# Recover Earlier Versions of a File

Different progressive versions of a document can be saved so that all earlier versions can be retrieved. This can be helpful if you accidentally delete a document, if you forget to manually save the document, if someone else overwrites the content, or you want to return to an earlier version of the document.

Turn on Auto Recover and Auto Save

Auto Recover and Auto Save must be turned on for this feature to work.

❋ Click the **File Tab**.
❋ Click the **Options** button on the **left side** of the **Backstage View** window.
❋ The **Word Options** window will display (see illustration below).
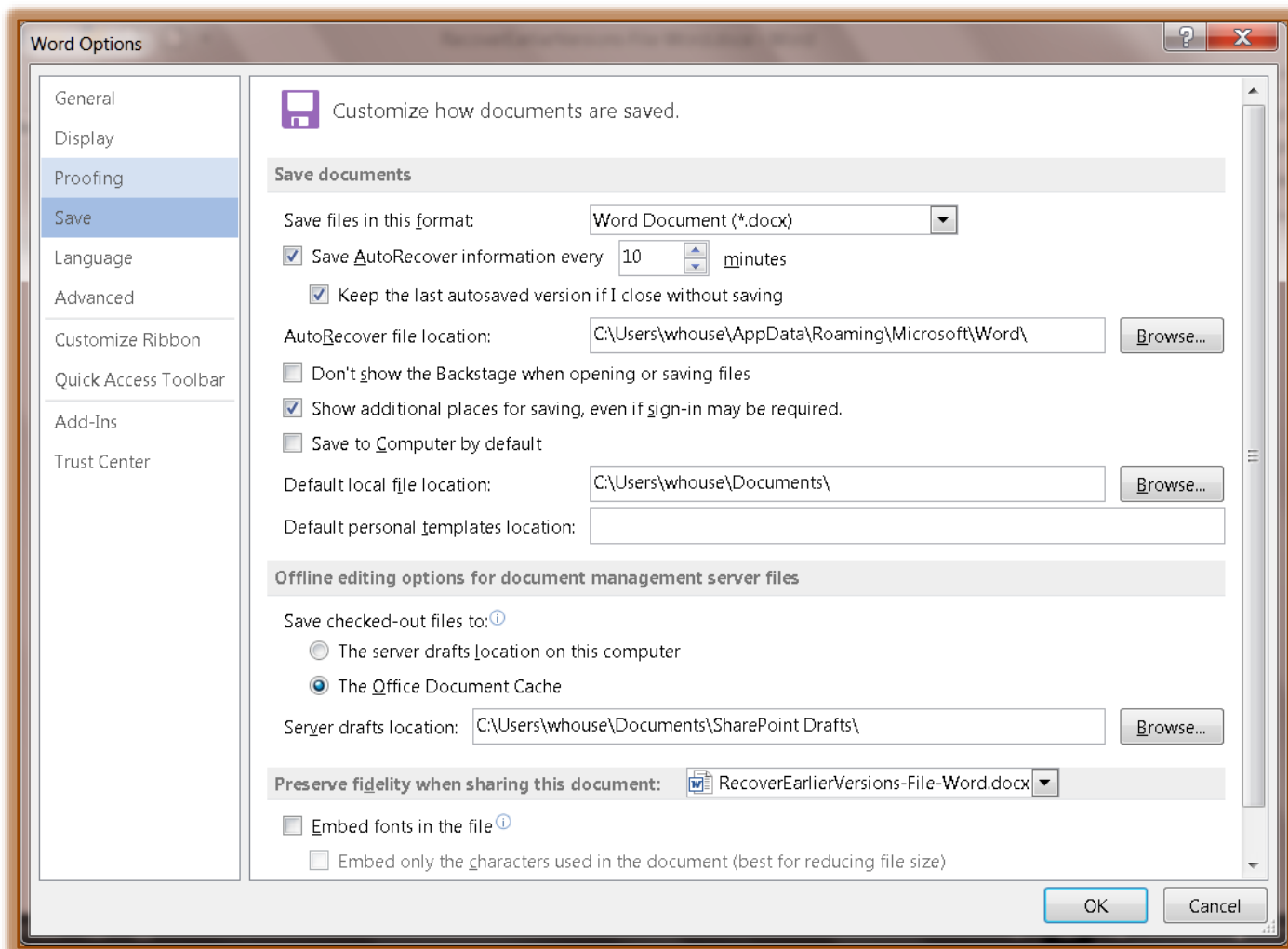
❋ Click the **Save** tab.
❋ Make the necessary changes in the **Save Documents** area (see above).
❋ When the changes are complete, click the **OK** button.

Close Without Saving

If a file is closed without saving, a version of the file is kept temporarily so that it can be recovered when the program is opened again.

❋ Click the **File Tab.**

* Click the **Info** tab.
* Click **Manage Versions**.
* Click **Recover Unsaved Documents**.
* A list of unsaved files will appear.
* Select the file and then click **Open**.
* Click **Save As** to save the file to the computer.

Previously Saved Files

These are files that have been saved previously and are closed before saving the current edits.

