

What is a macro?

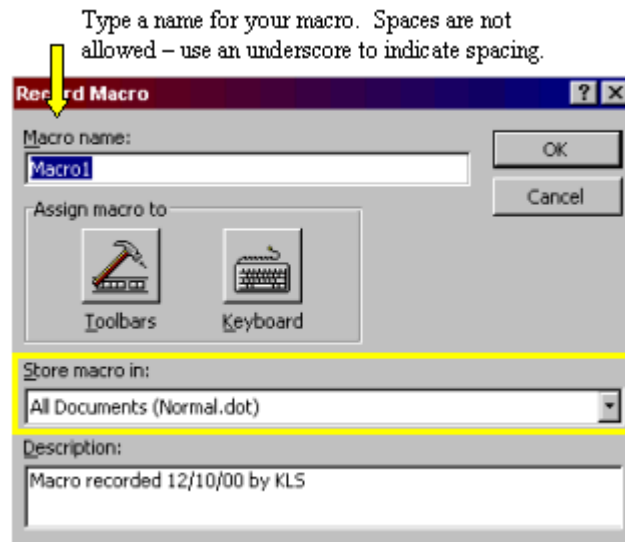
Put simply, macros automate common tasks. For example, let's say when you print out a particular document, you always have to print 5 copies. You always need to go to the **File/Print** menu, select 5 copies, and choose **OK** to print. Wouldn't it be nice if you could just press a keyboard shortcut or choose a button on the toolbar and have Word automatically print 5 copies? That's what macros do. Macros allow you to assign a keyboard shortcut or create a button on the toolbar for tasks you commonly perform and can save you oodles of time. Macros are written in Visual Basic for Applications (VBA), but are easily created in Word with no knowledge of VBA. The code is written for you!

A macro can be created for virtually any task that you perform in Word. The amount of steps is irrelevant. You can even create a macro that automatically places certain text in a document with as many attributes as you'd like! This is great if you need to place things like legal statements or disclaimers in a document.

Macros are created with a recording device similar to a common tape recorder. Once you start recording your macro, a toolbar pops up with standard stop and pause buttons. Let's use our example of creating a macro that automatically prints 5 copies of a document, and make one!

Creating a Macro

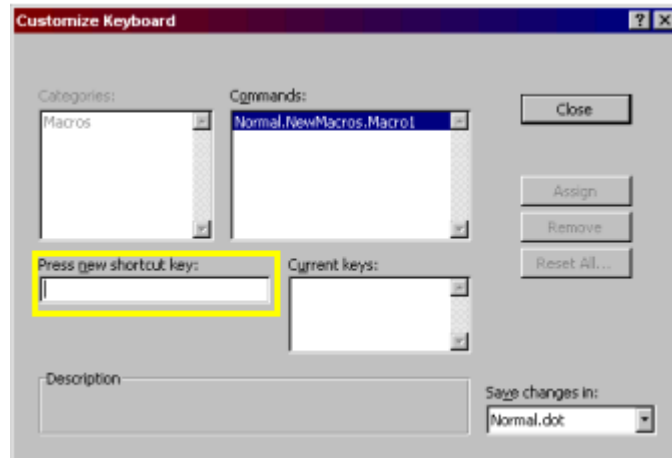
1. Open a blank document or open the document in which you would like to add a macro. You can assign the macro to either be available to all documents, or just the document you currently have open.
2. From the **Tools** menu, choose **Macro** and **Record New Macro**. The **Record Macro** dialog box is displayed as shown below.



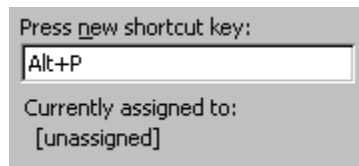
3. Type a name for your macro as indicated above, and choose where to store your macro. The drop down arrow will allow you to choose a document that you have open to store your macro in, or you can make it available to all documents by storing it in the Normal template.
4. Add a **Description** if you would like - this is helpful if you are creating a lot of macros and need to keep everything organized. I usually just make the macro name something I can recognize, and leave the description as the default text.
5. To assign the macro to a toolbar button, choose **Toolbars**. To assign the macro to a keyboard shortcut, choose **Keyboard**. For the example we are using, we are assigning the macro to a

Macros

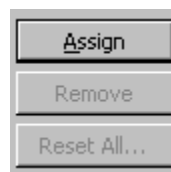
keyboard shortcut. That seems to be the preferred choice for most users. The **Customize Keyboard** dialog box appears as shown below.



