

Formatting Text Files in OpenOffice

For an explanation of why you do these steps, see the "formatting" page.

Copy the text you want and paste it into OpenOffice. (You can skip the legal info in the Gutenberg texts. It's perfectly legal to do it, as long as you remove all of it, which is easy to do.)

Tip: An easy way to select large blocks of text is to click just before where you want to begin highlighting but DO NOT hold down the mouse button. Next, scroll down to where you want to end highlighting. While holding down the Shift key, click just after where you want to highlight to. Now everything between your two clicks is highlighted. This is much faster than holding the mouse and scrolling down to highlight, when doing a large bit of text.

Select the page layout. Click "Format/Page". First, in the Page tab, set "page layout" to "mirrored" to leave a binding allowance. Next, set margins at 0.5", except the "inner" margin. That will be 0.5" *plus* the amount of space you need for binding. (3-hole punch: 0.5"+0.5"= 1"; Comb-punch: 0.5"+0.25"=0.75") And if you're planning to print half-size, be sure you've selected the correct paper size. (It's often called "statement," or you can define your own "user" size that is 5.5" wide and 8.5" high.)

[If you are *making a macro*, begin recording here. To find macros, click *Tools/Macros*, then record. If you've already done this step and *want to play your macro*, skip down to "To play a macro later".]

1. Select all text (Click "Edit/Select All"), and make sure it stays selected through the following steps. You can always select it all again if it comes un-highlighted.
2. Fix Font. (Click "Format/Character"). I like Times New Roman, 11 point.
3. Fix Text Alignment. (Click "Format/Paragraph/Alignment"). Select "Justified". This evens up both edges of the text.
4. Fix Paragraph Indentation & Line Spacing. (Click "Format/Paragraph/Indents and Spacing"). Look through the list and find the box labeled "First line." In that box type 0.125 (1/8"), or 0.25 (1/4").
You can leave the line spacing as it is, and it's fine. If you choose to make it a bit larger, in the "Line spacing" box, select "Proportional". Then in the box to the right of that, change the percentage to 112%. (This comes out similar to WordPerfect's 1.1 line spacing.) The percentage may vary if you select a different font type and size than Times New Roman 11. (See what works best for you.)

To Remove Extra Hard Returns:

5. Select all text (still) and click "Edit/Find & Replace". In the "Search for" box type "^\$" (without the quotes, of course). In the "Replace with" box type "PQVX". Next, click the "More Options" button, and select "Regular expressions." Now click "Replace all." When that's done, click ok. (The Find & Replace function sometimes takes a few minutes to run. Just wait, and a box will pop up when it's finished.)
6. Select all text again. In the "Search for" box type "\$". In the "Replace with" box type one space with the spacebar. Click "Replace all", then "ok" when it's done.
7. Select all text again. In the "Search for" box type "PQVX". In the "Replace with" box, first delete the space (don't forget that step!) and then type "\n". Click "Replace all", then "ok" when it's done.

[If you were making a macro, stop recording now, and name your macro.

To play a macro later, place cursor at *beginning* of text, click *Tools/Macro/Run Macro*, select your macro, and click "Run". You should find your macro in *My Macros/Standard/Module1*. It may take a few minutes to run.]

Finishing touches - Many of these are *optional*, but doing them can make your book look just that much neater. (This order works well, so you don't have to go back and redo anything.)

* **Arrange the title page:** Larger font, centered, remove indentation from this page (select the text on that page and change the amount of indentation to "0").

* **Add page numbers:** Click "Insert/Footer/Default" or "Insert/Header/Default" (depending on if you want numbers at top or bottom of page.) Next click "Insert/Fields/Page Number". Then center the text so it's in the middle on each page. *Limitations:* There's a long complicated way to make outside alternating page numbers, have no numbers on the title page, and begin numbering on a different number than the default. For now I'll stick with the easy directions (especially since I can't make the other way work).

* **Arrange a table of contents:** I usually skip this step, unless I am putting more than one book into a volume (like putting four Bobbsey Twins stories into the same book). I put the title of each book within that volume and which page it begins on. Arrange this page, minus the page numbers, arrange the rest of the book, then come back and enter the page numbers last.

* **Fix italics:** Click "Edit/Find & Replace" to search for underscores (*_these thingies_*). Anything *_inside_* the underscore can be italicized, then the underscores can be deleted.

* **Add any pictures:** Usually I don't do this, but occasionally it is a good idea. For instance, if you want to add a map, or a graphic from a science text, (or if you just really like the pictures).

* **Make chapter titles bold/centered:** Can often use "Edit/Find & Replace" to search for the word "chapter" to find them easily. I highlight them, then do the following: make bold, center, and un-indent (change indentation to "0"). You can make another macro to do these steps for you.

* **Arrange chapters:** You don't need to make them begin on a new page (many real books don't). Just leave 2 blank lines after end of last chapter. One blank line after each chapter title also looks nice. Arrange them so that a chapter doesn't begin at the very bottom of a page. I try to make sure that there are at least 3 or 4 lines of the new chapter on a page (besides the title and blank line). If there isn't that much, I move it to the next page. *Hint* - If you're binding more than one book together, make sure that each new book begins on a right hand (odd numbered) page.

* **Go back to the table of contents:** (if you have one) and enter the page numbers.

You're now ready to print!