



LibreOffice
The Document Foundation

Writer Guide

Chapter 6

Introduction to Styles

Paragraph, Page, Character, and List Styles

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Acknowledgments

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Note for Mac users

Some keystrokes and menu items are different on a Mac from those used in Windows and Linux. The table below gives some common substitutions for the instructions in this chapter. For a more detailed list, see the application Help.

Windows or Linux	Mac equivalent	Effect
Tools > Options menu selection	LibreOffice > Preferences	Access setup options
<i>Right-click</i>	<i>Control+click</i>	Open context menu
<i>Ctrl (Control)</i>	⌘ (<i>Command</i>)	Used with other keys
<i>F5</i>	<i>Shift+⌘+F5</i>	Open the Navigator
<i>F11</i>	<i>⌘+T</i>	Open Styles & Formatting window

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What are styles?

Most people are used to writing documents according to *physical* attributes. For example, you might specify the font family, font size, and weight (for example: Helvetica 12pt, bold).

Styles are *logical* attributes. We use styles every day. For example, there are different styles of personal computer: desktop, tablet, netbook, laptop, and so on. Each has its own distinctive set of properties. You never say “my computer is a low-weight, one-piece unit with an LCD screen attached to a rectangular casing containing the computing components and the keyboard”. Instead, you would probably say that you have a laptop.

LibreOffice styles are a way to do the same thing for your document. Using styles means that you could stop saying “font size 14pt, Times New Roman, bold, centered” and start saying “title” for describing that particular font usage. In other words, styles mean that you shift the emphasis from what the text *looks like* to what the text *is*.

Why use styles?

Styles help improve consistency in a document. They also make major formatting changes easy. For example, you might decide to change the indentation of all paragraphs or change the font of all titles. For a long document, this simple task could be prohibitive. Styles make the task easy.

The time is 9:50 AM, and Jane is finishing the 30-page paper for school that is due at 10:00 AM. She looks over the assignment one more time, and suddenly she realizes that:

- The text must use Arial font instead of Times New Roman.
- The headings must be dark blue and indented.
- The title must appear at the top-right of every page except the first.
- Even-numbered pages must have a wider right margin, and odd-numbered pages must have a wider left margin.

Thankfully, Jane used LibreOffice Writer and styles. She makes all the changes in only two minutes and hands in the paper on time.

Style categories

LibreOffice Writer has five style categories:

- *Paragraph* styles affect entire paragraphs represented with those styles.
- *Character* styles affect a block of text inside a paragraph.
- *Page* styles affect page formatting (page size, margin, and the like).
- *Frame* styles affect frames and graphics.
- *List* styles affect outlines, numbered lists, and bulleted lists.

In the same way that characters are the building blocks for creating words, paragraphs are the building blocks of every document. Headings (subheads) are paragraphs; headers, footers, and numbered lists are also paragraphs. Paragraph styles are, therefore, the most frequently used styles and are the ones treated in most detail in this and the next chapter.

The Styles and Formatting window

Styles are available through a floating or dockable window called *Styles and Formatting*, shown in Figure 1. This window is at the center of styles management. Do not worry if, at first, some contents of this section seem obscure while progressing through this or the next chapter. This guide describes how to use all these functions.

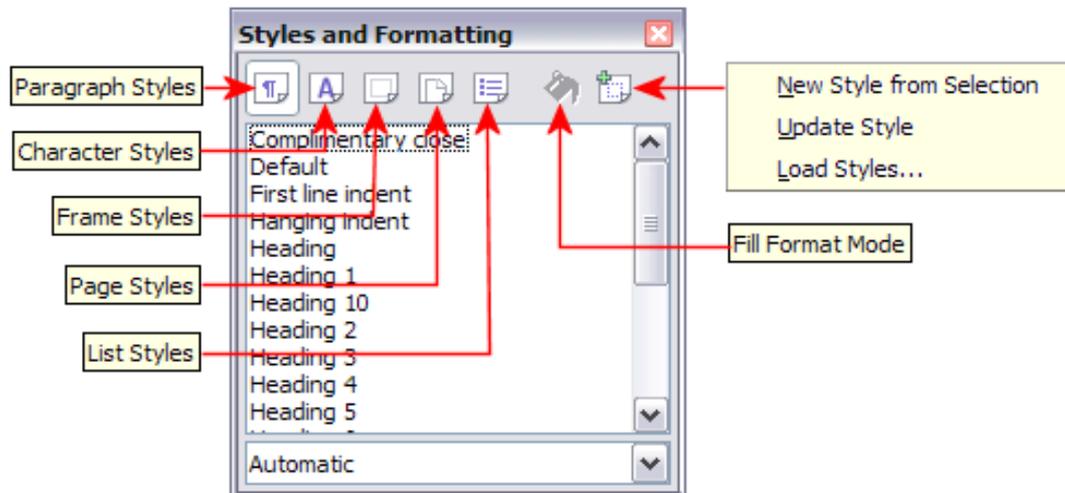


Figure 1: The Styles and Formatting window for Writer, showing paragraph styles

To open the Styles and Formatting window, do *any one* of the following:

- Click on the  icon located at the left-hand end of the Formatting toolbar.
- Select **Format > Styles and Formatting**.
- Press *F11*.

Tip

You can move the Styles and Formatting window to a convenient position on the screen or dock it to an edge.

Style selection basics

The first five icons at the top of the Styles and Formatting window select the category of styles to work on. Click on one of these icons to display a list of styles in that category, such as paragraph or character styles.

To apply a character style to existing text, select the text and then double-click on the name of the style in the *Character Styles* list. To apply any other style, put the cursor in the paragraph, frame, or page you want to modify and double-click on the name of the style in the corresponding section. You can select more than one paragraph or frame and apply the same style to all of them at the same time.

Using Fill Format mode

The sixth icon at the top of the Styles and Formatting window activates the *Fill Format* mode. You can use Fill Format to apply a style to many different areas quickly without having to go back to the Styles and Formatting window and double-click every time. This method is useful for formatting many scattered paragraphs, words, or other items with the same style, and it may be easier to use than making multiple selections first and then applying a style to all of them.

- 1) Open the Styles and Formatting window (Figure 1) and select a style.
- 2) Click the **Fill Format Mode** icon .
- 3) To apply a paragraph, page, or frame style, hover the mouse over the paragraph, page, or frame and click. To apply a character style, hold down the mouse button while selecting the characters. Clicking on a word applies the character style to that word.
- 4) Repeat step 3 until you have made all the changes for that style.
- 5) To quit the Fill Format mode, click the icon again or press the *Esc* key.

Caution



When this mode is active, a right-click anywhere in the document undoes the last Fill Format action. Be careful not to accidentally right-click and mistakenly undo actions you want to keep.

Using New Style from Selection, Update Style, and Load Styles

Styles are part of the document properties, therefore changes made to a style or new styles you create are only available within the document they belong to. Styles always stay with a document. So, for example, if you e-mail a document to another person, the styles go with it.

If you want to reuse modified or new styles in other documents, you need to either save the styles in a template (see Chapter 10) or copy the styles into the document where you want to use them.

The last button in the toolbar of the Styles and Formatting window is a menu button that gives access to three submenu functions: *New Style from Selection*, *Update Style*, and *Load Styles*.

New Style from Selection

Use the first function of the button to create a new style from the formatting of an object in the current document. For instance, you can change the formatting of a paragraph or frame until it appears as you like, and then you can turn that object's formatting into a new style. This procedure can save time because you do not have to remember all the formatting settings you want, as is necessary when creating a new style with the Style dialog. In addition, unlike when setting the formatting parameters in the pages of dialogs, which you will learn to do later, you can immediately see how the objects will look when formatted with the style you are creating.

Follow these steps to create a new style from a selection:

- 1) Change the formatting of the object (paragraph, frame, etc.) to your liking.
- 2) From the icons at the top of the window, choose the type of style to create (paragraph, character, and so on).
- 3) In the document, select the item to save as a style.
- 4) Go back to the Styles and Formatting window and click the **New Style from Selection** icon.

In the Create Style dialog, type a name for the new style. The list shows the names of existing custom styles of the selected type, if any. Click **OK** to save the new style.

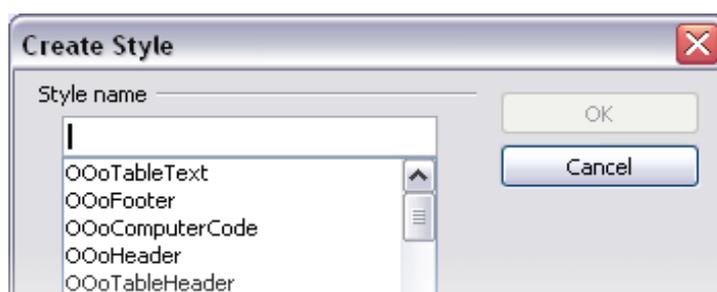


Figure 2: Dialog to name a new style from selection

Update Style (from a selection)

Let's use paragraph styles as an example.

- 1) Create a new paragraph (or select an existing paragraph) and edit all the properties you want to alter in the style (such as indentation, font properties, alignment, and others).

Caution



Make sure that there are uniform properties in this paragraph. For example, if there are two different font sizes in the paragraph which is selected to be used to update the style, that particular property will not be updated.

- 2) Select the paragraph by clicking anywhere in the paragraph.
- 3) In the Styles and Formatting window, select the style you want to update (single-click, not double-click) and then click on the **New Style from Selection** icon and select **Update Style**.

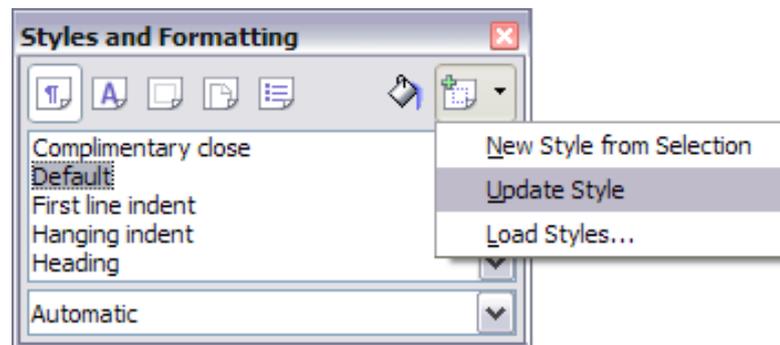


Figure 3: Updating a style from a selection

The procedure to update another type of style (character, page, or frame styles) is the same: select the item in question, modify it, select the style you want to update, and choose **Update Style**.

Load Styles (from a template or document)

The last option under the **New Style from Selection** icon is used to copy styles into the current document by loading them from a template or another document. Using this method, you can copy all styles, or groups of styles, at one time.

- 1) Open the document to copy styles into.
- 2) In the Styles and Formatting window, click on the **New Style from Selection icon** and then on **Load Styles** (see Figure 3).
- 3) In the Load Styles dialog (Figure 4), find and select the template to copy styles from.

