



Headings



What do headings accomplish?

Headings enhance readability, scan-ability, and overall professionalism of the document:

- Provide an overview (Table of Contents)
- Indicate the logical flow and hierarchy of ideas
- Enable readers to read selectively
- Provide breaks and white space
- Keep readers focused
- Keep the writer focused and organized



Tips for designing headings

- To indicate hierarchical importance of different levels of headings, use
 - Numbering system
 - Font type and size
 - Bold and italics
 - Placement (indentation)
- Be consistent in using one size/style/font for each heading on the same level (use **Styles** function in MS word)
- Use a numbering system to indicate hierarchical importance of headings and flow in longer documents
- Font size and typography is used intuitively:
(larger size or bold = more emphasis)



Example Heading Designs

Heading: Arial bold 16 point font. Introduce with Arabic numeral; aligned with left margin. 1.5 space below (whitespace between heading and text below it)

1. Heading Level One

This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.
This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.
This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.
This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.

Body font: 12 point Times New Roman



Heading Designs: Second Level

Leave white space under the end of the previous section.
There should always be slightly more white space above the heading than below.

1.1. Heading Level Two

This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.

This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.

This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.

This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.

**Heading and text is
indented 0.5" from margin;
Arial bold 14 point font;
introduced with numeral
and one decimal place.**



Heading Designs: Third level

Additional indent from margin (optional). Font Times New Roman bold italics 14 points. Introduce with an Arabic numeral

1.1.1. Heading Three

This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.
This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.
This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.
This is text. This is text. This is text. This is text.



1. First Level Heading

Under this first level heading you will find text related to the topic indicated by the heading. It will go on for several lines. If there is a Section 1, there will also be a Section 2 in order to avoid having a lone heading at this level.

1.1. Second Level Heading

This section may align directly under the 2nd level heading, or can align with the left margin. To avoid having a lone heading at this level, you will also have a section 1.2 and possibly 1.3, etc.

1.1.1. Third Level Heading

This third level heading is further indented, and smaller or in italics to set it off from second level heading. Again, if you have a 1.1.1, you should have a number 1.1.2, etc.

1.1.2. Additional Third Level Heading

Text text text text...

1.2. Additional Second Level Heading

Text, text text...

2. First Level Heading with a New Topic

Text text text text...



Non-Numbered Headings Example:

First Level Heading

Under this first level heading you will find text related to the topic indicated by the heading. It will go on for several lines. You will have additional headings at this level in order to avoid creating a lone heading.

Second Level Heading

This section may align directly under the 2nd level heading, or can align with the left margin. To avoid having a lone heading at this level, you will have additional headings at this level.

Third Level Heading

This third level heading is further indented, and smaller or in italics to set it off from second level heading. Again, if you have a 1.1.1, you should have a number 1.1.2, etc.

Additional Third Level Heading

Text text text text...

Additional Second Level Heading

Text, text text...

First Level Heading with a New Topic

Text text text text...



How do you use headings?

- Each section must have a heading, and each heading should normally have text under it.
- Use consistent formatting (Use **STYLES**) for each level of heading
- Make your headings accurate and descriptive
- Use task-oriented headings in instructions
- Have more white space *above* the heading than below
- Use an appropriate number of headings
Guideline: 2 to 4 headings per page for our assignments



Function vs Descriptive Headings

These two tables of contents are based on the documents' headings. Which table gives you a better sense of what the document contains?

| Table of Contents | Table of Contents |
|--|--|
| <i>Introduction.....1</i> | <i>Ski Lift Safety Issues.....1</i> |
| <i>Problem Definition.....2</i> | <i>Deropement Problems in Tow Lifts.....2</i> |
| <i>Proposed Solution.....2</i> | <i>Proposed Rope Catcher Solution3</i> |
| <i>Benefits4</i> | <i>Benefits of Implementation4</i> |
| <i>Conclusion4</i> | <i>Resolving the Safety Issue.....5</i> |
| <i>Recommendation.....5</i> | <i>Recommendation.....5</i> |
| <i>References6</i> | <i>References6</i> |
| Table 1 2 | Table 1. Cost Breakdown for One Tower Installation.....2 |
| Figure 1 4 | Figure 1. Proposed Retainment Device Attached to Existing Sheave.....4 |



What to Avoid

| X Lone headings | Avoid having just one heading at a particular level or section of your document. That is like having one item in a list. |
|---|---|
| X Stacked Headings | Every heading should normally have body text under it. |
| X Headings as list lead-ins | A list should be introduced by a grammatically correct lead-in sentence. |
| X Headings as captions for visuals | Use “insert caption” to create correct labels for figures and tables, and place them appropriately. Headings indicate an entire section, not a single visual element. |
| X Widows and Orphans | Use hard page breaks to avoid leaving a heading orphaned at the bottom of a page, with no text below it. |



Quick Quiz

Identify three things that headings accomplish.

What are “stacked headings” and when should these be used?

True or false? “Background” or “Technical Information” are examples of effective descriptive headings.

What is a lone heading?

Can a heading introduce a table?

True or false: 3rd level headings should be larger than first level headings?

True or false? There should be more white space above the heading than below?