

Creating and Using Style Sets in Word



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Introduction

There are cases where we get documents in fonts and font sizes that are not our preferences. If we have disabilities we might want a different font, font size or font colour. If we do not have a disability we may be trying to read a document in a font or font size that causes visual fatigue or makes it difficult to decode words. Word gives us the power to quickly swap out one Style set for another. We can create custom Style Sets based on our preferences and apply them to documents optimized for accessibility we want to read more efficiently.

If we create a Style Set that has our preferences such as Verdana 16 point, when we Tell Word to apply our Style Set the font style and size are associated with the Normal paragraph style which means that everything that uses the Normal paragraph style as its base will fall into line gracefully. And every piece of text layer content uses the Normal paragraph style!

It is easy to create a Custom Style Set and use it on other computers too!

I've attached a Large Print and an Extra Large Print Style Set to this PDF tutorial so you can use them or examine them.

Creating a Custom Style Set

On the Design Ribbon in Word you can swap out one Style Set for another by pressing Alt + g, s for Design Ribbon, Styles, then choosing the Style Set you want.

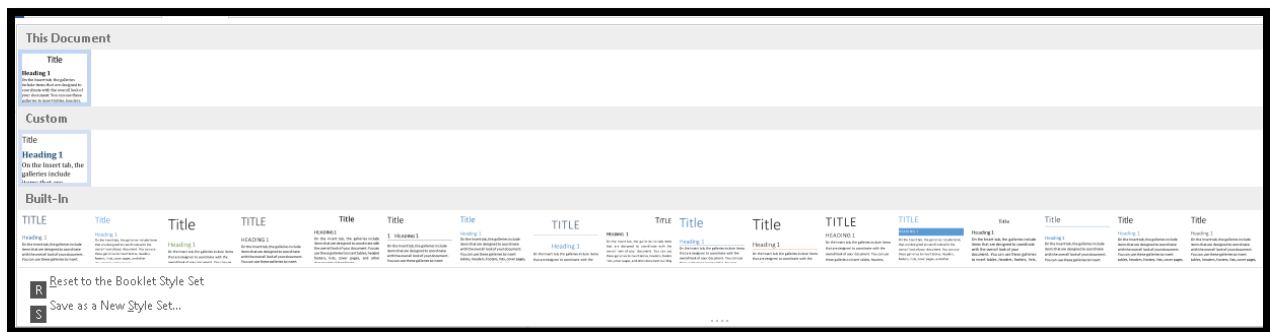


Figure 1 Styles Gallery from the Design Ribbon.

This gives you several options.

1. You can choose from a list of built-in Styles such as “Distinctive,” “Basic,” “Lines” and “Minimalist.”
2. You can create your own Style Set with your own font style and size.
3. If you are used to working with Themes and have created a Theme Font you can choose Fonts and apply the Theme Font although this would not affect the font size, just the font style.

Note: Themes can be used to create a common look and feel for documents in Word, PowerPoint or Excel. Themes don't typically identify a font size but do identify Theme Colours. Using style Sets gives us more flexibility in applying font attributes such as bold, colour, or case so that we can read Word documents easier. We can copy one Style Set file rather than the separate Theme Font, Theme Colour and Theme Effects files from computer to computer.

I recommend starting with the default Style Set because it has the paragraph spacing built-in whereas the Word 2003 Style Set does not, and you will have to either manually add paragraph spacing or do this in the Normal paragraph style. So, it saves you time!

You will only have to do this once. When you create your Style Set you can archive it somewhere for safe-keeping. If a service pack update or reinstall of Office removes your Style set as an option, you can copy it back to the Quick Styles folder and continue using it. You won't have to recreate it.

