Chapter 3: Working with Text

In this chapter

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Understanding PowerPoint’s Text Capabilities

Adding and formatting text is a fairly straightforward task in PowerPoint. What’s often more difficult is choosing the appropriate fonts, colors, and effects for your presentation. PowerPoint offers sophisticated text formatting and customization options, and it also provides a great deal of automation if you’re in a hurry or have limited design skills. When you’re done adding text to your presentation, you can verify that its spelling and style are error free with PowerPoint’s spelling checker.

Adding Text

In PowerPoint, you need to add text in a text placeholder, title placeholder, or text box. Figure 3.1 illustrates an example of a text placeholder.

**Figure 3.1**

A text placeholder is a tool PowerPoint uses for entering text.

If you use the AutoContent Wizard or add a slide that includes a text or title placeholder, you can immediately start creating text.

If you want to add your own text box to a blank slide, choose Insert, Text Box. You can then draw a text box on the slide using the mouse. As you add text, the box expands. Figure 3.2 shows a text box.

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**Tip** - You can also add a text box by clicking the Text Box button on the Drawing toolbar.
Figure 3.2
A text box is another tool that PowerPoint uses to enter text.

Formatting Text

PowerPoint’s design templates include preselected colors, fonts, font sizes, and other formatting parameters that are designed to work well together—a real timesaver and also very useful for people who are new to presentation design.

→ To learn more about how typefaces and fonts affect your presentation, see "Choosing Typefaces and Fonts" in Chapter 23, "The Media—Designing Visual Support."

You'll need to apply extensive text formatting only if you create a text box on a blank slide in a presentation without an attached design template. In most cases, you'll either use the formatting that the design template suggests or make only minor modifications to it.

→ To learn more about how to modify text and formatting on slide masters rather than on individual slides, see "Modifying the Slide Master" in Chapter 21, "Customizing PowerPoint."

The following are some changes you may consider to enhance the presentation of your slides:

- **Enlarge or reduce font size to fit the page** For example, if your title is too long to fit across one line, you might want to reduce the font size slightly. If you have only a few bullet points on a slide, you might want to increase their size to fill the page. Be sure, however, that the font size is still appropriate for the presentation. For example, be careful that all text is still readable on the slide and, if you're going to do an onscreen presentation, that it isn't too small to be seen by viewers in the back of a room.

- **Replace one font with another** You might have a particular font you prefer to use in presentations. Be careful, however, not to be too creative with unusual fonts. You want to be sure everyone can clearly read your presentation.

- **Add boldface, italics, or color** Use these to emphasize a point with a certain word or words.

  **Caution** - Unless you have experience in graphic design, you're better off using the preselected fonts, colors, and font sizes included in one of PowerPoint's design templates or making only very minor modifications.

You can format text in two ways:

- Use the Font dialog box to make a number of changes in one place and to set font defaults.
Apply text formatting individually using the buttons on the Formatting toolbar.

**Using the Font Dialog Box**

To use the Font dialog box to format text, follow these steps:

1. Select the text you want to format and choose Format, Font. The Font dialog box appears, shown in Figure 3.3.

**Figure 3.3**  
Make numerous font changes quickly using the Font dialog box.

2. Select the font you want to use from the Font list. Scroll down the list to see additional font selections.

3. Select a Font Style: Regular, Bold, Italic, or Bold Italic.

4. Choose a Size: Choose a preset size from 8 to 96 points, or enter an exact size in the edit box.

5. Apply additional desired effects by checking the check box next to any of the following:
   - **Underline** Underlines the selected text.
   - **Shadow** Applies a slight shadow to the lower right of the text.
   - **Emboss** Creates an embossed effect on the selected text.
   - **Superscript** Raises the text above the baseline and reduces the font size. Sets the Offset to 30%, which you can adjust.
   - **Subscript** Lowers the text below the baseline and reduces the font size. Sets the Offset to –25%, which you can adjust.

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**Note** - Offset refers to the percentage the text displays above or below the baseline, or standard, text. For example, because subscript text is below the baseline, its offset will be a negative number.

→ To learn how to create innovative text objects with PowerPoint WordArt, see "Inserting WordArt" in Chapter 14, "Creating and Formatting Objects."

6. Choose a color from the palette that is displayed by the Color drop-down list. For additional color choices, click More Colors from the palette to open the Colors dialog box.

