

I've Got Style -- Microsoft Word Styles That Is

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With 6 months until NFL kickoff, I spent much of today teaching myself how to better use Styles - especially numbered Styles in Microsoft Word. Hey Ben Schorr, how come you've never told us about Styles before? ;)

If you create long structured documents with numbered Articles, paragraphs, subparagraphs, etc., you have to learn how to use Styles. For those of you who hate Word, I think if you spend time learning Styles, you'll come around.

I'm still trying to figure out how to make various templates of my styles though.

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How come you haven't bought his book on Word??? Then you could've learned all about styles :-)

Ross

Ross L. Kodner, Wisconsin

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True. I think I have it somewhere. But I'm using Word 2011 for Mac. Most of it is the same though.

What I want to do now is set up different templates for the types of documents that I'm drafting, instead of all in Normal.

Almost all of my documents are outlined numbered with different size headings. It's amazing how awesome Styles works.

Did everyone know that you can set up dozens of settings in a single style? Is this something incredibly obvious that I just figured out?

David A. Shulman, Florida

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I've been singing the praises of style sheets in Word here for some time. They are the secret, I think, to keeping your sanity when using word with numbering, and to really making productive use of word at all. I have style sheets for correspondence (one for short, one for long), for pleadings (one for state, one for federal, another for discovery documents), for information sheets, for cases I download from Casemaker, for file folder labels, for wills, etc.

They are the secret to making a document look the way you want with a few clicks. Need to squeeze that document into 8 pages, and it's currently 8 1/2? Tweak the Normal style by half a point, or squeeze spacing, or tighten the leading. Preparing it for a client you know to be visually impaired? Up the font from 12 to 14 points and the line spacing to 1.5. Voila; document reformatted in 15 seconds!

In addition to styles, you may find that using Word (especially with styles) is much more efficient if you learn a few shortcuts, especially if you favor the keyboard over the mouse, as I do. (The F8 key is a good friend.)

[http://shortcutworld.com/en/win/Word\\_2007.html](http://shortcutworld.com/en/win/Word_2007.html)

To create a template, I create, say, a letter on my digital letterhead, apply all of the formats I want, and then trim out the content and make it generic. I save as a DOT file. For many of my common formats, I also create a template for Amicus, with merge fields, so I can create a letter that contains contact information for a designated party, etc. I have templates in Amicus that are built on the style sheet DOTs, but containing standard text, such as an engagement letter, a no-contact letter, a fee agreement, etc.

-Rick

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr., North Carolina

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I recently posted about a problem I'm having with styles. Ben didn't weigh in on that thread (must have been busy with his paying clients ;-), so I'm re-posting it here:

>Aaaargh!

>I'm trying to add a style I created in a document to my normal template. I created the style, then used the styles organizer to copy it to normal.dotm. When I highlight the style name in the current document column, the description is correct. However, when I highlight the style name in the "In Normal" column, the description is not correct - in other words, it has the wrong attributes. Furthermore, to test whether the changes "took," I created a new blank document and tried to apply the style. It has some of the attributes I specified (the paragraph numbering, for example), but not other ones (for example, it uses incorrect paragraph and first line indentation).

>What am I doing wrong?

Lisa Solomon, New York

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I would actually LOVE to see Ben do a distinct book about stylesheets for lawyers - or offer a CD/download with pre-made stylesheets for those of us too dense to spend the time to learn for ourselves (me).

Eric Ridley

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Checking in after being out of town all week, I decided to skim the topics before deleting the hundreds of Solosez e-mails accumulated in my box. Imagine my surprise to see a thread saying something positive about Word! It is a great program and Styles is definitely the fast and easy way to make documents look great. None of this having to change font codes a paragraph at a time through a long document, having documents mysteriously renumber themselves. No having to mark the TOC - it does it magically. Good for you, David, for posting!

Stephanie Hill

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The more I use it, the more I realize that when people say:

"You can't do that in Word," what they really mean is "I don't know how to do that in Word."

The problem that switchers have is that they try to make Word act like WordPerfect, instead of learning how to use Word.

But yes, doing a TOC in Word is simple.

David A. Shulman

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Just for the record, one can use Styles in WordPerfect every bit as effectively and comprehensively as in Word, if that is the way you prefer to work. There are character styles, paragraph styles, document styles aplenty. If you prefer that approach, there is no reason to "change font codes a paragraph at a time through a long document." In fact, there is no reason to do that in WordPerfect at all.

Michael A. Koenecke, Texas

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I'd love to learn more about 'Styles' in Word. Can anyone recommend a good video or whitepaper or blog about how to use them?

Sincerely yours,  
Michael D. Caccavo, Vermont

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<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/video-apply-styles-in-word-2010-VA101820568.aspx>

[http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1365077/word\\_2007\\_demo\\_adding\\_styles/](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/1365077/word_2007_demo_adding_styles/)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-kb32j3-nY>

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gq\\_dr69xjTw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gq_dr69xjTw)

[http://blogs.office.com/b/office\\_casual/archive/2011/02/15/using-quick-styles-in-word.aspx](http://blogs.office.com/b/office_casual/archive/2011/02/15/using-quick-styles-in-word.aspx)

<http://blogs.office.com/b/microsoft-word/archive/2011/06/21/word-of-the-week-formatting-vs-styles.aspx>

That should be a good start.

HTH,

Ross

\*Ross L. Kodner

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Sorry about the delay in getting to this thread - I was in meetings at Microsoft all last week so a bit quiet on e-mail.

