

How to Format Tables in the American University Thesis and Dissertation Template

Click to Jump to a Topic

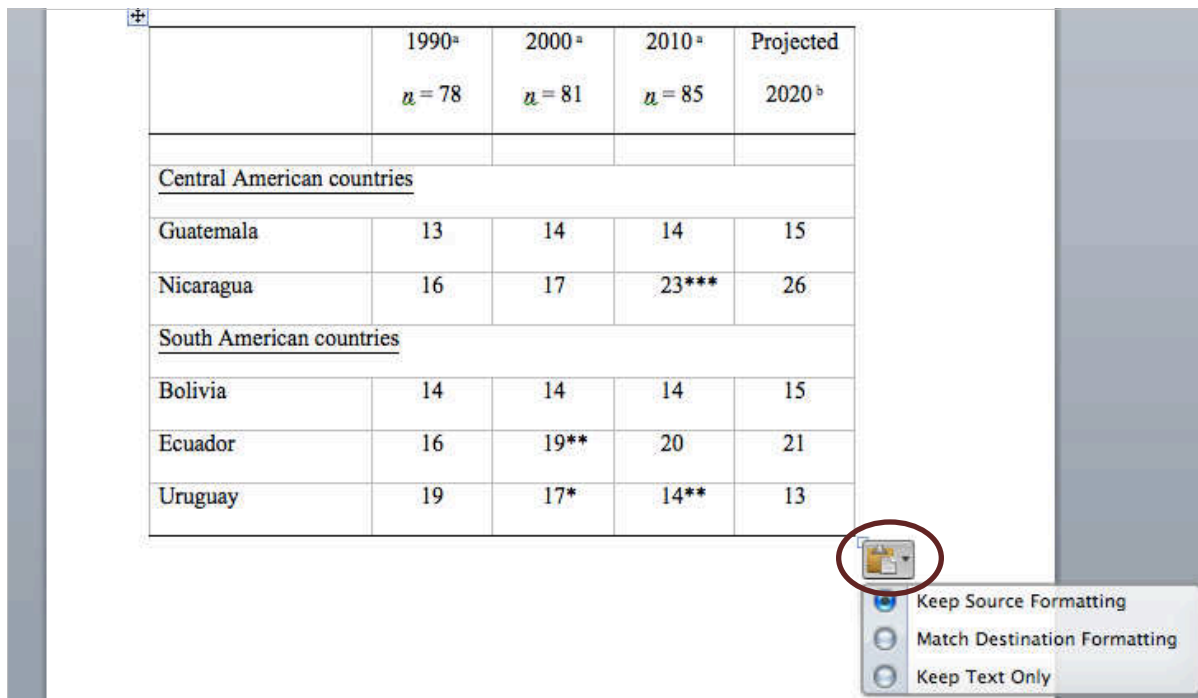
Pasting Tables into the Template (3 Steps)

Creating and Formatting a Table from Scratch (12 Steps)

Formatting Table Notes

Pasting Tables into the Template (3 Steps)

STEP 1. If you already have tables made in Excel or another Word document, you can highlight them, copy them, and paste them into your thesis or dissertation template. After pasting, you will see a little clipboard appear at the bottom right of the pasted material. Open the menu and experiment with the different options to see which gives you the best results. You may still have to do some formatting afterwards. Make sure you consult your discipline's preferred style guide for details on border lines, spacing, data alignment, capitalization, and so forth.



The screenshot shows a table with the following data:

	1990 ^a	2000 ^a	2010 ^a	Projected 2020 ^b
	<i>n</i> = 78	<i>n</i> = 81	<i>n</i> = 85	
<u>Central American countries</u>				
Guatemala	13	14	14	15
Nicaragua	16	17	23***	26
<u>South American countries</u>				
Bolivia	14	14	14	15
Ecuador	16	19**	20	21
Uruguay	19	17*	14**	13

A context menu is open at the bottom right of the table, with the following options:

- Keep Source Formatting
- Match Destination Formatting
- Keep Text Only

If you are pasting from Excel and want to paste your table as an image, you should turn off the gridlines first in Excel (go to View and uncheck the box that says "Gridlines"). Pasting as an image is sometimes helpful for large appendix tables, assuming your formatting is clean in the original document.

