

How I configure Word 2004

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Some notes about configuring Word 2004. I made them for my own use. I provide no guarantee of any kind and I am not liable for any loss or damage due to the information or misinformation in this document. You use it on your own risk.

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First backup

Immediately backup the initial settings:

- the Normal template (in ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/)
- the following settings files (in ~/Library/Preferences/Microsoft):
 - the .plist
 - Microsoft Office ACL files
 - Microsoft Office settings (11)
 - Proofing Tool Preferences

Move user files to a more convenient place

Create in ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/ the following folders:

- 'AutoRecover Files'
- 'Custom Dictionaries'
- 'User Templates' (this folder will contain my Normal template, my 'My Templates' folder, as well as folders with third party templates).

Move the following folders and files (Word should be closed!):

- Startup (from /Applications/Microsoft Office 2004/Office/ to ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/)
- My Templates (from /Applications/Microsoft Office 2004/Templates/ to ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/User Templates/)
- Custom Dictionary (from ~/Library/Preferences/Microsoft/ to ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/Custom Dictionaries) (put an alias to the Custom Dictionary in the original place—the alias should be named 'Custom Dictionary' (not 'Custom Dictionary alias!'))

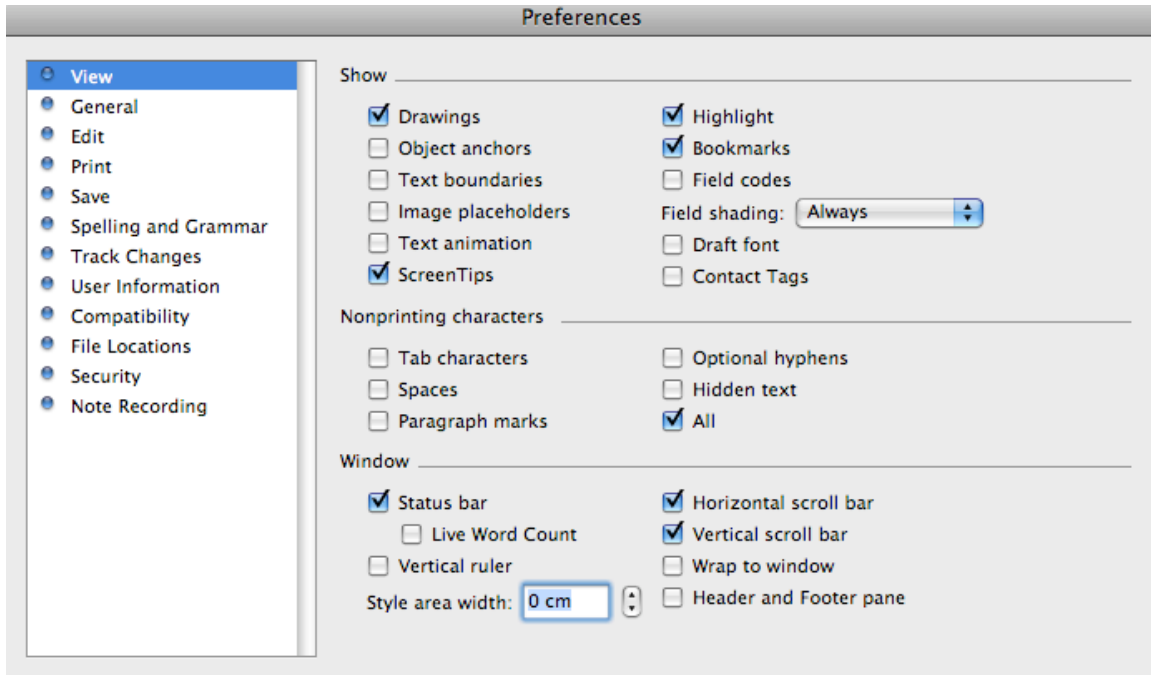
Open Word and fill in the new file locations for AutoRecover files, User Templates and Startup files in Word's preferences (under 'File Locations' in Word's Preferences).

Close Word and move Normal from ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/ to User Templates/

Organize Word's settings

Preferences (Word menu)

View



The “Show/hide ¶” button in the toolbar switches the non-printing characters that are not checked on and off. The non-printing characters that are checked remain always visible. If 'All' is checked the “Show/hide ¶” button switches between showing all or none of the non-printing characters. I strongly recommend viewing at least the paragraph marks and the hidden text when writing or editing.

If word counting is important to you, you might want to check Live Word Count. Be warned that Live Word Count puts a heavy load on your memory, which may exhaust your laptop battery and slows down the editing somewhat. You can always use the Word Count Tool.

