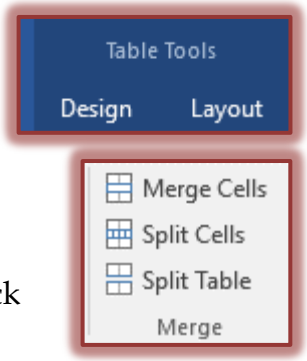
Adjust Table Cells

Many times there is more to modifying a table than adjusting the row height or column width and adding or deleting rows or columns. Many times the text that is to be entered spans across more than one column or it is necessary for the title to spread across all the rows. A function known as Merge (combine) Cells is used to accomplish this. The Split (divide) Cells feature can be used to divide a cell so that subtopics can be added. It is also possible to divide a table into more than one table. When a table is split, a different format may be applied to each table.

With Word, it is possible to combine two or more cells into one cell or to split one cell into more than one. It is also possible to divide a single table into two or more tables. This document describes how to accomplish this.

Merge Cells

This feature is used to combine two or more cells into one cell so that a heading can be inserted above a group of columns.



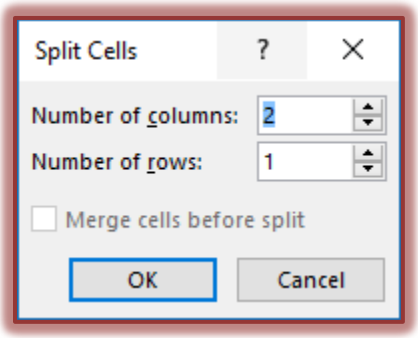
- Select the cells that are to be combined.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will appear at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Merge Group** click the **Merge Cells Button**.
- The selected cells will become one cell, instead of separate cells.

NOTE: It is also possible to right-click after selecting the cells and then click Merge Cells to merge two or more cells.

Split Cells

If a cell needs to be split into more than one cell, this feature can be very helpful.

- Click the cell to be split (divided).
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will appear at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Merge Group** click the **Split Cells Button**.
- The **Split Cells** dialog box will display.



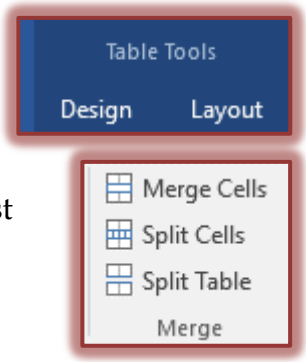
- Select the number of columns or rows in which the cell is to be divided.
- Click the **OK** button.
- The selected cell will be divided into the specified number of cells.

NOTE: It is also possible to right-click in a cell and then select Split Cells to divide the cells.

Split/Merge Tables

To divide a table into two or more tables, use this feature.

- Click in the row that is to be used as the top row in the second table.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will appear at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Merge Group** click the **Split Table Button**.
- The one table will become two tables with the insertion point in the first cell of the new table.
- To merge two tables into one, delete the paragraph mark between the tables.

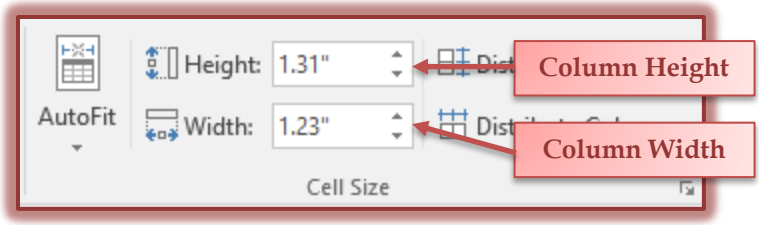


Adjust Widths

There are different options that may be used to adjust columns and rows in a table.

Adjust Column Widths

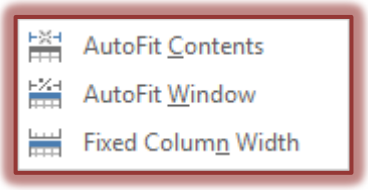
- Select the column(s) that is to be changed.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon (see illustration below left).
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Cell Size** group, click the **Width** spinner arrow until the desired column width is displayed.
- The size of the column will display in the Word window as the adjustments are being made.



