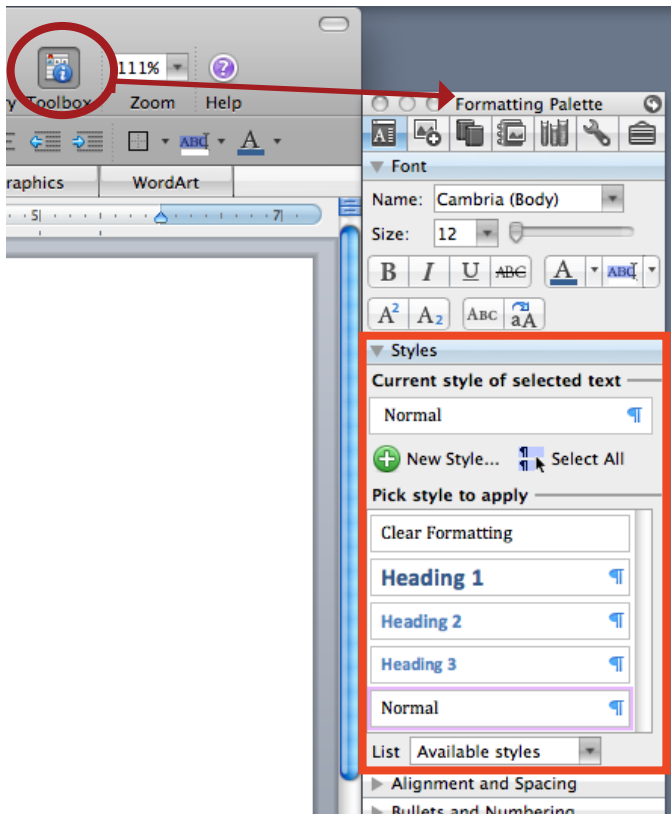# Using Microsoft Word Styles
(Word for Mac 2008)

Microsoft Word Styles make formatting documents fast and easy. Word Styles reduce the time you spend creating and editing documents by allowing you to change the formatting of certain elements all at once, rather than one by one. Word Styles also allow easy access to document design elements.

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To begin, select Toolbox (in the Standard toolbar) to make the Formatting Palette pop out.

The Formatting Palette has several of options to work with for designing a document, but we're going to focus on Styles, the second section of the Formatting Palete (outlined in orange).

Applying Default Styles

Default styles automatically appear in the Styles section of the Formatting Palette. These styles were designed by Microsoft and use pre-selected fonts, sizes, colors, and border options.

Inital application of default styles is simple.

1. Type your text.

2. Highlight the portion you would like to apply a style to.

3. Select and click on a style in the Styles section. Your text will automatically be formatted according to the selected style.

Editing Styles

The default styles aren't entirely aesthetically pleasing. You should modify these styles to fit with the theme of your document.

1. Hover over the paragraph symbol (¶) to the right of the name of the style you wish to edit. This turns the paragraph symbol into a down arrow.

