



QUICKBOOKS DESKTOP 2021 CLIENT TRAINING

Lesson 15

**Customize Forms and
Write QuickBooks Letters**

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About the Author



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Esther's clients include companies worldwide and accounting professionals who seek her out on behalf of their own clients. She is sought out for her expertise in multicurrency and various countries' editions of QuickBooks Desktop and Online, and for her talent in customizing QuickBooks usage for different industries. She also teaches QuickBooks Core and Advanced certification classes to accounting professionals in Canada.

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Lesson Objectives

- Learn how to modify a preset invoice form
- Design a custom invoice form
- See how to print invoices
- Learn how to prepare a collection letter for overdue customers
- Learn how to edit a prewritten letter in QuickBooks

Create New Templates

QuickBooks provides invoices and other forms to suit the needs of your business, but there may be times when you want to design a completely different invoice or other form. QuickBooks lets you do that too. You can use the Layout Designer to create a new form design for your business. In the Layout Designer you can move, resize or change the width of columns, turn on or off borders around fields, and control font type and size for each field.



Step-by-Step: Create a New Invoice Template

1. From the Lists menu, choose **Templates**.



NAME	TYPE
Custom Progress Invoice	Invoice
Custom S.O. Invoice	Invoice
Finance Charge	Invoice
Intuit Product Invoice	Invoice
Packing Slip	Invoice
Progress Invoice	Invoice
Rock Castle Invoice	Invoice
Custom Credit Memo	Credit Memo
Return Receipt	Credit Memo
Custom Sales Receipt	Sales Receipt
Custom Purchase Order Template	Purchase Order
Intuit Standard Statement	Statement
Custom Change Order	Estimate
Custom Estimate	Estimate
Proposal	Estimate
Custom Sales Order	Sales Order
Intuit S.O. Packing Slip	Sales Order
Intuit S.O. Pick List	Sales Order
Sales Order with Rep	Sales Order

Templates ▾ Open Form Include inactive

2. Click the **Templates** menu button, then choose **New**.
3. Choose the template for the type of form you want to create.

4. Click the **Manage Templates** button to give the template a name, then click **OK**.
5. Use the features in the Basic Customization window to customize the general look of your form.
6. Click **OK** to close the Basic Customization window.



IMPORTANT: *You might want to click on an existing template. Click the **Templates** button and select **Duplicate** to get a head-start on a new template without altering the original.*

Customize Fields on Forms



Step-by-Step: Customize Fields on a Template

1. From the Lists menu, choose **Templates**.
2. Double-click the template you wish to customize.
3. Click the **Additional Customization** button at the bottom of the screen.

Basic Customization ✕

SELECTED TEMPLATE
Rock Castle Invoice Manage Templates...

LOGO & FONTS

Use logo Select Logo...

Select Color Scheme:
Please Select... Apply Color Scheme

Change Font For:

Title

Company Name

Company Address

Labels

Change Font...

PREVIEW

Rock Castle Construction
1735 County Road
Bayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
FAMILY	

BILL TO

SHIP TO

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	RATE	AMOUNT
Subtotal				50.00
Sales Tax (0.0%)				50.00
Total				50.00
Payments/Credits				50.00
Balance Due				50.00

Print Preview...

COMPANY & TRANSACTION INFORMATION

Company Name Phone Number Update Information...
 Company Address E-mail Address
 Fax Number Web Site Address
 Print Past Due Stamp
 Select only when you want to include Past Due information Stamp.
 Print Status Stamp
 Select to include the status on the form. Various statuses are, Paid, Pending, Received, Void, and so on.

[How do I apply a design across multiple forms?](#)

Help
Additional Customization...
Layout Designer...
OK
Cancel

The Header tab is displayed by default (other tabs are available to select).

Additional Customization

SELECTED TEMPLATE
Rock Castle Invoice Template is inactive

Header Columns Prog Cols Footer Print

	Screen	Print	Title
Default Title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Invoice
Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DATE
Invoice Number	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	INVOICE #
Bill To	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BILL TO
Ship To	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SHIP TO
P.O. No.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	P.O. NO.
S.O. No.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	S.O. No.
Terms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TERMS
Due Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DUE DATE
REP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	REP
Account Number	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Account #
Ship Date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SHIP DATE
Ship Via	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SHIP VIA
FOB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FOB
Project/Job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contract #	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONTRACT #

When should I check Screen or Print?

Preview

Rock Castle Construction
 1735 County Road
 Hayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
	FAM124

BILL TO

SHIP TO

TERMS	DUE DATE	PROJECT

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	RATE	AMOUNT

Subtotal	50.00
Sales Tax (0.0%)	50.00
Total	50.00
Payments/Credits	50.00
Balance Due	50.00

Print Preview...

Help

- Note that the Due Date field is displayed both onscreen and on the printed form, because both the **Screen** checkbox and the **Print** checkbox for Due Date were selected.

- Select the **Screen** and **Print** checkboxes for the P.O. No. field to add the field to the form. You will be warned that some fields will be overlapping. (Don't worry; you'll take care of that later using the Layout Designer.) Click **Continue**.
- Do the same to add the **Screen** and **Print** checkboxes for the REP field.

