

# Writing AND designing in Word—Your audience will stick around

By [Crabby](#)  
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I've been sitting here for longer than I should, trying to write about how Word isn't just for text, that you can use it for just about any project you can think of because of some of its new-ish and most awesome design capabilities. But I haven't been able to spit out what it is I want to say, exactly; in fact, I've been going on and on, knowing full well I'll lose my audience before I even get to my point. Finally, after taking a break, I realized that Tal, one of the Word bloggers, wrote about that topic quite nicely and succinctly in his post called [An image, a diagram, and a chart meet](#) and all I really wanted to do was tell you about what is probably in my top five favorite features in Word 2010: The **Picture Tools**. (Phew. There it is.)

I love it, when I insert a photo or other illustration into Word, that this contextual tab called **Picture Tools** appears on the ribbon. Using those tools is the most fun I've had sitting upright in my straight-backed chair staring at a flickering monitor. I have to admit (because someone around here must) that Word has not *always* been known for its image features. It used to be a wee bit difficult to put an image where you wanted, to get text to wrap around it, to just get it in there the way you imagined. Things have changed, and although I rather despise when a word like "robust" is used to describe software, these tools are! They're *robust!* And here's what I love doing with all that *robusticity* at my disposal:

Insert a photo (this is my dog, Bamboo), crop it, remove the background so that I have the focus where I want it, add an effect to it like a medium-sized reflection or perhaps a shadow, give it a funky border, adjust the brightness and contrast, recolor it, and make it look like I painted it or...created it with my [Lite Brite](#):

Original

Painted, neat-o border,  
with a shadow

Lite Brite, recolored, beveled,  
with a *slight* reflection



So yeah, Word isn't just for words. And as [Tal put it](#), "Not only do we remember better, but when words are accompanied by illustrations, we even understand the content better." And let me add to that by saying when we're allowed to play with our documents, we have more fun, and when we have more fun, our readers have more fun, and if our readers have more fun and learn more, the world is a more beautiful, knowledgeable place. Now let's all join hands and sing Kum-ba-ya...

Read more about what will [perk up YOUR Word documents](#) and help you create [visually compelling ones](#).

— *Crabby*