

Bugs and suggestions for Microsoft Word™ 4.0

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CompuServe - 75106,3721

Delphi and Genie - DSACHS

Please mail reports of new bugs and suggestions to:

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First of all I wish to state that there is no reason whatsoever for producing a detailed problems list for meagre software products. Word 4.0 is definitely worth buying, but some problems remain, and there are features I would like to see in future versions. Word is very good, *but it should be better.*

A. Bugs and design errors in Microsoft Word

- 1 Problems with spelling, hyphenation, thesaurus...
 - i. The spelling checker does not flag **alright**.
 - ii. Is Boston the capital of **Massachusetts**, or **Massachusettsses**? Both spellings are shown.
 - iii. In general Microsoft seems to have decided to exclude certain words, that normally do not appear in print or on radio or TV broadcasts. However, I do note the inclusions of a word starting with 'P' referring to liquid excrement. The *Word Finder* desk accessory lacks this consistency; it accepts scatological terms that the Word spelling dictionary rejects. Furthermore for certain words, such as *ass*, with both printable and non-printable meanings, only the slang meaning is shown. How about some consistency?
 - iv. Word fails to properly hyphenate some words. Furthermore the hyphenator does not always report the same possible points when it encounters the same word at different times. The hyphenation algorithm should be improved and a suitable disclaimer should be placed in the reference manual and the help text as to the limits of automatic hyphenation. Some words that are not properly hyphenated: **antithesis**, **anomaly**, **attribute**, **dictionary**, **disclaimer**, **interpretable**, **suitable**.
- 2 A funny thing happened on the way to the next paragraph.
 - i. Word handles the combination of a bottom of page footnote, and a section break with **No Break** at the start of the section, very badly. A **totally** unnecessary page break is inserted at the section boundary. Why can't Word simply continue to the next section on the same page, and then print the footnote on the bottom. *If a user specifies this combination, Word should assume he wants it. The section break may be present only for the purpose of changing the number of columns*

Microsoft Word 3.01 Bugs/Requests

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- ii. When a page contains all or part of more than one section, Word uses both the header and the footer of the first section present on the page. I feel that Word should use the header from the first section and the footer from the last section present. If this is not feasible (among other things it could result in multiple valid paginations for a document) the subject should be properly documented.
 - iii. When the next section's attributes do not force a break, Word does not honor the **Keep With Next ¶** paragraph attribute for the last paragraph of a section.
 - iv. The **Spacing Before** value for a paragraph should not be honored after a non-forced page or column break, though it should be honored after a forced (user specified) break.

There has been considerable discussion of this topic, and it may be desirable to provide an option for the handling of paragraphs at the start of a page or column.

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- 3 Problems with formulas
 - i. Formulas are often vertically mis-centered.
For example $\sqrt{\sum_{i=1, i=n, r(i+1)} + \sqrt{\sum_{i=1, i=n, r(3, i+1)}}$ produces $\sqrt{\sum_{i=1, i=n, r(i+1)} + \sqrt{\sum_{i=1, i=n, r(3, i+1)}}$
Notice the mis-centering of the second Sigma.
 - ii. On a Macintosh (II, IIx, IIcx...) equipped with color, some formula elements are unconditionally shown in black when the entire formula is given a color attribute; Note the Sigma, and the radical in the formula above.
- 4 Saving a document as text causes all formatting information to be lost in Word's *internal* copy of the document. It is displayed in the default **Normal** style.
- 5 In form letters, Word fails to substitute values for field names within headers, footers and footnotes. This is a gross regression from version 1.x of Word.
- 6 Underlining of subscripts and superscripts rises and falls in accordance with the amount of vertical positioning, instead of properly remaining at the same level below the base of the line. This makes it impossible to properly underline such things as titles containing chemical formulas.
- 7 Index entries within footnotes are ignored; such usage is common in legal word processing.
- 8 When an existing file is modified and saved with **Make Backup** selected, the icons of file and the backup file occupy the same place when viewed by the Finder. Word should clear the 'init' Finder attribute from the old file.
- 9 Word is very sensitive to errors in the **Word Settings (4)** or other configuration file. This is not really a severe problem, as this file is normally produced with the proper format. However, if you are encountering crashes with Word 4, one of the first things you should try is to erase and remake your settings file. It may be necessary to remake the settings file whenever you upgrade to a new release of Word.
- 10 Right margins are sometimes incorrect with justified text. I have seen this only when a format other than plain is used, and the **fractional widths** option is enabled. The problem usually only appears on the screen display (and may be preferable to jamming characters together), but there are some reports of bad printed output.
- 11 Word 4 uses the same creator and file type for its documents as Word 3. does This can cause serious confusion at sites where both versions are in use.
- 12 The feature that would not die