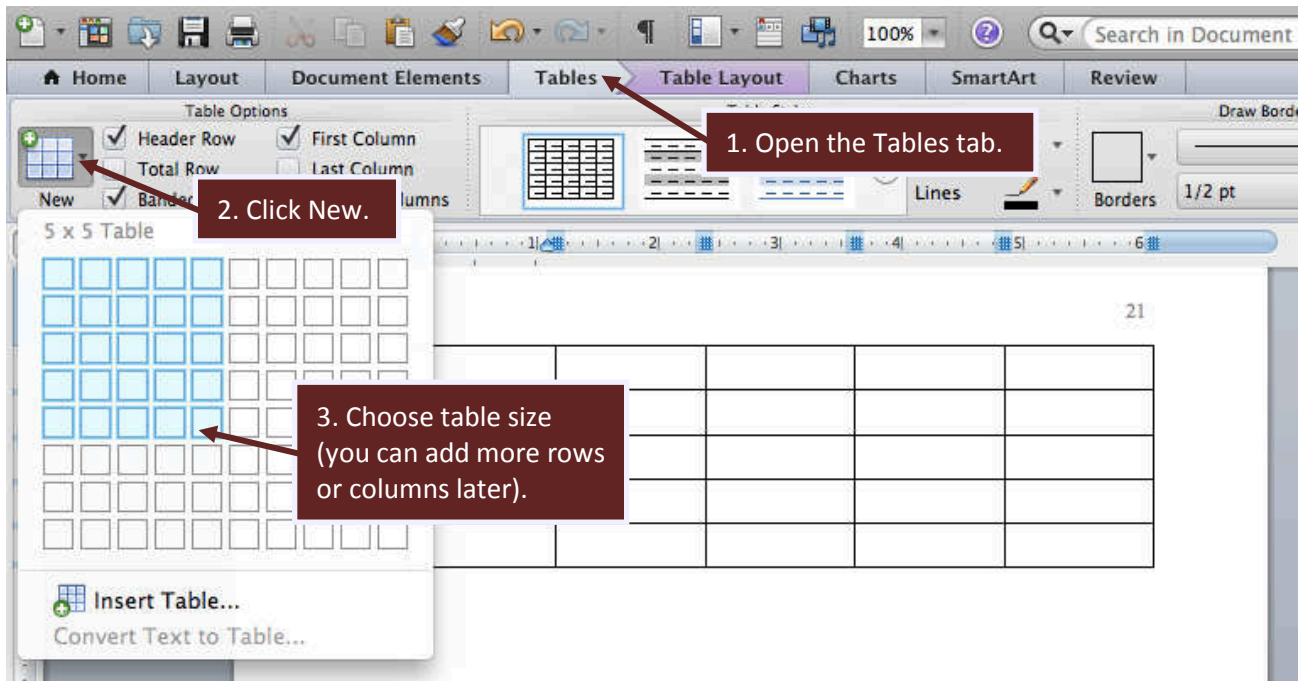
STEP 2. After you get as close as you can with the formatting, check to make sure your table is within the allowable margin area by turning on the page gridlines (go to the Layout Tab, then check the box that says Gridlines toward the right of the screen. If the box is not visible, click Grid Options within the Layout tab (towards the right) and then check the box to Display Gridlines on Screen.

STEP 3. Check your discipline's preferred style guide (Turabian, APA, etc.) and format as necessary.