For a unique Style Set, step 1 is to modify the Normal paragraph style:

1. It is always better to work with content in a document.
2. Open a new document.
3. Use the ability to insert random text using =rand(x, y) where x is the number of paragraphs and y is the number of sentences in each paragraph. This will give you some text to work with.
 - a. Press Ctrl + Shift + S to open the Apply Styles Pane. This will float over the document. If you are using a screen reader it will have focus once it is opened until you apply a Style.
4. Make sure that the Normal style is the one identified in the Apply Styles Pane.
5. Tab to the Modify button and press Enter.
6. The standard Modify Style dialog opens.
7. Tab to the Font Style area and choose the font you prefer. You can either type it in or open the list and use first character navigation to find it.
8. Tab to the Font Size list and press the Down Arrow to open the list.
9. Locate the font size you want, and press Enter.
10. If you want to choose a default colour for all text in the document when the Style Set is used, press Alt + C to move to the colour palette and choose a colour.
11. This is the Modify Style dialog and it can apply to new documents based on this template or this document only.
 - a. You want to choose "This document only" because this is a Style Set you will not necessarily be able to use for business documents or academic papers as the default.
12. Do not choose to Automatically Update if that option is available.
13. Tab to and activate the OK button.

If you have made the Style Set 14 point for the body text, you will need to calculate the changes in size for Headings and go through the process of modifying them.

For example, if the text of your document is 14 point, you would want Heading 3 to be 16 point, Heading 2 to be 18 point and Heading 1 to be 20 point. The size of Headings is not automatically updated when you change the font size for normal text in a document.

Step 2 - Create the new Style Set that can be swapped out for the current Style Set:

1. With the changes to the Normal style and Headings Styles as well as any other Styles you would use in a document in front of you and before you close the sandbox document without saving press Alt + G, S, S to open the Save as a New Style Set dialog.

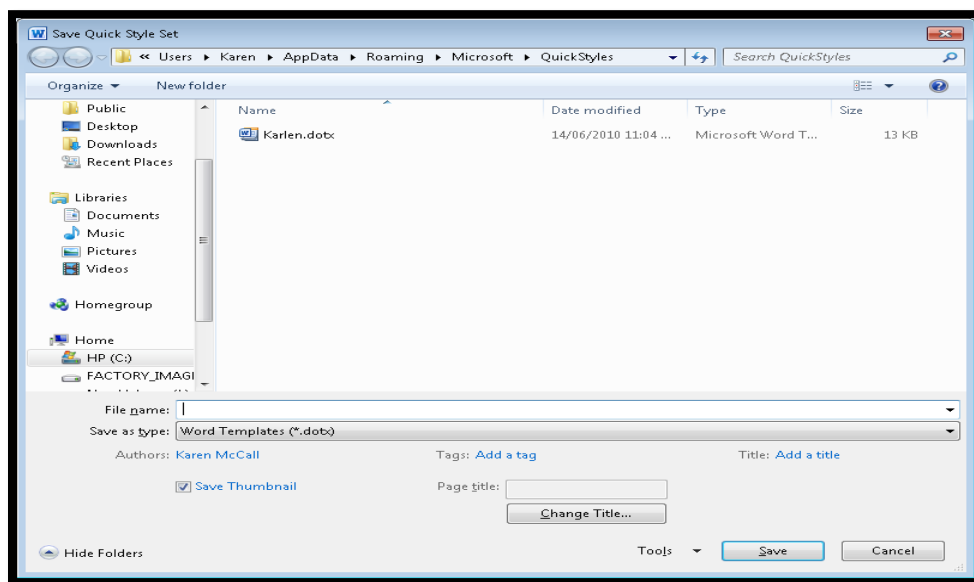


Figure 2 Save as Quick Style Set dialog.

2. When the Save as Quick Style dialog opens, your focus is in the filename edit box where you can type the name of your Quick Style or style Set. Type in a name for your Style Set. I chose "Large Print" for mine, but you can call it "Accessible" if you like.
 - a. It will appear in the list of available Style Sets in alphabetical order. You cannot use first character navigation in the list of Style Sets in the Design Ribbon, so this might influence your choice of a name.
3. Press Alt + S to Save the new Style Set.
 - a. The new Style set is saved to the Microsoft/Quick Styles folder for Microsoft applications. Don't worry about where it is saved at this point. We'll get to that when we learn how to copy or delete a custom Style Set.

