

Office 2007 file formats for use in Blackboard

Office 2007 applications such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint will by default save files with new different file extensions (.docx, .xlsx, .pptx) than Office 2003 and earlier versions (.doc, .xls, .ppt). Blackboard currently does not recognize these new file formats. Files created in Office 2007 will generate the following message when students who do not have Office 2007 or the Microsoft Compatibility Pack installed attempt to open the file placed in Blackboard.

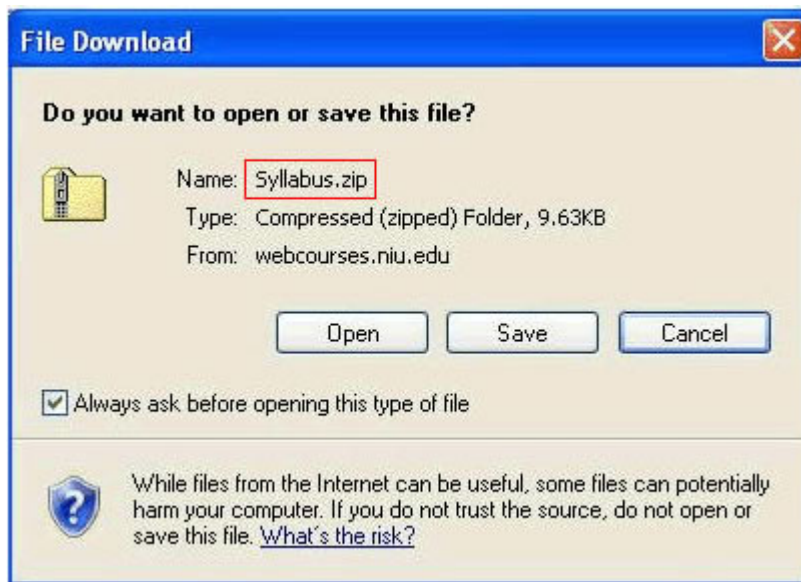
An Office 2007 file uploaded to Blackboard:

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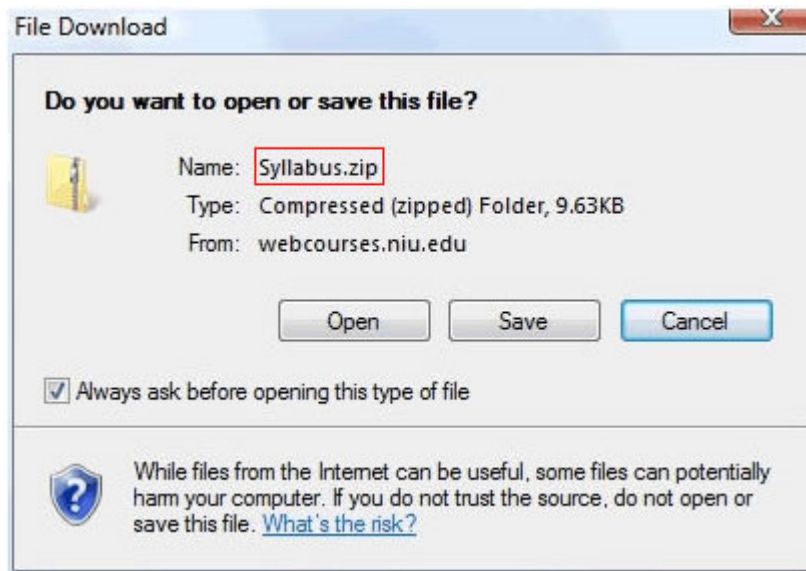
Course Documents



Windows XP file open dialog box:



Windows Vista file open dialog box:



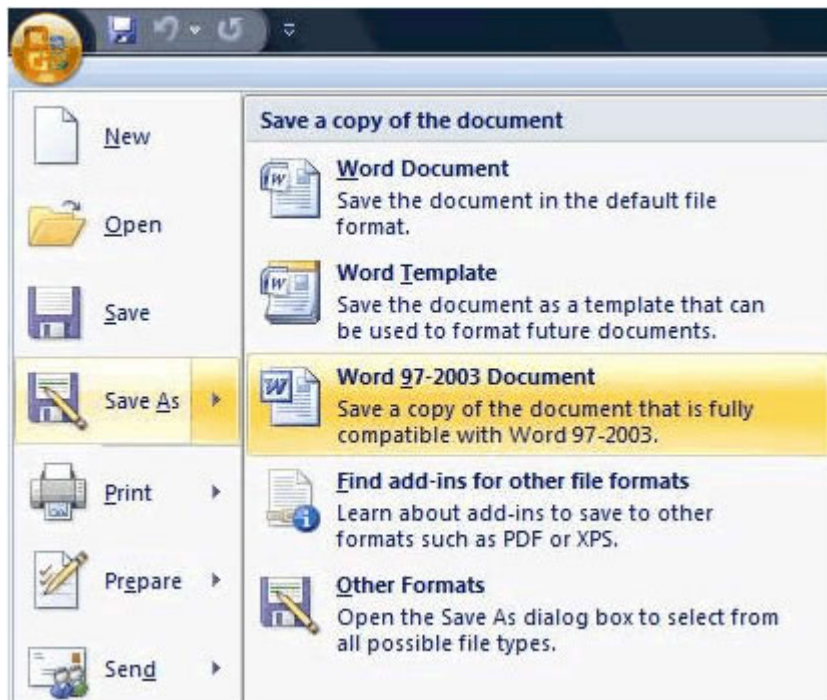
By clicking "Open" in the dialog, the file will be unzipped into a number of files, **neither** of which will open in the intended Office application. Until more people upgrade to Office 2007 or download the Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack which allows users with older Office versions to view these new file formats, it is recommended that you **NOT** save your Office 2007 documents in the new file formats. Rather, save Office 2007 documents in Office 2003 file formats. Below are some steps you can take to ensure that if you create files using Office 2007, instructors and students can still access them in Blackboard.

