

Using vLetter Handwriting with Mail Merge in Word 2000 - 2003

Q: What is Mail Merge?

A: The Mail Merge feature in Microsoft Word allows you to merge an address file with a form letter in order to generate multiple copies of the same letter, with one copy for each address in your file. This automates the task of generating the same letter for multiple recipients. See Mail Merge in the Word Help for more information.

Q: Why use vLetter Handwriting Software with Mail Merge?

A: vLetter Handwriting Software gives your form letters a personalized look with your own handwriting font, or with one of our Ready-Made Handwriting Styles.

Q: Are there any limitations to using vLetter Handwriting Software with Mail Merge?

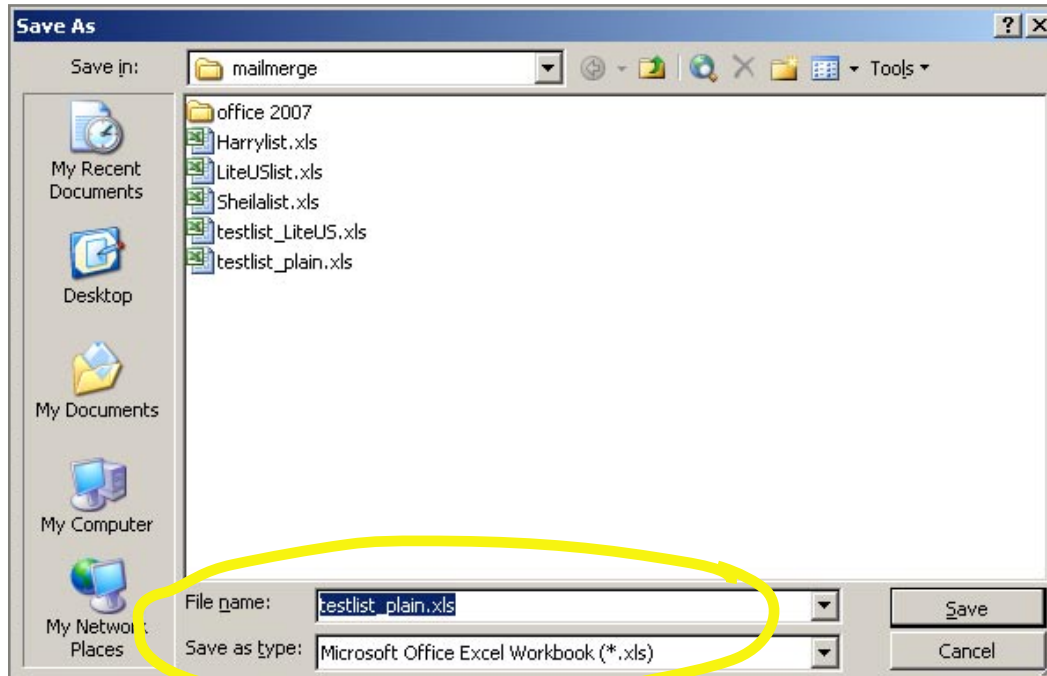
A: Yes. First, the vLetter Handwriting Software converts limited quantities of text at a time, up to 8000 characters. Second, there is a licensing limit of less than 5000 documents at a time. If you need to send mass mailings of 5000 or more pieces of mail at a time, then you need to contact vLetter for a special license and for database conversion. Visit <http://direct.vletter.com> for more information.

Q: How do I use vLetter Handwriting Software with Mail Merge?

A: Read the step-by-step guide on the following pages!

Step-by-Step Guide for Mail Merge in Word 2000 - 2003

1. First, export your address data to an Excel file type (.xls) if it is not already an Excel file. You can do this in most database programs.



2. Next, open the .xls file in Excel. Highlight the cells you wish to convert to handwriting (do not select the top row of field names - these need to remain as plain text).

Microsoft Excel - testlist_plain.xls

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Data Window Help Adobe PDF Type a question

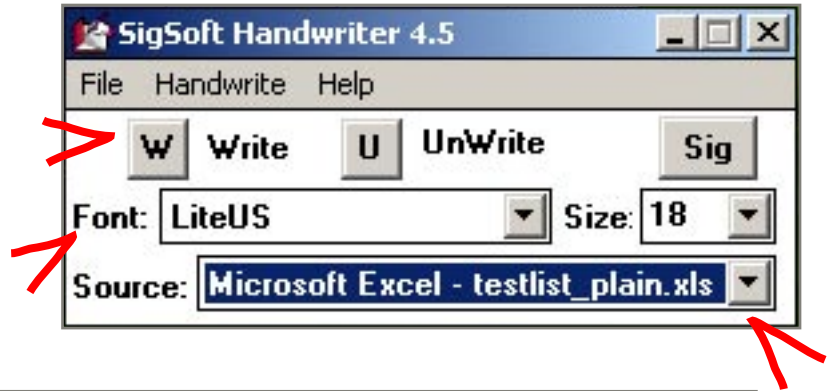
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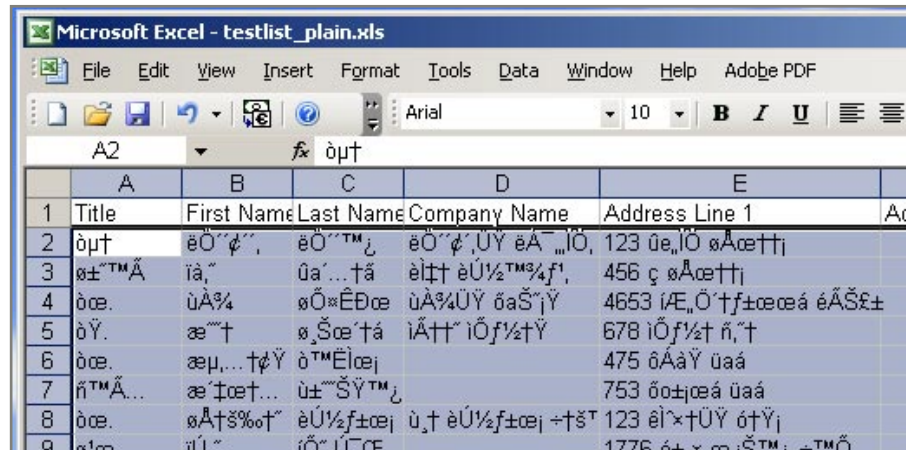
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Title	First Name	Last Name	Company Name	Address Line 1	Address Li	City	State	ZIP Code
2	Mme	Fallulla	Fallon	Fallula's Focaccia	123 Vecci Street		Anywood	OR	97031
3	Senor	Juan	Valdez	Cafe Colombia	456 B Street		Somewher	OR	97235
4	Mr.	Tom	Sawyer	Tom's Paints	4653 Huckleberry Drive		Smalltown	MO	54687
5	Ms.	Anne	Shirley	Green Gables	678 Gable Lane		Avonlea	ME	32345
6	Mr.	Amadeus	Mozart		475 Opus Way		Salzburg	IN	46578
7	Lord	Alfred	Tennison		753 Poetry Way		London	England	1K3 TW4
8	Mr.	Stephen	Colbert	The Colbert Report	123 Eagle's Nest		New York	NY	21122
9	Sir	John	Hancock		1776 Declaration Road		Braintree	MA	02184
10	Not that	Alfred	Hitchcock		964 Nowhere Street		Hollywood	OR	97634
11	Mrs.	Butter	Worth		357 Pancake Place		Mapleton	NY	21202

