


Microsoft's Guide to:

Quickly copy formatting with the Format Painter

Applies to: Microsoft Office Excel 2003, PowerPoint 2003, Publisher 2003, Word 2003

Office programs offer a quick way to copy formatting from one item — such as text in Word, a cell in Excel, a control in Access, or a shape in Publisher — to another. It's called the Format Painter , and it might be the most helpful toolbar button you've never used.

Save time and effort: Format an item in one step

Say you've written a report in Word. You like the look, especially your headings, which are 14 pt. Bookman Old Style, centered, green, and bold, with a nice subtle shadow.

Fifteen minutes before you're supposed to present the report to the team, your manager asks you to add four new sections to the report. You spend thirteen minutes adding the information, and the next two wishing that you hadn't chosen such complicated formatting for your headings, since you now have to apply it to all the new ones.


Using Format Painter saves you that time and duplicated effort. Instead of having to manually apply the font, font effects, centered paragraph alignment, and other formatting to each new section heading, you can quickly copy all of the formatting attributes by using one toolbar button.

To copy formatting

1. Do one of the following:

To copy both paragraph attributes (such as alignment, indentation, and so on) and character attributes (such as font and font effects), select the text whose formatting you want to copy plus the paragraph mark that follows the text.

To copy only character attributes, select the text without selecting the paragraph mark.

2. On the **Standard** toolbar, click **Format Painter** .
3. Select the text you want to apply the formatting to.

The text takes on the new formatting.

If you want to apply the same formatting to more than one item, select the formatting you want, double-click **Format Painter**, and then select each word, phrase, or paragraph you want to apply formatting to. When you're finished, press ESC.

You can find this information on the Microsoft website, <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA012176101033.aspx>, along with a video.