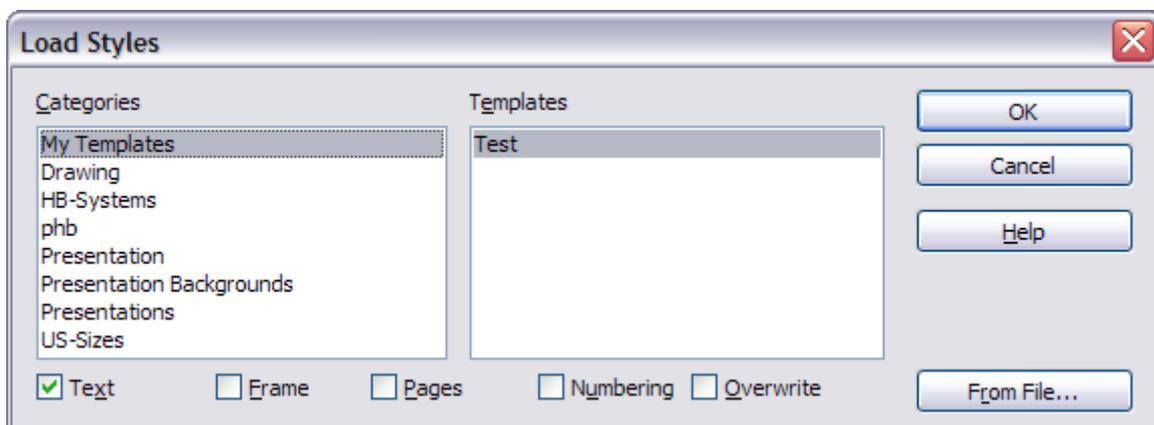


Figure 4: Loading styles from a template

Click on the **From File** button if the styles you want are contained in a text document rather than a template. In this case, a standard file selection dialog opens up, where you can select the desired document.

- 4) Select the options for the types of styles to be copied: Text (Paragraph and Character styles), Frame, Pages, Numbering (List styles). If you select **Overwrite**, the styles being copied will replace any styles of the same names in the target document.
- 5) Click **OK** to copy the styles.

Using the visible styles filters

At the bottom of the Styles and Formatting window (Figure 5), use the drop-down menu to select a filtering criterion for the contents of the main body of the window. Normally, you will find that only a handful of styles are needed in any given document, and it makes sense to have only these styles shown.

So, at the beginning of the writing process, you may want to have access to all the available styles (by selecting **All Styles**), and to exclude some of them from use (right-click each style to be excluded and select **Hide** from the context menu). However, as the document develops, it is useful to reduce the size of the list displayed to only the styles already in use (by selecting **Applied Styles**). If you work on a document where you want to apply special-purpose styles only (such as those styles used in writing this user guide), select instead **Custom Styles**. The **Hierarchical Styles** view is most useful when modifying styles as it reveals which styles are linked together. This topic is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, Working with Styles.

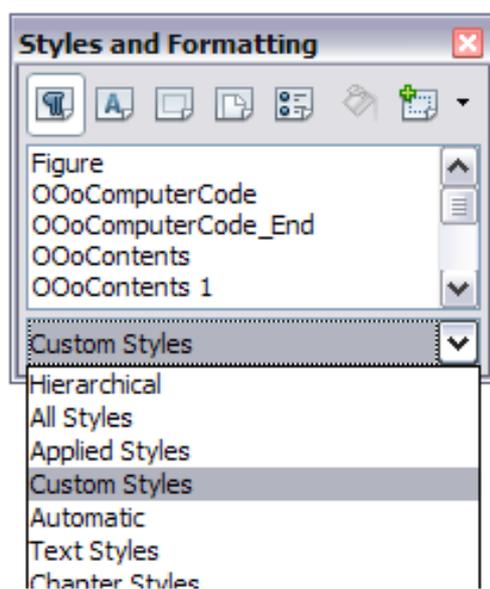


Figure 5: Styles and Formatting filter

If you select the **Paragraph Styles** view in the Styles and Formatting window, the drop-down menu contains many more filtering options so you can view, for example, only **Text Styles**, **Special Styles**, and so on.

Drag-and-drop a selection to create a style

Another way to create a new style is to drag-and-drop a text selection into the Styles and Formatting window.

- 1) Open the Styles and Formatting window.
- 2) Select the style category you are going to create (for example a character style) using one of the five icons in the top left part of the window.

- 3) Select the object you want to base the style on and drag it to the Styles and Formatting window. The cursor changes to indicate whether the operation is possible or not.
- 4) In the Create Style dialog (Figure 2), type a name for the new style and click **OK** to save the style.

Note

You cannot use the drag-and-drop method to create a custom page style.

Applying styles

Styles can be applied easily by means of the Styles and Formatting window. However, alternative ways exist to apply certain styles, as explained in this section.

Applying paragraph styles

When drafting a document, the most used style is the paragraph style. LibreOffice offers two quick alternatives to the Styles and Formatting window to apply this category of style: the *Apply Style* list and the *Format Paintbrush* icon.

Using the Apply Style list

When a paragraph style is in use in a document, the style name appears on the *Apply Style* list near the left end of the formatting bar, to the right of the *Styles and Formatting* icon. You can select styles from this menu, just as you can from the Styles and Formatting window.

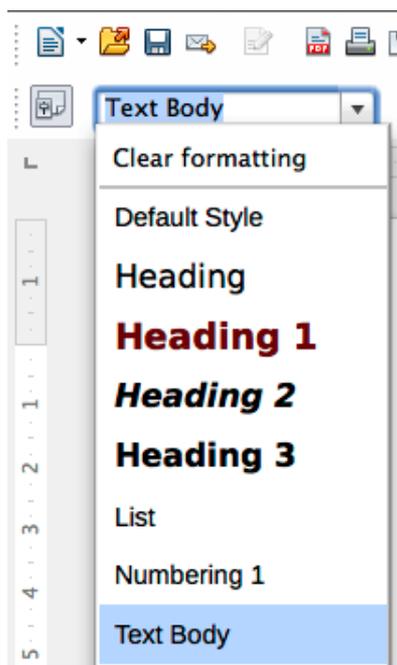


Figure 6: Apply Style list

To apply a style from this menu, place the cursor in the paragraph to change, click on the desired style or use the up or down arrow keys to move through the list, then press *Enter* to apply the highlighted style.

Tip

Select **More** at the bottom of the list to open the Styles and Formatting window.

Using the Format Paintbrush

You can use the Format Paintbrush to apply a certain paragraph style to another paragraph or to a group of paragraphs. Start by placing the cursor inside the paragraph you want to copy. Table 1 shows the formatting copied as a result of a particular cursor position. Table 2 shows the formatting painted as a result of the format copied and the cursor position when painting. Cases A, B, and C refer to the example shown in Figure 7.

Table 1: Cursor positioning

Case	Type of selection	Action
A	No selection. Cursor in the space between two words.	Copies the formatting of the paragraph and the character formatting of the next character in the text flow direction.
B	No selection, cursor in any word.	As above.
C	Text selected.	Copies the formatting of the last selected character and the paragraph.

Table 2: Format Paintbrush click position

Case selection	Paint position	Result
A, or B, or C	In a space between words.	Paragraph formatting only.
A	In a word or selection.	As above.
B, or C	In a word or a selection.	Paragraph formatting applied. Word or selection formatted with character format from original paragraph.

Now do one of the following:

- 1) To format a single paragraph:
 - a) Click the **Format Paintbrush** icon  in the standard toolbar.
 - b) The cursor changes into an ink bottle . Now click the paragraph (see Table 2) to which you want to apply the copied style.
If you press *Shift+Ctrl* while clicking, you exclude any character formatting wherever you select to click.
 - c) The paragraph is formatted and the cursor then returns to normal
- 2) To format more than one paragraph:
 - a) *Double-click* the **Format Paintbrush** icon.
 - b) The cursor changes shape. Now click each of the paragraphs (see Table 2) to which you want to apply the copied style.
If you press *Shift+Ctrl* while clicking, you exclude any character formatting wherever you select to click.
 - c) The paragraphs are formatted. Click the **Format Paintbrush** icon once more.
 - d) The cursor then returns to normal.

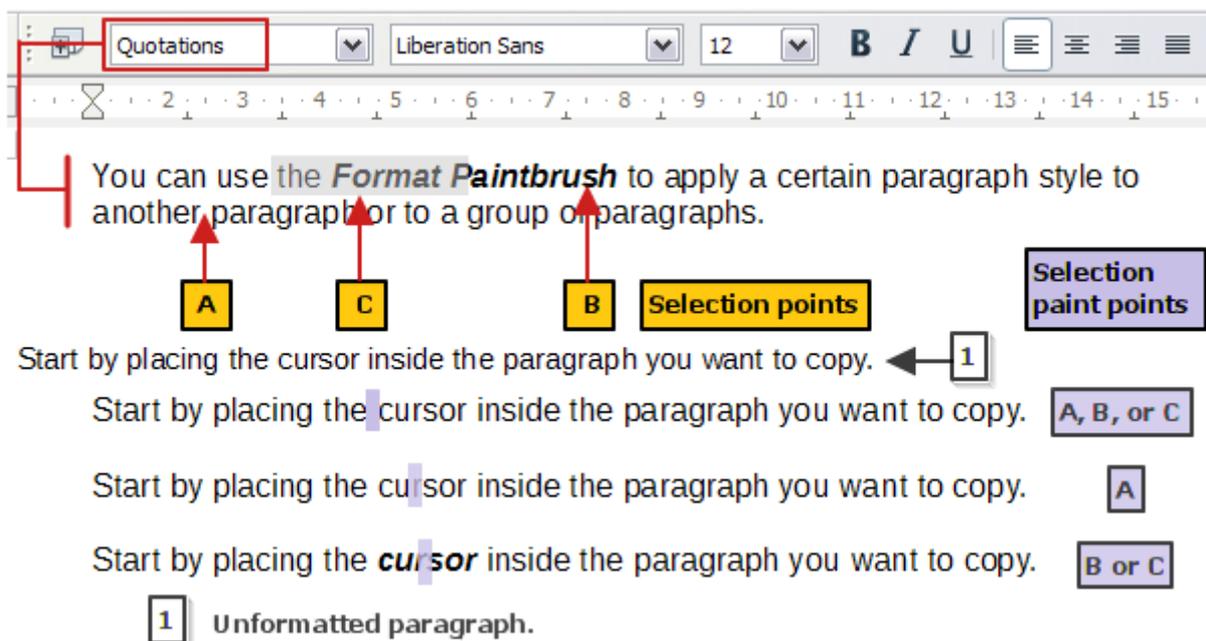


Figure 7: Showing the results of Table 1 and Table 2 on the unformatted paragraph

Example: Applying a paragraph style

Let's see the three methods described above in action with an example.