Auto Fit

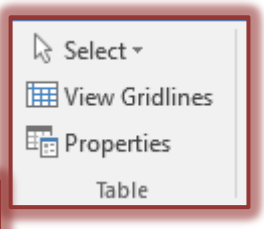
This feature is used to automatically adjust column widths depending on the contents of the cells.

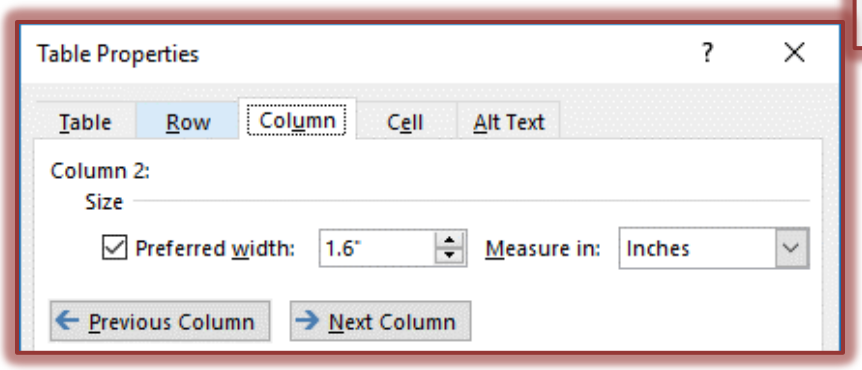
- Select the table or columns that the formatting is to be applied to.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Cell Size Group**, click the **AutoFit** list arrow.
- The following options are available:
  - **AutoFit Contents** – When this option is chosen, the width of a column is fit to the longest entry in the column.
  - **AutoFit Window** – This option will set the width of the column to match the width of the window in which the document is displayed. This is a good feature to use when a document is going to be converted to a Web page.
  - **Fixed Column Width** – Use this option when the width of a column has to be a particular size.



Adjust Column Widths Using Table Properties

- Select the column(s) that are to be changed.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Tables Group**, click the **Properties Button**.
- The **Table Properties** dialog box will display.
- Click the **Column** tab (see illustration below).



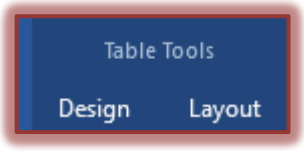


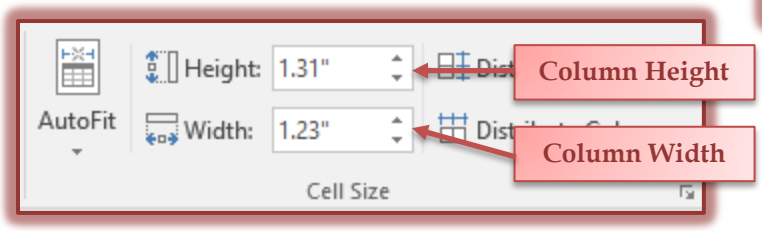
- To specify an exact width:
  - Click the **Measure In** drop-down arrow.
  - Click inches and type an inch measurement.
- To adjust additional column widths, click the **Previous Column** or **Next Column** button on the **Column** tab.
- After all the changes are complete, click **OK** to accept the changes and exit from the dialog box.
- To adjust columns quickly:
  - Position the pointer over the boundary of the column to be adjusted.
  - The pointer becomes a resize pointer – a pointer with two straight lines and two arrows pointing left and right (see illustration at right).

- Drag the boundary to a new location.
- When the columns are adjusted in this manner, the columns on either side of the selected column will adjust to either larger or smaller depending on the selected columns adjustment.

Adjust Heights

- Select the row(s) that is to be changed.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Labels Tab**.
- In the **Cell Size** group, click the **Height** spinner arrow until the desired height is displayed.

