

## Preparing Microsoft Word Files for Moodle

This information is oriented towards using Microsoft Word files in Moodle, but most of it is relevant to using any Microsoft Office files (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) on the web generally.

### Problems with Microsoft Office Files on the Web

- **Character-Encoding Conflicts.** You will sometimes see strange characters appear in your text, when you copy and paste the text from Word into Moodle, or when you save the file as a web page and upload it to Moodle. That is because the character encoding for Microsoft Office files is different from the standard character encoding for web pages.

For information about changing the character encoding, see below.

- **HTML — the Language of the Web.** HTML files (which have the file extension .html or .htm) work best in Moodle and on the web generally, because they are native to the web. They open quickly, and directly in the student's web browser.

Word, PowerPoint, and other types of files (except for HTML) require a software application or browser plug-in for that file type, in order to be viewed on the web. It thus takes longer for students to access files that are not web pages, because they have to wait for that software to launch. In addition, some students may not have the necessary software to open that file type.

You can upload any kind of file to Moodle, but students can only open the file, if they have the corresponding software application or plug-in.

### Saving Word Files in Other File Formats

Saving a Word file in a different format, before uploading it to the web, can increase the chances that others can access it. Here are some options:

- **Save .docx files as .doc files.** You should still save .docx files (files created using Word 2007/2008 or later) as .doc files, since many students may not have a recent version of MS Word or know how to convert .docx files.
- **Save Word files in RTF (Rich Text Format).** You will probably encounter a few students who cannot open .doc files. To avoid causing problems for those students, you can save Word files (either .docx or .doc files) in RTF (Rich Text Format). More students will be able to access .rtf files than .doc files.
- **Save Word files in HTML format.** A third option is to convert your Word files (either .docx or .doc files) to web pages. (The file type is .html or .htm). Anyone using a web browser can open HTML files, because they don't require any other software. Most Word files can be converted easily and nicely to web pages, but others may require changes to the page formatting and/or the character-encoding of the file.

**Note:** Before saving a Word file as a web page, you may need to do one or both of these:

1. Change the character-encoding to **Unicode (UTF-8)**.
2. Modify the page formatting (by replacing tabs with table formatting, for example).



For instructions, see: [Converting Microsoft Word Files to Web Pages](#).

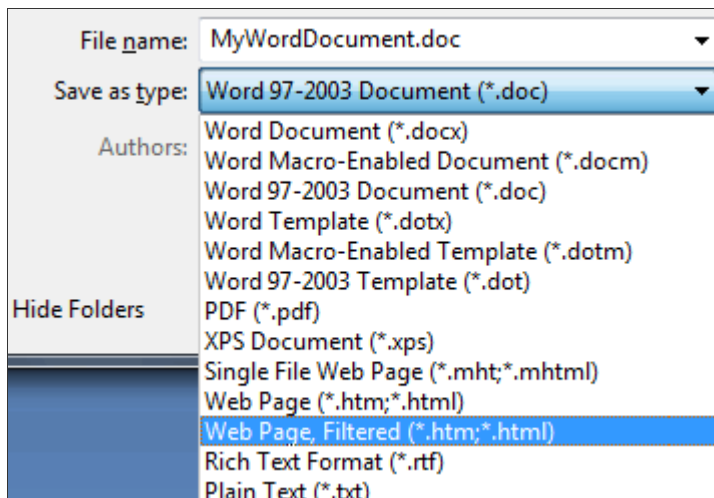
### Saving MS Word Files in a Different Format

1. Open the **File** menu (Word 2003 or earlier) or the **Office** menu (Word 2007 or later)



and select **Save As**. (Ignore the file types that appear; just click on Save As.)

- In the location bar at the top of the Save As window, select the location to which you want to save the plain text file.
- On the Save As screen, open the **drop-down menu** for **File Type** or **Save as type**. Select:
  - Word 97-2003 Document (\*.doc)** — To convert a .docx file to .doc
  - Rich Text Format (\*.rtf)** — To convert to RTF
  - Web page, filtered (\*.htm;\*.html)** — To convert to HTML  
(For step-by-step instructions, see: [Converting Microsoft Word Files to Web Pages.](#))

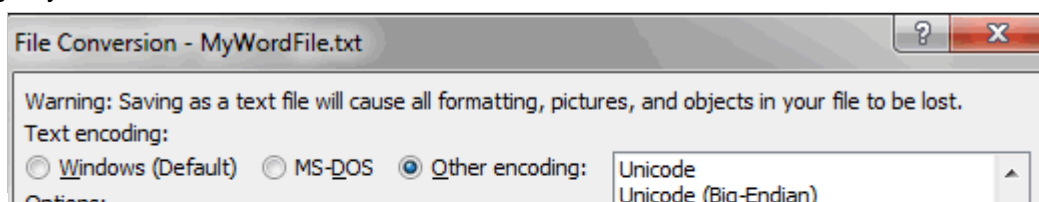


- Click **OK**.

## Copying and Pasting Text from Word to Moodle

When you copy text from Word (Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) to Moodle, you may see strange characters on the screen when you later view the page. To avoid that, you can first save the file in plain text (without formatting) and then copy text to Moodle.

- Open the **File** menu (Word 2003 or earlier) or the **Office** menu (Word 2007 or later) and select **Save As**. (Ignore the options that appear when you roll over the Save As menu item; just click on Save As.)
- In the location bar at the top of the Save As window, select the location to which you want to save the plain text file.
- Select **Plain Text (\*.txt)** from the drop-down menu labeled **File type** (Word 2003 or earlier) or **Save as type** (Word 2007 or later). (This menu is just below the **File name** in the Save As window.)
- Click **Save**.
- Before the file is saved, a File Conversion dialog box will appear, which gives you an opportunity to change the character encoding of your file.
- Click **Other encoding** and select **Unicode (UTF-8)** from the options.



7. Check the **Allow Character Substitution** box.



8. You will see a preview of the converted document. You may see that some characters have been replaced ('curly quotes' replaced with straight quotation marks, for example).
9. Click **OK**.
10. Open the plain text (.txt) file you just saved.
11. You can copy and paste text into Moodle from this file (which now has UTF-8 encoding).

Created by Jane Rice. Updated March 2011.