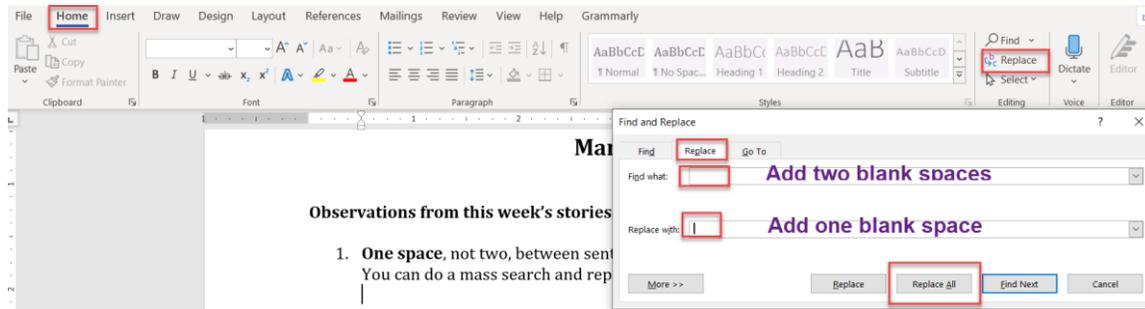


1. **One space** - One space, not two, between sentences, always and forever, since well before the 1990s. The same rule applies to the one and only space after a colon. You can do a mass search and replace using the MS Word replace feature.



2. **Would** – Many, many times you can replace *would* in a sentence with the simple past tense, and it makes the sentence much stronger.

I would go to the movies every Saturday afternoon.
I went to the movies every Saturday afternoon.

3. **Titles of books, plays, albums, television shows.** Italicize the names of longer works. All shorter works like poems, songs, television episodes, etc., should be enclosed in quotation marks, e.g., Maya Angelou's poem, "Still I Rise" but "Where Did Our Love Go" and "Baby Love" are songs included in the album *Where Did Our Love Go* by The Supremes.
4. **Family member's titles as names.** When writing about a family member *without* a possessive pronoun (*my, your, hers, his, our, their*) or other designation, capitalize *Mom, Dad, Grandpa, Aunt Rose*, etc.

Grandma Donna is my dad's mom, Uncle Jim's stepmom, and my cousins' and my favorite grandmother.

5. **That.** *That* is a word you can often eliminate in sentences. Read the sentence without *that*. If it is still easily understood, take out the *that*.

I learned that I was Jim's cousin.
I learned I was Jim's cousin.

6. **Got.** Got is a word that does not say much. Try to replace *got* with a more descriptive verb.

I got the measles from Sally.
I caught the measles from Sally.

7. **Thing(s).** *Thing* is another word that doesn't give the reader much information. What is a *thing*? Try to find more description words.

I had a lot of things in my bookbag.
I had a pencil, crayons, compass, and apple in my bookbag.

8. **Fact-check.** Fact-check every verifiable reference in your story—dates, places, spellings, etc.