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Write your report with MS Word™

How to use MS Word™ in writing your paper

ABSTRACT

We introduce you this report to show the techniques of MS Word™ that facilitate writing a report using the amazing tools of MS Word™.

Ibrahim ALIBRAHIM

25-Jan-13

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1 Introduction

We use MS Word™ in our daily life to write reports, letters, and papers in many fields. A few people know about the abilities that MS Word™ has, which help a lot making the task of writing so easy and smooth. MS Word™ helps you with inserting an automatic table of contents, table of references, headers and footers, alignment, and review.

This report will show you the special utilities of MS Word™ as a strong and powerful program in the field of writing. It will not focus on dummy tasks like how to change your font properties (type, size, and color), but it will show you how to use MS Word™ with organizing a report (insert table of contents, generate the references automatically, justify your text...). It will also give you some advices about the structure of a report and some writing rules (like punctuation and font properties...).

We will organize this report to be easy to be searched and for you to find what you need easily. We will talk about each tab in MS Word™ with its purpose and provide. Each paragraph title will have the purpose of the tab implicitly, and in case the tab title cannot give the idea, we write the purpose explicitly between brackets.

As MS Word™ version are pretty the same since version 2007 (2010 and 2013), we depend on version 2010 to be the main version that we take the explanation and the images from.

2 Report Structure

Each report differ in structure according to its nature and field, like if it is a scientific report, a book, or a free writing. We intend to talk about the structure of the scientific report.

The main points will listed in order bellow.

2.1 Cover page

This page contains the main title of the report, subtitle, author(s), publisher, and publishing date. Try to make the main title as expressive as possible and add some clarification and justification in the subtitle. In the field of the author, write your name and your supervisor(s). The publisher may be the real publishing house of the report or the company that you are writing under it (your university or institute...).

Insert a built-in cover page from MS Word™ through the tab INSERT then Cover Page and choose one.

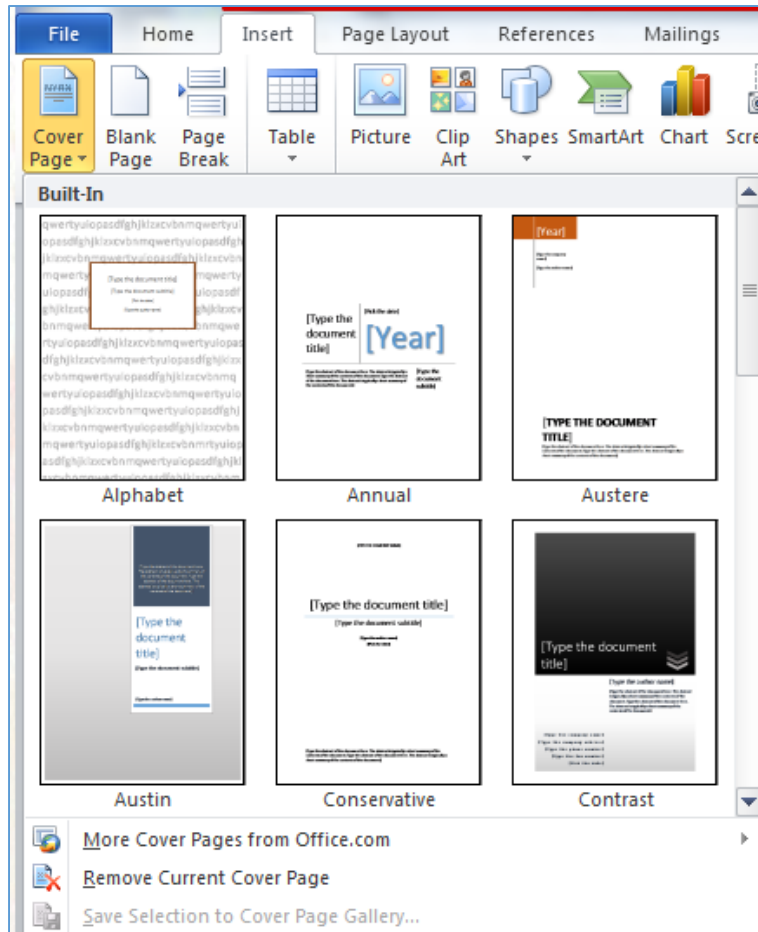


Figure 1 Insert Cover Page

This built-in cover page gives you automatic fields to be filled of your choice.

