

Tip - Compare and Merge Documents in Word 2003

Word 2003 has options to compare and merge document revisions. These options will show the results of the comparison either in one of the documents being compared, or in a new document.

Below are instructions for three options to compare and merge documents in Word 2003.

To Compare and Merge Two Word Documents:

1. Open a document.
2. On the **Tools** menu, click **Compare and Merge Documents**.
3. Select the document that you want to compare to the copy that is currently open.
4. Click the arrow next to **Merge**, and then do one of the following:
 - To display the results of the comparison in the selected document, click **Merge**.
 - To display the results in the document that is currently open, click **Merge into current document**.
 - To display the results in a new document, click **Merge into new document**.

Notes:

To ensure the best possible merge results, make sure that the **Store random number to improve merge accuracy** check box is selected on the **Security** tab of the **Options** dialog box (click **Options** on the **Tools** menu).

If you've used the **Versions** command on the **File** menu to save multiple versions of the document in one file, and you want to compare the current version with an earlier one, you must first save the earlier version as a separate file under a different name.

If you've closed the **Compare Side by Side** toolbar and want to show it again, click **Customize** on the **Tools** menu, and select the **Compare Side by Side** check box.

To Merge Comments and Changes from Several Reviewers into one Word document:

1. Open the document into which you want to merge changes.
2. On the **Tools** menu, click **Compare and Merge Documents**.
3. Click one of the documents that have the changes to be merged.
4. Click the arrow next to **Merge**, and then click **Merge into current document**.
5. Repeat steps 2-4 until all copies are merged.

Notes:

For best results when merging changes from multiple reviewers, click **Options** on the **Tools** menu, and then make sure the **Store random number to improve merge accuracy** check box is selected.

Microsoft Word can store only one set of formatting changes at a time. Therefore, when you merge multiple documents, you may be prompted to decide whether you want to keep the formatting from the original document or use the formatting from the edited document. If you don't need to track formatting changes, you can clear the **Find formatting** check box in the **Compare and Merge Documents** dialog box.

To Compare Word Documents with the Legal Blackline Option:

1. Open the document.
2. On the **Tools** menu, click **Compare and Merge Documents**.
3. Select the **Legal blackline** check box located to the right of the filename in the **Compare and Merge Documents** dialog box.
4. Select the document that you want to compare with the document that is currently open.
5. Click **Compare** to create a new document showing changes between these two documents.

Notes

If either version of the document has previous tracked changes, Microsoft Word displays a message box. Click **Yes** to compare the documents.

Microsoft Word displays a new, third document in which tracked changes in the baseline document are accepted and changes in the selected document are shown as tracked changes. The original documents being compared are not changed.

If you've used the **Versions** command on the **File** menu to save multiple versions of the document in one file, and you want to compare the current version with an earlier one, you must first save the earlier version as a separate file under a different name.

Whenever you need help with any computer issue, please check our Support Services website as information is constantly added and updated:

http://www.uis.harvard.edu/support_services/