3. Open the SigSoft Handwriter (go to the Start Menu > Programs > vLetter > SigSoft Handwriter). This is a small utility that will convert plain text to handwriting.

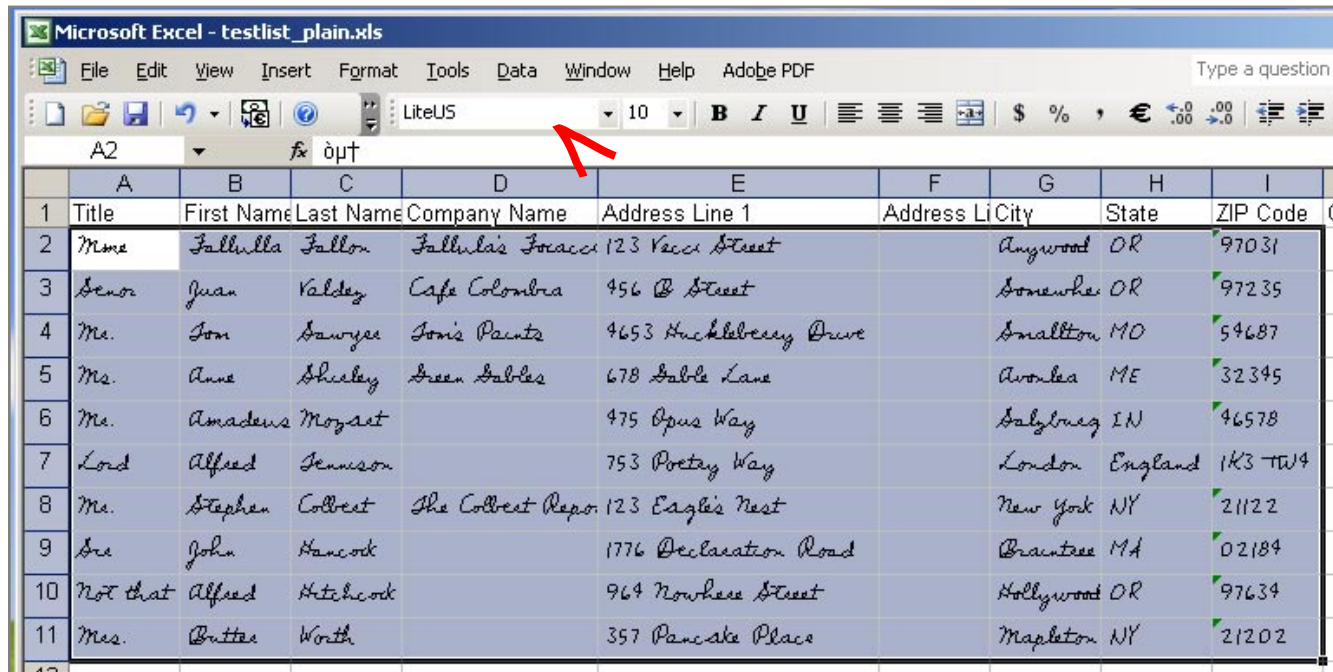
Set the Font to the handwriting style you wish to use, and set the Source to the program your document is in (Excel).



4. Next, click the “W” button to “write” the text in the font you chose. When the text is converted, you will see some funny characters onscreen -- this is normal.



5. To check that the information converted correctly, you can highlight the cells (if not still highlighted) and choose the handwriting font from the Font menu to view the information in handwriting. (Excel 2000 might not display the font, but crash; you can skip this step as it is not necessary to the process).



The screenshot shows the Microsoft Excel interface with a spreadsheet containing data in a handwriting font. The font dropdown menu in the toolbar is highlighted with a red arrow, showing 'LiteUS' as the selected font. The spreadsheet data is as follows:

