Content Conversion Guidelines

Revised August 2017

Welcome to Kobo Writing Life! These guidelines are intended to help you format your book so that it uploads smoothly into our store and displays beautifully on all devices.

This resource will provide an overview of file types and sizes that can be loaded into our system, best practices for cover images, instructions on formatting Word documents for conversion to ePub, and guidance should you encounter errors during the upload process for your book.

Note that these guidelines do not include information on how to create an ePub file from scratch, as this requires an understanding of html and is beyond the scope of this document.

While formatting is the responsibility of the author or publisher, we are always happy to help, so please feel free to contact us if you have any questions at writinglife@kobo.com.

FILE TYPES & SIZES

You can upload your content file in any of the following formats and they will be converted into a Kobo formatted ePub:

• DOC and DOCX
• ODT
• EPUB
• MOBI

Regardless of the file type, the file size for your book cannot exceed 100MB.

BOOK COVER

Your book cover is usually the first thing a reader notices about your book. It's good to have an eye catching cover as this can help increase sales for your title. We recommend looking around for inspiration in our store and comparing your cover to similar bestsellers. Here are some general guidelines that can help you make a great cover.

- **File size**
    - Your cover image should be no larger than 5MB.
- **Orientation**
    - Your cover image should be in portrait, not landscape. This best suits the screen size of our devices and apps.
- **File format**
    - A JPG or JPEG format image works the best; PNG files are also perfectly acceptable; all others may be prone to corruption.
- **Resolution**
    - For best results, your image should be 900 DPI (dots-per-inch). However, files as low as 300 DPI are also fine.
- **Dimensions**

- Our device screen sizes have a width to height ratio of 3:4. It is therefore a good idea for you to make sure that the width of your cover image is ¾ of its height.
- **Box Set Covers**
  - We strongly discourage using 3D Box Sets in your cover image. This can make your cover appear smaller on our site as there is a lot of blank white space. We recommend using 2D images for Box Sets.
- **Public Domain Covers**
  - If you're publishing a title that belongs in the Public Domain, please ensure that the cover you're using is also part of the Public Domain. We encourage users to create original cover images. Covers should not include information from the original publisher.
- **Restrictions**
 - Cover images cannot contain graphic nudity or persons involved in sexual activity.

WORD DOCUMENTS

Table of Contents

If you would like there to be a Table of Contents page inside your book, then you will need to create one inside your document. However, note that even without creating this page, if you have formatted your chapter headers properly, when users read your book using our app or devices, they will be able to navigate to the various chapters of your book using a built-in navigation function.

How to set up page navigation

For chapter titles to appear in the navigation pane for your book, you need to format them as "Heading 1". This can be done by highlighting the chapter title text, and then selecting "Heading 1" under the **Styles** menu. The location of this menu may vary depending on the version of Word you are using. Generally, this is near to where font selections are made.
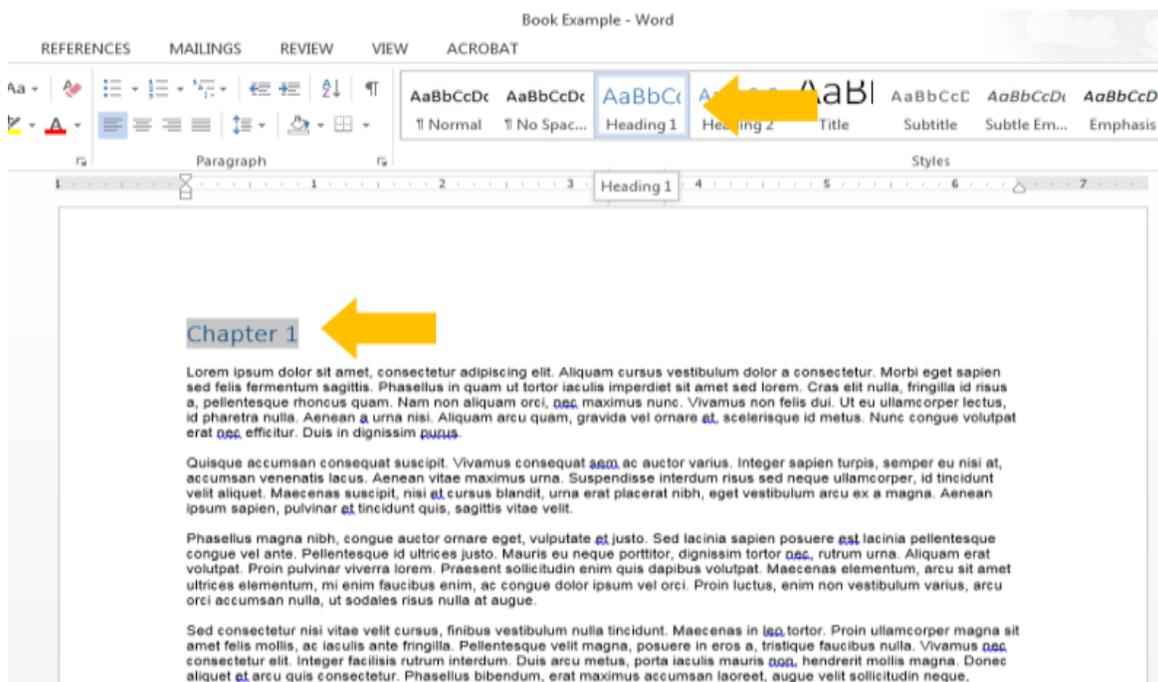
Formatting your chapter titles in this manner is highly recommended as it enhances the reading experience.

