# THE FOUR FASTEST FORMATTING FIXES

4 ways to fix the formatting in your Microsoft Word document *fast* with quick shortcut keys (and one bonus trick, too!)

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## WHAT KIND OF FORMAT FIXER ARE YOU?

In my years of helping people with Microsoft Word problems, I've noticed that people tend to have one of two reactions to formatting issues:

    (1)   "Why is this happening?"

    (2)   "Fix it NOW!"

In other words, some people want to understand why their Microsoft Word formatting is so jacked up and figure out a way to prevent future problems. So I've published various tutorials for those people who want to prevent formatting problems before they start.

Other people just want it fixed ASAP. They're either pressed for time or have ZERO patience with long-winded technical explanations.

I totally get that. That's why I've published this quick guide featuring a short series of quick fixes that require nothing more than a shortcut key (a combination of the CONTROL, ALT and/or SHIFT keys plus a number, letter or F-key) or a quick mouse click.

# Fix It NOW!

Okay, fix-it-nowers! Let's cut to the chase with some quick emergency fixes.

## "Painting" Formatting from One Text to Another

Cutting and pasting text from one document to another is probably the most common source of formatting disasters. Often, when you've pulled text from one document and dropped it into your current document, that text will bring over some undesirable formatting:

> (1) On the Insert tab, the galleries include items that are designed to coordinate with the overall look of your document. You can use these galleries to insert tables, headers, footers, lists, cover pages, and other document building blocks. When you create pictures, charts, or diagrams, they also coordinate with your current document look.
>
> (2) You can also format text directly by using the other controls on the Home tab. Most controls offer a choice of using the look from the current theme or using a format that you specify directly. To change the overall look of your document, choose new Theme elements on the Page Layout tab. To change the looks available in the Quick Style gallery, use the Change Current Quick Style Set command.

If, for example, you pasted in paragraph (2) from another document, and you want the formatting of it to match paragraph (1), including font and paragraph settings, do this:

(1) Triple-click the first paragraph. (When I say "triple click", I literally mean pointing your mouse cursor somewhere on the first paragraph and clicking the left mouse button three times rapidly.) This will select the entire paragraph.

(2)  Go to the Home tab and click the Format Painter button on the left side. The Format Painter button has a paintbrush icon. When you click it, the entire button will turn orange, which means Format Painter is turned on.

(3)  Select the entire second paragraph with your mouse. The easiest way to do this[1] is to hover your mouse cursor in the left margin next to the first line of the paragraph so that the mouse cursor is pointing to the right:



Press down on the left mouse button and drag all the way down to the end of the paragraph so the entire paragraph is selected.[2]

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[1] Wondering why I didn't tell you to triple-click again? In the middle of a Format Painter operation, the first click of your mouse will turn off Format Painter. Instead, you'll have to select text in a way to allows you to hold down the mouse button until you've selected the entire paragraph.

[2] If you only want to copy paragraph formatting but leave the font in the "target" paragraph intact, you can just single-click anywhere in the "target" paragraph—no need to select the entire text.

(4)    When you let go of the mouse button, the second paragraph will look just like the first paragraph.

