

AUTHOR INK

Microsoft Word ~ Twisty Questions

UPDATING STYLES (WHEN YOU WANT TO)

A question that I'm asked a lot is: "When I change the appearance of a heading or a piece of text, the rest of the document changes too and I have to use the **undo** option to put things back to normal - how can I stop this happening?"

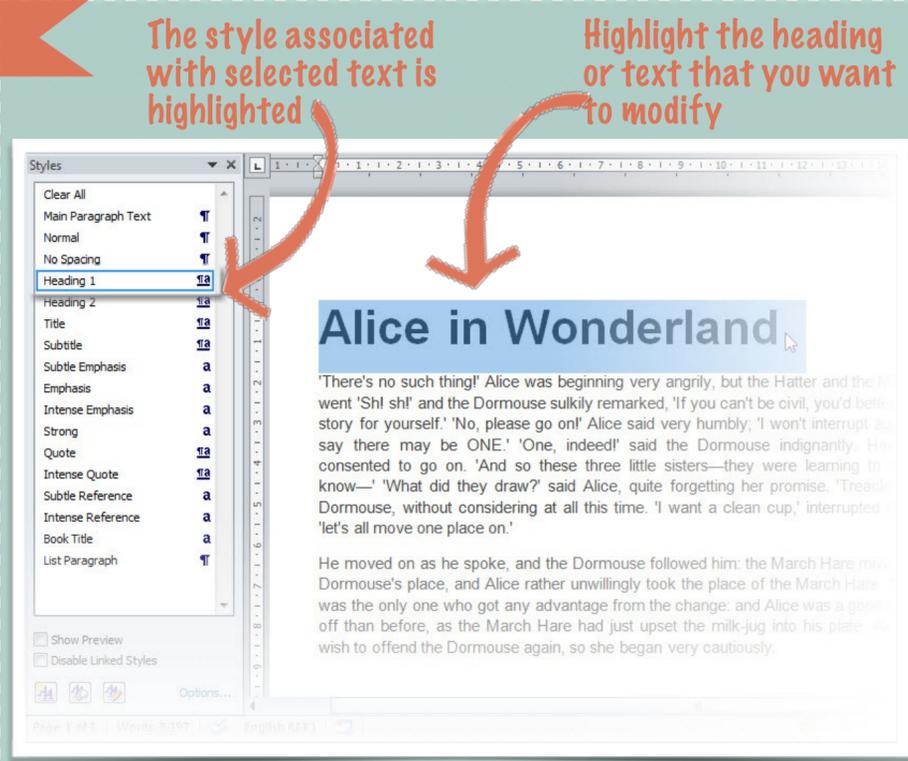
Believe it or not, this is actually Word trying to be helpful - it's all down to an **automatically update** option that's associated with styles. If this option is switched on for a style, it means that any modifications (e.g. changing font size, colour, spacing, etc.) made to text that's using that style are immediately applied to all other instances of that style in the document. This is generally a **good thing!** It can save lots of time and help ensure that the look/feel of your document is consistent. **But**, if styles aren't your thing and those seemingly random changes are driving you crazy, you can switch the **automatically update** option off. Here's how.

1. CHECK THE STYLE NAME

You need to find the name of the style that's being updated when you make a change.

To do this, highlight the piece of text that you're adjusting and check the **styles** list (typically this will be in the **home** tab of the Word ribbon or as a separate panel down the side).

The style associated with content that is currently highlighted will be selected in the **styles** list.

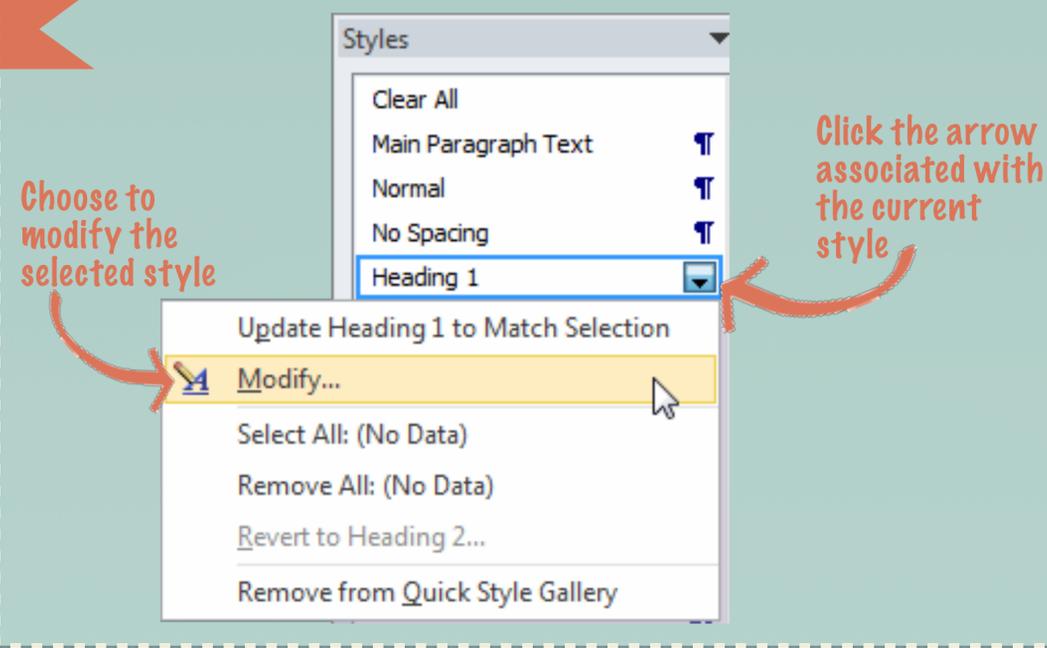


2. MODIFY THE STYLE

Hover your cursor over the selected style to activate an options arrow to the right of the style name.

Click this arrow to display available options and choose **modify**.

The **modify style** window is displayed and it's here that all of the properties for the selected style are defined.



3. TOGGLE AUTO UPDATE OFF/ON

Look towards the bottom of the **modify style** window and note the **automatically update** option:

❖ **Switched On:** If you select some content that is formatted with this style and make changes to its appearance (font size, colour, type, spacing, etc.), those changes will be applied to any other content in the document which is associated with this style.

❖ **Switched Off:** If you select some content that is formatted with this style and make changes to its appearance (font size, colour, type, spacing, etc.), those changes will **ONLY** be applied to the portion of text that you modify - the rest of the document is unaffected by the change(s).

