



**Computer
Science**

COMPSCI 111 S2 C - Lecture 5
July 2003

Word Processing

(Using Microsoft Word)

A word processor allows you to create, view, edit, format, print and store text. Most modern word processors have many advanced and Microsoft Word is no exception. Some of these features are incredibly useful, while others are not. We will look at some of the more common features here.

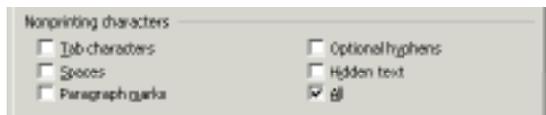
Creating documents

A new document can be created by choosing **New** from the **File** menu. Once the document is created, you can enter new text by simply typing on the keyboard. The position where the text appears is indicated by a *cursor*, and is known as the *insertion point*. The cursor usually appears as an I-beam (a vertical line), which blinks. Some word processors use a solid blinking rectangle or an underscore to represent the cursor. The location of the cursor can be altered by clicking the mouse at a new position in the text, or by using the cursor keys (arrow keys). When the text reaches the end of the page, it automatically continues on the next line. This feature is known as *word wrap*, and does not occur in some text editors and typewriters, where the machine must be manually told to start a new line by hitting a carriage return key (enter key on some keyboards). It is important to realise that Microsoft Word uses the return key to signify the end of a paragraph. You should always allow the word processor to decide how to wrap words, using a carriage return only to signify the end of a paragraph of text.

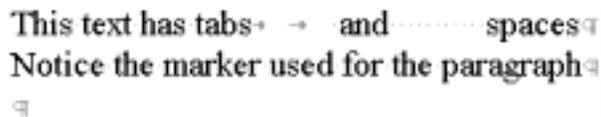
Viewing a documents

A document contains content (text) and information about how to display the content (formatting information). Using Microsoft Word, you have different choices about how to view your document. **Normal** view is used for all the usual word processing tasks, however it does not display the page exactly as it will appear when printed. To view the document as it will be printed, you should choose **Page Layout (Print Layout)** from the **View** menu. Viewing a document using **Page Layout (Print Layout)** is slower because the computer must calculate more information, so there may be delays while the screen updates. It is more accurate, and must be used for any complex layout involving multiple columns, drawing or pictures, page breaks, headers, footers etc.

In many cases it is difficult to tell how the page is actually formatted. You cannot tell by looking at the screen whether the words have merely wrapped to the next line, or if the paragraph ends and a new paragraph begins on the following line. It is also difficult to see how many spaces there are between words, or how many tabs have been used. It would be useful to be able to view these formatting characters, and in most word processors there is an option to do exactly that. To view these special characters, choose **Options** from the **Tools** menu. In the **View** Tab, you can select which non-printing characters to display on screen.



Select **All**. Notice how hidden characters become visible. These *non-printing* characters will not be printed, whether you can see them on screen or not. Being visible on screen just makes the job of formatting easier, without altering the printed page.



Editing a document

The act of modifying or changing the content of your document is known as editing. Some programs (known as text editors) provide the tools to edit text, but provide no way of printing, altering layout, changing presentation or formatting a document. The most common editing features are explained below.

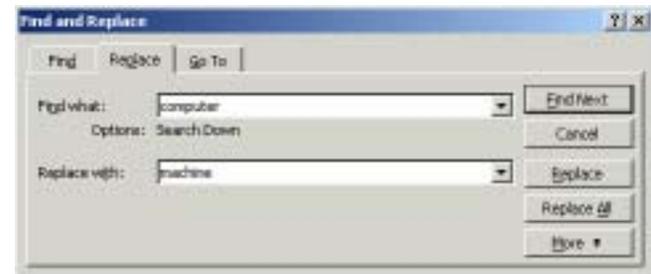
Inserting and deleting text.

