Single Level Lists

What's covered?

How to create single level lists in RoboHelp 8 and above as well as covering how they work in Printed Documentation.

Click here for information on multi level lists.

Click here for the List home page.

> June 2019 - This page covers the steps for use with RoboHelp Classic versions. See the RoboHelp Tour for the steps in RoboHelp New UI.

Creating Single Level Lists

RoboHelp 8 introduced the Style Pod as described in my RoboHelp Tour and changed the whole concept of editing styles with the introduction of the Style Editor pod.

The first thing to note is that from RoboHelp 8 the Normal style is no longer automatically applied to lists. That is covered in my RoboHelp Tour.

The Style dropdown defaults to None but you can select Normal as I have done here.

Without Normal applied, the code would be the same but without the P tags.

HTML purists would say the style for the list item should be defined by the LI tag but there are advantages in working this way. Not least if you have to generate printed documentation, more on that later.

```
<ul type="disc">
    <li><p>First item. </p></li>
    <li><p>Second item.</p></li>
</ul>
```

When you go to Format > Styles you get the Style Pod and you right click Edit to edit any given style.

Styles and Formatting

Paragraph and Charac

(none) ¶

breadcrumbs ¶

Default paragraph font a

Expanding text a

Glossary text a

Heading 1 ¶

Heading 2 ¶

Heading 3 ¶

Heading 4 ¶

Heading 5 ¶
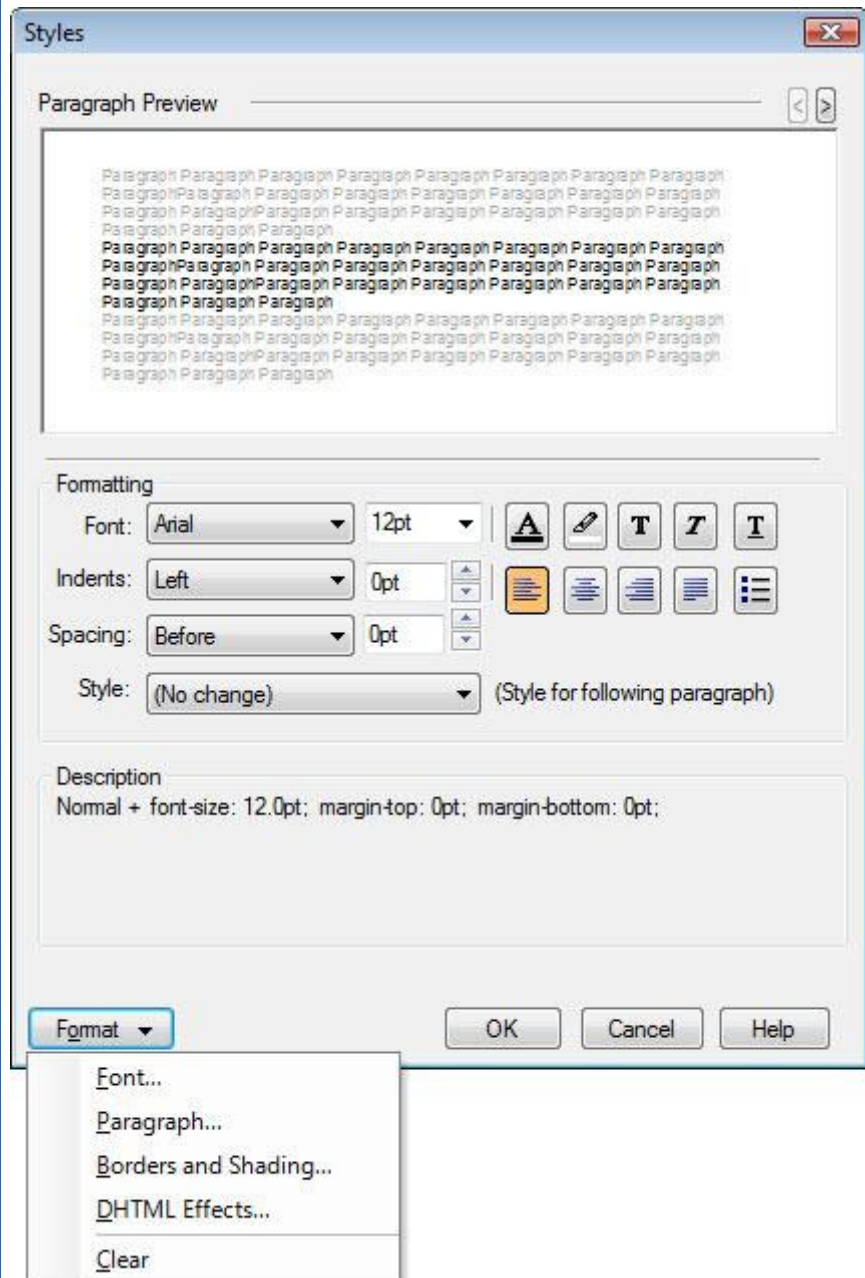
Heading 6 ¶

Normal ¶

If you right click Normal and select Edit, you will see this dialog. There is no option to apply an image or indeed edit bulleted lists. The bullet icon you see is for Autonumbering, something entirely different.

