# How to Create and Update an index or Table of Contents in Microsoft Word

(called a Table of Contents by Microsoft)

**How to Add an Table of Contents**

Regardless of the size of your document, using a Table of Contents can direct the reader to exactly where they need to be. In addition to making the document more reader-friendly, a Table of Contents also makes it easier for the author to go back and add or remove content if necessary.

By default, Word generates a Table of Contents using the first three built-in heading styles (Heading 1, Heading 2, and Heading 3). To apply heading styles, select the particular style from the "Home" tab. If you're not happy with the types of heading styles available, you can change the default heading style.
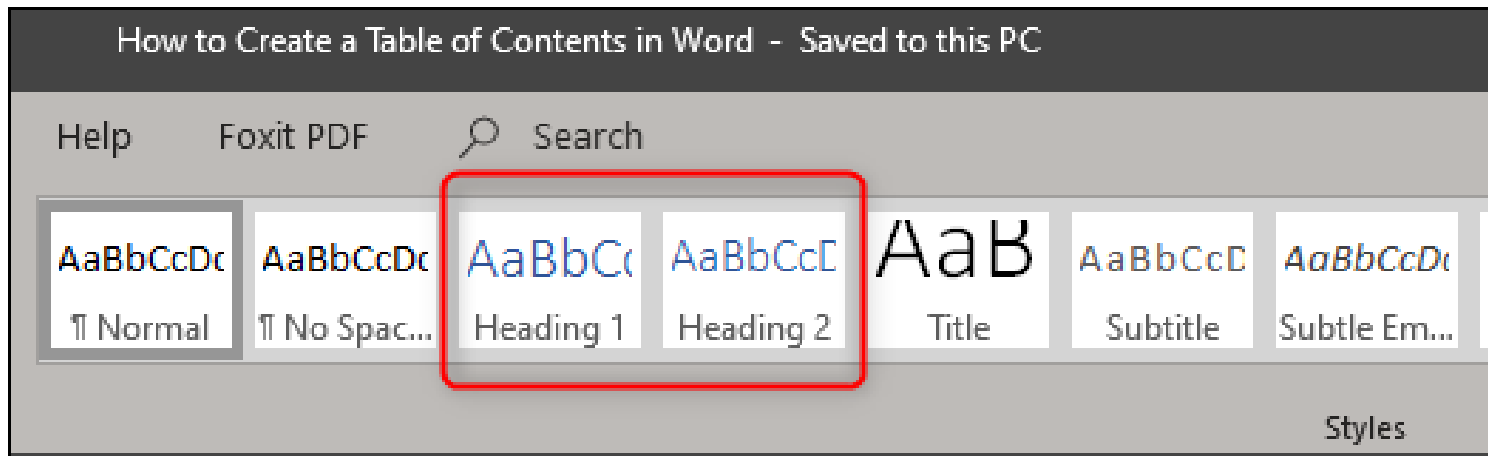
You can manage this in two different ways. You can either apply the heading styles to each section after you've finished the document, or you can add them as you go, modifying them, if preferred, by right clicking and choosing "modify".

