The conventions for numbered lists

Numbered lists have fewer conventions than bullet lists, but they do have a few:

- They are used when the order of items is important. If the order is irrelevant, use bullet lists instead.

- They are generally introduced in the body text by a summary of the overall task they describe that ends in a colon. For example, *To install the software update, follow these steps:* or, simply *To install:*.

- Each step can have multiple paragraphs, most of them unnumbered, describing what happens when it is performed or the alternatives.

- The steps in a procedure should be less than a dozen (some suggest 6–8).

> ### *i* Tip
>
> If each step has multiple paragraphs or you have more than about a dozen steps, you may need to break down the list into smaller lists or else present the points as ordinary body text.

Outline lists

Outline lists summarize the structure of a much longer, typically unwritten document. In finished technical and legal documents, they are used in headings to make the structure obvious, although this use is becoming less common than it was a few decades ago.

Writer gives several options for outline lists (see Figure 269). List styles create an outline method that uses a single paragraph style. When such a paragraph style is in use, you change the level and the numbering by pressing the *Tab* key to descend a level, and *Shift+Tab* to ascend a level. This single style outlining is by far the quickest to apply and learn.

You can choose to use outline lists when writing a document and then, before publication, remove the letters and numbers of the outline by changing or removing the numbering style associated with the paragraph style.
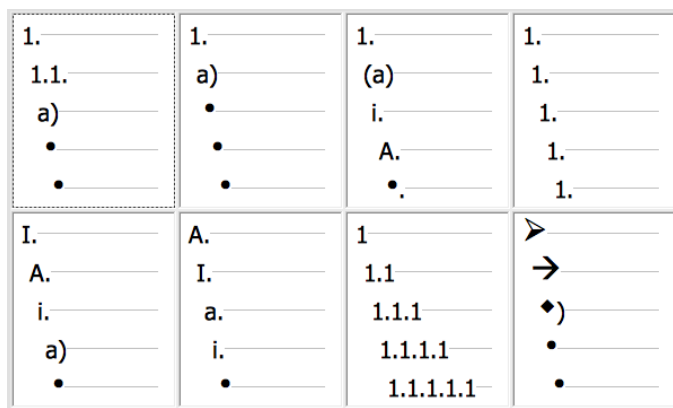

Figure 269: Writer's pre-defined outline list styles

The conventions for outline lists

The conventions for outline lists are:

- Usually, a different numbering system is used for each level to help distinguish them.

- Levels can be ordered using Arabic numerals, upper and lower case Roman numerals, and upper and lower case letters.