

## What are styles?

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Most people are used to writing documents according to physical attributes. For example, you might specify the font family, font size, and weight (for example: Helvetica 12pt, bold). In contrast, styles are *logical* attributes. For example, you can define a set of font characteristics and call it *Title* or *Heading 1*. In other words, styles mean that you shift the emphasis from what the text *looks like* to what the text *is*.

## Why use styles?

Styles help improve consistency in a document. They also make major formatting changes easy. For example, you might decide to change the indentation of all paragraphs or change the font of all titles. For a long document, this simple task could be prohibitive. Styles make the task easy. In addition, Writer uses styles for other purposes, such as compiling a table of contents; see “Using paragraph styles to define a hierarchy of headings” on page 181.

## Style categories

LibreOffice Writer has six style categories:

- *Paragraph* styles affect entire paragraphs and are also used for purposes such as compiling a table of contents.
- *Character* styles affect a block of text inside a paragraph; they provide exceptions to paragraph styles.
- *Page* styles affect page formatting (page size, margin, and the like).
- *Frame* styles affect frames and images.
- *List* styles affect outlines, numbered lists, and bulleted lists.
- *Table* styles affect the appearance of tables of data.

Paragraphs are the building blocks of every document: headings are paragraphs; headers, footers, and items in numbered lists are also paragraphs. Paragraph styles are, therefore, the most frequently used styles and are the ones treated in most detail in this chapter.

### Note

Manual formatting (also called direct formatting) overrides styles. You cannot get rid of manual formatting by applying a style to it.

To remove manual formatting, select the text and choose **Format > Clear Direct Formatting** on the Menu bar, or right-click and choose **Clear Direct Formatting** in the context menu, or press *Ctrl+M*.

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## The Styles deck in the Sidebar

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Styles management is primarily available through the Styles deck (called Styles and Formatting in some installations) in the Sidebar (Figure 169). Here you can apply styles, modify styles, and create new styles.

To begin, do any of the following:

- Click the **Styles** icon on the Sidebar.
- Choose **Styles > Manage Styles** on the Menu bar.
- Press *F11* (*⌘+T* on Mac).

The first six icons at the top of the Styles deck select the category of styles. Click one of these icons to display a list of styles in that category, such as paragraph or character styles.