MIDDLESEX Community College

Tools and Technologies for Tech Writers 2023

Homework Helpers

Notices

This document was prepared as a handout for the Middlesex Community College Tools and Technologies for Technical Writers class, Winter semester 2023.

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Contents

Homework Helpers

This course is very fast paced. A lot of the instructions are vague. This document is an attempt to flush out some details if you need it.

I reiterate this many times over the course: I am covering too much, too fast.

Every single topic I cover could be a full course unto itself.

The intention is that you learn a bit about how you need to learn whatever new tools come your way in the workplace. Do you need a few tutorials? Do you need to buy a book? Do you need someone to train you, hands on?

The other intention is that you figure out if there are tools you hate, so you know to avoid those when job hunting.

Note: This document is a work in progress. I am going to add to it chapter by chapter.

Homework requirements

For each assignment, I am looking to see if you tried to use the tool.

It is impossible to master any of these tools in a week.

- I do not expect you to get everything correct.
- I do not expect you to become an expert.
- I do not expect this to be an excellent example of your writing abilities.
- I do not expect the assignment to be coherent or logical. It could all be Lorem Ipsum with some formatting applied.

My intention is that it only takes an hour or two to make a simple file (or more, depending upon the tool) that includes the following:

- At least one heading
- A paragraph or two
- An unordered list
- A numbered list
- A table
- Some inline formatting
- A link to an external file
- An image

This text can be completely nonsensical. I just want to see if you tried (not even succeeded) at using the tool.

Building Blocks on page 5 explains why I selected this set of items.

Suggestion on page 8 shows an example set of content.

These are the minimum requirements.

If you choose, you can attempt to use each homework assignment to make a portfolio piece. Pick something to document and write it up in whatever the tool of the week is. One of the easiest things

to document might be something about whatever tool you are using. If you ask, I will review your content for writing style and offer suggestions.

Building Blocks

There are a handful of tasks you need to learn how to do in any program you work in.

Every tool, and every implementation of a tool, has a unique way of doing things. For example, many content sets require some way to link to the software application they are documenting. This is so if you click the help button in your application, a specific page in your output appears. Most tools offer a way to do this, however how you do it is unique to the tool. Also, what is specifically required is unique to your work place. You may need to set up a mapping file that links application IDs to help IDs, and then do something to add the help IDs to your source files so the "magic" works in the output. You may just need to ensure that output files are named a certain way or put in a certain folder.

That said, there are a relatively small list of things that you need to be able to do in every tool. If you can do these things, you can use the tool.

As a Writer

If all you are concerned with is writing, these are the basic tasks you need to know how to do.

Required

This is the bare minimum you have to be able to do in any tool to be a technical writer.

Add a new paragraph	The English language is divided into chunks of text. These chunks are often paragraphs. You need to know how to make a new paragraph as needed. This is usually as simple as pressing **Enter**, but could require a bit more work, such as remembering to have a blank line between paragraphs in lightweight markup, or having to wrap the text in a `<p>` element in HTML.
Format the content	As you author content, you need to add formatting to it to help present the information better. You need to know both what formatting to apply, as well as how to do it.
	Some of this is subjective, such as determining if the content work better as a series of paragraphs, a bulleted list, or a table.
	Some of this should follow your company's style guide, such as when to apply inline formatting, and knowing the name of the style for a third level heading.
	Some of this is knowing how your tool works.
	When I'm describing adding formatting here, in general, I'm referring to applying the formats, styles, or template in your tool. Designing what your format actually looks like is generally something different.
Make text a title	The way we structure content in English, your content needs a title. This could be a chapter title, a book title, a section title, or a topic title. This

could be done by applying a style to a paragraph, filling in the correct field in a form, or making sure the line of text has a line of equal signs underneath it.

Make a list

A lot of technical content requires lists of information: lists of prerequisites, lists of options, lists of things to do next. In many ways, this is just a specialization of *Format the content*. However, list items are very common.

Make a procedure

Many would state that this is the core of technical writing. Our main job is to tell people how to do things. This is often done via a procedure. This could be as simple as making a numbered list, or following a set of styles prescribed by your style guide, or the complex structure of a DITA task topic. Similar to *Make a list*, this is a specialization of *Format the content*, but there are often special tools or techniques for working with procedures.

