Tracking changes and comments in Microsoft 2010

Track Changes feature allows MS Word to keep track of the changes you make in a document. The best usage of this feature is when two or more users need to edit the document. In that case, those users can see which changes have been made to it or which content is deleted, inserted, or formatted. Through this feature you could track almost every change that has made to the document.

Turn on change tracking

You can customize the status bar to add an indicator that tells you when change tracking is on or off. When the Track Changes feature is on, you can view all of the changes that you make in a document. When you turn off the Track Changes feature, you can make changes to a document without marking what has changed.

- On the Review tab, in the Tracking group, click the Track Changes image.

To add a track changes indicator to the status bar, right-click the status bar and click Track Changes. Click the Track Changes indicator on the status bar to turn Track Changes on or off.

Note  If the Track Changes command is unavailable, you might have to turn off document protection. On the Review tab, in the Protect group, click Restrict Editing, and then click Stop Protection at the bottom of the Protect Document task pane. (You might need to know the document password.)

Turn off change tracking

When you turn off change tracking, you can revise the document without marking what has changed. Turning off the Track Changes feature does not remove any changes that have already been tracked.

Important  To remove tracked changes, use the Accept and Reject commands on the Review tab in the Changes group.

- On the Review tab, in the Tracking group, click the Track Changes image.
To add a track changes indicator to the status bar, right-click the status bar and click **Track Changes**. Click the **Track Changes** indicator on the status bar to turn track changes on or off.

To prevent you from inadvertently distributing documents that contain tracked changes and comments, Word displays tracked changes and comments by default. **Final Showing Markup** is the default option in the **Display for Review** box.

In Microsoft Office Word, you can track each insertion, deletion, move, formatting change, or comment that you make so that you can review all of the changes later.

The Reviewing Pane displays all of the changes that currently appear in your document, the total number of changes, and the number of changes of each type.

As you review tracked changes and comments, you can accept or reject each change. Until you accept or reject all tracked changes and comments in a document, even hidden changes will appear to viewers in documents you send or display.

**Review a summary of tracked changes**

The Reviewing Pane is a handy tool for ensuring that all tracked changes have been removed from your document and won't show up to others who might view your document. 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 read long comments that do not fit within a comment bubble.

**Note**  The Reviewing Pane, unlike the document or the comment bubbles, is not the best tool for making changes to your document. Instead of deleting text or comments or making other changes in the Reviewing Pane, make all editorial changes in the document. The changes will then be visible in the Reviewing Pane.

- On the **Review** tab, in the **Tracking** group, click **Reviewing Pane** to view the summary at the side of your screen. To view the summary across the bottom of your screen instead of on the side of your screen, click the arrow next to **Reviewing Pane**, and then click **Reviewing Pane Horizontal**.

To view the number of each type of change, click **Show Detailed Summary**.
Review each tracked change and comment in sequence

1. On the Review tab, in the Changes group, click Next or Previous.

2. Do one of the following:
   - In the Changes group, click Accept.
   - In the Changes group, click Reject.
   - In the Comments group, click Delete.

3. Accept or reject changes and delete comments until there are no more tracked changes or comments in your document.

To ensure all tracked changes are accepted or rejected and that all comments are deleted, on the Review tab, in the Tracking group, click Reviewing Pane. The summary section at the top of the Reviewing Pane displays the exact number of tracked changes and comments that remain in your document.

Accept all changes at the same time

1. On the Review tab, in the Changes group, click Next or Previous.

2. Click the arrow below Accept, and then click Accept All Changes in Document.

Reject all changes at the same time
1. On the **Review** tab, in the **Changes** group, click **Next** or **Previous**.

2. Click the arrow below **Reject**, and then click **Reject All Changes in Document**.

**Review changes by type of edit or by a specific reviewer**

1. Do one of the following:
   - On the **Review** tab, in the **Tracking** group, click the arrow next to **Show Markup**.

   Clear all check boxes except for the ones next to the types of changes that you want to review.
   - On the **Review** tab, in the **Tracking** group, click the arrow next to **Show Markup**.

   Point to **Reviewers**, and then clear all check boxes except for the ones next to the names of the reviewers whose changes you want to review.

   To select or clear the check boxes for all reviewers in the list, click **All Reviewers**.

2. On the **Review** tab, in the **Changes** group, click **Next** or **Previous**.

3. Do one of the following:
   - In the **Changes** group, click **Accept**.
• In the **Changes** group, click **Reject**.

**My changes are showing**

You receive a document in an e-mail message from your colleague. It would make a good starting point for a document that you want to work on, so you save it under a new name and tailor it to your needs. It never occurs to you that your colleague left comments in the original document, because you don't see them in your copy.

You are now ready to pass the document along to your customers, but you want to send them your version of the document, not an accumulation of the original document, your colleague's comments, and your updates.

