

MICROSOFT WORD 2010

Generating a Table of Contents

WHAT DOES “GENERATE” MEAN?

When we say that Microsoft Word generates a table of contents (or something else, such as an index), we mean that Microsoft Word automatically constructs the table of contents (or index) for us. We click a button and in a flash, Microsoft Word goes through our document, collects the right elements for our table of contents, puts them in order, and then VOILA! displays them on the page for us.

It seems like magic!



NOT MAGIC AT ALL

Of course, it's not magic – it's skillful programming. But one thing we always should remember is the old adage about computers:

Garbage In, Garbage Out

This reminds us that computers, as magical as they may seem sometimes, really are just outputting information in response to actions we take. If we put bad information in, we'll get bad information out. If we put good information in, we'll get good information out.



WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON

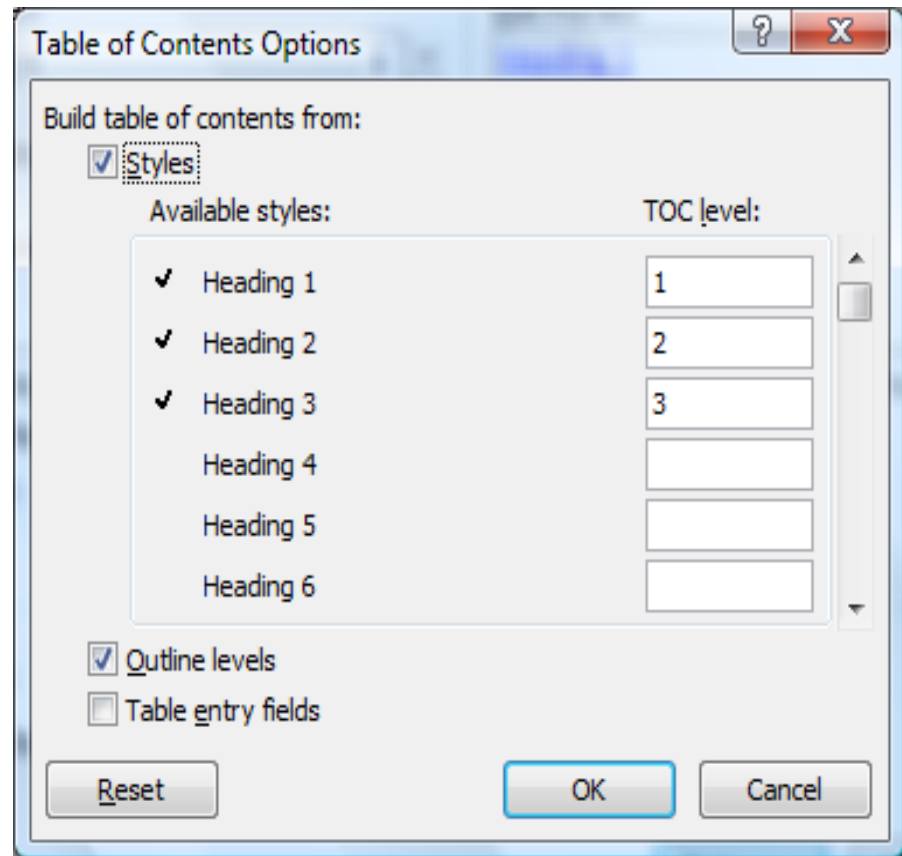
When Microsoft Word generates a table of contents, it's really going through your document and looking for paragraph styles. This is one of the reasons why paragraph styles are so important!

By default, Microsoft's programmers designed Word to search for text that had the Heading 1, Heading 2, and Heading 3 paragraph styles applied to them. Then after collecting those in its search, Word displays that text in your table of contents along with the page numbers upon which the text was found. Word doesn't really know what text should be included in your table of contents – it just knows what paragraph styles should be included.



WHERE YOU SET THESE OPTIONS

You “tell” Word what paragraph styles you want it to look for on the Table of Contents Options dialog box. You can access this dialog box from the Table of Contents dialog box. Notice that there are checkmarks in front of the paragraph styles Word will look for when constructing a TOC, and the level of each is at the right.



IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE THESE

You can select other paragraph styles to include in your TOC or you can stop Word from using paragraph styles in your TOC by doing the following:

1. To add another paragraph style for Word to use in constructing your TOC, type a TOC level in the box to the right of the name of the paragraph style. A checkmark will automatically be displayed in front of the name of the paragraph style.
2. To stop Word from using text associated with a paragraph style in your TOC, remove the number in the box to the right of the name of the paragraph style. The checkmark will be removed.
3. Click OK after you've done either of these things.



