

Over 30 Useful Shortcuts for Typing in Word

Save – CTRL + S

Possibly the most essential shortcut. This saves your current draft! If you don't have a save file, you will be prompted to make one, name your file, and place it somewhere in your computer. If you are working on a previously-saved work, this handy shortcut makes sure your progress is saved. A properly prepared writer should learn to hit these keys together often (I like to do it after every paragraph or whenever I need to walk away from my work).

Save As – F12

Similar to “Save,” this function makes a save of your document. However, this function prompts you to create a new version of the existing document, which can be useful if you think you may want to make changes but might want to return to previous versions at some point in the future.

Undo – CTRL + Z

This handy shortcut undoes the last thing that you did. This can often get you out of a bad situation in case a terrible mistake has just happened. Note that pressing it too much in a row can sometimes lead to more mistakes, so learn when to use it wisely.

Redo – CTRL + Y

This function can be used to reverse the “undo” function. However, it has multiple uses. It can also be used to repeat formatting changes that might be otherwise too tedious or complicated to do over again. For example, if you need to highlight something in yellow and then highlight something nearby also in yellow, sometimes using this function can save time. Note, it does not work in every situation, and I often find that the best use of it is the most obvious one.

Find – CTRL + F

One of my most frequently used shortcuts. Using this combo opens a menu that allows you to search for any word or keywords in an entire document.

Find and Replace – CTRL + H

Like the “find” function, replace lets you search your entire document, but in this case, the “replace” function allows you to replace a given keyword or phrase with another. Note that doing so can replace those words throughout the ENTIRE document, so caution should always be exercised. However, using the advanced settings on Replace can be very powerful, as it lets you search documents for more than just words—bolded, italics, and underlined words, all caps words, prefixes, suffixes, and punctuation can *also* be searched out!

Move Cursor – CTRL + Arrow key

This is another function that I use often. Holding the CTRL button and “Up” or “Down” can move the typing cursor to the bottom or top of a paragraph very quickly. This can be very useful when you want to scan through a page without having to scroll with a mouse or hold down the arrow key. Holding CTRL and pressing “Left” or “Right,” on the other hand, can move you past an individual word allowing for quick movement through sentences without having to manually click with the mouse.

Highlight text with cursor – CTRL + SHIFT + Arrow key

Just like the above functions move you quickly through words or paragraphs, this function highlights those words. CTRL + SHIFT + “Up” or “Down” can highlight entire paragraphs, and CTRL + SHIFT + “Left” or “Right” can highlight individual words. This can be very useful if you want to quickly change the formatting, copy, cut, or delete whole sections of the text.

Select All - CTRL + A

Not always useful unless you want to change the font size, spacing, color, or something similar all at once. If you do this incorrectly, you may end up deleting your entire work, so be cautious.

Copy – CTRL + C

After you highlight something, pressing CTRL+C is supposed to save it to your “clipboard” so that it can be copied quickly later.

Cut – CTRL + X

Like copy, cut lets you save the highlighted text to your clipboard, but cut also deletes it from its current place.

Paste – CTRL + V

Paste takes text copied to the clipboard previously and places it. Remember that generally, only the last thing copied or pasted is saved to the clipboard for easy paste use.

Bold – CTRL + B

After highlighting text, using this combo makes the text **bold**. Pressing the combo again while highlighting removes bold.

Italics – CTRL + I

After highlighting text, using this combo makes the text *italics*. Pressing the combo again while highlighting removes the italics.

Underline – CTRL + U

After highlighting text, using this combo makes the text underlined. Pressing the combo

again while highlighting removes the underlining.

All Caps – CTRL + SHIFT + A

After highlighting text, using this combo makes the text ALL CAPS. Pressing the combo again while highlighting removes the capitalization. *Note: This does not work on all work processors or all versions of Word, and it can often be easier just to type the text in all caps by hand. However, in a quick pinch, this can be very useful.

All lowercase – CTRL + SHIFT + K

After highlighting text, using this combo makes the text all lowercase. Pressing the combo again while highlighting sometimes removes the lowercase. *Note: This does not work on all work processors or all versions of Word, and it can often be easier just to type the text in all lowercase by hand. However, in a quick pinch, this can be very useful.

Increase font size – CTRL + SHIFT + >

Holding this combo while highlighting text allows you to **increase its font size**.

Decrease font size – CTRL + SHIFT + <

Holding this combo while highlighting text allows you to **decrease (decrease) its font size**.

Align to Left Margin – CTRL + L

This function lets you move your text so that it is flush with the left margin. This is the most common place for text, so often, aligning the text left sees little or no change unless you already moved it using one of the more complex functions.

Align to Center – CTRL + E

This function lets you move your text so that it is in the center of the page. Pressing it again usually moves the text back to the left margin.

Align to Right Margin – CTRL + R

This function moves your text to the right margin of the page. Pressing it again usually moves the text back to the left margin.

Justify Text – CTRL + J

This function makes the spacing between text on a selected paragraphs “even” or justified. Pressing the combo again usually reverts the text back to standard “non-justified” left margins. However, this function is rarely used except for aesthetic purposes.

Indent – “Tab”

Using this button will create an indent. This can be used multiple times and is useful for paragraph spacing. If it is used after the first line of a given paragraph, it can create block quotes, where the whole paragraph is indented, rather than just the first line space.

Indent entire paragraph - CTRL + M

Using this combo will indent the entire paragraph that your cursor is currently aligned with or highlighted on. **This is very useful for indenting block quotes.** Note that pressing it again can move the indent even further left.

Undo paragraph indent – CTRL + SHIFT + M

Undoes the above paragraph indentation, moving the entire paragraph back toward the left.

Hanging indent – CTRL + T

Using this combo will indent the entire paragraph that your cursor is currently aligned with or highlighted on and give it the “hanging indent” appearance. **This is very useful for formatting References, Works Cited, and Bibliography pages.** Note that pressing it again can move the indent even further left.

Undo hanging indent – CTRL + SHIFT + T

Undoes the above hanging indentation, moving the margin back toward the left.

Create a “Line Break” New Page - SHIFT + ENTER

Using this combo moves your text to the next page or creates space between two lines of text in such a way that they are separated onto two different pages. A useful alternative to having to press “Enter” multiple times to put text on different pages, especially when adding more text can sometimes create problems with formatting new pages.

Grammar, Spellcheck – F7

On new versions of Word, this opens the grammar and spellcheck menu, which can scan your whole document for certain errors. Just remember that the machine is **not** perfect and is no substitute for good ol’ human editing!

Open document – CTRL + O

This function opens the saved menu of documents so you don’t have to go searching around with the “File” menu. Just don’t forget to save your own document first!

New document – CTRL + N

This function creates a new, blank document automatically. But don’t forget to save your previous work!

Print - CTRL + P

Holding this combo takes you to the print setup screen, or sometimes it quick-prints your work as it already is, depending on the settings of your computer.