

# Introduction to OpenOffice Writer 2.0

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## Introduction:

OpenOffice Writer is a word processing application similar to Microsoft Word. OpenOffice is an open source software suite, and in addition to the Writer application, it includes Base, Calc, Draw, Impress and Math, all comparable to Microsoft Office applications. OpenOffice is available to be downloaded for free. It is considered open source because its source code is publicly accessible, and users are welcome to improve upon the existing code. The suite can be downloaded at: [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org). It is available for Windows, Linux, Solaris, FreeBSD, and Macintosh operating systems. Microsoft Word documents can be opened through Writer, but it is not possible at this time to open Writer documents in Word.

The goal of this tutorial is to provide an outline of the basic features and functionality of OpenOffice Writer. If there are unfamiliar buttons or icons within the Writer window that are not covered in the tutorial, it is useful to know that there is a “What's this?” feature located within the help menu. When you click on this, you can roll your mouse over any feature on the Writer window, revealing a text box that explains its functionality.

## Objectives:

1. Getting started
2. Format documents
3. Cut, copy and paste
4. Insert pictures and graphics
5. Draw functions
6. Tables and lists
7. Page and section breaks
8. Spell check, auto correct, and word count
9. Hyperlinks
10. Find/replace
11. Print preview/Printing
12. Navigator
13. Save as HTML
14. Tracking changes
15. Versioning

## Getting Started:

Once OpenOffice is downloaded onto a computer, you can open a Writer document from the program menu like you would open any other application. Depending on what type of composition or project you are working on, you can customize the tool bars to allow easy access to the tools you will use most. This can be done by going to **VIEW**

and then **TOOLBARS** in the menu bar or by clicking on the drop down arrows at the end of each row of tools. Figure 1 features the Writer screen with the standard tool bars, and it shows where the tool bars can be customized.

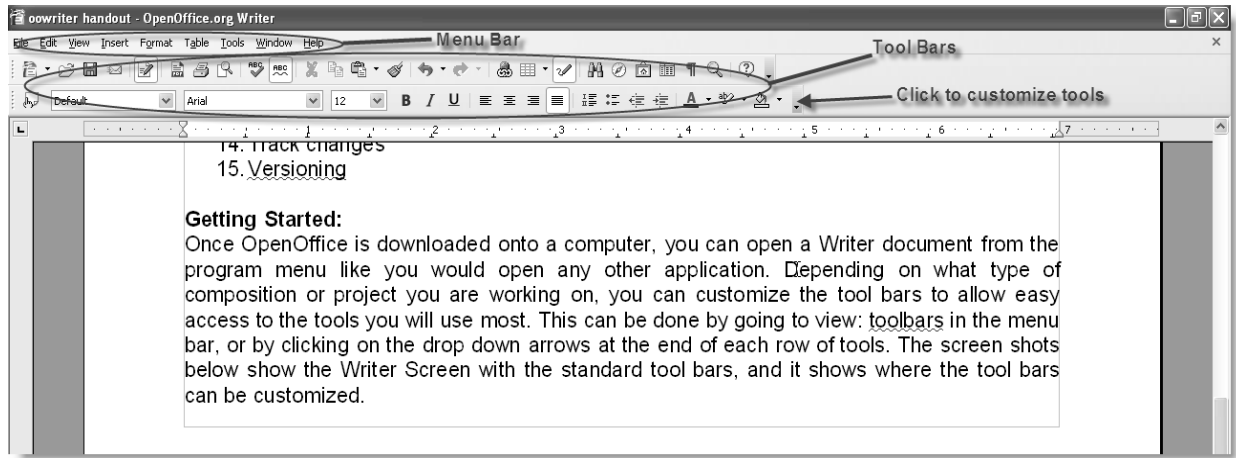


Figure 1

### Formatting Documents:

Page elements, including background color, margins, header/footer, and footnotes can be edited by clicking on **PAGE** in the **FORMAT** menu. A window will pop up allowing you to choose tabs to edit certain elements within the page (figure 2).

