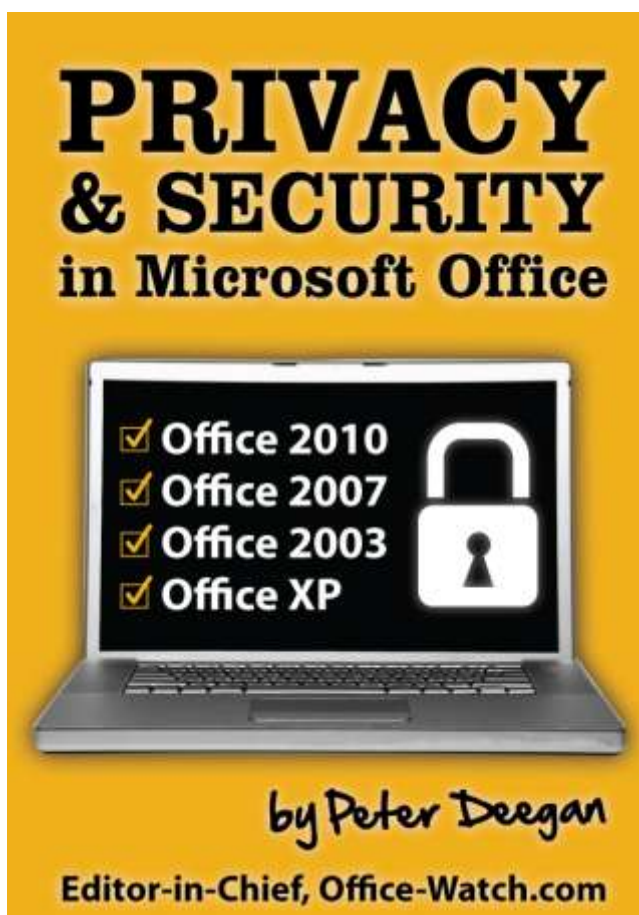


# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office

Protecting your information from prying  
eyes, theft and deliberate attack



by **Peter Deegan** – Editor-in-Chief *Office Watch*

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# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

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# Introduction

“Protecting your information from prying eyes, theft and deliberate attack”

So much important information is stored on our computers yet often they are poorly protected. You can walk up to a computer and get to bank account details, budgets, salary info, tax returns as well as much more personal messages.

This ebook focuses on using the security and encryption options available within Microsoft Office and Windows. There are many, often expensive, security options sold but most people don't need them. We show you how to use what is already in Windows and Office for reasonable security.

There is practical, step-by-step, information that you can use right away. If you're interested in the technical details of encryption algorithms and how they work, there are plenty of web sites that have eye-glazing details.

We'll tell you not only how to secure your data but also how it can be revealed with or without your knowledge. Knowing how information can be unlocked is important in case something goes wrong (eg a password is forgotten) and also so you can judge how secure a feature or option really is.

Sending digitally signed and encrypted messages can involve helping the receiver understand what's going on. This ebook has some examples of how signed messages appear (or not) in various email clients.

We've been working with computers and Office for a long time – we've seen good security turn around and damage people and companies badly. There's a potential downside to excessive security and we'll warn of those pitfalls.

There's often a lot of focus on communication security like secure web sites but less on vulnerabilities on an individual computer. We have a look at how to protect your computer from prying eyes, the accidental opportunist and the deliberate hacker.

## Features

- Password locking Word, Excel and Powerpoint documents in Office XP, Office 2003, Office 2007 and Office 2010.
- How to try unlocking a password protected document if you forget the password
- Some password tricks for MS Office than can make the document considerably harder to crack.
- Making Office XP and Office 2003 documents more secure.
- Restricting access to documents so only certain people can edit them.
- What's inside your documents that you might not want others to see.
- Where copies of a document might be hiding – deleting a file isn't that simple.
- Get a FREE digital certificate to send secure and encrypted emails from Outlook.

# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

## Introduction

- Sending emails that people can be sure come from you and not an online impersonator.
- Sending encrypted emails that only you and the receiver can read.
- Options for securing your Outlook data, Outlook emails, OneNote and the new Office Web Applications.
- Tips on making stronger passwords that are harder to guess or crack.
- Passwords you should avoid and, in some cases, are explicitly banned.
- The features you can use for free in Windows to secure your computer.
- A detailed look at Bitlocker, the Windows feature to encrypt your entire hard drive.
- Wireless networks are easily hacked, we have tips on securing your base station and secure computing on public wireless networks.

