HELP—My Word document randomly reverts to the wrong format!

This is a maddening phenomenon that seems to pop up sometimes with documents that were originally created in Word 2007 or earlier but are later opened and edited in Word 2010.

Here's what happens:

- You've set up styles in your document (or are using a document that may have previously had style settings).
- After typing along normally and without incident, you make a few changes in the document, maybe deleting a passage.
- You may not notice it immediately, but you soon discover that things have been moved. Previously formatted tables may no longer be formatted as you had them. Automatic tables of contents may have lost dot leaders. Indents and spacing may have changed.

What to do?
There are three steps you can take to protect your document (and your sanity).

First, if you are using an older document and this has happened in the past, be careful when saving that you aren't saving these changes without realizing it. Save frequently but choose a known trouble spot and check it first. That way, you can always close the document without saving to go back to a recently saved version that you know is okay, even if everything goes wrong in the meantime.

Another trick is to watch the activity on the drop-down arrow on the **Undo** button. If you are having lots of trouble with your document reverting, be careful when making style changes, even if you just boldface a word. If you see your document update to a style you don't want, immediately hit the **Undo** button. Often this will undo the Auto Update function that applies the change to the entire document, but leave in place the smaller style change that you made. You can also use the drop-down Undo history to search for the most recent Auto Update activity and delete all activity back to it. This may mean that you have to re-do some steps, but may save you from having to re-do the whole document.

To get rid of it once and for all, adjust the Normal heading style. Here's how:

1. From the **Styles** gallery in Word's Home tab, *right*-**click** on the style called **Normal**.

2. From the pop-up list of options, click **Modify**.
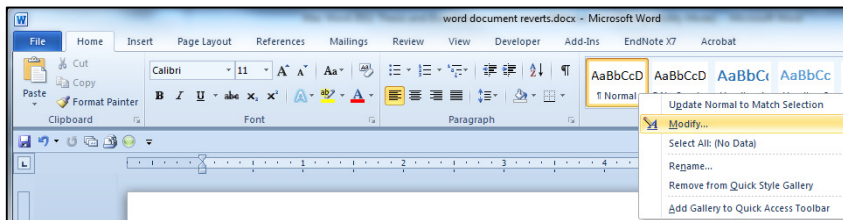
3. Near the bottom of the Modify Style box, ***uncheck*** the box labeled **Automatically update**, then click **OK**.

Note that this option will not appear when inactivated.

4. Return to your document and check it, then save when you are satisfied with its appearance.