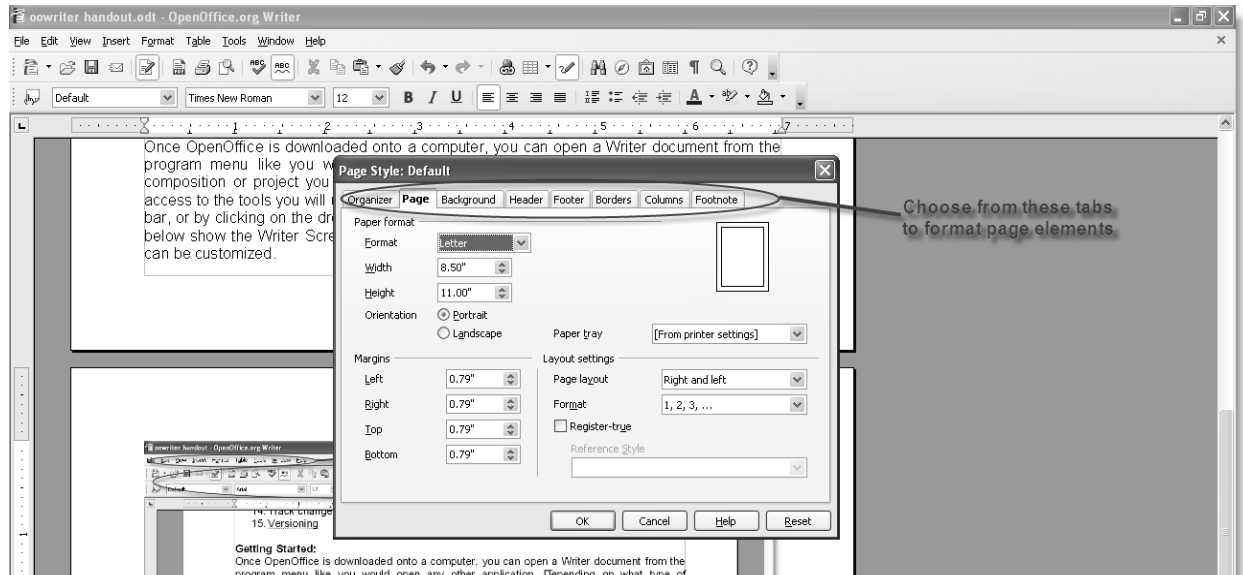


Figure 2

The font size, type and color can be changed by using the drop down menus located within the tool bar, or they can be changed by clicking on **FONT** in the **FORMAT** menu. To edit paragraph features, including spacing, alignment, text flow, tabs and borders, choose **PARAGRAPH** from the **FORMAT** menu (figure 3).

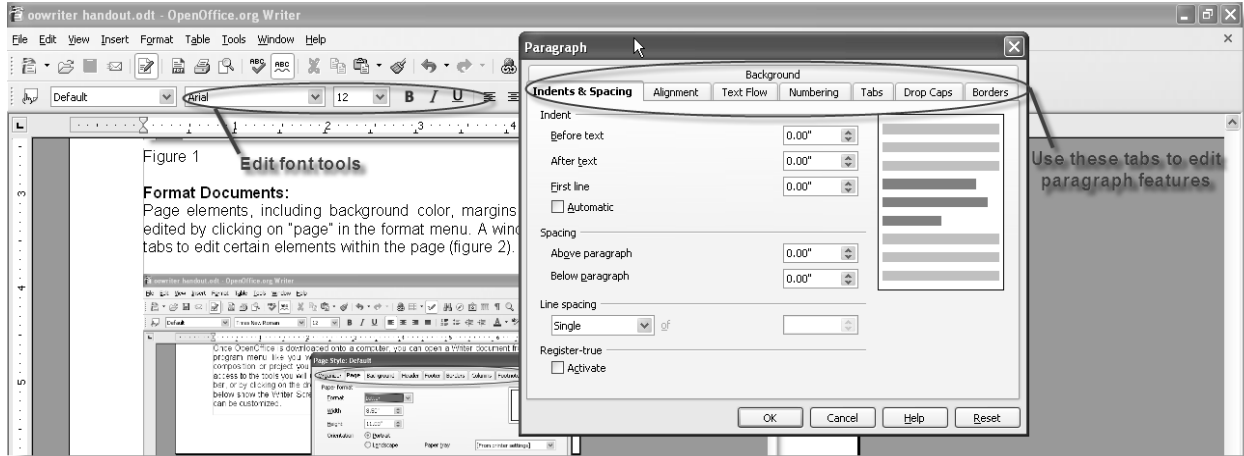


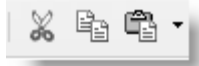
Figure 3



The format paintbrush (above) allows you to copy the format of existing text and apply it to another section. Highlight the formatted text you want to copy with the cursor, click on the paintbrush icon in the tool bar, and click on the text you want to format. This feature can be used for headings, paragraphs, words and objects.

*Troubleshooting tip: The default font setting for Writer documents is Times New Roman. If you experience problems while using the format paintbrush, where it reverts some text to Times New Roman instead of the font you have chosen, make sure to change the font setting by going to **FORMAT** and then **FONT** in the menu bar instead of changing it in the drop down box in the tool bar. Using the drop down box only applies the font setting to sections of the document, while changing it from the menu applies it to the entire document.*

### Cut, copy and paste:



Like Microsoft Word, Writer enables you to cut, copy and paste text and objects. This can be done within one document or between multiple documents. There are a number of ways to do this.

- It can be done through the **EDIT** menu by highlighting text you want to copy or cut, select **COPY** or **CUT**. Place the mouse where the text will be inserted, and select **PASTE** from the **EDIT** menu.
- You can also use the cut, copy and paste icons in the tool bar (pictured above).
- These key commands speed up the process if you will be using the cut, copy and paste features often:
  - Ctrl + C = Copy
  - Ctrl + V = Paste
  - Ctrl + X = Cut