To use the *Styles and Formatting* method:

- 1) Create a new document (choose **File > New > Text Document** or press *Control+N*).
- 2) Type the words **Heading 1** in the new document, but do not press *Enter* so that the cursor remains in that same line where you typed.
- 3) Click the **Styles and Formatting** icon  located on the Formatting Bar or press the *F11* key. This opens the Styles and Formatting window.
- 4) Make sure the window is showing the *Paragraph Styles* section: click on the top-left icon  of the Styles and Formatting window.

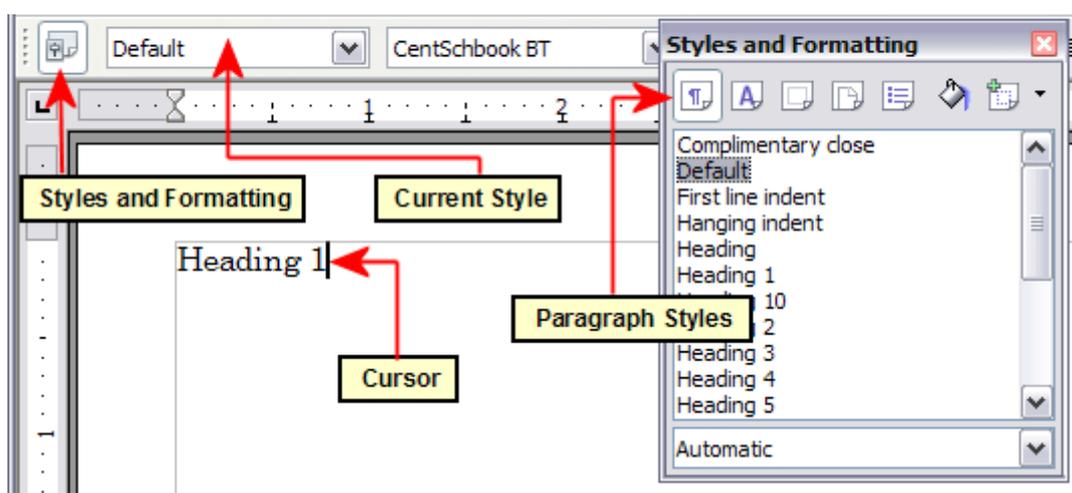


Figure 8: Click on the Styles and Formatting icon to bring up the window

Double-click the **Heading 1** entry of Styles and Formatting (Figure 9). This does two things:

- Gives the line (actually, its entire paragraph) you typed the *Heading 1* style.
- Adds **Heading 1** to the *Apply Style* menu.

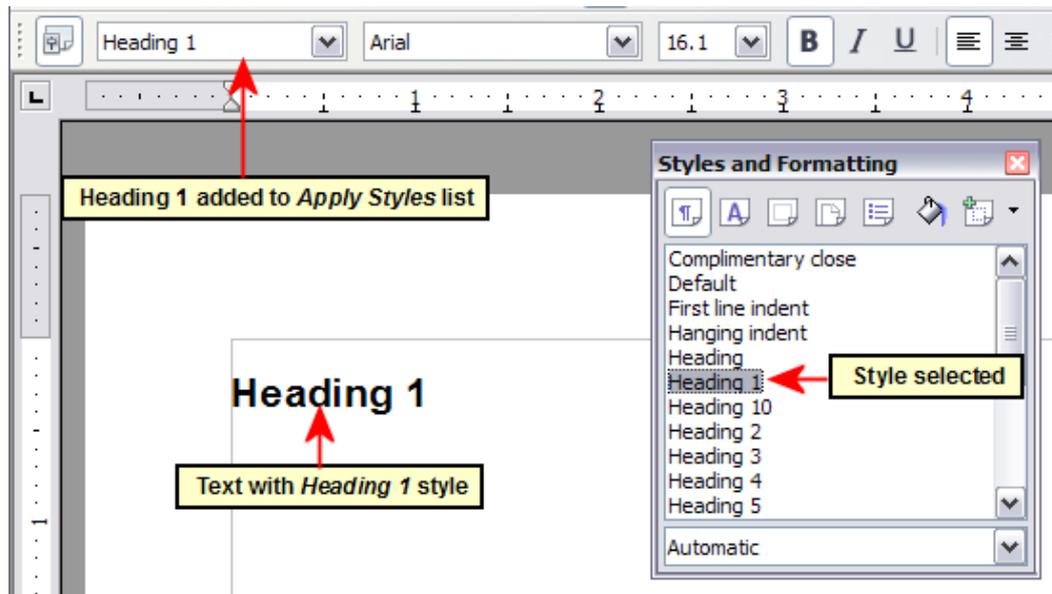


Figure 9: Applying paragraph styles

To use the *Apply Styles* list (Figure 9):

- 1) Repeat steps 1 and 2 from the previous example.
- 2) Select **Heading 1** in the *Apply Styles* list.

The text acquires the properties of the *Heading 1* style. If the paragraph style you want is not in the *Apply Style* list, select **More** to bring up the Styles and Formatting window. If the Styles and Formatting window is still open, you may notice that the *Heading 1* style is also highlighted in the main window, as shown in Figure 9.

Finally, try the *Format Paintbrush*.

Recreate the text in Figure 9 and add extra formatting to some of the text; bold and italic was used

in the example. Place the cursor at a point in the text and click the **Format Paintbrush** icon  to activate it. The cursor changes shape. Move the cursor to one of the new paragraphs and left-click to apply formatting. Try the different selection points and the different paint points to see the effects. To apply the formatting to multiple paragraphs, double-click the **Format Paintbrush** icon before clicking at a paint point. Clicking back on the icon cancels the format painting.

The cursor shape changes back to the normal one on completion.

Applying character styles

You may have a document that contains character formatting applied directly using the Formatting toolbar or shortcut keys, and you decide to replace this with character styles formatting. The direct formatting should be removed before applying new character styles.

To remove the formatting manually, select the characters or words to be altered:

- Select **Format > Clear Direct Formatting**
- Alternatively, press *Ctrl+M*.

You can now proceed to apply character styles.

Tip

Select all the formatting of one type at a time. Manually removing this formatting leaves the text elements selected so you can then apply the new character style immediately.

For example, to remove a number of manually italicized elements:

- 1) Select each instance (press *Ctrl* when selecting each subsequent element).
- 2) Use one of the methods above to remove the formatting (the text remains selected after removal).
- 3) In this example, pressing *Ctrl+I* will also toggle off italics.
- 4) Apply the character style (for example, Emphasis).

Repeat for each formatted style you wish to replace.

Using the Styles and Formatting window

Open the Styles and Formatting window (press *F11*) and click the second button in the top bar. The list of available character styles is displayed. To apply a character style, follow these steps:

- 1) Select the block of text, or put the cursor into the single word, where you wish to apply the style.
- 2) Double-click the appropriate character style in the Styles and Formatting window.

Some character styles supplied in LibreOffice include:

Emphasis character style.

Strong Emphasis character style.

Teletype character style.

Note

One difference between character styles and paragraph styles is the need for selecting text (highlighting). To apply a character style to more than a single word, you need to select all of the text to be changed. To apply the style to a single word, you only have to place the cursor in the word. Paragraph styles are applied to the whole of the paragraph in which the cursor is placed.

Using the Format Paintbrush

The Format Paintbrush can be used to apply character styles in much the same way as for paragraphs (see “Using the Format Paintbrush” on page 11).

The difference is that you must select a word that has the required formatting, and that to paint only the character style, without the underlying paragraph style, you must hold down the *Ctrl* key when applying the style.

Unset/undo character styles

Sometimes, you will want to remove the character style formatting from a block of text. *You must resist the temptation to do this manually using the Formatting toolbar.* This will only cause trouble down the road. To remove character style formatting from selected text:

- 1) Open the Styles and Formatting window (press *F11*) and click the second button in the top bar.
- 2) With the Styles and Formatting window open, double-click the *Default* character style.

Applying frame styles

Whenever you insert an object (such as a graphic) into a document, it will automatically have an invisible frame around it. Some designers like to add frame styles to introduce variety. For example, you could have one frame style for photographs and a different frame style for other graphics such as line drawings. The one for photographs might have a border with a drop shadow, while the one for drawings might have only a border.

To apply a style to a frame:

- 1) Select the frame.
- 2) Bring up the Styles and Formatting window (for example, by pressing *F11*).
- 3) Click the **Frame Styles** icon (the third one from the left).
- 4) Double-click the frame style you want.

Having applied a style to a frame, you can now modify the frame to be just how you want it. Most of a frame's design can be set in a style, but the following options must be set manually:

- Anchoring: how the frame is positioned in relation to the rest of the page's contents (**Format > Anchor**).
- Arrangement: the frame's position in a stack of objects (**Format > Arrange**).
- Adding a hyperlink: so that a click on the frame opens a Web page or another document in an HTML file (**Insert > Hyperlink**).

When a frame is selected, the Frame toolbar replaces the Formatting toolbar, allowing you to modify the settings. The right-click (context) menu also has items for anchoring and arrangement, as well as for wrap and alignment.

Applying page styles

To apply a page style, place the cursor anywhere on the page to which the style should be applied. You can easily check which page style is applied because it is shown on the status bar.

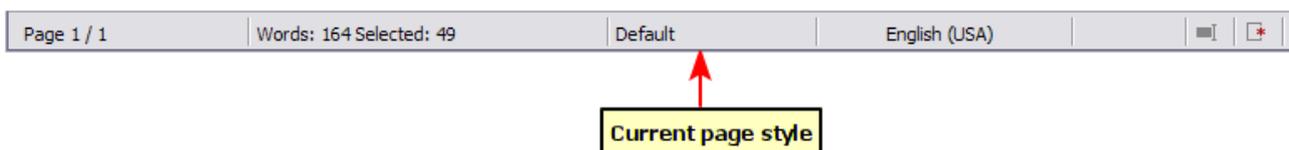


Figure 10: The current page style is displayed on the status bar

If you want to apply a different style, you can either right-click on the style in the status bar and select a new style from the pop-up menu, or you can open the Styles and Formatting window (press *F11*), select the page style icon at the top of the window (fourth icon), and then double-click on the desired style.

Caution



Changing a page style may cause the style of subsequent pages to change as well. The results may not be what you want. To change the style of only one page, you may need to insert a manual page break, as described below.

As discussed in Chapter 7, Working with Styles, a correctly set up page style will, in most cases, contain information on what the page style of the next page should be. For example, when you apply a *Left* page style to a page, you can indicate in the style settings that the next page has to apply a *Right* page style, a *First* page style could be followed by either a *Left* page style or a *Default* page style, and so on.

Another very useful mechanism to change the page style is to insert a manual page break and specify the style of the subsequent page. The idea is simple: you break a sequence of page styles and start a new sequence. To insert a page break, choose **Insert > Manual Break** and choose **Page break**. This section illustrates two common scenarios where page breaks are useful.

Example: Chapters

A possible scenario: You are writing a book that is divided into chapters. Each chapter starts with a page style called *New Chapter*. The following pages use the *Default* page style. At the end of each (except the last) chapter, we return to the *New Chapter* page style for the first page of the next chapter.

