

Technology Tips

September 28, 2000



Question:

How do I center a table horizontally on the page in Word 97 or Word 2000 or XP? Everything I've tried just centers the text within each cell rather than centering the whole table.



Answer:

Centering the whole table is a bit tricky in Word. First you must select the whole table and then apply center alignment to the table rather than to the individual cells. For Word 97, see numbers 1 through 3 below. For Word 2000 or XP, see numbers 4 and 5.

- ❶ In Word 97, click once in any cell in the table.
- ❷ On the menu bar, click **Table**, then click **Select Table** from the drop-down list. This selects the whole table.
- ❸ Now hold down the **Control key and press E**. This centers the whole table horizontally on the page. (Word 97 does provide alternatives for this step. Instead of pressing Control-E, you can click on the center alignment button on the Formatting Toolbar. Or, you can click Table on the menu bar, choose Cell Height and Width, click on the Row tab, and then select Center from the Alignment choices – the most complicated method!)
- ❹ In Word 2000 or XP, centering a table is a bit easier. Click once in any cell in the table. A little **square symbol** will appear above the upper left corner of the table. Move your cursor over the square symbol. When your cursor turns into a four-headed arrow, click the square symbol. This will select the whole table. Now click the **Center Alignment** button on the Formatting Toolbar. Your table will be centered horizontally on the page.
- ❺ There is an even more powerful way to change alignment and other properties for the table. Right-click the square symbol at the upper left corner of the table. On the menu that pops up, left-click **Table Properties**. This will open the Table Properties dialog box where you can set many properties for the table, columns, rows or cells including:
 - Table alignment
 - Table indentation from left
 - Borders and shading
 - Default cell margins
 - Spacing between cells
 - Automatic cell re-sizing
 - Vertical alignment in cells
 - Preferred width for table, columns or cells
 - Wrap text in cell
 - Fit text in cell
 - Row height
 - Allow row to break across page
 - Repeat header row at top of each page