Microsoft 365 Copilot Shortcuts & Power Tips (2026)

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https://tygartmedia.com/microsoft-365-copilot-keyboard-shortcuts-hidden-features-power-user-tips-2026/

Most people hunting a “Copilot shortcut” want one key. Microsoft now ships three layers: the in-app pane, the in-canvas draft box, and the Windows Copilot key. They are not the same chord.

Direct Answer (September 2026): In Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, open Copilot with Alt + C (Windows) or Cmd + Control + I (Mac). F6 works on every platform and focuses the Copilot button if the new chords have not rolled out in your build. Alt + I (Windows) / Control + L (Mac) still opens *Draft with Copilot* on a blank line — that is not the chat pane. Windows Copilot itself is the Copilot key or Win + C. Esc closes the pane. Source: Microsoft Support, Copilot Dynamic Action Button.

The shortcut table (what Bing is asking)

What you want	Windows	Mac
Focus / open Copilot pane in Word, Excel, PowerPoint	Alt + C	Cmd + Control + I
Same, any platform / older build	F6 then Up arrow through suggested prompts	
Draft with Copilot on a blank line (in-canvas)	Alt + I	Control + L
Old ribbon path (replaced)	Alt + H, F, X — use F6 instead	
Windows Copilot app	Copilot key or Win + C	—
Push-to-talk on Windows	Hold Copilot key or Win + C 2 seconds; or Alt + Space	—
Submit prompt	Ctrl + Enter / Cmd + Enter	
New line without sending	Shift + Enter	
Close pane / window	Esc	

Japanese / other-language builds use the same chords. If Alt + C does nothing, press F6. That is the documented fallback while the unified shortcuts finish rolling out.

Two Copilots, two keys

In the Microsoft 365 file (Word, Excel, PowerPoint): Dynamic Action Button on the canvas + the table above. Outlook still uses its own compose / summarize entry points; Microsoft says Outlook was not moved onto the Dynamic Action Button.

On Windows itself: dedicated Copilot key (right of the spacebar on newer keyboards) or Win + C. Remap under Settings -> Bluetooth & devices -> Keyboard, or Personalization -> Text input. Work accounts may need the key remapped to the Microsoft Copilot app so Entra users land in work Copilot Chat, not the consumer app.

Excel, Outlook, Teams

Excel: Same Alt + C / F6 to the pane. Alt + I on a blank cell/line is draft-in-canvas, which is why “copilot shortcut excel” and the generic shortcut queries both hit this page. Ask in the pane for formulas and charts; do not expect a separate Excel-only chord.

Outlook: Copilot in the compose toolbar; summarize on long threads in the reading pane. Alt + I may still open a suggestion on some compose fields (“press Alt + I to generate a suggestion for this field” is a field hint, not the Word pane shortcut).

Teams: Copilot control on the meeting bar (transcription on). In chat, Copilot in the upper-right opens the side pane. Close with the X or the Copilot toggle — that is the “close this window” query. @mention a tab or person to scope; that is Graph context, not a keyboard shortcut.

Knowledge pane

“Microsoft 365 Copilot knowledge pane” is the right-hand grounding / sources panel when Copilot answers from your tenant. It is not a separate product. Open Copilot in the app, run the prompt, then expand citations / sources in that pane. There is no unique published chord just for the knowledge pane — open Copilot first (Alt + C or F6), then use the pane UI.

The slash and @ systems (unchanged)

In the prompt box, / references files from SharePoint, OneDrive, or recent docs. @file, @person, and @meeting load Graph context. Combine them: *Based on @Q2-Report.xlsx and Friday’s meeting with @Sarah, draft the budget memo.*

- /summarize current email, doc, or channel
- /draft drafting mode
- /rewrite selected text
- /catch up Teams channel or meeting

Sidebar vs inline

Pane (Alt + C / F6): multi-turn, remembers the session. Use it when you are iterating.

Inline / draft box (Alt + I on a blank line): one-shot rewrite or draft. No conversation memory.

Power tips still worth the page

Copilot Pages for durable output. Loop for multi-person prompting. Forms from a sentence. Whiteboard theme extraction. Stream chapters + transcript. Edge Copilot for the page you are looking at. Those are features, not shortcuts — keep them below the key table so the shortcut queries still resolve in the first screen.

FAQ

What is the keyboard shortcut for Copilot? In Word/Excel/PowerPoint: Alt + C (Windows), Cmd + Control + I (Mac), or F6. Windows Copilot app: Copilot key or Win + C.

Is Alt + I still the Copilot shortcut? Only for Draft with Copilot on a blank line. The pane shortcut is now Alt + C / F6.

Copilot shortcut in Excel? Same as Word and PowerPoint. No Excel-only official chord.

How do I enter a new line in Copilot without sending? Shift + Enter. Send with Ctrl + Enter.

How do I close the Copilot window? Esc, or the X / Copilot toggle in Teams.

>*Part of the complete guide: Microsoft 365 Copilot*