Figure 11 illustrates the flow of page styles when using page breaks.

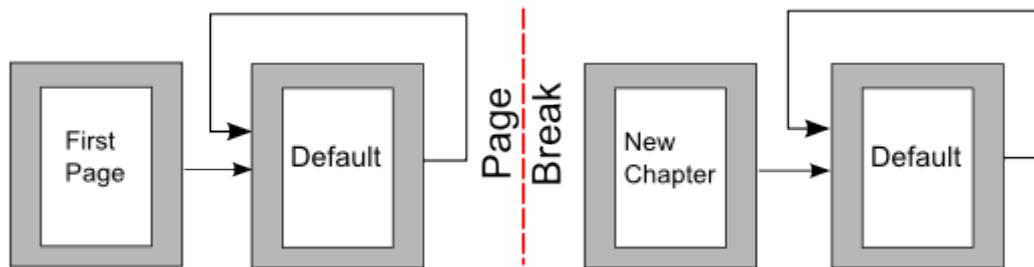


Figure 11: Page style flow using a page break

Writer doesn't have a predefined *New Chapter* page style, so you must create a custom style (see Chapter 7). (You could also use the First Page style for this purpose, but in our examples we use that style for the title page of the book.) Let's suppose that you already have the page styles with the following properties:

Page style	Next Style
New Chapter	Default
Default	Default

At some point, you will want to start a new chapter. Follow these steps:

- 1) Put the cursor at the end of the chapter, on a blank line (empty paragraph) of its own.
- 2) Choose **Insert > Manual Break**. The Insert Break dialog (Figure 12) appears.
- 3) Under *Type*, choose **Page break** and under *Style*, select **New Chapter**.

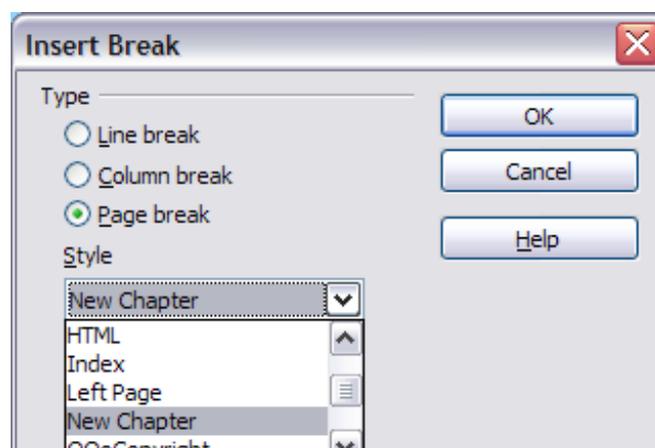


Figure 12: Choose Page break and select the *New Chapter* page style

Example: Page with special formatting

Sometimes you may need to insert a page with special formatting, for example a landscape page or a page with more columns. This can also be done with page breaks. Suppose that the current page has the *Default* page style.

- 1) Choose **Insert > Manual Break**.
- 2) Select the desired page style (say, *Special Page*) in the Insert Break dialog.
- 3) Fill in the contents for this page. Then insert another page break.
- 4) Then select *Default* again. The pagination continues on as normal, except that one page has been replaced by a different page style.

This concept is illustrated in Figure 13.

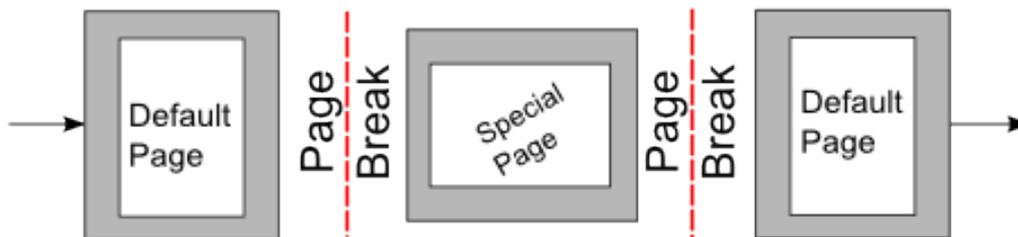


Figure 13: Inserting a page with special formatting

Applying list styles

List styles define properties such as indentation, numbering style (for example, *1,2,3*; *a,b,c*; or bullets), and punctuation after the number, but they do not by themselves define properties such as font, borders, text flow, and so on. The latter are properties of paragraph styles.

If you need your list to have specific paragraph-style properties, you should embed the list style into paragraph styles, as explained in Chapter 7. You can then create a numbered list by applying paragraph styles alone.

Writer has two series of predefined list styles, named *List* and *Numbering*. Each series contains five list styles, intended for the different levels of a nested list. As with any style, you can redefine the properties of these styles, for example the numbering or bullet symbol and the indentation. You can also define other list styles in these series or create your own series.

Each of the list styles predefined in Writer has four associated paragraph styles. For example, the *Numbering 1 list* style is associated with four **paragraph** styles:

- Numbering 1
- Numbering 1 Cont.
- Numbering 1 End
- Numbering 1 Start

Numbering 1 is a default paragraph style to which you can attach a list style. If you want to make exclusive use of paragraph styles and never use the Formatting toolbar when creating a numbered list, you could use the other three styles. All you need to do is to create a suitable list style and set up the *Next Style* property in the Organizer page of the Paragraph Style dialog so that the *Numbering 1 Start* paragraph is followed by the *Numbering 1 Cont.* style, while the *Numbering 1 End* paragraph style is followed by a default style paragraph.

If you only want to apply a list style (that is, the numbering or bullet symbol and the indentation) then, when the cursor is on the paragraph, double-click on the desired list style.

When creating a list style, you can define up to ten levels of depth for nested lists. Switch from one level to the other with either the **Promote One Level**  or the **Demote One Level**  buttons

on the Bullets and Numbering toolbar or by pressing the *Tab* key (one level down) or *Shift+Tab* key combination (one level up) or by right-clicking on the list element and select **Up One Level** or **Down One Level** from the context menu.

Restarting or continuing the numbering

When creating more than one numbered list of the same type within the same chapter, Writer applies sequential numbering to all the lists. Sometimes this is what you want (for example, when placing illustrations between the numbered paragraphs), while at other times you want to restart the numbering.

To restart numbering from 1, you can do any of the following:

- Click on the **Restart numbering** icon  on the Bullets and Numbering toolbar.
- Right-click on the first element of the list and choose **Restart numbering** from the context menu.
- Right-click on the first element of the list, choose **Paragraph** from the context menu, and go to the Outline & Numbering tab of the Paragraph dialog. In the *Numbering* section, select the options **Restart at this paragraph** and **Start with**, and set the number (see Figure 14).

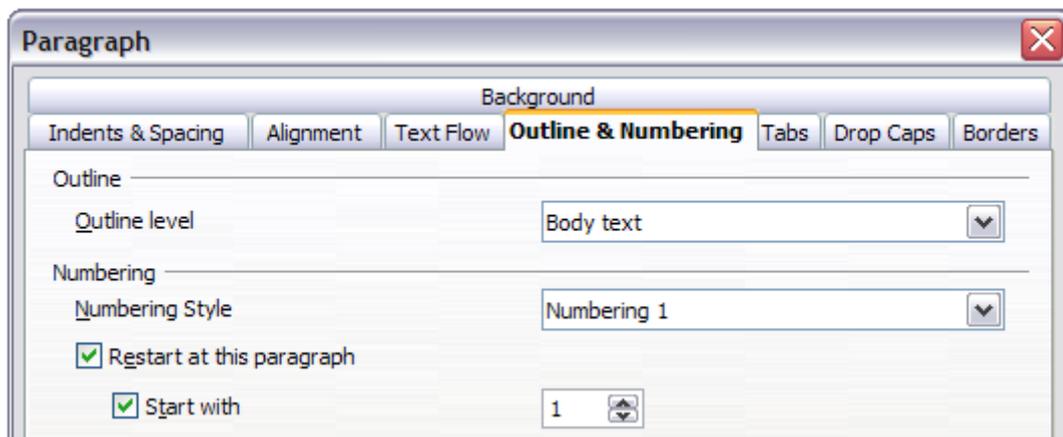


Figure 14: Restarting numbering

If you find that the numbering does not restart as intended using the first or second method, or if you want to restart from a number greater than 1, use the third method.

When editing a document, you may want to change from restarting numbering to continuing the numbering from a previous list. To do so, right-click on the list element and choose **Continue previous numbering** from the context menu.

Modifying styles

Writer provides several predefined styles, but you may find that they do not fit your preferences. You can build your own library of custom styles to use in place of the predefined ones, or you can modify the existing styles. LibreOffice offers four mechanisms to modify both both predefined and custom (user-created) styles:

- Update a style from a selection.
- Load or copy styles from another document or template.
- Change a style using the Style dialog.
- Use AutoUpdate (paragraph and frame styles only).

The first two methods are discussed in “Update Style (from a selection)” and “Load Styles (from a template or document)” on page 8, while Chapter 7, Working with Styles, discusses at length the process of creating a new style.

This section shows how you can quickly make simple modifications to existing paragraph styles using the same tools you would use for applying formatting manually.

Tip

Any changes made to a style are effective only in the current document. If you want to reuse modified or new styles in other documents, you need to either save the styles in a template (see Chapter 10, Working with Templates) or copy the styles into the other documents, as described in “Load Styles (from a template or document)” on page 8.

Changing a style using the Style dialog

To change an existing style using the Style dialog, right-click on the style in the Styles and Formatting window and select **Modify** from the pop-up menu.

The dialog displayed depends on the type of style selected. Figure 15 shows an example of the dialog for a paragraph style. Each style’s dialog has several tabs. The various properties on these dialogs are described in the next chapter.

Move to the page where the setting you want to modify is specified and input the new value. You can click the **Help** button at any time to bring up the online help where all the options of the current page are briefly described. When you are done, click **OK** to close the dialog.

