Borders have three components: where they go, what they look like, and how much space is left around them.

- **Line arrangement** specifies where the borders go. If a group of cells is selected, the border will be applied only to those cells. You can specify individually the style of the border for the outside edges of the selected cells and for the cell divisions. Writer provides default arrangements, but you can click the line you want to customize in the *User-defined* area to get exactly what you want. When multiple cells are selected, you can select the edges of the selection as well as the cell dividers.

> ✅ **Note**
>
> When the selected cells have different styles of border, the *User-defined* area shows the border as a gray line. You can click the gray line to choose a new border style (first click), leave the border as it is (second click) or delete the border (third click).

- **Line** specifies what the border looks like. You can choose from the drop-down lists for Style and Color, and specify a Width. Your selections apply to those borders highlighted by a pair of black arrows in the *User-defined* area.
- **Padding** specifies how much space to leave between the border and the cell contents. Spacing can be specified individually for thr left, right, top, and bottom borders. Choose **Synchronize** to have the same spacing on all four sides.
- **Shadow Style** properties always apply to the whole table. A shadow has three components: where it is (position), how far from the table it is cast (distance), and what color it is.
- If **Merge adjacent line styles** is checked, two cells sharing a common border will have their borders merged, rather than being side by side or above/below each other.

> ℹ **Tip**
>
> To reset everything if you are having problems with borders, right-click in the table and choose **Table Properties** or choose **Table > Properties** from the Menu bar. On the *Borders* tab, select the **Set No Border**s icon under *Line arrangement Presets* (the box on the left).

Selecting background colors and graphics

A table background can greatly improve the readability of data, visually highlight important parts of the table (such as the heading or a specific cell), or just make the table more appealing. You can choose between two types of background: solid color or image. The background can be applied to the whole table, to a single cell, or to a row.

You can quickly apply color cell backgrounds using the palette of options on the **Table Cell Background Color** icon in the Table toolbar or the Table panel of the Properties deck on the Sidebar. For more control, or to use an image as a background, use the *Background* tab of the Table Properties dialog (Figure 306).

> ℹ **Tip**
>
> You need to consider the color contrast between the background and foreground (usually text). Background colors and images can also have transparency applied to help make the text more readable.
>
> The row background option is quite handy when you want to create alternate color rows or assign a different background to the heading of the table.