Saving Office 2007 files as Office 2003

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 document that Word 2007 by default saves as .docx as a Word 2003 .doc file.

When saving your Word 2007 file, choose "Save As", and choose Word 97-2003 format. This saves your Word 2007 document not as a .docx file but rather .doc file that can be opened and read in older versions of Microsoft Word.

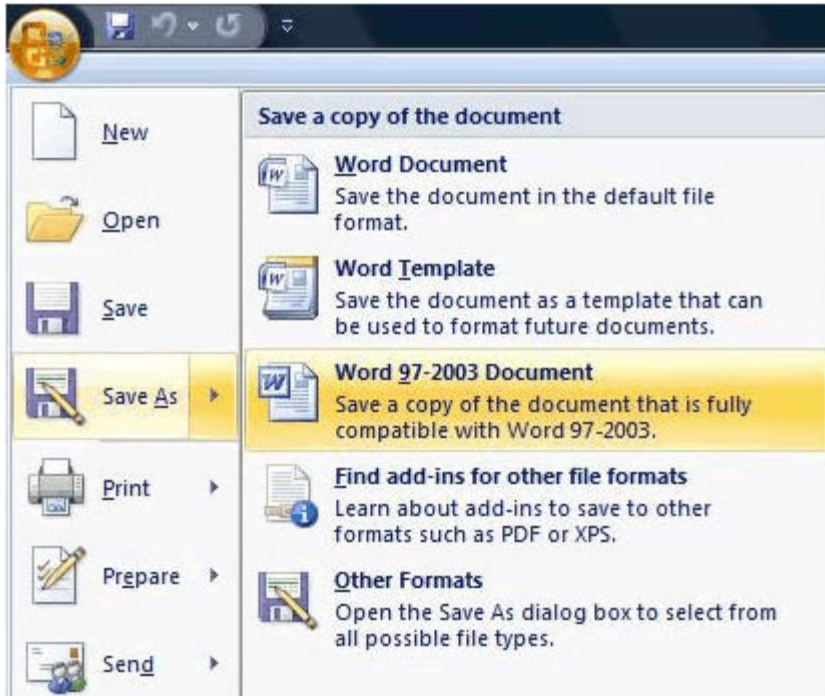
Likewise, when saving an Excel 2007 spreadsheet or PowerPoint 2007 presentation, choose "Save As", and save your spreadsheet or presentation in the old file format.



Setting the default file saving format in Office 2007 to Office 2003

To force Office 2007 to always save new files in the old .doc file format, take the following steps in Word 2007. Repeat these steps for each Office 2007 program (such as PowerPoint or Excel) old file format (ppt. or .xls) that you may be using for uploading files to Blackboard.

Step 1: Click on the Office icon at the top left corner of MS Word. Click on "Word Options" at the bottom right corner, or alternatively use the letter "i" on your keyboard.



Step 2: Select "Save" from the menu options, in the right-hand side panel, down-arrow on "Save files in this format" and select "Word 97-2003 Document (*.doc)".



Step 3: Click "Ok" to accept the changes.

Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Office 2007 File Formats

Since Office 2007 programs typically creates files in docx, xlsx, and pptx format, Office 2003 and earlier versions cannot read these files. If you do not use Office 2007 but would still like to ensure that you can read Office 2007 files, you will have to install the Compatibility Pack from Microsoft. The Compatibility Pack can be downloaded at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/products/HA101686761033.aspx> and then follow the instructions below to install it.

Instructions for download:

1. Ensure your system is up to date by installing all High-Priority/Required updates on Microsoft Update (required for Microsoft Office XP and 2003 users) available here.
2. After installing all High-Priority/Required updates with Microsoft Update, download the Compatibility Pack and saving the file to your desktop.
3. Double-click the FileFormatConverters.exe program file on your desktop to start the setup program.
4. Follow the instructions on the screen to complete the installation.