

[My Account](#) ▾[My Blogs](#) ▾[Blog Info](#) ▾[Subscribe](#) ▾[★ Like](#)[Edit](#)

CyberText Newsletter

Official newsletter/blog of CyberText Consulting:
Technical communication specialists

[« When researchers say...](#)[Browser support for HTML5 and CSS3 »](#)

Word 2007: Taming multilevel list numbering

June 22, 2010

★★★★★ [7 Votes](#)

I think I've finally figured out how to get proper multilevel numbering happening in Word 2007!

A client called me in desperation — they had an employment contract with multilevel numbering, but somewhere along the way the numbering got screwed. Instead of 12 followed by 12.1, 12.2, 12.3 etc. they had 12 followed by 14.1, 14.2, 14.3 etc. I tried every trick I knew to get those second level numbers to reset, but I couldn't figure it out. I sent an email to my client letting him know that Word had probably beaten me on this one, and asking him if he wanted me to persevere for a little while longer. He gave his OK, so back to Word I went, determined to master this multilevel list numbering. Ultimately, I had to set up new styles for him and reapply them to the document, but I finally got it working after about an hour or so.

Hopefully these instructions will help someone else (as well as remind me how to do it again next time I'm asked to troubleshoot multilevel lists!)

The example I work through below creates a multilevel numbered list that looks something like this (ignore the formatting — you can sort that out later):

1. → On the Insert tab, the galleries include items that are designed to coordinate with the overall look of your document. You can use these galleries to insert tables, headers, footers, lists, cover pages, and other document building blocks. ¶
 - 1.1. When you create pictures, charts, or diagrams, they also coordinate with your current document look. You can easily change the formatting of selected text in the document text by choosing a look for the selected text from the Quick Styles gallery on the Home tab. ¶
 - 1.1.1 → You can also format text directly by using the other controls on the Home tab. Most controls offer a choice of using the look from the current theme or using a format that you specify directly. ¶
 - 1.2. To change the overall look of your document, choose new Theme elements on the Page Layout tab. To change the looks available in the Quick Style gallery, use the Change Current Quick Style Set command. ¶
2. → Both the Themes gallery and the Quick Styles gallery provide reset commands so that you can always restore the look of your document to the original contained in your current template. On the Insert tab, the galleries include items that are designed to coordinate with the overall look of your document. ¶

Warning! This is a long series of steps as I'm going to take you through setting up *three* list levels. Please take your time and work through the instructions one step at a time — this is not something you can do while you're focused on something else, so turn off Twitter, email notifications etc.

Step 1: Set up a new multilevel list style



Pages

- » [About](#)
- » [Blog archives 2008–now](#)
- » [Newsletter archives 2001-2007](#)

Links

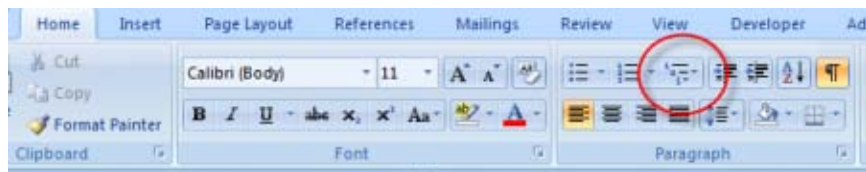
- » [CyberText bookstore](#)
- » [CyberText on Twitter](#)
- » [CyberText website](#)

Categories

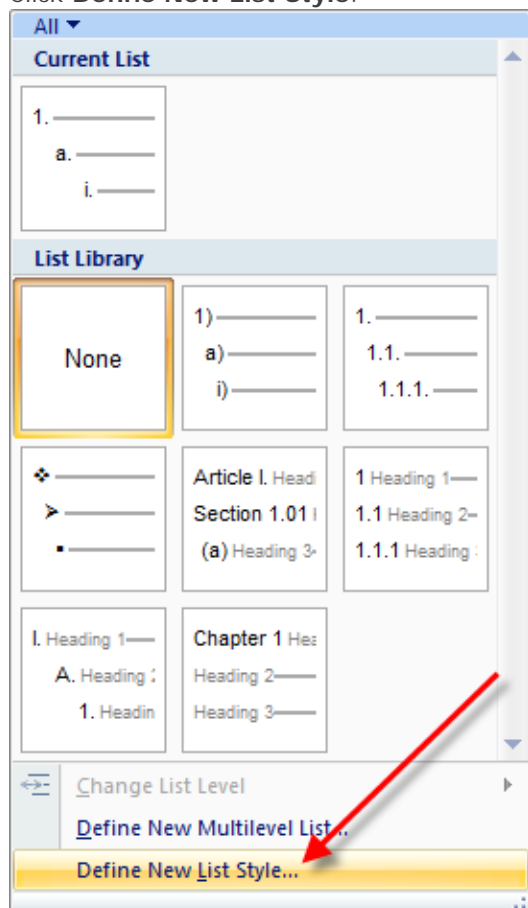
- » [Blogging](#) (34)
- » [Book recommendations](#) (19)
- » [Business/Work](#) (130)
- » [Hardware, network etc.](#) (18)
- » [Humor](#) (136)
- » [Software](#) (415)
- » [Acrobat](#) (23)
- » [Author-it v5](#) (37)
- » [Outlook](#) (35)
- » [PaintShop Pro X](#) (6)
- » [Word](#) (225)
- » [Styles](#) (118)
- » [Grammar & Punctuation](#) (27)
- » [Pronunciation](#) (4)
- » [Word Usage](#) (74)
- » [Technical writing](#) (401)
- » [Conferences](#) (68)
- » [User experience](#) (150)
- » [Wikis](#) (12)
- » [Tips](#) (64)
- » [Twitter](#) (16)
- » [Uncategorized](#) (12)

Tip: When you define a new Multilevel List style, define ALL levels in it at once. Don't set up a new list style for each level – it won't work.

