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Attila IMRE

Basics of Word Processing for Thesis Writing

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Preface

While pupils and students have regular classes of “informatics,” few of them can create properly edited and formatted documents. On the other hand, countless books labeled as *manual* (or *guidebook*, *stylebook*, *handbook*, *grammar book*, *text editing book*, and *design book*) deal with punctuation, correct spelling, text editing and layout, as well as typographic style.

All these books try to describe (present) and prescribe (regulate) correct typing and writing, but—after all—they all seem to be mere recommendations, unless strictly prescribed for publishing purposes created by journal and book publishers. The reality shows that people producing various texts either ignore these recommendations or use them at their whim.

An author of a course on digital text handling is disgruntled, as would-be teachers lack minimal skills in this field, but thesis supervisors are no better, and in Csernoch’s view, a number of teachers cannot teach present-day pupils how to edit and format a document, offering documents full of various errors (Csernoch et al. 2023, 6–7). A further source explains that once we rely on desktop publishing, it is reasonable to know the basic rules of printed texts (Ármeán 2017, 129), although there are views that teaching typographic rules should be part of the education in the mother tongue, lest this knowledge be known only for the ones working in the field, such as printers, proofreaders, editors, writers, or journalists (Hargitai 2005, 134).

The other side of the coin is that many of those who produce texts consider themselves experts, leading to the conclusion that “everybody is a typographer today” (Jury 2007, 8). Other scholars refer to this “syndrome” as *typomania* (Spiekermann 2013, 7), and those who suffer from this syndrome are *typomaniacs* (Spiekermann 2013, 55). The author has thus reached the conclusion that the typeface of the printed text is governed by three factors: “the content of the message, then the intended audience, and only lastly by technical constraints” (Spiekermann 2013, 75), as the reader should not “get sidetracked” while accessing the information. This entails that the text has to “look so normal” that readers should not even be aware of it, so ultimately text design is “invisible” (Spiekermann 2013, 15). While this statement should sound outrageous or at least illogical, we may discover that comics is “the invisible art” (McCloud 1994), proudly stated on the cover page, while Venuti’s book title is *The Translator’s Invisibility* (Venuti 2004), and there are views that the best movie subtitles are also invisible not to distract the viewer’s attention. What may be common in all these invisibilities is implementation.

As such, our aim is to offer certain guidelines to produce texts which draw the readers' attention primarily on the content, which—in our view—might only be possible by following certain technical requirements, among which consistency is of utmost importance. As the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) states, “[c]onsistency in the order, structure, and format of paper elements allows readers to focus on a paper’s content rather than its presentation” (APA 2020, 49).

Having in mind consistency, we have tried to organize the book as follows:

- the spelling used in this book is American English (AmE), except for direct quotations by authors using British English (BrE);
- as a number of manuals have no identifiable authors or editors, these sources are referenced using established abbreviations (acronyms) in the main text, after their full title is given; however, a list of abbreviations is provided;
- based on the *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMOS), file format abbreviations are provided in full capitals (PDF for Portable Document Format), while the form .pdf is used to refer to the type of extension (CMOS 2024, 472);
- italic font style is used for book titles and linguistic examples;
- bold font style is used for software menu items (CMOS 2024, 473–74), built-in features, and certain keywords;
- key combinations or shortcuts available with the help of standard keyboard keys are bordered (All Borders), such as Esc, 3, Shift, or Fn, while keys on the Numeric Keypad (NumPad) are not bordered; a collection of discussed shortcuts is listed in *Appendix 1*;
- Unicode values of symbols and signs are detailed in Section 1.4.2.;
- the following terms are all labeled as Figure in captions: *figure*, *illustration*, *image*, *photo*, *picture*, or *screenshot*;
- the term “click” refers to the left click of the mouse; whenever a right click is needed, it is specified as “right click”; when multiple clicks are involved, it is always with the left click;
- the reference section has been created with Zotero reference manager, using the CMOS style: Chicago Manual of Style 18th edition (author–date); properly installed, Zotero is displayed embedded in the LibreOffice Writer Toolbar, and a new tab is created in Microsoft Office Word, also visible among the **add-ins**, as shown in Figure 1:

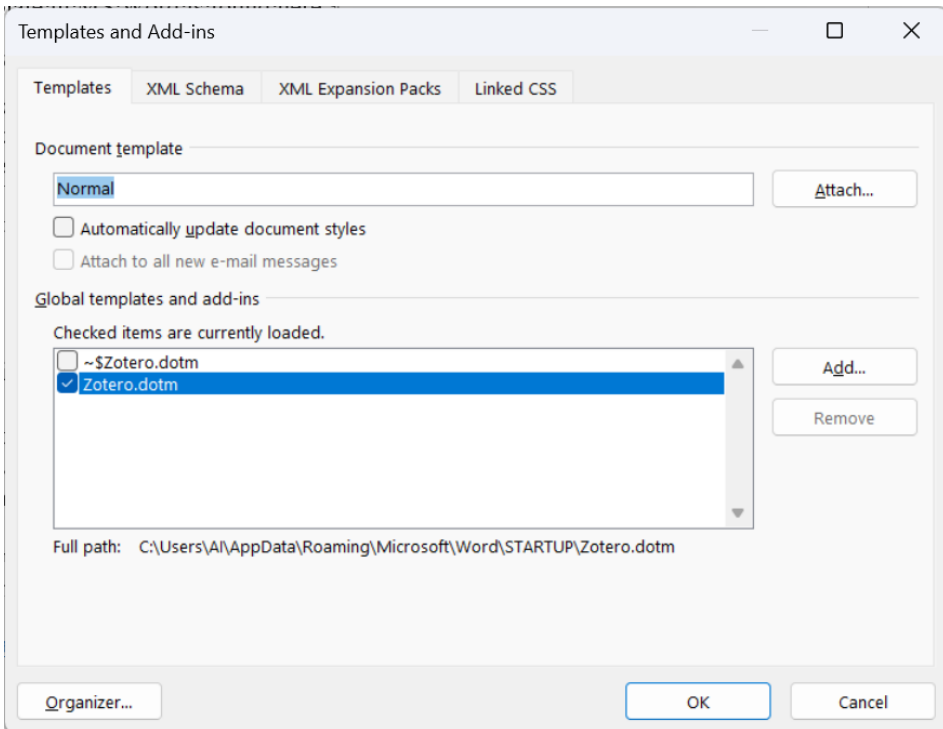


Figure 1. *Zotero add-in, Word*

Although books may contain a **Glossary** section, we tend to believe that checking any unfamiliar term on the internet is much more straightforward, so no Glossary is provided in this book.

Ultimately, the present work will hopefully assure the successful writing of a thesis, including a structural, typographical, and editing point of view.

Chapter 1

Operating Systems and Characters

1.1. Prior to Breaking the Rules

Books on typography present many rules and suggestions connected to text design and layout, but authors agree that at a certain point all these rules may and even should be broken (Ármeán 2017, 133; Jury 2007, 14). However, this is to be done “beautifully, deliberately and well” (Bringhurst 2004, 10), which is only possible after “good designers” (Spiekermann 2013, 41) learn the basic rules, which may sound a “a tired cliché,” but “it is nevertheless true.”¹

We also agree that knowing the rules first enables us to change them later, and the present book tries to offer those basic rules that are considered aesthetically necessary to produce a text. As our aim is not to teach the reader how to become a book designer or an expert in typography, we rely on relatively simple tips found in the most popular word processing or text editing software, Microsoft Office (MSO),² occasionally mentioning alternatives, such as LibreOffice (LO), although it is considered to have “limited functionality” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 4). It is also true that handling texts for the sake of **desktop publishing** is basically beyond the reach of a single person when quality is important (Ármeán 2017, 15), as while trying to read a text, we tend to skip minor mistakes aiming at understanding the message (Ármeán 2017, 85).

Manuals and guidebooks on text editing, such as the American Medical Association’s (AMA) book entitled *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors* (AMA 2020, 1114), typically offer rules for character/font choice, text format, titles, headings, paragraphs, the insertion of tables, figures or lists, quotations, reference citations, punctuation, and spelling. As such, other guidelines (Csernoch et al. 2023, 4) focus on how to avoid all sorts of errors connected to syntax (spelling, hyphenation), semantics (content), or typography (the printed/edited version), although these rules may be tailored to the specific needs or functions.

It is our firm belief that producing near “error-free” documents needs no sophisticated software, as both MSO and the freely available LO contain enough features. These features (Ármeán 2017, 138) may belong to *macrotypography*

¹ <https://www.thepunctuationguide.com/about-this-guide.html>, June 5, 2023.

² Computer software mentioned “do not require citations” (APA 2020, 338), and they need not be italicized either.

(paragraphs, indentation, initials, layout), *mezotypography* (spaces between characters, lines), or *microtypography* (fonts, font size, color). As both software suites display their full potential while running on computers, the next section deals with operating systems (OS), basic skills, and filenames.

1.2. OS and Keyboard Layouts

At the quarter of the 21st century, one of these three major operating systems is running on all conceivable devices: Android (47.22%), Microsoft Windows (25.75%), and iOS (17.38%).³ However, we are more interested in desktop environment, in which case the market is clearly dominated by Microsoft Windows (73.41%), followed by OS X (14.14%), unknown (6.41%), and Linux (4.13%).⁴

These operating systems have a default language, but further language packs may be downloaded and installed, which is important when multiple languages are used. A possibility to check the installed languages in a Microsoft Windows (in the following: Windows) setting is the following:

- right click on the Windows logo on the **Taskbar**;
- click on **System**;
- type Language settings;
- search for **Preferred languages**, which displays the already installed ones, and further ones may be added by selecting the **Add a language** button.

Once various languages are installed, the default language may be changed, and various keyboard settings are also available. The active keyboard layout is typically shown in the taskbar either based on various International Organization for Standardization (ISO) language codes (two-letter or three-letter codes)⁵ or country flags (e.g., *Linux Mint*), enabling users to change keyboard layouts (different for each operating system).⁶

Keys of the keyboard are referred to as provided by Microsoft,⁷ knowing that the standard US laptop keyboard layout contains 103 keys grouped as follows:

1. function keys (**F1**–**F12**), which may contain secondary functions (triggered with the simultaneous pressing of the **Fn** key and a function key: multimedia (Volume Mute, Volume Down, Volume Up, Microphone On/Off), screen keys (related to brightness or connection to external monitors), Print Screen (**PrtSc**));
2. modifier keys: **Ctrl**, **Shift**, **Alt**, **Win**, **Command** on MacBooks (**cmd**), **Esc**;

³ <https://gs.statcounter.com/os-market-share>, January 14, 2025.

⁴ <https://gs.statcounter.com/os-market-share/desktop/worldwide>, January 14, 2025.

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ISO_3166_country_codes, January 18, 2025.

⁶ By default, the Windows logo key **Win**+**Space** (*Windows, Linux*) or the **fn** button (*macOS*), but they are customizable.

⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/4b66rhfv>, January 14, 2025.

3. special keys for navigation and modifying the text: **Insert**, **Home**, **End**, **Delete**, **Enter**, **Tab**, **Backspace**, Caps Lock (**CapsLk**), **Scroll Lock**, **Pause/Break**, **Space** bar, four arrow keys (**←**, **→**, **↑**, **↓**, or **⇐**, **⇒**, **⇑**, **⇓** for Left, Right, Up, and Down), Page Up (**PgUp**) and Page Down (**PgDn**) keys;
4. mathematical operations keys, brackets, and punctuation keys;
5. certain keyboards have a numeric keypad, which may contain as many as 21 keys: a numeric keypad (**0–9**), completed with mathematical operation keys (**←**, **+**, **=**, **√**, *****, **/**, **⌋**), decimal/period key (**⌋**), **Enter**, **Num Lock** key, and a **Backspace** key; the active **Num Lock** key provides the number keys, while deactivating it offers other functions such as arrows (**↑**, **→**, **↓**, **←**), **Home**, **PgUp**, **End**, **PgDn**, Delete (**Del**), Insert (**Ins**), or the Calculator(**⌋**);
6. keyboard combinations need two or more keys, which are joined with the plus sign, without space between them; the keys to be held down are bordered to be more visible, for instance **Ctrl**+**B** to change the font style to Bold.

Switching keyboard layouts enables us to type language-specific characters as well, which might not be present on the actual keyboard. As explained, “expanded to its maximum dimensions, a standard keyboard will give direct access to $47 \times 6 = 282$ glyphs,” which is “enough to handle all current European versions of the Latin alphabet” (Bringhurst 2004, 91). This is possible with various keyboard combinations, relying on the **Alt**, **AltGr** (right-hand side of the **Space** bar), **Ctrl** and **Shift** keys in Windows and Linux, or the **Option** and **Command** keys on MacBooks using macOS as well, by pressing one to four keys simultaneously. Showing the actual keyboard layout for a specific language is also possible by searching for the **On-Screen Keyboard** (Windows), **Show Keyboard Viewer** (macOS), or **Virtual Keyboard / Onboard** (Linux Mint).

More recently, the **AltGr** button tends to be replaced with the Microsoft **Copilot** button,⁸ changing its functions as well:



Figure 2. *Windows copilot button replacing AltGr*

The importance of switching keyboard layouts even within a language/country is well reflected in the differences between the US (QWERTY)⁹ and United States-International¹⁰ (QWERTY) variants:

⁸ <https://1000logos.net/download-image/>, January 18, 2025.

⁹ https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KB_United_States-NoAltGr.svg#mw-jump-to-license, January 18, 2025.

¹⁰ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:KB_US-International.svg, January 18, 2025.

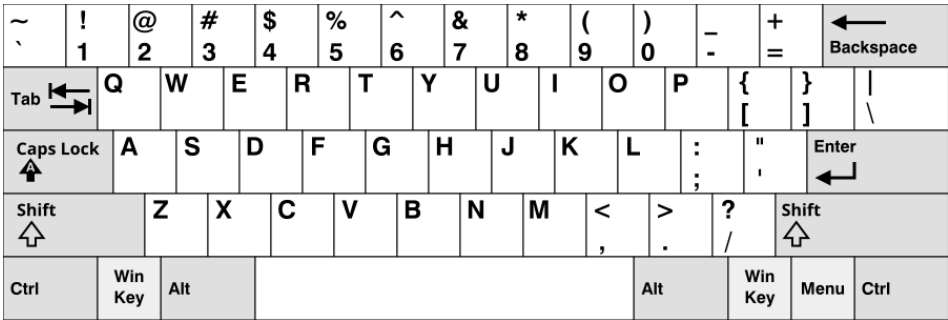


Figure 3. US Standard Keyboard Layout

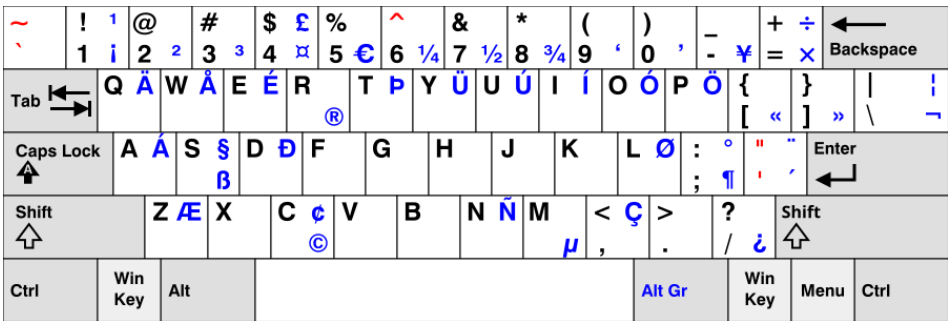


Figure 4. US-International Keyboard Layout

The differences between these two keyboard layouts are obvious: the international version enables us to type much more characters directly, by pressing either the **AltGr** key (right **Alt** key) or the **Shift** + **AltGr** key and one more key. However, the relevance of the following signs and symbols obtained this way is questionable ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, ‘, ’, ¢, ¶, ¢, ©, Æ, µ), as some of them are already on the standard keyboard (the opening and closing apostrophes) or might either be created by simply typing them, followed by a space (fractions $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$), writing them in parentheses followed by a space (the copyright sign, ©), and other signs have very limited use or are outdated.

Yet, the obvious gains seem to outweigh the previous remarks, as there are three superscript numbers (1, 2, 3), the £, €, ¥ currency signs, two standard mathematical operators (× and ÷), the guillemets (« and »), the paragraph mark (§), the degree sign (°), and a few language-specific characters as well (¡, ß, ø, Ø, ñ, Ñ, ç, ¿). Those who use these symbols a lot will appreciate the gain should they memorize the shortcuts.

Switching between various input methods is possible once all desired keyboard layouts are set, as the OS displays the current keyboard layout in the

taskbar. This is possible either by clicking on the specific area in the taskbar or by relying on shortcut keys, depending on the OS:

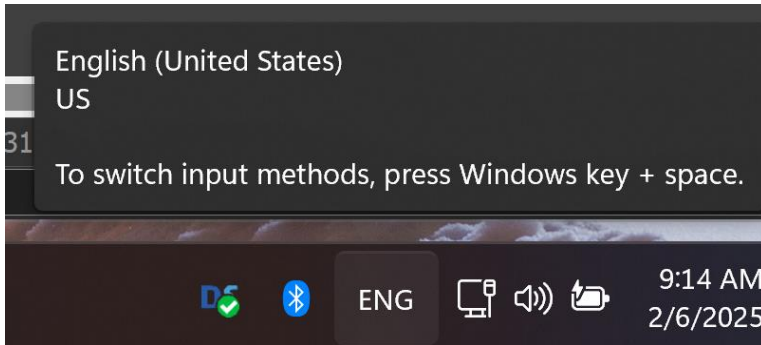


Figure 5. *Switching the input method, Windows*

For instance, the present-day Romanian keyboard layout¹¹ displays the Romanian-specific characters correctly (Ș, ș, Ț, ț), which are with comma and not cedilla (letters S and T are separated from the glyph below them):



Aranjamentul primar din noul standard SR 13992:2004 (varianta „standard” în noul layout xkb)

Figure 6. *Romanian standard keyboard layout*

Furthermore, the major difference between the standard Hungarian keyboard layout¹² (QWERTZ) and the 101 variant¹³ is the switch between keys Z and Y, the relocated paragraph sign position, and a few punctuation-related signs:

¹¹ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_QWERTY_keyboard_language_variants#Romanian, January 18, 2025.

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:KB_Hungary.svg, January 18, 2025.

¹³ <https://kbdlayout.info/KBDHU1/>, January 18, 2025.

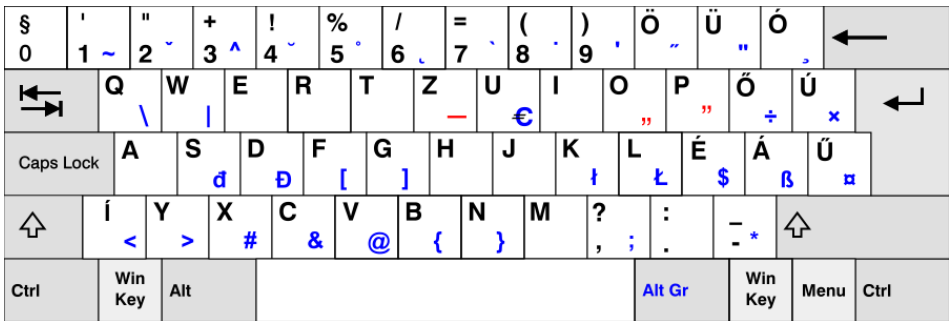


Figure 7. QWERTZ Hungarian keyboard layout

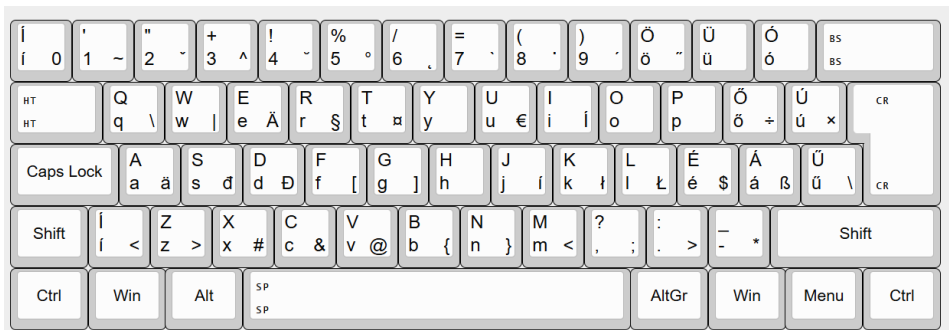


Figure 8. QWERTY Hungarian 101-key layout

Typing any character properly should be a basic requirement, and while certain characters may also have specific shortcuts (so-called Alt codes by holding down the **Alt** key and typing a number on the NumPad), it might be more convenient to rely on the **Character Map** (Windows and Linux) or **Finder, Edit, Emoji & Symbols** (macOS):

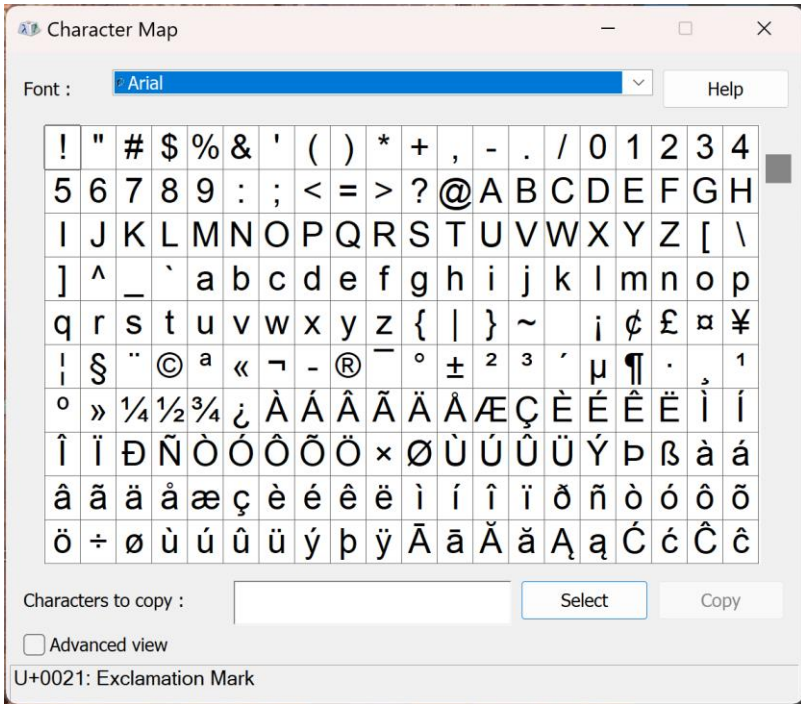


Figure 9. Character map in Windows



Figure 10. Character map, Linux Mint

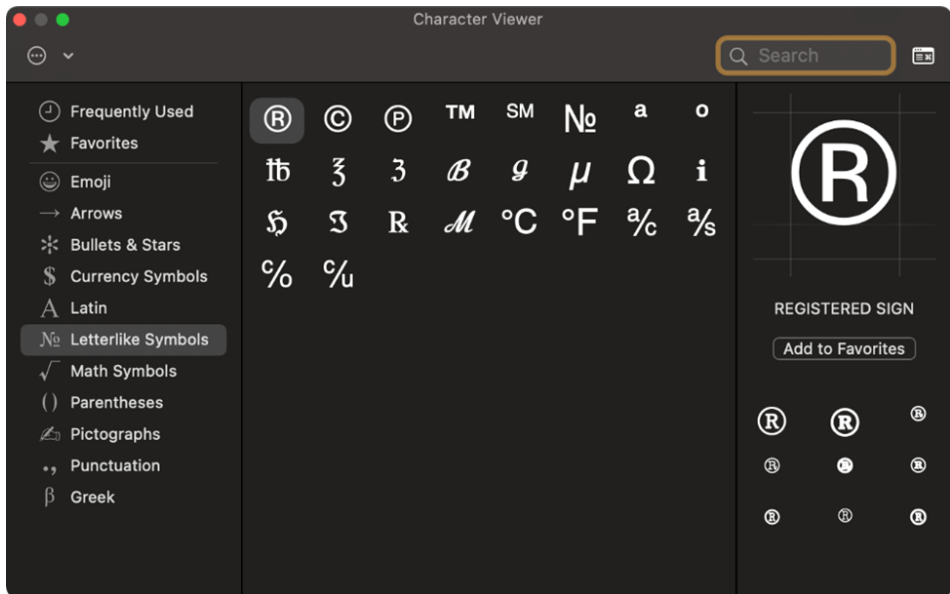


Figure 11. *Character viewer, macOS*

It is obvious that text editing might be substantially improved by inserting proper characters and never replacing them with some similar-looking ones (e.g., two apostrophes instead of the quotation marks).

The operating systems must all be able to handle text-based documents, ranging from built-in software to paid office suites. As for their market share, all websites offering statistics agree that various Google applications are the most popular, followed by MSO, although the percentage of their market share is rather different with various sources. Irrespective of their estimated or tracked use, reality shows that the majority of people use either Google Workspace or MSO, or both. These office suites contain components dedicated to dealing with texts (e.g., Google Workspace, Docs), and our primary interest is MSO Word (from now on, simply Word), as this is arguably the most popular text editor taught in educational facilities, and editors “develop sufficient skill in this software to edit efficiently” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 4).

Nevertheless, it is known that Linux-based operating systems typically contain the open-source LO suite, which is also compatible with MSO, while macOS has Apple iWork (Pages, Numbers, and Keynote) as the alternative for a typical office suite.

Other notable software packages developed for word processing are *AbiWord*,¹⁴ *Apache OpenOffice*,¹⁵ *OnlyOffice*,¹⁶ *Polaris Office*,¹⁷ *Scrivener*,¹⁸ *Softmaker FreeOffice*,¹⁹ or *WPS Office*.²⁰

These office suites make it possible for users to create and edit various text-based documents, and they typically offer language-specific spelling options as well, which may be enabled or disabled (often with the **F7** function button). While they spot the majority of typographical errors, including the “fat finger syndrome,” they can hardly detect “atomic” typos, which are words typed correctly but used in a wrong context.

1.3. Skills to Organize Files

Basic computer skills include effectively handling the tasks a person needs. This typically means creating, editing/modifying, saving, copying/pasting, and deleting various files, either one by one or in batches.

As such, in our view, a basic skill would be to categorize documents according to a personal style system, which is in harmony with the operation system’s predefined categories. This means separate folders for documents, pictures, music, videos and further ones, such as downloads or templates, and with further subfolders as well to enable fast search when needed. This entails pre-set download locations for the chosen web browsers and default save locations for software within which new documents are created.

Furthermore, the desktop should have no more than about a dozen shortcuts to the most frequent files and contain no files whatsoever. The Windows **Taskbar** may contain shortcuts to software, and a right click on them might show the most recent documents, some of which might even be pinned:

¹⁴ <https://abiword.net/>, January 18, 2025.

¹⁵ <https://www.openoffice.org/>, January 18, 2025.

¹⁶ <https://www.onlyoffice.com/>, January 18, 2025.

¹⁷ <https://www.polarisoffice.com/en/>, January 18, 2025.

¹⁸ <https://scrivener.app/>, January 18, 2025.

¹⁹ <https://www.freeoffice.com/en/>, January 18, 2025.

²⁰ <https://www.wps.com/office/>, January 18, 2025.

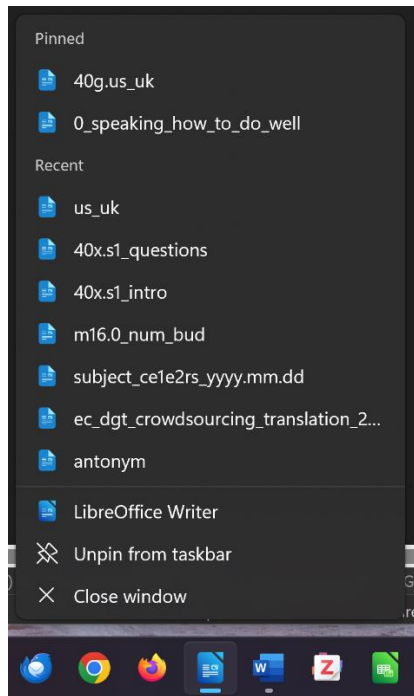


Figure 12. Taskbar, most recent and pinned files

1.4. Filenames

An effective file management system saves a lot of time, especially when file names are designed having in mind productivity.

1.4.1. Creating Files or Folders

The first thing to do when creating a new file or folder is to name it properly. Ideally, this means a “reasonable length,” which means fewer than 31 characters,²¹ yet a title reflecting its contents, meaning that every single file should be named to reveal its content without the need to open it. However, before offering further clues on file or folder name, certain terminology clarification is needed.

As defined, a **character** may be “[a] letter, numeral, symbol, or punctuation mark” (AMA 2020, 1126), and a further definition is more comprehensive: “the smallest possible unit of arrangement: a space, letter, numeral, punctuation mark, or other symbol” (Wellisch 1999, 1). As such, **letters** are characters “used in writing to represent a speech sound and forming an element of an alphabet,” while

²¹ <https://support.promax.com/en/knowledge/special-characters>, June 30, 2022.

numerals (0–9) are characters “used in writing or print to represent a number” (Wellisch 1999, 2), although experts refer to them as digits.

The letters and numbers are collectively referred to as **alphanumeric characters**, which may also be combined with all sorts of non-alphanumeric **symbols**, which are nevertheless characters, explained in the foreword (Wellisch 1999), but when we have in mind filenames, letters containing diacritical signs are excluded. Due to various operating systems (Windows, macOS, or Linux), publishing on the web, and differences in file management systems, the safest way is to refrain from using any language-specific characters containing diacritical signs in filenames.

Other special characters, signs, and symbols are also restricted;²² this category includes almost all the ones visible on a standard keyboard layout: forward slash (/), backslash (\), single or double quotation marks (‘...’, “...”), asterisk (*), ampersand (&), colon (:), semicolon (;), vertical bar or pipe (|), backtick (`), question mark (?), exclamation mark/point (!), left and right angle brackets (<, >), parentheses, curly brackets ({}), square brackets ([]), at sign (@), pound sign / number sign / hashtag (#), percent (%), tilde (~), currency signs (\$, £, €), plus and equal signs (+, =). As such, this rule virtually refers to all signs and symbols except for three, listed below:

1. period / dot (.),
2. hyphen (-),²³
3. underscore (_).

Although longer filenames and certain specific characters may cause less erroneous interpretation since the adoption of the Unicode Standard,²⁴ major sources opt for the use of these three non-alphanumeric characters in filenames, also mentioning that blank space is not recommended either; underscore or hyphen should be used to separate words, while only one period should be used, which is before the extension type (e.g., filename_001.pdf). More than one period might also result in erroneous interpretation.

1.4.2. *The Unicode Standard*

The Unicode Standard offers more than 150,000 characters via shortcuts, and whenever the shortcut starts with a leading zero or two leading zeros, it is enough to type the rest and press the **Alt** + **ⓧ** combination. Furthermore, these shortcuts are not character sensitive, which means that both capital and small letters are acceptable. As such, the degree sign may be obtained by typing b0 only and

²² <https://blog.josephscott.org/2007/02/12/things-that-shouldnt-be-in-file-names-for-1000-alex/>, June 30, 2022.


²³ A hyphen is different from a dash, the latter being of various lengths, such as the en dash (used to express range) or em dash.


²⁴ <https://records-express.blogs.archives.gov/2017/08/22/best-practices-for-file-naming/>, June 30, 2022.

pressing **Alt+X** (Windows) or **Ctrl+Shift+b0** (Linux), even if the “official” Unicode value is 00B0.

Once the Unicode value is typed or the symbol is inserted, pressing the **Alt+X** combination multiple times swaps between the character code and the symbol. For instance, the Unicode value for the circled capital letter A is 24B6, thus typing the code and pressing the **Alt+X** combination will result in this glyph: Ⓐ. Placing the cursor at the end of the glyph and pressing **Alt+X** again will revert the glyph to the code. In various descriptions, the Unicode is marked with a leading U +, thus the **Character Map** of each font typeface starting with this combination can swap between the glyph and the character code. Occasionally, it is also referred to as Hex code.

A possible issue is when the selected font typeface does not contain the Unicode character. In this case, typing the code and pressing the **Alt+X** may result in the desired glyph, but the text-editing software changes to a different font typeface, which may display:

- the glyph correctly (e.g., in *MS Gothic*);
- an empty box or the power On-Off glyph (Ⓜ);
- a box with a question mark or the power button (Ⓜ);
- a slightly modified symbol (27FF is \rightsquigarrow in *Segoe UI Symbol*, but it is \rightsquigarrow in *Cambria Math*, which changes from TNR once U+27CC is typed);
- a completely different symbol (U+27CC is an old Windows logo  in *Wingdings*).

More than that, the Unicode combination for the power symbol is 23FB, but font typefaces cannot display it properly in Word (□), while LO Writer (from now on, simply Writer) renders it properly, which is not the case in LO Calc (from now on, simply Calc). Interestingly, the code 26D4 (*No entry*) displays  in Word, but the font typeface changes to *Segoe UI Emoji*.²⁵

Certain glyphs are presented in various sections of this book, including their Unicode values and Alt codes (if available), offering descriptions and occasionally some remarks. It may happen that in case there are two Alt codes (e.g., **Alt+20** or **Alt+0182** for the paragraph sign), only the shorter one is provided.

1.4.3. Uploading Files

When having in mind uploading files on the internet, a hyphen should replace underscore to separate words in filenames, as this “will also improve your search engine rankings.”²⁶ An additional restriction is that file or folder names should not start with any of these symbols.

Interestingly, various sources restrict the use of further characters:

²⁵ An interesting online article discusses many aspects of Unicode: <https://eev.ee/blog/2015/09/12/dark-corners-of-unicode/>, April 29, 2025.

²⁶ <https://www.mtu.edu/umc/services/websites/writing/characters-avoid/>, June 30, 2022.

1. uppercase letters (see Footnote 26);
2. Roman numbers, as they will be interpreted as standard letters (Wellisch 1999, 9).

Thus, the logical conclusion is that filenames should only contain lowercase letters with no diacritical marks; these may be completed with numeric characters and three signs (underscore, hyphen, and period), with the restriction that these three signs may not start or end the filename. Respecting these suggestions enables both proper alphanumerical arrangement of files and effective archiving.

When these rules are not respected, it may result in erroneous file and folder names (especially when they are zipped), illustrated in Figure 13:



Figure 13. *Diacritical marks in filenames*

In case the previously accepted three non-alphanumeric characters “compete” with alphanumeric characters for the supremacy of alphabetical arrangement in document names, the following outcome is to be expected, depending on the operating systems:

Windows	macOS	Linux
cup.black.txt	cup_black.txt	cup.black.txt
cup_black.txt	cup-black.txt	cup7black.txt
cup7black.txt	cup.black.txt	cup-black.txt
cup-black.txt	cup7black.txt	cup_black.txt
cupblack.txt	cupblack.txt	cupblack.txt

Figure 14. *Different filename arrangements in OS*

The table illustrates that when document names differ in only one character, non-letters take precedence over letters. While “alphabetization is language-specific, and no two languages written in the Roman script have the same alphabet and orthographic rules” (Wellisch 1999, Foreword), respecting the filename-related recommendations enables us to have the same filenames on all computers, irrespective of the operating system and language. Even if Wellisch states, “[s]ymbols other than numerals and letters do not have a universally known and agreed-upon order,” the above alphabetical order has been checked personally on all three operating systems.

A final suggestion is that in case we receive documents with different filenames than recommended, it is worth preserving their original names,²⁷ especially when they are sent back or forwarded to others. Further details on filenames are available at various webpages: Wikipedia²⁸ or language-related sites.²⁹

1.4.4. *Changing File and Folder Names*

There are multiple options to change the names of files and folders. If there is a particular filename to be changed, selecting a file and a slightly slower click or selecting one and pressing the **F2** function key³⁰ usually enables us to do that. However, when multiple filenames or folder names need renaming, our suggestion is to use a versatile dual pane file manager such as FreeCommander.³¹

When we wish to change multiple file names (i.e., to rename them according to the filename creating rules), on opening the folder containing the files in FreeCommander, the following steps might be necessary:

1. select all the files;
2. press **Ctrl+M** to modify them, upon which a new window (**Multi rename**) will be displayed;
3. change [n] in the **File name** box to [nid] to eliminate all language-specific characters (diacritical marks);
4. in the Case box, replace No change to All lowercase;
5. place the cursor in the **Search for** box and press the **Space** bar once; this will look for all spaces in the names;
6. then place the cursor in the **Replace with** box and type either a hyphen or an underscore;
7. tick the Replace all occurrences box;
8. press the **Rename** button.

²⁷ If we modify the document content, we can add our family name or initials with a hyphen or underscore at the end of the document, or in case of translation, the new language code may be added.

²⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filename>, June 30, 2022.

²⁹ <https://style.mla.org/punctuation-with-titles/>, June 30, 2022.

³⁰ Remember that notebook keyboard layouts might be set to multimedia functions rather than basic function keys (**F1–F12**), in which case an extra keystroke might be needed, such as **Fn+F2**.

³¹ <https://freecommander.com/en/summary/>, June 30, 2022; while this is the one we actually use on Windows OS, there are good ones for macOS (Commander One) or Linux OS (Double Commander, which is also a cross-platform, available even on FreeBSD) as well.

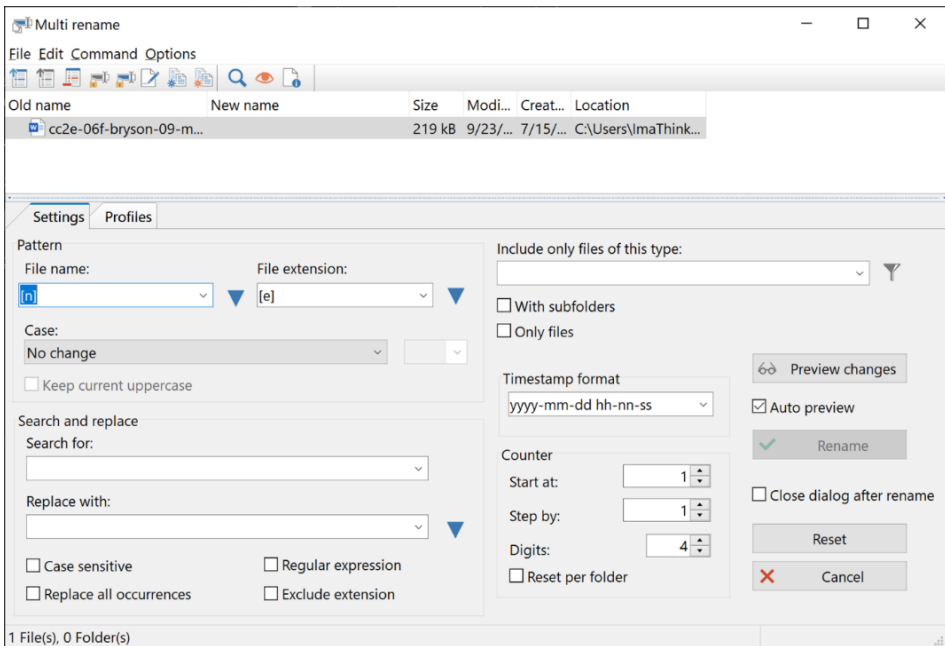


Figure 15. *Multi-rename, FreeCommander*

These changes will correct many filename issues, although it may happen that further changes are needed:

- in case the **Modify** window was closed, select all files again and press **Ctrl+M** again; if the window is still available, press **Reload** again;
- place the cursor in the **Search for** box again and type the below signs one by one, leave the **Replace with** box empty and press **Rename** after each sign over and over again:
 1. Ampersand (&);
 2. Apostrophe (');
 3. Opening and closing parentheses () and square brackets [], each symbol separately;
 4. Comma (,);
 5. Plus sign (+);
 6. Question mark (?);
 7. Exclamation mark / point (!);
 8. Reduce double or triple hyphens or periods to one by typing two/three hyphens or periods in the **Search for** box and typing only one of them in the **Replace with** box.

FreeCommander is also useful when multiple files need to be numbered (check the **Counter** section in the **Multi-rename** window) or we wish to add a

similar string of characters at the beginning or end of each filename (in which case, type the desired string of characters after the [n] in the **File name** box).

If everything goes wrong, do not close the **Multi-rename** window; go to **Command** and press **Undo**, which reverts the filename changes to the previous state.

Another extra function offered by the software is that on selecting all filenames in FreeCommander (**Ctrl**+**A**), we can copy the list of names and paste this list in a separate file by holding down simultaneously the **Alt**+**Shift**+**Insert** keys (or go to **Edit, Copy to clipboard, Copy item name to clipboard**).

Organizing items is strongly encouraged by *The Copyeditor's Handbook* as well, which suggests that everybody should *folderize* to be efficient (Preface by Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, xvi).

The next stage might be the setup of documents to be created, which should follow some rules as well, detailed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Setup

2.1. The Quick Access Toolbar

Setup refers to operations which involve creating new text-based files, in our case mostly in Word or Writer. While these office suites come with certain predefined settings, these are constantly “under development” for the sake of productivity.

However, productivity is different with every single user, and a few setup options are worth considering when using Word or Writer:

1. customizing the **Quick Access Toolbar**;
2. exporting to PDF file format;
3. adding other software to enhance productivity.

As default settings may not be “user-friendly” for everyone, it is worth considering minor adjustments. In the case of Word, the **Quick Access Toolbar** is on the very top of an open document, and depending on the frequency of using certain commands, users may add some of them to this toolbar.

There are five icons of the **Quick Access Toolbar** in Figure 16 below:

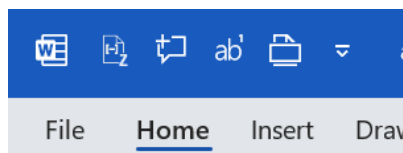


Figure 16. *Quick Access Toolbar, Word*

The first one is a Word logo (restores or minimizes the windows), followed by a Zotero icon (**Add/Edit Citation**), an **Insert a Comment** icon, an **Insert Footnote** icon, and a **PDF or XPS** icon.

The last icon of this toolbar (similar to an arrow down button) can help in this respect, as clicking on it reveals certain options, including the possibility to add **More Commands...**:

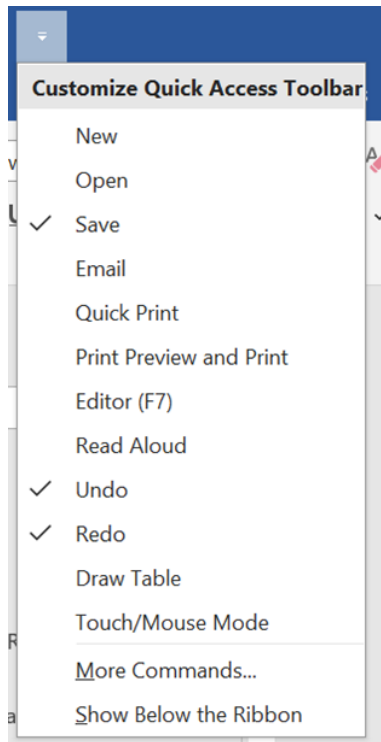


Figure 17. *Customizing Quick Access Toolbar, Word*

A click on **More Commands** will display a window, and the **Popular Commands** in the search box should be changed to **All Commands**. The list below **All commands** shows all the available options, and the illustration below reveals that we have added four new commands to the **Quick Access Toolbar**, as these commands are heavily used:

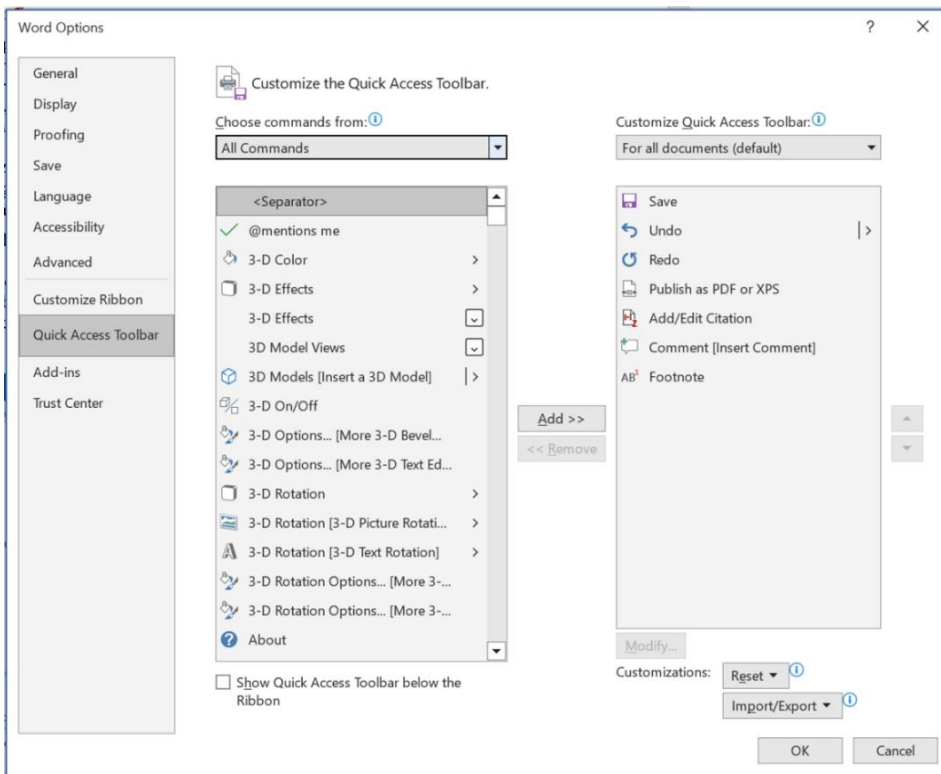


Figure 18. *Commands added to Quick Access Toolbar, Word*

As Figure 18 shows, the newly added commands are **Publish as PDF or XPS** (we often export DOCX files to PDF files); **Add/Edit Citation**, which belongs to Zotero (a separate software which can be embedded into Word);³² **Comment [Insert Comment]**, as this is often used when reviewing documents; finally, **Footnote**, which can add a footnote to the document with a single click. Although adding these commands to the **Quick Access Toolbar** requires a few steps, once set, it will be useful in the long run.

However, when the same functionality is pursued in Writer,³³ its main toolbar already contains an **Export Directly as PDF** icon, the **Insert Footnote** icon, and **Insert Comment** as well:

³² Further details: https://www.zotero.org/support/word_processor_plugin_usage, August 20, 2025.

³³ Further details: https://www.zotero.org/support/word_processor_plugin_usage, August 20, 2025.

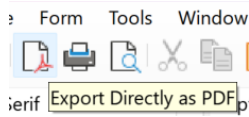


Figure 19. *PDF icon, Writer*



Figure 20. *Insert Footnote icon, Writer*

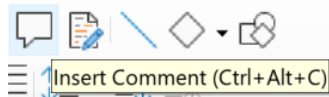


Figure 21. *Insert comment, Writer*

Zotero makes it easy to create documents with references in Word, and there is no need to install Zotero separately for LO, as it is embedded automatically while installing it. After that, six command icons will appear at the beginning of the main toolbar, starting with the **Add/Edit Citation** command icon.

Other users will surely find further useful commands, depending on the purpose of using any office suite, and once the most frequent ones are added, we should focus on how these suites open a new file, which is basically a new page in the case of Word and Writer.

2.2. Page Setup

Page setup is also predefined in the case of Word and Writer, although few users are happy with that, especially when it comes to printing the pages.

All authors mention that various purposes require various typographical rules (Jury 2007, Virágvölgyi 2004), but in case we have in mind an average user, it is worth considering what is more readily available. In commerce, the most widespread paper size is A4 (210 × 297 mm or 8.3 × 11.7 inches), which means that the majority of text-based documents should have a similar size by default. This is commonly referred to as **Layout**, which is “the arrangement of all the elements of design and typography on the page or screen for optimal readability, taking into account the context and aesthetic requirements of the content” (AMA 2020, 1118). The standard layout for page includes major settings, such as **Margins**, **Orientation**, and **Size**, and minor ones such as **Columns**, **Breaks**, **Hyphenation**, **Indent**, and **Spacing**.

2.3. Page Size (Format) and Margins

Based on the previous section, the standard page size is A4, and neither Word nor Writer is set by default to this size.

Resizing a page is not difficult if not many new documents are created, but otherwise it is worth creating a template (discussed later). Page size may be changed in **Layout, Page Setup** section, **Size**, A4 (Word) and **Format, Page Style, Page, Format: A4** (Writer).

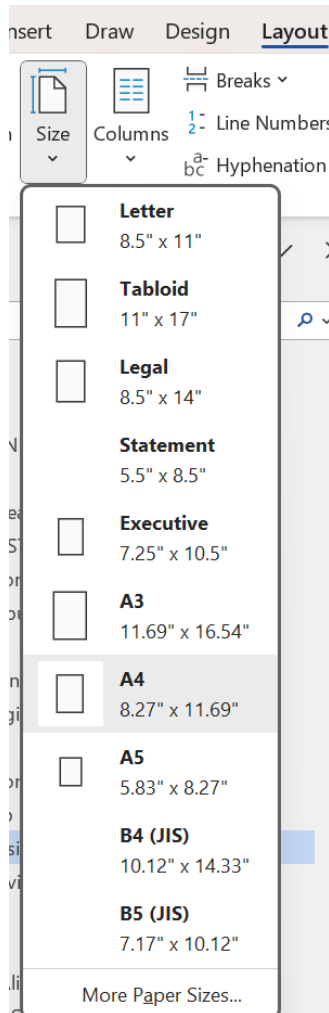


Figure 22. Setting page size, Word

Further page setup in Word is found in the **Layout** section as well: standard **Orientation** is **Portrait**, while **Margins** should be set to **Normal** unless required otherwise (**Custom Margins**). As for Writer, **Orientation** is found below the previously mentioned **Format**, similarly to **Margins**:

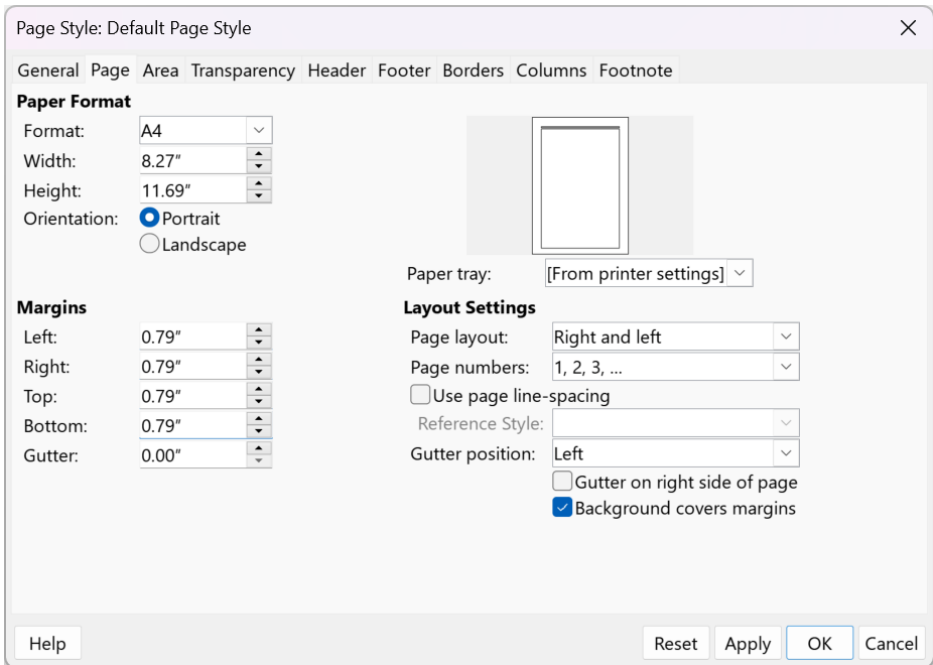


Figure 23. *Default page style A4 format, Writer*

Bringhurst offers details regarding further recommended margins for various book types, including multiple columns (Bringhurst 2004, 161), having in mind “room for the readers thumbs,” but he concludes that a visually appealing page lies in the letterforms and in its margins (Bringhurst 2004, 165). However, the standard margin for all four sides (top, bottom, left, and right) is 2.54 cm, or 1 inch, but “[d]issertations and theses may have different requirements if they are to be bound” (APA 2020, 45).

Further settings are also possible: a standard page typically has one column, but it can have more (**Layout, Columns** for Word; **Format, Page Style, Columns** for Writer).

2.3.1. Page View

To enhance page visibility, there are two very useful possibilities, and one of them is to enable the paragraph mark (pilcrow sign). Word considers it “useful for advanced layout tasks” because it shows “paragraph marks and other hidden formatting symbols,” as well as non-printable characters:

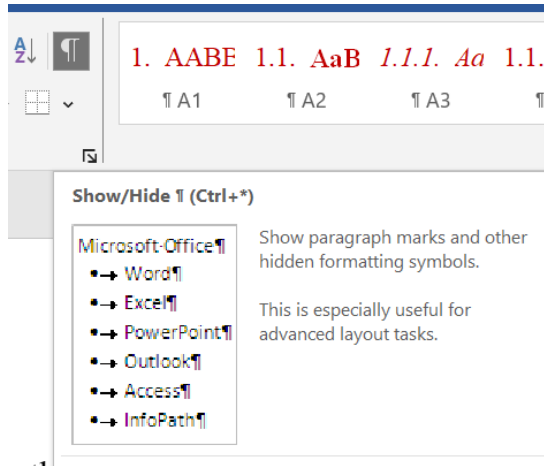


Figure 24. Show paragraph mark, Word

Writer offers to enable/disable all formatting marks from the **Menu bar (View, Formatting Marks)**, from the tabbed interface (**Home, Toggle Formatting Marks**), from the **Toolbar (Formatting Marks** with the paragraph symbol: ¶), or as a keyboard shortcut (**Ctrl+F10**).

2.3.1.1. Crop Marks and Text Boundaries

If we position the cursor over the paragraph mark in Word, it will display **Show/Hide ¶**, including its shortcut (**Ctrl+***). However, the shortcut is not functional, but it works if we use the **Ctrl+Shift+8** combination.³⁴ Writer relies on the **Ctrl+F10** shortcut, and the paragraph mark is labelled as **Toggle Formatting Marks**.

When this is enabled, the document may also display the so-called **crop marks** in Word. By default, this option is not enabled, but it is easy to do that: **File, Options, Advanced, Show document content** and tick **Show crop marks**, which

³⁴ While various guides suggest **Ctrl+Shift+8**, this is only functional when the * sign is selected from the regular keyboard and not from the numeric keypad, so it is basically the shortcut mentioned above.

will be displayed in all four corners. The Writer version is **View**, and then tick **Boundaries**. The results are illustrated for Word and Writer in Figure 25 below:

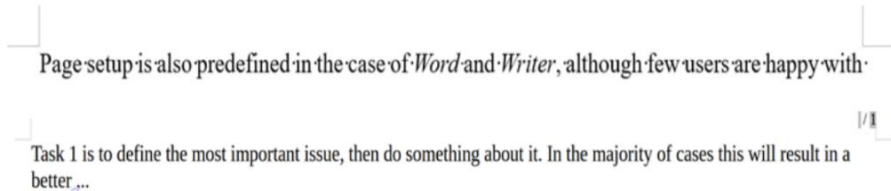


Figure 25. *Displaying crop marks (Word) and text boundaries (Writer)*

2.3.1.2. Breaks—Page, Section, Column

There are various breaks, which are also invisible unless the paragraph sign is enabled.

Page break may break the page at specific parts, for instance at the beginning of a new heading or section or before/after an inserted table or illustration or when we simply wish to start a new idea on a different page. Inserting a page break in Word is possible either by **Insert, Page Break** or by **Layout, Breaks, Page**. **Layout, Breaks** offers further types of breaks, also explaining their use. Writer offers these options within **Insert, Page Break**, or **More Breaks**:

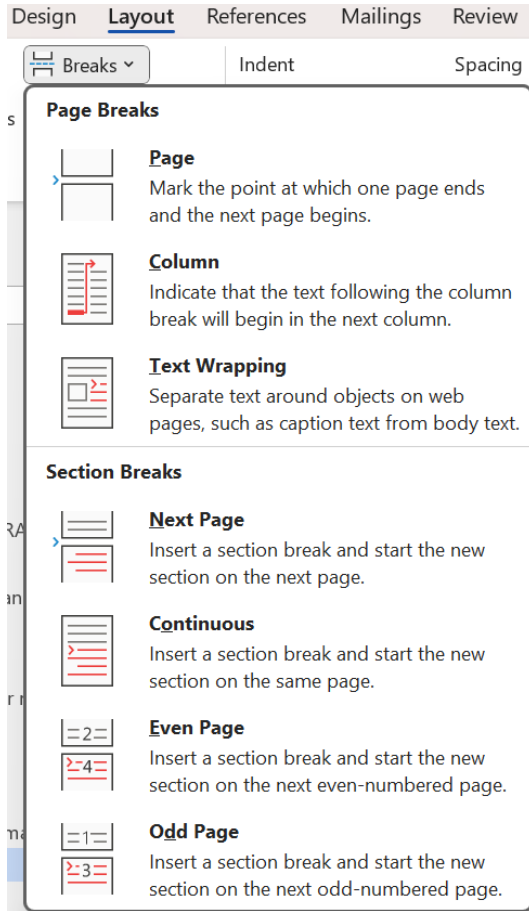


Figure 26. Breaks, Word

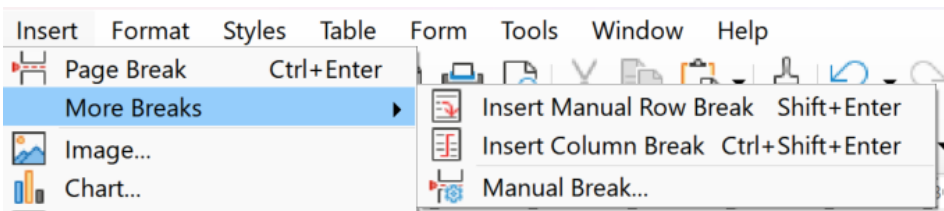


Figure 27. Insert breaks, Writer

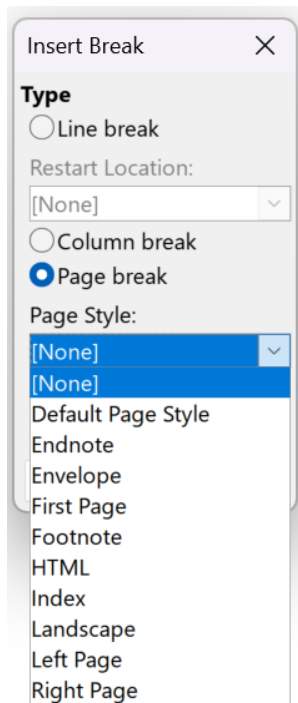


Figure 28. *Insert page break, Writer*

As Figure 26, Figure 27, and Figure 28 illustrate, **Page**, **Column**, and **Section Breaks** might be needed for various purposes, some of which are listed below:

1. separate ideas to start on a new page;
2. page number should start only on a later page, not to number the title pages;
3. non-continuous page numbering is required;
4. odd/even pages are required;
5. the next page should have a different layout (**Portrait** to **Landscape**).

The shortcut for **Page Break** is **Ctrl+Enter**,³⁵ while **Ctrl+Shift+Enter** is the shortcut for **Column Break**.

2.3.2. View

The **Menu** bar contains **View**, which—by default—shows a certain **Print Layout** (Word) or **Normal** (Writer). This means that in case the page is printed, it should look the same as on screen, except for the non-printable formatting marks.

³⁵ Word uses **Return** for the **Enter** key.

The **View** in Word offers a **Ruler**, **Gridlines**, and a **Navigation Pane**. While enabling the **Gridlines** might be useful only in restricted cases, the other two seem to be more frequently needed. The **One Page** or **Multiple Pages** show either one page (like a scroll) or multiple pages (left–right) on the screen. In case the **Navigation Pane** is inactive, the **Ctrl+F** (find)³⁶ will enable it, offering to show **Headings** (having in mind a table of contents), **Pages** (a mini-view of pages, also good for faster scrolling), and **Results** (searching for strings of characters or other items in the entire document, up to 100 instances):

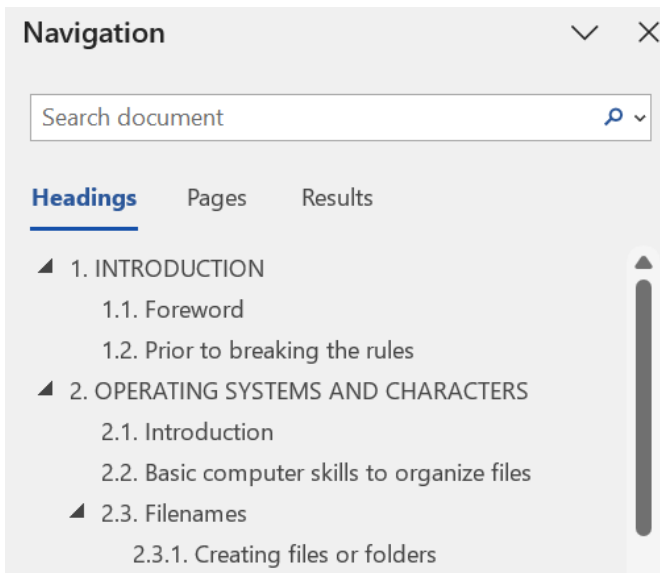


Figure 29. *Navigation, Word*

The **View** in Writer enables us to activate the **Rulers**, **Gridlines**, various **Boundaries**, and further options as well. If we wish to search within the document for character strings, the **Ctrl+F** shortcut activates an extra bottom bar with various find functions (**Find All**, **Match Case**, search **up/down**). In order to see something similar to **Headings** in Word, we need to press the **F5** function key to enable **Navigator**, which offers (among others) a complete list of all **Headings**, **Tables**, **Images**, **Bookmarks**, **Sections**, **Hyperlinks**, **References**, **Indexes**, **Comments**, **Footnotes**, and **Endnotes**, and this **Navigator** may be moved to any place on the screen:

³⁶ The **Find and Replace** option is available either as a shortcut (**Ctrl + F**) in both Word and Writer or via the button placed in the **Home** toolbar (Word) or the main toolbar (Writer).

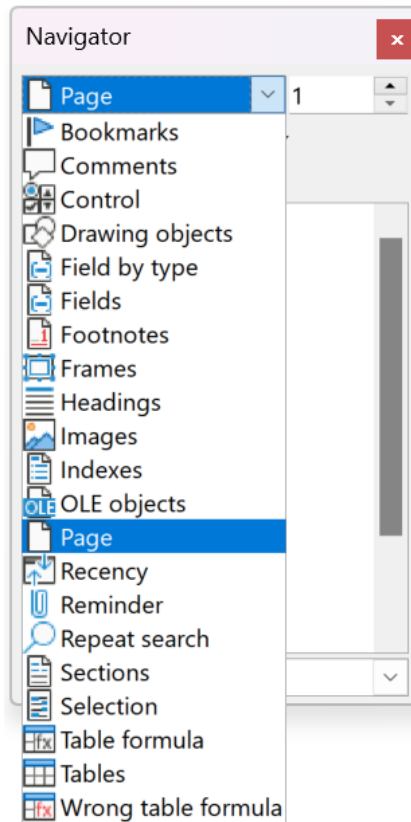


Figure 30. Navigator, Writer

Other views than **Print Layout** or **Normal View** may also be useful. Word offers **Read Mode**, **Web Layout**, **Outline**, and **Draft** views, while Writer only a **Web View**.

2.3.3. Styles

The importance of **Styles** is well reflected in Word. The **Home** tab dedicates a highly visible part to them, which offers the possibility to set special style templates for various sections.

This setting option includes the Name, Style type, Formatting (font type, font size, Bold, Italic or Underline, font color), Alignment, Line and Paragraph spacing, Indentation, Tabs, Border, Language, Frame, Numbering, Shortcut key, and Text effects, referring to the selected text. Actually, there are a number of predefined styles, starting with the Normal text.

While various MSO editions have different **Normal** text style templates (*Calibri* font, 11-point font size for Office 2016 or 2019; *Aptos* font for Office 2021 or 2024), there are also templates for headings, quotes, lists, captions, or tables, and all of them may be changed:

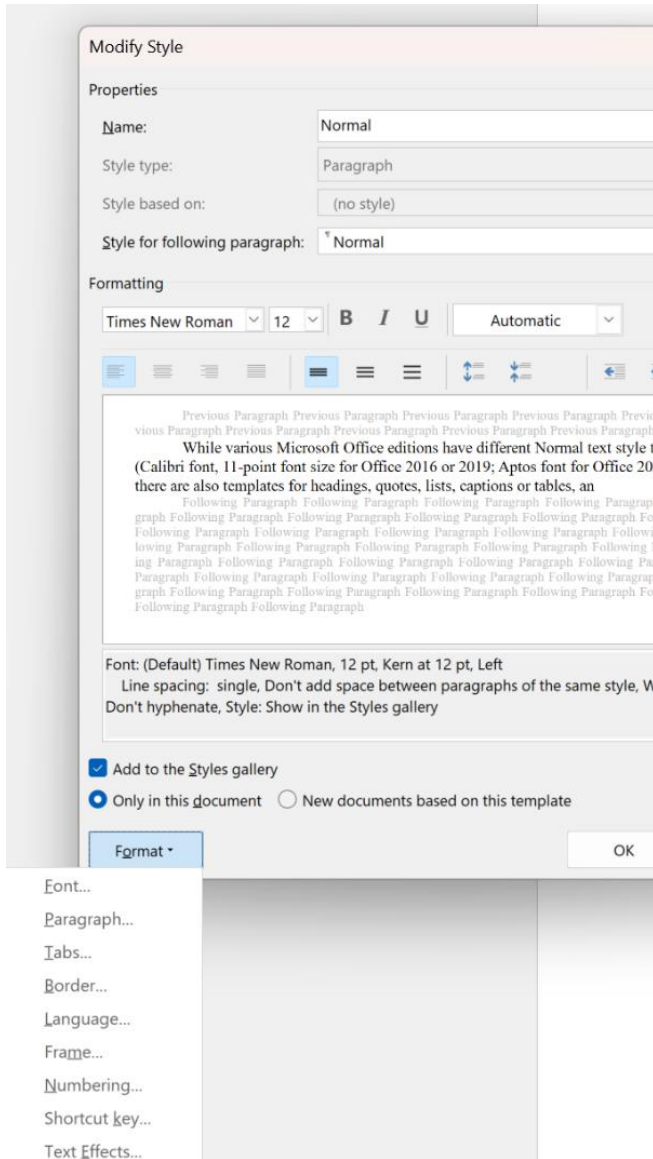


Figure 31. *Modifying styles, Word*

























Styles	Table	Form	Tools	Window	F
 Body Text				Ctrl+0	
 Title					
 Subtitle					
 Heading 1				Ctrl+1	
 Heading 2				Ctrl+2	
 Heading 3				Ctrl+3	
 Block Quotation					
 Preformatted Text					
 No Character Style					
 Emphasis					
 Strong Emphasis					
 Quotation					
 Source Text					
 No List				Ctrl+Shift+F12	
 Bullet • List Style					
 Numbering 123 List Style					
 Numbering ABC List Style					
 Numbering abc List Style					
 Numbering IVX List Style					
 Numbering ivx List Style					
 Edit Style...				Alt+P	
 Update Selected Style				Ctrl+Shift+F11	
 New Style from Selection				Shift+F11	
Load Styles from Template					
 Manage Styles				F11	

Figure 32. *Modifying styles, Writer*

Although the **Style** section of the **Home Tab** is rather extended, the **Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S** shortcut enables a sidebar on the right with the full list of Styles, with extra buttons to create new styles or further options as well:

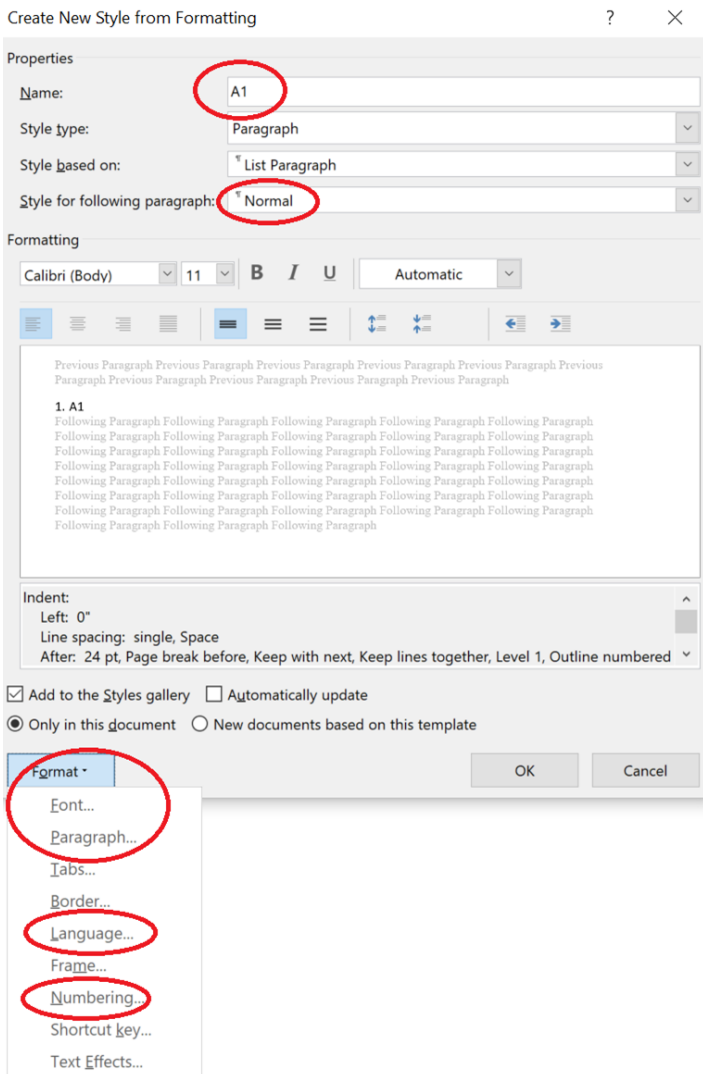


Figure 33. Create new style, Word

Writer offers a **Styles** tab on the main toolbar with similar options, and the shortcut for the **Styles** sidebar is **F11**.

While it seems that all settings may be carried out with the ones discussed so far, there are three more in-depth settings referring to the entire text (**Text Alignment**), a specific **paragraph setup** or the **line setup**, detailed in the following sections.

2.3.4. Text Alignment

As defined, the term *align* in text editing refers to how the text is organized on a page: “To place text and/or graphics to line up horizontally or vertically with related elements” (AMA 2020, 1123).

