CHANGING THE SETTINGS ON MS WORD TO CHECK GRAMMAR

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:

MS Word only checks basic spelling and basic grammar by default. However, it also has the capability to help improve writing to a more formal, college level style by giving helpful suggestions and checking for common grammar, style, and punctuation oversights. **THIS HANDBOOK WILL DETAIL THE STEPS TO CHANGE THE SPELL CHECK SETTINGS TO ALSO PERFORM A GRAMMAR CHECK**

**NOTE**: This will **NOT** correct errors or always contribute helpful suggestions, but it will help give an idea where common problems occur and where rewording or additional punctuation may help improve the sentence.

TO CHANGE THE SETTINGS ON A PC IN MS WORD (2010/2007 VERSION) -

1. Click “File” at the top left corner and go to “Options”
2. Click “Proofing” from the left side bar
3. Under the section “When Correcting Spelling and Grammar in Word”
   a. To have Word give suggestions while writing, be sure to have the first 4 check boxes marked – their definitions are listed below
      i. “Check Spelling as you type” – red lines under misspelled words as you are writing
      ii. “Use Contextual Spelling” - spelling suggestions based on the context of the sentence
      iii. “Mark Grammar Errors as you type” – green lines under possible grammar errors as you are writing
      iv. “Check Grammar with spelling” – Word will check both grammar and spelling during a normal spell check under the review tab
v. “Show readability statistics” is optional – brings up a box after a normal spell check that shows you how many words, paragraphs, and characters are in the document and the Flesh Kincaid (estimated) reading level of the paper

4. In the sub-section “Writing Style,” hit the drop down box and choose “Grammar and Style” to check both
   a. To customize these settings (such as if you are getting the same error over and over and want to stop Word from checking that particular grammatical problem), click on the “Settings” button next to the Writing Style drop down box.
      i. An example of a reason to customize the settings would be when writing a reflection essay. The check for using first person and passive voice may be needed in a reflection essay, but is typically discouraged in other essays. Thus if you are writing a reflection essay, go into the settings and scroll down to where it says “Passive Voice” or “Use of First Person” and uncheck those boxes.
   ii. Other things you may want to have MS Word check for:
      1. Comma required before last list item: He needs sugar, salt, and spice.
      2. Punctuation required with quotes: Inside/outside/don’t check (personal preference/professor’s preference)
      3. Spaces required between sentences: 2 (very helpful for consistency)

5. After changing the settings, click the button “Recheck Document” to check the current document using the new settings, then click “ok”. After this, during a normal spell check, Word will also check grammar and style for more formal writing as well.

6. When doing a standard spell check on a PC in Word, and it finds a grammatical error, there is an “Explain” button at the right side of the Spelling and Grammar checking box. This will bring up Word's help window giving a helpful rule or guide as to why it marked that particular grammatical issue. You can also right click on a green wavy line, and click “About this Sentence” to bring up the same help window.
1. Click on “Word” at the top left corner of the top title bar. Click on “Preferences...” to open the Word Preferences box.
2. Click on “Spelling and Grammar” to open the options box
3. Under the section called “Grammar” look for the sub-section called “Writing Style:”
4. Next to Writing Style, click on the arrows next to “Standard” and change it to “Formal”
   a. This will change the grammar settings to check for more formal style of writing
   b. To customize these settings (such as if you are getting the same error over and over and want to stop Word from checking that particular grammatical problem), click on the “Settings” button next to the Writing Style drop down box.
      i. An example of a reason to customize the settings would be when writing a reflection essay. The check for using first person and passive voice may be needed in a reflection essay, but is typically discouraged in other essays. Thus if you are writing a reflection essay, go into the settings and scroll down to where it says “Passive Voice” or “Use of First Person” and uncheck those boxes.
      ii. Other things you may want to have MS Word check for under these settings:
         1. Comma required before last list item: He needs sugar, salt, and spice.
         2. Punctuation required with quotes: Inside/outside/don’t check (personal preference/professor’s preference)
         3. Spaces required between sentences: 2 (very helpful for consistency)
5. After changing the settings, click the button “Recheck Document” to check the current document using the new settings, then click “ok”. After this, during a normal spell check, Word will also check grammar and style for more formal writing as well.