

Data sources

Your first step in setting up a mail merge is to pick the source of data you'll use for the personalized information. Excel spreadsheets and Outlook contact lists are the most common data sources, but any database that you can connect to Word will work. If you don't yet have a data source, you can even type it up in Word, as part of the mail merge process.

For details about data sources, see [Data sources you can use for a mail merge](#).

Excel or Outlook

If you know you'll be using Excel or Outlook as the source of your data, see:

- [Mail merge using an Excel spreadsheet](#)
- [Use Outlook contacts as a data source for a mail merge](#)

Document types

Word provides tools for incorporating your data into the following kinds of documents. Follow the links for details about each type:

- **Letters** that include a personalized greeting. Each letter prints on a separate sheet of paper.
[Create and print a batch of personalized letters](#)
- **Email** where each recipient's address is the only address on the To line. You'll be sending the email directly from Word.
[Create and send email messages](#)
- **Envelopes** or **Labels** where names and addresses come from your data source.
[Create and print a batch of envelopes for mailing](#)
[Create and print sheets of mailing labels](#)
- **Directory** that lists a batch of information for each item in your data source. Use it to print out your contact list, or to list groups of information, like all of the students in each class. This type of document is also called a catalog merge.
[Create a directory of names, addresses, and other information](#)



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