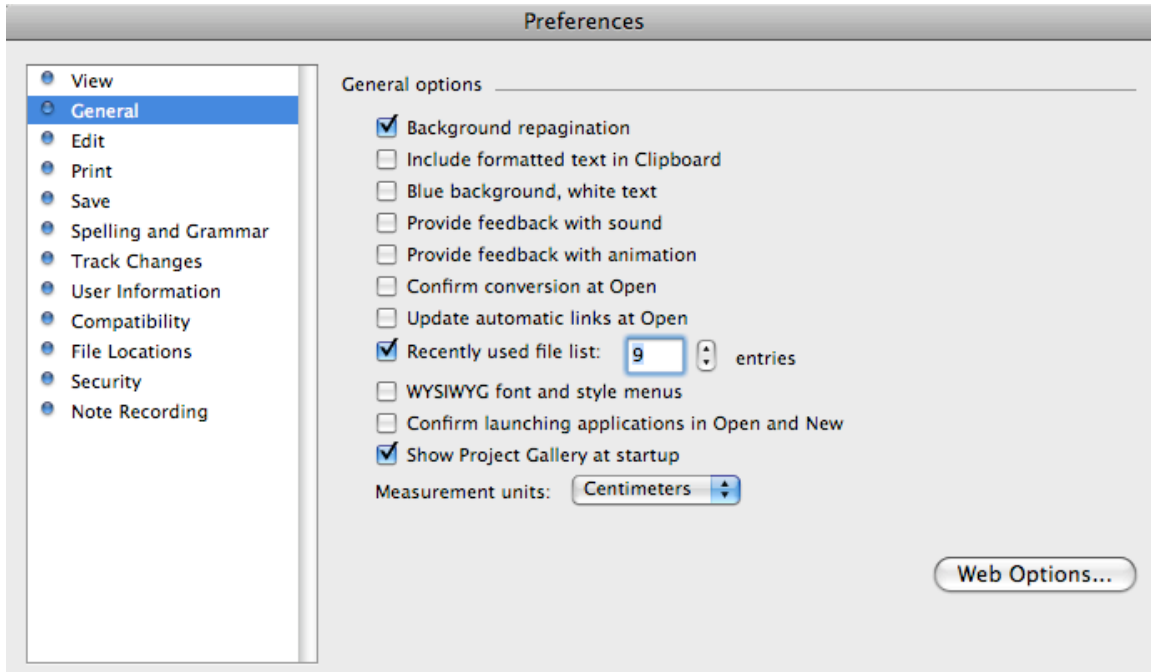
General

When I paste text, I usually want it to have the format of the context where I paste it. For that reason, I have 'Include formatted text in Clipboard' unchecked. You may prefer to check it.

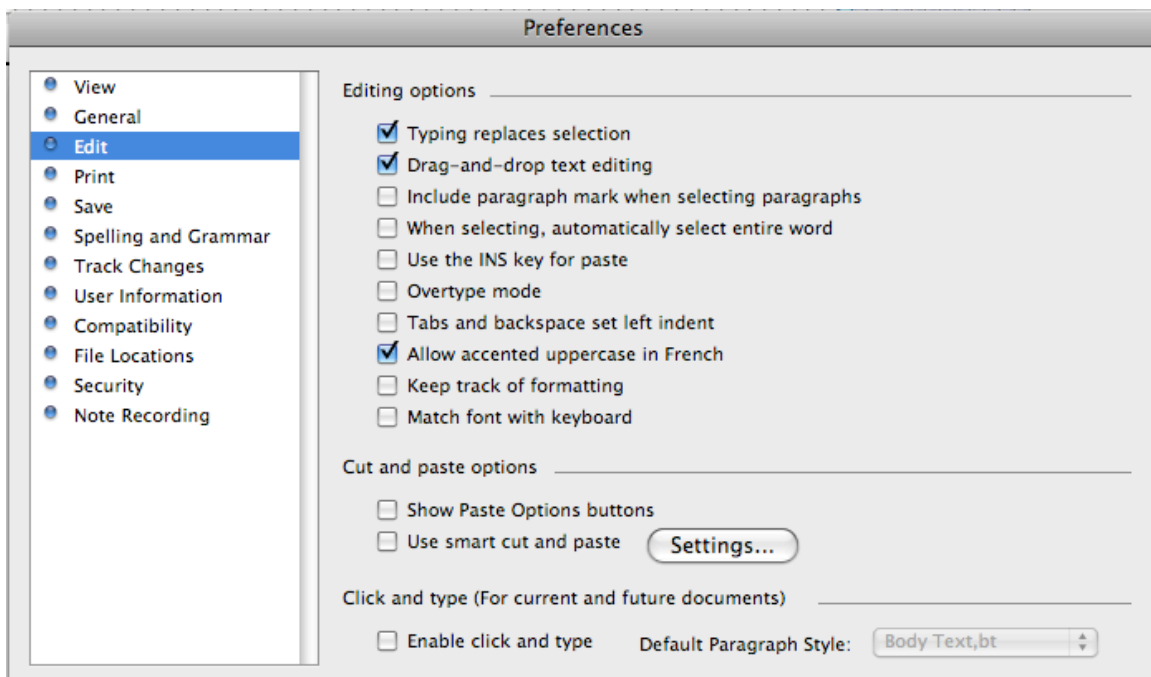
When (unlike me) you like WYSIWIG font and style menus, don't hesitate to check that option.

