Tables - Tips, Tricks, and Answers

Tables

There are a number of quick tricks you can use in tables for things such as inserting objects and formatting the table for printing. Tables can become quite cumbersome in Word and somewhat confusing if you are not sure how to manage the many elements involved. Follow the simple steps in these articles to learn how to do these tasks and more with tables in Word.

The following articles are available for the 'Tables' topic. Click the article's title (shown in **bold**) to see the associated article.

Adding Table Columns to Columns with Merged Cells
Word's table editor allows you to modify the structure of tables in a wide variety of ways. If you want to add columns to a table in which some of your columns include merged cells, the process can be a bit tricky.

Automatic Initial Capitals in Tables
Have you ever started typing words in a table, only to find that Word automatically capitalizes the first word in each cell? This is a part of AutoCorrect, but you can control this behaviour.

Blank Lines Before Tables
Adding a blank line before your table is easy, but Word's behaviour as you attempt to make the insert can depend on where the table is located in the document. Here's the skinny on how Word handles your attempts.

Blank Page Printing after Table at End of Document
When you print, do you get an extra blank page printed at the end of the document? It could be because of the final paragraph mark in the document being pushed to that blank page. This tip discusses ways you can get rid of that unwanted blank page.

Cannot Set Heading Rows in a Table
Word allows you to specify which rows in a table should be considered headings. What if setting the headings doesn't work like you think it should? Here's one thing to check.

Centring a Table
Left-justified tables are great for many document designs, but you may want instead to centre a table between the margins of the page. Here's how you can make Word do the centring.

Changing Spacing Between Table Cells
Need to adjust the space between individual cells in a table? Word gives you a good deal of control over this spacing, as discussed in this tip.

Changing Table Cell Text Direction
When creating a table, you can turn the orientation of the text, within a cell, by ninety degrees in either direction from normal. It's easy to do using either dialog boxes or toolbars, as described in this tip.

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Clearing the Contents of a Table
Want to get rid of information within a table, but not the table itself? Here's a guide to understanding the effects that different editing keys have on table data.

Converting Tables to Text
Need to convert all the tables in your document into plain text? This tip provides a macro that can make quick work of a bunch of tables.

Converting Text Into a Table
Need a block of text to appear in a table? Word can do the conversion for you very quickly.

Copying All Tables to a New Document
Need to make a copy of every single table in a document? There's a quick and easy way to do it using the macro in this tip.

Counting Values in Table Cells
In Excel it is easy to count how many times a certain character occurs in a column of cells. In Word, it is a bit trickier. It could be done with a macro, but there is an even easier way, as described in this tip.

Creating a Split Page
In WordPerfect terminology, a split page allows you to put information side-by-side on opposite halves of the page. If you want to accomplish the same task in Word, the best method is to use a table, as described in this tip.

Creating and Using Standardized Tables
If you have a common table layout that you want to use again and again, you'd benefit by having an easy way to save that layout. The easiest way is to use building blocks.

Deleting a Table
Tired of that old table taking up space in your document? You can get rid of it using a variety of techniques—"some of which are highlighted in this tip.

Differing Column Widths when Pasting
When you move information from one table to another, you may be faced with the problem of making that information fit within the structure of the target table. Here's some techniques you can use to make the post-pasting table look the way you want it to.

Displaying Table Gridlines
For those times when you remove the borders from your tables, Word provides a way that you can display non-printing gridlines. These help you to see the structure of your table.

Drop Shadows for Tables
When adding borders and shading to a document's elements, Word allows you to quickly add drop shadows to paragraphs, text boxes, and other objects. What you cannot easily do is to add a drop-shadow to a table. This tip explains different ways you can still achieve the desired results.

Entering Tabs in a Table
When you press the Tab key while entering info into a table, Word dutifully moves to the

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next table cell. If you don't want to do this, but instead want to add the Tab into a cell, you'll appreciate the techniques in this tip.

Filling Table Cells with a Macro

Want to stuff a value into each cell of a table? You can either type the value over and over and over again, or you can use the short macros described in this tip.

Filling Table Cells with Sequential Numbers

Excel makes it very easy to add sequential numbers to a range of cells. Not so in Word's tables, where adding such numbers can be a bit trickier. This tip examines four different ways you can add the desired numeric sequence.

Find and Replace in a Column or Row

Need to search for information in a table? Word allows you to easily limit your search to an entire column or row, as described in this tip.

Finding a Cell Reference

Want to know what the reference address is for a particular cell in a table? Word won't tell you, but you can use a macro to figure it out.

Finding Text at the End of a Table Cell

How do you use Find and Replace to locate information at the end of a table cell? Interestingly enough, there is no way to do this in Word. You can, however, utilize other Find and Replace capabilities for your own workaround.

