

The 4 Biggest Time-Saving Microsoft Word Features You're Probably Not Using

Helpful post from Legal Office Guru:

<http://legalofficeguru.com/4-biggest-time-saving-microsoft-word-features/>

Lisa Solomon, New York

You left out autocorrect, which is absolutely my favorite.

With a bit of memorization, you can insert the most common words and phrases at surprising speed.

My own system is pretty simple:

Most common words are three letter repeating roots. Pfp for plaintiff; dfd for defendant; jdj for judgment; jsj for jurisdiction; ptp for property; ctc for constitution; and so on. Using only two letters makes them very fast to type.

Then I add suffixes, which makes them easy to remember. pfps for plaintiffs. jdjs for judgments. jsjl for jurisdictional.

Things which are used in multiple forms get short codes that can be extended to add information. wtw is West Tisbury; wtwtw is West Tisbury, MA 02575. hlohlo is Hammarlund law Office; hlohlohlo is Hammarlund Law Office, 10 State Rd. Unit B-3, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568. dc dc is Dukes

County; dcdcdc is County of Dukes County. And so on.

Long, common, phrases get acronyms. Dukes County Registry of Deeds is, unsurprisingly, "dcrd." Dukes County Registry District of the Land Court is "dclc."

But since I type a lot of real estate documents, which are always referring to recorded information, I also use "rdcrd" which inserts "and recorded with the Dukes County Registry of Deeds in Book". Want to guess what "rdclc" will insert?

It's pretty hard to describe how fast this makes things. And it sure is simple to type cmcm instead of Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Erik Hammarlund, Massachusetts

Have you utilized QuickParts in Word? It is essentially AutoCorrect on steroids and allows for the insertion of paragraphs essentially at the click of the mouse, great for paragraphs that you are constantly utilizing. Similar to you, I also use AutoCorrect in Word extensively and generally use the same "system" which you outline below. For example, "private inurement" is a term I use all the time in my practice, I just type in "pi" for that, or "exor" for "exempt organization" and on and on and on.

Brian Yacker, California

Does that QuickParts work in Quickbooks?

Walter D. James III, Texas

It does not...but AutoHotKey does. :-)

Disclaimer: Never been a lawyer; have been an AutoHotKey user for as long as I can remember.

Ben M. Schorr

Autocorrect only lets you type in a limited number of characters, BUT you can cut and paste lots more.

Mitchell P. Goldstein

QuickParts essentially automates the cut and paste process.

Brian Yacker

The only problem I have is that I use c4 for Cal.4th, c3 for Cal.3d, etc. since I type these citations in briefs all the time. It can screw up Excel unless I remember to turn it off first.

Wendy Lascher, California

Ha, I have exactly the same problem since I use "f9" for Form 990 !!! That being said, since I am a challenged typist, I love just typing 5c for §501(c)(3)!!

Brian Yacker

Yes, I use quick parts all the time, most often for large pre-formatted building blocks like notary, jurats, letterhead (which includes jpeg images and multiple text blocks,) complaint headers, and the like. I find autocorrect is much faster, though.

Erik Hammarlund

Preface your autocorrect entry with a symbol. I usually use either / or { since those are characters I don't normally type often.

{c4 for "Cal.4th" might work better?

Disclaimer: Never been an attorney; have written 3 books on Word for attorneys.

Ben M. Schorr

Autocorrect is best for things that are less than a sentence. Word or short phrases. QuickParts works best for sentences and paragraphs - longer content.

I use both. :)

Disclaimer: No, still never been an attorney.

Ben M. Schorr

Instead of using Word's AutoCorrect , AutoText, or QuickParts, I suggest using text expanding that works in all your programs. That way, you can use the same "triggers" in your word processing program(s), email client, billing program, accounting program, litigation support program, blog posts, and everything else.

I have been happily using ActiveWords for a few weeks, which does a lot more that expand text. The time you invest in learning the program and building your triggers and actions pays dividends in saved time and effort *very* quickly. Entering your existing Word AutoCorrect and AutoText entries (and WordPerfect's corresponding features) are a good place to start.

I recommend the free ActiveWords add-in that acts as a system-wide AutoCorrect in its intended function of correcting common misspellings and typos and adds your own misspellings and typos as you work.

Steven Finell, California

I've used ActiveWords for years, and it has saved me a huge amount of time. I highly recommend it.

Caroline A. Edwards, Pennsylvania
