

Transcript: Cross-Platform Word Processing with CloudOn, Quip, and More

[00:00:00:00] Cross-Platform Word Processing with CloudOn, Quip, and More. A Digital Writing Tutorial from Bedford/St. Martin's

[00:00:00:09] Whether you're writing a paper, making a flyer, or preparing for a major presentation, you will almost certainly be using a word processor. But sometimes, there are files you need to create or access when you don't have a desktop computer available. That's why it's helpful to choose a word processing program that will also work on your smart phone, or your tablet.

[00:00:00:33] The first step is choosing the program that's right for you. Here's some criteria to keep in mind when considering which program to use. What is your main platform? In other words, are you creating the document on a computer and only need to access it later, or will you be starting or editing from your tablet or phone? Other important questions include: What are you hoping to create? and Are you working with a group on this project?

[00:00:01:04] Let's start with the most familiar program first: Microsoft Word. There are a couple of different ways to utilize Word across multiple platforms. The first is simply by saving your document in a different format. While a regular word document cannot always be opened on an iPhone or other Apple device, if you save your finished file as a PDF, it is accessible anywhere. While this has the benefit of preserving your formatting and design choices, you typically cannot make changes once you've saved the file, so it's best to use this method for finished documents.

[00:00:01:40] You can also save a Microsoft Word file in an open document text format. This allows you to create a file that can be opened in many common word processors. However, you will lose any formatting or design that you have integrated into the document, maintaining only the text. This method works best while your work is still in the draft stage.

[00:00:02:04] Another way to use Microsoft Word across devices is with downloadable apps, like CloudOn. CloudOn interfaces with any cloud storage program (such as DropBox) to bring the entire Microsoft Office Suite to any device. To use CloudOn, simply download the app onto whichever device you wish to use. Then, link your CloudOn account to your storage program and you will have access to any documents you place there. Once you open a document in CloudOn, you can edit, annotate, and compose just as you would through the normal Microsoft Office interface.

[00:00:02:41] If it isn't important that you use Microsoft Word, there are a wide variety of other Word Processing programs available, many of which will work across all of your devices. Let's look at a program called Quip. In Quip, the document adapts to whatever size screen you are using and if you're working offline, any changes you make will sync automatically when you reconnect to the internet.

[00:00:03:06] Quip was designed for group collaboration, and offers a wide variety of support and tools. However, most are only available with a premium business account. When you open Quip, it will take you to your desktop, which contains a series of folders, as well as some helpful information for new users. To begin a new document, click on the icon in the top righthand corner.

[00:00:03:31] If you want to insert content into your document, type the "@" symbol. A dropdown menu will appear, inviting you to insert an image or table, to add a linked mention to a group member, or to add hyperlinks or code. Once you add media – in this case a picture – you can continue to add text

beside and below whatever you inserted into your document. This is perfect for creating a newsletter, or other project with a specialized layout.

[00:00:04:04] Instead of adding a regular bulleted list, you can choose to incorporate a checklist directly into your document. When you or a team member finishes a task, simply check it off to let everyone else know that it's been taken care of.

[00:00:04:19] To format or comment, just highlight the text and a menu will pop up with options. When I add a comment, I can also upload other files directly into the comment space. For this one, I will propose an alternative image.

[00:00:04:35] The number of comments appears in a word bubble, and the text itself in the scrollbar on the left. This scrollbar serves as a running list of all major activity within the document, allowing you to keep track of your progress and to undo any decisions that aren't working out.

[00:00:04:54] When you are finished with your document, you can make a copy, save a PDF, print, or share your document. If you click "share" you will be given a link that others can click through to access the document. This can be used to invite new collaborators into the project, or to deliver a finished project to an instructor or supervisor.

[00:00:05:15] Another great resource for collaboration is Google Drive. It's a little less formal than Quip, but it might already be familiar. Google Drive allows you to create and store documents in the cloud. These documents can be shared and accessed by everyone working on your project, and you can track your versions to see who made what changes, and when.

[00:00:05:34] As you can see, there are many options for creating and accessing documents, no matter what device you have on hand. The important thing is to choose the program that will help you to build engaging content and to polish and revise in an organized way.

[00:00:05:51] The word processor can be a valuable tool, and one that you can access wherever you go.