2.2 1st section (Structure)

2.2.1 Abstract

In this section, you need to revise your report in few lines, which express the whole idea of your report and what you are going to talk about. Try to make it clear and simple because in most cases the reader of your report will decide whether to continue reading or not after reading the abstract.

2.2.2 Table of Contents

The table of contents shows the paragraphs' titles with their page numbers.

Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Report Structure	1
2.1	Cover page.....	1
2.2	1 st section (Structure).....	2
2.2.1	Abstract.....	2
2.2.2	Table of Contents	2

Figure 2 Table of Contents

To generate automatic table of contents you should firstly make some Headings to provide MS Word™, which titles to contain in the table. In order to mark pieces of text to be contained in the contents table, mark the title and press one of the headings that you will find in the Home tab.

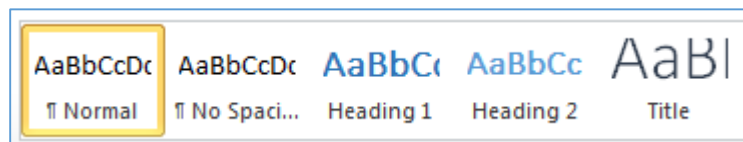


Figure 3 Headings

Try to numerate the title in a hierarchical way. Use multilevel list auto numeration to help you doing what you need.

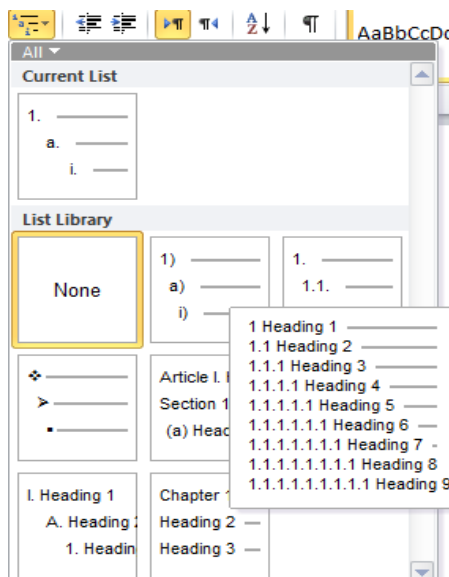


Figure 4Multilevel list auto numeration

Choose the model viewed in figure 4 to auto numerate headings. Numeration gives the report more organization.

If you wanted to modify the format of a heading, mark one of the titles that is already defined to be heading x and modify it to suit you, then select it and press with the right mouse key on heading x (in Home tab) and click “Update Heading x to Match Selection”. Alternatively, click “Modify...” to reformat it.

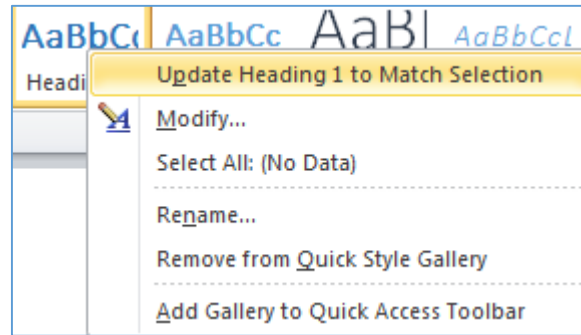


Figure 5 Heading Properties

After marking all the desired titles to be headings (included in the table of contents), you can now generate the built-in table from REFERENCES tab then click on Table of Contents then choose either table 1 or table 2.

