Track and review document changes

Writing a document is often a collaborative effort. If your research paper or project proposal has several authors and reviewers, you can use the Track Changes feature in Word to keep track of and comment on each other's changes. Take this tutorial to learn how.

Before you begin

What you'll learn

After completing this tutorial, you'll be able to:

- Turn the Track Changes feature on and off.
- Identify the different types of tracked changes.
- Accept or reject a reviewer's changes and comments.
- Insert your own tracked changes and comments.
- Hide tracked changes in a printout.
- Set a password to make sure that future changes are tracked.

Requirements

- Word for Mac 2011
- Basic Word skills, including how to open a document, cut and paste, and format text.

    💡 **Tip** If you are new to Word, first take the tutorial Tutorial: Word basics.

Practice file

Tutorial lessons are designed to be viewed in order. Use the practice file **TrackChanges.docx** for hands-on experience while taking the tutorial.
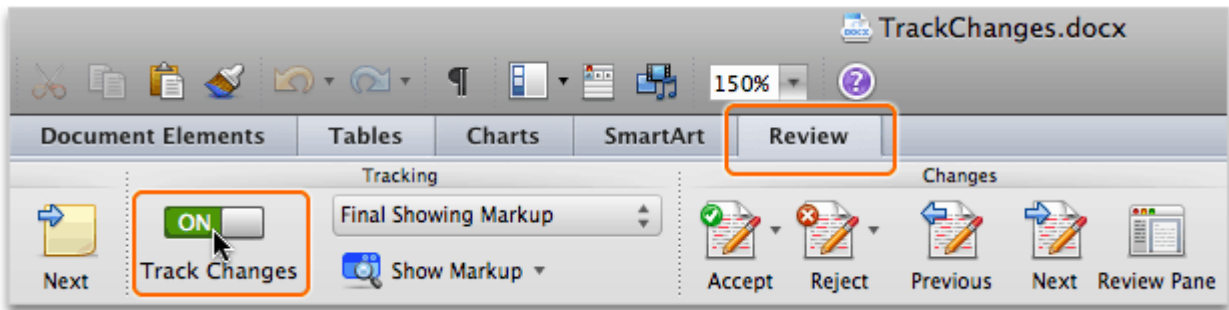
Estimated time to complete: ⏱ 25 minutes
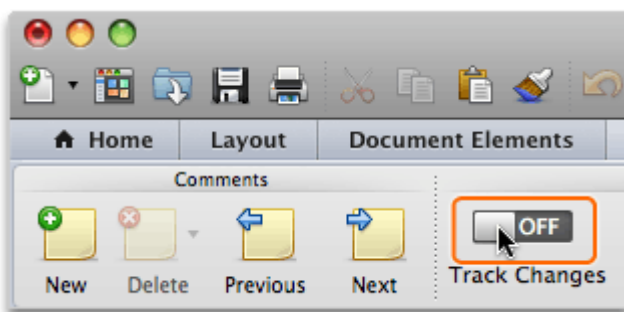
1. Turn Track Changes on and off

When you open a document that contains tracked changes, the Track Changes feature is already turned on. To track changes in a new document, you must turn on Track Changes.

Let's open a document that contains tracked changes and then turn Track Changes off and on.
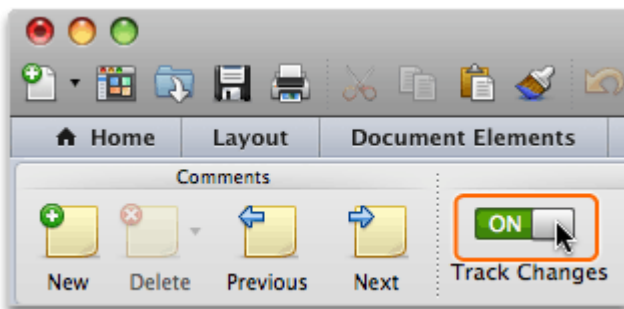
① Open the practice file, which is located at the beginning of this tutorial.

② On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, notice that **Track Changes** is **On**.

③ Click the **Track Changes** switch. Track Changes is now turned off.

④ Click the **Track Changes** switch again. Track Changes is now turned on.