There are a lot of good resources for leaning about Word styles. In addition to the excellent list that Ross already provided here's a couple more:

<http://www.shaunakelly.com/word/concepts/styles.html>

<http://www.addbalance.com/usersguide/styles.htm>

And, of course, I'm always adding content to <http://www.officeforlawyers.com/word.html>

Lastly, not to be overly self-promotional - there is considerably more Styles content in my book "The Lawyer's Guide to Word 2010" than there was in my 2007 book.

Disclaimer: Even though spammers frequently address me as "Dear Lawyer" when asking me to help get their cash out of Nigeria...I'm not.

Ben M. Schorr, Arizona

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Because I have sometimes twitted (in original sense) Ben, I should also report that he posted a useful overview that I receive by email but THINK is available at

<http://www.technolawyer.com/smalllaw.asp>

John Page, Florida

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In fact, my new blog post for this week is on this topic, includes a video list for styles training and also links to Ben's Word 2010 book and the Payne Consulting 2003 Word book for all the folks still hanging on to that "ancient" version." And also a tip of the hat to Mike Koenecke for his usual sensible advice re: WordPerfect here: <http://rossipsa.com/?p=707>.

HTH,  
Ross

\*Ross L. Kodner

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I'm working on an appellate brief. Here's styles are important as that's part of what's required to build a table of contents. Windows 2010 help seems to be video oriented. Too bad I don't have time. Maybe Ben Schorr will have a book on it. Oh wait he does. Alas it's not due out at Amazon till after my birthday. Sigh.

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{John}

John A. Davidson, Pennsylvania

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I think what I may need some advice on is Style overload. I can see myself ending up with a few dozen styles depending on what type of document it is. However, the 3 -4 styles that I'd use in a letter will never be used in a Trust, and vice versa. I assume that instead of just shoving them all into Normal.dotm I should be setting up different templates with their own styles, right?

David A. Shulman

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ABA has an exclusive on my books for the first 6 months or so before they'll release them to Amazon, Barnes & Noble, etc. But you can order it from the ABA if you want to. (link below)

There are also some excellent general purpose Word books on the market. Anything with Beth Melton or Stephanie Krieger's name on it is worth reading.

Disclaimer: Even though Angelina Jolie wonders if she awkwardly displayed the wrong leg whenever I say it, I've still never been a lawyer.

Ben M. Schorr

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I know that there was a big jump from Office 2003 to 2007, but it seems there was less of a change with 2010. I am currently running the full version of Office 2007. Any particular reason to upgrade to 2010? It doesn't appear that MS is offering an upgrade price for 2010.

kwg

Kevin W. Grierson, Virginia

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These could help you decide:

<http://lifehacker.com/5537569/should-i-upgrade-to-office-2010>

<http://www.channelinsider.com/c/a/Microsoft/Top-10-Reasons-to-Upgrade-to-Microsoft-Office-2010-Instead-of-Switching-to-Google-or-Zoho-467672/>

[http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/201145/five\\_reasons\\_you\\_dont\\_need\\_microsoft\\_office\\_2010.html](http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/201145/five_reasons_you_dont_need_microsoft_office_2010.html)

<http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.aspx?p=1623117>

Here are some references on the differences between 2007 and 2010:

<http://cybertext.wordpress.com/2011/02/17/word-2010-differences-with-word-2007/>

<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ee523661.aspx>

<http://www.microsofttraining.net/versions/office-difference.php>

Hope this helps. Also, cheap Office 2010 sources:

Official MS Home/Business download is only \$199 now -

<http://www20.buyoffice.microsoft.com/usa/product.aspx?sku=10234643&cache=1287727946&action=buy&culture=en-US>,

or

OEM Home/Business - <http://buycheapsoftware.com/details~productID~5239.asp>

Retail Home/Business -

<http://buycheapsoftware.com/details~productID~4951.asp>

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Ross

\*Ross L. Kodner

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Ross is right (as he so often is) - there really aren't a lot of compelling reasons to upgrade to Word 2010 from 2007 for most users.

There ARE some advantages to upgrading the whole suite - Outlook 2010 is quite a bit better than Outlook 2007 and Office 2010 includes OneNote in every box, for two. And you're correct, there isn't any upgrade SKU for Office 2010, but you can often find it a bit cheaper than most places on Amazon.com. Here's Office 2010 Home and Business from Amazon for just \$202 and change: <http://tinyurl.com/7vgmcoz>

Here's a short article I did on what's new in Word 2010:  
<http://www.officeforlawyers.com/word/newinword2010.htm>

Disclaimer: Yes, I use several versions of Word. No, I'm still not an attorney.

Ben M. Schorr

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I use Outlook (and the rest of Office) pretty extensively, as most of my practice involves drafting documents and sending/receiving documents and feedback via email. Anything in particular you like about Outlook 2010 as opposed to 2007?

While we're on the subject of upgrades, any big advantages to upgrading from Acrobat 9 to X? I don't work with PDF documents a lot except to view them and or convert Word documents to them. So far 9 seems to fit the bill for everything I need, but maybe I'm missing something.

kwg  
Kevin W. Grierson

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Right. You want to create .DOT files for those various types of correspondence, so when you choose File...New, you'll get a gallery of document types, and start your new document from the appropriate template.

You could, theoretically, tag all of your styles by document type and keep them all in NORMAL.DOT, but I find that Word's propensity for updating NORMAL.DOT puts you at risk of modifying something far-reaching without meaning to, and not catching it until much later.

-Rick  
Richard J. Rutledge, Jr.

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