Using Styles in Word to Make Documents Accessible and Formatting Easier

This document provides instructions for using styles in Microsoft Word. Styles allow you to easily apply consistent formatting to documents, as well as to quickly change existing formatting. In addition, the use of styles provides a structure to your document that can be discerned by a screen reader.

Opening Comments

A style can be thought of as a set of pre-defined formatting instructions that can be used repeatedly throughout a document. For example, you may want each section title to be centered, underlined, bolded, and size 14. Rather than applying those formatting attributes individually to each section title, you can store the formatting attributes in a style and apply that style any time you need it without having to do all of the reformatting. In addition, you can easily update the formatting if later you decide you want to use a different size font instead.

There are two basic types of styles in Word – paragraph and character.

When you apply a paragraph style, the formatting affects the entire paragraph. For example, alignment is a paragraph style. An entire paragraph is centered, not just a single word. To apply a paragraph style, click anywhere in the paragraph.

Character styles (for example, bold or underline) apply to only those characters that are selected. To apply a character style to a single word, click anywhere in the word. To apply a character style to a group of words, select the desired words.

Benefits of Using Styles

There are several reasons for using styles in a document:

- Easier to modify
  - When formatting attributes need to be altered, you only need to update the style once; the changes apply to all text formatted with that style.
- Efficiency and consistency
  - It saves time to save a group of formatting attributes as a style so they can be applied multiple times throughout a document. It also helps to keep formatting consistent throughout the document.
- Discernable by a screen reader
  - When a Word document formatted with styles is exported to HTML, it will retain the structure, making it accessible to screen readers. Also, the structure will be retained when exported to PDF. In both cases, the added structure increases the readability of the document for people using screen readers.
Table of Contents
- Using Word’s built-in styles, you can quickly create and update a table of contents.
- Faster navigation
  - Using the Document Map, you can quickly move to different sections in a document based on their style.
- Efficiency of Word
  - Word is a styles-based application; it first reads the attributes of the underlying style, then has to broadcast anything contrary (for example, any manual formatting). As such, a lengthy document that has mostly been formatted manually might behave sluggishly because Word has to work harder at managing it. Additionally, the print formatting processes may be equally labored as opposed to when styles are used.

Quick Styles in Word 2007

Quick Styles are sets of styles created to work together. For example, one set of Quick Styles can include styles for several heading levels, body text, a quote, and a title. All of the style colors and formats in a single style set are designed to be used together to create an attractive and readable document.

You can choose from several predesigned Quick Style sets. The gallery of Quick Styles changes to reflect the Quick Style set that you selected. You can then use all of the styles in the gallery to build your document.

Switch your Style Set from the Change Styles dropdown list

Then, select a Quick Style for use in your document
Applying Styles

To apply a paragraph style,

1. Click anywhere in the paragraph.
2. On the Home tab, in the Styles group, click the desired the Quick Style. Notice the Live Preview effect in Word 2007; you can point to a Quick Style (without clicking it) and see that style applied to your text.

To apply a character style,

1. Select the text to which you would like to apply a style. Be sure to select each and every character.
2. On the Home tab, in the Styles group, click the desired Quick Style. Notice the Live Preview effect in Word 2007; you can point to a Quick Style (without clicking it) and see that style applied to your text.

To display styles in your document,

1. From the Microsoft Office Button, click Word Options.
2. Click **Advanced** on the left side. Then, in the **Display** section, enter the amount of space you would like to allocate to the **style area pane** (for example, 1”). Click **OK**.

3. Switch to either **Draft** or **Outline** view to see the style area pane. The view buttons are located in the status bar at the bottom of the window.
4. You can also print a list of the styles (and the formatting associated with the styles). From the **Print** dialog box, choose **Styles** from the **Print What** dropdown list.

Note that this does NOT print the content of your document, merely the styles in use.

Replacing Styles

Fortunately, it is easy to adjust the styles that have previously been applied. For example, let’s say that you formatted each section title as Heading 1. But now you would like each section title to be formatted as Heading 2. You can use Word’s Find and Replace feature to quickly and easily update the styles.

To replace previously applied styles,

1. From the **Home** tab, in the **Editing** group, click **Replace**.
2. In the Find and Replace dialog box, click the **More** button, if necessary. This expands the box to offer additional options.

3. From the **Format** button, select **Style**.

4. Select the previously applied style that you would like to replace. Click **OK**.
5. Click in the Replace with field. From the Format button, select Style. Select the style you would like to use instead of the previously applied style. Click OK.

![Replace Style dialog box]

6. Click Replace All to have Word replace all instances (in this example, to replace all instances of Heading 1 with Heading 2).

![Find and Replace dialog box]

Changing a Quick Style

There may be times when you would like to modify some of the formatting associated with Word’s styles.
1. On the **Home** tab, in the **Styles** group, right-click the style that you want to change in the Quick Style gallery. Then choose **Modify**.

2. In the **Modify Style** dialog box, make the desired changes. Click **OK** when finished. All text to which that style had been applied will be updated with your changes.

Word 2007 includes new functionality through the use of themes. When you apply a theme, you simultaneously apply a font scheme, a color scheme, and a set of graphic effects. The font scheme and color scheme from the theme are carried over into the Quick Style sets. This is great for designing a consistent and professional-looking document.

However, you may want to customize the style set to better meet your needs. For example, if you like the color scheme and graphical effects of the Civic theme, but you do not want to use Georgia as the font for headings and body text, you can apply a different font scheme.
To modify the entire style set,

1. On the **Home** tab, in the **Styles** group, select **Change Styles**.

2. From here, you can modify the style set, the colors associated with the style set, and/or the fonts associated with the style set. Changes made apply to all styles in the set.

Creating a New Style

Rather than modify one of Word’s existing styles, you may prefer to design your own style.

1. The easiest way to create a new style is to format text with the attributes that you want to apply to the style.
2. Select the newly formatted text. On the **Home** tab, in the **Styles** group, click the dropdown arrow and select **Save Selection as a New Quick Style**.
3. Give the style a name. Click the **Modify** button to apply any additional settings to the style. Click **OK** when finished.

![Create New Style from Formatting dialog box](Image)

4. Your new style will now show up in the Styles group, ready to be applied to additional text as needed.

![Styles group in Microsoft Word](Image)