

Application Comparison

18335951

Laura Crowley

The two applications I've chosen that do the same job are Google Docs, and Microsoft Word and the platforms I've chosen are their web applications and mobile applications.

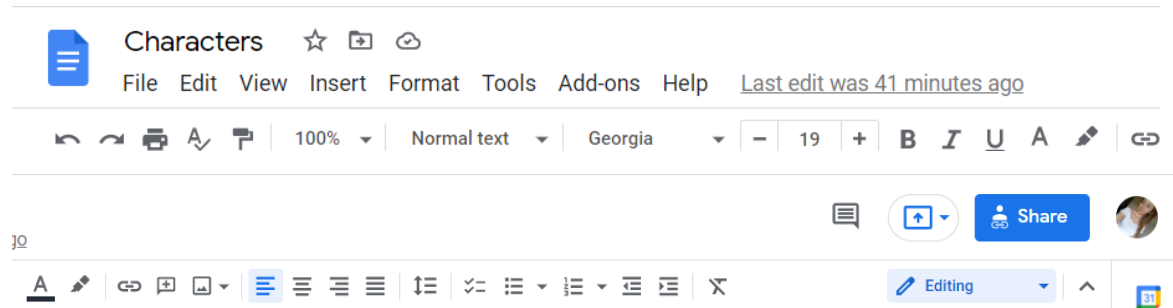
Four activities that can be performed:

1. Start a new blank document - For starting a new document on the web applications, the user can find both applications include a picture of a blank page with a plus sign included as well as the wording "start new document" or something of that nature. To create a new document on the mobile application, a similar method is used; a plus symbol to indicate the creation of a new document.
2. Edit document – On both web applications once the user selects the document they wish to edit, all the necessary tools can be found in the top panel of the application. A new control is introduced in the mobile application when it comes to the user editing documents; unlike the web application where you can start editing as soon as the user opens a document, on the mobile app once the user opens the document they must then select the pen button to start editing the text/bring up the text options.
3. Share document – Both web applications include a share button, once the user selects it they can add the people they wish to share the document with or copy the link and send it to them. They can also select the option to allow those they're sharing the document with to edit its contents. While both Google Docs and Microsoft use different iconography for the share option it is more noticeable on the mobile applications as the word "share" is not featured, just the icon.
4. Download document - The web applications do different slightly when it comes to downloading documents. In Microsoft Word the user must go through the file tab and then the "save as" section first before they can find the option to download whereas Google Docs uses the word download straight from the file menu — Google Docs also offers more downloading options. On the Microsoft Word mobile application, there is no file tab, instead, there are three vertical dots signifying "more options" in which the user will find a save as options in which they can choose to download the document. Contrary to the web application, the Google Docs mobile app has extra steps to download documents. The user must click the three dots for more options, then share and export, then save as where they'll be prompted to pick a format.

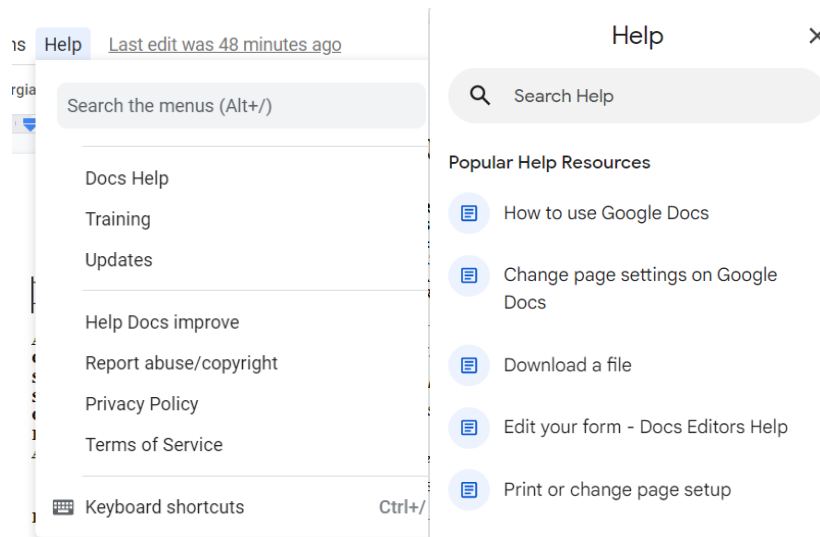
Google Docs Web Application

Functionality through controls

The user can control and change a variety of things in the application such as the text size, the font type and colour, the document name, the viewing size, the document layout, the text layout etc.

