

## Dos and Don'ts of Formatting Documents for Web page and PDF and Accessibility

### Fonts, text and keyboard keys

**Do not** use Word Art. Often makes duplicate set of text letters and will be read 2 or 3 times in PDF.

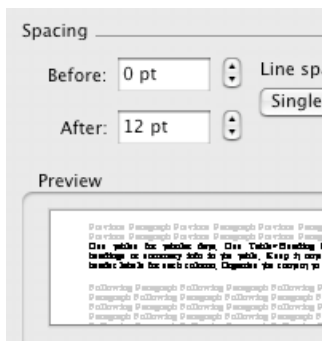
**Do** always use numbers as appropriate. For example, use the number one rather than the letter "L" and the number zero rather than the letter "O."

**Do not** use "glyphs". Symbols found in the symbol menu, often will read the character that is used to create that symbol; for example the number 4 in web dingbats will show a checkmark, but will be read as "four" by the assistive technology.



**Show markup** to see your paragraphs, tabs and line breaks.

### Paragraphs, indents, tabs, headings and lists



**Do not** use the Enter (or Return) key to end each line, as you would when using a typewriter. Let the text flow based on the margins. If you need to separate text into two lines, use the "soft return" or "line break", by pressing Shift and then Enter together. Only use the Enter (or Return) key when a **new paragraph** should begin. Go to **Format>Paragraph...** to **add space above or below** a paragraph instead of adding empty paragraphs to break up text.

**Do** use non-breaking spaces (CTRL+Shift+spacebar) or non-breaking hyphens (CTRL+Shift+hyphen) to keep words together.

**Do** use placed tabs and hanging indents rather than using the spacebar. **Format>Paragraph...** **Do not** use multiple tabbing to get text positioned across the page.



**Do** insert hard **page break** codes at the proper locations rather than using the enter key repeatedly in order to move to the next page.

**Do** use **page numbering** codes, rather than simply typing in page numbers.

**Do** use **styles** to generate passages of text, such as bold, italics, or underlining, but remember that text for large print readers should already be in boldface type to improve contrast.

Use **Heading styles** to organize content. Heading 1 is usually the page title and there usually is only one Heading level 1. Headings 1-6 should be used like an outline, organizing the most important information on down. Don't skip heading levels. If the built in heading style is not to your liking, add the headings and then set the font size and style to your liking.

To use the Styles structure for headings with your desired font, boldness, text-alignment etc, create a new style based on Heading1, etc. (See Creating Styles)

Use **lists** to further organize content. Number lists imply a sequential order, or steps in a process. Bulleted lists imply no necessary order, just a list. Don't use special symbols or characters for the bullets unless the character is from the Base 14 Fonts that work well with Acrobat (Times or Times New Roman, Helvetica or Arial Courier, Symbol, Zapf Dingbats)



## Tables

Use **tables for tabular data**. Use **Table>Heading Row Repeat** to mark the header row. Do not add headings or summary info in the table. Keep it outside the data table. The first row should only be the header labels for each column. Organize the content to be read row by row. Don't break content that should be read together into different cells for visual layout.

**Tabular data should be presented in tables**, not tabbed columns. Tables provide structure and header information that assists the assistive devices get the proper meaning and organize the information.



## Columns

Use **columns** where appropriate in the document.

Don't use tabbing or multiple row tables to create columns of information. Use the MS Word columns. Tabbing and multiple row tables will be read line by line or row by row across the page instead of down one column and then down the next.

## Text Boxes

Use text boxes sparingly. Text boxes almost never convert to PDF in the proper reading order. For visual formatting, add borders to paragraphs. Format>Border, and Apply to Paragraph and Options to set distance from paragraph text.

## Images and Word Art

Right click on the image or graphic and the Format Picture dialog box opens up. Select the Web tab and add Alternate text. (Unfortunately this is not available on the Mac.)

Examples of what to add:

- Photo of Dorothy clicking heels in OZ.
- Photo of new parking structure viewed from sculpture garden showing completed ramp.
- Graphic of school bus.
- Chart of earnings for New Yorker magazine in January showing 10% increase over last year.
- Screenshot of Format Picture dialog box, with web tab selected.

Decorative lines or border graphics, leave alternate text empty.

Vector graphics like Illustrator, Corel Draw and some EPS files can be composed of hundreds of thousand vector elements. When a PDF is made all of these elements may become part of the PDF information creating a problem. It is better to create a TIFF or GIF image, or flatten the vector graphic for use in your final document.

**Don't use Word Art.** This text is made up of multiple copies of the letters to create shadows, etc. and each letter will be read multiple times in the PDF, i.e. PPP CCC CCC.

If you are unfamiliar with any of these concepts, go to Microsoft Help on the toolbar and search for the term. You will usually get excellent tutorial steps to help you start taking advantage of the power of the word processor.