Make a table

Tables are a great way to present certain types of information. They also tend to be very complicated. You need to learn how to insert, format, etc. Again, it's another specialization of *Format the content*, but they are tricky. If you're working with lightweight markup, it can be the most complicated formatting. Most tools have wizards and various tools that take some time to learn.

Insert an image

A picture is worth a thousand words. You will need to include images in your content. Different tools do this in different ways.

In general, there are two ways you need to consider inserting images: inline or separately. An inline image is used often in procedures to assist with instructions such as "Click the **Save** () icon".

For larger images, you need to insert them so that they stand alone. That could be inside of a figure with a caption, or just on a separate line. In rare cases, you may configure text wrapping to go around the image.

Insert a link

Content these days usually needs to refer to other things. This can be links to external web sites or links to other parts of your content. (Internal references are often called *cross-references*.)

Linking can be something you have to control manually, or it might be something that can be autogenerated by your tooling. It can also be something you may have to maintain over time, or maybe the tool helps you keep the links working.

Add inline formatting

Besides formatting giant blocks of text, such as paragraphs, lists, and tables, you often need to apply formatting to specific words or phrases in your giant blocks of text. Common examples include making things you click in your software bold, making variables italic, and making command names use a monospace font.

Structure your content

Most likely you don't have a lot to say about the big structure, such as new help systems, new books, or new output formats. However, within the area where you do have control, you will need to know how to structure your content. By structure, this generally means what makes

a new section or chapter, and how section headings are nested. This could be making sure you use the right heading level style or could be structuring a bunch of topics into something that makes a table of contents.

Occasional

You may or may not need to do these tasks. These depend upon your tooling, your implementation, and how structured your work place is.

Make a new thing
Most of the time, as a technical writer you are working with content that is already semi-established. The User's Guide already exists, you're just adding new sections to it. You very rarely make a new thing. Also, there's usually a senior writer or information architect who minimally has extremely strong opinions and potentially corporate guidelines to follow about how new large things (new books, new help systems, new top level sections) can be created.

However, if you are working in a topic based system, you will probably often need to make new topics.

Update the table of contents
You will have to structure your content. Depending upon your tooling, your table of contents could be automatically generated, or something you have update. You may also need to be aware of your heading structures to make sure the table of contents works correctly. For example, some tools can't handle if your headings go from heading level 1 to heading level 3, skipping heading level 2.

Indexing or tagging for search
This may not make an actual index any more, but you probably need to do something to improve search results. This can be marking index terms, adding keywords, or adding tags.

Add context sensitive links
If you have a context sensitive help system, you need to add the markers or metadata or whatever to ensure your software can open the right page in your content. This could be something complicated to identify a help ID, or just making sure a file is named something specific.

Work with reuse
This is entirely tooling dependent, but if your tool allows for reuse, you should probably take advantage of it. Reuse can be many different things. You could have certain words or phrases that need to be inserted a specific way, such as version numbers or product names. You could have a way to share topics or chapters between different books. You could be able to reuse specific paragraphs, or any other defined chunk. You will need to learn both how to do the reuse in the tool you are using, and how your company maintains and organizes reused things.

Work with conditional text
Some tools allow you to mark content so that it only appears when certain conditions are met. This means you can mark content that only appears for specific outputs, such as between HTML or PDF output, or based on product or component.

Suggestion

Make a simple set of content that you can keep reusing in different tools.

Every single one of these homework assignments can be portfolio pieces. You can write complicated instructions on how to do things to show off what a great writer you are.

However, to pass this course, all you need to do is try to make all the basic building blocks in different tools.

When trying to learn the different tools, it might be easier if you just have text you are copying and pasting instead of trying to write something new *and* learn how to format something in yet another tool.

I would very much prefer you didn't cut and paste the following, but this is the minimal amount I'm looking for:

Look a Title

The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.

This is another new paragraph with something **bold** and *italic*. I now have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.

- I also need a list.
- This is a second list item.

  With a paragraph that lines up with the list item.
- And look, a third list item.

