



from TORCH TRUST

Making your newsletters accessible





These notes are written for facilitators who may only want to use basic techniques.

In this guide, we will introduce best practices for large print newsletters. We will be using Microsoft's Word program but the principles involved would apply to all word processors. If your knowledge of Word is more advanced you may wish to refer to Torch's equivalent notes which are aimed at church administrators.

For a more advanced video demonstration of this guide please visit Focus on Making Your Document Accessible in our Focus On playlist on our YouTube channel:
<https://youtu.be/enwBRxhHaBM>

Things to note

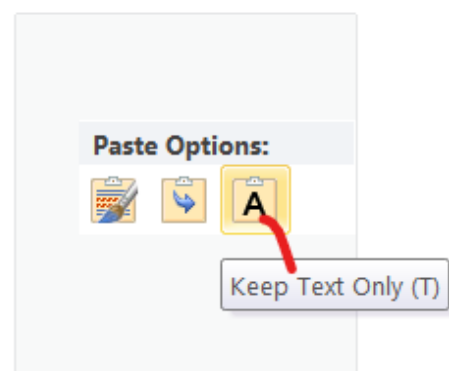
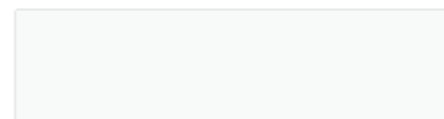
- If you are producing a newsletter, it will not look like a newsletter by the time you've finished! Many newsletters are in multiple columns, with articles in boxes. The accessible version needs to be written in an entirely linear fashion.
- You should avoid simply photocopying the original document at twice the size, as the layout may still be confusing.

Creating the Newsletter

Create a New Word Document

Use a neat, consistent, uncluttered layout and allow adequate spacing between lines of text, paragraphs and columns.

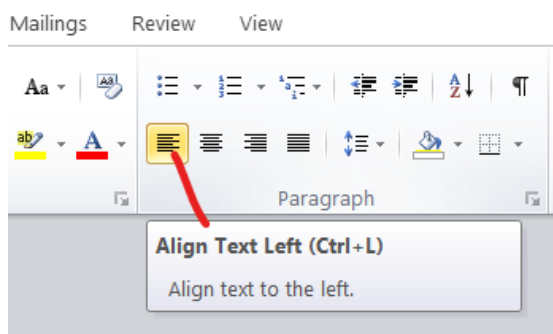
- Identify a logical order for the content of the original document.
- Copy the first item in the original document to the clipboard.
- Paste it into your new word document, choosing "Keep Text Only" (right-click mouse to see Paste Options).
- Repeat for the other items.





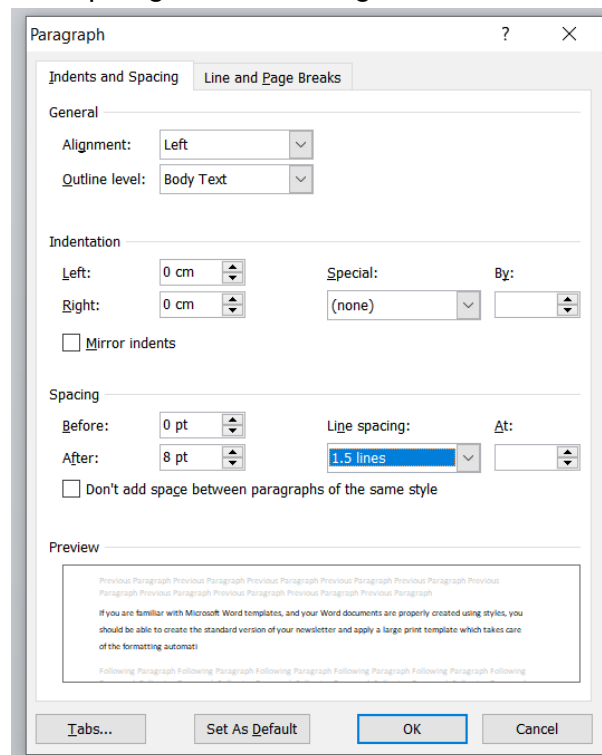
Set the Basic Styling

- Set the font. Printed text should be in a bold, clear, sans serif font such as Arial or Trebuchet, sized to suit the reader.
- At Torch, we use the specially designed Tiresias font, available for download via our resources page at www.sightlossfriendlychurch.org.uk/resources/resources
- Set the size. At Torch, we offer four sizes of large print: 17, 20, 25 and 30.
- Remove excess white space. Try to keep everything left justified ('Align Text Left') so it is easy to find the start of a new line, indentations can cause confusion. Using blank lines (spacing) after the paragraphs clearly shows the paragraph divisions. However, if there is a large amount of white space between paragraphs, it can be deleted.



- Set up paragraphs so there is a bigger gap than normal between lines: Select all of the text (by holding the Control button on the keyboard down at the same time

as the 'A' key) and right-click. From the menu that appears, choose "Paragraph ...". On the "Indents and spacing" tab, find "Line Spacing" and set it to, e.g. 1.5.



- Consider other elements of your document.
- If using bullet points, use square ones as they help to line the text up across the page.
- Use solid lines, dotted lines are more difficult to see.
- Printing over pictures or photos can make words difficult to read.





Notes On Size

Increasing the font size in the newsletter will significantly increase the number of pages. You may be able to adjust the margins to make more effective use of the space, but ultimately there is little more that can be done about this.

Please do not reduce the amount of information in the newsletter by deciding it is "not really necessary" for someone with sight loss. People with sight loss have sighted friends and will want to know everything that is going on.

If the newsletter reproduces content which is available elsewhere, it might be sufficient merely to cite the original source. For example, cite just the Bible passage and translation rather than including the entire reading, or include the hymn number rather than printing the hymn in full.

Note, however, that this strategy is only appropriate where the original source is also available in an alternative format!

Remember that some people with sight loss may also be hard of hearing – so **do not omit information on the basis that they will hear it spoken aloud during the service!** For example, prayers or lists of people who are unwell.

Many people with sight loss may prefer to access your newsletter electronically, e.g. using a tablet or laptop computer or possibly even on a smartphone. Sending it by email or making it available for download on a website may meet this need better whilst simultaneously reducing paper usage.

