

# Why shouldn't I email or post Microsoft Word documents?

Many people send Microsoft Word documents as email attachments without realizing that there are several security risks.

- some viruses specifically target Microsoft Word files
  - [Microsoft Word vulnerability gives hackers a backdoor](#) May 24, 2006
- earlier versions and edits of your document are often contained in documents. See this article by security expert Bruce Schneier for more details. <http://www.schneier.com/grammar-0308.html#8>
- using .PDF instead provides a smaller, and usually non-editable file, preventing hijacking of 'official' document templates
- if you must use MS Word, download and use the Remove Hidden Data tool from Microsoft
- if you need an editable version save it as RTF (Rich Text Format), which can be imported into almost every word processing program and won't contain scripts or macros.

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