## Coverage

- Office XP (Word 2002 etc)
- Office 2003
- Office 2007
- Office 2010

Including:

- Word
- Excel
- PowerPoint
- Outlook
- OneNote
- Office Web Applications

For users with Windows XP, Windows Vista and Windows 7

## About the author

**Peter Deegan** has been the Editor-in-Chief and co-creator of the popular Office Watch ([www.office-watch.com](http://www.office-watch.com)) series of free email newsletters since they started in 1996. He has written several acclaimed computer books [Organizing Outlook Email](#), [Clever Outlook Contacts](#) and [Effective Outlook Calendars](#) plus [Eye-Catching Signs with Word](#) and [Christmas Cheer with Office](#) (with MaryJane Almer). He's the winner of a Computer Press Association award and nominee in another year. Peter loves live theatre, good movie or TV drama, innovative comedy. He is addicted to the written word in any form and his new Kindle has only fed that addiction. When he's not delving into the dark secrets of Windows and Office, Peter travels widely, has visited over 170 countries and can be found typing away in airplanes, airports, cruise ships, café's and hotels across the world.

# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

## Introduction

Also by the author:

[Organizing Outlook Email](#)

[Clever Outlook Contacts](#)

[Effective Outlook Calendars](#)

[Office Backup Handbook](#)

[Formatting Magic with Word](#)

[Eye-Catching Signs with Word](#) (with MaryJane Almer)

[Christmas Cheer with Office](#) (with MaryJane Almer)

[Valentine's Day with Word](#) (with MaryJane Almer)

# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

## Password Protected Documents

### **Password Protected Documents**

Protecting the privacy of documents in Word, Excel and PowerPoint with a password is quite simple. All it takes to restrict users from accessing certain sensitive information is a password.

The only drawback here is once you set a password for a document and forget it later then there is no way to either retrieve the password or open the document. You have to be very careful to remember the password that you use to encrypt any document.

But there's more to protecting a document than just setting a password to let you open it.

You can set a password to open a document and another to edit it and yet another to manage other access. What is available depends on the Office program:

#### **Word**

- Open
- Edit / Modify
- Protect for Track Changes, Comments or Forms.

#### **Excel**

- Open
- Edit / Modify

#### **PowerPoint**

- Open
- Edit / Modify

Office features for restricting editing options for a document are covered in [a later chapter](#).

Details on choosing good, secure passwords including special tricks for Office documents are in a [later chapter](#).

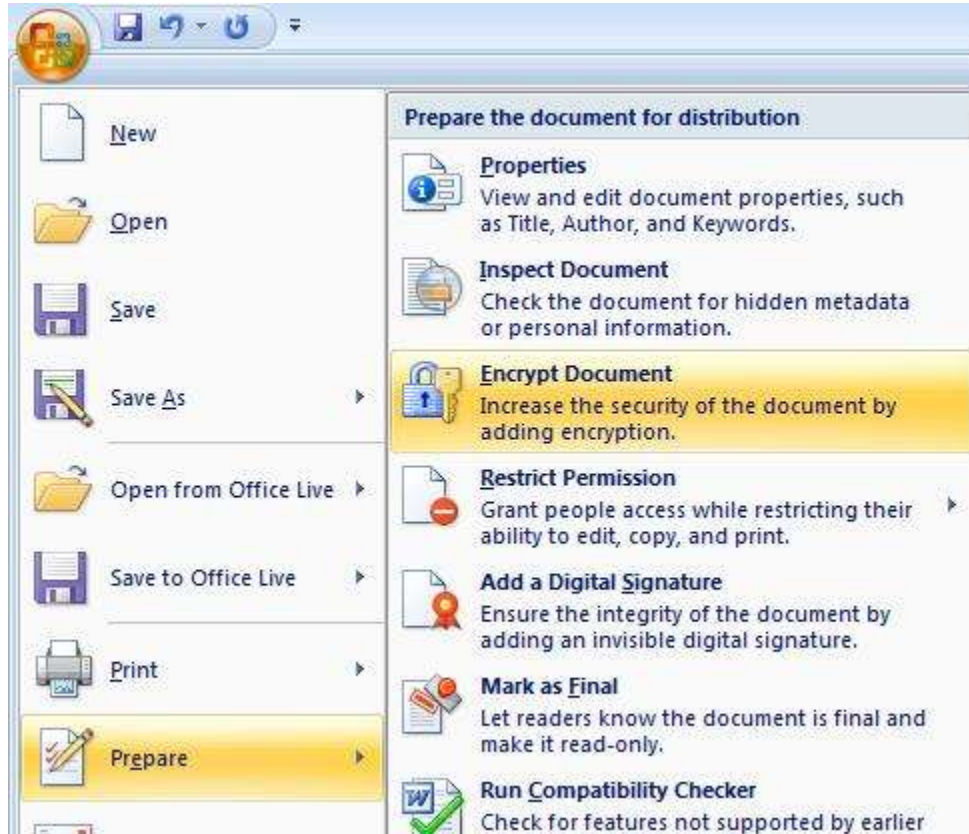
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## Password Protected Documents

### Setting a password

#### Word 2010 & Word 2007

Open the document for which you want to set a password. Click on Office Button | Prepare | Encrypt Document.