Formatting an ASCII Table with Spaces

When you get a text file from a program other than Word, tabular information may be formatted with nothing but spaces in between columns. You can easily convert such information to Word's native table structure by using the macro in this tip.

Formatting an ASCII Table with Tabs

If you get a document from a co-worker that has tabs used to line up tabular information, you might want to change that type of formatting to a regular table. Word provides some capabilities to do this, but you may want to use the macro presented in this tip to make the conversion even easier.

Formatting Lots of Tables

Do you need a quick way to format your tables? Believe it or not, there are several tools you can use from Word's arsenal to make table formatting easier and easier.

Freezing Cell Size when Inserting Pictures

Insert a picture into a table cell, and you may quickly find that the table is no longer the size you expected. Here's how to make sure that the cells in your table don't resize themselves when you insert an image.

Headings in Tables Not Showing in TOC

Word includes a couple of built-in tools that rely upon the use of heading styles in your document. These tools include tables of contents and the Navigation pane. When all your headings don't show up in one or both of these, it can be bothersome.

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Hiding Gridlines

For those times when you remove the borders from your tables, Word provides a way that you can display non-printing gridlines. These help you to see the structure of your table.

Hiding Table Rows on a Printout

When you work with tables in your document, you may want to hide some of rows in those tables so that they don't print out. There are a few ways you can approach the problem, and this tip shows you how to absolutely hide the entire row.

Inconsistent Repeating of a Table Header Row

When you have a table that extends over multiple pages, you may want to have Word repeat a row or two at the top of each page. This is easy to set up, but if you don't get the results you expect, it could be because of one of the four problem areas described in this tip.

Index Number for the Active Table

For some programming needs, it is important to determine the index of an object within a collection of such objects. This tip discusses ways you can determine the index number of a table within the Tables collection.

Jumping to a Table Row

Need to jump to a particular row in a table? Word provides an easy way to jump to all sorts of things, but it doesn't seem that table rows are among the targets. Here are some ways you can get to where you want, though.

Jumping to Tables

If your document contains quite a few tables, you may find it helpful to jump quickly from one table to another. There are two ways you can do this: using Go To and the Object Browser.

Jumping to the Ends of Table Columns

Need a quick shortcut to jump to the top or bottom of a table column? Here's the two shortcuts you are searching for.

Jumping to the Ends of Table Rows

Need to jump from one end of a table row to another? Word provides a couple of handy shortcuts that can make this type of navigation a snap.

Keep Your Headings in View

Headings on a table are very important when it comes to understanding what is in the table. This tip explains an easy way you can keep those headings in view when working with very long tables.

Keeping an Image Centred in a Table Cell

Tables are often used in Word documents to help with page layout. This may lead you to inserting images within the cells of a table. If you want to keep those images centred both horizontally and vertically, you'll appreciate the information in this tip.

Keeping Table Rows Together

When you create a table that extends beyond a single page, you may want to make sure that

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the information in a table row doesn't span a page break. You can make sure that Word presents the table the way you expect by adjusting the table formatting.

Line Numbering and Tables

Some types of documents (such as legal documents) may require that individual lines of text be numbered. If you use tables to organize the data that appears on the page, you may be surprised when your text lines don't have line numbers. Here's why that happens and some workarounds you can explore.

Noting Table Rows Containing a Character

If you want to have Word highlight rows in a table that contain a certain character, you need to resort to using a macro. This tip shows how such a macro could work to give the desired results.

Nudging a Table

When laying out a page, you often need to move objects around to get them into just the right position. Word allows you to "nudge" most objects, which means to move them some miniscule amount up, down, left, or right. Not so with tables, as you discover in this tip.

Overriding Automatic Numbering of Tables

Word lets you add automatic numbering to different elements of your document. It does not, however, allow much flexibility in how those numbers are applied.

Picking a Contiguous Range of Table Cells

Creating a table in Word is a relatively simple task. When you want to format or edit information in the table, often the first step is to select the cells you want to affect. Word provides several techniques you can use to select those cells.

Placing Text in Empty Table Cells

Tables are often used to organize information into an understandable format. If your company requires that tables in formal reports always contain something in every cell, you may long for a way to speed up making sure that cells aren't empty. Here's a couple of ways you can approach the problem.

Preventing a Frame when Converting a Table to Text

Tables, in Word, can either be inline with the rest of your text or the text can wrap around the table. If you have wrapping set to Around and you convert the table to text, then you end up with your text in a frame. Here are two ways to address this problem and end up with your text in the body of the document.