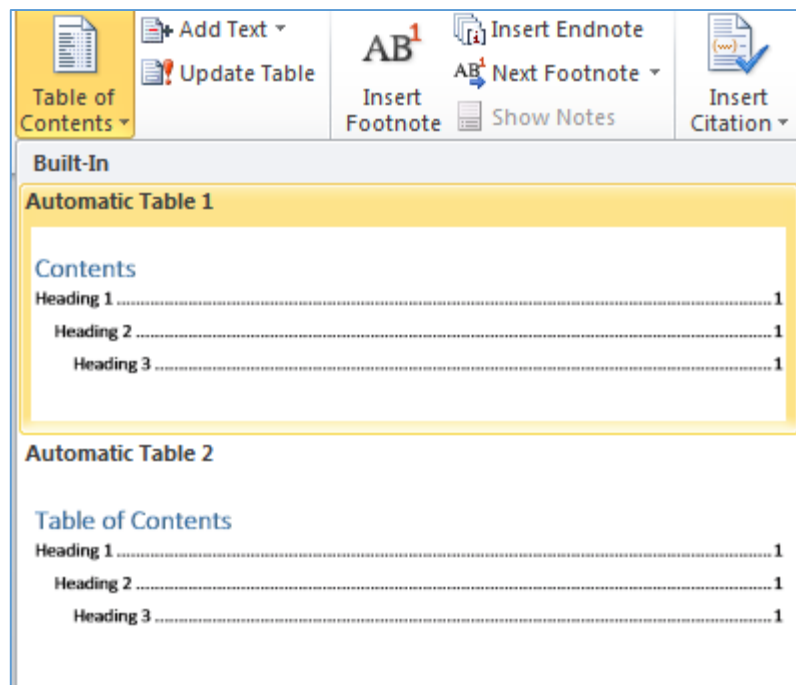


Figure 6 Insert table of contents

After generating the table, you can update it any time you want by clicking on the button “Update Table” which gives you two choices.

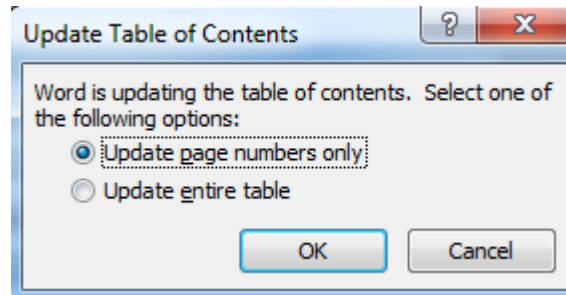


Figure 7 Update Table of Contents Dialog

2.2.3 Table of Figures

The table of figures shows every figure with its title and page number.

In order to generate a table of figure you should mark the figures. Mark a figure by clicking a right click on it and click “Insert Caption...”, then write the caption, which express the figure’s title. You can notice that every figure has a label; this label recognizes it to generate the table of figures later. You can change the label to be “Table” for example to generate the list of tables later.

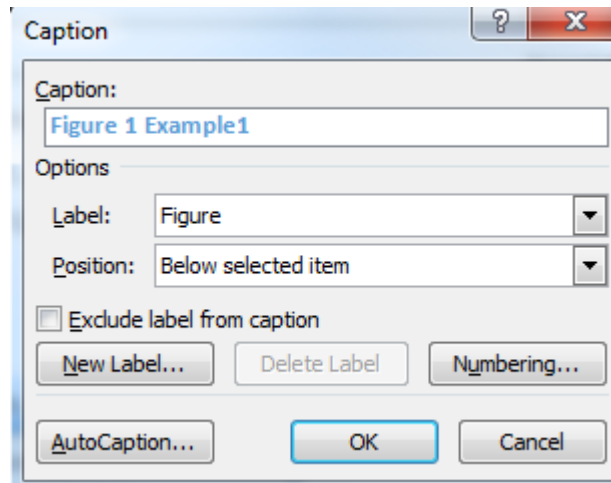


Figure 8 Insert Caption

After marking all the figures in the paper, go to References tab and click on “Insert Table of Figures”. A pop-up window will appear which sets the properties of the table. Change the Caption label to include all the figures that have this label.