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## Password Protected Documents

In Word 2010 the same option is under File | Info | Protect Document | Encrypt with password:



The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word 2010 interface. On the left, the 'Protect Document' task pane is open, listing several options: 'Mark as Final', 'Encrypt with Password' (highlighted with a red circle), 'Restrict Editing', 'Restrict Permission by People', and 'Add a Digital Signature'. Below this pane, the 'Protect Document' button is visible, featuring a padlock icon and the text 'Protect Document'. To the right, the document content is partially visible, showing a title 'about Contract negotiation' and a section titled 'Compatibility Mode'.

The Encrypt Document window pops open. Here you can enter the password. The password which you type will appear in encrypted format as shown:



## Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

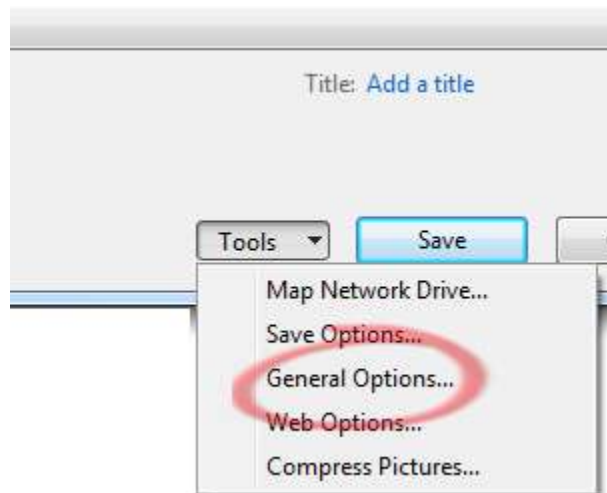
### Password Protected Documents

After entering the password click on OK button. Confirm Password window opens. Re-type the password again and click on OK button.



Your document is now encrypted.

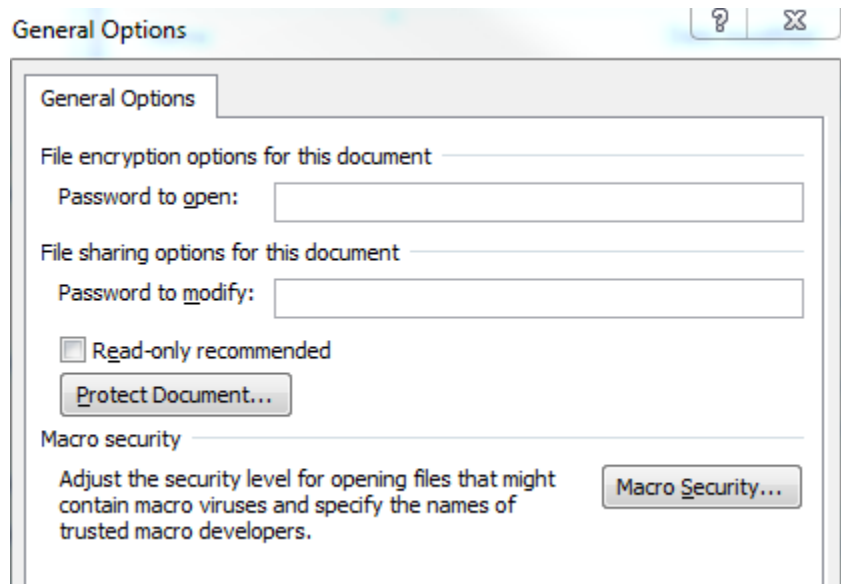
The other protection options are somewhat hiding under Save As | Tools | General:



# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

## Password Protected Documents

Not quite sure why they are called 'General' options when all the choices are about document protection ...