Additional Customization

SELECTED TEMPLATE
Rock Castle Invoice Template is inactive

Header Columns Prog Cols Footer Print

	Screen	Print	Title
Default Title	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Invoice
Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DATE
Invoice Number	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	INVOICE #
Bill To	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BILL TO
Ship To	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SHIP TO
P.O. No.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	P.O. NO.
S.O. No.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	S.O. No.
Terms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TERMS
Due Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DUE DATE
REP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	REP
Account Number	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Account #
Ship Date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SHIP DATE
Ship Via	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SHIP VIA
FOB	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FOB
Project/Job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contract #	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONTRACT #

When should I check Screen or Print? Default

Preview

Rock Castle Construction
1735 Country Road
Bayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
	FAM124

BILL TO

SHIP TO

TERMS	DUE DATE	PROJECT	REP

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UOM	RATE	AMOUNT

Subtotal 50.00

Sales Tax (0.0%) 50.00

Total 50.00

Payments/Credits 50.00

Balance Due 50.00

Print Preview...

Help Layout Designer... OK Cancel

- Continue customizing your form fields as needed for your business.
- Click **OK** to get out of Additional Customization then **OK** again to save the template changes.

NOTES

Change Field Order on Forms

The lower half of the standard QuickBooks invoice form is where you enter details about the items or services purchased by the customer. You can change the order of these fields as they appear on your invoices.

The Order column shows you how fields display from left to right on the invoice form. Currently, Item is the first column and Amount is the last column. Suppose you want the Qty field to appear after the Item field and before the Description field.



Step-by-Step: Change the Order of Fields on a Form

1. From the Lists menu, choose **Templates**.
2. Double-click the template you wish to customize.
3. Click the **Additional Customization** button at the bottom of the screen.
4. Click the **Columns** tab.
5. Click the **Order** box for a particular field to select it.

- Manually enter the number that represents the left-to-right order you want the column to be displayed on your form. Click **Continue** when prompted that you have overlapping fields.

Additional Customization

SELECTED TEMPLATE
Rock Castle Invoice Template is inactive

Header Columns Prog Cols Footer Print

	Screen	Print	Order	Title
Service Date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	SERVICED
Item	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	ITEM
Description	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	DESCRIPTION
Mfr Part Number	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	MPN
Quantity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	QUANTITY
Unit of Measure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4	U/M
Rate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5	RATE
Amount	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6	AMOUNT
Class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	CLASS
Other 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	
Other 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	
Color	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	COLOR
Material	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	MATERIAL
Style	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Style

When should I check Screen or Print?

Preview

Rock Castle Construction
1735 County Road
Bayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
	7/AM124

BILL TO

SHIP TO

TERMS	DUE DATE	PROJECT	REP

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	U/M	RATE	AMOUNT

Subtotal				\$0.00
Sales Tax (0.0%)				\$0.00
Total				\$0.00
Payments/Credits				\$0.00
Balance Due				\$0.00

Print Preview...

Help

- Continue working through the tabs to customize your form.
- Click **OK** to record the changes.
- Click **OK** again to save the template then close the Templates window.

NOTES

Display Your Customized Form

This walkthrough shows you how to view a template using the Invoice form. If you have other custom forms, you can access them by opening the form window in QuickBooks, then choosing your template from the **Template** drop-down at the top of the form.

