

Editing Documents in Google Drive

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When using Google Drive via a web browser, if you wanted to edit any document not native to Google (e.g. Microsoft Word/Excel/PowerPoint, images, PDFs, etc.) you would need to download the file, make your changes, and then re-upload the new file. This is cumbersome, but there is a better way to edit these files now and that is by using AODocs Universal File Opener.

AODocs Universal File Opener

In order to edit non-Google files directly in Drive, you will need to use the Chrome web browser and have the Universal File Opener (UFO) extension installed. For instructions on downloading and installing AODocs Universal File Opener please see our page on [installing the AODocs extensions](#).

Note: Most college-owned computers have Chrome web browser already installed however if you do not have Chrome web browser already, you can download it here: <https://www.google.com/chrome/>

To open and edit your non-Google files (Microsoft Office, images, PDFs, etc.) directly from Google Drive and keep them synchronized you need to have a program able to edit those file types as well as the UFO extension installed. Once properly installed you can launch from Drive, edit, and save these files directly back to Drive.

An icon, identifying the document as a non-Google document looks like a computer with a pencil pointed at the screen () , and it will be displayed to the right of your document name. Click on this icon to launch the necessary program and start editing.

Again, for more information on Installing the AODocs Universal File Opener (UFO) can be found here: [Installing the AODocs Extensions](#)

File Management with Universal File Opener

The Universal File Opener (UFO) allows you to launch and edit non-Google files directly from Drive. Most, if not all, of the programs that will edit these files, do not allow the same kind of cooperative editing that the Google apps do. Only one editor is able to edit a non-Google file at a time. This is easy if you are the only contributor to a file, but what if it is a shared file?

Files Locked for Editing

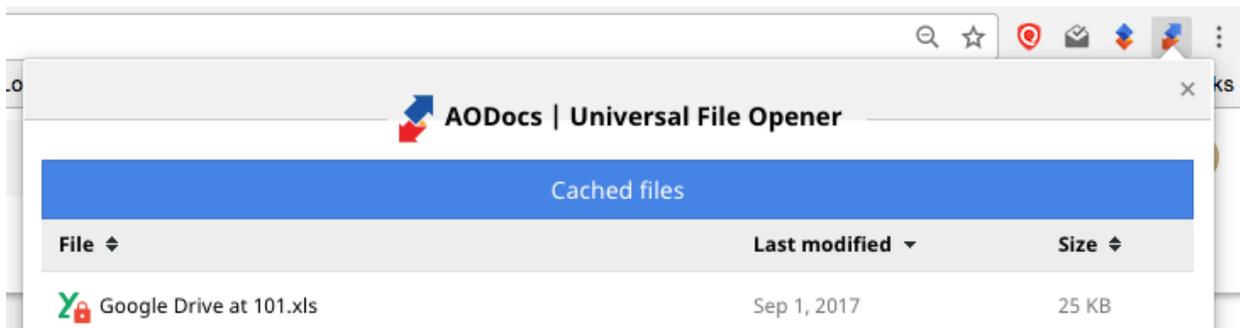
When you use the AODocs UFO extension to launch a shared file it will lock that file for 1 hour. That means that only you will be able to save edits made to the file back to the Drive. Once you save, that time will actually refresh and extend for 1 hour after you hit save. Anyone else attempting to editing that file before the 1-hour lock expires will be given a message letting them know that the file is locked for editing by another user.

How do I unlock files?

If you have recently edited a shared file, but another contributor needs to add changes of their own, there are a couple of options.

When the other contributor opens the file, they will get a message noting that it is locked by another user, but not who that user is. They will get an option to have UFO let them know when the file is unlocked and available to edit. This may be fine if there is no rush or need to make timely edits to a file, but if edits need to be made quickly there is another option.

If you have just made edits to a file that you know you are finished with, you can also unlock the file manually in case others need to make edits. Once you save and close the file, go back to your Drive and click on the UFO icon at the top-right of your Chrome browser (). This will open up a pop-up window with a list of files that you have opened recently using the UFO extension. Find the file you were working on in the list. At this point, it will have a red padlock icon on it.



Once you click that icon you will get a warning that you are opening up the file for others to edit. Simply choose "Yes" and it will unlock the file for others.

Unlock Confirmation

Are you sure you want to unlock this file? If you have unsaved changes and another user locks the file, you may not be able to save them to Google Drive.

[No](#) [Yes](#)

If you see any files with gray padlock icons in your list, that means these files are currently locked for editing by other users, and you cannot unlock them. The user that last locked the file needs to be the one to manually unlock it. Otherwise, you will have to wait for the lock to expire.