

## Viewing Microsoft Word Documents

Microsoft Word, widely known for its extension .DOC, was revised in 2007 as .DOCX causing a variety of compatibility issues for Word users and non-users alike. This document addresses the steps to gap the difference between two MS Word versions: MS Word 2003 (.DOC) and MS Word 2007 (.DOCX).

### *Viewing Word files without the MS Word Application*

If your workstation does not have the MS Word Application, you can download and install a free alternative application. The application can only view/print the document:

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=3657ce88-7cfa-457a-9aec-f4f827f20cac&displaylang=en>

**NOTE:** The free application can only view .DOC files. In order to view the Word 2007 (.DOCX) documents a patch must be applied (see below).

**Reference:** How to view Word 2007 and Excel 2007 files by using Word Viewer 2003 and Excel Viewer 2003, 31 October 2008. <<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/925180>>.

### *Viewing Word 2007 files using MS Word 2003 or other applications*

If your MS Word application version is 2003 or earlier, you will need a patch in order to open the Word 2007 (.DOCX) files:

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=941B3470-3AE9-4AEE-8F43-C6BB74CD1466&displaylang=en>

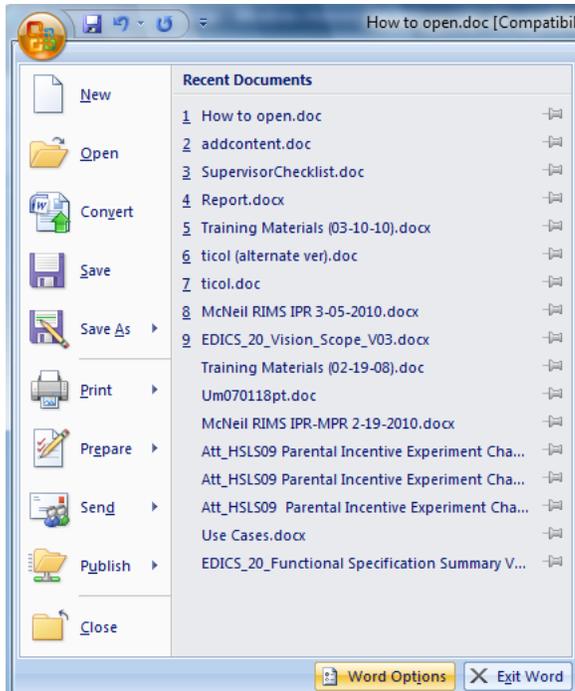
**NOTE:** The patch only allows a limited access to the document. For Word 2003, you will not be able to edit any of the features that was added with Word 2007. For Word Viewer 2003, you will not be able to edit the file.

**Reference:** Open a Word 2007 document in an earlier version of Word, <<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word/HA100444731033.aspx#1>>

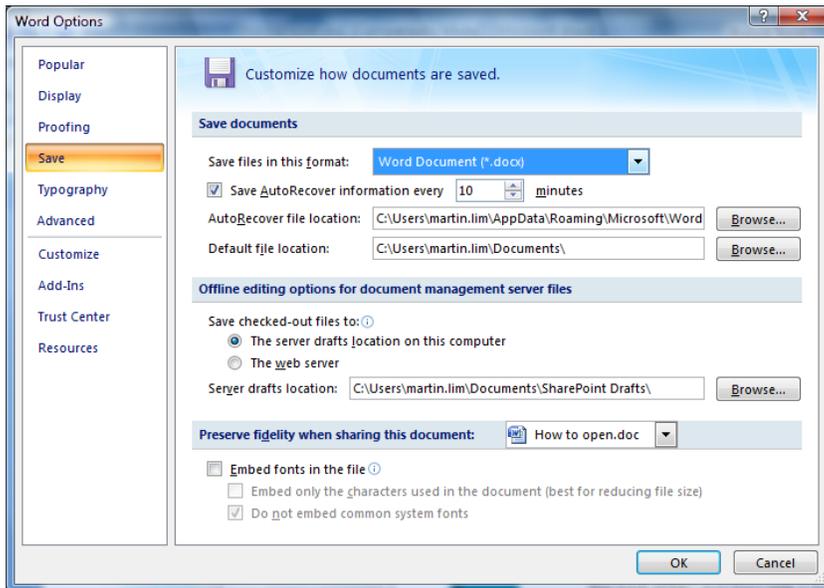
### *Changing the MS Word Application to save files in .DOCX as default*

If you have the MS Word 2007 application installed on your PC and you frequently download files with the MS Word file format, default the desired file format by configuring the MS Word application. The following steps offer a thorough process to assigning Word 2007 documents to MS Word 2007 or older MS Word applications with the compatibility patch installed:

1. **For MS Word 2007 users only:** Open MS Word 2007 and click the **Microsoft Office Button**  and then click **Word Options**, which you'll find at the bottom of the menu.



2. In the dialog box that opens, click the **Save** tab.



3. Select the file type **Word Document (\*.docx)** or the format you want to use as a default from the list labeled **Save files in this format**.

4. Restart the workstation if necessary.