Or, you used the Track Changes feature in Word to keep track of the changes that you made to your job application letter. Now you want to send the letter to your prospective employer, who should see the result of your editing, not the thought process you went through to get there.

In either case, you are stunned when those who receive your document report that it is difficult to read, with all the strikethrough, underlining, and balloons off to the side. Look! There is a paragraph in your letter with three different points displayed in strikeout formatting — and the skill you want to emphasize this time around is displayed in underlined text. Chances are you won't get that job.

This text wasn't in the document when you sent it. How did Word find and display this content? What can you do to make Word behave?

**Understanding the Track Changes feature**

You may not realize it, but you are working with the Track Changes or Comments feature in Word. Typically, when Word tracks changes, it displays deletions in balloons in the margins and insertions as underlined text. Deletions — as well as comments (or "annotations") — also can be displayed to appear inline.
There are various ways to hide the tracked changes or comments — but all the changes that were made while the Track Changes feature was turned on and all the comments that were inserted remain part of the document until they are accepted or rejected (or, in the case of comments, deleted).

Note  Hiding tracked changes does not delete existing tracked changes or comments from the document. Instead, hiding tracked changes enables you to view the document without having to wade through strikethroughs, underlining, and balloons.

How do I check a document for tracked changes and comments?

Word 2010 provides a feature called Document Inspector that allows you to check any document for tracked changes, comments, hidden text, and other personal information. To check a document:

1. Open the document you want to inspect for tracked changes and comments.
2. Click the File tab.
3. Click Info, click Check for Issues, and then click Inspect Document.
4. In the Document Inspector dialog box, click Inspect.
5. Review the inspection results. If Document Inspector finds comments and tracked changes, you are prompted to click Remove All next to Comments, Revisions, Versions, and Annotations.
6. Click Reinspect or Close.

How do I get rid of my tracked changes and comments?

To get rid of tracked changes and comments, you need to accept or reject the changes and delete the comments. Here's how:

1. On the Review tab, in the Tracking group, click the arrow next to Show Markup.

2. Make sure a check mark appears next to each of the following items:
   - Comments
• Ink
• Insertions and Deletions
• Formatting
• Reviewers (Point to Reviewers and make sure that All Reviewers is selected.)

If a check mark does not appear next to an item, click the item to select it.

3. On the Review tab, in the Changes group, click Next or Previous.

4. Do one of the following:
   • In the Changes group, click Accept.
   • In the Changes group, click Reject.
   • In the Comments group, click Delete.

5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until all the tracked changes in the document have been accepted or rejected and all the comments have been deleted.

Notes

• If you know that you want to accept all the changes, click Accept, and then click Accept All Changes in Document.
• If you know that you want to reject all the changes, click Reject, and then click Reject All Changes in Document.
• To remove all comments, you must delete them. In the Comments group, click the arrow next to Delete, and then click Delete All Comments in Document.

How did those tracked changes and comments get there?

You may have thought that you removed the comments or tracked changes, or you may have received the document from someone else without realizing that it contained comments or tracked changes. How does Word store these items without you being aware of them?

You, or the person who sent the document, may have hidden the tracked changes or comments to make the document easier to read. However, hiding tracked changes does not remove them. They will remain in the document until you take action. Depending on your version of Word and the settings you are using, the tracked changes or comments may reappear when you or someone else opens the document.
If you don't want others to see tracked changes and comments, accept or reject the tracked changes and delete the comments before you share the document with others.

**How to find hidden changes and comments**

There are several ways to hide tracked changes and comments, which may lead you to think that they are not in the document. For example:

- **Display for Review box**  On the **Review** tab, in the **Tracking** group, the **Display for Review** box shows you what viewing mode you are in. It also provides additional options for viewing your document. If you click **Final** or **Original**, tracked changes and comments are hidden. To display them, select **Final: Show Markup** or **Original: Show Markup**.

- **Show Markup**  On the **Review** tab, in the **Tracking** group, you can use the **Show Markup** list to hide comments and tracked changes. Items that are marked with a check mark under **Show Markup** are displayed; items without a check mark are hidden. To display an item, such as **Insertions and Deletions**, click it on the **Show Markup** menu.

**Why Microsoft Office Word displays tracked changes and comments by default**

To prevent you from inadvertently distributing documents that contain tracked changes and comments, Word displays tracked changes and comments by default. **Final Showing Markup** is the default option in the **Display for Review** box.

**Can I have it both ways?**

If you want to preserve tracked changes or comments in a document and you want to share the document without others seeing the tracked changes and comments, the best solution is to keep separate copies of the document.
Create a public copy for distribution and keep a private copy for yourself. In the public version of the document, accept or reject all tracked changes and delete all comments, as described in this article. In the private version of the document, you can leave the tracked changes and comments in place.