

## LABOUR-SAVING MSWORD TRICKS FOR ESSAYS, PAPERS AND REPORTS

- You are probably working far too hard to produce papers and your thesis if you are using MSWord.**
- Learning a few tricks and tools in MSWord can save up to 1/3 of the work put into any paper.**
  - These skills can eliminate the repetitive, frustrating “housework” of writing a university paper or report,
  - They can give you control over the many strange and arbitrary things that “just happen” happen in MSWord.
  - Learn the secrets here:  
**“Formatting Skills in MSWord“**  
<http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writing/thesesformatting/WorkshopPlan051.pdf>
  - Get more free help here at the **SFU Library Theses Office webpage:**  
<http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writing/thesesinfo.html>
- Take the quiz on the other side to find out your skill level with MSWord.**
- Use a basic, pre-designed template for papers and reports...**
  - so you don't have to do the set-up yourself.
  - Then customize your papers fast and easily when you want to
  - Get a template for term papers here:  
<http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writing/thesestemplates/index.htm>
- Meet APA manuscript style requirements...**
  - with almost no effort with this template:  
<http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writing/thesestemplates/GeneralAPAManuscriptTemplate043.dot>
- Choose from a variety of customized templates to write your final thesis...**
  - <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/researchhelp/writing/thesestemplates/index.htm>

# WORKING SMART (INSTEAD OF HARD) – A POP QUIZ

The tools and skills listed below are available in both MSWord 2003 and MSWord 2007, though they are often in different locations. Score yourself on this inventory of MSWord tools and skills. Tick the skills you know how to do without using the Help menu, and add up your score. Then do a quick study of the Theses page help PDFs to learn key skills. After that, whenever you feel frustrated, use MSWord “Help” to go get the one skill or tool you need for the task you are working on.

**Your Score:**

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**out of 40.**

▪ **8 General Skills – still working too hard:**

- Creating new documents.
- Working with text.
- Spell checking.
- Word count.
- Formatting margins, font, paragraphs, custom tabs, indents.
- Inserting footnotes or endnotes.
- Inserting and editing basic tables.
- Using “Document View” and “Select Browse Object” to save your eyes from constant scrolling.

▪ **10 Intermediate Skills – getting beyond working hard to working more smoothly and quickly:**

- Choosing MSWord options to suit your own needs and speed, and eliminate “keyboard rage” and frustration.
- Using Bibliographic software (Endnote, Reference Manager, RefWorks) to collect and “bank” references, then generate references in papers in the style of your choice:
- Making your document portable on USB keys, disks, for use on different computers.
- Setting the system dictionary for the language (Canadian English, U.S. English, etc.) required for your paper.
- Creating an easy-to-edit outline using heading styles.
- Working with styles” and “templates” to increase your control of the formatting, even in “blank” documents.
- Making the margins visible to make table and figure sizing easier.
- Inserting tables, using “autofit” to size columns, and setting up default table style and table defaults.
- Using table configurations, “heading row repeat” and paragraph “keep with next” to control how table break across pages.
- Inserting graphics, drawings using “in line with text” to keep them together with your text.

▪ **9 Skills for getting the machine to do the mechanistic work so you have time to do the thinking:**

- Using Heading styles not just for looks, but to generate a table of contents
- Inserting figure and table captions with updatable numbers.
- Using captions to generate lists of tables and figures.
- Inserting updatable cross-references (to the tables or figures) into your text.
- Customizing project dictionaries.
- Maximizing automatic spelling/typographical error correction.
- Making the computer type repetitive, long words and phrases instead of you typing them.
- Setting the standard for comma (or not) before ‘and’, quotation marks inside or outside punctuation, and spaces after periods.
- Grammar checking, customizing grammar checks, and setting readability levels.

▪ **8 Advanced Problem-Solving Skills – responding to particular needs:**

- Creating a portable custom dictionary you can use on different computers.
- Formatting sections, headers and footers.
- Creating “Landscape”-oriented pages with section breaks.
- Debugging page numbering and changing and controlling page numbering, from section to section.
- Inserting endnotes at the end of chapters/specific location without divider lines.
- Applying a template to a previously created document.
- Converting documents from other templates.
- Final tidying of format settings to accommodate content.

▪ **3 Collaborative Writing/Electronic Document Review Skills:**

- Facilitating electronic reading and reviewing with Comments (“Annotations” or “Balloons”) to work electronically with supervisors and others.
- Using revision tracking and reviewing tools for collaborative, team-based writing and editing.
- Compare and combine different versions of documents.

▪ **2 Wizardry-level Skills:**

- Creating your own templates.
- Creating and working with Master documents and sub-documents.