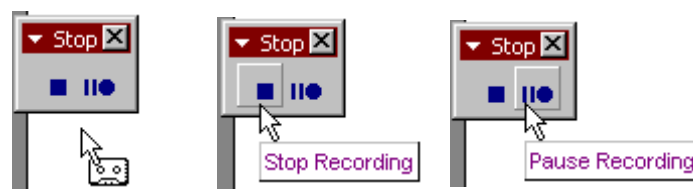
6. On your keyboard, press the shortcut key combination that you would like to use. For example, Alt+P. Note that you are pressing the actual shortcut on your keyboard, not typing out the letters like you see in the graphic below. The combination is automatically placed in the **Press new shortcut key** box, and Word tells you whether or not that shortcut is already assigned. If the shortcut is already in use, try pressing a different combination. You can use any number of combinations of Ctrl, Shift, and/or Alt with a letter or number. If Alt+P was taken, I might have tried Alt+Shift+P.



7. Once you have found a shortcut that is not assigned, the **Assign** button becomes active. Choose **Assign** and **Close**. After you choose **Close**, the recording of your macro immediately begins.



8. The **Stop** toolbar is displayed while you are recording, and your mouse has a small cassette icon attached to it. This lets you know that Word is recording every move and click of the mouse you make until you choose the **Stop Recording** button on the **Stop** toolbar. You can also choose the **Pause Recording** button on the **Stop** toolbar if you need to temporarily stop recording. Choose the **Pause Recording** button again to continue.



Macros

- In our example, from the **File** menu we would now choose **Print**. We would change the number of copies to 5, then choose **OK**. You can have any number of steps for the task you are performing, and you can use any of the menus and tools available. Every character you type and/or click of your mouse is recorded. Since our macro is a simple macro for printing 5 copies, we are now done recording.
- Choose **Stop Recording** on the **Stop** toolbar. The toolbar disappears, and you are finished!
- Test your macro by pressing the shortcut key you have chosen. In this example, Alt+P. It should print five copies of the current document.

Note: It is easy to get a bit nervous when recording a macro, much like if you were recording something on an actual tape recorder. Remember, though, that Word is recording what you do and not the speed at which you do it. Take your time and be sure it is exactly what you want. If you make a slight mistake, don't panic! Fix it and keep going - your mistake and fix is recorded in the macro, but macros execute commands so fast you won't even be able to tell. If you totally mess things up, choose **Stop Recording**, delete the macro, and try again.

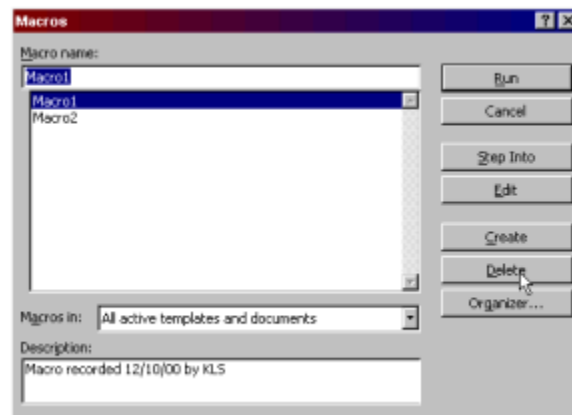
Deleting a Macro

To delete a macro when it is no longer needed, or to re-record a macro:

- From the **Tools** menu, choose **Macro** and **Macros**.



- In the **Macros** dialog box, select the macro you want to delete, and choose **Delete** and **Close**.



You would go to the same box to edit your macro with the **Edit** button. However, this opens the Visual Basic Editor and unless you know VBA you may not be able to make the changes you would like. If you need to make changes and are unfamiliar with VBA, it is best just to delete the old one and record a new one.