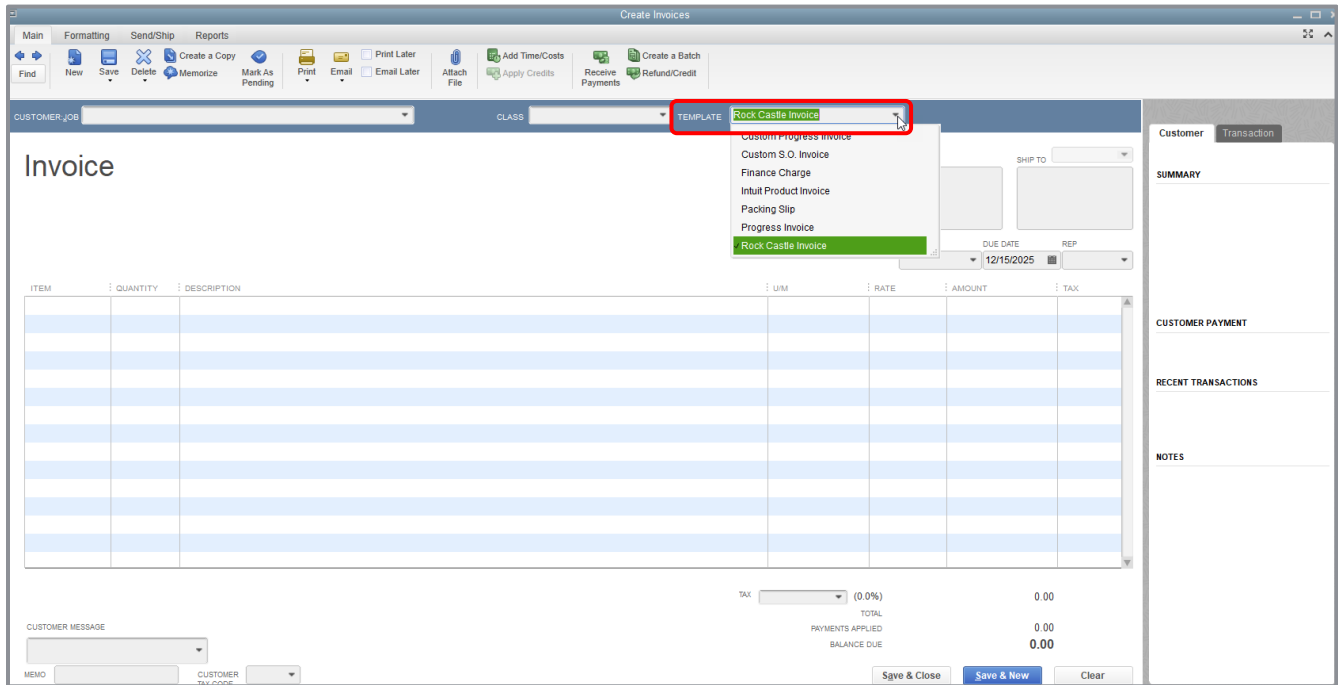


Step-by-Step: Display a Custom Invoice Form

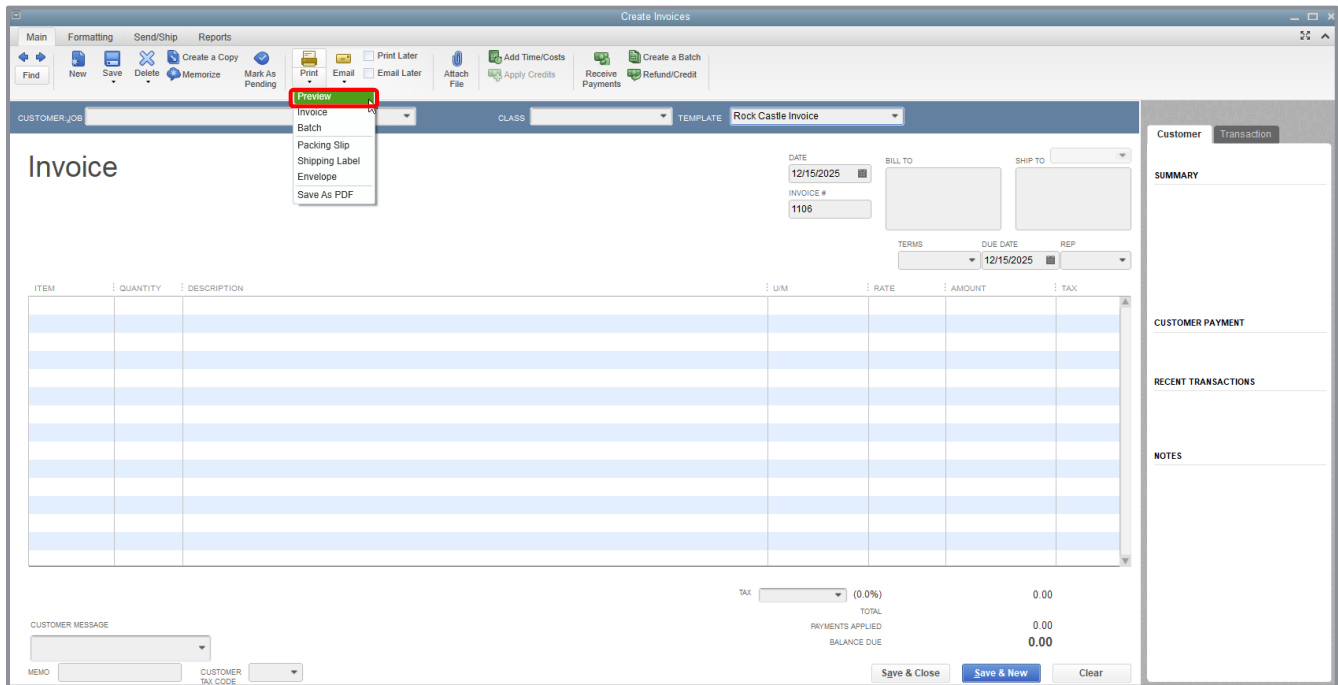
1. From the Customers menu, choose **Create Invoices**.

ITEM	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	UOM	RATE	AMOUNT	TAX

2. Choose your template from the **Template** field drop-down list.



3. Click the drop-down on the **Print** icon and select **Preview** to see what your invoice will look like printed. If you see a Shipping Labels pop-up, select **OK** to close it.



4. Close the Print Preview screen.
5. Exit the invoice.



IMPORTANT: If the template you are currently using requires tweaking, you can click the **Formatting** tab in the ribbon at the top of the form and select **Customize Data Layout** to edit the template (rather than finding the template from the Lists menu then double-clicking on it to edit it, only to go back into the Invoice form to preview it).

