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MS Office Without MS Office — The Free Web App That Does It All

5 min read · Oct 30, 2025



Jannis



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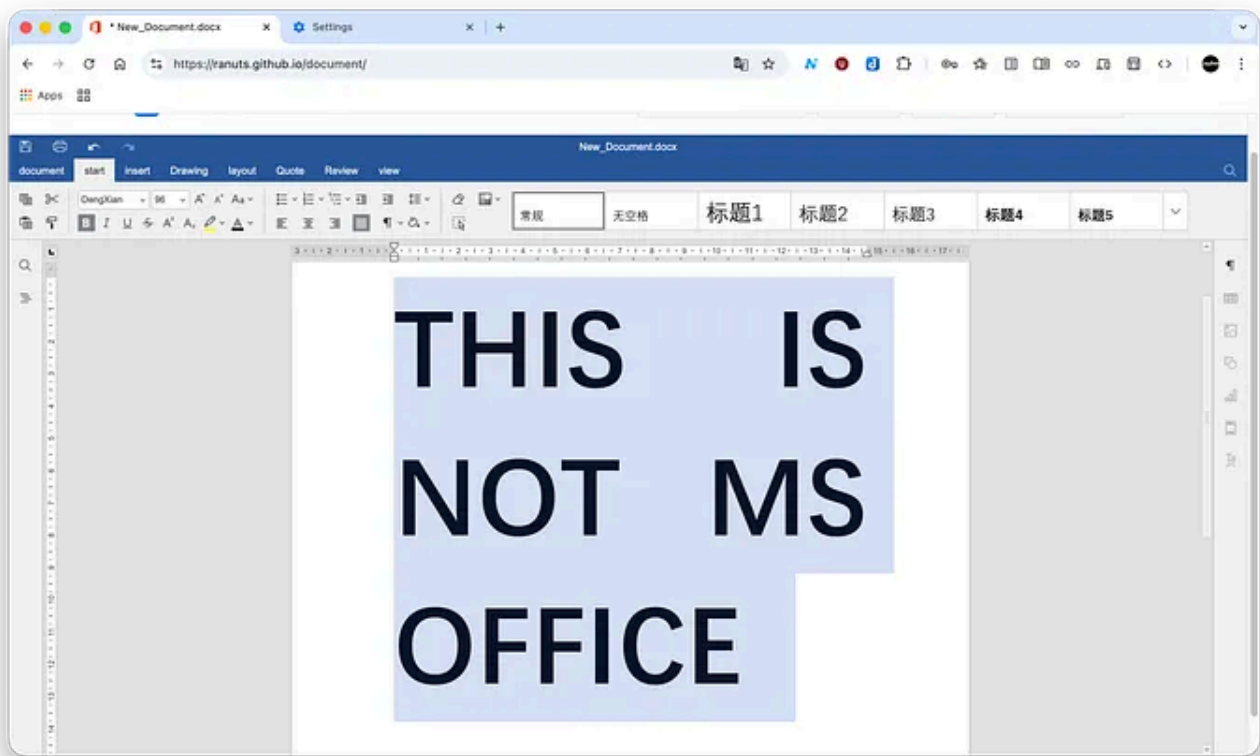
Bring Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to your browser — no subscriptions, no sign-ins, no strings attached.

It started as a curiosity. I wanted to open a Word document on a machine that didn't have Microsoft Office installed. Normally, that's a dead end — you either cough up a subscription or juggle between clunky online converters. But while browsing through open-source directories, I stumbled upon something simple and brilliant: a tool called **Document**.



Hi, this is Jannis.

When I first read its description on GitHub, I half expected another experimental project that barely loads beyond the login page. But Document turned out to be one of those open-source finds that solve a real, everyday problem. The kind that big software vendors turned into billion-dollar subscriptions.



It's Basically Office, Minus the Office

Document is a web-based suite that lets you create, edit, and view Word, Excel, and PowerPoint files directly in your browser — privately, locally, and without needing a Microsoft account. It uses WASM-powered LibreOffice under the hood, meaning it's essentially LibreOffice running in your browser tab.

There's no remote server handling your files, no hidden cloud sync. Everything happens locally on your machine, inside the browser sandbox. Your data never leaves your computer. It's like having the power of an office suite, minus the telemetry, logins, and license checks.

No watermark, no trial popup, no “sign in to continue.” The document looked almost identical to what you'd expect in Microsoft Word, complete with formatting, comments, and even tables preserved

What It Can Do

Once I got past the novelty of seeing Word open without Word, I realized how capable this tool really is. You can:

- Create new documents, spreadsheets, or presentations
- Upload existing Office files (.docx, .xlsx, .pptx)

- Edit them with full formatting support
- Export them back in the same format or PDF

Underneath, Document uses **LibreOffice 24.x**, compiled into WebAssembly using **Emscripten**, so the performance is smooth even on modest hardware.