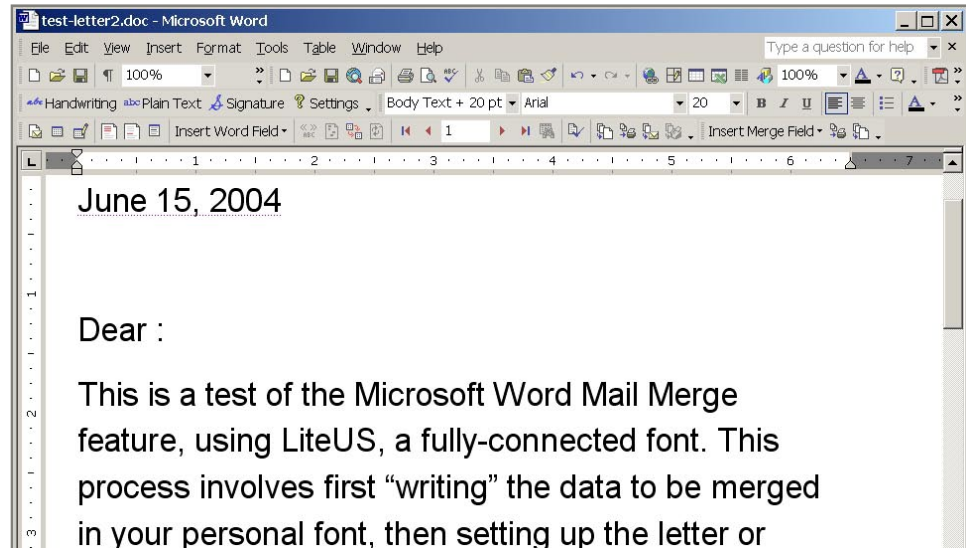
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Title	First Name	Last Name	Company Name	Address Line 1	Address Li	City	State	ZIP Code
2	Mrs	Fallula	Fallon	Fallula's Focacci	123 Vecci Street		Anywood	OR	97031
3	Senor	Juan	Valdez	Cafe Colomba	456 B Street		Somewhe	OR	97235
4	Mr.	Tom	Sawyer	Tom's Paints	4653 Huckleberry Drive		Smallton	MO	54687
5	Ms.	Anne	Shelley	Green Sables	678 Sable Lane		Avonlea	ME	32345
6	Ms.	Amadeus	Mozart		475 Opus Way		Salymsq	IN	46578
7	Lord	Alfred	Jennison		753 Poetry Way		London	England	1K3 TW4
8	Mr.	Stephen	Colbert	The Colbert Repo	123 Eagle's Nest		New York	NY	21122
9	Dr	John	Hancock		1776 Declaration Road		Brantree	MA	02184
10	Not that	Alfred	Hitchcock		964 Nowhere Street		Hollywood	OR	97634
11	Ms.	Butter	Worth		357 Pancake Place		Mapleton	NY	21202

6. Finally, save the file as an Excel file. It's best to do a "Save as" so you can save it under a different file name, to preserve your original Excel file as unchanged (in case you need to start over or want to convert it to another handwriting font).

Close this file when finished.

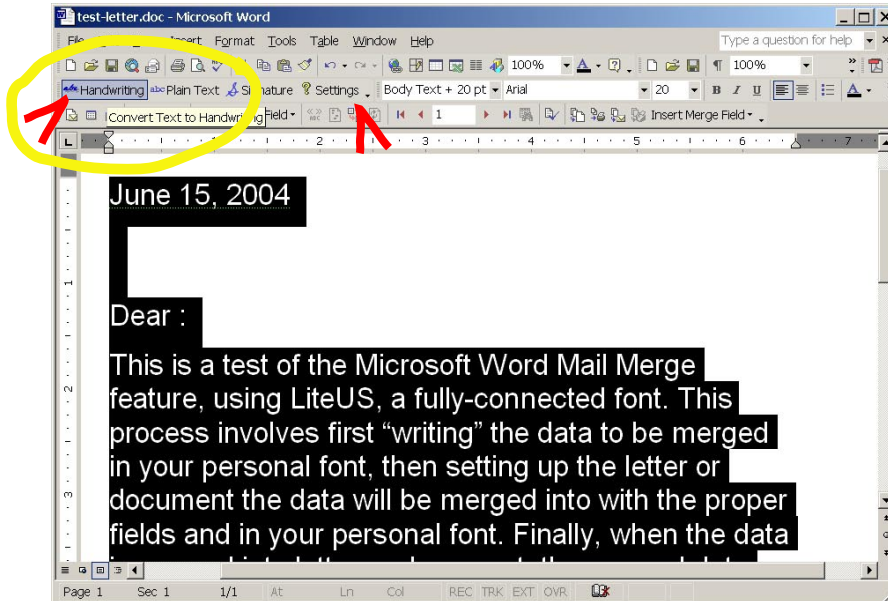
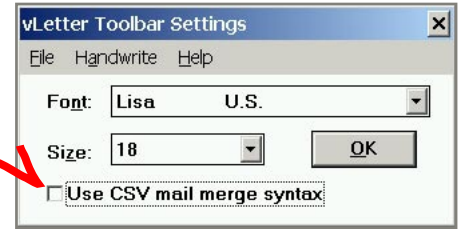
7. Now, open the letter or document you wish to merge with the address list.

For creating envelopes, see page 16.



8a. If you want the entire document in a handwriting font, select all the text of the document. Select your font from Settings in the vLetter toolbar – be sure to select the same font used in your address list.

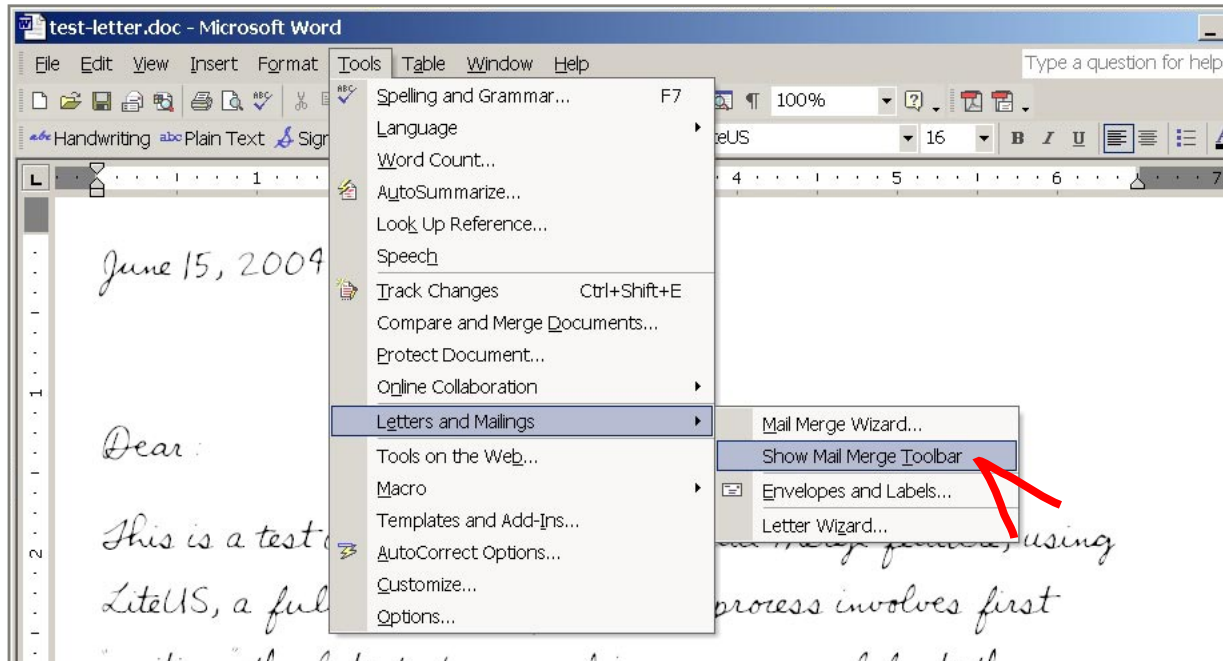
*Be sure to uncheck the option to “Use CSV mail merge syntax.”