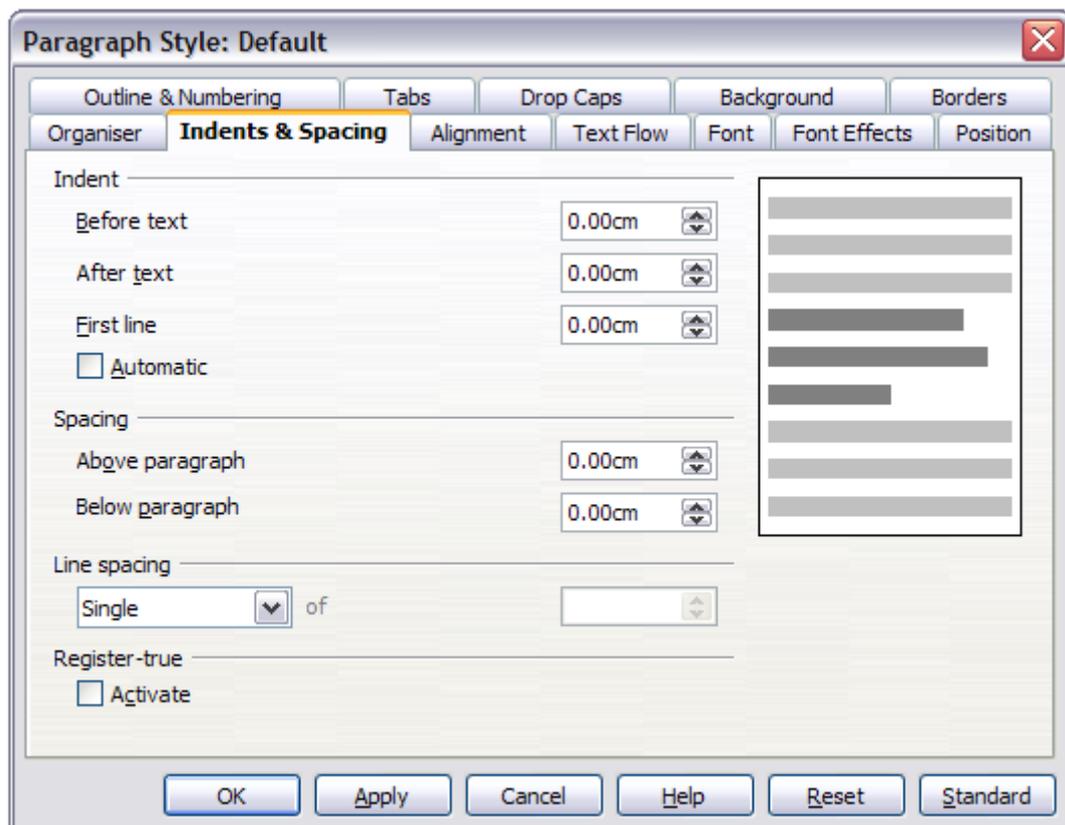


Figure 15: Example of the Paragraph Style dialog

Examples: Modifying paragraph styles

For this example, we need five lines of text with three LibreOffice-supplied paragraph styles: *Heading 1*, *Heading 2*, and *Heading 3*. These paragraph styles could be used in formatting headings (subheads) in the framework for a document that will be “fleshed out” afterwards.

Open a new text document for this exercise and type **Title** on the first line, click the **Paragraph Styles** icon on the Styles and Formatting window, and double-click **Heading 1** in the drop-down list. Press *Enter* to start a new line and type **First section heading**, applying the *Heading 2* style. Repeat this procedure for the other headings shown in Figure 16, using the proper paragraph style for each: Heading 3 for **Subsection heading**, and so on.

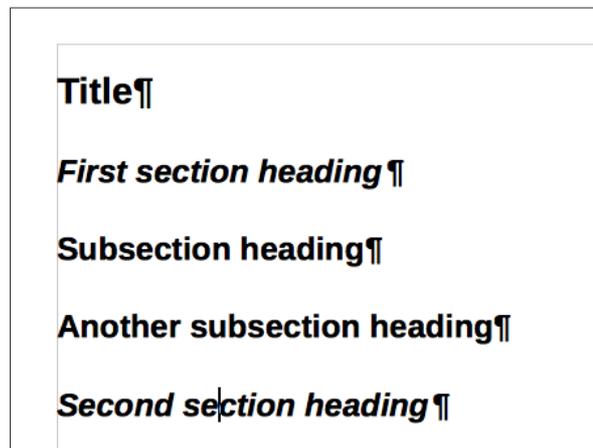


Figure 16: Headings 1–3 with default styles

Now, suppose you decide to make the following changes to these styles:

- *Heading 1* should be centered.
- *Heading 3* should be indented.

Center Heading 1

On the Styles and Formatting window, select the **Paragraph Styles** icon (if it isn't already chosen), right-click on **Heading 1**, and choose **Modify**.

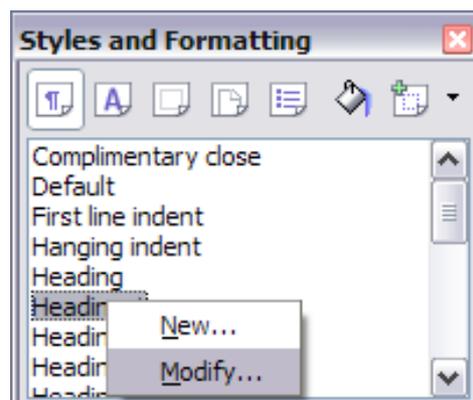


Figure 17: Modifying a style

After the Paragraph Style window opens, choose the **Alignment** tab, select **Center** (as shown below), and click **OK**.

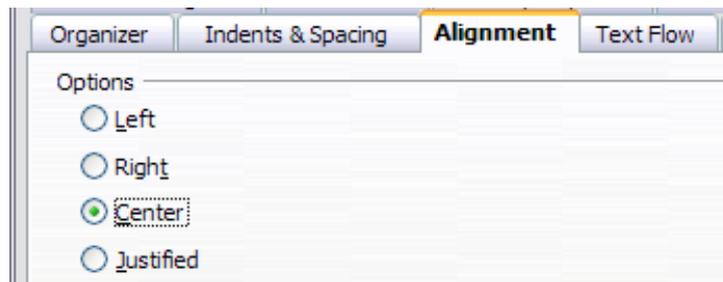


Figure 18: Center Heading 1

Now, every paragraph marked as *Heading 1* will be centered (as shown below). If you make another *Heading 1* entry, it will be centered as well.



Figure 19: The text *Title*, which is formatted as a centered *Heading 1* style

Indent Heading 3

On the Styles and Formatting window, right-click on the **Heading 3** paragraph style and choose **Modify** (as before). After the Paragraph Style dialog opens, follow the steps below:

- 1) Click the **Indents & Spacing** tab.
- 2) Under the *Indent* section, set the indentation before the text to **0.60"**, as shown below. Your display might be different, depending upon what measurement unit was set in the options (**Tools > LibreOffice Writer > General > Settings**).

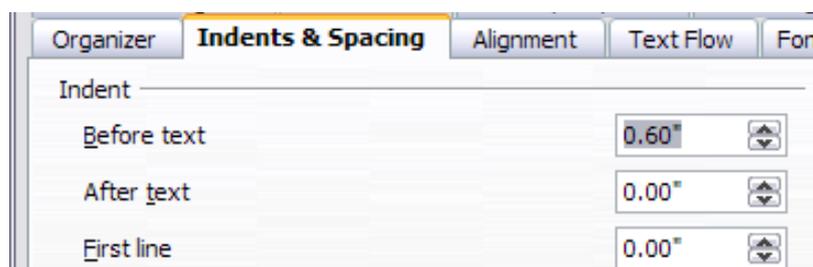


Figure 20: Set indentation

The result should resemble the illustration below.

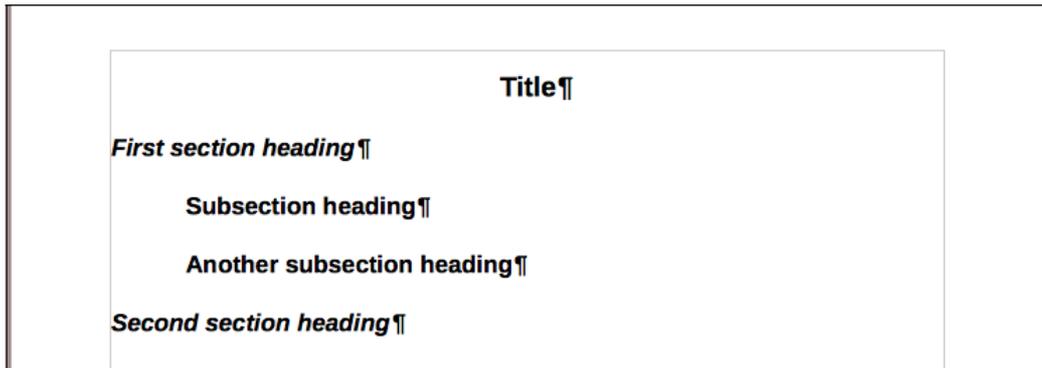


Figure 21: The text formatted as Heading 3 style is now indented

Using AutoUpdate

On the Organizer page of the Paragraph Style dialog is a check box named AutoUpdate. It is present only for paragraph and frame styles. If this check box is selected, then LibreOffice itself will apply to the style, any modification made manually to a paragraph formatted with that style.

Caution



If you are in the habit of manually overriding styles in your document, be sure that AutoUpdate is **not** enabled, or you will suddenly find whole sections of your document reformatting unexpectedly.

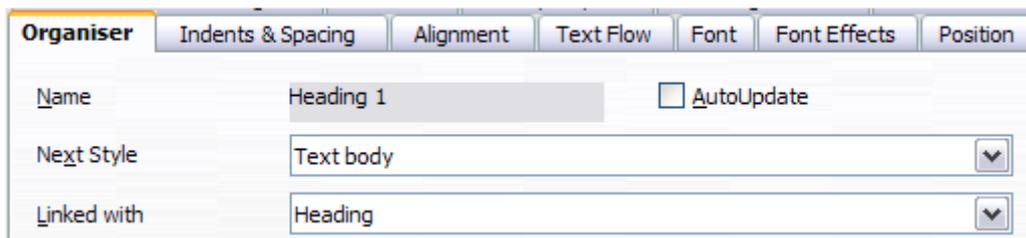


Figure 22: The Organizer page of the Paragraph Style dialog

Creating custom paragraph styles: examples

You have seen that the Styles and Formatting window provides several predefined styles, such as *Heading 1* and *Text body*. But what if you need something different, like a poem style, that is not in Styles and Formatting? With Writer you can make your own styles to suit your needs.

Chapter 7, Working with Styles, describes in detail the options on the various pages of the Paragraph Style dialog. This section provides an example of a typical use of custom paragraph styles.

We will create a *Poem* paragraph style and a *Poem Header* paragraph style, with the following properties:

- *Poem*: Centered, with a font size of 10pt.
- *PoemHeader*: Centered, bold, with a 12pt font size.

In addition, a *PoemHeader* style is to be followed by a *Poem* style. In other words, when you press *Enter*, the next paragraph style in the document changes to *Poem*.

Note

You may have noticed this behavior already. After you enter a heading using a *Heading* paragraph style and press *Enter*, the next style switches to *Text body*.

Creating the *Poem* paragraph style

Our next example creates the *Poem* style. We will use the *Default* style as a starting point.

- 1) Click the **Styles and Formatting** icon  or press *F11*.
- 2) Click the **Paragraph Styles** icon (first from the left).
- 3) Right-click **Default** and choose **New**.

The Paragraph Style dialog opens, with the **Organizer** page selected. To create a *custom style*, you have to understand and configure the top three entries.