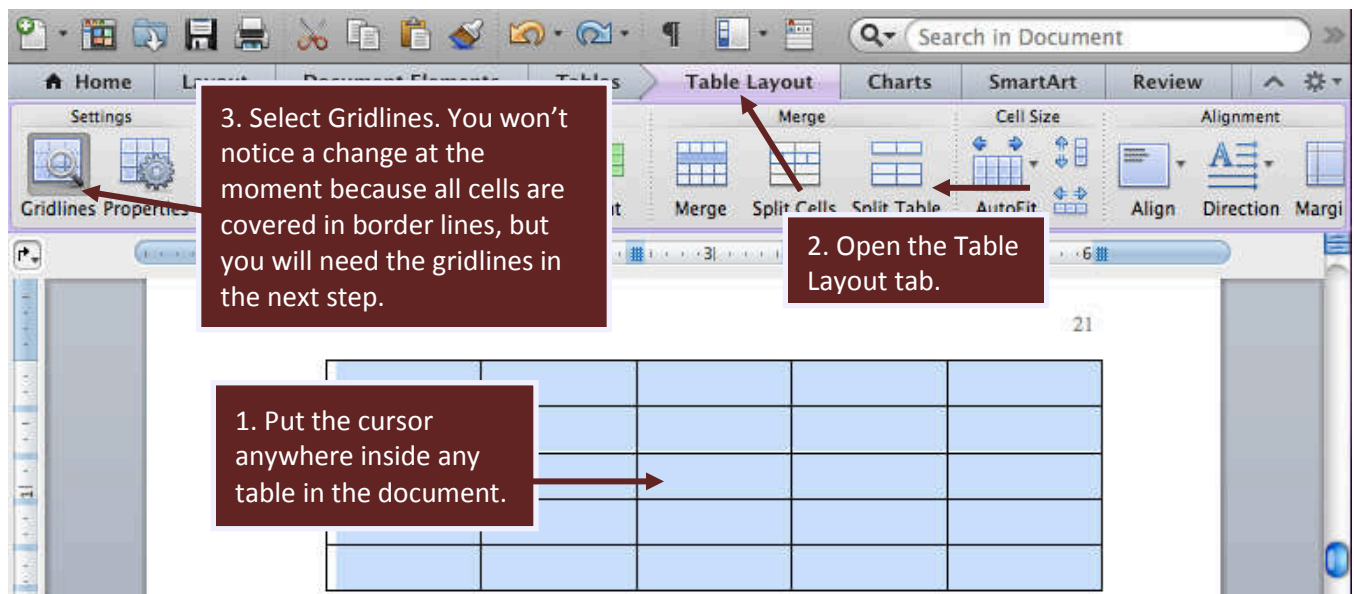
Creating and Formatting a Table from Scratch (11 Steps)

The following steps show the basic formatting shared by both Turabian and APA tables. Please see those guides or your department's preferred style guide for details and requirements specific to your discipline.

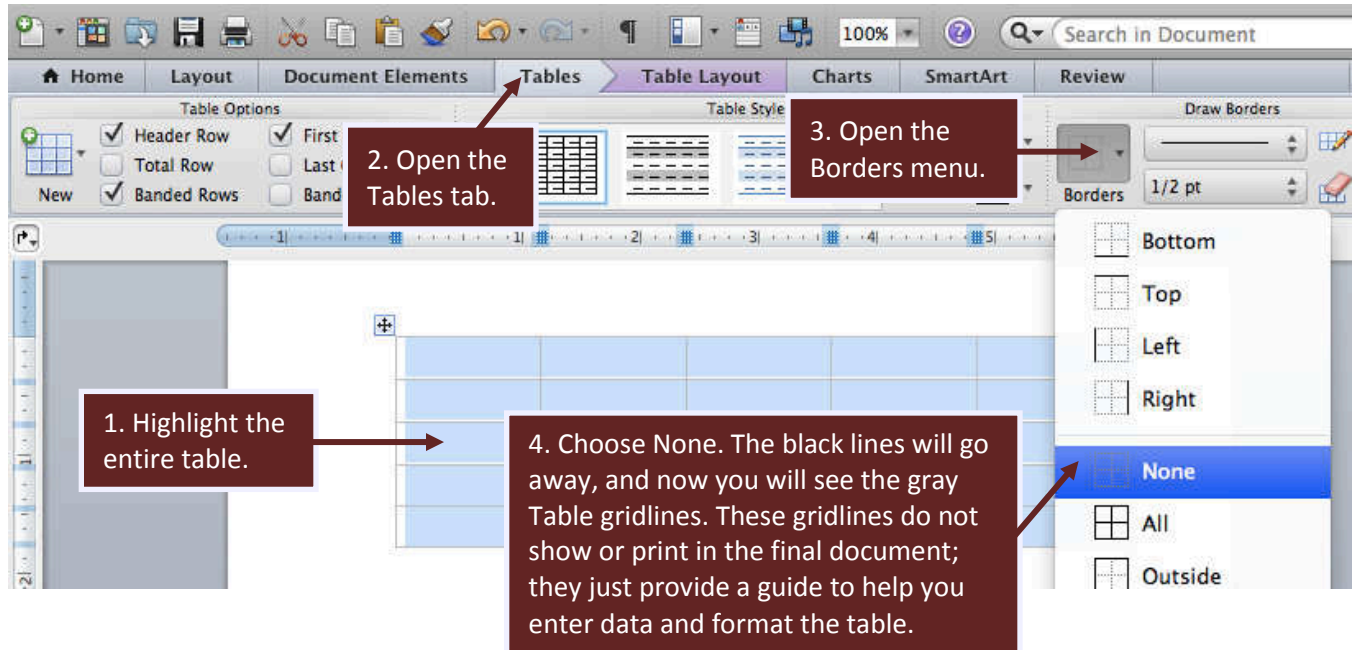
STEP 1. It is not recommended to type rows of data into the main text and use the TAB key to create spaces. This makes the tables very difficult to format and often causes misrepresentations of the data. You can easily insert a table as follows:



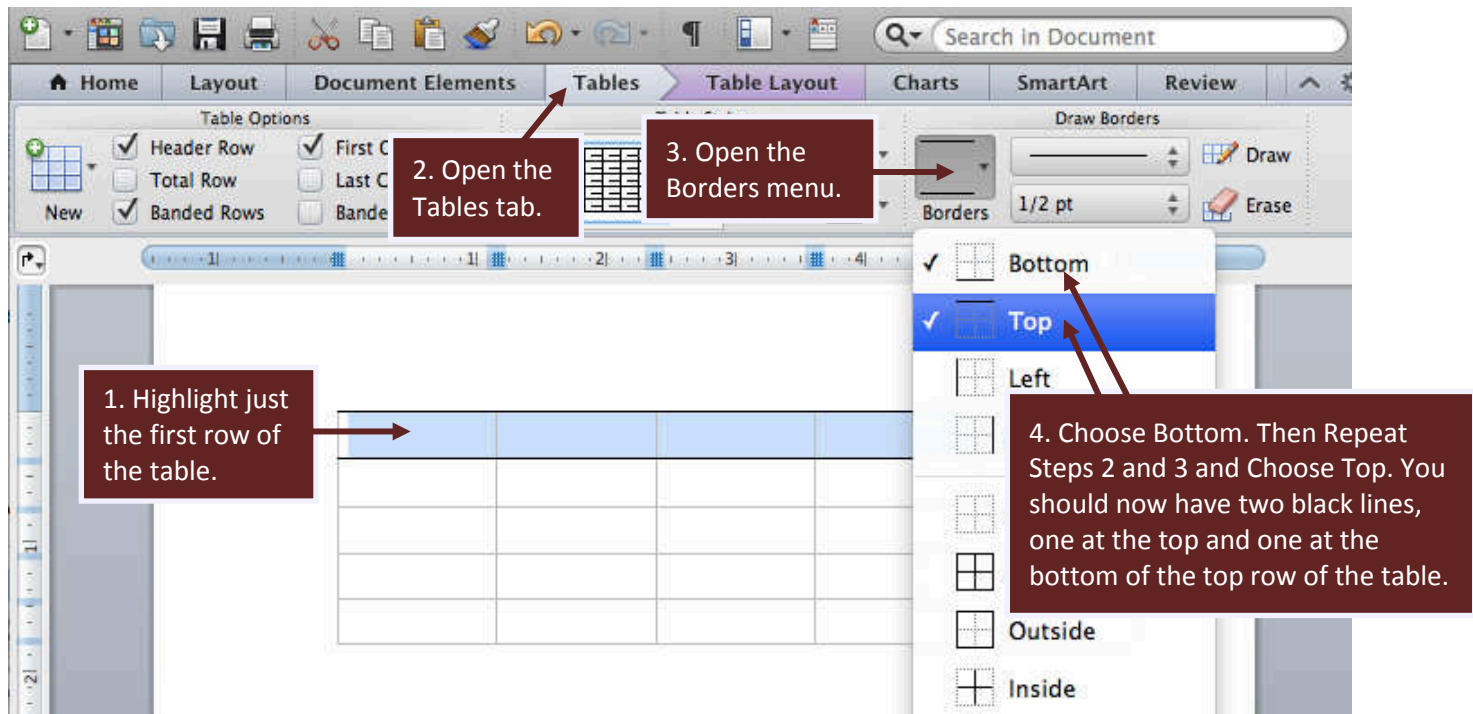
STEP 2. Turn on the Table Gridlines (not the Page Gridlines).