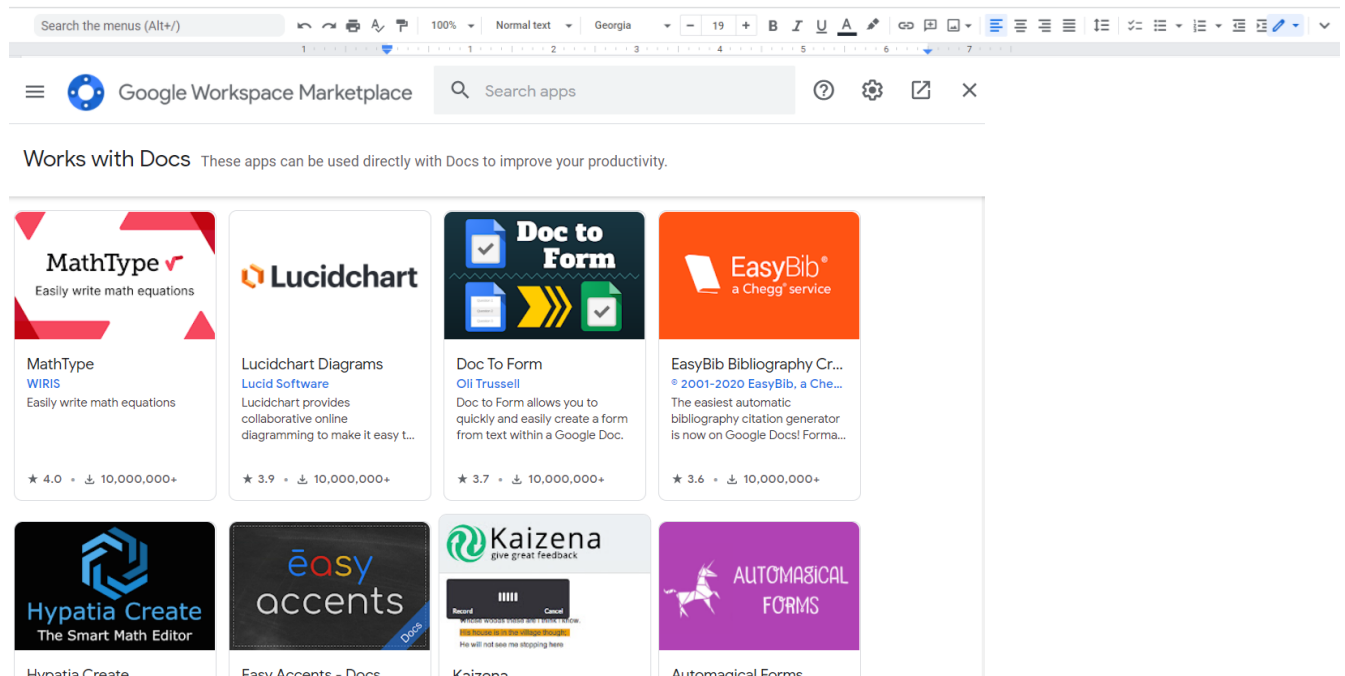


It also includes a “Help” dropdown menu to guide the user through the application



Customization Options

There are some slight customization options, such as collapsing a section of the tab bar. Google Docs also offers add-ons to further customize the application. Further customization of the application can be done in their “view” section.



I think the interface is a mix of inductive and deductive. For example, if you hover over certain icons, it tells you their function, so you don't have to deduce what they mean or have previous knowledge about the icon. But it assumes that you will be able to deduce how to type on the page in the interface.

