UBC Library Research Commons

Thesis Formatting FAQ

These are the topics we help students with most frequently. If you have additional questions or would like some help, don't hesitate to reach out to us at research.commons@ubc.ca.

Note that the UBC Thesis Template already has many features set up for you. We recommend you use the template as early in your thesis-writing process as possible.

This FAQ covers:

Official Requirements:

"Where do I find the only official formatting requirements for my UBC Thesis?"

UBC Grad Studies is the official resource for UBC Thesis requirements.

Checklists that summarize their requirements can be downloaded from the "Resources for Checking and Preparation Box" on the Research Commons Thesis Formatting page. Be sure to check the "Common Problems" column in these checklists!

Preface:

"What do I write in my preface?"

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies provides examples for a number of preface types. You can use this document as a guide for how to write your preface statements.

Line Spacing:

"What are the line spacing requirements? How do I fix line spacing?"

Lines in your body paragraphs must be double spaced or 1.5 spaced. There are **two different ways** you can do this:

1) Select your text. Right click, select Paragraph…; in the popped-up window, under Line Spacing, select 1.5 or Double.
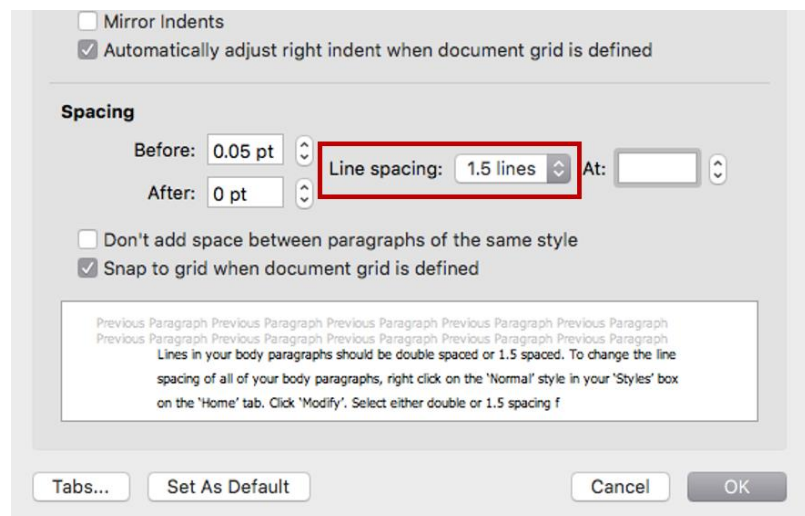
Figure a) Right Click -> Paragraph - > Line Spacing

OR

2) Select your text. Under the <u>Home</u> tab in your document, look at the <u>Paragraph</u> <u>Settings</u> box and click on the <u>Line and Paragraph spacing icon</u>. Select 1.5 or 2.0.

Figure b) Home Tab -> Paragraph -> Line Spacing Icon

General Spacing Requirements for UBC Theses:

- Lines of text must be 1.5 or double spaced
- Quotations of more than one line can be single-spaced
- Acknowledgements, footnotes, table, figure and illustration captions and the bibliography can be single-spaced, provided that individual entries are separated by a full space
- Always double-check the requirements of your citation style. Other spacing details (such as including spaces before and after titles and between paragraphs) depends on the citation style that is used.

Tables and Figures:

"I have many tables and figures. How do I create a List of Tables/Figures/Images? How do I get my captions to appear in the List of Tables/Figures/Images?"

If you need to create a List of Tables, List of Figures, or Table of Figures, you need to **caption** all of your tables and figures throughout your thesis.

To **caption** a table or figure in Word, select your item and go to <u>References</u> tab -> <u>Insert Caption</u>. Choose the type of label (Table, Figure, etc.) from the <u>Label</u> drop-down menu (or choose New Label to create your own). Next, still in the Caption box, click <u>Numbering</u>. Check the box that says <u>Include Chapter Number</u>, and choose "<u>Chapter Starts with Style – Heading 2</u>".
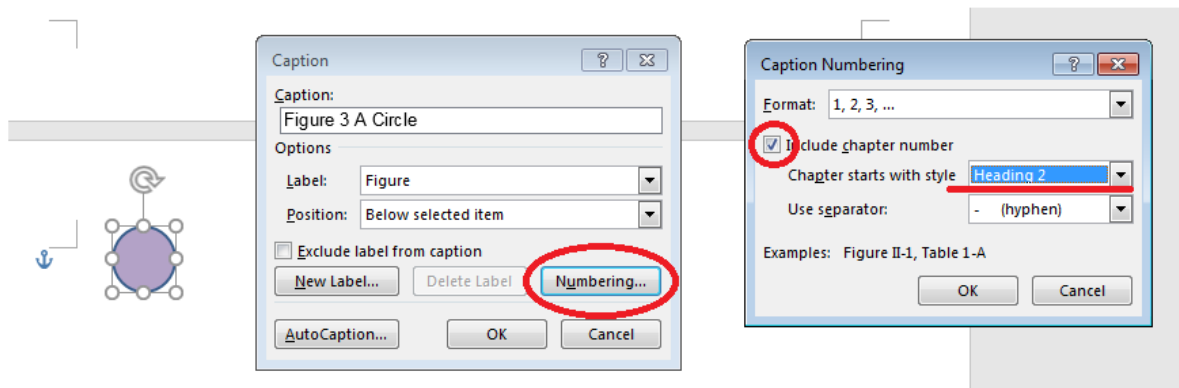

