

WORD HACKS™

*Tips & Tools for
Taming Your Text*



O'REILLY®

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HACK
#3

Hack Your Shortcut Menu

To find relevant commands quickly, most Word users head straight for the shortcut menus. But like any Word menu, a shortcut menu is yours for the hacking.

In most applications, you're stuck with whatever the software company decides to put on its *shortcut menus* (the set of context-sensitive commands that appear when you right-click your mouse). For example, Microsoft must consider [hyperlinks](#) [Hack #28] *extremely* relevant; in Word 2003, you can insert a hyperlink from 26 of the 62 shortcut menus!

The shortcut menu you'll probably use most is the Text shortcut menu, which appears when you right-click within the text of a document. This menu is shown in its native form in Figure 2-1.

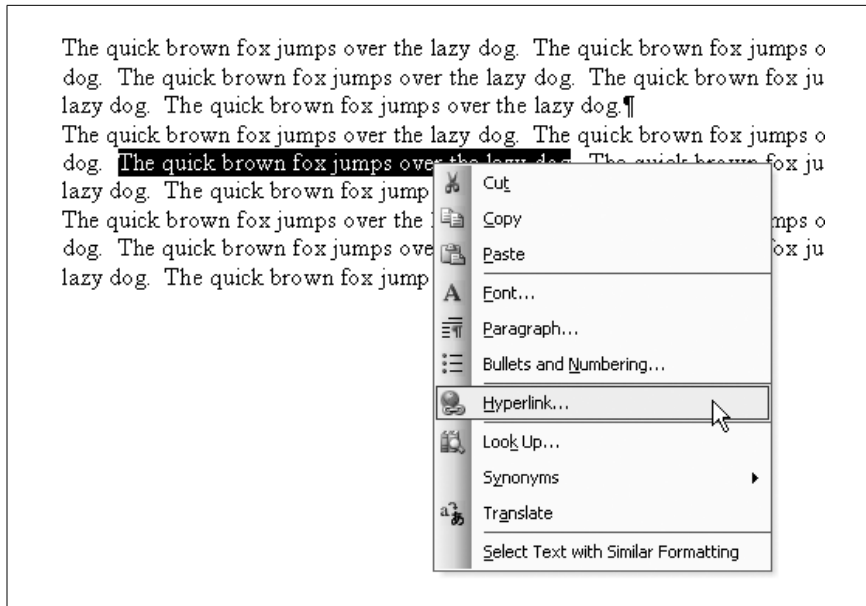


Figure 2-1. The default Text shortcut menu

Fortunately, you can rearrange any of the 62 shortcut menus in Word according to *your* priorities. For example, if you insert a lot of comments, the mouse mileage needed to repeatedly select the text and then go up and choose Insert → Comment can really add up. This hack will show you how to give your wrist a rest by moving the Insert Comment command closer to where you're working—onto the shortcut menu.

Accessing the Shortcut Menu Toolbar

All of the menus in Word reside on toolbars. Even the main menu bar (with File, Edit, View, etc.) is actually a toolbar—appropriately named Menu Bar. Shortcut menus are no different, but the toolbar they live on is a bit harder to find. In fact, except for when you’re customizing it, you’ll never get to see the Shortcut Menu toolbar; notice it’s not one of the choices offered when you select View → Toolbars.

To see the elusive Shortcut Menu toolbar, select Tools → Customize to display the Customize dialog. You can also right-click on the title bar of any toolbar or an unoccupied area of the main menu bar and choose Customize.

Select the Commands tab. If you want the shortcut menu changes to be available in every document you use, choose *Normal.dot* from the “Save in” drop-down list in the Customize dialog, as shown in Figure 2-2.