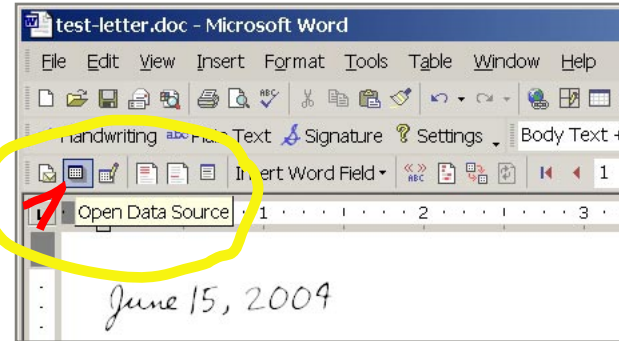
8b. Once the correct font is chosen, click the Handwriting button to “write” the document in your font.

NOTE: If you want only the merged information itself to be in handwriting, and not the rest of the document, then skip the above step and go on to the next page to follow the steps to insert Merge Fields.

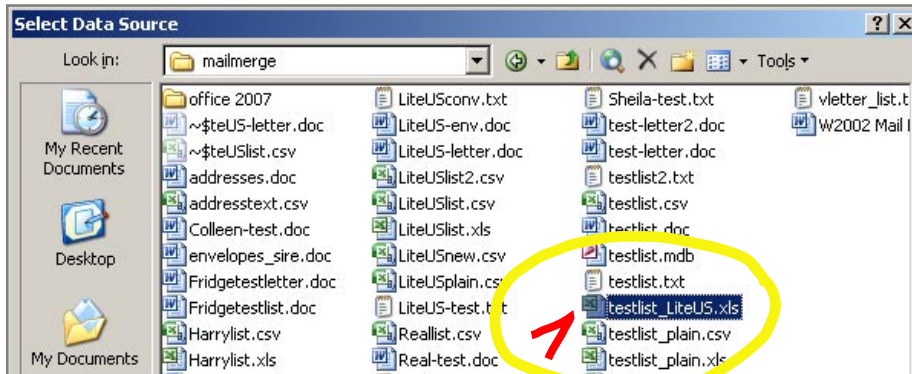
9. If the Mail Merge Toolbar is not already showing, go to Tools > Letters and Mailings > Show Mail Merge Toolbar to display the Mail Merge Toolbar.



10. From the Mail Merge Toolbar, click the Open Data Source button.

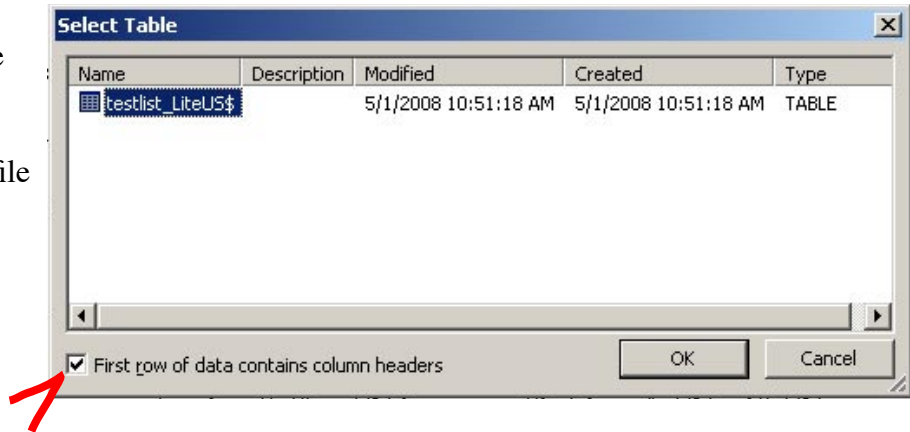


11. In the dialog box, browse to find the .xls file you saved with the names and addresses written in your font. This selects the .xls file as the data source to be used for merging.