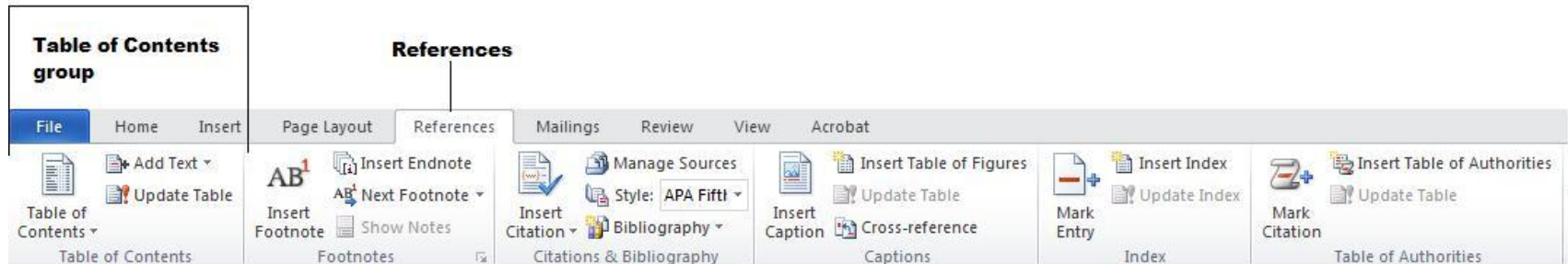
GENERATING YOUR TABLE OF CONTENTS

Now that you understand the “magic” behind the process, here are the steps for generating a table of contents in Word 2010:

1. Open a Word document.
2. If you haven't already applied heading styles to some of the text, do so now. Be sure to use Heading 1, Heading 2, and Heading 3 paragraph styles.
3. After you're certain your document is formatted with these heading styles, place your cursor in front of the first line of the document and press CTRL + ENTER to create a blank page in front of it.



4. Place your cursor at the top of the new blank page.
5. Select the **References** tab on the Ribbon.



6. Look for the Table of Contents group in the Ribbon. It should be the first one on the left.
7. Click the arrow at the right bottom corner of the Table of Contents button and select one of the built-in tables of contents styles listed there

OR

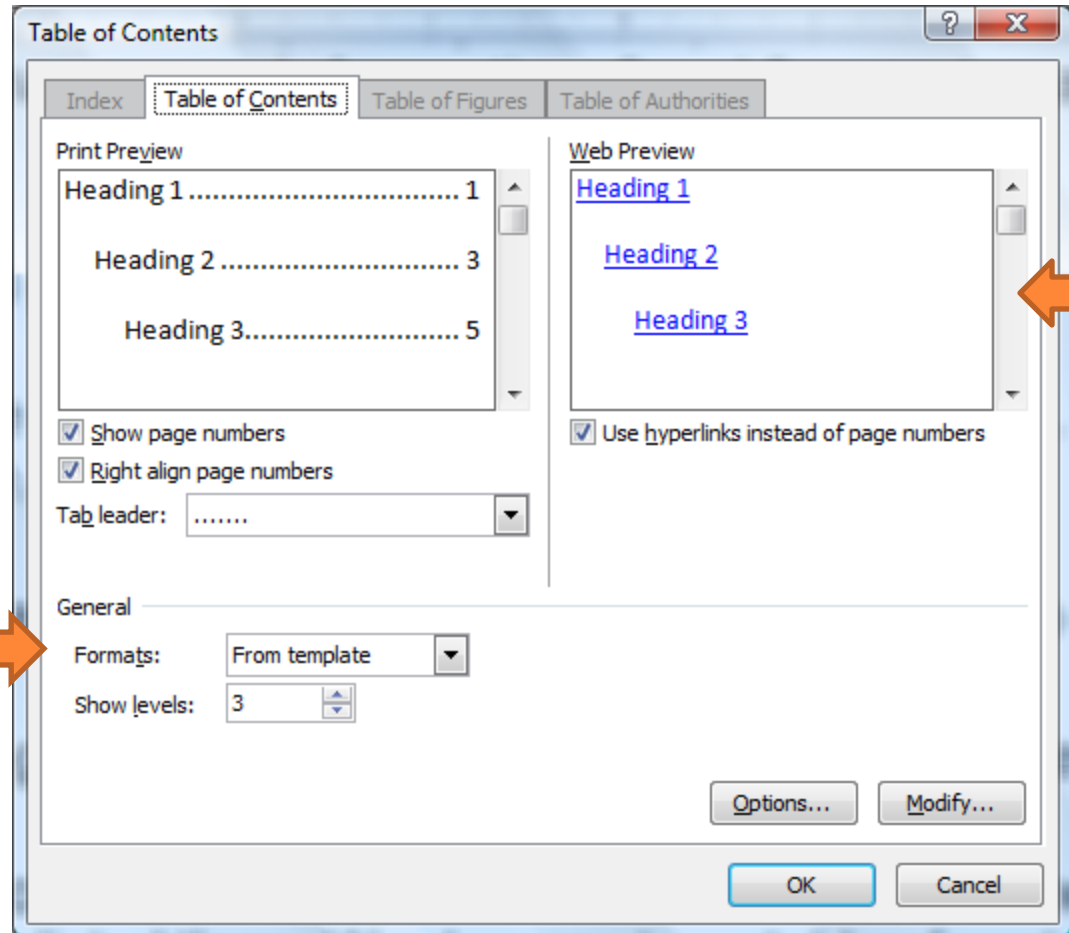
select “Insert Table of Contents” to open the Table of Contents dialog box.