Text can be inserted by placing the insertion point (cursor) at the place desired and simply typing on the keyboard. Deleting text can be achieved by using the backspace key or the delete key (on extended keyboards). The backspace key deletes the character to the left of the cursor, the delete key removes the character to the right of the cursor. On the Macintosh keyboard, the backspace key is usually called *delete*, and the delete key is called *del*. To remove a large block of text, select the text to remove (by dragging the mouse) and then press backspace or delete.

Find and Replace.

If you need to find a word in a document, then you can use the **Find** command from the **Edit** menu. To replace the word with an alternative, you should use the **Replace** option (again from the **Edit** menu).

This replace command can be extremely valuable if you need to make major changes to a document. If you select the **More** button, you will be given more options, including the ability to search and replace special characters such as tabs, paragraph markers (i.e. return key), formatting styles and more.



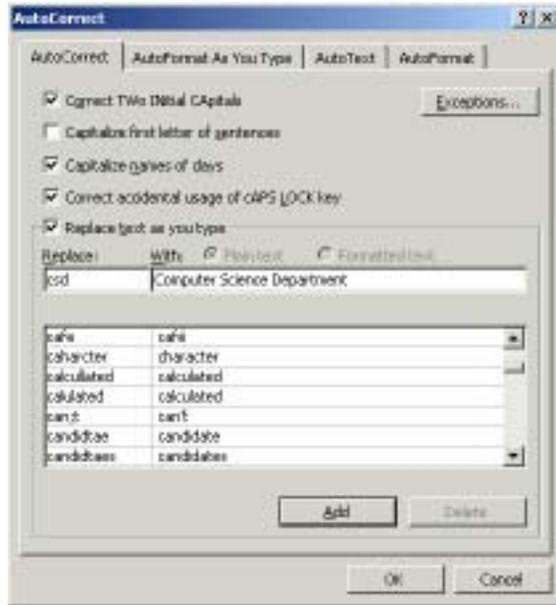
The Clipboard

The clipboard is used to cut, copy and paste pieces of text from one position to another. Remember that the clipboard can only keep one clipping at a time, so if you copy more than one piece of text, only the most recent text is retained for pasting.

Spelling, Thesaurus, Grammar Checker

These tools are provided to help authors produce more professional documents. Some word processors automatically check the spelling and grammar as words are typed. Any words spelt incorrectly are underlined in red (this red colour is not printed, but used only to alert the author of a problem). Words can be added to the users personal dictionary to expand the number of words the computer can recognise (such as proper names or technical terminology).

A recent feature added to many word processors is the ability to auto-correct words. The computer maintains a list of words that should be changed to other words. This feature helps correct any mistakes the author makes (since you can have a misspelling being changed to a correct spelling), and also allows them to use acronyms or shorthand which is automatically expanded by the computer (example: you could get the computer to convert *csd* to computer science department). When the user types any of the words, they are automatically changed to the correct version



Formatting Documents

Once the text in a document is correct, the presentation may need to be altered. In a word processor, the presentation is known as the *format* of the information. Many aspects of a document may be altered to provide a wide range of presentation options. The formatting toolbar provides many of these options which can be applied to the current selection with a single click. However, more detailed options are usually found in the Format menu. The most commonly used formatting options are detailed below..

Font

The font describes the typeface and type size which are used to display text. The font can usually be displayed in normal, bold, italic or underlined form. Each individual character in a document may be displayed using different combinations of font formatting. All the options can be altered by choosing **Font** from the **Format** menu.



Paragraph

You are able to alter the spacing between lines in a document, or alter the alignment (left aligned, right aligned, justified, or centered) of a paragraph of text. These options may be accessed by choosing **Paragraph** from the **Format** menu.



Document

The **Page Setup** option from the **File** menu allows you to alter formatting which affects the entire document. The margins and overall layout may be altered here. You can also set the location for the header and footer to appear.



Columns

Choosing **Columns** from the **Format** menu allows you to select the number of columns to use for displaying the text.