The 'side by side' format option is missing from the 'Format Paragraph' dialog. This option has capabilities, that cannot be done easily with the new positioning or tables commands.

Paragraphs with the 'side by side' formatting option are hard to select in page view.
- 13 Arithmetic calculations involving decimal points produce wrong negative results. For example 1.1-2.1 produces -0.9 instead of -1.0.
14. Changing the style of a paragraph sometimes removes all character attributes from the entire paragraph. **Undo** will not restore the paragraph to its previous state.

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B. Documentation Problems

- 1 The keyboard combinations for dialogs do not work for those not produced by Word itself, such as the request from the Standard File Package whether to overwrite a file with the same name. This may not be feasible to fix, but should be properly documented.

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- 2 Global changes (selecting the entire document and changing the font) do not affect headers footers and footnotes.
- 3 The spelling checker does not show the context for misspelled words within headers, footers or footnotes.
- 4 Documentation for the 'side by side' paragraph format has been deleted.
- 5 'Menu metamorphosis', the change in menu items when the shift key is held down is inadequately documented.

C Design issues raised by users

- 1 The behavior of tabs, when typing extends beyond a tab position, is controversial. Perhaps there should be an option to choose between typesetting tabs (ignore tab characters if the corresponding tab has already been reached - the way Word 1 behaves), and typewriter tabs.
- 2 When **Show ¶** is enabled, the dots used for spaces are hard to distinguish from periods. Version 1 of Word raised these dots more than version 3.01 does.
- 3 When 2 paragraphs are combined by deleting the ¶ mark between them while retaining text from each of the paragraphs, the newly formed paragraph takes the attributes of the **second** paragraph. I have received a request that the attributes of the **first** of the combined paragraphs be retained.
- 4 A user complained about the adjustment of right margins when the page width is altered.

D. Suggestions for new or expanded features

- 1 Add features to formula generation. Some suggestions are:
 - i. Overridable user settable global defaults for such things as amount of sub- and superscripting and relative size of limits compare to the integral sign.
 - ii. Multiple character Brackets (such as double bars) and "Integral signs" (such as **Sum**).
 - iii. Make fraction bars look better, especially on Postscript printers.
 - iv. Use the special symbol-part characters of the **Symbol** font for large integral signs and brackets...
- 2 Requests involving spelling, hyphenation and thesaurus
 - i. When adding a word to a user spelling dictionary, there should be an option to describe capitalization requirements. When a previously unrecognized word is to be added to a user dictionary, and the word happens to be capitalized in the document, Word should have an option to add the word without case sensitivity, as it may be start of a sentence. While it is possible to manually enter the word without its leading capital letter, the procedure to do so is awkward and error prone.
 - ii. Provide some capability to edit the standard dictionary.
 - iii. Sell vertical market spelling dictionaries for such English-like languages as Legalese and Medicaese. Provide spelling and hyphenation dictionaries for other English-speaking countries such as Canada and Australia. Sell spelling and hyphenation dictionaries, if possible, for major foreign languages.
 - iv. Provide for real time spell checking.
 - v. Provide a method to modify or expand the hyphenation dictionary and rules. Perhaps the hyphenation dictionary should be combined with the spelling dictionary.

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- vi. The hyphenator should have options to not hyphenate words with particular text attributes (bold, italic ...)
 - vii. The spelling checker should bypass Roman paragraph numbering.
- 3 Requests involving document structure, sections, pagination...
- i. Page margins should be adjustable section by section, as in the MS DOS version. It may also be desirable to change page orientation in the middle of a document.