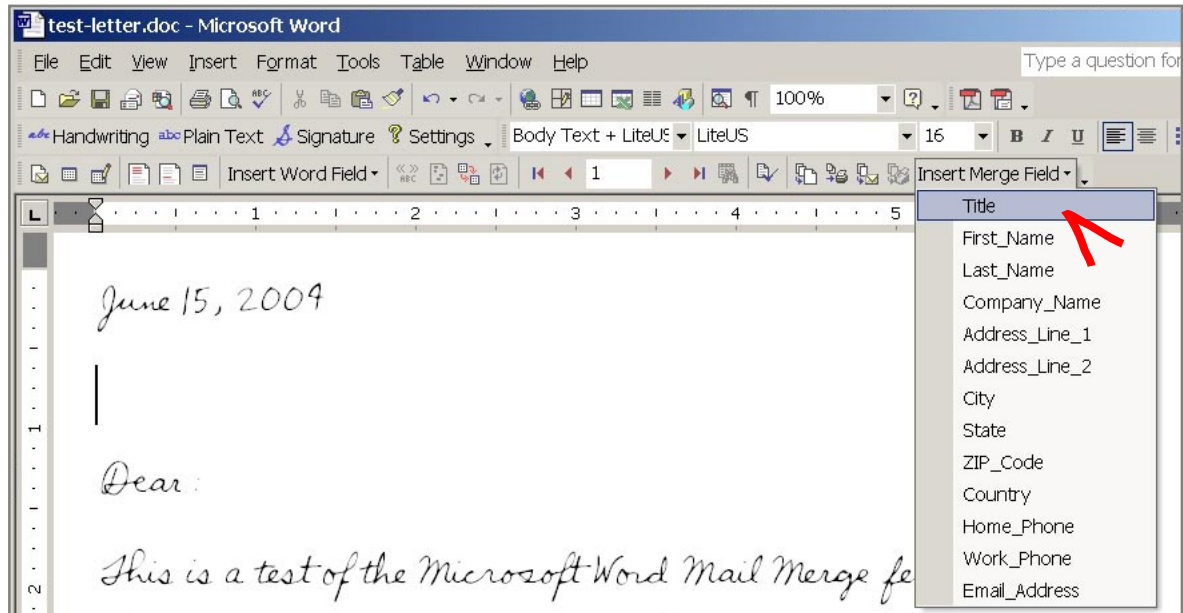
12. The “Select Table” window pops open next. You can leave the defaults as they are. Click OK.

This sets your address list as the file that will be used for merging into your document.

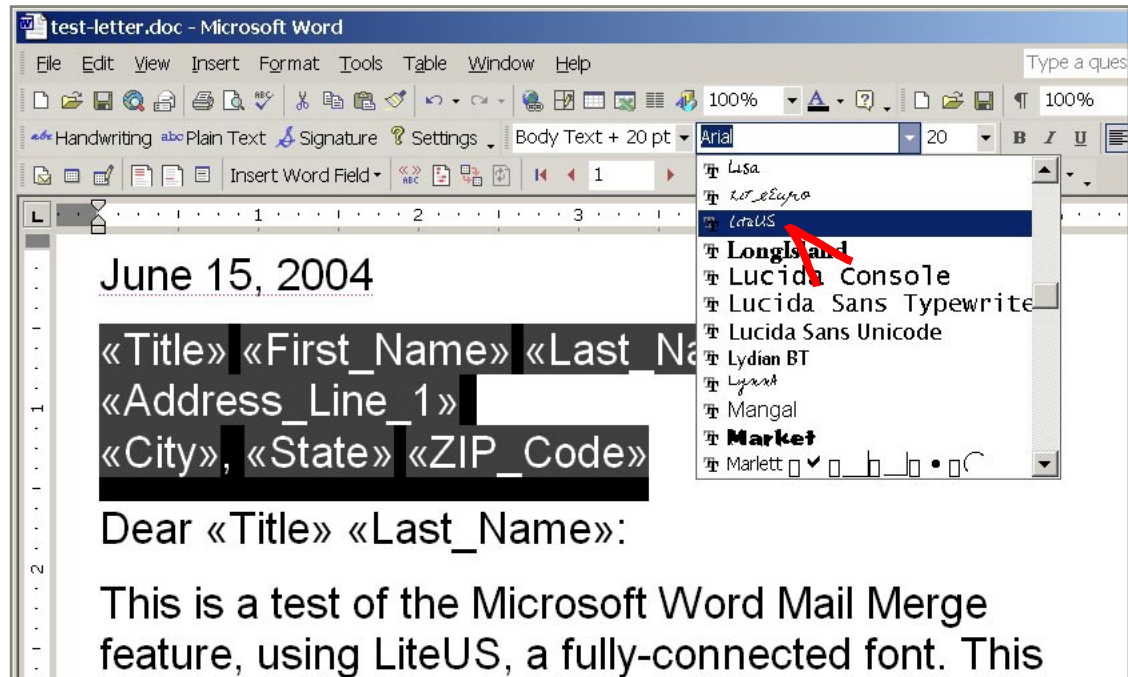


13. Next, insert Merge Fields where needed in your document. If you want only the Merge Fields to be in the handwriting font, see the next page. Otherwise, skip to page 13 if you have already converted your entire document to the handwriting font.

NOTE: Avoid using the “Address Block” and “Greeting Line” fields. These contain words and formatting that cannot be automatically written correctly in your font and must be manually altered in every merged document created (if you have dozens or hundreds of addresses, this means dozens or hundreds of merged documents to be altered).

