Spell Check

Walden University Academic Skills Center

Spell check is an automated program in Word that will check the grammar and spelling of a document. Using this program is important in helping to check that writers avoid small typos, spelling errors, and grammatical mistakes.

Adjusting Spell Check Options

Spell check has various options writers can adjust to change what types of issues spell check will identify. To adjust these options:

1. Choose the “Office Button” in the upper left-hand corner of the document, choosing “Word Options”

2. Under “Proofing,” writers can adjust the settings under “When correcting spelling and grammar in Word.” For most APA papers, writers should make sure each option is checked. Additionally, writers should set the “Writing Style” to both “Grammar & Style”
3. To adjust the Writing Style, choose “Settings...”. All of the grammar options should be checked and the other settings should normally be set to:

- Writing style: Grammar & Style
- Comma required before last list item: always
- Punctuation required with quotes: don’t check
- Spaces required between sentences: 2
Using Spell Check Within a Document

Besides running a full spell check, Word indicates when there may be a grammatical, mechanical, or style error in a document with red and green lines under words:

- Spelling errors appear as red squiggly lines
- Grammar errors appear as green squiggly lines.

To work with spell check within a document:

1. Right-click the word or phrase that Word underlined with red or green lines
2. Word identifies the type of error or gives an alternative suggestion at the top of the pop-up, giving the writer the option to ignore the error

Running Spell Check

Writers run spell check by:

1. Choose the “Review” tab
2. Select the “Spelling & Grammar” button, which will prompt the “Spelling and Grammar” window to appear
3. First determine the type of error spell check is identifying. Then, choose one of the options on the right-side of the window:

- Ignore once: ignore this type of error once
- Ignore rule: ignore this type of error for the rest of spell check’s review
- Next sentence: move to the next sentence and come back to the error
- Change: use spell check’s suggested fix for the error
- Cancel: leave spell check without making any changes