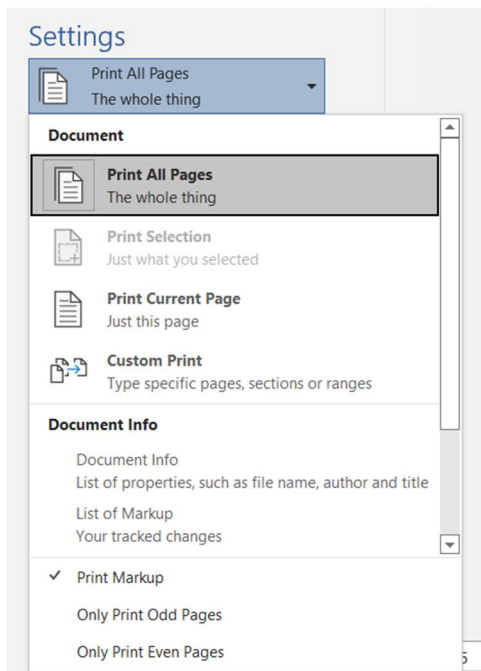
View all your changes in a summary list on the Reviewing Pane

1. Review Tab→Tracking→Reviewing Pane
2. Select to see the Reviewing Pane next to or below your document
   - Select Reviewing Pane **Vertical** to see a list of all changes next to your document
   - Select Reviewing Pane **Horizontal** to see a list of all changes below your document

The Reviewing Pane is perfect for ensuring that all tracked changes have been removed from your document so others will not see the edits. The summary section at the top of the Reviewing Pane displays the exact number of visible tracked changes and comments that remain in your document.

The Reviewing Pane also allows you to review long comments that do not fit within a comment bubble.

PUT

Comments are no longer part of the Track Changes function.