Style fields	Description
Name	This is the name of the style itself, like <i>Heading 1</i> or <i>Text body</i> . Set (type in the text box) the name to Poem .
Next Style	This is the style of a paragraph that follows the paragraph that is in <i>Poem</i> style. When you press <i>Enter</i> while typing text in the <i>Poem</i> style, this style is applied to the new paragraph. Set this value to Poem . When you press <i>Enter</i> , the text of the new paragraph will remain in the <i>Poem</i> style.
Linked with	If the <i>Poem</i> style is linked with another style, say <i>Default</i> , then any change in <i>Default</i> will affect <i>Poem</i> , just as you saw with <i>Heading</i> in the previous section. For our example, this is not the behavior we want. Set this entry to – None –. This means that <i>Poem</i> is not linked with any other style.

Select the Custom Styles category for new styles. After making these changes, your dialog should look like Figure 26.

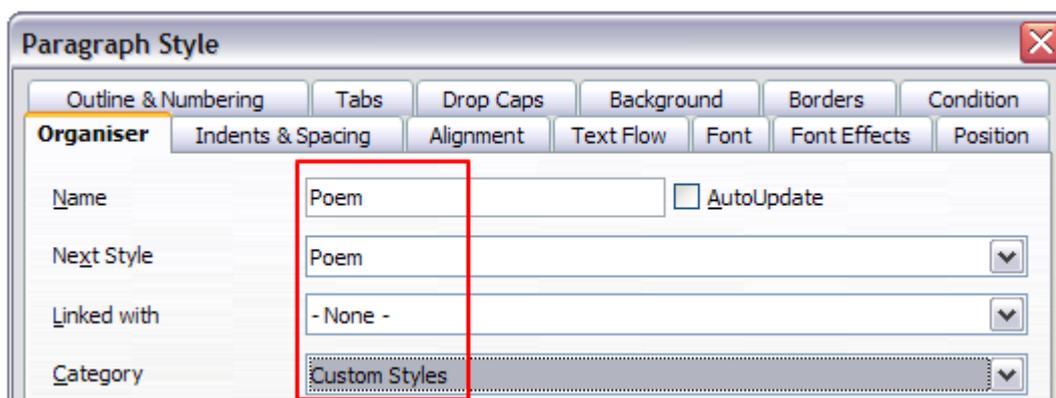


Figure 23: Initial configuration for the *Poem* style. Set the first three entries as shown.

The next step is to configure the alignment and font properties of this style.

- On the *Alignment* page, select the **Center** option.
- On the *Font* page, select the **12pt** font size.

Click **OK** to save the new *Poem* style.

Creating the PoemHeading style

Create a new *PoemHeading* style. Use the same procedure as before, using with these changes:

- *Next Style*: Select **Poem**, not **PoemHeading**.
- *Linked with*: **Heading**.

The dialog should look like Figure 24.

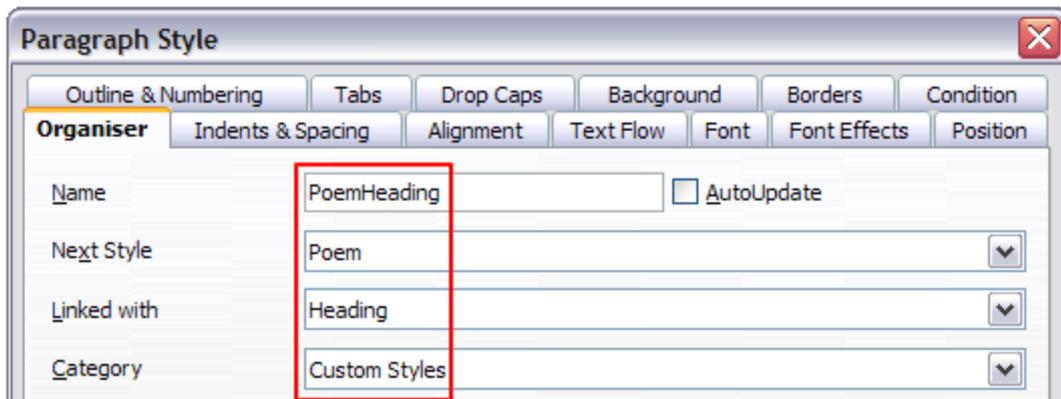


Figure 24: Settings for the *PoemHeading* style

Now set the settings of the new style:

- 1) On the *Alignment* page, select **Center**.
- 2) On the *Font* page, choose **Bold** and size **14pt**.

Click **OK** to save the new *PoemHeading* style.

Sample poem

It is a good idea to test out your new styles and see if you are happy with them. Typing a poem using the styles we have just defined should produce the results in Figure 25.

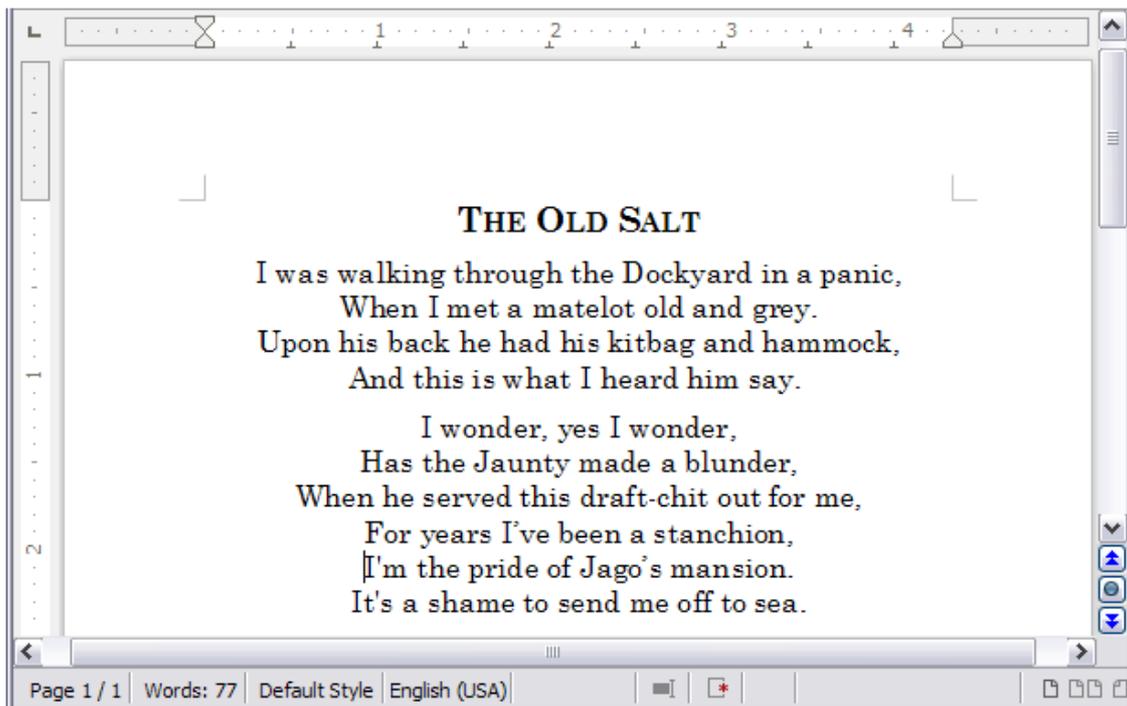


Figure 25: Sample poem

Changing the formatting of your styles

One of the main advantages of styles is that they allow the document formatting to be changed after the content has been written. For example, suppose you have written a 100-page book of poetry. Then you decide you don't like the way the poems look after all. Or, perhaps, your publisher doesn't like it.

To learn about reconfiguring styles, we add an indentation to the *Poem* style instead of centering it.

Indent Poem

First, set the *Poem* style to left alignment:

- 1) In the Styles and Formatting window, select **Poem** and right-click and select **Modify**.
- 2) On the *Alignment* page, select **Left**.

Set the indentation:

- 1) Click the **Indents & Spacing** tab.
- 2) Under *Indent*, set the indentation before the text to **0.5in**.

Done! Click **OK**, and you should see the text change.

Final result

After all these changes, the poem should look similar to Figure 26. Note in the figure that a third style has been created for the author of the poem.

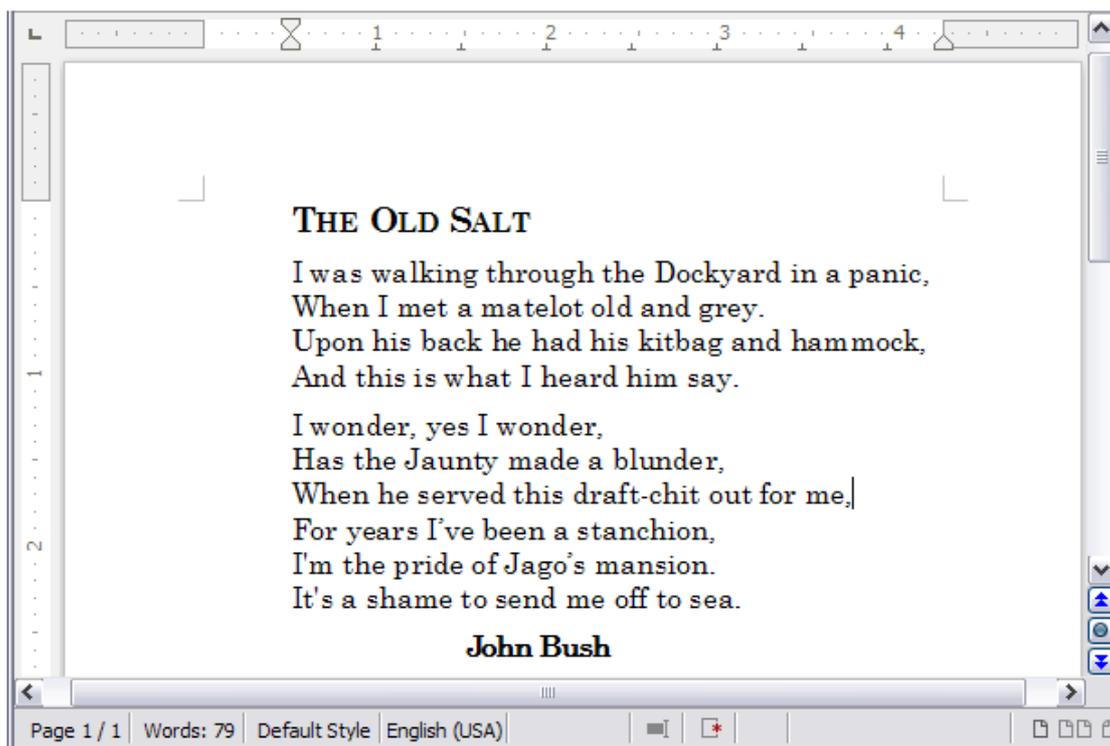


Figure 26: Final result, using three custom styles

- Deleting styles

It is not possible to delete LibreOffice's predefined styles from a document or template, even if they are not in use. However, custom styles can be deleted.

To delete an unwanted style, right-click on it in the Styles and Formatting window and choose **Delete**. If the style is in use, a message appears, warning you that the style is in use and asking you to verify that you really want to delete the style.

If the style is not in use, a different message appears, asking you to verify that you really want to delete the style.

Caution



If you delete a style that is in use, all objects with that style will return to the style it was based on (linked with) but retain some of the deleted style's formatting as manual formatting.

