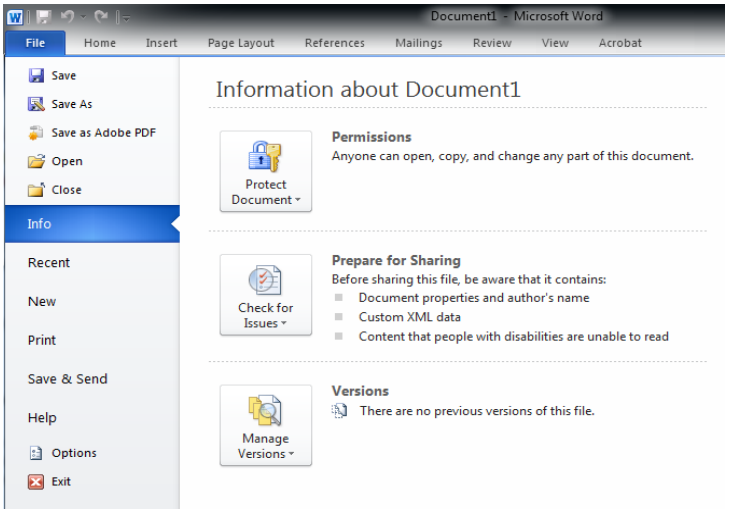
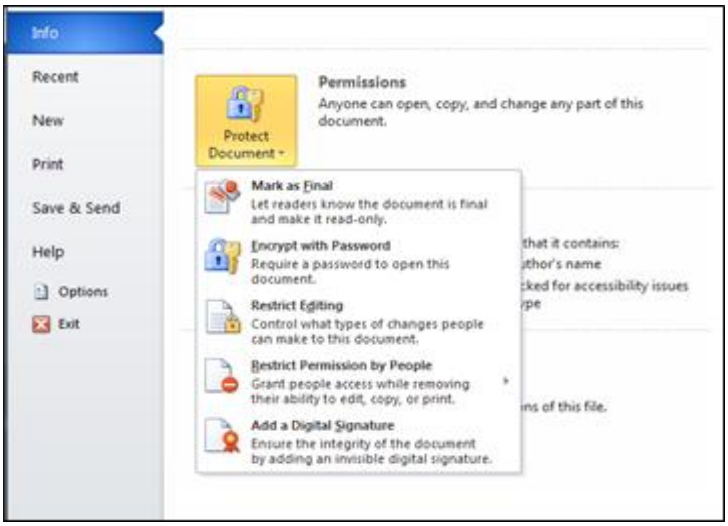
Encrypt your Word document

You can use passwords to protect word documents, preventing other people from opening them. This is extremely important when a document contains PII (Personally Identifiable Information) and needs to be shared with other entities via email, or other means.

NOTE: Microsoft cannot retrieve your forgotten passwords, so it's important to remember the passwords you assign to a document.

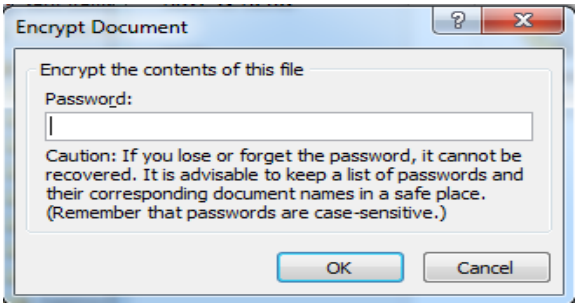


1. In an open document, click the **File** tab.
2. Click **Info**.

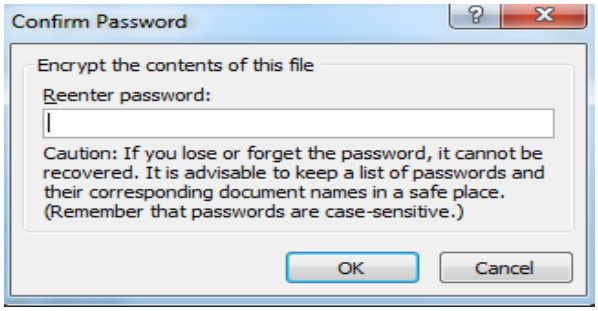


3. Under **Permissions**, click **Protect Document**.
4. Click on **Encrypt with Password**.
5. The Encrypt Document dialog box is displayed.

