



What do Templates and Add-ins store?

Article contributed by Dave Rado

Types of Template and Add-in

There are two types of Word templates:

1. "Regular" templates, the ones you see when you select **File + New** – which are used to base documents on.
2. So-called "**Global Templates**" or "Add-ins", which have been created to make functionality available to all your documents, regardless of which template is currently in use.

Creating an add-in is easy as pie. Create a new document, select **File + Save As**, set the "Save as type" to "Document template (*.dot)"; browse to your "Startup" folder and save it there. That's it.

To find out where your "regular" templates are stored, select **Tools + Options + File Locations**, and note the paths listed under "User Templates" and "Workgroup Templates". If you can't see the full paths, double-click on them.

Some of your templates may be stored in sub-folders of these two folders (the tabs you may see in the File New dialog come from the names of any such sub-folders).

In Word 97 and earlier versions, there is only one type of add-in – global templates. Like ordinary templates, global templates use the same file format as Word documents but have a different file extension (.DOT instead of .DOC). Global templates other than Normal.dot are usually stored in Word's startup path.

To find out where your global template add-ins (if you have any) are stored, select **Tools + Options + File Locations**, and note the path listed under "Startup". If you cannot see the full path, double-click on it.

Again, Word 2000 and 2002 complicate things pointlessly and annoyingly: any .DOT files stored in **C:\Program**

It is a good idea to store your templates in a different folder from the one Microsoft sets up by default; otherwise, finding your own, useful templates amongst all Microsoft's generic ones will make you think longingly of needles and haystacks. In a company environment, it is really **essential** that you do this, because you want your users to create (for example) company faxes, not Microsoft ones!.

In Word 97, this is straightforward; in order for a template to appear in the File + New dialog, it must be stored in one of the template paths listed under Tools + Options + File Locations, or the subdirectories thereof. Unfortunately, Word 2000 and 2002 make life much more difficult. Whatever you specify under Tools + Options + File Locations, the Microsoft templates will still appear in the File + New dialog.

There are two ways to get round this:

1. Copy the Microsoft templates you want to keep to another location. Note that they are **not** actually stored in your Templates path; you will find them in a language-specific folder (such as \1033 for English) within \Program Files\Microsoft Office\Templates\ (or equivalent, if you installed Word somewhere else).

For instance, you could create a "Microsoft Templates" subfolder within your Templates folder, and copy them to there. Or if you don't want them to be displayed in the FileNew dialog at all, but do want them to be available on demand, you could copy them to a completely different folder.

Then in Control Panel, run **Add/Remove Programs**, select Office 2000 (or 2002), then "Add/Remove Features", and finally, right-click on "Templates and Wizards", and select "Not available".

Files\Microsoft Office\Office\ Startup

(or equivalent, if you installed Word somewhere else) will be loaded as an Add-in, regardless of what your setting is under Tools + Options + File Locations + Startup. However, you can fix this by deleting any such files or, if you do want them loaded, by moving them into your “real” Startup folder.¹

Unfortunately, even this leaves you with the item “Web Page” in the File + New dialog; if you want to get rid of that, you'll need to use the following method.

2. **Intercept** the FileNew command with your own macro, which displays a UserForm that shows only the templates you want your users to see (which is what I do).

In Word 2000 and 2002, you may also have **COM Add-ins** installed. Unlike Global templates, these are not .DOT files; but are DLL or EXE files. For more information, see: **How to find out whether any Word Add-ins have been installed.**

What do Templates and Add-ins store?

COM Add-ins are not covered in the table below; they only store code. They can *programmatically* customise menus, keyboard assignments etc., but this is not usually considered to be good practice, because such customisations have to then be stored in a template, and it is cleaner to store them in a regular or global template in the first place.

“Regular” templates (available only to documents created using that template (or subsequently attached to that template))	Global template add-ins (available to all documents:)
AutoText entries	AutoText entries
Keyboard shortcuts and toolbar and menu customisations	Keyboard shortcuts and toolbar and menu customisations.
Macros	Macros.
	AutoCorrect Entries that were saved with their formatting preserved (these are stored only in Normal.dot ; but see: How can I import and export all my AutoCorrect entries, so they can be transferred to another machine?).
<p>Styles are a special case. You should define your styles in your “regular” Templates (and your “Blank Document” styles in Normal.dot); and when a new document is created using that template, the document will inherit the template's styles. But from then on, the link is broken, and the document's style definitions are stored within the document. So any subsequent changes made to the styles' definitions in the template will not be reflected in documents that have already been created, unless you select Tools + Templates and Add-ins and tick the “Automatically Update” checkbox (which can be buggy) or use the Organizer.</p> <p>And any changes made to the styles' definitions in your documents will not be reflected in the template they were based on unless you select the “Add to Template” check box under Format + Style + Modify.</p>	