Tip

If an unwanted paragraph style is in use, you can use **Find & Replace** to replace it with a substitute style before deleting it. See Chapter 3, Working with Text, for more information.

Assigning styles to shortcut keys

You can configure shortcut keys to quickly assign styles in your document. Some shortcuts are predefined, such as *Ctrl+1* for the *Heading 1* paragraph style and *Ctrl+2* for *Heading 2*. You can modify these shortcuts and create your own. See Chapter 16, Customizing Writer, for details.

Defining a hierarchy of headings

Tools > Outline Numbering defines the hierarchy of headings in a document. Headings can be numbered or not; typically the first-level headings in a book-length document are the next level of headings after the chapter titles, which may be numbered, but lower-level headings are not numbered. Some chapter title and heading styles (such as those commonly used in engineering documents) number each chapter and heading level, for example 1, 1.1, 1.2, 2, 2.1, and so on. When chapters or sections are added or deleted, the numbering is automatically changed.

Paragraph styles are the key to LibreOffice's outline numbering feature. The default paragraph styles assigned to outline levels are the heading styles supplied with LibreOffice: *Heading 1*, *Heading 2*, and so on. However, you can substitute any styles you wish, including custom (user-defined) styles.

The headings defined using the outline numbering feature can be used for more than the table of contents (described in Chapter 12). For example, fields are commonly used to display headings in headers and footers of pages (see Chapter 14, Working with Fields), and Writer can send the outline to Impress to use as the basis for a presentation (see the *Impress Guide* for details).

Choosing paragraph styles for outline levels

If you are using the default heading styles for the headings in your outline, and you do not want to use heading numbering, you do not need to do anything on the Outline Numbering dialog. The default outline numbering scheme uses the default heading styles (*Heading 1*, *Heading 2*, and so on).

To use custom styles in place of one or more of the default heading styles:

- 1) Choose **Tools > Outline Numbering** to open the Outline Numbering dialog.

- 2) Click the number in the *Level* box corresponding to the heading for which you want to change the paragraph style.

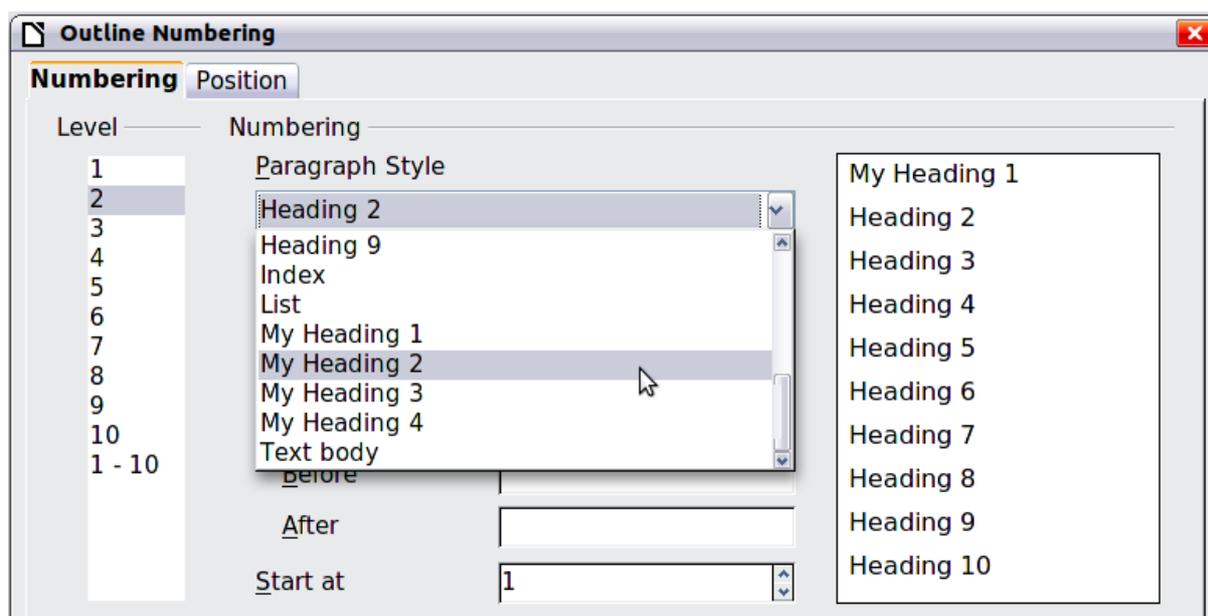


Figure 27: Choosing paragraph styles for outline levels

- 3) In the *Numbering: Paragraph Style* section, choose from the drop-down list the paragraph style you want to assign to that heading level. In this example, you might choose **My Heading 1** to replace **Heading 1** and for **Level 2**, **My Heading 2** to replace **Heading 2**.
- 4) Repeat for each outline level that you want to change. Click **OK** when done.

Assigning outline levels to other styles

In Writer, you can assign an outline level to any paragraph style. This feature enables you to create a table of contents that includes those headings along with the headings using styles listed in the Outline Numbering dialog. For example, you might use a different sequence of styles for annexes (appendixes), but you want the annex headings and subheadings to appear in the TOC at the same levels as the chapter headings and subheadings.

To assign an outline level to a paragraph style, go to the Outline & Numbering page for the style, and select the required outline level. Click **OK** to save this change.

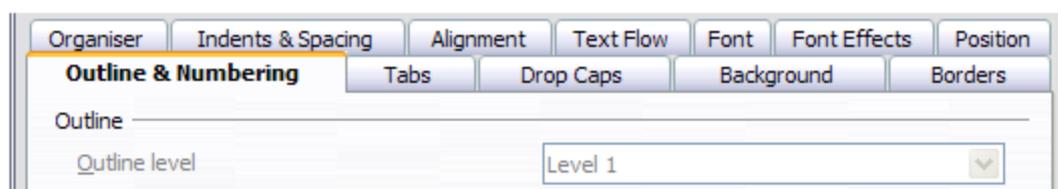


Figure 28: Specifying an outline level for a paragraph style

Setting up heading numbering

If you want one or more heading levels to be numbered, many choices are available; this example defines a scheme to create headings that look like those in the illustration below.

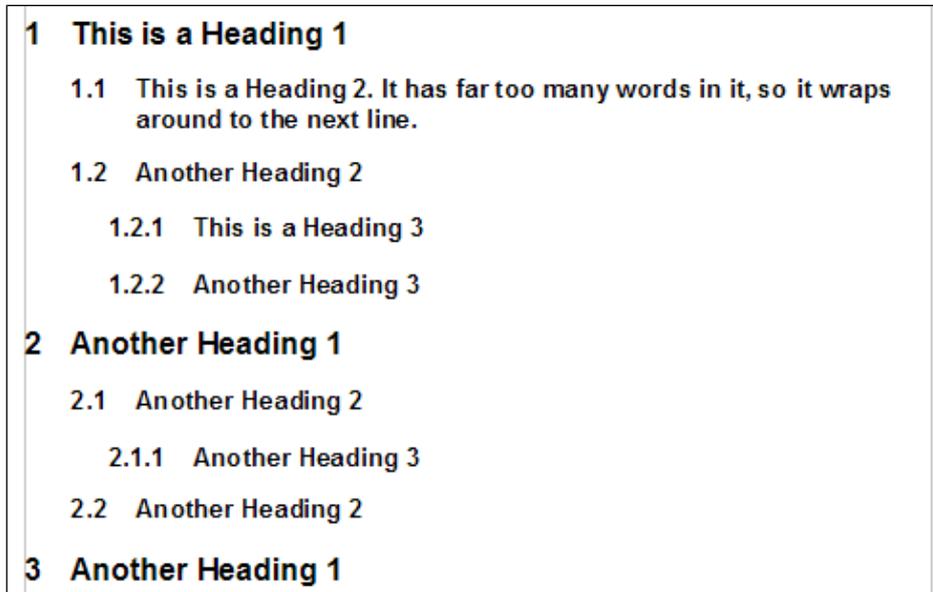


Figure 29: The numbering scheme to be set up

Use the Numbering page of the Outline Numbering dialog to define the numbering scheme and its appearance. Figure 30 shows the default settings.

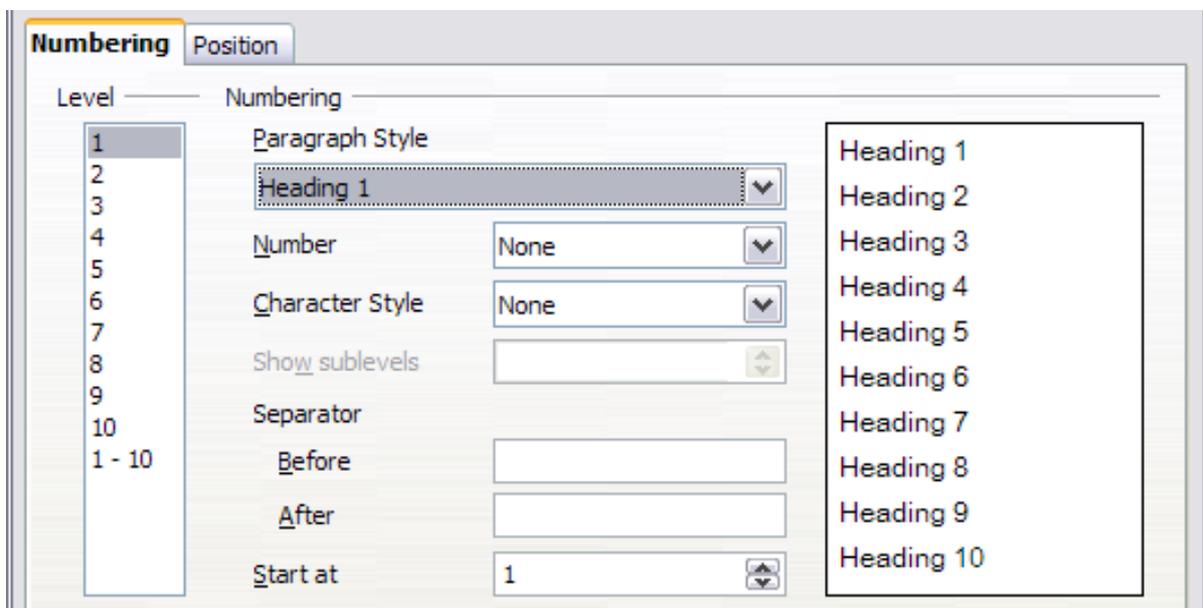


Figure 30: Default settings on the Outline Numbering dialog

- 1) In the *Level* list, choose **1**. In the *Number* list, choose **1, 2, 3, ...**. The result is shown in the preview box on the right in Figure 31.