## Inserting Pictures and Graphics:

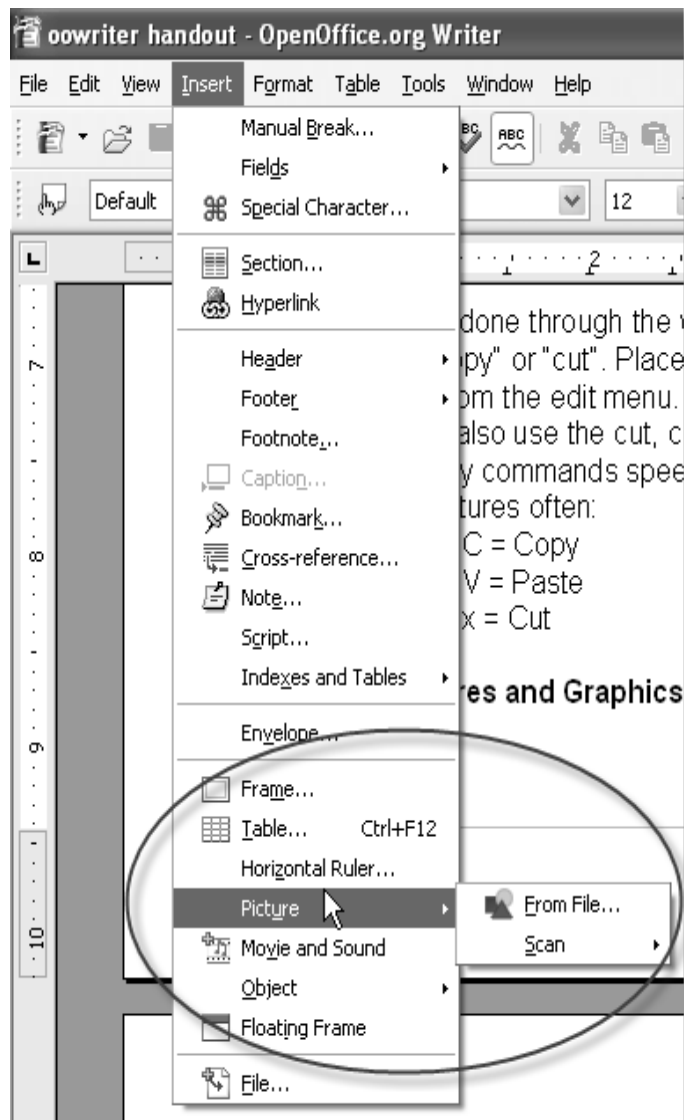


Figure 4

Writer allows you to insert pictures and graphics within your text. You can do this by going to **INSERT** in the menu bar, and the bottom set of features lists pictures and graphics you can insert (figure 4), including frames, tables, horizontal ruler, pictures, movies, objects and floating frames.

### *Insert Details:*

If you choose to insert a **frame**, you have the option to include a picture or object within the frame.

**Tables** will be addressed later in this tutorial.

The **horizontal ruler** allows you to insert a graphical line dividing sections of your work.

You can choose to insert a **picture** from an existing file or a scanned item. If you choose to insert a picture from a file, you will be prompted to locate the file and picture on your computer.

**Movie and sound** allows you to insert an audio or video file into the document.

If you choose to insert an **object**, you have several options:

- OLE Objects: Object Linking and Embedding objects. These can link to another type of Open Office document, or the other documents can be embedded within the text.
- Plug-in: If your document is to be displayed as a web page, it allows you to insert a plug-in, or software component that expands the capabilities of a web browser.
- Sound: Inserts an audio file located on your computer.
- Video : Inserts a video file.
- Applet: These contain programs written in Java, and they are often used for animation. When they are inserted into your document, anyone who has a web browser supporting applets is able to view them.

- Formula: This allows you to insert a formula directly into the document.
- Chart: Allows you to create a chart to illustrate your text.

A **floating frame** allows you to insert another document within the text. It is most applicable when you are saving a Writer document as a web page. An example of a floating frame is a software agreement that must be read before installation. Once you choose to insert a floating frame, you will be prompted to locate the file you want it to display. The frame allows the user to scroll through the document. An example of a floating frame (figure 5):

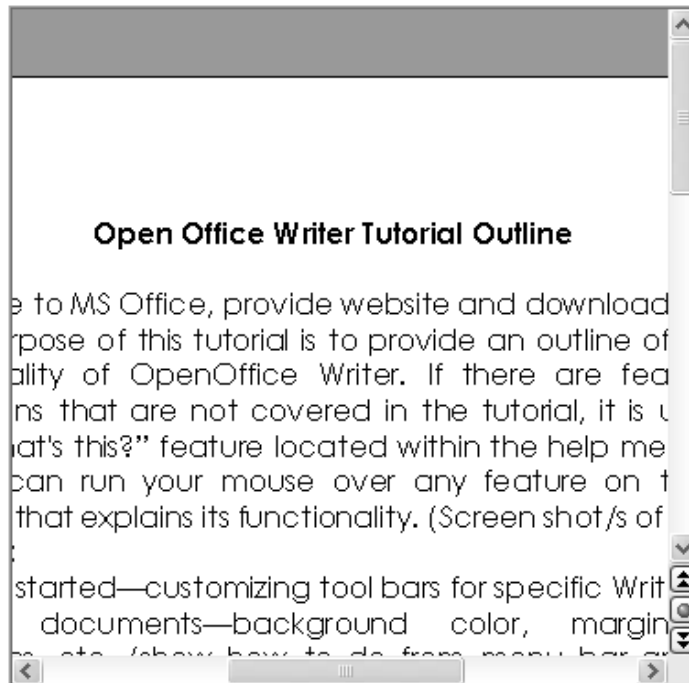


Figure 5

**Draw Functions:**

To activate the drawing tool bar, go to **VIEW**, then **TOOLBARS**, and select the drawing toolbar. A set of drawing tools should appear along either the top or bottom of the page (figure 6).

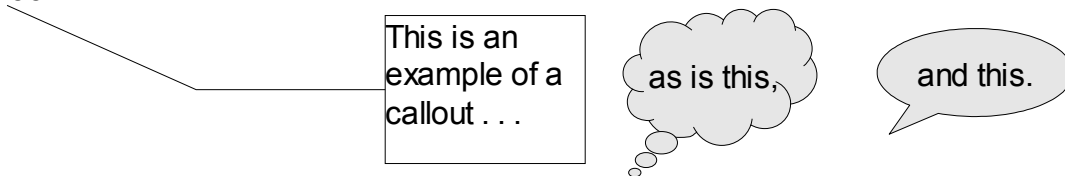


Figure 6

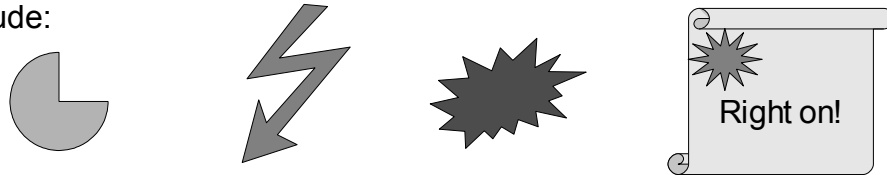
Drawing tools allow basic drawing functionality similar to that of most paint/drawing programs. Straight lines, basic geometric shapes, free form lines and text boxes can be added. The following icons may be unfamiliar, but their features are quite useful.



