

3. Formatting your document

Working with styles

What is a style?

A style is a predefined set of formatting specifications that can include both font and paragraph settings. When you apply a style, Word formats the text according to how the style has been defined.

Using styles has several benefits:

- Consistency – text is formatted in the same way throughout
- Ease of modification – simply modify the style and all the text formatted with the style changes
- Access to time-saving features – you can use Word's powerful automatic functions, such as tables of contents, navigation pane, heading numbering and cross-references

Style types

Word includes a range of built-in styles. There are two main types:

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|------------------|---|
| Paragraph | Applied to an entire paragraph. As well as text formatting, this style includes paragraph formatting such as spacing and alignment. Paragraph styles are indicated by the symbol ¶. |
| Character | Applied to selected text. This style includes font formatting only, for example, italic, bold or underline. Word indicates character styles with the symbol a. |

Word also includes a **linked** style, indicated by the symbol ¶a. A linked style can be applied to an entire paragraph or to selected text only. When you apply it to selected text, none of the paragraph formatting is used, only the font formatting – it behaves like a character style.

Why use a linked style? In a thesis, you could use it where you only want part of a heading to appear in a table of contents. Select the text to appear in the contents and apply the linked style, and then manually format the rest of the text to match the style.

Styles and navigation

If you have used styles, you can use the **Navigation** pane to move around your document quickly. Clicking on a heading in the pane will take you directly to the location. You can also reorganise your document easily by dragging and dropping entire sections.

To display the pane, click on the **View** tab and select **Navigation Pane** in the **Show** group.