

The Lorem Text

Using Word’s Random Text Feature to Help You Prepare Documents

When you’re responsible for the layout and format of a report, newsletter, brochure, flyer, or another document that includes graphics and other design elements, you may receive the copy all at once by the time you’re ready to start working. But more often than not, you’ll receive it piecemeal or after specified internal deadlines. Sometimes you may receive a copy and, shortly after that, an email indicating not to use it as changes are being made. However, you want to make sure you hit your own deadline for formatting the project and plan to get started immediately.

You can layout the document, graphics, and design elements, as long as you have the approximate word count of the text. With this information, you can generate random or dummy text to serve as a placeholder while the actual copy is finalized. You can layout and format your presentation using this random text, and then, when the actual copy is finished, you can replace your random text with it.

If you’re using Microsoft Word to create your document, you can easily create random text using the application’s random text generator feature.

The Random Text feature

Creating random text is simple. To start, type `=rand()` and then click Enter in your document. Several paragraphs of randomly generated text will appear. You can also use this function to specify the number of paragraphs and sentences in each paragraph. To do so, type `=rand(`, followed by the number of paragraphs, and the number of sentences in each paragraph you want, separated by a comma. Don’t forget to include a closing parenthesis and to press Enter.

For example, if we’d like six paragraphs of random text, with each paragraph consisting of four sentences, we’d type `=rand(6, 4)`, and then press Enter. Or if we’d like 20 paragraphs with five sentences per paragraph, we’d type `=rand(20, 5)`, followed by Enter. We can use the Word Count feature to determine how many words have been generated by selecting Word Count from the Review ribbon selection. If you’ve generated more words than needed, simply delete the extra ones.

Random Latin text

The Random Text function will generate English paragraphs for your use. However, you can also generate random Latin sentences if you choose. To do so involves similar steps. Type `=lorem()`, and you’ll be treated to several paragraphs of Latin phrases. To specify how many paragraphs and sentences per paragraph you’ll need, type the number for each within the parenthesis, separated by a comma. For example, if you need seven Latin paragraphs consisting of three sentences each, type `=lorem (7,3)` and then press Enter.

Using these functions can help you obtain the dummy text you need to format your Word document successfully. You can format it into columns, drop it into text boxes, and apply different formatting styles depending on your project’s requirements. You can produce a document that looks almost entirely like the finished product. When you receive the actual text, you can insert it in the appropriate place. For example, if your layout has a text box full of dummy text, highlight it using your mouse and cursor. Then open your approved text in a separate document, highlight the approved copy that belongs in that text box and use the Ctrl + C and Ctrl + P shortcuts to copy your approved text in the appropriate place.

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