

Word, Excel & Microsoft 365 | Medium | 2 min read

Word: why your formatting keeps changing

Pasting text and watching it change font, size or spacing is one of the most annoying things in Word. It usually happens because Word is trying to be helpful and copying styles from somewhere else. The good news is that it can be tamed.

Paste without bringing the formatting along

1. Copy your text as normal.
2. In Word, press Ctrl+Shift+V and choose **Text Only** where the choice appears. Or right-click and choose the clipboard icon marked **A (Keep Text Only)**.

The text then takes on the look of wherever you pasted it.

Reset the odd bits

1. Select the text that looks wrong.
2. On the **Home** tab, click **Clear All Formatting**. It is the small icon with an **A** and a pink eraser.
3. If the text is then plain, apply the style you want from the **Styles** gallery.

Use styles, not hand-formatting

If you change every heading by hand, Word will fight you later. Instead:

1. Select a heading, set it how you like.
2. Right-click the matching style (for example **Heading 1**) in the **Home** tab and choose **Update Heading 1 to Match Selection**.

All headings in the document now match.

See what is going on

Click the **Show/Hide** button (the ¶ symbol on the **Home** tab) to display hidden marks such as spaces, tabs and paragraph breaks. Strange gaps are often extra paragraph marks or lots of spaces.

Stop automatic changes

- **Lists that appear by themselves:** click the small lightning bolt icon that appears after Word starts a list, and choose **Stop Automatically Creating Numbered Lists**.
- **Other auto-corrections:** click **File**, then **Options**, then **Proofing**, then **AutoCorrect Options**, and look at the **AutoFormat As You Type** tab.

Default paste setting

In **File**, **Options**, **Advanced**, look under **Cut, copy, and paste** to set what Word does by default.

On a Mac look under the **Word** menu, then **Preferences**.

When to get more help

If one particular document keeps going wrong, or a company template is causing the problem, send it to us rather than rebuilding it by hand.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.