→ To learn more about color theory and how it relates to emotions, see "Understanding Background Colors and Emotions" in Chapter 23.
To learn more about the Colors dialog box, see "Using the Colors Dialog Box" in Chapter 14.

7. Click Preview to view the selected font changes on your slide.

8. If you want the selected font formatting to be the default for future text, select the Default for New Objects check box.

9. If you want to accept these changes, click OK to close and apply the font formatting.

**Using the Formatting Toolbar**

You can use the Formatting toolbar (see Figure 3.4) to apply individual formatting elements such as bold, italics, and shadows to selected text.

**Figure 3.4**
The Formatting toolbar includes buttons for commonly used text effects.

Table 3.1 lists the formatting options on this toolbar.

**Table 3.1 Formatting Toolbar Buttons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Button</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Font" /></td>
<td>Font</td>
<td>Applies a font to the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Font Size" /></td>
<td>Font Size</td>
<td>Sets the size of the font from 8 to 96 points or any size you enter in the edit box.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bold" /></td>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>Bolds the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Italic" /></td>
<td>Italic</td>
<td>Italicizes the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Underline" /></td>
<td>Underline</td>
<td>Underlines the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Shadow" /></td>
<td>Shadow</td>
<td>Applies a shadow to the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Align Left" /></td>
<td>Align Left</td>
<td>Aligns text to the left margin of the object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Center" /></td>
<td>Center</td>
<td>Centers text across the slide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Align Right" /></td>
<td>Align Right</td>
<td>Aligns text to the right margin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Numbering" /></td>
<td>Numbering</td>
<td>Applies numbering to the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bullets" /></td>
<td>Bullets</td>
<td>Applies bullets to the selected text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Increase Font Size" /></td>
<td>Increase Font Size</td>
<td>Increases the font size of selected text by one increment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Decrease Font Size" /></td>
<td>Decrease Font Size</td>
<td>Decreases the font size of selected text by one increment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Decrease Indent" /></td>
<td>Decrease Indent</td>
<td>Outdents the selected text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To apply specific formatting, select the text you want to format and click the toolbar button. Clicking the Bold, Italic, Underline, Text Shadow, Numbering, or Bullets button a second time acts as a toggle and removes the formatting.

With the Font drop-down list, you can preview what each font actually looks like.

**Replacing Fonts**

If you want to replace all occurrences of one type of font in your presentation with another font, you can easily do so by following these steps:

1. Choose Format, Replace Fonts to open the Replace Font dialog box (see Figure 3.5).

2. Select the font that you want to replace from the Replace drop-down list. Only those fonts that currently exist in your presentation are listed.

3. Select the replacement font from the With drop-down list. All available fonts in PowerPoint are listed.

4. Click Replace to replace all matching fonts in your presentation.

5. Click Close to return to the presentation.

**Figure 3.5**
Replace fonts throughout your presentation with this dialog box.

→ If you find you are making several text changes to all slides in a presentation, consider using the slide master. To learn how, see "Working with Slide Masters" in Chapter 21.

**Changing Text Case**

You can also automate a change of text case in your presentation, such as changing from lowercase to all capitals. Do so by following these steps:

1. Select the text that you want to change.

2. Select Format, Change Case to open the Change Case dialog box, shown in Figure 3.6.

**Figure 3.6**
You can quickly change case if something doesn’t look right.
3. Choose the case to which you want to change. Options include
   - **Sentence case** Only the first word in a sentence is capitalized.
   - **lowercase** All letters appear in lowercase.
   - **UPPERCASE** All letters appear in uppercase.
   - **Title Case** The first letter of every title word is capitalized. Exceptions include words such as *the*, *and*, *to*, and so on, which remain lowercase in titles.
   - **tOGGLE cASE** Toggles all existing cases. Lowercase becomes uppercase, and uppercase becomes lowercase.

4. Click OK to apply the case changes to the selected text.

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**Caution** - Remember that an unusual use of case may be difficult to read, particularly uppercase and toggle case. With text, you need to strive for readability and clarity.

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*Only part of your text changes?* See "Making Your Case Work" in the "Troubleshooting" section near the end of this chapter.

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**Tip** - Another way to change case is to select some text and press Shift+F3 to cycle through PowerPoint's case options.