Hints

- The Track Changes on and off settings apply to the current document only.
- We recommend that you use Track Changes in print layout view. To view a document in print layout view, click **View** > **Print Layout**.
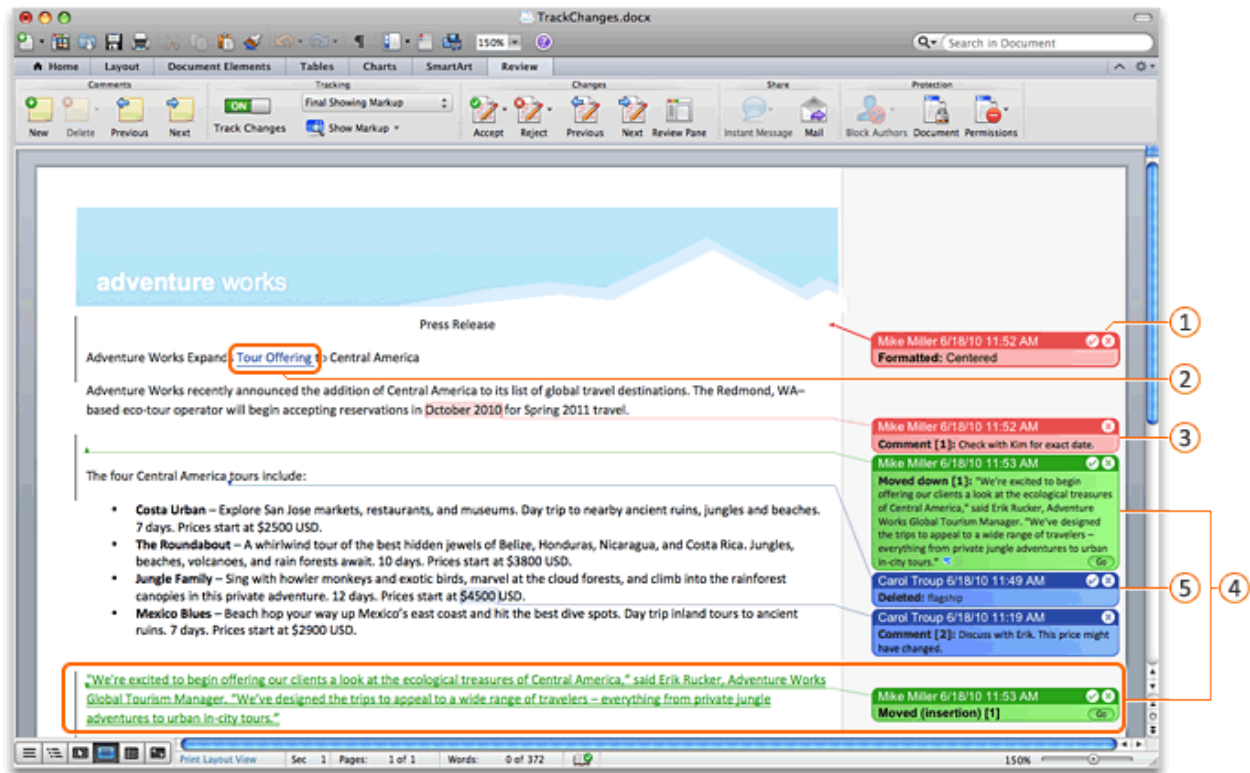- To hide the ribbon while you work, on the right side of the ribbon, click ⌃.

Before you move on

Make sure that you can do the following: Turn Track Changes on and off.

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2. Explore the different types of tracked changes

Whether you are reviewing another person's changes or making your own, there are five types of changes that you should be familiar with: insertions, deletions, moved content, formatting changes, and comments. Each type of change creates a different "revision mark" in the document, and each reviewer's changes appear in a different color.

Let's look at how each type of change appears in a document.

① **Formatting change**: Formatting changes appear in a balloon labeled **Formatted** in the right margin. A small dashed line connects the balloon to the formatting change. To make the dashed line appear solid, click the balloon.

② **Insertion**: Insertions appear underlined. To see the time, date, and reviewer who made the change, rest the pointer on any part of the inserted text.

③ **Comment**: Comments appear in balloons labeled **Comment** in the right margin of the document. A small dashed line connects the balloon to the text that was commented on. To make the dashed line appear solid, click the balloon.

④ **Moved content**: Text or other content that has been moved is deleted from its original location and appears in a balloon labeled **Moved** in the right margin. The moved content also appears as a double-underlined insertion in its new location.

⑤ **Deletion**: Deletions are removed from the document, and the deleted text appears in a balloon labeled **Deleted** in the right margin. A small dashed line connects the deletion to the balloon. To make the dashed line appear solid, click the balloon.

Hints

- To change how tracked changes appear (for example, to hide balloons or change the color), click **Word** > **Preferences**, and then click **Track Changes**.

- To hide any type of tracked change, on the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click **Show Markup**. Then clear the check mark next to the type of change that you want to hide (for example, **Insertions and Deletions**).

