

## Special Characters on Web Pages

Microsoft Word and other programs use characters that Web browsers may not recognize without special coding, including accented letters and "curly quotes" or "smart quotes". It's best to stay with the simpler characters for now. If you are using Word to write content for your pages, here's how to switch the quote marks:

### **From Microsoft Word Help: Change curly quotes to straight quotes and vice versa**

Microsoft Word automatically changes straight quotation marks ( ' or " ) to curly (smart, or typographer's) quotes as you type. To turn this feature on or off:

1. On the **Tools** menu, click **AutoCorrect**, and then click the **AutoFormat As You Type** tab.
2. Under **Replace as you type**, select or clear the **"Straight quotes" with "smart quotes"** check box.

**Note** You can find and replace all instances of single or double curly quotes with straight quotes in your document. To do this, clear the **"Straight quotes" with "smart quotes"** check box on the **AutoFormat As You Type** tab. On the **Edit** menu, click **Replace**. In both the **Find what** and **Replace with** boxes, type ' or ", and then click **Find Next** or **Replace All**.

To replace all straight quotes with curly quotes, select the **"Straight quotes" with "smart quotes"** check box, and repeat the find and replace procedure.

The curly quote marks also should disappear if you **save a Word document as plain text**, using the "Save as..." item on the File menu. Reopen it with a plain text editor to be sure. (TextWrangler, SimpleText, Notepad, NoteTab, etc.)

## HTML Characters & International Alphabets

Sometimes you need to have a Web page show one of the characters that are used in HTML coding, such as the angle brackets < and >, which mathematicians call "less than" and "greater than" signs. In HTML, you can display these and other symbols with special abbreviations sandwiched between an ampersand and a semicolon, such as &lt; for "less than" and &gt; for "greater than." Since HTML uses the ampersand as a code character in those abbreviations, use &amp; when you want an ampersand in your text.

These "special characters" or "character entities" for international alphabets and scientific use are spelled out in great detail by the W3.org standards organization here:

<http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/sgml/entities.html>

The most common special characters are toward the end of that page:

<http://www.w3.org/TR/html4/sgml/entities.html#h-24.4>