Printing Only Selected Rows from a Table

Tables are a great way to organize the information in a document. If your table gets quite long, you may not want to print the entire table. This tip looks at several ways to print only a portion of the table based on the contents of a particular column.

Putting Something in Every Cell of a Table

Need to make sure that all the cells of a table have something in them? It's easy to do with a handy little macro.

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Quickly Accessing the Column Tab
If you need to quickly display the Column tab of the Table Properties dialog box, here are some handy tricks you can use. (Two tricks are provided in this tip.)

Quickly Moving Your Table
For those who love to use the mouse during editing, you can use the little critter to help move your tables to exactly where you want them. Using click-and-drag techniques, you can make quick work of the move.

Removing Leading Spaces in a Table
If you work with data imported from the Web or with documents prepared by others, you may have tables that have leading spaces in a number of the cells. This tip examples three different ways that you can get rid of these leading spaces.

Resizing Very Large Tables
When pasting a table into your document, you might discover that it extends beyond the right margin of your page. Here are three different ways you can gain control over the table and make it fit within the page's margins.

Resizing Your Table
Need to make your table a different size? It's easy to do, using the same general technique you use when resizing a graphic. This tip walks you through the steps to do the resizing.

Selecting a Column or Row in a Table
Selecting rows and columns in tables is a common task. Because of this, Word provides a couple of ways you can accomplish it, as described in this tip.

Selecting a Table
There are a couple of different ways you can select an entire table in Word. The methods and shortcuts are described in this tip.

Selecting Individual Cells in a Table
Many times, before applying formatting or doing another operation, you need to select an individual cell in a table. Here's the quickest ways to make the selection.

Setting a Default Table Border Width
When you insert a table into your document, it uses a standard-weight line around each cell in the table. If you want to change that default line weight, you may be out of luck. Here are a couple of macros you can use to make it easier to change the line weight.

Setting a Standard Column Width
If you have a bunch of tables in your document, you may want to adjust the column widths of all of those tables. Here are two ways you could accomplish the task.

Setting Table Values to Three Decimal Places
If you import information into a document from another program, the values you import may not be exactly to your liking. For instance, you might need to limit imported data to three decimal places. The best and fastest ways to perform this task are discussed in this tip.

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Setting Up Multi-page Columns

Do you need a page layout that features columns that progress vertically across pages instead of horizontally across a page? If so, then columns may not be the best approach to use. Try a table, instead!

Splitting a Table

Table getting too long? Need to move part of a table to somewhere else in your document? You can easily split an existing table into pieces by using the three simple steps in this tip.

Stopping Enter from being Pressed In a Form

If you create a form using Word, chances are good that you don't want a user to mess up the layout of the form by pressing Enter where they shouldn't. Here's a tip that explains what is happening and how you can best protect against users distorting the form.

Summing a Table Column

Need to add a sum to a column of figures in a table? Word makes it relatively easy to provide the sum you need.

Suppressing a Zero in a Calculated Sum

You can use fields to calculate a sum of values in a table column. Here are two ways you can modify what the fields display if the sum is zero.

Tabbing from One Table to the Next

Press the Tab key in a table, and Word dutifully moves to the next cell in that table. Press it in the last cell of a table, and Word adds a new row to the table. Here's how to make that last-cell behaviour be something other than what it is.

Table Borders Won't Print

Print a table and you may be surprised if it has no borders. That could be because you actually have the borders turned off. Confused? You don't need to be (read this tip).

Table Header Rows after a Manual Page Break

Insert a manual page break into the middle of a table, and you may find that subsequent pages of the table don't always look like you expect. The reason is discussed in this tip, along with some solutions to get around the problem.

Table Numbers are Skipped

What do you do if you add numbered captions to an element of your document (such as tables) and Word skips a number? There are a couple of things you can check to discover where the problem lies, as discussed in this tip.

Table Won't Flow to Second Page

Have you ever created a table that never seems to flow to a second page, even when it should? This could be caused by any number of settings within Word, as described in this tip.

Unwanted Numbering on Pasted Tables

When pasting text from another document or from the Web you can have unexpected characters sometimes show up. Many of them may be eliminated during paste by using Paste Special capabilities of Word.

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Unwanted Vertical Lines in a Table

When you print a table that includes borders, those borders should be crisp and clear on the printout. If you get some unexpected lines around the borders, there could be a number of different reasons.

Using Outline Numbering in a Table

Can you put a numbered outline in a table? Yes, you can. But Word is rather prickly when it comes to using the keyboard to navigate that outline.

Viewing Formulas in Table Cells

Word allows you to insert simple formulas, using fields, in table cells. If you want to see these formulas in their entirety, you may need to adjust how Word displays the rows in the table.