

Crabby's Font Facts 104: Your questions



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Crabby Office Lady

This is the final column in my Font Facts series. Today I'm going to answer the questions you posed after reading the other columns. (You sure are a curious bunch!)

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I recently concocted three fonts columns to try and put to rest some of the more common questions and concerns you have about using (or abusing) fonts. Apparently, I missed some key questions that are keeping you up at night. Let's put these last issues to bed.

Size matters

You have a lot of questions when it comes to font size. Some of them are about fonts themselves, and some are more about setting font size from within a particular program. It's your lucky day because I'm going to address both issues.

First, let's figure out if we can work around the *apparent* limitations of the **Font Size** box.

Questions

- How do I enlarge a font size above 72?
- Can I change the font size to 20, even though the **Font Size** box only gives me the option of choosing 18 or 24?

Answer

It's true that in the **Font Size** box, 72 is the largest font size listed there. As well, some programs in some versions don't have the full list of font sizes in that box. However, you can just select your text and type the font size you want in that box! Go ahead — try it!

So, you see? The **Font Size** box isn't really a limitation at all; you just need to think outside the box. (Sorry; couldn't resist.)

Question

How can I enlarge the font for incoming e-mail messages in Outlook?

Answer

You can only specify this if the e-mail is sent to you in plain text (rather than Rich Text Format or HTML). You can usually tell if someone is sending you e-mail in plain text; it appears in the Courier New font:

```
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890~!@#$%^&*()_+|}{:"?><
```

1. In Outlook, on the **Tools** menu, click **Options** and then click the **Mail Format** tab.
2. Under **Stationery and Fonts**, click **FONTS**.
3. In the section **Composing and reading plain text messages:** box, click **Font** and make your selection(s).

You're not stuck with what you got

All Office programs come with preset features switched on or off. Some examples are task panes, the drawing canvas, and page setup properties such as margins and paper orientation.

Another example is the default font. This is the font you're using (if you're starting with the standard Normal template that comes with the program) when you create a new Office document, spreadsheet, or whatever, and start typing. You can, however, change that font (size, type, etc.) to whatever your little heart desires.

Question

How do I change the default font?

Answer

These are the four programs in which you can change the default font. How to change (or set) it depends on the program and version you're using.

Word

- [Change the default font in Word 2007](#)
- [Change the default font in Word 2003, 2002, and 2000](#)

Excel

- [Change the default font in Excel](#)
- [Change the default font in Excel 2003, 2002, and 2000](#)

FrontPage

- [Change the default font in FrontPage 2003](#)

NOTE This FrontPage 2003 procedure works for FrontPage 2002 and 2000, except that you can't set the default font for Design view and Code view.

OneNote

- [Set the default font in OneNote 2007 and 2003](#)

Effects affect affection

Some of you just love to do crazy things with fonts. Frankly, I don't blame you — these flexible little nuggets are fun to play with.

Question

How do I use the subscript effect in an Excel cell?

Answer

In Excel 2007

1. Select the cell that has the text you want as subscript.
2. In the **Formula Bar** select the actual character to which you want to apply subscript formatting.
3. On the **Home** tab, click the arrow in the lower right corner of the **Font** group.
4. Under Effects, select **Subscript**.

In Excel 2003 and 2002

1. Select the cell that has the text you want as subscript.
2. In the **Formula Bar** select the actual character to which you want to apply subscript formatting.
3. On the **Format** menu, click **Cells**, and then click **Subscript**.

Random thoughts

We could go on and on, covering your burning font questions, but I only have room for a few more. (And yes, that last question is a real inquiry from a real, live Office customer — someone apparently barking up the wrong Web site.)

Question

What is the difference between an "em space" and an "em space?"

Answer

An em space is a space equal to the type size. For example, it's a space that's 12 points wide in 12 point type.

NOTE An em dash is something different. It's a dash like this: —. It's equal to two hyphens: --. It's used to indicate a break in the sentence. I like to use these a lot — maybe even too much.

Question

Is it possible to change lower case letters to upper case letters without having to retype them?

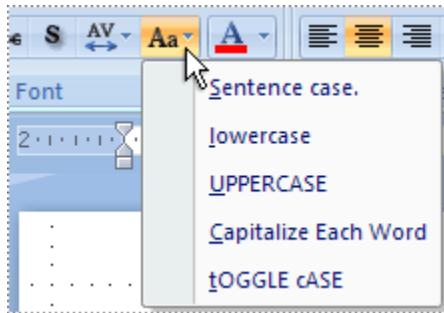
Answer

Good question; and one that's close to my heart. Since I'm a rotten typist and never learned to type without looking at my hands, I often find, when I look up, that I've typed my entire thing in upper case letters. Do I want to start over? No! Do I ever learn and finally take a typing class? No!

The Word creators came up with a solution just for me and you.

Word 2007 and PowerPoint

- Select the text you want to change.
- On the **Home** tab, in the **Font** group, click **Change case**  and make your selection.



Word and PowerPoint 2003, 2002, and 2000

- Select the text you want to change.
- On the **Format** menu, click **Change Case**.

Question

How can I make my own fonts?

Answer

This is not within my sphere of expertise, you ambitious little scamp. However, I know it obviously can be done, so I did a little research to provide you with some resources that will help you get started.

- [About.com: How to make fonts](#)
- [Developing fonts](#)

Question

How do I know if I'm choosing a "Serif Typeface" or a "Sans Serif Typeface?" Some you can tell easily and some you cannot. Is there a list somewhere in the computer that divides them?

Answer

As you might remember, in [Font Facts 102](#), I explained that serifs are the funny little "tails" at the end of the stems of some letters in a particular font. Sans serif fonts don't have the tails. Whether you choose a serif or sans serif font depends on your situation.

Unfortunately, there isn't a list on your computer that will tell you. However, here are some of the more common fonts separated by type:

Serif	San serif
Times New Roman	Arial
Georgia	Trebuchet MS
Palatino	Century Gothic
Book Antiqua	Franklin Gothic
Century Schoolbook	Tahoma
Bodoni	Lucinda Sans
Bookman Old Style	Verdana
Garamond	Comic Sans MS

Question

I was actually trying to find out something about aliens and somehow this information came up. Why?

Answer

Let me check with my intergalactic masters and get right back to you.

"It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers." — James Thurber

About the author

[Annik Stahl](#), the Crabby Office Lady columnist, takes all of your complaints, compliments, and knee-jerk reactions to heart. Therefore, she graciously asks that you let her know whether this column was useful to you — or not — by entering your feedback using the **Was this information helpful?** tool below. And remember: If you don't vote, you can't complain.

Remember: Send Crabby your Office tips at crabby@microsoft.com.

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