

# Creating a Table of Contents in Microsoft® Word

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## Before You Start

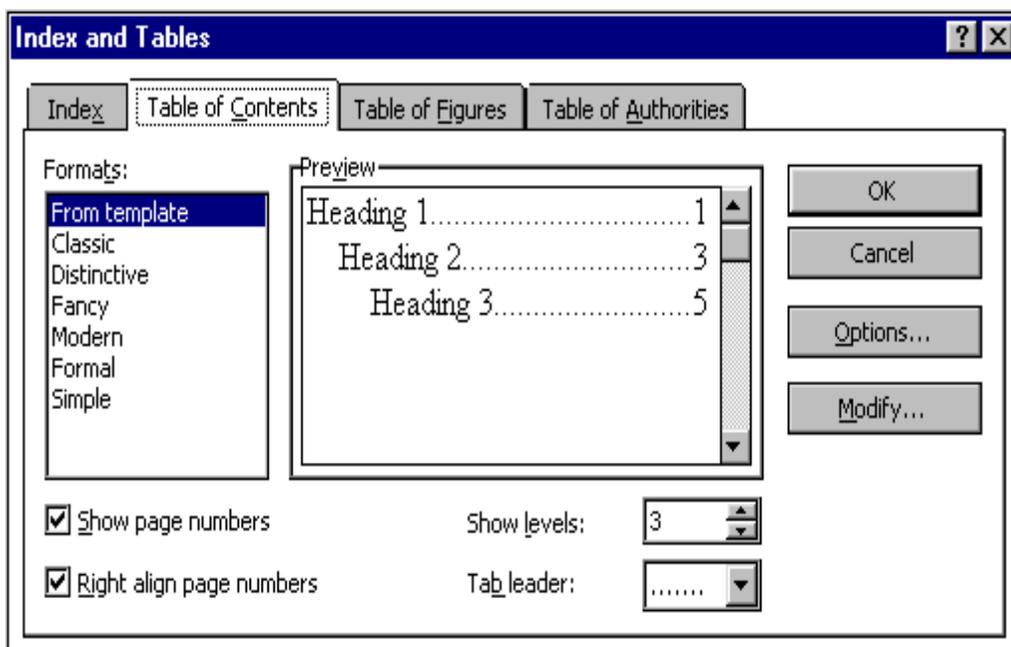
Microsoft Word will create a table of contents for your document automatically, but only if you have used the built-in style sheets correctly. That is, your chapter titles, section titles, subheads—anything you want to appear in the table of contents—must have a Heading 1, Heading 2, etc. applied to them.

The easiest way to apply these styles is to click in the heading paragraph and then pick a style from the style box on the menu bar.

For more information, see *Using Style Sheets in Microsoft Word*, in the Target Guides series.

## Format the Table of Contents

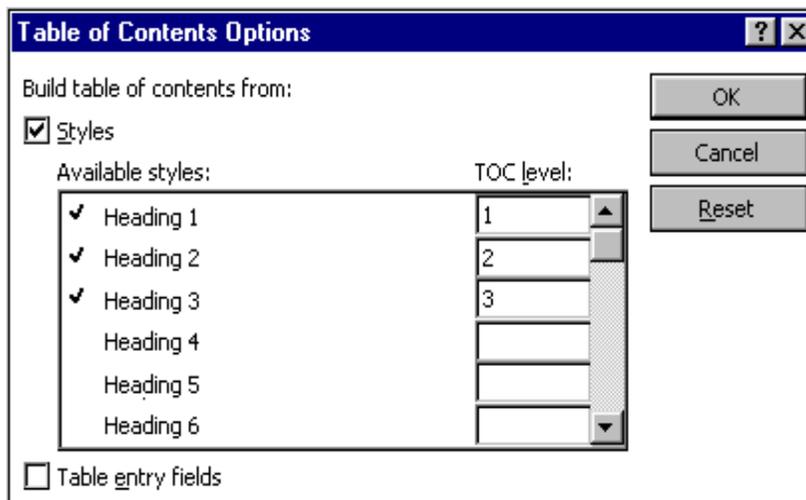
The contents is normally on a page by itself, so insert a page break before the spot where you want your table of contents, and insert another page break after the spot, with a paragraph between them. Place the cursor between the two page breaks you just created. From the pull-down menu, select **Insert** → **Index and Tables...** In the “Index and Tables” dialog box, click on the Table of Contents tab.



The items on the left side of the page—the list of formats and the checkboxes—are easy to figure out. Pick a format you like and stick with it.

“Show levels” can be set from 1 to 9. This tells Word whether you just want your Heading 1 paragraphs to appear in the contents, or Heading 2 and so forth (up to

Heading 9) as well. Unless yours is a very long and complex document, two levels is probably enough.



**Note:** Sometimes the “Show levels” box is missing. You can change that with the Options dialog box.

The Modify button opens the Style dialog box. This is the same one you will find in the Format menu, except that it lists only the TOC styles. For more information, see *Working with Styles in Microsoft Word* in the Target Guide series.

### The Options Dialog Box

If you click on the Options button on the right, you can change some of the decisions that Word makes about the Table of Contents.

You probably don’t want your document’s title listed in the Contents as if it were a chapter title—that is, TOC level 1. Scroll through this list to see if there are any defaults you want to change. To get back to the settings you started with, click Reset.