ITEM	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	UOM	RATE	AMOUNT	TAX

TAX (0.0%) 0.00
TOTAL 0.00
PAYMENTS APPLIED 0.00
BALANCE DUE 0.00

NOTES

Design Custom Layouts for Forms

We have covered editing a template to change its header and some columns, but there is so much more you can do. Here are a few examples of what you can do with a custom layout:

- Give your company name, address and logo special treatment on the form
- Center your logo at the top of the form and put your company name and address in a special font immediately below the logo
- Enlarge a custom field so it can display more information
- Reposition fields that are overlapping as a result of the basic customization
- Position the customer's billing address so it coincides with the address window in the envelopes you use
- Change the borders on fields, add background colors and add extra text fields
- Add multiple graphics to a form

NOTES

Change the Position of Fields on Forms



Step-by-Step: Move Fields on Forms

1. From the Lists menu, choose **Templates**.
2. Right-click the template you wish to edit, then select **Edit Template** (or double-click on the template you wish to edit).
3. Click **Layout Designer** at the bottom of the Basic Customization window.

Basic Customization

SELECTED TEMPLATE
Rock Castle Invoice Manage Templates...

LOGO & FONTS

Use logo Select Logo...

Select Color Scheme:
Please Select... Apply Color Scheme

Change Font For:

- Title
- Company Name
- Company Address
- Labels

Change Font...

COMPANY & TRANSACTION INFORMATION

Company Name Phone Number Update Information...

Company Address E-mail Address

Fax Number Web Site Address

Print Past Due Stamp
Select only when you want to include Past Due information Stamp.

Print Status Stamp
Select to include the status on the form. Various statuses are, Paid, Pending, Received, Void, and so on.

[How do I apply a design across multiple forms?](#)

PREVIEW

Rock Castle Construction
1735 County Road
Hayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #

BILL TO

SHIP TO

TERMS	DUE DATE	PROJECT	REP

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UOM	RATE	AMOUNT

Subtotal	50.00
Sales Tax (0.0%)	50.00
Total	50.00
Payments/Credits	50.00
Balance Due	50.00

Print Preview...

Help Additional Customization... **Layout Designer...** OK Cancel

4. Click the fields you wish to move; hold your mouse button down to drag/drop the fields.

Rock Castle Construction
1735 County Road
Bayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
12/15/2025	Sample

BILL TO
This is sample text.

SHIP TO
This is sample text.

TERMS	DUE DATE	PROJECT	REP
Sample	12/15/2025	Sample	Sample

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	U/M	RATE	AMOUNT
This is sample text.	1	Sample	1.00	123.45

This is sample text.

Subtotal	\$123.45
Sales Tax	\$123.45
Total	\$123.45
Payments/Credits	\$123.45
Balance Due	

Label field for Terms

Zoom: 100% 1.25, 3.63 1.19 x 0.31

Margins... Grid... Show envelope window

OK Cancel Help



IMPORTANT: If you wish to move multiple fields in a group, you can hold down the **Shift** key while you highlight all the fields you wish to select, then you can drag and drop them as a group into their new location.

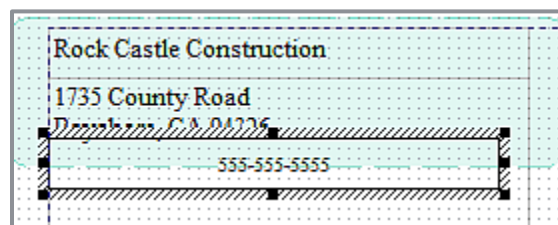
NOTES

Change Field Widths

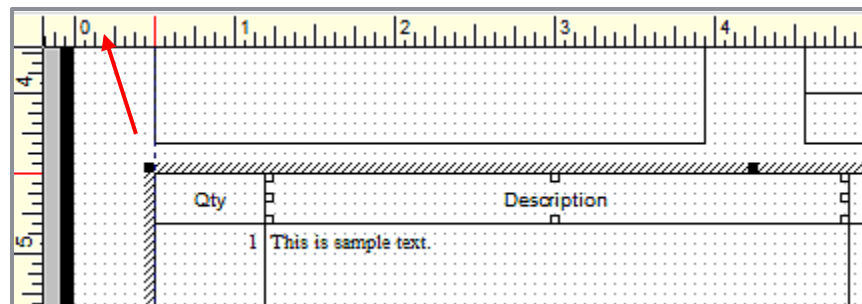


Step-by-Step: Change the Width of a Field

1. Select the field you want to resize. Click the **black boxes** in the field border, hold your mouse button down and drag the black box to resize the field. Let go of your mouse button to release the resized field.