I do not often open Word directly (I usually open a document). However when I do, it usually is because I want to start by creating a new document from one of my templates. For that I need the Project Gallery. So, I checked 'Show Project Gallery at

startup'. If you often want to start Word directly with a new default document, you might prefer to uncheck this option.



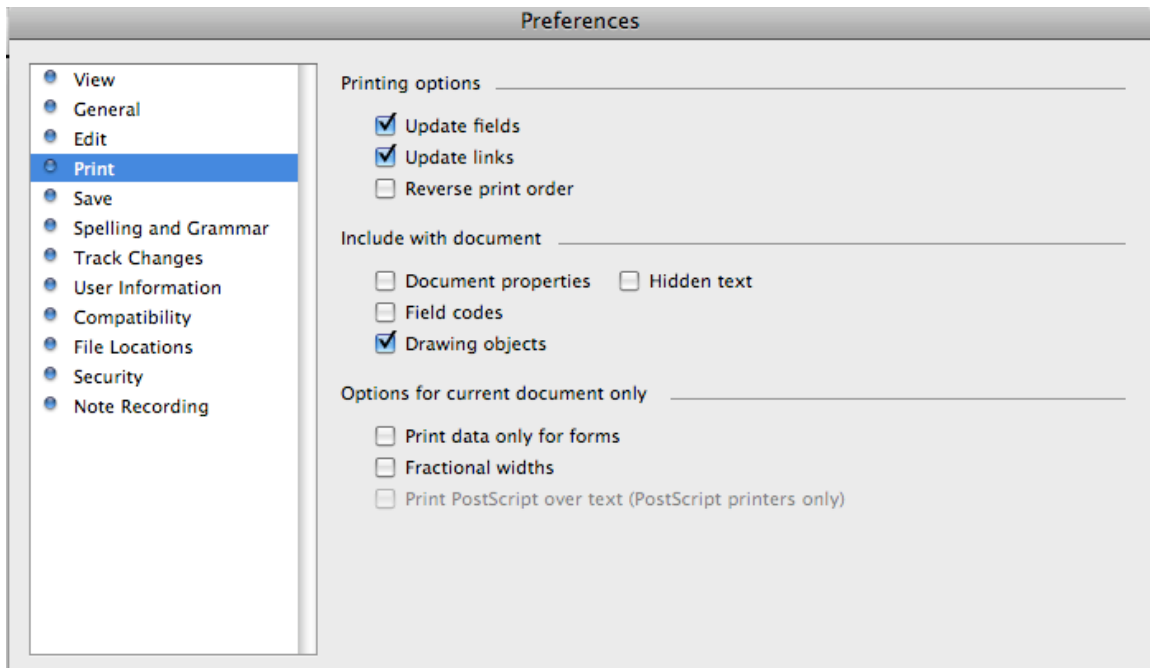
Edit



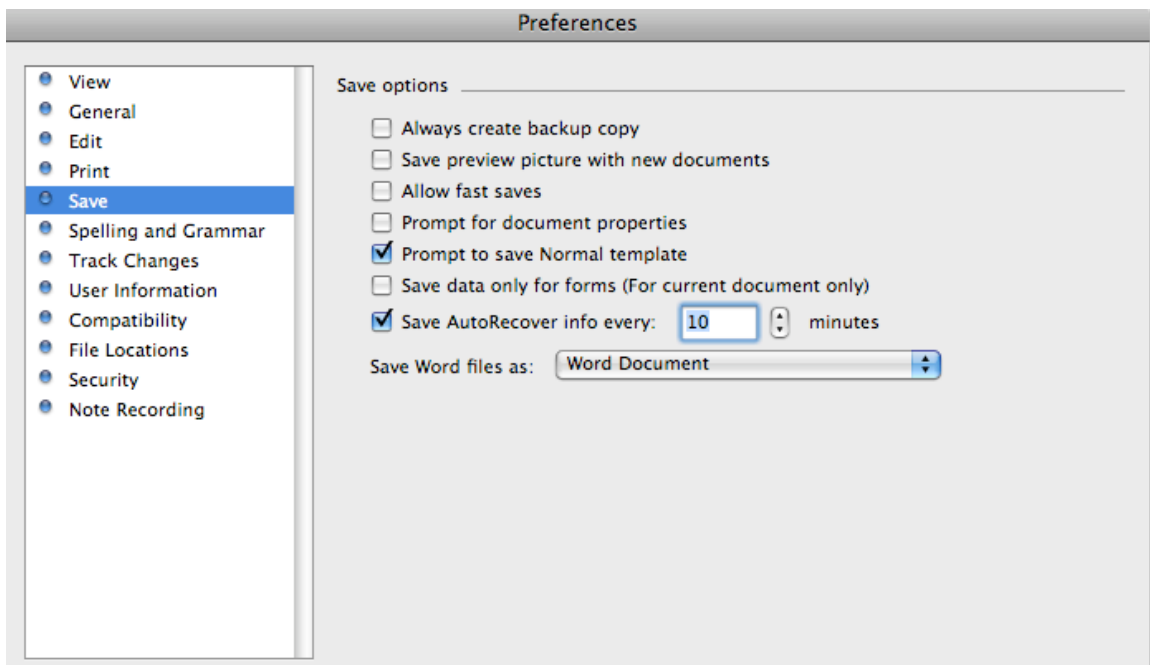
'Use smart cut and paste' can be very handy, but it causes troubles if you use TypeIt4Me (as I do): when smart cut and paste is enabled, the space that triggers TypeIt4Me is removed by Word after TypeIt4Me did its work (which is very annoying!).