Once you've applied your heading styles, it's time to insert your Table of Contents. The first thing you need to do is put the cursor where you want the Table of Contents to appear. Once ready, head over to the "References" tab and select "Table of Contents."
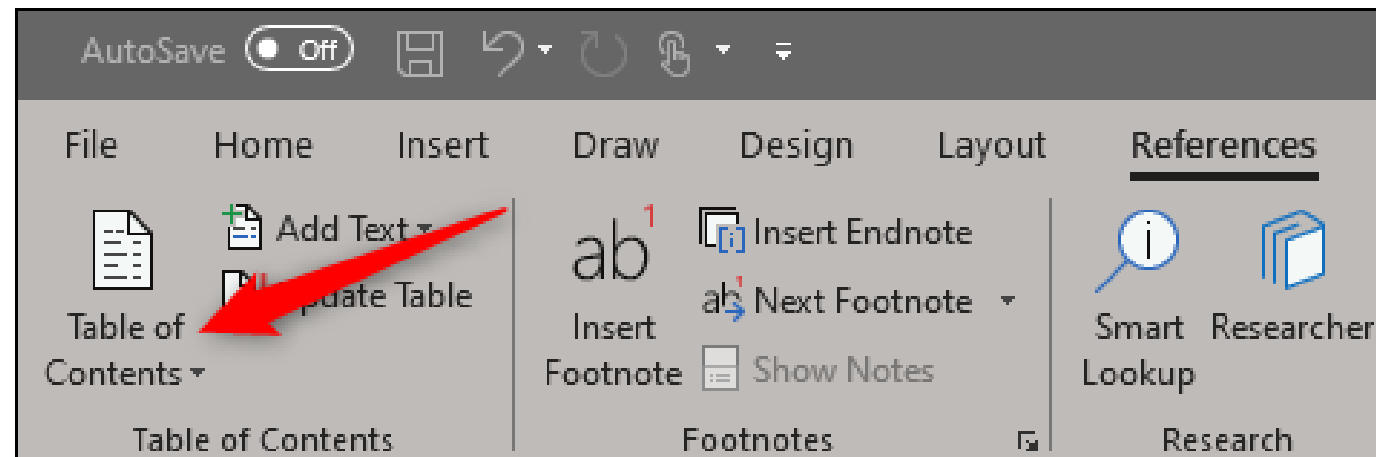
A drop-down menu will appear. Here, you can choose between the three different built-in tables.

Built-In

Automatic Table 1

Contents

Automatic Table 2

Table of Contents

Manual Table

Table of Contents

The only difference between Automatic Table 1 and 2 is the title, "Contents" and "Table of Contents," respectively. Selecting either Automatic Table 1 or 2 will create the Table of Contents using the names of the headings.
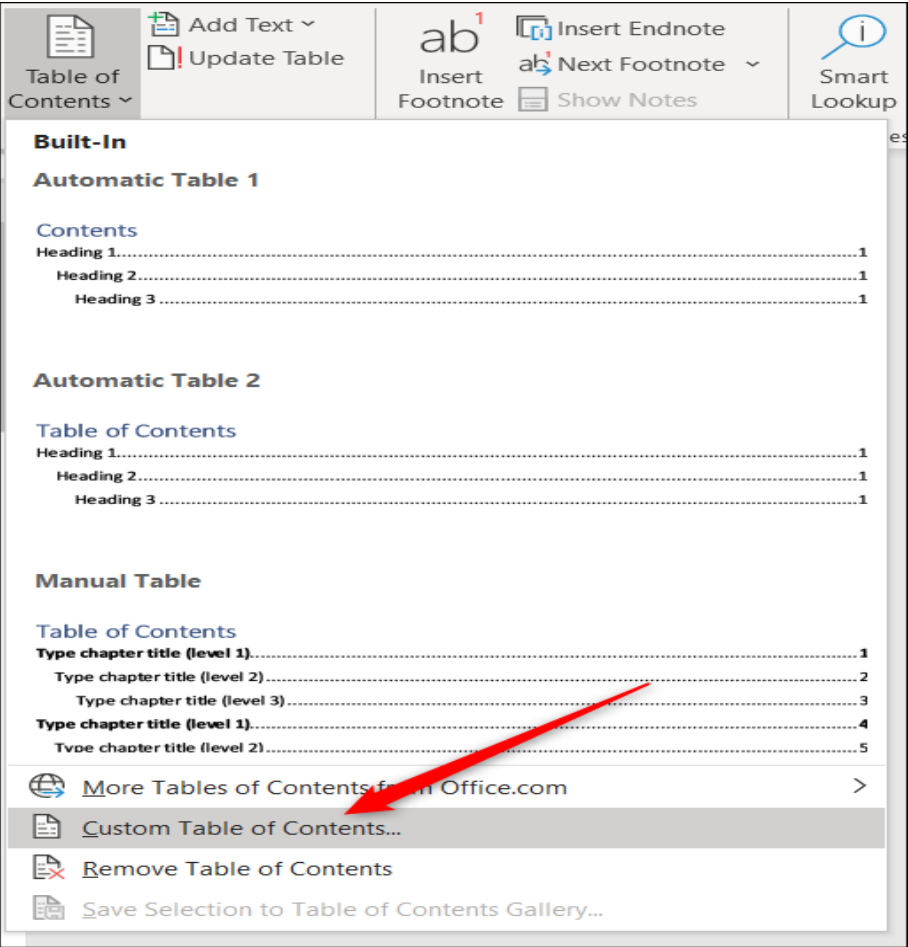
Table of Contents

