Paragraph Styles in Microsoft Office

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Style sheets are a key aspect of modern document processing – such as with a word processor (e.g., Microsoft Word), a web page design application (e.g., Macromedia DreamWeaver), or a page layout application (e.g., Adobe InDesign).

A style is a named collection of formatting instructions or properties that specifies how aspects of the document should be displayed on a designated medium such as the computer screen or print.

Styles exist for an entire document as well as for elements within the document such as paragraphs, characters, and tables.

A paragraph style specifies the formatting for an entire paragraph and can be applied to many different paragraphs throughout the document.

Applications of paragraph formats include headings and sub-headings, figure captions, lines of information within tables, definitions, quotes, and, of course, the body text which typically defines the majority of a written document.

One compelling advantage of a paragraph format style is that the specification of the style applies to all instances of the corresponding style throughout the document. So one or one thousand instances of a paragraph style can be redefined with a single redefinition of the corresponding style. Want to increase the space between adjacent paragraphs? Change the corresponding paragraph property for that style and the display of all such instances of the paragraph automatically adjust accordingly.

Microsoft Word paragraph styles offer several distinct features beyond just consistently defining the format of paragraphs:

a. Create a table of contents
b. Work in outline mode
c. Convert Word outline to PowerPoint slides
d. Convert a Word document to a Web Page.

The ability to define formatting styles in Word and all other modern document applications is a major and powerful feature of modern document preparation.

All paragraphs all of the time are formatted with a paragraph style in Word. Though Word can be used without the user being aware of these styles, styles are
so useful that they should be explicitly defined and modified and then applied to virtually all documents. Word ships with dozens of existing paragraph styles, all of which can be easily modified and adapted for specific uses. New styles can also be defined. To print a list of all style definitions, Choose Print from the File menu. Set Print What to Styles.

The ¶ symbol information found at the end of each paragraph contains the paragraph style. Normally this symbol is an invisible character that neither prints nor appears on the screen. To view these and other invisible characters on the screen, click the Show/Hide toolbar icon or select the View tab under Preferences and click on the appropriate checkbox.

For Windows Word 2011, access paragraph styles from the ribbon’s File tab. For Mac Word 2012 the process is the same, but the tab is called Home. Then choose the heading style under Styles.

The styles presented on the ribbon are pre-defined. You can also define your own by changing specific properties. To view a list of the available formatting properties, right-click on a paragraph and select Paragraph... . Or, for earlier versions of Word, and for Word on the Mac, choose the Paragraph... option under the Format menu.

Two resulting Paragraph windows result: Indents and Spacing and Line and Page Breaks. Each window lists a variety of paragraph formatting options. For Spacing, Before and After refer to the spaces between paragraphs. Line spacing: refers to spacing within the paragraph.
Window/Orphan control means no stray lines from the paragraph across pages. Keep with next means keep this paragraph together with the next paragraph. Keep lines together means to not split the paragraph over a page break. Page break before means to always start the paragraph at the top of a new page.

The Bullets and Numbering... and Borders and Shading... choices on the first tab (Home or File) provide more paragraph formatting options. Borders and Shading... allows for placing a border around some or all of the paragraph as well as shading the paragraph. Choose the Borders tab or the Shading tab from the resulting window.

**Using Paragraph Styles**

The primary use of paragraph styles is to provide a consistent means to specify the formatting of a document. Change the definition of a paragraph style and all paragraphs with that style change accordingly. These styles are automatically saved when the document is saved. Further, under the Styles menu choice, options are provided for saving the style definitions in the Normal template, which is available to all Word documents. The list of styles can be invoked from the Style tab in the toolbar. Or, the more extensive dialogue can be invoked from the Style... (or Styles and Formatting) option under the Format menu.

Paragraph styles also provide other uses than just formatting per se. Another advantage of paragraph styles is that Word can generate a table of contents directly from the Heading styles. Word generates a table of contents by choosing a style from the Document Elements tab. Or, on some versions of Word, with the menu
The resulting table of contents is inserted wherever the cursor is when the menu option is invoked. So first place the cursor at the beginning of the document after the title page, usually on its own page, and then have Word generate the table.

PowerPoint can convert the Heading formats in a Word document directly into a PowerPoint presentation. PowerPoint converts each Heading1 paragraph to the title of a new slide. The Heading2 paragraphs under this Heading1 become the primary bullet points for the slide. Similarly, the Heading3 paragraphs under each Heading2 paragraph define the second-level bullet points, and so on.

For current versions of PowerPoint, open a file, but specify All Outlines from the drop-down menu next to the File name box. On older versions of PowerPoint, read the outline from a Word file with:

- Insert ➔ Slides from ➔ Outline File...

or, depending on the version,

- File ➔ Send To ➔ PowerPoint

PowerPoint reads only the Headings and ignores the text. The Headings of a Word document define the Outline, which is why the menu option for reading the Word file is called Slides from Outline...

The initial PowerPoint presentation is rather bland. Fortunately PowerPoint provides for customizing the presentation with a single menu selection. Choose a slide design with the menu selection:

- Format ➔ Slide Design...

This design can be customized and tweaked endlessly, but the list of available slide designs is long so usually no further customization need be done.

**Graphics**

Excel provides a variety of graphic formats for straightforward creation of charts and graphs. Excel plots mathematical functions what a Scatter Chart. Excel creates a Scatter Chart from the already entered data with the menu selection:

- Insert ➔ Chart... ➔ Chart Type: XY (Scatter)

Pasting the contents of the clipboard into a Word document is standard procedure for virtually every user of Word. The usual Paste, however, is restricted to only one format. Word also provides the opportunity to Paste the clipboard contents in a variety of formats, including as a graphic, also called a Picture. Paste a graphic into
a Word file as a Picture with the menu selection:
   Edit → Paste Special...

Word is more than a word processor. Word goes one step further and is also a Page Layout program that permits multiple columns and graphics inserted into the flow of text. Format a Picture in terms of text flow with the menu selection:
   Format → Picture... → Layout → Square

PowerPoint has the same Paste Special menu choice as Word. Paste the graphic into your PowerPoint file as a Picture, which requires the menu selection:
   Edit → Paste Special...