- A vertical black line appears in the left margin next to all lines that include changes.

- To see all tracked changes in a vertical pane, on the **Review** tab, under **Changes**, click **Review Pane**.

Before you move on
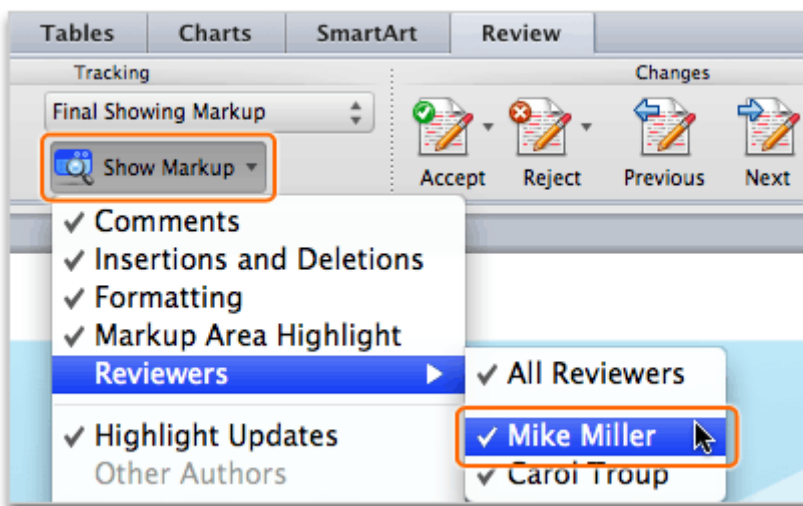
Make sure that you can do the following:

- Identify each type of change by its revision mark.
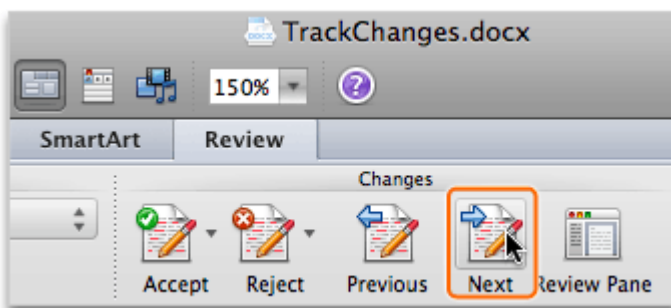
3. Accept and reject a reviewer's changes

To review a document, you can step through each change and accept it or reject it. If a document appears cluttered with revision marks from several reviewers, you can hide changes from specific reviewers.

Let's hide the tracked changes for all but one reviewer, and then accept and reject the reviewer's changes.
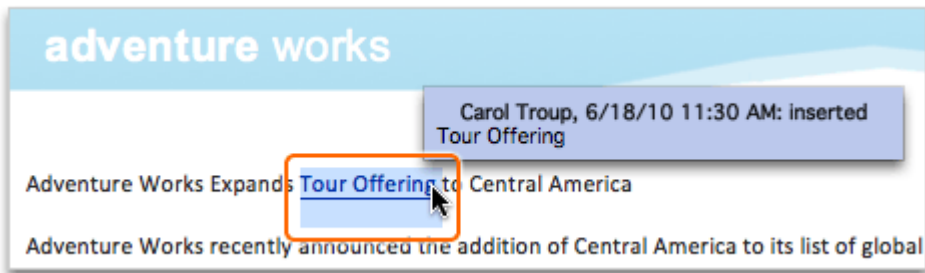
① On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click **Show Markup**, point to **Reviewers**, and then click **Mike Miller** to hide Mike Miller's tracked changes.
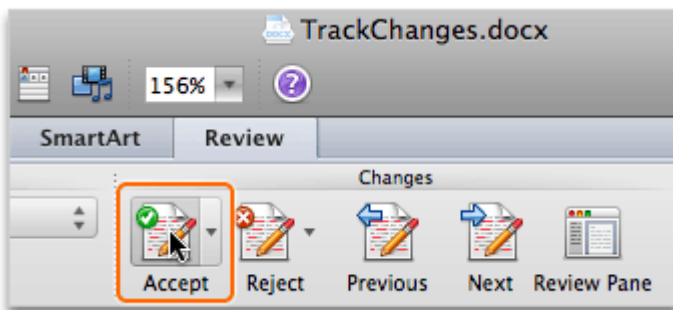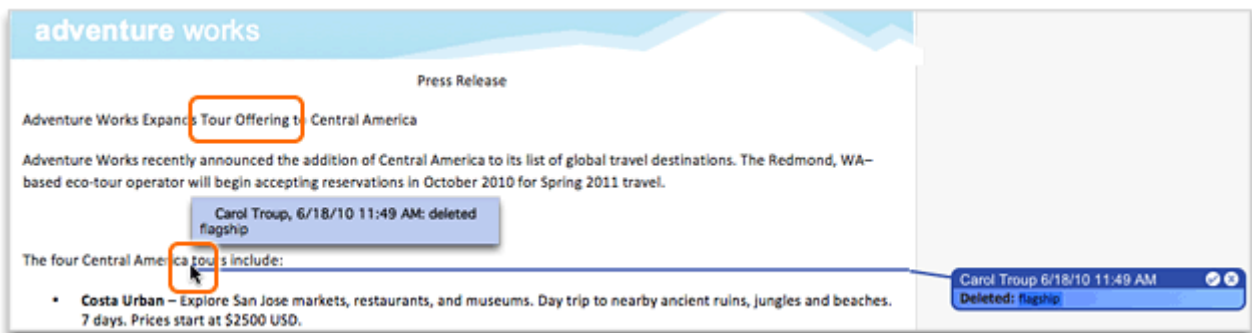