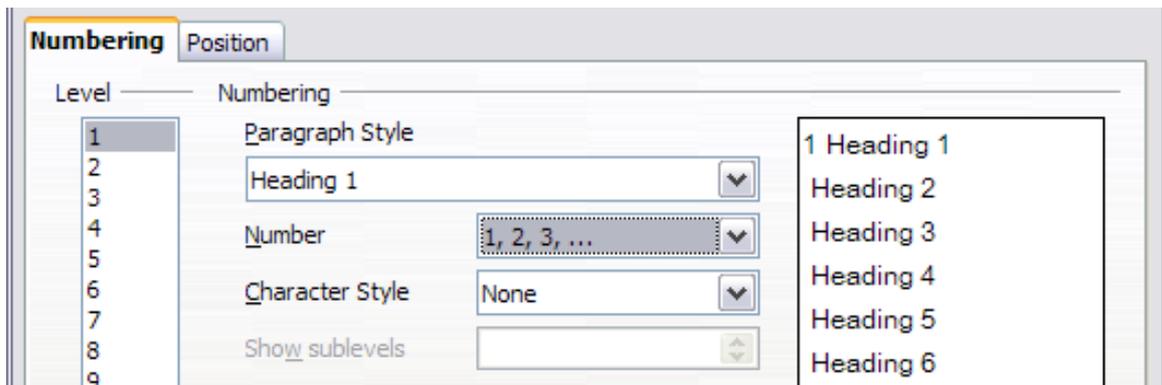


Figure 31: Specifying numbering of Level 1 headings

- 2) In the *Level* list, choose **2**. In the *Number* list, choose **1, 2, 3, ...**. The *Show sublevels* list is now active; it should show **2** (if not, choose **2**). The result is shown in Figure 32.

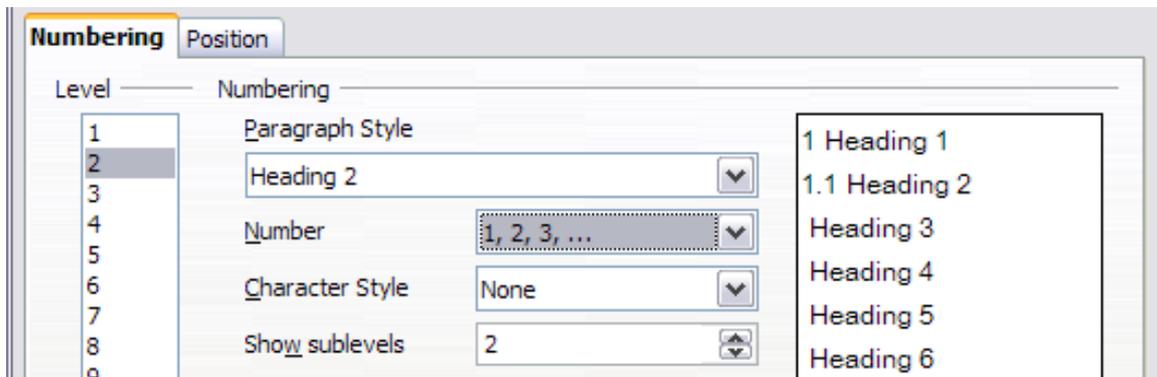


Figure 32: Specifying numbering of Level 2 headings

- 3) In the *Level* list, choose **3**. In the *Number* list, choose **1, 2, 3, ...**. The *Show sublevels* list should show **3** (if not, choose **3**). The result is shown in Figure 33.

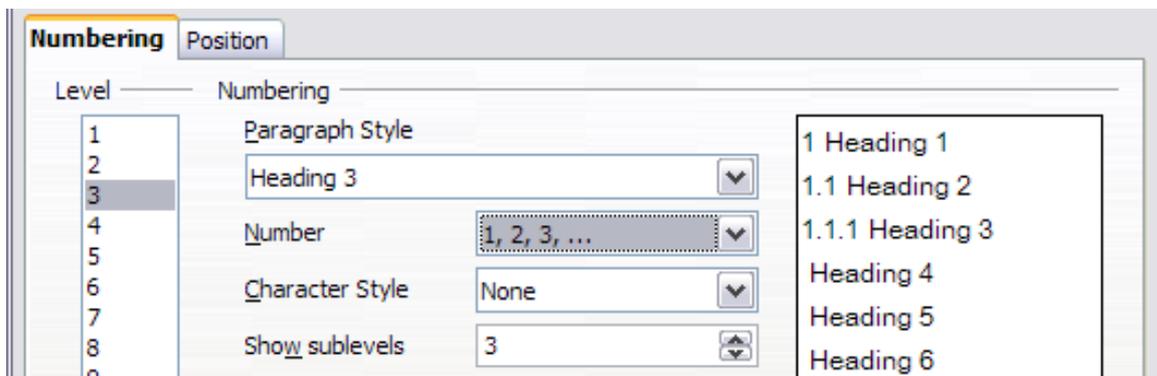


Figure 33: Specifying numbering of Level 3 headings

These choices produce the layout shown in Figure 34.

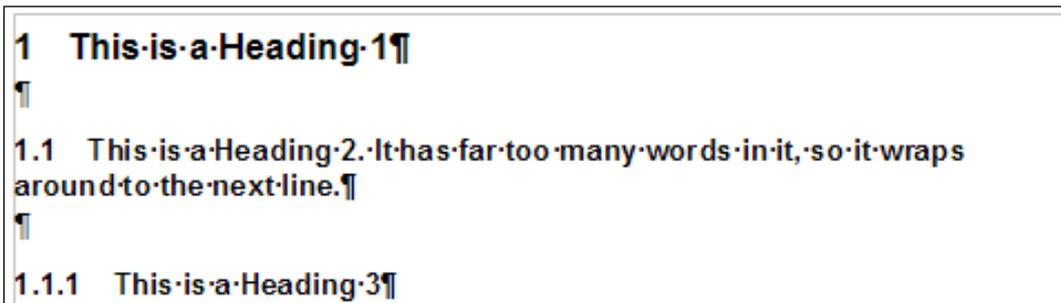


Figure 34: Results of numbering choices for headings

Setting up the indentation of headings

Whether or not the headings are numbered, you may want to change some of their formatting. For example, you may want the second-level and third-level headings to be indented from the margin. For numbered headings, you may also want the second line of long headings to line up with the first word of the heading, not the number. For these changes, use the **Position** page of the Outline Numbering dialog.

Note

The Position page for documents created in LibreOffice is slightly different from the Position page for documents created in earlier versions of similar programs that are opened in LibreOffice. This difference is provided for backwards compatibility. For more information, refer to “Position page for older documents opened in LibreOffice” (under “Creating a new list style”) in Chapter 7, Working with Styles.

Positioning in new LibreOffice documents

Figure 35 shows the Position page as it appears for documents created in LibreOffice.

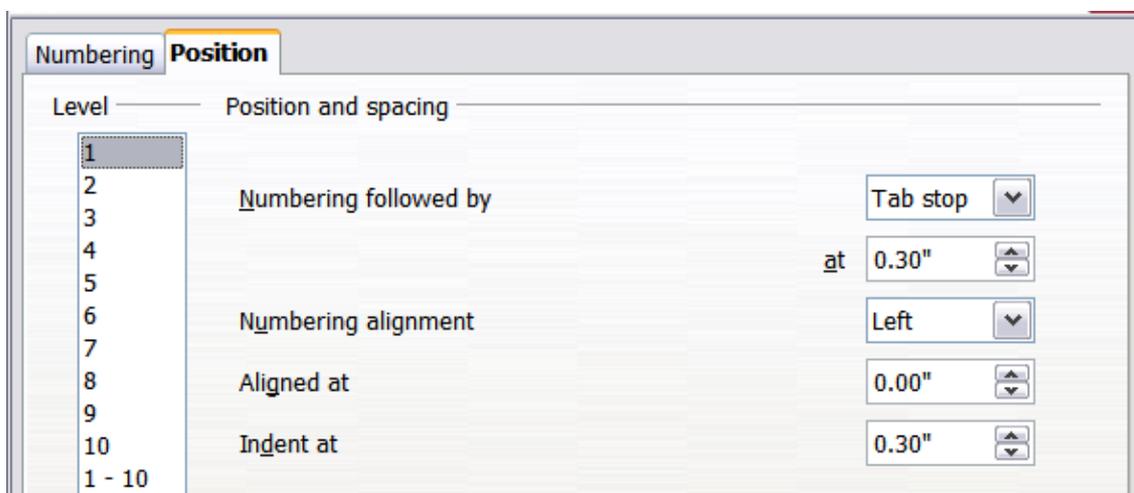


Figure 35: Setting up the position of level 1 headings

- 1) In the *Level* list on the left, choose 2. Change the values for *Numbering followed by... at* and *Aligned at*, as shown in Figure 36. You may want to use a different value. This indents the entire heading but does not affect the way long headings wrap around (see Figure 37).

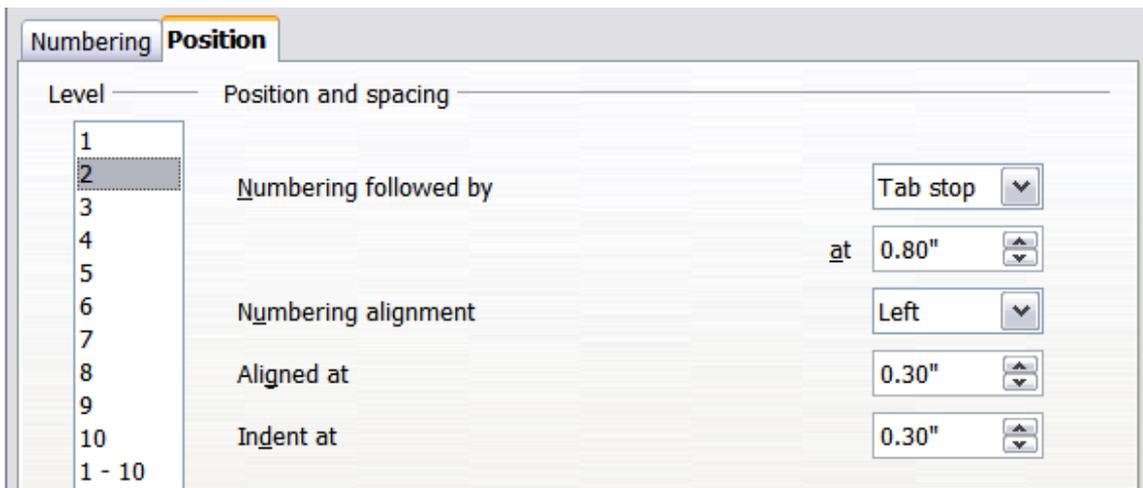


Figure 36: Indenting Level 2 headings



Figure 37: Result of changes to indentation of Level 2 headings

- 2) To change the wrapping behavior of long headings, change *Indent at* to a larger value, as shown in Figure 38. The result is shown in Figure 39.



Figure 38: Wrapping long headings



Figure 39: Result of changing Indent at value

- 3) In the *Level* list, choose 3. Change the values for *Numbering followed by... at*, *Aligned at*, and *Indent at*, as shown in . The final result is shown in Figure 40.



Figure 40: Indenting level 3 headings