

Grad School Dissertation Template Quick-Start

1. Beginner Tips

- Download the Word template from the Grad School website and save it to your writing folder. Open it from the browser, or double-click the file icon to create a new file based on the template — use this as your working file.
- The formatting view (¶) on the Home tab reveals Section Breaks, Page Breaks, Paragraph Breaks, Spaces, and Line Wraps. Do not delete any existing section breaks between the title page and your first chapter.
- View → Show → Navigation Pane allows you to see an automatic outline of the document that links to anything with a Heading style applied.
- Use a Line Wrap (SHIFT + ENTER) in numbered/lettered chapter and appendix titles, table titles, and table of contents entries that run into their page number.
- For correct spacing, add a Page Break (CTRL + ENTER) at the end of each chapter. At the top of the new chapter page, leave one blank line, then begin your chapter title on the second line.

3. The Styles Pane

Explore the Show Preview and Options settings at the bottom to customize how your Styles Pane displays.

Most styles in the template are based on the **Normal** paragraph style. If you don't like the default Calibri or Times New Roman font, **Modify** the Normal style first, then use the Show Preview button at the bottom of the pane to identify any styles that didn't automatically pick up the font change.

- A ¶ or ¶a icon to the right of the style name indicates a *paragraph-level style*. You can simply click inside a paragraph, then click this style to affect spacing, font, size, tabs, indents, alignment, text decoration, numbering, etc.
- A plain a icon indicates that it's a *character-level style*; you must highlight the text you want to affect, and the style will only affect font-level settings (color, italics, bold, underline, internal font spacing, etc.).

If you Modify a style and want that change to persist, check the "New documents based on this template" to save your modification back to the source template

2. Importing Existing Content

If you have already written chapters in another program (Google Docs, for example), you can streamline the import process by using the following default styles:

- Normal for all main text style paragraphs
- Heading 1 for main text chapter-level titles
- Heading 2 for top-level subheadings
- Heading 3 for subordinate headings, etc.

Do not copy and paste content from the source document; you may inherit formatting "baggage" from the previous program. Instead, *insert* the text from your file directly into the template. Word will recognize default style names and update the incoming text to use the template settings.

- Windows: Insert → Object → Text from File
- Mac: Insert → File

If a style exists in your source program but not in Word, you can often use the style pane to select all instances of an imported style, and then apply a template style for standardization — for example, select all items with the "Quote" style and apply "Block Quote" instead.

4. Table of Contents Source Styles

The template's table of contents mechanism is built to look for specific styles by default:

- Chapter Title (on TOC, not numbered)
- Heading 1 — numbered chapter titles
- Heading 2 (etc.) — chapter subheads
- Appendix heading 1 — lettered appendix titles
- Appendix heading 2 (etc.) — appendix subheads

Note that the style **Chapter Title (no TOC)** is used only for the dissertation, abstract, and table of contents titles, since they *should not be included* in the table of contents.

Chapter Title, Heading 1, and Appendix Heading 1 styles add an all-capitals font "mask" over the title as typed. **Word will import the original capitalization as typed** before you applied the style. (See #5.)

If you wish to group chapters into larger sections, you may use the Part style on a blank page between chapters to create a Part title. The table of contents will recognize this style and import it if it is in use.

5. Update the Table of Contents

Navigate to the pre-set Contents list and right-click on any entry in the table; the whole list highlights in gray to indicate a Word-generated field. Select “Update Field” from the pop-up menu.

- Update page numbers: no changes to the chapter titles or subheadings
- Update entire table: added, removed, or corrected any of the titles

The generated list will import exactly what you typed when you applied the style. For example:

- Typed: INTROduction
- Apply Heading 1: CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION
- Imported result: Chapter 1: INTROduction

Correct typos and capitalization errors at the source in the text, re-apply the appropriate style, then tell the Contents page to update the entire table to import the changes.

7. Update the List of Figures/List of Tables

Navigate to the pre-set Figures or Tables list, and right-click on any entry in the table. Like the Contents, a gray field means Word is generating that content based on styles. You can update pagination only, or the entire list.

If your list isn’t including figures or tables in the appendices, and you’ve verified you applied the correct style, it’s probably looking for a label instead of the text style and needs to be reset.

- Right-click on the appropriate list, and choose “Edit Field” and then “Table of Contents”.
- Set the Label option to “None” and instead, assign the appropriate style (“Figure Caption” or “Table Title”) via the Options button.

Troubleshooting: If you see an “**Error! Bookmark not defined.**” message appear where the page number should be, re-apply the correct style at the source, then trigger an update at the appropriate list in the front matter.

6. Figures and Tables

Insert figures and tables after the end of the paragraph in which they are first mentioned or collect them under a heading at the end of the chapter. Do not wrap paragraph text around, above, or below figures/tables. Do not interrupt a paragraph with a full-page figure or table. Oversized figure/table rules apply to items that are too large to fit entirely on one page with their caption or title.

Place your cursor on a paragraph line and insert the image. Apply the “Figure – keep with caption” style to the figure to center it, and force the figure to attach to its caption. (Disregard this for oversized portrait figures.)

Figure captions go below the figure; table titles go above the table. Place your cursor at the start of the caption or title, then use the References → Insert Caption to have Word keep track of figure and table numbers. These basic labels should be pre-set to the Chapter + Order style of numbering (Figure 1.1, Table 5.2, etc.).

- Apply the “Figure caption” style to figure captions.
- Apply the “Table Title” style to primary table titles.

8. Order of Elements

Begin each section at the top of a new page.

1. Title page (required; no p. #)
2. Copyright (optional; no p. #)
3. Abstract (required; no p. #)
4. Dedication (optional; p. ii if included)
5. Contents (required; p. ii if no dedication)
6. Figures (required if 5 or more figures)
7. Tables (required if 5 or more tables)
8. Preface (optional)
9. Acknowledgments (optional)
10. Abbreviations (optional)
11. Main Chapters (p. 1; Introduction → Conclusion)
12. Appendix A
13. Bibliography/References¹

¹ Students may choose to include a list of references as a major subheading (i.e., Heading 2) at the end of each chapter rather than collecting them in a single chapter at the end of the document.