I think Google Docs is a mix of single and multiple-page applications. When you first create a new document or select a recent one this is an example of the multiple page application, as Google Docs must reload in order to carry out the selection. Once you are working on the document it's more of a single-page application. Google Docs offers "progressive disclosure" through the various dropdown menus it includes allowing the user to access further tools if needed and keeping them out of the way the rest of the time. To use Google Docs you are required to first have a Google account which is free to set up. Once you sign up for a Google account you will be able to access the Google Docs application. To log in you must input your associated email and password. You can choose whether you wish to stay logged into your Google account or choose to log out. In order to logout, you must click on your profile picture in the top right of the screen and click the sign out button.

Google Docs Mobile Application

Functionality through controls

A new control is introduced in the mobile application when it comes to editing your documents; unlike the web application where you can start editing as soon as you open a document, on the mobile app once you open the document you must then select the pen button to start editing your text/bring up the text options.

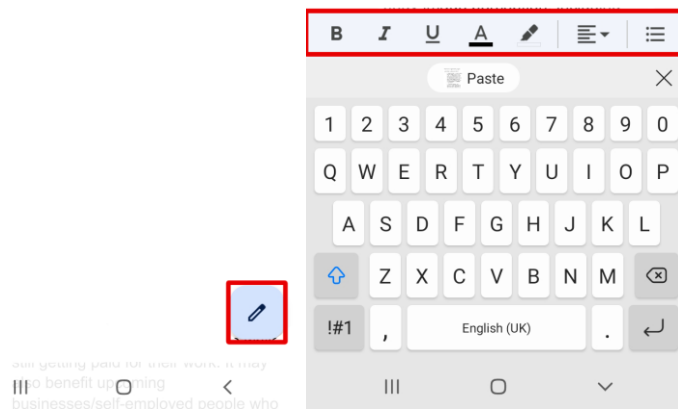


Sample of previous digital work

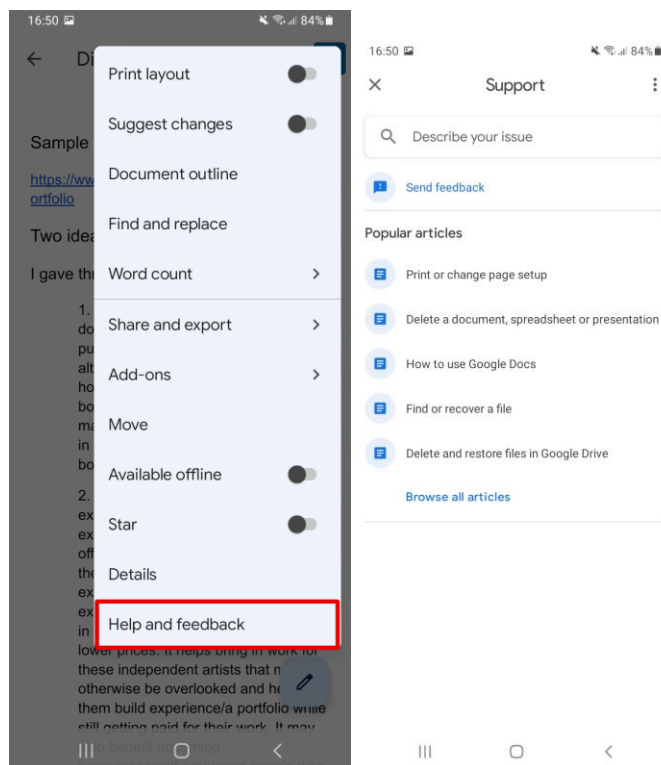
<https://www.behance.net/gallery/121597371/Portfolio>

