

BUSINESS & CAREERS

Quick Word tips for busy lawyers



HI-TECH

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It's one of those tools every modern lawyer gets to know well. But do you know Microsoft Word well enough to consider it a "productivity tool" or do you feel like

you stumble along when you use it?

Any "stumbling" can come from several different things, like:

- Being taught the long way of doing things instead of the shortcuts

- Not being told why a feature may be useful

That's why I've devoted this column to a few tips you can use every day to speed up your work. Some of these are one-click sim-

ple, while others take some experimentation to figure out.

Since features can move around from version to version and aren't in the same place depending on whether you use Windows or Mac, I haven't included many detailed instructions here. If you need to learn how to do specific things, check out Word Help or Microsoft's online documentation.



Looking for more tips? Visit Microsoft's free online Office training page at:

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/support/training-FX101782702.aspx?redir=0>

One-click solutions

Justifying a line

■ Sure, you can click icons in a toolbar. But many people use keyboard shortcuts for copying, cutting and pasting since they're a lot faster, and the same holds true for justification.

Place the mouse pointer on a line that contains text and try these shortcuts in a Word document: Left: Ctrl-L, Centre: Ctrl-E (since Ctrl-C is for copying) and Right: Ctrl-R.

Quickly aligning a line of text

■ Place the mouse pointer at the point on an empty line where you want the text to start and double-click.

Inserting a table row

■ Need to insert a row in an existing table? Put the cursor at the end of the preceding row, outside the table's right edge, and hit Enter. Need to create another row? Press the right arrow and press Enter again.

Paste Special

■ Tired of having to format text you paste into your Word document to match the surrounding text? Then instead of using Paste, try Paste Special, then choose "Unformatted text." (Newer versions of Word feature a Paste and Match Formatting option.)

Templates

Did it take you a long time to incorporate each tip to this point in your document? Do you want to reuse what you created without recreating it? Then save your document as a template (.dotx instead of .docx).

When you open your template, Word creates a new document, leaving the template file untouched so you can use it to start other documents.

Use non-printing characters and Print Layout view

Creating a document for print? View your document in Print Layout and make sure you can always see all non-printing characters (Options dialog, View tab).

The latter are really helpful when you want to troubleshoot oddities, like the one that can result when you inadvertently double-click an empty line and Word thinks you wanted to start the text from the double-click point. You'll see the resulting symbols, and if you don't understand them right away, you will soon enough just by seeing what pops up when you do things like press the spacebar, Enter, Tab and so forth.

Field updates

Cross-references, tables of contents, dates — if you used Word to insert these things, then they are all fields. To update fields in your document, you can select the entire document, right-click and choose Update All.

TIP: in the Print options dialog, turn on update fields (and update links if you use them) to ensure documents print with updated fields.

Styles

Wouldn't it be nice if you could just make Word automatically make your section headings bold, 18-point, Garamond, extra spacing before, all in one step? Well, you can, using Word styles. Common styles include headings (useful for creating things like cross-references and tables of contents), body text, numbered and bulleted lists, block quotations, headers and footers.

Not happy with the look of a style? Change it in one place to make the change happen wherever the style occurs, so you don't need to find and fix each instance of, say, heading or body text.

Fields

Headers and footers are perfect places to put things like word count, the document name, the date and, of course, the page number. While Word provides features to create some of these fields, you can insert others using the field feature.

Cross-references

At one place in a long document, you might need to refer to another place in the same document. Don't just find the "target" section and type a static reference at the "source" — if you add or remove text before the target section, you invalidate the cross-reference.

Instead, insert a Word cross-reference. Should the page number of the target section change, Word will update the cross-reference for you.

TIP: if you use heading styles for document sections, Word offers a list of those headings in the cross-reference dialog.

Quick PDF generation

While you can use Acrobat to generate PDFs, if you just need a quick PDF and aren't worried about things like metadata, save your document as a PDF from within Word.

Branding a document

Want to put the firm logo, colours and fonts in places like headers, footers, or even the document background? Then use headers, footers and watermarks.

Word count

Do you need to stay under a specific word count? Then put the word count on the status bar (bottom frame of the Word window) so you always know how many words you have typed.

BONUS HINT: click the word count to see other stats, like number of paragraphs and lines in the current document.

BONUS HINT NUMBER TWO: if you highlight a selection of text, Word shows you how many words are in that selection alone.

BONUS HINT NUMBER THREE: put the word count field in your header so it appears on printouts.

Table of contents

Use heading styles throughout your document, and when the time comes Word can quickly generate a table of contents using headings marked with heading styles.

Regenerating a table of contents is as easy as right-clicking the table and choosing Update Field.




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