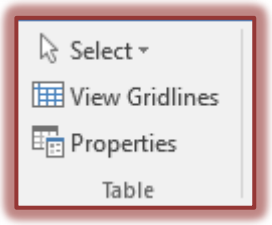


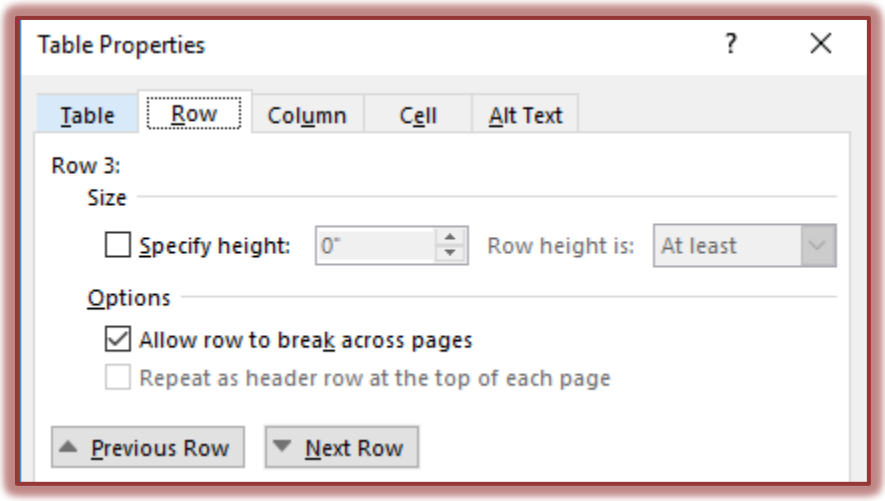


- The size will display in the Word window as the adjustments are being made.

Adjust Row Heights Using Table Properties

- Select the row that is to be changed.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Tables Group,** click the **Properties Button**.
- The **Table Properties** dialog box will display.
- Click the **Row** tab.





- Click the **Specify height** check box.
- Click the **Row height is** drop-down arrow.
- Select from one of the following options:
  - **Exactly** – When this option is chosen, the height of the row will remain exactly the specified height even if the font size is changed.
  - **At least –** Choose this option when the height of the row has to be at least the specified height. The height might increase if a larger font is used.
- Type in a measurement.
- Click **OK** to accept the changes and exit from the dialog box.
- To adjust additional column widths, click the **Previous Row** or **Next Row** button on the **Row** tab.
- After all the changes are complete, click **OK** to accept the changes and exit from the dialog box.
- To adjust rows quickly:
  - Position the pointer over the boundary of the row to be adjusted.
  - The pointer becomes a resize pointer – a pointer with two straight lines and two arrows pointing up and down (see illustration at right).
  - Drag the boundary to a new location.

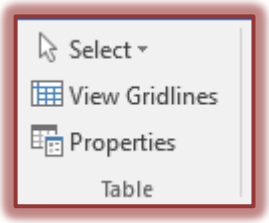
Adjust Cells

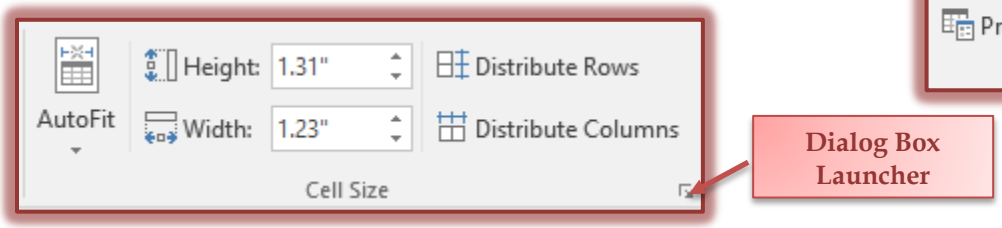
- Select the cell that is to be changed.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.

- In the **Tables Group** click the **Properties Button**.