1. Open a new Word 2007 document.
2. On the **Home** tab, go to the **Paragraph** group.
3. Click the small drop-down arrow next to the **Multilevel List** icon.
- 4.



Click **Define New List Style**.



5. On the Define New List Style window, give the style for the entire list a name (in this example I've called it **Numbered List**).

- » Web development (82)
- » Browsers (26)
- » CSS (20)
- » HTML (12)
- » Websites (113)
- » Windows (55)

Recent Posts

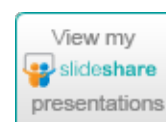
- » WritersUA Conference, 2011: Day One
- » There's a reason it's called Long Beach
- » Woohoo! Hyatt gets it right!
- » On the road again
- » Word: How to find out your printer's printable area

Top Posts

- » Word 2003: Create an automatic Table of Contents
- » Word: Automated tables of figures
- » Outlook: Creating a hyperlink to a network file
- » Inches to pixels converter
- » Word 2007: Outline numbering
- » Word 2007: Taming multilevel list numbering
- » Word 2007: Create an automatic Table of Contents
- » Word 2007: Apply a template
- » Adobe PDF is missing from the menu
- » Word: Update fields in headers and footers

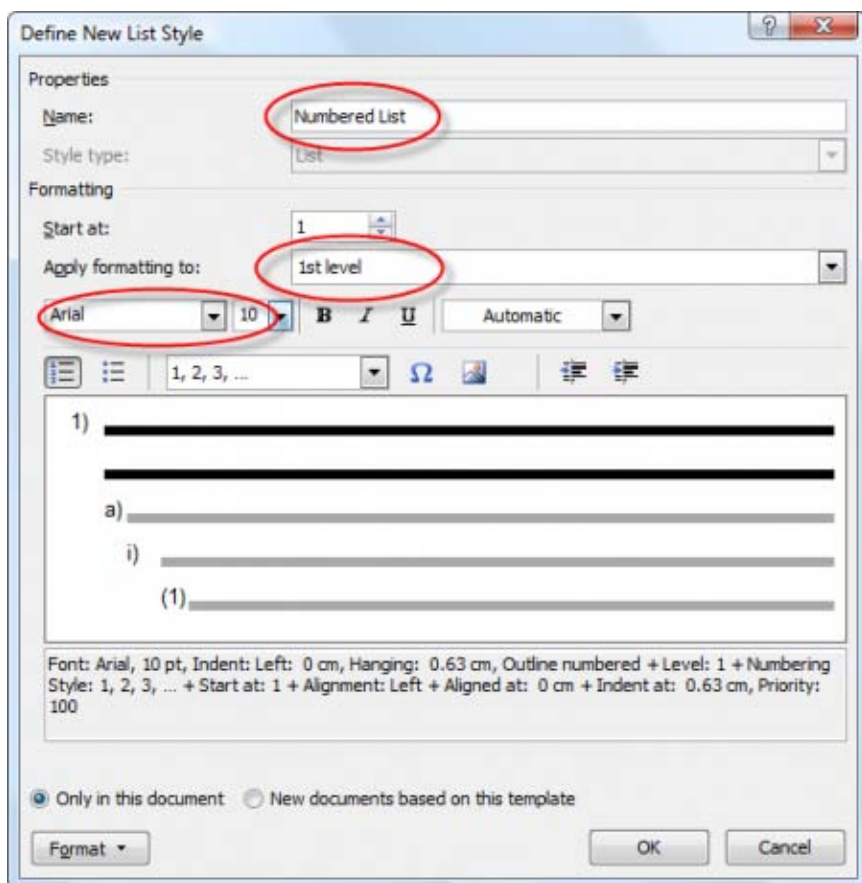
Blog Stats

- » 675,525 hits

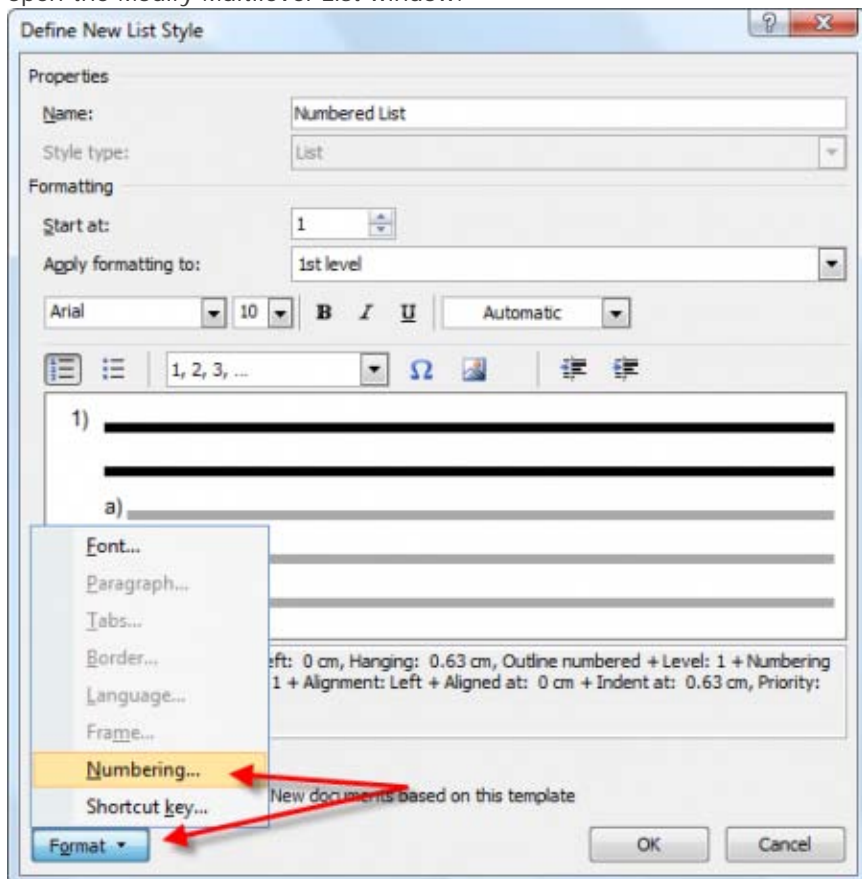


Tags

active content applications attachments Audacity Blogging captivate captivate 5 clickable images contractors converters cross references cybertext editing error message error messages fields file extensions fonts freeware graphics ie6 image maps indexing internet explorer keyboard