Once the paper size is set to A4, text alignment is important to match both printer settings (full-width pages) and readability: “the content is easier to read when it is justified left/ragged right.”³⁷

Text Alignment may refer either to the entire document or just to a paragraph, which may be aligned left (Ctrl+L), center (Ctrl+E), right (Ctrl+R), or justified (Ctrl+J), and the shortcuts refer to both Word and Writer. Figure 34 below shows all four types of alignment:

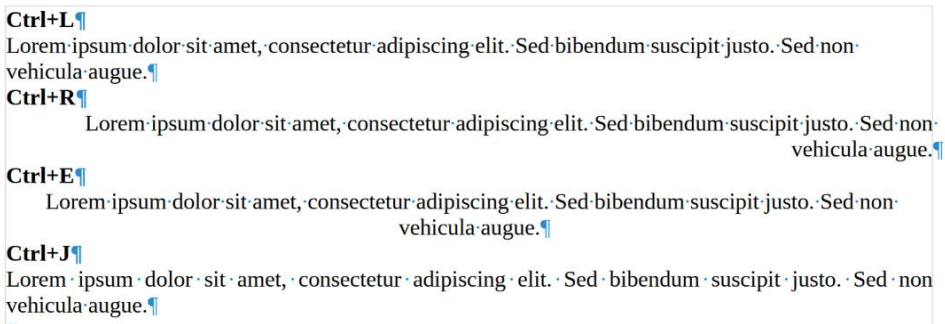


Figure 34. Text alignment, Writer

As shown, the four alignment types visibly differ from each other, serving various purposes (e.g., breaking a monotonous text, poetry, title, maximizing printing space, etc.). While these are rather visible alignment types, there are three minor options which directly affect the layout of the text.

2.3.4.1. Hyphenation

Hyphenation is an option to break longer words in a text, directly affecting text layout,³⁸ its use sparking heated arguments, mostly against it, although it is fully justified per se.

Bringhurst prefers “ragged” texts “if ragged setting suits the text and the page,” which means no hyphenation is needed. He is also against justified texts, as “there is always a trade-off between evenness of spacing and frequency of hyphenation” (Bringhurst 2004, 27), also mentioning that enabled hyphenation might lead to a

³⁷ <https://cuttingedgepr.com/best-body-type-alignment-in-printed-publications/>, January 21, 2022.

³⁸ As for the *hyphen* as a punctuation character, see the chapter *Punctuation and Spelling, Dashes, Hyphen*.

number of “consecutive hyphenated line-ends,” which is nevertheless “better than sloppy spacing”, returning to the idea that “ragged setting is better yet” (2004, 10), eliminating the possibility of “outbreak of hyphenation.” Actually, there is even a nickname for “four or more hyphens that appear at the end of consecutive lines,” which is called a **ladder** (AMA 2020, 1136).

Although Shaw accepts that “many contemporary graphic designers ... do what they can to avoid it” and “minimize the number of hyphens in a row at the end of lines in justified text setting,” to avoid “wildly fluctuating line lengths”, he is also convinced that the hyphen is an “unprepossessing character” (Shaw 2018). Yet his conclusion is that “[h]yphens are not a necessary evil. If used with care and understanding, they are an aid, rather than a hindrance, to good typography” (Shaw 2018). Logically, this means that the text is set to “flush left”³⁹ and “rag right,” a setting that is both the default and “it is preferred.” When hyphenation is required, Bringhurst explains that it should be in accordance with the “conventions of the language,” which means that, for instance, proper names are not to be separated, except for “as a last resort” (Bringhurst 2004, 43).

A stricter manual explicitly states that “[a]uthors should make sure the hyphenation function on their word processor is turned off,” and—in their view—only hyphens in compound forms are acceptable (CMOS 2024, 71), without being worried about the “extremely ragged” right-hand side, and manuscripts should never contain hyphenation. Another manual also warns us not to “use the hyphenation function to break words at the ends of lines” (APA 2020, 45).

As Bringhurst explains, hyphens break the text so much that the reader is distracted, especially when they are combined with other distracting content such as illustrations (2004, 10). Although guidebooks argue that both parts of a hyphenated word should appear on the same page, there is so much rejection of hyphens overall that our recommendation is to disable this function. This is found in the **Paragraph** tab by clicking on the bottom right small arrow, which opens a new window (Word). Writer also has this option under **Format, Paragraph, Text flow**, and **Hyphenation**, offering interesting options as well (e.g., maximum consecutive hyphenated lines or minimum word length in characters):

³⁹ Flush left, as Shaw explains, is “alignment of the left side of the div, page, screen, or margin,” while the right side is not justified, becoming “ragged right” (Shaw 2018).

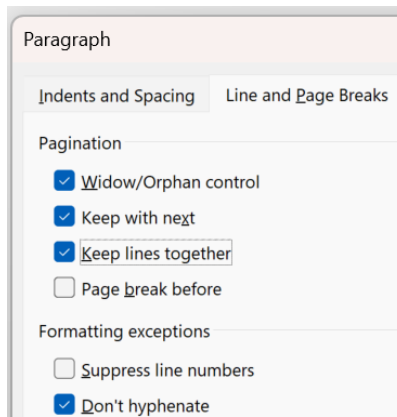


Figure 35. *Hyphenation, Word*

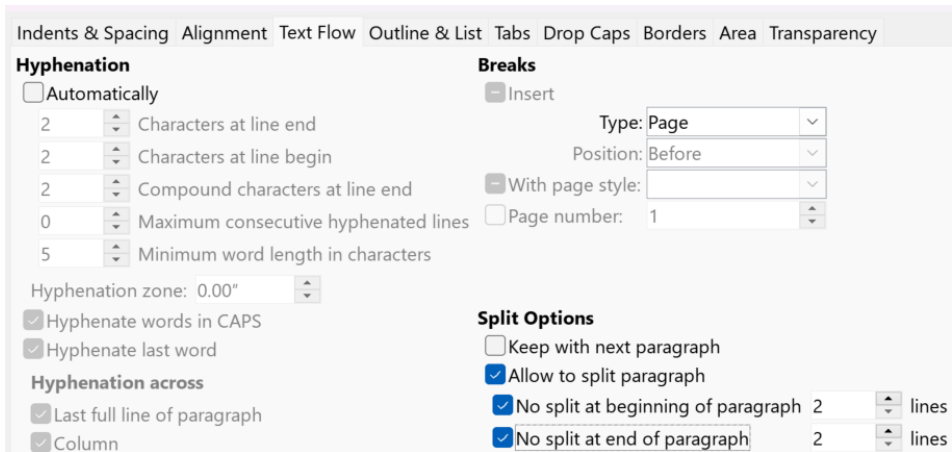


Figure 36. *Hyphenation, Writer*

Although the justified alignment might look more appealing visually, supported by a number of printed books, magazines, and newspapers, Shaw argues that in a postmodernist world this should be eliminated, together with the hyphens, which look outdated (Shaw 2018). Bringhurst also concludes that the ragged right “will lighten the page and decrease its stiffness” (2004, 10).

2.3.4.2. *Word Spacing*

As explained, “[f]or text set ragged right (unjustified), word spacing may be fixed and unchanging,” but if the text is justified, “more flexible” spacing is needed,

which is a “fourth of an em,” ranging from “a fifth of an em to half of an em” (AMA 2020, 1117).

While this is an important remark, the majority of users do not need to check that, as both Word and Writer are set automatically in this respect. An *em* refers to the length of an em dash.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, less skilled text writers try to position text by holding down the **Space** bar multiple times, which is considered a grievous mistake, although it is not visible in printing. As such, it is hardly a typographical error, but it is a shameful layout mistake, easily detected by enabling the paragraph mark. The multiple use of **Space** bar should be replaced, for instance, by proper indentation, the use of tables or columns, or the **Tab** key (interpreted as 4 or 8 white spaces), yet this last option is also discouraged (discussed in Section 2.4.2.).

2.4. Paragraph Setup

A full text may be split into paragraphs (chunks of a text), and thus “[a] paragraph is a cohesive group of sentences,” which elaborates an idea or “related thoughts” (AMA 2020, 1135). The typical length of a particular paragraph is a few lines in order to maintain the reader’s attention, so they should be neither too short nor too long (Ármeán 2017, 67).

Setting up a paragraph may refer to multiple operations, as it involves the space before and after a paragraph, as well as the lines and the two sides of the paragraph.

2.4.1. Paragraph Alignment

Paragraph alignment is similar to text alignment, referring only to a particular paragraph. Thus, a paragraph should be set to flush left, ragged right, while justified is also frowned upon (APA 2020, 45).

The use of justified paragraph without hyphenation is a clear sign of typographical illiteracy (Ármeán 2017, 93–94), and the author explains that center alignment is only recommended in the case of titles or special lines, while right alignment is recommended for table columns, list of numbers, mottos, or captions.

Improper alignment within a paragraph or a text may result in a **river**, which is the name of a “streak of white space that runs down through lines of type, breaking up the even appearance of the page,” and, of course, it should “be avoided” (AMA 2020, 1142). This might be the only reason why words should be broken by hyphenation, as explained by Jan Tschichold, who considers that “breaking words is less harmful to the appearance of the page than too much space between words” (Shaw 2018).

⁴⁰ Em dash is discussed in Chapter 7: Punctuation and Spelling, Dashes, Em Dash.

Furthermore, the avoidance of rivers might involve other possibilities as well, such as non-breaking space and non-breaking hyphen.⁴¹

2.4.2. Paragraph Indentation

Seeing the problems of alignment, some might think of manual handling, which is not recommended, whatever the case: “Do not manually divide words at the end of a line” (APA 2020, 45), and **indentation** might be a possible “replacement,” which means “[t]o set a line of type or paragraph in from the margin or margins” (AMA 2020, 1135).

By default, the very first paragraph is flush left (Bringhurst 2004, 39), whereas the first line indentation of every subsequent paragraph is 1.27 cm, or 0.5 inches (from the left margin), knowing that the “most common paragraph indent is one em” (Bringhurst 2004, 40), and not smaller than “one en” (Bringhurst 2004, 39). Further lines of a paragraph “should be left-aligned” (APA 2020, 45), and this way the result will be a consistent paragraph look.

Although the **Tab** key in word processor is typically set to this indentation, it should never be used to create a first line indentation this way (CMOS 2024, 73). However, the same paragraph states that an additional first-line paragraph indent may be applied “either with the **Tab** key or, preferably, with your word processor’s indentation feature.” A built-in shortcut in Word for paragraph indentation is **Ctrl+M**.

Another type of indentation is **Hanging indent**, which indents all the lines in a paragraph, except for the first one. This might be useful in the case of a reference list (APA 2020, 46), index table, or a multiple-choice test layout, and the same warning applies in this case too: “never use tabs to achieve hanging indents” (CMOS 2024, 70), as tabs are only to be used in a paragraph only “after a number or symbol in a vertical list.”

The *APA Publication Manual* offers a list of items indented differently. In their view, titles, bylines and affiliations, section labels, Level 1 headings, Appendix labels, and titles should be centered, while quotations “should be indented from the left margin 0.5 in.,” and in case quotations are longer than one paragraph, “subsequent paragraphs of the block quotation should be indented another 0.5 in., such that those first lines are indented a total of 1 in.” (APA 2020, 46).

Although these manuals offer such meticulous guidelines, the competing publications seem to follow internal rules in this respect as well. Reality shows that having in mind the publication of a book or scientific paper, the author must follow the publication guidelines of a particular publishing house, which cannot

⁴¹ See Chapter 6 on Dashes, Non-breaking Space and Non-breaking Hyphen.

cover as many cases as the most authoritative manuals. As such, several issues are left to the goodwill of the author, the proofreader, and ultimately the publisher.

2.4.3. Paragraph Break and Keep Options

As specified earlier, the **Space** bar is not designed to create breaks for paragraphs. It is the **Return/Enter** key in word processors which should serve this function, meaning that whenever the **Return/Enter** is pressed, a new paragraph is created.

This is referred to as the “hard return,” resulting in a new paragraph with similar formatting as the previous one. Thus, the paragraph break refers to the visible distance in space between two consecutive paragraphs. As such, each paragraph should end with a punctuation mark, and in case a new one is needed, this is followed by a hard return (CMOS 2024, 70), displaying the paragraph mark (¶), provided the **Show/Hide** button in Word or the **Formatting marks** button in Writer is active. The distance between two paragraphs should be set to 6 points in Word or 0.06” in Writer, and the box below (**Do not add space between paragraphs of the same style**) should not be checked:

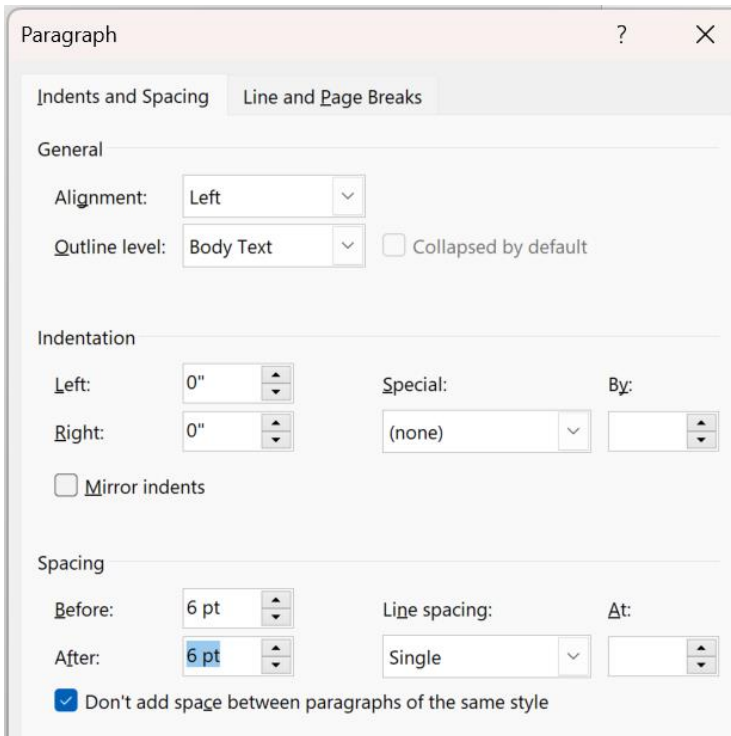


Figure 37. Paragraph spacing before and after, Word

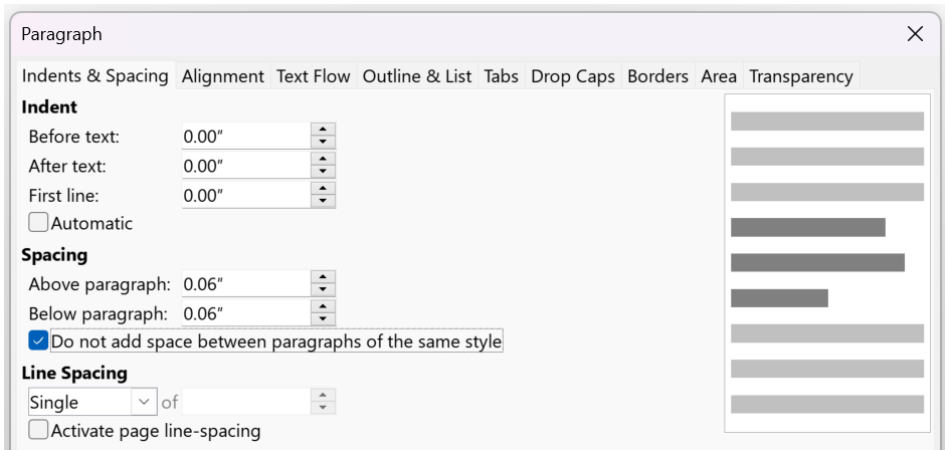


Figure 38. Paragraph spacing before and after, *Writer*

Controlling the paragraph layout is also possible by managing the number of first/last lines of a paragraph, which either start or end a page. Accessing the **Home** tab in Word and clicking on the bottom-right small arrow of the **Paragraph** section displays a new window. More simply, a right-click on the paragraph enables a drop-down list, and selecting the **Paragraph** option enables the same window. The second tab (**Line and Page Breaks**) offers four **Pagination** options. In case the third box is ticked (**Keep lines together**), the paragraph which is spread over two pages will be displayed on one page only.

The second option is **Pagination (Keep with next)**, which keeps two consecutive paragraphs together. Similar functions are available in *Writer* as well if we access the **Text Flow** tab in **Paragraph**, which is also accessible by right-clicking on the paragraph(s) in question:

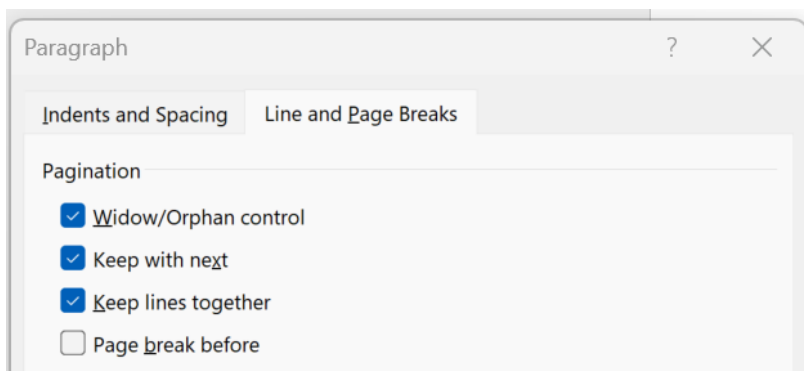


Figure 39. Keep lines together and Keep with next, *Word*

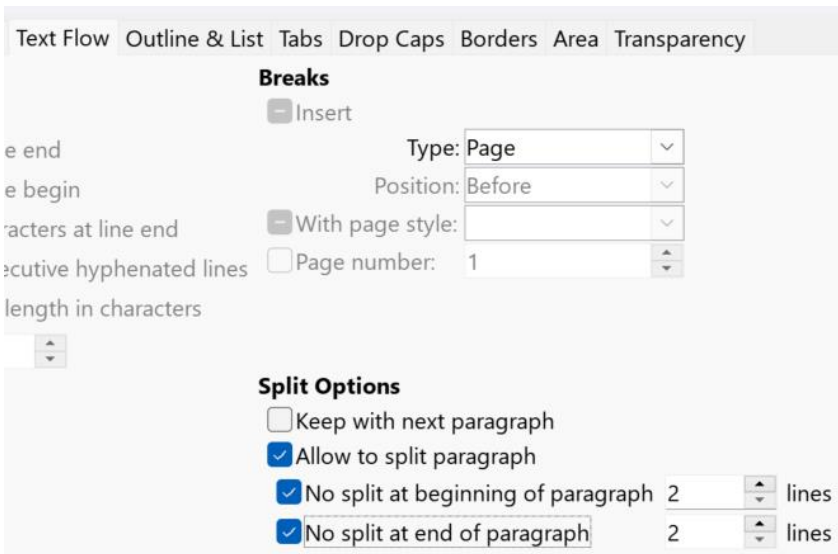


Figure 40. *Keep lines together and Keep with next, Writer*

However, there is a “soft” Return/Enter in case we only wish to break the line (discussed in Section 2.5.3.).

2.4.4. *Widow/Orphan Control*

By default, word processors should automatically handle cases when the first or the last line of a paragraph would be on a different page and should keep the entire paragraph together. This is also found in the **Pagination** section (Word) or the **Text Flow** tab (Writer).

The last line of a paragraph or column landing on the top of the second page is called **widow**, and it should be “avoided” (AMA 2020, 1147). Bringhurst refers to them as “stub-ends” which “look foreshortened and forlorn,” and typographical culture dictates “to give them one additional line for company” (2004, 44), so he warns us to “[n]ever begin a page with the last line of a multi-line paragraph” (2004, 43).

The first line (or one or two short words) of a paragraph or a single line may start at the bottom of a page or column, which is called **orphan**⁴² (AMA 2020, 1139). These single lines look “isolated ... when paragraphs begin on the last line of a page” (Bringhurst 2004, 43), so this is also automatically adjusted by word processors. This way, a minimum of two lines belonging to the same paragraph or column should end or start a page.

⁴² However, the typographic term for **orphan** is telling (Bringhurst 2004, 43).

2.5. Line Setup

The previous sections already involved lines, as keeping the lines of a paragraph together was discussed, and possibilities with the first/last line of a paragraph or a column was needed.

Nevertheless, there are further possible settings for lines: line spacing, line length, and line break.

2.5.1. Line Spacing

A very technical presentation of **line spacing** is that it “refers to the vertical distance between the base of 1 line of text and the base of the next line of text” (AMA 2020, 1117).

There are various standards regarding the distance between two lines of a text, paragraph, section, or column. By default, Word uses 1.08 line spacing, which means that it adds 8 points of space between paragraphs separated by a hard Return/Enter, which, of course, may be changed (as discussed in Section 2.4.):

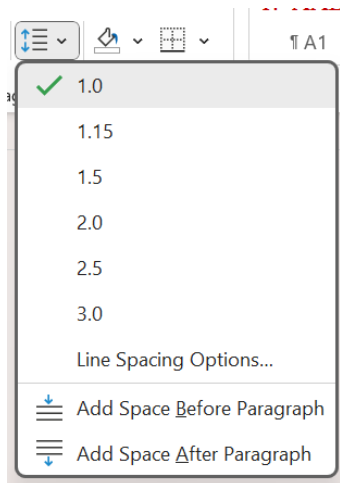


Figure 41. Line spacing, Word

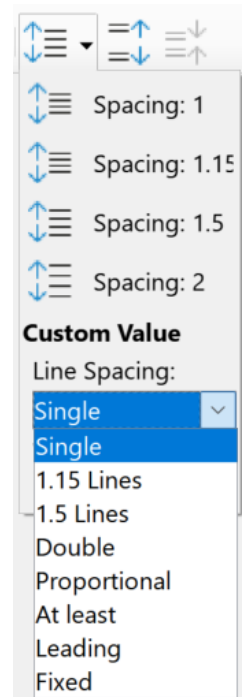


Figure 42. Line spacing, Writer

Figure 41 and Figure 42 above show that line spacing is set to 1 in both Word and Writer, and there are pre-set spacing options. For instance, a standard A4 page uses Times New Roman fonts, font size 12, and 1.5 spacing between the lines to be able to estimate the number of characters per page (ranging from 1,800 to 3,700, largely depending on these settings).

Line spacing may also be affected by other options such as underlined characters (which is very frowned upon by typographers and scholars), superscript (**Ctrl**+**Shift**+**+**) or subscript (**Ctrl**+**Shift**+**=**) characters⁴³ that go above or below the regular line space, and special symbols which simply do not fit into the standard spacing, such as circled letters and numbers.

Certain publishing houses or scientific journals may require double space between the lines, and space requirements may include not only lines or paragraphs but illustrations, tables, lists, quotations as well, knowing that footnote lines are typically set single-spaced, and special texts (such as formulae or equations) should be visibly separated by the main texts with larger spacing. A potential guideline is detailed in the *APA Manual* (APA 2020, 45).

2.5.2. Line Length

There are various guidelines referring to the number of characters per line for the sake of readability, which should respect the previous recommendations as well, mostly referring to the ban of relying on hyphenation (thus excluding ladders or rivers).

Naturally, line length is firstly affected by paper size, and an A4 paper might contain close to 100 characters per line (Times New Roman 12, the basic alphabet letters, and most common punctuation signs, including spaces). As explained, the best readability is associated with about “45 to 75 characters (including punctuation and spaces),” whereas scholarly journals consider that “40 to 50 characters per line is ideal” (AMA 2020, 1116). The same numbers are recommended by other sources as well (Bringhurst 2004, 26), while best readability in the case of emails is similar: no more than 75 characters per line.

Interestingly, the lowest recommended character number is very close to the number of characters per line in the case of subtitling as well, where dedicated applications signal the excess of 43 characters per line.⁴⁴

Moreover, character number per line may also be changed by expanding or condensing specific words⁴⁵ by clicking on the bottom right-hand arrow of **Fonts** in **Home tab** (Word), then **Advanced, Spacing** and selecting **Expanded** or **Condensed**.

⁴³ Their shortcuts are functional only if the + and - signs are typed on the regular keyboard and not on the NumPad.

⁴⁴ For instance, Subtitle Edit.

⁴⁵ In this sentence, the words *expanding* and *condensing* were expanded and condensed, respectively.

In the case of Writer, this is possible via **Format, Character and Position**, leading to a window with **Character spacing**:

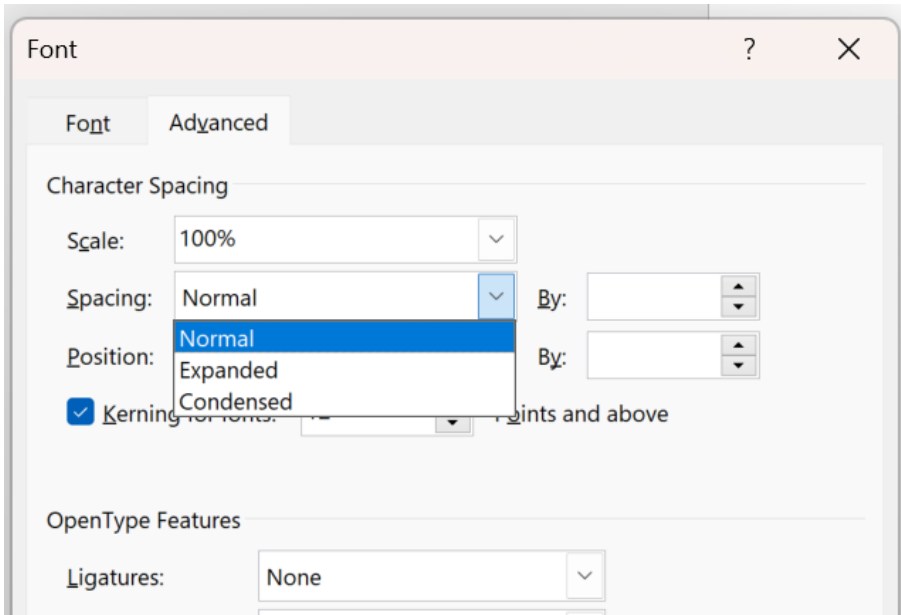


Figure 43. *Font or Character spacing, Word*

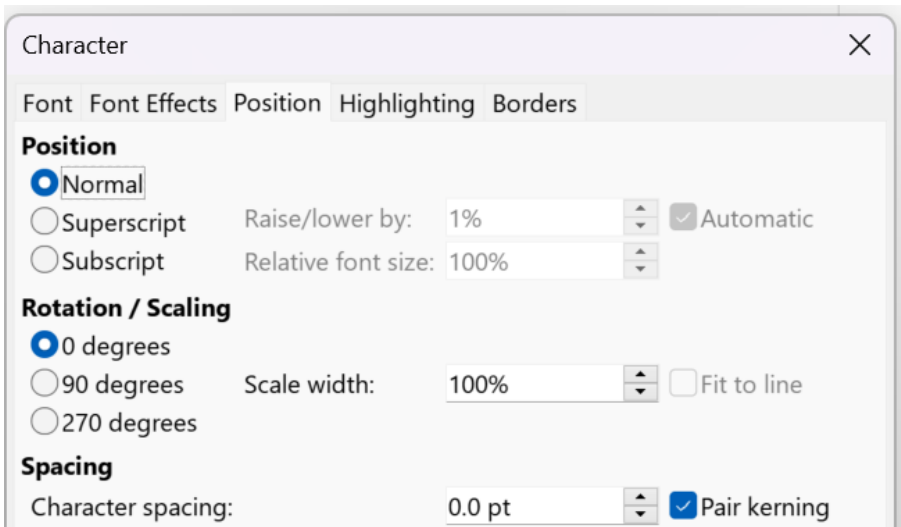


Figure 44. *Font or Character spacing, Writer*

Similarly, there used to be an ideal number of lines per page. As explained, “the perfection of the forty-two-line Bible; no longer was the typographic letter sacrosanct” after Zapf’s automatic letter scaling became widespread (Houston 2013, 142), even if many scholars dislike it, including Bringhurst: “no typesetting software should be permitted to compress, expand or letterspace the text automatically and arbitrarily ... [this] should be solved by creative design” (Bringhurst 2004, 42).

A final suggestion is that “[w]hen the line is short, the text should be set ragged right” (Bringhurst 2004, 27), which is hardly respected in publications.

2.5.3. *Line Breaks*

Word processors can handle line breaks by default, which means that in case a line reaches the limit of characters, it is automatically broken and the “extra” characters will start a new line, depending on how **Alignment** is set: **Left**, **Right**, **Center**, or **Justified**.

Default line break is carried out by automated space calculation between characters and words separated by space, although “[g]ood justification is calculated paragraph by paragraph instead of line by line” (Bringhurst 2004, 192), knowing that overall spacing between individual characters is technically referred to as **kerning**, and this might be changed as well. **Ligatures**, **Number spacing**, **Number forms**, and **Stylistic sets** may also affect line breaks in Word, while **Pair kerning** combined with **Character spacing** is available in Writer.

A so-called “soft break” is possible by the **Shift+Enter** combination, which breaks the line within a paragraph and starts a new line, thus preserving the line spacing. This might be useful when multiple short lines form a unit such as the details of an address or creating a numbered or bulleted list, as the soft break creates a new line without a new number or bullet. These soft breaks are displayed as the **Return/Enter** or “carriage return arrow” (↵).

Word offers a further option in this respect via the **File** tab, then selecting **Advanced**, **Layout** options and checking the box before **Don’t expand character spaces on a line that ends with SHIFT+RETURN**. Something similar may be set in Writer by going to **Tools**, **Options**, expanding the Writer options, and then selecting **Compatibility**:

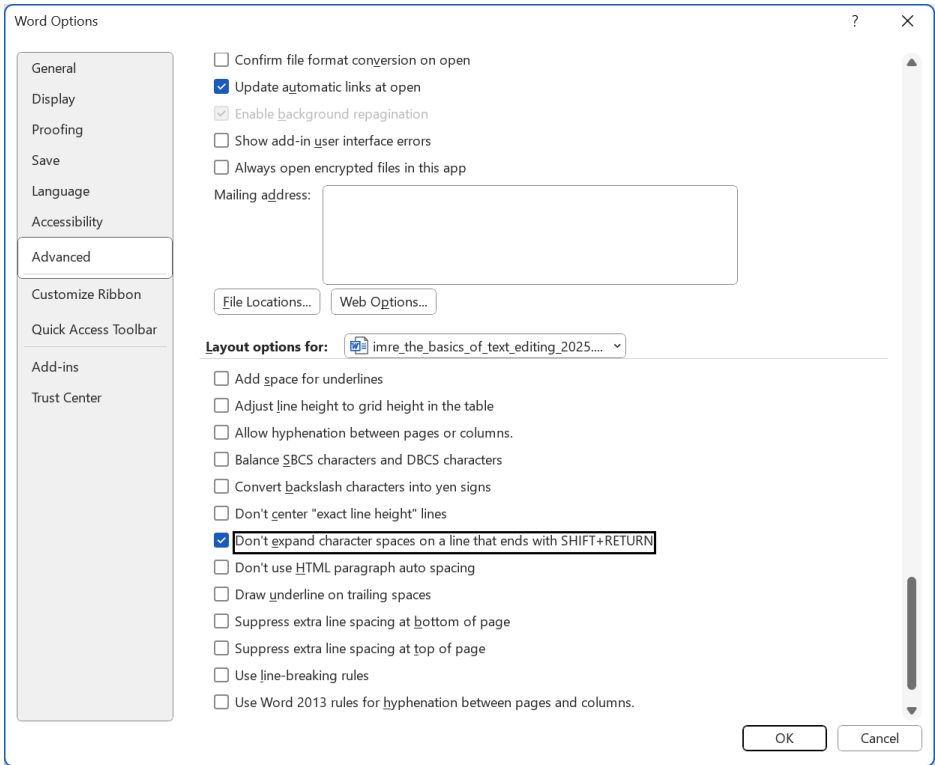


Figure 45. Soft break options, Word

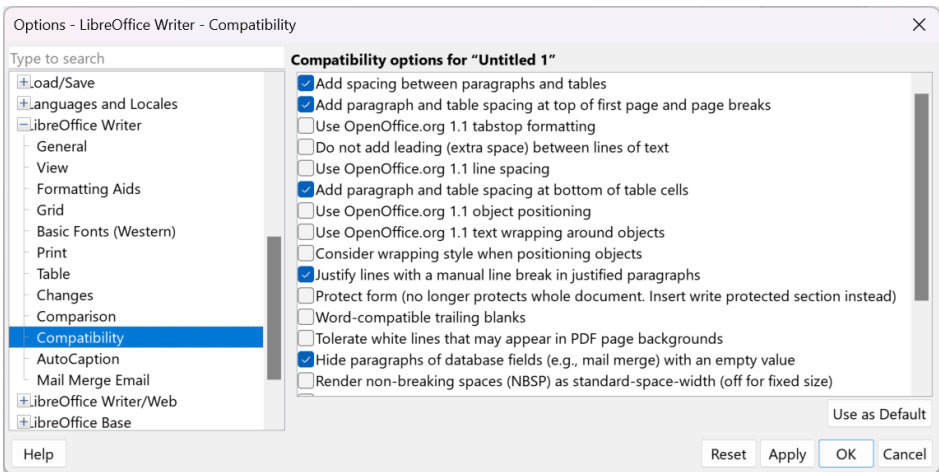


Figure 46. Compatibility options, Writer

It may happen that extra-long lines are needed to offer a correct link to a Digital Object Identifier number (DOI) or a link to a webpage, in which case no manual break is recommended, as the link might not be valid anymore. Instead, automatic breaks by the word-processing programs “are permissible” (APA 2020, 45).

After having discussed page, paragraph, and line setup, the next step to secure a clear organization of longer texts is to set various heading styles.

2.6. Style Setup

While multiple-level styles are automatically provided by word processors, their use might constitute certain issues, for instance when numbering them.

Although there is a possibility to use many levels of heading, there are only five possible ones according to the APA style (APA 2020, 48):

Level	Format
1	Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
4	Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5	Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Figure 47. *Heading levels according to APA*

A further problem is the positioning of headings (titles), bylines, and various labels (captions), as some sources consider them best center aligned, in bold (APA 2020, 46), while others opt for flush left (CMOS 2024, 73), so this setting seems to depend on the choice of publishing houses with the remark that levels 2 and 3 are typically in bold or bold italic. However, before discussing heading levels, the starting point is the Normal style, which provides the text body.

2.6.1. Normal Style

Setting the normal style may be considered the foundation of every document, as it is the most often used style, and every other form(at) is compared to this one.

While the most standard normal style for drafting documents used to be the **Paper Size A4, Orientation: Portrait, Font Times New Roman, Font Size 12, Line**

spacing 1.5, flush left, this is no longer the case, and more recent releases of Word and Writer offer different font families and sizes.

The normal style—which is understood as following a heading—usually differentiates the first line of the paragraph from the subsequent ones by indentation, although other than normal styles may use hanging indent.

As the normal style is the most used one, setting a shortcut to apply this style is more than optional, for instance **Alt+N**. A right click on the **Normal** style in the **Style** gallery (**Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S**) offers the **Modify** option, which opens a new window, where this shortcut may be set.

Further variants of the Normal style also need shortcuts such as the normal style following a table (e.g., **Alt+T**, see Section 6.4.) or a caption of a figure (e.g., **Alt+C** and **Alt+P** see Section 6.5.).

2.6.2. Heading Styles

Creating and formatting heading styles is vital to organize the information and to enable the automatic processing of the table of contents (see Section 6.16.1.). However, before offering a possible way to create numbered headings, it is important to discuss the capitalization of English titles, subtitles, or headings.

2.6.2.1. Capitalization

Capitalizing English titles, subtitles, or headings is often prescribed, although it seems to be only a recommendation, as publishing houses and journals often neglect these rules.

According to the prescription (AMA 2020, 20), major words of titles and subtitles should be capitalized, including short verbs as well (*Be, Am, Is, Do*), while the following word categories should not be capitalized:

1. the three articles (*a, an, and the*);
2. shorter than four-letter prepositions (*in, on, at, by, to*);
3. coordinating conjunctions (*and, or, for, nor, but, per*);
4. the *to* particle in infinitives.

While the list may seem logical, there are many counterexamples to these recommendations, leading to the conclusion that capitalization should be consistent within a document.

2.6.2.2. Simple Heading Styles

There are various tutorials explaining how headings are worth using, including their numbering,⁴⁶ which signal that extra effort is needed to set heading styles properly.

⁴⁶ For instance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GevZOS-nCuw&ab_channel=YoungCareerPros, June 25, 2025.

However, the simplest option is to start from the default headings provided by Word and Writer. In the case of Word, heading styles are available once a new document is created, after which the **Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S** shortcut reveals the entire list of styles.

A click on **Heading 1** style offers the possibility to change the line to Heading 1 (where the cursor blinks), and a right click on **Heading 1** can modify its settings. As for the numbering, we have to access the drop-down arrow of the **Multilevel List** button on the **Home** tab, **Paragraph** group and select the **Define New Multilevel List**. The right side of the opening window offers the possibility to **Link level to style**, and **Heading 1** should be selected. The **Position** should be aligned to 0, **Text indent at** also to 0, after which the **Set for All Levels...** button should be clicked on and all other values set to 0. Then changing the **Follow number with** line to **Space** is recommended, and the **OK** button finalizes the entire procedure. After these settings, **Heading 1** is numbered and displayed in the left-side panel (**Ctrl+F**, **Headings**) properly.

Further headings should be set similarly, except for **Heading 2** must be linked as **Heading 2**, then **Heading 3** as **Heading 3**, and so on. Figure 48 shows how **Heading 1** is set as described above:

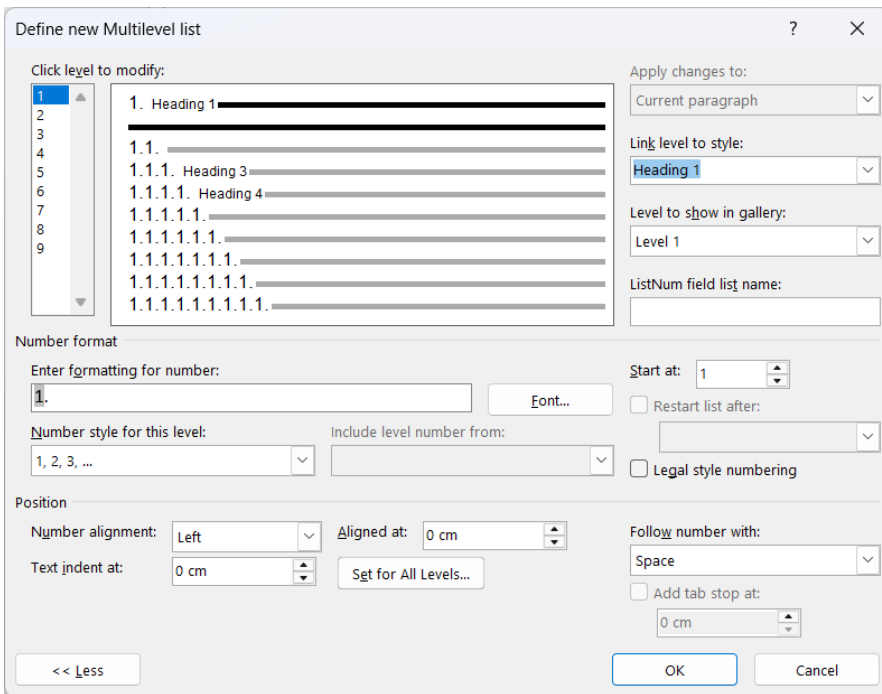


Figure 48. Setting Heading 1, Word

In case all headings are displayed correctly and newly created ones fit into the list with proper numbering, no further action is necessary. However, there are more complex options to create headings, presented in the next sections.

2.6.2.3. *Heading Names and Numbering*

Successful titles, subtitles, and headings offer the summary of the content in the shortest possible way, as they should be “concise, specific, and informative and should contain the key points of the work” (AMA 2020, 14).

Prior to creating heading styles, it is also important to mention that question forms should be avoided, which is characteristic to “more provocative, than research articles” (AMA 2020, 16).

Before creating headings, the following icons are worth checking on the **Main** tab in Word:

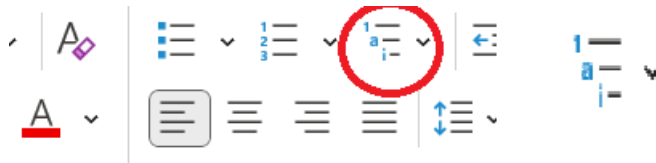


Figure 49. *Multilevel list icon, Word*



Figure 50. *Increase indent icon, Word*

A possible way to create new headings⁴⁷ in Word is detailed below:

1. place the cursor in the first empty line. Type the desired name for **Heading 1** (e.g., **A1**);
2. choose the drop-down arrow of **Multilevel List** in the **Home** tab, **Paragraph** group, then select **List Library** 3rd variant), triggering automatic numbering (1., 1.1., 1.1.1.), which replaces **A1** with **1. A1**, then press **Enter** for the second heading;
3. the next numbered item is offered (2.), but select **Increase Indent** in the same **Paragraph** group, which changes 2. to **1.1**. Type the name of **Heading 2** (**A2**), then press **Enter**;

⁴⁷ This description is based on the courses of M. Csernoch, to whom I am indebted.

4. the next numbered item is offered (1.2.), but select **Increase Indent**, which changes 1.2. to **1.1.1**. Type the name of **Heading 3 (A3)**, then press **Enter**;
5. the next numbered item is offered (1.1.2.), but select **Increase Indent**, which changes 1.1.2. to **1.1.1.1**; type the name of **Heading 4 (A4)**, then press **Enter**;
6. the next numbered item is offered (1.1.1.2.), but select **Increase Indent**, which changes 1.1.1.2. to **1.1.1.1.1**; type the name of **Heading 5 (A5)**, then press **Enter** and the automatic numbering might be deleted;
7. when ready, go back to **Heading 1 (1. A1)** and click on the **Multilevel List** again and choose **Define New Multilevel List**; it is recommended to set **Text indent** to 0, **Aligned** to 0, **Follow number with: Space** and **Set for all levels**; by pressing this button, a new window appears, where **Additional indent for each level** should also be set to 0.

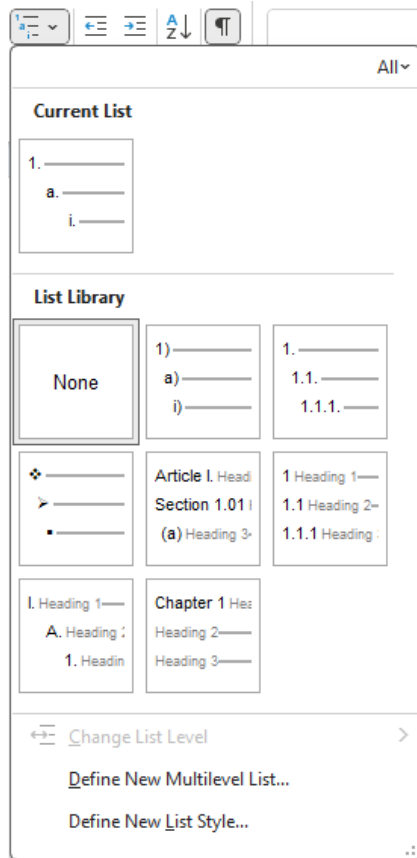


Figure 51. *Multilevel list, Word*

However, Word seems to fail the command **Follow number with Space**, thus each heading should be checked separately after the first one is set, by placing the cursor on the desired heading, clicking on the **Multilevel List** icon, and selecting the **Define new Multilevel List** option:

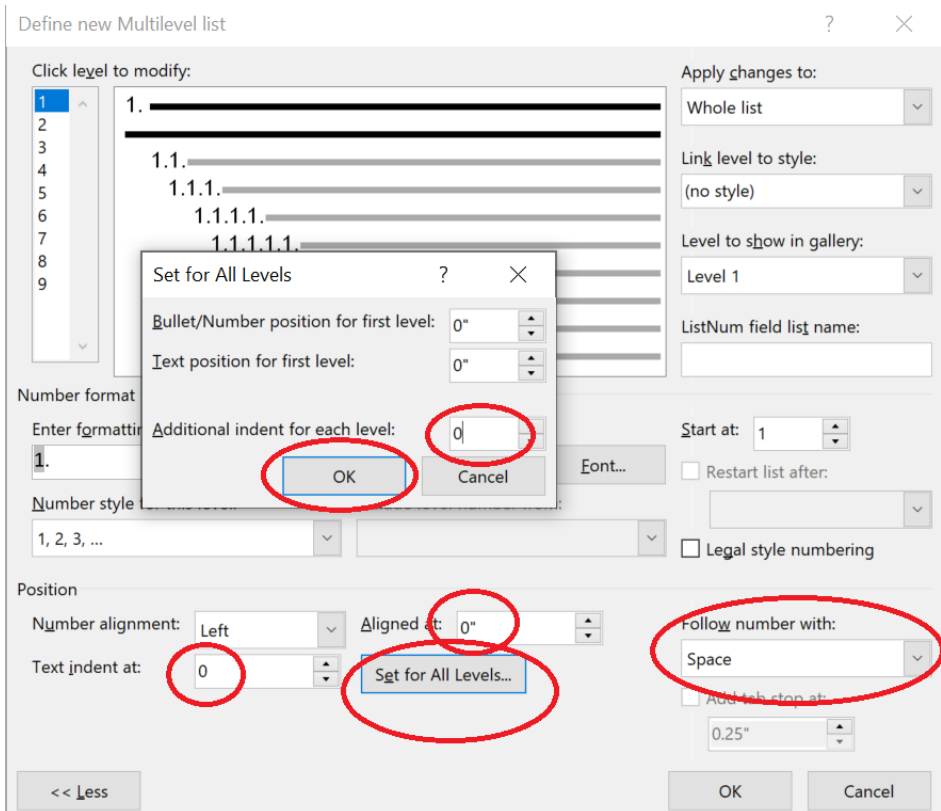


Figure 52. Define new multilevel list. Set for all levels, Word

2.6.2.4. Formatting Headings as Paragraphs

The next challenge is to format each heading one by one. Place the cursor on **Heading 1**, and then fine-tune its settings by clicking on the southeast arrow in the right bottom corner of the **Paragraph** group. When ready, do the same for all subsequent headings (by placing the cursor on the desired heading name) as specified in the list below.

The **Paragraph** tab offers the following options, within which possible values are provided. In the case of the **Indents** and **Spacing** tab, we should check these settings:

- Alignment: Left;
- **Outline level:** **Level 1** for A1, **Level 2** for A2, **Level 3** for A3, **Level 4** for A4, and **Level 5** for A5 (this step enables its visibility in the left-hand navigation pane, which becomes visible by typing **Ctrl+F**, **Headings**);
- **Indentation:** **Left** → 0, **Right** 0 for all headings;
- **Special:** (none) for all headings;
- **Spacing:** **Before:** 0 pt for A1, 12 pt for the subsequent headings;
- **Spacing:** **After:** 24 pt for A1, 6 pt for the subsequent headings;
- **Line spacing:** **Single** for all headings.

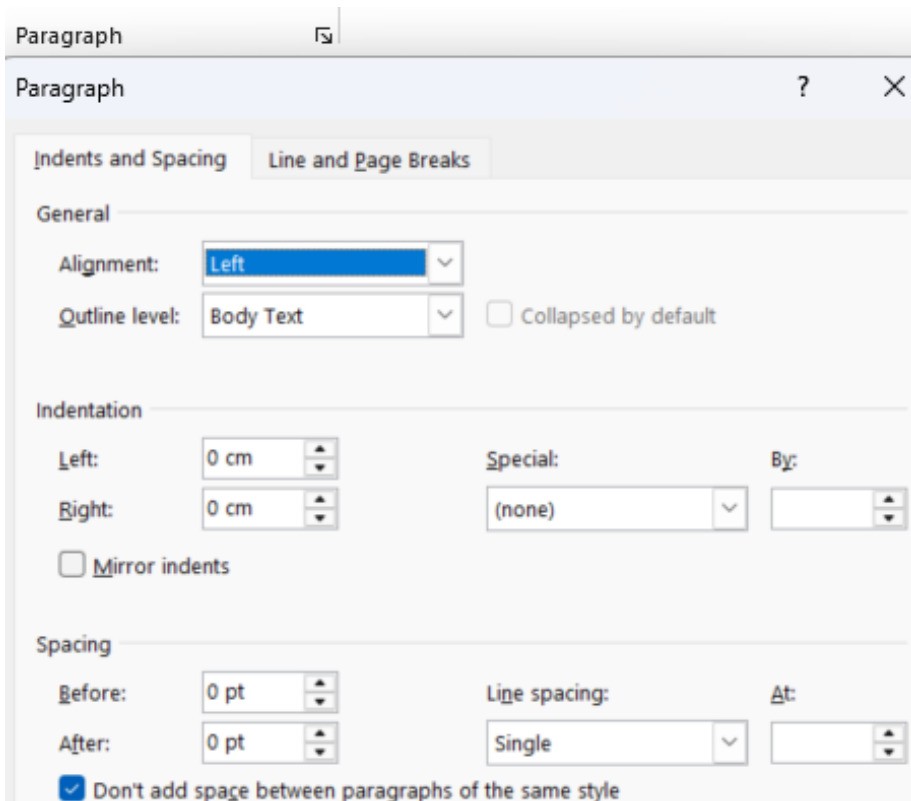


Figure 53. *Accessing paragraph settings, Word*

The **Line and Page Breaks** tab enables to check **Pagination**, where checks are needed for the boxes before **Widow/Orphan control**, **Keep with next**, and **Keep lines together** for each heading (1–5). The box preceding **Page break before** should be checked only for Heading 1 (**A1**).

2.6.2.5. Heading to Style Panel

The next step is to activate the **Style** panel by clicking on the southeast arrow on the **Styles** tab or using the **Ctrl+Shift+Alt+S** combination. This offers the possibility to modify each heading style one by one by clicking on the **New Style** icon (left bottom corner, A+ button):

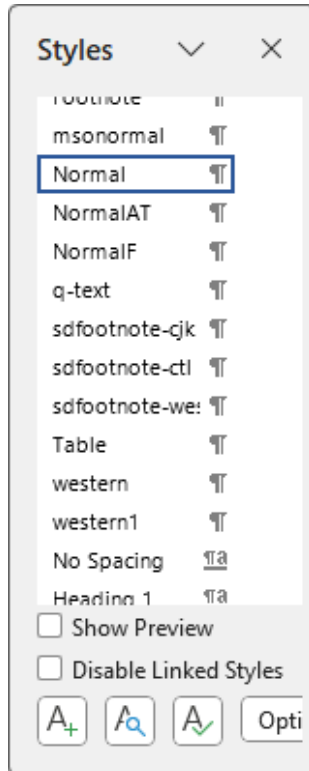


Figure 54. *Styles panel, Word*

The Properties for each heading might be set individually the following way:

- name → A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, respectively;
- style for following paragraph: Normal;
- check the Automatically update box for each heading.

The **Format** tab (bottom left corner) enables us to set the Font (type, size, color) and check **Paragraph** settings (Indents, Spacing, Line and Space breaks):

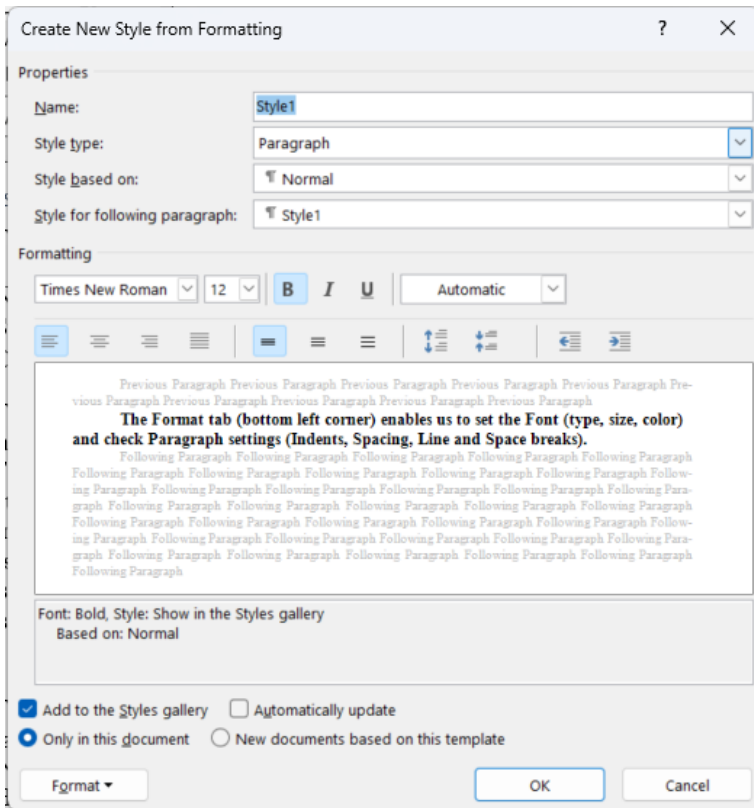


Figure 55. *Format style, Word*

In theory, formatting the headings should stem from the Golden Ratio Typography (GRT),⁴⁸ which respects the $\sqrt{2}:1$ ratio (Ármeán 2017, 107); this means that the font sizes for five headings using Times New Roman fonts are 31, 25, 19, 15, and 12, respectively, where the smallest one coincides with the size of Normal font size; additionally, we can change the font color of headings, knowing the typographer's second color is red. In case there are no more than four headings, their font sizes might be 25, 19, 15, and 12. In case these sizes might look too large, it is recommended to have sizes at least 2 points difference from one another.

The **Format** box offers further options as well (e.g., **Tab** or **Border**), whose default settings are acceptable, while the **Language** is already set to the language of the document, and the **Numbering** has been set earlier through the third option of the **Library List**.

⁴⁸ For instance, the GRT for *Times New Roman* is available here: <https://grtcalculator.com/>, March 9, 2022.

Heading styles may be completed with setting proper shortcuts for all headings: a right click on the style in the **Home** tab, **Style** group offers the **Modify** option, which opens a new window:

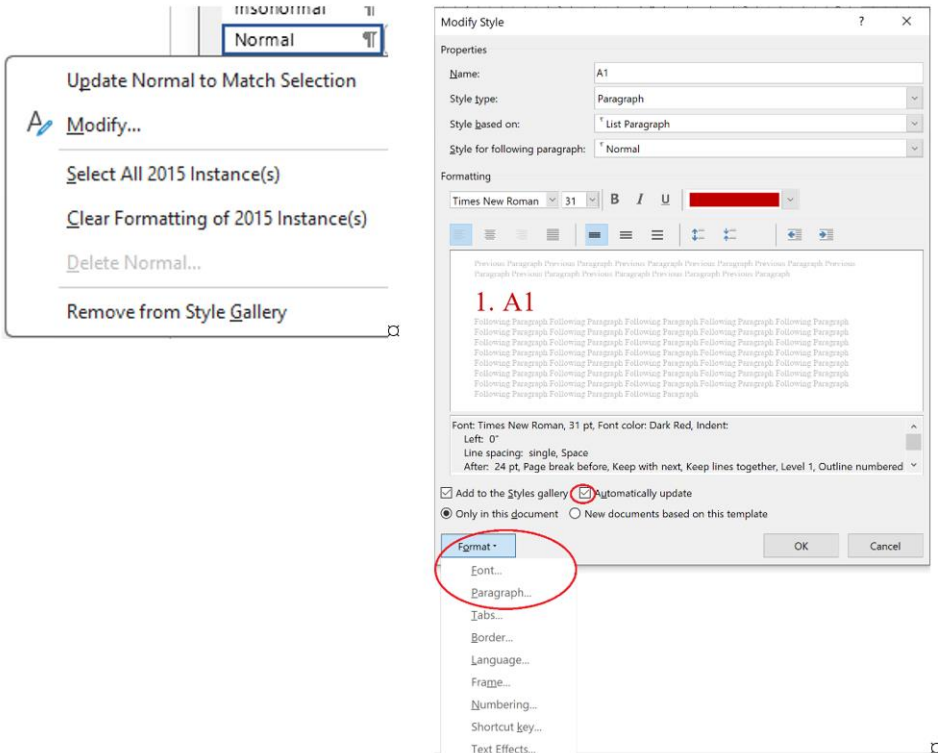


Figure 56. *Modify style, Word*

The bottom left button is **Format**, which reveals the **Shortcut Key** option that may be set easily, having in mind to choose a shortcut that is not used for other functions.

Headings 1–5 may have shortcuts relying on the combination of the left **Alt** key and number keys 1–5:

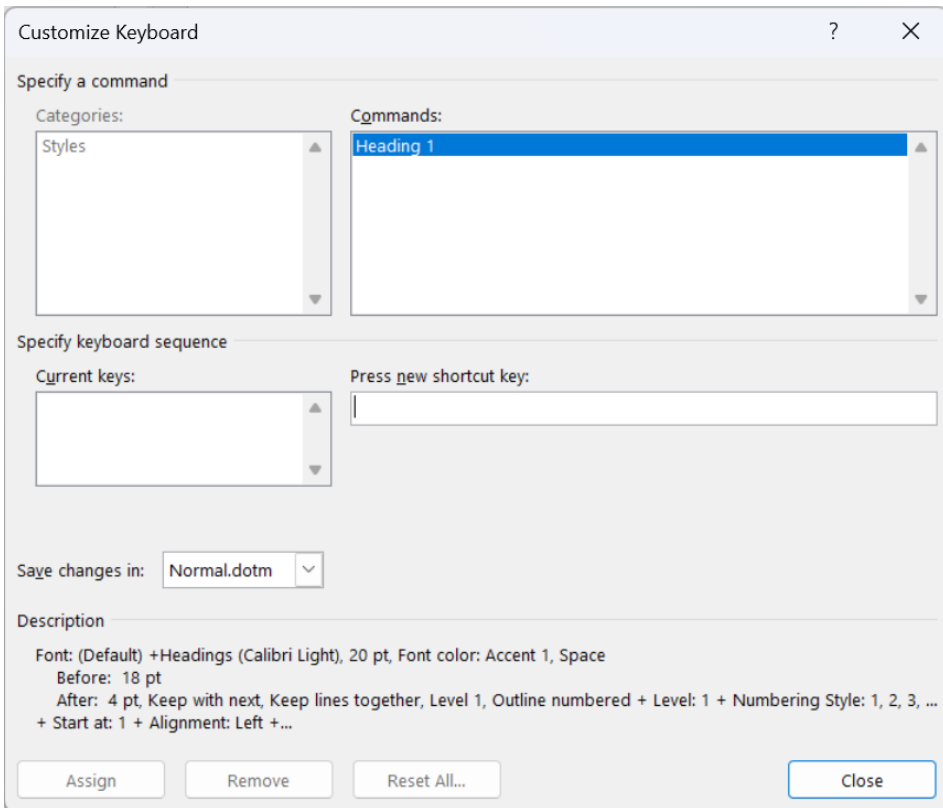


Figure 57. Adding shortcut keys to headings, Word

Once the normal and the heading styles are set, further shortcuts are worth considering: a list style for bulleted lists (**Alt+B**), a further list style for numbered lists (**Shift+Alt+3**), figures (**Alt+P**), and at least one style for quotes (**Alt+Q**).

After finalizing the setup for the page, paragraph, line, and styles, the document should be saved as a template (see Chapter 0), which should be used subsequently and attached to any newly created document. When triggering any change in the previously set parameters, there is the option to apply it either in the current document or in the template.

2.7. Caption Style

Sentence case is recommended for captions (CMOS 2024, 143), except for formal titles (titles of works). Latest recommendations also suggest that the caption type (figure, table, etc.) and number should be bold, while the title regular typeface.

This is possible with the help of Style Separator, which is not active by default in Word, although a shortcut can solve this: **Ctrl+Alt+Return**.

This shortcut makes sense when the caption style is already set in the first line, while the second line contains the description. Selecting both lines and applying the shortcut will join the two lines, preserving both formats. In case the Show/Hide button is enabled, a paragraph mark is visible between the two styles.

Those favoring icons and buttons, the Style Separator may be added to the **Home** tab, for instance: **File**, **Options**, and **Customize Ribbon**. A **New Group to Home** should be added to prevent a warning, then the **Popular Commands** may be changed to **All Commands**, and the **Style Separator** will be shown:

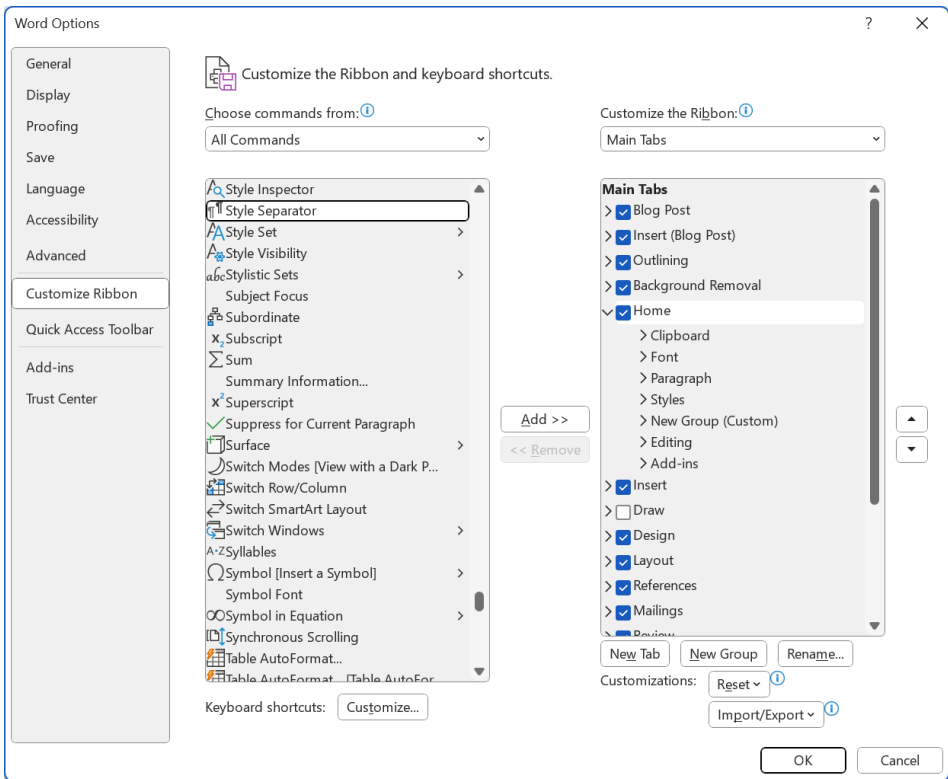


Figure 58. Adding Style Separator to the Home tab

Once added to the previously activated **New Group**, it will result in a new icon among the **Home** tab icons:

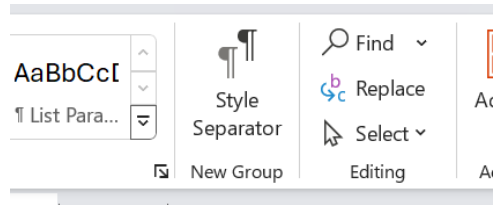


Figure 59. *Style Separator in the Home tab*

Unfortunately, Writer has no similar function, and copying text from Word formatted properly or saving a Word document (.docx) to .odt file format might not preserve the **Style Separator**.

2.8. Summary (**Shift+F1**)

A possible summary regarding the setup options is offered by a very useful shortcut: **Shift+F1**.

This shortcut reveals all the formatting of the selected text in Word, including **Fonts (Default font name, Font size, Language, Character spacing)**, **Paragraph (Alignment, Indentation, Spacing, Line and Page breaks)**.

Chapter 3

Fonts, Characters, Letters

3.1. Definitions

Certain terms overlap due to their use by both professionals and laymen. This is also the case with font, character, and letter, whose definitions are worth clarifying.

An online source admits that the term **character** is “a fairly fuzzy concept. **Letters, numbers** and **punctuation** are characters. But so are Braille and frogs and halves of flags. Basically, a thing in the Unicode table somewhere.”⁴⁹ However, this enables us to state that letters, together with numbers and punctuation signs are subordinate categories of the much comprising term **character**. Yet, we should turn our attention to the definition of **font**, which is mostly used in typography.

3.2. Typeface and Font

The distinction between **typeface** and **font** is relevant, as they are not synonyms.

As explained, “[a] typeface is a design for a set of characters (e.g., *Times Roman, Arial*)” (AMA 2020, 1114), whereas **font** comprises “[t]he complete assortment of qualities (e.g., size, pitch, and spacing) and styles (e.g., boldface, italic) of a particular typeface (AMA 2020, 1132). More simply, typeface refers to “letters and numbers in a particular design.”⁵⁰

Another source explains that the term font encapsulates all the **glyphs** or characters of a typeface, which is actually a **character set** (Virágvölgyi 2004, 22).

Typefaces come in two forms, **serif** and **sans serif**, detailed in the next section.

3.2.1. *Serif and Sans Serif*

Typefaces may be differentiated whether they are serif or sans serif.

Serif typefaces “have a short, light line” (AMA 2020, 1115) deriving from the main strokes, so these typefaces have a “finishing stroke, ... in particular, the fine cross stroke at the top or bottom of a letter” (Parkes 1992, 307), and due to these extra strokes, the letters are thought to be more readable when larger texts are involved, as the lines offer a certain guidance for the eyes, making the distinction

⁴⁹ <https://eev.ee/blog/2015/09/12/dark-corners-of-unicode/>, April 29, 2025.

⁵⁰ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/typeface>, January 28, 2025.

between “individual letters and words” easier (AMA 2020, 1115). As such, serif is predominantly used for body text.

On the other hand, sans serif typefaces have no extra strokes or “adornments” (AMA 2020, 1115), offering contrast to serif typefaces, and are mostly used for titles and headings to capture the reader’s attention. While it has been proved that electronic texts are better to have sans serif as text body, nowadays this is not entirely tenable, as “modern screen resolutions can typically accommodate either type of font, and people who use assistive technologies can adjust font settings to their preferences” (APA 2020, 44).

Although personal preference may be acceptable for individual use, still certain rules apply when creating texts for others. A student paper may be created with *Arial* or *Calibri* typeface for titles and headings, and *Times New Roman* or *Georgia* for the text body, whereas texts designed for the larger public need ampler considerations. Whatever the case, it is recommended to “use the same font throughout the text of the paper” (APA 2020, 44), and the two typefaces seem to be enough even for “a print scholarly publication” (AMA 2020, 1118), in case font style is also taken into account (see Section 3.3.).

3.2.2. *Choosing Typeface*

Choosing a particular typeface for either the headings or the text body may be very simple (in case it is “prescribed” by the particular publishing house) or rather difficult, when the fonts should satisfy the text producer.

A first suggestion to select a typeface is to consider the target language. While English contains no diacritical signs, other languages have a few special ones, and tend to use them rather frequently (e.g., Polish). As such, the chosen typeface should contain all the letters needed, and, alongside them, special ligatures, numbers, punctuation signs, and various styles as well (bold, italic, small capitals), as recommended by experts in the field (Ármeán 2017, 33), while others warn us that although a number of typefaces are embedded in various office suites and “software packages, ... the stock fonts supplied ... are the wrong fonts for many tasks and people, and most of them are missing essential parts” (Bringhurst 2004, 117), particularly mentioning small capitals, text figures, ligatures, diacritics and non-alphabetic characters.

Bringhurst also states, “[u]sing what there is to best advantage almost always means using less than what is available.” In his view, *Baskerville*, *Helvetica*, *Palatino*, and *Times New Roman* only offer “public disagreement” (Bringhurst 2004, 96), which is a rather sobering remark, reminding us how disturbing it is when improper characters are seen in subtitles or any other print material or slide presentation with fonts belonging to different typefaces. The “Lorem ipsum” boilerplate text is hardly suitable in this respect.

There are dedicated sites where all the characters supported by a particular typeface are shown, and one of the most comprehensive ones is *Arial Unicode MS*.⁵¹ Other typefaces are famous for their well-designed numerals (*Palatino*, *Pontifex*, *Trump Medieval*, and *Zapf International*) or matching phonetics (*Stone Serif and Sans*, *Lucida Sans*, and *Times New Roman*)—as suggested by Bringhurst (2004, 95–96), who also recommends to check an extended family type, such as *Lucida*, and we can extend this list with *Liberation* or *Linux* as well.

While checking the typeface first involves individual characters, the next step is to check how they are combined into words, leading us to font spacing.

3.2.3. Font Spacing—Kerning

As the present work aims at the basics of text editing, acceptable or usable default settings are favored in the case of word processors. Thus, even if we accept that font spacing is important, the default settings in Word and Writer suit the majority of cases, supporting Spiekermann’s statement: “There is no bad type.” (Spiekermann 2013, 195). At a more advanced level, the default attitude is “Don’t let your font software kern for you,” as Creger suggests.⁵²

The more technical term for font spacing is **kerning**, which includes the “[m]odification of spacing between characters, usually to bring letters closer together, to improve overall appearance” (AMA 2020, 1136), because the larger the space between the letters, the more difficult it is to distinguish the words and thoughts of a text (Spiekermann 2013, 139). Thus, a **kern** is “part of a letter that extends into the space of another” (Bringhurst 2004, 327), so kerning reduces the space between the characters, offering a visually more appealing text. It might be set to automatic, or the author can adjust it manually (Ármeán 2017, 43), but more experienced text producers know that **tracking** and **leading** should precede kerning,⁵³ which is beyond the range of our interest.

There are specific kerning tables which involve standard letter combinations, such as capital letters *A*, *L*, *T*, *V*, *W*, *Y* followed by non-capital letters, except for *b*, *h*, *k* or *l* (Bringhurst 2004, 33), but the most frequent kerning probably involves doubling letter *f* and the combination of letters *f*, *i*, and *j*, often resulting in improper conversion (especially the italic style) when optical character recognition is involved (OCR). Kerning may be accessed in Word via the **Font** section on the **Home** tab and via the main toolbar in Writer (**Format, Character**):

⁵¹ <http://zuga.net/articles/unicode-all-characters-supported-by-the-font-arial-unicode-ms/>, January 28, 2025.

⁵² <https://99designs.com/blog/tips/11-kerning-tips/>, January 28, 2025.

⁵³ **Tracking** refers to “overall spacing between groups of letters, while **leading** refers to the “vertical spacing between lines”; see Footnote 52.