Figure c) References -> Insert Caption

Formatting Page Numbers:

"How do I change the formatting of my page numbers from Roman numerals, in the preliminary pages, to Arabic in the body of my thesis?"

Note that the UBC Thesis Template already has this set up for you.
If the page number formatting has changed or you're not using our thesis template, then do the following:

1) You should have Roman numerals for your front-matter materials (all pages that come before Chapter 1, like Preface, Table of Contents, etc.) Set this up by going to the <u>Layout</u> tab, <u>Breaks</u> -> <u>Section Breaks</u> -> <u>Next Page</u>.
2) Then, on the <u>Home</u> tab, enable the hidden formatting symbols button (¶). This will make it easier to see where the break is between your front matter materials and the rest of your thesis – you can press this button again when you're done to turn off the symbols.
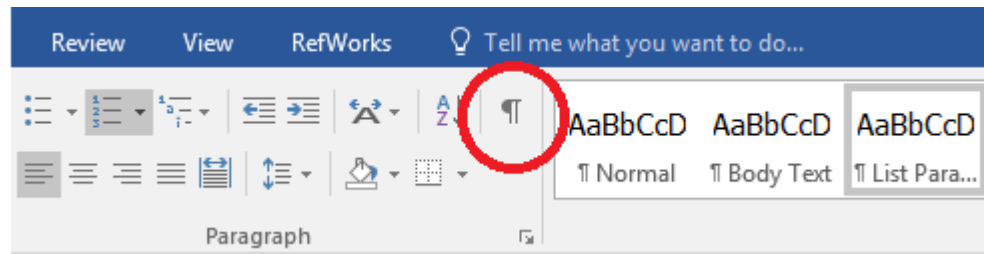
Figure d) Locating the formatting symbols button

3) In your front matter materials section, double-click your page number. When a gray box appears, right-click the number and choose Format Page Numbers. From Number Format, choose **lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii…).**

4) In the body of your thesis, make sure page numbers are in **Arabic numerals (1,2,3…).**

Headings & Table of Contents:

"I've used heading styles to indicate my chapter and section headings, but they're not appearing in my Table of Contents. How can I make them appear?"

You need to refresh your Table of Contents; it will not update on its own. To do this, right-click anywhere in the Table of Contents. A menu will appear with "Update Field" as an option:
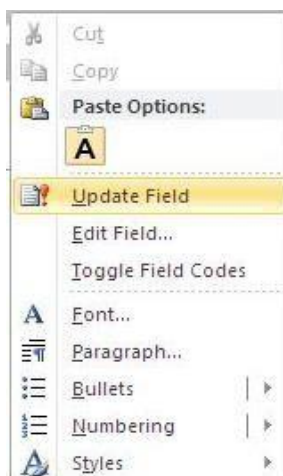

Figure e) Right-Click -> Update Field -> Update Entire Table

Notes and Footnotes:

"Where is the right place to put notes and footnotes?"

> You and your supervisor should decide at an early stage on the form and location of footnotes, as well as the presentation of the bibliography. You should follow a style guide or style of a significant refereed journal in your field.
>
> Notes and footnotes must be numbered consecutively throughout the thesis. There are three possible places to put your footnotes:
>
> 1) At the bottom of pages
> 2) At the end of chapters
> 3) At the end of the main body of the text immediately preceding the bibliography

Example Theses:

"Where can I download theses published by other students in my field?"

> You can access UBC-published Theses and Dissertations from cIRcle. The Theses and Dissertations section lets you choose an area of study and download works from there. This is a great place to check if you're not sure how to format your thesis in a way that's consistent with your field; for example, how other students in your department have displayed tables of research.

Checking Your Thesis:

"Can you check if there are problems with my thesis? Can you format my thesis?"

> We can provide support to you while you format your theses, but **we are not an editing service** and **cannot give you the final word** on whether your thesis will be accepted by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Neither can we format your theses for you.

We can, however, provide appointment-based instruction and support for how to use Microsoft Word to meet theses formatting requirements, as well as feedback for some of your formatting questions.

If you are looking for a pre-review of your thesis, please contact the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at graduate.thesis@ubc.ca.