Click and type is notorious for causing problems, especially with tables. Disable it!

Print



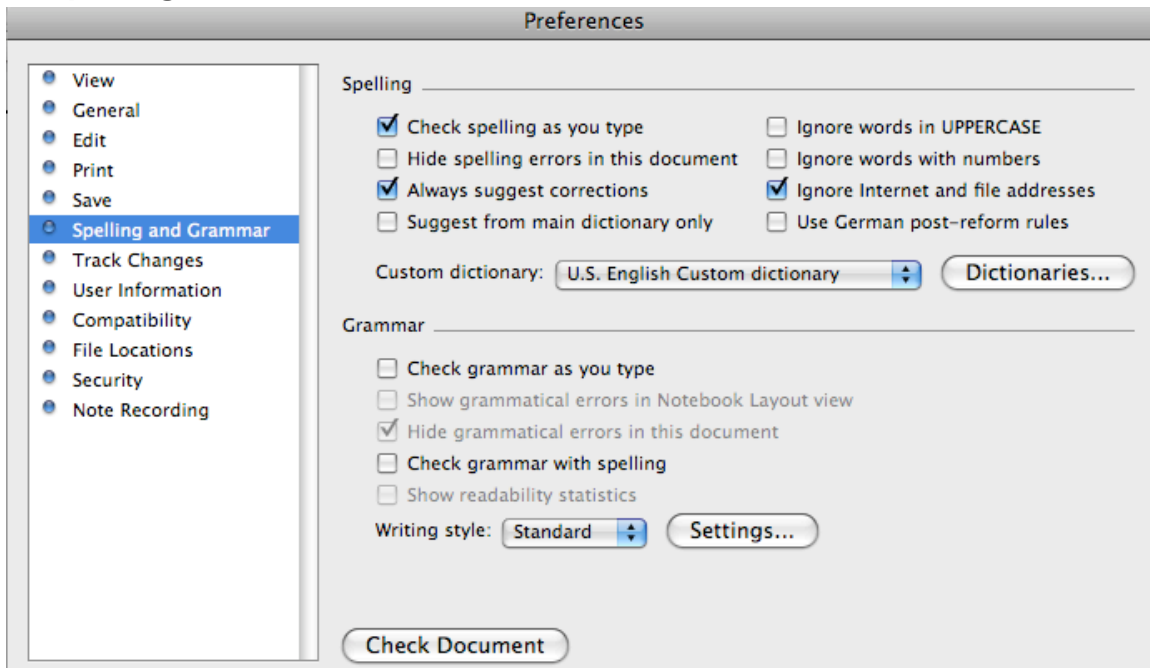
Save



Make sure "Allow fast saves" is not checked (fast saves are the number one source of document corruption)!!

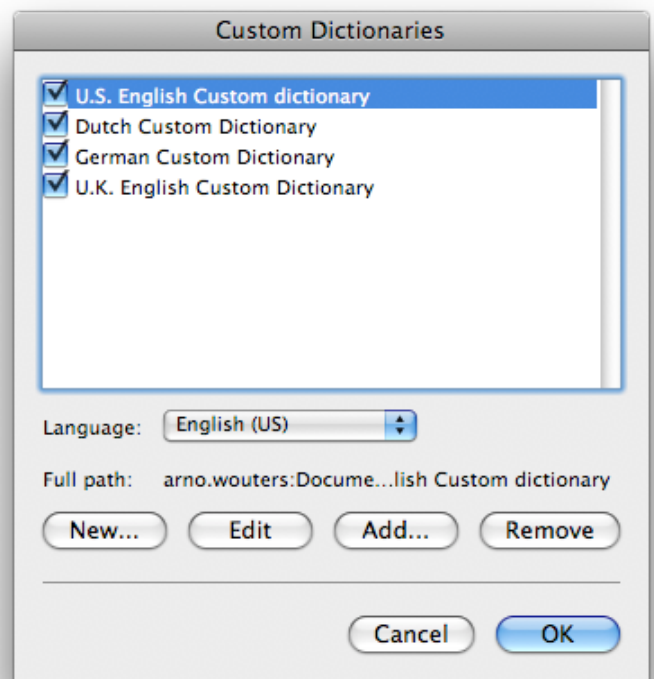
"Prompt to save Normal template" should be on (you don't want to modify your normal template by accident!)

