

Word, Excel & Microsoft 365 | Easy | 2 min read

Word: how to set spell-check to English (UK)

If Word keeps underlining words like colour or organise in red, or suggests American spellings, its proofing language is set to US English. This is quick to fix, and you can make it permanent.

Change the language for the document you have open

1. Press Ctrl+A to select everything in the document.
2. Click the **Review** tab.
3. Click **Language**, then **Set Proofing Language**.
4. Choose **English (United Kingdom)**.
5. Make sure **Do not check spelling or grammar** is not ticked.
6. Click **OK**.

The red underlines should vanish for the correct UK spellings.

Make UK English the default for new documents

Open the same box (**Review**, **Language**, **Set Proofing Language**), choose **English (United Kingdom)**, click **Set As Default**, and confirm. Word may ask you to agree that this affects all new documents based on the usual template. Say yes.

Check the status bar

At the bottom of the Word window you can usually see the language, for example **English (United States)**. Clicking it opens the same box. If it is not visible, right-click the status bar and tick **Language**.

Check the Windows setting

Open **Settings**, then **Time & language**, then **Language & region**, and check that your region is **United Kingdom**. This helps with dates and the pound sign across all programs.

Common problems

- **Only some of the text is still wrong:** that text may have been pasted in from a US source. Select all again and reapply the language.
- **Spell-check is not working at all:** go to **File**, **Options**, **Proofing** and tick **Check spelling as you type**.
- **Other Office programs still show US spelling:** Outlook and PowerPoint have their own settings. In **File**, **Options**, **Language** you can choose the editing language.
- **On a Mac:** open the **Tools** menu, then **Language**, and choose English (UK).

When to get more help

If this keeps resetting on a work computer, the setting may be controlled by your organisation, and we can help change it properly.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.