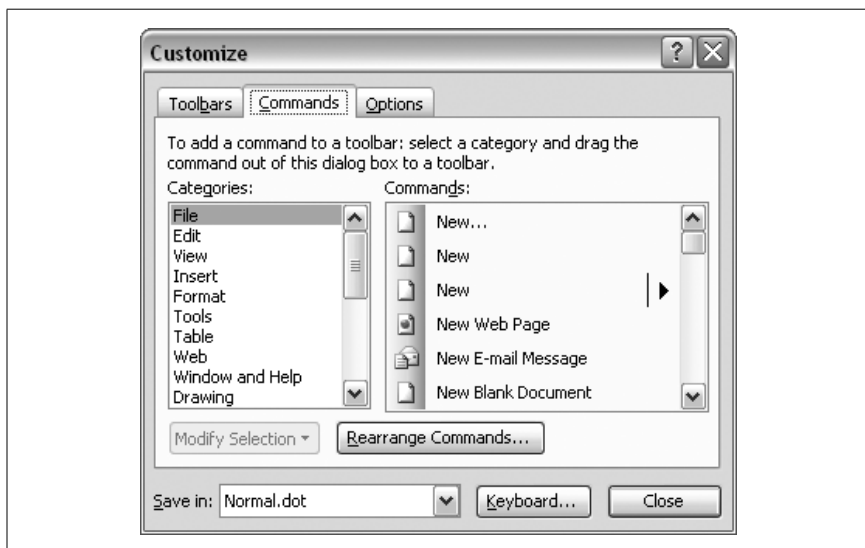


Figure 2-2. The Customize dialog

Next, click the Toolbars tab and check the “Shortcut Menus” box, as shown in Figure 2-3.

As soon as you check the box, a toolbar like the one in Figure 2-4 will appear on your screen, probably near the top left. *Don’t* press the Close button on the Customize dialog. You can access the Shortcut Menu toolbar only with the Customize dialog open.

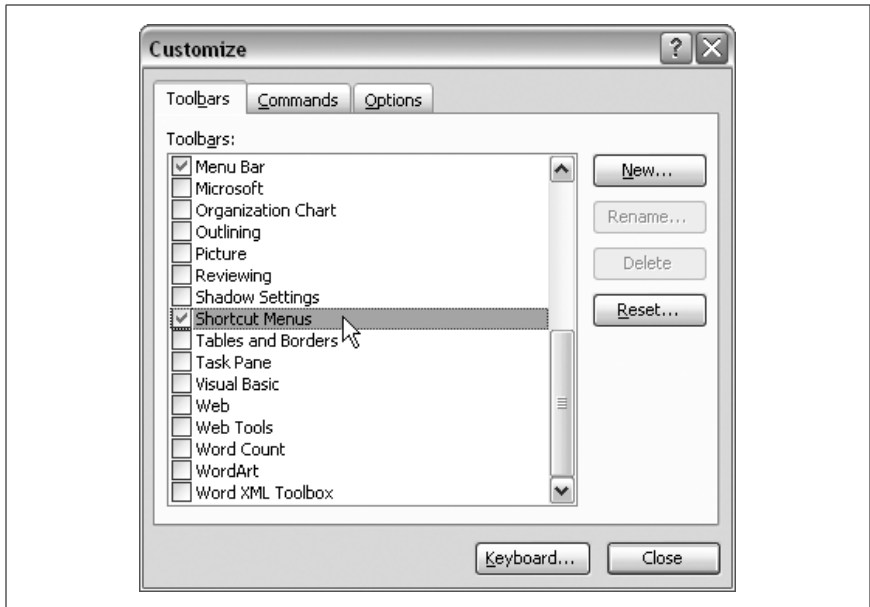


Figure 2-3. Getting to the shortcut menus



Figure 2-4. The elusive Shortcut Menu toolbar

Modifying a Shortcut Menu

Word divides shortcut menus into three categories: Text, Table, and Draw. This can help you narrow your search for a particular shortcut menu among the five dozen or so choices. To add the Insert Comment command to the shortcut menu that appears from within regular text, choose the Text menu on the Shortcut Menu toolbar, then scroll down and select Text, as shown in Figure 2-5.

Now click the Commands tab in the Customize dialog and choose Insert from the list of Categories on the left. Then, in the list of Commands on the right, scroll down until you get to Comment. Drag it from the Customize dialog to the Text shortcut menu. Once you release the mouse button, the Comment command will appear on the shortcut menu, as shown in Figure 2-6.