Spelling and Grammar



Create a custom dictionary for every language you use:

- 1) Click the 'Dictionaries...' button to get the 'Custom Dictionaries' window
- 2) In this window click "New...", a save dialog appears.
- 3) Navigate to the 'Custom Dictionaries' folder in 'Microsoft User Data' in the Documents folder in your home directory
- 4) Give the dictionary a suitable name (e.g. "US English Custom Dictionary") — **the first custom dictionary that you create must be the custom dictionary of your default language!**
- 5) Click 'Save' to return to the 'Custom Dictionaries' window
- 6) Choose the language of this custom dictionary (in my example 'English (US)')
- 7) Repeat step 2–6 for every other language you use
- 8) Disable the original 'Custom Dictionary' by selecting it and clicking 'Remove'
- 9) Click on 'OK' and you are done (well, nearly so)

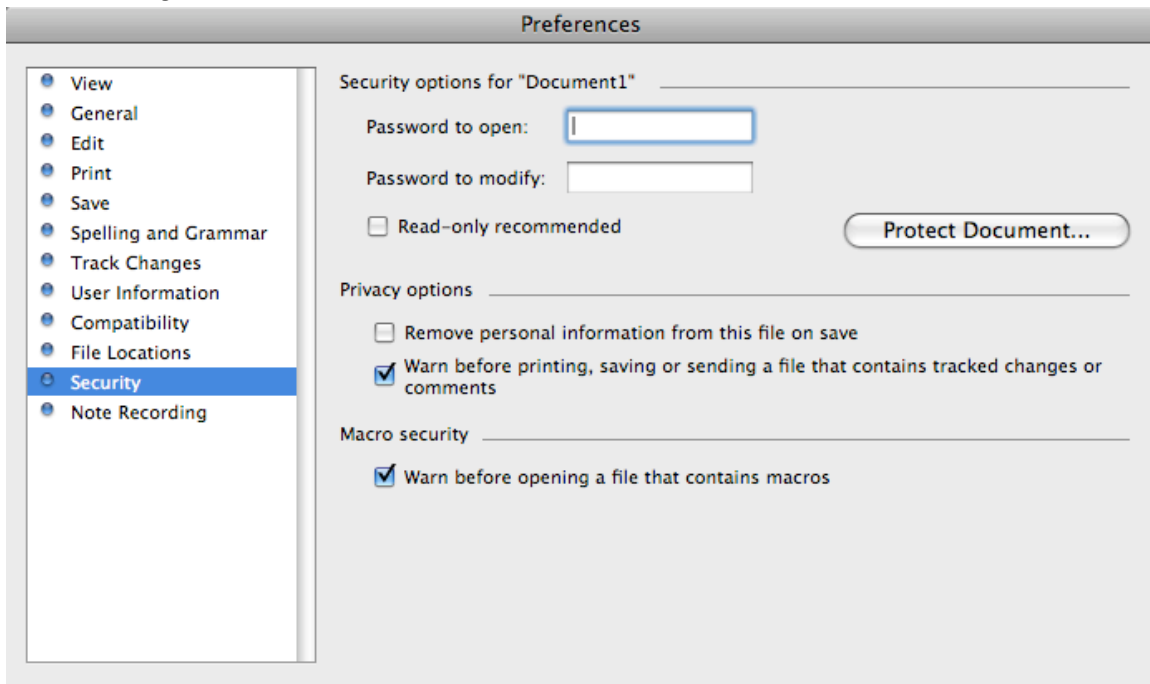


To make these newly created custom dictionaries available to other Office programs (such as PowerPoint) you should put aliases of the custom dictionaries in ~/Library/Preferences/Microsoft/! The aliases should have exactly the same name as the original files—if the original is named 'Dutch User Dictionary' the alias should be named 'Dutch User Dictionary' and not 'Dutch User Dictionary alias'!

User information

Fill in as you like

Security



Tracked changes is the number two cause of document corruption, so I want a warning should I save a file that contains tracked changes.

If you have good virus protection software (not recommended on a mac) you might want to uncheck 'Warn before opening a file that contains macros'.

View menu

Make your choice from the available toolbars and palettes (I made my own standard toolbar and this is the only one I view).

