

Styling Google Docs

INTRODUCTION

In today's video, I will be demonstrating some of the tips and tricks I use when styling Google docs. If you have used Google Docs at least at a basic level, then you have probably noticed that it lacks many of the more robust formatting features and capabilities of office applications such as Microsoft Word.

Or...does it?

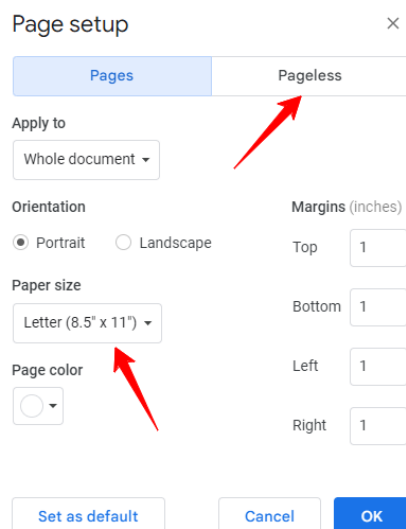
It is true that Word boasts many more features and allows for more precision when formatting documents, however you may be surprised to learn just how granular you are able to get with Google Docs after watching my video today.

Personally, I view it like: Google Docs is to Microsoft Office as GIMP is to Photoshop. At any rate, let's dive in!

This walkthrough will be most effective if you choose to follow along with my examples as we work together to unlock all of Google Docs lesser known capabilities.

Having said that, go ahead and create a brand new document in a separate browser window, then resize it so that you can position it next to the window in which you are viewing this video. It will be easier to keep up with them side-by-side.

PAGE SETUP IN GOOGLE DOCS



The first choice we will need to make before we start to get our hands dirty with styles and formatting, is the setup of the pages (or, lack thereof) in our Google doc.

To specify these details, first go to the **File** menu in your doc editor and scroll almost all the way to the bottom, where you will find the option 'Page setup.'

By default, the page will be set to **Letter** (8.5" x 11").

You can choose whatever page setup you want, but I prefer the preset called **Legal** because it gives us a few inches of extra length to work with,

which will come in handy for the uses we have in mind in this video.

File —> Page Setup —> Paper Size —> Legal (8.5" x 14")

Leave the default values for the **margins**.

The other choice you can make is to go completely Pageless!

I have experimented with this approach, and there are some advantages but I feel that we are better off having a set width for the tips and tricks we will be learning here today. We will save all the fun of Pageless Google Docs for another day.

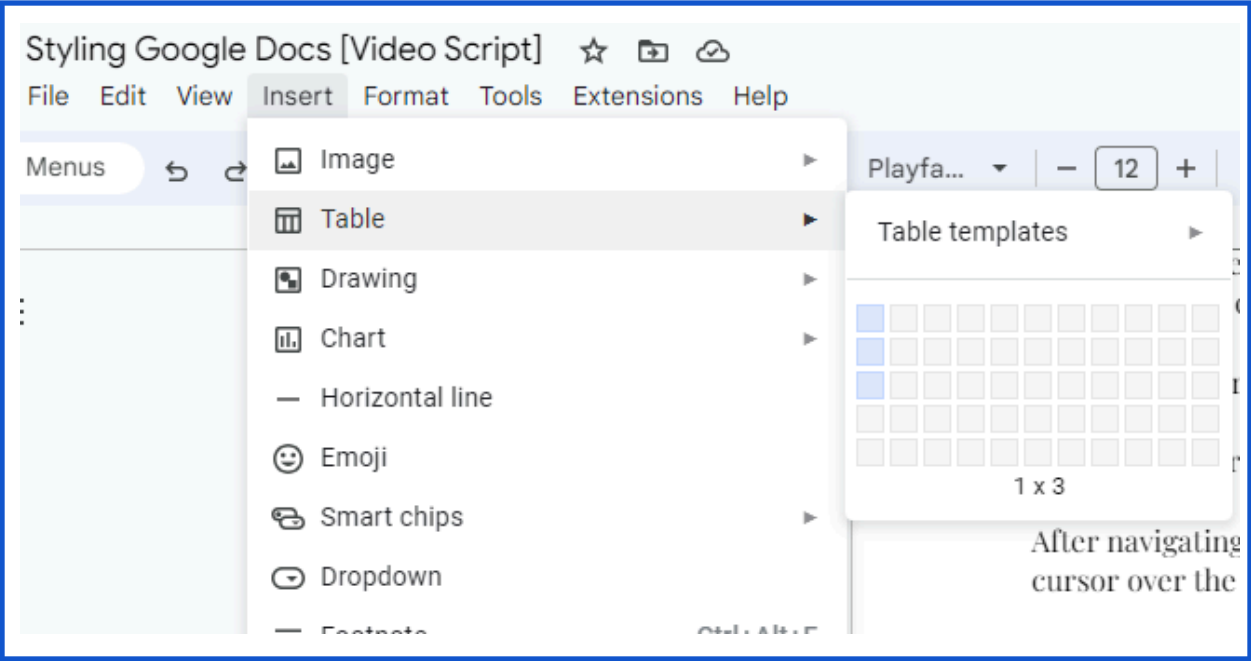
INSERTING A TABLE FOR OUR DOCUMENT LAYOUT

If we were designing anything for the web outside of a Google doc or an HTML email template, that section header you just read would be considered blasphemous.