Sample of previous digital work

<https://www.behance.net/gallery/121597371/Portfolio>

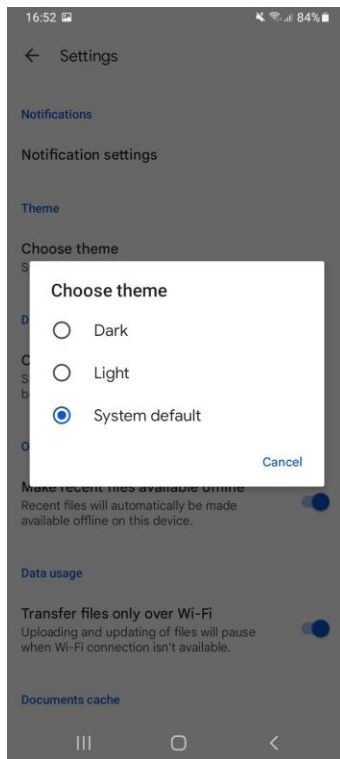


There is a help and feedback section that is the same as the web application.



Customization Options

Google Docs still offer the add-ons for customization and in the app settings it does allow you to change the theme i.e., dark, light, or system default, but otherwise the mobile app is very limited when it comes to customization.



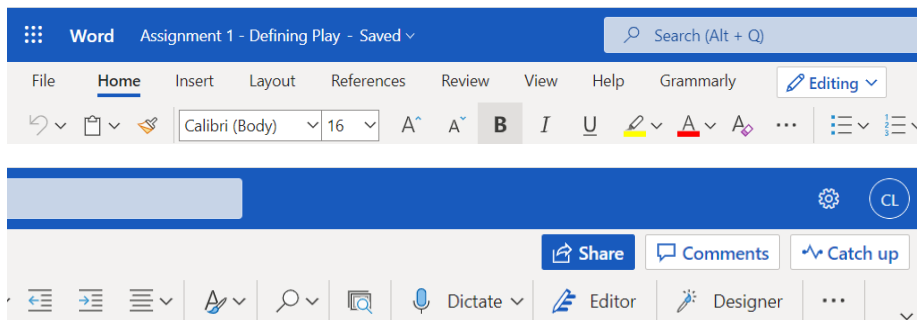
I think the interface for the mobile app is more deductive than the web application. Since hovering on the phone isn't an option, it relies on you to know what the different icons mean in order to navigate the app.

I think the Google Docs mobile app also follows the web application in being a mix of single and multiple-page applications. The Google Docs mobile app, like the web application, offers progressive overload by grouping items together and hiding them out of the way behind certain buttons i.e., the three vertical dots that signify there's additional options. The authorization process is the same as the web application, you are required to firstly have a Google account in order to use the mobile app. To log in you must input your associated email and password. While there is a profile picture on the Google Docs mobile app, by clicking this you are not presented with the option to sign out, to sign out of your overall Google Account it must be done externally.