Styles (Format menu)

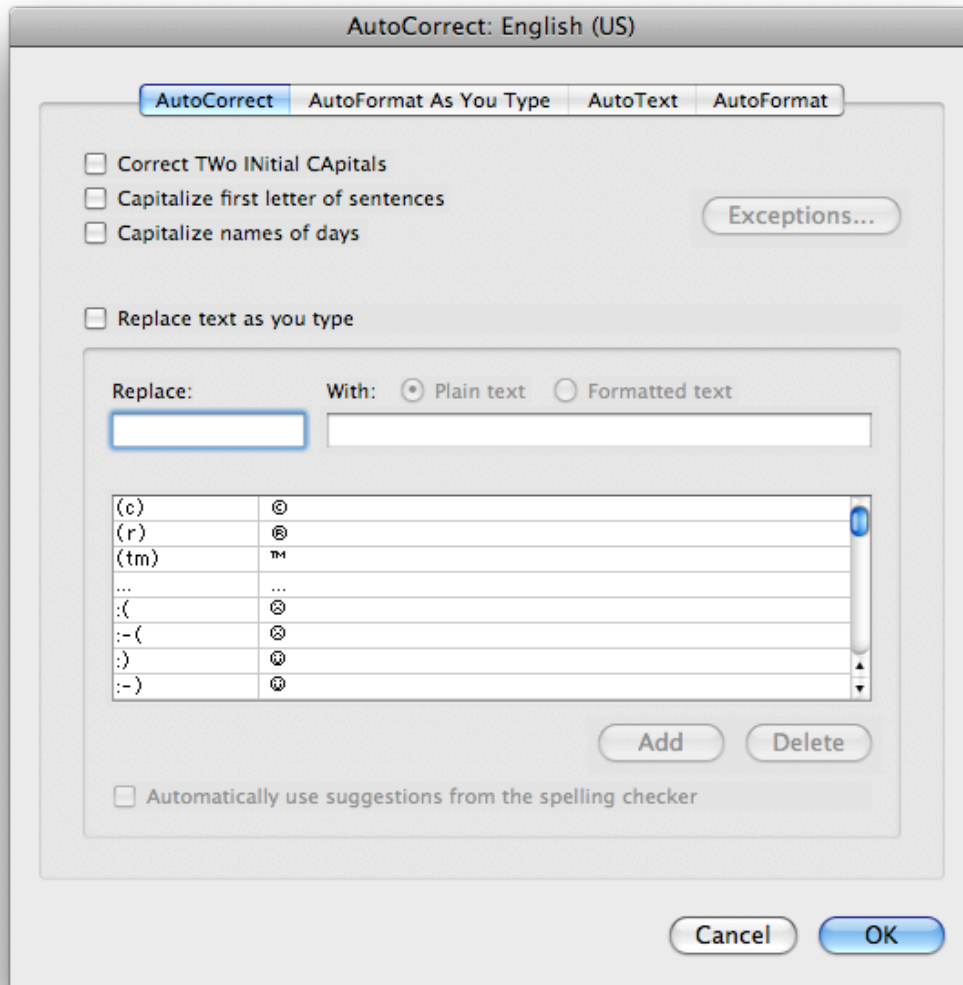
Set your default language in style Normal and add this to the Normal template.

Language (Tools menu)

Select your default language and click 'Default...'