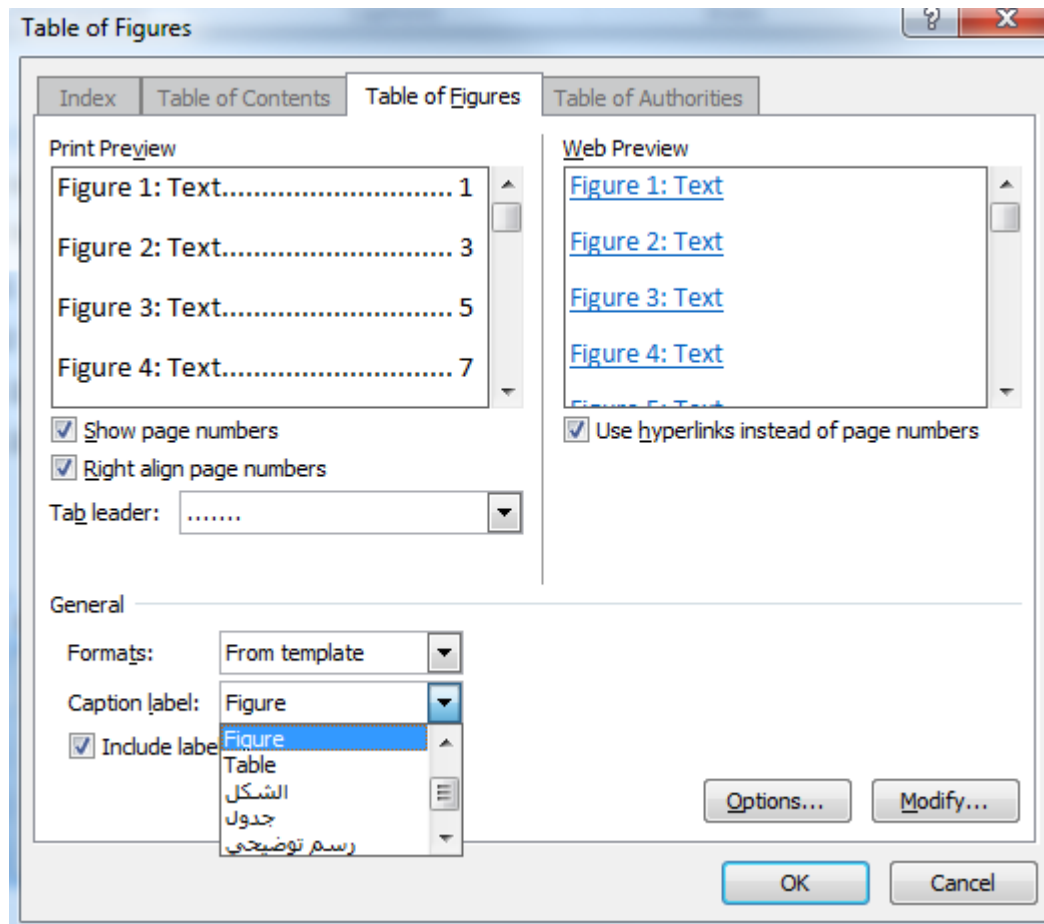


Figure 9 Generate a table of figures

Change the label to be “Table” to generate the list of tables.

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Figure 10 Example of table of figures

2.2.4 List of Tables

Follow the previous steps and change the caption label to “Table”.

2.2.5 List of Abbreviations (Acronyms)

MS Word™ does not provide a built-in list of abbreviations, so you have to write it by yourself. Include the abbreviation and its explanation in the table.

☞ You can set this list at this position or at the end of the paper before the references.

2.2.6 Contents (Body)

In this section, you should provide the substance of the paper. It must develop the key idea and result and be organized so that the reader is convinced of its significance and validity. Follow these rules to produce and organize the content of a paper (1).

1. Choose carefully the key idea and hold to it.
2. Design a scheme for the paper that best conveys the idea.
3. Demonstrate the result.

The contents must be organized to help the reader; numerate the titles using a hierarchical way using multilevel list numbering.

2.2.7 Index

An index lists the terms and topics that are discussed in a document, along with the pages that they appear on. To create an index, you mark the index entries by providing the name of the main entry, and then you build the index.

To facilitate building the index, try to begin marking entries since the beginning of writing your paper.

In order to mark an entry, mark the word (phrase) which represent the entry, and click on “Mark Entry” in References tab; then just click on “Mark”.

Notice that each word should be marked as an entry to be found in the index. Marking should be done each time the entry appears; that means each time the entry is marked you will find the page number with the entry.


☞ Notice that when you mark an entry the format of the text is changed; go to home tab and deactivate the button  or just click ctrl+shift+8.



Figure 11 Insert Index

After marking all the entries, click on “Insert Index” and choose the classic format to sort the entries alphabetically.