6. By default, you're working on the **1st level**. Set the font, font size and font weight for the 1st level numbers. **NOTE:** These font settings are for the numbers **ONLY**, not for the paragraph style. So if you want bold numbers, set that here. Ignore everything else on this window for now.
7. Click **Format** at the bottom left of this window, then click **Numbering** to open the Modify Multilevel List window.



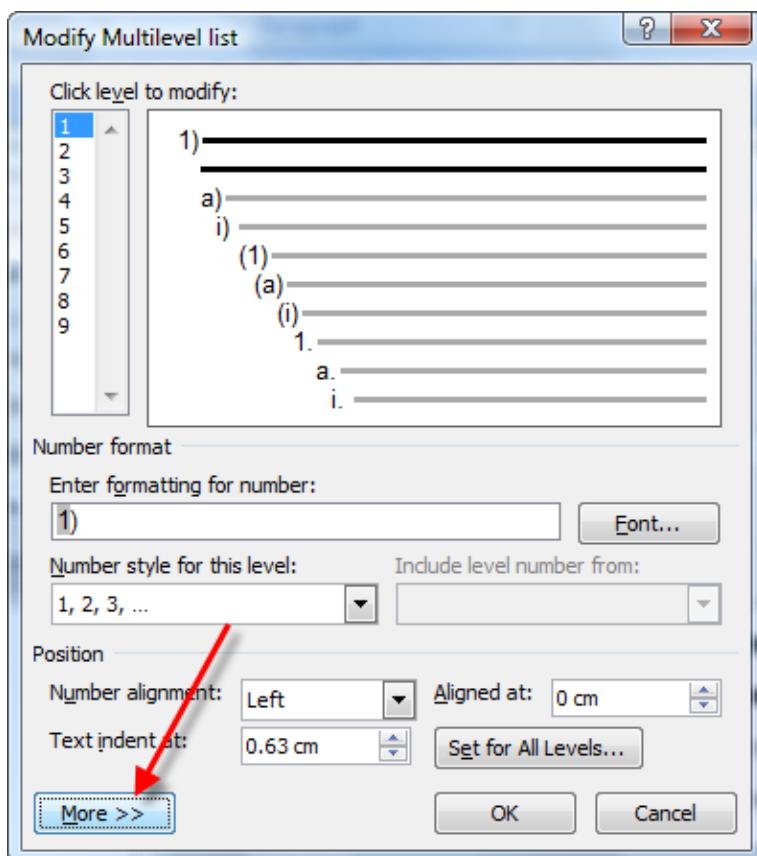
8. Click the **More** button at the bottom left of the Modify Multilevel List window to display all available options.

shortcuts malware
 MYOB newsletter outlook pixels
 podcasts PowerPoint RSS
 security shareware signs
 SQL Express table of
 contents tables

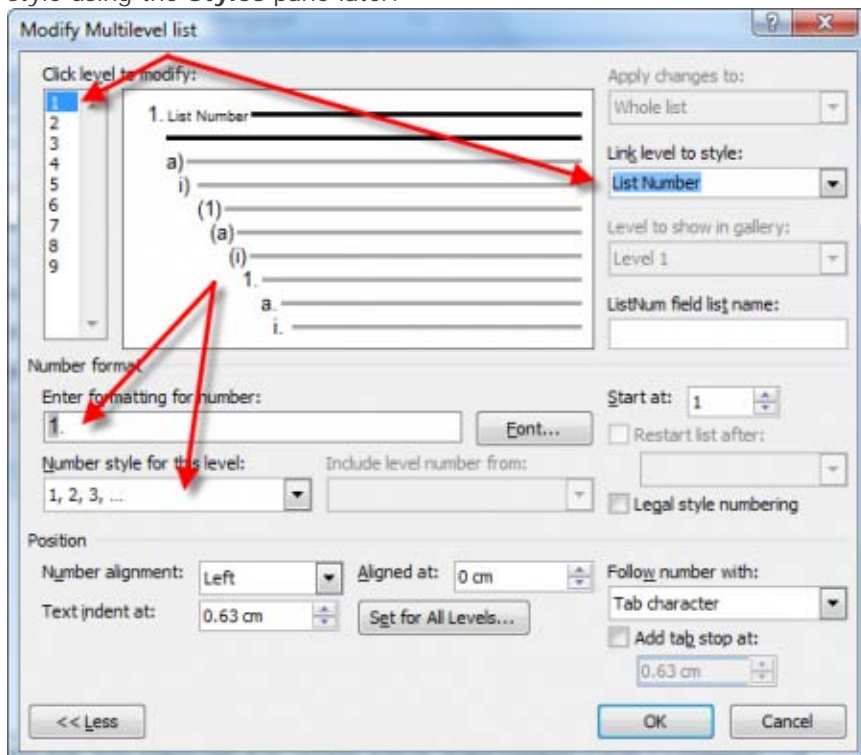
telstra toc utilities vista
 vista 64-bit warnings

Archives

- » March 2011 (13)
- » February 2011 (19)
- » January 2011 (20)
- » December 2010 (18)
- » November 2010 (21)
- » October 2010 (21)
- » September 2010 (25)
- » August 2010 (25)
- » July 2010 (29)
- » June 2010 (28)
- » May 2010 (31)
- » April 2010 (30)
- » March 2010 (31)
- » February 2010 (28)
- » January 2010 (31)
- » December 2009 (31)
- » November 2009 (30)
- » October 2009 (31)
- » September 2009 (30)
- » August 2009 (31)
- » July 2009 (31)
- » June 2009 (30)
- » May 2009 (31)
- » April 2009 (31)
- » March 2009 (32)
- » February 2009 (29)
- » January 2009 (32)
- » December 2008 (37)
- » November 2008 (36)
- » October 2008 (35)



9. Level 1 (top left) is already set, and I'm happy with the **Number style...** of **1, 2, 3**, but I want a period after my top level number, so I need to delete the **)** after **1** in the **Enter formatting...** field and type in a period (don't touch the gray shaded **1**).
10. Assign a style to this level — in this example, I've assigned the standard Word style of **List Number** in the **Link level to style** field. I'll modify this style using the **Styles** pane later.