These two buttons allow you to add *callouts* to your document. Callouts are text boxes that point to an item on the page. Just put your mouse where you would like the callout to start, and click and drag. You have the option to adjust size, location, font and color after it is created. The button on the right allows more options as to how the callout will look.



These three buttons allow you to add basic shapes, symbols, and merit stars/symbols. Some examples include:



These buttons add arrows and flowchart features to the document.



This button allows access to the fontworks gallery. Click on the button, and select which type of text you would like. Once the text has been inserted, adjust the size and location by dragging with the mouse. Double click on the text, and edit it to say what you would like. Here are some examples of the fontworks features:

Fontworks

Fontworks



This button allows you to insert pictures or graphics from a file just as you would from the **INSERT** menu.

### Tables and lists:

Tables and lists can be included in a Writer document through either the menu bar or the tool bar. To insert a table from the menu bar, click **INSERT**, and scroll down to **TABLE**. A menu will appear allowing you to name the table and edit the number of rows and columns. You can also adjust other table settings, including heading, AutoFormat, border, etc., in the options section (figure 7).

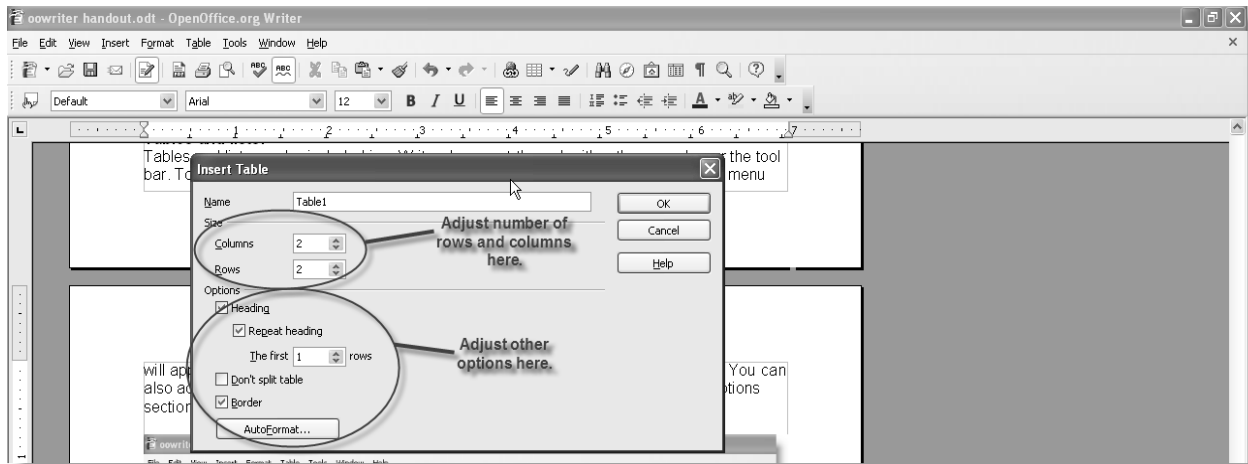
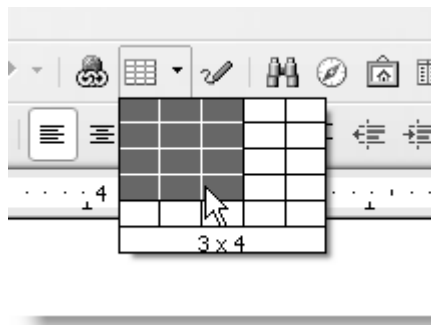


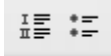
Figure 7



Tables can also be added by clicking on the above icon in the tool bar. You can click on the button, and you will get the same pop-up menu as in figure 7, or you can click on the drop down arrow next to the button (left), and you will have the option to drag your mouse to choose the number of rows and columns:



To insert a list, you can either use a format of bullets, numbers or a customized outline version. Go to **FORMAT, BULLETS & NUMBERING**, and a pop-up menu will allow you to customize or choose the format for your bullets or numbers (figure 8).



You also have the option of using the default bullet and numbering settings by clicking on the buttons in the tool bar, which are pictured above.