2. Click the arrow to open the Modify Style box

The Modify Style box allows you to change every element of your selected style. The menu that appears initally only allows for limited changes; many more options are available by clicking the arrows next to Format on the bottom left of the box.
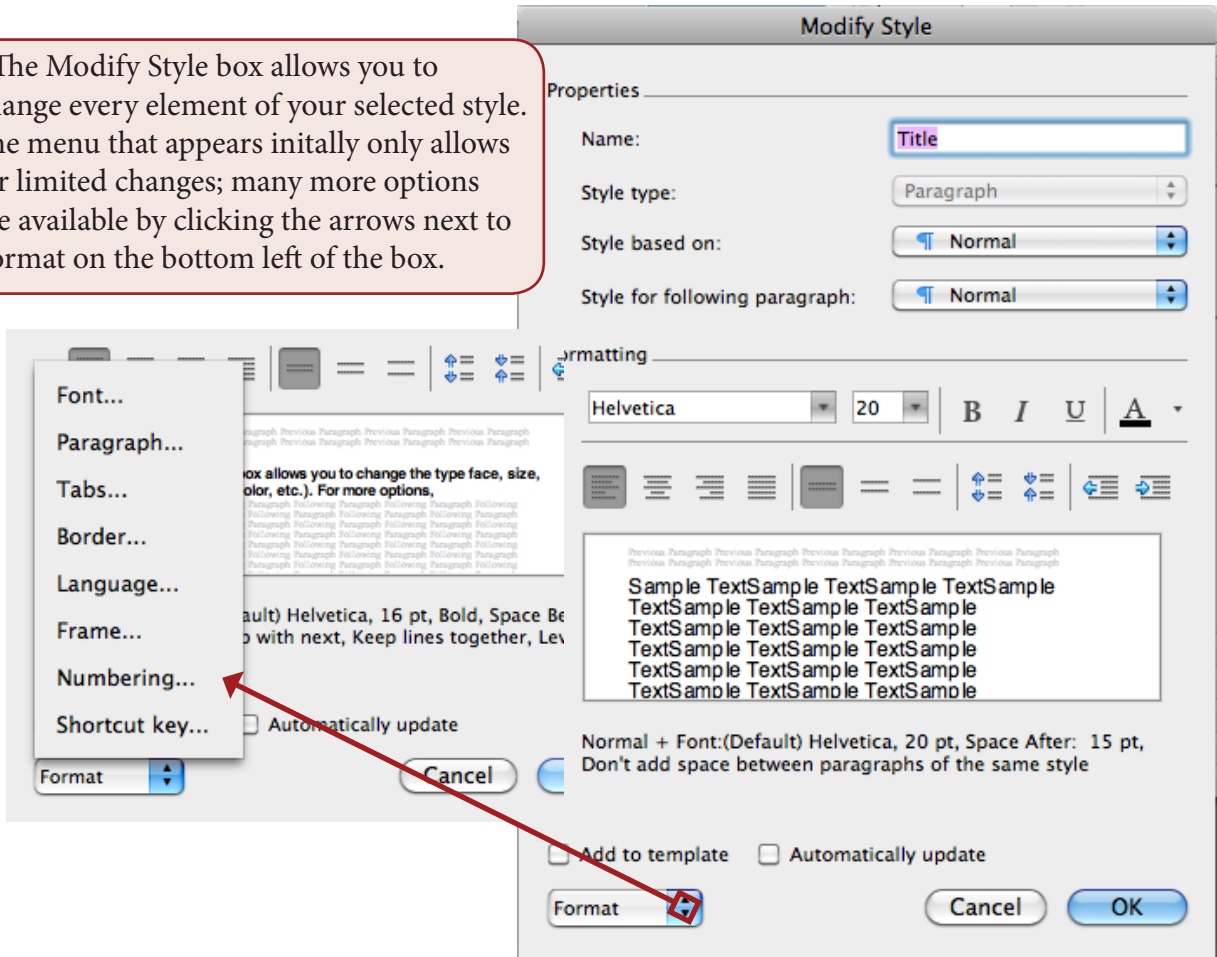
Font Options

The font options which intially appear in the Modify Style box are limited. For more control and choices, click the Format menu at the bottom left (see above) and choose Font from the list that appears to open the Font dialog box.

1. To change the font, select from the scrolling menu at the top left.

2. To change the font style (bold, italicized, regular), select from the scrolling menu at the top center.

3. To change the font size, select from the scrolling menu at the top right.

4. To change font color, open the menu under Font Color and select a color and select fron the given options.
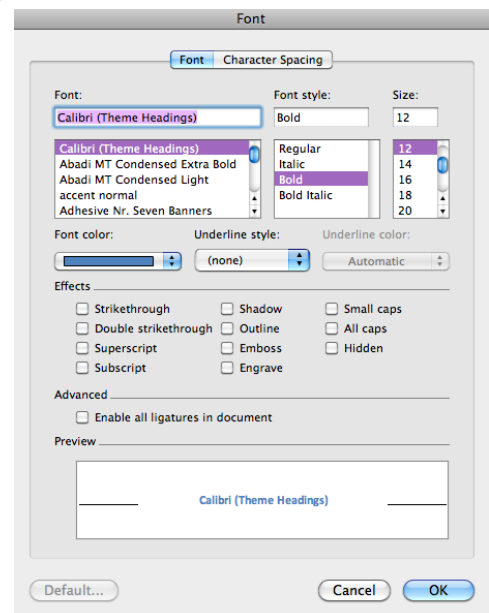
Borders and Color Fills

Borders and color fills are a good way to make titles, headings, and subheadings stand out more. To use this feature, click the Format menu (see page 2) and choose Border from the list that appears to open the Borders and Shading dialog box.

