

Application: Word – Paragraph Spacing

The All-Important Paragraph.....(the late) Shauna Kelly, WORD guru

The basic unit of construction in Word is not a line or a page. Word barely knows what a page is and isn't too sure about a line.

The basic unit of construction in Word is a paragraph. You create a new paragraph when you press **ENTER**. You will see a paragraph mark, called a **pilcrow (¶)**, although only when **Show/Hide** is toggled on (**CTRL+Shift+***).

The **ENTER** key is the create-a-new-paragraph key. It is NOT the 'I want some more space here' key.

If you press **ENTER** twice you'll get an empty paragraph.

A document should NOT be littered with empty paragraphs.

New Paragraph

1. In the days of the typewriter the only means of distinguishing a new paragraph was to put two returns. Two returns between Heading 1 and body text...two returns between Heading 2 and body text and so on.

Tip: Paragraph spacing is the amount of white space between two paragraphs.

2. With Word we can control the gap before and after a paragraph mark (¶) and that way the spacing within a mix of different numbering levels, for example, can be more nuanced and aesthetically pleasing.

Tip: Don't forget **Keep with next** for all **Heading** styles.

The screenshot displays the 'Paragraph Spacing' settings for various styles in a Word document. The styles and their respective 'Before' and 'After' spacing values are as follows:

- Heading 1:** Before: 18 pt, After: 6 pt
- Body 1:** Before: 0 pt, After: 6 pt
- Heading 2:** Before: 10 pt, After: 6 pt
- Body 2:** Before: 0 pt, After: 6 pt
- Heading 3:** Before: 0 pt, After: 6 pt
- List Heading 3:** Before: 0 pt, After: 6 pt
- Heading 4:** Before: 18 pt, After: 6 pt

Tip: 1 point = 1/72nds of an inch.



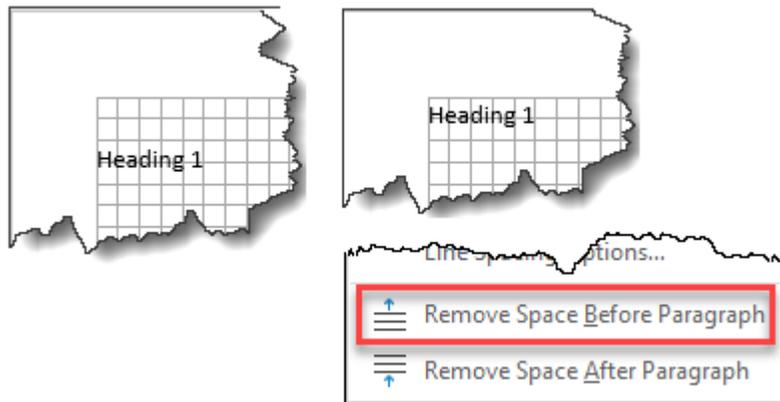
Spacing Before

1. If you want a larger-than-usual gap (e.g. to clearly differentiate the main headings – as illustrated above) note that as the extra space is **exclusive** to **Heading 1**, the extra space is included in the **Heading 1** style as **Spacing Before**.

Tip: As a rule of thumb...determine the number of points you want between paragraphs and adopt this as your **Spacing After** for all the Styles. Add extra points in **Spacing Before** for those Styles where you want an extra gap.

Remove Space Before Paragraph

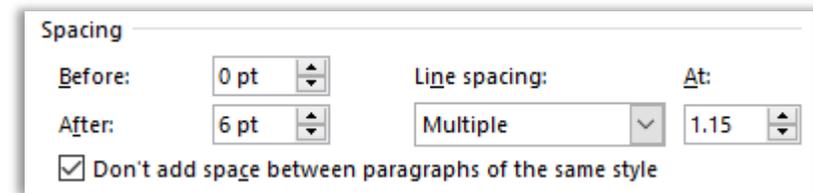
2. When **Heading 1** style appears at the top of the page, that extra spacing is surplus to requirements. With the insertion point anywhere in the Heading, select **Home > Paragraph > Remove Space Before Paragraph** to eliminate the extraneous space.



Tip: Should the **Heading** subsequently be further down the page, there is an equivalent operation **Add Space Before Paragraph**. These may be useful additions to your **Quick Access Toolbar**.

Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style

1. If you have a Style to create a list (see Heading 3 in the illustration on page 1) then you want the **Spacing After**...but only after the very last entry in the list. There is no requirement for 6pt between (a), (b) and (c).



2. Select **Home > Paragraph** (dialog launcher) > **Indents & Spacing**.

Don't add space...