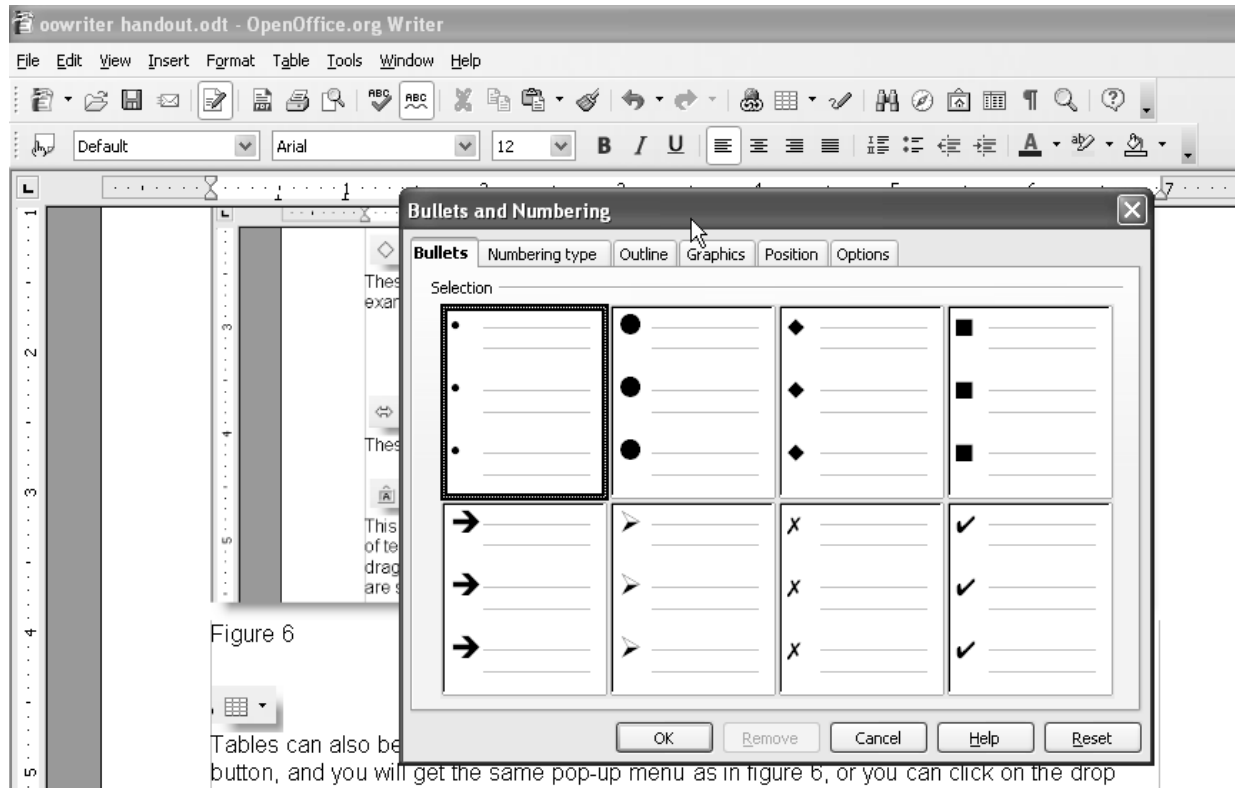


Figure 8

### Page and Section Breaks:

You can insert line, column and page breaks into your document by going to **INSERT, MANUAL BREAKS**. Page breaks end the text where they are on the current page, and start on the next page. Page breaks are useful after creating a title page, while line breaks and column breaks are useful when you are working with tables or spreadsheets.

### Spell Check, Auto Correct, and Word Count:



OpenOffice Writer has the ability to check for spelling mistakes. You can check the spelling by going to **TOOLS** and then **SPELLCHECK**, or you can click on the button in the tool bar pictured above. By highlighting a particular word or section, Writer will only check the spelling in that section. If nothing is highlighted, it will check the entire document. Writer automatically underlines misspelled words with a red, wavy line. This feature can be turned off by clicking on the following button in the tool bar:



**AutoCorrect** is a feature that automatically corrects commonly misspelled words. It replaces mistakes like t-e-h with t-h-e. By going to **TOOLS** then **AUTOCORRECT** (figure 9), you can see the list of existing words Writer is programmed to correct (figure 10).

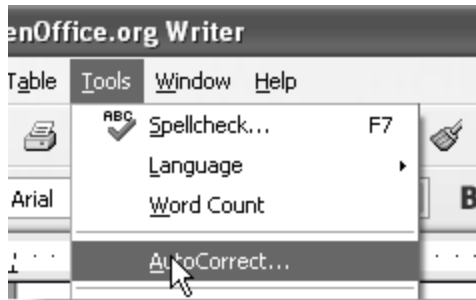


Figure 9

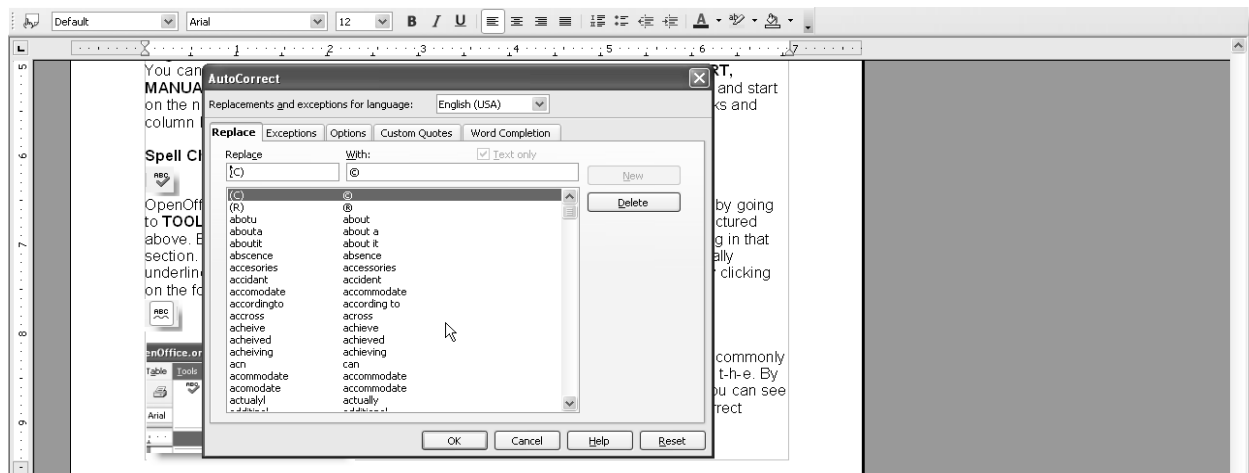


Figure 10

Within this window, you have the option of setting exceptions for words to be corrected, and you can add other words that you may commonly misspell to be corrected automatically.

You can count the total number of words in a document or highlighted section by going to **TOOLS**, then **WORD COUNT**.