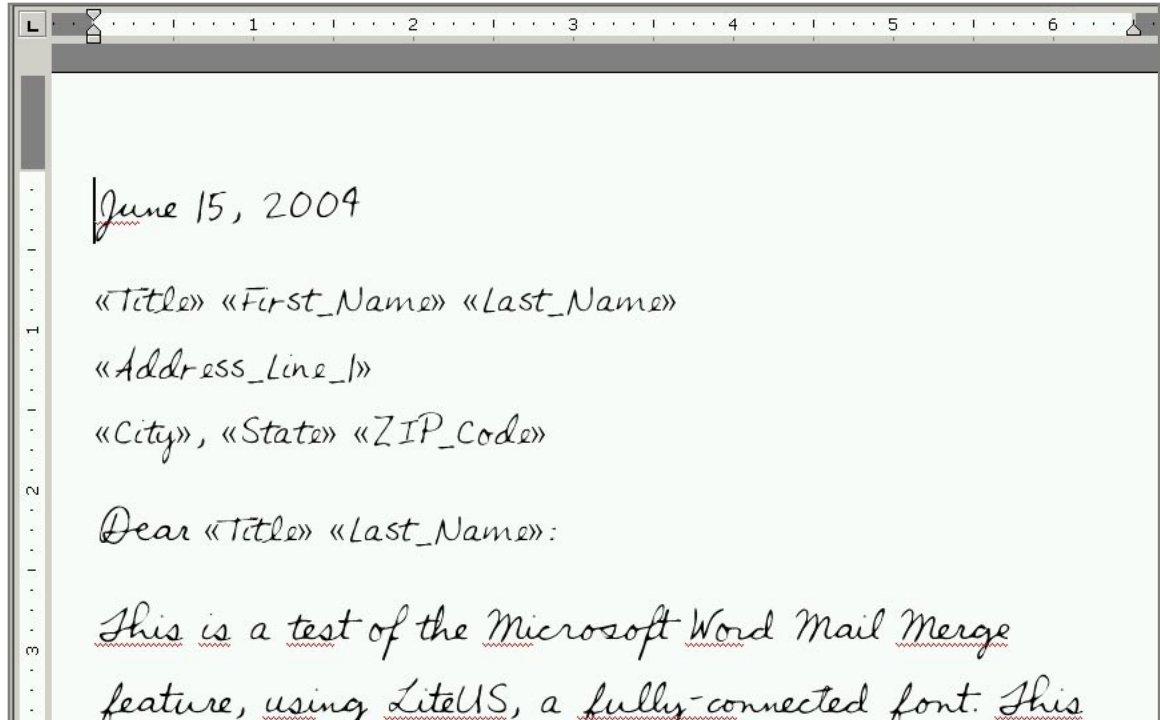


14. If you wanted only the merged information to be in the handwriting font, then insert Merge Fields where needed, then highlight those Merge Fields, then select the handwriting font from the Font menu. *Do Not* use the vLetter toolbar to convert the fields to handwriting, or the Merge Fields will not be recognized correctly by Word.

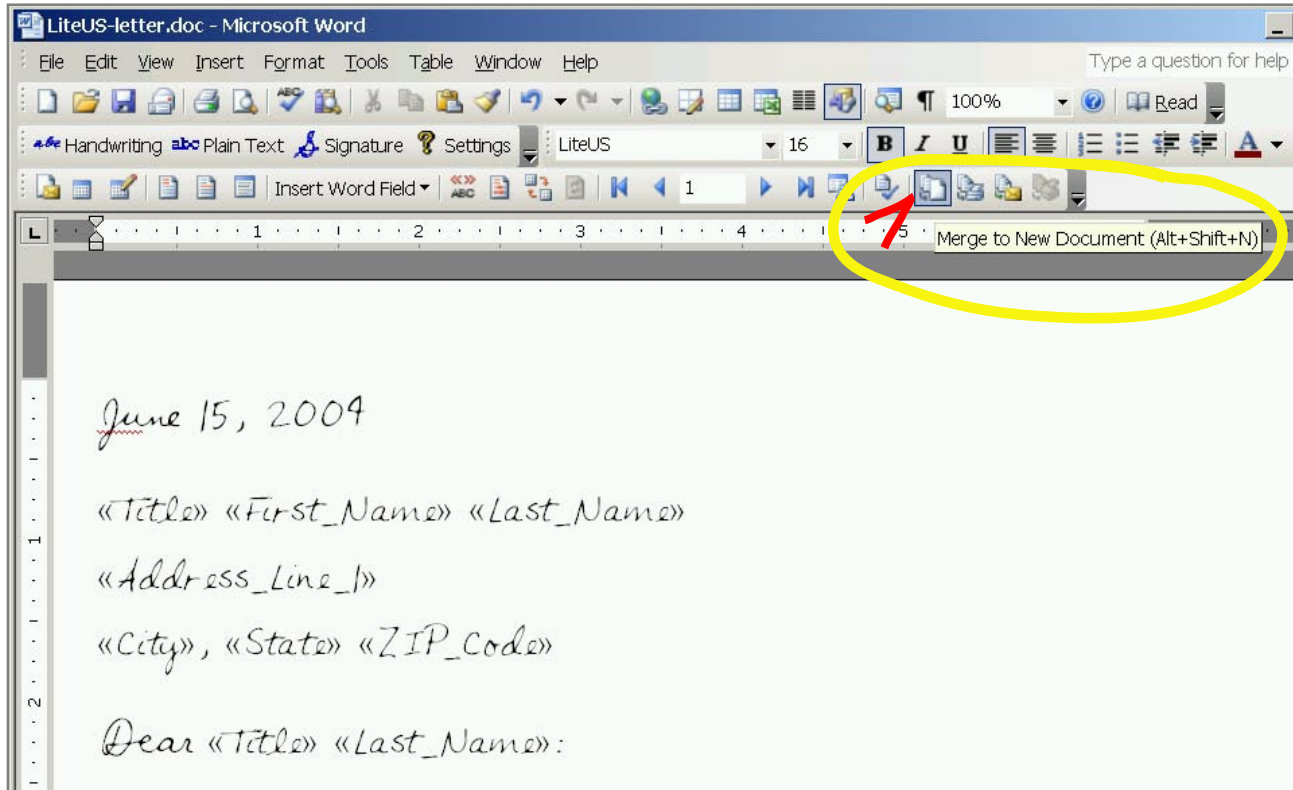


15. These Merge Fields will be in your handwriting font, but will not be fully contextual. (In this example, the cursive font LiteUS is disconnected in the Merge Fields.) This is okay. *Do Not* use the vLetter toolbar to convert the fields to handwriting, or the Merge Fields will not be recognized correctly by Word.