2. Use the ruler to keep field sizes uniform and field edges in alignment.



NOTES

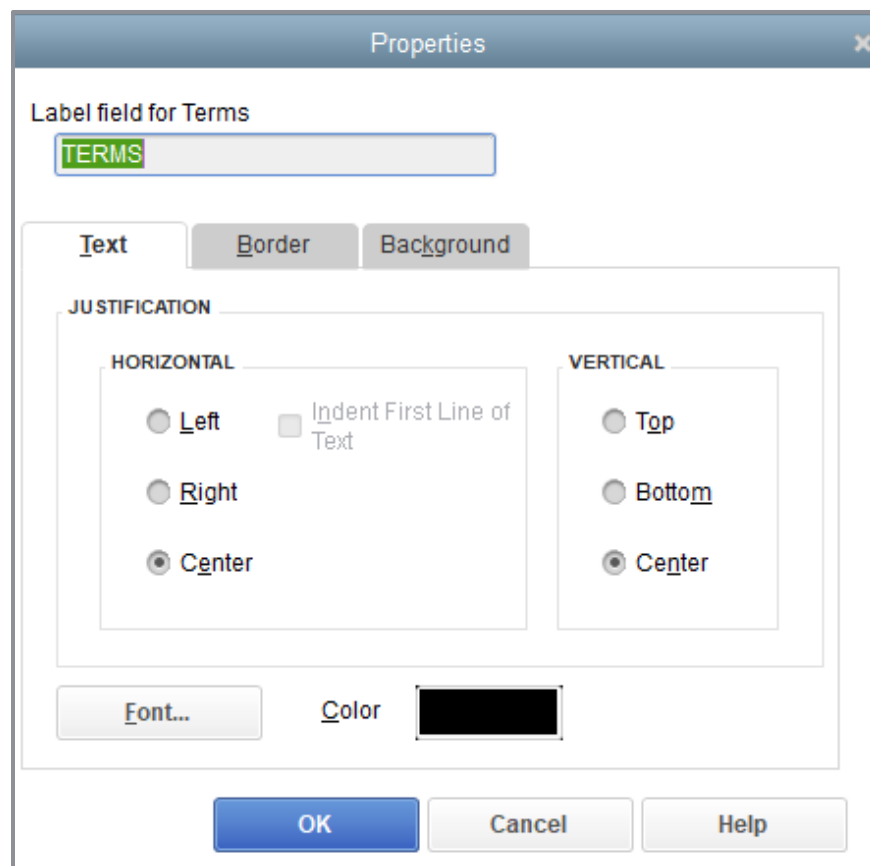
Change Fonts, Borders and Colors

Using the Properties window in the Layout Designer, you can change font size and style, and text justification. You can also add, remove or change the borders around fields.



Step-by-Step: Change Fonts, Borders and Colors

1. Select the field you wish to edit, then right-click to select **Properties**.
2. On the Text tab, select the justification you wish to use.
3. Click **Font** to select your font, font size and color. Click **OK** when you are finished.



4. Click the **Border** tab. Use these settings to create/remove/edit field borders on your form.

5. Click the **Background** tab to give your form a colored background.
6. Click **OK** to save the changes to that particular field's appearance.
7. Click **OK** to save the changes in the Layout Designer.

You can see a preview of the template in the right-hand panel of the Basic Customization and the Additional Customization windows.

SELECTED TEMPLATE
Rock Castle Invoice Manage Templates...

LOGO & FONTS
 Use logo Select Logo...
 Select Color Scheme: Please Select... Apply Color Scheme
 Change Font For:
 Title
 Company Name
 Company Address
 Labels Change Font...

COMPANY & TRANSACTION INFORMATION
 Company Name Phone Number Update Information...
 Company Address E-mail Address
 Fax Number Web Site Address
 Print Past Due Stamp
 Select only when you want to include Past Due information Stamp.
 Print Status Stamp
 Select to include the status on the form. Various statuses are, Paid, Pending, Received, Void, and so on.
[How do I apply a design across multiple forms?](#)

PREVIEW

Rock Castle Construction
1735 County Road
Hayshore, CA 94326

Invoice

DATE	INVOICE #
12/15/2025	1188

BILL TO

SHIP TO

TERMS	DUE DATE	PROJECT	REP
	12/15/2025		

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	RATE	AMOUNT

Subtotal				50.00
Sales Tax (0.0%)				50.00
Total				50.00
Payments/Credits				50.00
Balance Due				50.00

Print Preview...

Help Layout Designer... OK Cancel

8. Click **OK** to close the Basic Customization or Additional Customization window.

NOTES

Preview New Forms

Notice the on-screen invoice data entry form displayed by QuickBooks doesn't show the changes you just made in the Layout Designer. This is because changes made in the Layout Designer only affect the *printed* invoice and not the invoice QuickBooks displays onscreen for data entry.



Step-by-Step: Preview the Invoice

1. To see how a printed invoice form will look, in the Main tab of the invoice, click the drop-down below the **Print** button, and select **Preview**.
2. When you are finished looking at the preview, click **Close**.

NOTES

Prepare Collection Letters



Step-by-Step: Prepare a Collection Letter

1. From the Company menu, choose **Prepare Letters with Envelopes → Collection Letters**.
2. If QuickBooks prompts you to find letters, click **Copy**. QuickBooks will copy the QuickBooks letters from your installation directory to your folder.

QuickBooks opens the Letters and Envelopes wizard.
3. When QuickBooks prompts you to choose to whom you want to write, set your parameters accordingly.
4. Click **Next**. If you see a warning to apply unapplied payments or credits, take the actions described and return to this point.