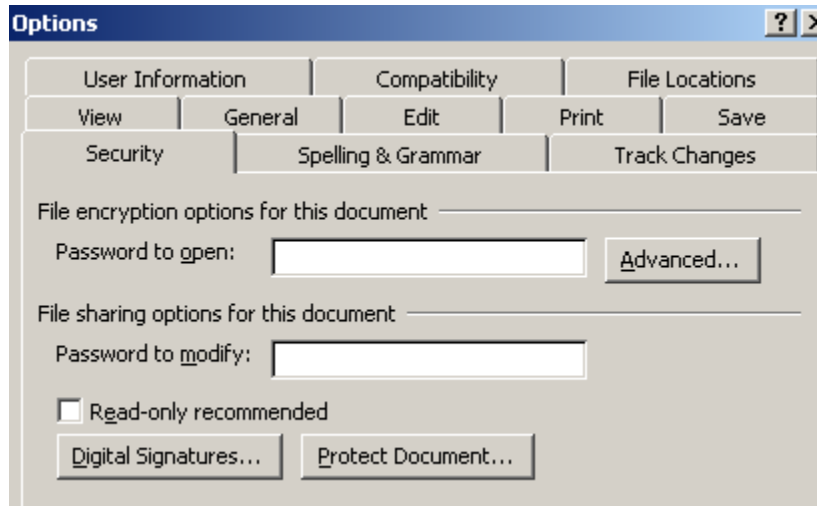
Here you can set the open password (same as Encrypt Document mentioned above) but also other protection features:

Edit / Modify – this password is required if someone want to edit the document.

Protect document – this button is confusing. It appears that clicking this button takes to back to the Save As dialog but if you look underneath you'll see that the Restrict Formatting and Editing Pane has appeared.

## Word 2003 and Word 2002( XP)

Go to Tools | Options | Security:



You can set two passwords for a document.

Open – controls all access to the document

# Privacy & Security in Microsoft Office – *an Office Watch guide*

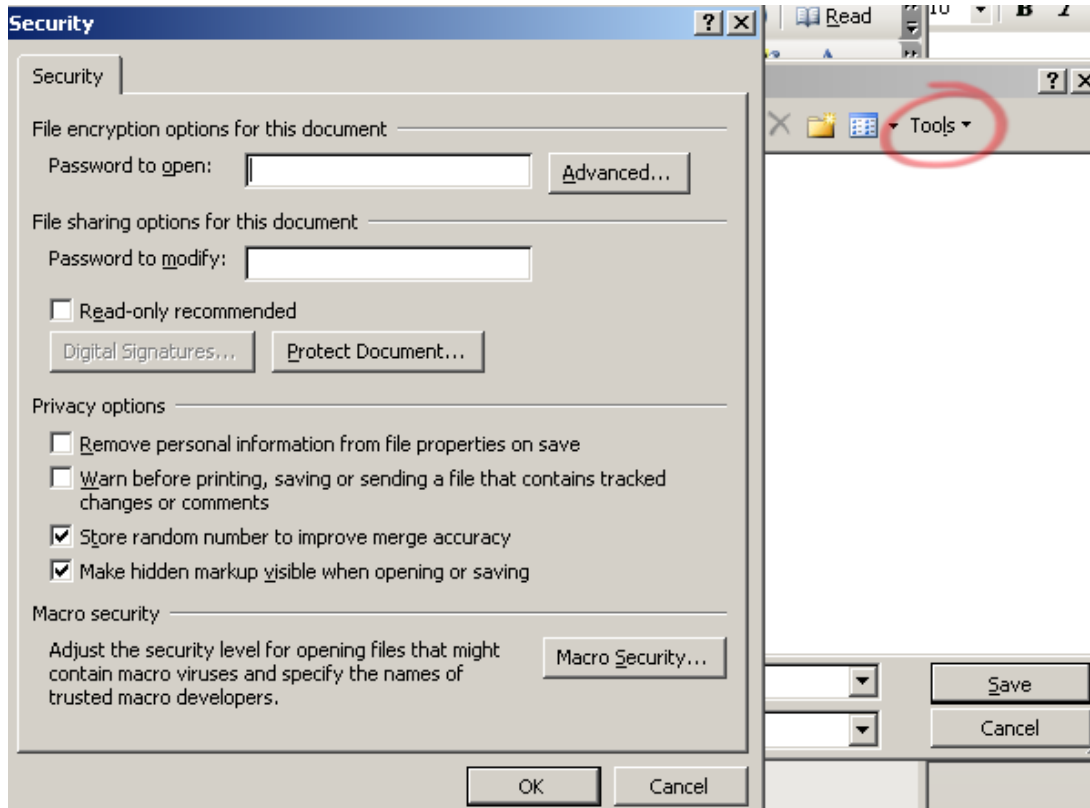
## Password Protected Documents

Edit – controls the ability to change the document.

Under the Advanced button you can choose the encryption option, which we'll deal with below.

Protect document is dealt with a little later in this chapter.

Yet more options are available under File | Save As | Tools | Security options ...



### Saving the Password

Once you set the password you can save and close the document.

You must save the document after setting the password to enforce the encryption and password.

### Excel 2010 and Excel 2007

Open the document for which you want to set a password. Click on Office Button | Prepare | Encrypt Document.