Why, you might be wondering?

Well, suffice to say that if you are not already aware of why that is the truth, we will have to save the topic for later on. For now, we will simply agree that no website should exist as content arranged in HTML table cells, am I right?

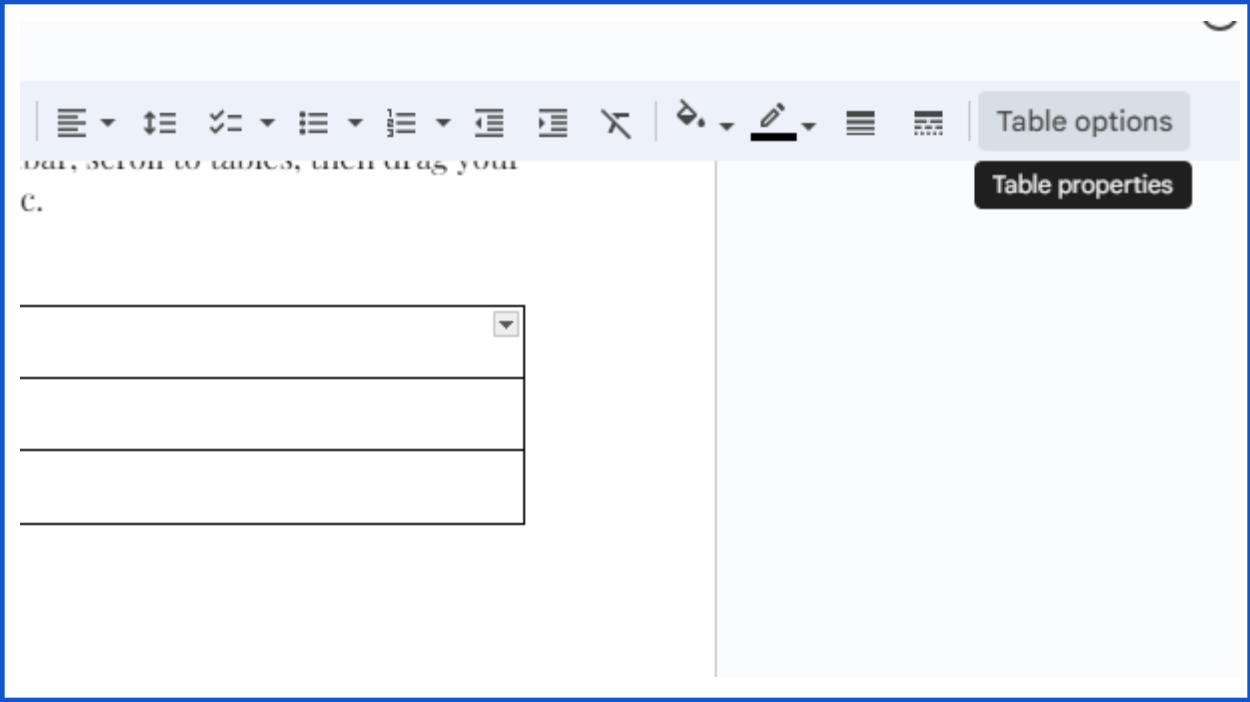
Glad we can agree on that much. Moving things right along.



After navigating to the **Insert** menu on your doc toolbar, scroll to tables, then drag your cursor over the grid to create a **1 x 3 table** in your doc.

Insert → Table → 1 x 3

Once you've inserted your table, look to the far right end of your toolbar and click on **Table options**.