Letters and Envelopes

Abercrombie
Cypress Hill Rd
[redacted] CA 94326

Mrs. Kristy Abercrombie

Choose the Recipients

1. Include listed customers or jobs that are:

Active

Inactive

Both

2. Create a letter for each:

Customer

Job

3. Limit letters to customers or jobs with payments overdue by:

1 day or more 1 - 30 days

31 days or more 31 - 60 days

61 days or more 61 - 90 days

91 days or more

Back Next Cancel Help

5. Choose the customers for whom you would like to make letters, then click **Next**.

Letters and Envelopes

Abercrombie
ypress Hill Rd
re CA 94326

Mrs. Kristy Abercrombie

ou
g
ff
to
re
ne
ie if you have an

Review and Edit Recipients

These customers have overdue payments of 1 day or more.

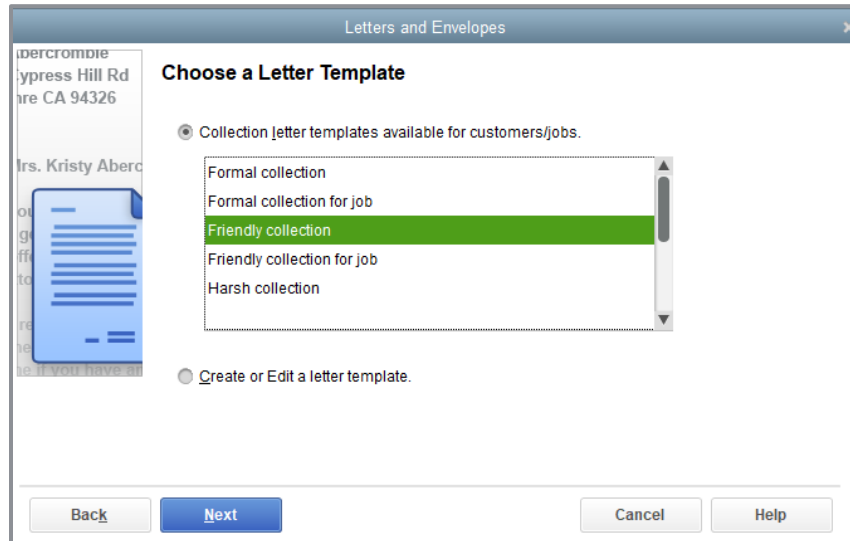
Sort the list by:

Customer Amount

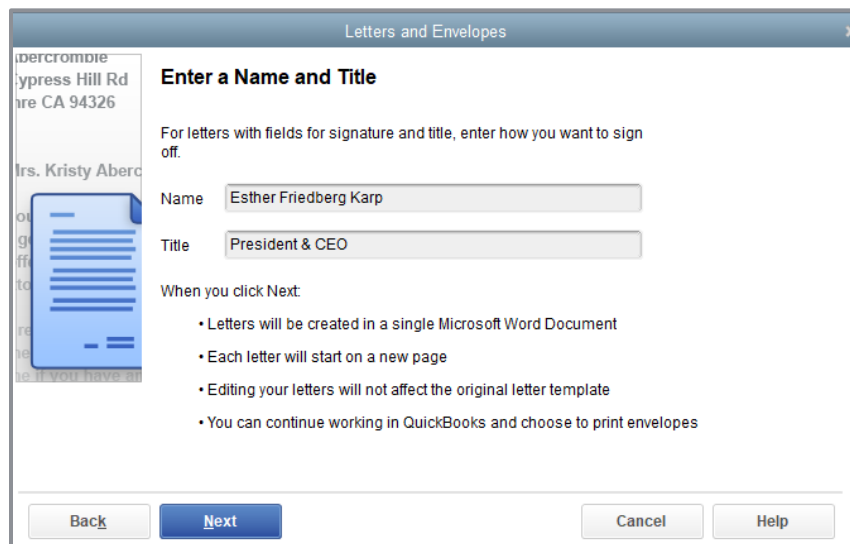
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CUSTOMER NAME	AMT. OVERDUE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Abercrombie, Kristy	3,111.28
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Allard, Robert	14,510.00
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>		

Full Name:
Abercrombie, Kristy

6. When QuickBooks prompts you to choose the letter you want to use, choose one from the list then click **Next**. (You may also choose **Create or Edit a letter template** to customize your letter even more.)



7. Enter the name and title of the person who is signing the letter and click **Next**.



8. If QuickBooks displays a message about missing information, click **OK**.

9. The letters will open in Microsoft Word®. You can print the letters from there.

Rock Castle Construction
1735 County Road
Bayshore, CA 94326

December 15, 2025

Kristy Abercrombie
5647 Cypress Hill Rd
Bayshore CA 94326

Dear Kristy,

Just a friendly reminder that you have 1 overdue invoice(s), with an overdue balance of \$3,111.28. If you have any questions about the amount you owe, please give us a call and we'll be happy to discuss it. If you've already sent your payment, please disregard this reminder.

