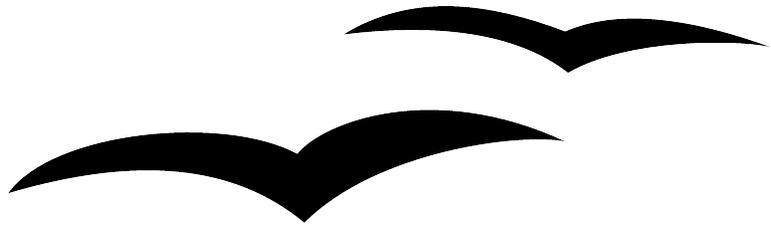


How to Create Columns



How to Create Columns
Version 0.1
First edition: March 2004
First English edition: March 2004

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Overview

About this guide

How to Create Columns shows you how to create columns in a text document using OpenOffice.org Writer 1.1. To understand the instructions, you need to have a basic familiarity with Writer.

For an introduction to Writer, see:

- *OpenOffice.org Starter's Guide*, available at <http://www.math.umd.edu/~dcarrera/openoffice/docs>
- *How to Write and Manage OpenOffice.org text documents using Common Features and Styles*, available at http://documentation.openoffice.org/HOW_TO

Conventions used in this guide

This guide uses the following conventions:

- **Bold** indicates menu options, buttons, and other items that you select on the screen.
- Step-by-step directions are numbered to make them easy for you to follow. When you have a choice, the choices are presented in a bulleted list, just like the bulleted list you're reading now.

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Feedback

Please direct any comments or suggestions about this document to dev@documentation.openoffice.org

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Sophie Gautier, author of the French native-language document, *Comment Faire des Colonnes Et Insérer une Lettrine*, which I used as a reference.

Modifications and updates

Version	Date	Description of Change
0.1	03/01/04	Initial version issued for comment

Creating columns

Writer allows you to create columns in your text documents. You can apply columns to a page style or to an individual block of text, and you can format the column layout according to your preferences.

This chapter shows you how to:

- Apply columns to a page style.
- Apply columns to an individual block of text.
- Format a column layout.
- Revert to a single-column layout.

Applying columns to a page style

To apply columns to a page style, click anywhere on the page and then choose **Format > Columns...** from the main menu. The Columns window opens.

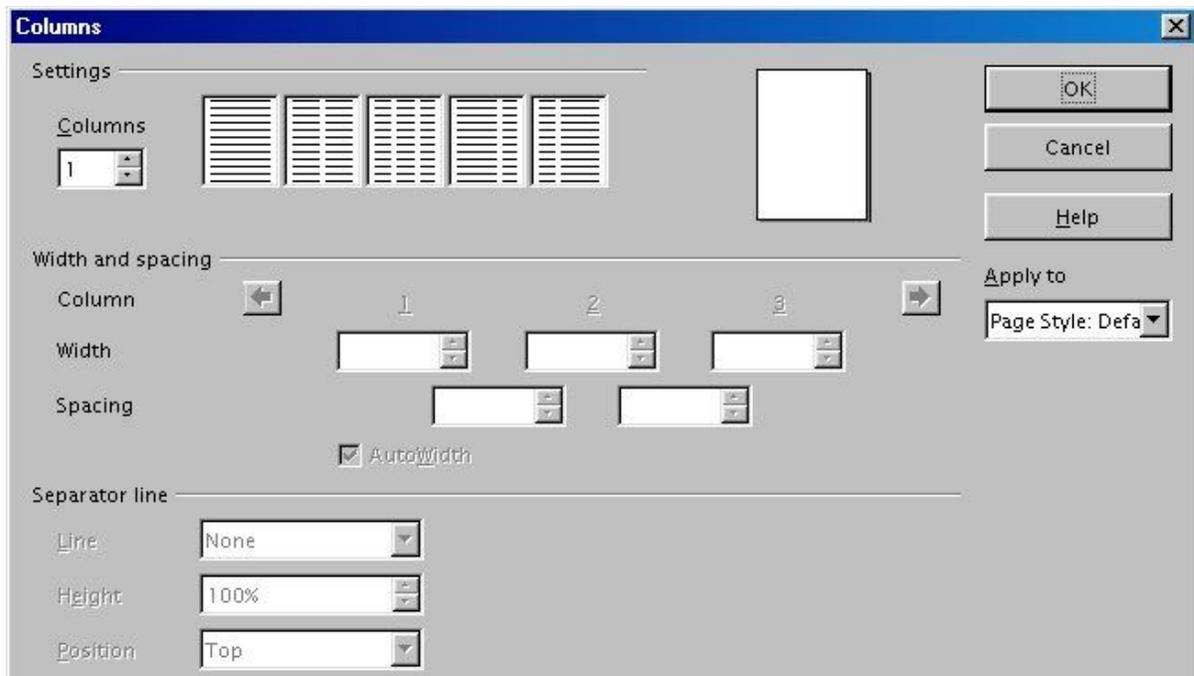


Illustration 1 Columns window for a page style

“Formatting column layouts” on page 3 explains how to use the Columns window to format a column layout.

Applying columns to a block of text

You can also apply columns to an individual block of text. This is useful if you don't want to change the page style, or if you want to insert columns within columns. Note that Writer will automatically create a section from the selected block of text. (A section is simply a block of text that has special formatting.)

To apply columns to an individual block of text, select the desired text and then choose **Format > Columns...** from the main menu. The Columns window opens.