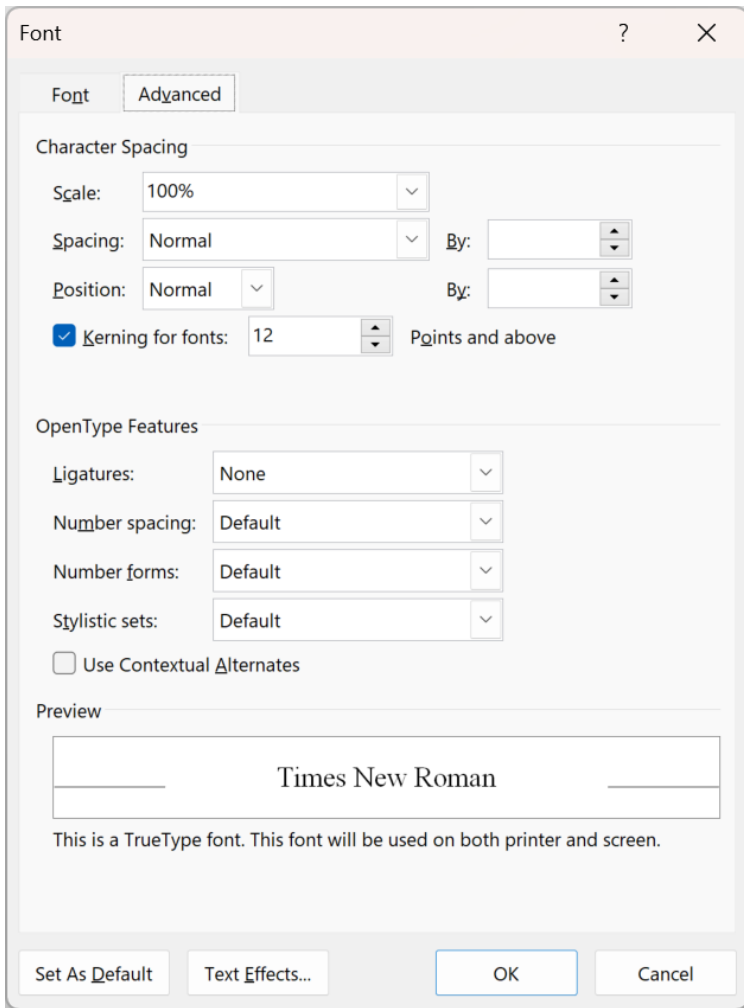


Figure 60. *Accessing kerning, Word*

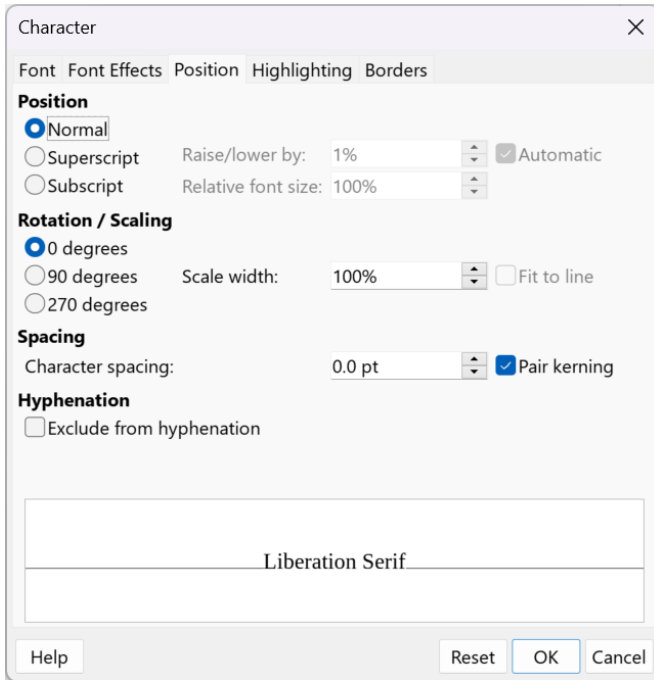


Figure 61. *Accessing kerning, Writer*

How serif and sans serif typefaces handle kerning is illustrated below:

Liberation Serif:	Award, difficulty, To, popinjay
Times New Roman:	Award, difficulty, To, popinjay
Liberation Sans:	Award, difficulty, To, popinjay
Arial:	Award, difficulty, To, popinjay

Figure 62. *Kerning letters*

It is important to remember that “numbers often need more kerning [than] letters do,” although they are rarely found in kerning tables. To illustrate this, we have typed the whole set and a special combination:

Liberation Serif:	0123456789	47474
Times New Roman:	0123456789	47474
Georgia:	0123456789	47474
Palatino Linotype:	0123456789	47474
Segoe UI:	0123456789	47474

Figure 63. *Kerning numerals*

Hopefully, these illustrations demonstrate the advantages of kerning: the proportional spacing between fonts is less tiresome for the eyes, the text takes up less space, as certain characters “invade” the space of other ones, and these consistent overlaps offer an improved layout.

While the age of typewriters meant monospaced fonts for obvious reasons, there are no more than three justified situations to return to that visual aspect, as Spiekermann explains: when writing plain emails and codes and imitating the look of typewriters (Spiekermann 2013, 137).

A final idea is that disregarding the possibilities of kerning is better than setting it in only certain parts of a consistent text, as “inconsistent kerning is worse than none” (Bringhurst 2004, 33).

3.2.4. *Glyphs*

A **glyph** is “a visual representation of some symbol, provided by a font.”⁵⁴ This “graphic symbol ... provides the appearance for a character.”⁵⁵ While a glyph stands for a character in the majority of cases, there are exceptions. Consequently, their total number may only be estimated, which is presumably more than a thousand (Bringhurst 2004, 179).

3.2.4.1. *ASCII and Unicode*

There are alphabetic, numeric, and symbol glyphs, and the most widespread character encoding set is the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII), which contained only 128 characters, without containing enough diacritical characters and being criticized for focusing on English language and punctuation symbols.⁵⁶

These seven-bit characters were extended to eight-bit characters, doubling the number of slots for glyphs, but the 256 slots were still not enough to comprise the multitude of diacritics of all written languages and the special needs for further symbols related to sciences and arts (cf. Bringhurst 2004, 180), so a new system was created: Unicode. This set—in theory—contains all the characters (137,374), and there is even more space for further slots, with the daring vision to create the possibility “to store every symbol, ever.”⁵⁷ Thus, all the glyphs or codes (as algorithm creators refer to them) may be correctly displayed in case we know the proper shortcut or the exact name/description of a particular glyph.

The most typical encoding is the Unicode Transformation Format, more precisely UTF-8, although UTF-16 or UTF-32 is also possible. The majority of

⁵⁴ <https://eev.ee/blog/2015/09/12/dark-corners-of-unicode/>, April 29, 2025.

⁵⁵ <https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/glyph>, January 29, 2025.

⁵⁶ <https://eev.ee/blog/2015/09/12/dark-corners-of-unicode/>, April 29, 2025.

⁵⁷ <https://blog.hubspot.com/website/what-is-utf-8>, January 29, 2025.

webpages are stored in UTF-8, which is also used elsewhere such as subtitling. The UTF-8 encoding table may be checked online,⁵⁸ as displaying all of them in printed form would be pointless, containing all the collected symbols of all languages. Video subtitles might display language-specific characters incorrectly, in which case it can be corrected when the .srt file format is opened in Word and saved in **UTF-8**. If this does not solve the problem, a last resort would be to open it in SubtitleEdit⁵⁹ and save it in **UTF8 with BOM** format.

3.2.5. Diacritics

We already mentioned the importance of diacritical marks, starting from selecting the proper typeface. These might be language-specific characters or “accented letters” (APA 2020, 44) and diacritical marks and signs/symbols. A diacritic is basically “a glyph added to a letter.”⁶⁰

Since the appearance of Unicode, using proper diacritical marks should be a basic requirement, starting from typing foreign names “correctly” (as in the source language), all foreign words should be preserved in their original way of spelling. However, as recommended earlier (see 1.4.), electronic filenames are an exception to the rule, as well as cases when creating a humorous text is intended: e.g., spelling tasks with deliberately erroneous meaning due to misplaced, missing, or improper diacritical signs. Although various commercials tend to overlook the importance of diacritical marks (trying to look smart or trendy), we cannot agree with this approach.

Diacritical marks may have various names, the most commonly used ones in Europe being listed below, collected from various sources⁶¹ and the **Character Map**:

Table 1. *Diacritical marks with examples*

Name	Symbol	Example
accent acute	á, é	resumé
accent grave	à, è, ì, ò, ù	dernière
angstrom (circle/ring above)	å	Bokmål
bar (stroke)	ł, Ł	ładny
breve	ă, ǎ, ŭ	artă
caron, wedge	č, ř, ž	háček

⁵⁸ For instance, here: <https://www.utf8-chartable.de/>, January 29, 2025.

⁵⁹ <https://www.nikse.dk/subtitleedit>, August 19, 2025.

⁶⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diacritic>, January 29, 2025.

⁶¹ <https://www.businessballs.com/glossaries-and-terminology/accents-and-diacritical-marks/>, June 30, 2022; AMA 2020, 553.

Name	Symbol	Example
cedilla	ç, ș, ț	Beşiktaş
circumflex (caret)	â, ê, î, ô, û	côte
comma below ⁶²	ș, ț	ședință
dot above (overdot)	č	vaikystė
double acute	ő, ű	örtűz
macron	ā, ē, ō, ū	infrastruktūros
ogonek	ą, ę	wąż
slash, stroke, virgule (streg)	ø	Rømø
tilde	ã, ñ, õ	vulcões
umlaut (diaeresis)	ä, ë, ï, ö, ü, ÿ	Lÿre

The table contains only a very limited set of letters combined with glyphs. Furthermore, it may happen that two letters are combined, discussed in the next section.

3.2.6. Ligatures (ligs)

As explained, a **ligature** (or *lig*) refers to the combination of “two or more letters” (AMA 2020, 1137).

However, this is a simplistic term, as there are **lexical ligatures**, which are letter combinations “defined by lexicographers and grammarians” (Bringhurst 2004, 188), but there are also **typographic ligatures**, discussed earlier (see kerning, Section 3.2.3.).

The most common lexical ligatures that may come to our minds are the *aesc* (æ, Æ as in *Lætitia*, *Ælfred*: U+00E6 and U+00C6), the combination of *o* and *e*, resulting in *œ* or *Œ* (as in *hors d’œuvre* and *Hærdt*: U+0153 and U+0152), and the *eszett*, sharp *s* or double *s* (ß as in *groß*: U+00DF). On the other hand, typographic ligatures are applied to reduce space by overlapping letters, although Bringhurst warns us that this distinction is “by no means absolute” (2004, 50).

As recommended by the CMOS, the lexical ligatures *æ* (a + e) and *œ* *Œ* (o + e) “should not be used in Latin or transliterated Greek words,” and they might only be used “for spelling Old English words in an Old English context” (CMOS 2024, 454). Interestingly, there is a macOS shortcut for *œ* (**Option+Q**).

⁶² While *ș* and *ț* (comma below) are the correct diacritical marks in Romanian, the widespread incorrect variants for Romanian are with cedilla (*ş* and *ţ*) due to missing official glyphs before 2007. However, the cedilla versions referring to the same sound are correct in Turkish, French, or Albanian: <https://stiisascii.wordpress.com/2014/07/16/diacritica/>, January 29, 2025.

3.3. Font Contrast

Contrasting fonts break the monotonous continuity of texts, and there are certain techniques to do that.

A basic rule is not to change more than “one parameter at a time” (Bringhurst 2004, 60) so as not to obtain a visually too cumbersome text layout. Basic font contrast options include the following:

1. change the typeface (serif to sans serif); this may be useful when dictionary entries require the mixture of “unserifed and serifed fonts on the same line” (Bringhurst 2004, 105);
2. change the font family (*Times New Roman* to *Arial*);
3. increase or decrease font size;
4. change the letter case (uppercase, lowercase, capitalize first letter, small capitals);
5. apply font styles (bold, italic, underline).

Whatever type of font contrast we opt for, we are not to use more than one typeface or font within the same word (Ármeán 2017, 70; Gyurgyák 2005, 79–80), although Gyurgyák makes it explicit that contrasting or highlighting rules are not set in stone, except for that they should be consistently applied within the same publication. If the restriction mentioned above is accepted, languages with suffixes have to apply the same contrast to the entire word, including the suffix (Ármeán 2017, 67; Laczkó and Mártonfi 2025, 289), a rule which is not always respected.

Font contrast may be applied to various parts of the text, and, most commonly, titles, headings, captions, foreign words, and words with special meanings (metaphoric, head-word, etc.) are highlighted, knowing that too much contrast is not very effective.

3.3.1. Capitalization

Capitalization is the simplest type of font contrast within the same typeface. While it is common knowledge that sentence-start words are capitalized (and this is implemented in word processors as well), there are certain issues:

1. both English and non-English words and phrases are to be capitalized “according to that language’s standard of correctness” (AMA 2020, 552);
2. words that are brand names but start with lowercase letter followed by capital letters (*iPhone*, *eBay*)⁶³ or statistical terms (*p* value) should not start the sentence, so rewording is necessary (AMA 2020, 504; APA 2020, 165) to avoid their sentence-start position;
3. intercaptioned words starting with a capital letter may start the sentence (*PubMed*); intercaptioned or midcaptioned trademark spelling should always be preserved (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 182);

⁶³ These words are “intercaptioned compounds” (AMA 2020, 504).

4. the first word after a colon is not capitalized as explained by the manual of the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America (from now on, ASA et al.) unless it starts a quotation or a direct question (ASA et al. 2024, 2–04);
5. names of languages, nationalities, ethnicities, tribes, political parties, religions, religious denominations, days of the week, and months of the year are capitalized in English.

The capitalization of particular words in English may be broken down to further subsections presented in the following.

3.3.1.1. *Titles of Works*

Stemming from the previous rules, titles, subtitles, or headings—referred to as title case (versus sentence case)—start with a capitalized word.

This includes books, journal articles, table columns, albums, songs, plays, radio and TV programs, paintings, software programs, websites, blogs, names of historical and special events (*Declaration of Helsinki*), historical periods (*Civil War*), awards (*Purple Heart*), holidays (*Fourth of July*, *New Year's Eve*), or monuments.

As these are special texts, further rules apply, described by various sources (APA 2020, 165; AMA 2020, 495–501):

1. title case refers to all the words of the title, which contain at least four letters, including *With*;
2. two- or three-letter verbs are also capitalized (*Am*, *Is*, *Are*, *Was*, *Do*, *Did*, *Has*);
3. shorter than four-letter conjunctions or prepositions are not capitalized (*but*);
4. words following a colon or an em dash are capitalized (*Joker Laughs—As Expected*).
5. in case the second word of a hyphenated compound is a major word, it should be capitalized (*Pre-Requisite*);
6. in case numerals of lowercase Greek letters start the word, the following word is capitalized;
7. labels (designators) of tables, figures, sections, chapters followed by numbers and the first word of row headings should also be capitalized (*Table 1*, *Figure 2*, *Supplement A*, *Illustration*, *Photo*, *Chapter 3*, *Section 5*);⁶⁴

⁶⁴ The following words are not capitalized: *numeral*, *letter*, *page*, *paragraph* + a numeral (APA 2020, 168); similarly, *equator*, *north pole* and *universe* are not “strictly proper names,” although “some people choose to capitalize them anyway,” which is “not recommended” (cf. <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/punctuation/capsandabbr/caps>, February 4, 2025).

8. technical descriptions, mathematical formulae often contain isolated letters, which are capitalized (APA 2020, 168), as they denote grades, or place names, and their plural form is constructed without an apostrophe (*Xs*);
9. letters representing various shapes (*a C-Curve*, *a P-shaped bath*) “are capitalized and set in Roman type” (CMOS 2024, 467).

Although titles of books and articles are used in the text according to these rules, when they appear in reference lists (bibliography), they are used according to the particular style required by the publishing house; this is typically mixed capitals and lowercase for book titles and sentence case for articles, except for the capitalized first word (AMA 2020, 1118).

While these rules seem to be “prescribed” by manuals and guidebooks, they might not always be respected, which is also due to the **Toggle Case** function of word processors (press **Shift+F3** in Word or Writer repeatedly to check the effect).

3.3.1.2. *Titles and Degrees of Persons*

Job titles, positions, and academic degrees of people have two variants:

1. capitalized before names (*Chair, President, Head*) and sentence case after names (APA 2020, 166); it is noted that newspapers and magazines tend to use capitalized titles (“up style”), while book publishers use “down style,” without capitalizing (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 173);
2. titles without names are not capitalized (ASA et al. 2024, 2–04);

Interestingly, academic degrees are not capitalized unless abbreviated: John Smith, *MA*.

3.3.1.3. *Computer and Technology Terms*

Computer terms are technology-related words that have been on the rise for decades, and certain rules should be followed when using them:

1. keyboard keys of letters should always be capitalized;
2. named keys should also be capitalized, even if some of them are abbreviated:

Esc or **FnLock**

F1–F12

Insert, **Home**, **End**, **Delete**, **Backspace**, **Tab**, **Option**, **Command**,

CapsLock, **Shift**, **Ctrl**, **Fn**, **Alt**, **Enter**, **AltGr**, **PgUp**, **PgDn**, **PrtSc**,

NumLock;

3. initial capitals for each word are used to refer to functions provided by various software programs: **Layout**, **Help**, **View**, **Font**, **Paragraph**, **Select Recipients**, **Start Mail Merge**;
4. it is suggested that “abbreviations for file formats are rendered in full capitals unless expressed as extensions” (CMOS 2024, 472), so there are

PDF, DOCX, and ODT files, but when referring to extensions, the .pdf, .docx, and .odt forms should be used;

5. combinations of keys are used either with the plus or hyphen sign, without spaces between them: **Ctrl+Shift+Home** (Windows) or **Command+Q** (macOS), and in case the shortcut might be ambiguous (punctuation symbols or with or without Space), it should be spelled out (CMOS 2024, 472–473).

While newly created terms were used with initial capitals, some have become so common that they are no longer capitalized: *internet*, *intranet*, *wireless network*, *mobile* or *cellular network*, *web*, *email*, unless they start the sentence or refer to a trademark such as *Ethernet* (CMOS 2024, 474).

3.3.1.4. Capitalized Abbreviations

There are various types of abbreviations. We should distinguish single-word abbreviations, such as *p.* for *page*, or multiple-word abbreviations such as *MD* for *medical doctor*. Depending on their type, they might be **shortened** to the initial letter, **contracted** (*Bld.* for *Boulevard*), **clipped**, or **truncated**: *teach* for *teacher*, *flu* for *influenza*, *burger* for *hamburger* (Imre 2022a, 379).

Multi-word phrases are often abbreviated with capital letters and are either **acronyms** (letters pronounced as words such as *POTUS* for the *President of the United States*) or **initialisms** (letters pronounced as letters such as *BBC* for *British Broadcasting Corporation*) (Imre 2022a, 380). **Blends** come into being by “melting at least two words together” by preserving some of the letters, and these are often capitalized in case the original term was also capitalized (*Interpol* for *International Police*).

The overwhelming majority of acronyms and initialisms are fully capitalized (although the letters might or might not be separated by periods), as they derive from various institutions, company names, political parties, trademark, geographical terms, etc.: *UN*, *DNA*, *DOD*, *NSA*, *FEMA*, *GOP*, *CNN*, *US/U.S.*, *DC/D.C.*, *LA/L.A.*, or *NASA*. Acronyms created from non-capitalized medical terms are also capitalized: *CBC* for *complete blood count* or *PET* for *positron emission tomography*.

A number of computer-related terms are also turned into abbreviations: *NFC* (*Near Field Communication*), *LAN* (*wired local area network*), *IT* (*Information Technology*).

Famous people might also be referred to via an initialism, especially in the USA: *JFK*, *RFK*, *FDR*, *MLK*, and *LBJ*. In a local context, people’s names may also be abbreviated with their initials (*Mr. X.*, *Miss G.*),⁶⁵ and in this case a period “usually” follows the single initial (CMOS 2024, 467), the same source mentioning that a

⁶⁵ As it is used in the movie *Freedom Writers* (2007).

concealed name may start with a capital letter “followed by a 2-em dash and no period”: *Mrs. A— is the victim.*

However, there are non-capitalized abbreviations as well, most notably connected to time (AMA 2020, 933); the first column contains standard abbreviations, while the next three ones are abbreviations used for localized settings (Windows) and the online Google Calendar:

Table 2. *Time abbreviations*

Abbreviation	Short Abbreviation	Long Abbreviation	Google Calendar	Term
y	yy, yyyy	yyyy	Y	year
mo	M, MM, MMM	MMMM	M	month
wk			W	week
d	d, dd	dddd, d	D	day
h	h, H, HH	h, H, hh, HH		hour
min	mm	mm		minute
sec		ss		

The table clearly demonstrates that manuals and guidebooks may prescribe “correct” versions, but these are left to the discretion of software producers and publishing houses. As such, multiple variants come into being, as is the case of the abbreviations for morning and afternoon: *AM*, *PM*, *A.M.*, *P.M.*, *am*, *pm*, *a.m.*, and *p.m.*, not to mention that these follow the hour either with or without space, and there are further rules referring to these abbreviations, detailed in the next section.

3.3.2. *Small Capitals and Uppercase*

The use of small capitals (small caps) also tends to be regulated. This is a typeface style, so these capitals are designed to have the height of lowercase letters, but all the letters take the shape of a capital letter.

Manuals (AMA 2020, 1121) and scholars (Spiekermann 2013, 63) mention that small capital letters should be used with the previously presented *morning* and *afternoon* abbreviations, whose capitalized versions with no periods are exemplified: *AM* and *PM*, and further time-related small caps initialisms are also listed: *AD*, *BC*, *BCE*, and *CE*. As explained, “small caps rather than full capitals look more graceful” (CMOS 2024, 461).

Certain authors may rely on small capitals, as they “mark an opening phrase” (Bringhurst 2004, 120), but they may also be used with currency abbreviations, country codes, or temperature symbols (*USD*, *PL*, *0°C*, *32°F*), as the same author exemplifies it (Bringhurst 2004, 46).

To obtain small caps while using word processors, the desired term should be typed as a lowercase word. In Word, after selecting the desired term, either the **Ctrl+Shift+K** shortcut changes the casing or through the menu: **Home**, click on the arrow in the **Font** section, and the **Font** tab of the appearing window offers **Small caps** as one of the **Effects** options, which may be selected with a tick (Word):

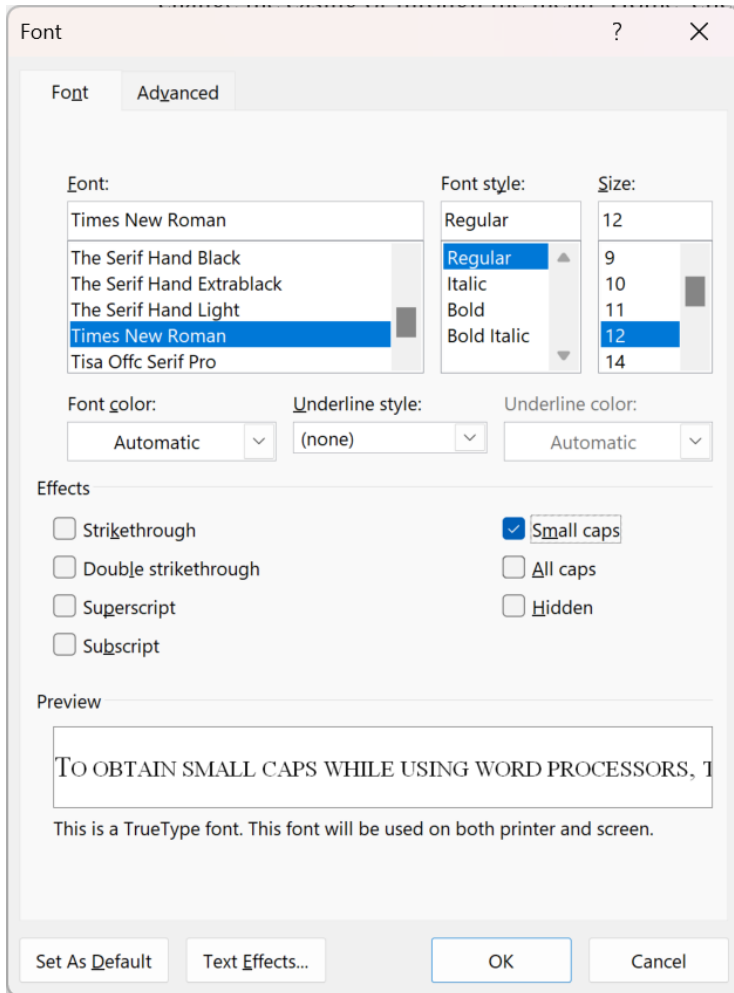


Figure 64. Changing lowercase letters to small caps, Word

Writer offers this via the same shortcut, or through the main toolbar: **Format**, **Text**, and the drop-down menu reveals **Small capitals**, displaying the shortcut as well:

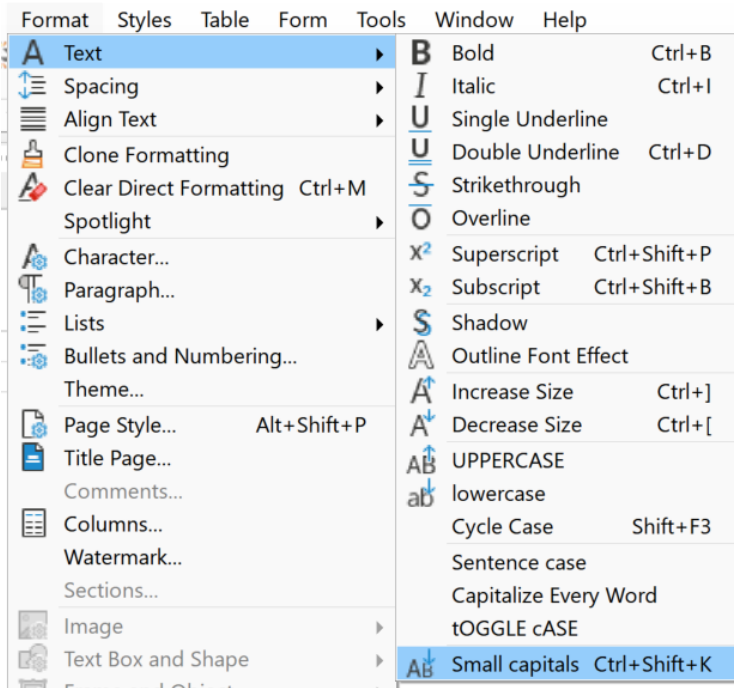


Figure 65. Changing lowercase letters to small caps, Writer

The more daring option is to set the whole word to fully capitalized, or UPPERCASE characters, which may be carried out via the previously described route in Writer, as visible in Figure 65 above. As for Word, this is possible via the drop-down arrow of the **Aa** icon in the **Home** panel:

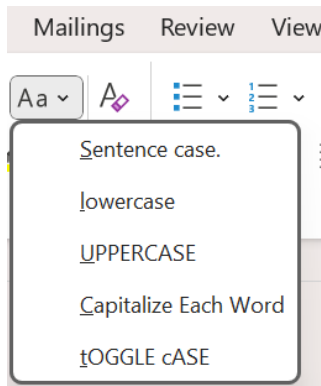


Figure 66. Changing the letter case to uppercase, Word

However, changing the letter case in all possible variants may be carried out with a shortcut as well: **Shift+F3** (referred to as **Cycle Case** in Writer). This shortcut works in Word, Writer, Calc, and PowerPoint, while it is associated with other functions in MS Excel (from now on, Excel) and Impress. Nevertheless, fully capitalized words are often associated with shouting, so it is not recommended when using social media.

3.3.3. *Boldface*

Boldface, Italic, and Underline are readily available styles, which offer visible contrast with the standard Roman typeface. They are used very frequently, either with the help of their corresponding buttons on the main toolbar of word processors or with the help of well-known shortcuts: **Ctrl+B**, **Ctrl+I**, and **Ctrl+U**.

However, only the first two typefaces are recommended to highlight part of a text, and the Underline option is strongly discouraged by typographers, publishing houses, and journals alike. In fact, a typical publication includes no more than seven styles, and none of them is Underline (AMA 2020, 1115):

1. Roman capitals (uppercase letters);
2. Roman lowercase letters;
3. boldface capitals;
4. boldface lowercase letters;
5. italic capitals;
6. italic lowercase;
7. letters with small capitals.

Boldface may be used for figures, tables, and headings 1 and 2 (AMA 2020, 1119), but any important word (keywords, metaphoric meaning, headword, etc.) may also be boldfaced. The first punctuation symbol following the boldfaced word (**Table 1.**, which ...) is also highlighted, but a word in focus is followed by Normal typeface (CMOS 2024, 379).

If boldfaced words are used only “sparingly,” they may be very effective (Bringhurst 2004, 56), and it is suggested that this type of contrast is for cases when “you really need it” (Bringhurst 2004, 103).

3.3.4. *Italic*

The definition of **italic** specifies that the characters slant “upward and to the right (*italic*) as opposed to Roman type” (AMA 2020, 1136), which is another type of contrast or highlight.

Similarly to boldface, italic(s) may be used to “mark specific classes of information” (Bringhurst 2004, 57). When parts of a text are emphasized this way, no quotation marks should be used. Specific cases to italicize are listed below,

based on various sources (CMOS 2024; EC-DGT-RO 2021, 24; AMA 2020, 479; 2020, 1119–21).⁶⁶

1. key terms (typically first occurrence only, then Roman);
2. foreign words, except for frequently used Latin terms (*ibid.*, *et al.*, *ca.*, *passim*); however, *sic* is always italicized, due to its special meaning (“intentionally so written”) when quotes are reproduced accurately, containing factual errors or improper spelling;
3. personally highlighted terms in a direct quotation, in which case the italicized part is followed by [emphasis added] within square brackets (APA 2020, 275);
4. titles and headings (mostly Heading 4), but not titles of book series (e.g., *The Hunger Games* series);
5. titles of proceedings;
6. names of legal cases;
7. titles of plays;
8. names of paintings;
9. names of video games;
10. names of musical compositions;
11. movie titles;
12. names of planes, ships, and spaceships;
13. rhyme schemes (*abab*) or “similar patterns,” with no space between the lowercase letters;
14. genera, species, and varieties;
15. mathematical expressions, including statistical symbols, lines, variables, unknown quantities, and constants, test scores, except for trigonometric terms;
16. anchors of a scale, with the associated number set in Roman (1 *poor* to 5 *excellent*);
17. periodical volume numbers;
18. special explanations: when terms described terms and letters are discussed as letter (the letter *n* is used in mathematics);⁶⁷
19. alphabetic enumeration of items or topics, while the parentheses are set in Roman: (*a*), (*b*), (*c*).

While this may seem a long list, italics should be restricted to a sentence the most, and not an entire passage or paragraph. Notable exceptions to this rule are

⁶⁶ EC is the initialism for the European Commission, while DGT-RO stands for the Directorate-General for Translation, Romanian-language unit.

⁶⁷ There are a few notable exceptions to this rule: *Mind your p’s and q’s!*; *Dot the I’s and cross the t’s, the three R’s* (CMOS 2024, 467).

prefaces, headnotes, sidenotes, block quotations,⁶⁸ or epigraphs at the beginning of a book or chapter, in which case full italics are justified.

It may happen that titles are needed in an already italicized text (e.g., title within a title), in which case **reversed italicization** should be used, and the title set in Roman (normal, nonitalic) typeface (APA 2020, 171).

Interestingly, there are several restrictions regarding punctuation following the italicized parts. Manuals specify that in case the punctuation mark does not belong to the highlighted part, it should be set to Roman (APA 2020, 170). Nevertheless, Bringhurst mentions that “italic punctuation normally gives better letterfit and thus looks less obtrusive” (Bringhurst 2004, 60).

There are a few further cases when no italic is needed:

1. trigonometric terms: sin, tan, log (APA 2020, 171);
2. chemical terms: H₂SO₄, CaO;
3. Greek letters: α, β, γ;
4. “naturalized” foreign terms, which already appear in the dictionary of the target language; in the case of English, these might be *nacho*, *paprika*, *tableau vivant*, or *zucchini* (as in this case they are linguistic examples, they are still in italics).

While there is the possibility to combine the contrast of boldface and italic, resulting in ***bold italic***, this is rarely accepted from a typographical point of view.

3.3.5. Underline

Underline font style may be considered the “black sheep” of typeface. Bringhurst mentions it only once, in a totally unrelated context (Bringhurst 2004, 83). There are very limited and special cases when Underline font style is not frowned upon:

1. active hyperlinks in word processing programs (APA 2020, 299);
2. the **Track Changes** function of word processing, while reviewing texts, or when it refers to editorial changes (CMOS 2024, 71);
3. manuscript underlines to signal italicized parts for the editors (CMOS 2024, 103).

Typographical reasons against underlined text are clear: it interferes with the standard glyphs/characters by segmenting them, optical character recognition software programs might misinterpret them, and reading may become cumbersome. To put it simply, Underline is not recommended, even though it is readily available in word processing software programs.

⁶⁸ A passage that is longer than 40 words. Passages shorter than 40 words are referred to as *direct quotations*.

3.4. Font Ornament

Font contrast may be carried out with the help of various character ornaments, which also function as text breakers.

A blank line may be the simplest text breaker, but when a visible breaker is needed, either a set of asterisks (***) may be used between the paragraphs or relying on font ornaments might be an excellent choice.

3.4.1. Fleuron

Fleurons are stylish typographic ornaments in the shape of flowers or leaves “to flag text openings,” and they might be printed in red, which is “the typographer’s habitual second color” (Bringhurst 2004, 63). Some of them have been used for long, for instance **hedera** (a type of fleuron), the term stemming from the Latin name for *ivy leaf* (Parkes 1992, 61).

While fleurons are stronger breaks than simply starting a new paragraph, they are weaker than a subheading (CMOS 2024, 35). Typographers rely on fleurons for ornamental separations of sections, being more graceful than the asterisks, and may choose from several variants: the reversed rotated floral heart bullet (☛, U+2619), the rotated floral heart bullet (☞, U+2767), or the floral heart (☜, U+2766), also presented by Bringhurst (2004, 311). These may be used to separate paragraphs, but the editors of the APA chose to place one next to each page number of the book.

Fleurons have descriptive names and shortcut keys,⁶⁹ but word processors might not display them correctly. For instance, Word can display the three fleurons mentioned above, but more modern ones—now part of the Unicode table⁷⁰—are not displayed in *Times New Roman* when using Word unless they are set in *Segoe UI Symbol* font. Interestingly, *Times New Roman* in Writer displays all the symbols in the table below correctly, based on the provided codes:

Table 3. *Fleurons and Unicodes*

Description	Symbol	Unicode
reversed rotated floral heart bullet	☛	2619
floral heart	☜	2766
rotated floral heart bullet	☞	2767
north west pointing leaf	☱	1F650
south west pointing leaf	☲	1F651
north east pointing leaf	☳	1F652
south east pointing leaf	☴	1F653

⁶⁹ <https://www.htmlsymbols.xyz/ornamental-symbols/fleurons>, February 5, 2025.

⁷⁰ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fleuron_\(typography\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fleuron_(typography)), April 28, 2025.

Description	Symbol	Unicode
turned north west pointing leaf	☞	1F654
turned south west pointing leaf	☜	1F655
turned north east pointing leaf	☛	1F656
turned south east pointing leaf	☝	1F657
north west pointing vine leaf	☎	1F658
south west pointing vine leaf	☍	1F659
north east pointing vine leaf	☏	1F65A
south east pointing vine leaf	☐	1F65B
heavy north west pointing vine leaf	☑	1F65C
heavy south west pointing vine leaf	☒	1F65D
heavy north east pointing vine leaf	☔	1F65E
heavy south east pointing vine leaf	☕	1F65F
north west pointing bud	☖	1F660
south west pointing bud	☗	1F661
north east pointing bud	☙	1F662
south east pointing bud	☚	1F663
heavy north west pointing bud	☛	1F664
heavy south west pointing bud	☜	1F665
heavy north east pointing bud	☞	1F666
heavy south east pointing bud	☝	1F667

3.4.2. Drop Cap

Drop caps (versals, lettrines) typically start a chapter or a section of a longer text, being in fact an initial capital letter dropping through three or four lines, “nested into the text” (Bringhurst 2004, 63). They are typically red and are typically followed by a few words with small capitals (see *National Geographic* articles).

Certain alternatives exist, as the cap may be positioned in the margin (**cap**, cf. Ármeán 2017, 58) or elevated/raised above the main text line (**elevated cap**, AMA 2020, 1119).

Inserting a drop cap is simple with the help of word processors; Word offers it in the **Insert** menu, **Drop Cap** (options exemplified below), while Writer hides it in **Format, Paragraph, Drop Caps** tab:

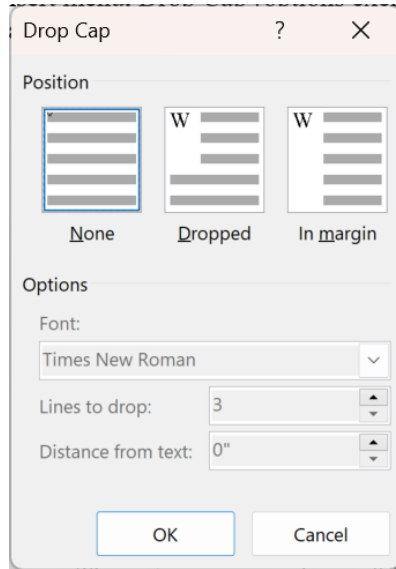


Figure 67. *Insert drop cap, Word*

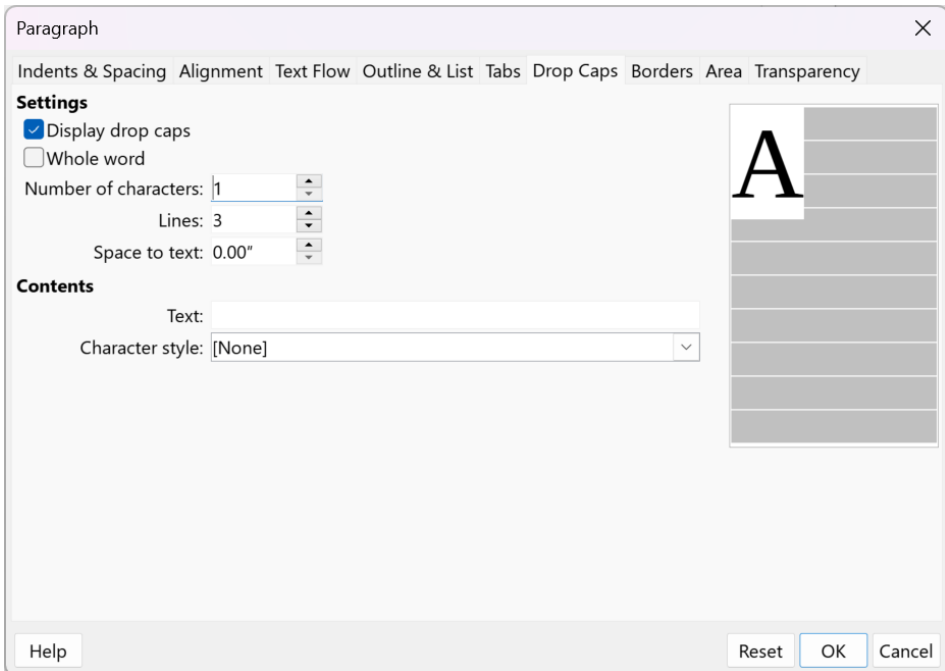


Figure 68. *Insert drop cap, Writer*

The outcome reminds us of the origin of drop caps, which are the monastic manuscripts, exemplified in the next paragraph.

FLEURONS ARE BEAUTIFUL if they are used systematically, all through a book, starting a new chapter. When set in red, fleurons offer a unique ornament to the entire page, bringing joy to the eyes of the reader every time. However, inserting a drop cap might require further settings.

Scholars explain that setting the drop cap in a typographically correct position requires expertise, as side bearing is preserved; hence, the stem of *F* in our case is not in line with the left margin, which is why, for instance, the text line should be set to a minus value (Virágvölgyi 2004, 6), and the area around the drop cap might need further adjustments.

In certain cases, kerning the letter following the cap might be necessary—the top of the drop cap should be in line with the top of letters in the first line, while the bottom of the cap should match the bottom of the letters in the third line. However, this is left to typographers, and word processors can handle the task acceptably.

3.4.3. Swash

A final type of ornament is **swash**, which is a “letterform reveling in luxury” (Bringhurst 2004, 331), as they either occupy extra space or contain extra ornaments compared to the Roman typeface, and Bringhurst concludes that true italic capitals are typically swash.

These ornamented glyphs are remarkable, and entire typefaces are readily available in both Word and Writer (e.g., *Blackadder ITC*, *Brush Script MT*, *Edwardian Script ITC*, or *Vivaldi*), and various sites offer further wonderful fonts, often inspired by beautiful handwriting.⁷¹ Ligaments and other symbols, most notably ampersands, add to the charm of a particular typeface (see, for instance, *Caslon No 337 Italic* or *Sahara Bodoni*).

3.5. Font Effects

Various font effects may be considered as a final font contrast option.

Word offers seven font effects by accessing **Home**, **Font** section, bottom-right arrow (**Strikethrough**, **Double strikethrough**, **Superscript**, **Subscript**, **Small caps**, **All caps**, and **Hidden**), or through the **Ctrl+D** shortcut. On the other hand, Writer makes these effects accessible via **Format**, **Text** (with shortcuts), or **Character**:

⁷¹ For instance: <https://elements.envato.com/learn/best-swash-fonts-and-fonts-with-tails>, February 5, 2025.

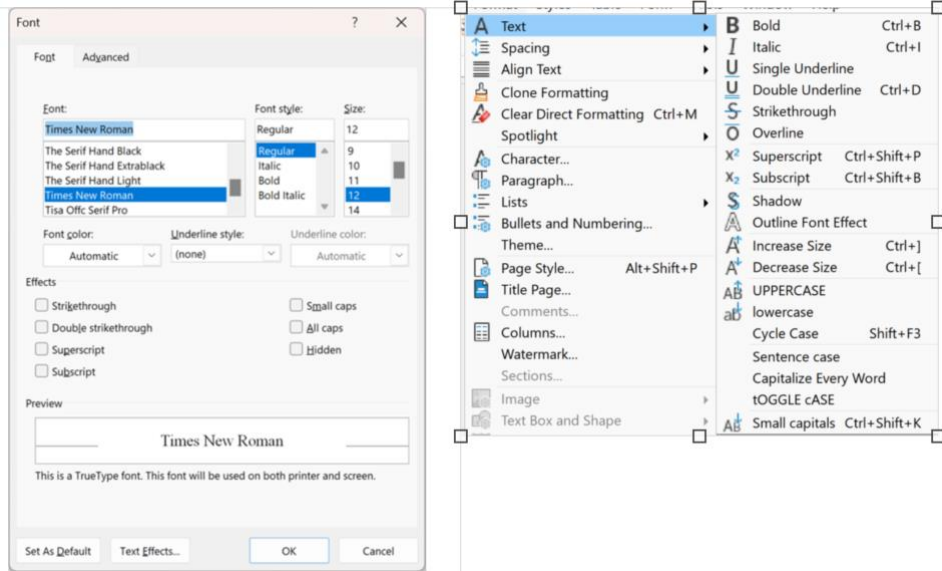


Figure 69. Font effect available, Word and Writer

Furthermore, various text effects may also be used. The **Text Effects and Typography** icon is available in Word next to the **Superscript** icon, while Writer offers them via **Format**, **Character**, and the **Font Effects** tab (**Case**, **Relief Embossed/Engraved**, with or without **Outline**, and **Hidden/Shadow**):

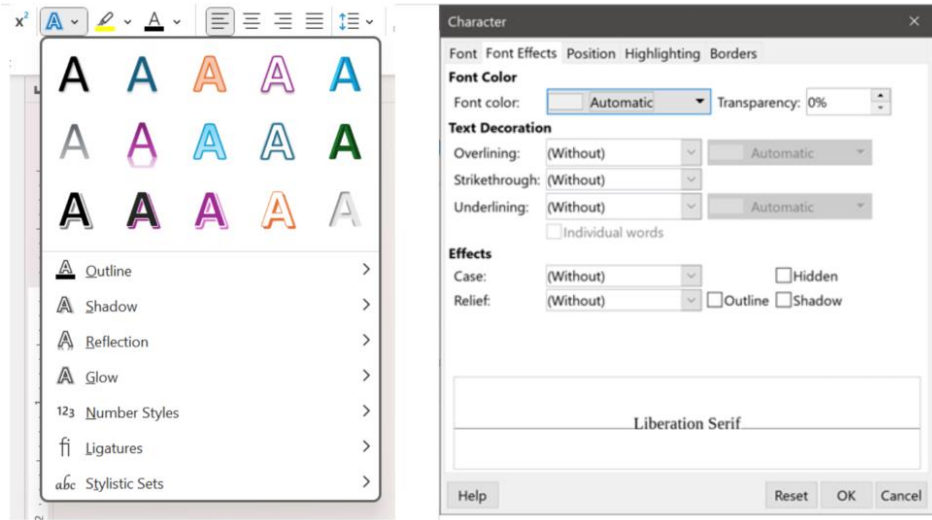


Figure 70. Text effects available, Word and Writer

Naturally, **Text Highlight Color** and **Font Color** offer very vivid contrasts:

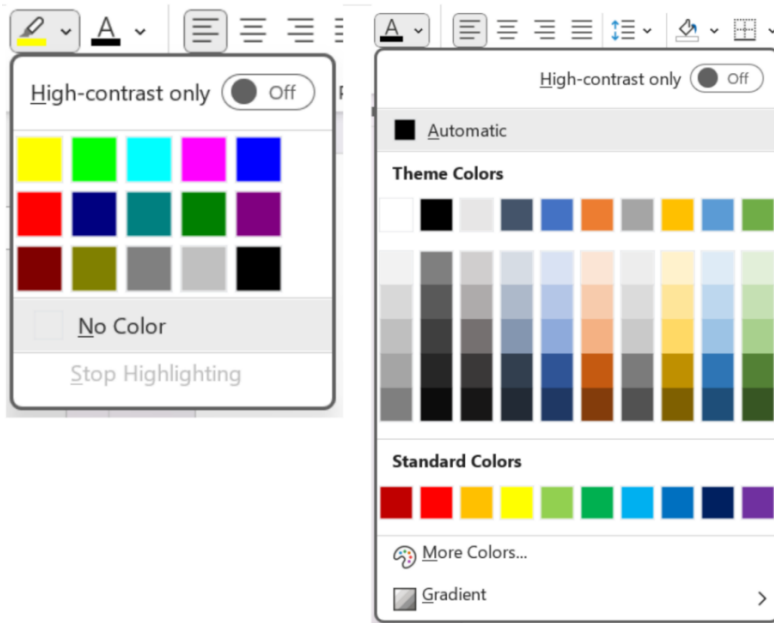


Figure 71. Contrasting text and font color, Word and Writer

3.6. Modified Letters

The most common alphanumeric characters are displayed on the keyboard, and non-English keyboards have language-specific characters available with a single stroke or by changing the input language via keyboard settings.

However, there are thousands of glyphs, characters, letters, signs, symbols, pictograms, and (emot)icons that may be inserted with the help of keyboard shortcuts, either through word processors or some special ones from various online sources.

A rather reduced list is the so-called Windows Alt Codes list (ASCII), which is a set of 128 signals divided into 33 control signals and 95 graphic signals (letters of the Latin alphabet, the punctuation signs, and mathematical signs) dating from the 1960s.⁷² The Windows-1252 system developed by Microsoft doubled it to 256 characters, but then the Unicode character system (1991) has become the international character-encoding system containing “more than a 100,000 characters.”⁷³

Given the abundance of these characters, Bringhurst warns us that “[s]everal alphabetic characters are notorious for poor design and should always be inspected when assessing a new font” (Bringhurst 2004, 76). Due to the immense number of characters, it is worth categorizing them such as alphanumeric characters, mathematical signs and operators, punctuation-related, or various dingbats.

Certain codes may lead to non-standard alphanumeric characters, and by using key combinations, even the typeface may switch to another one (*Times New Roman* to *MS Gothic*, *MS Mincho*, *Segoe UI Symbol*, or *Cambria*)⁷⁴ once the original one does not contain a particular character. We have categorized them as country and regional indicators, circled letters, modified letters with special meanings, letter-like currency signs, and logograms. There are also (modified) numbers, discussed in Chapter 4 and punctuation signs and symbols presented in Chapter 5

3.6.1. Country and Regional Indicators

Although the letters in the table below may look like regular letters, they are in fact special letters (compare: A **A**), and combining them in twos will result in either country codes (**NZ** for New Zealand) or codes for the US states (**FL** for Florida):

⁷² <https://degreessymbolsign.com/alt-codes-list-of-256-alt-alternate-key-codes-symbols/>, August 8, 2022.

⁷³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Unicode>, August 8, 2022.

⁷⁴ Further details https://www.adamdawes.com/windows8/win8_segouisymbol.html, <https://www.arild-hauge.com/altcodes.htm>, <https://www.makeuseof.com/windows-alt-codes/>, <http://zuga.net/articles/unicode-all-characters-supported-by-the-font-arial-unicode-ms/>, February 7, 2025.

Table 4. *Regional or country indicator letters*

Letter	Char.	Unicode
regional indicator symbol letter a	A	1F1E6
regional indicator symbol letter b	B	1F1E7
regional indicator symbol letter c	C	1F1E8
regional indicator symbol letter d	D	1F1E9
regional indicator symbol letter e	E	1F1EA
regional indicator symbol letter f	F	1F1EB
regional indicator symbol letter g	G	1F1EC
regional indicator symbol letter h	H	1F1ED
regional indicator symbol letter i	I	1F1EE
regional indicator symbol letter j	J	1F1EF
regional indicator symbol letter k	K	1F1F0
regional indicator symbol letter l	L	1F1F1
regional indicator symbol letter m	M	1F1F2
regional indicator symbol letter n	N	1F1F3
regional indicator symbol letter o	O	1F1F4
regional indicator symbol letter p	P	1F1F5
regional indicator symbol letter q	Q	1F1F6
regional indicator symbol letter r	R	1F1F7
regional indicator symbol letter s	S	1F1F8
regional indicator symbol letter t	T	1F1F9
regional indicator symbol letter u	U	1F1FA
regional indicator symbol letter v	V	1F1FB
regional indicator symbol letter w	W	1F1FC
regional indicator symbol letter x	X	1F1FD
regional indicator symbol letter y	Y	1F1FE
regional indicator symbol letter z	Z	1F1FF

More recently, further letter combinations have appeared such as related to airplanes: ☪ (1F198), ☫ (1F197), ☬ (1F194), or ☭ (1F18F).

It is also worth noting that while Greek letters are often used in specific Latin-based texts, they function as symbols or pictograms (see 5.11.2.).

3.6.2. *Circled Capital Letters*

There are various reasons to rely on circled (enclosed) letters, which have both capital and small variants.

Circled Latin capital letters are presented in the table below, together with their extended Alt code or Unicode. In case the selected typeface lacks these

characters, the word processing software will switch to a typeface that contains these characters.

Table 5. *Circled Latin capital letters*

Circled Latin capital letter	Char.	Unicode	Alt
circled Latin capital letter A	Ⓐ	24B6	9398
circled Latin capital letter B	Ⓑ	24B7	9399
circled Latin capital letter C	Ⓒ	24B8	9400
circled Latin capital letter D	Ⓓ	24B9	9401
circled Latin capital letter E	Ⓔ	24BA	9402
circled Latin capital letter F	Ⓕ	24BB	9403
circled Latin capital letter G	Ⓖ	24BC	9404
circled Latin capital letter H	Ⓖ	24BD	9405
circled Latin capital letter I	Ⓖ	24BE	9406
circled Latin capital letter J	Ⓖ	24BF	9407
circled Latin capital letter K	Ⓖ	24C0	9408
circled Latin capital letter L	Ⓖ	24C1	9409
circled Latin capital letter M	Ⓖ	24C2	9410
circled Latin capital letter N	Ⓖ	24C3	9411
circled Latin capital letter O	Ⓖ	24C4	9412
circled Latin capital letter P	Ⓖ	24C5	9413
circled Latin capital letter Q	Ⓖ	24C6	9414
circled Latin capital letter R	Ⓖ	24C7	9415
circled Latin capital letter S	Ⓖ	24C8	9416
circled Latin capital letter T	Ⓖ	24C9	9417
circled Latin capital letter U	Ⓖ	24CA	9418
circled Latin capital letter V	Ⓖ	24CB	9419
circled Latin capital letter W	Ⓖ	24CC	9420
circled Latin capital letter X	Ⓖ	24CD	9421
circled Latin capital letter Y	Ⓖ	24CE	9422
circled Latin capital letter Z	Ⓖ	24CF	9423

It is important to mention that certain enclosed letters have been designed for special use, which are different than the ones in Table 5, so they are discussed in the next section.

3.6.3. *Circled Capital Letters as Logograms*

Signs in this category have gained all special meanings, mostly a particular logogram (symbol for a word) function:

- the copyright sign © marks that “an artistic or intellectual work is copyrighted”,⁷⁵
- the ® symbol refers to copyright sound recordings;
- the ® sign means that the trademark is registered or “all rights reserved”;
- the circled CD letters are mostly seen on vehicles belonging to diplomatic agencies, as the letters stand for “Diplomatic Corps” in French:

Table 6. *Circled capital letters as logograms*

Sign	Character	Unicode	Alt	Remarks
copyright sign	©	00A9	169	or type (c)+Space bar
sound recording copyright symbol	®	2117		
registered sign	®	00AE	174	or type (r)+Space bar
circled CD (Corps Diplomatique)	Ⓒ	1F12D		

Although it is not a letter, there is a circled bullet as well. While editing the text, we can type its Unicode value (U+29BF), which changes the font to *Cambria Math*, resulting in this glyph: ●.

3.6.4. Circled Small Letters

Similarly to the circled capital letters, applying the codes to create circled Latin small letters may also change the typeface in case the character is not available in the default one.

Table 7. *Circled Latin small letters*

Circled Latin small letter	Character	Unicode	Alt
circled Latin small letter a	Ⓐ	24D0	9424
circled Latin small letter b	Ⓑ	24D1	9425
circled Latin small letter c	Ⓒ	24D2	9426
circled Latin small letter d	Ⓓ	24D3	9427
circled Latin small letter e ⁷⁶	Ⓔ	24D4	9428
circled Latin small letter f	Ⓕ	24D5	9429
circled Latin small letter g	Ⓖ	24D6	9430
circled Latin small letter h	Ⓗ	24D7	9431

⁷⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/copyright-symbol>, February 7, 2025.

⁷⁶ Although not enclosed, there is a different type of *e*, functioning as the “estimated symbol” (Ⓔ, U+212E). This is rather widespread, found on various prepacked products, specifying content tolerance in Europe.

Circled Latin small letter	Character	Unicode	Alt
circled Latin small letter i ⁷⁷	⓪	24D8	9432
circled Latin small letter j	⓫	24D9	9433
circled Latin small letter k	⓬	24DA	9434
circled Latin small letter l	⓭	24DB	9435
circled Latin small letter m	⓮	24DC	9436
circled Latin small letter n	⓯	24DD	9437
circled Latin small letter o	⓰	24DE	9438
circled Latin small letter p	⓱	24DF	9439
circled Latin small letter q	⓲	24E0	9440
circled Latin small letter r	⓳	24E1	9441
circled Latin small letter s	⓴	24E2	9442
circled Latin small letter t	⓵	24E3	9443
circled Latin small letter u	⓶	24E4	9444
circled Latin small letter v	⓷	24E5	9445
circled Latin small letter w	⓸	24E6	9702
circled Latin small letter x	⓹	24E7	9447
circled Latin small letter y	⓺	24E8	9448
circled Latin small letter z	⓻	24E9	9449

3.6.5. *Modified Letters as Abbreviations*

While discussing ligatures (see 3.2.6.), we have mentioned a few cases with two merged letters, thus creating new ones (e.g., æ).

Another possibility is that the letters remain unmerged, but their combination refers to something else. A few well-known letter combinations function as abbreviations, listed in Table 8 below. As these form a single glyph, they are characterized by default kerning.

When inserted in the main text, some of them respect the line height (%), while others may be positioned in the superscript line (TM):

⁷⁷ Another type of circled small letter *i* refers to Circled Information Source: ⓪ (U+1F6C8, Alt 128712). Typing the code might change the typeface.

Table 8. *Enclosed signs or modified letters*

Sign	Glyph	Unicode	Alt	Remarks
account of	ª	2100		
addressed to the subject	¸	2101		
care of	¸	2105		
Número sign	№	2116		
telephone sign	TEL	2121		
trademark sign	™	2122	153	typing the string <i>tm</i> within parentheses will automatically turn into the glyph: (tm)

3.6.6. Letter-Like Currency Signs

Exchanging currency is a basic financial activity, and most widespread currencies have their own symbols. These signs are hardly ever used by themselves, as they should be “accompanied by a numeral” (APA 2020, 187).

The APA manual also suggests using “the name of the currency when a number is not given,” also prescribing the repetition of the required symbol for each quantity of currency (cf. the repetition of the degree belonging to values).

Currency signs are very efficient, saving space on electric boards, in figure labels, tables, legends, and charts (APA 2020, 187). The dollar sign, pound sterling sign, Euro sign, and Yen sign come before the numeral, which might be “expressed as a decimal number or whole number” (AMA 2020, 956). However, smaller amounts than decimals may also be displayed.

The dollar sign is used by many countries, so in international settings it is recommended that the country code should precede the dollar sign, and the calculated amount in U.S. dollars should be added in parentheses. Yet, there are some issues connected to spelling:

1. the Canadian dollar has multiple abbreviations: *C\$, CA\$, CAD\$, Can\$*; the AMA Handbook uses *CAD \$* (AMA 2020, 958),⁷⁸ so a space separates the letters and the sign (CAD \$3,000);
2. the New Zealand dollar has two alternatives: *\$NZ* or *NZ\$*;⁷⁹
3. while the APA Manual mentions the importance of these signs in conserving space in “table headings and in figure labels and legends” (APA 2020, 187), it does not discuss how to spell dollars preceded by country reference; nevertheless, the country is abbreviated with periods (U.S.);

⁷⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_dollar, February 8, 2025.

⁷⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand_dollar, February 8, 2025.

4. the ASA Manual uses *Can\$* for Canadian dollars; United States is abbreviated without periods, and there is no space between the country abbreviation and the dollar sign: US\$500, Can\$350, NZ\$300 (ASA et al. 2024, 7–01).

Knowing that consistency is very important, we recommend the US version (we tend to use no periods in acronyms and initialisms), which saves space and is also favored in headlines and combined abbreviations (USPS for United States Postal Service). In a similar vein, the country code may precede the sign without a space, on a par with the ASA recommendation above.

Table 9. *Currency signs*

Currency	Character	Unicode	Alt	Remarks
dollar sign	\$	0024	36	The sign precedes the value. It is available on US (Standard/International) keyboards (Shift+4) or other keyboards as well (RO: Shift+4 , HU 101: AltGr+É).
cent sign ⁸⁰	¢	00A2	155 0162	Rarely used: \$1.00 = 100¢, replaced by \$0.25, \$0.05. It is available on US (Standard/International) keyboards (Shift+AltGr+C).
general currency sign (placeholder)	Ɑ	00A4	0164	Informally: louse, ⁸¹ scarab, sputnik (English). It is available on US (Standard/International) keyboards (AltGr+4).
pound (sterling), lira sign	£	00A3	156 0163	The sign precedes the value. It is available on US (Standard/International) keyboards (Shift+AltGr+4).
Euro sign	€	20AC	0128	The sign precedes the value. It is available on US (Standard/International) keyboards (Shift+AltGr+C) or other keyboards as well

⁸⁰ Although not in polished English, the reason for the disappearing ¢ sign is explained here: <http://www.charlieanderson.com/centsign.htm>, February 7, 2025.

⁸¹ *Louse* refers to its “parasitic” nature, as it is only a placeholder: “it takes up space on the font but offers nothing in return” (Bringhurst 2004, 313).

Currency	Character	Unicode	Alt	Remarks
				(RO: $\overline{\text{AltGr}}+\overline{\text{E}}$, HU 101: $\overline{\text{AltGr}}+\overline{\text{U}}$).
Yen sign	¥	00A5		The sign precedes the value. It is available on US (Standard/International) keyboards ($\overline{\text{AltGr}}+\overline{\text{I}}$).
Florin (Dutch guilder, obsolete)	<i>f</i>	0192		

While these are globally used signs, there are rather limited ones as well such as the obsolete *guilder* or the less common *florin* (U+0192), which is the lowercase version of the Latin capital letter F with hook (F, U+0191). Nowadays, it is used as the Arabian florin (AWG).

3.6.7. Logograms

Logographic symbols are traditionally associated with Chinese and Japanese (symbols representing words). However, certain symbols came into being from Latin words and gained international fame, being included in character tables, as these typographic forms have been “tied to a certain word” (Bringhurst 2004, 327).

3.6.7.1. Ampersand (&)

The ampersand derives from the Latin *et* ‘and,’ and it is “one of the oldest alphabetic abbreviations” (Bringhurst 2004, 78), which is extremely useful in saving space in citations and tables (APA 2020, 203).

Houston highlights that the ampersand symbol “earned a permanent place in type cases and on keyboards” (Houston 2013, 75), so its Unicode is little known (U+0026).

The possibilities to illustrate the merged letters of the ampersand set the imagination of typeface creators on fire, and there are “sexy” ampersands⁸² or “I ♥ ampersands!” movements, collecting dozens of them.⁸³ A few interesting ones are illustrated below:

⁸² <https://blog.spoongraphics.co.uk/articles/my-top-30-fonts-with-the-sexiest-ampersands>, February 7, 2025.

⁸³ <https://github.com/cormullion/know-your-fonts/blob/master/i-love-ampersands.pdf>, February 7, 2025.

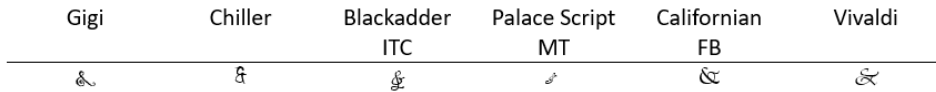


Figure 72. *Ampersand variants*

3.6.7.2. Section sign (§, 00A7)

The section sign (*silcrow*, *section mark*, or *paragraph mark*) originates from the Latin double *s* (*signum sectionis* ‘section symbol’).⁸⁴

As explained, it is a “critical sign used to mark the beginning of a paragraph or section” (Parkes 1992, 305), and it is inevitable in legal documents, manuals, and guides, typically followed by a number, referring to a particular section or subsection. Multiple sections are referred to with double section signs (§§ 8–10).⁸⁵

The importance of the section sign seems to have fallen behind, as various keyboards can reproduce it via combinations only (US-International: `Shift+AltGr+S`, RO: `AltGr+P`, HU-101: `AltGr+R`), while it is part of both ASCII (`Alt+0167`) and Unicode (U+00A7), displayed in the bracketed part of the heading as well.

Although the visual representation of the glyph might be “often stiff and bland” (Bringhurst 2004, 76) due to its reference, there are a few interesting versions:

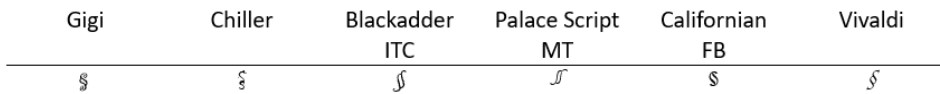


Figure 73. *Section sign variants*

3.6.7.3. “At” Sign (@)

The @ sign is “a shorthand notation for the word «at»” (Houston 2013, 79) or “at any rate,” so it is a logogram.

Having been included in the ASCII table in 1963, it was possible to be used in modern accounting (“commercial a”), invoicing, and more recently in email addresses, X (Twitter) usernames. In fact, its worldwide fame is secured by the entire social media, the financial and technical use (e.g., describing processor speed), but handwritten boards may also invite you to *the best c@ffee in town* with the help of this sign. A more recent use might have already been spotted by *Revolut* customers, as usernames (*Revtags*) start with this sign.

⁸⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/3aw998nd>, February 7, 2025.

⁸⁵ <https://straightforward.design/posters/silcrow/>, February 8, 2025.

US keyboard layouts position this sign on Key **2**, so **Shift+2** creates the sign, without thinking too much of its values: **Alt+64** or **U+0040**. The Hungarian keyboard layout enables this sign by pressing **AltGr+V**.

After discussing various letters, the next chapter presents numbers and numerals.

Chapter 4

Numbers

4.1. Disambiguation of Terms

There are at least four terms in English related to number: *number*, *numeral*, *figure*, and *digit*, so a minimal disambiguation is needed.⁸⁶

Digit refers to one of the ten single numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), while **number** “is an amount of something,”⁸⁷ so it is formed of one or more digits. While the term number is an abstraction or idea, written numbers are referred to as **numerals**, which seem to “emphasize quantity more strongly than numbers spelled out as words,” so “they are generally preferable in technical writing” (AMA 2020, 984). However, another source explains, “a numeral is a symbol or name that stands for a number,” admitting that people often use the term numeral instead of number.⁸⁸

Figure may also refer to a number,⁸⁹ and its use is favored in arithmetical calculations (having in mind “digits”), statistics, and financial performances; as such, there are *crime figures*, *unemployment figures*, *sales figures*, *a six-figure salary*, and some are *good at figures* (calculations). However, figure may also refer to illustrations, diagrams, or shapes in geometry, and we use this term in this sense throughout the book.

In the following, we try to use the terms *number* and *numeral*, except for the original terminology used in quotes. In our view, numbers are worth discussing starting with their form, completed with their types and spelling.

4.2. Forms of Numbers

The form of numbers may be standard, most notably the ten digits, but there are variants as well, such as circled (enclosed) digits and numbers, while others are raised (superscript) or lowered (subscript) compared to the middle of the text line.

⁸⁶ The term **cipher** is obsolete to refer to numbers.

⁸⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/eb/qa/digit-or-number>, February 10, 2025.

⁸⁸ <https://www.mathsisfun.com/numbers/numbers-numerals-digits.html>, February 10, 2025.

⁸⁹ https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/figure_1?q=figure, February 10, 2025.

4.2.1. Enclosed Numerals

All the digits and a few numbers have circled variants, which means black digits and numbers enclosed in a white circle (0–20) or their negatives (1–10):

Table 10. *Circled digits and numbers*

Digits, numbers	Glyph	Unicode
circled digit one	①	2460
circled digit two	②	2461
circled digit three	③	2462
circled digit four	④	2463
circled digit five	⑤	2464
circled digit six	⑥	2465
circled digit seven	⑦	2466
circled digit eight	⑧	2467
circled digit nine	⑨	2468
circled number ten	⑩	2469
circled number eleven	⑪	246A
circled number twelve	⑫	246B
circled number thirteen	⑬	246C
circled number fourteen	⑭	246D
circled number fifteen	⑮	246E
circled number sixteen	⑯	246F
circled number seventeen	⑰	2470
circled number eighteen	⑱	2471
circled number nineteen	⑲	2472
circled number twenty	⑳	2473
circled digit zero	①	24EA
negative circled digit one	①	2776
negative circled digit two	②	2777
negative circled digit three	③	2778
negative circled digit four	④	2779
negative circled digit five	⑤	277A
negative circled digit six	⑥	277B
negative circled digit seven	⑦	277C
negative circled digit eight	⑧	277D
negative circled digit nine	⑨	277E
negative circled number ten	⑩	277F

In case the typeface does not contain the desired glyph, it changes into a different one after the shortcut is typed (e.g., *Cambria Math*).

4.2.2. *Superscript and Subscript Numbers*

The use of superscript numbers is justified when extra information might be needed and the author wishes to “minimize interruption” (Bringhurst 2004, 69). As he explains, this strategy keeps them out of the main text, yet those who are interested in extra information can easily find them.

Superscript numbers are smaller than the default numbers of the baseline text and are positioned partly above the baseline. They are created “automatically” when a footnote⁹⁰ is inserted. This is possible with the help of a shortcut in Word (**Ctrl+Alt+F**) or **References, Insert Footnote**. The Writer variant is the **Insert Footnote** icon on the main menu or **Insert, Footnote and Endnote, Insert Footnote**:

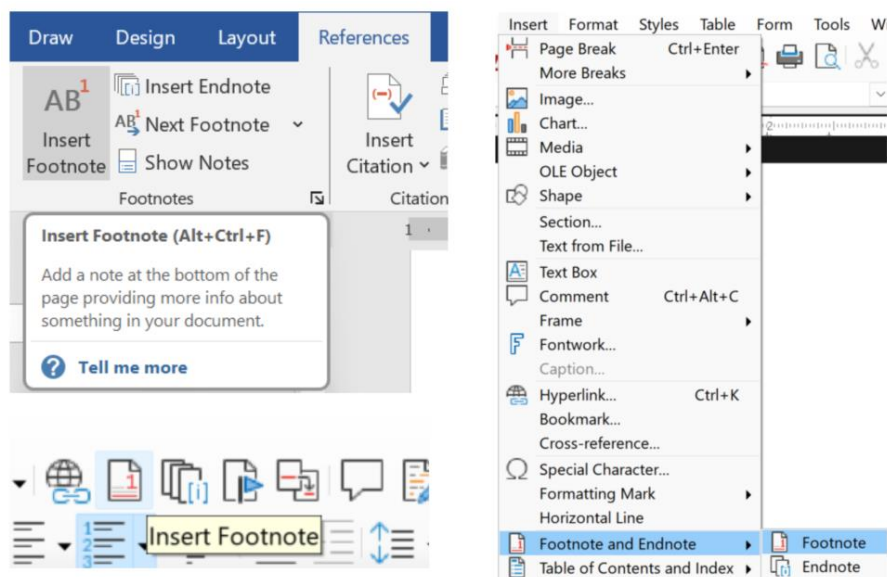


Figure 74. *Insert footnote, superscript number, Word and Writer*

Mathematics also relies heavily on superscript numbers when they refer to an exponent. The most frequent ones are squaring (3^2) or cubing (2^3).

Subscript numbers are smaller than the default numbers of the baseline and are positioned “partly below the baseline” (AMA 2020, 1145). Scientific descriptions abound in them: the number of atoms is subscripted in Chemistry

⁹⁰ Endnotes typically start with small Roman numbers: *i*, then *ii*, *iii*, etc.

(H₂O), or they denote the base of the number system, the elements of a vector, or differentiating variables (A_1 , A_2) in mathematics.

The Word shortcut for **Superscript** is **Ctrl+Shift+=**, while **Ctrl+Shift+=** triggers **Subscript**. The Writer variants are **Ctrl+Shift+P** and **Ctrl+Shift+B**, respectively.

4.3. Type

While numbers mostly express the idea of a particular amount, and they may have various functions (e.g., relative number, irrational number), we are interested in those which might appear in everyday communication.

4.3.1. Cardinal & Ordinal Numbers

The most commonly used numbers are probably cardinal numbers, while arranged items may be referred to with the help of ordinal numbers. Although both cardinal and ordinal numbers can be written with digits, ordinal numbers have two extra letters in the superscript part, which express the rank or order.

When the typing language is set to English in Word or Writer, correctly suffixed ordinal numbers change when followed by space, more precisely the suffix is raised to the superscript level. There are four ordinal suffixes: *-st* for 1 (*first*), *-nd* for 2 (*second*), *-rd* for 3 (*third*), and *-th* for the rest, but any integer number ending in 1, 2, or 3 has the corresponding suffixes: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 31st, 43rd, 95th. However, certain word processing programs may prevent this automatic raise.

One of the sources considers that superscript ordinals “may appear jarring and interrupt the flow of the text,” and to avoid this, it is recommended to spell out “the ordinals *first* through *ninth*” (AMA 2020, 966), and the same source does not favor the use of these suffixes as superscripts. Another guidebook accepts any of the versions as long as they are “consistent” (APA 2020, 179).

Ordinal numbers above nine are written in numbers unless they start the sentence, title, subtitle, or heading (AMA 2020, 966). This manual also specifies that in case a sentence contains more than one ordinal number, but all of them are below ten, they may be spelled out or not, but when one of them is above nine, the numeral form should be used for all.

However, there are a few exceptions, which are always spelled out, such as the *Twenty-fifth Amendment*, whatever the context.

A final remark is that references typically contain ordinal numbers (*3rd ed.*, *9th Annual Conference*), in which case numeral versions or digits (either superscript or not) are preferred (ASA et al. 2024, 7–01). The APA manual (APA 2020, 179) offers the following examples: *first*, *3rd year*, *fourth grade*, *10th grade*, *75th trial*, *three groups*, *3 years*, *Question 2*, *the second question*, *Table 2*, *the second table*, *the 12th chapter*.

4.3.2. Fractions and Decimal Fractions

Typographically viewed, fractions combine at least two digits, which are either separated by a fraction slash ($\overline{\text{Alt}}+8260$, U+2044)—resulting in a more slanted version than the regular slash found on keyboard: $/$ —or a decimal point.

