Creating topics

We are going to pretend that Word files are lightweight DITA topics.

You are going to create a new file for each topic. Topics are the basic units of DITA content. Each topic should be organized around a single subject.

Every topic must contain a title and it should be the first thing in the topic. Use the wDITA\_title style for the title.

The second paragraph of every topic should be a “Short Description” Use the wDITA\_shortdesc style. It has a green background. Short descriptions are the first paragraph of your topic. However, in DITA processing, they can be used to autopopulate content. For example, when you make cross-references to topics, when you render the topics as HTML, the short description can appear as a popup when you hover over the link. They can also be used when generating lists of topics. Think of when you do a Google search, the first sentence of the web page shows up after the title. Short descriptions fulfill that purpose. Learning to write good short descriptions is a worthy endeavor. You can search for more guidance, for example <https://www.oasis-open.org/committees/download.php/57803/DITA-Adoption_2016_Writing-Effective-Short-Descriptions.pdf>.

After that, you can use the wDITA styles to mimic Lightweight DITA elements.

Regular paragraphs should be wDITA\_paragraph.

For bulleted lists, use wDITA\_unorderedlist

* List item 1
* List item 2
* List item 3

For numbered lists, use wDITA\_orderedlist

1. Another list item 1
2. Another list item 2
3. Another list item 3

Remember that Word is annoying. When you start another list using wDITA\_orderedlist, it starts with the next number from the previous list.

1. Right-click the first item in the new wDITA\_orderedlist.
2. Select Restart at 1.

If something is important, you can turn it into a note using wDITA\_note.

This is a note.

You can use what is called a “Definition list”. Definition lists consist of a wDITA\_definitionterm followed by a wDITA\_definitiondescription.

This is a term

This is the description.

This is a second term

This is a second description.

With a second paragraph, also using wDITA\_definitiondescription.

And back to a regular paragraph, wDITA\_paragraph.

You can insert tables. Please select the wDITA\_table from the Tables Design ribbon. Your cursor needs to be in the table.

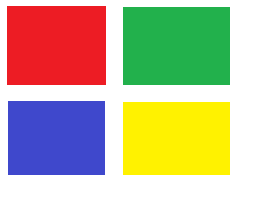
Table 1 Table caption

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Heading 1 | Heading 2 | Heading 3 |
| Cell contents | Stuff | Thing |
| You can use regular formatting in a cell | * List item 1 * List item 2 | 1. Ordered list 1 2. Ordered list 2 |

Tables should have captions. With your cursor in the table, go to the References tab and select Insert caption. You might need to change the label as appropriate.

You can also insert images.

Figure 1 This is a figure formatted with Caption,wDITA\_figuretitle



Just use Insert Picture from the Insert tab. Images should also have captions. Select the image and use Insert caption from the References tab. You might need to change the label as appropriate.

Lightweight DITA also includes some inline formatting. You can have wDITA\_bold, wDITA\_italic, wDITA\_subscript, wDITA\_superscript, and wDITA\_underline. You can also format links, either internal or external, using wDITA\_xref.

A lot of technical documentation is about software. Many aspects of technical software requires code examples.

Use wDITA\_codeblock for code samples.

The format respects whitespace and uses a monospace font.

So you can have tabs

To format code examples.