### Hyperlinks:

Text can be converted to hyperlinks for electronic versions of Writer documents. This can be done by going to **INSERT** then **HYPERLINK**, or you can click on the button pictured above. The screen pictured in figure 11 will pop up. A hyperlink will allow you to link to a web page, an email address, existing documents, or a new document. These options are located on the left side of the page. The target link should be typed into the target box at the top of the window, and the text you want to show on the document will

be typed into the text box at the bottom of the window. Once these values are correctly filled in, click **APPLY**, and then **CLOSE**. The hyperlink will appear on the page where the cursor is.

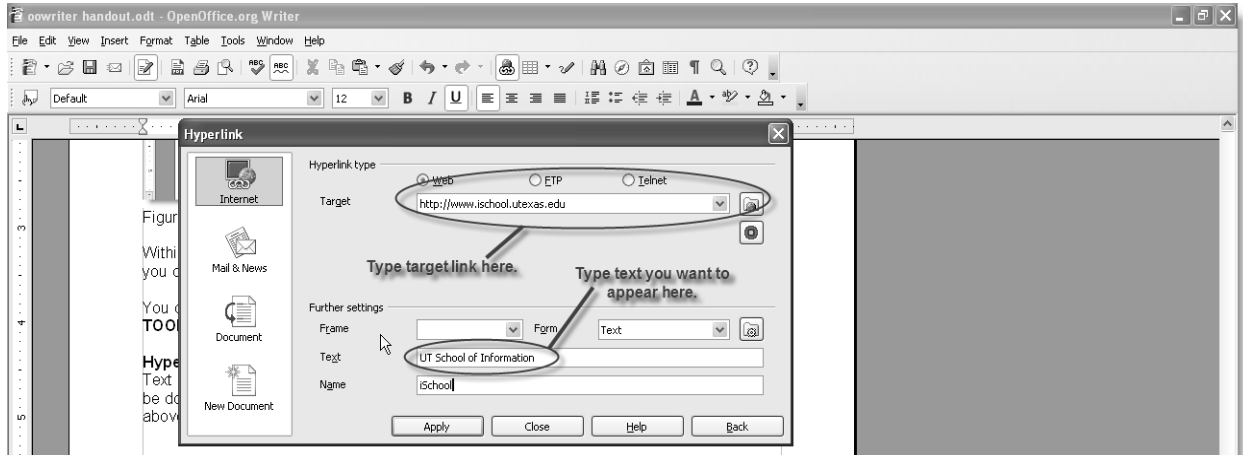
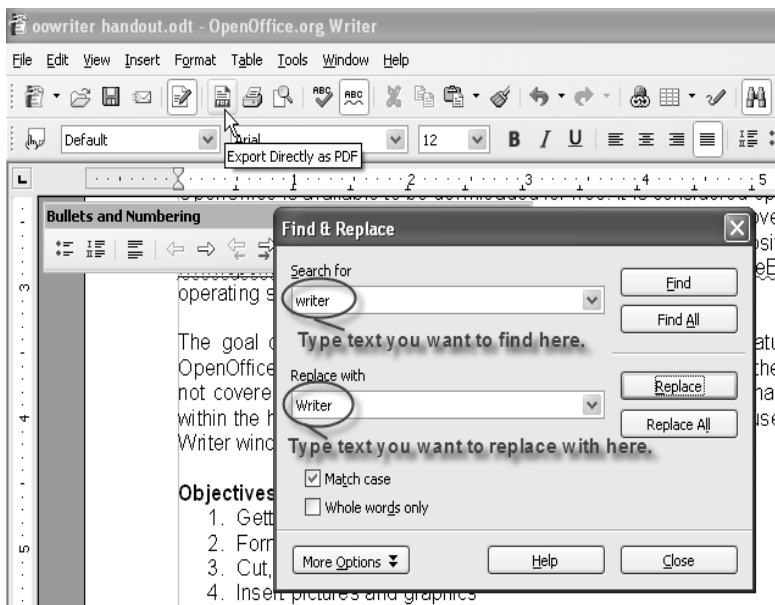


Figure 11

### Find/Replace:



Writer has a feature that allows you to find and replace a word that appears throughout the document. This can be done by going to **EDIT, FIND/REPLACE** in the menu bar, or you can click on the button with binoculars (pictured above) in the tool bar. A screen will pop in which you will type the words to find and replace (figure 12). Type the text you would like to find in the top box and the text you want to replace it with in the bottom box. Make sure to check the “Match Case” box if you want it to be case specific.

Figure 12

### Print Preview/Printing:



When you are ready to print your document, you can preview the print layout before you print the pages. Go to **FILE** then **PRINT PREVIEW** in the menu, or click on the button with the magnifying glass pictured above. You will be able to view the layout of multiple

pages, which you can choose by clicking on the page layout icon, circled in figure 13. When you are finished, you can click on the printer icon to print, or you can return to the normal screen by clicking on **CLOSE PREVIEW**. You can continue printing by going to FILE then PRINT, or you can click on the printer icon in the Writer tool bar.

### Navigator:



Clicking on the compass icon (above) in the tool bar activates the Navigator feature. This feature allows the user to move around within different sections of the document. This includes headings, tables, graphics, etc. If any of these are included in the document, the navigator will have a drop down list for you to choose from, and it will take you to that section of the document. This feature is especially useful for very long documents. The Navigator activates a pop up window that will stay active unless you choose to close it (right).

