

Mastering timesaving tools in Microsoft Office.

By Donna Payne and Bruce Lewis

Hidden Tactics

There are some less visible but highly useful features in Microsoft Office to help you maximize your productivity and save valuable time. This month's column features tips for Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook.

Word

Don't Add Space Between Paragraphs of the Same Style (Word 2002 and higher)

Just when you thought the "Styles" feature could not become any smarter — it did. In Word 2002, Microsoft added the "Don't Add Space Between Paragraphs of the Same Style" option. This allows you to adjust spacing between paragraphs based on the paragraphs that surround it, without creating multiple styles containing the same formatting except for paragraph spacing. For example, you can create a "Bulleted List" style that contains no space

between one item and the next, but adds a space between the list and the next non-bulleted paragraph.

- Create a new document and apply one of Word's "List Bullet" styles. You can do this by displaying the "Styles and Formatting" task pane found in the "Format" drop-down list, then changing the "Show" box at the bottom to "All styles." Scroll through

the list until you find "List Bullet" through "List Bullet 5." Click to apply one of the formats to your current cursor location.

- Hover your mouse over the "List Bullet" drop-down menu at the top of the task pane and scroll to "Modify."
- In the "Modify Style" dialog box click "Format" and choose "Paragraph" from the list.
- Under "Spacing" change the "After" setting to "6 pt."
- Check the option (now enabled) "Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style" (see Figure 1).
- Click "OK" twice to close the open dialog boxes.

Add Words to the Custom Dictionary

The dictionary built into Word contains thousands of words that allow the spelling checker to proof your text. When the option to "Check spelling as you type" is enabled, Word often incorrectly flags words as misspelled. If you don't want to see a correctly spelled word marked with a red line every time you use it, you can add it to the Custom Dictionary — Word's editable file that contains all of the words, terms and phrases you add over time.

- Enable the option to "Check spelling as you type" (from the "Tools" menu, choose "Options," then select the "Spelling & Grammar" tab). Under "Spelling," check the first option (see Figure 2). Click "OK."
- Create a new document and type "McEnzie, Smythe and Arenold."

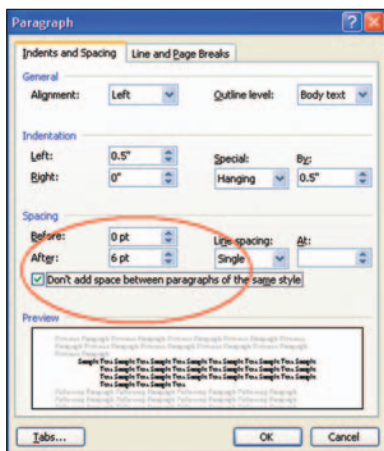


Figure 1. "Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style" option.

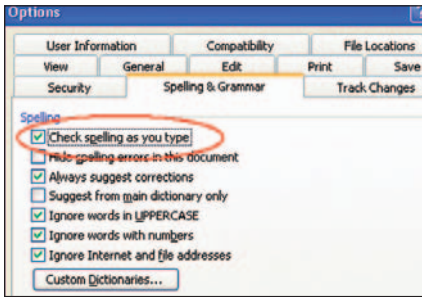


Figure 2. With "Check spelling as you type," Word can incorrectly flag words as misspelled.

- Notice that "McEnzie, Smythe and Arenold" are marked as misspelled.
- Right click "McEnzie" and choose "Add to Dictionary" from the shortcut menu.

Find and Replace Straight Quotes

Smart (curly) quotes have, for the most part, replaced straight quotes as the standard quote style in most legal documents. However, many legacy documents contain a mixture of styles, which can be frustrating when you are trying to create a uniform appearance. Luckily, there is a way to quickly find and replace all of the existing straight quotes with smart quotes.

- Open the document you wish to reformat. From the "Tools" menu choose "AutoCorrect Options," and select the "AutoFormat As You Type" tab.
- Under "Replace as you type" check the option "Straight quotes" with 'smart quotes,' and click "OK."
- From the "Edit" menu choose "Replace."
- Type a quotation mark in the "Find what" and "Replace with" boxes.
- Click "Replace All."

Excel

Insert a Line Break Within a Cell

There are times when you need to add more text or data in the same cell, but with some space between the other information. In Word, all you have to do is press "Shift+Enter" to quickly insert a manual line break within a paragraph, but in Excel that just moves you up to the previous cell. In Excel, the shortcut key to insert a line break in a cell is "Alt+Enter."

Hiding Rows and Columns

To make your spreadsheet easier to read and navigate through, there might be times when you only want to display important information – or, conversely, hide sensitive data from other users. In either case, you quickly can do so by following these steps.

- Select the rows or columns you wish to hide.
- From the "Format" menu choose "Row" or "Column" and click "Hide."
- To unhide columns, select the cells to the left and right of the hidden column, and from the "Format" menu choose "Column" and select "Unhide."
- To unhide rows, select the cells above and below the hidden row. From the "Format" menu choose "Row" and select "Unhide."

PowerPoint

Import a Word Outline Into PowerPoint

If you prefer to draft your presentation outline in Word, you can do so and then import the outline directly into PowerPoint. When you import an outline into PowerPoint, the heading styles ("Level

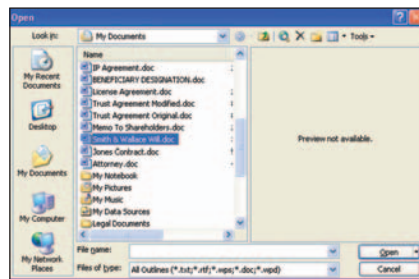


Figure 3. Import outlines created in Word to PowerPoint presentations.

1," "Level 2" and so on) are converted into new slides. Each "Level 1" heading paragraph starts a new slide and the text of the "Level 1" heading is used as the title of the slide. "Level 2" headings are converted into top level bullets, "Level 3" headings are converted into the next level bullet and so on.

- Create an outline in Word using heading styles "Level 1" through "Level 9." Save the document.
- Start PowerPoint and from the "File" menu choose "Open."

- In the "Open" dialog box change the "Files of type" to "All Outlines" (see Figure 3).
- Select the outline (.doc) and click "Open."

Outlook

Propose Alternate Meeting Time (Outlook 2002 and higher)

Have you ever received a meeting request that didn't fit in your schedule? You either had to deny the request, rearrange your schedule or call the other recipients of the request to try to find a more suitable time. With Outlook 2002 and higher, you automatically can propose a new meeting time directly from the meeting request dialog box. You even can use the AutoPick feature to find the next best available time when all attendees are free.

- Open the meeting request.
- Click "Propose New Time."
- In the "Propose New Time" dialog box, find a time when each of the attendees seems to be available or click "AutoPick Next" to let Outlook find it for you.
- Click "Propose Time," then click "Send." The meeting organizer can then accept the new time or propose an alternate time.

Look for additional tips covering Outlook in the January issue of *LAW OFFICE COMPUTING's* new e-magazine, which is free to subscribers. Visit www.lawofficecomputing.com/coming_soon to sign up. **.loc**



Donna Payne is president and founder of Payne Consulting Group, a training and development company headquartered in Seattle. She and the company have authored 10 books on Microsoft Office, including the bestselling series "Word for Law Firms." Payne is a six-time recipient of the Microsoft Most Valuable Professional award and is a member of the Microsoft Legal Advisory Counsel, the American Bar Association, and the American Society of Journalists and Authors. You can reach her at donnapayne@payneconsulting.com.

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