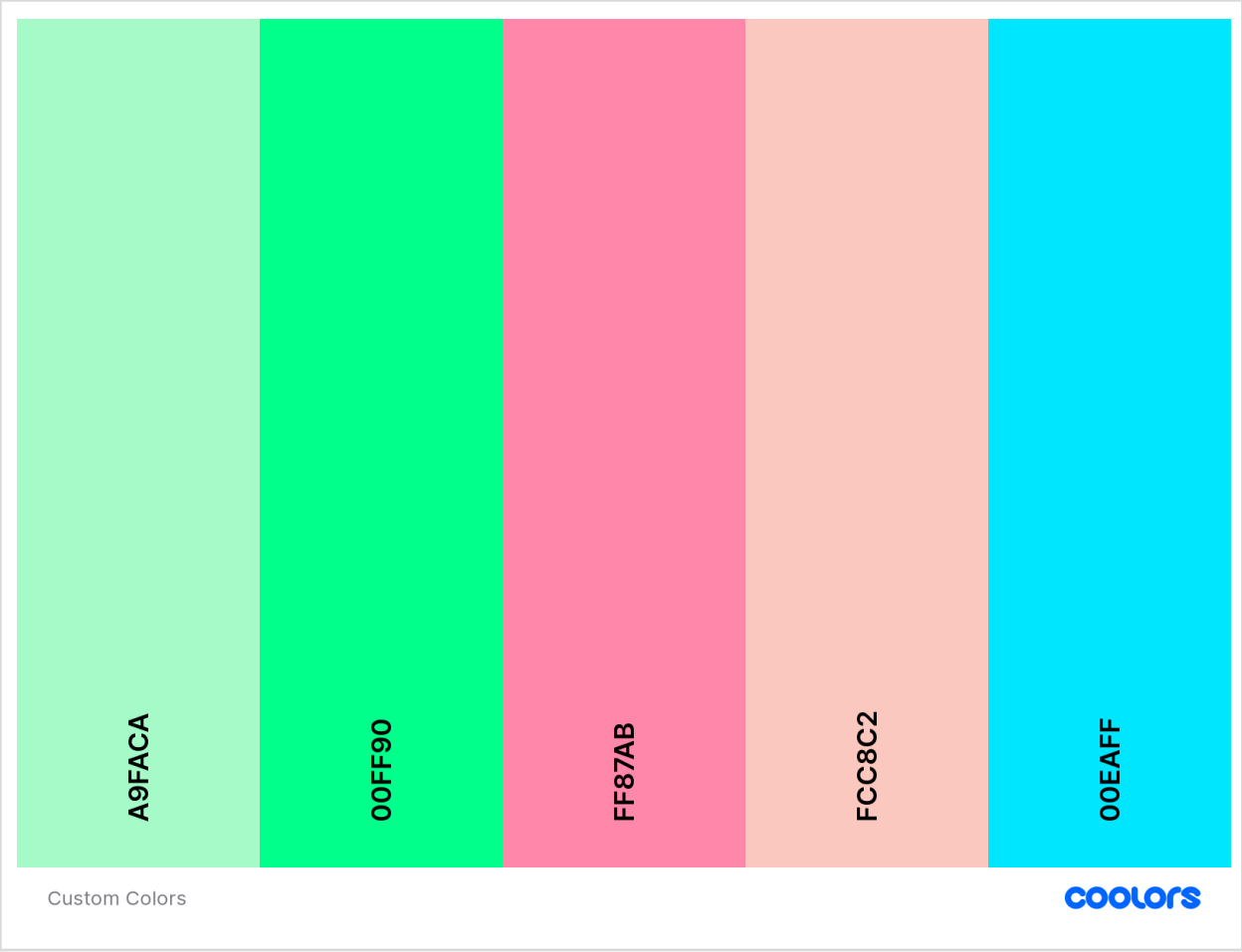
Clicking on this will bring up a sidebar menu called **Table properties**, which will include several sub-menus. First, click on the **Table** sub-menu dropdown and click on the **centered alignment**.

Table Options —> Table —> Alignment —> Center

ADDING CUSTOM COLORS

Next, expand the **Color** sub-menu. There you will find two fields which accept color input. For the first one, we will choose a light gray color for our **table border**, rather than the black one that is present by default. For the **cell background color**, we will click on **Custom**.

For this part, we need to step out of Docs for a few minutes and put some thought into creating a visually pleasing color palette for the design of our document. There are tons of free tools for generating these types of color resources, but one of my favorites is called [Coolers](#)



Input the **HEX code** (as seen in the image above) for the color you want to use for your cell background, and add it as a custom color.

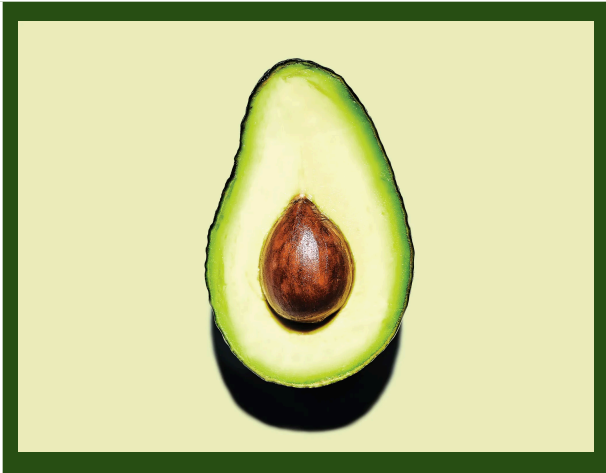
Click in first table cell —> Table Options —> Color —> Cell background color —> Custom —>

Next, place your cursor in the first row of your table, then choose the newly added color for the cell background. Leave the next row plain white, then place your cursor in the third and final table row and assign the same cell background color that you used in the first row.

