

Wordprocessing Handout 1

Wordprocessing Basics

Wordprocessing is using a computer application to create, edit, format and print documents.

Common wordprocessing programs today are *Microsoft Word*, *WordPerfect*, *AppleWorks* and *WordPro*. Wordprocessing applications specifically designed for children include *Storybook Weaver Deluxe*, *The Writing Center*, *Creative Writer* and *ClarisWorks for Kids*.

Word wrap is a wordprocessing feature that automatically moves continuing text to the line below when the previous line becomes full. The ENTER key should be pressed only at the end of a paragraph to move the cursor to the next line.

The paragraph symbol ¶ indicates the end of each paragraph, but does not appear on the printed document. Other non-printing characters include a raised dot • representing a space, and an arrow → for a tab. Users may choose whether to display these non-printing characters.

Wordprocessors today are **WYSIWYG** in format (pronounced *wizzy-wig*, short for What You See Is What You Get). The screen shows the appearance of the printed document.

The main features of wordprocessing can be categorized as either editing or formatting functions. **Editing** features allow users to alter the content of text. **Formatting** commands affect how information appears within a document. Formatting can be performed while text is entered or after the text is complete. To format text or paragraphs after text has been entered, highlight the text or paragraphs, then choose the desired formatting options.

Wordprocessors allow users to access a variety of fonts. A **font** is an individual design of letters, numbers and punctuation characters. Many thousands of fonts exist. Fonts can be categorized as either serif or sans serif. *Serif* refers to cross strokes at the end points of letters and numbers, and *sans* is French for *without*. Compare the following:

Courier New is an example of a serif font.

Arial is an example of a sans serif font.

Consider using a serif font for text in the body of a document because it is easier to read. Sans serif fonts are typically used for shorter amounts of text, such as titles.

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Wordprocessing Basics [continued]

The size of a font is measured in **points**. One inch is equal to 72 points, and one centimeter is equal to 28 points. Font sizes of 10 point or 12 point are common for text in the body of documents.

The **font style** refers to the defining characteristics that can be applied to fonts. The most common font styles are *italic*, underline and **bold**. In general, avoid applying multiple styles, such as bold and italics, to text.

Bullets are symbols (often a solid circle or square) used to distinguish items in a list. Bullets are used when listing items of relatively equal importance. Numbers can be inserted automatically to signify order in a list of items.

Margins are the blank spaces at the top, bottom, left and right edges of a document. The word wrap feature keeps text within the specified margins. Most printers require margins of at least half an inch.

Text alignment (also known as justification) refers to how text appears in relation to the left and right margins. Alignment applies to all of the text within a paragraph. Compare the alignment of the following four sentences.

This sentence is left aligned.

This sentence is center aligned.

This sentence is right aligned.

Other sentences in this document are justified (also known as full justification), meaning the text is aligned with both the left and the right margins.

The **header** comprises the text or graphics that appear at the top of every page in a multipage document. Text or graphics at the bottom of each page comprise the **footer**. Page numbers are often inserted into the header or footer. It is possible to create different headers and footers for odd and even pages, as well as for the first page of a document.