Ignore almost everything Word's Help says about templates and styles. Most of it is misleading and much of it is inaccurate.	
Text and graphics. (When you create a document it inherits any text and graphics stored in its template). You should create your own templates for the purpose – never add text to Normal.dot.	
The Page Setup (although if you change the Page Setup in a document, you can transfer the new settings to its template by clicking the Default button on the File + Page Setup dialog).	

Normal.dot is a global template but can also be used as a “regular” template (if you select File + New + Blank Document, you will be using Normal.dot). It is best to use it as a “regular” template only when you need a “scratchpad”. Create your own templates for important documents, and for any documents that need to contain standard text and graphics at point of creation (such as a fax coversheet).

Unfortunately, if you don't consciously specify where you want to store your customisations, they will usually be stored in Normal.dot. But it is generally best to store your customisations (such as AutoText entries, macros, keyboard and toolbar customisations) either in your regular templates, if they are template-specific; or in add-ins, if you want them to be available to all documents (in other words, anywhere **but** in Normal.dot). Add-ins are much less prone to corruption and virus infection than Normal.dot; and you may need to delete Normal.dot from time to time (for more on this, see: **Problems opening Word**). When it is deleted, Word will create a brand new copy, minus any of the customisations you stored in the old one. As mentioned previously, creating an add-in is easy as pie.

So for example, when creating toolbar, menu or keyboard customisations, open an add-in and make the customisations there. When defining an Autotext entry, set the “Look-in” list box to point to your add-in. You can copy many of your customisations from Normal.dot to a template or add-in using the Organizer (Tools + Templates and Add-ins + Organizer). You can copy keyboard customisations between templates using Chris Woodman's **Shortcut Organizer**.

One more thing; under **Tools + Options + Save**, turn **on** the checkbox which says “Prompt to save Normal template”, if it isn't switched on already (unfortunately, it is switched off by default). The only time you should ever save Normal.dot is when you have knowingly made a change to it that you want to save. Then you should save it by holding the Shift key down and selecting File + Save All. Letting Word save Normal.dot whether you've consciously made changes to it or not, without even prompting you first, is just asking to end up with a corrupt Normal.dot file. I believe most corruptions of Normal.dot are a direct result of this setting being switched off.

1. More confusingly still, in Word 2002, if you have “Trust All Installed Templates and Add-ins” checked (it is, by default), on the “Trusted Sources” tab of the “Macro Security” dialog, then any add-ins that are in the “real” startup folder (the one listed under Tools + Options) are treated as being “installed add-ins” and are therefore trusted; whereas any add-ins in Word’s “Program Startup Folder” (i.e. C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office\ Startup\ – or equivalent, if you installed Word somewhere else) are treated by Word as **not** having been being installed, so are not trusted. (This does not apply to Word 2000, which treats add-ins in either Startup folder as being installed add-ins).

That rather begs the question as to why, if they are not considered to be installed, does Word 2002 automatically load them! It’s also tantamount to an admission by Microsoft that add-ins should **not** be installed in Word’s “Program Startup Folder”; and this is made even more explicit in the **Microsoft Knowledge Base** Article: **WD2000: How to Find the Word Startup-Path by Using an External Solution (Q210860)**. But unfortunately, many commercial add-in developers ignore that article (or haven’t discovered it), and many commercial add-ins do install themselves in the wrong path. Some even install themselves in both paths!

The existence of a second, undocumented Startup path in Word 2000 and higher causes all sorts of problems – for example, see the article: **Problems opening Word**. As mentioned previously, the best fix is to move any incorrectly installed add-ins into your “real” Startup folder. You can automate this (which is particularly useful in a company); see: **How to ensure (using VBA) that all your Word add-ins are installed in the correct path**.

Another unfortunate change that was made in Word 2000 is this: when you start Word 97 with the /a switch, even though it doesn’t load any global templates, you can still look under Tools + Options + File Locations in order to find out what you Template paths and Startup path are. But if you start Word 2000 using the /a switch, the dialog displays the default paths, not your actual paths. Again, see **Problems opening Word** for examples of why this change was unfortunate.