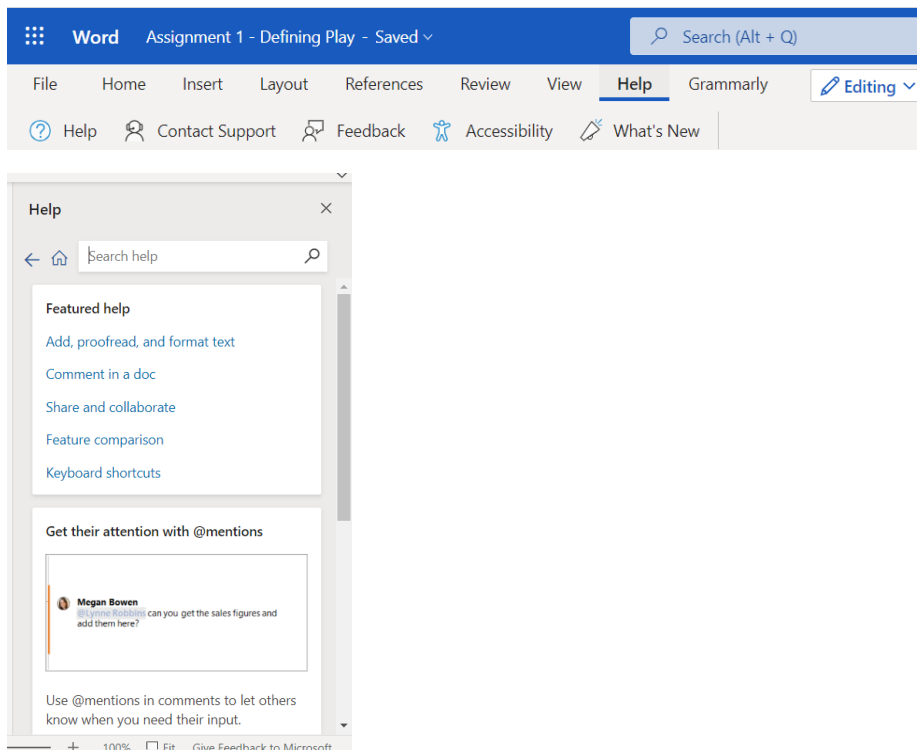
Microsoft Word Web Application

Functionality through controls

Microsoft Words functionality through controls is the same as Google Docs. The user can control and change a variety of things in the application such as the text size, the font type and colour, the document name, the viewing size, the document layout, the text layout etc. The controls in these applications follow a standard layout and use the same iconography e.g., **B** = being bold, *i* being italicized etc, and buttons, as well as having other similar crossovers. The consistency between these applications is what makes them functional and easy to follow.

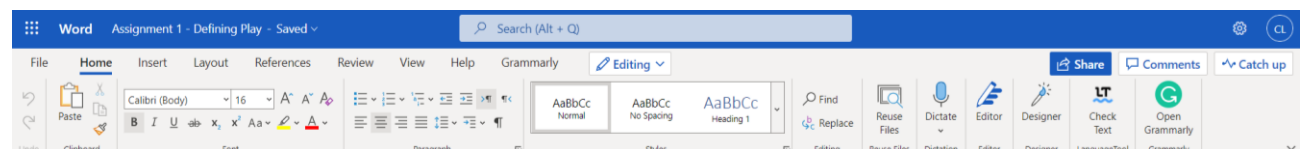
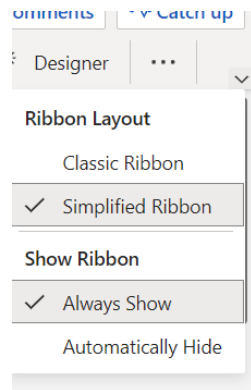


It also includes a “Help” button to guide the user through the application.



Customization Options

In Microsoft Word you can customize the ribbon layout to be the classic or simplified version, and whether the ribbon always shows or hides automatically. Further customization of the application can be done in their “view” section.

