

Revisions: Showing Changes

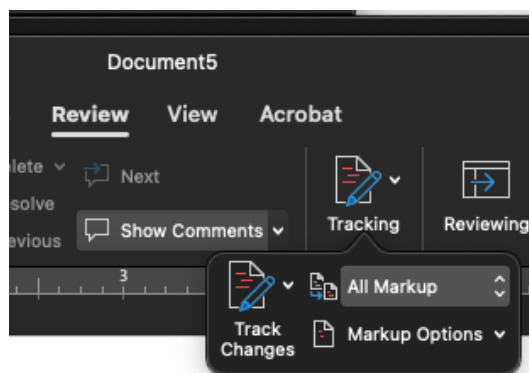
Method 1: Track Changes in a first revision

This function automatically shows insertions, deletions, and changes. It's exactly what you need, especially the first time you revise a paper.

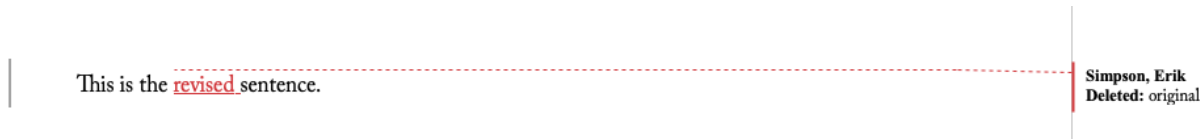
Microsoft Word

Note: These instructions for Word use the desktop application for Mac. The web and PC versions may look slightly different, but the process will be similar. You can always search for online instructions if you run into any obstacles.

Open your document. From the options at the top of the document, select the “Review” menu, then select “Tracking,” then “Track Changes.”



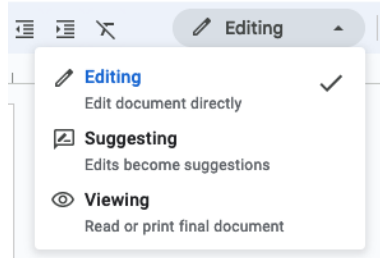
Now, when you make a change, the document should mark up what you've done.



If you start this process as you begin to revise a paper, you should be all set! And don't worry that the appearance of the essay will get a little messy. I'm used to reading documents with tracked changes, and the messiness doesn't bother me at all. I like seeing the evidence of the work you've done in revision!

Google Docs

Working in Google Docs, you can create the same effect as “Track Changes” by switching from “Editing” to “Suggesting” mode. Select the “Editing” button in the top right and choose the “Suggesting” option.



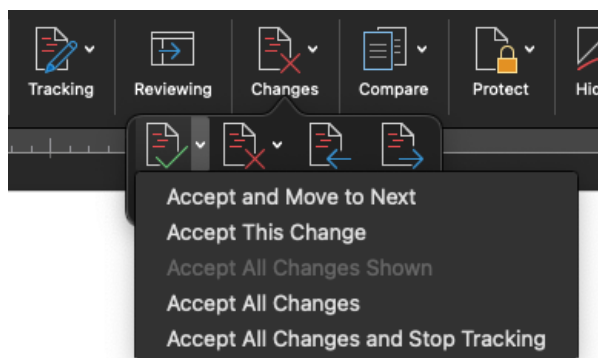
Method 2: Track Changes in second or later revisions

The problem with multiple revisions is that it becomes difficult to tell what you changed in the first vision and what you changed in the most recent stage of your editing process. To show only the most recent changes, you need to recent the document to the last version you turned in and then track only the new changes.

To do that, you need to “accept” all the old changes first, then start tracking the new ones. Here’s how.

Microsoft Word

Open your document. From the options at the top of the document, select the “Review” menu, then select “Changes,” then “Accept,” then Accept All Changes.”



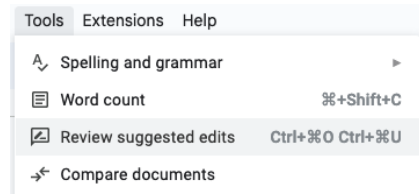
Now, all of the previous changes don’t appear as changes anymore, but any *new* changes you make will be tracked as before.

This is the newly revised sentence.

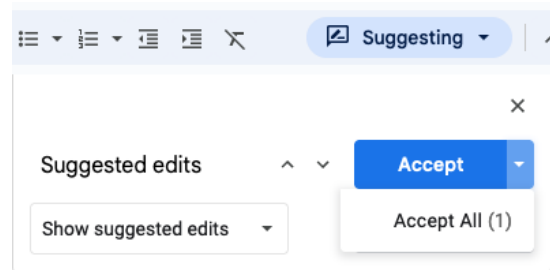
Simpson, Erik
Deleted: revised

Google Docs

Within your document showing the suggestions, go to the “Tools” menu at the top, then choose “Review Selected Edits.”



A menu will then drop down from the “Suggesting” button, revealing an “Accept” button. Click the arrow on the “Accept” button to reveal an additional “Accept All” button.



Select that option, and you’re all set—the old changes will be accepted, and the new ones will be tracked as suggestions.

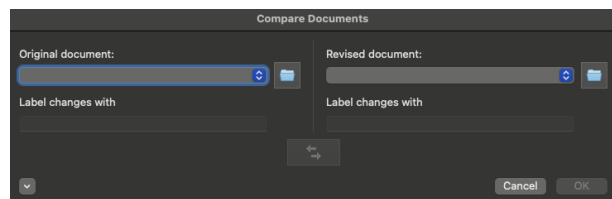
Method 3: Compare Documents (for when you have already made changes you didn’t track)

All of the methods above require you to activate a tracking process before you start making changes. What do you do if you already made your revisions?

For that purpose, you can use a “Compare Documents” function that reveals the changes between two versions of the document. You might have saved the first version of the document, or you might have a record of it in an email you sent to me to submit it.

Microsoft Word

Again using the “Review” menu, select the “Compare” button, then choose “Compare Documents.” That will bring up a menu that lets you select the original version, the new version, and the label you want to use for changes:



Make the appropriate selections, and the program will generate a document that shows your changes.

Google Docs

The Google version operates similarly, and the process begins with going to the “Tools” menu and selecting “Compare Documents.” The process might be self-explanatory from that point on, but if you have any trouble, you can see the [detailed instructions at How-To Geek](#).