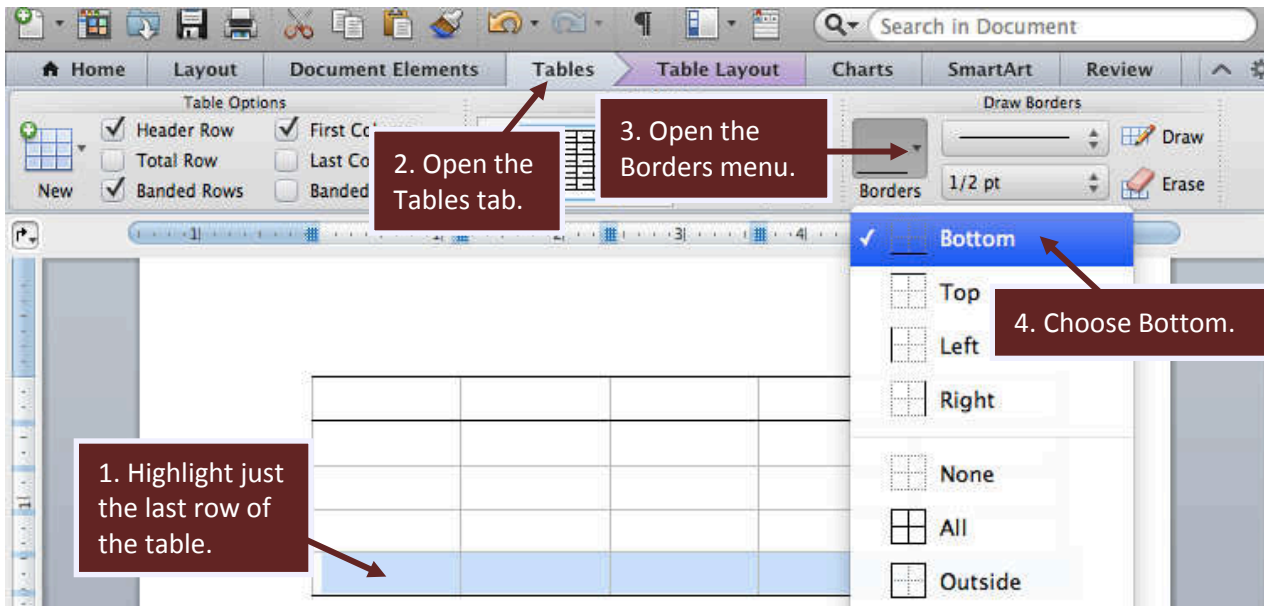
STEP 3. Remove all border lines from the table.



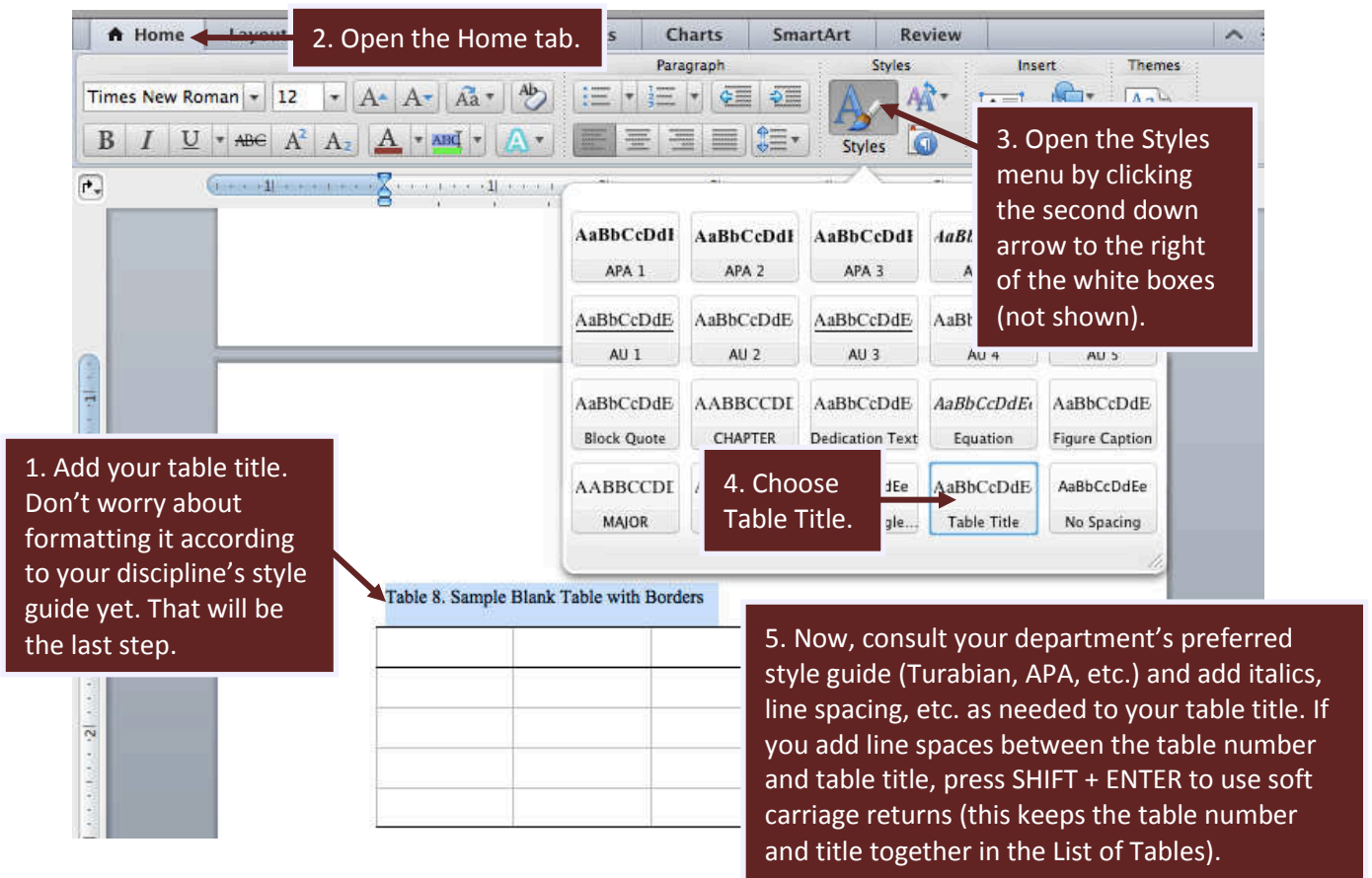
STEP 4. Add a top and bottom border to the first row.