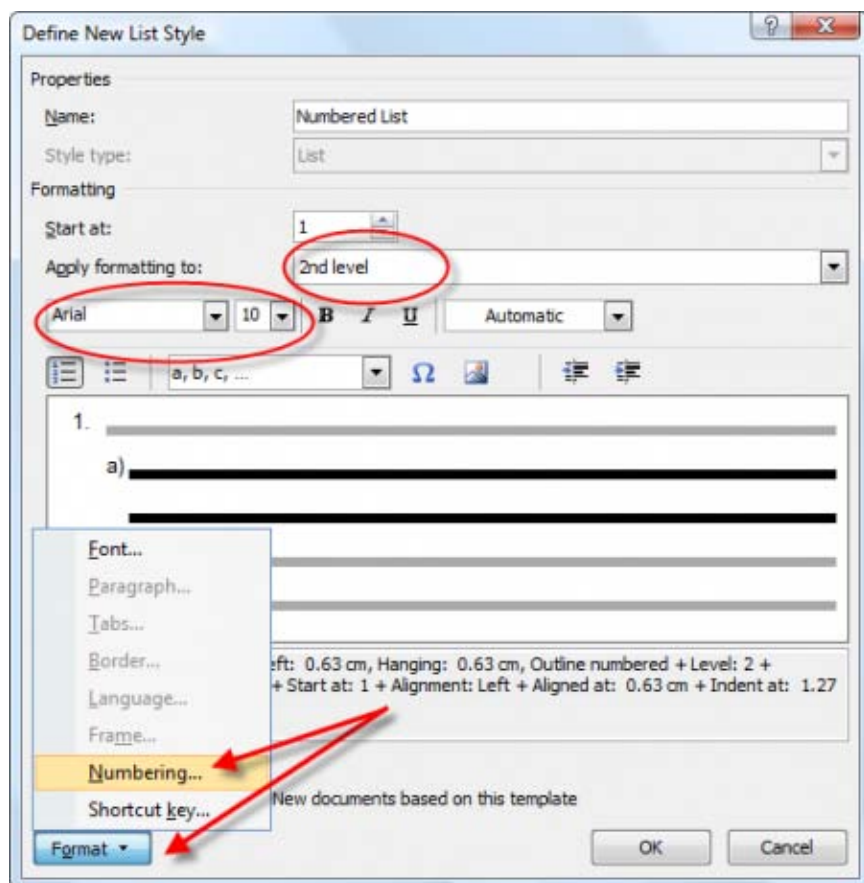
11. Click **OK** to return to the Define New List Style window. DO NOT close this window — you now need to set up the 2nd and 3rd levels for your list.
12. Select **2nd level** from the **Apply formatting to** drop-down list.
13. Set the font, font size and font weight for the 2nd level numbers.

- » September 2008 (31)
- » August 2008 (37)
- » July 2008 (38)
- » June 2008 (38)
- » May 2008 (37)
- » April 2008 (31)
- » March 2008 (37)
- » February 2008 (32)
- » January 2008 (36)
- » December 2007 (3)
- » November 2007 (6)
- » October 2007 (14)
- » September 2007 (3)
- » August 2007 (12)
- » July 2007 (4)
- » June 2007 (8)
- » May 2007 (3)
- » April 2007 (6)
- » March 2007 (1)
- » February 2007 (3)
- » January 2007 (1)
- » November 2006 (1)
- » September 2006 (1)
- » August 2006 (1)
- » July 2006 (1)
- » June 2006 (2)
- » May 2006 (3)

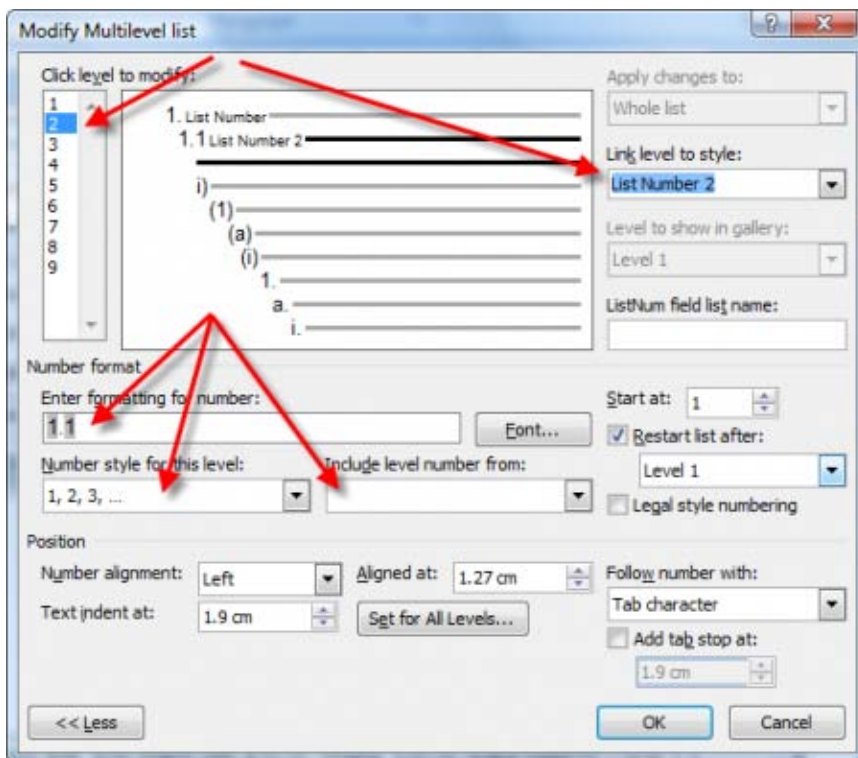
Kudos!



