

Method Sheet 37

How to insert a table of contents using Microsoft Word

Overview

A simple way to improve the quality of presentation of your report or dissertation is to insert a Table of Contents. This will list the major section headings and sub-headings of the document alongside their respective page numbers for ease of reference. This method sheet explains how to insert a Table of Contents automatically using the headings function in Microsoft Word.

Method

- 1) Your dissertation should be broken into the following major (level 1) headings: Abstract; 1. Introduction; 2. Materials and Methods; 3. Results; 4. Discussion and 5. References.
- 2) These are also the standard headings for a journal article in the Life Sciences.
- 3) Each major section will be broken up into subsections, which will focus on covering a specific topic.
- 4) These subsections should be numbered sequentially according to which major section they are in, for example, in the introduction section, they would be numbered 1.1, 1.2 etc.
- 5) Before formatting your headings and subheadings, they may look something like this:

A natural product library screen for inhibitors of growth of *Micrococcus luteus*

Abstract

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to antibiotic resistance

Normal text for the main body of the document.

1.2 Past approaches to antibiotic discovery

1.3 Difficulties facing the development of new antibiotics

1.4 Natural products as structural leads for the development of new drugs

1.5 Examples of drugs arising from natural products

1.6 Advantages and disadvantages of natural product screening

1.7 Background to use of *Micrococcus luteus* in antibiotic discovery

1.8 Hypothesis and aims

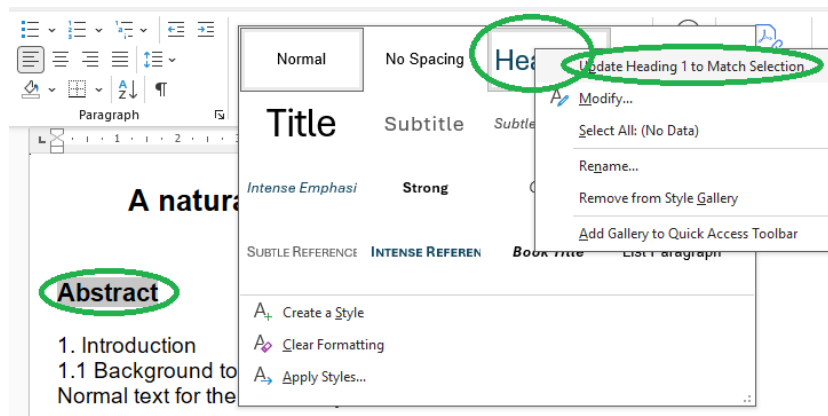
2. Methods

- 6) The title text is meant to be on the first (cover) sheet of your document, and it should be in a large, easy to read font, for example Arial font size 16 with bold highlight and centre align, for example:

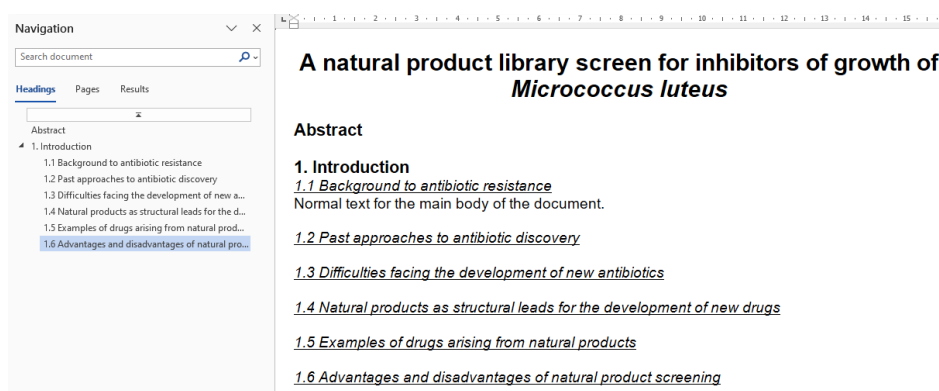
**A natural product library screen for inhibitors of growth of
*Micrococcus luteus***

- 7) Now select the first of the top level headings (Heading 1) that you want to format consistently throughout the text, in this case it will be 'Abstract'
- 8) Change the font size and format to a more prominent style that we will use across all top level headings throughout the document.

