Track Changes in Microsoft Word

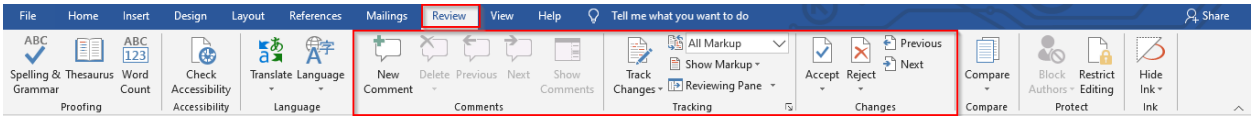
A Simple Guide for Reviewing Your Edited Document

Track Changes in Microsoft Word allows you to see all edits and comments made to your manuscript. This guide walks you through how to review changes, respond to comments, and finalize your document after editing.

Please note: These instructions are based on Microsoft Office 365 (Standalone version). Your screen may look slightly different, but the tools and functions are the same.

The Review tab contains three primary sections you'll use:

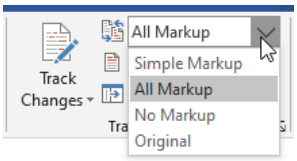
- Comments
- Tracking
- Changes



Hiding/ Unhiding Changes

To hide or display edits:

- Go to the Review tab
- In the Tracking section, click the dropdown in the top-right corner
  Select:
  Simple Markup to hide detail of updates
  All Markup to show all edits



Recommended Approach

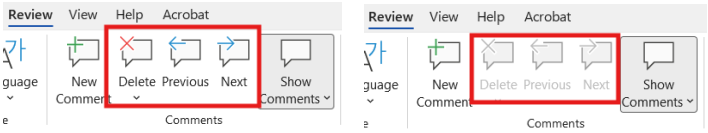
I suggest reading through your manuscript first in Simple Markup view. This lets you experience the story without the visual distraction of edit marks.

After your initial read-through, switch to All Markup to review each suggested change individually.
You can also toggle between the two modes as you go:

- Read in Simple Markup
- Switch to All Markup to examine a specific edit
- Accept or reject that change
- Switch back to Simple Markup and continue reading

Working with Comments

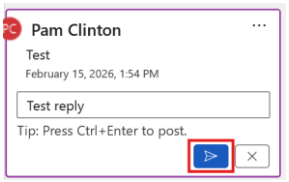
If comments are present, the Next and Previous buttons in the Comments section of the Review tab will be active. (If no comments exist, these buttons will be grayed out.)



Replying to a Comment

- Click inside the comment balloon on the right side of the document
- Type your reply in the response box
- Click the blue arrow to submit your response

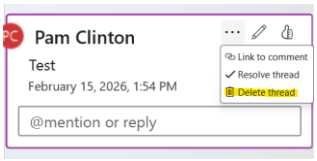
Your name will appear beneath the original comment.



Deleting Comments

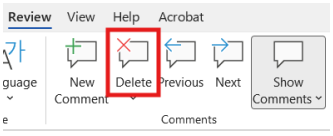
To delete a single comment:

- Click on the comment balloon
- Click the three-dot menu at the top of the comment
- Select Delete



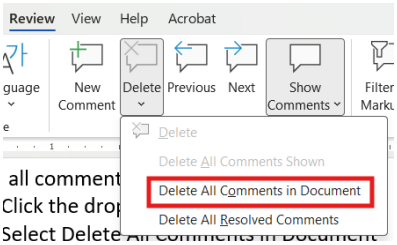
You can also delete comments from the Review tab:

- Click inside the comment bubble
- Click Delete in the Comments section



To delete all comments at once:

- Click the dropdown arrow under Delete
- Select Delete All Comments in Document



Creating a New Comment

To add a comment:

- Highlight the text you want to reference
- Click New Comment from the pop-up menu

or

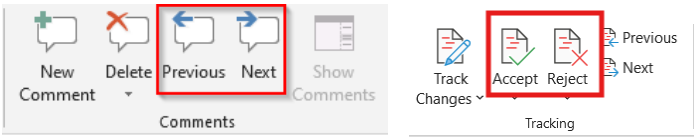
- Click New Comment in the Review tab

Accepting or Rejecting Changes

Edits can be removed by accepting or rejecting each change individually or all changes in the document.

To review changes one at a time:

- Go to the Review tab
- In the Changes section, use Next and Previous to move through edits (All Markup not Simple Markup)
- Click Accept to approve a change
- Click Reject to decline it

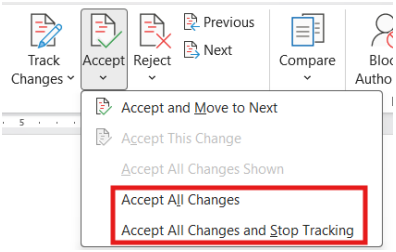


When you accept or reject a change, Word automatically moves to the next edit.

Accepting or Rejecting All Changes

To accept or reject all changes at once:

- Click the dropdown arrow under Accept or Reject
- Choose the appropriate option from the menu



Important: Remove All Markup Before Publishing or Returning the File

Before sending your manuscript back for a second review—or before uploading it for publication—make sure all tracked changes and comments have been removed.

While uncommon, tracked changes and comment bubbles can occasionally remain embedded in a file and may become visible in certain eBook formats (including Kindle) after publication.

To avoid this:

- Accept or reject all tracked changes
- Delete all comment bubbles
- Save a clean version of the file

For extra safety, you may also:

- Use **File → Info → Check for Issues → Inspect Document**
- Run the Document Inspector to remove hidden markup and comments

Taking a few extra minutes to ensure your file is completely clean protects your professionalism and prevents readers from seeing behind-the-scenes edits.

If you're ever unsure whether a file is clean, feel free to ask. It's always better to double-check than to discover it after publication.