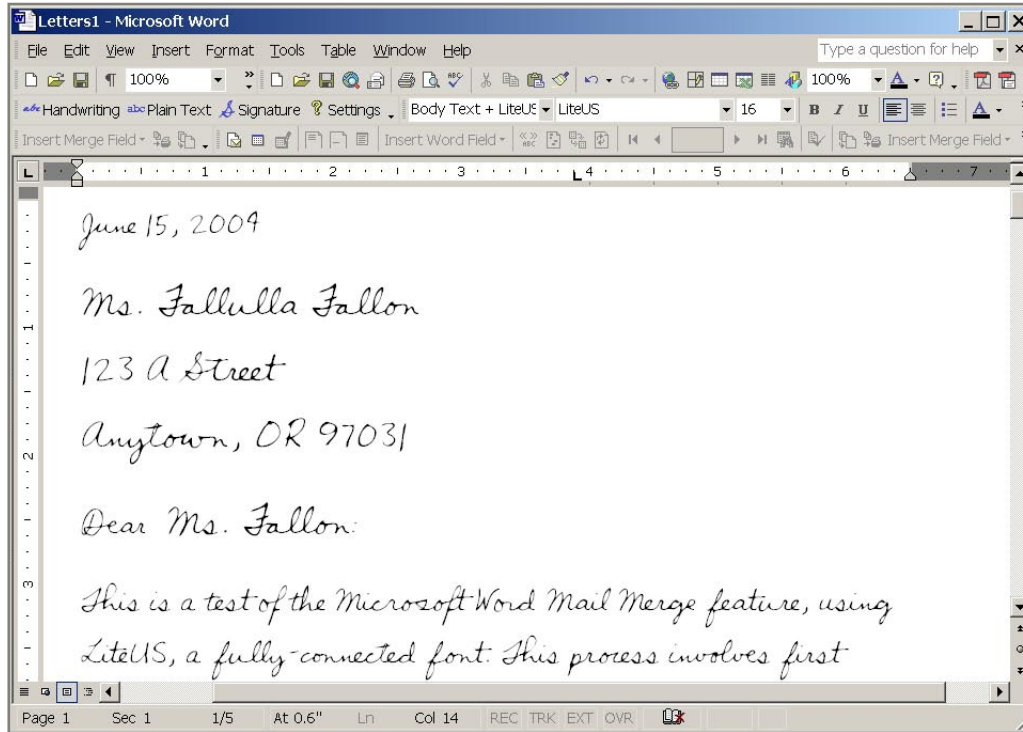
16. Save your document.



17. Click the Merge to New Document button to merge your document with the .csv file you saved.



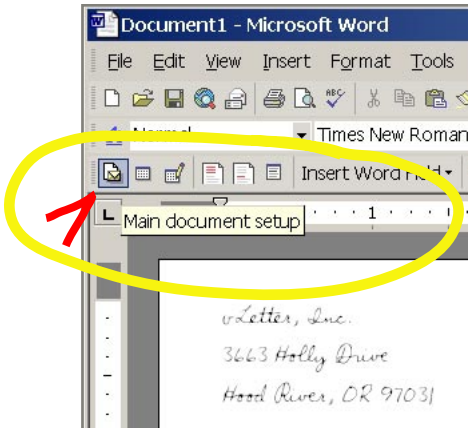
18. The names and addresses will appear as fully-contextual handwriting in the new merged documents generated.



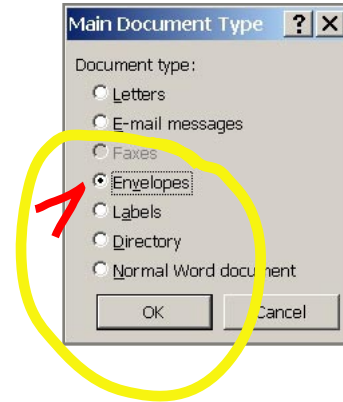
Envelopes

1. To generate envelopes from a list, save the list as a .xls file (Excel) first, then convert it to handwriting (see page 4) and save it.