The slashed fractions are commonly referred to as **vulgar** or **common fractions**, in which the fraction slash separates two whole numbers (the numerator and denominator, neither of which may be zero), and some of them are available in the form of a single glyph:

Table 11. *Vulgar fractions*

Fraction	Glyph	Unicode	Alt
vulgar fraction one seventh	$\frac{1}{7}$	2150	8528
vulgar fraction one ninth	$\frac{1}{9}$	2151	8529
vulgar fraction one tenth	$\frac{1}{10}$	2152	8530
vulgar fraction one third	$\frac{1}{3}$	2153	8531
vulgar fraction two thirds	$\frac{2}{3}$	2154	8532
vulgar fraction one fifth	$\frac{1}{5}$	2155	8533
vulgar fraction two fifths	$\frac{2}{5}$	2156	8534
vulgar fraction three fifths	$\frac{3}{5}$	2157	8535
vulgar fraction four fifths	$\frac{4}{5}$	2158	8536
vulgar fraction one sixth	$\frac{1}{6}$	2159	8537
vulgar fraction five sixths	$\frac{5}{6}$	215A	8538
vulgar fraction one eighth	$\frac{1}{8}$	215B	8539
vulgar fraction three eighths	$\frac{3}{8}$	215C	8540
vulgar fraction five eighths	$\frac{5}{8}$	215D	8541
vulgar fraction seven eighths	$\frac{7}{8}$	215E	8542
fraction numerator one	$\frac{1}{}$	215F	8543
fraction slash, division slash, solidus	$/$	2044	
vulgar fraction one quarter (or type 1/2, space)	$\frac{1}{4}$	00BC	0172
vulgar fraction one half (or type 1/2, space)	$\frac{1}{2}$	00BD	0171
vulgar fraction three quarters (or type 3/4, space)	$\frac{3}{4}$	00BE	0190
non-breakable division slash	$/$	2215	

However, some of them may be created by simply typing the digits and the regular slash ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$). They may be spelled out in texts (AMA 2020, 962), such as *two-thirds*, while others may rely on an article: *half an hour*, *a fifth*, *one-fifth*, although scientific descriptions prefer numerals (AMA 2020, 963). Mixed fractions contain both whole numbers (integers) and vulgar fractions, in which case numerals are easier to use: $3\frac{1}{2}$ (AMA 2020, 963).

Decimal fractions contain a decimal marker, pronounced as *point*, which is in fact a period (or dot glyph).⁹¹ Points accompany various measures: 25.8 (twenty-five point eight), 1.05 (one point zero five), knowing that numbers after the decimal point “are pronounced in isolation.”⁹²

All manuals stress that decimal values below 1 should start with 0, as in 0.750, and this leading 0 should not be omitted if the value may be higher than 1 (e.g., AMA 2020, 930), but in case no higher value than 1 is possible, the leading 0 must be omitted (APA 2020, 180).

Furthermore, “certain statistical values, such as α levels and P values, should be reported without the use of 0 before the decimal marker” (AMA 2020, 930) or “correlations, proportions” (ASA et al. 2024, 7–01). Bringhurst adds that when these types of numbers are listed, they should be “flush right or on the decimal” in the column (Bringhurst 2004, 71).

4.3.3. Roman Numerals

Although the use of Roman numerals is shrinking, we are advised to keep them if they “are part of an established terminology, do not change them to Arabic numerals” (APA 2020, 180).

While centuries used to be referred to in Roman numerals, modern English relies on Arabic numbers, and capital Roman numbers are to be seen only in titles, outlines, or “supplements to journals” (AMA 2020, 974). Furthermore, denoting wars (*World War I*), kings (*King George III*), and legislative acts (*Title XII*) also need Roman numerals (Froke et al. 2024, 209), while page numbering for forewords, prefaces, and introductions uses lowercase Roman numerals.

4.4. Numerals and Spelling

There might be various issues with spelling numbers, as well as their form (numerals or words), as detailed below.

4.4.1. Range of Numbers

Ranges of numbers should be typically used with *from* and *to* in texts, in which case the dash is not recommended:⁹³ *from 5 to 6*.

Interestingly, AmE might differentiate *to* and *through*, as the first one does not include the final digit (*from 7455 to 8698*), while *through* includes the final digit (AMA 2020, 968). However, the same source admits that *to* may be used instead of

⁹¹ AmE uses *period*, while BrE uses *full stop*. Nevertheless, *dot* is used in the case of webpages.

⁹² <https://jakubmarian.com/dot-period-full-stop-and-point-in-english/>, September 20, 2022.

⁹³ <https://tinyurl.com/3thfsc9j>, September 20, 2025.

through when the context is clear (lifespan, academic year, page numbers, or historical periods).

On the other hand, an en dash is suggested to express a range of numbers (ASA et al. 2024, 2–06).

4.4.2. *Plurals of Numbers*

The plural form of numbers should follow the standard plural form in English (by adding *-s* or *-es*), so no apostrophe is needed: *to march in threes, fours, or sixes* (APA 2020, 181). The same rule applies to the numeric form as well: *in the 1960s*.

4.4.3. *Figures and Spaces*

Although English uses commas to separate every three digits, this is generally not encouraged by manuals.⁹⁴ Instead, they suggest the *thin space* for that, “starting from the right-most integer or, in numbers with decimals, from the left of the decimal point” (AMA 2020, 962).

The thin space (AMA 2020, 456) is included in the International System of Units convention (SI), and it is applied in major European institutions as well. The elimination of comma to indicate large numbers of more than 4 digits has made it possible to avoid misunderstandings stemming from the different uses of period and comma. However, 4-digit numbers need no thin space, while more than 4-digit numbers need a thin space (U+2009) of “1/5 or 1/6 the width of an em dash” (AMA 2020, 930). This thin space is detectable in the five-digit number in the following brackets (75 925), although it is slightly more complicated to produce it.⁹⁵ The AMA manual offers a list comparing large numbers with thin space and comma:

<u><i>Preferred</i></u>	<u><i>Avoid</i></u>
1234	1,234
123 456	123,456
12 345.678 901	12,345.678901
1234.567 89	1,234.56789
1234 567.8901	1,234,567.8901

Figure 75. *Preferred and to-be-avoided numbers*

⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the APA Publication Manual recommends commas starting with 4 digits (1,000), mentioning exceptions as well (APA 2020, 180).

⁹⁵ Once any digit is typed, the string of 2009 followed by `Alt+X` will not yield the desired thin space, as it considers the digit before the string. Hence, a space is needed before the string, which may be deleted after the thin space is created.

When a string of digits longer than 4 serves other purposes as well, no spacing is needed, which is the case of postal codes, combinations of numerals with letters, page numbers, binary numbers, serial numbers, frequency, extreme temperature, or file numbers (APA 2020, 180).

A rather disturbing image might be when line-end numbers are broken, and one part of the string ends the line, while the other part starts the new line. The application of thin spaces will prevent this, as it is in fact a non-breaking space. The improper use of large numbers produces a visually disturbing image, as illustrated in Figure 76, detected in an online source:

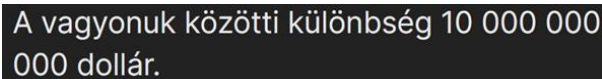


Figure 76. *Wrong line-end number (online source)*

A final remark is that no comma is needed in measures of the same unit, such as time or volume (AMA 2020, 456), as shown in the example: *1001 days is 2 years 9 months and 1 day.*

4.4.4. Numbers Instead of Words

Both text-editing manuals and subtitling guidelines typically state that “numbers 10 and above” are written with digits (APA 2020, 178), while numbers less than 10 should be written as words (APA 2020, 179) with a few exceptions:

1. the combination of numbers and units such as 3 °C or 3 kg (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 7);
2. numbers in series, parts of books (APA 2020, 178), lists and tables;⁹⁶
3. numbers representing common fractions (*two-thirds*) or mathematical operations (APA 2020, 179);
4. numbers deriving from quotes (AMA 2020, 962);
5. “when two or more numbers are used and any of them are greater than nine” (ASA et al. 2024, 7–01);
6. ordinal numbers from *first* through *nine*;
7. numbers referring to “time, dates, ages, scores and points on a scale, exact sums of money, and numerals as numerals” (APA 2020, 178);
8. the correct abbreviation of the word “number” is № (U+2116), and not the hashtag.

Numbers starting a sentence, title, or heading also belong to the exceptions, as they are written as numbers, although it is generally recommended not to start sentences with numbers (AMA 2020, 964).

⁹⁶ D. M., Mitchell, and Royle E. M. *Cochrane Style Essentials*. June 2024. <https://training.cochrane.org/online-learning/author-guidelines/essential-style-guidelines>, May 9, 2025.

4.4.5. *Words Instead of Numbers*

A list of cases when words replace numbers is offered in the previous section, to which we can add idiomatic expressions or metaphoric uses of numbers, as well as established expressions, where words replacing numbers should be preserved (*The Ten Commandments*, offer an example or two).

The range of numerals from twenty-one to ninety-nine requires a hyphen, and spelling numbers greater than 100 requires neither commas nor *and* (AMA 2020, 964).

In fact, the word *number* “may be abbreviated *No.* in the body of tables ... or in the text when used as a specific designator” (AMA 2020, 970), and it is not recommended to use the number sign (#) instead of this abbreviation (a *No. 1 hit*), as it is used extensively in social media. However, *number* should not be abbreviated when it is used as a proper noun (*Social Security Number*).

One is often used as a noun or pronoun (*on the one hand*), in which case the word is used. Similarly, “large rounded numbers,” such as *million* or *billion*, are mostly spelled out (AMA 2020, 965). *Million* signifies the quantity 10^6 , so digit 1 is followed by six zeros, but *billion* might refer to either 10^9 (a thousand million) or 10^{12} (a million million), and the latter is the rarely used *trillion*⁹⁷ (AMA 2020, 967). As the British and American use of *billion* and *trillion* is ambiguous, they are to be avoided, although there is the assumption that billion is 10^9 , while trillion is 10^{12} “in all English-speaking areas” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 204 Footnote 9).

4.4.6. *Numerals, Words, and Symbols*

Combining words and large numbers is logical (*2 million birds*, *3.5 million people*), including “[d]ates, page numbers, percentages, time, numbers preceded by capitalized nouns, and numbers followed by units of measure” (ASA et al. 2024, 7–01).

However, monetary units may often rely on currency signs as well (\$2, €3, £4, ¥5), and when they refer to a range, the symbols should be used twice (\$5–\$9), even if it refers to the same currency (CMOS 2024, 176). Currencies not exemplified above are placed after the numbers. The percentage symbol follows the numeral without space (5%), and a range repeats the symbol (5%–10%).

Understanding consecutive numbers is easier when words separate them. Rewording focuses on separating two numbers after each other, so instead of mentioning *a class of 30, 15 boys and 15 girls*, it is better to say *a class of 30 pupils, with 15 boys and 15 girls* (AMA 2020, 967).

⁹⁷ http://www.vendian.org/envelope/dir0/counting_by_tens.html, March 13, 2025.

4.5. Conclusions

Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 present the elements described as the “framing and hanging a painting” (Bringhurst 2004, 23), because they offer the setup of pages and the typeface of texts, together with an impressive set of options to contrast and highlight various parts of any text.

Nevertheless, we agree that everything described so far is a mere description and may be approached as suggestions at best, knowing that “there really aren’t any standards for type designers to follow” (Spiekermann 2013, 57). And it is not designers alone who do not follow these suggestions verbatim.

If we take an inventory of page content, we should focus on titles, several headings, an epigraph, block quotations, equations, sidenotes, possible graphs, tables, illustrations with accompanying captions, as explained (Bringhurst 2004, 102), because these elements offer the overall impression.

In our view, less visible parts may also contribute to shape the overall image, such as the numbers and various symbols belonging to punctuation, reiterating our experience that “prescriptions” regarding numbers and numerals also seem to be created by publishing houses, and inconsistencies are inevitable across various publications and individual solutions.

Chapter 5

Punctuation and Spelling

5.1. Definitions

Punctuation ensures the “cadence of a sentence” (APA 2020, 153). *The Modern Language Association of America Handbook* (MLA) offers a more precise definition: punctuation “clarifies sentence structure by separating some words and grouping others” (MLA 2021, 16), and it governs “relationships within and between sentences” (CMOS 2024, 378), revealing where thoughts are intended to be paused.

Punctuation is effective with the help of a set of signs and symbols, commonly referred to as **punctuation marks**. Manuals mention about a dozen of them, and we group them according to their various functions. As such, we consider it important to differentiate invisible (non-printable) and visible (printable) characters. While the former category contains only a few cases, the latter may be very diverse, ranging from common characters directly available from a standard keyboard (period, comma, or question mark) to mathematical operators and pictograms as well. However, it is clear that while a standard computer keyboard contains many useful characters, less frequent ones are also available directly (such as angle brackets), and more needed ones are not (e.g., en dash).

All these signs may “resolve structural uncertainties in a text ... signal nuances of semantic significance which might otherwise not be conveyed at all” (Parkes 1992, 1). This is possible once there are clearly set recommendations upon the meanings of punctuation signs, and the *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* (1993), together with its major abridged version (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*) provides this for the majority of publication manuals, relying on AmE.⁹⁸

Two important remarks are that all punctuation marks should be set in the same font style as the main text unless they belong to the highlighted part (CMOS 2024, 378), and no extra invisible characters (space or tab) should be left after sentence-end punctuation marks (CMOS 2024, 69).

Notable exceptions to following punctuation guidelines are provided by users of various social media, which may be characterized by lacking certain punctuation marks (AMA 2020, 444) or overusing some of them. Yet, this type of

⁹⁸ Yet, the dictionary is not void of criticism, for instance, lack of recommendations or the use of *ain’t*.

communication is beyond the range of the present book. Proper punctuation is typically combined with correct language use, well-chosen font typeface with diacritical signs, word order, and lack of typographical errors, which is discussed in the next chapter.

5.2. Non-Printing Characters

Non-printing characters, together with special characters—abbreviated as NPSC (Dodlapati et al. 2010, 1)—offer a valuable insight into how characters were positioned in a document. Non-printing characters are typically disabled, and they may be enabled with the help of the pilcrow symbol both in MSO and LO.

While MSO running on Windows displays non-printing characters in the same color as the font color (leading to eye strain), LO and MSO running on MacBooks offers blue non-printing characters to the users, which is more than welcome. Enabling non-printing characters offers the chance to observe typing errors such as multiple spaces, multiple tabs, or extra lines.

In our view, there are three major categories of non-printing characters (the pilcrow sign, spaces, and breaks), detailed in the following sections. Less frequent ones are anchor (appearing when images or text boxes are inserted), end-of-cell or end-of-line symbol (louse), appearing in tables. Some headings end in a bracketed part, which contains those signs and their Unicode value that are not present on the standard US keyboard.

5.2.1. *Pilcrow (¶, 00B6)*

Experts recommend users to enable non-printing characters, which may be carried out by pressing the pilcrow button in both Word (**Main** tab, **Show/Hide** button) and Writer. The Word shortcut to enable/disable this function is **Ctrl+Shift+***,⁹⁹ while Writer uses the **Ctrl+F10** shortcut.

The pilcrow sign is referred to as the “quintessential shady character” (Houston 2013, 3), and it may be inserted from the **Character Map** or with specific shortcuts (**Alt+20**, **Alt+0182**, or **U+00B6**). Its origin is well described by Houston, also taken over by the Smithsonian magazine.¹⁰⁰ However, if the **Show paragraph marks and hidden characters** is enabled, pressing the **Enter** key results in a pilcrow sign, and the cursor jumps to a new line below, starting a new paragraph. Thus, it is a “proofreading symbol ... of talismanic power” (Houston 2013, 21).

⁹⁹ Although MSO provides the **Ctrl+¶** shortcut, this is not functional, and the **Ctrl+Shift+*** only works with the * sign on Key **Q**, while the * sign on the numeric keyboard is also non-functional.

¹⁰⁰ <https://tinyurl.com/4sm363t4>, February 7, 2025.

5.2.2. Spaces

There are spaces for various purposes, and the exact amount of (white)space between different characters is described in various manuals and guidelines (Spiekermann 2013, 193; CMOS 2024, 381), although Spiekermann admits that spaces in between letters may prove more time-consuming than “setting the type itself.”

The CMOS states, “[t]he spaces that occur between words and other elements in running text ... are not punctuation per se, but they play a supporting role,” as their primary function is separation (CMOS 2024, 430). The problem is that there are various spaces with different widths, and some of them are even non-breaking to keep certain strings of characters together. There are 13 types of spaces listed (CMOS 2024, 430), and the majority of whitespace characters are detailed below.

5.2.2.1. Space

The term **space** in text editing refers to the “regular” space created with the Space bar. Its Unicode value is U+0020, but it is part of the Alt value (decimal) as well (Alt+32). As explained, this is “as an invisible graphic rather than a control character” (Dodlapati et al. 2010, 1).

Space is to be used between Arabic numerals and following quantities, although they might be “connected” with non-breaking spaces for intelligibility. Sentence-end punctuation marks are followed by space when another sentence starts. Similarly, initials of names are separated by a period followed by space, while abbreviations (more precisely, acronyms and initialisms) should not contain spaces (APA 2020, 154). However, there is no space before the percent and degree signs (AMA 2020, 929).

Other types of spaces are also defined in Unicode, but they might not be functional on certain devices or in other applications unless they are “intended for print or PDF” (CMOS 2024, 431).

5.2.2.2. Non-Breaking Space (00A0)

The use of non-breaking space is recommended between numerals with spaces and numerals followed by measures of unit (except for numbers followed by the percent and degree sign).

Non-breaking space is also recommended between the initials in a name (CMOS 2024, 431), or even parts of a book, such as *chapter 1* or *unit 2*. This type of space may be referred to as **hard space** (Bringhurst 2004, 43), and it may be either inserted from the Character Map or relying on various shortcuts: Ctrl+Shift+Space bar (Windows) and Option+Space bar (macOS). It has a Unicode variant (U+00A0), but Alt+255 and Alt+0160 also result in a non-breaking space. This type of space is widely supported in text editing.

Non-English languages also rely on non-breaking space to type large numbers (1 000 000), phrases/words followed by numbers, or various mathematical operations (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 7).

Although hardly distinguishable from the non-breaking space, there is a narrow non-breaking space (U+202F), which is a fixed-width version (CMOS 2024, 430).

5.2.2.3. *En Space (2002) and Em Space (2003)*

There are two types of dash-width spaces:

1. an en space (or “nut”) offers the width of an en dash, hence they are wider than the standard space;
2. an em space provides the width of an em dash.

An en space may be half the width of an em space (CMOS 2024, 430). Their Unicode value is U+2002 and U+2003, respectively.

5.2.2.4. *Thick (2004) and Thin Space (2009)*

As explained, a thick space is a third of the width of an em space, while a thin space is a fifth or a sixth of an em space (CMOS 2024, 430).

The CMOS recommends the use of thin spaces “between contiguous single and double quotation marks” (CMOS 2024, 431), and another source—relying on the SI convention—favors thin spaces to separate the digits beyond thousands (AMA 2020, 456), even if they are commonly separated by commas in English.

Manuals might also mention a hair space (U+200A), which is thinner than a thin space (CMOS 2024, 430), but no explanation has been found when to use it.

5.2.2.5. *Figure Space (2007) and Punctuation Space (2008)*

As its name suggests, a figure space (U+2007) takes the width of a monospaced digit, whereas a punctuation space (U+2008) occupies the width of a period, colon, or exclamation point (CMOS 2024, 430). While figure space makes sense to use in telephone numbers or secure aligned columns filled with numbers, punctuation space is hardly ever used in everyday contexts.

5.2.2.6. *The Tabulator Character*

The tabulator has a standard width (as a nonprint character), although text editors tend to change it.¹⁰¹

The tabulator key (tab key, tab space) should be used to divide a text into fields, ultimately having in mind the creation of tables by exporting the text into a spreadsheet. However, many users rely on this key to mark the beginning of a new

¹⁰¹ <https://tinyurl.com/5z45jfpn>, April 3, 2025.

paragraph, functioning as a paragraph marker, often taking over the first line indentation feature of word processors (CMOS 2024, 73).

Word can change tabbed text to a table by accessing **Insert, Table, Convert Text to Table, Separate Text At** with four options: **Paragraphs, Commas, Tab, Other**. Writer offers this via **Table, Convert, Text to Table, Separate Text At**, also offering four options: **Tabs, Semicolons, Paragraph, Other**.

The following table displays the width of spaces discussed above:

Table 12. *Various spaces*

Name	Unicode/Shortcut	Alt	Width
Space	0020	32	Jack Sparrow
Non-Breaking Space	00A0 Ctrl + Shift + Space bar	255 0160	Jack Sparrow
En Dash	2002	0150	Jack Sparrow
Em Dash	2003	0151	Jack Sparrow
Thick Space	2004		Jack Sparrow
Figure Space	2007		123 456
Punctuation Space	2008		Jack Sparrow
Thin Space	2009		Jack Sparrow
Hair Space	200A		Jack Sparrow
Tab Character ¹⁰²	–	09	Jack Sparrow

5.2.3. Breaks

Breaks are also nonprint features of a text. Major break types within a document are:

1. page break (Ctrl+Enter) is used to start a new page within a document; if each new chapter is set to start on a separate page, then **Page break before** must be enabled; if separate ideas need to be presented, then **Space after**;
2. column break (Ctrl+Shift+Enter) is used to start a new column within a document;
3. line break (Shift+Enter) starts a new line in the document; the symbol for this type of break is signaled by a carriage return (¶);¹⁰³
4. section break starts a new section, which may be **Continuous** (on the same page), **Next** (starting on a new page), and there is the option for the new page to start an odd or even page;

¹⁰² Seemingly, there is no Unicode for that, but there is Alt+09 for the tab character, resulting in a right arrow, when nonprint characters are revealed.

¹⁰³ The Unicode value for a carriage return (¶) is U+21B5, or the decimal is Alt+8629.

5. paragraph break: keep lines together;
6. end of cell/row (louse).

Word offers these breaks via the **Layout** tab, **Breaks**, while Writer users can access these features through **Insert**, **More Breaks**, **Manual Break**, and **Page Style** with the options for **Line**, **Column**, and **Page break**.

A special type of nonprint break character marks the end of cells or rows in tables, referred to as the louse symbol (☐).

5.3. Dashes

Dashes are a set of printing characters and—together with hyphens—belong to “internal punctuation marks used for linkage and clarity of expression” (AMA 2020, 459).

As Houston explains, there are many types of dashes, some of which can easily replace the hyphen in modern word processors, “where once the hyphen-minus ran riot” (Houston 2013, 112), knowing that the differences may be “subtle” (CMOS 2024, 414). The APA style uses two kinds of dashes: the em dash (long dash) and the en dash (midsized dash), which are different from the hyphen and the minus sign (APA 2020, 157). However, another manual mentions that alongside the em dash, there is a 2-em dash and even a 3-em dash, and dashes are used to “convey a particular meaning or emphasize and clarify a certain section of material within a sentence” (AMA 2020, 471). For instance, *a small-state affair* versus *a small state-affair*.

The only dash directly available on the keyboard is the hyphen, although there are combinations for the em dash and en dash as well. In fact, Houston complains that dashes were neglected before the Unicode period, and the typewriter’s hyphen stood for the hyphen, en dash and minus sign as well, while present-day keyboards display a “hyphen-minus” sign, which is also inadequate (Houston 2013, 121).

5.3.1. Hyphens

A **hyphen** is primarily used to link syllables of the same word “which have become separated, especially at the end of a line,” and to “link compound words” (Parkes 1992, 304).

However, there are at least three types that should be mentioned: hard hyphen, soft hyphen, and non-breaking hyphen. As observed, hyphens and apostrophes apply to words (Greenbaum 1996, 505).

5.3.1.1. Hard Hyphen

A **hard hyphen** is typed (available on various keyboard layouts), becoming “a permanent part of the text stream” (Felici 2012, 90), and is one of the “the simplest

mark[s] of punctuation,” together with the period (Houston 2013, 121). In fact, it is a “connector” (AMA 2020, 459).

The length of a hyphen is typically the quarter of an em, although there are cases when “a shorter hyphen is better” (Bringinghurst 2004, 79). Its Unicode value is U+002D, but `Alt+45` results in the same symbol.

While it is impossible to list all the conceivable uses of hyphens, there are certain guidelines to clarify that, and words with or without hyphens should be checked in dictionaries. If not found in dictionaries, the general rule is to avoid the use of hyphen. As for line-end hyphens, they should be “hung in the right margin” (Bringinghurst 2004, 79). Interestingly, a line-start hyphen followed by space is automatically turned into a bulleted list in Word, where bullets are replaced by hyphens (not recommended). This function is not implemented in Writer.

Permanent hyphens are orthographic (AMA 2020, 460), signaling a strong bond between the components. The CMOS offers a lengthy table of how to use the hyphen properly (CMOS 2024, 477–91), and combined with further sources (AMA 2020, 461–69; 2020, 968–69; APA 2020, 163–64; Thomas 2021, 464), online ones included,¹⁰⁴ the following major uses are worth mentioning:

1. compound words (*brother-in-law*);
2. compounds in which the base word is capitalized (*pro-Freudian*);
3. compound words with certain words such as *self* or *ex* (*self-driven*, *ex-wife*); nevertheless, certain hyphenation rules change, as is the case with *email*, which used to be hyphenated, although other similar compounds still preserve the hyphen (*e-cigarettes*, *e-commerce*);
4. multiple compound words (*non-goal-oriented*);
5. compound serving as adjective or noun (*a hands-on experience*);
6. telephone numbers with country codes;
7. social security numbers;
8. International Standard Book Number (ISBN) numbers;
9. separating letters when letter by letter spelling is intended;
10. avoiding awkward combinations of similar letters of prefixed or suffixed words (*semi-independent*, *football-like*), except for commonly used ones (*coeducational*, *cooperation*, *coordination*);
11. identical interjections (*blah-blah*);
12. marking syllables (without spaces on either end);
13. connecting numbers (*forty-five*, *2024-25*), sounds and abbreviations with suffix in foreign languages;
14. ranges and dimensions (*a 3-cm-diameter spot*); however, non-modifier versions are more fluent (*a spot 3 cm in diameter*);
15. tests, scales, diagnostic manuals (*MMPI-2*, *DSM-S*).

¹⁰⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/mtr75upt>, April 24, 2025.

Naturally, there are rules when not to use hyphens (AMA 2020, 968; Bringhurst 2004, 80; Thomas 2021, 464):

1. tables and graphs may use hyphens to indicate spans, except for when the minus sign is also included (*-5.8 to -2.3 kg*); on the other hand, texts should use the preposition *to* instead of the hyphen when dates or numerals are specified (*5% to 10% of the people. 29 January to 10 February*);
2. “closed compound words” that look like one word should not be hyphenated: (*bookshop, earthquake, downstream, honeybee, keyword, makeup, notebook, online*);
3. Uniform/Universal Resource Locators (URLs), i.e. web page addresses or email addresses should not be broken relying on hyphens.

The so-called **suspended hyphens** (APA 2020, 163; CMOS 2024, 477) should be used when “the second part of a hyphenated expression is omitted,” and the suspended hyphen replaces the similar part, followed by a space or comma: *fifteen- and twenty-year mortgages, both over- and underfed cats, 2-, 3-, and 10-min pauses*.

Temporary hyphens should “prevent ambiguity, clarify meaning, and indicate word breaks at the end of a line” (AMA 2020, 460), including the case when an “unhyphenated word would have a different meaning” (AMA 2020, 465) such as *re-formation*.

5.3.1.2. Soft Hyphen

Soft hyphens are automatically generated breaks at line-ends once **Hyphenation** is active in Word. Writer contains this feature under **Tools, Language, Hyphenation**.

This type of hyphen is “added by a hyphenation program ... and it will disappear when the word in which it occurs no longer needs to be broken at line’s end” (Felici 2012, 89). The CMOS explains that hard hyphens should be distinguished from “end-of-line hyphens,” that is soft hyphens, which are not permanent (CMOS 2024, 108–9).

5.3.1.3. Non-Breaking Hyphen (2011)

Interestingly, non-breaking hyphens are not mentioned in the major style guides. Nevertheless, they might be very important when we do not wish to break hyphenated words at line-ends, such as combined family names or certain numbers (e.g., *twenty-five*).

Its Unicode value is U+2011 or Alt+Shift+␣, but it may be inserted from the **Character Map** as well: the **Main** tab in Word contains the **Symbol** icon, and the drop-down arrow offers **More Symbols** with the **Special Characters** tab:

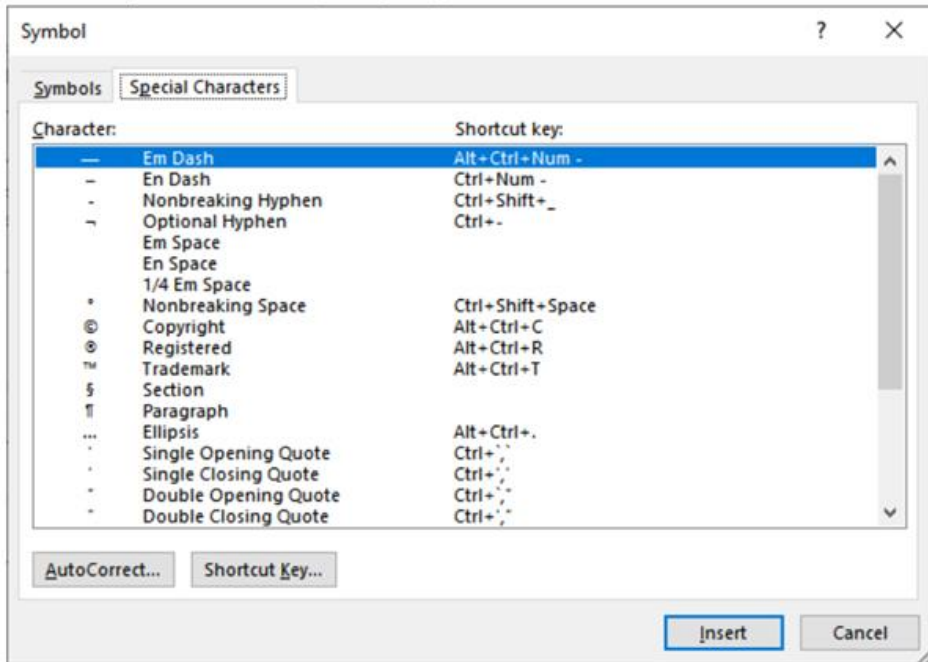


Figure 77. Special characters, Word

However, the **Ctrl+Shift+** shortcut (displayed) results in superscript and not in the desired non-breaking hyphen. Word, running on Windows, can produce a non-breaking hyphen with the Alt code or the Unicode mentioned above.



Figure 78. Special characters, Writer

Special characters in Writer may be inserted differently: **Insert** on the **Main** tab, then **Special Character**, and in the Search line the name of the character will filter the options to the desired one (although spaces are invisible in the white cells): see Figure 78.

5.3.1.4. Word Division

While soft hyphens are controlled by text-editing software, there are certain words that should never be separated resorting to hyphens. Although certain settings are available regarding when to split words at line-ends (e.g., by specifying the minimum number of characters or to make exceptions with specific words), this might not be enough.

As recommended, division of words should take place after a vowel, knowing that diphthongs form a single vowel (e.g., *aneu-rysm*). Furthermore, single-syllable words should never be separated (CMOS 2024, 455–59), but pronunciation should be also considered (e.g., *knowl-edge*) and homonyms might have various divisions (*proj-ect* as a noun and *pro-ject* as a verb).

Compound words, already hyphenated words, or affixed words (with prefix or suffix) should be divided at “the natural breaks” (CMOS 2024, 456), so where the hyphen is (e.g., *mother-in-law*) or separating the prefix/suffix from the root (e.g., *un-happy*, *wonder-ful*).

Personal names should not be divided, except for after the initials, but not before the *Jr.* or *Sr.* abbreviations, which are not separated by comma before and after the names (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 174).

A further issue is large numbers, which should never be divided, although online articles seem to break this rule, as illustrated in Figure 76 (Section 4.4.3.). Moreover, abbreviated units of measure should be next to the numeral with the help of a non-breaking space (CMOS 2024, 457).

Finally, email addresses and URLs should not be hyphenated manually at the end of a line; they are typically broken after a punctuation sign or other symbol.

5.3.2. En Dash (–, 2013)

There are views that dashes “obscure” the meaning of a sentence (Houston 2013, 154), and the **en dash** (or *middle-length dash*) is one of them, as its use is mixed with the hyphen and the subtraction sign.

Although the keyboard contains a key with a sign similar to an en dash, that is the hyphen, while the combination of **Shift**+**⏏** results in the underscore (**_**). An en dash may be inserted via the **Character Map** or relying on shortcuts: **U**+2013 or **Alt**+0150. The en dash is “half the length of an em dash” (AMA 2020, 1131).

Word can insert an en dash with the **Ctrl** key and the hyphen sign on the NumPad, while Writer turns two consecutive hyphens to an en dash. Furthermore, typing a hyphen, a space, and a word followed by another space will automatically turn the hyphen into an en dash. A notable exception is when the hyphen starts

the line, because Word will interpret it as the beginning of a bulleted list, but bullets are replaced by hyphens (visually unappealing), in which case they are not converted into en dashes.

The en dash is used to refer to ranges with digits (3–6) referring to times, page numbers, dates, house numbers (Ármeán 2017, 38), and no space should be inserted between the sign and the digits¹⁰⁵ (Bringhurst 2004, 80; Thomas 2021, 463). In order to prevent ending the line with an en dash, inserting the non-breaking space before and after the dash is recommended (Word). While this method keeps the range together, it breaks the rule that no space should be on either side of the dash, so an interesting bridging solution is needed. As suggested,¹⁰⁶ when the range is typed with the non-breaking spaces, selecting a space and pressing **Ctrl+D** triggers a window with the fonts, where the **Advanced** tab, **Scale** is found. The value should be set to 1%, which is an acceptable solution:

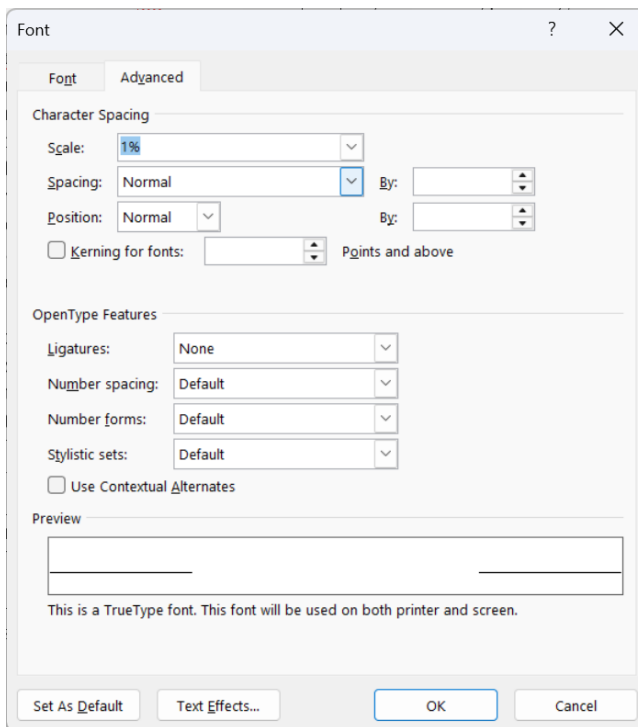


Figure 79. Workaround for non-breaking en dash, Word

¹⁰⁵ BrE may use spaces before and after the en dash (Houston 2013, 145).

¹⁰⁶ <https://darrengoossens.wordpress.com/2018/07/31/non-breaking-en-dash-in-word/>, August 14, 2025.

Of course, this is not an ideal solution, as a non-breaking space set to Scale 1% is invisible even if the **Show/Hide** is activated.

There is a description for Writer:¹⁰⁷ after typing the characters before the en dash, the `:-:` string should be typed (this will automatically turn to an en dash), and typing 2060 followed by `Alt+X` will turn the dash into a non-breaking word joiner, followed by the characters after the dash. The result is visibly better, as activating the nonprint characters reveals the non-breaking word joiner, while the standard view hides it:

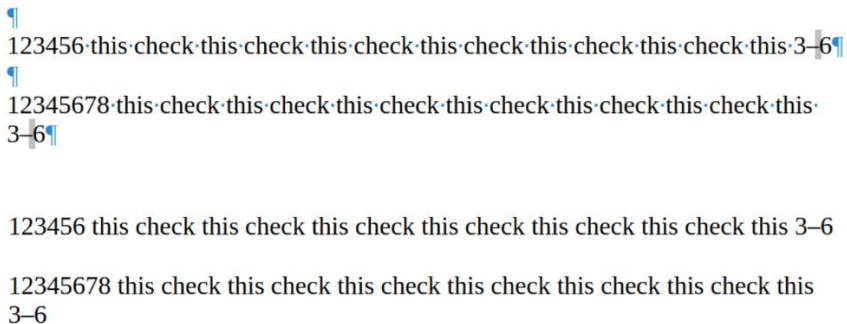


Figure 80. Workaround for non-breaking dash, Writer

Tricking Word by creating this word joiner in Writer is not possible, as once the text is copied from Writer and pasted into a Word document turns it into a regular en dash.

To facilitate clarity, in case any of the numbers is negative (*-3 to 3*), *to* is preferred instead of the dash (ASA et al. 2024, 2–06). As the en dash replaces the word *to*, it may refer to routes, directions, and distances as well (*Paris–Roubaix bicycle race*), where the en dash signals that the compounds are “of equal importance” (ASA et al. 2024, 2–06).

However, when *from* or *between* is used, *to* is always required: *from 5 to 6*, *between 5 and 6*. The en dash also signals the link between compound words with hyphen: *the post–World War II years* (CMOS 2024, 417). More complex compounds may combine en dash and hyphen: *North–North–West* (Academia Română 2005, XLIII) or *Winston–Salem–oriented group* (AMA 2020, 471).

A final use of en dash might be linked to censorship: “offensive or sensitive” words may offer only a letter completed with the en dash (Houston 2013, 145).

¹⁰⁷ <https://ask.libreoffice.org/t/non-breaking-en-dash/27197/7>, August 14, 2025.

5.3.3. *Em Dash (—, 2014)*

An **em dash** (or *long dash*) is double the length of an en dash, and it may be inserted via the **Character Map** or **Choose Symbol** from the **Insert** menu, then **Special Characters** tab, highlight the em dash, and click **Insert**.¹⁰⁸ There are also two shortcuts for this sign: U+2014 or **[Alt]+0151**. Keyboards with numeric keypad have a further option: **[Ctrl]+[Alt]+[hyphen]** (hyphen on the numeric keypad) will also result in an em dash, but only in Word.

The non-breaking space before and after the em dash might work in the case of Word, but the workaround for Writer does not work (see Section 5.3.2.).

The em dash seems to be an alternative to parentheses, commas, or a colon (CMOS 2024, 418), and certain expressions with *that is*, *for instance*, or *namely* might start with the em dash (CMOS 2024, 419). Thus, it indicates “an interruption or break in thought in a sentence,” also used “after introductory clauses and before closing clauses or designations” (AMA 2020, 1131).

Appositions are typically separated from the rest of the sentence by commas, but em dashes are also possible (AMA 2020, 471), although it is better not to use them very often, as they might break the text too much (APA 2020, 157). Furthermore, it can replace an entire word or thought in case the author does not wish to reveal them (Greenbaum 1996, 511).

Subentries in an index may also rely on the em dash, as well as blank or empty data may be signaled with it (CMOS 2024, 420).

Non-English languages may signal dialogue lines with a sign slightly longer than the em dash, although in many cases they rely on the em dash directly followed by the first word, without a space (CMOS 2024, 420), which is also suggested by other authors (Bringhurst 2004, 81).

The rise of the “dash” (both the em dash and the en dash) is mentioned by Lloyd,¹⁰⁹ who offers a vivid characterization of them: “[t]he dash is brutal, unsympathetic, slashing, and impossible to be confused about — it takes you, frictionlessly, to the point. The dash invites no ambiguity and wastes no time. The punctuational equivalent of tearing a heart from a chest,” ending with the recommendation that it should be used instead of the semicolon.

5.3.3.1. *2-Em Dash (2E3A)*

The previously discussed en dash and em dash might be used to indicate missing letters and words, although manuals mention longer dashes for these purposes.

One of them is the **2-em dash** (U+2E3A), which should mark “missing letters in a word” (AMA 2020, 472), in which case the first letter is provided (e.g., *New*

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.techrepublic.com/article/four-ways-to-insert-an-em-dash-in-a-word-document/>, April 24, 2025.

¹⁰⁹ <https://unherd.com/newsroom/the-melancholy-decline-of-the-semicolon/>, April 24, 2025.

A— *Hospital*), and there is no space between the letter and the 2-em dash. Yet, an entire word may be replaced by this sign, in which case space is needed on both sides, unless a punctuation sign is used.

5.3.3.2. 3-Em Dash (2E3B)

The 3-em dash (U+2E3B) is recommended in bibliographies instead of repeating the author’s name (Bringhurst 2004, 81; CMOS 2024, 71), although it is typically applied by editors and publishers.

However, another source recommends the use of the 3-em dash to stand for one or even more missing words (AMA 2020, 472), in which case space should be inserted on both ends, unless it is followed by a punctuation mark.

5.4. Sentence-Stop Marks

There are four generally accepted sentence-stop marks, or “terminal punctuations” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 94): the period, the ellipsis, the exclamation point, and the question mark.

5.4.1. Period

The **period** (or *full stop*, *dot*)¹¹⁰ is considered to be “the most powerful punctuation mark” (Bălan et al. 2003, 57), which is “irreducible” (Houston 2013, 121).

A period is used to end a declarative sentence (sometimes even an imperative one), and there is no space before the period (Academia Română 2005, XLIII). Furthermore, it never accompanies an exclamation point or a question mark, which “take precedence over the period” as they are “stronger” (CMOS 2024, 433).

A period comes before the closing quotation mark, parenthesis or square bracket of a full sentence (AMA 2020, 448), thus no further period is required after the quotation, parenthesis, or square bracket.

On the other hand, in case an abbreviation ending in a period finishes the sentence (*etc.*), a further period is needed for the “sentence as a whole, outside the parentheses (CMOS 2024, 383). When the sentence’s last word ends in an apostrophe, the period follows it.

Further uses of the period:

1. figure legends and captions (AMA 2020, 448);
2. initials in names;
3. after Latin or Arabic numerals representing ordinal numbers;
4. dates in various languages; certain languages, such as Romanian, need no space after the period between the day, month, and year (Academia

¹¹⁰ While AmE uses *period*, BrE uses *full stop*.

Română 2005, XLIV), while others require space after the periods, such as Hungarian;

5. decimal indicator (AMA 2020, 449), although in these cases we refer to it as a *point*.

While there are regulations when to use periods in abbreviations, these seem to be only recommendations, as there are variations. For instance, it is suggested that Latin abbreviations (*a.m.*, *e.g.*, *i.e.*, *p.m.*, *vs.*) should use periods without spaces (Thomas 2021, 456), but we can see variants as well (*am*, *AM*, *A.M.*). On the other hand, abbreviations functioning as adjectives (*U.S. Navy*) need periods.

Reference abbreviations (APA 2020, 154) also need a period (*Vol.*, *Fig.*, *ed.*), although it is suggested that *p* for *page* and *pp* for *pages* should take no period (Bringhurst 2004, 88).

Era designations also need periods with no spaces (*B.C.E.*, *C.E.*, *B.C.*, *A.D.*), and all references take a period at the end, except DOI numbers and URLs (APA 2020, 154), knowing that period in a URL is referred to as *dot*.

Abbreviations of various measurements need no period, except *inch* (*in.*), as it might be misread (APA 2020, 154).

Abbreviated items may take a period in AmE (*Dr.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *St.*, *Rd.*, *Ct.*), while these have no period in BrE (*Dr*, *Mr*, *Mrs*, *St* ← *Street*, *Rd* ← *Road*, *Ct* ← *Court*). Lack of full stop in BrE abbreviations signals that the word ends in the final letter, making the full stop unnecessary. Non-English languages may have other rules regarding abbreviations and periods.

A succinct list specifies cases when no period is needed:

1. titles, subtitles, chapter titles, subhead, heading, figure or table titles (AMA 2020, 448);
2. datelines, signatures, addresses (CMOS 2024, 384);
3. scientific and technical measurement abbreviations (*cm*, *kg*, *min*, *ml*, *s*);
4. abbreviations functioning as nouns or geographical names (*US*, *USS*, *USA*);
5. fully capitalized acronyms (*NASA*);
6. academic degrees such as *PhD*, *PsyD*, *EdD*, *MD*, or *MA* (APA 2020, 154);
7. letters referring to the cardinal points (*E*, *W*, *N*, *S*);
8. in case a sentence ends with an abbreviation that requires a period (*etc.*).

Non-English languages might have further rules regarding the use or omission of period.

5.4.2. *Ellipsis (2026)*

Ellipsis is a “sequence of (normally) three periods” destined to stand for “omissions in quotations and for hesitation or suspense” (Greenbaum 1996, 516). It may be termed as *ellipsis dots*, *ellipsis points*, *ellipsis periods*, *suspension dots*, or *suspension periods*, a row of three baseline dots (Bringhurst 2004, 82),

informally *dot-dot-dot*,¹¹¹ or simply *dots*, and it is known to have at least three formats (detailed below).

5.4.2.1. Creating an Ellipsis

The standard text-editing ellipsis (...) is a single glyph, resembling three dots close together, although the space between them is increased compared to three consecutive periods.

By default, this type of ellipsis is used in Word or Writer when three periods are typed in a row with the **Autocorrect** function on. This glyph may be obtained in multiple ways:

- the Unicode value is U+2026;
- the Windows **Alt** code is **Alt**+0133;
- the macOS shortcut is **Alt**+**;**;
- the Word shortcut is **Ctrl**+**Alt**+**;**;
- a further option is the decimal code: **Alt**+8230.

The Associate Press (AP) format ellipsis (...) is also three periods in a row, but when typed, the automatic change to the glyph is cancelled with the help of the **Ctrl**+**Z** keyboard shortcut, thus switching back to three standard periods in a row.

The CMOS format ellipsis (. . .) is similar to the Associated Press (AP) format, but there is a non-breaking space on both sides of the middle period. A further source¹¹² even recommends the use of a special space between the periods (U+202F), which is the *narrow non-break space*, and it is around ¼ or ½ em wide (. . .).

A final possibility is the ellipsis suggested by two authoritative sources, which is three periods separated by spaces between them and on both ends (APA 2020, 275; MLA 2021, 272).

5.4.2.2. Ellipsis After Words and Sentence Start

There are views that the ellipsis joins the previous text without space, and if it starts the sentence, no space should be used between the ellipsis and the following word, also stipulated by English sources: “it’s generally acceptable to include no spaces between the ellipsis and the words directly adjacent to it.”¹¹³

However, we would like to reserve the option of no space between the text and ellipsis for the ellipsis within a word (e.g., due to decency, censorship, crossword puzzles, etc.), in which case we agree that it should not be separated by spaces from the remaining letters (*t...er*). Yet, it is known that censored words typically rely on other options than ellipsis, such as the asterisk, plus sign (instead of *T*) or figures instead of letters (*5* instead of *S*, *1* instead of *I*, *0* instead of *O*).

¹¹¹ Cf. the movie *Mamma Mia!* (2008).

¹¹² <https://tinyurl.com/44933v3t>, August 20, 2022.

¹¹³ <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/ellipsis-examples.html>, August 20, 2022.

Similarly, no space is needed when each syllable of a longer word is emphasized (*She is beau...ti...ful!!!*).

On the other hand, we tend to think that in case the ellipsis replaces a word, it should be separated by a space on both ends from other words, an idea supported by non-English sources as well (Academia Română 2005, LXXVIII).

As for the ellipsis at the beginning of a sentence, Bringhurst mentions that it is separated from the previous sentence with a period, followed by a space (. ...), although there are two possibilities to continue the ellipsis (Bringhurst 2004, 82–83): with or without space (. ...*the snow* or ... *the snow*). In this case, we would opt for the second version, namely a space between the ellipsis and the following word.

Ultimately, whatever ellipsis is favored, the same type should be used systematically “to indicate the omission of a word or a group of words” (Thomas 2021, 456), or “that data are not available” (AMA 2020, 1131). Furthermore, Thomas also recommends the use of an entire line with spaced period, which might stand for the “omission of one or more paragraphs or sentences” (Thomas 2021, 456).

A final remark refers to omissions in verse, in which case one line of em-spaced dots are recommended “to indicate omission of a full line or several consecutive lines of verse” (AMA 2020, 485).

5.4.2.3. *Ellipsis at the End of the Sentence*

Rules regarding sentence-end ellipsis are rather confounding, as they are contradictory, and the most controversial of them is whether a sentence-end period is needed or not.

Depending on which prescription we favor, there are three possible variants, which is doubled in case space before ellipsis is also accounted for:¹¹⁴

Table 13. *Sentence-ends with ellipsis*

Type	Variant 1	Variant 2
Sentence-ends with an ellipsis:	She is...	She is ...
Sentence-ends with a period:	She is....	She is
Sentence-ends with a spaced period:	She is... .	She is

According to Bringhurst, sentence-end ellipsis (Bringhurst 2004, 82–83) requires a period without a space between them (...), while another source explains that no period should be used after the ellipsis,¹¹⁵ an opinion supported

¹¹⁴ <https://www.grammar-monster.com/glossary/ellipsis.htm>, August 20, 2022.

¹¹⁵ <https://communications.unu.edu/mues-punctuation>, August 20, 2022.

by many authors, which solves the issue of space or not between the ellipsis and the period.

Yet, we tend to think that in cases when an ellipsis replaces a single word, we should consider the ellipsis as such, so a space on either side of the ellipsis is needed. If this ellipsis ends the sentence or clause, a sentence-end punctuation mark (period, question mark, exclamation point) or a comma, semicolon, colon, etc. should follow it without space (Keszler 2009). This solution is also supported by most AmE and scholarly BrE writing (Greenbaum 1996, 519), and the rationale is that this is how a single word is treated.

As explained, “a sentence break within omitted material, ... when a quotation includes the end of one sentence and the beginning” (APA 2020, 275) is also indicated by four periods, namely a period followed by an ellipsis. Yet, there are views (e.g., TED Talk subtitlers) that any punctuation sign might follow the ellipsis directly, except for a period, to omit a row of four points. Similarly, the “suspension points” stand for partially expressed thoughts with more than one missing word, in which case only the ellipsis might be used.¹¹⁶

A number of sources agree that sentence-end ellipsis (with or without period) is followed by space before the next sentence starts.

A special case is when an entire quoted sentence is left out (suspense, multiple-choice tests), in which case the quotation marks should contain only the ellipsis, which replaces the entire sentence, period included.

5.4.2.4. *Ellipsis and Quotations*

The use of ellipsis is more complicated when quotations are involved, especially the ones which also contain ellipsis.

Manuals suggest that scholarly work should not start with an ellipsis, as quotation marks signal that only a fragment is reused. Furthermore, the end of the quoted material may (MLA 2021) or may not (CMOS 2024) contain ellipsis.¹¹⁷

The combination of ellipsis with square brackets indicates the omission of a fragment within the quote as well (Keszler 2009). The APA style discourages the use of ellipsis at the beginning or end “of any quotation unless the original source includes an ellipsis” (APA 2020, 275).

Ellipsis is not the only option to indicate omission. As explained (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 113), this may also be indicated by an apostrophe (dropped letters), a period (abbreviations), dashes (excision of portion of word), comma and semicolon (ellipsis within a parallel construction).

¹¹⁶ <https://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-4100100en.htm>, August 20, 2022.

¹¹⁷ <https://www.thepunctuationguide.com/ellipses.html>, August 20, 2022.

It is also important that in case the capitalization of first letter from the quotation is changed, this should be marked with square brackets: [A] or [a], which means that the original letter case was different.¹¹⁸

5.4.2.5. Conclusions

It is worth highlighting that the more divergent recommendations there are regarding the “proper” use of ellipsis, the more the prescription element disappears, and various publishing houses and authors feel free to use the ellipsis at their whim. A logical approach to ellipsis might start when we consider this sign as replacing a word (or even more), and treat it like that, which is why we suggest the use of ellipsis with space before and after, unless it is followed by a punctuation sign, and this version is also supported by major text-editing software as well.

Yet, we can find sources following their internal rules, and—for instance—the *National Geographic’s Life* textbook series (Stephenson et al. 2019, 25) uses only three periods for the ellipsis, wherever it is situated in the sentence, always separated by spaces on both ends, including trailing punctuation signs (... ? or).

The final word is given to Bringham, who considers that “acute accent, midpoint and ellipsis, are nowhere to be seen” (2004, 90), even if they add specific meanings to various text types. We think that the more texts people produce, the more aware they should be when and how to use various punctuation signs correctly, or at least consider the suggestions of automatic proofing, not to lead typographers and proofreaders to despair.

5.4.3. Question Mark

The **question mark** is a basic punctuation mark, and the US keyboard layout displays it on the key left to the right **Shift**. As the question mark is above the slash sign, **Shift+/?** results in a question mark.

Interrogative questions typically end in a question mark (*Are you happy?*), but indirect questions (*She asked how old I was.*) take no question mark (Greenbaum 1996, 521; AMA 2020, 450). A question mark may also be used to express “surprise, disbelief, or uncertainty at the end of a declarative or imperative sentence” (CMOS 2024, 412).

There are so-called “declarative questions,” in which case the grammatical structure does not indicate a question, but they end in a question mark: *Perhaps you enjoy this? You think he’s back?* (Greenbaum 1996, 520). As these belong to spoken English, they are not to be used in formal writing.

Polite requests may end in a period (*Will you kindly attach it before the deadline.*) or a question mark: *Would you help me?* The difference in the

¹¹⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/44933v3t>, August 20, 2022.

punctuation mark is explained with the intended style, as “official and business letters” seem to be “politely framed” when a request ends in a period: *Would you kindly telephone the above number to make an appointment. In the meanwhile, may I just confirm a few administrative details.* (Greenbaum 1996, 516).

In case quotations contain a question mark, this is placed inside the quotation, and in parenthetical material it also comes before a closing parenthesis or end bracket (AMA 2020, 450), but only if it belongs to the quoted part or parenthetical fragment (CMOS 2024, 413).

Similarly to other sentence-end or clause-end punctuation marks, the question mark cannot be combined with a period, exclamation point, comma, colon or semicolon, and situations of this should be obviated. However, more than one question mark may refer to a question combined with confusion (informal), or it may seem impolite and too demanding.

Yet, it may happen that the question mark is combined with an exclamation point when the title of a piece of writing ends in any of these two signs:

I’m a fan of *Would I lie to you?*!
Do you like The Isley Brothers’ *Shout!*?

However, it is obvious that these pieces are quoted, and reformulating the sentences will solve the adjacent punctuation marks.

5.4.4. Exclamation Point

The **exclamation point** (AmE) or the exclamation mark (BrE) is accessible on a standard US keyboard layout via a keyboard combination (**Shift+1**), but other layouts relocate it elsewhere (for instance, Hungarian layout uses **Shift+4**).

Both the exclamation point and the question mark have a dual purpose: to end a sentence and signal that it is exclamation or question, respectively (Greenbaum 1996, 520).

The exclamation point may be used to end an emotional, declarative (*But I have seen him!*), an imperative (*Go there!*), an optative (*May you be happy!*), or an exclamatory sentence (*How wonderful!*), but they also mark “an outcry or an emphatic or ironic comment” (CMOS 2024, 413) or “forceful utterance” (Greenbaum 1996, 521), often introduced by *What ...!* or *How...!*

Sentences in the form of a “direct question” may sound rhetorical, in which case an exclamation point is used (*Whyever do you need that!*).

The use of the exclamation point is not recommended in scientific manuscripts, so it is predominantly used in “less formal articles,” and it should be positioned within “the quotation marks, parentheses, or brackets only when it is part of the quoted or parenthetical matter” (CMOS 2024, 414). However, it is also used in mathematical expressions, indicating a factorial (AMA 2020, 451).

Another source also recommends not to overuse them, and periods may often replace them unless “the sentence is intended to be read as undoubtedly exclamatory in tone” (Greenbaum 1996, 516), expressing surprise, shock, wish, curse, warning, alarm, or a vocative (*Jack!*). Interjections are often accompanied by the exclamation point: *Oh no!* (Greenbaum 1996, 522).

It is strong enough not to be combined with other sentence-end or clause-end punctuation marks, such as period, question mark, comma, semicolon, or colon, although sometimes multiple exclamation points are used (mostly three) to express shock, surprise, admiration, screaming, for instance, in comic books. Otherwise, more than one exclamation point is frowned upon, and Terry Pratchett stated, “Multiple exclamation marks are a sure sign of a diseased mind.”

5.4.5. *Interrobang* (‽ 203D)

A final sentence-end option is the **interrobang** (‽), which is the combined question mark and exclamation point, invented by Martin K. Specter in 1962. It was intended to express surprise, doubt, or rhetorical questions (Houston 2013, 28), but as grammar did not start to use it and there was a “cultural resistance” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 90), the interrobang was sent “to an early grave” (Houston 2013, 35).

Nevertheless, today it is part of the Unicode (U+203D), is sort of “a cult punctuation mark” (Houston 2013, 37), and is available in Microsoft’s *Wingdings2* characters or more popular font types (*Lucida Sans Unicode*, *Arial Unicode MS*, and *Calibri*).¹¹⁹

While it is mostly informal, it is also used in chess, referring to a “dubious move, one that is questionable but possibly has merits.”¹²⁰

5.5. Pause Marks

Pause marks typically do not end a thought, only indicate a temporary break, or they might introduce a new element. Comma is the most used of them,¹²¹ whereas semicolons and colons are not frequently used.

5.5.1. *Comma*

As explained, a **comma** is “the least forceful of the 3 marks” (AMA 2020, 451), causing the “smallest break in sentence structure” (CMOS 2024, 384), and it is often optional, especially when the introductory phrase is short.

¹¹⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interrobang>, April 19, 2025.

¹²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chess_annotation_symbols#Evaluation_symbols, April 19, 2025.

¹²¹ See (Greenbaum 1996, 514–15).

Being the most widely used punctuation mark (46.8% in American texts, 41.9% in British texts), closely followed by the period, they can be typed directly by standard keyboard layouts. Commas are “versatile,” “flexible” and can both isolate and separate units (Greenbaum 1996, 529). Its major uses are presented in the following sections.

5.5.1.1. Oxford Comma

The **Oxford comma** (also known as *serial* or *series comma*) is used when three or more items are listed (ASA et al. 2024, 2–04), and the last item joins the previous ones with *and* or *or*, preceded by a comma (*The most typical car colors are grey, white, and black.*). Yet, when the elements of a list form a term, unit or entity, no comma is needed (AMA 2020, 453).

The Oxford comma is “strongly” recommended (CMOS 2024, 386), as “it prevents ambiguity,” although the inclusion of an ampersand prevents the use of a comma (*Taylor, Taylor & Smith sounds good.*).

5.5.1.2. Comma and Latin Abbreviations

A rather frequent Latin abbreviation is *etc.*, mostly ending a list. As this abbreviation literally means ‘and others of the same kind,’ ‘and so forth’ or ‘and the like,’ it should be preceded by a comma (CMOS 2024, 387), and if the context requires it, it may be followed by another comma.

However, this term is not recommended in scientific reports (AMA 2020, 520), except “parentheses, notes, and tabular matter” (CMOS 2024, 387), and another source considers that *etc.* should not be followed by a period unless it ends the sentence (AMA 2020, 520). Non-English languages might not use a comma before *etc.*, such as Romanian (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 9).

The conclusion is that no definite answer may be given regarding the “proper” use of this abbreviation although the CMOS (2024) guideline seems to be supported by the majority of users.¹²²

A further Latin abbreviation should be treated as *etc.*, namely *et al.* ‘and others,’ which is often seen in references with multiple authors. This means that in case at least two authors are specified, *et al.* should follow them with a comma, but *et al.* preceded by a single author takes no comma (CMOS 2024, 387).

The Latin abbreviations *e.g.* (*exempli gratia* ‘for example’) and *i.e.* (*id est* ‘that is’) should be always followed by a comma (Froke et al. 2024, 73; 2024, 115; CMOS 2024, 387), adding that they should be confined to parentheses and notes (CMOS 2024, 404), and no Latin abbreviation should be italicized (CMOS 2024, 623) unless it is the matter of discussion. While other sources agree with the last

¹²² <https://jakubmarian.com/comma-before-and-after-etc/>, August 20, 2022.

statement, there are views (AMA 2020, 454) that no period is needed between the letters (*ie, eg*).

While the automatic spellchecker of Writers seems not to know these abbreviations, the Microsoft Word spellchecker warns us to add a comma after them.

5.5.1.3. *Commas and Clauses, Phrases, Adjectives*

There are many prescriptions regarding commas with clauses, and various sources (AMA 2020, 454–57; APA 2020, 155–56; CMOS 2024, 387–94) list the following ones:

1. independent clauses joined by coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, so, yet*) need a comma before the conjunctions unless the clauses are very short;
2. supplementary, parenthetical clauses, questions are preceded by a comma (e.g., *therefore, moreover, on the other hand, of course, nevertheless, after all, consequently, however*);
3. dependent clauses preceding the main clause are separated by a comma;
4. dependent clauses following a main clause need no comma;
5. restrictive relative clauses introduced by *that* (or *by who/whom/whose*) take no comma; similarly, restrictive words or phrases offering essential or relevant information about the noun are used without commas (*Jack's volume First Kiss is launched in June.*); on the other hand, *which* introduces a nonrestrictive clause (adding non-essential information), and it is preceded by a comma (AMA 2020, 428);
6. quoted sentences, direct dialogues, conversations introduced by reporting verbs need a comma (*He said, "I will marry you."*);
7. titles followed by descriptive nouns (*novel, poem, story, or work*) need no comma; commas are only needed when it is nonrestrictive (the noun remains clearly identifiable);
8. the end of parenthetical or bracketed information may take a comma only after the parenthesis or bracket;
9. introductory phrases may be separated by a comma from the rest of the sentence (*After having arrived home, she took a shower.*); if they are appositive, both ends need a comma;
10. an introductory *yes, no, OK, well*, and similar words, as well as the exclamatory *oh* and *ah* are followed by a comma or an exclamation mark; in cases when exclamatory words belong to a phrase, no comma is needed (*Oh boy. Ah yes.*);
11. compound predicates are not separated by a comma (*Jack went home and watched TV.*);

12. appositive clauses are mostly nonrestrictive, so they do not provide essential information; thus, they are “flanked” by commas on both ends (AMA 2020, 425); however, when they are restrictive, no commas are needed (AMA 2020, 452);
13. when adjectives are asyndetically coordinated, it is possible to separate them with commas and inserting coordinators between them, and their order may be reversed: *She is a nice, happy person.*; if there is no asyndetic coordination, no comma is needed: *a whole new level* (Greenbaum 1996, 533–34).

5.5.1.4. Commas and Names

Proper names followed by *Jr.*, *Sr.*, *II*, or *III* are not separated by a comma, but when family name comes first, commas flank the first name (*Smith, John, Jr.*).

Nevertheless, sentences including these names need a comma to separate *Jr.* or *Sr.* from the name (*Meet John Smith, Jr.*). Interestingly, not all guidebooks require a period after *Jr* or *Sr* (AMA 2020, 455).

Degrees and other titles need a comma when they are placed after the name (*John Smith, MD; Jane Smith, PhD*).

When addressed directly, names or similar words (*girls, class*) are set off via a comma, and letter-start greetings end in a comma.

5.5.1.5. Commas and Numbers

There are various rules when numbers need commas. The majority of rules specify the correct use of reference numbers, large numbers, dates, and measurements.

Reference numbers refer to quotations, in which case the comma is placed inside the quotation marks and “before superscript citation of references and footnote symbols” (AMA 2020, 456).

Contradictory rules try to regulate the correct form of large numbers. A source specifies that numbers starting from 1,000 should be separated in groups of three digits starting from the right with commas (APA 2020, 181), while another manual states that 4-digit numbers should be “set closed up,” and a thin space (U+2009) must be used for 5-digit numbers and up to separate groups of three digits, “starting from the right-most integer” (AMA 2020, 962). Naturally, in the case of large decimal numbers, the group count starts from the decimal point (*1 207 985.45*).

Separating groups in large numbers is also regulated by the SI convention, which addresses differences in national regulations regarding large numbers. As such, thin space is stipulated in the case of large numbers (AMA 2020, 456). Furthermore, when large numbers may be adjacent to unrelated numbers (e.g., dates), a rewording might be necessary to prevent this vicinity (AMA 2020, 456).

Full AmE dates (month-day-year) need a comma between the day and year (*April 21, 2025*), including the case when the day of the week is provided as well (*Monday, April 21, 2025*). When no day is provided (*September 2025*) or a holiday precedes the year (*Christmas Day 2025*), no comma is needed (APA 2020, 155–56).

BrE dates (day-month-year) need no commas “to set off the year” (CMOS 2024, 398). ISO stipulates the use of “from-largest-to-smallest” version, and the year-month-day is hyphenated (2025-04-21), which causes no troubles when imported to spreadsheets and other applications (CMOS 2024, 607).

Measurement parts need no comma between the components if they are “of the same dimension” (AMA 2020, 456): *2 years 8 months 25 days are in fact 1 000 days. He is 6 ft 2 in. tall. I need 4 lb. 6 oz. of rice.*

Commas are often used in addresses, as they separate the “elements” (AMA 2020, 455). Thus, a comma should be used after the number and street name, after the city and state or country name, and the US and Canadian zip or postal codes are not set off by a comma from the state or city name (CMOS 2024, 399): *12 Ashton Rd., Apt. 5, Albion, IA 50005.*

5.5.1.6. *Commas and Specific Expressions*

Certain expressions, such as *for example*, *namely*, or *that is*, may be flanked by commas at both ends in the middle of the sentence, although the CMOS recommends a preceding em dash (or flanking em dashes), a semicolon, or a parenthetical solution (CMOS 2024, 404).

The conjunction *or* may be used to offer a synonymous term for the original one, in which case a comma is recommended: *Corn, or Zea mays, is widely available.* These are referred to as enclosing commas (Greenbaum 1996, 542–45), and they might separate vocatives from the rest of the sentence (*Come here, Jane.*), tag questions from the introductory part, appositive sentences, verbless or non-finite sentences from the main clause, comment clauses (*To be frank, this is difficult.*), sub-clauses preceding the main clauses.

No comma is needed before *too* and *either* with the sense of ‘also,’ although in mid-sentence position it is easier to interpret them (CMOS 2024, 405); however, the manual (CMOS 2024, 407) also accepts that a separating comma between two identical words may also help understanding (*Let us march in, in twos*). While this might not function in all cases (*I think about ‘about.’*), they might clarify meanings: *If he enjoys that, it is good for us. If he enjoys that it is good for us, thank him.*

5.5.2. Semicolon

The **semicolon** may communicate “stops, pauses, reflections,” as explained by Lloyd.¹²³ The primary—and almost single—use of a semicolon is to separate two main clauses, being stronger than a comma but less forceful than a period.

While it obviously has a shortcut (U+003B), it is directly available from the keyboard, although there are views that its use is fading, and it is near ‘extinction.’¹²⁴

A magazine article quotes Kurt Vonnegut, whose first rule of creative writing is “Do not use semicolons. They are transvestite hermaphrodites representing absolutely nothing. All they do is show you’ve been to college” (Blatt 2017).¹²⁵ Blatt also reveals that the use of semicolons dropped about 70% between 1800 and 2000, and there is a Pulitzer winner who used no semicolon whatsoever (Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*). George Orwell called semicolons “an unnecessary stop,” and Lloyd concludes that the symbol leads to an inevitable “extinction,” similar to the dodo or the dinosaur, and is mostly replaced by the dash.¹²⁶

Guidebooks suggest that the semicolon is used “between two independent clauses not joined by a conjunction” (CMOS 2024, 407–9) or when the two independent clauses are joined by conjunctive adverbs (*also, besides, furthermore, hence, however, indeed, nevertheless, then, therefore, thus, yet*) or even coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, for, nor, or, yet, so*) if one of the clauses is long or contains internal punctuation.

Furthermore, items of a series also containing internal commas (*Team 1, 5 points; Team 2, 3 points; Team 3, 1 point*) may be separated by semicolons to enhance interpretation (AMA 2020, 457; ASA et al. 2024, 2–04). Similarly, multiple parenthetical citations, index entries, or statistics already containing commas are accompanied by semicolons (APA 2020, 156).

A university webpage contains a collection of articles on punctuation, including the semicolon.¹²⁷ In this article, Trask (1997) explains that only one major use may be attributed to the semicolon provided that three conditions are met: 1. closely related sentence not to be separated by a period; 2. no conjunctions are used which require a comma; 3. no colon may be used. He mentions a further function of the semicolon, namely when it becomes a “super-comma.” This way it replaces a comma in a very long sentence with many clauses and commas, “where the reader can pause to catch his breath.” Yet, he suggests rewording in these cases. Interestingly, Trask quotes Dickens’ famous sentence (“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.” *A Tale of Two Cities*), arguing for its powerful meaning

¹²³ <https://unherd.com/newsroom/the-melancholy-decline-of-the-semicolon/>, April 24, 2025.

¹²⁴ Id.

¹²⁵ <https://tinyurl.com/yc5hu9me>, April 24, 2025.

¹²⁶ <https://unherd.com/newsroom/the-melancholy-decline-of-the-semicolon/>, April 24, 2025.

¹²⁷ <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/punctuation/colonandsemi/semi>, April 24, 2025.

due to the semicolon. Unfortunately, various editions of this work offer this opening sentence with a comma, and no semicolon is present in the rather lengthy opening with many opposing ideas of the 614 characters with spaces (Dickens 1983, 1).

Finally, while the semicolon seems to lose ground, a writing expert confesses that it is “a particularly elegant piece of punctuation and doesn’t deserve its fate,” as the “elegance of the semi-colon lies in its ability to both join and separate.”¹²⁸ Munteanu also considers that it is an “under-used tool,” offering famous quotes containing semicolons (e.g., “I think; therefore I am.”—Rene Descartes). However, when checking the online versions of this quote, the semicolon is nowhere to be found, and it is the comma that joins or separates the two parts.

Still, to finish this section with widespread uses of the semicolon, we should mention spreadsheets (Excel and Calc), where dates are instantly inserted with the `Ctrl+;`, and the semicolon is also used (followed by a closing bracket) to create a winking face emoji, working in Word as well (☺).

5.5.3. *Colon*

The name of the **colon** is due to the fact that “it was often used to indicate a major medial pause, or disjunction of sense, at the end of a colon” (Parkes 1992, 302). While it can be typed directly on a standard keyboard, its Unicode value is U+003A.

A rather simplistic summary of use is presented by Greenbaum, who states that a colon has three main functions: to introduce identifications, to introduce examples, and to introduce quotations or direct speech (Greenbaum 1996, 523).

However, further cases need to be specified, starting with the case when a colon introduces a list or examples. Greenbaum admits that “punctuation usage varies for ends of items,” mentioning that questions must end in question marks, but other lines may end in periods, semicolons (which he considers to be “less common”) or even no punctuation at all (Greenbaum 1996, 526).