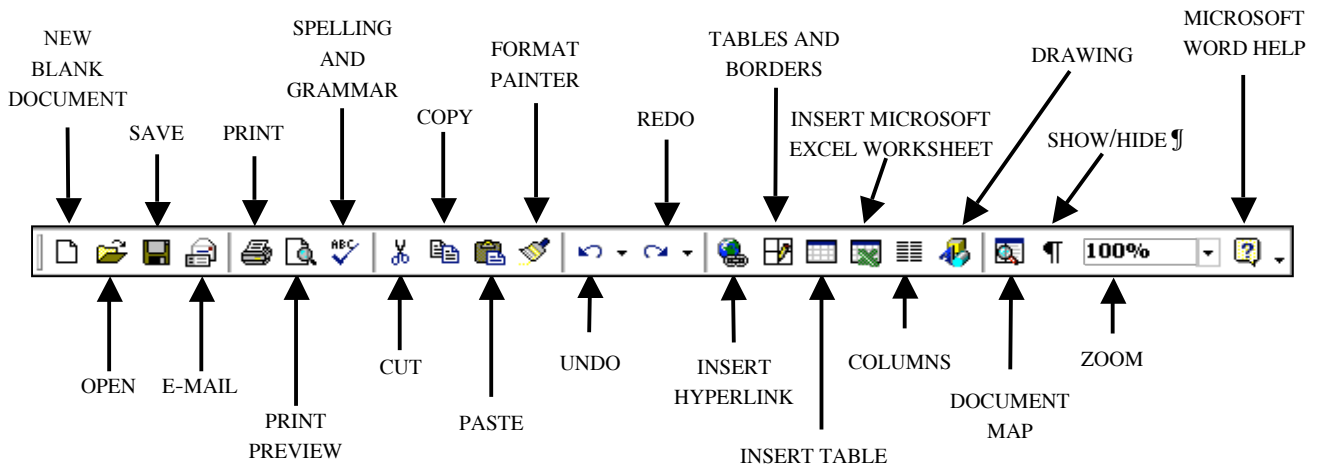
A **footnote** is a note of reference or a comment that appears at the bottom of a page. An **endnote** is a note of reference or a comment that appears at the end of the document. To let readers know that a footnote or an endnote exists for a particular section of body text, superscript numbers (or sometimes symbols) are inserted after the corresponding sentence.

Clipart is a collection of previously created graphics that can be added to documents.

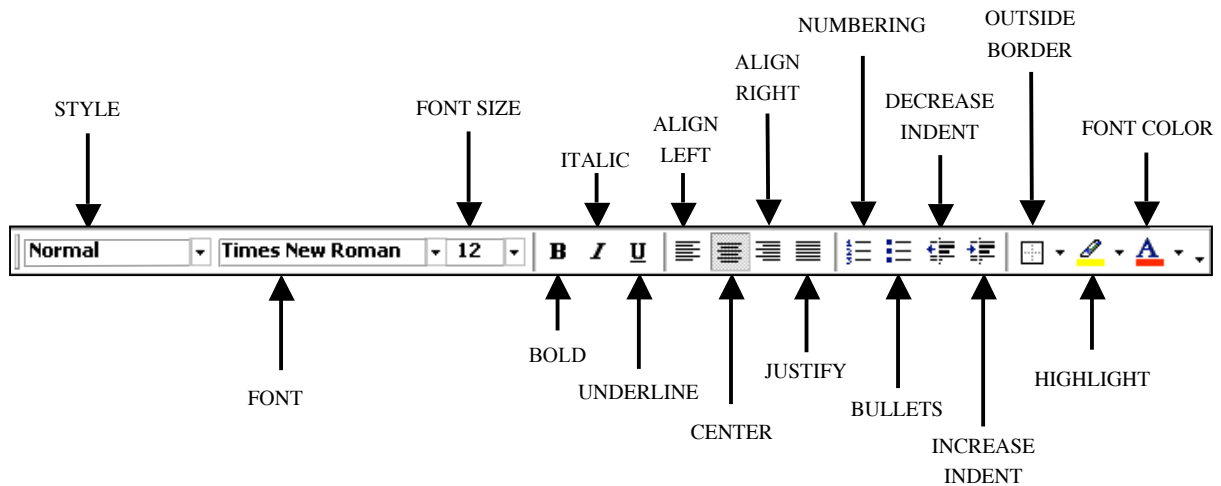
Documents can be printed in different **page orientations**. **Portrait** orientation refers to a printed page that is taller than it is wide. Portrait orientation is the default printing option in almost all applications. **Landscape** orientation is used to print a page that is wider than it is tall.

Using Microsoft Word 2000

Standard toolbar



Formatting toolbar



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