We appreciate your continuing business, and we look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Sincerely,

Esther Friedberg Karp
President & CEO
Rock Castle Construction

10. Return to QuickBooks and click **Cancel**.

NOTES

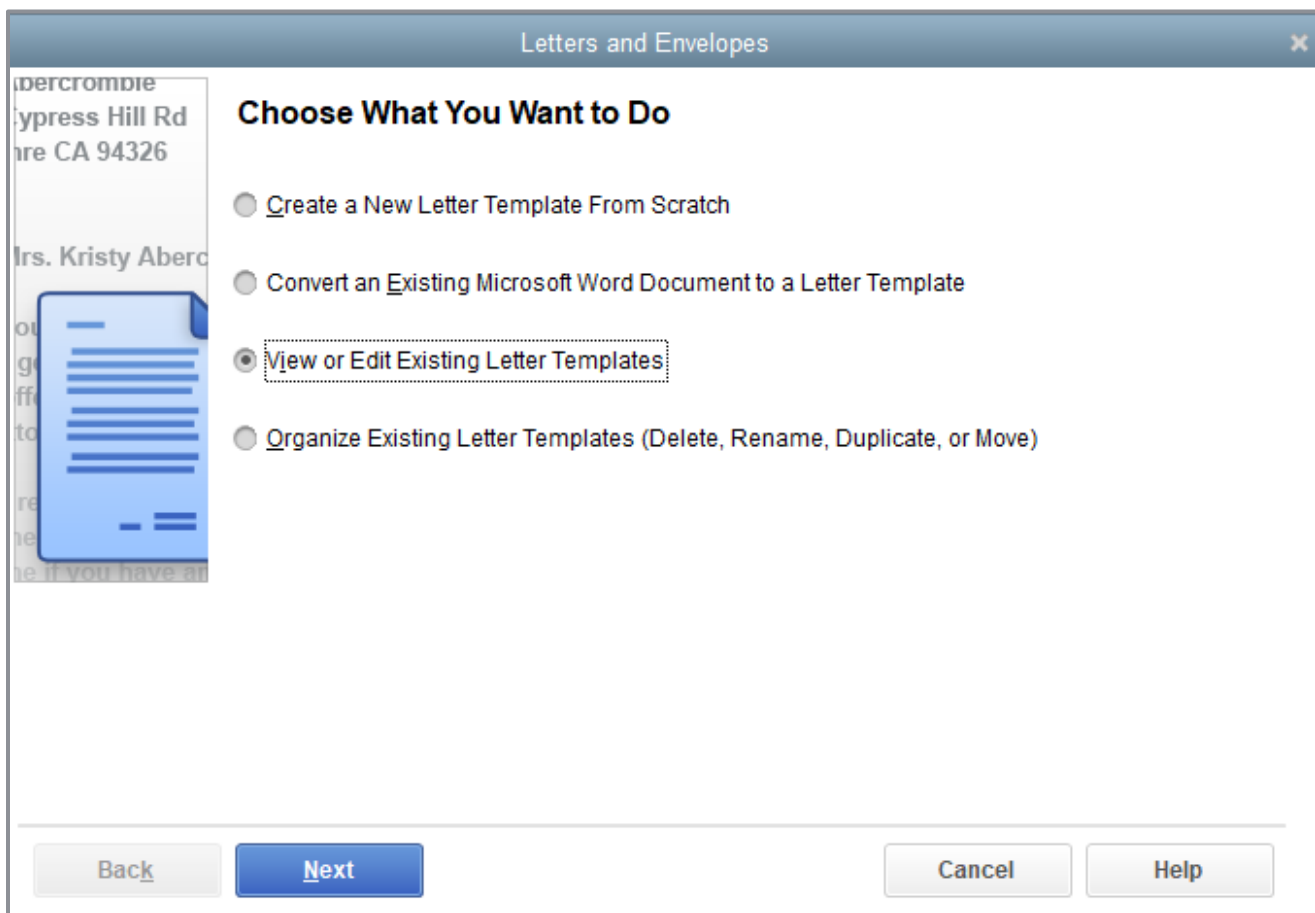
Edit QuickBooks Letters

You can make changes to individual letters using Word, or you can make global changes by editing the QuickBooks Letter used to generate a specific letter.