Borders

1. The first column of the dialog box shows preset borders which can easily be applied to your style. However, they don't always match your document's formatting, so it is best to create your own.

2. The second column gives options for border style (solid, dashed), as well as color and thickness.

3. The third column shows a preview of the border options you have selected and allows you to make only certain parts of your border box appear. This is a great way to underline text without modifying the font style, or to add emphasis to the right or left side of a heading.
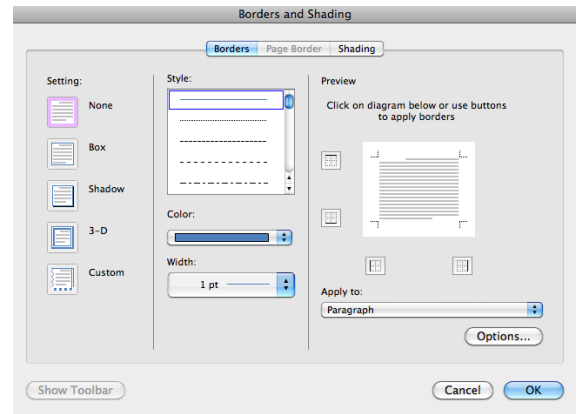
Color Fill

To modify the shading/create a color fill, click the Shading button at the top of the dialog box (center-right). From there you can choose a color and style to fill your shaded area.

Spacing
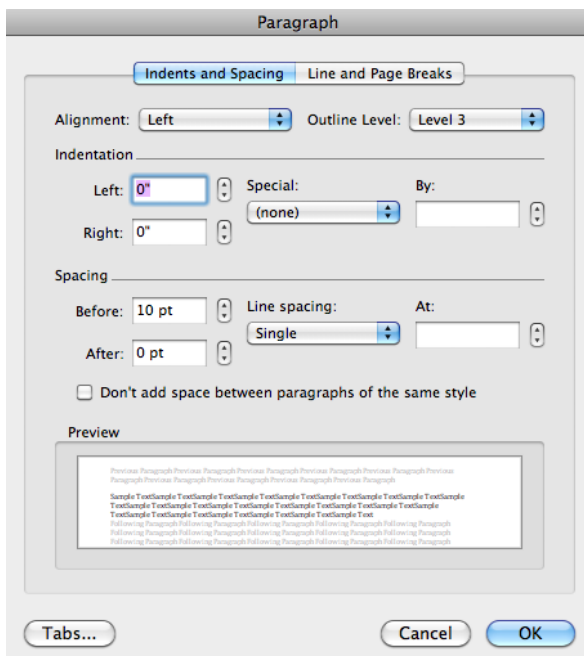
To ensure that your document is spaced precisely and consistently, modify the spacing in Styles.

Click the Format menu (see page 2) and choose Paragraph from the list that appears to open the Paragraph dialog box.

From here, you can modify the spacing before and after each element of the selected style. If your chosen style is a header, you may want it to be very close to the text it is about, but separated from the previous text. In that case, increase the spacing before and decrease the spacing after

Cascading and Based On

Word Styles allow you to base styles on each other. This feature is useful, for example, when you have headings and subheadings which you would like to look similar, but not exactly the same.

You can create your first heading (Heading 1) as desired, then base Heading 2 on Heading 1.

All the design elements you chose for Heading 1 will now be applied to Heading 2.

This feature is even more helpful later in the design process. If you decide you don't like an element of your Heading design, you can change that element in Heading 1, and the change will be applied to all styles based on Heading 1.

Styles, once applied, make changing elements throughout a document a breeze. When you modify a style, it will change all pieces of text with that style applied to it.

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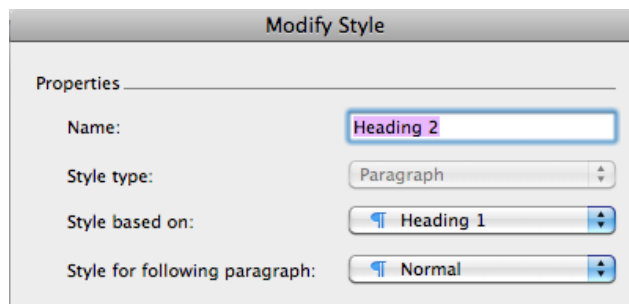
Using Microsoft Word Styles will save you a lot of time while creating your documents, and make formatting fast and easy. The features included in Word Styles will help you design your documents more precisely and make them look more professional.