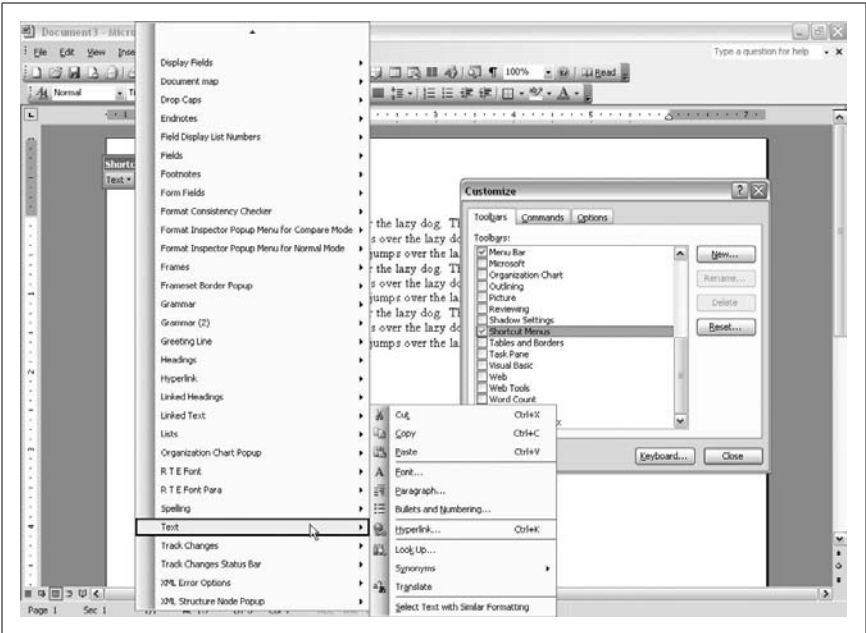


Figure 2-5. Accessing the Text shortcut menu for customization

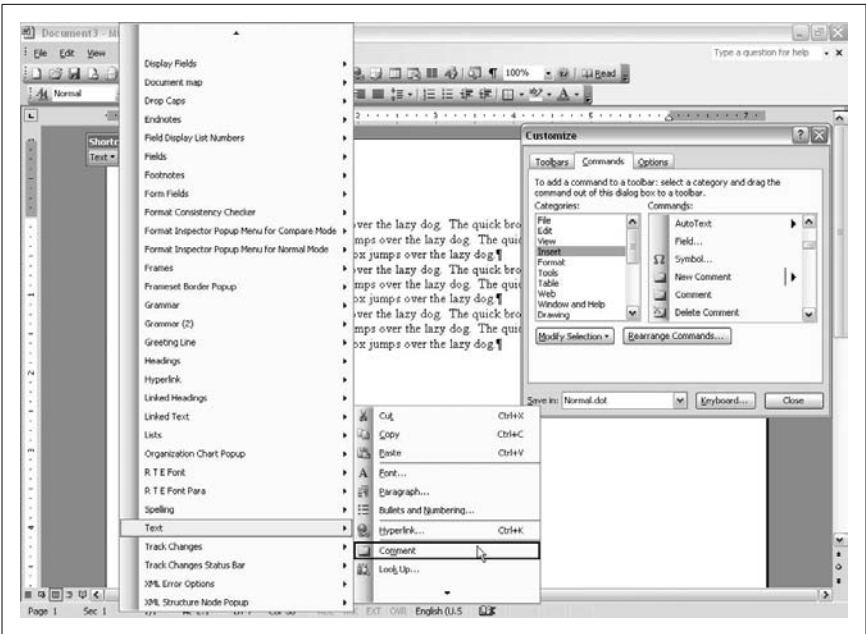


Figure 2-6. Adding a command to a shortcut menu

Hack Your Shortcut Menus

After you press Close on the Customize dialog, you'll be able to insert comments via the Text shortcut menu, without moving your mouse from the page.



To save your changes to *Normal.dot*, you must exit Word.