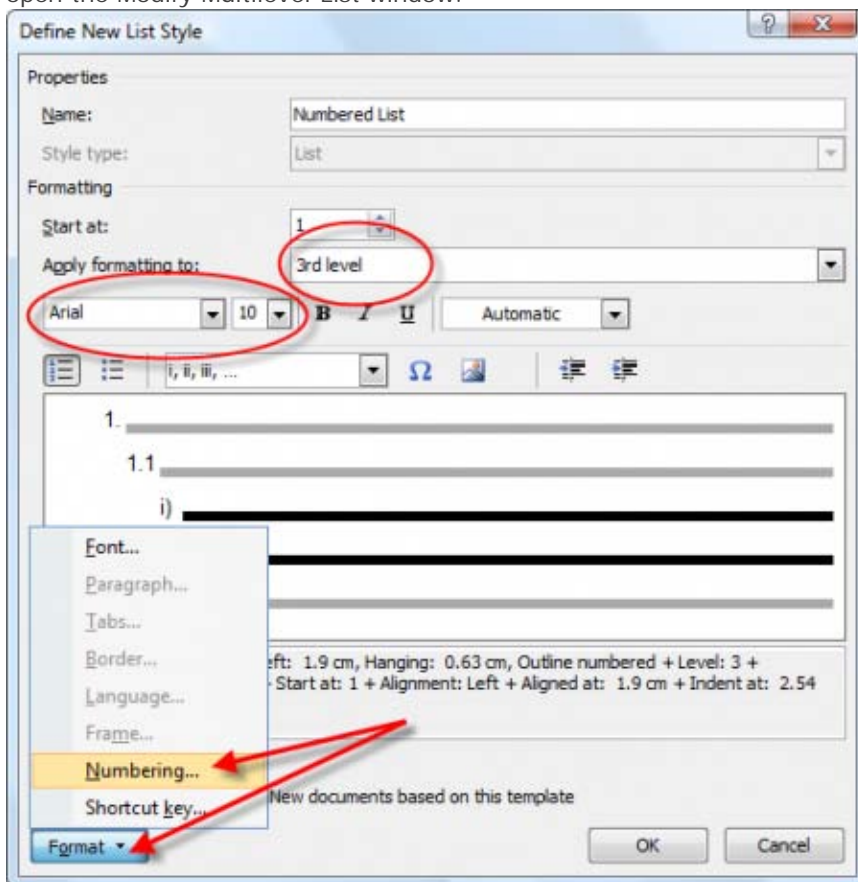
b blogged



14. Click **Format** at the bottom left of this window, then click **Numbering** to open the Modify Multilevel List window.
15. Select **2** in the **Click level to modify** list.
16. The default **Number style for this level** is **a, b, c**. Using the drop-down list, change this to **1, 2, 3**.
17. Remove the **)** from after **1** in the **Enter formatting...** field.
18. Place your cursor in **FRONT** of the grayed **1** in the **Enter formatting...** field.
19. Select **Level 1** from the **Include level number from** drop-down list. You now have two grayed **1**'s. PLEASE NOTE: This 'Level 1' selection you just made does NOT display in the field. You know you've got it right if another grayed **1** is added to the **Enter formatting...** field.
20. Type a period between the two grayed **1**'s in the **Enter formatting...** field.
21. Select the **List Number 2** style from the drop-down list in the **Link level to style** field.



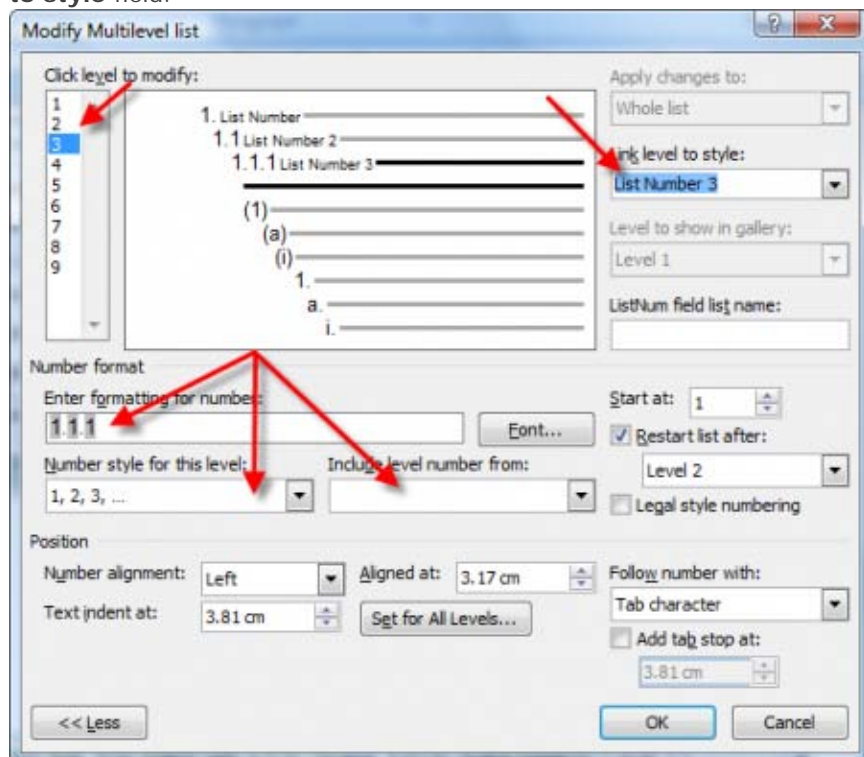
22. Click **OK** to return to the Define New List Style window. Do not close it. You're nearly finished... you just have to set up the 3rd list level.
23. Select **3rd level** from the **Apply formatting to** drop-down list.
24. Set the font, font size and font weight for the 3rd level numbers.
25. Click **Format** at the bottom left of this window, then click **Numbering** to open the Modify Multilevel List window.



