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Word or Excel crashed: how to recover an unsaved file

When Word or Excel closes unexpectedly, your work is often not lost. Office keeps temporary copies in the background. Stay calm, and avoid saving over anything until you have looked.

Menu names vary between versions, so use the closest wording.

Reopen the app first

When you start Word or Excel again after a crash, a **Document Recovery** panel often appears on the left. It lists recovered versions.

1. Click each one to preview it.
2. Choose the newest or most complete one.
3. Click **Save As** and give it a new name, so you do not overwrite the original.

If the panel does not appear

1. Open Word or Excel.
2. Click **File** then **Open**.
3. Look for **Recover Unsaved Documents** (Word) or **Recover Unsaved Workbooks** (Excel). It is usually near the bottom of the recent files list, or under **Manage Document** or **Manage Workbook** in the **Info** section.
4. Open any listed file and use **Save As** straight away.

Check AutoSave and previous versions

If the file is stored in OneDrive or SharePoint and **AutoSave** was on, look at **File** then **Info** then **Version History**. Older versions may be listed.

Search for backup copies

Search your computer for the file name. Word sometimes keeps files starting with "~" or ending in .asd or .wbk. Do not delete these until you have your work back.

Prevent a repeat

- Turn on **AutoSave** when the file is online.
- Press **Ctrl + S** often.
- Keep Office updated.
- Do not open huge files from email attachments directly. Save them first.

If it keeps crashing

Try opening the app in Safe Mode by holding **Ctrl** while you click its icon. This switches off add-ins. If it helps, an add-in may be the cause. Do not remove add-ins you do not recognise.

Please do not

Do not repair or reinstall Office until you have tried to recover the work.

When to get more help

Contact us if the file will not open, says it is corrupt, or shows only strange characters. Do not keep trying to save over it.

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.