Returning to the colon, it indicates a much stronger break in thought between two main clauses, compared to the comma or semicolon (AMA 2020, 458). It typically marks the beginning of an illustrating, extending, amplifying second clause (CMOS 2024, 409–12), and in case it is a complete sentence, it starts capitalized (APA 2020, 156–57). However, this is different in BrE, as the first letter is only capitalized if it is an acronym (*NHS* for *National Health Service*) or a proper name (Greenbaum 1996, 523).

Titles in formal communication may end in a colon (*To whom it may concern:* or *Dear Manager:*). The CMOS also offers examples when the colon is used in ratios (*a 13:2 ratio*), subtitles following the main title (*John Doe: The Truth Behind the*

¹²⁸ Dena Bain Taylor, quoted by her former student: <https://ninamunteanu.me/2021/02/28/the-semi-colon-is-dead-long-live-the-semi-colon/>, April 24, 2025.

Mystery),¹²⁹ indexes (main heading, followed by a colon and the first subheading), URLs (after the *https* part), place and publishing house in references, or mathematical expressions (CMOS 2024, 409–11).

It often introduces a list, an enumeration (which can never start capitalized), mostly “after anticipatory phrasing such as *thus, as follows, the following,*” or it may introduce a “formal or extended quotation” (AMA 2020, 458).

While it is typically followed by a space, no space is needed when it indicates time, for instance 7:30, especially in AmE (Greenbaum 1996, 526), ratio (1:2) or in biblical references separating chapter and verse numbers: *Exodus 1:2* (AMA 2020, 459). However, another source inserts space after the colon in biblical references and uses hyphen to express a range: *Genesis 11: 1-9, 2 Kings 10: 12-25* (Greenbaum 1996, 526).

Similarly, volume and page numbers (in which case the abbreviation *vol.* is omitted) are separated by a colon only, except when parenthetical information intervenes, in which case a space is needed after the colon: *Critical Inquiry 1, no. 3 (Winter 1975): 479–96*. In case the page number follows an issue number, the colon is replaced by a comma (CMOS 2024, 886).

Finally, it is common knowledge that a colon followed by a closing bracket stands for a smiling face (smiley), or it may actually turn into a smiley while typing (e.g., in Word or Facebook Messenger: 😊).

5.6. Brackets as Detour Marks

There are at least four types of **brackets** (or *fences*) used in non-mathematical texts: parentheses, square brackets, braces, and angle brackets. While they are used in pairs, the components (an opening bracket and an ending bracket) have their own Unicode values, even if all of them may be typed on a standard keyboard (directly or with the help of **Shift**).

5.6.1. Parentheses

Parentheses (or *round brackets, brackets* in BrE) are stronger than a comma and similar to the dash, disrupting the continuity of a sentence (Greenbaum 1996, 538). They may be typed with the help of **Shift+9** (opening parenthesis) and **Shift+0** (closing parenthesis), while their Unicode value is U+0028 and U+0029, respectively.

They delimit grammatically independent texts from the rest of the sentence (AMA 2020, 474–77; APA 2020, 159; CMOS 2024, 422–23; Greenbaum 1996, 537–40), and the parenthetical reference may signal the following:¹³⁰

¹²⁹ A notable exception is when the title ends with other punctuation (AMA 2020, 458).

¹³⁰ <https://www.thepunctuationguide.com/parentheses.html>, April 24, 2025.

1. a cited work;
2. other places in a text (p. 3, below, Chapter 5, cf. 6.2);
3. a table, illustration, figure;
4. enumeration, letters, and numbers in a list embedded in the main text, especially when subsequent reference is intended;
5. notes, remarks;
6. the abbreviated form or acronym of an extended term, which is always used in its full form, then followed by the abbreviated form in brackets, after which the abbreviated form may be used by itself;
7. supplementary explanation, such as conversion (pound to kilogram), synonyms, glosses of specific terms;
8. translations from other languages;
9. additional or clarifying information;
10. afterthought;
11. around the letters *s* or *es* after nouns to indicate the plural option—“parenthetical plurals” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 139)—yet the verb is singular: *The name(s) of the translator(s) or the subtitle(s) is unknown.*;
12. various mathematical expressions, detailed in Section 5.6.3.

The punctuation of the parentheses is also important. It is highlighted that no punctuation is accepted before the opening parenthesis, except in enumerations (AMA 2020, 475). A closing parenthesis cannot be “preceded by a comma, a semicolon, or a colon,” while “[a] question mark, an exclamation point, and closing quotation marks” may come before the closing parenthesis “if they belong to the parenthetical matter” (CMOS 2024, 423). In other cases, these marks come after the closing parenthesis. Parentheses within parentheses are only acceptable in publications in law, while the CMOS might accept brackets within parentheses. A period only comes before the closing parenthesis if it ends a full sentence (APA 2020, 159), in which case the sentence starts with a capitalized word (AMA 2020, 475).

As for the style of parentheses, they should be set in the same font as the “surrounding text” and “not in that of the material they enclose” (CMOS 2024, 380), although there are views that they should be always Roman and never sloped, “even if the context is italic” (Bringinghurst 2004, 85). Yet, a possible exception is when they refer to part of a title.

As explained (APA 2020, 159), multiple parentheses should be avoided, which is why reference items are separated by commas (e.g., *Smith, 2024, explains ...*).

A final warning is that parentheses must not be replaced by the slash symbol unless they signal verse lines.

5.6.2. *Square Brackets*

Square brackets (or *box brackets*, *brackets*) are directly available on a standard keyboard, and their Unicode values are U+005B (opening bracket) and U+005D (closing bracket).

Their use seems to be rather regulated (AMA 2020, 477–86; APA 2020, 159–60; CMOS 2024, 423–25; EC-DGT-RO 2021, 7):

1. in a quoted text, the current author or editor may make insertions, explanations, clarifications, translations, comments, corrections (*She [Jane] wanted to escape.*); in case the brackets are part of the quoted text, it should be stated clearly, to avoid confusion (e.g., brackets in the original);
2. in a quoted text, the first letter of the first word may be enclosed in brackets to signal that the original was the other way around;
3. bracketed text might offer the original words in a translated work;
4. brackets replace parentheses within parentheses (nested parentheses) in bibliographies;
5. ellipsis in brackets [...] might indicate a missing word or a fragment in a quoted text;
6. the European Union (EU) documents might contain ellipsis in brackets not to reveal commercial secrets;
7. phonetic transcriptions may be bracketed, although slashes might also be used in this case;
8. the term [*sic*], always italicized in Roman brackets,¹³¹ signals incorrect grammar, punctuation, or spelling in the quoted text.

However, square brackets are recommended to be used sparingly not to distract the reader too much.

5.6.3. *Braces*

Braces (or *curly brackets*) are available on a standard keyboard with the help of the **Shift** key combined with the two brackets keys. Their Unicode values are U+007B (opening) and U+007D (closing).

While parentheses and brackets are typically used in common and specialized texts alike, braces are rare, unless in programming languages¹³² or mathematical equations. Mathematics expresses the necessary aggregation by using parentheses first, then brackets, and finally braces in equations (APA 2020, 188; ASA et al. 2024, 7–02; Laczkó and Mártonfi 2025, 311), and they are altogether referred to as ‘fences.’

¹³¹ The Latin abbreviation comes from *sic erat scriptum*, meaning ‘Thus it was written.’

¹³² For instance, square brackets are used for arrays or to create empty matrices, as explained here: <https://www.mathworks.com/help/matlab/ref/squarebrackets.html>, April 25, 2025.

Advanced level in text editing also relies on fences. For instance, after pressing the **Ctrl**+**F** shortcut (triggering the **Find** and **Replace** window) in Word, we can type `{0-9}{4}*` in the **Find what:** line, which finds all the 4-digit numbers; the `<[A-Z]{2,}>` shortcut finds all the strings of at least two consecutive capital letters. As for Writer, this is possible by typing `{[A-Z]{2,}}` in the search line in case the **Use wildcards** box is checked.

5.6.4. Angle Brackets («, 00AB; », 00BB)

Angle brackets (or *chevrons*) are not used in regular texts, unless the text is in a language that uses them for quotations (such as French; see 5.9.3., *guillemets*). They are available on a standard keyboard with the help of the **Shift** key combined with the comma (opening) and period (closing) keys, and their Unicode values are U+003C and U+003E.

They are typically doubled, taking the form of << and >>, although there are different symbols for the doubled versions: « (U+00AB) and » (U+00BB). However, angle brackets used in mathematics have different symbols: < (U+27E8) and > (U+27E9), and there are pointing and dotted versions as well.¹³³

As known, in mathematics they refer to values “less than” (<) and “greater than” (>), often used in spreadsheet formulas as well. They also “enclose tags in XML and related markup languages,” might “set off URLs and email addresses,” or can “indicate missing or illegible material” (CMOS 2024, 425).

While the CMOS discourages the use of angle brackets “in prose,” they find their spot in comic strips, movie and play scripts, online communication apps or data fields to be completed (*the «TIME» show on «DATE»*).¹³⁴

Manuals offer tables of signs with their Unicode values, split into various categories, often starting with mathematical symbols. A selection is provided below (Laczkó and Mártonfi 2025, 405)—see Figure 81.

The relative importance of these punctuation marks may be deduced from Greenbaum’s summary (Greenbaum 1996, 514–15) regarding their frequency: commas (46.8%), periods 45%, dashes (2.2%), pairs of parentheses (1.9%), semicolons (1.9%), question marks (1%), colons (0.9%), and exclamation marks (0.3%). The data refer to an American corpus, but data from a British corpus reveal similar results.

¹³³ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bracket_\(mathematics\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bracket_(mathematics)), April 25, 2025.

¹³⁴ https://www.grammar-monster.com/punctuation/using_brackets_parentheses.htm, April 25, 2025.

+	U+002B	<	U+003C	°	U+00B0
-	U+2212	>	U+003E	%	U+0025
±	U+00B1	≪	U+226A	‰	U+2030
·	U+22C5	≫	U+226B	'	U+2032
×	U+00D7	≦	U+2266	"	U+2033
:	U+003A	≧	U+2267	'''	U+2034
/	U+002F	≡	U+226C	}	U+0029
//	U+2AFD	≠	U+223C]]	U+005D
	U+2223	~	U+2241	}	U+007D
‡	U+2224	+	U+2248	}	U+27E9
=	U+003D	≈	U+2248	U	U+222A
≠	U+2260	≠	U+2249	∩	U+2229
≡	U+2261	≡	U+224B	∩	U+2283
≠	U+2262	≈	U+2243	∩	U+2282
	U+2225	≡	U+2245	∩	U+2285
	U+007C	≠	U+2247	∩	U+2284
‡	U+2226	↑	U+2191	∩	U+2287
‡	U+22D5	→	U+2192	∩	U+2286
		↔	U+2194	∩	U+2289
				∩	U+2288

Figure 81. Mathematical symbols in Laczkó and Mártonfi (2025)

5.7. Further Detour Marks

5.7.1. Slash and Division Slash (/, 2215)

The **slash** has many alternative names: *forward slash* (AMA), *shill* (APA), *shilling mark*, *slant*, *solidus*, *stroke*, or *virgule*. However, the forward slash is directly available on a standard keyboard (/), while a more sloping slash is used for fractions, which should be the solidus:

8/9½

Figure 82. Slash and solidus

The difference between them is visible when placed next to each other: // . The first one is the slash (U+002F or Alt+47), while the latter is the fraction sign (U+2044).

The slash is automatically converted into the fraction sign when common fractions are typed in various text-editing software (½ or ¾), not to mention that there is a **non-breakable division slash** (U+2215) as well, which looks exactly like

the fraction sign; algebraic expressions use the division slash (a/b), while skewed fractions ($\frac{1}{4}$) need the fraction slash, although when placed next to each other, the two signs look identical://

Before listing the uses of slash, it is important to mention the huge number of debates whether to use space before or after it. Lenient rules consider that the space may be optional on both ends of the slash, but there are very explicit rules stating that no blank space must be used either before or after the slash (Academia Română 2005, XXXIX), which is obvious in the case of fractions,¹³⁵ as they should never be broken at the end of the line. When a line break is needed, this comes after the slash, “never before” (CMOS 2024, 428), and no single character should be left after the slash to the next line.

A single word versus a phrase or open compounds is “more legible” (CMOS 2024, 426) if separated by a spaced slash (*World War I / First World War*), but when only two words are divided, there should be no space either before or after the slash.

As for poetry, the slash indicates line divisions, and in this case space on both ends of the slash must be used.

Our personal remark is that in case many slashes are used to refer to multiple options or when the slash divides two long words and the space is limited (e.g., tables or cells), a space after the slash can solve the displeasing view of alternating very long and very short lines.

After discussing the issue of space before and after the slash, we should mention the cases when the slash is actually used. Bringhurst explains that the steeper slash is in fact “an alternative form of the comma” (Bringhurst 2004, 81), and these are the most common uses:

1. offering or separating alternatives, meaning ‘and,’ ‘or,’ ‘if,’ ‘when’ expressing a connection or conflict between the two parts (AMA 2020, 1114; Thomas 2021, 464), which is slightly “informal” (CMOS 2024, 426): *Latino/a, He/she can do that with/without help.*
2. the alternative of a comma or parenthesis in texts providing further details, such as *Tibetan Guest House / Thamel / Kathmandu* (Bringhurst 2004, 82);
3. clarifying a comparison in a compound adjective, “especially when one of the elements is a hyphenated compound” (APA 2020, 160): *hits/false-alarms comparison*;
4. to represent *per* with abbreviated units of measure, when at least one element provides numbers (*100 km/h, \$100/day, 10 mg/d*); however, in case a preposition is included, no slash is used: *5 g of sugar per kg* (AMA 2020, 473);

¹³⁵ <https://www.cochrane.org/authors/handbooks-and-manuals/style-manual>, August 14, 2025.

5. having the role of division, it may replace the division sign (\div);¹³⁶ as such, ratios may be expressed with the help of the slash (ASA et al. 2024, 2–07), more precisely the numerator and the denominator (5/9) in fractions (AMA 2020, 472); however, a single glyph is recommended (CMOS 2024, 427) when it is available ($\frac{3}{4}$);
6. forming dates, mostly used in tables and figures: full dates providing the month, day, and year (04/04/2025),¹³⁷ two-year spans (2024/25, or completed with an en dash as well: 2023/24–2024/25); however, formal writing should be clearer (*April 4, 2025*);
7. citations containing two different years typically start with the year of the original publication, and—depending on the context—may include the year of republication, translation: 2014/2024;
8. abbreviations may also rely on the slash “in lieu of periods” (CMOS 2024, 426): *a/c* (air-conditioning), *c/o* (in care of), *n/a* (not applicable), or *w/o* (without);
9. URLs also make use of slashes, typically after the *https* and the colon, but further slashes may be included as well; long links should be left to be broken automatically at line-ends;
10. poetry, song, or play lines embedded in texts are separated with the help of slashes, in which case a space placed on each side of a slash used to show line breaks (CMOS 2024, 427); in these cases, a comma may be used after the slash;
11. pronounced letters (sounds), phonemes, and phonemic transcriptions are separated by slashes (AMA 2020, 478; CMOS 2024, 427): *The letter /e/ may be silent*.

To sum up, while there are controversial recommendations regarding the space before and after the slash, clear-cut recommendations might help their justified and correct use in texts, involving dual variants (‘and/or’), dates, fractions, certain abbreviations, links, quoted lines, and transcriptions.

5.7.2. Backslash (\, 0020)

The use of **backslash** seems to be rather limited, compared to the forward slash. Nevertheless, it can be typed directly on a standard keyboard, and its Unicode value is U+0020.

¹³⁶ <https://unicode-characters.fandom.com/wiki/Solidus>, April 25, 2025.

¹³⁷ While the American date system uses the month-day-year style, the British version is day-month-year. Other languages may have different ones, which is why the ISO standard date format may be used in international communication: year-month-day. Yet, imported spreadsheets created in various language settings may have issues recognizing various date formats. The actual date may be inserted in the open spreadsheet file based on the current language setting with the **Ctrl+;** shortcut. Set to AmE, this shortcut will insert the date, placing slashes between the current month and day and between the day and the year, without spaces.

It may be used by certain operating systems (CMOS 2024, 427) to refer to exact file locations. In this case, backslashes separate directories, sub-directories, and filenames. As there are no spaces adjacent to the slashes, long addresses should be broken automatically at line-ends.

Computer coding also relies on backslash, and this is where the backslash signals a highly advanced level of mastering texts, as text-editing software may also need the backslash for special purposes. As it is used as an “escape character,”¹³⁸ once a backslash is typed, the following character will have a different interpretation. For example, `\n` represents a new line character, `\t` a tab character (this is valid for both Word and Writer). In case the **Regular expressions** box is checked in Writer, `\d+` finds all the digits in the document, or `\(.*\)` will find all the characters in brackets.

5.7.3. Rare Detour Marks (|, 00C7; ||, 2016; ·, 00B7; •, 2022)

There are a few less frequently used detour marks as well. We have in mind the *bar*, the *double bar*, the *pipe*, and the *midpoint*.

The **vertical bar** (or *vertical line*,¹³⁹ *pipe*) is typically found on a standard keyboard on top of the backslash key (`[Shift]+[|]`), and its Unicode value is U+007C. It is used in mathematics (e.g., conditional probability, distance, divisibility), chemistry (cell notation), often accompanied by the **double bar** (||, U+2016). The vertical bar is mostly referred to as *pipe* in computing. The double vertical bar is also used in music, where—accompanied by a colon—it marks the repetition of a particular section (|: *That’s right.* :|). As for linguistics, the vertical bar is used to “separate main elements of a clause, for example: subject, verb phrase and object” (Leech 2006, vi) while parsing: *Subject | Verb | Object*.

Finally, a **midpoint** (or *small bullet*, *mid dot*, *interpunct*, *interpoint*, *centered dot*) is considered to be “one of the simplest, most effective forms of typographic punctuation” (Bringinghurst 2004, 75), and the Unicode table refers to it as *mid dot* (U+00B7), but `[Alt]+250` also results in the same glyph. The midpoint may start lists, letterheads, and signage. However, as it might look too small, there is a **thicker midpoint**, or thick mid dot (U+2022 or `[Alt]+149`) for this purpose.

While the midpoint was once used in Classical Latin, today it may replace a hyphen, as it is shorter when signaling word-split options in dictionaries,¹⁴⁰ or it may stand for the multiplication sign in mathematics ($2 \cdot 3 = 6$). It is worth noticing that all spaces between the characters are non-breaking spaces or thin spaces, as stipulated in the case of mathematical operations, considering that signs function “as quasi verbs” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 207).

¹³⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/hedpk868>, April 26, 2025.

¹³⁹ However, the term *vertical line* (U+02C8) should be reserved for the apostrophe-like glyph, marking the stress in syllables, discussed in Section 5.8.3. below.

¹⁴⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interpunct>, April 26, 2025.

5.8. Other Marks

A few other marks help interpreting the text better or offer convenient abbreviations. Some of them are regularly used (e.g., the apostrophe), while others are rather rare (e.g., the per thousand glyph).

5.8.1. *Apostrophe ('; 0027; ', 2019)*

The proper use of **apostrophe** should start with the differentiation between the default apostrophe of text-editing software (') and the 'smart' apostrophe ('). While the former is not typographically accepted (U+0027), the latter (U+2019) is strongly supported by both Word and Writer, even if it is in fact the right single quotation mark sign.

The previously mentioned two text-editing software convert the typed default apostrophe into the 'smart' one by default. In the case of Word, this may be checked here: **File, Options, Proofing, AutoCorrect Options, AutoFormat as You Type, Replace as You Type**, and the box before "Straight quotes" with "smart quotes" should be checked.

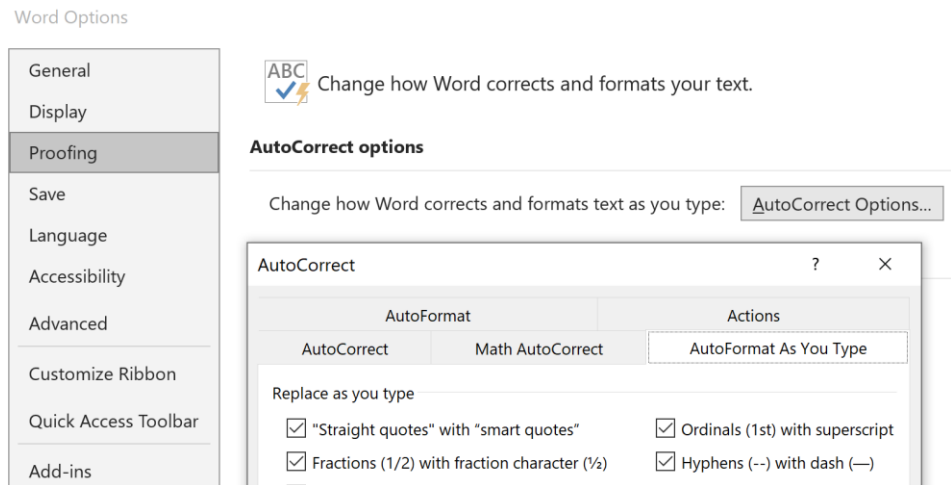


Figure 83. *Autocorrect straight quotes with smart quotes, Word*

After the use of curly apostrophe is checked, a few cases are specified when the apostrophe is needed, as they apply to words or numbers (Greenbaum 1996, 505):

- replacing missing letters: in fact, this case leads us to the essence of contraction, which is a type of abbreviation; in this case, two words are melted into one, and the omitted letter (*he's*) or letters (*can't*, *we've*, *'cause*) are signaled by the apostrophe (Parkes 1992, 302), a possibility

which is frowned upon is formal writing (AMA 2020, 433); the right single quotation mark is needed in case the missing letters would start the word: *Find 'em* or *I love rock 'n' roll*. (CMOS 2024, 429);

- replacing missing numerals (*the '80s*), in which case the apostrophe is still a right single quotation mark (CMOS 2024, 429);
- indicating the possessive case of English nouns (AMA 2020, 482–84) or referring to possessive adjectives related to units of time or monetary terms: *an hour's wait*, *a dollar's bill*, knowing that plural cases end in *s*, followed by the apostrophe (*a few days' rest*); if the plural form does not end in *s*, 's is needed: *our brethren's wish*;
- as explained (Greenbaum 1996, 550–51), there are alternatives with proper nouns ending in *s*: *Dickens's story* or *Dickens' story*, but *Moses' deed*, *Jesus' help* (as they already have two *s* letters), *Socrates' death* (Greek names of at least two syllables ending in *s*);
- the genitive form of pronouns is without an apostrophe: *its walls*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*;
- indicating the plural form of special expressions may need an apostrophe; these may be words that do not normally have plural forms (*a reminder of do's and don'ts*, *extra and's in a sentence*) or letters and numbers, in which case only the letters, numbers, or signs are set in italics: *Mind your p's and q's*. *There are two +'s here*. *The l's are like 1's*. *Two B's are needed*.

The plural form of years (*the 1980s*), numbers (*These cars are 4 × 4s.*), or fully capitalized acronyms (*IVs*)¹⁴¹ take no apostrophe (Bringhurst 2004, 87). Yet, the same author mentions inconsistent expressions: *the ayes have it but the I's don't*; *the ewes are coming but the you's are staying home* (Bringhurst 2004, 88).

According to the Chicago style (CMOS 2024, 429), in case the word ends in an apostrophe, the period or comma comes after the apostrophe: *The cat is the Joneses'*.

5.8.2. Various Primes (' 2032; " 2033)

The **prime** looks like the apostrophe ('), yet they are not interchangeable, and manuals warn against using improper symbols (AMA 2020, 484). Prime (' U+2032) and apostrophe (' U+2019) are different both in form and use although both may be inserted from the **Symbols** or the **Character Map** as well.

The prime is used to express feet, minutes, or arcminutes, while the **double prime** (", U+2033) refers to inches, seconds, or arcseconds, respectively (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 192; CMOS 2024, 599). Thus, a degree or angle (1°) equals 60' or 3 600", while a person may be 6'3" tall.

Computer encodings also use reversed prime (¸, U+2035), reversed double prime (¨, U+2036), or **modifier letter prime** (¸, U+02B9). As reversed primes are not used in standard texts, we only highlight modifier letter prime, which is also used

¹⁴¹ Short for *intravenous*.

in linguistics to indicate stress. Nevertheless, the next section refers to another glyph for that purpose,¹⁴² and there is a **modifier letter double prime** (″, U+2BA), which is also beyond our interest.

5.8.3. *Modifier Letters (´, 02C8; ¨, 02CC)*

The **modifier letter** or *vertical line* (´, U+02C8) is considered to be the sign of a **stressed syllable** (CMOS 2024, 427), which corresponds to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) sign.

This glyph indicates the **primary stress**,¹⁴³ while the Unicode value U+02CC indicates a **secondary stress** (¨), as in the pronunciation guide of *information*: /,mfəˈmeɪfʰn/.

However, we have already discussed a vertical bar or line (|, U+007C) in Section 5.7.3.

5.8.4. *Degree (°, 00B0), °C (2103), °F (2109)*

The **degree** sign is not directly available from the standard keyboard, but its Unicode value is U+00B0, and it has two Alt codes: Alt+248 and Alt+0176.

As it is mostly used to indicate temperature, the degree Celsius or degree Fahrenheit signs have separate glyphs: °C (U+2103) and °F (U+2109). However, the International System of Units (SI) uses the Kelvin scale (*kelvin*, K) to refer to thermodynamic temperature, which needs no degree sign (ASA et al. 2024, 7–06), as the “degrees Kelvin” was abolished in 1967. It is also important not to confuse the degree sign with the superscript zero (ASA et al. 2024, 7–06): 0 °C and 10⁰ rely on different glyphs.

Angular arc also uses the degree sign: 30°, 45°, 60°, 90°, to mention the most common ones, and in these cases the sign directly follows the number. When minutes and seconds are added, space or non-breaking spaces are needed between the sexagesimal degree subdivisions: 30° 15′ 15″ (SI style), also supported in other languages as well (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 192; Laczkó and Mártonfi 2025, 313); nevertheless, this rule is controversial, and the Chicago style uses no spaces between them (CMOS 2024, 637). Further details are found in Section 5.14.5.4.

Photography denotes logarithmic film speed grades with the degree sign as well: 21° DIN, 5° ASA, or ISO 100/21°.¹⁴⁴

A final thing to mention is the correct spelling of the degree sign. It is generally recommended that a space should be placed between the number and the following degree symbol when it expresses temperature, but publishing houses often leave out the space: 0°C (CMOS 2024, 599), specified later as well (CMOS 2024, 631).

¹⁴² [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_\(symbol\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_(symbol)), April 26, 2025.

¹⁴³ <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/Word-Stress.htm>, April 26, 2025.

¹⁴⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Film_speed, April 26, 2025.

5.8.5. *Percent*

The adverb **percent** (meaning *by the hundred* or *in, to, or for every hundred*) and its accompanying sign (%) is used with Arabic numerals, but mostly in non-technical texts (CMOS 2024, 599). The noun **percentage** is “a more general term for any number or amount that can be stated as a percent” (AMA 2020, 971). This means that percentage is used when no number is attached to it (*a small percentage of a community*).

The percent is available on standard US keyboards (**[Shift]+5**), its Unicode value is U+0025, and it may be inserted from the **Character Map** as well. Similarly to the degree sign, the SI style adds a space between the number and the % sign, while major guidebooks (CMOS or AMA) join the numbers and the percent sign: 3%.

In case a range is specified, both numbers are accompanied by the sign: 3%–10% (APA 2020, 187; CMOS 2024, 599). The same source explains that the percent symbol is only used when accompanied by a numeral, and space limits make it necessary, such as table headings or figure labels.

When the number and percent start the sentence, they are spelled out (*Five percent of the people ...*), although rewording might be better, so as not to start with percentages, especially when ranges are involved (AMA 2020, 972).

5.8.6. *Per Thousand, Per Mille (‰, 2030)*

The **per thousand** (or *per mille*) sign (‰) is rarely used, except for mineralogy and oceanography references, expressing “isotope ratios relative to a standard and is dimensionless” (ASA et al. 2024, 7–09).

The Unicode value for the symbol is U+2030.

5.8.7. *Hashtag*

The usage of the **hashtag** (or *crosshatch*, *hash sign*, *numeral sign*, *octothorpe*, *pound sign*) is “something of a problem child” (Houston 2013, 41), as it is used heavily, and its meaning depends on the particular context, earning the nickname “a jack-of-all-trades,” also reflected in its less formal nicknames: *crunch*, *flash*, *grid*, *hex*, *pig-pen*, *square*, or *tic-tac-toe* (Houston 2013, 47).

It is available on standard keyboards (**[Shift]+3**), and its Unicode value is U+0023, while **[Alt]+35** will also result in a hashtag. Its primary use is to replace the word *number* when a number follows (#2), although style guides suggest that *number* should be spelled out, and when the space is limited, the correct abbreviation is *No.* (with a full stop), and it also has an abbreviation for the plural *numbers* (*Nos.*).¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/style-guide/a-z-word-list-term-collections/n/number-sign>, April 27, 2025.

As Houston explains, a further use is to refer to weight: 5# means “five pounds in weight” (Houston 2013, 41), but in chess it may stand for checkmate (Houston 2013, 47). Furthermore, it may be used as a sharp symbol substitute in music (which should be ♯, available as a Unicode value: U+266F); proofreaders also use it to mark various mistakes in a text (e.g., missing spaces), while computer programmers rely on it to signal that what follows the hashtag in the line does not belong to the code, it is only a comment, and three hashtags in a row (###) mark “the end of a press release” (Houston 2013, 47).

X (formerly *Twitter*) and *Tumblr* abound in hashtags to signal cross-references of content by topic, but virtually it is a favorite symbol of the social media, where keywords headed by a hashtag trigger huge social movements (#BLM, 2013; #jesuischarlie, 2015, or #MeToo, 2017).

While manuals and guidebooks do not offer too much coverage on the hashtag, it is recommended to capitalize either the first word or every single word in a combination of words (#ThisIsTheEnd). Nevertheless, its use is rather discouraged, as it is “frequently too large for anything more interesting than chain-store propaganda” (Bringhurst 2004, 77).

5.8.8. Boxes, Check Marks, and Crosses

While boxes, ticks, and crosses may not belong to standard text symbols, they are needed to create various questionnaires or multiple-choice tests. Occasionally, ticks and crosses may signal a list of do’s and don’ts.

As they are not directly available on standard keyboards, they might be inserted either looking for them among the *Wingdings* font characters (☑ or ☒) or searching for their Unicode values. Some of them are listed below, knowing that once the shortcut is applied, the font will change to *Segoe UI Symbol*:

Table 14. *Ballot, check, tick box, mark, cross*

Description	Symbol	Unicode	Alt
ballot/check/tick box	☐	2610	9744
ballot box with check	☑	2611	9745
ballot box with X	☒	2612	9746
check mark	✓	2713	10003
thick check mark	✔	2714	10004
cross	×	2715	10005
thick cross	✕	2716	10006
ballot box with check	☐	2610	9744

5.9. Quotations

The primary use of quotation marks is to signal that the words are “taken verbatim from another source” (AMA 2020, 479), including direct speech as well (Greenbaum 1996, 545).

There are various types to quote someone’s words (direct or indirect speech) or writings (scientific statements): single quotation marks, double quotation marks, guillemets, and inverted commas. Quotations stand out of the general text style with the help of these marks, be they exact words of someone, technical words, slang, explanation, metaphorical meaning, or simply “words we want to draw attention on [*sic*]” (Bălan et al. 1996, 64).

Their importance is also marked by the fact that Word can insert them either directly (Apostrophe key or Shift+Apostrophe key) or via **Insert, Symbol and Special Characters**, as illustrated below:

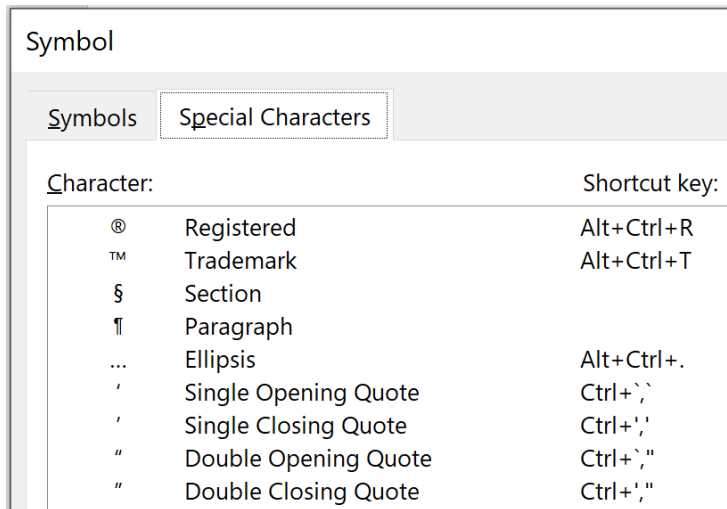


Figure 84. *Inserting quotes, Word*

As discussed before (see Apostrophe, 5.8.1.), modern word processors are automatically set to “smart” quotation marks instead of the straight ones (also known as *neutral*, *vertical*, *typewriter*, or *dumb quotes*). Once smart quotes are enabled, on pressing the double stroke key, the left (opening) quotation mark is displayed, and pressing it again at the end of a word, the right (closing) quotation mark will be shown. Smart quotes are also called *typographic*, *curved*, or *curly quotation marks* (CMOS 2024, 428).

It is also important to mention that while English uses both quotation marks raised, other languages may start with a baseline opening quotation mark (e.g.,

German, Romanian, or Hungarian: „...”) or even angle brackets or guillemets (e.g., Spanish or French: «...»).

However, smart quotation marks may be disabled by accessing **File, Options, Proofing, AutoCorrect Options** and choosing the **AutoCorrect** dialog box, **AutoFormat As You Type** tab, **Replace as you type** and clearing the "Straight quotes" with "smart quotes" check box.¹⁴⁶

5.9.1. Double Quotation Marks

While the double quotation marks are available from the keyboard (**Shift+Double stroke** key), they may be typed with Unicode values as well: U+201C (left) and U+201D (right).

As explained, using straight double quotes ("", U+0022) is a clear sign of amateurism (Spiekermann 2013, 115), and professionals always use smart quotes, which look like two commas, resembling 99).

As for the proper use of double quotation marks, the following cases should be mentioned:

1. when quoting someone's words, in which case the exact "wording, spelling, and punctuation of the original" must be followed (AMA 2020, 479), including the indication of omissions or italics; however, there are acceptable exceptions, such as the first letter of the first word, which might be changed, depending on the context, and signaled with the help of square brackets; the single quotation marks might turn double or the other way round; final punctuation marks of the quoted material might be changed if the meaning is preserved, while "footnote or endnote number callouts can be omitted" (APA 2020, 274–75);
2. titles of various large publications (including albums) are mostly italicized, while smaller works (poems, chapters, articles) are mentioned in quotation marks;
3. however, when titles or subtitles are required in quotation marks, these are double (AMA 2020, 18);
4. specific words or phrases may be highlighted either with the help of quotation marks or italicized;
5. metaphorical meanings, ironical remarks (meaning the opposite), coined words, slang, unfamiliar terms, nicknames may be rendered on their first use with the help of quotation marks, which are known as "apologetic" or "scare quotes," not recommended in scientific writing (AMA 2020, 480–81; CMOS 2024, 464): *John Smith is a "rare" name in England.*;

¹⁴⁶ <https://tinyurl.com/3n7we75n>, April 27, 2025.

6. foreign words given in the original language are typically italicized, while their English explanation may be offered in brackets or between quotation marks;
7. when a single word is highlighted as the word itself is under discussion (linguistic examples), the use of double quotation marks is suggested: *the use of “I” versus “me”* (APA 2020, 157; CMOS 2024, 464); however, these may be simply italicized in a Roman (normal) environment;
8. direct quotes replicate the exact words of the speaker: *John said: “You are right.”*;
9. when the reported sentence ends in a period, it is replaced by a comma in case it is followed by the reporting clause: *“I am happy,” she said.* (Greenbaum 1996, 546); sentence-end question marks or exclamation points remain: *“Are you happy?” she asked.*;
10. quotations in block quotations require double quotation marks (APA 2020, 277);
11. file names, words, or strings of characters (CMOS 2024, 473) may also appear in quotes (Find “Insert,” then look for “index.html” and type “cd Desktop”), but non-prominent computer terms may follow the software’s use (**Layout, Page**, etc.).

A further important remark is that run-in quotations are short ones (words, phrases, or no longer than two lines) and are embedded in the main text, matching in font and style, being differentiated from the main text only with the help of the quotation marks (CMOS 2024, 380). When the quoted material contains whatsoever mistakes, a bracketed [*sic*] is used.

Quotations longer than two lines (some guidebooks recommend even more) should be separated from the main text, and they are referred to as block quotes, formatted with different font, different line spacing, or a wider margin, but they typically take no quotation marks. In fact, extra lead should be added “before and after block quotations” (Bringham 2004, 40), more precisely “9 pt lead before and after the quotation, and the text will realign” (Bringham 2004, 41).

Block quotations are introduced by a colon, and in case a quotation is embedded in the block quotation, double quotation marks should be used (AMA 2020, 482).

Other cases when no quotation marks are needed: highlighting a key term or phrase which is under discussion (italics are recommended), numerals (APA 2020, 158–59) or interview or discussion formats with set off speakers’ names: *Joe: Who is happy?*

A further issue is the position of quotation marks when combined with certain punctuation marks. AmE prefers commas and periods within the quotation marks, which means that no double period or comma is needed (ASA et al. 2024, 2–04). However, these punctuation marks come after the closing quotation mark in BrE,

and this latter style is used in Romanian (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 9) and Hungarian as well (Laczkó and Mártonfi 2025, 353).

Other punctuation marks (e.g., colons, semicolons, ellipses, asterisks, or superscripted footnote numbers) are typically outside the closing quotation marks.

Question marks and exclamation points may be either within or outside the closing quotation mark, depending whether they are part of the quote or not. Interrupted quotations contain words not included in the quotation (AMA 2020, 480): “*I’m happy,*” *she confessed,* “*but we can’t be together.*” However, in case the “medial reporting clause” splits two full direct speech sentences, the original punctuation marks are preserved and the reporting clause ends in a period: “*Is she happy?*” *he asked.* “*Will she forgive me?*” (Greenbaum 1996, 546).

A final case is the quote within a quote, in which case single quotation marks are needed for the internal quote in English: *Donkey said “Shrek is reading ‘Christmas Preparations’ on the outhouse.*” Non-English languages often use other punctuation marks for internal quotes, such as guillemets (Ármeán 2017, 38), to be discussed later (see 5.9.3.).

5.9.2. Single Quotation Marks

Single quotation marks (‘...’), or single inverted commas, are directly available from the standard keyboard (double stroke key), and their Unicode value is U+2018 (left) and U+2019 (right), the latter being identical with the apostrophe (see 5.8.1.).

Single quotation marks (‘...’) are used to signal quotations within quotations in AmE (AMA 2020, 480), and a source specifies that this should be “fewer than 40 words” (APA 2020, 277). However, BrE uses single quotes first and embedded quotes are double (Bringhurst 2004, 86), or at least this is the more “common” usage (Thomas 2021, 460).

A further possible use is to replace parentheses for translations, when the foreign terms are italicized and the English rendition follows it in single quotation marks. As explained, headlines of newspaper articles may also use single quotations marks in AmE.¹⁴⁷

As for the punctuation, these are positioned “outside of the single-quote marks” (ASA et al. 2024, 3–05), and proofreading includes a very thorough check of apostrophes, single and double quotation marks to be smart or curly, and never straight, involving a lot of “eyeballing” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 136).

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/quotation-marks/>, April 27, 2025.

5.9.3. Guillemets

Guillemets (or *angle quotes*, *chevrons*, *duck-foot quotation marks*) are widely used for quotes (e.g., France, Spain, Italy, Hungary), and there are even two variants (Bringhurst 2004, 86):

1. French, Italian, and Romanian typography (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 9) use “points out” types («...»);
2. German and Hungarian typography (Laczkó and Mártonfi 2025, 352) use “points in” versions (»...«).

Punctuation marks are either inside or outside the guillemets, depending on whether they belong or not to the quotation (Bringhurst 2004, 87). Further uses are presented as *angle brackets* discussed in Section 5.6.4.

5.10. Mathematical Operations and Relations

Basic mathematical operations and relations might be used in general texts as well, and professional text writers should never substitute any sign with a more convenient one, unless this is explicitly permitted (e.g., slash sign instead of the division slash or fraction sign in certain cases).

Table 15 below—based on the (CMOS 2024, 664–65)—contains basic mathematical signs of general use, accompanied by their Unicode values as well. As these signs are to be interpreted as words, such as conjunctions or verbs (CMOS 2024, 431), they are flanked by a non-breaking space on both sides,¹⁴⁸ similarly to a sequence of words (APA 2020, 188), exceptions to which are presented below the table.

Table 15. *Mathematical operations and relations*

Sign	Name	Unicode	Remarks	For
+	Plus (addition)	002B	Shift+=	operation
–	Minus (subtraction)	2212		operation
±	Plus-or-minus	00B1		operation
×	Multiplication ¹⁴⁹	00D7	Alt+0215	operation
÷	Division	00F7		operation
/	Division slash, fraction, solidus	2215		operation
∩	Intersection	2229		operation
∪	Union	222A		operation
=	Equals	003D	= key	relation

¹⁴⁸ Still, there are views that only a thin space is needed to set off these operations and relations (AMA 2020, 931).

¹⁴⁹ The **Alt** code works only with the NumPad. See <https://www.pickupbrain.com/ms-word/multiplication-symbol/>, April 28, 2025.

Sign	Name	Unicode	Remarks	For
≠	Unequal, Not equal to	2260		relation
≈	Almost equal to	2248		relation
≡	Identical to, congruent to	2261		relation
>	Greater than	003E	Shift+]	relation
≥	Greater than or equal to	2265		relation
<	Less than	003C	Shift+[relation
≤	Less than or equal to	2264		relation
~	Tilde, similar to ¹⁵⁰	223C		relation
⊂	Subset of	2282		relation
⊃	Superset of	2283		relation
∈	Element of	2208		relation
∉	Not an element of	2209		relation
√	Radical, square root	221A		other

Although only a space is visible between the elements, all of them should be non-breaking spaces: $3 + 4 = 7$. However, when a negative number is involved, there is no space between the negative sign and the number: $-3 \times -2 = 6$.

Certain signs accept no spaces before and after them such as the fraction sign, the square root sign, subscript or superscript letters and numbers, or signs “modifying a number or symbol”: -5 , 7^3 (CMOS 2024, 432). The fraction sign may also be used to refer to standard abbreviations as well: $\%$ (account of, U+2100), $\%$ (addressed to the subject, U+2101), $\%$ (care of, U+2105). The simple square root ($\sqrt{\quad}$) suffices for a single item, while the professional version of more complex operations needs the extended root, which is available in Word via Insert, Equation: $(\sqrt{b - 4ac})$.

Table ranges (number, age) involving comparisons with mathematical signs ($<$, $>$, \leq , \geq) do not need a space either: ≤ 50 (CMOS 2024, 176).

Furthermore, mathematical variables (single letters) “are generally italicized” (CMOS 2024, 468): $a + c = f$, while both numerals and signs are set in Roman, except for advanced mathematical symbols, which are typically bold such as **F** for force, **a** for acceleration (CMOS 2024, 469).

Notable warnings regarding the replacement of mathematical signs with similar ones are collected below:

1. the minus sign ($-$, U+2212) should not be replaced by the en dash ($-$, U+2013);

¹⁵⁰ Tilde is different from a swung dash (\sim , U+007E), as the latter “indicates a relation between alternative forms of the same basic word or pattern” (Leech 2006, vi): *boy ~ boys*. Yet, hardly any difference is visible between them, unless they are next to each other: $\sim \sim$ (the first one is a swung dash, available on a standard keyboard, Shift+Grave key, which is below the Esc key).

2. slashes may replace fraction signs if no single glyph is found for a particular fraction; for instance, the *Times New Roman* font contains a series of fractions of single glyph ($\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{9}$, $\frac{1}{10}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{2}{5}$, $\frac{3}{5}$, $\frac{4}{5}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, $\frac{5}{6}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{7}{8}$), in which cases no substitution is accepted; however, 6/5 with a slash is acceptable, while non-English languages might use the colon to refer to division;
3. small or capital letters (x or X) or the asterisk sign (*) should not replace the multiplication sign (\times);
4. when multiplication is involved or dimensions are given, the proper sign should be used: *My fish tank size is 60 \times 30 \times 30*, in which cases either non-breaking spaces are recommended or thin spaces may be used;
5. the same symbol is needed to refer to areas, volumes, matrixes, or magnification ($\times 10$), in which case there is no space between the sign and the number (AMA 2020, 931);
6. the \geq and \leq signs should not be replaced by \geq or \leq , unless they are spreadsheet logical operators;
7. midline horizontal dots (\cdots , U+22EF) or elided ellipsis (CMOS 2024, 765) should not be replaced with baseline ellipsis (\dots , U+2026);

As for the layout of mathematical expressions, they may be broken at line-ends before the signs (CMOS 2024, 457) or “another clear logical pause” (Bringhurst 2004, 43). A rather firm rule is that these signs should never start a sentence (CMOS 2024, 667).

Finally, the correct order of mathematical parentheses should be remembered so as to make the “equation visually unambiguous” (APA 2020, 188), and also to obtain the correct result, we might add: $\{[()]$.

5.11. Pictograms

The majority of pictograms are rarely used, except for the asterisk. Nevertheless, they might have very special meanings or may adorn various texts.

5.11.1. Asterisk, Dagger (†, 2020), and Double Dagger (‡, 2021)

The **asterisk** is a pictogram available on standard keyboards ([Shift+8]), or it has a dedicated key on the NumPad. Its shortcuts are U+002A and [Alt+42] .

It may be used for emphasis, in which case the highlighted word is between asterisks (**joy**), and in this case it corresponds to the boldface (CMOS 2024, 461).

Expletives or swear words may be disguised with the help of one or more asterisks (CMOS 2024, 421).

Footnotes may be marked with pictograms; if there is only one footnote on the page, this may be introduced by an asterisk (CMOS 2024, 788), followed by further footnotes. Nevertheless, the sequence of footnote symbols is only familiar to

typographers: dagger (†, U+2020), double dagger (‡, U+2021), section sign (§, U+00A7), double vertical line (||, U+2016), and finally the paragraph mark (¶, U+00B6), as explained earlier (Bringhurst 2004, 68–69). The CMOS recommends doubling or tripling the first three pictograms if more than three footnotes are needed: ** †† ‡‡ (CMOS 2024, 800–801).

Legal-style citations (CMOS 2024, 938–39) referring to an electronic database signal the page number with “at” (@), followed by space, asterisk, and the page number (*Oral Surgeons*, 2021 U.S. App. LEXIS 19775, at *4.)

Significance levels or probability notes in tables may be marked with asterisks (*, **, ***) after the numbers and in the *Note* section below the table (CMOS 2024, 174–75). While this practice is supported by other sources as well (APA 2020, 204), there are views that instead of asterisks exact *P* values should be provided (AMA 2020, 129).

An asterisk positioned before a linguistic example indicates that “the example is unacceptable as a piece of English” (Leech 2006, vi). Other sciences also make use of the asterisk (e.g., medicine, indicating metastable states, alleles, and genes with the help of asterisks), but this is beyond our scope. However, Houston observes correctly that the asterisk seen by the majority of people might be associated with some special footnotes, namely the “small print,” scaring the readers away from some unfavorable conditions (Houston 2013, 114).

When a set of three asterisks occupies an entire line, they signal a break “stronger than a paragraph but not as strong as a subhead,” so they produce an ornamental or typographic break (CMOS 2024, 35).

The choice of an asterisk or dagger may be a matter of life and death, as the asterisk preceding a date reveals the birth of a person (*2006), while a dagger followed by a year indicates the year of death (Houston 2013, 97).

Daggers are rare views in printed materials, as they mostly introduce the second or fifth footnotes, as specified above. However, while the dagger before a year (†2019) indicates the year of death of a person, there used to be another way to indicate a person’s death before their article was published, namely in the byline, right after the author’s name. Today, this practice “has been discontinued” (AMA 2020, 26), but this may be specified in the Acknowledgement section, under the heading Additional Information.

The single use of the double dagger in typography is to indicate the third or the sixth footnote on a page.

5.11.2. Further Symbols, Greek Letters, and Special Typefaces

Font typefaces designed for writing contain the basic characters, while others contain more ornamented fonts as well, including emoticons, pictograms, ideographs, logograms, and icons. In this respect, it is worth checking the **Character Map** of each font typeface, especially the following ones:

1. Arial Unicode MS (not among readily available font families);¹⁵¹
2. Segoe UI Symbol;
3. HoloLens MDL2 Assets (for newer glyphs);
4. Webdings;
5. Wingdings.

It is known that the *Times New Roman* font typeface contains many characters, but the above-mentioned ones contain further ones as well. Accessing the **Character Map** enables us to select very special symbols (glyphs), whose Unicode value is also displayed. For instance, the *No smoking* sign (🚭) is available in *Webdings* (character code: 0x7a), but changing the font to *Webdings*, no sign is displayed, as various codes may have no signs attached in different typefaces or have different ones. For instance, the *No smoking* sign in *Webdings* turns to “z” if the typeface is changed to *Times New Roman*. It is also available in Unicode (1F6AD), but the pictogram is colored: 🚭.

Symbols for specific purposes might enhance the visibility of any text, for instance when designing workbooks on language:

Table 16. *Possible workbook symbols*

Activity	Symbol	Unicode
Read	📖	1F4C4
Listen	👂	1F508
Listen	👂	1F442
Speak	🗣️	1F5E2
Write	✍️	1F58E

Works using Greek letters should use their Unicode values. Greek letters should be set in Roman, not italics, and their size might be adjusted to the surrounding text (CMOS 2024, 723). Some of them are listed below:

Table 17. *Greek letters*

Name	Character	Unicode	Alt
Greek small letter alpha	α	03B1	224 945
Greek small letter beta	β	03B2	225 946
Greek capital letter delta	Δ	0394	916
Greek capital letter omega	Ω	03A9	234

¹⁵¹ <https://online-fonts.com/fonts/arial-unicode-ms>, (Microsoft), February 7, 2025. Freely available through the Linux Software Manager.

Name	Character	Unicode	Alt
			937
Greek capital letter sigma	Σ	03A3	228 931
Greek capital letter phi	Φ	03A6	934
Greek small letter phi	φ	03C6	966
Greek capital letter psi	Ψ	03A8	936
Greek small letter psi	ψ	03C8	968
			230
Greek small letter mu (micro)	μ	00B5	0181 956
			227
Greek small letter pi	π	03C0	960

Various shapes or arrows may also be useful such as the black hexagon (♠, U+2B22), the black down-pointing triangle (▼, U+25BC), the black right-pointing pointer (▶, U+25BA), the rightwards arrow (→, U+2192), the leftwards arrow (←, U+2190), the upwards arrow (↑, U+2191), the downwards arrow (↓, U+2193), or the up-down arrow (↕, U+2195).

Various publications may use thousands of so-called dingbats¹⁵² inserted in texts or page border areas for ornamental purposes, and the *Wingdings* font family might be among the most appreciated ones, covering contacts, time, communication, warning, technical, work, history, religion, zodiac, music, chess, cards, animals, vehicles, or even weather.

The *Webdings* font family, emojis and emoticons¹⁵³ only come to extend this vast library of non-alphabetic symbols, while hundreds of flags (religious, political, movements)¹⁵⁴ may cheer up the reader. Although these symbols might be far away from scientific texts, some of them are available in the *Times New Roman* font family as well, they may be found in word processing software (typically by accessing **Insert** and **Symbol**), and modern articles published online often rely on newly available icons.

Let us finish this section with our favorite, which is the *Hololens MDL2 Assets* typeface, available in both Word¹⁵⁵ and Writer, as it is part of Windows 10 and later versions of the OS. Although it may be downloaded for Linux or macOS, it is designed by Microsoft Corporation, so its signs and symbols might not be

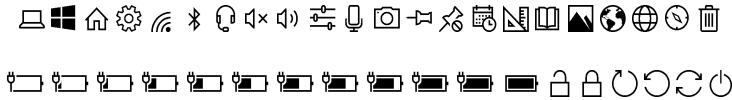
¹⁵² <https://www.monotype.com/resources/expertise/dive-dingbats-part-1>, April 29, 2025.

¹⁵³ <https://www.monotype.com/resources/expertise/dive-dingbats-part-2>, April 29, 2025.

¹⁵⁴ Further details on inserting flags may be found here: <https://www.alt-codes.net/flags>, or here: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Emoji_One_v1, April 29, 2025.

¹⁵⁵ <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/typography/font-list/hololens-mdl2-assets>, April 29, 2025.

displayed correctly on other operating systems. What we particularly appreciate in this typeface is that it provides many new technical icons:



5.12. Spelling

It is beyond the reach of the present book to delve into the details of spelling. However, the suggestions and recommendations presented so far might offer an insight into the correct way of using letters, numbers, and further signs and symbols to create a visually appealing and linguistically correct text.

Details on spelling are available in printed and online guidebooks, but part of the rules might change over time and are language-dependent (e.g., AmE or BrE). While ample explanations may be found upon the correct uses of hyphen (Greenbaum 1996, 551–55), the reader also has to consider whether these rules are still valid three decades later and compare them to a newer source (CMOS 2024, 474–91).

We tend to think that the combination of automatic spell checker will help in the majority of cases, with notable exceptions such as proper names, rare terms, foreign words, or atomic typos.

The **atomic typo** is labelled as a “typographical error in a published work, such as a misspelling or missing letter” (AMA 2020, 1146), but it is important to add that these are otherwise meaningful words that do not fit in the context (e.g., *from* instead of *form*), and there is even a shortlist of the most mistyped words.¹⁵⁶

It is of utmost importance to set the proofing language of word processors, and it should be checked whether the language pack for the desired language is installed. Windows provides this information in **Settings, Time and Language, Language**, and the **Preferred Languages** part displays *abc* with a check below the letters in fortunate cases:



Figure 85. *Proofing language installed*

The next step is to check if this is also the case within Word and Writer after the document is opened. Word offers this information either by accessing **Review, Language, Set Proofing Language**, which displays a window showing the used languages with or without the same icon, or this may be also checked by double

¹⁵⁶ <https://centrediting.com.au/2013/03/23/atomic-typo-yes-thats-really-a-thing/>, April 29, 2025.

clicking on the displayed language at the bottom toolbar, which triggers the same window:

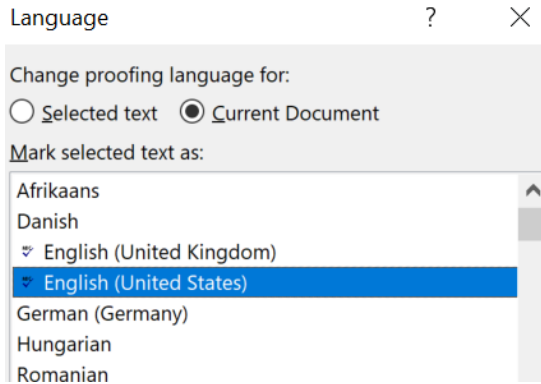


Figure 86. *Proofing language for current document*

As Figure 86 shows, in our case the proofing language is English (United States), and the icon preceding the language signals that the dictionaries for the selected language are installed. To be on the safe side, the installed language may be checked by accessing **File, Option, Language**, and see whether the proofing language is installed or not:

Office authoring languages and proofing

Manage languages used for creating and editing documents, including proofing tools such as spelling and grammar check. ⓘ

English (United States) <preferred>	Proofing installed	<input type="button" value="Add a Language..."/> <input type="button" value="Remove"/> <input type="button" value="Set as Preferred"/>
English (United Kingdom)	Proofing installed	
German (Germany)	Proofing installed	
Hungarian	Proofing installed	
Romanian	Proofing installed	

Figure 87. *Installed proofing languages, Word*

Further spelling options are available by accessing **File, Options, Proofing**, including **Grammar Settings**:

Word Options

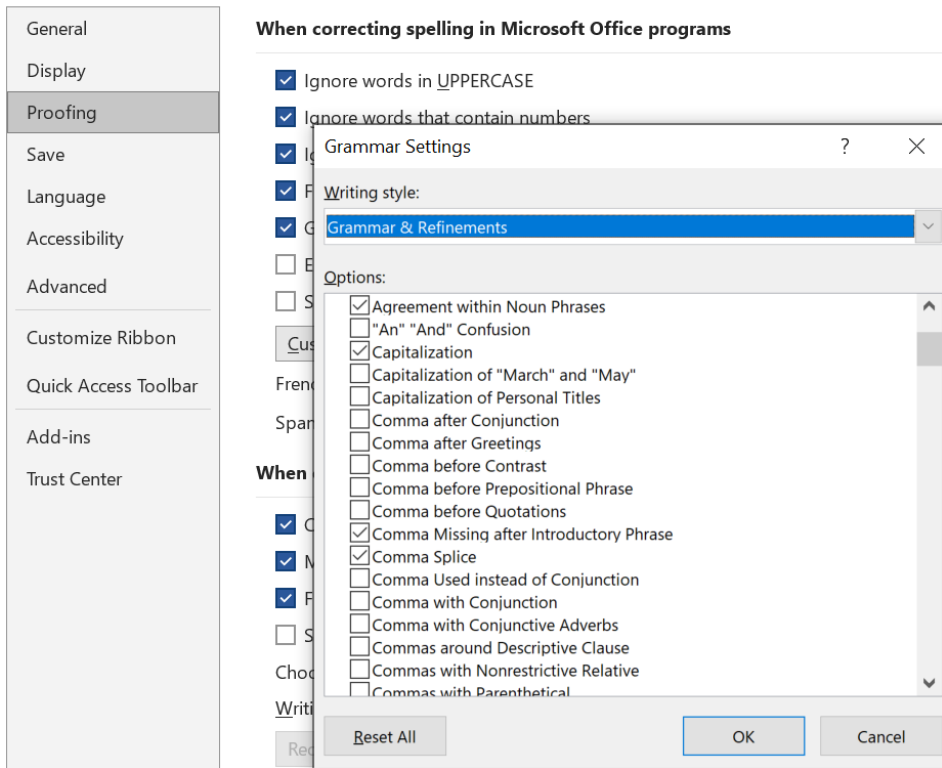


Figure 88. Grammar settings, Word

Writer offers this feature via **Tools, Language, For Selection, More**, and a click in the **Language options** will display the selected language, showing an *ab* with a green tick below in case the dictionaries are installed:

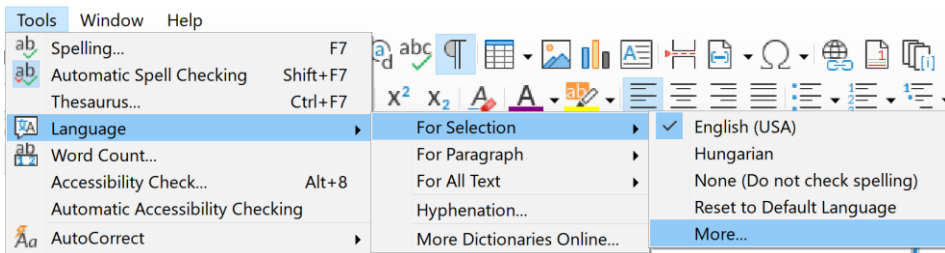


Figure 89. Language for Selection, Writer

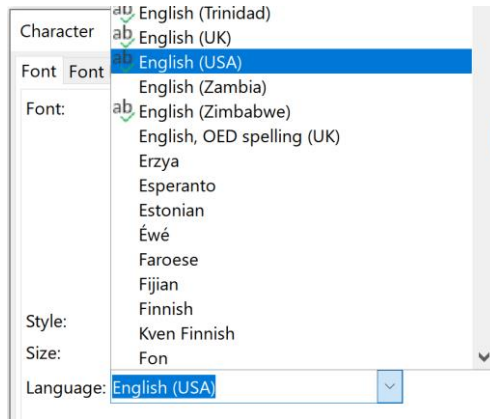


Figure 90. *Installed languages, Writer*

Similarly, this may be accessed by a single click on the language name on the **Bottom Toolbar**, then clicking on **More**.

A wavy red line below the word might indicate a spelling mistake, a typographic error, while two parallel blue lines below the word might indicate a grammar (Figure 91) or formatting issue (Figure 92):

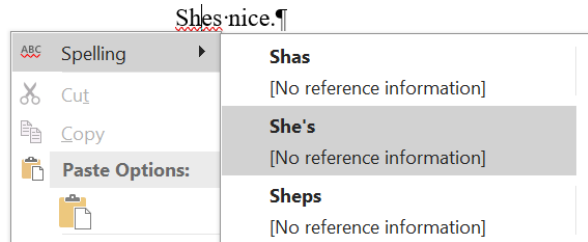


Figure 91. *Spelling Issues, Word*

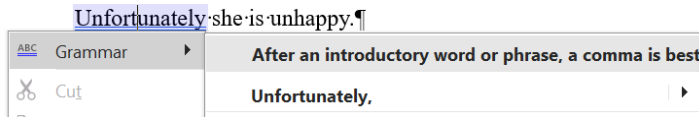


Figure 92. *Grammar issues, Word*

Writer seems to have different options. By accessing Tools, Options, Languages and Locales, Writing Aids will offer Available Language Modules, User-Defined Dictionaries and Options such as Check spelling as you type or Check grammar as you type. More than that, there is a separate Sentence Checking possibility for the installed languages. In the case of English, these are the options:

Options - Languages and Locales - English Sentence Checking

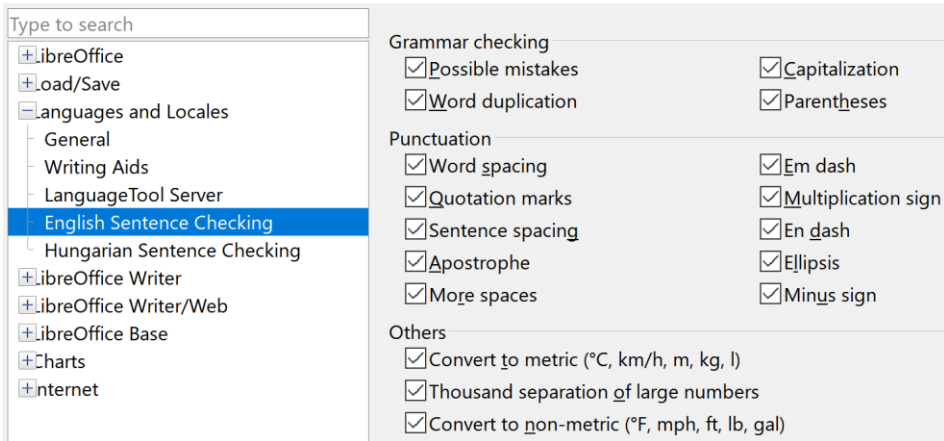


Figure 93. Options, English sentence checking, Writer

While Writer underlines misspelled words with a red wavy line, other types of (grammatical) errors are underlined with one wavy blue line (e.g., double space or missing capitalization). **AutoCorrect Options** in the **Tools** tab, then **AutoCorrect** may offer further refinements with **Replace**, **Exceptions**, **Localized Options**, or **Word Completion**.

However, it is important to highlight that these two word processor applications will find different mistakes and offer suggestions based on different dictionaries: Word uses its own spell checker, while LO, Mozilla Firefox, and Thunderbird use the freely available Hunspell¹⁵⁷ as their primary spellchecker. As such, it is worth checking a text with both spellcheckers.

Spelling and grammar should be associated with style and proper register as well, detailed in the next section.

5.13. Text Style and Word Choice

Text style may imply the proper selection of words, making a clear difference between formal words versus informal ones, but we should consider abbreviations as well.

Language exam difficulty implies both grammar and vocabulary, and the latter is obvious in the writing part, where candidates must pay attention to using a formal register while drafting an essay, knowing that no abbreviations are to be used.

Formal texts tend to be straightforward, and they should contain commonly known terms and phrases depending on the topic and the target readers. This also entails the avoidance of the following types of words and phrases:

¹⁵⁷ <https://hunspell.github.io/>, August 14, 2025.

1. slang (e.g., *cash*), which is a “very informal kind of vocabulary, used mostly in speech by people who know each other well” (Swan 2005, 526);
2. idioms, which are expressions whose words result in a new meaning, specific to a language (e.g., *bite the dust*);
3. colloquialisms, which are terms understood only in specific geographical areas (*ain’t*), although these “informal expressions” are used in “everyday speech and writing” (APA 2020, 116);
4. phrasal verbs, in which the combination of the verb with a particle or preposition results in a new meaning (e.g., *take up* “start”);
5. jargon, which should not be overused as is “specialized terminology,” and is “the opposite of clarity” (Froke et al. 2024, 36), understood only by experts in the specific field; by far, “[b]ureaucratic jargon has had the greatest publicity,” and writers should “define on first use any specialized terms” that are relevant to the topic (APA 2020, 116);
6. euphemisms, which are “indirect terms used to express something unpleasant” (AMA 2020, 440) in a more positive way; scientific writing prefers “directness”;
7. clichés, about which the AP Stylebook considers that are the “junk food of the literary pantry, much loved by lazy writers” (Froke et al. 2024, 36), illustrated by *crystal clear* or *first and foremost*;
8. taboo and swearwords, which are never to be used in formal writing unless it is the case of study.

Particular attention must be paid to the use of *we*. The editorial *we* may be used by writers, but in scientific writing the use of “passive voice construction” is preferred, “which is less direct,” unless “writers are describing their work or their observations” (AMA 2020, 426–27).

It is part of the style to use consistent grammar, linking words expressing transitions, contrast, addition, comparison, or signaling summaries (AMA 2020, 1135), and authors should “[a]void beginning more than two consecutive lines with the same word” (Bringhurst 2004, 43).

The visual appearance is more appealing if long paragraphs may be broken with the help of paragraphs, subtitles, headings, tables, illustrations, footnotes, lists, or quotes, knowing that English uses no first-line hanging indent.

5.14. Abbreviations

5.14.1. Topicality of Abbreviations

Abbreviations may be discussed under various headings (e.g., pronunciation, spelling, or capitalization), but—based on earlier studies on the topic (Imre 2022a–b)—they also belong to text style, given that recent (mostly medical journals) ban their use in scientific papers (to be discussed in the following).

Abbreviation is an “umbrella term” (Imre 2022a, 379), which includes any string of characters shorter than the original word or phrase, so *acronym*, *initialism*, *truncation*, *alphabetism*, *single-* and *multi-word shortening*, *clipping*, *contraction*, *blend*, and their combinations are all varieties of abbreviation. Discussing them is indispensable, as their use has reached staggering scales, although corpuses still underrate their frequency (Izura and Playfoot 2012, 869).

Studies warn about “a proliferation of initialisms” (Bloom 2000, 3), and “the proportion of acronyms in titles increased from 0.7 per 100 words in 1950 to 2.4 per 100 words in 2019,” while “the proportion of acronyms in abstracts also increased, from 0.4 per 100 words in 1956 to 4.1 per 100 words in 2019” (Barnett and Doubleday 2020, 1). As for their presence in dictionaries, Cannon estimated decades ago that “the number of initialisms in numerous languages worldwide has exploded from tens of thousands to perhaps 800,000 recorded in dictionaries, besides those that are still unrecorded” (Cannon 1989, 104–5). There are various reasons for this phenomenon, as “they accelerate communication” (Panajotu 2010, 160), and scholars also think that “human languages are very prone to the creation of acronyms” (Sánchez and Isern 2011, 311), as their graphic image captures the attention by their shorter form or full uppercase letters, and today they are “part of our everyday vocabulary” (Izura and Playfoot 2012, 862).

Moreover, they have become even more widespread in scientific writing, as a “need for a more efficient vocabulary in ... medicine, politics, law, and commerce... advances in computer science and technology” (Mattiello 2013, 64). While authors need to “conform to space limitations” (Soyer 2018, 589) or “save time and space” (Ribes et al. 2009, 269), today the popularity of certain initialisms (e.g., *US* ← *the United States of America*; *MIT* ← *the Massachusetts Institute of Technology*) has long “superseded the full forms” (Cannon 1989, 103), becoming “highly familiar to the language user” (Izura and Playfoot 2012, 862) or “often used without our knowing what the letters stand for” (Quirk et al. 1972, 1582). Nevertheless, scholars are less enthusiastic about their popularity, often wording their dissatisfaction.

Negative approaches to abbreviations typically mention that their frequent use in “scientific communication” is “mostly unnecessary,” as they can be alienating, ostracizing (Hales et al. 2017, 22), or difficult to read (Thomas 2021, 467). A further aggravation is that a single initialism might refer to hundreds of terms. For instance, *CCC* may have nearly 500 extended definitions, ranging from military terms to pop culture (Imre 2022a, 379).¹⁵⁸ As a result, abbreviations were soon labeled as “confusing and imprecise” (Baue 2002, 489), and some abbreviations are unknown even among experts (Dróth 2008, 24–25), turning scientific texts “unpleasant and even more difficult” (Soyer 2018, 589), leading to the conclusion that an editor compares them to an “epidemic,” publishing his

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.acronymfinder.com/CCC.html>, April 22, 2022.

editorial entitled *Zero tolerance for acronyms* (Begg 2017, 561). While we consider that it is untenable not to use any abbreviation, it is worth discussing types of abbreviations stemming from various definitions and their possible uses.

Whatever the case, the created abbreviations, acronyms, or initialisms are considered as the “most peripheral to word formation” (Carter and McCarthy 2006, 482), labeling them as a sort of “nonword with meaning” (Izura and Playfoot 2011, 864), which resemble “irregular” words (Laszlo and Federmeier 2007, 1161) characterized by “iconographic independence” (Alonso 2008, 16). Authors are often discouraged to create new abbreviations, but in case they still do that, the newly created string of characters should be definitely different from the familiar or highly used ones such as the units of measure.

5.14.2. Forming Abbreviations

A dictionary definition of **abbreviation** states that it is perceived as “a reduced form” or “a shortened form of a word, phrase, or symbol” (Trumble and Stevenson 2002, 3), and other sources also mention “a shortened form of a word or a group of words” (Thomas 2021, 467), or simply “a shortened form of a term” (Soyer 2018, 589).

While the majority of scholars do not make a clear distinction between one-word and multi-word shortenings—resulting in ambiguous definitions—a thorough analysis seems to indicate that it is worth discussing separate origins of these words, which partially solves the issue of overlapping terms. A similar distinction is also found in Mattiello (2013, 72), although no clear-cut categories exist, as detailed in the following.

The left column of the table below contains all the available processes that shorten a single word, while the right column labels ways to shorten phrases or multiple words:

Table 18. *Ways to shorten single- and multiple words*

Single-word abbreviations	Multiple-word abbreviations
- shortening (abbreviation)	- acronym
- clipping	- initialism
- truncation	- alphabetism
- single-word contraction	- blend
- hybrid	- multiple-word contraction
	- hybrid

The extreme abbreviation of a single word is in fact the **shortening** of the original (full, expanded) word to a single letter (e.g., *p.* ← *page*), but typically more letters are

preserved. A source considers that shortenings never “include the last letter of a word.”¹⁵⁹ However, shortenings may be labeled differently, as explained below.