The Styles checkbox on the left is the default: leave it. Do not check the Table Entry Fields checkbox—this is a cumbersome feature better left alone.

**Note:** If you check the Table Entry Fields box but not the Styles box, the Show levels drop-down menu will disappear from the previous dialog box.

### Insert the Table of Contents

Once you have made your selections in the dialog boxes, click OK in the Index and Tables dialog box. The TOC will be inserted at the cursor.

Once the table of contents is in place, it is treated as a single item. If you click anywhere in the TOC, a gray background appears behind the whole thing to highlight it. If you want to change the structure of the table of contents—show fewer heading levels, for example—click to highlight it, and then begin again with **Insert** → **Index and Tables....** When you are done, Word will ask if you want to replace the selected table of contents. Click **yes**.

If you have changed the contents of the document, and need to update the TOC, highlight the TOC and hit the F9 key. This will correct chapter names if you have made changes to the Headings, and renumber the pages.

*TOC stands for  
Table of Contents*

*To update the TOC,  
use F9.*

**Note:** On long documents, this may take a few moments. Watch the status bar at the bottom of the screen.

## Advanced Topics

### Table of Contents Entry (TC Field)

You may want to add a supplementary table to your document—a table of illustrations, for example. You can do this by inserting field codes in your text, and using the Table of Contents tab to create the new table.

For each entry you want to appear in your table, set the blinking cursor immediately before the text and select **Insert** → **Field...** Highlight the category “Index and Tables” on the left, then “TC” on the right. Type the field code information in the bottom. The entry begins with the “TC” that is already there. Follow it with the text you want to appear in your table.

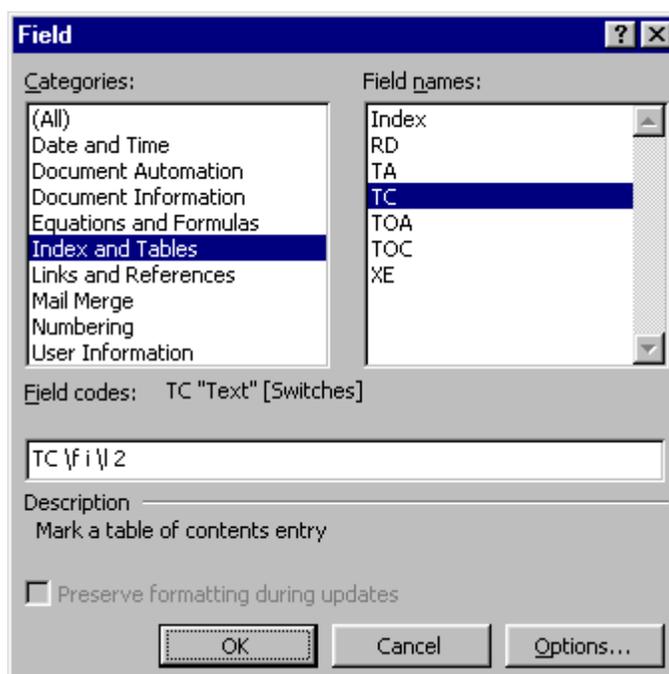
You can then add optional “switches” to control what your table displays, and how. Each switch begins with a backslash.

**Type of entry.** Enter \f followed by a letter if you are creating more than one supplementary tables. For example, “\f i” might indicate an item for your table of illustrations, and an item identified with switch “\f h” would go in your table of helpful hints. (You assign the letters yourself.)

**Level.** Enter \l followed by a number from 1 to 9 for the hierarchy level. This is the equivalent of Heading 1, Heading 2, and so forth in the standard table of contents.

**Omit page number.** If you want to use this feature simply to gather a list of items that appear in your document, you can suppress the page number by entering the \n switch.

You can see the list of switches by clicking on the **options** button.



## One TOC for Multiple Documents

You may want to create a table of contents that covers more than one document. For example, you may have made each chapter of a book a separate Word file. Use the RD (for referenced document) field code to add the entries from external documents.

In the document that will contain the combined TOC, select **Insert** → **Field...** Highlight the category “Index and Tables” on the left, then “RD” on the right. In the text box, type in the name of the file to reference. If the filename includes spaces, enclose it in double quotation marks. If it is in another folder (directory), include the entire path, using double backslashes to separate folders, subfolders, and the filename. Click **OK** to insert the field code.

Here is an example. The TOC will include entries from the file “Sam Spade.doc” that is in the same directory, and after them, entries from “Amanda Pepper.doc” in the directory called “Sleuths.”

```
{ RD “Sam Spade.doc” }
{ RD “C:\\Sleuths\\Amanda Pepper.doc” }
```

## Troubleshooting

Problem	What to Do
The page numbers in my TOC are wrong.	Select the TOC and press the F9 key.
Some or all of my headings do not appear in the TOC.	Make sure that the correct built-in styles are applied to the headings you want to appear.
The title of my document appears as the first entry in the TOC.	Select <b>Insert</b> → <b>Index and Tables...</b> and click on the Table of Contents tab, then on the Options button. Find “Title” in the list of styles, and remove the number next to it.
I inserted field codes, but they don’t appear on the screen.	Click the Show/Hide Paragraph button on the toolbar.
Some of the lines in my TOC are too short.	Place the blinking cursor in the short line and remove any extra tab stops from the ruler at the top of the screen.

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