I have proven I can make an unordered list. And I can make another paragraph. Oh. I need a link to something, like http://www.google.com.

1. Now I need an ordered list.
2. I can use this for procedures.
3. Or to identify items in an image I don't want to translate.

There. Proof I can make a numbered list.

And there is an image. And I remembered to add alternative text.

Table Head 1	Table Head Column 2
Column 1	Column 2
More Column 1	More Column 2
And a third row for fun	With one more column 2

Assumptions

These instructions assume the following:

- You have already cloned the class repository and you are keeping it synced.
- You have Notepad++ installed.

    Instructions are in `Handouts/tips_and_tricks.pdf`.
- You have modified Windows File Explorer to always show known file type extensions.

    Instructions are in `Handouts/tips_and_tricks.pdf`.

Week 6 GitHub Flavored Markdown

There are multiple flavors of markdown out there in the world. We are going to focus on GitHub Flavored Markdown.

These instructions should help you complete the minimum requirements for the homework.

These instructions should be used in conjunction with the information in the following files:

- `mcc_tools_tech\Week06-LightweightMarkup\markdown.pdf`
- `mcc_tools_tech\Week06-LightweightMarkup\week6_Lightweight_markup.html`

Make a md file

Markdown is a text file.

1. In File Explorer, right-click in the `mcc_tools_tech\Week06-LightweightMarkup\Homework` folder and select **New** > **Folder**.
   This makes a new folder in the `Homework` directory. It should be called `New Folder`, and the text "New Folder" should be highlighted and ready to rename the folder.
2. Rename the folder `YourNameHW`.
   For example, I would name the folder `ZoeLawsonHW`.

   I will keep referring to the folder as `YourNameHW`.
3. Navigate into the `YourNameHW` folder.
4. Still in File Explorer, right-click in `YourNameHW` and select **New** > **Text Document**.
   This makes a new text document in the `YourNameHW` folder. It should be called `New Text Document.txt`, and the text "New Text Document" should be highlighted and ready to rename the file.
5. Rename the text file `YourName.md`.
   For example, I would name the file `ZoeLawson.md`.

   You must change the extension to `md`.

   You should receive a message stating `If you change a file name extension, the file might become unusable. Are you sure you want to change it?`.
6. Click **Yes** to change the file extension.
   The file should be named `YourName.md`.

Congratulations! You have made a markdown file.

Open the md file in Notepad++

There are a few markdown editors out there, but we're going to use Notepad++.

In File Explorer, right-click `YourName.md` and select **Edit with Notepad++**.

If you have Windows 11, you may have to select **Show more options** before you can select **Edit with Notepad++**.

The blank file, `YourName.md` opens in NotePad++.

You are now ready to add your first heading or title.

Add a title to the markdown file

The first block you need to add is a title or heading.

Your blank file should already be open in Notepad++. If it isn't, see

1. On the first line, type a `#` followed by a space, followed by your title text.
   For example:

```
# Look a Title
```

2. After entering the text of the title, make sure there is a blank line after the title.

Your file should look like the following:

```
# Look a Title

```

Notice that there is a blank line after the title, and your cursor is at the start of line 3.

Add a paragraph to the markdown file

After the title, insert a paragraph.

Your cursor should be at the beginning of line 3.

1. Enter the text of your paragraph.
   For example, enter the following:

```
The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically
  labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.
```

2. After entering the text of the paragraph, make sure there is a blank line after the paragraph.
3. Add a second paragraph.

You should have a title with two paragraphs, such as the following:

```
# Look a Title

The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically
  labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.

This is another new paragraph with something bold and italic. I now
  have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
```

Notice that there is an empty line between every block of text. Your cursor should be at the beginning of line 7.

Add inline formatting to the markdown file

Inline formatting in GitHub Flavored Markdown is done with underscores and asterisks.

You have a paragraph in your markdown file.

To make text italic, you wrap it with a single underscore or asterisk.

To make text bold, you wrap it in two underscores or two asterisks.

1. Place your cursor before the text you want to make italic and insert a single underscore or a single asterisk.
   Here is the second paragraph with the first underscore added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something bold and _italic. I now
    have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

2. Place your cursor at the end of the text you want to make italic and insert a single underscore or a single asterisk.

   You have to use the same symbol as you used to start the italic text. `_italic_` or `*italic*` work; `_italic*` or `*italic_` does not work.