How to set up a Table of Contents page

Setting up a Table of Contents (TOC) within the book itself is entirely up to you. As mentioned previously, for this is not needed for the purposes of navigation; however, you may still feel that it would be of interest to your readers.

When deciding whether or not to include a TOC, you may want to keep in mind that when you publish your book to Kobo, a preview of the first 5% of the book is made available to readers. If you would like readers to be able to immediately dive into the first chapter, then perhaps you would not want to include a TOC. However, in other cases, particularly for non-fiction or cookbooks, prospective readers might enjoy perusing the TOC to see get an overview of the contents of the book.

To set up a TOC:
1. Ensure that all headings that you would like to appear in the TOC (i.e. chapter titles) are formatted as "Heading 1". (See *How to set up page navigation* above for an example)

2. Insert the TOC by going to the **References** menu and selecting "Table of Contents". A TOC will appear at the location of your cursor.
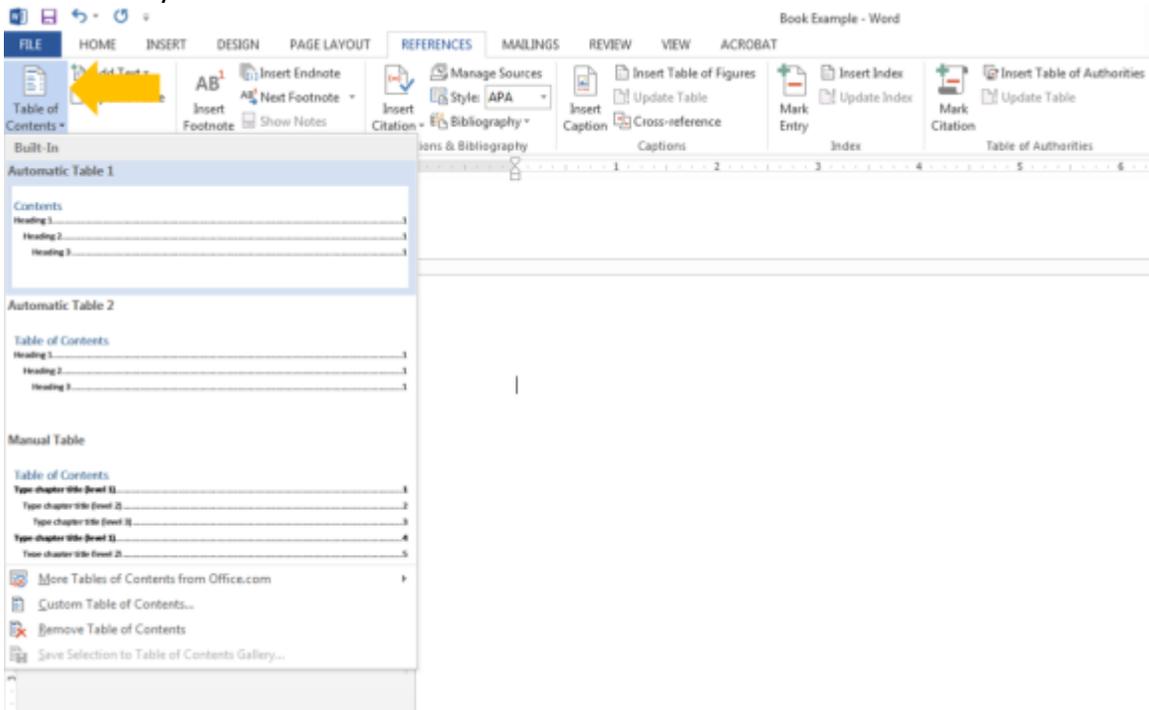
3. Verify that the headings in the TOC are hyperlinked to the correct location in the book.
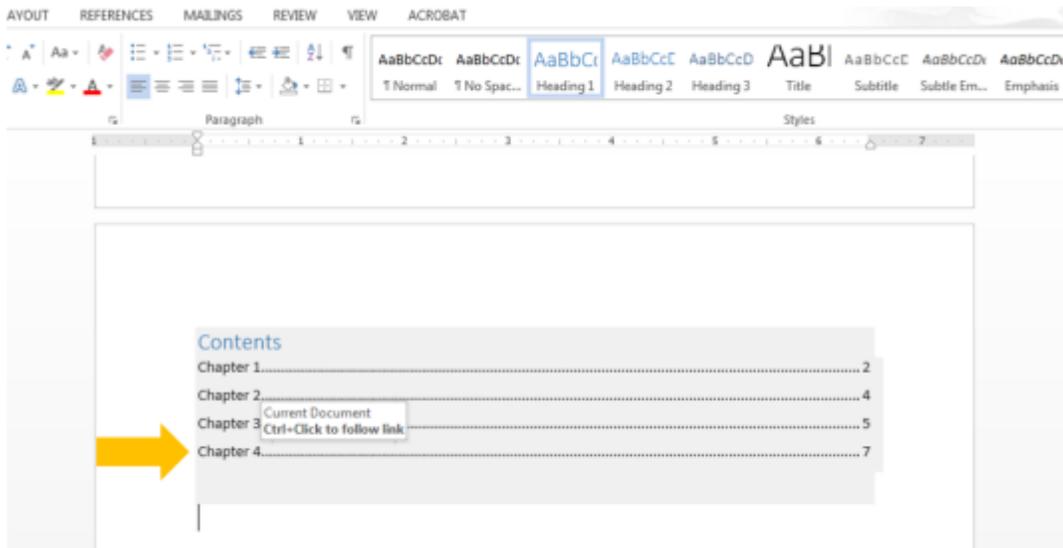
4. Delete the page numbers that appear in the TOC.
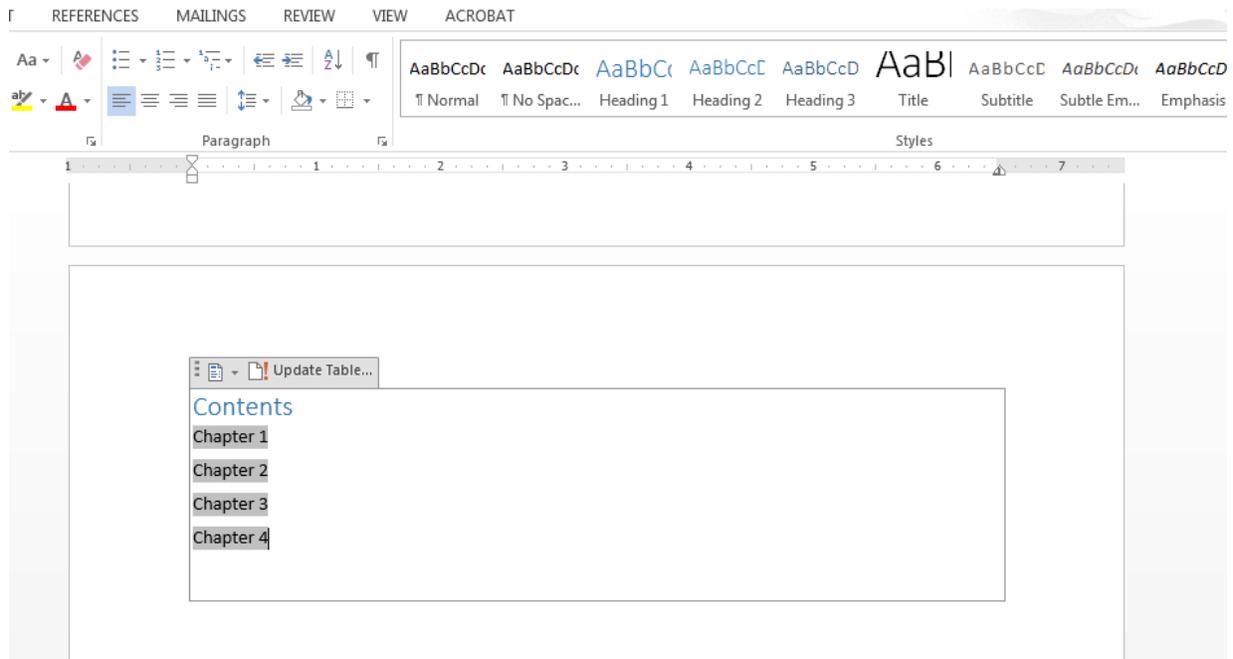
It is extremely important to delete the page numbers because pages work differently in eBooks than in print books, or Word documents. Once your book is converted to an ePub, these numbers will be meaningless and could even possibly cause conversion errors.

Page Layout

eBook pages are **reflowable**. This means that the content that appears on a page is adjusted based on the size of the device the reader is using, and also based on their own preferences. Readers can enlarge or shrink font sizes, alter line spacing, and even change the font of the book they are reading. This is important to keep in mind as you are formatting your book.

