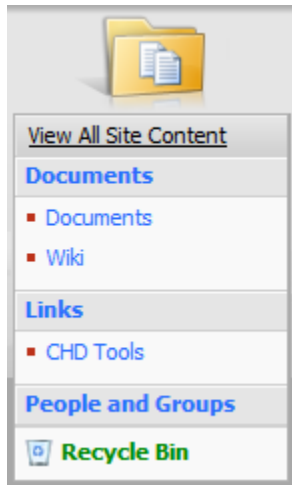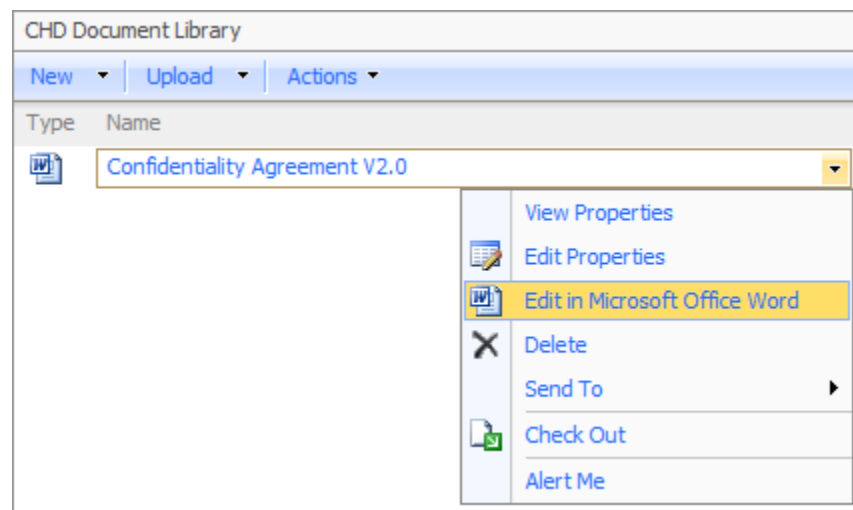# Open and edit a file in SharePoint

Open a read-only copy of a file

1. If your document library is not already open, click on its name in the left-hand menu. If the name of your library does not appear, click **View All Site Content** and then click the name of your library.

2. Click on the name of the file that you want to open and then do one of the following:

   - If you are opening an MS Office file such as Office Word 2007, you may see a dialog box that asks how you want to open the file. If a dialog box appears, select the option to open the file as read-only.

   - In other programs, such as an earlier version of a program or a program that is not compatible with Windows SharePoint Services 3.0, the file automatically opens as read-only when clicked. If you intend to edit the file, do not open it by clicking it; instead, point to the file name to display a down arrow. Click the down arrow, and then in the menu that appears, click **Edit in *Application***.
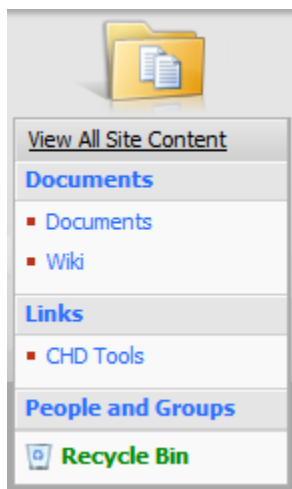
- In a picture library, the properties of the image appear when you click the file. You can preview the image in the **Preview** section, or to view a read-only copy in a browser window, click the image preview or the image name.

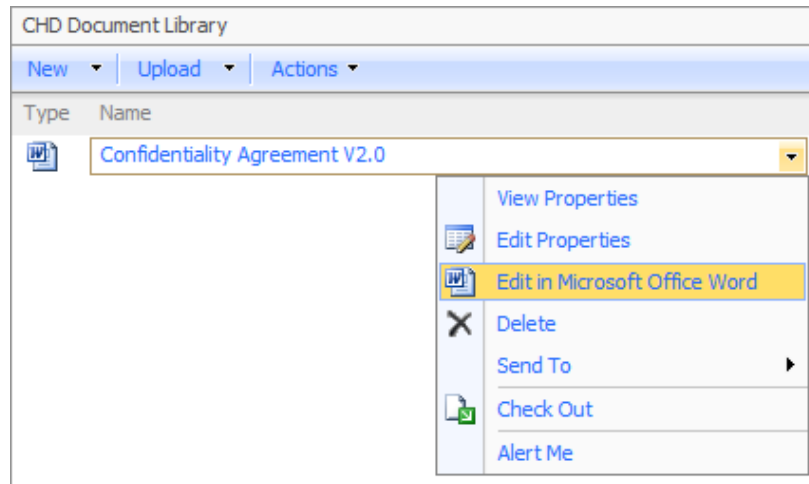## Edit a file in a document library

Depending on how your library is set up, you may be required to check out a file before you edit it, which prevents other people from changing the file at the same time. If someone else has checked out the file, you will not be able to edit it.

If you do not check out a file before you edit it, someone else could edit the file while you are working on it. When two or more people work on a file at the same time, it is possible to accidentally overwrite each other's changes.

1. If your document library is not already open, click on its name in the left-hand menu. If the name of your library does not appear, click **View All Site Content** and then click the name of your library.

2. Do one of the following:
   - If you are opening a MS Office file such as Office Word 2007, click the file. If you see a dialog box that asks how you want to open the file, select the option to edit the file.
   - If you are editing the file in an earlier version of a program, or in a program that is not compatible with Windows SharePoint Services 3.0, point to the file name to display a down arrow. Click the down arrow, and on the menu that appears, click **Edit in *Application***.

3. Depending on the settings for your library and the program that you are using to edit the file, you may see a message when you open the file. For example, the message may ask whether you think the file is safe to open or it may notify you that your file is being checked out, if your library requires files to be checked out. If you want to proceed, respond to the message by clicking **OK**, or the equivalent.

4. Edit the file, save the file, and then close the program.

5. If the file is checked out, and the program that you are using is compatible with Windows SharePoint Services 3.0, you will be prompted to check in the file when you close it. If you do not want to check in the file at that time, you can check in the file later by using the drop-down menu that appears when you mouse over the file in the library.