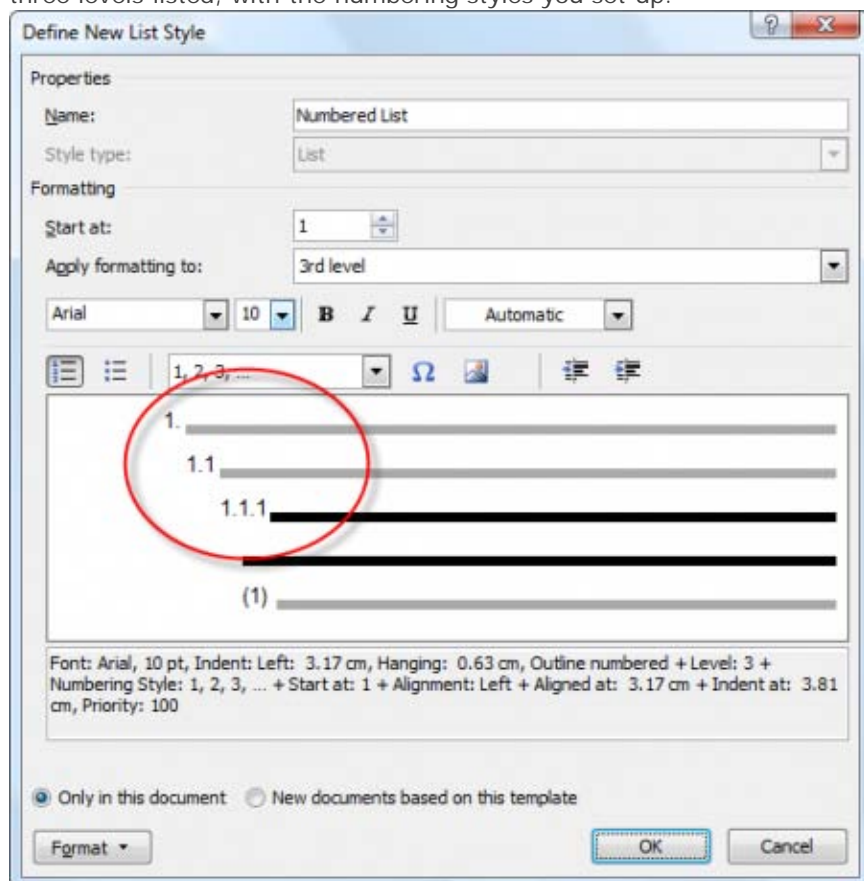
26. Select **3** in the **Click level to modify** list.
27. The default **Number style for this level** is **i, ii, iii**. Using the drop-down list, change this to **1, 2, 3**.
28. Remove the **)** from after **1** in the **Enter formatting...** field.
29. Place your cursor in **FRONT** of the grayed **1** in the **Enter formatting...** field.
30. Select **Level 1** from the **Include level number from** drop-down list. You

now have two grayed 1's in the **Enter formatting...** field.

31. Select **Level 2** from the **Include level number** from drop-down list. You now have three grayed 1's in the **Enter formatting...** field. The first is the Level 1 number, the second is the Level 2 number, and the third is the Level 3 number — unfortunately, as all are 1, it's hard to see which is which!
32. Type a period between each of the grayed 1's (i.e. your numbers should look like this: **1.1.1**)
33. Select the **List Number 3** style from the drop-down list in the **Link level to style** field.



34. Click **OK** to return to the previous window where you should see your three levels listed, with the numbering styles you set up.




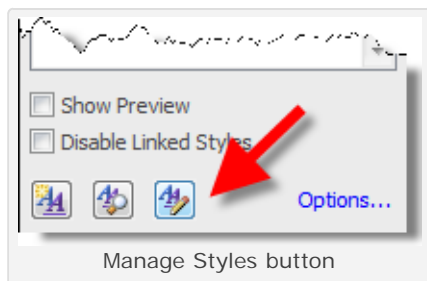
35. Click **OK** again to close the window and return to the document, where a

first level numbered item is added to your document.

