What’s New in MS Word 2003

When you start using MS Word 2003 for the first time, you will notice that the program has a new look that incorporates many features designed to make Word easier to use. The most notable changes include the following:

- Reading Layout
- Thumbnail Pane
- Easier Line Spacing Tools
- Protect Document Options
- Side by Side Document Comparison
- Research Task Pane
- Smart Tags

Reading Layout: This new layout makes it easier to read document text. It ignores line and page breaks and divides the text into two columns. For example, below is this actual document shown in Reading Layout. ClearType technology makes the text easy to read in this mode, and you can quickly increase or decrease the size of the text via toolbar buttons. With large text, the Reading Layout definitely pleases the eyes. As a bonus, the Reading Layout clears out some toolbar clutter.
The Reading Layout can then be closed by choosing a different layout in the View menu or by clicking the Close button on the toolbar at the top.

**Thumbnail Pane** is a feature similar to Adobe Acrobat thumbnails. When activated from the View menu, the thumbnail pane displays miniaturized page previews of the document along the left edge of the document.

**Line Spacing Button:** Finally, Microsoft added a line spacing button to the formatting toolbar.

**Protect Document Options** allows you to restrict a document to certain formatting styles or defined styles. It also allows you to protect certain sections of a document from editing.

Use the Tools menu (shown at left) to access the Protect Document options. They will open in the Task Pane (shown at right) at the right side of the window.
Side by Side Document Comparison allows you to view two versions of the same document in adjacent windows. While this was manually possible with previous versions of Word, now both documents automatically scroll when you scroll in either one.

To access this feature, open the documents you want to compare side by side. Then use the Window menu, to select Compare Side by Side with.

On the Compare Side by Side toolbar do any of the following:

- If you want to scroll through the documents at the same time, click Synchronous Scrolling.

- If you want to reset the document windows to the positions they were in when you first started comparing documents, click the Reset Window Position button.

- Click Close Side by Side to stop comparing documents.
**Note**: If you open two documents, the command on the **Window** menu will include the file name of one of those documents.

**Research Task Pane**: When connected to the Internet, the Research Task Pane takes you to encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauri, and web search features. This pane appears along the right side of the document and can be closed when finished.

Use the **Tools** menu (shown at left) to open the Research Task Pane.

Type a search term in the **Search for** box (shown at right) then click the green button with the arrow to start the search. Use the drop down menu to select the references in which to search.

**Smart Tags**: These are a set of buttons shared across Office programs that deliver a menu of context-sensitive options when and where they are needed. For example, the Smart Tag button appears when you paste data or make an error in an Excel formula. They provide options for completing a task quickly.

- **Context-sensitive smart tag**
  It automatically recognizes many information types, including names, dates, addresses, telephone numbers, places, and stock symbols. Smart tags can be customized to recognize multiple types of data.
Paste options smart tag
When pasting data from another source, you can paste data in its original style and format, modify it to match the target document's formatting, or paste it as text only.

An Example: This smart tag appeared after copying and then pasting data. Clicking the down arrow on the smart tag gives you a menu of options.

- AutoCorrect options smart tag
When auto-corrections are made, you can undo or modify a correction or specify that the correction not be made again in the future.

Compatibility between Office 2000 & Office 2003:
Most documents created with any of the Office 2003 applications can be opened in Office 2000. The exception is Publisher 2003.