   Here is the second paragraph with the second underscore added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something bold and _italic_. I now
    have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

3. Place your cursor before the text you want to make bold and insert two underscores or two asterisks.
   Here is the second paragraph with the first set of asterisks added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something **bold and _italic_. I
    now have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

4. Place your cursor at the end of the text you want to make bold and insert two underscores or two asterisks.

   You have to use the same symbol as you used to start the italic text. `__bold__` or `**bold**` work; `__bold**` or `**bold__` does not work.

   Here is the second paragraph with the second set of asterisks added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something **bold** and _italic_. I
    now have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

You now have inline formatting marked. You are ready to make an unordered list.

Add an unordered list to the markdown file

Unordered lists are sometimes known as bulleted lists.

Make sure your cursor is at the start of a new line and that there is a blank line above your cursor.

You can use many different characters to indicate an unordered list. The most common are asterisk or hyphens.

1. Have your cursor at the start of the line, and confirm there is a blank line between where your cursor is and the previous content.

   If you are following the example in these instructions, your cursor should be at the start of line 7.

2. Insert a hyphen, a space, and then the text of your list item.
   For example:

   ```
   - I also need a list.
   ```

3. Press `Enter`.

4. Insert a hyphen, a space, and then the text of your second list item.

   You do not need to have blank lines between list items.

5. Repeat entering a hyphen, a space, and then the text of your list item.

6. Make sure there is a blank line after your list.

Your list should resemble the following:

```
- I also need a list.
- This is a second list item.
- And look, a third list item.
```

Add an ordered list to the markdown file

Unordered lists are sometimes known as numbered lists.

You make a numbered list item by entering the number 1, a period, a space, and then the text of the list item.

You should only use the number 1, which can be confusing. Some editors may recognize if you actually enter the numbers, but it's not guaranteed.

1. Have your cursor at the start of the line, and confirm there is a blank line between where your cursor is and the previous content.

   If you are following the example in these instructions, your cursor should be at the start of line 11.

2. Insert the number 1, a period, a space, and then the text of your list item.
   For example:

   ```
   1. Now I need an ordered list.
   ```

3. Press `Enter`.

4. Insert a number 1, a period, a space, and then the text of your second list item.

   You do not need to have blank lines between list items.

5. Repeat entering a number 1, a period, a space, and then the text of your list item.

6. Make sure there is a blank line after your list.

Your list should resemble the following:

```
1. Now I need an ordered list.
1. I can use this for procedures.
1. Or to identify items in an image I don't want to translate.
```

Insert a link in the markdown file

You often need to reference external websites when writing.

These instructions are how to link to an external web site. Linking to internal locations require different formatting, and is not required for this homework.

If you're interested in internal links, see https://stackoverflow.com/questions/27981247/github-markdown-same-page-link.

1. Have your cursor where you want to insert your link.
2. Type an open square bracket `[`.
3. Enter the text for the link.
4. Type a close square bracket `]`.
5. Type an open parenthesis `(`.
6. Enter the URL for the link.

   You have to enter the full URL, including the `http://`.
7. Type a close parenthesis `)`.

For example:

```
This is a [link to Google](http://www.google.com).
```

Insert an image in the markdown file

Images in markdown are inserted by reference.

You need to have a web-friendly image in the folder you made in Make a md file on page 10. For example, you can reference a JPG, GIF, or PNG file.

You can also use a relative path from the markdown file to where the image is. If you have already added an image for another homework assignment, you could reference it. However, that requires that you understand how relative paths work. If you're not ready for that yet, just make sure your image is in your `mcc_tools_tech\Week06-LightweightMarkup\Homework\`*YourName*`HW` folder.

The example image used is called `graphic.png`.

1. Have your cursor where you want to insert your image.
2. Type an exclamation point `!` followed by an open square bracket `[`.
3. Enter your alternative text for the image.

   This is used by screen readers or if your image cannot be found.

4. Type a close square bracket `]`.

5. Type an open parenthesis `{`.

6. Enter the relative path to your image.

   If your image is in the same folder as your markdown file, it should just be the file name.