In case more initial letters are preserved, this may be referred to as **truncation** (e.g., *teach* ← *teacher*), during which the final part is deleted. However, according to Mattiello (2013, 72), truncation is only a type of **clipping**, which may be defined as a procedure during which the middle or end part of the initial word is preserved (e.g., *flu* ← *influenza*, *burger* ← *hamburger*).

Terms such as *Dr.* (← *Doctor*) or *Prof.* (← *Professor*) are always “expanded in pronunciation,” so they should be labelled as “graphic shortenings” (Mattiello 2013, 13). Yet, as the final part is deleted in *Prof.*, the word is in fact truncated, while *Dr.*¹⁶⁰ is considered to be a “conventional abbreviation” (López Rúa 2004, 115), and even if they appear in writing in their shortened form, they are pronounced as a full word (Deme 1955, 399). Still, informal speech might accept the shortened version (e.g., *Prof.*).

The term **contraction** is applied to cases when the first and last letters of a word are preserved (Thomas 2021, 409), so the previously exemplified *Dr.* falls into this category, together with *Mr.* (← *Mister*), but contractions preserving middle letters might also belong here (*km* ← *kilometer*; *Bld.* ← *boulevard*).

Hybrid cases might combine the previously mentioned abbreviation methods: *Dem* (← *Democrat*) or *Jan* (← *January*) may be pronounced either in their expanded or unexpanded form, so they are “clipping and graphic abbreviations” (Mattiello 2013, 72); or there are cases when the shortened form disregards the original letters (*lb* ← *pound*) or mix uppercase and lowercase letters (*kWh* ← *kilowatt-hour*).

To sum up, as there are various approaches to shortened words, these terms might be confusing, so the term abbreviation seems to cover all these terms in everyday use.

However, abbreviations deriving from phrases and multiple words should be discussed separately, as they are referred to as acronyms, initialisms, sometimes alphabetisms or contractions of two words, knowing that the term **acronym** “has remained maddeningly ill-defined for its entire existence” (Zimmer 2010)—actually ever since it “was coined” (López Rúa 2004, 110). This is partially due to the imprecise definitions formulated in dictionaries and mainstream grammar books, which mix the terms.

The majority of scholars agree that a prototypical acronym derives from a multi-word sequence (e.g., the name of the institution) and the initial capital letter of each word forms the newly created word, which is still pronounceable as a word (Barnett and Doubleday 2020, 4; HaCohen-Kerner et al. 2013, 2133; Hales et al. 2017, 22), exemplified by *RAM* (← *Random Access Memory*). However, hybrid terms exist, such as *JPEG* (← *Joint Photographic Experts Group*), in which ‘j’ is

¹⁵⁹ <https://tinyurl.com/yc2ehbjy>, May 9, 2025.

¹⁶⁰ This term is used without a period in BrE.

pronounced as a letter and the string p-e-g is pronounced as a word, or acronyms created not only from the initials of the expanded version (*ASPEN* ← *Automated Survey Processing Environment*).

Initialisms also stem from the initial letters of a multi-word sequence containing capitalized words, but the newly formed uppercased word is “pronounced as separate letters” (Thomas 2021, 467), not as a single word, such as *CIA* (← *Central Intelligence Agency*). Naturally, less central cases exist, as initialisms may skip the first letter of certain words, especially prepositions or conjunctions (e.g., *FBI* ← *Federal Bureau of Investigation*); in other cases, they could be pronounced as words, yet letter-by-letter pronunciation is needed: *WHO* (← *World Health Organization*) or *GOP* (← *Grand Old Party*). Less prototypical or hybrid cases may pose further challenges, for instance terms containing both uppercase and lowercase letters (*CoS* ← *Chief of Staff*). To make matters worse, initialisms may include numbers (*AK47* ← *Avtomat Kalashnikova*), signs or symbols (*AT&T* ← *American Telephone and Telegraph Company*), and social media abounds in these types (*ELI5* ← *Explain like I’m 5*; *F2F* ← *Face to face*; *Gr8* ← *Great*, *L8* ← *Late*).¹⁶¹

Although some scholars consider that **alphabetism** is a superordinate term for both acronyms and initialisms (López Rúa 2004, 117; Mattiello 2013, 67; Scarpa 2020, 66), or initialism encapsulates acronyms and alphabetisms (Kortmann 2020, 70), the term is not widely used.

Blends preserve various parts of multi-word sequences (Kortmann 2020, 70), most typically the first letters or syllables (*Interpol* ← *International Police*; *infotainment* ← *information* + *entertainment*; *motel* ← *motor* + *hotel*), but other options are also possible (*blog* ← *web* + *log*; *frenemy* ← *friend* + *enemy*).

Contractions involving two words are extremely popular, both in (informal) speech and in writing. In this case, the second word usually implies an auxiliary word dropping its first letter(s), replaced by an apostrophe, and joining it to the preceding word: *we’re* (← *we are*), *you’ve* (← *you have*).

As for the popularity of these terms, even if initialism is the older term, “it has never caught on in wider usage” (Zimmer 2010), so **acronym** may be considered the covert term for the entire category, and the latter has captured the attention of computer programmers as well, who designed various codes (algorithms) to detect acronyms and initialisms in texts, together with their possible expanded forms, as it was observed that these are usually found within the range of less than 20 words distance from the acronym (Cannon 1989, 106; Koelsch 2016, 80).

In the following, we use the umbrella term **abbreviation** for all possible types.

¹⁶¹ <https://buffer.com/library/social-media-acronyms-abbreviations/>, May 8, 2025.

5.14.3. Using Abbreviations

Although a few abbreviations may sound professional, there is a general consensus among scholars that they are rather informal, belonging to the “conversational use” (Soyer 2018, 589).

Some sources are slightly more receptive to them, stating that their choice is “a process without any semantic consequences, but with a change in the stylistic value” (Mattiello 2013, 69), although “their overuse is to be avoided” (Panajotj 2010, 165). Nevertheless, the author acknowledges on the same page that this is hardly tenable. The strictest guidelines simply recommend their complete avoidance (Ribes et al. 2010, 68), but this rarely seems to have any effect on the authors, which is often due to the fact that English language is “very prone to using and creating new words like acronyms” (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2020, 138), entailing that translations from English also borrow many of these terms.

Unfamiliar abbreviations in a text inevitably lead to confusion, so only conventional ones should be used, and the readers are “likely to be more familiar with the abbreviation than with the complete form,” leading to considerable space savings (APA 2020, 172).

Authors relying on any kind of abbreviation in the main text should spell out the expanded form first, even if they might be familiar to the potential readers, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses (Koelsch 2016, 6; Ribes et al. 2010, 69; Thomas 2021, 467), after which the abbreviation may be used by itself, especially when “the original word or words are repeated numerous times, are long and cumbersome to read, or cause the prose to be awkward” (AMA 2020, 556). Once the abbreviated form is provided, this should be used consistently thereafter, and not the expanded form.

Common abbreviations and symbols may be used in labels and explained “in a key or in the caption” (CMOS 2024, 155) but are restricted in titles and abstracts.¹⁶² However, when a particular abbreviation is found in standard dictionaries (e.g., *AIDS*), no extended form is necessary. The problem is that even though they are included in dictionaries, this is not an automatic indicator that the target readers will know it. Other sources suggest that whenever an abbreviation is used in tables and figures, their expanded form should be included in a note or the legend of each table and figure, even if they were defined before (APA 2020, 173), which seems redundant, but it respects the rule that every single table should be understood out of the context as well.

Furthermore, in extensive scientific publications, the Abstract section should be followed by a list of abbreviations and symbols used in the text. This is provided in alphabetical order, including their expanded form as well, except for the common abbreviations (also found in standard dictionaries) and units of

¹⁶² For instance, see De Gruyter Brill’s *Open Linguistics*, Instructions for Authors, a downloadable guideline, available at <https://www.degruyterbrill.com/journal/key/opli/html>, May 8, 2025.

measurements, which need not be included. This list may be placed at the end of the text as well.

Thus, abbreviations and acronyms used in texts almost always require disambiguation (Jacobs et al. 2020, 527), which is “critical to the proper understanding of various types of texts” (HaCohen-Kerner et al. 2013, 2133), and the expanded form of an abbreviation is given in lowercase letters, unless it contains a proper noun, it is a formal name, or it begins a sentence (AMA 2020, 556).

The **plural form** of abbreviations is signaled by a lowercase “s” at the end of the term, without an apostrophe (APA 2020, 173): *DOIs* (← *Digital Object Identifiers*), *Eds.* (← *Editors*), or even *vols.* (← *volumes*), although the plural of *p.* (← *page*) is *pp.* (← *pages*).

The plural forms of single-character abbreviations and symbols might also cause confusion, or when they end in a superscript or subscript character, in which case an apostrophe before the plural “s” is needed: *A’s* or *F₂’s*.

The **possessive form** of abbreviations might be confusing, so manuals mostly recommend rephrasing to avoid the apostrophe form followed by an *s*. However, when the use of possessive forms is relevant, this should not be on the first occurrence of the abbreviation or acronym (AMA 2020, 602). A possible example is the *CEO’s decision* versus the *CEOs’ decision*, which is why rewording might be more felicitous.

Articles preceding abbreviations follow the rule of pronunciation. The proper indefinite article (*a* or *an*) is selected depending on “how the term is pronounced” (CMOS 2024, 454) or “according to the sound following the article” (AMA 2020, 603). Although this is simple, it might still vary, for instance, when it starts with an *h*: *a HAZMAT case* or *an HBO subscription*.

Periods may signal an abbreviation (Greenbaum 1996, 517), but rules whether certain abbreviations should be followed or not by a period are rather controversial. Hence, alternatives are guaranteed, such as the variants for the Latin abbreviations of *morning* and *afternoon*: *am*, *a.m.*, *A.M.*, or *AM* (← *ante meridiem*) and *pm*, *p.m.*, *P.M.*, or *PM* (← *post meridiem*), knowing that the CMOS prefers *a.m.* and *p.m.*, while Microsoft products set for the United States predominantly use *AM* and *PM*. Similarly, there are alternatives for *exempli gratia*: *e.g.*, followed by a comma (CMOS 2024, 5), *e.g.* without a trailing comma,¹⁶³ or *eg.* without periods and a trailing comma (AMA 2020, 454). Further remarks regarding the use or lack of periods are provided when discussing types of abbreviations below.

It is suggested that BrE tends to omit the periods in symbols, acronyms, and initialisms (Greenbaum 1996, 518), while it preserves them in shortenings or clippings (e.g., *Capt.* ← *captain*, *Co.* ← *company*, *ft.* ← *feet*, *Inc.* ← *Incorporated*, or *Rev.* ← *Reverend*) unless they are units of measure or belong to the international

¹⁶³ <https://training.cochrane.org/online-learning/author-guidelines/essential-style-guidelines>, May 9, 2025.

system of abbreviations (e.g., *kg* ← *kilogram*, *s* ← *second*, *Hz* ← *hertz*, or *O* ← *oxygen*).

In case an abbreviation with a trailing period ends the sentence, no further period is necessary to mark the end of the sentence (CMOS 2024, 432).

Acronyms and initialisms are typically full uppercase words, and there are neither spaces nor periods between the letters (Mancuso 1987, 124; Wallwork 2014, 106), as they are “more direct part of the vocabulary” (Cannon 1989, 111), and it results in a “cleaner typography” (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2020, 138).

Space after shortenings and clippings (either with or without a trailing period) is needed to separate them from the following word, but there may be space or not between the letters forming an acronym or initialism.

Bringhurst advises the following: “[a]dd little or no space within strings of initials... A normal word space follows the last period in the string” (Bringhurst 2004, 30), who also suggests spaced small caps for acronyms, “except two-letter geographical acronyms and acronyms that stand for personal names” (Bringhurst 2004, 48). He also considers that acronyms tend to become regular words, so there is a shift from full uppercase words to an initial capital letter followed by lowercase letters (e.g., *Fortran*).

To make matters worse, a few authors remind us that multiple ways of spelling are possible (HaCohen-Kerner et al. 2004, 59; Mattiello 2013, 83), having in mind uppercase letters (no periods, no spaces), uppercase letters (periods, no spaces), only first letter uppercase followed by lowercase letters (as a word), or fully lowercase letters in a single word.

Others consider that an acronym is “a word in which half or more of the characters are upper case letters” (Barnett and Doubleday 2020, 1), or “consisting of an uppercase letter, followed by 1–4 more uppercase letters, or by the & character and by a single uppercase letter” (Dannewitz Linder 2016, 253), knowing that the typical length of an acronym or initialism ranges from 2 to a maximum of 10 characters (Sánchez and Isern 2011, 313).

Finally, initialisms may include a hyphen, a slash, an en dash, or even an em dash (Bloom 2000, 1), and the string may contain numbers too.

While it is beyond doubt that journals will not accept manuscripts disregarding the instructions referring to abbreviations, few of these recommendations are applied elsewhere. Subtitling is a clear example for this, as translated subtitles often rely on borrowing abbreviations from the original transcript, forcing the viewers to learn the frequent ones while watching and doing background research on less frequent ones.

Although the *BBC Guidelines* specifies that symbols for units of measurement should never be used (Williams 2009, 34), and “most companies recommend the avoidance of abbreviations” in subtitles, unless “they should be known by the target audience or not cause any confusion” (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2020, 137), these remain pure recommendations. A well-informed viewer might rely on the

mass media providing many fashionable abbreviations connected to current affairs in politics, economics, or health, but subtitles often contain abbreviations which puzzle the viewers. Yet, subtitles seem to be in a desperate need for abbreviations due to constraints of space: number of characters per line, and no more than two lines at once.

Ultimately, subtitles can hardly do anything to replace abbreviations with their extended forms when multiple abbreviations are at stake: *DARPA of DOD* (← *the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency of the United States Department of Defense*) or an unforgettable line in this respect in *Designated Survivor* (Season 2, Episode 3): “Look, we have the CDC, HHS, NIH, FEMA...,” referring to the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, the *United States Department of Health and Human Services*, the *National Institutes of Health*, and the *Federal Emergency Management Agency*.

5.14.4. *Extended Forms Instead of Abbreviations*

While the popularity of abbreviations is increasing, there are voices that “writing is generally easier to understand when most words are written out rather than when overflowing with abbreviations” (APA 2020, 172).

To minimize the use of abbreviations, they should not be used in titles, section headings, and very rarely in abstracts (with at least three occurrences) or in the References section, where common book title abbreviations, such as APA or the CMOS, are always in the expanded form: *American Psychological Association* or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.¹⁶⁴

Furthermore, authors should not create new abbreviations (AMA 2020, 556; Nicoll 2016, 6), having in mind that more than one “novel abbreviation per paper burdens the reader” (Bloom 2000, 4). Consequently, they should be used “sparingly” (APA 2020, 172), and there are cases when their use is actually discouraged:

1. in titles and subtitles;
2. in abstracts;
3. in headings unless they were previously used or are found in dictionaries;
4. at the beginning of sentences (APA 2020, 174), such as *lb* (← *pound*) or *α* (← *Alpha*);
5. when the abbreviation is more popular than the extended form;
6. when there are fewer than three occurrences in the main text (APA 2020, 172); however, very long terms with standard abbreviations (e.g., *DNA* versus *deoxyribonucleic acid*) are an exception to this rule;

¹⁶⁴ <https://proofreading.org/blog/abbreviations-in-academic-writing/>, May 9, 2025.

7. in case the extended form is easier to understand, such as chemical symbols and formulas, or when the extended form is not considerably longer: *water* versus H_2O (AMA 2020, 637);
8. for stylistic reasons.

5.14.5. *Types of Abbreviations*

There are various types of abbreviations based on their meaning, most of which are presented below.

5.14.5.1. *Abbreviating Names and Collectives*

Names, titles, and honorifics may be abbreviated. In the case of names, letters standing for abbreviated first and middle names are always followed by a period: *John F. Kennedy, J. J. Thomson*. The term *St.* (← *Saint*) should take a period when it precedes a person's name, but not in geographical names: *St Louis, Missouri* (AMA 2020, 449–50).

People's name may be combined with their either honorific or academic degrees but not both: *Jane Doe, PhD*, or *Dr Jane Doe*. Further titles are *Prof., BA, MA, BSc.*, and fellowship designations, or honorary degrees are “generally not listed in bylines or elsewhere” (AMA 2020, 556). The term *editor* is abbreviated as *Ed.* in case it is singular, while the plural form is *Eds.* (APA 2020, 287).

There are cases when the period might differentiate AmE and BrE spelling. According to the CMOS, period is needed in *Dr.* (← *doctor*), *Mr.* (← *Mister*), *Sr.* (← *Senior*), or *Jr.* (← *Junior*). Other sources contradict this, and Brighurst urges us to “use a period only when the word stops prematurely” (Brighurst 2004, 88), which seems to be a logical advice, entailing that *Dr, Jr, Mr, or Sr* take no period, and this is also recommended by others as well (AMA 2020, 572), and BrE also disregards periods in these cases. On the other hand, *Prof.* (← *Professor*) or *Capt.* (← *Captain*) take a period.

Differences between BrE and AmE punctuation are highlighted by others as well (Milinković 2019, 156), but a more optimistic observation suggests that punctuation changes over time (Thomas 2021, 469).

Depending on the writing style, first names of authors are also abbreviated (capitalized first name followed by a period), while group authors may be abbreviated to preserve the first capital letters into an acronym of initialism with no periods between: *APA* ← *American Psychological Association* (APA 2020, 268). This style may be extended to agencies, foundations, or various organizations as well (APA 2020, 287).

5.14.5.2. Abbreviating Time

Dates and **periods of time** are also often abbreviated, although there are variants in certain cases. For instance, eras may be capitalized with periods (B.C., A.D.) or set in small capitals, no periods: BC ← *before Christ*, AD ← *Anno Domini* or ‘in the year of the Lord,’ CE ← common era (AMA 2020, 563).

Months shorter than five letters are not abbreviated (*May, June, July*), while the rest may be abbreviated with the first three letters followed by a period (except for *Sept.* ← *September*, which is a four-letter abbreviation) in full dates, tables, and references, but not when only the month is in question (ASA et al. 2024, 7–06). However, another source considers that months may be abbreviated with the first three letters and no periods (AMA 2020, 563), similarly to the days of the week.

Hours, minutes, and seconds may have different abbreviations as well: *h* ← *hour*, *m* ← *minute*, *s* ← *second*, but *m* may stand for *meter* as well, so there are views that the abbreviations for time should be doubled: *hh:mm:ss*, knowing that they are not included in the international system of abbreviations. Non-technical contexts might use abbreviations with periods (CMOS 2024, 669): *h.*, *hr.*, *min.*, and *sec.* There is a space between the preceding number and the abbreviated hour, minute, or second (APA 2020, 176).

However, there are versions without periods as well (*sec, min, hr*),¹⁶⁵ and informal variants replace the letters with the prime symbol for minutes (′, U+2032), while the double prime expresses seconds (″, U+2033). Yet, careless versions might replace prime and double prime with apostrophes (') or straight apostrophes (').

BrE uses periods between the hours and minutes, while AmE relies on colons: 10.49 versus 10:49. A more visible difference is the AmE Month-Day-Year format (May 21, 2025), where the year is separated by a comma from the rest, compared to the BrE Day-Month-Year format (21 May 2025), knowing that the day may be written as an ordinal number (21st May) or a cardinal number (21 May), and no period is needed after the ordinal (Greenbaum 1996, 518). However, the numbers replacing the month, day, and year may be separated by periods, slashes, and dashes as well (e.g., 05/21/25, 5-21-25).

5.14.5.3. Abbreviating Locations

The abbreviation of **capital directions** is always uppercase, and no period follows them: *N* (← *North*), *E* (← *East*), *S* (← *South*), and *W* (← *West*), including their whatsoever combinations (*NE, S-SE*).

Geographical coordinates make use of the degree, the prime, and double prime signs to refer to directions, latitude, and longitude values: 44° 4' 5.5308" N and 114° 44' 31.3548" W are the coordinates for Idaho, USA; as both coordinates

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.yourdictionary.com/articles/sec-min-hr-abbreviations-conversions>, May 21, 2025.

are given, no *lat* and *long* abbreviations are needed (ASA et al. 2024, 2–02), and a few geographical abbreviations are commonly used, such as *Mt* ← *Mount*.

Countries typically have their established abbreviations, although there are multiple variants. For instance, the ISO codes may be Alpha-2 or Alpha-3 codes, thus both *US* and *USA* refer to the *United States of America*, while *GB* and *GBR* stand for the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*.

While these codes contain no periods, *The Washington Post* consistently uses *U.S.* and not *US* (← *the United States of America*), although manuals recommend *US* (AMA 2020, 565). *US* states and Canadian provinces should be spelled out, except for postal addresses, tables, and figures, where their established abbreviated version is recommended (AMA 2020, 565–69). Another source explains that *USA* is a noun, while *U.S.* is an adjective, as in *U.S. Cotton Belt* (ASA et al. 2024, 2–01).

States, provinces, territories, counties, and cities also have abbreviations, and users should respect the established ones: *MB* ← *Manitoba*, *LA* ← *Louisiana* or *Los Angeles*, and postal addresses also contain abbreviations for *Avenue* (→ *Ave*), *Boulevard* (→ *Blvd*), *Drive* (→ *Dr*), *Highway* (→ *Hwy*), *Lane* (→ *Ln*), *Road* (→ *Rd*), *Square* (→ *Sq*), *Street* (→ *St*), or even *Building* (→ *Bldg*), *Place* (→ *Pl*), *Suite* (→ *Ste*), or *Terrace* (→ *Terr*), but the list is not complete (AMA 2020, 564–65). However, in case the “street number is not given,” or plural form is needed (e.g., *Main and Summer streets*), there is no abbreviation, and *room*, *department*, or *division* should not be abbreviated either (AMA 2020, 565), even if their abbreviations are widespread (*R*, *Dept*, *Div.*, respectively). Interestingly, *Number* is abbreviated as *No.*, ending in a period.

Commercial firms may contain abbreviations in their names *Co.* (← *Company*), *Corp.* (← *Corporation*), *Inc.* (← *Incorporated*), *Ltd.* (← *Limited*), and manuals either recommend periods (CMOS 2024, 402) or not (AMA 2020, 573). Our recommendation is to use periods.

5.14.5.4. Abbreviating Units of Measurements

Units of measurements typically take no period unless they end a sentence, as *SI* unit symbols contain no periods. Unit abbreviations in the *SI* system are not capitalized.

Furthermore, units of measurements take no plural forms when they follow numbers (7 *cm*, 2 *hr*), as explained (AMA 2020, 928), and are followed by a verb in singular. Overall, avoiding plural forms in abbreviations is a reasonable advice, at least not on their first occurrence.¹⁶⁶

Interestingly, *liter* is abbreviated with an uppercase *L* to distinguish it from the digit 1, which is similar to the lowercase *l* (AMA 2020, 927).

¹⁶⁶ <https://tinyurl.com/mr3udjtt>, May 8, 2025.

Style guides recommend the full form of measurements when they start the sentence, belong to the title or the subtitle, or are not accompanied by numeric values, while less common units should be spelled out first, accompanied by the abbreviated form in parentheses, and the abbreviated form may be used later on (AMA 2020, 928). Other sources consider that no extended form of common measurements, time, chemical elements, Latin and statistical abbreviations is needed, and they should not be defined in tables or figures either (APA 2020, 173).

Nonmetric units may be preserved in idioms, proverbs, and sayings (*Give him an inch and he will take an ell.*); otherwise, it is recommended to be converted to the metric system (AMA 2020, 932), including length (*feet, ft* to *centimeters, cm* or *meters, m*), area (*square feet, sq ft, sq. ft., ft²* to *square meters, sq m, m²*), mass (*ounce, oz* to *gram, g*; *pound, lb* to *gram, g* or *kilogram, kg*), and volume (*fluid ounce, fl oz* to *milliliter, mL*; *teaspoon, tsp* to *milliliter, mL*; *pint, pt* to *liter, L*; *gallon, gal* to *liter, L*, etc.). Preserving nonmetric values is considered less formal and nonscientific. While units of measurements take no period, the abbreviation of *inch* is an exception (*in.*), not to be misunderstood. It is also important to mention that units and numeric values are separated by a space (APA 2020, 175), but further remarks are necessary in the case of the degree sign.

Temperature values (AMA 2020, 933) in degrees Fahrenheit (°F, U+2109) should be converted to degrees Celsius (°C, U+2103), but there are different views whether these signs follow the numeric values with or without a space. The SI style (AMA 2020, 933; APA 2020, 175) recommends space (3 °C), while another style (CMOS 2024, 651) uses no space (3°C) between the degree sign and the number. On the other hand, angle values take no space: *a 30° angle*. Further details are found in Section 5.8.4.

There are contradictory rules regarding repeated quantities as well: ranges with units of measurements should display the unit only once (APA 2020, 176), as in *5–9 kg*, while the CMOS recommends doubling them: *1%–2%* (CMOS 2024, 599). In our view, the en dash refers to a range, and in case the measurement unit is the same, there is no need to signal it twice.

5.14.5.5. Military Abbreviations

There is an entire “arsenal” of military abbreviations, which—interestingly—are less “regulated” (Panajotu 2010, 164), as some acronyms are used without period, although periods are frequent. Panajotu also acknowledges, “it is extremely difficult to change or modify a way of spelling already embedded in modern use” (Panajotu 2010, 164).

Frequent abbreviations derive from military titles (grades or ranks) as well as services, which may be fully capitalized or not: *COL* or *Col.* ← *Colonel* (AMA 2020, 561). As mentioned above, they might also end or not in a period. As such, the

correct abbreviation depends on the country, army division, and which version the editor favors.

5.15. Summary and Recommendations

Proper text style was discussed as the combination of word choice and good knowledge of abbreviations.

Abbreviations are mostly considered informal, and there are many contradictory recommendations on their use. A major rule might be that the extended forms should be provided on their first use, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, thereafter using the abbreviation only. A complimentary one is that no abbreviation is needed if there are fewer than three occurrences, except for when they are under discussion, as in this book.

However, certain abbreviations are far more popular than their extended form, and prescriptions of style guides are contradictory, leaving prospective authors puzzled. As such, the editors' choices remain the only clue, which should be followed consistently. These include seemingly obvious abbreviations as well, such as Latin abbreviations or time-related ones, but, unfortunately, there are variants in these cases as well, depending on uppercase/lowercase options, the use of periods or not, or whether to use space between the abbreviated terms and numbers or not.

5.16. Writing Emails

While it may look strange to insert a section on writing emails, it is important to present some basic know-how of email etiquette.

Experts consider that in a professional environment, an email must be answered in a 24–48-hour window, and in case this is not possible, a quick reply should be sent to let the sender know when a full response is possible. Expected quick responses should also consider cultural sensitivity, as based on cultural differences, emails should be replied only during working hours of the target company.

Whether replying or sending an email, the subject line should never be empty, and its brief words should cover the content. While texting or contacting someone via the social media requires no professional greeting, this is different in the case of emails, resembling letter writing. The style of the email should be professional and respectful, void of slang, concise, clear, and no longer than necessary. Special formatting with various fonts and highlighting should be avoided, being as close to an unformatted text as possible to ensure that the recipient will see the same message. As explained, legible lines “should be shorter than 75 characters, and many email applications automatically wrap lines at around that mark” (Spiekermann 2013, 175). Spiekermann also suggests that replies should not

contain the sender's entire message. Similarly, circular emails do not always need *Reply All* emails. More recently, emails may contain a footnote warning regarding the confidentiality of the email, discouraging forwarding it to other recipients.

As it is possible to add a signature block at the end of each email sent, this might look more professional, including the name, job title, company, and further contact information, paying attention to the language format as well or providing the same information in multiple languages.

Email service providers (such as Mozilla Thunderbird)¹⁶⁷ offer proofreading features in multiple languages, and they help eliminate typographical errors and occasionally grammar mistakes as well.

In case attachment is announced, failing to include it is unprofessional, knowing that they are relevant; however, attachments should not be excessively large. The effect of these recommendations is unquestionable: "A little consideration for the recipient of your messages goes a long way" (Spiekermann 2013, 175).

¹⁶⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/4yp3x3ck>, August 22, 2025.

Chapter 6

Insert

There are many technical options to insert layout-related or text-enhancing features in a text, which may provide either a better insight into longer documents (e.g., page numbers) or break the text into more visible parts (e.g., enumerations).

Focusing on a manuscript, standard requirements for publication mention the title (style) and further formatting prescriptions regarding page headers, page numbers, (reference) lists, footnotes, tables, figures, and appendices (APA 2020, 29). As all these may be added in various forms of insertion, they are all discussed in this chapter.

6.1. Headers and Footers

The top of a page often includes data regarding the document title, date, chapter number, page number, or author's name, which are repeated on consecutive pages.

This part of a standard page is referred to as a *running head* or **header** (AMA 2020, 1142) or *page header*, which should contain fewer than fifty characters (APA 2020, 37) and is mostly flushed left in uppercase letters, although in case the page number is included, this is flushed right (APA 2020, 44).

Footer, or *running foot*, is placed at the bottom of pages, which may typically contain the similar information as the header, completed with various notes (e.g., **Footnotes**). The style of footnotes is predefined or “standardized” (AMA 2020, 1132) in word processing software; for instance, the font size is smaller than the main text.

No header or footer should be used on pages containing the title, copyright, dedication, table of contents, preface, foreword, or chapter openings (CMOS 2024, 8), and publications may omit headers or footers on blank pages or pages containing only tables or illustrations.

Student papers are simpler, typically containing the page number only, which may be either in the header or in the footer. While reference works, conference publications, anthologies make use of elaborate headers, books on “unified subjects” or “strong authorial voice” need no headers (Bringhurst 2004, 166).

Inserting a header or footer in a Word document is possible via selecting the **Header** on the **Insert** tab, offering various options (**Edit Header**), which make it easy to include the author, file name, document properties, or page number, as

well as set the height of the **Header** from the top of the page or the height of the **Footer** from the bottom of the page:

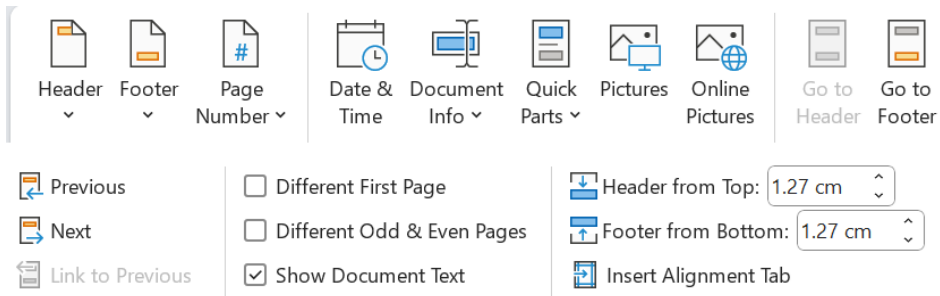


Figure 94. *Inserting header and footer, Word (rearranged in 2 columns)*

Many publishing houses prefer to use different types of content of recto and verso pages, such as the title on recto pages, chapter names on verso pages, or the author's name on recto and the title of the work on the verso pages. This is possible in Word if the box next to **Different Odd & Even pages** is selected. Inserting the proper information starts from **Insert, Cross-reference**, where **Heading** content can be selected (**Heading number** for chapter number and **Heading text** for chapter heading). The **Show Next** button moves to the header or footer of the next chapter, and the **Link to Previous** button can break the link between the current header and footer from the previous ones.¹⁶⁸

Furthermore, there is a **Different First Page** option, which treats the introductory pages differently when enabled, where no headers and footers must be displayed.

Writer offers various predefined data to add to either the Header or the Footer via the **Insert, Field** available in the **Main** tab: see Figure 95.

Clicking on the **More Fields...** (**Ctrl**+**F2**) at the bottom, an extra window opens, offering further options, such as **File name**, **Path**, **Statistics**, or **Cross-references**, and options which are beyond our interest, such as **Functions**, **DocInformation**, **Variables**, and **Database**.

¹⁶⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/ybc9sa48>, July 6, 2025.

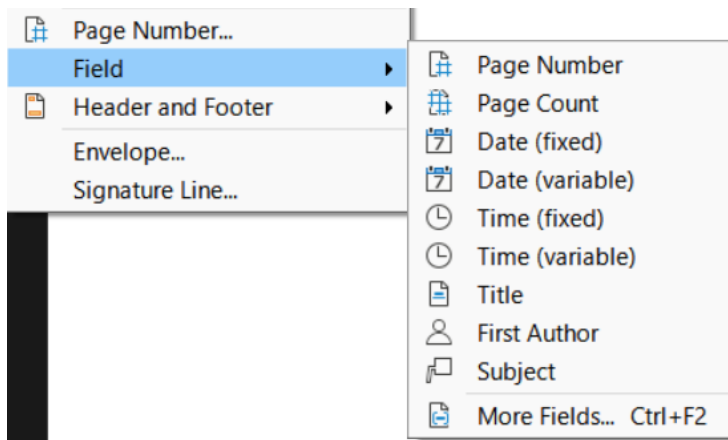


Figure 95. Insert header and footer, fields, Writer

6.2. Page Numbers

In our view, all documents longer than one page should contain **page numbers**, at either the top or bottom of the page.

Manuals specify that Arabic page numbers are traditionally flushed right, and while the title page is considered as page 1, it is not numbered (APA 2020, 44).

Word processors offer easy access to insert page numbers. In Word, this is found under the **Insert** tab and selecting **Page Number**, which offers various options: top or bottom position, **Page Margins**, **Current Position**, but further formatting is also possible (**Format Page Numbers**). Clicking on this last option enables the choice of **Number format** (number or letters), whether or not to include chapter number, the option of hyphenated separation or starting the page number from a specific number or continue from the previous section.

It is obvious that extra settings regarding page numbers are necessary, as introductory pages are not numbered. In this case, we can access **Layout, Breaks, Section Break, Next Page** in Word, which makes sense after the pages containing the title page, cover pages, table of contents, and abstract. After having inserted a new page with section break, we should go to the **Footnote** (double click) and disable the **Link to Previous** button. This way the numbering in the footnote may start from any number. Then we can return to any of the previous pages and delete the **Footnote** without affecting the numbering of the next section.

Writer also offers straightforward page numbering via **Insert, Page Number...**, opening a new window with various setting options:

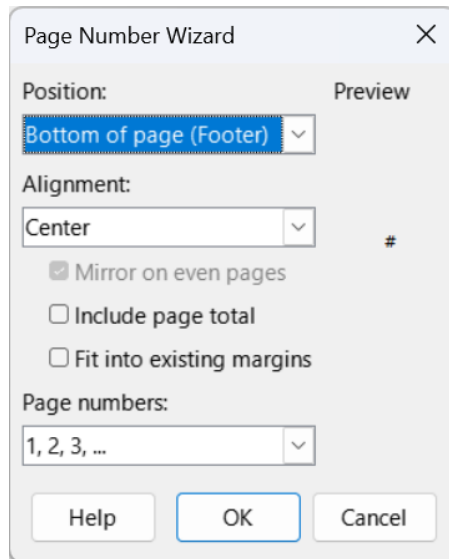


Figure 96. *Insert page number, Writer*

Certain pages (treated as different sections) might need no numbering, while the so-called “front matter” (the introductory pages) is usually numbered with lowercase Roman numerals (CMOS 2024, 7). The same source suggests that a *page* is understood as “one side of a leaf,” and the side of the leaf that is on the right side of an open book is the *recto*, while the back of it (the left side of an open book) is called the *verso*. Recto pages are always odd numbered (flush right), and verso pages are always even numbered (flush left).

Student papers are simpler, so page numbering may be set in the footer and centered. However, in this case, page numbers should start after the front matter as well, which is formatted as a separate section, and the page numbering should not continue from the previous section, which typically contains the Cover page, Title page, and the Table of Contents (optionally completed with a List of Tables/Illustrations). The last numbered page includes the Reference section, while the Appendix section needs a Section Break, as it should use Roman page numbers.

6.3. Notes

As **notes** tend to offer extra information on the main issue, they are subordinate, so are set in smaller font size (Bringhurst 2004, 68), often 2–3 points smaller (Ármeán 2017, 54). We can distinguish footnotes, endnotes, and sidenotes, knowing that they may be easily converted from one form to another.

6.3.1. Footnotes

Footnotes are “an ancillary piece of information” (AMA 2020, 1132) connected to the topic in discussion on a particular page, or they may offer copyright or translation data regarding the text, table, list, or illustration on a particular page.

While they seem to be marginal, they should not contain “complicated, irrelevant, or nonessential information” (APA 2020, 40). However relevant information they might contain, footnotes should be as brief as possible and used sparingly (Bringhurst 2004, 68). Actually, the *MLA Handbook* (MLA 2021) disregards them and uses only endnotes, while there is an article entitled *Elegy for Excursus: The Descent of the Footnote* by Betsy Hilbert (1989).¹⁶⁹ Still, footnotes are found in scientific papers and books alike. The present book includes all the links to websites that have been used in the Footnote section for obvious reasons: due to their length in the form of a string of characters, they can hardly fit in the main text, unless hyphens are not included in the links. Still, links longer than a line in paper size A4 are shortened with the help of TinyURL.

Footnotes may be inserted at the bottom of the page even if no footer is set previously. This is possible because they are available via **References**, **Insert Footnote**, and they may be positioned either at the bottom of the page or below the text. The layout may either match the selection or not, and various formats are available.¹⁷⁰ However, the most common option is to use Arabic superscript numerals, and—similarly to page numbers—they may start at 1 or not, and the numbering may be continuous or not. The number and the footnote text are separated by a space. As footnotes might contain phrases, sentences, or hyperlinks with date of access, they should have the same line spacing as the main text (CMOS 2024, 74), even if the font size is smaller, but they can be “hung to the left” (Bringhurst 2004, 69). A particular attention should be paid to setting the footnote language to avoid spelling mistakes, and proper language setting also provides correct date formats when adding them to hyperlinks.

The standard style of a footnote is automatically set to **Hanging indent** in Word¹⁷¹ and Writer alike. In Word, it may be changed by accessing the **Home** tab, **Styles**, and clicking on the arrow for further options. This **Style** window may also be triggered by the **Ctrl**+**Alt**+**Shift**+**S** shortcut key, then the **Manage Styles** button, enabling us to change the font, font size, reference style (numbers), spacing, or language. However, the possible standard option to set footnotes is accessing **References** on the **Main** tab and then clicking on the southeast arrow at the bottom of the **Footnotes** section that opens a window illustrated in Figure 97 below.

¹⁶⁹ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/377528>, May 22, 2025.

¹⁷⁰ Arabic numeral, lowercase or uppercase letters, Roman numerals or symbols with a clear order: asterisk, dagger, double dagger, paragraph symbol, but Bringhurst admits that using symbols for footnotes is outdated (Bringhurst 2004, 68).

¹⁷¹ <https://tinyurl.com/3wy9fba>, May 22, 2025.

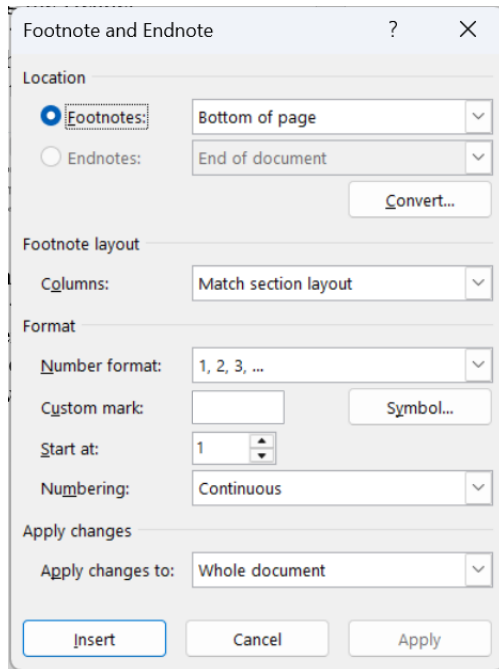


Figure 97. Footnote and endnote settings, Word

As for Writer, a right click on the inserted footnote offers the following options:

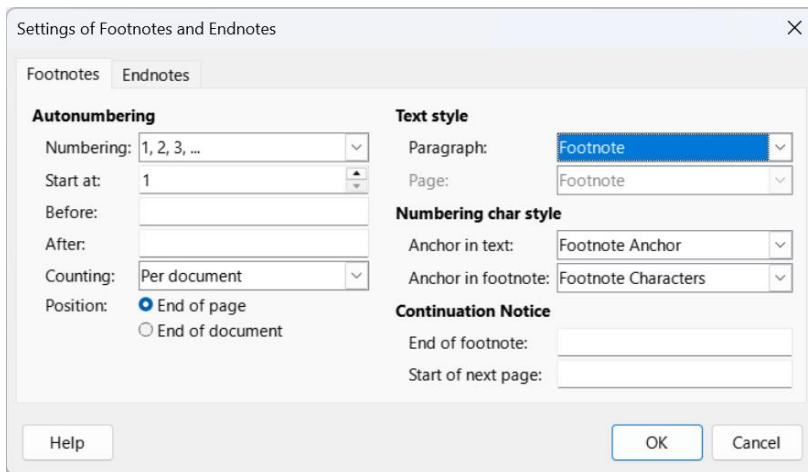


Figure 98. Setting footnotes and endnotes, Writer

Footnotes are restricted to the main text, so headings should not contain footnote callouts, and in case a particular footnote should be referred to again, this is possible via **Insert, Cross-reference**, and the label and number (APA 2020, 40). In case a footnote refers to the previous one containing a reference, the Latin abbreviation *ibid.* may be used and a particular page number may be added,¹⁷² although other sources rule this out (MLA 2021, 290).

Whatever the layout, footnotes should always end in a period (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 9; AMA 2020, 125).

6.3.2. Endnotes

Endnotes are inserted at the end of documents or sections, and their default numbering is set to lowercase Roman numerals: *i, ii, iii, iv*, etc.

By default, inserting endnotes in Word is possible via **References, Insert Endnote**, and the arrow at the right bottom of the tab reveals various options, similarly to footnotes. The major advantages of endnotes over footnotes are that their length is not limited, and they do not break the continuity of the main text while reading the page, being more economical regarding the layout.

The obvious disadvantage of endnotes is that those interested in endnotes constantly have to swap between the main text and the end of the document (or section and end of section) to find the particular endnotes (Bringhurst 2004, 68).

While authors may have personal preferences regarding footnotes or endnotes during the writing process, should the editor require the opposite, conversion from endnotes to footnotes and backwards may be carried out by accessing **References**, then clicking on the bottom right arrow on the **Footnotes** tab, and clicking on the **Convert...** button:

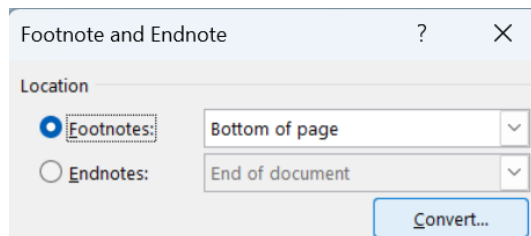


Figure 99. *Convert footnotes and endnotes, Word*

Changing the footnote line position and length is also possible.¹⁷³ As described in Footnote 173, the **View** tab offers a **Draft view** option, then **References, Show Notes, Footnotes** drop down list, which lists a **Footnote Separator**, revealing the

¹⁷² <https://libguides.murdoch.edu.au/Footnote>, May 22, 2025.

¹⁷³ <https://tinyurl.com/35erfvbp>, June 3, 2025.

separator line, which may be modified by adding or deleting further em dash symbols.

6.3.3. Sidenotes

Sidenotes should not be mistaken for inserting comments. Although the latter is placed on the right side of the page, it contains the reviewer’s name and personal remarks on the content.

Sidenotes are similar in function to footnotes and endnotes, and they may be positioned anywhere on the page. The font size of sidenotes may even be the same as that of the main text (Bringhurst 2004, 68), and they may be marked with asterisks, as in our example. They may extend over various parts of a page, but they should be used sparingly as well.

* Sidenotes “may give more life and variety to the page” (Bringhurst 2004, 68).

A possible way¹⁷⁴ to insert sidenotes in Word is to activate the **Developer** on the **Main** tab. This is possible via the **File** tab, **Options**, **Customize Ribbon**, and then ticking the **Developer** box and clicking **OK** places the **Developer** on the **Main** tab. Clicking on it, the **Legacy Tools** will become available within the **Controls** tab. One of the options of **Legacy Tools** is **Insert Frame**, and selecting it changes the mouse pointer to a cross, and then any part of the page can be selected to create a **Frame**.

Frames have various options: their size may be easily changed by placing the pointer over the border, upon which the cursor changes to a four-sided arrow symbol, and a left click shows the actual borders, which may be changed by the indicated moving points. Furthermore, any side of the frame may be visible or not by a right click when the pointer displays the four-sided arrow sign: the **Format Frame** enables us to set the size (width, height), horizontal and vertical position, while the **Borders and Shading** option offers various frame styles (including no frame on any side) and color styles.

6.4. Tables and Captions

Tables and **figures** belong to infographics, which is in fact a system of structured raw data, relying on the visual aspect of gridlines, color, icons, symbols, or graphical representation (Ármeán 2017, 114).

Another source discusses tables and figures as “non-text elements” (Bringhurst 2004, 21) that can break monotonous texts easily, and both a table and a figure should be designed to “be understood on its own,” without the accompanying text (APA 2020, 196). A general rule is that they should be

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.simuldocs.com/blog/how-to-insert-frames-into-microsoft-word-documents>, May 23, 2025.

“announced” in the preceding text with a “callout” (APA 2020, 198), and labeled with a caption, which is set in a different font and size than the main text.

As for their alignment, there are various suggestions. Some sources recommend centering them, while others recommend to have them positioned to the left margin, and ideally they are shorter and smaller than one page (APA 2020, 198), separated from the surrounding text by visible space (e.g., a double-spaced blank line). Unless they are created by the author, table notes or figure notes should specify their sources.

Inserting a table in Word starts with **Insert, Table**, and the drop-down list offers a few sizes of rows and columns.

The left-most column is called the “stub,” containing “the list of topics, variables, or instances to which the values in the table body apply” (AMA 2020, 1144). A detailed description of basic table components is available in the APA Manual (APA 2020, 200).

Tables contain data in a visual form, relying on “alphanumeric text,” so they are “usually typeset along with the text rather than produced separately as images” (CMOS 2024, 132). The contents of the table should be easy to understand “on its own,” without duplicating the details (CMOS 2024, 156). This also entails that abbreviations in tables should be spelled out first (even if they have already been used before, lest the reader should check the meaning elsewhere in the text (ASA et al. 2024, 5–01).

A special attention must be paid to a consistent style of tables, including “column heads ... content layout ... line spacing, indentation, fonts, rules, and other distinguishing features” (CMOS 2024, 158). The simplest way would be to insert a simple table, then format it according to the provided styles, which are available once a table is inserted; by clicking on the table, **Table Design** and **Table Layout** appears at the end of the tabs in Word, and clicking on the **Table Design** reveals many styles, which may be further modified.

Although a table is easily recognized from its gridlines, they should “not look like bars on a prison cell window” (Spiekermann 2013, 89), so lines of tables might be restricted to a minimum, as white space can effectively “divide elements” as well, and “[a] vertical line is wasteful because it needs precious space on either side” (Spiekermann 2013, 165). Overall, a text should contain a minimum of “guidrails ... and a maximum amount of information” (Bringham 2004, 70–71). As such, the use of table edges is discouraged, although other sources recommend a border at the top and bottom of the table, beneath column headings, the row with summary or totals (APA 2020, 205), leading to the conclusion that vertical borders are mostly unnecessary, as are shading or colors. There are many tips how to create and modify tables,¹⁷⁵ or cell gridlines,¹⁷⁶ depending on personal needs.

¹⁷⁵ <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/word/tables/1/>, June 7, 2025.

¹⁷⁶ <https://tinyurl.com/2vjxwds4>, June 7, 2025.

Tables should have a caption, numbered automatically, by clicking on the four arrows icon on the top left corner area of the table. This selects the entire table, and a right click on it displays the **Insert Caption (Word)** window with multiple options:

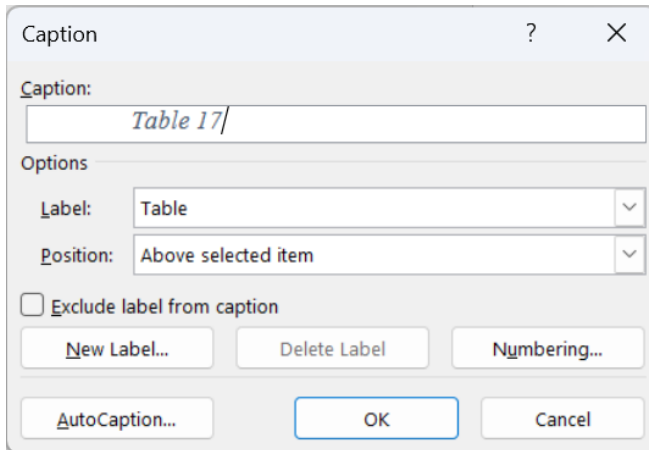


Figure 100. *Insert tables, Word*

Word offers to place the caption (label) *Table* above the selected item, also recommended by various manuals, specifying that it should be “in bold font” (APA 2020, 199), which is not compulsory. The label is typically followed by a period and the title, although it might be positioned below it as well (APA 2020, 199). This “descriptive title” should be “written as a phrase rather than as a sentence” (AMA 2020, 117). Well-formed tables are labelled with proper captions, enabling the creation of a list of tables, which might be placed after the table of contents or in the appendix section by accessing **References, Insert Table of Figures** and selecting **Table** from the **Caption label** options in the **General** section.

When reference is made to the table, their number should be specified, as close to the table as possible (CMOS 2024, 159), adding that tables on a single page are positioned either at the top or bottom of the page (hardly tenable), while tables that break over pages “should be presented broadside across facing pages.” However, splitting a table should be the very last resort, as it might be split into smaller tables, with smaller font size, or in landscape format (AMA 2020, 117). **Cross-reference** in Word is found on the **Insert** tab, selecting **Table** from **Reference type** options, while the **Insert reference to** offers to insert **Entire caption** or **Only label and number**, among others. Writer offers **Cross-reference** via the **Insert** tab.

However, subsequent changes in the document (before the first cross-reference) make it necessary to update the cross-references before publishing the

final version. Instead of doing this one by one, there is the possibility to select the entire document (**Ctrl+A**), and then pressing **F9** function key updates all fields in a Word document. Writer, on the other hand, seems to update caption numbers automatically once a new one is added or an inserted one is deleted.

As for the contents of tables, number ranges should be precise, explaining that they refer to “up to” or “up to including,” which is also possible with the correct symbols: $>$, $<$, \geq , \leq (CMOS 2024, 176). In case percentages are specified, the recommendation (AMA 2020, 129) is to use only digits in the denominator (17%) and no decimals (17.5%), while statistical data need exact values, even three or four digits to the right of the decimal point. *Total* at the foot of the stub should be highlighted with further indent or other typographical option.

All columns of a table should include column headings (APA 2020, 199), set in font: “bold” and “sentence case ... similar to axis labels in figures” (AMA 2020, 119), and except for questions, no end punctuation is used (CMOS 2024, 164). Similarly to heading, fields or data cells are also capitalized in sentence style (AMA 2020, 122), and tables written in Latin alphabet should contain horizontal text (rarely oblique), never vertical (Bringhurst 2004, 70).

Alignment in tables is also relevant, as justified margins might endanger readability due to uneven word lengths. Simple tables and lists (two columns) might be aligned against each other (Bringhurst 2004, 72), so flushed right (left column) and left (right column), while larger tables might be flushed left (AMA 2020, 124) or center, and “numbers may also be aligned on the decimal” (APA 2020, 202) or flushed right (Bringhurst 2004, 72), especially when no decimals are provided. Different kinds of numbers are to be aligned on the most frequent ones, while no data cells containing an ellipsis or an em dash are centered (CMOS 2024, 169). If long lines must be broken in a cell, indentation is typical.

To save space in the table, slash could help in the case of dates (if the local date format is clear: month/day/year, day/month/year, or international), while hyphens when ranges are needed and no negative number is implied, otherwise the particle *to* is compulsory to be used between the numbers (AMA 2020, 128–29).

Table row spacing may also be variable: “single-spaced, one-and-a-half-spaced, or double-spaced,” depending on table length and the type of information (APA 2020, 202).

Space before the table is not an issue, as the line above the table is the caption, whose style might be set any desired space from the previous line. However, the space after the table is troublesome, and two alternatives are recommended.¹⁷⁷ One of them is to leave an extra row at the end, set to **No border**, as this is invisible when saved to PDF or printed. Another option might be to create a new **Normal text** style with 12-, 18-, or 24-point spacing before and after.

¹⁷⁷ https://wordribbon.tips.net/T013012_Space_after_a_Table.html, June 4, 2025.

Table notes may contain the source (italicized *Source* or *Sources* followed by a colon), definition of abbreviations¹⁷⁸ (unless they are standard ones), explanation of symbols, copyright attribution, acknowledgement, reprint information when needed (APA 2020, 199), introduced by the italicized word *Note*, followed by a period, knowing that specific notes may refer to a single cell, row, or column by superscript lowercase letters (APA 2020, 203). These notes are placed below the table and are numbered separately from footnotes (CMOS 2024, 164). Arabic numerals may be replaced by a set of specific symbols (limited to six) this way: asterisk (*), dagger (†), double dagger (‡), section mark (§), parallels (||), and the number sign (#).

A final issue is **table conversion**, which might be needed when data derives from a different document (PDF, spreadsheet, or online sources), amply described in an authoritative source (Csernoch 2015, 9–42), or when textual information might be converted to table, available in word processing software.

Word offers table conversion via **Insert, Table, Convert Text to Table** once the text is selected, with various options: number of columns and rows, width, and how to separate the text (**Paragraph**, **Commas**, **Tabs**, or **Other**), knowing that a single item of a large array of symbols may be inserted in the box next to **Other**, as illustrated in Figure 101 below:

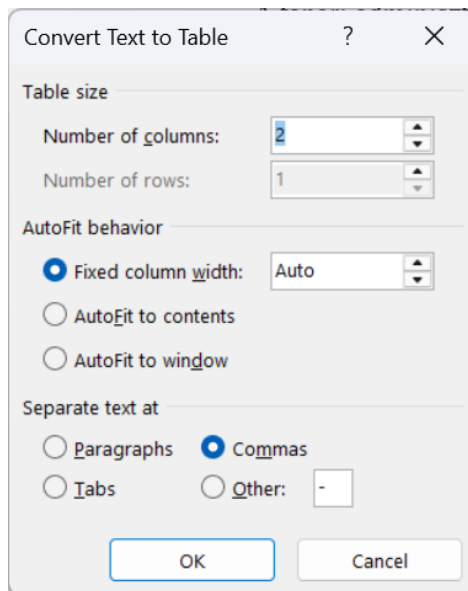


Figure 101. *Convert text to table, Word*

¹⁷⁸ The abbreviation for number is not a hashtag (number/pound symbol) but ‘No.’ with a trailing period.

The Writer version is simple: a click on **Table** on the **Main** tab reveals a drop-down list, containing **Convert, Text to Table** with the following options:

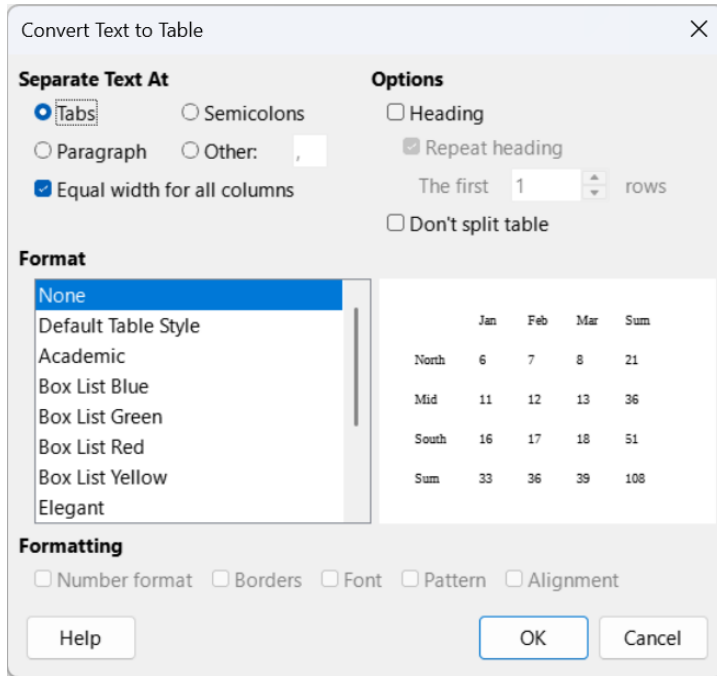


Figure 102. Convert text to table, Writer

A table may be converted to text by selecting the table, then accessing **Table Layout, Convert to Text** and providing the separator character in Word. Once a table is selected in Writer, clicking in **Table** reveals the drop-down list with **Convert**, but this time the other option is available: **Convert Table to Text**.

Applying separate styles for captions and titles is possible with the help of Style Separator, discussed in 2.7.

6.5. Figures and Captions

As explained, “all types of graphical displays other than tables are considered figures” (APA 2020, 225), which present “information or data, including statistical graphs, maps, matrixes, algorithms, illustrations, digital images, photographs, and other clinical images” (AMA 2020, 130), so possible synonyms are *chart*, *drawing*, *graph*, *illustration*, *image*, *photograph*, or *picture* (AMA 2020, 1132; APA 2020, 195). However, pie charts should be avoided in scientific publications, unless they are intended for “lay audiences” (AMA 2020, 137).

Figures may be colored or not, depending on the source, personal preference, or specific reasons. *Icons, pictograms* also belong here, and while some of them may be inserted as symbols directly from the word processing software, others may have Unicode values or may derive from screenshots, which capture various parts of the computer screen.

While Windows has **Snipping Tool** with five options (four for images), these may be triggered with a single shortcut: the Windows logo key (■) combined with **Shift** and the key **S**: **Shift+■+S**.

Table 19 below presents various screenshot options for other operating systems.¹⁷⁹

Table 19. *Screenshot options*

Area	Linux Mint	macOS
Full screen	PrtSc	Shift+command+3
Rectangle	Shift+PrtSc	Shift+command+4
Window	Left Alt+PrtSc	Shift+command+4+Space bar

Changing multiple open windows is possible with **Alt+Tab** (Windows/Linux OS).

Similarly to tables, figures should be preceded by a callout, closely followed by the figure as soon as possible, which should be horizontal. A caption accompanies them (right click on the figure and select **Insert Caption**), typically below the figure. The figures are numbered (Arabic numerals), and the label, the number, and the trailing period might be in bold (flush left), followed by the title, either in regular or italic title case (APA 2020, 7), which is capitalized sentence-style (APA 2020, 227; CMOS 2024, 155). Nevertheless, the same source adds that titles of works mentioned or cited are “usually capitalized in headline style” (CMOS 2024, 568). As titles are mostly incomplete sentences, no punctuation is needed to finish the caption (CMOS 2024, 143), but their content should be specific enough.

Captions of figures and tables are considered to be exceptions to paragraph indentation, as figure and table numbers should be flush left and their font size is smaller than the main text, while their length is ideally shorter than “half a basic column” (Spiekermann 2013, 161).

A list of figures or illustrations may be placed after the table of contents (Word: **References, Insert Table of Figures**) or as an appendix, relying on various formats, visible in Figure 103:

¹⁷⁹ <https://support.apple.com/en-us/102646>, June 8, 2025.

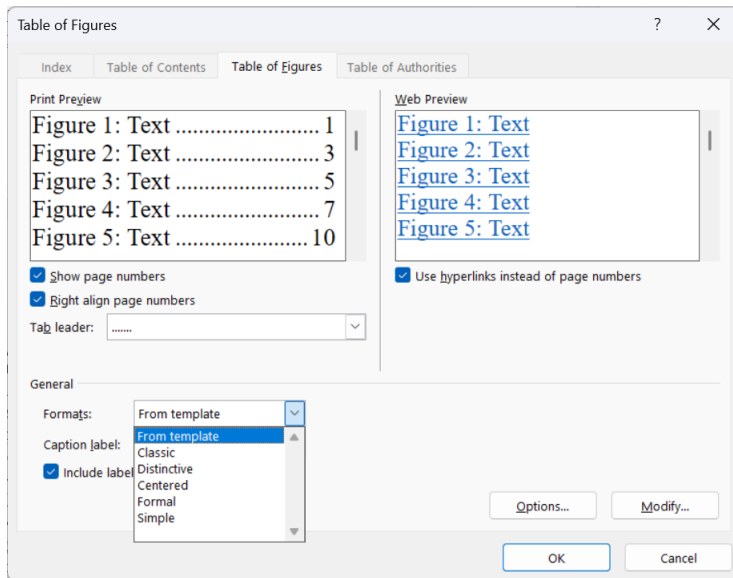


Figure 103. Insert table of figures, Word

Subsequent reference to figures makes use of the figure number and label, with or without the title. The term *figure* or *Figure* should not be abbreviated, except for parenthetical uses (*fig.*). Abbreviations in figures should be either consistent with the ones used in the text or defined in the title, legend, or key (AMA 2020, 163), and the words *percentage* and *number* may be abbreviated as % or *No.*, respectively (APA 2020, 227).

The **legend** or **key** explains the “symbols, line styles, or shading or pattern variants used in the image portion of the figure,” and they are placed either “within or below the image” (APA 2020, 229). Furthermore, figure notes may accompany the figures, which may complete them with general (abbreviations not found elsewhere, acknowledgement, source, copyright, color, design elements), specific, and probability information. Sources may be referred to in a so-called “credit line” (CMOS 2024, 149–50), which may be in parentheses or in a different typeface. Photographs of identifiable people might also require permission. The creator of a commissioned work should also be mentioned in the credit line out of “professional courtesy” (CMOS 2024, 152). In a similar vein, figures or images created with artificial intelligence (from now on, AI) software should be specified with the date of creation.

In case figures need accompanying text, these should be in “sans serif fonts that are large enough to be read without magnification” (APA 2020, 196). Also, figures should be clear enough to understand them on their own, and authors should refrain from too much distractive decoration (APA 2020, 196). It is also

recommended to use original figures, but when taken from other sources, “written permission to reproduce it must be obtained from the copyright holder” (AMA 2020, 137), although this may be replaced by specifying the source properly.

Well-formed figures may be cross-referenced easily: **Insert, Cross-reference** (in Word), with various options (entire caption, label and number, caption only), as illustrated in Figure 104 below:

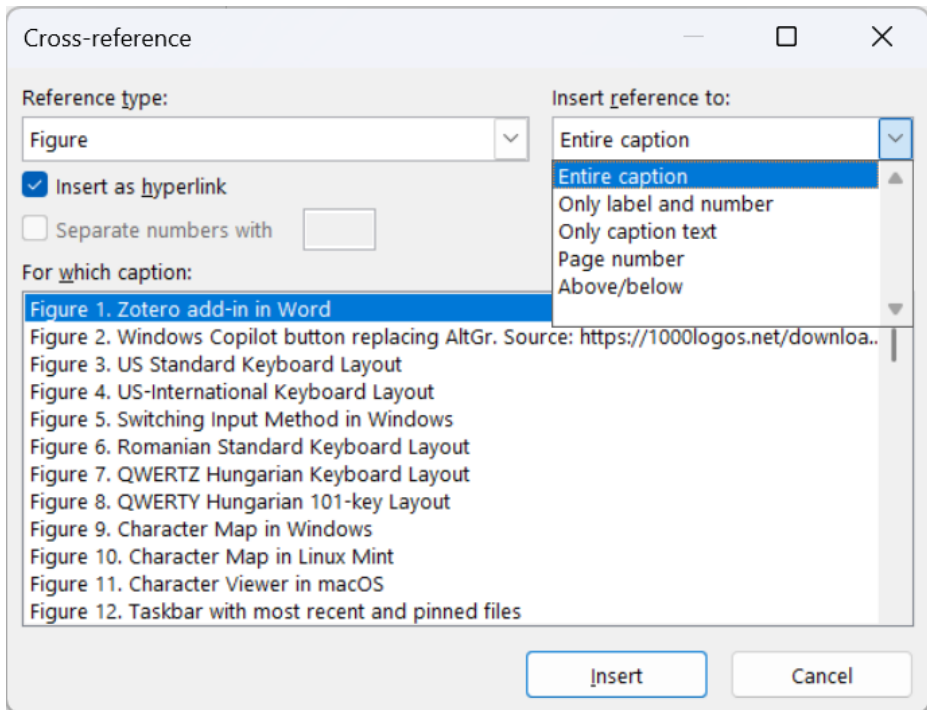


Figure 104. *Insert figures, Word*

Applying separate styles for captions and titles is possible with the help of Style Separator, discussed in 2.7.

6.6. Text Box

There are various options to insert text boxes in Word or Writer, offering various built-in styles.

The boxes may offer layouts that break the main text, and might be visually more attractive for specific kind of information such as quotes, a thesis statement, or a description. It might also offer the introduction to a new chapter, being the only text area on the page.

Predefined text boxes are positioned automatically on the page (top, bottom, middle, or sides), and the sample content may be changed easily. As they are formatted differently, a new label may be created for them and referenced accordingly, with caption and number as well. Inserting a **Text Box** in Word is illustrated in Figure 105 below:

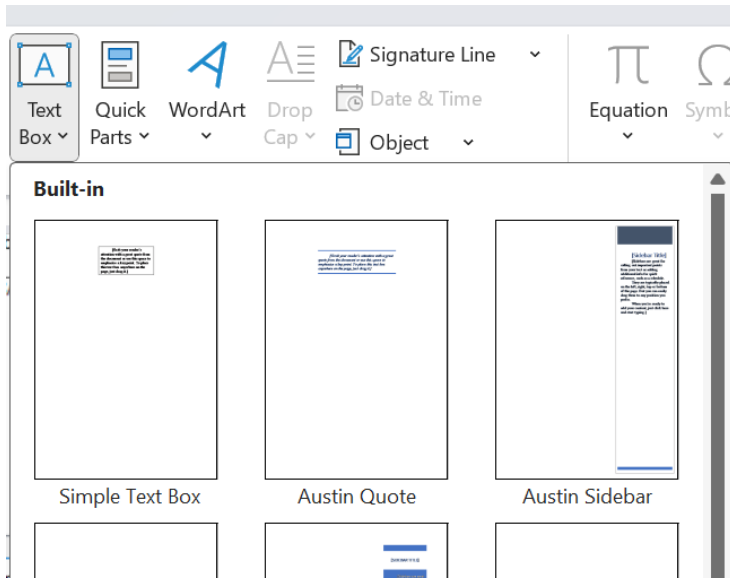


Figure 105. Insert text box, Word

6.7. Horizontal Line

Inserting a horizontal line across the page, cell, or column makes sense when the content should be visually separated. While there are stylish font ornaments (see 3.4.), a horizontal line only splits the section.

The **Horizontal Line** in Word is available in the **Home** tab, **Paragraph** group, **Borders** button, and the drop-down menu offers **Horizontal Line**, which is inserted below:

Writer can also insert a **Horizontal Line** via the **Insert** tab.

6.8. Enumerations

Enumerations are often found in longer texts, and they are separated from the main text by “spatial positioning and pointing, usually done with bullets, dashes or numerals” (Bringhurst 2004, 71), and the list should contain at least two items

(Sabin 2011, 463). In case they are “embedded” in a sentence, they are referred to as *seriation* or *run-in lists*.

6.8.1. *Seriation*

Seriation presents “a related set of key points within a sentence or paragraph” (APA 2020, 189), and it typically contains at least three items. While they are separated by commas, semicolons might also be used in case the items already contain commas. These run-in lists may be signaled by the following:

1. commas;
2. numerals, which may be italicized and either followed by a period or enclosed in parentheses, and items may be separated by commas;
3. letters, which may be either enclosed in parentheses or simply followed by a closing parenthesis (CMOS 2024, 435), and items may be separated by commas (AMA 2020, 969).

Whatever type is chosen (bullets, dashes, or numbers), a frequent issue is end punctuation. As explained, sentence fragments need no end punctuation, but complete sentences should end with proper end punctuation marks. In case there is a mixture of complete and incomplete sentences, their ending should be consistent, and the last item of any enumeration should end in a period (AMA 2020, 448–49).

When the enumeration or list functionally belongs to the introductory sentence, it is in fact a seriation; thus, commas or semicolons are needed at the end of each entry, and “a final period, just as you would if the sentence had no line breaks” (ASA et al. 2024, 2–04).

The text after the enumeration may express another idea, in which case first-line indentation is recommended, but if it continues the same thought as the enumeration, no indentation is needed (CMOS 2024, 74).

6.8.2. *List Style*

All **lists** should have their special style. The two primary styles should be for bulleted and numbered styles, but further styles may be created to include dashed or lettered lists alike, paying attention to the separation of lists from the main text above and below, as well as to their indentation, knowing that to make them visually distinctive, a minimum of 0.5 in or 1.27 cm of left indentation is necessary.

6.8.3. *Bulleted List*

Except for seriation, the other types of enumeration need a specific style, and how they are introduced, their end punctuation, and the text following them should be discussed.

As for their introduction, a “grammatically complete sentence” (CMOS 2024, 436) ending in a colon is the standard way, and short items may be set in two or more columns.

While major text editors typically offer pre-formatted styles for bulleted and numbered lists, their format may be changed, or new multilevel lists or new list styles might be defined. Furthermore, the bullet icon may be changed to another symbol (such as arrows or ticks). The basic idea of every bulleted, dashed, numbered, or lettered list is the left indent and hanging indent (CMOS 2024, 74), and a right indent is also recommended. Adding shortcut keys to each list style will boost productivity as well (e.g., **Alt+B** for a bulleted list and **Alt+Shift+3** for a numbered list).

Inserting a built-in **bulleted list** in Word is simple: on the **Home** tab, there is a three-bullet icon in the top left corner of the **Paragraph** group. A click on it inserts a pre-formed style, while these settings may be changed by clicking on the drop-down arrow next to the icon.¹⁸⁰

In case the bullet items are full sentences, they should start with an uppercase letter and end in a sentence-end mark, while sentence fragments start with a lowercase letter (except for proper names) and may end with a **semicolon** or nothing, except for the last one, which ends in a period (AMA 2020, 969; CMOS 2024, 454). Another source favors the lack of punctuation after the bulleted items, including the last one as well (APA 2020, 190), especially when “the items are shorter and simpler.”

The difference between bulleted lists and numbered lists is visible: while bulleted lists lack the importance of order (hence it is also referred to as unordered list), chronology, or priority in a series, numbered or lettered lists typically involve the importance of ordinal position (APA 2020, 190).

6.8.4. *Dashed List*

Interestingly, while Bringhurst mentions the **dashed list**, no other sources specify it, except for a Romanian one, which explains that em dash (–) may be used for listing items, in which case the items should be separated by semicolons (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 10).

Creating a dashed list is simple, as a line starting with a hyphen followed by a space is interpreted as the start of an automatic bullet list. Naturally, a hyphen may be replaced by an en dash (U+2013) or em dash (U+2014), but when they are followed by a space, they are also turned into an automatic list, and if this is not desired, the **Ctrl+Z** shortcut reverts the automatic change.

¹⁸⁰ <https://tinyurl.com/yj9phuvc>, June 20, 2025.