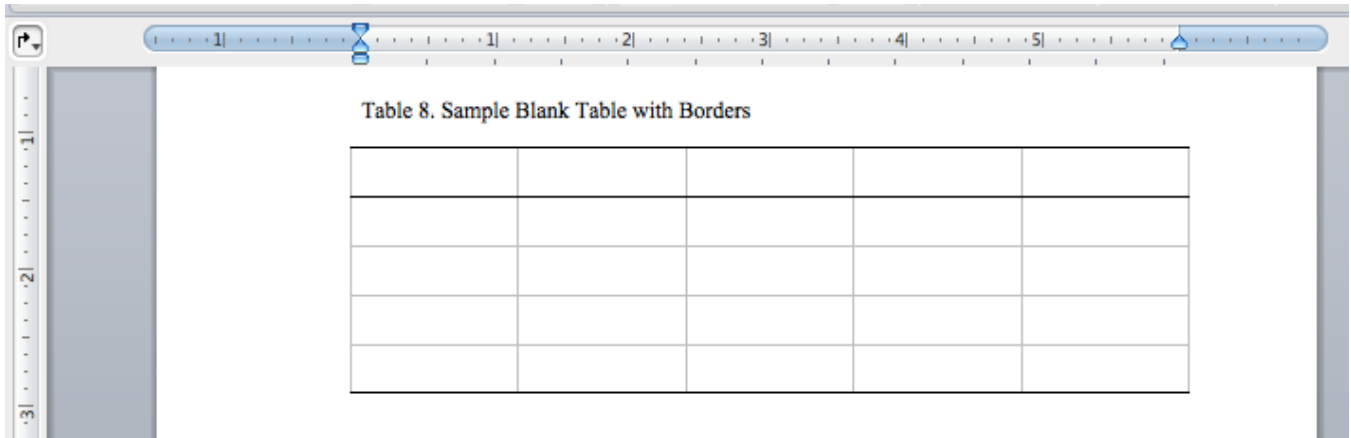
STEP 5. Add a bottom border to the table.



