



Improve Word-processing Skills and Employment Prospects

A Microsoft Word Tutorial for All

This month's ASOH sees the final Tutorial in our **Microsoft Word** "How-to" series. Most people who use computers can type and will probably have a word-processing package among their programs. Not all that many, though, take advantage of the full range of wonderful tools and applications available, which is a pity. As I compiled the eight Tutorials in the series, I learned quite a few new techniques and shortcuts that I had never bothered with before; but I will certainly be using them in future, and I think you will too, if you can find time to give it a go.

The original idea for the series stemmed from helping family members and their friends with projects they were having difficulty with. Some needed CV's creating or updating; others wanted a letter drafted for a job application; but they didn't know how. There were University students who had to write assignments, lab reports, and create presentations; many of which had to include pictures and diagrams. They could all type, and claimed to have sufficient knowledge to get the words into a document; but they were all at sea when it came to graphics and images. Because their skills were limited, so much time was wasted in the process that assignment deadlines were generally met in panic, if they were met at all.

I think it's fairly obvious what this has to do with money. A quick scan through the situations vacant columns in the classifieds tells the story. Businesses use computers, and employers these days require staff to be computer-literate and have good word-processing skills. Those who claim to be competent in these fields will eventually have to prove it; and if they can't they won't be in the job for long. Even small concerns, especially those that are one-man operations, need someone to handle the paperwork, accounts and, in some instances advertising. They may believe a flier will help bring in more customers; and if they have an office-worker who knows enough create it, they won't be paying a fortune to an outsider.

There are companies which frequently display what they have on offer, for example real estate agents. Someone has to make up those attractive posters stuck on their windows advertising houses for sale or rent. It can all be done in **Microsoft Word** easily and quickly by anyone who knows how. Newsletters are a way of informing clients of the latest developments; and these again are no trouble for **Microsoft Word**; as long as there is someone on hand with the skills to use it.

From writing letters to school homework, a better-than-average knowledge of word-processing makes life so much easier. There are times when moving house causes extra pressure, having to inform everyone of change of address. Our Tutorial can show you

how to create a form-letter template suitable for all. Once the names and addresses of everyone who needs to be told have been entered in a data base, the **Word** program merges the two files and produces a standard letter, just changing individual details of each recipient appropriately. The letters can be printed in a batch and sent snail-mail, or emailed. By following the step-by-step instructions in the Tutorial, it's easy. And next time another move is happening, as long as the data base has been kept up to date, those change-of-address letters will be no hassle.

There are many time-saving techniques and skills to be learned throughout the series; and anyone having the patience to go through them will benefit enormously. I daresay, like me, even those who already possess a fair knowledge of what **Microsoft Word** is capable of will discover something new.

The eight Tutorials start from the very basics, each subsequent one introducing more advanced techniques. Along the way, I will show how to import pictures from a personal gallery into a document; or, when allowed, copied from the Internet. You can also produce your own A5 hard-copy book, printed on standard A4 paper. The example I chose is a recipe book; but the same procedures can be used for personal notes and diaries, novels; and even personalised greetings cards.

The Tutorials are definitely "How-to" with step-by-step instructions, including illustrations of **Microsoft Word's** tools and where to find them in the program. It won't hurt to take a look, maybe have a play. You don't know what you are capable of unless you try; and you might even have fun doing it.

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