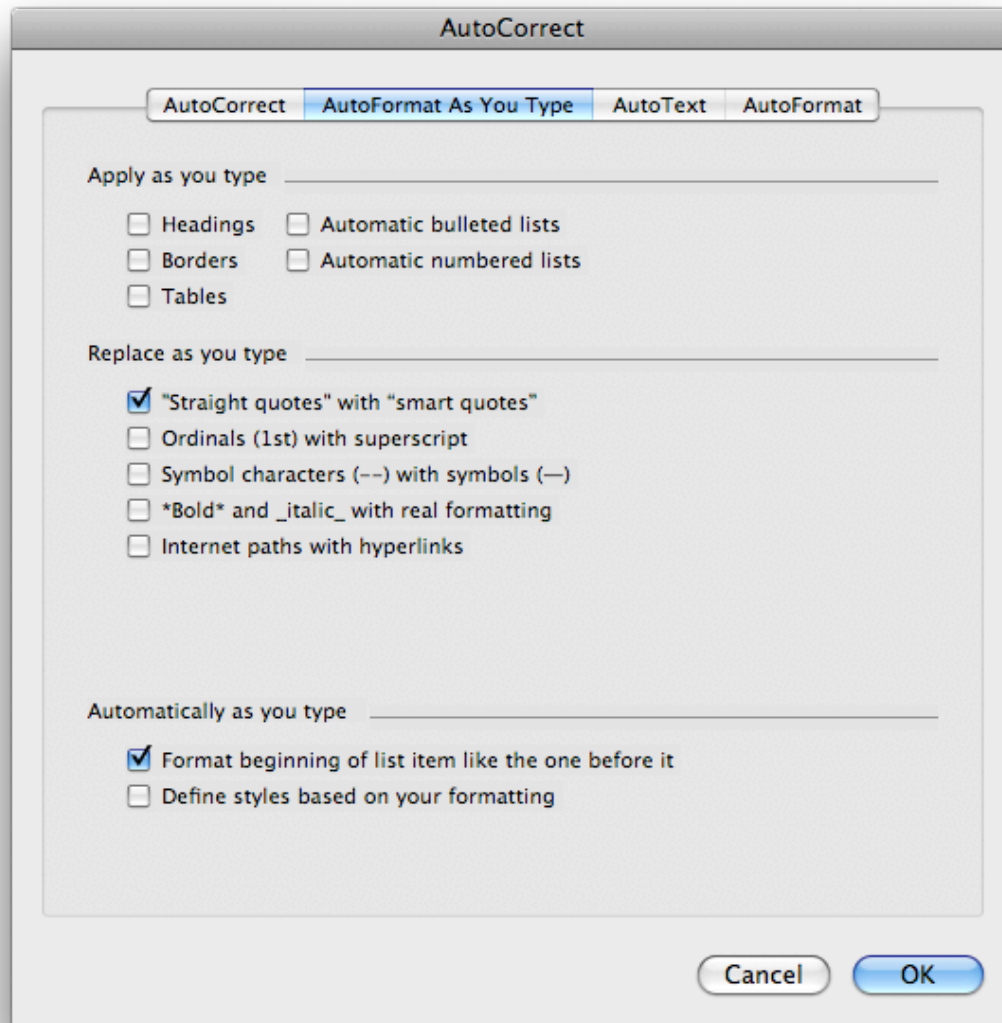
AutoCorrect (Tools menu)

AutoCorrect



As you see, I have unchecked everything. Automatic text expansion such as provided by AutoCorrect is very useful. It can be used to automatically correct frequent spelling mistakes, to automatically expand abbreviations for frequently used phrases, to automatically replace t_1 by t_1 in formulas, and so on. However, I use a utility (TypeIt4Me) that does this system wide (in every program I want: Word, my mail program, my notebook program, my HTML-editor, my browser, etc.), so I disabled 'Replace text as you type'. In case you do not have such a utility, I recommend enabling 'Replace text as you type'. However, you will probably not appreciate the predefined entries, so either remove them all before you enable 'Replace text as you type' or examine them critically at least.

AutoFormat As You Type

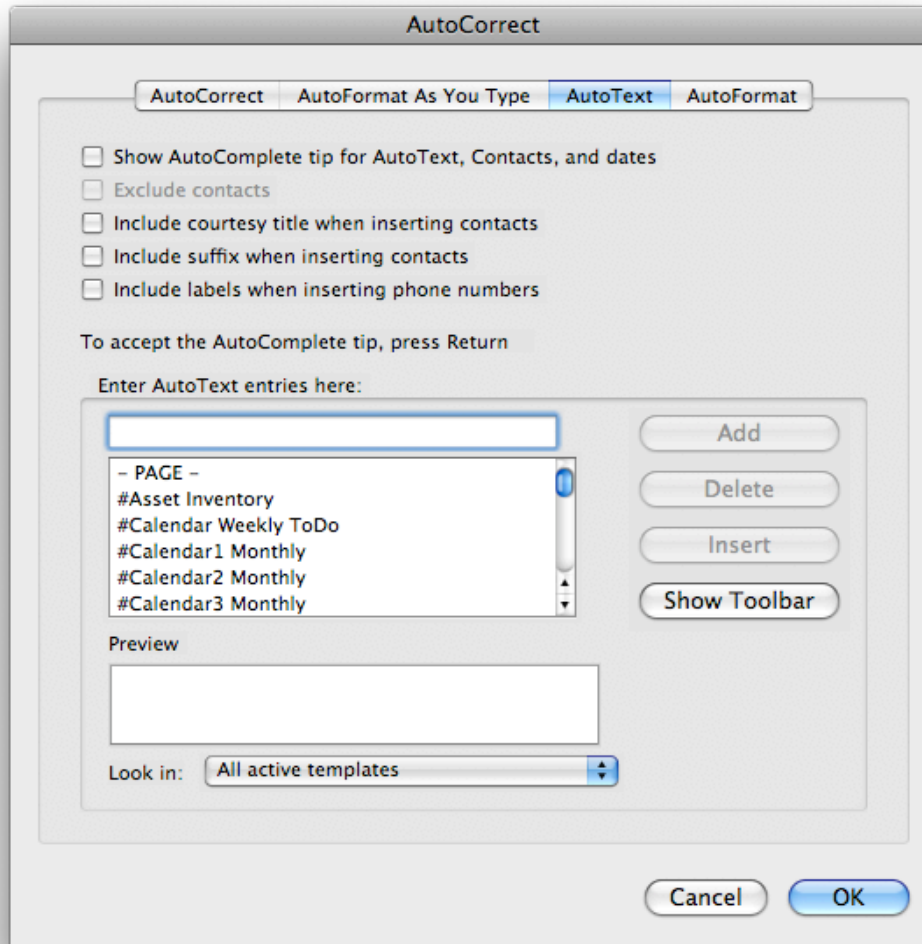


If your texts are filled up with formulas, you'd better uncheck 'Replace "Straight quotes" with "smart quotes"', otherwise this is a very useful feature.