② Under **Changes**, click **Next**.

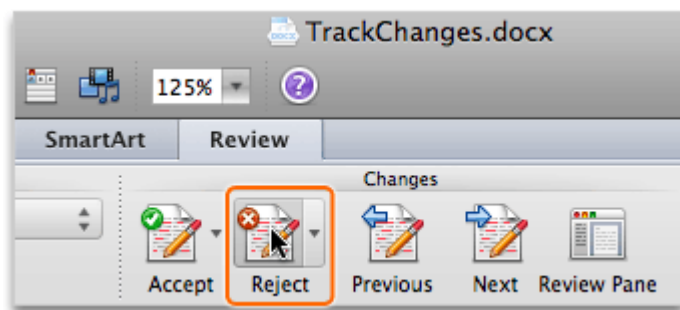③ Notice that Carol Troup's "Tour Offering" insertion is selected.

④ Click **Accept**.

⑤ Notice that the revision mark is removed, the "Tour Offering" insertion is accepted, and the next change (Carol Troup's "flagship" deletion) is selected.
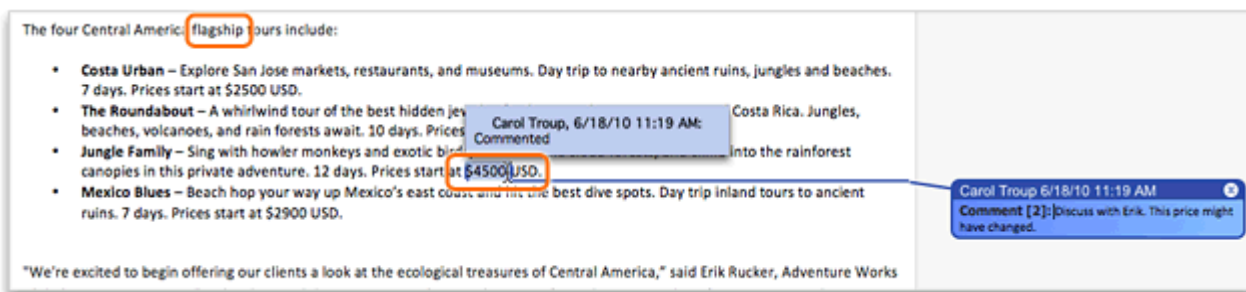
⑥ Click **Reject**.

💡 **Tip** Rejected changes and deleted comments are not saved with a document. If you think that you might need to reference them at a later time, save a copy of the document before you reject any changes or delete any comments.

⑦ Notice that the revision mark and balloon are removed, the "flagship" text remains in the document, and the next change (Carol Troup's comment) is selected.

Hints

- To undo an accepted or rejected change, click **Edit** > **Undo**.

- To accept or reject changes directly in the document, hold down CONTROL and click any revision mark or balloon (or right-click the revision mark or balloon), and then click **Accept Change** or **Reject Change**. You can also click **Accept** ☑ and **Reject** ☒ in the upper-right corner of the balloons.

- When you open a document, Word automatically shows all reviewers' changes and comments.