2. Open a New Document in Word, then click on the “Main document setup” button on the toolbar.

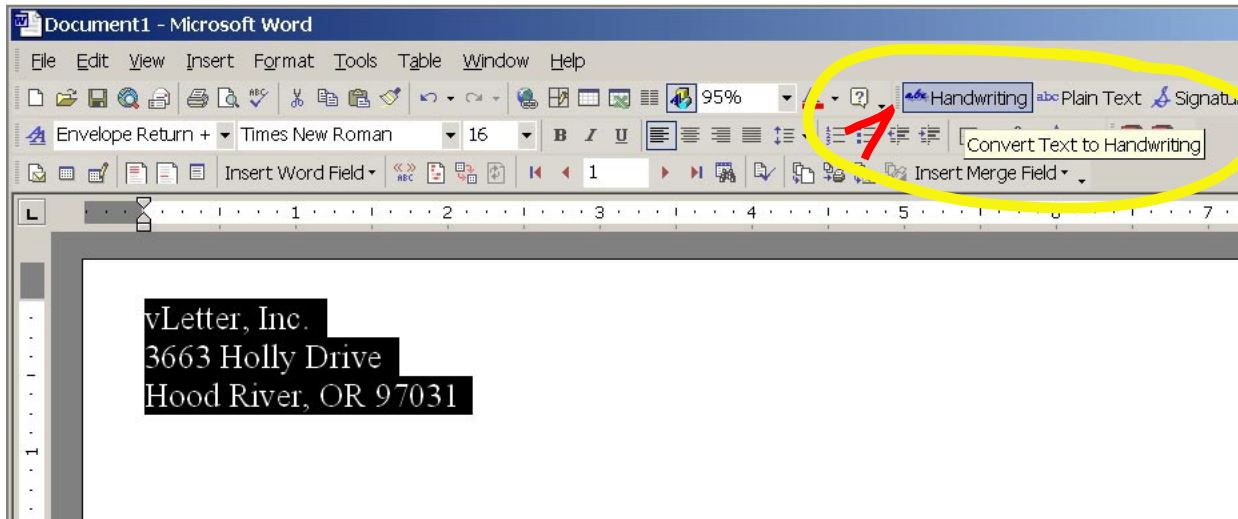


3. In the Main Document Type window, choose Envelopes, then click OK.

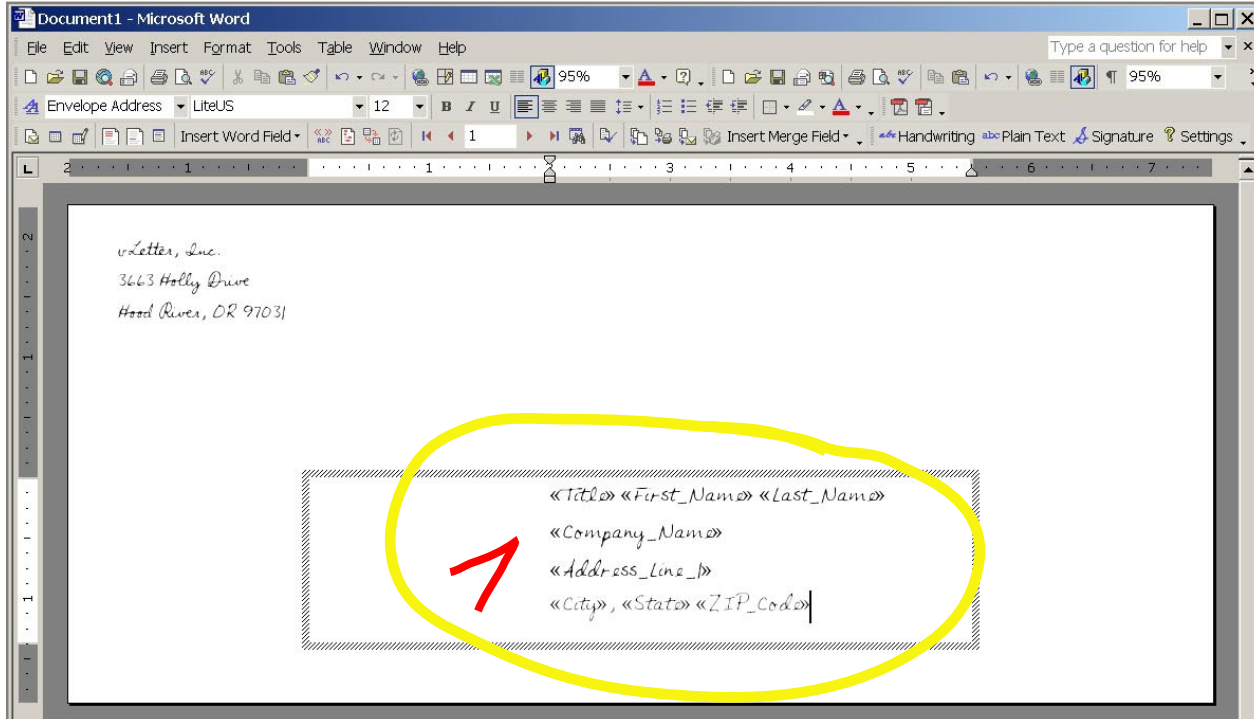


4. From the Mail Merge Toolbar, click the Open Data Source button. Choose your address list from the files in the dialog box (see pages 9-10 for details).

5. Highlight the Return Address, then click the Handwriting button to convert this to handwriting. (Be sure you have chosen the right handwriting style in the Settings first.)



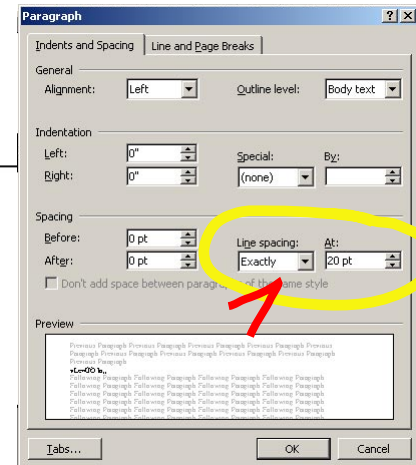
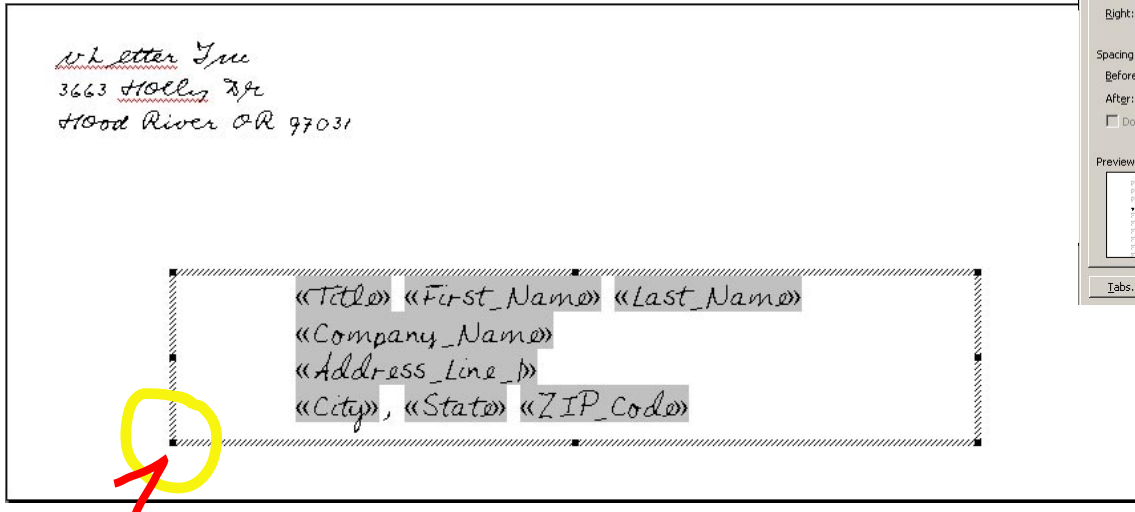
6. In the Envelope Address box, enter the Merge Fields you wish to use from the address list. When done adding fields, highlight all of them and select the handwriting font from the Font menu (Do Not use the Handwriting button).



7. You can set the font size you wish to use. Remember, handwriting is naturally bigger than text, so try at least 16pt for the Return Address, and 18pt or bigger for the Delivery Address. Addresses should be readable at arm's length by a Postal Carrier.

Also, you can go to Format > Paragraph, and then set the Line Spacing to Exactly, and enter a specific point size, to help pull the lines closer together for a more natural look (for an 18pt font, try a spacing of 22pt - 24pt).

Finally, you can resize the address box itself by dragging the points on the border.



8. Click the Merge to New Document button to merge your envelope with the address list. This will create envelopes for all the addresses in the list. Check the envelopes to be sure the addresses look correct in the handwriting font, then print away!

Letter Inc
3663 Hollis Dr
Hood River OR 97031

Mme Fallulla Fallon
Fallula's Foraccia Bocci
123 Vecci Street
Anywood, OR 97031