Here's an 18-second video that'll show you how easy this is:
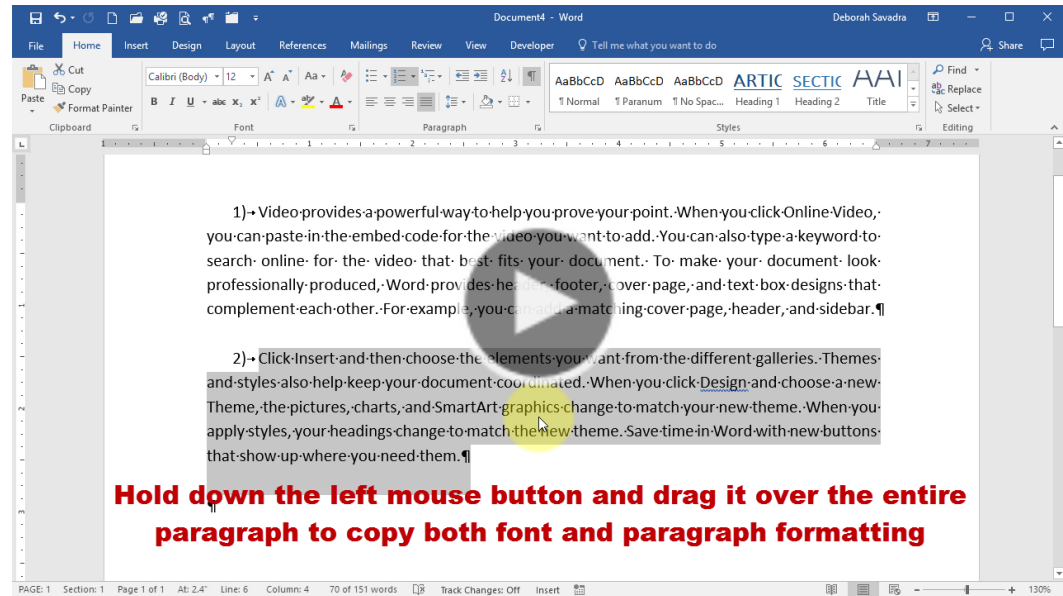
**VIDEO 1: USING FORMAT PAINTER TO COPY PARAGRAPH OR FONT & PARAGRAPH FORMATTING (HTTPS://GOO.GL/AMEUKP)**

(Note: the video above demonstrates <u>both</u> methods of copying formatting; you don't have to do it twice!)

To break it down even further, here's how to use Format Painter in any situation:

(1)    Select the text that has the formatting you like.

(2)    Click Format Painter.

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(3)   Select the text that needs its formatting changed.

Could it get any easier?

### BONUS TIP: RAPID REPEAT REFORMATTING

If you want to fix several pieces of text without having to repeat this entire sequence, you can make Format Painter "persistent" so it will paint the desired formatting onto multiple pieces of text in a document. In step 2 above, instead of single-clicking on the Format Painter, double-click on it. Then every piece of text you click on or select from that point will have the new formatting. When you're finished reformatting, turn Format Painter off by single-clicking on it again. You'll know it's off when the icon is no longer orange.

### NOT JUST FOR PARAGRAPHS

Format Painter isn't just for paragraphs. You can select individual words, sentences, etc., pick up their formatting and "paint" it onto however much text you wish. I've demonstrated Format Painter with paragraphs above because it's the most common problem I see with cut-and-pasted text.

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## "CLEAN SLATE" FORMATTING

Sometimes, frankly, it's just a whole lot easier to start from scratch. Here are three shortcut keys you'll want to write down on a Post-It™ note to stick on the bottom of your monitor:

> **CTRL+SPACE** removes all character-level formatting—funky fonts, underlining, boldface, italics, etc. Just select the text you want to fix, hold down your Control key and press the Space Bar.

> **CTRL+Q** removes all paragraph-level formatting—weird indents, line spacing, extra spacing before and after the paragraphs, etc. Again, select the text, hold down your Control key and press the letter "Q".

> **CTRL+SHIFT+N** returns the selected text to Normal formatting (however Normal is defined in your particular document's Styles). You'll need a bit more manual dexterity here: select your text, then hold down the Control and Shift keys together and press the letter "N".

The best "nuke formatting" trick, however, may be found on the Ribbon: Clear All Formatting. It's on the Home tab in the Font section and looks like an eraser (appropriate, no?).

Once you've eliminated the problem formatting, you're free to reformat it, either manually or by using the Format Painter trick illustrated in the previous section.

## GET MORE WORD FORMATTING AND OTHER TIPS

Thanks for downloading The Four Fastest Formatting Fixes report! Be sure to check your email inbox every week for the next several weeks for more of my popular Microsoft Office tips and tricks.

If you like to pass these tips along to a colleague, you're free to do so, as long as you pass along the document in its entirety.

If you'd like to get more tips and tricks from Legal Office Guru, here's where I hang out on social media:

http://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahsavadra

https://plus.google.com/+DeborahSavadra

http://www.twitter.com/legalofficeguru

Thanks for reading,

*Deborah @ Legal Office Guru*