It should now start to almost appear like a website layout, with a **header** and **footer** and a white space between them, where your content will end up going.

Give Your Document a Title

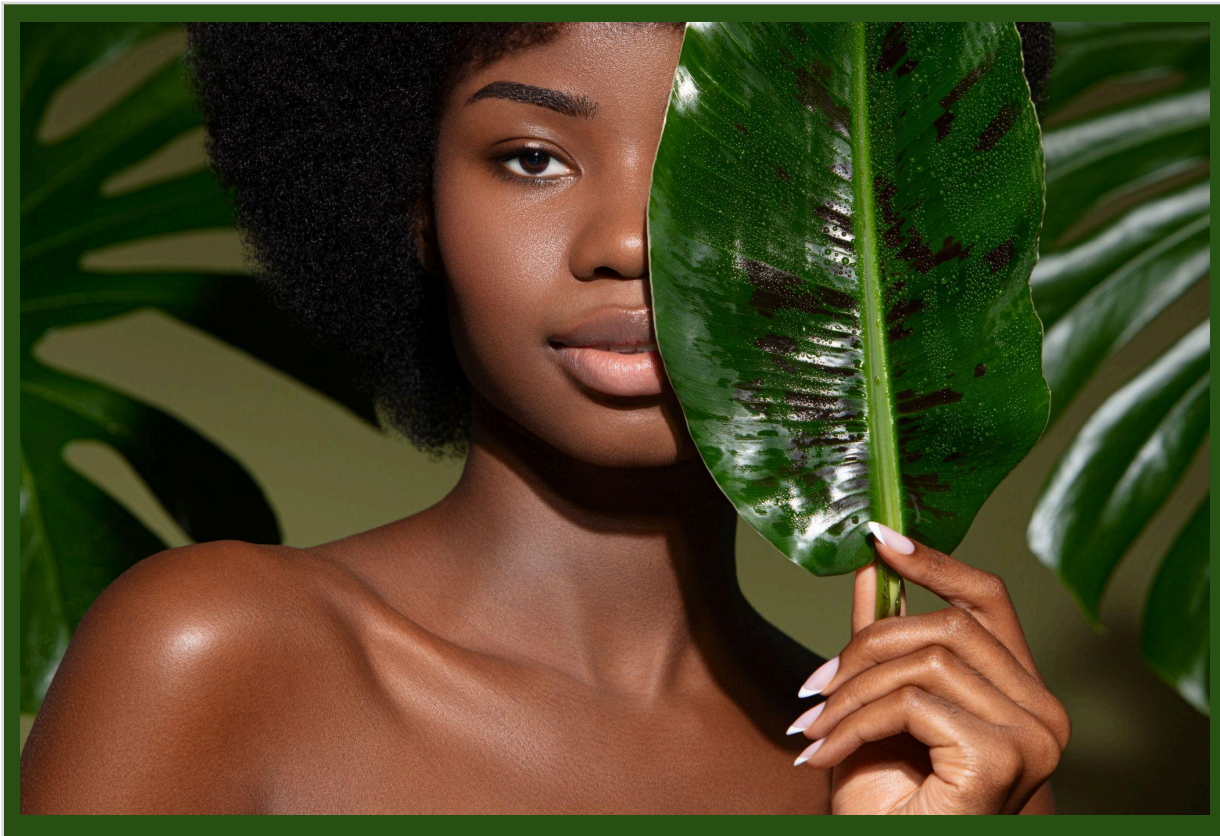
ADD A SUB HEADING TO THE FIRST SECTION



Place your cursor in the plain white **middle row** of your table, then insert another table, this time a **1 x 1**.

In the **left column**, place your cursor and choose center alignment, then insert a nice rectangular-shaped photo or image that goes well with the color scheme you chose for this document's design.

In the column directly to the right of your photo, you can start typing the first paragraph of text in your document. Once the text has matched the height of your image, then place your cursor directly underneath the table and continue to add text, so that it appears to wrap around your image, as demonstrated in this example.



ANOTHER GOOD PLACE FOR A SECTION HEADING

As a final touch, click in that first paragraph of text again and change your table background color to white, so that the nested table is no longer visible to the reader.