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**Setting Line Spacing**

To specify the amount of vertical space between text (such as single or double spacing), follow these steps:

1. Select the text you want to format and choose Format, Line Spacing. **Figure 3.7** shows the Line Spacing dialog box that appears.

**Figure 3.7**

Appropriate line spacing can make a presentation easier to read.

2. In this dialog box you can set either lines or points for line spacing, space before paragraphs, and space after paragraphs.

3. Select the numeric amount from the first field and then choose either Lines or Points from the second drop-down list.
4. Click the Preview button to view the changes in your presentation before accepting them.

5. Click OK to apply the changes.

Setting Alignment

To align paragraphs, choose Format, Alignment and then one of the following options:

- **Align Left** Alights text to the left margin of the object.
- **Center** Centers text across the slide.
- **Align Right** Alights text to the right margin of the object.
- **Justify** Justifies selected text.

Using Bullets

Creating a bulleted list of text is a very common PowerPoint task. If you use the AutoContent Wizard, your presentation probably already contains a slide with text formatted as a bulleted list. You can add a bulleted list to any slide that contains text, as well as within a table.

To change a numbered list or other text to a bulleted list, select the text and click the Bullets button on the Formatting toolbar. The default style for bullets comes from the design template applied to the presentation. You can change this if you want, however. To do so, select the bulleted list that you want to change and choose Format, Bullets and Numbering. Figure 3.8 shows the Bullets and Numbering dialog box that appears.

Figure 3.8
You can choose from many different bullet types.

On the Bulleted tab of this dialog box, you can choose from the seven bullet styles displayed, or you can choose None to remove bullets. In the Size field, you can scroll to enlarge or reduce the bullet size from the default 100%.

To change the color of a bullet, select a new color from the Color drop-down list. For additional color choices, click More Colors to open the Colors dialog box.

→ To learn more about the Colors dialog box, see "Using the Colors Dialog Box" in Chapter 14.

→ To change the bullets in your entire presentation, do so on the master slide; see "Modifying the Slide Master" in Chapter 21.

You can also create picture or character bullets, if none of the seven default bullet styles suits your needs.

Creating Picture Bullets
To apply a picture bullet, click the Picture button to open the Picture Bullet dialog box, which enables you to choose from a wide variety of more creative bullet styles.

Select your desired bullet from those that appear or enter a keyword in the text box and click Search to locate matching bullets. Click OK to apply. Figure 3.9 shows a presentation that uses picture bullets.

**Figure 3.9**
A picture bullet can enhance a creative presentation.

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**Tip** - To import your own picture bullets (maybe a logo or something you already use on a Web site or other company literature), click the Import button to open the Add Clips to Organizer dialog box.

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**Creating Character Bullets**

You can choose a character bullet for your bulleted list if you want something a little different. In the Symbol dialog box you can choose from a variety of fonts. Each font displays its character set, from which you can choose a new character bullet.

To apply a character bullet, click the Customize button in the Bullets and Numbering dialog box to open the Symbol dialog box, shown in Figure 3.10.

Select a font from the Font drop-down list, choose the bullet you want from the display area, and click OK. To speed up your insert process, you can view and choose from character bullets you’ve recently applied to a bullet list from the Recently Used Symbols section.

**Figure 3.10**
Use a font like Wingdings for character bullets.

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**Note** - You can select a color and size for your character bullet in the Bullets and Numbering dialog box.

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**Using Numbered Lists**

For a sequence of items, creating a numbered list is a good alternative to a bulleted list. For example, a series of procedural steps or a list of dollar amounts from highest to lowest would work well in a numbered list. You can create numbered lists with actual numbers, Roman numerals, or letters of the alphabet.

To change a bulleted list or other text to a numbered list, select the text and click the Numbering button on the Formatting toolbar.
Tip - You can also create a numbered list by pressing the Backspace key at the beginning of a bulleted list, typing the number 1 (or the letter a if you're using letters instead of numbers), pressing the Tab key, and entering your first list item. PowerPoint then continues the numbering series when you press Enter to move to the second line.

To change the numbering style of selected text, follow these steps:

1. Choose Format, Bullets and Numbering and go to the Numbered tab, shown in Figure 3.11.
2. Select one of the seven number styles that appear. Choosing None removes the numbered list.
3. Set Size as a percentage of the text; 100% (or the same size as text) is the default. Lower the number to reduce the size, increase the number to enlarge the size.

