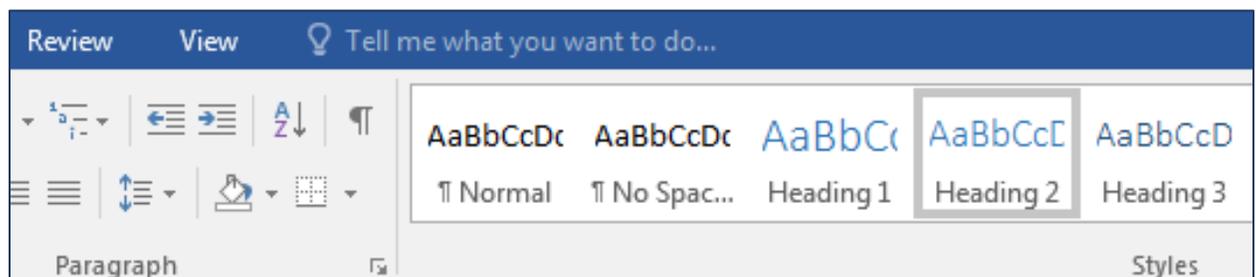# Headings and Styles for Microsoft Word

Overview

Sighted users can visually scan websites and documents to quickly make meaning and assess the structure and content of the page. People with vision impairments who use screen readers rely on the semantic structure of a document or webpage to complete that same type of scanning. For that reason, it is essential that we use proper headings (as opposed to text that is styled to be big and/or bold) and that they are applied in a logical, sequential order.

There should only ever be one Heading 1 per page and heading levels should never be skipped (i.e. going from Heading 2 to Heading 4). When this is done correctly, screen reader users can access a list of all of the headings on a page or jump from one heading level to the next.

Apply a Style

Headings can be properly applied to documents using the built-in styles in Microsoft Word.

1. Select the Home tab from the ribbon.
2. In your document, select the text to convert to a heading.
3. Click on the appropriate heading level in the Styles in-ribbon gallery; e.g., Heading 2.

Modify an Existing Style

You can modify an existing style to change the look of the Headings you will need to use throughout your document.

1. Right-click any style in the Styles gallery on the style you want to modify and click Modify.
2. The Modify Style dialog box will open.
3. In the Formatting section, make any formatting changes you want, such as font style, size, or color, alignment, line spacing, or indentation.
4. Click OK to save changes.

Modify Style   ?   ✕

Properties

Name: Heading 1

Style type: Linked (paragraph and character)

Style based on: ¶ Normal

Style for following paragraph: ¶ Normal

Formatting

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Font: (Default) +Headings (Calibri Light), 16 pt, Font color: Accent 1, Space
Before: 12 pt
After: 0 pt, Keep with next, Keep lines together, Level 1, Style: Linked, Show in the Styles gallery,
Priority: 10

☑ Add to the Styles gallery   ☐ Automatically update
◉ Only in this document   ◯ New documents based on this template

Format ▾   OK   Cancel