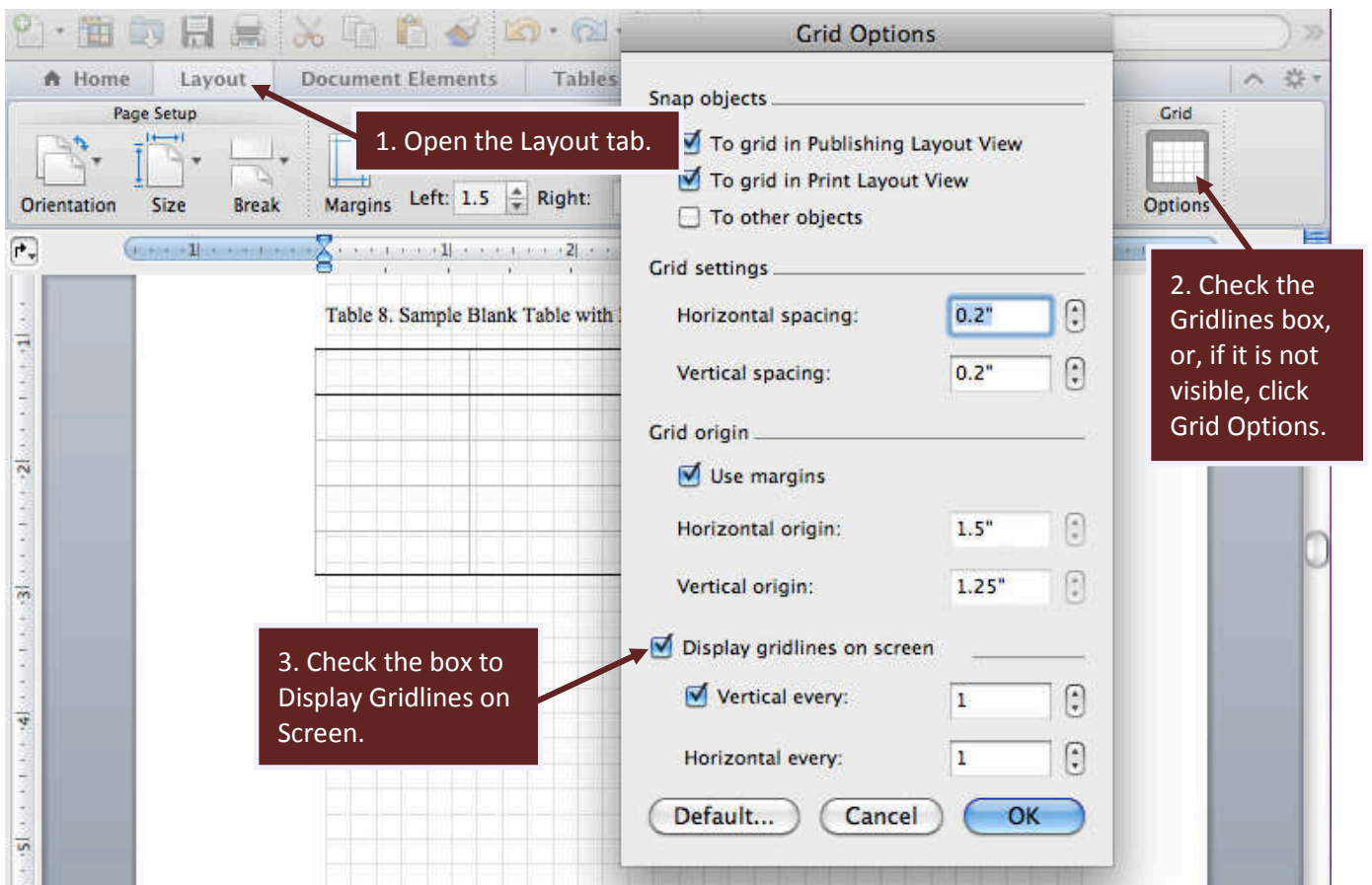
STEP 6. Add a table title. Highlight the table title and choose Table Title from the styles boxes in the Home tab. This will ensure that the table title appears in the List of Tables. Consult your discipline's preferred style guide for how to format the table number and title and how to capitalize and punctuate appropriately.