7. Type a close parenthesis `)`.

8. If this is a standalone image, make sure there is a blank line before and after the line of text for the image.

For example:

```
![A few overlapping geometric shapes in different colors.](graphic.png)
```

Add a table to the markdown file

Tables are very useful for displaying data but complicated in markdown.

Tables are defined using pipes | and hyphens –.

1. Have your cursor at the start of the line, and confirm there is a blank line between where your cursor is and the previous content.

2. Type a pipe |, a space, the text of your first column header, another space, and then another pipe |.

3. Type a space, the text of your second column header, another space, and then another pipe |.

4. Repeat step 3 for every column.

5. Press **Enter** at the end of your table row.

6. For the second line to mark the previous line as the table head, type a pipe | a space, then a number of hyphens – equal to the text of your first column, another space, and then another pipe |. Repeat the hyphens and pipes to match your table head.
   For example:

```
| Table Head 1 | Table Head Column 2 |
| ------------ | ------------------- |
```

7. For each row of your table, type a pipe |, a space, the text of your cell, a space, a pipe, the text of the second column cell, a space, and a pipe. You want to end your row with a space and a pipe.

   This means that most likely your pipes will not line up because your cell text will be different lengths.

8. Make sure there is a blank line after your table.

For example, here is the completed table:

```
| Table Head 1 | Table Head Column 2 |
| ------------ | ------------------- |
| Column 1 | Column 2 |
| More Column 1 | More Column 2 |
```

```
| And a third row for fun | With one more column 2 |
```

Example markdown file

If you followed the previous instructions, your file should resemble the following.

```
# Look a Title

The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically
 labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.

This is another new paragraph with something **bold** and _italic_. I
 now have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.

- I also need a list.
- This is a second list item.
- And look, a third list item.

1. Now I need an ordered list.
1. I can use this for procedures.
1. Or to identify items in an image I don't want to translate.

This is a [link to Google](http://www.google.com).

![A few overlapping geometric shapes in different colors.](graphic.png)

| Table Head 1 | Table Head Column 2 |
| ------------ | ------------------- |
| Column 1 | Column 2 |
| More Column 1 | More Column 2 |
| And a third row for fun | With one more column 2 |
```

Save your file and upload it to GitHub. If you need a refresher on working with GitHub, see
Handouts/git_cheatsheet.pdf.

Congratulations! You've made a GitHub Flavored Markdown file!

Week 7 Restructured Text

ReStructured Text (ReST) is another type of lightweight markup.

These instructions should help you meet the minimum requirements for the assignment.

These instructions should be used in conjunction with the information in the following files:

- `mcc_tools_tech\Week07-MoreLightweightMarkup\reStructuredText.pdf`
- `mcc_tools_tech\Week07-MoreLightweightMarkup\sphinx.pptx`
- `mcc_tools_tech\Week07-MoreLightweightMarkup`
  `\week7_more_lightweight_markup.html`

Make a rst file

ReStructured Text is a text file.

1. In File Explorer, right-click in the `mcc_tools_tech\Week07-MoreLightweightMarkup` `\Homework` folder and select **New > Folder**.
   This makes a new folder in the `Homework` directory. It should be called `New Folder`, and the text "New Folder" should be highlighted and ready to rename the folder.
2. Rename the folder `YourNameHW`.
   For example, I would name the folder `ZoeLawsonHW`.

   I will keep referring to the folder as `YourNameHW`.
3. Navigate into the `YourNameHW` folder.
4. Still in File Explorer, right-click in `YourNameHW` and select **New > Text Document**.
   This makes a new text document in the `YourNameHW` folder. It should be called `New Text Document.txt`, and the text "New Text Document" should be highlighted and ready to rename the file.
5. Rename the text file `YourName.rst`.
   For example, I would name the file `ZoeLawson.rst`.

   You must change the extension to `rst`.

   You should receive a message stating `If you change a file name extension, the file might become unusable. Are you sure you want to change it?`.
6. Click **Yes** to change the file extension.
   The file should be named `YourName.rst`.

Congratulations! You have made a ReStructured text file.