- **Page Breaks**
  - We support Page Breaks. These can be used when you need the next section to begin on a new page, for example, at the end of Chapters.
- **Section Breaks**
  - Section Breaks can be used to break up large Chapters. This is often used to indicate a change in location or character, within a text. If you're using Section Breaks, we recommend providing an indication to the reader that there is a Section Break. For example, many books use three centered asterisks - ***.
- **Paragraph Indentation**
  - To create an indented paragraph, you can simply use the Paragraph dialog box in Word. This will allow you to set the indentation size. You can also indent using the Tab key.
- **Margins and Page Size**
  - We recommend using the standard 1" Margin and 8.5" X 11" Page Size available on Word. This will provide the best layout for conversion. Your page layout should be in Portrait, not Landscape.
- **Columns**
  - Do not use columns in your document. These are not supported.
- **Lists**
  - To create a bulleted list, use the built-in bulleted list tool. Do not insert symbols to create bullets as most symbols will translate into a question mark ("?"). To create a numbered list or multilevel outline, use the built-in numbered list tool. Images shouldn't be included in lists.
- **Tables**
  - Ensure that your tables can be viewed when your Word document is in Portrait mode, rather than in Landscape. This will guarantee that the tables fit on the page after conversion.
- **Headers & Footers**
  - Headers and footers are not supported.
- **Footnotes & Endnotes**
  - Endnotes are supported, but footnotes are not.

Text

For Word document to ePub conversion, text should be as simple as possible to ensure the smoothest conversion experience.

- **Fonts**
  - Please use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier New. Bolding, italic, underlining, and strike-through are all supported.
- **Superscripts and subscripts**
  - Both superscripts and subscripts are supported.
- **Symbols**
  - Avoid using most symbols. Also, ensure that any fractions are kept in #/# format (ex: 1/4). Word will automatically format fractions to appear as symbols, which will not translation correctly at conversion to ePub.

- **File size**
  - We recommend that images are no larger than 3MB. It is also important to keep in mind that the maximum file size for the entire book (images included) is 100MB.
- **File format**
  - Both JPG and PNG files are accepted.
- **Resolution**
  - For best results, your image should be 900 DPI (dots-per-inch). However, files as low as 300 DPI are also fine.
- **Alignment**
  - Images can be formatted as flush left, flush right, or centered.
- **Text wrapping**
  - Text wraps should be above and below the images, not around the image.

Page Numbers

Once converted to an ePub, your book will be **reflowable**. This means that the content on a page will vary, based on the device it is viewed on and on reader preferences. For example, when viewed on a tablet, there will be more words displayed on each page than if viewed on a mobile phone.

As a result, we ask that you **do not insert page numbers** into your document. These will be ignored during the conversion process, and could potentially cause conversion errors.

EPUB FILES

If you have made your own ePub file, or have generated one through a different conversion service, make sure that you run the file through an ePub validator before uploading it to your Kobo Writing Life account. Note that there are many free ePub validators online.

ePub files will fail to upload to your Kobo Writing Life account if the file size is larger than 100MB or if there are errors within the file.

If you receive critical errors on the upload page, you'll need to ensure that you correct those errors and run the ePub through the validator again before uploading the file to your account.

FILE UPLOAD OR CONVERSION ERRORS

At the "Add eBook Content" step, you may receive an error at file upload or at file conversion.

VALIDATION RESULTS ⓘ

✓ *Your eBook is ready to be published to Kobo's catalogue!*

❗ *Your eBook can be published, but we strongly recommend you fix these non-critical errors first.*

▶ *1 Resource failures*

If you receive non-critical errors, you can still publish your book. These errors won't affect how a reader views your file. The reason we let you know they're there is because they may prevent a partner site from ingesting the file. However, no action is needed to publish on Kobo alone.

PREVIEWING YOUR BOOK

When you upload your eBook file at the "Add eBook Content" step, your file is immediately converted to a Kobo formatted ePub. After conversion is complete, the page will appear as follows, with a new link that says "Download and preview this eBook".

ADD eBOOK CONTENT

Ready to upload new content? ⓘ

[   ] [🔍]

Supported file type(s): .epub, .doc, .docx, .mobi, .odt

Replace file

Last updated: 11/08/2017 13:51:57 GMT-0400

✓ *Done!*

Download and preview this eBook.

Due to the complex nature of displaying EPUB files consistently across multiple browsers, we no longer support editing them on our website.

If you need advanced EPUB support, our trusted partners can convert your Word or PDF files to EPUB. See our Author Services section for details.

To preview your ePub file, select the "Download and preview this eBook" link, and open your file in an ePub viewer. If you do not have an ePub viewer on your computer, you will need to download one in advance of opening the file. Note that there are many free ePub viewers available online, such as Adobe Digital Editions, Sigil or Calibre.