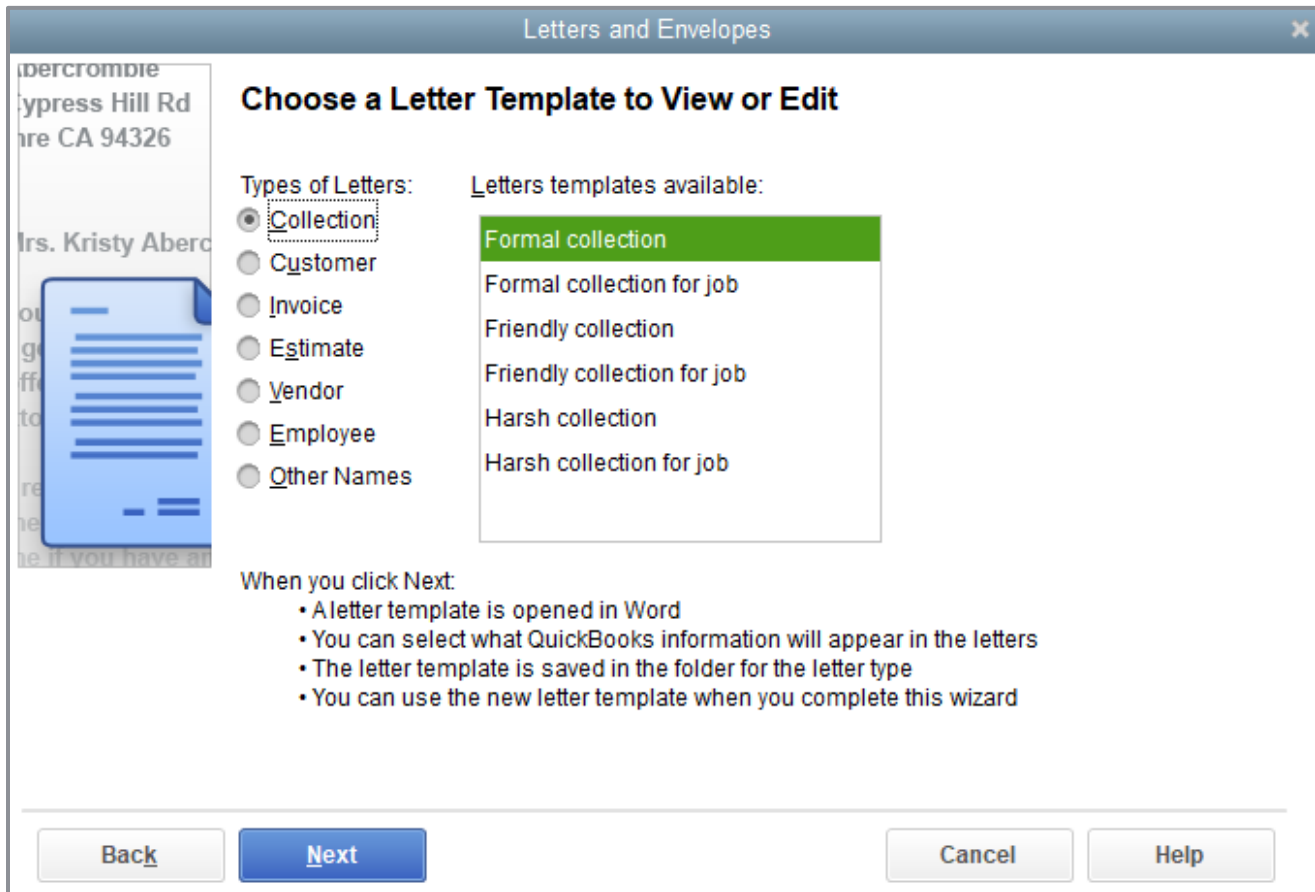


Step-by-Step: Edit a QuickBooks Letter

1. From the Company menu, choose **Prepare Letters with Envelopes → Customize Letter Templates**.
2. Click **View or Edit Existing Letter Templates**.
3. Click **Next**.



- When QuickBooks prompts you to choose the letter template you want to view or edit, click the letter type, then choose a letter from the list of available letters.
- Click **Next**.



- In Word, adjust the text of the letter as needed.

- From the Insert Fields drop-down lists on the Add-Ins tool bar in Word, you can insert links to QuickBooks data.

«AddrBlock»

Dear «MrMsMrs» «LastName»,

Although we have contacted you about the outstanding balance on your account, we still have not heard from you. You have an outstanding balance of «OverdueInvTotal». The following invoices are overdue:

«OverdueInvoices»

If you have already sent payment in full, we ask that you call and let us know. Otherwise, please call me to discuss what you plan to do to settle your account.

- From the Word File menu, choose **Save As**.
- Enter a new filename and click **Save**.
- Close Word.
- To see how this change affects the final letter output, close the letter file in Word, click **Use Template** in QuickBooks and go through the wizard again (all of your previous choices should still be selected). When you get to the Choose a Letter Template screen, select the name of the file you just saved then click **Next**.
- Close Word.
- Click **Cancel** in QuickBooks.

NOTES

Customize Forms and Write QuickBooks Letters – Review Questions

1. List three forms that can be customized in QuickBooks:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
2. True or false: The column order on QuickBooks forms is fixed and cannot be changed.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. You use the _____ window to move and resize fields on forms.
4. True or false: You can convert an existing Word document into a QuickBooks Letter to which you can add QuickBooks data.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Review Activities

Use Rock Castle Construction (sample product-based company) to do these activities:

1. Customize a Sales Receipt form to change the default title on the header from Sales Receipt to Cash Sale.
2. Using the Layout Designer, make the columns for QTY and Rate narrower so the Description field is wider.
3. Customize the P.O. form to include the Terms field.

Answers to Review Questions

1. List three forms that can be customized in QuickBooks:
 - a. ✓ *Invoice*
 - b. ✓ *Sales Receipt*
 - c. ✓ *Credit Memo*
 - d. ✓ *Statement*
 - e. ✓ *Purchase Order*
 - f. ✓ *Estimate*
 - g. ✓ *Sales Order (available only in Premier and higher)*
2. True or false: The column order on QuickBooks forms is fixed and cannot be changed.
 - a. True
 - b. ✓ *False*
3. You use the *Layout Designer* window to move and resize fields on forms.
4. True or false: You can convert an existing Word document into a QuickBooks Letter to which you can add QuickBooks data.
 - a. ✓ *True*
 - b. False