Before you move on
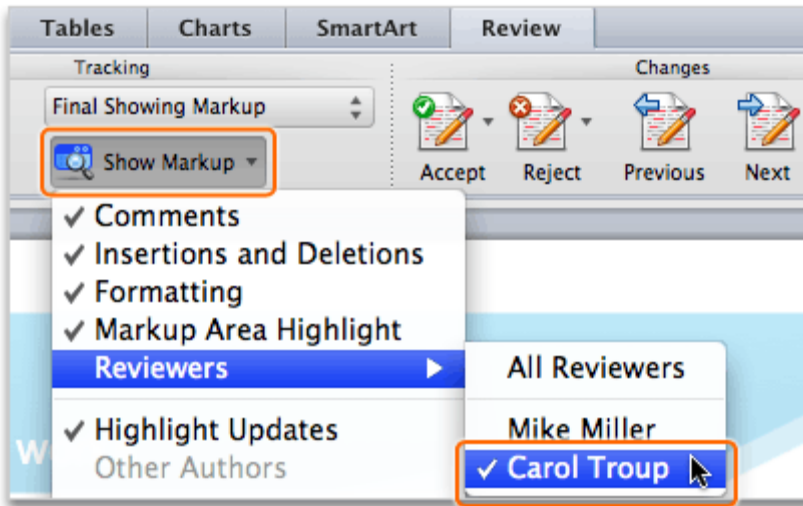Make sure that you can do the following:

- Show the tracked changes for a single reviewer.

- Accept and reject changes and comments.
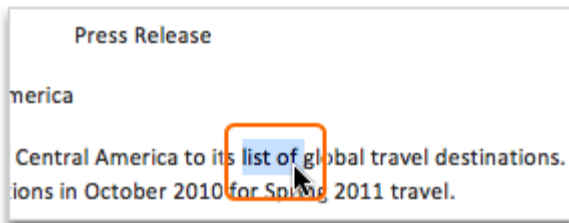
4. Add your own changes

As long as Track Changes is turned on, any insertions, deletions, formatting changes, text moves, and comments that you add to the document will be tracked. Sometimes it's easier to track your changes by hiding other reviewers' comments first.

Let's hide the tracked changes of the other reviewers, and then delete, insert, and move text in the document.

① On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click **Show Markup**, point to **Reviewers**, and then click **Carol Troup** to hide Carol Troup's tracked changes.
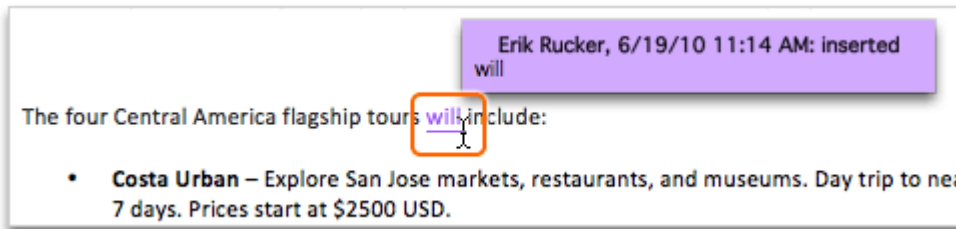
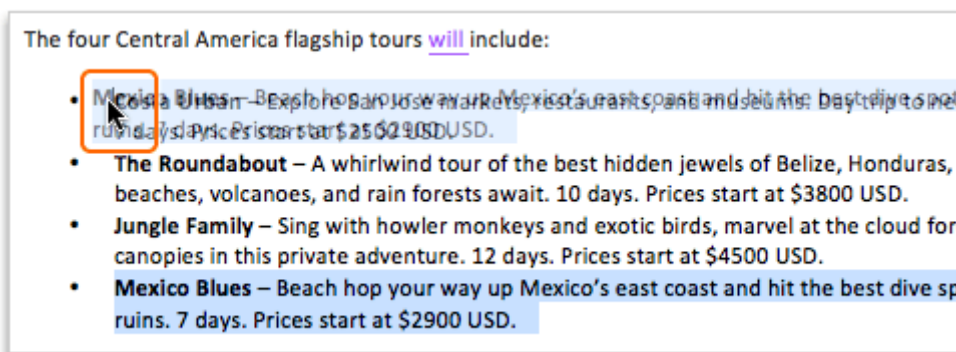② In the first paragraph, select the phrase "list of," and then press DELETE.