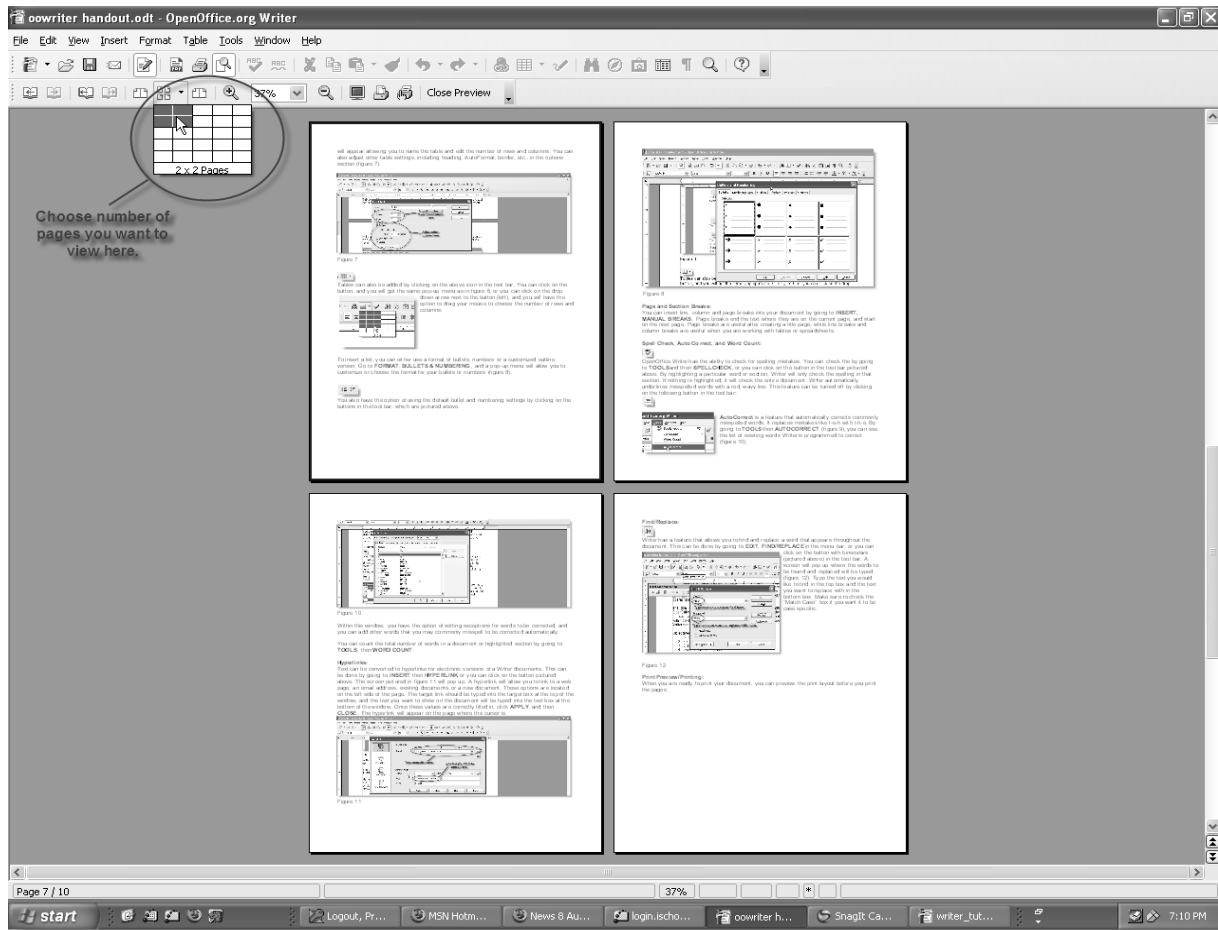
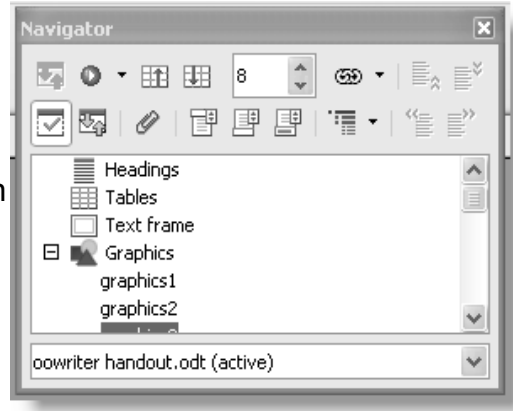
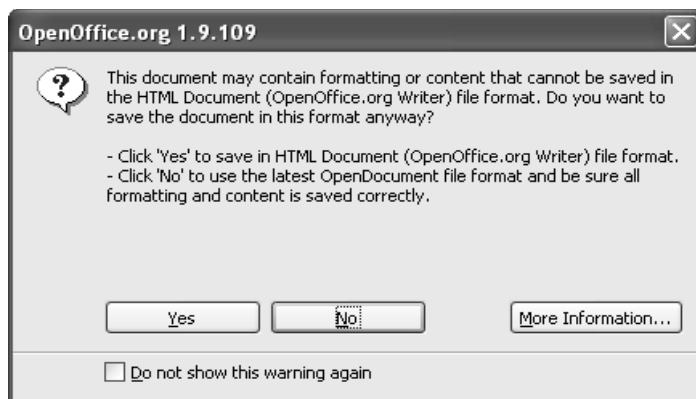


Figure 13

### Save as an HTML document:

Writer allows you to save your document as an HTML document, which can be viewed as a web page. Do this by going to **FILE, SAVE AS**, and save the document as a .HTML. You may get the pop-up window below that says some of the formatting may be changed once you save it this way. It is recommended that you save it as a .ODT (OpenDocument text) first so you will not lose important features of the document. When saving as an HTML document, make sure to create a folder associated with the document because Writer automatically extracts all associated pictures and objects embedded in the document and creates separate files for them. Once it is saved as an HTML document, you can view it as a web page and edit the HTML code to make changes to the formatting.



