

# Lesson 1-11: Use the Versions feature to recover an earlier version of a workbook

Excel's ability to automatically backup your document at a chosen time interval was explored in the last lesson: *Lesson 1-10: Use the Versions feature to recover an unsaved Draft file.*

This lesson will show you how to view the automatic backups and to revert to an earlier version if you've messed up the current version.

You can even cut-and-paste sections from older versions of a workbook and paste them into the current version.

You'll need a watch or clock with a seconds hand for this lesson.

- 1 Open *Mary* from your sample files folder (if it isn't already open).
- 2 Cause Excel to automatically save a different version of the workbook.

In the last lesson: *Lesson 1-10: Use the Versions feature to recover an unsaved Draft file*, you set the time interval for automatic backups to 1 minute. If you are not completing this course sequentially, you will need to go back to this lesson and make sure that this setting is set to 1 minute.

Add the following text to cells A4 and A5, pressing the <Enter> key after each line:

	A	B	C	D
1	Mary had a little lamb			
2	Its fleece was white as snow			
3				
4	and everywhere that Mary went			
5	The lamb was sure to go			
6				

Look at your watch or clock and wait for a little over one minute. Excel should have automatically saved a new version of the workbook.

- 3 Make sure that Excel AutoSaved the new version.

Some users have reported that Excel sometimes takes as long as ten minutes to AutoSave a file (even when the AutoSave interval is set to one minute). Here's how to check that it performed as it should:

1. Click the *File* button. 

You should see an AutoSave file version alongside the *Manage Versions* button.



## important

### Version files don't stay around forever

As discussed in: *Lesson 1-10: Use the Versions feature to recover an unsaved Draft file*, draft versions of unsaved files are kept for four days.

But what about the regular *Version* backups that Excel makes? Obviously Excel would fill up your hard drive with version files if it didn't have a mechanism for automatically deleting them.

Excel uses two rules when deciding whether version files are still useful.

1/ While you are in the current editing session, version files are **never** deleted (even if you save the current version).

2/ When you close the workbook **all version files are deleted** unless you close without saving. If you close without saving only the last version is retained (as a draft version).

Mary



If you don't see the AutoSave version, click the *Back Button* wait another minute and then click the *File* tab again. Don't move on to the next step until it has appeared.

**4** Further modify the file and then save it.


1. Add the following text to cells A7 and A8 pressing the <Enter> key after each line:

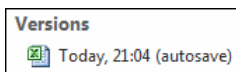
	A	B	C
1	Mary had a little lamb		
2	Its fleece was white as snow		
3			
4	and everywhere that Mary went		
5	The lamb was sure to go		
6			
7	It followed her to school one day		
8	It was against the rules		

	A	B	C
7	It followed her to school one day		
8	It was against the rules		

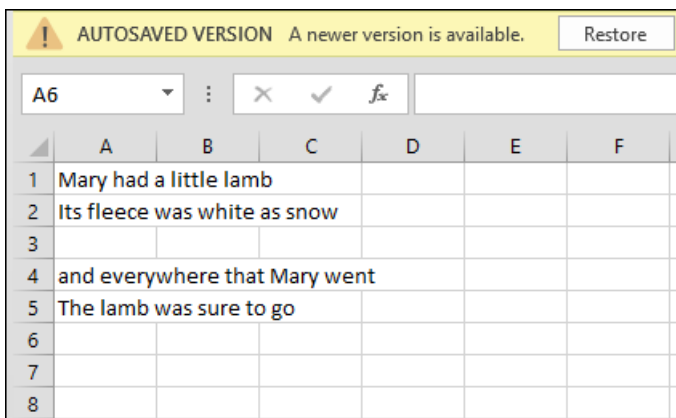
2. Save the workbook.

**5** View the earlier version that Excel automatically saved.

1. Click the *File* button. 
2. Click the earlier AutoSaved version.



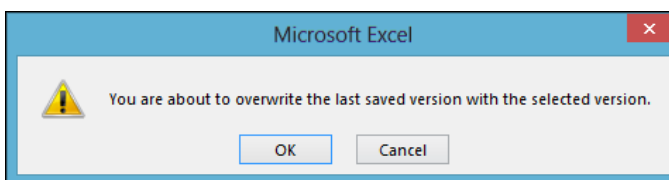
The earlier version opens in Excel.



**6** Replace the current version of the workbook with the earlier AutoSaved version.

1. Click the *Restore* button on the top yellow information bar.

Excel warns that you will over-write the current version of the workbook.



2. Click OK.

**7** Reset the AutoSave interval to 10 minutes.

You learned how to do this in: *Lesson 1-10: Use the Versions feature to recover an unsaved Draft file.*