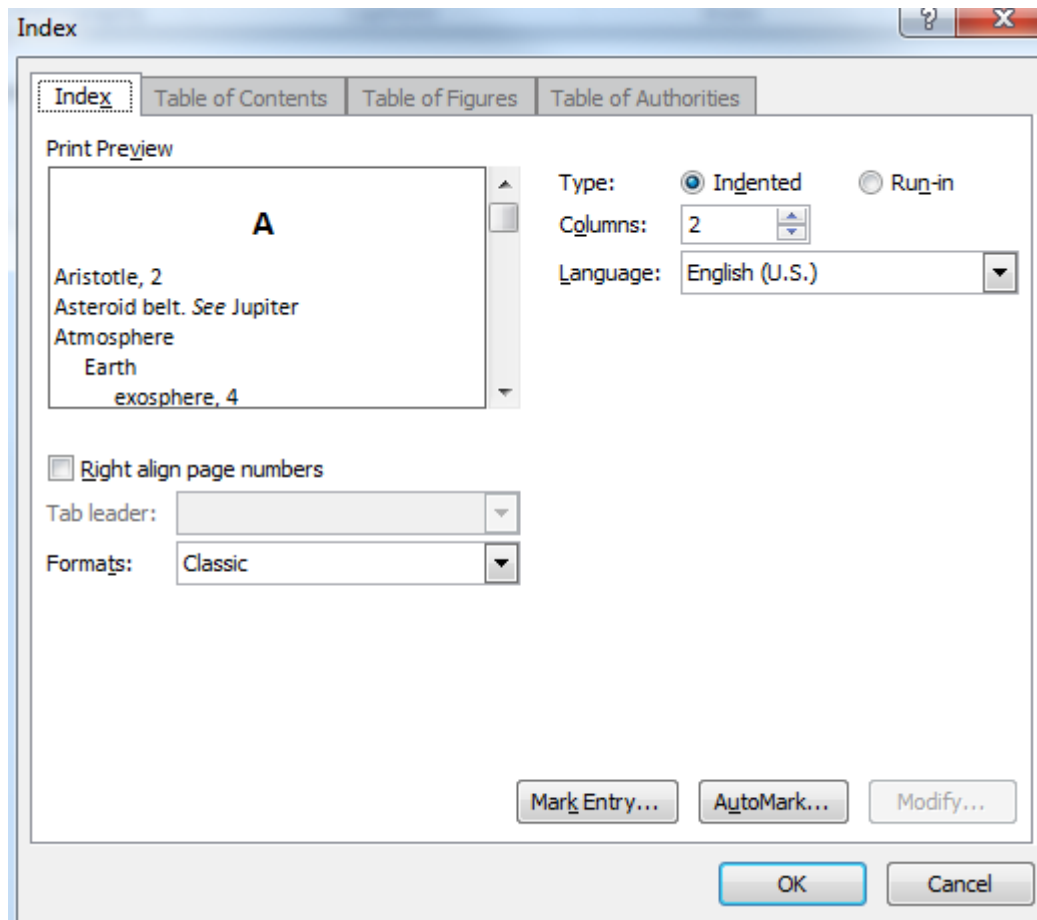


Figure 12 Insert Index settings

A		F	
abbreviations, 8		figure, 6	
alphabetically, 8			
B		M	
button, 8		MS Word™, 3, 4	
E		N	
entity, 8		Numeration, 5	
		T	
		table, 6	

Figure 13 an Example of Index

2.2.8 References

List all your references to be found in one place and to be indexed by identities, these ids could be unique numbers (starting from 1) contained between brackets (ex: [1], or (1)).

Every listed reference must be used in the paper at least in one place. Write the reference number using the previous format at the end of the place (sentence, paragraph...) where you use it.

MS Word™ provides a built-in technique to facilitate the process of generating the references. In the case of first usage of a reference, put the mouse pointer (writing pointer) where you want to mention a reference and go the references tab then click on “Insert Citation” and then “Add New Source...”

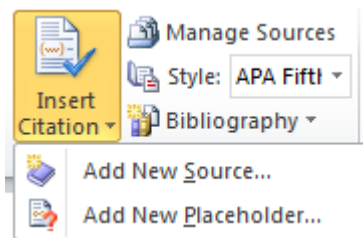


Figure 14 Add new reference

You get a pop-up window that sets the information about the new source. Fill this information noticing that MS Word™ gives you the main fields to be strictly filled, and there are some other supplementary information. Set the language of the source to be English or Arabic in order to generate the list of references correctly later.

Figure 15 Create Source

To insert the same source again, go to “Add New Source...” and you will find the added sources there, click on the source that you want.

You can change the style of how the references are mentioned from the same previous panel and change the style to be “ISO 690 – Numerical Reference” for example.

After finishing the paper, insert the list of references (bibliography) by clicking on “Bibliography” which exists on the same previous panel, and then select a style for the bibliography.

2.2.9 Acknowledgement

Thank all the people that helped you accomplishing your paper here. This paragraph is up to you.

2.2.10 Conclusion

The conclusion must summarize the paper contribution and emphasize the main result. It can also address application of the result and open issues, and give future research directions.

3 Bibliography

1. **Valduriez, Patrick.** *Some Hints to Improve Writing of Technical Papers.* Rocquencourt, France : Project Rodin, INRIA, 1994.