4. When you press Alt + G, and open the Style Set list, your Style set will be there and when chosen, will apply your font and font attributes to the document.

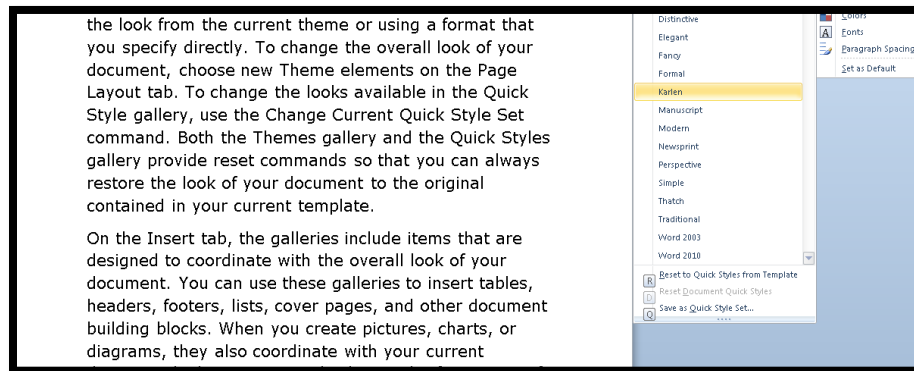


Figure 3 Karlen Style Set applied to document.

Deleting a Custom Style Set

If you created a style Set for practice and now want to delete it, you can do this. There are two methods to delete the Style Set file, one involves going into the User files on your computer and the other uses the list of recently opened documents on your computer.

The Quick Styles are stored in

Users/Username/AppData/Roaming/Microsoft/Templates/Quick Styles.

To delete a Custom Style Set from the Users Folder:

1. Go to My Computer and press Enter to open it.
2. Locate your computer's hard drive which is usually C:\ and might have a name such as Local Drive or Local Disk Drive.
3. Locate the Users folder. You can do this by pressing the letter U.
 - a. If the Show Hidden Files option is not turned on for your computer, go to Control Panel, Folder Options and turn on the ability to see hidden files.
4. In the Users folder, find your username and press Enter to open it.
5. Choose AppData from the list of files and Folders and press Enter to open it. AppData is a hidden file which is why you need to show hidden files in order to do this.
6. Choose Roaming and press Enter to open the folder.
7. Choose Microsoft and press Enter to open the folder
8. Choose Quick Styles and press Enter to open it.
 - a. You can use first character navigation for all of these steps.
9. Locate the custom Style Set you want to delete and select it.
10. Press the Delete key.
11. Confirm that you want to delete this Style Set.

12. Press Alt + F4 to close the current window.

That's it! The custom Style Set has been deleted and will disappear from the list of available Style Sets in Word.