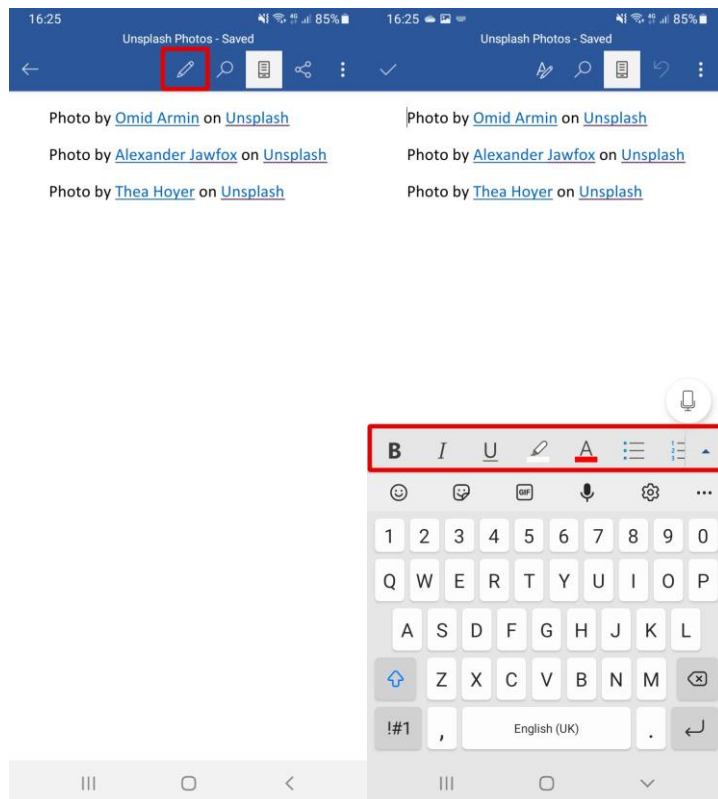


I think Microsoft Word is a mix of single and multiple-page applications. When you first create a new document or select a recent one this is an example of the multiple page application, as Microsoft Word opens the selection in a new browser tab. Once you are working on the document it's more of a single-page application. Microsoft Word offers “progressive disclosure” through the various dropdown menus it includes allowing the user to access further tools if needed and keeping them out of the way the rest of the time. To use Microsoft Word you are required to first have a Microsoft account which in contrast to Google, you typically must pay for. Once you sign up for a Microsoft account you will be able to access the Microsoft Word application. To log in you must input your associated email and password. You can choose whether you wish to stay logged into your account or choose to log out. In order to logout, you must click on your profile picture at the top right of the screen and click the sign out button.

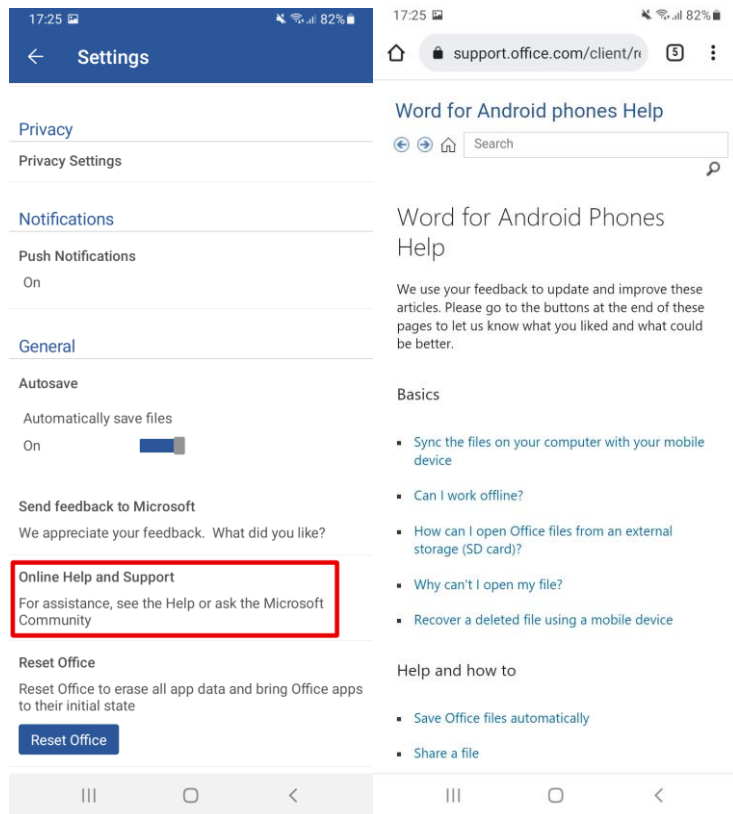
Microsoft Word Mobile Application

Functionality through controls

Like with the Google Docs mobile app a new control is introduced when it comes to editing your documents; you must then select the pen button to start editing your text/bring up the text options.



There is no “help” button in Microsoft Word, instead to get help you must go through the settings tab and select online help and support that will open a page in your phone’s browser.



Customization Options

From what I could see the Microsoft Word mobile app didn't offer any customization.

I think the interface for the mobile app is more deductive than the web application. Again, since hovering on the phone isn't an option, it relies on you to know what the different icons mean in order to navigate the app.

The Microsoft Word mobile app, like the web application, offers progressive overload by grouping items together and hiding them out of the way behind certain buttons i.e., the three vertical dots that signify there's additional options. The authorization process is the same as the web application, you are required to firstly have a Microsoft account in order to use the mobile app. To log in you must input your associated email and password. To log out of your Microsoft account on the mobile app you must click the profile picture in the top left corner, then you must click on your name which will make the "sign out" button appear.