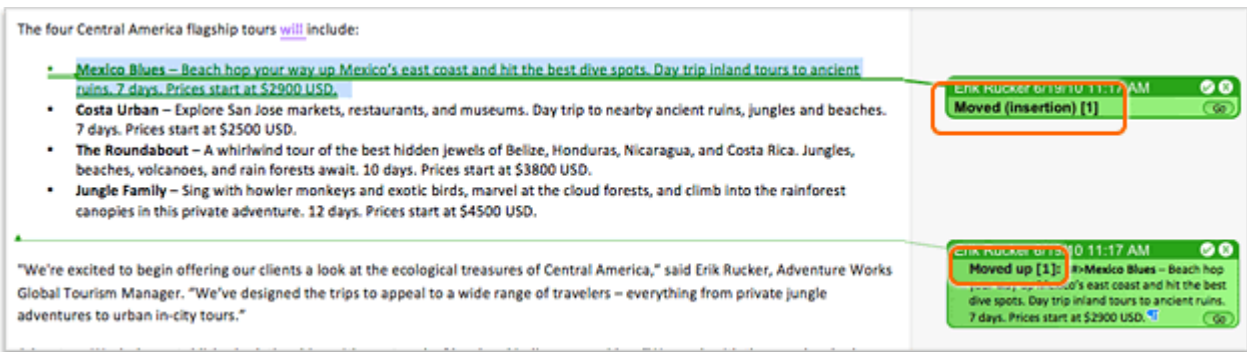③ Notice that the text is removed from the document and appears in a balloon in the right margin.

④ In the paragraph before the bulleted list, change the text to "tours will include." Notice that the inserted text is underlined in a different color than the other reviewers' changes.

⑤ Select the "Mexico Blues" bullet item, and then drag it to the beginning of the "Costa Urban" bullet item.

⑥ Notice that the moved text is deleted from the original location, and is double-underlined in the new location. The moved text also appears in a "Moved up" balloon connected to the original location.

Hints

- To change how tracked changes appear (for example, to hide balloons or change the color), click **Word** > **Preferences**, and then click **Track Changes**.
- To edit a document without adding revision marks, first turn off Track Changes.

Before you move on

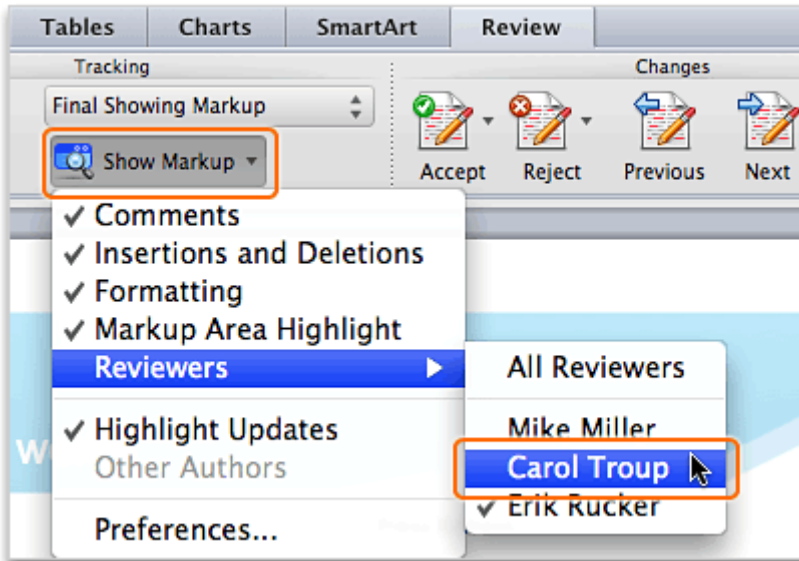Make sure that you can do the following:

- Delete, insert, and move text, and identify the revision mark for each type of change.
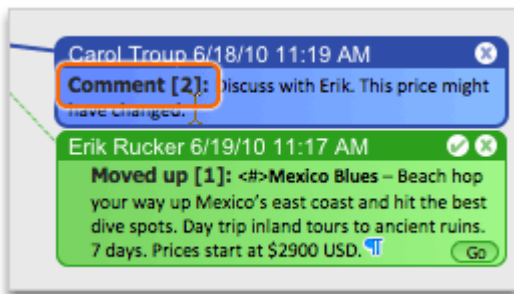
5. Work with comments

As part of the writing or reviewing process, you may want to add comments to a document. Comments appear in balloons in the right margin of your document.