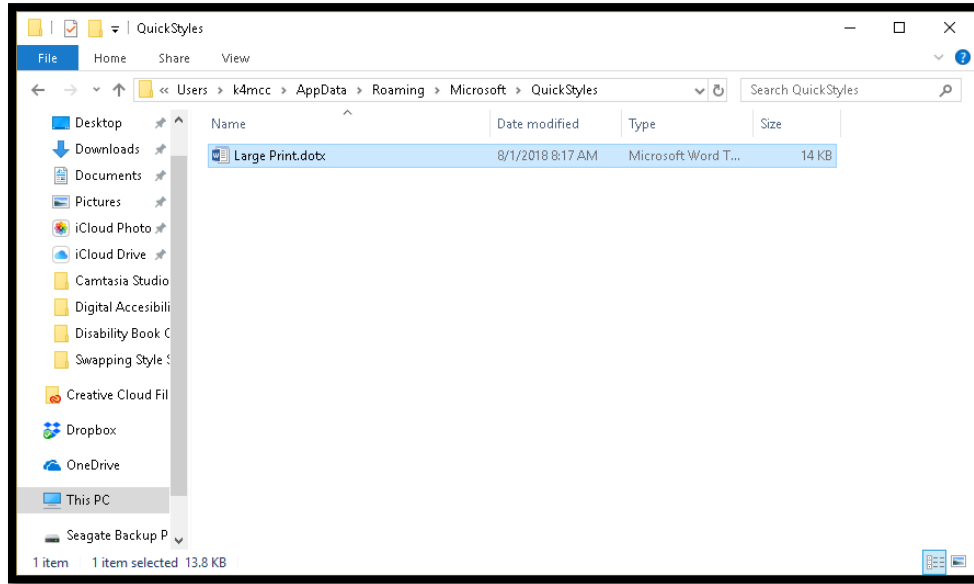


Figure 4 Quick Styles folder with Large Print Style Set.

To use the Windows Start Menu to locate and delete a Style Set:

1. Press the Windows key to open the Start menu.
2. Start typing the name of the Style Set.
3. Once it appears in the list in the Start Menu, right click on it or press the AppKey.
4. Choose to either open the file location or copy the full path.

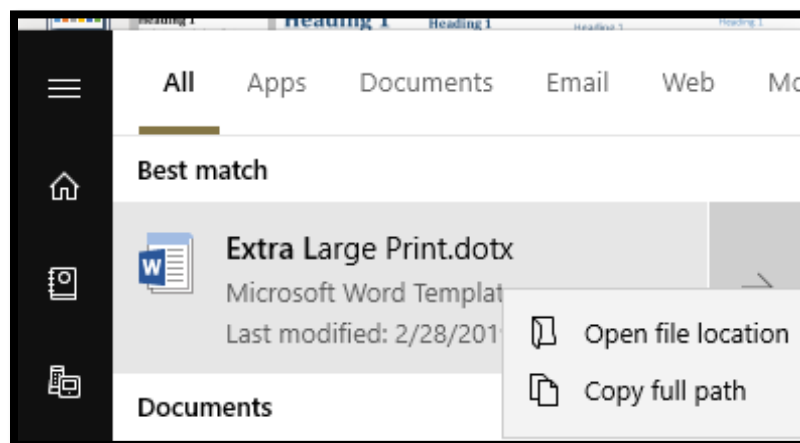


Figure 5 Extra Large Style Set from the Windows Start Menu.

5. Once you've found the Style Set, select it.
6. Press the Delete key to delete it.
7. Press Alt + F4 to close the dialog/Window containing your Quick Styles.

Using your Custom Style Set on Other Computers

If you have a laptop as well as a desktop or a computer at work [and you have administrative permission to access the user files] you can copy your Style Set to a flash drive and put it on the other computers. I've also copied my Quick Styles to my OneDrive.

To use the Custom Style Set on other computers with hidden files visible:

1. Go to Users/Username/AppData/Roaming/Microsoft/ Quick Styles.
2. You can either copy the entire folder if you have several custom Style Sets or the individual Style Sets by going into the folder and selecting the one you want to use on another computer.
3. Press Ctrl + C to copy it to the Windows Clipboard.
4. Switch to the external storage device such as a flash drive and press Ctrl + V to paste the folder or file to that device.
5. Go to the second computer.
6. Insert the flash drive and open the list of files and folders on it.
7. Locate the Quick Styles folder or file and press Ctrl + C to copy it to the Windows clipboard.
8. On the computer you want to copy the Style Set to, go to Users/Username/Roaming/AppData/Microsoft/ Quick Styles and either paste the Quick Styles folder or the Quick Style file into the Quick Styles folder. You can use Ctrl + V for this.
 - a. There is not usually a Quick Styles folder by default on any computer. The quick Styles folder is created when you create a custom Style Set.
 - b. If there is already a Quick Styles folder on the computer you are copying to, you will need to copy over just the Style sets you want to use on that device. Do not copy a quick Styles folder into another Quick Styles folder.

That's it! You've copied your preferred Style Set so that it can be used on a different computer.