

## MS WORD TIPS

**Q.** Can the MS Word Getting Started task pane be disabled? Every time I open Word, a “Getting Started” pane opens with it offering the latest news about Using MS Word and other tips. I just want to write a letter and I’m tired of closing this annoying pane. How’s that for a news flash?

**A.** Yes. You can prevent this pane from opening with Word, as well as change several default settings that may be annoying you and your staff.

### To turn off the Getting Started Pane:

1. Choose **Tools, Options, View**.
2. Clear the **Startup Task pane** check box in the upper left corner.
3. Choose **OK**.



While you’re in the Options dialog box, also consider these settings:

### Under Tools, Options, View

- Choose **Always** under **Field Shading** to discern display where fields are used in your documents. (Note – the fields do not print shaded.)
- Add a measurement (such a 1”) to the **Style area width** spin box so that when you view a document in **Normal View** you can see what styles are applied to the paragraphs down the left side of the screen.

### Under Tools, Options, General

- Clear the **Allow Starting in the Reading Layout** check box so documents don’t open in reading layout (new with Word 2003)

- Clear the **Automatically create drawing canvas when inserting auto shapes** check box so that if you insert a shape (such as an arrow, square, or circle) into a document, the confusing-at-best drawing canvas won't insert itself between the shape and your document.

### Under Tools, Options, Edit

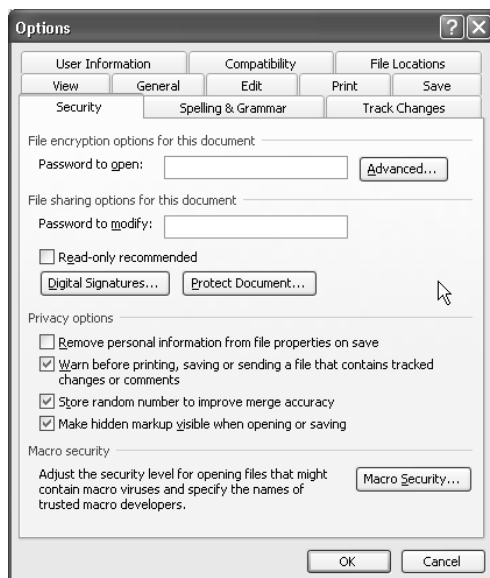
- Check the **When selecting, automatically select entire word** check box so you can change the font (bold, italics, underline, etc.) for a word when your cursor is blinking in it, rather than having to select the word first.
- Clear the **Keep track of formatting** check box so Word won't display direct formatting with the styles, and confuse the person(s) editing the document.
- Check the **Prompt to update style** check box so you can update styles on the fly.

### Under Tools, Options, Print

- Check the **Update Fields** check box so fields will always update to show the current information before the document is printed.

### Under Tools, Options, Security (New with Word 2002/3)

- Check the **Warn before printing, saving or sending a file that contains tracked changes or comments** check box so you will not inadvertently send a document containing tracked changes (which might be concealing an old client's name or settlement agreement amount) to the wrong person.
- Check the **Make hidden markup visible when opening or saving** check box so that anytime you open a document containing tracked changes, the changes are displayed and you realize they're there.



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**About the Author:**

Laura Leader is the founder of Smooth Transition. She provides software training and personalized MS Word templates and macros to law firms. For a complete list of recommended Word settings, can contact Laura at (858) 220-6886 or by e-mail at [Laura@smooth-transition.com](mailto:Laura@smooth-transition.com).

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