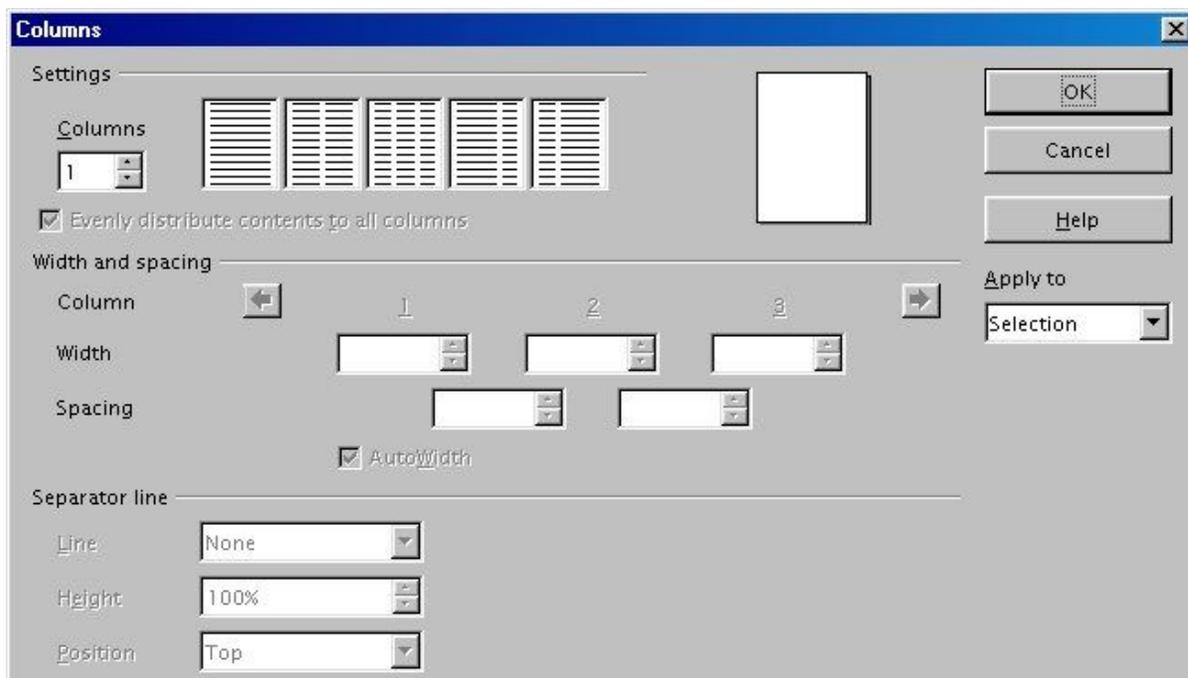


Illustration 2 Columns window for an individual block of text

“Formatting column layouts” on page 3 explains how to use the Columns window to format a column layout.

If you apply columns to a block of text, you can choose how you want to distribute the text across the columns. You can distribute text in one of two ways:

- **Evenly.** If you choose to distribute text evenly, Writer will fill the first line of each column, followed by the second line of each column, and so on.
- **Newspaper-style.** If you choose to distribute text newspaper-style, Writer will fill the columns one at a time, beginning with the first column.

To distribute text evenly, check the **Evenly distribute contents to all columns** check box in the Settings area. Clear this check box if you want to distribute text newspaper-style.

Formatting column layouts

Format column layouts using the Columns window. (See Illustration 1 on page 1 and Illustration 2 on page 2.)

You can use one of Writer's predefined column layouts, or you can create a customized column layout. The window's preview box, located to the right of the Settings area, shows you as you work how the column layout will look.

Using a predefined column layout

The Settings area displays five predefined column layouts. To use one of them, simply click the desired layout.

Specifying the number of columns

If you prefer to create a customized column layout, you must specify the number of columns that you want. Enter the desired number in the **Columns** spin box of the Settings area.

Formatting column width and spacing

To create evenly-spaced columns that are all the same width, check the **AutoWidth** check box in the Width and spacing area.

To customize the width and spacing of the columns, follow these steps:

- 1) In the Width and spacing area, clear the **AutoWidth** check box.
- 2) On the Width line, enter a width for each column.
- 3) On the Spacing line, enter the amount of space that you want between each column pair.

Use the arrow keys on the Column line to scroll among the columns.

Formatting separator lines

To display separator lines between the columns, follow these steps:

- 1) From the **Line** drop-down list in the Separator line area, select the type of line that you want.
- 2) By default, the separator lines are the same height as the columns. If you want the separator lines to be shorter than the columns, use the **Height** spin box to enter the height of the separator lines as a percentage of the height of the columns. For example, if you enter 50%, the separator lines will be half as high as the columns.
- 3) If you entered a height of less than 100%, use the **Position** drop-down list to select a vertical alignment for the separator lines.

Saving a column layout

To save a column layout so that it appears in your document, click **OK**. The Columns window closes and the column layout appears in your document.

Reverting to a single-column layout

To revert to a single-column layout for a page style or a block of text:

- 1) Click anywhere in the column layout.
- 2) From the main menu, choose **Format > Columns...** The Columns window opens. (See Illustration 1 on page 1 and Illustration 2 on page 2.)
- 3) In the Settings area, click the single-column layout that's located to the right of the **Columns** spin box. Or, reset the **Columns** spin box to 1.
- 4) Click **OK**. The Columns window closes and the layout reverts to a single column.