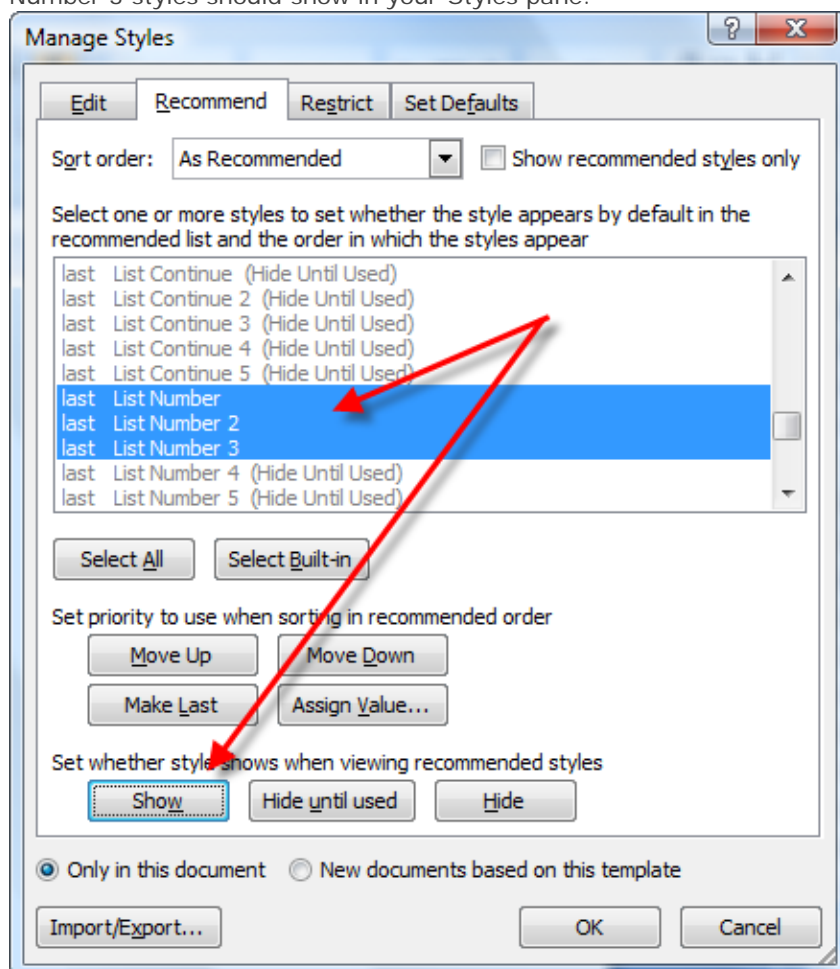
Phew! You've finished the first (and most difficult) part of setting up your multilevel lists.

Step 2: Test your new multilevel list

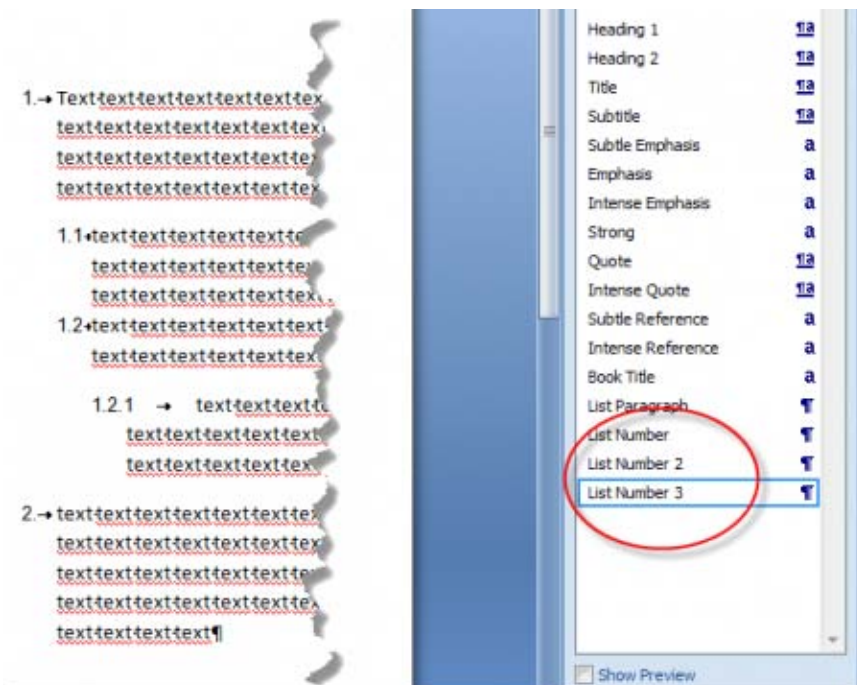
1. Open the **Styles** pane (click  at the bottom right of the **Styles** group on the **Home** tab).
2. Click the **Manage Styles** button.



3. Go to the **Recommend** tab.
4. Scroll down and select **List Number**, **List Number 2** and **List Number 3** from the list.
5. Click **Show**, then click **OK**. The List Number, List Number 2 and List Number 3 styles should show in your Styles pane.



6. Enter several paragraphs of text.
7. Apply **List Number**, **List Number 2** and **List Number 3** styles to various paragraphs.



Bonus hint: Assign a different level to an existing numbered paragraph

There are several methods for assigning a different level to an existing numbered list — I'll just describe two:

- **Method 1:** Use the **Styles** pane and reassign the relevant **List Number** style to the paragraph. If the text used the **List Number 3** style and you apply the **List Number 2** style, then the numbering will update accordingly.
- **Method 2:** Right-click anywhere in the list item, select **Change List Level**, then select the new level you want to apply to this item.

Changing the styles

- **Changing the formatting for the numbered paragraphs:** You may want to change the settings of the **List Number**, **List Number 2** and **List Number 3** styles — for example, their indents, above/below paragraph spacing, tab positions etc. You do this the normal way, using the **Styles** pane and modifying each style.
- **Changing the master list style:** To change any aspect of the Numbered List style (the master style with the three levels that you set up earlier): Click the **Manage Styles** button on the **Styles** pane, go to the **Edit** tab, select the **Numbered List** style, then click **Modify**.
- **Changing the numbering format for a single multilevel list style:** Put your cursor into a multilevel list numbered paragraph, click the small drop-down arrow next to the **Multilevel List** icon (**Home** tab > **Paragraph** group), select **Define New Multilevel List**, then change the **Number style for this level** setting.

I have no doubt there are many more fancy things you can do with multilevel list numbering (after all, there are a slew of settings on the Define New Multilevel List Style window I didn't even touch), but sometimes you just want a simple, multilevel numbered list! Hopefully, these instructions have given you just that.

See also:

- Outline numbering (for headings): <http://cybertext.wordpress.com/2008/09/23/word-2007-outline-numbering/>

Has this tip helped you? saved you time? saved your skin? You can



thank me by clicking on the cup and buying me a coffee. (An [E-Junkie](#) shopping cart page will open where you can pay for my coffee via PayPal.)