The answer is to go back to the Style Pod and change what is displayed to Lists. Nothing will be shown at first in a new project, you have to right click and create a new list. That brings you back to the dialog opposite but showing the LI tag under description.

Then you can define how you want the list to appear.

Whilst it is the same dialog as used for editing other styles, when you are editing a list the bullet icon accesses the dialog shown in the RoboHelp 7 section that allows you to select the bullet symbol or image you want.

To get the text to appear as you want there are two options:

1. You can define the font using the dialog shown above. That has the advantage that as soon as you apply the list style, everything will be as you want it.

2. You can apply the list style and then apply a paragraph style using the style dropdown.

The first is quicker and will suit authors who do not have to generate printed documentation.

You will see the style in the Styles pod when you select All Styles or List Styles.

Printed Documentation

You can generate printed documentation without mapping lists. Please note that these steps are only necessary if you want to map lists to give you greater control.

This is where things can go pear shaped but in revising this page I found some good news and some bad news. I found a way to get mapped lists to work in Word (the good news) but it requires some
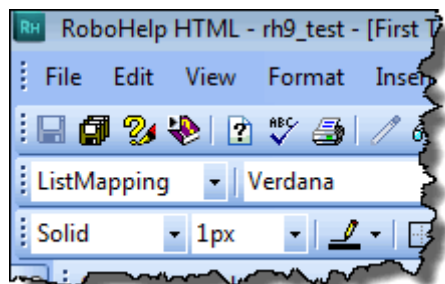
post production work if you use images (the bad news). That may also be necessary if you amend the default indents for your ordinary bullets or numbers.

Standard Bullets and Numbers

Create the list style in RoboHelp as described above. That list style will not appear in the Project's CSS Styles window when you generate so you need to superimpose a paragraph style.

To do that, create a RoboHelp paragraph style with a name such as ListMapping. For now, don't change any settings in the dialog that appears, these will then be inherited from the Normal style. Any tuning can be done later.
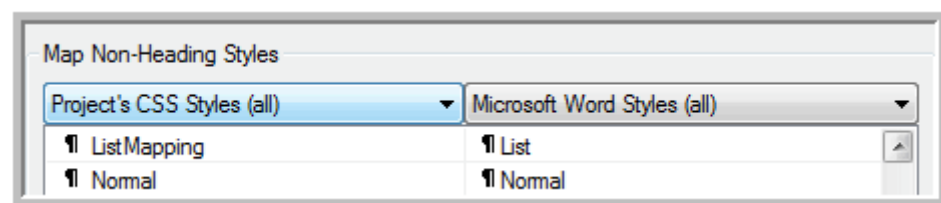
Create your list and as well as applying the list style to the list from the Style pod, select ListMapping in the Styles dropdown.

The HTML will look like this.

```html
<ul>
    <li class="PG_List"><p class="ListMapping">Item</p></li>
    <li class="PG_List"><p class="ListMapping">Item</p></li>
    <li class="PG_List"><p class="ListMapping">Item</p></li>
</ul>
```

Go to the last page of the Printed Documentation SSL where you can map the paragraph style you created in RoboHelp to the standard List style that is in the supplied Style Mapping template.

If you did not apply any indentation, the list should appear as you want. If it does and no one will be working on the document, then you have the document you want, ignoring any other tidying up that may be needed.

If others will need to work on the document, I found that the list in Word was a true list, in other words it is possible to add new items and a bullet will be displayed or the numbering will keep the sequence.

There is a wrinkle if you want to start new lists. You will find that when you apply the List style (from the Word Styles Pod, not the bullet icon) the appearance is not the same as the list that came in from RoboHelp. The solution is simple, select some items in one of the lists that came from RoboHelp and then right click the List style in the Word style pod and select the Update List to Match Selection option. Then you can create new lists using the Word List style.

Images

If you want an image instead of one of font based bullets, there is some extra work.