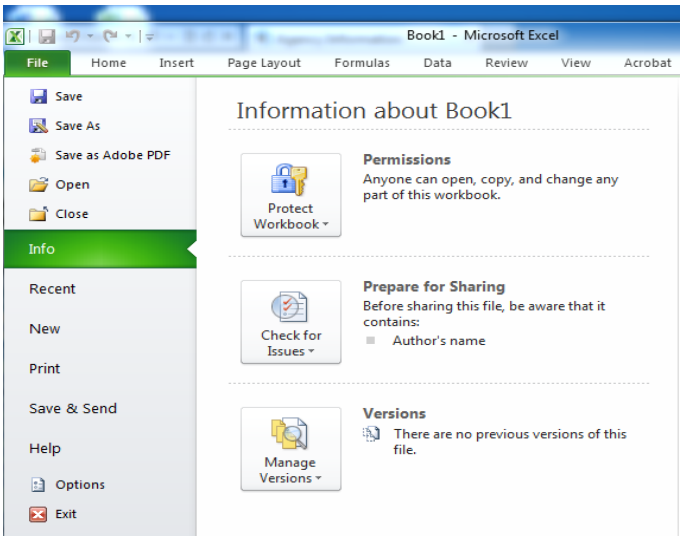
6. Type a secure password.



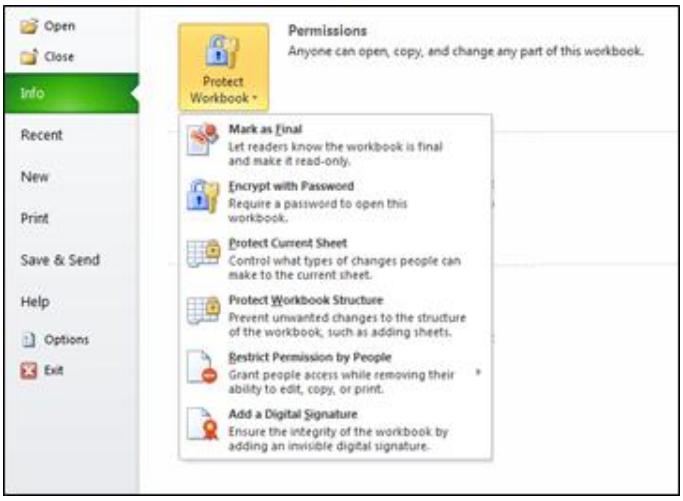
7. Retype the secure password to confirm it.



Encrypt your Excel worksheet

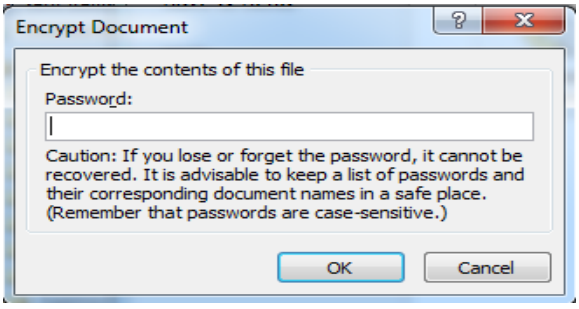


1. In an open worksheet, click the **File** tab.
2. Click **Info**.

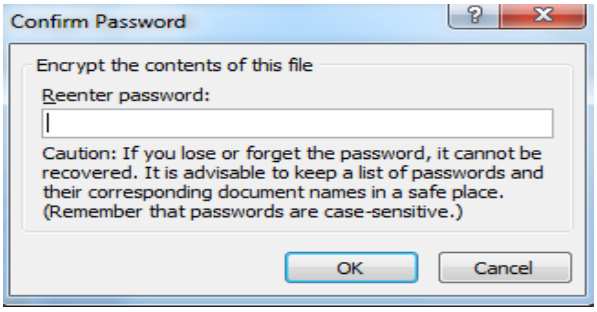


3. Under **Permissions**, click **Protect Workbook**.
4. Click on Encrypt with Password
5. The Encrypt Document dialog box is displayed.

6. Type a secure password.



7. Retype the secure password to confirm it.



How to create a strong password.

Strong passwords have the following characteristics:

- The minimum password length should be no less than eight characters.
- Contain upper and lower case characters digits and punctuation (e.g., a-z, A-Z, 0-9, !@#$%^&*()_+|~-=\`{}[]:";'<>?,./)
- Are not words (greater than 3 characters) in any language, slang, dialect, jargon, etc.
- Are not based on personal information, names of family, pets, etc.
- Do not contain word or number patterns like aaabbb, qwerty, zyxwvuts, 123321, etc.
- Passwords should be changed at least every 90 days.

To create a password you can easily remember you might base it on a song or book title or a phrase.

For example: "All I Really Need To Know I Learned In Kindergarten" could translate to AIRN2kilik. (Don't use this example for your password!!!)

A list of "don'ts":

- Don't reveal a password over the phone without verification of the person on the other end.
- Don't reveal a password in an unsecured email message.
- Don't talk about a password in front of others.
- Don't hint at the format of a password (e.g., "my family name").
- Don't reveal a password on questionnaires or security forms.
- Don't share a password with family members.
- Don't reveal a password to co-workers.