Open the rst file in Notepad++

ReStructured Text was created to be used with applications written in Python. A Python environment editor should handle ReST, but we're going to use Notepad++.

In File Explorer, right-click `YourName.rst` and select **Edit with Notepad++**.

If you have Windows 11, you may have to select **Show more options** before you can select **Edit with Notepad++**.

The blank file, *YourName*`.rst` opens in Notepad++.

You are now ready to add your first heading or title.

Add a title to the markdown file

The first block you need to add is a title or heading.

Your blank file should already be open in Notepad++. If it isn't, see Open the rst file in Notepad++ on page 17.

1. On the first line, type your title text and press **Enter**.
2. On the second line, type an equal sign = the same length as your title.

   You can actually use one of many characters, including +, #, *, or ~.
3. After entering the text of the title, and the line of characters marking the title, make sure there is a blank line after the title.

Your file should look like the following:

```
Look a Title
============
```

Notice that there is a blank line after the title, and your cursor is at the start of line 4.

Add a paragraph to the ReST file

After the title, insert a paragraph.

Your cursor should be at the beginning of line 4.

1. Enter the text of your paragraph.
   For example, enter the following:

   ```
   The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically
    labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.
   ```

2. After entering the text of the paragraph, make sure there is a blank line after the paragraph.
3. Add a second paragraph.

You should have a title with two paragraphs, such as the following:

```
Look a Title
============

The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically
 labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.

This is another new paragraph with something bold and italic. I now
 have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
```

Notice that there is an empty line between every block of text. Your cursor should be at the beginning of line 8.

Add inline formatting to the ReST file

Inline formatting in ReST is done with underscores and asterisks.

You have a paragraph in your ReST file.

To make text italic, you wrap it with a single asterisk.

To make text bold, you wrap it in two asterisks.

1. Place your cursor before the text you want to make italic and insert a single asterisk.
   Here is the second paragraph with the first asterisk added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something bold and *italic. I now
    have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

2. Place your cursor at the end of the text you want to make italic and insert a single asterisk.
   Here is the second paragraph with the second underscore added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something bold and *italic*. I now
    have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

3. Place your cursor before the text you want to make bold and insert two asterisks.
   Here is the second paragraph with the first set of asterisks added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something **bold and *italic*. I
    now have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

4. Place your cursor at the end of the text you want to make bold and insert two asterisks.
   Here is the second paragraph with the second set of asterisks added.

   ```
   This is another new paragraph with something **bold** and *italic*. I
    now have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.
   ```

You now have inline formatting marked. You are ready to make an unordered list.

Add an unordered list to the ReST file

Unordered lists are sometimes known as bulleted lists.

Make sure your cursor is at the start of a new line and that there is a blank line above your cursor.

You can use many different characters to indicate an unordered list. The most common are asterisk or hyphens.

1. Have your cursor at the start of the line, and confirm there is a blank line between where your cursor is and the previous content.

    If you are following the example in these instructions, your cursor should be at the start of line 8.

2. Insert a hyphen, a space, and then the text of your list item.
    For example:

    ```
    - I also need a list.
    ```

    You can use a hyphen -, an asterisk *, or a plus sign + to mark an unordered list.

3. Press Enter.

4. Insert a hyphen, a space, and then the text of your second list item.

    You do not need to have blank lines between list items.

5. Repeat entering a hyphen, a space, and then the text of your list item.

6. Make sure there is a blank line after your list.

Your list should resemble the following:

```
- I also need a list.
- This is a second list item.
- And look, a third list item.
```

Add an ordered list to the ReST file

Unordered lists are sometimes known as numbered lists.

You make a numbered list item by entering a pound sign/hashtag/octothorpe #, a period, a space, and then the text of the list item.

The pound sign makes an autonumbered list. You can use exact numbers if you need a list to start at a number other than 1.

1. Have your cursor at the start of the line, and confirm there is a blank line between where your cursor is and the previous content.

    If you are following the example in these instructions, your cursor should be at the start of line 12.

2. Insert a pound sign #, a period, a space, and then the text of your list item.
    For example:

    ```
    #. Now I need an ordered list.
    ```

3. Press Enter.

4. Insert a pound sign #, a period, a space, and then the text of your second list item.

    You do not need to have blank lines between list items.

