

Blackboard and Office 2007

INSTRUCTORS: How can you ensure that all of the students in your Blackboard course can access all of your Microsoft Office-based content?

STUDENTS: How can you ensure that your instructor can open and read homework created by Microsoft Office, then submitted to Blackboard without hassle?

This document details some steps that users of Microsoft Office 2003 and Microsoft Office 2007 can take to more easily share files through Blackboard.

Potential Problems in Using Blackboard with Office 2007

Blackboard is a web-based application, so it might be assumed by some users of Blackboard that issues of compatibility among different versions of Microsoft Office are not a concern in the Blackboard environment. However, because Blackboard serves as a repository for files that are shared between students and instructors, the issue of compatibility must be addressed. You should be aware that those receiving your Office 2007 file might not be able to open the file if they have an earlier version of Microsoft Office, such as Office 2003.

Office 2007 applications now save files with new, different file extensions:

Application	Office 2007 default extension	Office 2003 (and earlier) default extension
Word	.docx	.doc
Excel	.xlsx	.xls
PowerPoint	.pptx	.ppt

An Office 2007 file which is saved in its **new** default extension (see table above) cannot be opened by Office 2003 applications unless the Office 2003 user converts the file using the **Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats**. The pack is available as a [free download from Microsoft](#). You can also go to <http://office.microsoft.com> and search for “Compatibility Pack”. There is no compatibility pack for Access 2007. Macintosh Office 2004 users have a similar converter, but at this time it is only available in the beta testing version. Check at <http://www.microsoft.com/mac/> and search for “Office Open XML File Format Converter for Mac”. Even after conversion, some features of a file that were created in Office 2007 cannot be edited by the user of Office 2003. Following are some instructions you can follow to make files you share in Blackboard easier to use by others.

If you use Microsoft Office 2003, files you create can be opened by users of both Office 2003 and Office 2007. However, if you receive someone else's file which was created by Office 2007, you won't be able to open that file without installing operating system updates and downloading the **Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack**. These points are addressed next.

1. Ensure that your computer operating system is fully updated. Visit the Microsoft Update page, (www.update.microsoft.com/microsoftupdate) to download the latest updates to your operating system.
2. Install the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack. This will allow you to see everything that's contained in the file. However, you will not be able to edit any new features from Office 2007. These are usually displayed as graphic images.

If you use Microsoft Office 2007 you should consider that others might not have upgraded to Office 2007 yet. Following are suggestions for users of Office 2007:


1. Ask your instructor and fellow students with whom you'll share files if they can open MS Office 2007 files. If they use MS Office 2007, there will be no problem with sharing. If they use MS Office 2003 and have installed the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack, they will at least be able to open your file, though they will not have full editing capabilities – some features in the converted document will have become “static”.
2. Save your Microsoft Office 2007 files AS Microsoft Office 2003 files. In Office 2007, you have the option to save your created files in the format used by older versions. For example, you can save a Word 2007 document which normally has a “.docx” extension AS a Word 2003 document, which has a “.doc” extension. Step-by-step instructions for saving your file as an earlier version can be found at the end of this document.

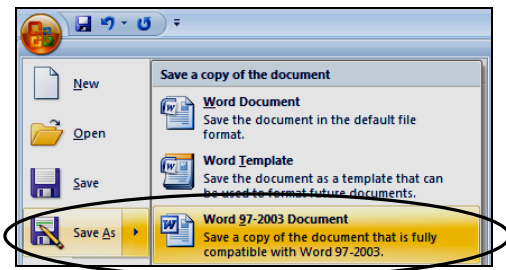
Blackboard Gradebook and Office 2007

The Blackboard gradebook, when downloaded to an instructor's computer, has the .csv file type, which is version-independent with Microsoft Excel. If you use Excel 2007 to revise the gradebook file on your personal computer, save the file from Excel 2007 as a .csv file. The Excel 2007 file saved with a .csv format can then be uploaded back into Blackboard's gradebook by the instructor without problems.

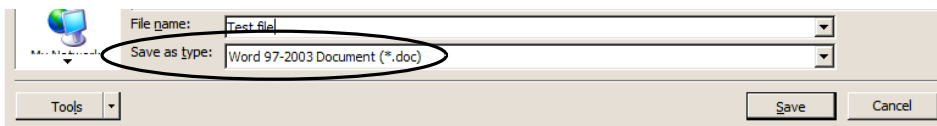
Instructions for Saving Office 2007 Files AS Office 2003 Files

Word:

1. Click the **Office** button  located at the top left corner of your screen
2. Select **Save As**
3. Select **Word 97-2003 Document**



4. Name the file and ensure that the *Save as Type* is **Word 97-2003 document (*.doc)**



Excel:

1. Click the **Office** button at the top left corner of your screen.
2. Select **Save As**
3. Select **Excel 97-2003 Workbook**

PowerPoint:

1. Click the **Office** button at the top left corner of your screen.
2. Select **Save As**
3. Select **PowerPoint 97-2003 Presentation**

Sending Files to Your Instructor Through Blackboard

By saving your file as an Office 2003 file type, you can ensure that everyone will be able to open the files you send through Blackboard Assignments, Digital Dropbox, or as attachments to a discussion posting.