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- ii. Allow skipping pages (start at a specified page number) at a section boundary.
 - iii. There should be an option to not print a footer on the last page of a document.
 - iv. Provide a means to dynamically display the total page count. (e.g. "page 3 of 17" in the footer)
 - v. Support automated references. References are similar to footnotes, but may be referred to at more than one place in the document, and consecutive numbering is based on the first occurrence. It would be especially desirable to have independent numbering of footnotes and references in the same document.
 - vi. The **Same as Previous** option for headers and footers should be available as a permanent option, so that header and footer changes can be propagated throughout a multi-section document.
 - vii. Allow the insertion of unnumbered or specially numbered pages in the middle of a document, so that correction sheets can be prepared more easily.
 - viii. Provide for subheading text, included as hidden text in the body of a document, to be dynamically placed in the header for each page.
- 4 Request involving index and table of contents
- i. There should be some provision for prefixed page numbers for documents organized by chapters. The intent is that the chapter number prefix should appear in the table of contents and the index.
 - ii. Provide a capability to retain the font of index and table of contents entries, so that entries containing, for example, characters from the Symbol font can be preserved.
- 5 Printing improvements
- i. Kerning pairs should be supported for LaserWriter fonts.
 - ii. When printing to a LaserWriter or other Postscript printer, Word should sort each page by font, style and size to minimize processing within the printer.
 - iii. Add options to print *odd* or *even* pages only to facilitate double sided printing.
- 6 Page preview improvements
- i. The **Page Preview** display should have icons for *next page* and *previous page*.
 - ii. Provide for showing line numbers on the screen without having to do a **Page Preview**.
- 7 Additional formatting capabilities wanted
- i. Add additional character attributes: Overline; Title Caps (Capitalize first letter of each word only)
 - ii. The **Find** and **Change** commands should support text with format attributes.
 - iii. Provide facilities for easy conversion of text to the opposite case, or mixed text to all caps or all lower case.
 - iv. Add an additional paragraph specification for the height of the first line of the paragraph. A user, who was preparing a double spaced document, noticed that the first line of each page was a line too low.
 - v. Word should be able to include pictures in more formats including ESPF (encapsulated Postscript) and TIFF.
- 8 Usability improvements

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- i. Word should provide styles that affect *only* character formats when applied (without changing paragraph formats), as done in the MS DOS version. This would allow for example, having individual words in either Geneva or Helvetica, while most of the document is in New York or Times, and switching both pairs of fonts easily, or switching all underlined words to bold easily. Section styles are also desirable.
 - ii. Word should support more date formats, both dynamic and non-dynamic in its documents. Using the international utilities, and offering both long and short date formats in Word 4 is an improvement, but even more flexibility is really needed. The best date format for the Finder may not be totally desirable in the heading of a business letter.
 - iii. Word should have provision for automatically adding change bars wherever the document is altered, and deleting all of them at the start of a new revision. If feasible provide an option to print only changed pages.
 - iv. Provide for the temporary screen display of selected text in a large type size to assist editing without affecting the character attributes used for printing..

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- v. Remember more default settings: **Num. Lock** status; ruler status of a document...
 - vi. Provide for automatic numbering of tables figures and equations.
 - vii. Some of the dialogs, especially the **Style** dialog could be made larger. Perhaps some of Word's dialog boxes could be made resizable.
 - viii. Provide a **Get Info** facility to store with each document such information as author, revision ...
 - ix. Provide an "infinite loop" capability for the **Print Merge** facility for generating reports from a list with global information before and after the entire report.
 - x. Several of Words modal dialogs should be made modeless. On a Macintosh II there may be plenty of room to keep a dialog such as **Format Paragraph** continually visible, select some text, format it...
 - xi. Make it more easy to navigate through a large document by providing for hidden markers that can be easy to go to.
 - xii. When in Num. Lock mode, the Num. Lock mode on the Macintosh extended keyboard should be lit.
 - xiii. Tab leader choices should be moved to the ruler.
 - xiv. Add a command to revert to the last saved version of a document.
- 9 Provide a simple means of propagating the footnote separators and continuation notice from document to document.
- 10 For networked systems, provide an option for the *network administrator* to limit the number of times Word can be opened simultaneously, as per licensing restrictions.

E. Acknowledgements

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Scott Wirth

E. Revision Record

89/05/11 First Edition