And because it's all local, you can even **run it offline** once it's loaded in your browser — a huge plus if you prefer privacy or travel a lot without constant connectivity.

Installing It (or Rather, Hosting It)

Unlike typical web apps, Document isn't something you install in the traditional sense. There are two main ways to use it:

Option 1: Use the Public Demo

The easiest way is to simply visit the hosted version linked from the GitHub repository:

👉 <https://github.com/ranuts/document>

The site will load the full editor directly in your browser. You can drag in a `.docx`, `.xlsx`, or `.pptx` file and start editing immediately.

Option 2: Run It Locally (For Privacy or Offline Use)

If you want to host it yourself:

Installation and Running on Mac Locally

Prerequisites

- Ensure Node.js version 20.0.0 or higher is installed.
- Install `pnpm` version 7 if you want to use the project's preferred package manager.

Installation Steps

Clone the repository:

```
git clone https://github.com/ranuts/document.git
```

Navigate to the project directory:

```
cd document
```

Install dependencies:

```
npm install
```

Alternatively, if you have `pnpm` installed, use:

```
pnpm install
```

Start the local development server:

```
npm run dev
```

This will launch Vite and make the development server accessible on your local network on localhost:8000.

From there, you'll have a full offline-capable office suite running right from your machine. No telemetry, no sign-in, no ads.

The Fun Part: Using Office Tools Without the Baggage

It's almost comical the first time you realize you're using Word, Excel, and PowerPoint without actually having Office installed. The ribbon layout, the menus, even the keyboard shortcuts feel familiar.

But what I liked most was the privacy-by-design approach. Everything stays on your system — a refreshing contrast to the “login to continue” culture that dominates productivity software today.

Performance-wise, it's not as instant as native Office on a fast laptop, but it's surprisingly smooth for something running purely in the browser. My test spreadsheet with a few hundred rows loaded fine, and PowerPoint transitions rendered cleanly.

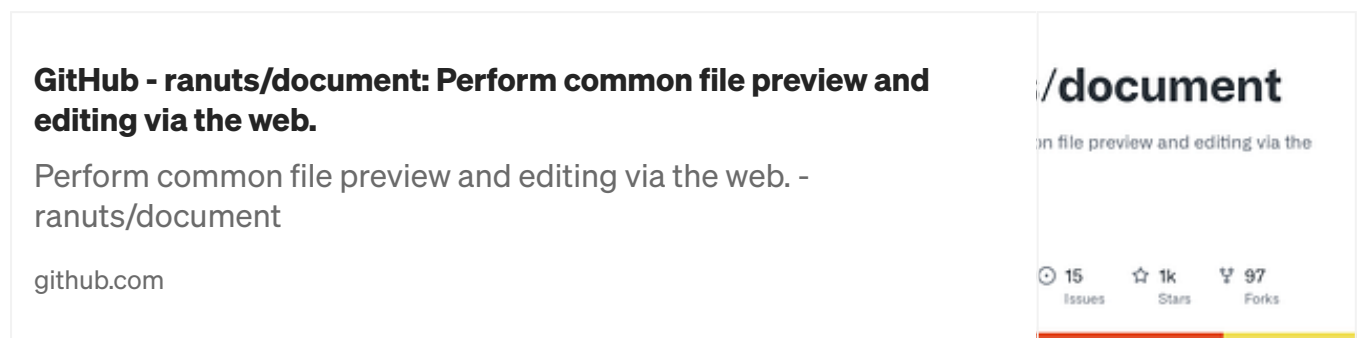
Your Quick Fix Whenever You Need Word, Excel or PowerPoint

For years, people have been conditioned to think that Office productivity tools are synonymous with Microsoft 365. But tools like Document remind us that ****local computing still matters****, and that browsers are now powerful enough to handle tasks we once reserved for desktop apps.

It's also a quiet rebellion against the subscription creep. If all you need is to write a few letters, edit your résumé, or tweak a presentation — you don't need to pay a recurring fee for that.

I've since bookmarked the local version of Document and pinned it in my dock. It's not a complete replacement for enterprise collaboration yet, but for personal use? It's perfect.

If you ever wished you could use Office without the subscriptions, the accounts, or the constant updates, this is your answer. Just open your browser, load the app, and get to work — quietly, privately, and completely free.



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Written by Jannis

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Product Owner in global telecom, lifelong tech tinkerer, and Mac user. Sharing hands-on hacks, real stories, and the tools that make work (and life) smarter.

Responses (13)



Bgerby

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Chris Howard
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Ah! I see it's based on OnlyOffice. I already have that installed and big fan



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Henk Roodt
Oct 30



Thanks, this is great for someone using a MacBook Air M2 !!





3

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