Share this: StumbleUpon Digg Reddit Tweet 2

Posted in [Word](#) | [Edit](#)

Like Be the first to like this post.

17 comments

Thanks Rhonda – that one is DEFINTELY worth a coffee!!



by [Jane Melross](#) June 22, 2010 at 8:41 am [edit comment](#)

[...] [Taming multilevel list numbering \(for lists, not headings\): http://cybertext.wordpress.com/2010/06/22/word-2007-taming-multilevel-list-numbering/](#) [...]

by [Word 2007: Outline numbering « CyberText Newsletter](#) July 8, 2010 at 6:18 am [edit comment](#)

Thank you very much for this post. I was looking for exactly this level of information.



I did find an interesting point. If "Heading 1" is used instead of "List Number 1", and the caption numbering is enabled to use the Chapter number with period separator, tables and figures can be identified by section and order (e.g. Figure 1.2 followed by Figure 1.3). This helps with the numbered list concept and allows a more informative ToT and ToF.

Thanks again!

by [Mike Putnam](#) July 17, 2010 at 2:36 am [edit comment](#)

I've mentioned adding chapter numbering to figures and tables before here: [http://cybertext.wordpress.com/2008/04/27/word-2003-automated-tables-of-figures](#)



You need to be using outline numbering for your headings for this to work. Multilevel numbering for numbered lists shouldn't make any difference to the caption numbering, I'd have thought.

by [Rhonda](#) July 17, 2010 at 8:13 am [edit comment](#)

THANK YOU!!!!



After spending over an hour trying to get the numbering scheme to work for different styles I turned to google and typed "how to use third level numbering word 2007" which I really didn't believe would yield anything helpful.

How wrong I was! I am writing my masters thesis and want to thank you for making this portion of it so much easier!

by [Mike](#) August 2, 2010 at 3:51 am [edit comment](#)

Thank you SO much for this. My team requires using multi-level lists all the time, and yours is the best explanation out there! You have cured a very big headache for me – THANK YOU!!!!



by [Stephanie](#) October 14, 2010 at 12:23 am [edit comment](#)

I have spent so many frustrated hours trying to figure this out and your instructions have been a total god send – can't thank you enough for saving my sanity.



by [Rupert](#) October 14, 2010 at 7:56 pm [edit comment](#)

I have followed these instructions closely, and they work! Thank you. I redefined the List number and list number 2 etc styles so that they all sit against the left margin.



However, (there is always a sting), when one tries to change the starting number from a number other than one, eg 2, the default styles from word 2007 over ride the changes to the List Number style! I suspect a word 2007 feature (bug)!

by [Murray](#) October 15, 2010 at 9:00 am [edit comment](#)

Thank you *so much* for taking time to share this! One question: Have you ever tried to link `_two_` styles to the same level in the custom list style? In my heading list style I need level 2 to be linked both to "Heading 2" and a custom style, let's say "Heading 2 para". I want them to have the same numbering format (1.1), and they need to continue each other's numbering, like this:



- 1.1 Heading 2
- 1.2 Heading 2 para
- 1.3 Heading 2 para
- 1.4 Heading 2
- ...

by [Valgerd](#) October 31, 2010 at 10:09 pm [edit comment](#)

THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



by [Savannah](#) November 22, 2010 at 4:27 am [edit comment](#)

Hi,



I have a question and I was wondering if you can help me. I have created a list which looks like this :

- Chapter 1 Heading1
- 1.1 Heading2
- 1.2 Heading2
- Chapter 2 Heading1
- 2.1 Heading2
- 2.1.1 Heading3
- 2.2 Heading2
-

In my document I want to reference to chapter 1 in a sentence and I get "Chapter 1" instead of just 1. Is there anyway I can have the above configuration and get "1" as a reference.

Thnx in advance!

by [Ani](#) December 15, 2010 at 12:38 am [edit comment](#)

If your outline numbering includes the word 'Chapter' in the numbering sequence automatically, then I can't see a way of doing this. I tested it with a sequence of numbering I had for some appendices, where 'Appendix' (just like 'Chapter') was part of the numbering. I tried using the Numbered Heading options and also tried a bookmark, but none of those gave me just the number without the word 'Appendix'. I don't think is possible, except perhaps with a macro.



by [Rhonda](#) December 15, 2010 at 6:14 am [edit comment](#)

Thank you sooo much, I spent almost an entire day trying to fix it yesterday and it looks horrendous when not tidy. Amazing job!



Wanda

by [Wanda](#) January 19, 2011 at 12:58 am [edit comment](#)

Nice and easy. I feel disappointed about Word not having built-in support for multilevel headings with different styles and numbering dependent on parent node. Thanks for sharing the experience.



by [marchewek](#) January 30, 2011 at 7:44 am [edit comment](#)

The thing seems to rely on using built-in "List Number X" styles. Could not get it to work without. Thanks.



✪ by [Gösta](#) February 22, 2011 at 11:12 pm [edit comment](#)

I've used it successfully with Heading styles. I don't think it matters whether it's a built-in style or one you've set up prior to assigning the numbering to it.



–Rhonda

✪ by [Rhonda](#) February 23, 2011 at 6:23 am [edit comment](#)

Okay.. I have followed these instructions and they are wonderful. But I am having one frustrating and annoying problem.



I am linking the numbered list to the headings, or at least trying to. I link the first level to heading 1 and it works. I link the third and fourth levels to the respective styles. Groovy!

But no matter what I do, Word 2010 will NOT remember or maintain the link from list level 2 to heading 2. Does anyone have any idea why?

Help!!!!

✪ by [Doug Herrington](#) March 2, 2011 at 6:03 am [edit comment](#)

Leave a Reply

Logged in as [Rhonda](#). [Log out?](#)

You are the author of this post.

Subscribe by email to this site

[Blog at WordPress.com.](#)
Theme: [Neat!](#). [Entries \(RSS\)](#) and [Comments \(RSS\)](#).