8. If you chose “Insert Table of Contents,” the Table of Contents dialog box opened.

9. Click the arrow at the end of the Formats box to see the options you have. Note that previews of each options you select are shown in the Preview pane.

10. When you’ve made your selection, click **OK**. Your table of contents will be generated.



TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR TOC

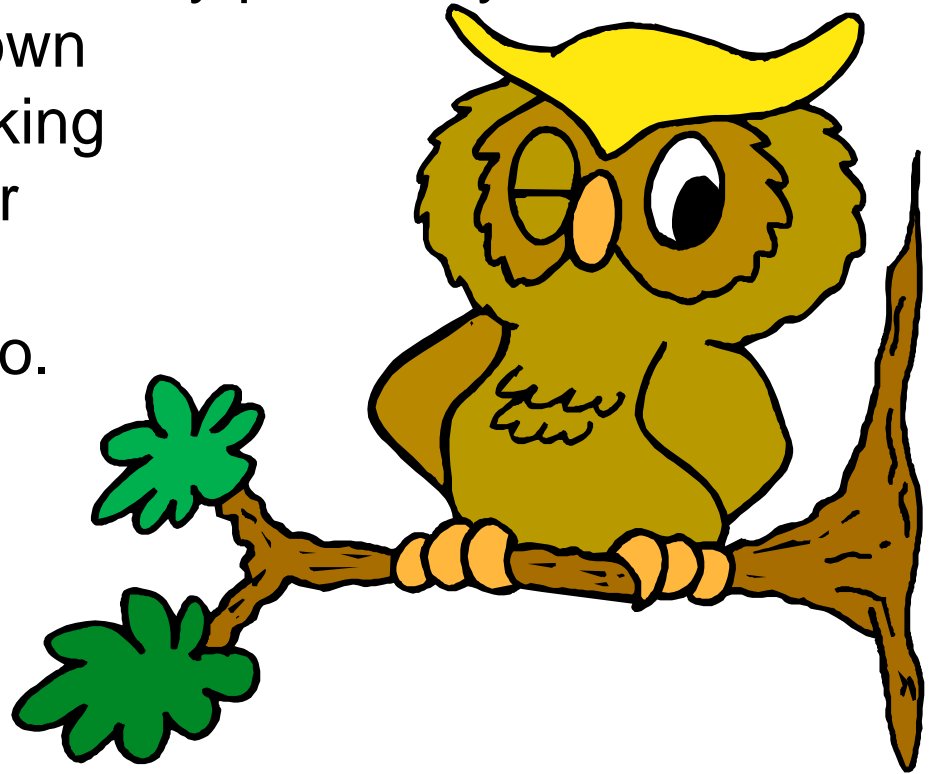
Any manual changes you make to your table of contents will be lost if you have to generate your table of contents a second time. Changes should be made to the text that Word is using to construct your TOC – not to the table of contents itself.

If you make changes to your document after generating your table of contents, you can update it by right-clicking anywhere in the table of contents, selecting on the context menu **Update Field**, and then selecting either **Update Entire Table** (my preference), or **Update Page Numbers Only**.



GOOD TO KNOW

You can quickly navigate to any place in your document by holding down the CTRL key while clicking the page number in your table of contents of the section you want to go to.



Now you know how to let Word do the work for you when you need to insert a table of contents in your document!

