

How to Set Tabs – Word (Microsoft 365)

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Summary

Step by step instructions for setting tabs in Word 2013

Overview

Tabs allow you to position text exactly where you would like it. To avoid problems with text alignment, use tabs rather than spaces. The default tab settings for Microsoft Word are every half-inch. If you do not like the Word settings, you can set your own tabs.

Tab Types

Tabs come in different types which are defined by the way text aligns with the tab. The following table explains the different tab types.

Tab Type	Windows Icon	Purpose
Left (Normal)		With the <i>Left</i> tab, the tab position is to the right of the tab.
Right		With the <i>Right</i> tab, the tab and flow to



Tab Type
Center

Windows Icon

Purpose

The *Center* tab works by centering a line of text. The location of centering between the left and right margins of text is centered at the same location.

Decimal

The *Decimal* tab is used for aligning numbers and text. This is useful for aligning numbers or a list of

Tab Type
Bar

Windows Icon

Purpose

The *Bar* tab is used to create a vertical line at the end of a line of text. It could be used when you want to set off some text.

Setting a tab does not automatically align your text. You still have to press **[Tab]** at the appropriate places.

There are two ways to work with tabs: from the Ruler or from the Tabs Dialog box.

Working with Tabs from the Ruler

Working with tabs using the *Ruler* option is a quick and easy way to set and adjust tabs. The *Ruler* options allow you to set, move, delete, or change tabs. You can display the ruler by clicking the View Ribbon, and checking the Ruler option in the Show group.

Setting Tabs

1. Select the paragraph(s) that will receive new tab settings

2. Click the **TAB TYPE** icon until the desired tab type is selected
3. On the *Ruler*, click the lower edge of the ruler where you want the tab

Moving Tabs

1. On the *Ruler*, click and hold the tab you want to move
2. Drag the tab to the new location and release the mouse button

Deleting Tabs

1. Click and hold the tab you want to delete
2. Drag the tab into the document area of the screen and release the mouse button

Changing Tab Type

To change the tab type, you can either delete the tab and add a new tab of the correct type or you can use the Tabs dialog box.

Working with Tabs from the Tabs Dialog Box

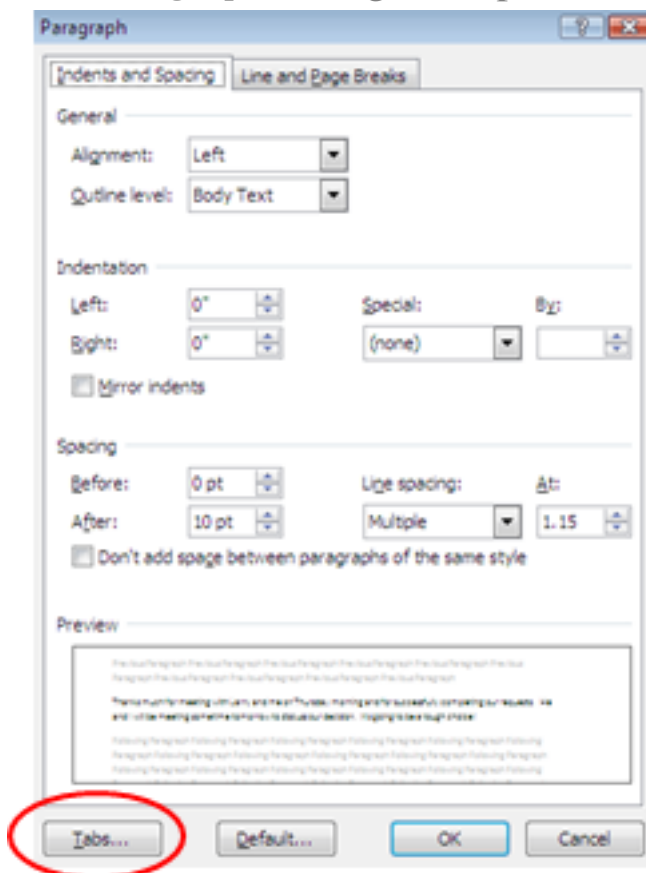
The *Tabs* dialog box allows you to adjust the placement and type of tab. Although the *Ruler* option is a quicker way to adjust tabs, the dialog box allows you to use leaders and enter specific tab locations.

In the *Tabs* dialog box, you can set leaders for the tabs. Leaders are lines (solid, dashed, or dotted) that appear in the blank space created by a tab. The most common use for a leader is in a table of contents where a dotted line

leads up to the page number. Leaders guide the reader's eye across the page.

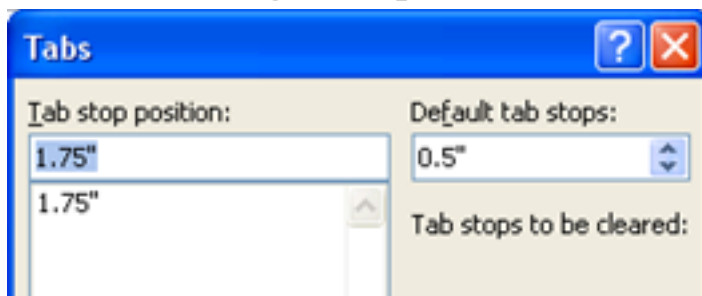
To access the Tabs dialog box

1. Select the paragraph(s) that will receive new tab settings
2. From the *Home* tab, in the *Paragraph* group, click **PARAGRAPH**
The *Paragraph* dialog box opens.



3. Click **TABS...**

The *Tabs* dialog box opens.



Setting Tabs

1. Access the Tabs dialog box
2. In the *Tab stop position* text box, type the desired value (in inches)
3. Adjust the tab alignment and leader if necessary
4. Click **SET**
5. To set additional tabs, repeat steps 2-4
6. >After all tabs have been set, click **OK**



Deleting Tabs

1. Place the insertion point within the paragraph with the tab settings you want to delete
2. Access the Tabs dialog box
3. From the *Tab stop position* scroll box, select the tab to be deleted

4. Click **CLEAR**

HINT: To delete all tabs, click **CLEAR ALL**

5. To delete other tabs, repeat steps 3-4

6. Click **OK**

Moving Tabs or Changing Tab Type

Moving tabs or changing the tab type in the *Tabs* dialog box involves adding a new tab and deleting the old one.

1. Access the Tabs dialog box

2. In the *Tab stop position* scroll box, select the desired tab

3. Click **CLEAR**

4. In the *Tab stop position* text box, type the new tab location

5. Adjust the tab alignment and leader if necessary

6. Click **SET**

7. Click **OK**

Key Words: tabs, indents, indentations

Online URL: <https://info.abtech.edu/article.php?id=463>