If you want all the URLs and email addresses in all your documents to be active hyperlinks (in blue and underlined) check 'Replace Internet paths with hyperlink'. As I seldom write documents for online use in Word, I have this option unchecked. In the rare case that I want active hyperlinks, I apply the character style 'Hyperlink', or use the AutoFormat tool from the Format menu.

All the other options are annoying and several of them may cause trouble.

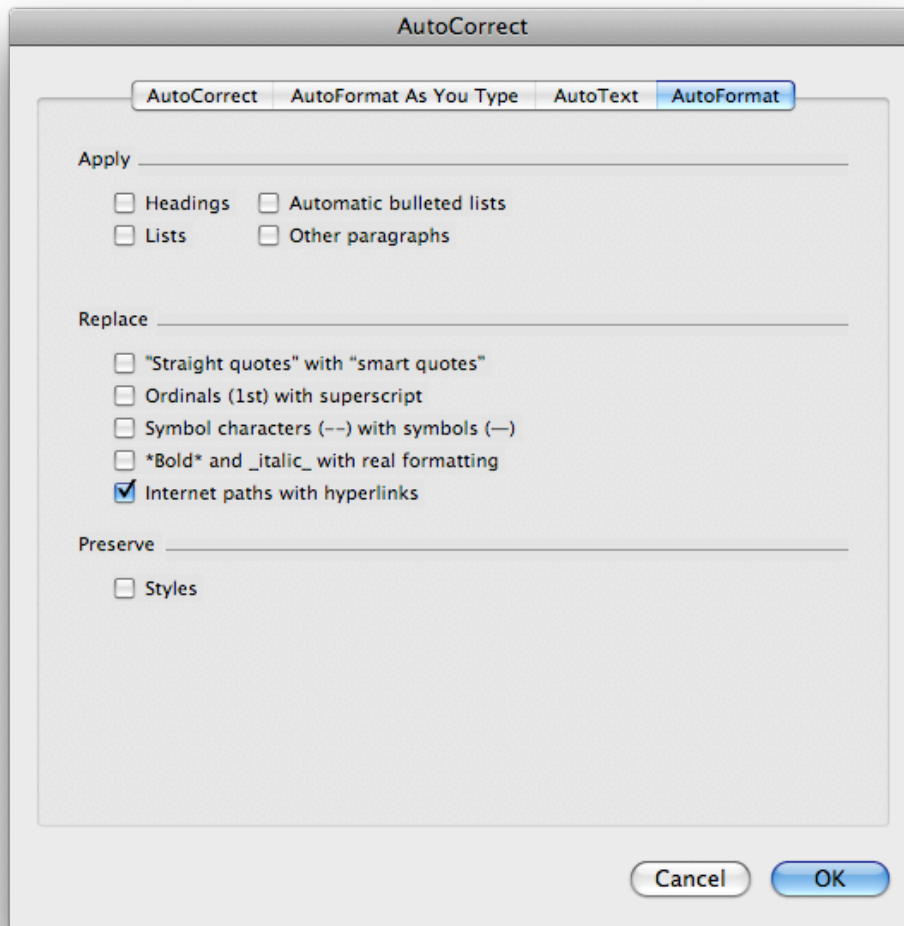
AutoText



I unchecked everything. Word's AutoComplete is slow and annoying.

AutoFormat

This tab sets the default options for AutoFormat in Word's Format menu. I use AutoFormat in rare cases to convert URLs, email addresses and so on into active hyperlinks. If 'Replace "Straight quotes" with "smart quotes"' is not checked in AutoFormat As You Type, you might prefer to check this latter option here, instead of the hyperlink one.



Customize toolbars / menus (Tools menu)

Enable “Show Screen Tips on toolbars” and “Show shortcut keys in Screen Tips”.
I have disabled "Show WYSIWYG font menu" (but you might prefer to have it on).

Customize keyboard (Tools menu)

Disable the keys for Word5Menus under Help & Windows.

Backup again

- the Normal template (in ~/Documents/Microsoft User Data/User Templates)
- the following settings files (in ~/Library/Preferences/Microsoft):
 - the .plist
 - Microsoft Office ACL files
 - Microsoft Office settings (11)
 - Proofing Tool Preferences