### Tracking Changes:

When multiple people are working on a document or project, Writer has a feature that allows changes in the document to be tracked by user. Go to **EDIT, CHANGES**, and select **RECORD**. Make sure that **SHOW** is also selected. This will highlight or underline changes added by other users, and the final editor of the document can review these changes and accept or reject them. By rolling the mouse over the changes, you can view who made the changes and when they were made. To accept or reject them, select **ACCEPT** or **REJECT** from the **CHANGES** menu. The editor will be able to see a pop-up window with a list of all changes that have been made by user, and they will have the option of accepting or rejecting each of them (figure 14).

Writer also allows the option of protecting the document by setting a password to allow any changes to be made. This can be done by selecting **PROTECT RECORDS** from the **CHANGES** menu.

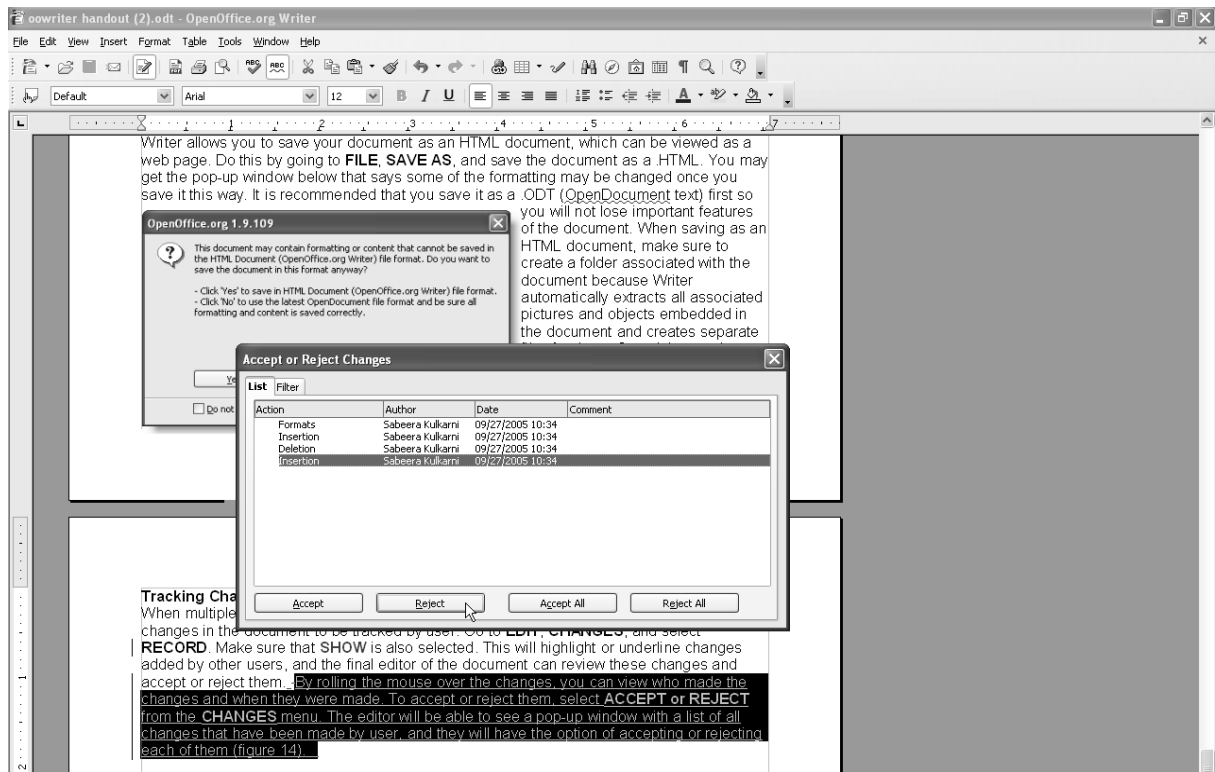


Figure 14

### Versioning:

The versioning feature of Writer tracks multiple versions of the document that have been saved by date and user. Go to **FILE** then **VERSIONS**, and you will get a pop-up window that lists all of the versions that have been saved (figure 15). Each version can be saved individually, and notes can be added to explain the changes to the version. You can check "Always save a version on closing," to make sure all versions are saved and nothing important is deleted. The **COMPARE** feature will highlight changes from the selected version and compare them to the current document.

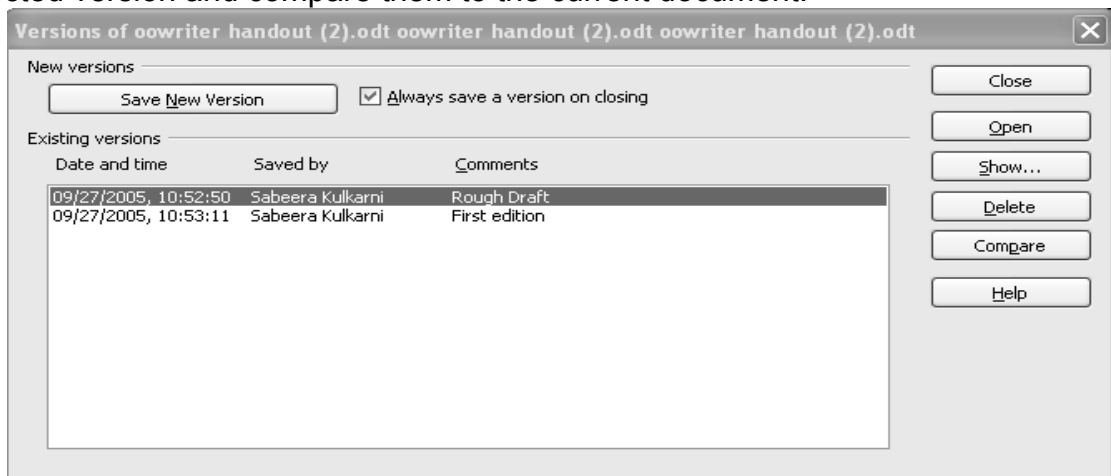


Figure 15