If you chose the "Manual Table" option from the "Table of Contents" drop-down menu, then it will insert a template for you that you will need to edit yourself.

Table of Contents

Notice here there are sub-levels. Each represents a heading style in your document. So if you use the automatic table and want sub-levels, you will need to use heading 1 for level 1, heading 2 for level 2, and heading 3 for level 3

If you want your Table of Contents to go deeper than the top three heading styles, you can do that, too. On the dropdown menu when you click the "Table of Contents" button, choose the "Custom Table of Contents" option.

In the Table of Contents window that opens, click the "Options" button

In the Table of Contents Options window, next to each available style you want to use (these are Word's built-in styles starting with Heading 4), type the TOC level you wish to use. Click "OK" when you're done.

How to Update the Table of Contents

If you ever need to add or remove a section from your document, you can easily update the Table of Contents to reflect those changes. To update your Table of Contents, select it, click "Update Table" on the pop-up menu that appears, and then choose whether you want to update only the page numbers or the entire table. Click "OK" to apply the changes.
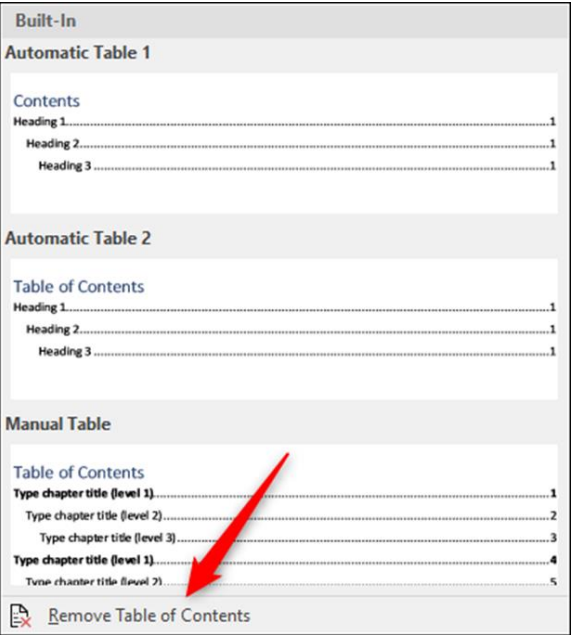
Your Table of Contents will now be updated. This is very useful when you want to add or remove a heading from the Table of Contents.

How to Remove the Table of Contents

Removing the Table of Contents is simple. All you need to do is select it and then click the arrow on the menu that appears.
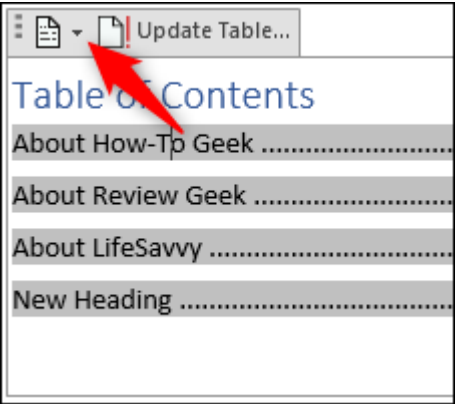
At the bottom of the drop-down menu, select "Remove Table of Contents."

THE END