You still setup your RoboHelp list style and List Mapping style as described in Standard Bullets and Numbers.
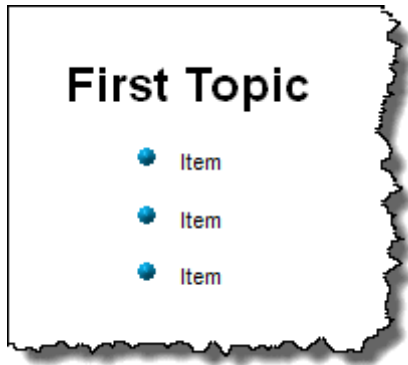
Additionally, in Word open the template you will use to create your document, I recommend you use the supplied Style Mapping template. Locate the List Bullet style that ships with Word. You may need to change Word settings to display all styles before you can see the List Bullet style. Modify that so that it uses the image your require. At this point do not modify the indents.

When you get to the Mapping page of the SSL things are a little bit different in RoboHelp 8 and 9.

- In RoboHelp 7 you can map to the List Bullet style.

- In RoboHelp 8 and 9 you cannot map to the List Bullet style. Instead map to the List style in the same way as you would have done with a standard bullet or number.

When the document is opened in Word, surprisingly it will probably look as it did in the OLH. If no one needs to do any post production work, then you could just accept that.
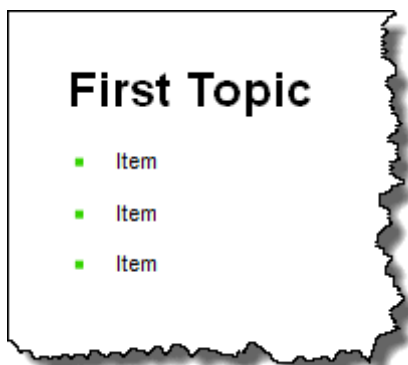

If however the document is going to be worked on in Word, then there is some more work to do.

- Here even though RoboHelp 7 users mapped to List Bullet, that style needs to be reapplied.

- If you are using RoboHelp 8 or 9, remember you mapped to List because List Bullet was not available, now you need to apply the List Bullet style you created.

Use Word's find and replace to (re)apply the style. Then you will see that whilst one problem has been fixed another has been created, there are now two bullets for each item. (I deliberately used a completely different bullet in Word to emphasise this.)

Enter ^g^t in the Find field of Word and leave Replace blank. That will find graphics followed by a tab. I suggest you don't use Replace All until you have done some testing, go through the each Replace. After that, the list will be as defined in the Word template.

Lists in dropdowns

The method above only works for lists that are in the topic as it will be displayed when opened. If you use dropdowns and include the content of them in your printed document, then it gets a little bit more tricky but I have worked out a solution that should solve the problem without too much work.

The problem is that when the document is created it will have various styles applied and the lists will show the style List so that you can change it to ListBullet. Dropdowns however all have the style Dropdown Text making the find and replace operation impossible.

What I suggest is this.

In the source topic preface each item in the list with something like ### and apply a build tag to it and the space before the text. I suggest the tag is called PrintOnly.

When you generate online help, use the Build Expression to exclude PrintOnly content.

For printed documentation first go back to the template and amend a second list style, use ListBullet2. Give it the same bullet as ListBullet but also apply the italic font. That has to be done once only.

When you generate the printed document you will do another search and replace. This time you search for ### with the style Dropdown Text applied, the replace will be ListBullet2. That will give you the bullet image but retain the italic formatting.

Indents

As soon as you apply indents in either RoboHelp or Word with either standard bullets and numbers, you may notice big differences when you generate a document. If you do, then try similar steps to those described for Images.
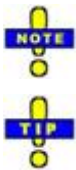
Image Size

I found using larger bullets (24 pixels by 24 pixels) caused the first line of text to be indented much further than the following lines. It looks to me as if when Word has an image that intrudes into the area the text would occupy, it applies a tab indent to give space to the image, not unreasonable as a default action.

Prior to identifying how to map list styles I stated:

If it were possible to map a RoboHelp list to a Word list, then it should be possible to create a Word style that indents all the text further. However, that is not an option so you have to work with things as they are. Effectively this means limiting the size of the bullet image. In some quick tests, 16 pixels by 16 pixels seems to be the limit.

This precludes using lists for Notes, Tips and suchlike with larger images such as these.

The only viable solution here is to use a two cell table with the image in the first cell.

Following what I found when rewriting this page, it might well be worth tweaking a Word style to see if the methods described above will allow larger images to be defined.

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Topic Revisions