6.8.5. *Numbered List*

Inserting a **numbered list** in Word is similar to the insertion of a bulleted list: it is the second top left icon with the vertical numbers 1, 2, and 3 in the **Paragraph** group on the **Home** tab. In case the pre-formatted list style is not suitable, this may be changed by clicking on the drop-down arrow, which reveals various number formats (Arabic, Roman, lettered), but further number formats are also available (**Define New Number Format**).

The standard numbered list uses Arabic numerals followed by a period, not enclosed by parentheses, and not followed by a closing parenthesis (APA 2020, 190), with capitalized first letter of each item, and sentence-end punctuation is only needed in the case of full sentences.

The layout of bulleted and numbered entries is similar: the runover lines should align with the first word after the bullet or numeral, which are typically separated by the text with a tab (CMOS 2024, 438).

6.8.6. *Lettered List*

Lettered or **bulleted lists** are recommended (APA 2020, 189) in case the items are phrases, knowing that lettered lists draw less attention than numbered lists.

Lettered lists may be created by initializing a numbered list (as described above), and then the numbers can be easily changed to lowercase letters, enclosed in parentheses, followed by a closing parenthesis or a period.

6.8.7. *Outline*

Outlines might be needed when list items contain further subdivisions, in which case both numbers and letters may enhance clarity.

The most elaborate list may contain seven levels. They may start with uppercase Roman numbers (I., II., III., IV., ...) followed by uppercase letters (A., B., C., ...), numbers (1., 2., 3., ...), lowercase letters (a, b, c, ...) followed by a closing parenthesis, numbers enclosed in parentheses, lowercase letters enclosed in parentheses and lowercase Roman ordinals (i, ii, iii, iv, ...) followed by an enclosing parenthesis (CMOS 2024, 439).

Whatever option is favored, it is of utmost importance to use them consistently within a list (AMA 2020, 969; CMOS 2024, 439), which includes (or not) the punctuation mark after the symbol (number, letter, bullet, dash, or other), the tabbed start, uppercase or lowercase first letter, item-end punctuation, indentation (first line hanging and right). In case the numbering needs more than one digit, it is always vertically aligned on the last digit (CMOS 2024, 439).

6.8.8. Sort (A–Z)

Enumerating items offers a better visual aspect, and when they are formatted correctly, a subsequent rearrangement is possible with the help of the **Sort** function.

The **Sort** button is also found in the **Paragraph** group on the **Home** tab, enabling the alphabetical or numerical order of the previously selected section. The selection may contain or not a header row, as illustrated in Figure 106 below:

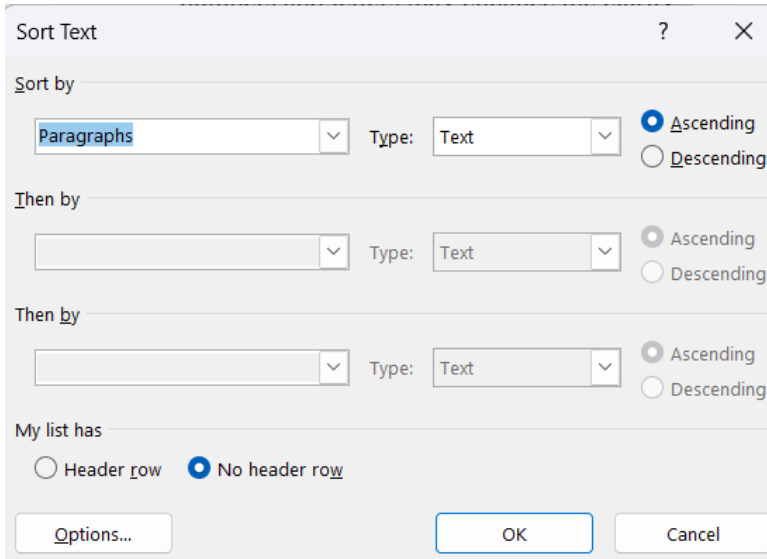


Figure 106. Sort, Word

As the figure shows, sorting is possible either in ascending or in descending order, depending on the type of information. Field delimiters may be tabs, commas, or other symbols, which are available within the **Options** tab (left bottom corner).

6.9. Index Entry and List

Index entries are often required for scholarly books. An alphabetical index offers a list of all discussed topics in a book, and word processors can produce an automatic index list provided the terms are already marked. Marking them is possible either while drafting the text or during proofreading.

Marking an entry for indexing purposes in Word is possible via the **References** tab, **Index** group, **Mark Entry**. This offers the possibility to insert either a **Main entry** or a **Subentry** with further options, such as **Cross-reference** or selecting

various pages. In case the key entry is highlighted, clicking on the **Mark Entry** already displays the term. If the **Mark Entry** is clicked on first, the **Main entry** and **Subentry** lines are empty and the proper key term must be typed.

Once the document terms are all marked for indexing, the **Insert Index** button creates the list, once again offering various formats (e.g., **Classic**, **Fancy**, **Modern**, **Bulleted**), number of columns or page number position.

While a multilevel table of contents can offer an insight into major topics, an Index list can pinpoint every single term discussed in a document, hence it is positioned at the very end of books, extending over many pages. For instance, the AP Stylebook (57th edition) contains 80 pages of Index out of 502 numbered pages, which is more than 15% of the entire book (Froke et al. 2024, 423–502).

It is also mentioned that in case more than one index is needed, they should be differentiated by their names, for instance “Index of Names” and “Index of Subjects” (CMOS 2024, 10).

6.10. Comment

Inserting comments might be useful when reviewing documents. This function is available on the **Review** tab of Word by clicking on the **New Comment** icon.

An inserted comment box will appear on the right side of the page, indicating the author’s name and specifying the time of the insertion, offering space to type the comment. The right bottom side of the box has two further options: **Reply** and **Resolve**:

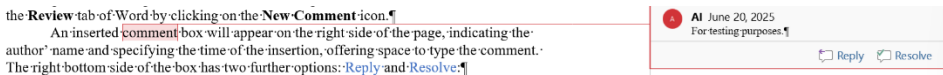


Figure 107. *Insert comment, Word*

The **Comment** group of the **Review** tab enables the user to delete the current or all comments, and it is possible to jump to the **Previous** or **Next** comment, as well as to **Show Comments** or hide them.

6.11. External Hyperlink

Inserting hyperlinks in a document is of two types: external and from another part of the document.

External hyperlinks may be copied from the internet and pasted in the footnote section, which should be followed by a comma and date of access. Once the comma and the space are placed after the hyperlink, it turns into an active hyperlink. They may be turned off one by one with the help of a right click on the active link, which displays the option of **Remove Hyperlink**. However, a more

effective way is to remove all of them by pressing **Ctrl+A** in the footnote section (thus selecting all footnotes) and then pressing the **Ctrl+Shift+F9** shortcut.

A particular issue is the date. In case the footnote language is set, adding the date is almost automatic; after the first characters are typed, the current date is offered in Word, which should end in a period.

A further type of hyperlink may direct toward a file, a place in the document, or an email address, as shown in Figure 108 below:

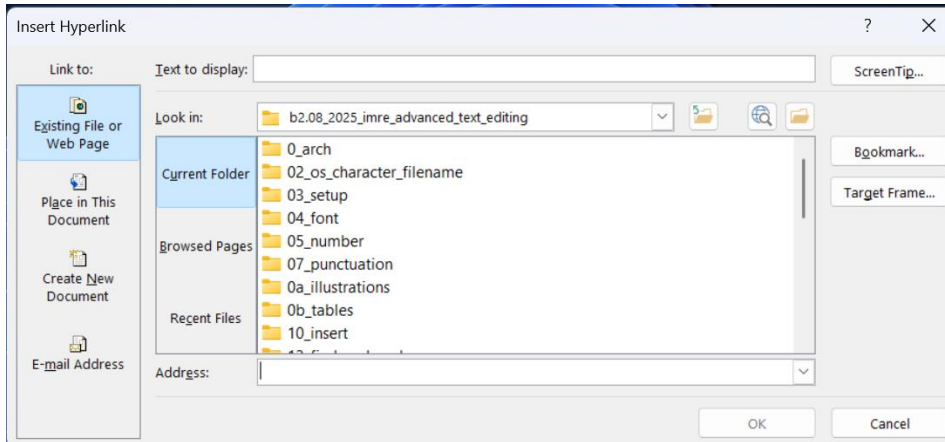


Figure 108. *Insert hyperlink, Word*

6.12. Link

Certain documents might need further supporting documents, which contain proof or more detailed information on a particular topic. In these cases, the main document offers a kind of summary that unifies the bulk of links to the details such as the lead-in document or the final report to an accreditation file of a university course program.

After stating something or offering statistics on a particular issue, a hyperlink to a further document with more detailed data may be inserted in Word this way: **Insert** tab, **Links** group, **Link** button, which opens a new window to look for the particular document. However, this is only worth doing when the referred document is not moved later, so the most secure option is to place it in the same folder with the main document.

However, the **Link** button also offers the option to create a bookmark to a particular place within the document.

Writer offers the same options by accessing **Insert, Hyperlink**, which opens a window with multiple possibilities: hyperlink from the internet, mail, document, or a new document.

6.13. Bookmark

Inserting a bookmark is sensible in the case of large documents, as it offers the possibility to jump with the help of a hyperlink to a selected part of the document. Both Word and Writer make this available via **Insert, Bookmark**.

As explained, inserting a bookmark in Word consists of three parts: first the content should be selected to which a hyperlink is inserted, followed by the insertion of the bookmark, then adding the hyperlink to it. This feature is logical when recurrent issues are discussed or a relevant part may be necessary to refer to further sections.

6.14. Cross-Reference

Cross-references enable the author to insert links to bookmarks, endnotes, equations, figures, footnotes, headings, numbered items, tables, or even newly created labels (e.g., *Illustration*, *Photo*, *Picture*, etc.).

Both Word and Writer offer this option via **Insert, Cross-reference**, which opens a window where the desired type may be selected.

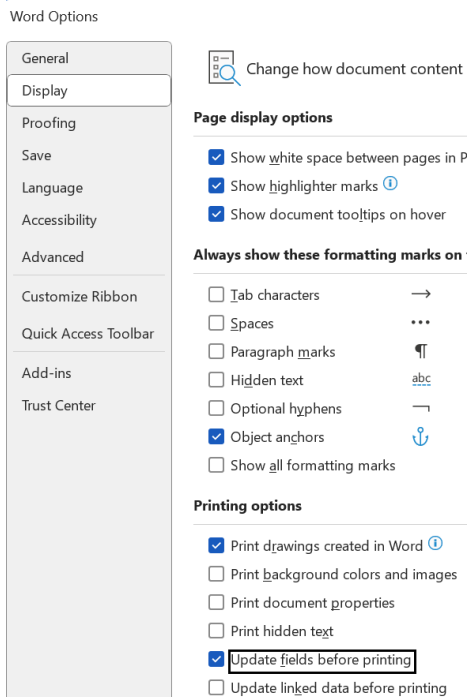


Figure 109. Automatic update of fields before printing, Word

Cross-reference may contain the entire caption or only the label and number, which should be updated when the writing process is over, as subsequent insertions before any cross-reference impacts the entry number. The final update of cross-references should be done before creating the automatic tables: table of contents, table of figures, list of tables, etc., which is possible with the **Ctrl+A**, then **F9** or **Fn+F9** shortcut, depending on the setting of function keys. However, an automatic update of all cross-referenced fields is possible in Word before printing via **File, Options** (thus opening **Word Options**), then **Display**, and check the box next to **Update fields before printing**, as shown in Figure 109.

Automatic update of fields is also possible in Writer by accessing **Tools, Options, LibreOffice Writer, General**, where the boxes belonging to **Automatically Update (Fields, Charts)** should be checked:

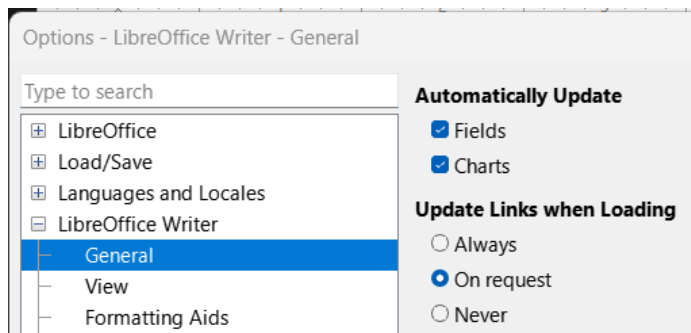


Figure 110. Automatic update of fields, Writer

6.15. Quotations

Using **quotations** from relevant sources is indispensable in scholarly work. However, proper reference to other sources is vital, as the lack of it leads to ethical issues such as plagiarism, discussed in Section 12.1.

Quotation marks should not be used to signal “common expressions or figures of speech (including slang),” as their basic function is to specify the beginning and end of “phrases borrowed verbatim from another context” (CMOS 2024, 465).

Proper quoting from other sources should always be signaled by opening and closing quotation marks, whose position depends on the selected language: AmE uses double quotation marks, both above the line (“...”), while BrE uses single quotation marks in the same manner (‘...’). Non-English languages might have different ways to signal quotes, such as Romanian and Hungarian („...”).

As for their form, all quotation marks should be smart (not straight), and no space is used between the opening quotation mark and the first word and between the last word and the closing quotation mark. While sources explain that the

punctuation mark is inside the quotation marks only if it is part of the quotation (APA 2020, 271), the reality shows that AmE inserts sentence-end punctuation marks (periods, commas, question marks) before the closing quotation mark, while BrE the other way around. However, footnote reference numbers come after the closing quotation mark.

Quotations no longer than two or three lines may be embedded in the main text, their start and end are signaled by double quotation marks, and this typically means “fewer than 40 words” (APA 2020, 271). In this case, parenthetical quotations are standard, which means that the author(s) and the year of publication are in parentheses, and more detailed quotation references should include page number(s) as well. Narrative citations embed the name of the author in the main text, while the parenthesis only contains the year and page number. A special case is when the source is referenced in another work (secondary source), in which case the author and year is specified, followed by the “as cited in” phrase, completed with the author and year (and page) of the work containing the secondary source.

While short mottoes, signs, or notices might be “capitalized in title case in running text,” longer notices should be treated as quotations (CMOS 2024, 465).

Foreign words or phrases are quotes per se, yet they tend to be “italicized and only the first word capitalized” (CMOS 2024, 466).

Other types of quotations may be pullout quotes, longer quotes (block quotes), or scare quotes (a word or a phrase with different meaning), detailed in the following sections.

6.15.1. Pullout Quote

Pullout quotes are brief, and capture the attention of the reader by their emphasized form: “usually bolder and larger than the original text, used to emphasize content, improve design, or fill white space” (AMA 2020, 1141).

Thus, the use of pullout quotes may be justified when an extremely important piece of information is quoted or the exact wording is relevant. While it is not specified, the author of the pullout quote should be clear, mentioned either in the main text or at the end of the pullout quote.

6.15.2. Manual Citation

The length of a citation is often restricted to the minimum necessary. As such, it may happen that one particular word is quoted, while in other cases more than two or three lines.

The APA style recommends that a quotation longer than 40 words should be treated as a **block quotation** (APA 2020, 272), which means that this part is visually separated from the main text by extra spaces above and below (or double space), and the text of the quotation is typically indented from the left margin. In this case, no quotations marks are used, and various sources recommend smaller font size

compared to the main text. A block quotation is referred to in the previous sentence of the main text, usually followed by a colon.

The author of the citation may be used in the narrative part, or may end the quotation in parentheses, which is not followed by a period (APA 2020, 272).

As it is a word-for-word citation, nothing is changed or “improved” in the original wording (CMOS 2024, 432), and in case the quotation contains a spelling or factual mistake, the Latin word [*sic*] (meaning ‘thus’) should warn the reader about it, which is italicized (CMOS 2024, 463; 2024, 766), without resorting to this possibility too many times.

The serious drawback of **manual citations** is that after the closing quotation mark the source should be typed manually in parentheses (author, year, and page number), and special care must be paid to note somewhere that this source is used and offer the details in the References section at the end of the document (author, year, title, edition, publishing house, place). Knowing that the order of referenced items might be different depending on the reference style, and a manual change of both in-text quotation sources and references is an aching task, this is not recommended for books, as the sheer number of references might lead to errors.

6.15.3. Zotero Citation

While manual citation is prone to errors (the quoted source may be left out from the references or the references may contain entries which were erased from the main text during the writing process), various applications are available to deal with them.

Our recommendation in this respect is Zotero, which is a free application (“Your personal research assistant,” according to their slogan), and it can be embedded in both Word and Writer upon installation, available for any operation system. It is in fact a frame for a database of sources, offering various built-in source types (e.g., book, book section, journal article, manuscript, thesis, etc.) with proper accompanying details for each source, which may be organized in folders and subfolders.

Zotero also has extensions for browsers, and once installed, it can directly export the details of a source from specific websites, such as Amazon or major publishing houses, as all sources must be added to the database first and then may be referred to while drafting the text.

However, before the first use of the reference, its details should be checked in the Zotero database, as it may happen that they are not retrieved correctly or in the proper slot.

The embedded **Zotero** tab offers six options needed to handle Zotero while typing the text, displayed in Figure 111:

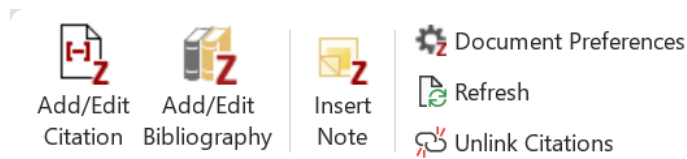


Figure 111. Zotero tab, Word

1. **Add/Edit Citation**, which—being the most frequently used—might be added to the Quick Access Toolbar in Word;
2. **Add/Edit Bibliography**, which is the huge advantage of this type of software, as it can insert the entire bibliography used in a document where the cursor is placed, in alphabetical order; once inserted, it can automatically update the list in case further work is referenced in the main text or deleted, in which case it disappears from the list;
3. **Insert Note** at the current cursor position;
4. **Document Preferences**, which offers major reference styles (e.g., APA, ASA, CMOS, Elsevier, IEEE, MLA, or Nature), with the possibility to add further ones, as well as to change the style format of the entire document at any time;
5. **Refresh**, which can check manually changed entries and update or correct them;
6. **Unlink Citations**, which cuts the live links of the document with the Zotero database, so no subsequent change will update in the references section in case new entry is placed in the main text; this feature may be useful when the final version of the document is sent for publication.

While drafting the text, the Zotero application must be opened, where the data can be retrieved from and new entries might be added to. New entries may be added automatically from the website in case the **Zotero Connector** is downloaded and activated for the particular web browser and it has access to the selected site. If access is granted, different Zotero icons become active, depending on the type of source (e.g., book, book section, journal article, etc.), and a click on the icon saves the entry into the Zotero database in the folder which is currently open in Zotero.

6.15.4. Scare Quotes

Scare quotes warn the reader that the standard meaning of the word or phrase is altered, so it is intended to be metaphoric, doubtful, or ironic (often the opposite meaning).

In these cases, the quotation marks express that “This is not how the term is usually applied.” (CMOS 2024, 464-65), but they might be used only sparingly. In case the term *so-called* is placed before the word or phrase in question, the quotation marks are not necessary (CMOS 2024, 465).

6.15.5. Quotation Style

Documents containing quotations should have a separate quote style, which may stem from the normal style.

A separate quote style may format pullout quotes (formatted as desired, as per discussed above in Section 6.15.1.), while block quotations may be indented from the left and right margin alike (typically 0.5 in., or 1.27 cm, but no more than 1 in., or 2.54 cm).

6.16. Automatically Generated Lists

When discussing how to insert index entries (see Section 6.9.), inserting the **Index List** was already described.

Further lists may be inserted in case the document is created accordingly: a table of contents, a list of tables, and a list of figures or illustrations. Furthermore, with the help of Zotero, a list of references is also possible to generate (see Section 6.15.3.).

6.16.1. Table of Contents

Longer documents with various headings and page numbers typically have a **table of contents** (TOC). Shorter student papers might also have a table of contents, considering that even presentations tend to have one.

The presence of a well-formed table of contents displays professionalism—Bringhurst considers that an incomplete or a missing table of contents “is usually a sign of typographic desperation or of disregard for the reader” (Bringhurst 2004, 73).

Inserting a table of contents is usually at hand. In Word, this is available in the **References** tab, the first group: **Table of Contents**, and the button subtitled similarly. This inserts a table of contents where the cursor is placed, offering various built-in table formats (e.g., **From template**, **Classic**, **Modern**, etc.), which may include or not the page numbers (they should be included); pages may be right-aligned, and the number of levels (Heading 1, 2, 3, 4) may also be set.

Once the table of contents is generated, the combination of the **Ctrl** key and a click on a particular heading should position the cursor to the particular heading in the main text. However, while creating the table of contents, there is a **Web Preview** option, which turns all headings into hyperlinks:

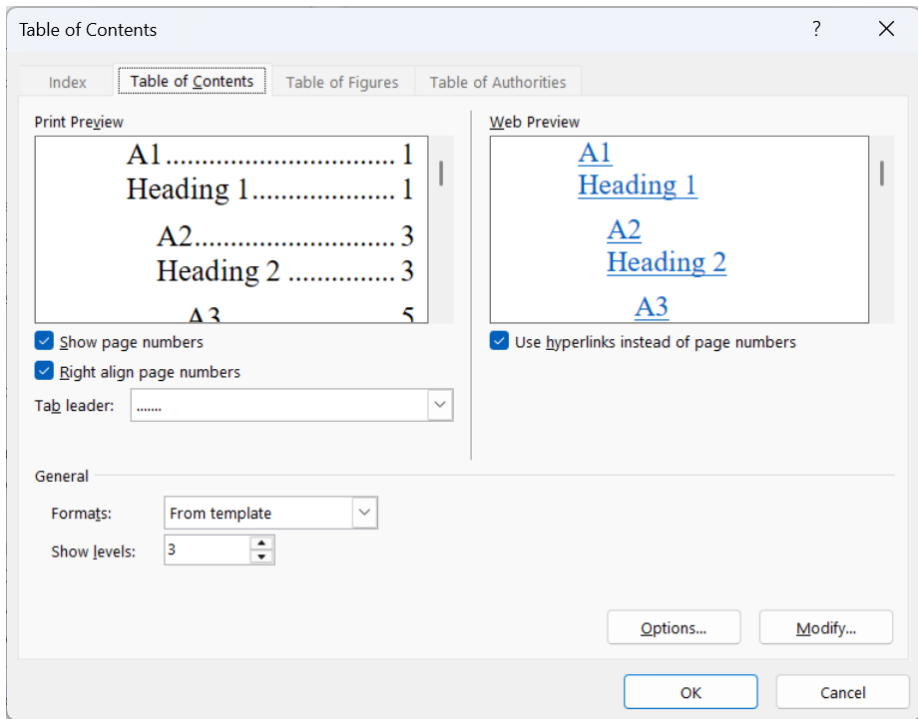


Figure 112. *Table of contents, Word*

While Anglo-American books place the table of contents at the beginning of books, Romanian and Hungarian books have it at the end.

There are cases when bilingual table of contents is needed, in which case the original-language table of contents must be copied, translating the headings in the desired language. When ready, the style of the original table of contents should be applied to it, and then a new style should be created on the translated headings, after which the new table of contents can be created with the new style.

6.16.2. Table of Figures

Inserting a table of figures is typically required when more than ten figures are included in the document.

As in the case of table of contents, inserting a table of figures is available in Word via **References**, and in the **Captions** group a click on **Insert Table of Figures** will open a window with similar setting options as in the case of table of contents: showing or not page numbers, right alignment or not, various style formats, with or without labels or the use of hyperlinks instead of page numbers, as illustrated in Figure 113:

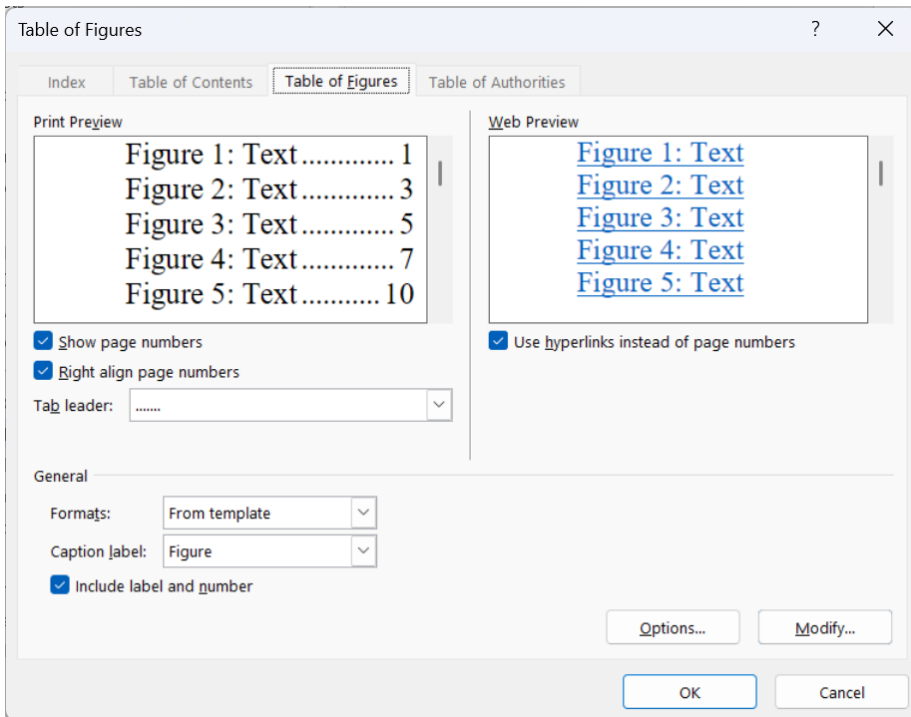


Figure 113. *Table of figures, Word*

6.16.3. List of Tables

In case there are more than ten tables, a list of tables might be inserted as well. While the table of contents is front-positioned (after the title pages and possible introduction or foreword), the table of figures and the list of tables may be positioned either after the table of contents or in the Annexes section at the end of the document.

Inserting a list of tables starts in the same way as inserting a table of figures, and once the corresponding window appears, the **Caption** label must be changed to **Table**.

6.16.4. References

References may be inserted manually when drafting the text, paying attention to the desired style and type of reference.

While manual insertion (typing) requires a lot of time, attention, and effort, a bibliographic management software can effectively speed up the process, not to mention that the style may be changed automatically at any time, and it reduces

the risk of omitting references or not formatting them in the same style. As specified before, our recommendation is Zotero, which also provides documentation and support for proper use.¹⁸¹

Relying on a reference manager will also enable the user to insert (generate) a list of bibliographic items instantly, in alphabetical order, as well as to create a database that may be reused for other documents or shared with fellow researchers.

After having a reference list inserted, it is worth checking its format, as the entries should have a hanging indent of 0.5 in., or 1.27 cm.

6.17. Object

There are cases when multiple documents need to be merged into a single one, for instance the transcripts of various episodes of a season in the case of TV shows.

A possible option is to open a new document and then click on the drop-down arrow of the **Object** button found in the **Text** group on the **Insert** tab (Word). This reveals the **Text from file** option, triggering a new window, where we can search for the file. After locating the document, a click on the file name and then the **Insert** button will copy and paste the entire content of the document, starting from where the cursor is placed.

In case the source document format is different, a click on the **Object** button displays further options such as spreadsheet or presentation formats. While Word offers insertion from OpenOffice document formats as well, this is not recommended due to formatting differences. Instead, these documents should be opened in LO or OpenOffice, saved in a native MSO format, and inserted into the desired Word document as an Excel file or a PowerPoint presentation.

Writer offers similar options by accessing **Insert, Text from file**. However, this inserts text from text-based files (both DOCX and ODT formats), while inserting an **OLE Object** enables the user to insert content from spreadsheet (Calc or Excel) and presentation (LO Impress or PowerPoint) document files.

In case we wish to merge various types of documents into one, there are online applications to support this, although this entails that those documents are first fully uploaded, and so their content might become available for unintended public.¹⁸²

6.18. Appendix

Scholarly work may contain various types of **appendices**, positioned at the end of the document.

¹⁸¹ <https://www.zotero.org/support/>, June 25, 2025.

¹⁸² <https://ilovemerge.com/word>, <https://products.fileformat.app/word-processing/merger/docx>, June 27, 2025.

It is prescribed that the appendix title appears recto, while the Appendix appears verso (CMOS 2024, 10), which might contain accompanying databases to the main text, transcripts, or summarizing tables.

6.19. Signature Line

Both Word and Writer offer the possibility to insert a **Signature Line** via the **Insert** tab, which creates a text box as seen in Figure 114:



Figure 114. *Signature line*

6.20. Symbols and Special Characters

There are thousands of symbols not available directly from the keyboard, which may be inserted in multiple ways.

In case the symbol is frequently used, it is worth memorizing its Unicode or Alt Code value. For instance, the value for the circled number 1 is U+2460, which might be faster to type than first looking for this symbol under the **Insert** tab, clicking on the **Symbol** icon, and then searching for it, as not all font families contain the symbol ①, leading us to the second option, which is looking for it in the **Symbols** with various subsets (e.g., Greek).

A third option is look up the symbol on the internet and download it as a symbol, while a fourth option is to find the symbol anywhere and take a screenshot of the icon, in which case it is an image in fact.

Some of the symbols and special characters are widely used and accepted in specific text types, while others have specific use such as musical or mathematical symbols, not discussed in the present work.

6.21. Date and Time

Inserting **date and time** is available in all major word processors, including texts, spreadsheets, and presentations.

If the language is properly set, the date format specific to that language may be inserted, which is rather different in the case of AmE and BrE. As known, AmE uses the Month-Day-Year format, where the year is separated by a comma, while BrE relies on the Day-Month-Year format without commas between them. Romanian date format is similar to BrE (EC-DGT-RO 2021, 25), specifying that

single-digit figures may not be preceded by a leading zero in the case of dates. Both English and Romanian use capitalized month names, while this is not the case in Hungarian, which uses the Year-Month-Date format, without capitalized month names. However, online transactions requiring the validity of credit cards seem to be unified, requiring MM/YY, that is two digits for the month and the last two digits for the year. Nevertheless, the standard abbreviations for months in English are: *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Mar.*, *Apr.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.*, and *Dec.*, while *May*, *June*, and *July* “are never abbreviated” (ASA et al. 2024, 2–08).

In case only Arabic numerals are used in the date format, certain sources specify the presence of periods between the units with or without space, while others rely on slashes or even dashes between them.

Manuals recommend that the months should be spelled out unless they are in a table cell, and American sources use 12-hour time format accompanied with the small capitals AM and PM, although all possible combinations might be used (*am*, *a.m.*, *AM*, *A.M.*).¹⁸³ Capitalized versions are more formal, and they should be preceded by space.¹⁸⁴ The Wikipedia guide regarding time is rather lenient,¹⁸⁵ explaining that “both the 24-hour and 12-hour notations are used in the United Kingdom,” although the 12-hour format is more common, while legal documents favor the 24-hour format.

A further note is that the American time format uses colon between the hours and minutes (*The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*), while some British publications prefer the period (dot), recommended by Oxford publications and prestigious newspapers (*The Guardian* or *The Times*), although the BBC uses the colon. Furthermore, military time uses the 24-hour format without colons or period (1530 instead of 3:30 PM).

Units of time may be abbreviated this way: *min* for *minute*, *h* for *hour*, *d* for *day*. While the 2021 version of a handbook accepted *wk* for *week*, and *yr* for *year*, the newer version states that *week*, *month*, and *year* should be spelled out (ASA et al. 2024, 7–06).

Inserting date and time in Word is possible via the **Insert** tab and the **Date & Time** button, which offers multiple formats and the possibility to select the language as well, with subsequent automatic updates. Writer can do that via the **Insert** tab and then **Field**, which offers fixed and variable date and time formats.

Spreadsheet files (both Excel and Calc) can insert the current date in a single cell with the **[Ctrl]+[D]** shortcut, while **[Ctrl]+[Shift]+[D]** inserts the current time. If both are needed in the same cell, a space or a comma and space might separate them.

PowerPoint presentations have the option to insert the date on any slide where the author wishes (**Insert, Date & Time**) or set it in the Footer, which may

¹⁸³ These are Latin abbreviations for *Ante Meridiem* ‘before noon’ and *Post Meridiem* ‘after noon’.

¹⁸⁴ <https://brians.wsu.edu/2016/05/16/am-pm/>, June 25, 2025.

¹⁸⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Date_and_time_notation_in_the_United_Kingdom, June 25, 2025.

be automatically updated to the current date. LO Impress documents can insert the date and time similarly to the way Writer does: **Insert, Field**, fixed and variable **Date and Time**, or setting it in the Footer section.

If needed, time zones may be added (e.g., Eastern European Time or its abbreviated form, EET).

Chapter 7

Modifying the Text

7.1. Find and Replace

After browsing through inserting options, it is important to check the find and replace options of word processors.

7.1.1. Navigation Sidebar

7.1.1.1. Navigation Sidebar in Word

On opening a Word document, it is worth enabling the **Navigation** sidebar with the **Ctrl+F** shortcut, which appears on the left side by default. This sidebar offers a convenient search option bar, containing three more options (**Headings**, **Pages**, and **Results**):

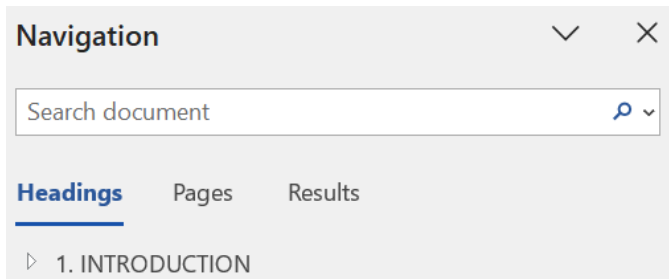


Figure 115. *Navigation pane, Word*

The **Headings** tab displays the structure of the document by showing all the headings in a hierarchical organization. This way the required chapter or subchapter is easy to find. Furthermore, there are multiple options to add or delete headings, as well as to expand or collapse the view and choose **Heading Levels** to show from **All** to **Heading 9**:

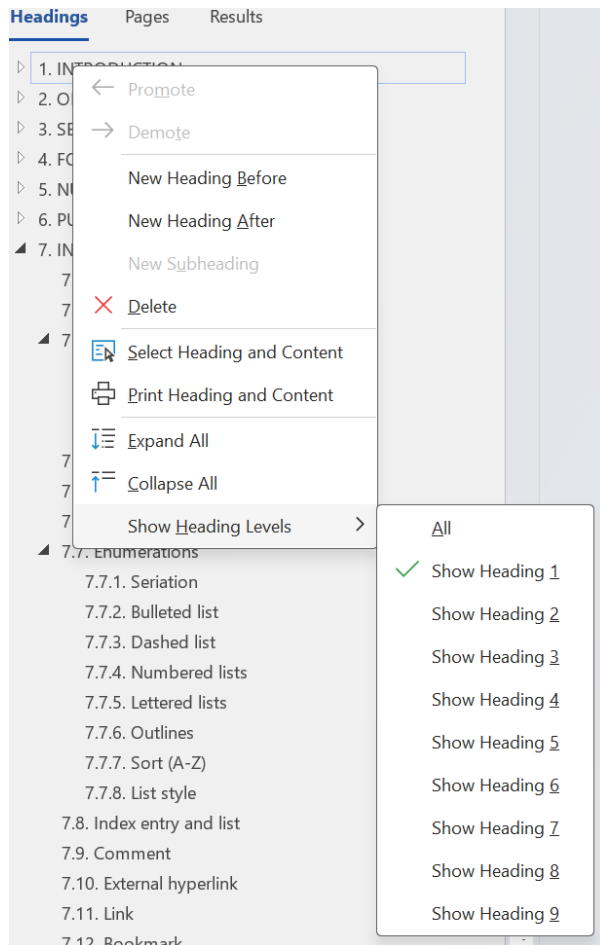


Figure 116. *Expand, collapse, show heading, Word*

The **Pages** tab changes the view to display a miniature version of the pages, where scrolling is much faster—and this view offers an idea about page layout as well.

The **Results** tab makes sense when a string of characters is searched for, as it can display the results if no more than 99 matches are found. In this case, the results are listed, and a single click on any of them positions the cursor to that particular part in the document.

7.1.1.2. Navigator Sidebar in Writer

Triggering the navigation sidebar (Navigator) in Writer is available via **View, Navigator**, or by pressing the **F5** function key, which opens a vertical window on the left side of the document, offering many options and categories:

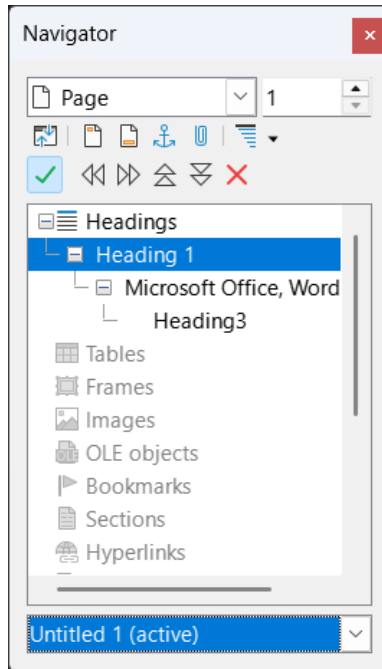


Figure 117. Navigator, Writer

The available buttons enable the user to jump to any heading, header, or footer, as well as promoting and demoting levels. Furthermore, it offers categories to explore, such as tables, images, hyperlinks, comments, footnotes, or endnotes, and in case multiple documents are opened, there is the possibility to switch from one document to the other, as all of them have one unified Navigator, listing active and inactive documents.

7.1.2. Complex Find and Replace

More complex **Find** options may be carried out with the **Ctrl+F** shortcut, upon which a new window pops up: **Find and Replace**. This possibility is important when multiple character strings are to be found in large documents and need to be replaced. In this case, the **Find what** bar should contain the original character string, while the new version is typed in the **Replace with** bar.

Although this is suitable for character strings, the **More** button in Word offers more complex options, such as **Match case** (this might be important when uppercase and lowercase strings should be differentiated), **Find whole words only**, or **Use wildcards**.

The **Ctrl+H** shortcut in Writer opens a window containing many possibilities, including **Regular expressions** instead of **Use wildcards**, and offering further options as well.

7.1.2.1. Find and Replace in Word

Ticking the **Using wildcards** box enables the user to make non-text-based operations. For instance, in a selected fragment, it is possible to change paragraph breaks into line breaks if we type a caret and letter “p” (^p) in the **Find what** bar and a caret and letter “l” (^l) in the **Replace with** bar.

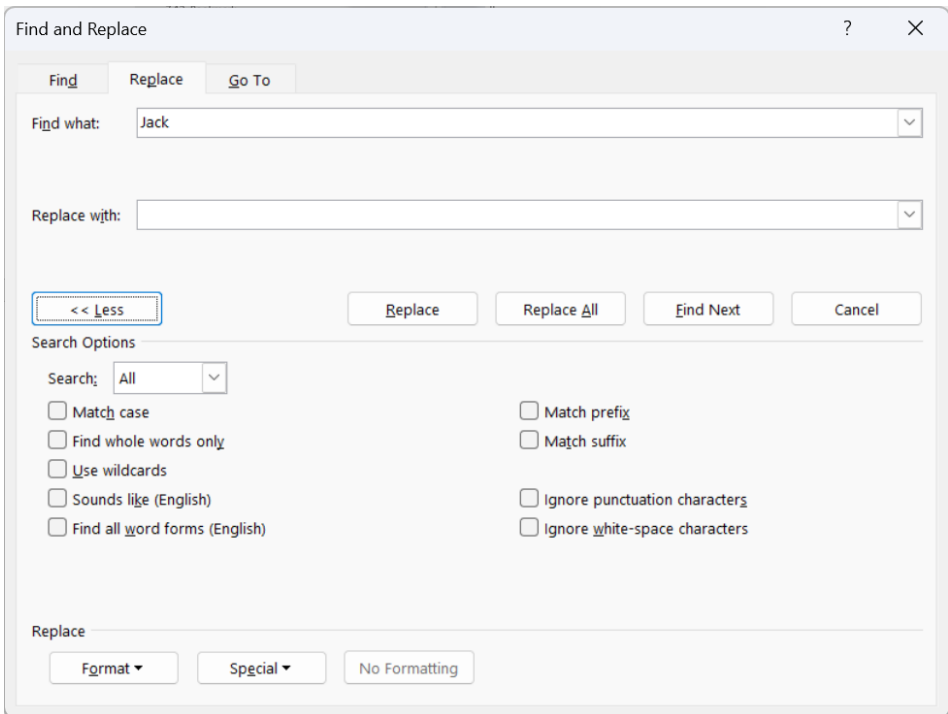


Figure 118. Find and replace, Word

Further possibilities are listed in Table 20 below, but before carrying out these operations, the **Use wildcards** box must be selected:¹⁸⁶

Table 20. *Complex find and replace, Word*

Action	Find what	Replace with
Find any digit (and remove)	[0-9]	
Find one- or two-digit numbers (and remove)	([0-9]{1,2})	
Find all 4-digit numbers	([0-9]{4}*)	
Find at least 2 consecutive capital letters	[A-Z]{2,}	
Find words longer than 10 characters	[A-Za-z]{10,}	
Remove double space	Type two spaces.	Type one space. (Press the Replace All button at least once or until 0 replacement is carried out.)
Remove characters within brackets depending on the type of brackets	\(*\ \[*\ \{*\ \<*\>	
Remove characters within any bracket type	(\[*\)\ (\{*\)\ (\(*\)\ (\<*\>)	
Bold characters within brackets	\[*\ \(*\ 	Click Format, Font, Bold
Bold all uppercase words	([A-Z]{2,}) Tick Match case	\$1 (Click Format, Font, Bold.)
Reversing currency symbols, adding space	\$([0-9.,]{1,})	\1^s\$

¹⁸⁶ <http://translationjournal.net/journal/15msw.htm> (2001), June 27, 2025. Many thanks to Tibor Körmeyi for this invaluable source of information.

Action	Find what	Replace with
Reversing currency symbols, changing to a word	<code>\$\$([0-9.,]{1,})</code>	<code>\1^sdollars</code>
Change currency symbol after the number before the number	<code>(([0-9]) ([0-9]) ([0-9])[^s]\$ (space before caret) ([0-9.,^s]{1,})\$\$</code>	<code>\1^s\2, then \1\$\$ \$\1</code>
Replacing and reverting Section sign	<code>([0-9]{1,}).[•^s]\$</code>	<code>Section^s\1</code>
Changing the separator comma in English numerals to non-breaking space format	<code>([0-9]),([0-9])</code>	<code>\1^s\2</code>
Changing the decimal comma of non-English numbers to English numerals	<code>([0-9]),([0-9]) ([0-9])^s([0-9])</code>	<code>\1.\2 (Change to decimal point.) \1,\2 (Change non-breaking space to comma.)</code>
Changing both non-breaking spaces and regular thousands separator	<code>([0-9])[•^s]([0-9])</code>	<code>\1,\2</code>

Further options might be considered: for instance, the opening and closing arrow brackets (< and >), which “specify that you want a single whole word, not parts of a word.”¹⁸⁷

7.1.2.2. *Find and Replace in Writer*

Generally, all basic and advanced find and replace functions available in Word are also available in Writer, presumably.

Advanced functions entail that the box in front of **Regular expressions** is selected.

¹⁸⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/449vbenu>, June 27, 2025.

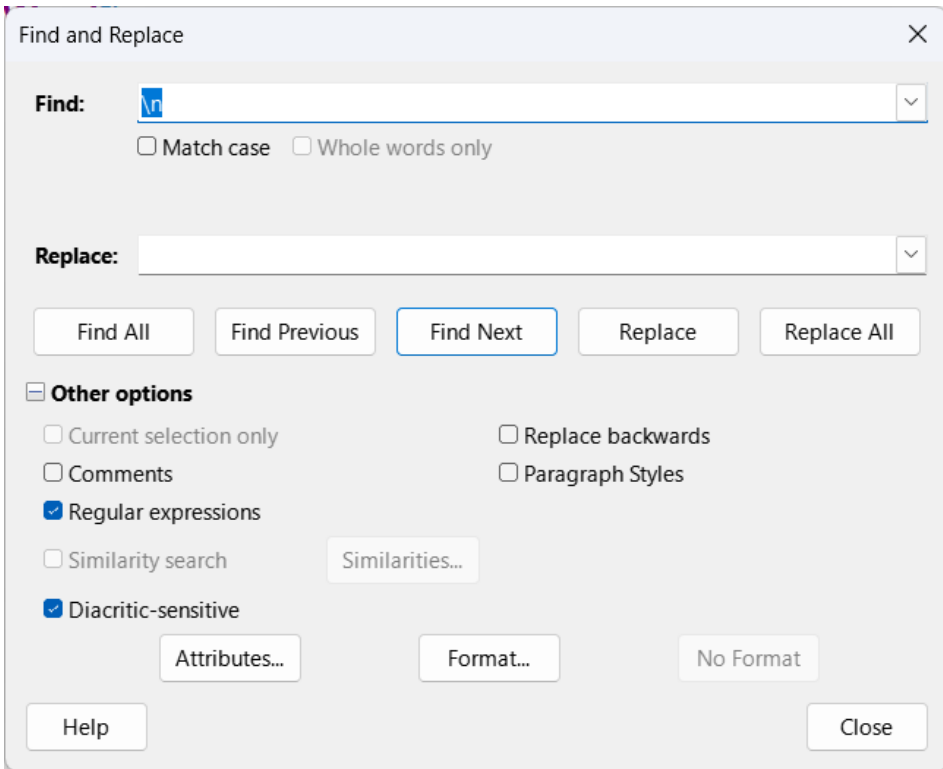


Figure 119. *Find and replace, Writer*

However, the syntax to induce similar results will probably be different in Writer. For instance, a paragraph mark may be replaced by space if the **Find** line contains a dollar sign (\$), while the **Replace** line contains a space. A new line created with the **Shift+Enter** combination is found with a backslash followed by letter “n” in the **Find** bar (\n), which may be replaced with a paragraph mark in the **Replace** bar—interestingly—with the similar characters (\n).¹⁸⁸

Uppercase words may be changed to bold by typing [A-Z]{2,} in the **Find** bar: the **Match case** needs to be selected, then \$1 is typed in the **Replace** bar, formatted as bold, and the **Current selection only** may be selected or not.

7.1.3. Find in Other File Formats

There are further file formats containing texts, and the standard shortcut to look for character strings in them is **Ctrl+F**.

¹⁸⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/3saeh62w>, June 27, 2025.

Finding chunks of texts is possible in various file formats, such as .pdf,¹⁸⁹ .txt, .rtf, .wpd, .pages, .html, as well as spreadsheets, knowing that .pdf or .html file formats display only the found character strings and—depending on the PDF application (see Chapter 0)—can count the number of occurrences, while other formats offer the possibility to modify them (add, change, or delete).

7.2. Delete and Remove

Word processors in Windows and Linux OS may rely on both the **Backspace** and **Delete** keys to delete text fragments in an open document before or after the cursor.

MacBook keyboards have either a **Backspace** or a **Delete** key (depending on the model) to erase characters to the left (sometimes a backward arrow), which may be combined with the **Fn** (Function) key to turn it into a delete or backspace key to delete characters to the right.

However, further types of erasures are possible, depending whether a particular document is open or not.

7.2.1. When the File Is Open

In case the document is open, the entire content may be deleted: **Ctrl**+**A** selects the entire main text, and then the **Delete** key erases it, except for the elements in the header and footer.

Various parts of an open document may also be deleted, with the understanding that anything inserted in a document may be erased:

1. parts of a document before or after the cursor with the help of specific keys (**Delete** and **Backspace**);
2. table rows and columns:
3. if the cursor is placed on the left side of the row, a click highlights the particular row in grey and the **Ctrl**+**X** shortcut removes the row; if needed, the **Ctrl**+**V** shortcut may place it elsewhere; in case only the cell contents should be deleted, the **Delete** key is pressed;
4. if the cursor is placed above the top of a particular column and changes to a black down arrow, a click selects the particular column and the **Ctrl**+**X** shortcut removes the column; if needed, the **Ctrl**+**V** shortcut may place it elsewhere; in case only the cell contents should be deleted, the **Delete** key is pressed;
5. entire tables may be removed if the cursor is placed in the top left corner, until the cursor changes to a four-sided arrow; a click highlights the entire table in grey, and **Ctrl**+**X** deletes the entire table; in case only the cell contents should be deleted, the **Delete** key is pressed.

¹⁸⁹ This refers to searchable PDF files.

6. hyperlinks may be removed individually by a right click on the link and selecting **Remove Hyperlink**;
7. in case all hyperlinks need to be removed, first the entire document needs to be selected (**Ctrl**+**A**), and then the **Ctrl**+**Shift**+**F9** shortcut erases all the hyperlinks in the document, preserving the characters;
8. hyperlinks in the footnote may be selected as well by placing the cursor anywhere in the footnote, then **Ctrl**+**A** (which selects all footnotes), and **Ctrl**+**Shift**+**F9**.
9. footnotes may be deleted by selecting the footnote number in the main text and deleting it;
10. comments in a document may be deleted one by one: a right click on the comment will offer the **Delete Comment** option; however, all comments may be deleted at once: in Word, the **Review** tab contains a **Comments** group, within which a click on the drop-down arrow reveals this option, illustrated in Figure 120 below.

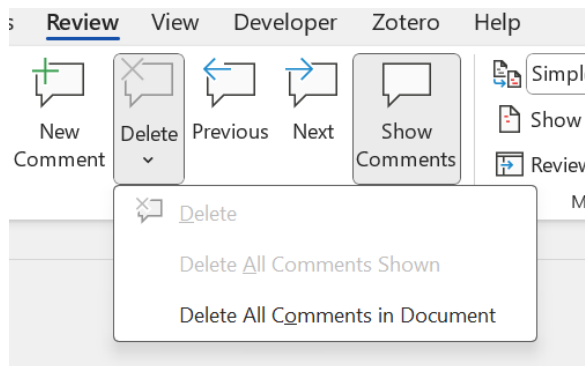


Figure 120. Delete all comments in a document, Word

Other types of erasures involve the selection of a particular part of the text first. Double click in a word selects the entire word (highlighted in grey in Word and light blue in Writer), after which it may be deleted with the **Delete** or **Backspace** keys.

A triple click in the text selects the entire paragraph in Word, while it selects the entire sentence in Writer; a rapid sequence of four clicks in Writer selects the entire paragraph. After that, the highlighted part may be deleted with one of these two keys: **Delete** or **Backspace**.

A more radical delete option requires to hold down the Left **Alt** key, and while dragging the cursor, a rectangular text block is highlighted that might be deleted. This works in both Word and Writer.

Another option is to hold down the **Ctrl** key, position the cursor to the left side of the text until it displays an I-beam, after which the dragging selects the adjacent lines.¹⁹⁰ Once lines are selected, while still holding down the **Ctrl** key, the cursor might be moved to the end of a line, and dragging it backwards may deselect parts of the selection, even across lines.

It may happen that the entire formatting of a text should be cleared. Once the entire text or part of it is selected, Word offers a **Clear All Formatting** button on the **Home** tab, **Font** group. A similar button is found on the main toolbar in Writer called **Clear Direct Formatting**, and **Ctrl**+**M** is the shortcut for that.



Figure 121. *Clear all formatting, Word*



Figure 122. *Clear direct formatting, Writer*

While these buttons will clear or delete major formatting, such as bold, italics, or indentation, some formatting types are outside this range: heading, footnote, or table form.

Copying the content of a document into another document may also rely on getting rid of the original formatting. This is possible after copying the text, and before insertion, a right click where it should be inserted offers the **Keep Text Only** option in Word or the **Paste Special, Unformatted Text** option in Writer.

7.2.2. *When the File Is Closed*

The delete or remove options are simpler when the document (file) is closed.

In the majority of cases, the contents of a file cannot be altered unless the registry setting is modified or relying on a Visual Basic (VB) code, neither of which are intended for regular text writers.

A right click on a closed file on Windows OS offers to check its **Properties**, some of which might be deleted by accessing the **Details** tab and clicking on **Remove Properties and Personal Information** at the bottom of the window. This opens another window, and thus certain information, such as the author, last saved by, revision number, or content type, might be removed. This might be carried out when the reviewer of an article wishes to remain anonymous to the author.

Selecting the file title with a single click followed by pressing the **Delete** button is enough to place (purge) the document in the **Recycle Bin** (Windows OS),

¹⁹⁰ In case the **Ctrl** key and mouse click selects the entire text, it means that the cursor is not close enough to any line, displaying a northeast-pointing white arrow.

Rubbish Bin, Trash (Linux OS), or **Trash** (macOS). The macOS option is to select the document and press the **Command+Delete** keys.

All operating systems offer to delete the document with the help of a right click, which offers the **Delete** option. A right click on the document on a MacBook also offers the option to **Move to Trash**. A third option is to drag the document to the bin directly.

However, files may be recovered from the bin by opening it, and a right click on a file offers the **Restore** option. The other option is to empty it from the bin as well, in which case it is not recoverable any more, as it disappears from the disk. A more direct way to delete the file from the disk is with the help of the **Shift+Delete** shortcut, which offers no more chance to recover the file. Yet, there are dedicated data recovery software offering various file recovery potential, such as *EaseUS*, *Stellar*, *DMDE*, or *Recuva*, some of which have free versions and are cross-platform.

The **Restore** and **Empty** the bin options may refer to all the files in the bin when all of them are selected.

7.3. Review

Quality assurance while drafting a text entails proper layout, formatting, and spelling alike, which might be completed with **Review**.

A thorough **review** should spot all the typographical errors (mistyped characters) as well as atomic typos (correct words in improper context).

While we can distinguish layout errors (visible in open documents) from typographical ones (visible in printed format), neither of them are accepted. Once layout is configured, text editors must check the language of the document, and the reviewing phase should rely heavily on the **Review** tab options.

The **Review** tab in Word contains **Spelling & Grammar**, **Language preferences**, inserting **New Comments**, or deleting them one by one or all at once. Proofreading in any language should include spelling errors, word breaks (hyphenation), capitalization, typeface, font style and size, numbers in the main text, page numbers, caption numbers, heading numbers, illustrations and tables, considering both meaning and overall appearance.

In case changes must be carried out, the **Tracking** group offers **Track changes**, **Accept**, and **Reject**, which can effectively show all the changes (strikethrough and colors) while correcting the text.

Writer also offers various review options: the **Tools** tab contains **Spelling** and **Automatic Spellchecking**, as well as **Language Setting** for a selection, a paragraph, or the entire document. **Hyphenation** and **AutoCorrect** are also in the **Tools** tab, while the **Track Changes** and **Comment** options are placed in the **Edit** tab. The **View** tab contains the **Show Tracked Changes**, while a **Comment** may be inserted from the **Insert** tab or with the **Ctrl+Alt+C** shortcut key.

A rather thorough review is often necessary when content is copied from another document, especially from PDF documents, as formatting is usually below expectations, starting from line breaks, but basically everything except for the characters proper.

It is worth remembering that the review process is effectively helped by enabling the **Show/Hide** option in Word or the **Toggle Formatting Marks** in Writer, thus displaying non-printable formatting symbols as well.

Chapter 8

Creating a Template

Creating a template document is sensible when multiple documents are to be created in the same style or a longer document with multiple settings is needed.

In these cases, a template document can ensure quality by providing a unified outlook, in which default settings are provided, including shortcuts as well.

8.1. New Template

A template document contains data on various setup options involving the page, font types and sizes for the normal text and headings, paragraph style, language, header, footer, footnotes, page number, or autocorrect.

While word processors contain certain default settings for a **Normal** template (text, spreadsheet, and presentation), creating further templates is also recommended.

The standard template in Word is found here:

C:\Users\user name\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Templates

However, instead of modifying this, a completely new template should be created by opening a document, performing all the changes needed, then saving it as a template with a different name to a different location. Thus, whenever a new document is opened, it will still show the settings of the Normal.dotm extension file. The new template can be easily attached to it by accessing the **Developer** tab and clicking on the **Document Template**, which opens a new window. This offers the possibility to attach any template to the currently opened document and even **Automatically update document styles**, as shown in Figure 123.

Writer also offers a default template, and creating a new one is similar: after opening a new document and performing all the settings, it should be saved as a template with a new name: **File, Templates, Save as Template**. It is generally recommended to save our templates in the **My Templates** category, with the option to **Set as default template** or not.

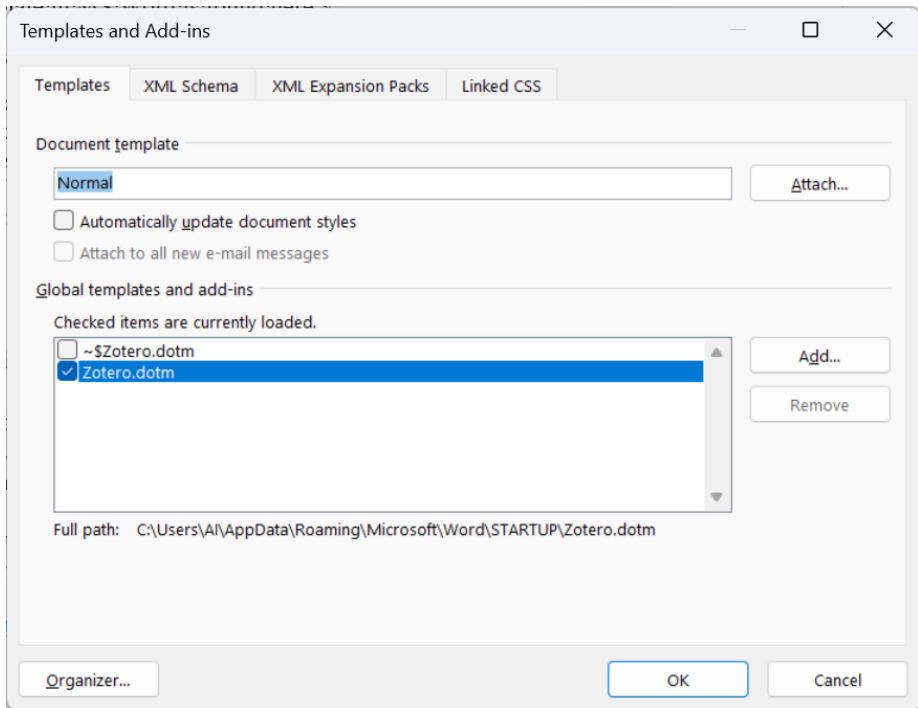


Figure 123. *Attaching a template, Word*

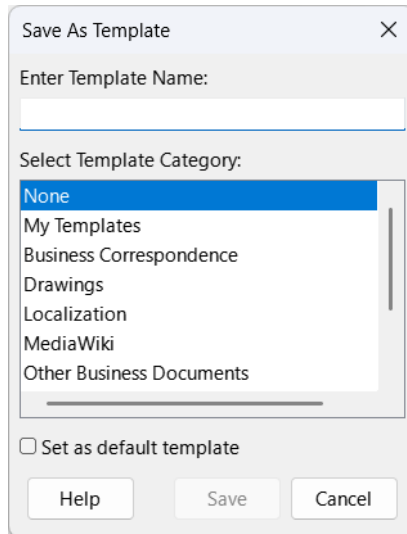


Figure 124. *Creating a new template, Writer*

Writers offers easy access to templates to be edited or even managed later: **File, Edit Template, or Manage Templates**. The importance of this management is signaled by a shortcut button as well: **Ctrl+Shift+N**, which triggers the following window:

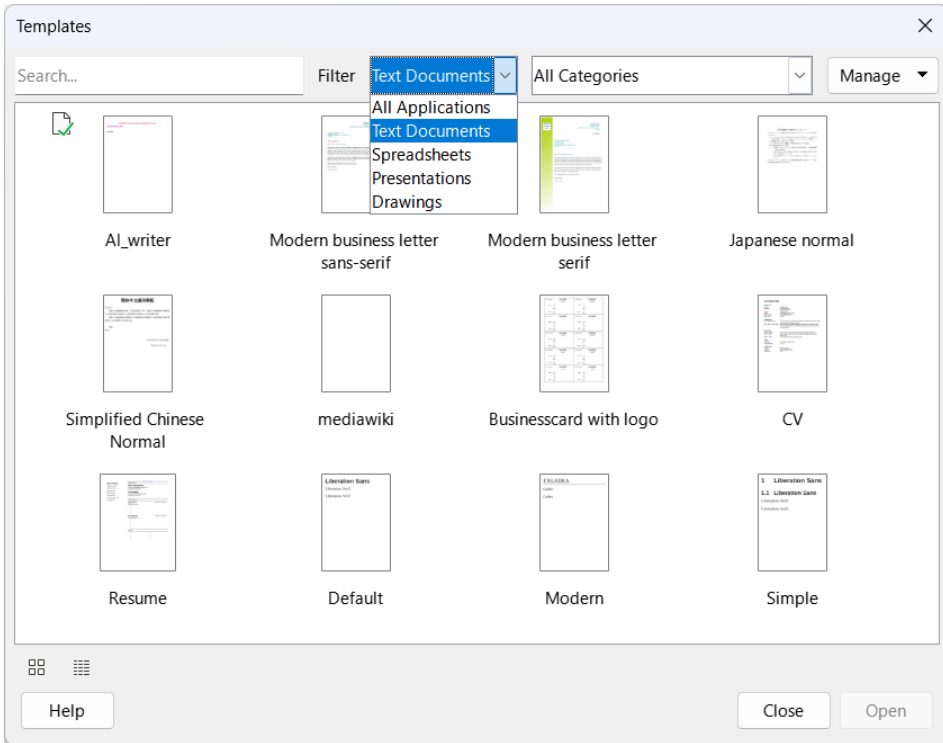


Figure 125. *Creating a template in Writer*

8.2. Setting Up a Template

Having in mind a thesis, a template should be created with the settings detailed in the following.

8.2.1. Document Language

On opening a new document, the **language** of the entire document should be set to the desired language. This includes the main text and the text in headers, footers, footnotes, and comments as well.

In case multiple languages are used in the document, the most often used one may be the default language, whereas text in other languages should be selected

and set to the corresponding language for proofing purposes, even though this may extend from one word to a paragraph.

8.2.2. Page Layout

The standard **Page layout** is **Size** A4, **Orientation** Portrait, **Margins** Normal, which is 1 in., or 2.54 cm. In case the document is printed and bound, the left **Margin** may be set to 1.18 in., or 3 cm.

8.2.3. Styles

The most frequent style of a text is **Normal**. This is typically set in a serified font family such as *Times New Roman*, font size 12, line spacing 1.5, set **Left** (recommended by typographers) or **Justify** (popular option).

The first line of the Normal style is typically indented (0.5 in., or 1.27 cm), except for the first paragraph after a heading, in which case the indentation is not preserved, as it is obvious that it is a separate paragraph. So, the cursor should be placed at the beginning of the indentation, and pressing the **[Backspace]** makes the indentation disappear.

The Normal style should have no spacing before and after, and the recommended shortcut for the template is **[Alt+N]**.

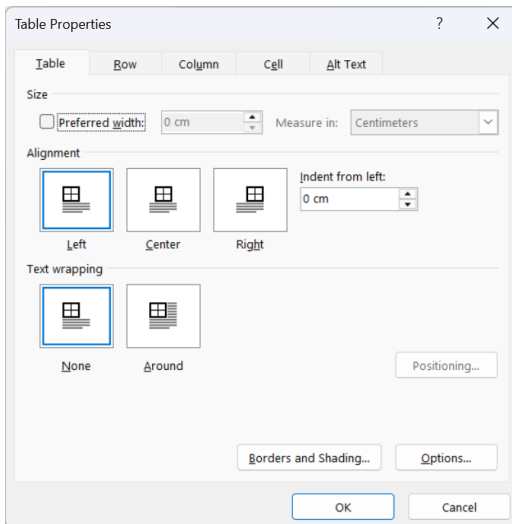


Figure 126. Table properties,
Word

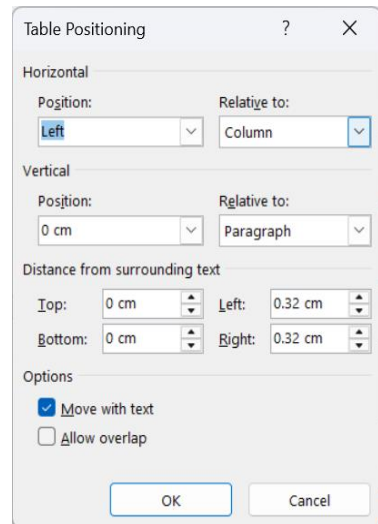


Figure 127. Table positioning,
Word

In case the main text follows a table, a different Normal style should be set, which is identical to the Normal style, but spacing before is set to 12 points, and the recommended shortcut is **Alt+T**. The other option in Word is to select the entire table, then a right click triggers a drop-down menu with **Table Properties**; this offers **Text wrapping** on the **Table tab**, and changing **None** to **Around** activates the **Positioning** button; this way, the **Distance from surrounding text** may be set to the desired distance (for instance 0.4 in., or 1 cm).

The lowest **Heading** style may start from the size of Normal style (12), but it is numbered hierarchically (containing the numbers of the higher levels it belongs to), and it is often italicized.

As higher Heading styles should be visibly different from lower ones, there should be at least two points difference between the font sizes. While the Normal style belongs to a serifed font family, headings tend to be sans serif such as *Arial*.

Some authors might change the color of heading, using red, magenta, or blue, and all headings are followed by Normal style; in case line spacing is 1, the following headings might be set:

1. Heading 1 style may be *Arial Bold Capitalized*, 18 points, spacing 24 before and 18 after, and page break before; the recommended shortcut is **Alt+1**;

Figure 128 below illustrates the setting for Heading 1, as Heading 1 is the only heading requiring **Page break before**.

2. Heading 2 style may be *Arial Bold* 16 points, spacing 18 before and 12 after; the recommended shortcut is **Alt+2**;
3. Heading 3 style may be *Arial Bold Italic* 14 points, spacing 12 before and 6 after; the recommended shortcut is **Alt+3**;
4. Heading 4 style may be *Arial Italic* 12 points, spacing 6 before and 0 after; the recommended shortcut is **Alt+4**.

The main text might contain quotations; while quotations shorter than two lines are typically embedded in the main text, longer ones are separated from the main text by space before and after (at least 12 points), are indented from the left (0.5 in. or more), and some prefer indentation from the right as well (0.5 in. or more). More than that, in case the main text is 12 points, the quotation may be set smaller, e.g., 10 points, typically ending in the source. The recommended Quote style shortcut is **Alt+Q**.

Illustrations, images, pictures, photographs, and figures might also be inserted in the document, which can be positioned center or left. Space before and after is recommended (12 points), and both figures and tables are recommended to be “announced” or mentioned before they are inserted, which—occasionally—might be felt redundant. The recommended shortcut is **Alt+P**.

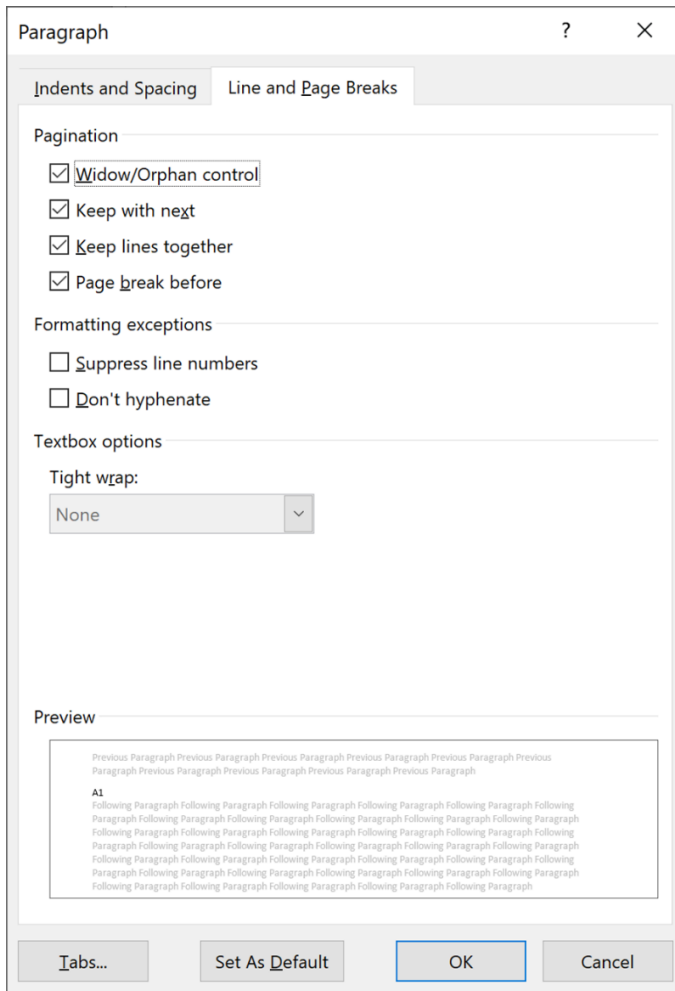


Figure 128. *Settings for Heading 1, Word*

Reference to the figure is possible either in the caption (in case it is not too long) or in the footnote, followed by a comma and the date of access in the format of the chosen language. Once a figure is inserted, cross-reference helps referring back to it (e.g., *Figure 1* or *Fig. 1*).

Tables might also need a specific style, and they might be inserted via **Insert, Table, Insert Table** (simple ones), or built-in table styles can be chosen. In case a simple table is inserted, the **Table Design** tab becomes visible in the main tab, which contains many **Table Styles**, and a separate **Table Layout** tab is also available. Similarly to figures, tables should also be “announced” beforehand,

according to manuals. For instance, *The table below presents facts about* The source of the tables should be mentioned accordingly, either in the caption or the footnote section, once again followed by a comma and the date of access in the format of the chosen language. If it is an own table, it should be mentioned in the text before the table, or the wording of the text should entail this logically.

Once a table is inserted, there is no space below the table and the first Normal text line below it, but this may be solved, as specified above, regarding Normal styles. In case the table properties are modified, copying the table will preserve its settings, so it might be reused.

While captions accompanying figures are positioned below them, captions of tables are positioned above the table. Captions, figures, and tables might be set center or left, depending on the requirements, but **Caption** style differs from the main text in size (e.g., 9 points compared to 12 points in Word), color (e.g., gray versus black) and might be italicized. The recommended caption shortcut is Alt+C.

Two list styles should be added to the template: a bulleted one, which might rely on the pre-defined bullet list provided by word processors, checking the indentation and the spacing before and after (at least 12 points). The recommended shortcut is Alt+B. A numbered list style is also recommended with similar settings, and a possible shortcut is Alt+Shift+3. However, in case a subsequent numbered list is created, it might happen that the numbering continues the previous list, but a right click on the selection or the first numbered line offers the possibility to restart from 1.

In case a footnote is inserted, the built-in settings are acceptable, although the indentation might be changed to hanging indent (0.15 in., or 0.4 cm) in case more than ten footnotes are expected to be in the document and they might be longer than a line. The recommended shortcut is Alt+F.

8.2.4. Headers and Footers

While a template cannot contain many possibilities regarding the content of headers, the **Header** might be set at a specific space from the **Top**, and it might be populated with various information such as the document title and chapter title on the first verso and recto page (see 6.1.).

The **Footer** should contain the page number (centered or odd number on the recto and even number on the verso), knowing that the template does not contain the introductory pages. When these are inserted before the main text, the header and footer should be unlinked (see 6.1.).