Let's respond to a comment from another reviewer, and then insert a new comment.
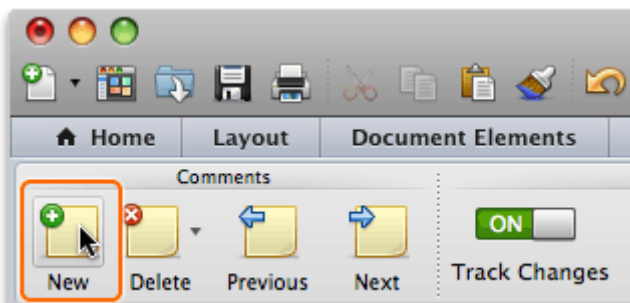
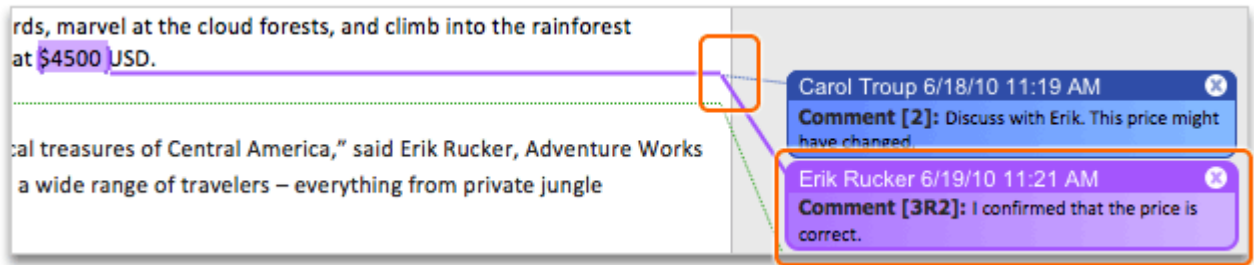① Click **Show Markup**, point to **Reviewers**, and then click **Carol Troup**.

② Click in the comment balloon from **Carol Troup** labeled **Comment [2]**.

③ On the **Review** tab, under **Comments**, click **New**.

④ In the comment balloon, type a comment (for example, "I confirmed that the price is correct."). Notice that both comment balloons connect to text that was commented on ($4500).

💡 **Tip** The **[3R2]** text in the comment balloon indicates that it is the third comment in the document, in response to comment number two.

⑤ In the press release title, select the text "Central America".

⑥ Under **Comments**, click **New**.

⑦ In the comment balloon, type your comment (for example, "Should we mention any of the new South American trips?").

8   Notice that brackets appear around the selected text, and a solid line connects the balloon to the text that was commented on.
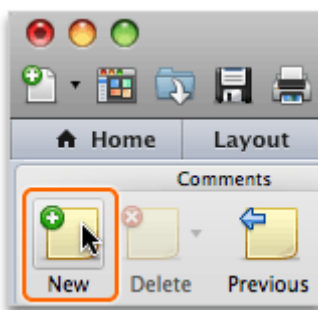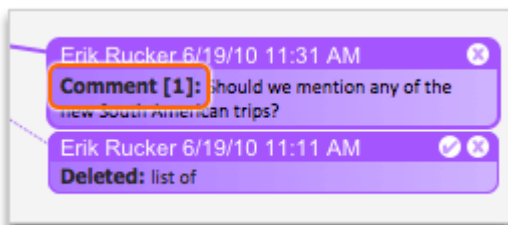

Hints

- The Track Changes feature does not have to be on to insert comments.

- If you don't see the comment balloons, under **Tracking**, click **Show Markup**, and then make sure that a check mark appears next to **Comments**.

Before you move on

Make sure that you can do the following:

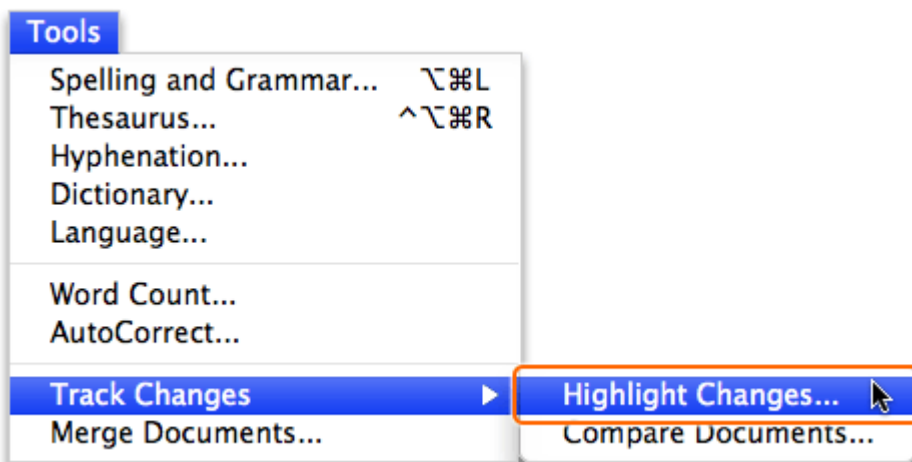- Respond to a reviewer's comment.

- Insert a new comment.