- 9) For example, if the normal (main body) text is font size 10, you could set the heading 1 format to be 12 point bold to clearly distinguish it.
- 10) Once you've done that, select to highlight the heading again, and now in the 'Styles' box of the Home ribbon, right click on the tile that says 'Heading' or 'Heading 1', then click 'Update Heading 1 to Match Selection', as shown below:

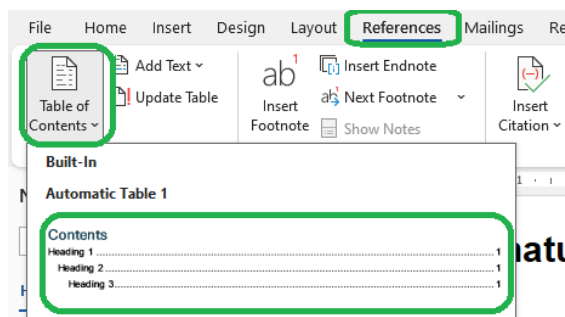


- 11) Now select every other top level heading in the document, one at a time, and click on the same 'Heading' button in the Style section of the ribbon - they should now all be formatted in the same way as the first heading you chose.
- 12) Select the entire text of a second level heading (in this example the first available one is '1.1 Background to antibiotic resistance') and change the font to a style that is distinctly different from the main body (normal) text and the level 1 heading text.
- 13) In this example, we will use font size 10 with underline and italic for the sub-headings.
- 14) Right click on the 'Heading 2' tile in the Styles section of the ribbon and select 'Update Heading 2 to Match Selection'
- 15) Now select each second level heading in turn and click on the 'Heading 2' tile, until all have the same consistent font and style.
- 16) Press 'Ctrl' and 'F' to open the Navigation pane.
- 17) If the headings selection has worked properly, you should now see something like this, with the headings appearing in the Navigation pane:



- 18) The Table of Contents should be inserted just after the cover page and before the abstract, so place your cursor in the line just before the abstract text starts.
- 19) Change from the 'Home' tab of the main ribbon to the 'References' tab, and click on the 'Table of contents' button at the left of the ribbon

20) Choose whichever format and layout of the table of contents you prefer and click on it so select it, as shown below:



21) Word will then automatically insert a table of contents with the correct page numbers at the right of each section heading.

22) It should look something like this:

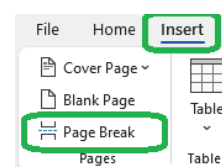
Contents

Abstract.....	1
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background to antibiotic resistance	1
1.2 Past approaches to antibiotic discovery	1
1.3 Difficulties facing the development of new antibiotics	1
1.4 Natural products as structural leads for the development of new drugs	1
1.5 Examples of drugs arising from natural products.....	1
1.6 Advantages and disadvantages of natural product screening.....	1
1.7 Background to use of <i>Micrococcus luteus</i> in antibiotic discovery.....	1
1.8 Hypothesis and aims	1
2. Methods.....	1
2.1 Bacterial strains and culture conditions	1

23) You should also insert page numbers to your document, to do this go to 'Insert' then 'Page Number' and choose 'Bottom of Page'.

24) To further enhance the presentation of your report, insert a 'Page break' ('Insert' tab on ribbon, then click 'Page break' button) just before the table of contents, so that it starts on a fresh page.

25) Do the same thing to ensure the 'Introduction' section also starts on a fresh page after the abstract.



Notes

- Different universities may have different requirements for the structure of their dissertations, check with your project supervisor which structure or layout will be most appropriate for your report.
- If you add more text or change page numbers later, right-click anywhere on the Table of Contents and select 'Update Field', then 'Update entire table' to refresh the table to show the new page numbers.

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