Figure 3.11
A numbered list can put a series of items in order.

4. Choose a color from the Color drop-down list. For additional color choices, click More Colors to open the Colors dialog box.

→ To learn more about the Colors dialog box, see "Using the Colors Dialog Box" in Chapter 14.

5. If you want the numbering to start at a number other than 1, enter that number in the Start At field.
6. Click OK to apply the numbering.

Checking Spelling and Style

Creating a quality presentation that is error free and easy to read is a natural objective when you use PowerPoint, and PowerPoint's spelling and style checkers can offer some assistance in this area. Keep in mind that, although these automated tools can help you catch errors, they aren't foolproof and don't take the place of thorough proofreading by a real person. To set options for spelling and style checks, select Tools, Options and go to the Spelling and Style tab. Figure 3.12 illustrates this tab.

You can choose any of the following spelling options:

- **Check Spelling as You Type** Underlines each suspected spelling error as you type it.
- **Hide All Spelling Errors** Doesn't display red underlining for suspected spelling errors.
- **Always Suggest Corrections** Suggests possible correct spelling options.
- **Ignore Words in UPPERCASE** Skips any word that is all uppercase in the spell-check process.
- **Ignore Words with Numbers** Skips any word that includes a number in the spell-check process.
You can designate several spell-checking options in PowerPoint.

**Setting Style Options**

If you also want to check style, select the Check Style check box and click the Style Options button. This opens the Style Options dialog box, shown in Figure 3.13.

**Figure 3.13**
Setting default case and punctuation helps give a more consistent look to your presentation.

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**Note** - The style checker uses the Office Assistant to check style. If the Office Assistant isn't enabled, PowerPoint prompts you to do so.

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**Caution** - Although having PowerPoint search for potential style errors can help you find mistakes you wouldn't otherwise notice, be careful to look closely at the changes it suggests rather than just automatically accepting all style changes. Sometimes automation can yield unusual and unwanted results.

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On the Case and End Punctuation tab, you can select the default case and end punctuation styles for your presentation slide titles and body text. Options include the capability to:

- Set Slide Title Style to Sentence case, lowercase, UPPERCASE, or Title Case (the default).

- Set Body Text Style to Sentence case (the default), lowercase, UPPERCASE, Title Case, or Consistent case. Sentence case is your best choice for regular body text because it's the most readable.

- Set Slide Title Punctuation to either Paragraphs Have Punctuation (the default) or Paragraphs Do Not Have Punctuation.

- Set Body Punctuation to Paragraphs Have Punctuation, Paragraphs Do Not Have Punctuation, or Paragraphs Have Consistent Punctuation (the default, which ensures that your punctuation choices match). For example, a bulleted list in a well-designed presentation shouldn't have a mixture of periods and no periods at the end of the bulleted text; it should be consistent.

Select the check boxes next to all options for which you want PowerPoint to search and choose the option from the drop-down list.

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**Tip** - If you want to place a character other than a period at the end of the slide title or body
text, enter the appropriate character in the Slide Title or Body Text edit box. For example, you might want to use a colon instead of a period in some cases. In that case, PowerPoint would look for the colon instead of the period.

\[\text{Note} - \text{If you’ve enabled another language, such as Japanese, additional grammar options may appear for that language.}\]

To learn more about foreign language options, see Appendix B, "Using PowerPoint’s Foreign Language Capabilities."

On the Visual Clarity tab, you can view and revise the existing defaults for font clarity and presentation legibility.

On this tab you can set the

- Maximum number of fonts
- Minimum point size for title text
- Minimum point size for body text
- Maximum number of bullets
- Maximum number of lines per title and per bullet

The Visual Clarity tab already includes default selections for these options that are based on basic design principles, but you can change any settings in the adjacent drop-down lists. When you run PowerPoint’s spelling checker, it looks for violations of these constraints.

\[\text{Caution} - \text{Even though you can change these defaults to suit your needs, consider carefully before doing so. Exceeding the recommended number of fonts and bullets and changing to overly small or overly large fonts can make your presentation difficult to read.}\]

If you make changes to the settings on the Style Options dialog box and want to go back to PowerPoint’s defaults, click the Defaults button.