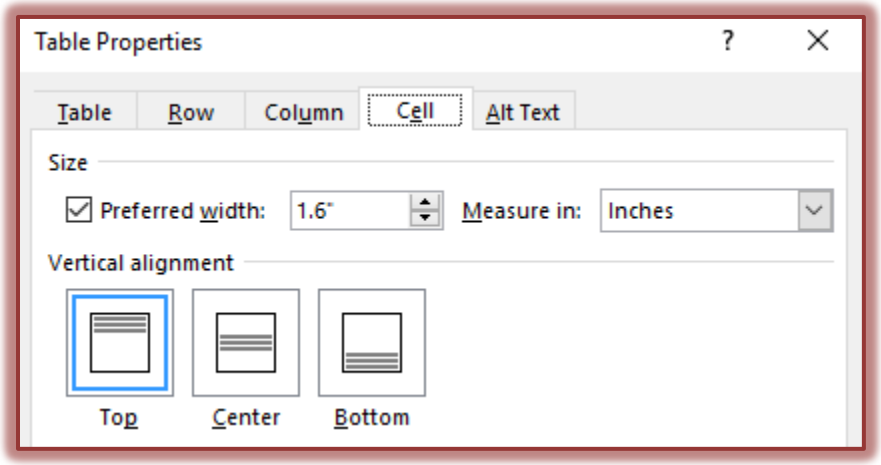
  or

- Click the **Dialog Box Launcher** button in the **Cell Size Group**.

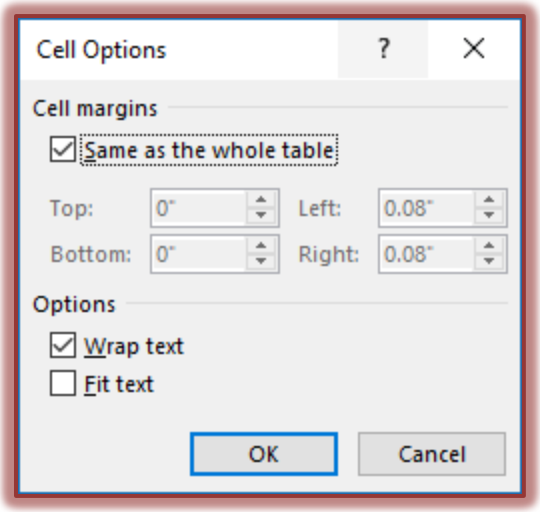




- The **Table Properties** dialog box will appear.
- Click the **Cell** tab.



- To adjust the size of the cell, click the **Preferred width** spinner arrow.
- In the **Measure in** drop down list, choose either **Inches** or **Percent**.
- To adjust the text vertically in the cell, choose one of the options under **Vertical alignment**.
- Click the **Options** button.
- In the **Cell Options** dialog box, select the **Cell margins** option.



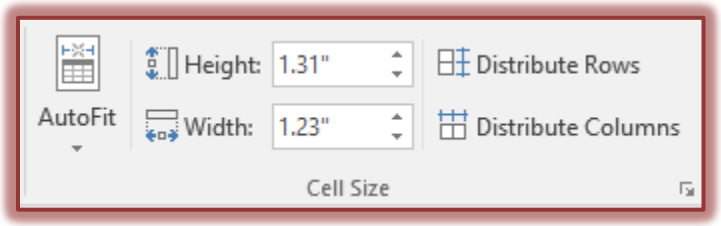
  - **Same as the whole table** – When this option is chosen, the margins from the rest of the table will be preserved.

- It is possible to adjust the margins for a particular cell by deselecting this option and specifying the margins.

- Under **Options,** select from the following:
  - **Wrap Text** – Automatically wraps the text in the cell to the next row when the end of the cell is reached. This is the default.
  - **Fit Text** – Fits the text to the end of the row. When the end of the row is reached, the size of the text will become smaller as additional text is input.
- When all the changes have been made, click **OK** to exit the **Cell Options** dialog box.
- Click **OK** again to exit the **Table Properties** dialog box.

Distribute Rows and/or Columns Evenly

- Select the rows or columns that are to be distributed evenly.
- The **Table Tools Contextual Tab** will display at the top of the ribbon.
- Click the **Layout Tab**.
- In the **Cell Size Group,** click either the **Distribute Rows** or **Distribute Columns** button.



- The selected columns or rows will be distributed evenly within the table.