8.2.5. Summary

A template file starts with setting the major language, **Page Size** A4, **Orientation** Portrait, **Margin** 1 in., and deciding upon the font family for Normal (serif) and

Heading (sans serif) styles. These may be *Times New Roman* (TNR) and *Arial*, respectively.

The table below contains all recommended settings to create a template file, including style, font size, line spacing, alignment, spacing before/after, and recommended shortcuts.

Table 21. *Template recommendations*

No.	Style	Font	Size	Line spacing	Align	Space before/after	Shortcut
1	Normal	TNR	12	1.5	Left/Center	0/0	Alt+N
2	NormalAT (after table)	TNR	12	1.5	Left/Center	12/0	Alt+T
3	Caption	TNR (bold/italics, grey)	9	1	Left	12/12	Alt+C
4	Heading 1 (page break before)	Arial Bold Capitalized	18	1	Center	24/18	Alt+1
5	Heading 2	Arial Bold	16	1	Left	18/12	Alt+2
6	Heading 3	Arial Bold Italic	14	1	Left	12/6	Alt+3
7	Heading 4	Arial Italic	12	1	Left	6/0	Alt+4
8	Quote	TNR	10	1	Indent left/right 0.5	12/12	Alt+Q
9	Table (+1 row)	TNR	12/10	1	Left	12/12	Alt+T
10	Figure	-	-	-	Left	12/12	Alt+P
11	List Bulleted	TNR	12	1.5	Left	12/12	Alt+B
12	List Numbered	TNR	12	1.5	Left	12/12	Alt+Shift+3
13	Footnote	TNR	10	1	Left	automatic	Alt+F

Chapter 9

Spreadsheet Basics

There are many books, tutorials, and descriptions on spreadsheet files, functions, and shortcuts for both Excel and Calc. They offer vast possibilities to handle large data, carry out background calculations, and combine values of various cells.

However, since the advent of AI, there are various posts and YouTube videos stating, “MS Excel is dead.”, similarly to classical presentation formats to be discussed in the next chapter. Yet, we tend to think that classical spreadsheet tools are still vital in processing data, and advanced users can produce more complex outputs in a faster way, possibly combined with AI (generating formulas and data analysis), but with every single entry carefully checked.

When creating a spreadsheet, the user should consider whether its contents will be printed or saved in PDF format, in which case page settings are relevant. Excel offers this in **Page Layout**, where **Size**, **Orientation**, and **Margins** can be set easily to A4, Portrait or Landscape (depending on the data), with Normal/Wide/Narrow margins. Calc offers the same settings via **Format, Page Style, Page**.

Occasionally, the Header and Footer sections (divided into three parts) may be populated with various data such as Sheet Name, File Name, Page number, Date and Time, or external data may also be inserted (e.g., a logo or the name of an institution).

While spreadsheets contain predefined fonts, narrower-than-normal typefaces are suggested by Spiekermann: *Axel*, *Frutiger Condensed*, *New Gothic*, or *Univers 57*—“[f]or maximum legibility with added space economy” (Spiekermann 2013, 169). However, none of them are directly available by default in Word or Writer:



Figure 129. *Recommended fonts for spreadsheets*

Nevertheless, *Arial Narrow*, Font Size 10 is a built-in option in both Excel and Calc, which might be a very good choice to economize on space. Font-related settings are available in the **Home** tab, **Font** group of Excel, while Calc offers them in the **Main** tab.

However, spreadsheets offer a **Freeze** option, which can block both rows and columns. In many cases, Row 1 or Column A needs “freezing,” as these cells contain information about what kind of data the other cells contain. Excel offers this option in **View**, **Freeze Panes**, and the drop-down menu offers to freeze the top row, first column or freezing the rows and columns left and top from any selected cell. Calc offers these options in the **Main** tab. The icons are similar:



Figure 130. *Freeze icons, Excel and Calc*

Adding data to cells (text or numbers) might be carried out manually or automatically, if taken from an external source. However, this only makes sense in case the data is organized in a way to fit into the columns and rows of the spreadsheet file properly.

9.1. Populating Cells

An initial operation in spreadsheets is to populate cells with numbers. Adding numbers and letters to cells is possible manually, but “automatically” filling cells with incrementing numbers and letters in alphabetical order is not entirely straightforward.

In the case of numbers, once numbers 1 and 2 are typed to two adjacent cells, selecting both cells and dragging them will auto-populate further cells with incremented numbers.

Populating cells with letters in alphabetical order is more complicated in Excel, but possible: if cell A1 contains A, then cell A2 needs a formula: `=CHAR(CODE(A2)+1)`, which places letters in alphabetical order once the cell is selected and dragged.

Calc offers a different approach to incrementing letters, by accessing **Tools, Options, LibreOffice Calc, Sort Lists**. Clicking on the **New** button in the upper right corner offers the possibility to type the alphabet (one letter per line), and saving it (**Add, OK**) will result in the desired function: typing letter *a* in a cell, then selecting and dragging it will offer further letters of the alphabet and populate the corresponding cells.

Naturally, cells may be populated with the help of various formulas as well or based on mathematical operations.

9.2. Importing Data from Tables

Text created in Word and Writer can easily fit into spreadsheets if they are formatted properly.

A possible option is to separate data in the text with the help of the tabulator key (Tab), which is interpreted in spreadsheets as cells in separate columns. The other option is the copy of tables, whose cells fit into the cells of a spreadsheet. However, in case the tables contain merged cells, the content should be double-checked after pasted into a spreadsheet, as cell alignment might be adjusted.

9.3. Cell Alignment, Wrap, and Merge

Cell Alignment means at least six possibilities. By default, data interpreted as text is aligned left, while data interpreted as number is aligned right in a cell.

Data in a cell may be changed easily: aligned left, center, right, top, middle, and bottom. This is possible in Excel in the **Home** tab, **Alignment** group, which is completed with further options: indentation might be increased or decreased, text may be wrapped (**Wrap Text**) or in case more cells are selected, they may be merged and centered (**Merge & Center**). A final option is to change the orientation of the cell content: angling clockwise, angling anticlockwise, vertical, rotate text up, or rotate text down.

Calc offers similar functions on the **Main** tab, some of which are only active when these tasks can be carried out. For instance, the **Merge and Center** button is only active when at least two cells are selected, in which case it offers more options than Excel, which can preserve the data only from one cell, offering a warning:

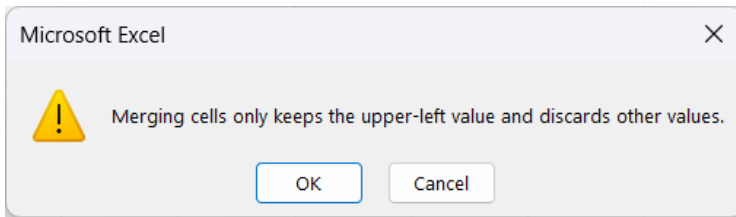


Figure 131. *Merging cells, Excel*

Calc can preserve all data or discard the contents of the hidden cells, as illustrated in Figure 132, which is a real asset:

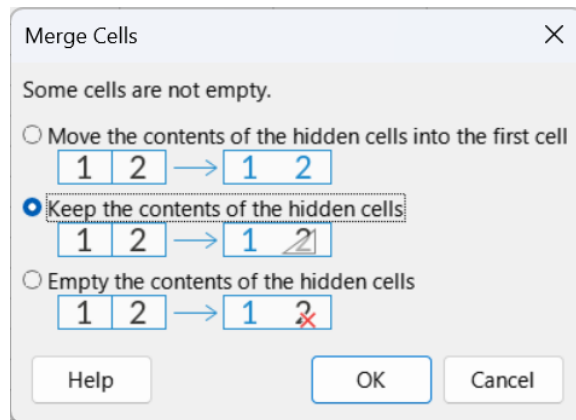


Figure 132. *Merging cells, Calc*

9.4. Handling Numbers

As the basic idea of spreadsheets is to manage data, it is used with numbers or strings of letters, which may be later analyzed with the help of various formulas, functions, and calculations (number of occurrences, frequency, percentage, etc.).

Any spreadsheet user should know how to use the basic math formulas (addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication), knowing that a formula starts with the equal sign in the cell, followed by the cell references involved in the calculation. For instance, provided that cells **D3** and **D4** contain numbers, typing

`=D3+D4`

in a different cell will add the numbers from these two cells, offering the sum. Changing the plus sign to a minus sign

```
=D3-D4
```

results in the difference between them. The forward slash

```
=D3/D4
```

offers the quotient, and the asterisk sign gives the product:

```
=D3*D4.
```

The next step is to calculate sums, differences, quotients, and products from a range of cells, either in rows or in columns. In this case, the cell containing these results must be modified this way:

```
=SUM(D3:D18),
```

which calculates the sum in this range, while subtraction is possible these ways:

```
=D3-SUM(D4:D18),
```

in which case the sum of the range from cell **D4** to cell **D18** is counted and subtracted from cell **D3**;

```
=SUM(D3:D4)-D18
```

subtracts the value of **D18** from the sum of **D3** and **D4**, while

```
=SUM(D3+D4) - SUM(D5:D18)
```

calculates the difference between the sum of ranges **D3:D4** and **D5:D18**. Similarly, divisions and multiplication may be carried out with ranges as well.

The next stage is to check that numbers may be interpreted differently in spreadsheets. Whenever a cell is highlighted, the **[Ctrl]+[1]** shortcut opens a window displaying how the content of the cell is interpreted. This may be a number, percentage, accounting, currency, date, time, scientific, fraction, text, or custom/user-defined. Numbers may be negative (easily visualized in red), thousands separator may be added, as well as leading zeroes:

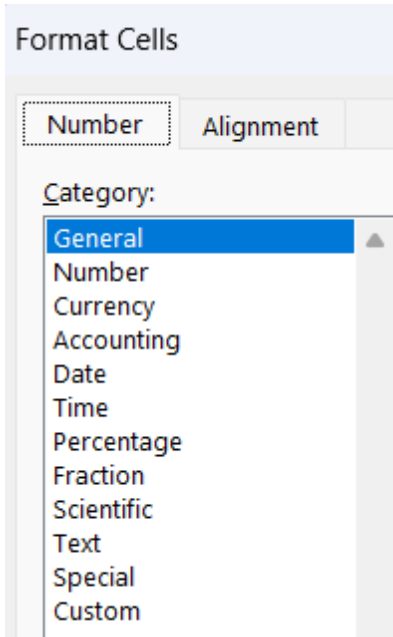


Figure 133. Cell format, Excel

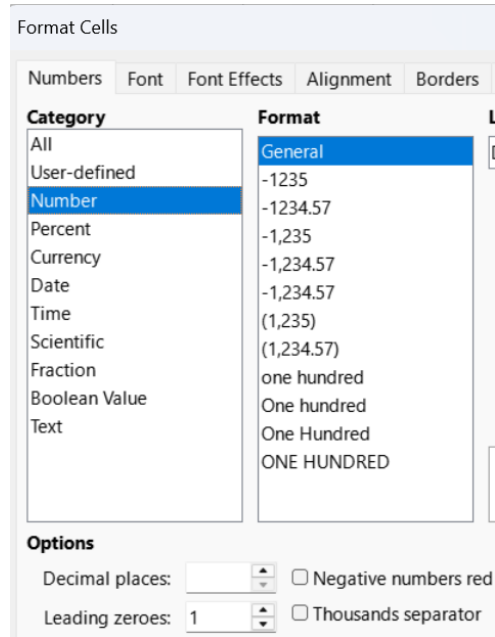


Figure 134. Cell format, Calc

The **AutoSum** button in Excel and the sigma icon in the formula bar of Calc (Σ) can easily sum a range of cells, which might be preselected as well to sum the desired cells. If no cells are selected, the spreadsheet offers the most logical range adjacent to the sum cell.

Natural numbers can be used to number cells automatically. In case an Excel cell contains a natural number, selecting the cell and positioning the cursor in the bottom right corner turns the cursor into a black plus sign. Holding it and dragging down or to the right fills the range of cells with the same number. The same operation in Calc fills the cells with numbers in ascending order (down or rightwards). If the cursor is dragged to the left or upwards, it will decrease the value one by one.

However, in case an Excel or Calc cell contains text and the adjacent cell contains a natural number, dragging both cells will repeat the text in every odd cell, while every even cell will contain ascending numbers.

The **Data** tab, **Statistics, Descriptive Statistics** in Calc offers values on cells containing numbers, without calculating them separately. As this chapter is about the basics, we only highlight the following values: Mean, Minimum, Maximum, Sum, and Count (the number of cells with data).

The Excel version for this is slightly more complicated, as it is possible only via the **Data Analysis** button in the **Data** tab, but only if it is activated first: **File, Options, Add-Ins, Manage**, where the Excel **Add-ins** should be selected, then **Go** and check the **Analysis ToolPak**. The **Data Analysis** will offer a list, where **Descriptive Statistics** is shown.

More complicated numbering is beyond the purpose of this chapter, unless it is connected to automatic count referring to the cells themselves. For instance, when a range is selected, the status bar at the bottom can offer various statistics, such as the number of cells selected. Excel will count only the cells containing values (Count), their sum and average, while Calc will count all the selected cells, their sum and average.

9.5. Find, Select, Replace, Delete

Finding data in a spreadsheet of thousands of entries may be a challenging task, so there are multiple options to search.

The simplest one is similar to the one discussed in word processing, as the **Ctrl+F** shortcut opens a search window, enabling the user to find character strings or numbers within the sheet or the entire workbook, and the search may be by rows or columns. Furthermore, the format may also be chosen, which refers to the cell content, which may be a particular one, custom/user-defined, or general. Furthermore, matches may be shown one by one (**Find Next**), or in case the **Find All** is selected, a pop-up window will display a list of all matches, specifying their exact location (book, sheet, column and row number).

The **Ctrl+H** shortcut offers to change numbers or strings of characters to something else. In case empty cells should be populated with data, the **Find** bar is left empty. In case cells with specific content should be deleted, the **Replace** bar is left empty.

Deleting all data from a range of cells (**Clear**) in Excel is possible in case the cells are selected and the **Delete** button is pressed. While this works in Calc as well, selecting the range of cells and pressing the **Backspace** button displays a window, enabling to delete certain types of data (**Text, Numbers, Date & Time, Formulas, Comments, Objects, Formats, or Objects**), as illustrated in Figure 135 below.

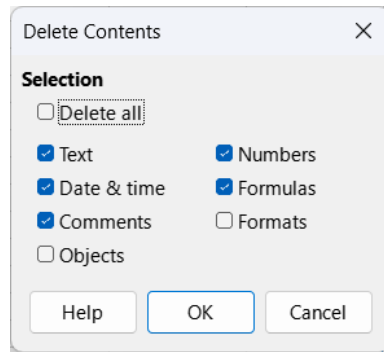


Figure 135. *Delete Contents, Calc*

Excel offers similar options via the drop-down button of **Find & Select** in the **Editing** group on the **Home** tab:

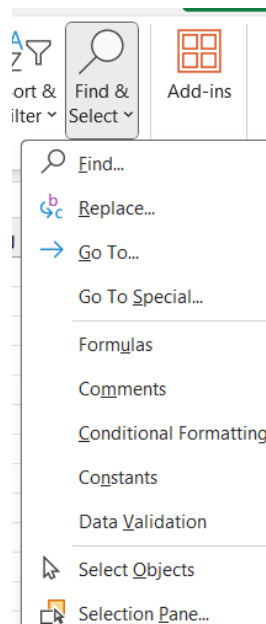


Figure 136. *Find & Select, Excel*

This contains a **Go To Special** option, which can find all the blank cells in a sheet, without trying to select all of them before the operation:

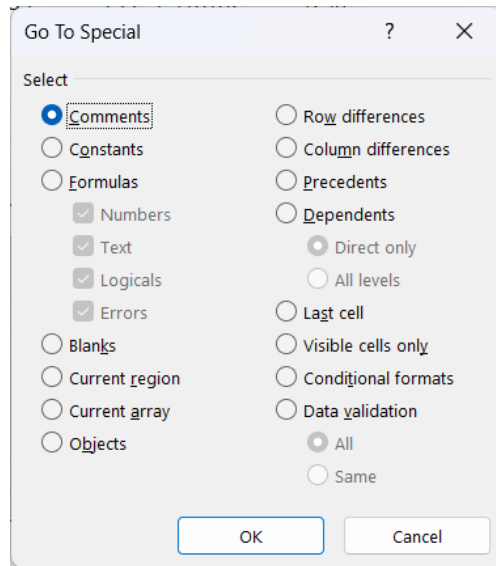


Figure 137. *Go to special, Excel*

As illustrated in Figure 137 above, cells containing specific content are found, and may be changed or deleted (cleared) easily.

9.6. Sort and Filter

Arranging data in spreadsheets is facilitated by the **Sort** and **Filter** possibilities.

The most common **Sort** function in the case of cells containing numbers is **Sort from Smallest to Largest** or **Sort from Largest to Smallest**, while cells containing text may be arranged with **Sort A to Z** or **Sort Z to A**.

Custom Sort options may include different columns and rows, cell values (cell color, font color, conditional formatting), including or not headers. These are possible in both Excel and Calc.

Filter options are only available when filters are added to certain columns. Excel offers this option via the **Home** tab, **Sort & Filter**, **Filter**. In case the first row is selected of any column, when pressing the **Filter** button, all columns get a **Filter** button. A click on any **Filter** button reveals the content of all the rows of the column in alphabetical order, offering the chance to select any one or more of them, including blank cells as well. Filtering the column to only one type of content will display at least one row or as many rows as there are with that particular content. A more powerful search option is also available within the filter option, which can search for character strings in all cells:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2	aaa	bbb	ccc	1		aaa	bbb	ccc	1	
3	aab	bba	cca	2	1	aab	bba	cca	2	1
4	aac	bbc	ccb	3	1	aac	bbc	ccb	3	1
5	aaa	bbd	ccc	4	4	aaa	bbd	ccc	4	4
6	aab	bbe	cca	5	5	aab	bbe	cca	5	5
7	aac	bbd	ccb	6	4	aac	bbd	ccb	6	4
8	aaa	bbe	ccc	7	5	aaa	bbe	ccc	7	5
9	aab	bbd	cca	8	4	aab	bbd	cca	8	4
10	aac	bbe	ccb	9	5	aac	bbe	ccb	9	5
11	aaa	bbd	ccc	10	11	aaa	bbd	ccc	10	11
12	aab	bbe	cca	11		aab	bbe	cca	11	
13	aac	bbd	ccb	12		aac	bbd	ccb	12	

Figure 138. Insert filter, Excel

Pressing the **Filter** button in cell **A1** offers three options, and selecting, for instance, the string *aaa* will display four rows (2, 5, 8, 11), as the cells of these rows contain that string of characters:

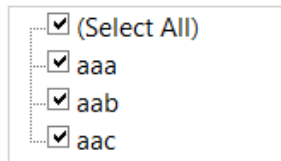


Figure 139. Start filtering in Excel

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2	aaa	bbb	ccc	1		aaa	bbb	ccc	1	
5	aaa	bbd	ccc	4	4	aaa	bbd	ccc	4	4
8	aaa	bbe	ccc	7	5	aaa	bbe	ccc	7	5
11	aaa	bbd	ccc	10	11	aaa	bbd	ccc	10	11

Figure 140. Filter string “aaa,” Excel

In case Column **E** is filtered, the option to filter the empty (blank) cells is offered, as this column contains empty cells:

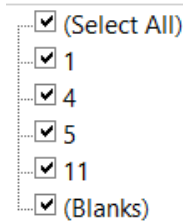


Figure 141. Filter options including blanks, Excel

Unchecking the box for **Select All**, then checking the box for **Blanks** will result in three rows (2, 12, 13):

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2	aaa	bbb	ccc	1		aaa	bbb	ccc	1	
12	aab	bbe	cca	11		aab	bbe	cca	11	
13	aac	bbd	ccb	12		aac	bbd	ccb	12	

Figure 142. Filter blanks in Column E, Excel

As filtering displays only rows that fulfill certain conditions, the rest of the data remains invisible. A further method to highlight certain cell content is to format them differently, to be presented in the next section.

9.7. Conditional Formatting

This function offers the possibility to highlight cells containing either numbers or text.

In the case of numbers, the **Conditional Formatting** button offers to **Highlight Cells Rules** containing **Greater Than**, **Less Than**, **Between**, or **Equal To** values, which may be highlighted either with different cell or font color.

In the case of text, **Text that Contains** may be used, and the particular character string given in quotation marks, in which case the cell background and/or the font may be changed to light red, yellow, or green by default, with further options as well:

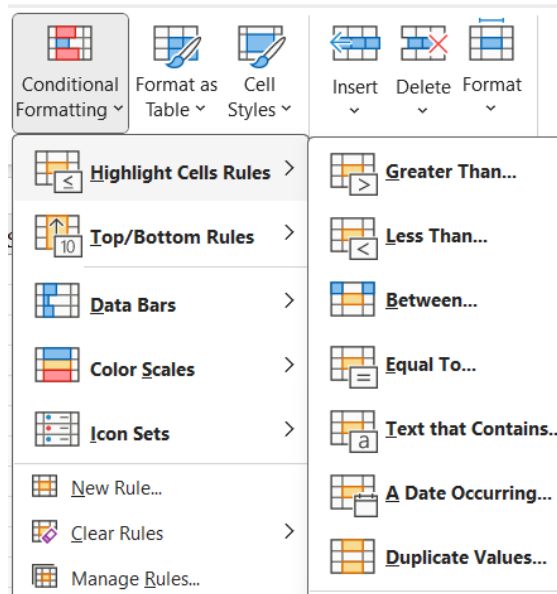


Figure 143. *Conditional formatting, Excel*

Dates may also be highlighted with this function: **A Date Occurring...**, which is shown in Figure 144:

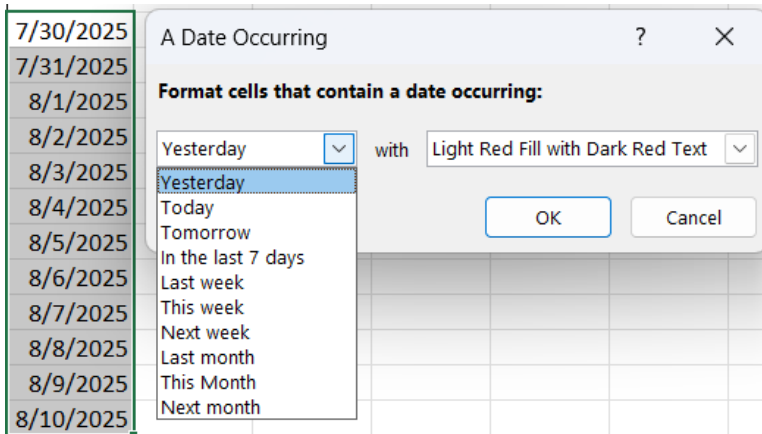


Figure 144. *Highlight a date occurring, Excel*

This function may come in useful when deadlines are approaching and the particular spreadsheet is used on a daily basis. Otherwise, other online calendars

or various computer or cell phone software may remind us of an upcoming event, so this spreadsheet function might become obsolete, similarly to other date-related formulas (e.g., calculating days left until the end of month or year).

A rather important function is to spot duplicate values in a spreadsheet. In case of large databases, it may happen that similar data is found in multiple cells, and if this is not needed, the **Conditional Formatting, Duplicate Values...** can highlight these cells with **Light Red Fill with Dark Red Text** by default. However, a possible drawback of this function is that all duplicates are highlighted this way, so in case two cells are found with the *aaa* string and three cells with the *aac* string, five cells will be highlighted similarly, which might be puzzling.

Interestingly, removing duplicates is possible even without highlighting them. A spreadsheet function can find all of them. Excel offers this via **Data, Remove Duplicates**, which can work either on the current selection or expanded to the entire worksheet. Calc offers this function via **Data, Duplicates**, after which a **Handle Duplicate Records** window opens, offering to compare rows or columns, with or without headers, followed by **Select** or **Remove** options:

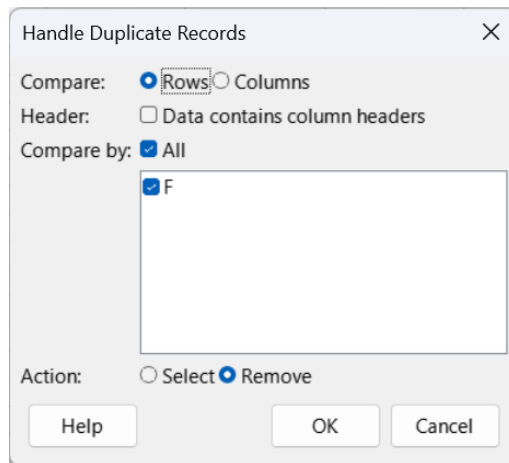


Figure 145. *Handle duplicates*

While there are much more advanced functions and formulas to analyze data in spreadsheets, these are beyond the range of the present book. However, it is worth mentioning that creating **pivot tables** may summarize data from various spreadsheet tables, and the **XLOOKUP** function can look for values in a particular range and return corresponding values from another range both horizontally and vertically.

9.8. Page Layout

Although data in spreadsheets may extend over thousands of columns and rows, they may be exported to Word and Writer, or they may be printed as well.

Before exporting or printing, it is worth checking **Page Layout** in Excel or **Format, Page Style, Page, Page Format** in Writer, which can set the page to the desired size, such as A4. In case spreadsheets are not exported but saved as PDF or printed, a narrow font type, smaller font size (10 instead of 12), and narrow page margins may help in placing more data per page.

9.9. Text to Columns

Data may be imported to spreadsheets in various forms. However, data organized in column-like view might not always fit into the desired cells, in which case the **Text to Columns** option can help. This is available in the **Data** tab, and the text may be sectioned into columns based on various delimiters such as tab, semicolon, comma, space, or other, which may be a specific sign or symbol.

This option is useful when data is saved from external sources such as online lists, enumerations separated by commas and so on.

9.10. Creating a Multiple-Choice Test

A specific functionality of spreadsheets is their mailing function. Having in mind well-designed multiple-choice tests (with A, B, C, and D variants), we can combine Word and Excel to obtain the desired outcome. For the time being, this is not possible with LO.

The first step is to place raw data in an Excel file in at least five columns:

1. Column **B** (Heading: *Sentence*) contains the sentences, e.g., *Look! She*
2. Columns **C–F** (Headings: *A, B, C, D*) contain the four choices, e.g.: *is crying, has crying, was crying, will cry*;
3. Optionally, Column **A** may contain numbering (*No.*), as the hashtag symbol will not be interpreted correctly when the file is attached to the Word document, while Column **G** may contain the answers (*Key*), after which the spreadsheet file should be closed.

The next part is to create a Word document which contains a specially designed table in the desired format; the characters enclosed between guillemets stand for the data to be extracted from the spreadsheet columns labeled this way:

«No.»	«Sentence»				«Key»
	A) «A»	B) «B»	C) «C»	D) «D»	

Figure 146. *Horizontal options, multiple choice*

or

«No».	«Sentence»	«Key»
	A) «A»	
	B) «B»	
	C) «C»	
	D) «D»	

Figure 147. *Vertical options, multiple choice*

When ready, the data from the spreadsheet can be attached to this table in the following way: **Mailings, Start Mail Merge, Directory**, then **Select Recipients** and **Use an Existing List**, which opens a window to search for the desired spreadsheet. When found and selected, there is a button displaying **ABC Preview Results**, which can show the first option. If it is displayed correctly, further data will be correct as well, presumably:

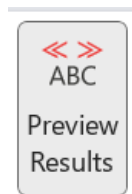


Figure 148. *Preview mailing results*

In case the first option is displayed correctly, we should finalize the test this way: **Finish & Merge, Edit Individual Documents**, and select **All** in the newly opened window.

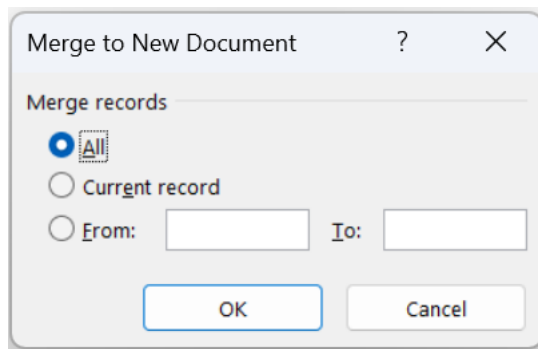


Figure 149. *Merge all records to new document*

This will create a new Word document populated with the desired data:

32.	The passenger said he'd lost his passport, ... he?				B
	A) shouldn't	B) didn't	C) needn't	D) wouldn't	
33.	Come and see me tomorrow, ...?				B
	A) do you	B) will you	C) don't you	D) may you	
34.	No one saw the thief steal the car, ...?				C
	A) does he	B) did he	C) did the	D) didn't they	
35.	Just put the book on the table, ...?				A
	A) will you	B) don't you	C) shall I	D) are you	
36.	There's little we can do about this unfortunate matter, ...?				A
	A) is there	B) isn't there	C) is it	D) isn't it	

Figure 150. Multiple-choice test through Mailings

Before saving this document, it is worth selecting the entire table and removing all borders: **Paragraph** tab, **Borders** icon, and from the drop-down menu the **No Border** option should be selected, after which the document may be saved. However, as this document contains the key, when saving the file, the term *key* should be included in the title, whereupon a copy may be created from this file, and on opening it, the Key column may be deleted. The name of the second Word document should not contain the word *key*, and this might be printed directly or saved as a PDF to have it printed or forwarded to students.

Comparing this way of creating a multiple-choice test has a steeper learning curve than creating one with tabs and constantly copying data from an existing database, but the template for the multiple-choice Word is saved and can be re-used subsequently with further databases that are formatted similarly and have the same headers.

A final remark is that Unicode values working with the **Alt+X** shortcut in Word or Writer will work in Calc as well, while many of them are non-functional with the values in Excel, in which case inserting the sign or symbol is the available option.

Chapter 10

Presentation Basics

Creating presentations with MSO PowerPoint (from now on, PowerPoint) used to be the staple for decades, while there are voices that it has turned obsolete over the past few years. Although LO contains Impress to create presentations, it has never really become popular on a large scale.

PowerPoint has the advantage of being well known, with good built-in features. Once MSO is installed on the computer, PowerPoint is also provided, so it makes sense to offer certain guidelines.

First, being a presentation, its time limit is one of the most important factors. For instance, students typically have presentations varying between 10 and 20 minutes, which means that the number of slides should be more or less equal to the number of minutes plus a maximum of two extra slides: the title slide and the *Thank You* slide. This also entails that a standard slide should contain six to eight lines with no more than six words per line, which stand for the gist of the thoughts to be presented, and they are not fully formed sentences.

The monotony of slides with texts may be broken only with various illustrations, graphs, statistics, pictures, photos, or tables. Occasionally, short soundbites or videos might be embedded, which should be typically no longer than 30 seconds. Adding text boxes, shapes, arranging and coloring them is rather intuitive, while modern versions of PowerPoint can easily accept soundbites and videos: **Insert**, then there are options for **Table, Pictures, Screenshot, Photo Album, Shapes, Icons, Chart, Text Box, Header & Footer, WordArt, Date & Time, Object, Equation, Symbol, Video, Audio, and Screen Recording**.

As for the colors, a subtle presentation should contain no more than three colors, and it is worth choosing large contrast colors, not close hues of the same color. Many guides highlight the importance of great contrast between the background and the text (especially in case of direct sunlight), leading to the obvious conclusion: the most traditional presentation is set in white background and black text, while a more modern version is the other way around: black background with white text.

A repetitive logo on each slide emanates stability and—in our view—the slides should be numbered, except for the title slide, to offer a guide on the passing of time while presenting. Changing the default slide layout is possible by accessing the Master slide view: **View, Slide Master**, and then scrolling up to the first slide

offers the possibility to modify it: delete unwanted elements, add logos, or rearrange various sections.

Although there is a possibility to add notes invisible to the public, it is worth putting words on the slides that can remind the speaker effectively what to say, without relying on whatsoever notes.

Arguably, the greatest challenge of PowerPoint is linearity, which is why one of its first contenders was Prezi,¹⁹¹ already offering to create a presentation with the help of AI. Its huge advantage was its non-linear presentation style and became fashionable quickly.

Present-day PowerPoint challengers all promise a presentation within minutes, all powered by AI, and there are even LinkedIn posts stating, “Microsoft PowerPoint is dead!”, offering various alternatives: Dectopus AI, Gamma App, Tome App, Beautiful AI, Presentations AI, or Pitch.¹⁹² At present, it is questionable whether PowerPoint, LO Impress, or Apple’s Keynote are competitive enough compared to *Canva*¹⁹³ or even *Google Slides*.

Although there might be more than 500 million PowerPoint users creating 30 million presentations every day,¹⁹⁴ it is under constant scrutiny and criticism, as it is not interactive, slides need time to be created, and it hinders the presenters. Alternatives, such as Plus AI, Claude, Gamma, or Canva, offer non-traditional approaches with simple designs and brainstorming options, but ultimately it is the customer who has to make the choice—considering the investment in time, energy, and finances—to create visually more appealing presentations or to rely more on information, mostly on words.

¹⁹¹ <https://prezi.com/>, July 31, 2025.

¹⁹² <https://tinyurl.com/4ed8332m>, July 31, 2025.

¹⁹³ <https://www.canva.com/>, July 31, 2025.

¹⁹⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/bde27m6x>, July 31, 2025.

Chapter 11

PDF Files

11.1. Types of PDF Files

Portable Document Format (PDF) was introduced by Adobe in 1992 as a new file format with the .pdf filename extension, and it became a standard format in 2008. This file format is platform independent, and all devices can display the content of this file type correctly.

Both MSO and LO can save their standard files as PDF files, which is recommended before printing, especially when images, hyperlinks, tables, or multimedia content is found in the original document. As PDF files preserve the exact formatting and layout, they are also recommended for archiving purposes.

There are many companies providing PDF-related software, and there are two major PDF file types: one of them is similar to photographs, as the characters are not recognized, so the PDF is basically non-searchable. The other type is a searchable file (usually there is a search button, or the **Ctrl+F** shortcut should work), which means that character strings are found when searched for them, including case sensitivity options.

Naturally, when Word, Excel, and PowerPoint documents or Writer, Calc, and Impress documents are saved as PDF files, they will be searchable. Thus, it is similar to a DOCX or an ODT document, except for that its content cannot be changed. Furthermore, selecting, copying (with the **Ctrl+C** shortcut) fragments and pasting them into a DOCX or an ODT file is also possible.

In case more lines are copied from a searchable PDF file, when pasting the text into a Word or Writer document, the lines will end where the original PDF file lines end, so the text needs formatting. If lines end in paragraph marks (¶), pressing **Ctrl+H** opens the **Find and Replace** window. In order to delete unnecessary paragraph marks, ^p should be typed in the **Find what** line, and then a space in the **Replace with** line will replace all paragraph breaks with spaces. If lines end in Manual Line Breaks (a carriage return arrow: ↵), ^l should be typed in the **Find what** line, and also replaced with a space in the **Replace with** line, and then **Replace all** changes all the occurrences in the selected area.

The following text is copied from a PDF format book on translator's invisibility (Venuti 2004, 30), and pasting it into a Word document will result in this view:

The translator [...] aims to make everything plain, though without the use of footnotes since the conditions of reading have radically changed and the young person of today is generally reading in far less comfortable surroundings than his father or grandfather. He has therefore to carry forward on an irresistible stream of narrative. (Cohen:1962:33)

Figure 151. *Inserting a fragment from a PDF document*

After taking the steps suggested above, the paragraph marks will change to spaces, which changes how the paragraph looks:

The translator [...] aims to make everything plain, though without the use of footnotes since the conditions of reading have radically changed and the young person of today is generally reading in far less comfortable surroundings than his father or grandfather. He has therefore to carry forward on an irresistible stream of narrative. (Cohen:1962:33)

Figure 152. *Reformatted paragraph*

Writer needs different commands for the same changes. In the case of paragraph marks, the dollar sign (\$) is needed in the **Find** line, paying attention to the **Regular expressions**, which must also be selected. As for the manual line breaks, \n is needed in the **Find** line. Interestingly, if manual line breaks are to be replaced with paragraph marks, both the **Find** and the **Replace** line should have \n.

11.2. Saving as PDF File

Saving LO documents as PDF files is easy, as there is an **Export Directly as PDF** icon displayed on the **Main** tab. However, when not the entire document is needed as a PDF file, we can rely on **File, Export As, Export as PDF**, which opens a window where the required pages can be selected and further options may be also set.

Writer can also create fillable PDF files: **View, Toolbar, Form Controls**, which makes it possible to add new fields to the document, including text boxes, options, or checkboxes. After this step, the document is exported as a PDF file, which allows adding information to the file or select various options and tick checkboxes.

There are at least two possibilities to save or export MSO documents into PDF file format. The longer version is **File, Save As**, choose the location, which opens a window where to store the file and offers to add a file name and its format. The drop-down list of **Save as type** will display **PDF (*.pdf)**, and it also offers **Options**

where the needed pages may be selected. In case the full document is required in PDF format repeatedly, it is worth placing a shortcut on the **Quick Access Toolbar** situated above the **Main** tab, which has a drop-down arrow, and clicking on it offers customization options (see 2.1.).

In case the **Publish as PDF or XPS** command is added to the **Quick Access Toolbar** list, saving Word documents as PDF files will be straightforward, as it will instantly open a window where to save it, with the possibility to change the name and providing the **Options** for extra settings.

11.3. Handling PDF Files

As mentioned in Section 11.1., searchability is a basic requirement for a PDF document. This means that any character string in the file should be found when searching for it, and there are further typical activities users require from a PDF-handling software, either online or offline.

Conversion from non-searchable PDF file to searchable is typically not provided for free, as optical character recognition (OCR) means a lot of investment. However, there are web-based applications that promise free conversion (for instance PDF24 Tools or iLovePDF),¹⁹⁵ and the results are best when the language of the document is English, while language-specific characters are more difficult to render correctly.

There are many freely available PDF file readers, including Adobe Acrobat Reader (for Windows OS and macOS), whose icon is generally associated with PDF files, or Evince for Linux OS.

As a PDF file may consist of multiple pages, there are a few tools required regarding these pages:

1. splitting;
2. merging multiple PDF files;
3. rotating;
4. removing;
5. extracting;
6. rearranging;
7. adding page numbers;
8. adding watermark;
9. adding text-boxes and notes;
10. cropping margins;
11. annotating;
12. highlighting parts;
13. editing;
14. creating editable forms;

¹⁹⁵ <https://tools.pdf24.org/en/> or <https://www.ilovepdf.com/>, August 2, 2025.

15. redacting;
16. recognizing characters;
17. signing;
18. password protection;
19. flattening.¹⁹⁶

Converting PDF files to HTML, DOCX, XLSX, PPTX, ODT, ODS, or ODP files might be a valuable asset, and converting images to PDF and vice versa also adds to the value of the software.

Opening other file formats than PDF is also becoming more and more important, so free software like Foxit PDF Editor, PDFgear, or Sumatra PDF are worth considering. Sumatra PDF can handle e-book formats, such as DjVu, MOBI, or EPUB files, while PDFgear has a built-in OCR function, which enables the user to either select a section and recognize the text on that page in certain languages (including Hungarian and Romanian) or convert the opened PDF file to MSO file formats and PNG, JPEG, TXT, HTML, or XML files. The tested files were in English, Hungarian, and Romanian, and the application produced very good results provided the original PDF files were of good quality.



The twelve chapters discussed so far have tried to offer a more or less comprehensive view on how to handle files, characters, major punctuation, and spelling-related remarks, completed with insert and modifying options while creating a text based on a template, followed by ancillary knowledge on spreadsheet, presentation and handling PDF files. This knowledge is more than enough to draft a thesis, whose structure is detailed in the following chapter.

¹⁹⁶ Flattening is needed when the PDF file contains added items, such as highlighting, text-boxes, or a signature, and after flattening it will have a single, non-editable layer, ready to archive or print.

Chapter 12

Thesis Structure

12.1. Ethical Considerations

Before delving into the proper structure of a thesis, a few ethical considerations must be mentioned.

The digital age seems to have intensified certain illegal acts, including intellectual property theft. There are four types of intellectual property protection: copyrights, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets,¹⁹⁷ and the first one includes written texts as well.

Copyright encapsulates all drafted texts by an individual, and in case the author's credit is not mentioned, it is labeled as **plagiarism**. The term refers to “the act of presenting the words, ideas, or images of another as one's own,” and this act “violates ethical standards in scholarship,” so “[a]uthors who try to publish plagiarized work face rejection from publication” (APA 2020, 21). Regardless of this rejection in case the act is revealed, more and more writers seem to trust that their act of plagiarism is not discovered, deploying even translations from languages of limited international circulation and/or combined with dedicated software to reword texts. Thus, anti-plagiarism software is trained to spot these attempts, and plagiarists should also consider that publicly available texts may be checked by many people for many years retrospectively, so any act of plagiarism may be revealed at any time.¹⁹⁸

A similar act of misconduct is **self-plagiarism**, which is also unethical, as the authors try to present their own “previously published work as original” (APA 2020, 21). There are institutions considering that students handing in a paper already submitted for another assignment may also “violate the academic integrity policy, honor code, or ethics code of the university” (APA 2020, 256). An exception would be the incorporation of an earlier work into a more ample later work, such as a dissertation.

A further term is **contract cheating**, which is the case when an individual is hired to write a paper for another person, and the latter will “take credit for work that they did not do themselves” (APA 2020, 256), also violating the previously mentioned codes.

¹⁹⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/4v28p5s7>, August 3, 2025.

¹⁹⁸ Notable cases of plagiarism are often associated with individuals who earned their PhDs under questionable circumstances before entering politics.

Ghostwriting is a special case, as famous people (politicians, celebrities, corporate executives) hire talented people who can formulate ideas that sound appealing when presented publicly. While this may be frowned upon, it is generally known that the wording of these speeches (spoken or written) does not belong to the one who presents them. However, there are data that in biomedical publication ghost authors may be junior researchers or statisticians whose identity is not revealed (AMA 2020, 180).

To counteract unethical behavior, detailed descriptions offer guidelines how to refer to cited work, both in the running text (quotations) and in the References section. While there are many types of sources (ranging from personal communication to very clear journal articles, including various types of multimedia), a good reference management application, such as Zotero, can automatically handle the majority of them. As this application is presented in Section 6.15.3., it is only important to highlight that Zotero entry types should be categorized properly, as the basic idea is to be able to identify the sources used in a paper correctly. This typically includes the author, year of publication, type of publication, publishing house, and exact page numbers. However, additional details depending on the source might also be needed: the edition number, the original title of the translation with the translator's name (APA 2020, 301), whether it is a reprint, the time stamp of audiovisual work, album name, artist name, recording studio, canonical reference to religious and classical works, plays with act, scene and lines, or the name of the social media site.

A further remark is that **embedded citations** (citations within quotations) should not be included in the reference section, unless that work has been used as a primary source elsewhere in the paper (APA 2020, 277).

All the same, questions still remain regarding how ethical it is to rely on AI to generate scientific texts, and whether texts created this way are traceable or not. For the time being, it has been observed that generated texts contain bogus references, and non-native speakers “produce” texts in English that it is highly unlikely to be their own work. Yet, AI is improving day by day, and there are options to ask for less polished versions, so it depends a lot on the attitude of the author how to deal with the temptation. It is conceivable to ask for a brief summary on major issues regarding a topic in the brainstorming phase, which should be replaced by personal effort and own research to master a field, being able to replace AI content with tested information.

12.2. Length of Writing

The length of scientific articles is usually limited by journals, similarly to student's papers.

The length of theses might be different, as universities might restrict their length, whereas PhD dissertations might be as many pages as it takes. While the length of books may be rarely limited, Bringhurst explains that there are octavo

signatures, which are multiples of 16: 32, 48, 64, 80, 96, 112, 128, 144, 160, 176, 192, 208, 224, 240, 256, 272, 288, 304, 320, 336, 352, 368, 384, 400, etc.—so, the majority of the books should be of these lengths. This includes ancillary parts such as title pages, table of contents, list of illustrations, preface, appendices, bibliography and index, referred to as “paraphernalia” (Bringhurst 2004, 73).

Page number may be replaced by character count, for which both Word and Writer offer ample calculation methods. The status bar in Word offers information on page and word number, but a click on the part where word number is displayed will open a more detailed window (see Figure 153 below), including character number with or without spaces, completed with number of paragraphs and lines:

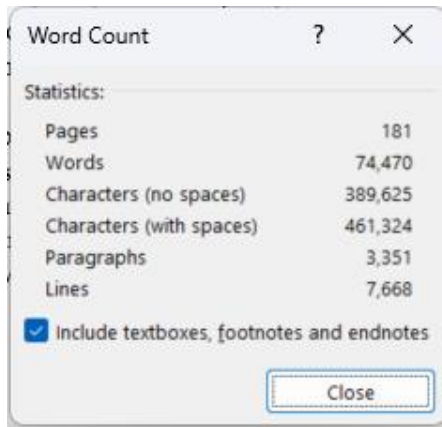


Figure 153. *Word count, Word*

Writer offers the number of words and characters in the status bar as well, and a click on this section will display a similar window to Word, offering the number of characters including and excluding spaces and the number of comments as well, as visible in Figure 154:

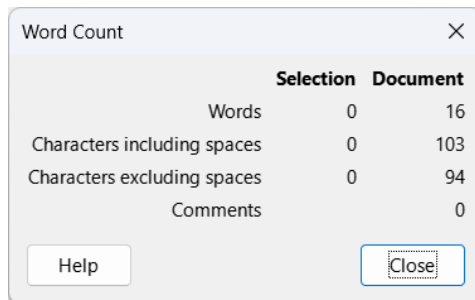


Figure 154. *Word count, Writer*

A right click on the Word **Status Bar** offers further details, including customization options. Thus, it is possible to add **Column**, **Line** and **Character Count (with spaces)** to the status bar, as shown in Figure 155:

Customize Status Bar	
Formatted Page Number	211
Section	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Page Number	Page 211 of 223
Vertical Page Position	12cm
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Line Number	10
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Column	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Word Count	73414 words
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Character Count (with spaces)	461124 characters

Figure 155. *Customize status bar, Word*

Furthermore, when the document is closed, a right click on it can reveal its properties, including the number of pages, words, characters, lines, and paragraphs, as shown in Figure 156:

Content	
Content status	
Content type	application/vnd.openxmlformats-officedo...
Pages	181
Word count	186794
Character count	956390
Line count	19127
Paragraph count	9687
Template	Normal.dotm
Scale	No
Links dirty?	No
Language	
File	
Size	2.96 MB

Figure 156. *Document properties, Word*

In conclusion, the length of a work is greatly affected by its type and purpose, and in the following we will try to draft the possible structure of a thesis, which might be developed to be published as a book.

12.3. Structure of a Thesis

The structure of a thesis is often available on university websites, and we present the one provided by Columbia University,¹⁹⁹ completed with information from other sources as well (Ármeán 2017, 104–7; Bringhurst 2004, 73; CMOS 2024, 4–44).

The following parts might constitute the structure of a standard thesis:

1. Title pages with pre-defined content: university, faculty, department, title, author, supervisor, place, year; if needed, in another language as well;
2. Table of contents (optionally: list of figures, list of tables); if needed, in another language as well;
3. Abstract with keywords;
4. Body;
5. References;
6. Appendix (if needed).

These parts form the front matter, covering all the pages before the main text starts, followed by the pages of the main text (the body), ending in the back matter, which are detailed in the following.

12.3.1. Front Matter

The **front matter** contains the title page, which may be split into a standard half-title page and a title page, and the title page may be translated into another language as well, especially when the language of the work is different than the official language.

The title page should suggest “poise,” which “consists primarily of emptiness” resulting in a “symbol of the dignity” (Bringhurst 2004, 61). In his view, this means “a modest line or two near the top, and a line or two near the bottom, with little or nothing more than taut, balanced white space in between.” Unless stated otherwise in guidelines, a thesis title page includes the affiliation (university name and department), followed by the title. Many prefer to set the title in title case, bold and centered and in the upper half of the title page, and it may have a subtitle as well (APA 2020, 32).

The author’s name is positioned below the title (aligned right), below which is the supervisor’s name (aligned left), specifying the supervisor’s academic ranks: *(Full) Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Reader/Senior Lecturer* and completed with *Dr. and/or PhD*, followed by the place and year of handing in

¹⁹⁹ https://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/~martins/sen_sem/thesis_org.html, August 4, 2025.

the work (cf. (APA 2020, 30). English theses should have the names according to the English standard: first name, middle initial(s), and last name (APA 2020, 33).

In special cases, the title page may be followed by the epigraph, which is in fact a quotation relevant to the thesis, set before the first line, like a block quotation (APA 2020, 277), although it is rather characteristic to books. Books also have an extra Copyright page with the name of the editor, translator, illustrator, publishing rights, and the ISBN number (Ármeán 2017, 97).

The next pages should contain the **table of contents**, and—in case their occurrence is significant—a **list of illustrations** and a **list of tables** might follow. All lists and tables should be inserted automatically, the way word processors offer them with the help of the built-in options, discussed in Section 6.16.

The Columbia guide considers that the **Abstract** page (recto) precedes the table of contents and other lists, while others position it after the tables. Whatever the case, the abstract starts with the section label *Abstract* (APA 2020, 38), it consists of one or two paragraphs, and its length may vary between 250 and 400 words. It should not contain citations or URLs, figures or tables, and an abstract typically covers the objective, hypotheses, design, methods, results, and summary of the contents (AMA 2020, 31), without evaluating or commenting the body of the paper, using verbs rather than passive voice (APA 2020, 73–78).

The abstract might be followed by 3–5 (sometimes up to 7) **keywords** covering major aspects of the thesis, which are relevant, as indexing is carried out based on these keywords. The term *Keywords* is set in italic, one line below the abstract, and only proper names are capitalized (APA 2020, 38–39).

In case the thesis contains many abbreviations, a **table of abbreviations** might follow,²⁰⁰ although CMOS explains that this may be part of the back matter, following the **Appendices** section. Similarly, the **Acknowledgements** section might be placed after the tables (Bringhurst 2004, Ármeán 2017), but it may start the back matter, preceding the **References** section (AMA 2020, 40). The Acknowledgements section may specify the “financial and material support for the research,” completed with grant or contract numbers together with “the complete name of the funding institution or agency” (AMA 2020, 47). Other contributions should be also mentioned: advice, statistical review, assistance, guidance, review, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, supervision (AMA 2020, 52).

The **Preface** ends the front matter section, followed by the main text. Numbering the front matter pages depends on the university requirements, but title pages should not be included in the numbering, and Page 1 is either the first page of the table of contents page or the first page of the Introduction. The front matter of books uses lowercase Roman numerals.

²⁰⁰ There are a few options to create a table of acronyms. An online suggestion is found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfSoMWdBoTM&ab_channel=Ga%C3%AbldeMondragon, August 20, 2025.

12.3.2. *Body*

The structure of the main text or **body** should not be very complicated, knowing that “only the most complicated works need more than three levels” (CMOS 2024, 34), adding that a section “ideally” should have at least two subsections, and paragraphs should have no extra space between them.

The introductory part of the thesis usually contains a literature review, the importance of the research, its hypotheses, aims and objectives. As the first paragraphs of a thesis are “understood to be introductory,” the heading *Introduction* is not recommended (APA 2020, 47), followed by the methods, results and discussion (APA 2020, 39), followed by possible conclusions, recommendations and future research.

12.3.3. *Back Matter*

Each part of the back matter starts on a recto page, and it must contain at least the **References** or **Bibliography**²⁰¹ and **Appendices**, if needed, although there are sources considering that Appendices may precede the References.

As explained, the Reference list “provides a reliable way for readers to locate the works authors cite to acknowledge previous scholarship” (APA 2020, 39), and hanging indent should be applied for the entries: “the first line of each reference is flush left and subsequent lines are indented by 0.5 in” (APA 2020, 40). Words referring to the type of legal corporate entity the publisher is should be omitted: *Company* (Co.), *Corporation* (Corp.), *Incorporated* (Inc.), *Limited* (Ltd.), just as initial articles (*The*), while the words *University Press* may be abbreviated as *UP*. Reference entries may be numbered and arranged in an alphabetical order, and works cited in English being translations of non-English publications should contain the original title after the English with the date of original publication (AMA 2020, 68).

Once again, we reiterate the importance of using a reference management software (BibTex, EndNote, ProCite, Reference Manager, RefWorks, Zotero), as these can also check whether URLs are still valid (AMA 2020, 96).²⁰² Website citations should contain the author’s name if available, the organization behind the source, the website name, and the date of access (cf. AMA 2020, 98).

The Appendix section may contain transcripts of recordings, larger tables of the collected material, titles, the entire lyrics, or other ancillary material considered relevant enough to support the main text, respecting proper copyright attribution, accurate data, and “protection of human participants” (APA 2020, 41).

²⁰¹ *References* are explicitly cited in the main text, while *Bibliography* also contains secondary sources not cited.

²⁰² For instance, this freely available website was valid in 2024: <https://sites.google.com/a/ngs.org/ngs-style-manual/>. However, in August 2025, it contained a top bar specifying that the National Geographic Style Manual had moved to in.disney.com, requiring signing in with a company email or ID.

Appendices should be labeled with capital letters or numbers in the order they are referred to in the main text, and once they are named, they should be referred to in the main text at least once.

Books may have further sections such as Endnotes, Afterword, Glossary (less familiar terms, explained in alphabetical order), Index, and abstracts and tables of contents in other languages. The glossary may precede or follow the Notes or Reference list (CMOS 2024, 37), and the entries should begin on a new line and separated from the definition with a period, a colon, or an em dash; the definition ends with a period, and the use of multiple columns is discouraged (CMOS 2024, 75).

The index also begins on a recto, and there might be a separate name and a subject index, in this order. Index text is usually set in smaller types and in two columns (CMOS 2024, 40).

Books must also have a Colophon section regarding information on book production: publishing house, emblem, editor, typographer, illustrator, designer, place of printing, book format, book pages, number of copies printed, paper type, font name, and date of publication (AMA 2020, 1127; Ármeán 2017, 106–7), although not all publishing houses reveal all this information. After all, descriptions regarding thesis structure are no more than recommendations, and it depends on the supervisor and the institution to what extent they specify guidelines and demand implementation.

12.4. Summary of Quality Assurance

The author of a thesis should aim to produce a high-quality work. This may be possible relying on a solid background of setting, editing, and spelling skills connected to word processing, which might be completed with basic spreadsheet knowledge while handling hundreds of data bits and skills to produce effective presentations.

Setting up a document entails page setup, including page size, header, footer, and paragraph, followed by proper styles for the body text, headings, quotes, footnotes, lists, tables, and figures.

Editing skills involve proper insertion of a table or figure with captions, creating numbered and bulleted lists and consistency in referring to linguistic examples, translations, and cross-reference to various items.

Spelling and punctuation should rely on both automatic spell checker in the language(s) of the document, hyphenation, capitalization, and proofreading (to spot atomic typos, for instance), considering hyphenation options, proper insertion of signs and symbols and disambiguation of all abbreviations before their first use unless they are widely popular. Creating a checklist might help, which should include typical mistakes of the author, also paying attention to consistency (e.g., formatting, term choice). While it is stipulated that proficiency in major applications and systematically following technological developments is a must

for editors (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 4), this has also been the case for students as well, although questions arise in the age of AI regarding the extent of this knowledge.

By way of encouragement, we might finish with a sobering quote: “You’re not expected to be perfect ... 95 percent accuracy is the best a human can do.” (Einsohn and Schwartz 2019, 5), and everybody should aim at this level.

APPENDIX. Shortcuts

A. Word/Writer Shortcuts

Alt+X	Turn Unicode Value to Glyph/Character and Vice Versa
Ctrl+A	Select All Content of Document
Ctrl+B	Bold Font Style
Ctrl+C	Copy Selected String of Characters
Ctrl+D	Font Settings (Word)
Ctrl+E	Text Alignment, Center (Selection/Line)
Ctrl+End	Jump to Document End
Ctrl+Enter	Page Break
Ctrl+F	Find/Search
Ctrl+H	Open Find and Replace Window
Ctrl+Home	Jump to Document Start
Ctrl+I	Italic Style
Ctrl+J	Text Alignment, Justify (Selection)
Ctrl+K	Insert Hyperlink
Ctrl+L	Text Alignment, Left (Selection)
Ctrl+Left Arrow	Jump to the Beginning of Previous Word
Ctrl+N	Open New Blank Document (as the Active One)
Ctrl+O	Open Options
Ctrl+P	Open Print Window
Ctrl+R	Text Alignment, Right
Ctrl+Right Arrow	Jump to the Beginning of Next Word
Ctrl+S	Save
Ctrl+U	Underline Style
Ctrl+V	Paste Previously Copied Selection
Ctrl+W	Close Window
Ctrl+X	Cut Selection
Ctrl+Y	Redo the Last Action Performed
Ctrl+Z	Revert/Undo Last Change/Action
Ctrl+Shift+_	Nonbreaking Hyphen
Ctrl+Shift+End	Select All the Document After the Cursor
Ctrl+Shift+Enter	Column Break

Ctrl+Shift+Home	Select All the Document Before the Cursor
Ctrl+Shift+K	Change Casing
Ctrl+Shift+Left Arrow	Select Previous Word
Ctrl+Shift+Right Arrow	Select Next Word
Ctrl+Shift+Space	Nonbreaking/Hard Space
End	Jump to End of Line/Far Right of Field/Screen
Home	Jump to Beginning of Line/Far Left of Field/Screen
PgDn	Moves Document or Dialog Box Down One Page
PgUp	Moves Document or Dialog Box Up One Page
Shift+End	Highlight From Current Position to End of Line
Shift+Enter	Insert Soft Break
Shift+F3	Toggle Case (Press Multiple Times: Uppercase, Capitalize, Lowercase)
Shift+Home	Highlight From Current Position to Beginning of Line

B. Word Shortcuts

F10	Activates Menu Bar Options
Shift+F1	Shows All Formatting of Selection, Word
Ctrl+1	Single Line Spacing
Ctrl+2	Double Line Spacing
Ctrl+5	1.5 Line Spacing
Ctrl+Alt+.	Insert Ellipsis, Word
Alt+=	Insert Equation
Ctrl+Alt+Enter	Style Separator
Ctrl+Alt+F	Insert Footnote, Word
Ctrl+Alt+Num -	Insert Em Dash, Word
Ctrl+Alt+Shift+S	Display List of Styles, Word
Ctrl+Shift+8	Toggle Show/Hide (Formatting Marks)
Ctrl+Shift+-	Insert Subscript, Word
Ctrl+Shift++	Insert Superscript, Word
Ctrl+Shift+<	Decrease Font Size
Ctrl+Shift+=	Superscript
Ctrl+=	Subscript
Ctrl+Shift+>	Increase Font Size
Ctrl+F	Enable Navigation Pane with Heading, Pages, Results and Find

Ctrl+Shift+F9	Remove All Hyperlinks in Footnote
Ctrl+G	Find and Replace Options/Go To (Page/ Section/ Line/ Bookmark/ Comment/ Footnote/ Endnote/ Field/ Table/ Graphic/ Equation/ Object/ Heading)
Ctrl+Shift+L	Start Default Bullet List
Ctrl+M	Increase Paragraph Indentation
Ctrl+Num -	Insert En Dash
Ctrl+Q	Remove Paragraph Formatting
Ctrl+Space	Remove Character Formatting, Return to Default Style Format
Ctrl+Tab	Insert Next Tab

C. Writer Shortcuts

Ctrl+Shift+B	Insert Subscript, Writer
Ctrl+Shift+N	Access/Create/Edit Template, Writer
Ctrl+Shift+P	Insert Superscript, Writer
Ctrl+Alt+C	Insert Comment, Writer
Ctrl+G	Go to Page
Ctrl+M	Clear Direct Formatting, Writer
Ctrl+F2	More Fields to Insert in Header and Footer
Ctrl+F10	Show Formatting Marks
Ctrl+Q	*Quit Active Document with Save Option

D. Spreadsheet (*Calc only)

Alt+=	AutoSum (Selection or from First Number of Range)
Alt+Enter	New Line Within Current Cell
Ctrl+-	Delete Cell
Ctrl+;	Insert Current Date
Ctrl+`	Show Formulas
Ctrl+1	Modify Cell Content
Ctrl+Shift+;	Insert Current Time in Spreadsheet
Ctrl+Space	Select Column
Ctrl+Tab	Moves Through Tabs
F2	Edit Cell/Place Cursor at the End of Text/Formula in Current Cell
Shift+Space	Select Row
*Ctrl+Q	Go to Next Empty Cell
*Ctrl+Q	Quit Active Document with Save Option

E. US International Keyboard

AltGr+;	Insert ¶
AltGr+0	Insert ’
AltGr+4	Insert □
AltGr+6	Insert ¼
AltGr+7	Insert ½
AltGr+8	Insert ¾
AltGr+9	Insert ‘
AltGr+C	Insert ©
AltGr+M	Insert µ
AltGr+S	Insert ß
AltGr+Z	Insert Æ
AltGr+Shift+=	Insert ×
AltGr+Shift+4	Insert £
AltGr+Shift+C	Insert ¢
AltGr+Shift+S	Insert §

F. Windows OS (it may work on other OSs as well)

F5	Refresh Current Window
F6	Refresh Current Window
Alt+F4	Quit/Close Current Window/Application
Ctrl+(drag)	Copy File
Ctrl+Esc	Open/Bring Up Start Menu
Ctrl+F4	Close Window in Program
Ctrl+Shift+(drag)	Create Shortcut (= right click + drag)
Ctrl+Shift+Esc	Open Task Manager
Ctrl+Shift+N	Create New Folder
Ctrl+Alt+Del	Open Security Options (Lock/Switch User/Sign Out/Open Task Manager)
Alt+Esc	Switch Between Applications on Taskbar
Alt+Shift+Tab	Cycles Backwards Between Open Applications
Alt+Tab	Cycle Between Open Applications
Shift+Win+S	Enables Snipping Tool/PrintScreen/Take a Screenshot
Win+-	Zoom Screen
Win+.	Open Emoji Panel
Win++	Zoom Screen (Start Screen Magnifier)
Win+A	Open Action Center
Win+D	Show Desktop/Bring Desktop to the Top of Other Windows

Win+E	Open File Explorer (Home)
Win+H	Start Voice Typing
Win+I	Open Settings
Win+L	Lock Computer Screen
Win+Left Arrow	Move Current Window to the Left Side of Screen
Win+M	Minimize All Open Windows on Desktop
Win+number key	Open Corresponding Application Pinned on Taskbar After Windows Start Button
Win+P	Switch Display Mode for Additional Screens
Win+R	Open the Run Dialog Box (Terminal)
Win+Right Arrow	Move Current Window to the Right Side of Screen
Win+S	Search
Win+Shift+Left Arrow	Move Current Window to Another Screen
Win+Shift+M	Undo Minimize All Windows
Win+Shift+Right Arrow	Move Current Window to Another Screen
Win+Space	Change Keyboard Layout
Win+T	Activate Taskbar
Win+Tab	Cycle Through Open Programs on Taskbar
Win+U	Open Accessibility/Settings in Windows
Win+Up Arrow	Maximize Current Window to Full Screen
Win+V	Open Clipboard History
Win+X	Power Menu
Win+X, M	Open Device Manager
Win+X, B	Open Windows Mobility Center (Brightness, Volume, Battery Status, External Display, Presentation)
Win+X, U, I	Instant PC Sign Out
Win+X, U, R	Instant PC Restart
Win+X, U, S	Instant PC Sleep
Win+X, U, U	Instant PC Shut Down

G. Other Applications

Alt+E	Edit Options in Current Program
Ctrl+P	Open Preferences
Esc	Cancel Last Function
F1	Help
F11	Toggle Full Screen

Alt+E	Edit Options in Current Program
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H. Files

Alt+Enter	Opens Properties Dialog of Selected File
Alt+Space	System Menu for Current Window
F2	Rename Selected File/Object
Shift+(drag)	Move File
Shift+certain keys	Insert the Upper Symbol on Keys with 2 glyphs
Shift+Delete	Delete from Disk (= Empty Recycle Bin)
Shift+F10	Simulate Right Click on Selected Item
Alt+Enter	Opens Properties Dialog of Selected File

I. Browser

Alt+Left Arrow	Back
Alt+Right Arrow	Forward
Ctrl+H	History List
Ctrl+J	Downloads List
Ctrl+N	Open New Window in Browser
Ctrl+T	Open New Tab
Ctrl+D	Bookmark Page
Ctrl+F	Find on Page
Ctrl+Shift+Delete	Clear Browsing Data
Ctrl+Shift+T	Reopen Last Closed Tab

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Kivonat

Szövegszerkesztési alapok a szakdolgozat írásához

A kötet tizenkét fejezete szerkezeti, tipográfiai és szerkesztési tudnivalókkal segíti elő a szakdolgozat készítését. A szerző szerint a tipográfiai és szerkesztési szabályok megszegése csak a kiadványszerkesztés alapjainak ismerete után lehetséges, beleértve az operációs rendszerek, billentyűzetkiosztás és a fájlok elnevezését is. Ezt követi a Microsoft Office Word és a LibreOffice Writer szövegszerkesztők alapvető beállítási lehetőségei, tárgyalva a betűtípusok, karakterek és betűk megkülönböztetését, valamint azok megfelelő használatát is. A negyedik fejezet a számjegyek és számok használatát taglalja, melyek után az írásjelek és a helyesírás alapjai következnek: nem nyomtatható karakterek, kötőjelek, mondatzáró jelek, zárójeltypusok, idézőjelek, piktogramok és rövidítések. A hatodik fejezet a beszúrás típusait ismerteti, melyet szövegmódosítási tippek követnek. A nyolcadik fejezet a sablonokról szól, és egyéni sablon készítését ajánlja. A következő három fejezet a táblázatokat, bemutatókat és pdf-fájlok kezelését tartalmazza, kiegészítve azzal, hogy miért érdemes ezekről tárgyalni a mesterséges intelligencia korában. A záró fejezet a szakdolgozat felépítéséről szól: az etikai bevezető után a terjedelmet boncolgatja, majd a minőségbiztosítással zárul. A fejezetekben bemutatott anyagot több mint 150 ábra és 21 táblázat illusztrálja, míg a Függelék általános és szoftverspecifikus gyorsbillentyűk listáját tartalmazza. A könyvet szakirodalom és tárgymutató egészíti ki.

Rezumat

Noțiuni de bază privind procesarea textelor și redactarea tezelor

Lucrarea de față își propune să ofere o perspectivă asupra redactării unei teze bine concepute, conținând observații structurale, tipografice și de editare, organizate în douăsprezece capitole. Autorul susține că încălcarea regulilor tipografice și de editare este posibilă numai după cunoașterea noțiunilor de bază ale publicării asistate de calculator, adică a sistemelor de operare, a configurațiilor tastaturii și a organizării fișierelor cu denumiri corespunzătoare (Capitolul 1). Urmează toate opțiunile importante de configurare atât în Microsoft Office Word cât și în LibreOffice Writer, completate cu diferențierea fonturilor, caracterelor și literelor, precum și utilizarea corectă a acestora. Capitolul 4 tratează numerele și este urmat de noțiunile de bază privind punctuația și ortografia: caractere neimprimabile, liniuțe, semne de oprire și pauză, tipuri de paranteze și alte semne, completate cu citate, pictograme și abrevieri. Urmează tipurile de inserții și sfaturi pentru modificarea textului. Capitolul 8 explică importanța șabloanelor, oferind un ghid pas cu pas pentru crearea unui șablon propriu. Următoarele trei capitole tratează foile de calcul, prezentările și gestionarea fișierelor .pdf precum și motivele pentru care acestea merită încă discutate în era inteligenței artificiale. Capitolul final tratează structura tezei cu considerații etice, lungimea lucrării și asigurarea calității. Peste 150 de figuri și 21 de tabele ilustrează materialul prezentat pe parcursul capitolelor, iar Anexa oferă diverse scurtături generale și specifice, urmată de bibliografie și index.

About the Author

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.D.	Anno Domini
A.M.	Ante Meridiem
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AM	Ante Meridiem
AMA	American Medical Association's Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors
AmE	American English
AP	Associated Press
APA	American Psychological Association
Apt.	Apartment
ASA	1. American Society of Agronomy 2. American Standards Association
ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
B.C.	Before Christ
B.C.E.	Before the Common Era
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BC	Before Christ
BCE	Before the Common Era
BLM	Black Lives Matter
BrE	British English
Bsc.	Bachelor of Science
C.E.	Common Era/Christian Era
CE	Common Era/Christian Era
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMOS	The Chicago Manual of Style 18
CSSA	Crop Science Society of America
D.C.	District of Columbia
DC	District of Columbia
DGT	Directorate-General for Translation
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
EC	The European Commission
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the 32 nd President of the United States
GRT	Golden Ratio Typography
HAZMAT	hazardous materials

HBO	Home Box Office
HU	Hungarian
i.e.	id est (that is, in other words)
IA	State of Iowa, USA
ID	identification
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
iOS	Operating system for Apple's iPhone, iPad, and other Apple mobile devices
ISBN	International Standard Book Number
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IV	intravenous
JFK	John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35 th President of the United States
JPEG	Joint Photographic Experts Group
L.A.	Los Angeles
LA	Los Angeles
LBJ	Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36 th President of the United States
LO	LibreOffice
MA	Master or Arts
macOS	Operating system by Apple Inc. for its personal computers
MD	Medical doctor
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MLA	The Modern Language Association of America
MLK	Martin Luther King Jr.
MS	Microsoft
MSO	Microsoft Office
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NHS	National Health Service
NPSC	Non-printing special characters
NumPad	Numeric Keypad
OCR	Optical Character Recognition
ODT	Open Document Text
OLE	Object Linking and Embedding
OS	Operating System
P.M.	Post Meridiem
PDF	Portable Document Format
PM	Post Meridiem
POTUS	President of the United States of America
Rd.	Road
RFK	Robert Francis Kennedy, US Attorney General, the younger brother of President John F. Kennedy

RO	Romanian
SI	International System of Units
SSSA	Soil Science Society of America
TED	Technology, Entertainment, and Design
TOC	Table of Contents
U.S.	The United States of America
UN	The United Nations
UP	University Press
URL	Uniform/Universal Resource Locators
US	The United States of America
USA	The United States of America
USPS	United States Postal Service
USS	United States Ship
UTF	Unicode Transformation Format
VB	Visual Basic

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Basics of Word Processing for Thesis Writing is a practical guide designed to take students and researchers from the fundamentals of digital writing to the polished completion of an academic thesis. Beginning with essential concepts such as operating systems, file organization, and keyboard layouts, the book builds a strong foundation before guiding readers through document setup, styles, and formatting. Then it dives deeply into the often-overlooked details that define professional writing—fonts, characters, numbers, punctuation, and spelling—offering clarity on conventions that can significantly impact readability and academic credibility. With step-by-step coverage of inserting and managing elements like tables, figures, citations, and automatically generated lists, readers learn how to structure documents efficiently. Further topics such as text modification, template creation, and working with spreadsheets, presentations, and PDFs ensure a well-rounded command of modern academic tools. The book ends in a structured approach to thesis writing itself, including ethical considerations, document organization, and quality assurance—equipping readers not just to write but to present their work at a professional standard.

Ideal for students, educators, and anyone engaged in academic writing, this guide transforms word processing from a basic skill into a powerful instrument for precise and effective scholarly communication.