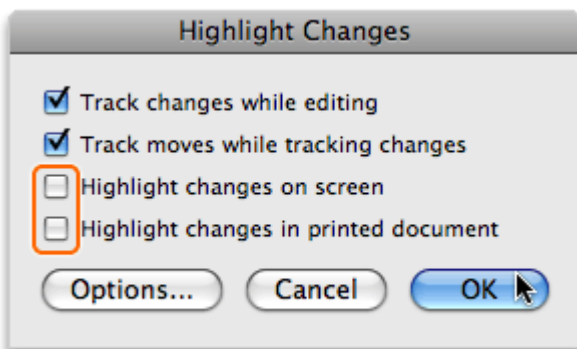## 6. Hide tracked changes in a printout

Tracked changes can clutter a printout if you want to see only the document's content. You can temporarily hide tracked changes for a clean printout.

Let's hide the tracked changes to see a print-friendly view of the document.

1   Click **Tools** > **Track Changes** > **Highlight Changes**.

② Clear the **Highlight changes on screen** and **Highlight changes in printed document** check boxes, and then click **OK**.

③ Notice that all changes in the document are hidden.

💡 **Tip** To show tracked changes on the screen again, on the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click the pop-up menu, and then click **Final Showing Markup**.

Hints

- As long as Track Changes is on, changes are tracked, even if the revision marks are currently hidden.

Before you move on

Make sure that you can do the following:

- Hide tracked changes in a document so that they don't show in the printed version.

7. Make sure that all future changes are tracked

Before you distribute a document for review, you can add a password to ensure that all future changes made to a document are tracked. This is the best way to make sure that you see each reviewer's changes and comments.

Let's add a password to make sure that all future changes are tracked.

① On the **Review** tab, under **Protection**, click **Document**.

② Click **Tracked changes**, type a password, and then click **OK**.

💡 **Tip** If you protect a document for comments, the only way to make changes to the document will be to insert comments.

③   In the **Confirm Password** dialog box, type the password again, and then click **OK**.

④   Notice that the **Track Changes** switch is now unavailable, which indicates that all changes will be tracked until you or someone with the password unprotects the document.

Hints

- To unprotect a document, under **Protection**, click **Document**, and then type the document password.

Before you move on

Make sure that you can do the following:

- Protect a document with a password so that future changes are tracked.

Quick Reference Card

To	Do this
Turn Track Changes on or off	On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click the **Track Changes** switch.
Hide specific types of tracked changes (for example, insertions and deletions)	On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click **Show Markup**. Then, clear the check mark next to the type of revision that you want to hide.
Hide the balloons and show tracked changes in the document only	Click **Word** > **Preferences**, and then click **Track Changes**. Under **Balloons**, clear the **Use balloons to display changes** check box.
Hide tracked changes for a specific reviewer	On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click **Show Markup**. Then, point to **Reviewers**, and clear the check mark beside the reviewer's name.
Step through the document to accept or reject changes one at a time	On the **Review** tab, under **Changes**, click **Next**.
Accept or reject changes without using the tools on the Review tab	Hold down CONTROL and click (or right-click) any revision mark or balloon, and then click **Accept Change** or **Reject Change**. You can also click the **Accept** and **Reject** buttons located on balloons.
See the time, date, and name of the reviewer who made the change	Rest the pointer over the revision mark. The information appears in a ScreenTip.
Edit a document without tracking the changes	Turn off Track Changes, and then make the changes that you want.
Show hidden tracked changes	On the **Review** tab, under **Tracking**, click the pop-up menu, and then click **Final Showing Markup**.
Add a password to ensure all future changes to a document are tracked	On the **Review** tab, under **Protection**, click **Protect**. Then click **Tracked changes**, and type a password.
Unprotect a document for tracked changes	On the **Review** tab, under **Protection**, click **Document**, and then type the password.

More Hints

- The Track Changes on and off settings apply to the current document only.

- The five types of revision marks that can appear in a tracked document are: deletions, insertions, moved content, formatting changes, and comments.

- When Track Changes is turned on, a vertical black line appears in the left margin next to each line in the document that contains a revision mark.

- Rejected changes and deleted comments are not saved with a document. If you think that you might need to reference them at a later time, save a copy of the document before you reject any changes or delete any comments.

- The Track Changes feature does not have to be on to insert comments.

- As long as Track Changes is on, changes are tracked, even if the revision marks are currently hidden.

- If the Track Changes switch is unavailable, the document has been password protected for tracked changes. All changes will be tracked until you or someone with the password unprotects the document.

- Lost track changes passwords cannot be recovered. Record and keep all passwords in a safe location.