5. Repeat entering a pound sign #, a period, a space, and then the text of your list item.

6. Make sure there is a blank line after your list.

Your list should resemble the following:

```
#. Now I need an ordered list.
#. I can use this for procedures.
#. Or to identify items in an image I don't want to translate.
```

Insert a link in the ReST file

You often need to reference external websites when writing.

These instructions are how to link to an external web site. Linking to internal locations require different formatting, and is not required for this homework.

ReST links consist of two items:

- A text for the link, followed by an underscore.

  If the text has spaces in it, you must wrap the text in a back tick. On US keyboards, the back tick is the key to the left of the 1. It is usually the same key as the tilde ~.

  For example: `` `A link to google`_ ``
- A definition for the link, that begins with two periods, a space, an underscore, and the link text.

  For example: `` .. _`A link to google`: http://www.google.com ``

1. Have your cursor where you want to insert your link.
2. Type the text for your link, followed by an underscore _.
3. On a separate line, type two periods, a space, an underscore, the name, and a colon.
4. Enter the URL for the link.

   You have to enter the full URL, including the `http://`.

For example:

```
This is a `link to Google`_

.. _`link to Google`: http://www.google.com
```

Insert an image to the ReST file

Images in ReST are inserted by reference.

You need to have a web-friendly image in the folder you made in Make a rst file on page 17. For example, you can reference a JPG, GIF, or PNG file.

You can also use a relative path from the markdown file to where the image is. If you have already added an image for another homework assignment, you could reference it. However, that requires that you understand how relative paths work. If you're not ready for that yet, just make sure your image is in your `mcc_tools_tech\Week07-MoreLightweightMarkup\Homework\`*`YourName`*`HW` folder.

The example image used is called `graphic.png`.

---

1. Have your cursor where you want to insert your image.
2. Type two periods, a space, the text `image` followed by two colons and a space.
3. Enter the relative path to your image.

   If your image is in the same folder as your markdown file, it should just be the file name.
4. As a standalone image, make sure there is a blank line before and after the line of text for the image.

For example:

```
.. image:: graphic.png
```

Add a table to the ReST file

Tables are very useful for displaying data but complicated in ReST.

Tables are defined using pipes |, plus signs +, and hyphens -. Table headings are defined with equal signs =.

- The plus sign + is used to mark corners.
- The hyphen - is used to mark row borders.
- The equal sign = is used to mark the table header.
- The pipe | is used to mark column borders.

All of the text of the table has to be surrounded by the demarcation symbols.

It's probably easiest to type out the text of your table, and then make the demarcation symbols around the text.

- This is difficult to explain in words. Hopefully this example will explain better than numerous confusing steps:

```
+-------------------------+-------------------------+
| Table Head 1            | Table Head Column 2     |
+=========================+=========================+
| Column 1                | Column 2                |
+-------------------------+-------------------------+
| More Column 1           | More Column 2           |
+-------------------------+-------------------------+
| And a third row for fun | With one more column 2  |
+-------------------------+-------------------------+
```

Example ReST file

If you followed the previous instructions, your file should resemble the following.

```
Look a Title
============
```

```
The above is a title. It could be formatted as something specifically
 labeled a title, or maybe just a heading level one.

This is another new paragraph with something bold and italic. I now
 have two separate paragraphs, and have some inline formatting.

- I also need a list.
- This is a second list item.
- And look, a third list item.

#. Now I need an ordered list.
#. I can use this for procedures.
#. Or to identify items in an image I don't want to translate.

This is a `link to Google`_

.. _`link to Google`: http://www.google.com

.. image:: graphic.png


+------------------------+------------------------+
| Table Head 1           | Table Head Column 2    |
+========================+========================+
| Column 1               | Column 2               |
+------------------------+------------------------+
| More Column 1          | More Column 2          |
+------------------------+------------------------+
| And a third row for fun | With one more column 2 |
+------------------------+------------------------+
```

Save your file and upload it to GitHub. If you need a refresher on working with GitHub, see `Handouts/git_cheatsheet.pdf`.

Congratulations! You've made a ReStructured Text file!