* Open the file that was being worked with.
* Click the **File Tab**.
* Click **Info**.
* Under **Versions**, click the version labeled **(when I closed without saving)**.
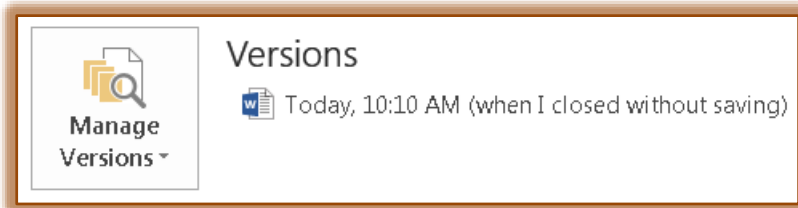
* A **Recovered Unsaved Version** message will appear at the top of the window as shown in the illustration below.
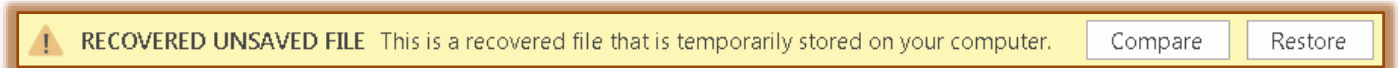
* Click **Compare** to display the different **Versions** of the file.
* Click **Restore** at the top of the window to overwrite any previously saved versions with the auto saved version of the file.
* The message in the illustration below will display.
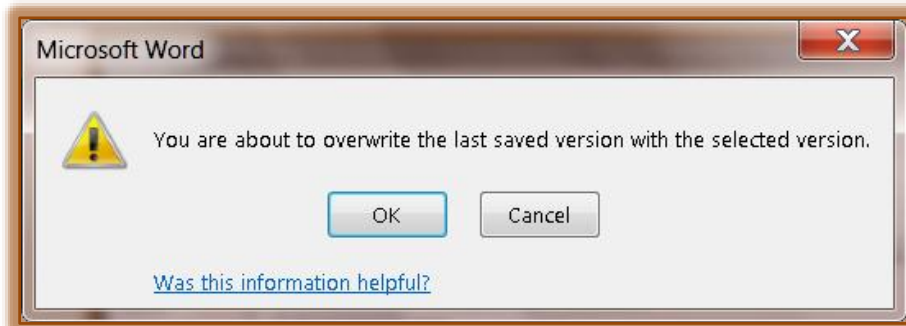
* Click **OK** to **Restore** the file.
* Files in this folder will be kept for four days after creation or until the file is modified, whichever version is earlier.

Work with Auto Saved Versions of a File

Open and View an Earlier Version of Current File

* Click the **File Tab**.
* Click **Info**.

❋ The **Auto Saved** versions of the current file will be listed under **Versions** (see illustration below).
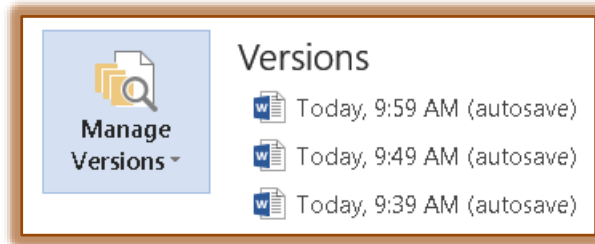
❋ Click on any version in the list to open it.

Restore Earlier Versions of Current File

❋ Click the **File Tab**.
❋ Click **Info**.
❋ The **Auto Saved** versions of the current file will be listed under **Versions**.
❋ Under **Versions**, click the version labeled **(when I closed without saving)**.
❋ Click **Restore** to overwrite any previously saved versions with the auto saved version of the file.
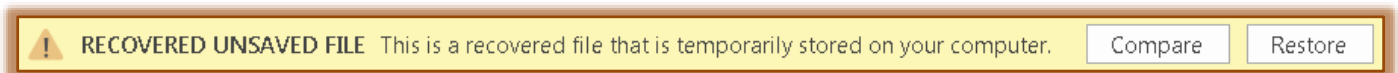
❋ The message in the illustration below will display.
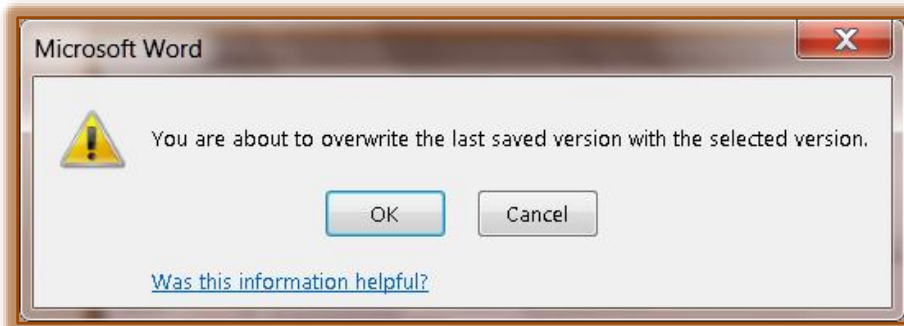
❋ Click **OK** to **Restore** the file.

Compare Earlier Version of File with Current Version

In Word an earlier version of a document can be compared with the current version. You can choose which changes to save.
❋ Click the **File Tab**.
❋ In the **Version List**, click on the earlier version that is to be compared to the current document.
❋ In the bar at the top of the document, click the **Compare** button.
❋ Choose from one of the following options:
   ✦ Accept or reject the changes in the comparison document and save it as a new document.
   ✦ Close the comparison document and restore the complete auto saved version of the file.
   ✦ Close the comparison and auto saved versions of the file and continue to work in the current document.