**Running a Spelling and Style Check**

After you’ve set the spelling and style options you want, you can check your presentation.
If you set the option to have PowerPoint check spelling as you type, you know immediately when you’ve possibly misspelled a word. PowerPoint underlines all suspected misspellings, as shown in Figure 3.14.

You can either fix the error yourself or right-click to see some suggested alternatives from which to choose. Figure 3.14 illustrates some suggestions.

**PowerPoint missing some of your spelling or style errors?** See "Checking Spelling and Style" in the "Troubleshooting" section near the end of this chapter.

You can also spell-check your entire presentation all at once. To do so, follow these steps:

1. Click the Spelling button on the Standard toolbar, or choose Tools, Spelling and Grammar.
2. When PowerPoint encounters an error, it displays the Spelling dialog box, shown in Figure 3.15.
3. The Not in Dictionary field highlights the misspelled word, and the Change To field suggests the most likely alternative. The Suggestions box also provides additional alternatives.

**Figure 3.14**
When you right-click an underscored spelling error, PowerPoint offers suggested spellings.

**Figure 3.15**
The Spelling dialog box offers several options for handling potential misspellings.

4. Select the correct spelling or enter it manually in the Change To field.
5. The Spelling dialog box also includes several buttons that provide other options:
   - **Ignore** Ignores the misspelling and continues checking spelling.
   - **Ignore All** Ignores all instances of the misspelling in the presentation and continues checking spelling.
   - **Change** Changes the individual misspelled word to the spelling offered in the Change To field.
   - **Change All** Changes all instances of the misspelled word to the spelling offered in the Change To field.
   - **Add** Adds the suspect word to the custom dictionary as a correctly spelled word.
   - **Suggest** Provides additional spelling suggestions.
   - **AutoCorrect** Adds the misspelled word and its corrected version to the AutoCorrect list.
   - **Close** Closes the dialog box.
To learn more about AutoCorrect, see "Setting AutoCorrect Options" in Chapter 21.

**Tip** - To make further modification to your custom dictionaries, go to Microsoft Word and choose Tools, Options from the menu bar. On the Spelling and Grammar tab of the Options dialog box, click the Custom Dictionaries button. The Custom Dictionaries dialog box opens, from which you can make additional modifications to your custom dictionaries.

You’ll find custom dictionaries stored as text files in one of three locations, depending on your operating system and configuration: 

- `C:\Windows_folder\Application Data\Microsoft\Proof`
- `C:\Windows_folder\Profiles\User_name\Application Data\Microsoft\Proof`
- `C:\Windows_folder\Profiles\User_name`

**Note** - PowerPoint also targets unknown words as spelling errors, such as a person’s name, a company name, or a product. Be sure to check carefully for these and add the names and words you commonly use in presentations to the dictionary.

When PowerPoint finishes checking spelling, it informs you with another dialog box.

**Troubleshooting**

**Making the Text Fit**

*My text doesn’t fit in my text placeholder.*

Select the placeholder and then choose Format, Placeholder to open the Format AutoShape dialog box. Go to the Text Box tab and be sure that you’ve checked the Resize AutoShape to Fit Text check box.

**Making Your Case Work**

*I tried to change the case of my text, but only part of it changed.*

If you select only part of a sentence and change the case, the change applies only to the selected text, not to the entire sentence/paragraph. It isn’t enough just to place the cursor in the specified line or paragraph. Select the entire text you want to change and then choose Format, Change Case again.

**Checking Spelling and Style**

*I ran the spelling checker, and it didn’t find my spelling or style errors.*

PowerPoint checks the spelling only in the basic presentation; it doesn’t check text in charts, WordArt objects, or embedded objects.
PowerPoint’s style checker looks for only the style flaws you specified on the Spelling and Style tab on the Options dialog box (Tools, Options). It doesn’t check for any other style errors.

**Design Corner: Dressing Up Your List**

To make a bulleted list that’s unique to your organization, consider using a logo or other internal image as a picture bullet. To import a logo for use as a picture bullet, click the Import button in the Picture Bullet dialog box. In the Add Clips to Gallery dialog box, select your logo and click Add. Now you can add your logo to a bulleted list just as you would any other picture bullet, adding some additional style and personalization to your presentation.

**Before**

Figure 3.16

**After**

Figure 3.17
The company logo with the matching picture bullets.

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