

# READY NET GO ... NEWS

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<http://www.readynetgo.net>

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## Tip of the Month

### Create a drop down form field

Unlike the checkbox and text form fields described on the reverse, creating a drop down form field requires some extra steps.

1. Type your question in the document, then click the drop down form field button on the Forms toolbar (third button from the left).
2. A shaded bar will appear (if it doesn't click the Form Field Shading button (third from the right)).
3. Place your cursor in the shaded bar and right click with your mouse. When the menu appears, scroll down to Properties.
4. A dialog box appears where you will type your responses that you want visible in the drop down box.
5. In the Drop Down Item box, type in your response, then click Add.
6. Continue to type in all of your responses and then click OK.
7. Next to the question you will see the first item you typed in the shaded box.
8. **IMPORTANT:** The document must be protected in order for the drop down field to be activated.
9. Click the Lock button on the Forms toolbar to **Protect** the entire document. You will now be able to click an arrow next to the shaded box to see your selections.

**HINT:** Drop down fields can be Yes/No or any other list items. Ex: create a list of food such as apple, banana, fig, kiwi from which people can choose.

## Create Fill-in Forms Like a Pro

Remember the days when we had to use a typewriter to fill in applications and business forms? It took endless attempts to line up the words just right. And more often than not, words or phrases would end up in the margins anyway. Thankfully, computers have made many tasks like this easier and in the process they have increased our productivity.

One of the more intriguing functions we can do with MS Word is to create forms that people can fill-in on their computer and either print and mail or email directly to the recipient. Word forms that are posted on a website are an easy way to make a great impression.

**Bottom Line:** By creating an MS Word Form, you won't have to work with illegible handwritten forms that need to be deciphered by everyone in the office. Printed forms greatly reduce errors and processing time.

Another advantage to using fill-in forms is that the document is **protected** — individuals cannot change the text of the form (e.g., questions, directions, layout). Once the MS Word document is protected, individuals may only fill in certain boxes which helps to eliminate formatting errors and improves the flow of the document. Word forms can even be password protected for added security.

The most important section when creating your Form is the Forms toolbar found by clicking **View** on the main menu, scrolling down to **Toolbars** and over to **Forms**. Once you have this box open and become comfortable with the available buttons, you'll be creating forms for everyone in the office ...

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### WWW (Websites Worth Watching)

1. [www.livingto100.com](http://www.livingto100.com) - Want to live to be 100 years old? Take this 5 min. survey and see where you stand.
2. [www.pueblo.gsa.gov](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov) – Free information and sound advice on topics such as energy efficiency, buying a car, travel, medical issues, retirement planning, etc.
3. [www.soundhome.com](http://www.soundhome.com) - Home inspection/maintenance advice for all homeowners and renters.

## Ideas for Fill-in forms

- An application that requires people to select checkboxes as their response
- Essay applications - 1 page, 5 pages, 20 pages or more
- A mix of checkboxes, short phrases (like address info), and essay responses
- Demographic information
- Collecting financial information (i.e., IRS documents)
- Online surveys
- Mileage or travel logs (no more tabbing or indenting)

## How to create a Fill-in Form

Before you begin, it may be helpful to sketch the layout of your form on paper. Do you want it block style with each question left justified or would columns work better? Do you want a table of contents to find sections faster? Try to visualize it first, lay it out on paper then create the form in Word.

1. Open MS Word and create a new document
2. Type in any header or Title information
3. If you want to collect demographic information (Name, Address, Phone, etc.), first create a table with 2 columns and at least 4 rows. In the first column, you'll type in what you want to collect such as Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone/Fax. In the second column, you'll create a blank text form field using the Forms toolbar. Once the document is protected, responses can only be typed in the areas labeled as text form fields.
4. To add text form fields to your tables, position your cursor where you want to add a form field in your document. On the Forms toolbar, click the button **ab** on the far left side – when you roll over it, the caption will read “text form field”. Once you click this button, the cursor will jump a few spaces to the right – a grey bar appears in the row.
5. If you don't see a grey bar, form field shading is not selected. On the forms toolbar, click the third button from the right – it has an **a** in the middle of short diagonal lines. Once this button is highlighted, all of your form fields will be clearly marked on the screen.
6. Continue to add form fields to all table boxes in which you want word responses.
7. If you prefer to add a checkbox, click the button with a checkmark (second from the left). Once placed in the document, the user simply has to left click in the box to put an X next to that response.
8. If many of your responses require Yes or No, you can add a drop down form field. When you place this form field next to a question, the user will click an arrow and highlight the appropriate response. This method will save space in the document. See the Tip of the Month for specific details.
9. **IMPORTANT:** For form fields to be activated (so they work properly), you must **Protect** the document.
10. To protect the document, click the **lock** button on the far right side of the Forms toolbar. If you wish to edit the document (fix spelling errors, add additional categories or questions), you must unprotect the document. Click the **lock** button again to unprotect the document.
11. When the document is complete, click the protect button and then **save** it before posting to your website. There you have it! If you have questions, give us a call or visit our website for a sample form.

**For an example of an MS Word form, see our website: [www.readynetgo.net/newsletters](http://www.readynetgo.net/newsletters)**