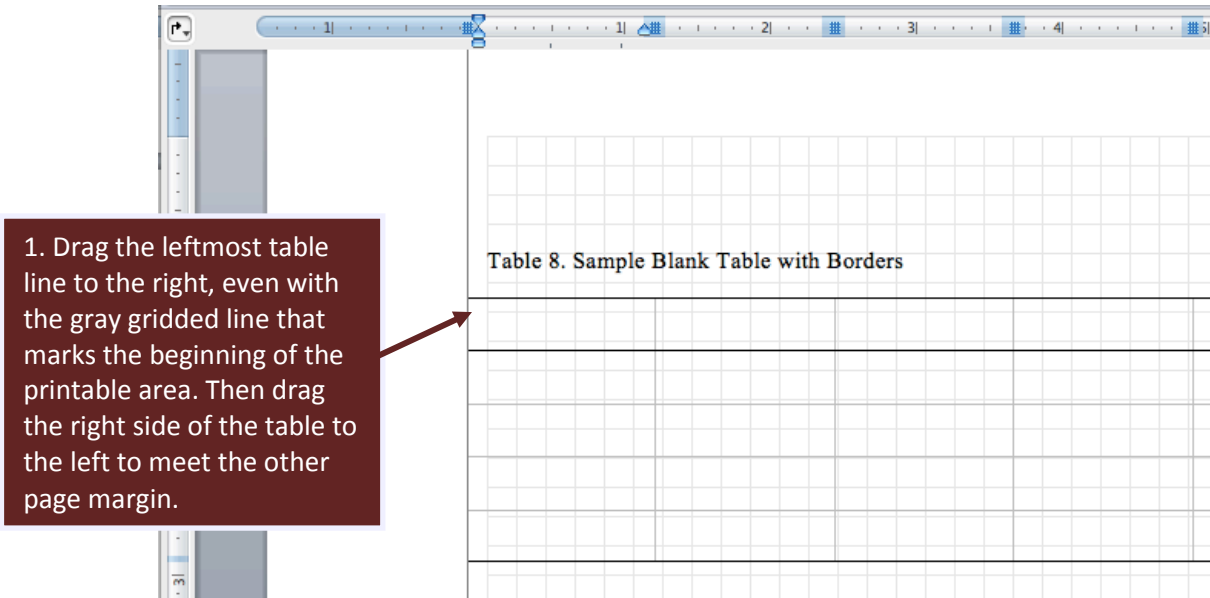
Your table should now look something like this:



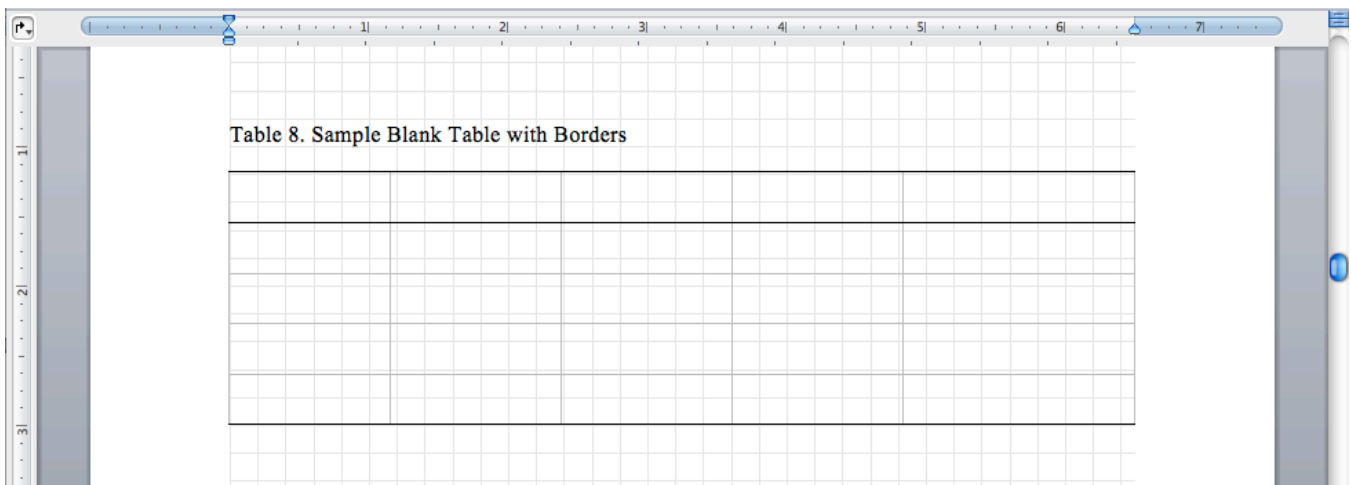
STEP 7. Your basic table is almost ready for data entry. By default, the table will be outside the left and right margins of the document. To see where the allowable margin area is, first activate the page gridlines (these are different from the table gridlines).



STEP 8. Drag the right and left table borders in to be even or within the page borders (see image below).

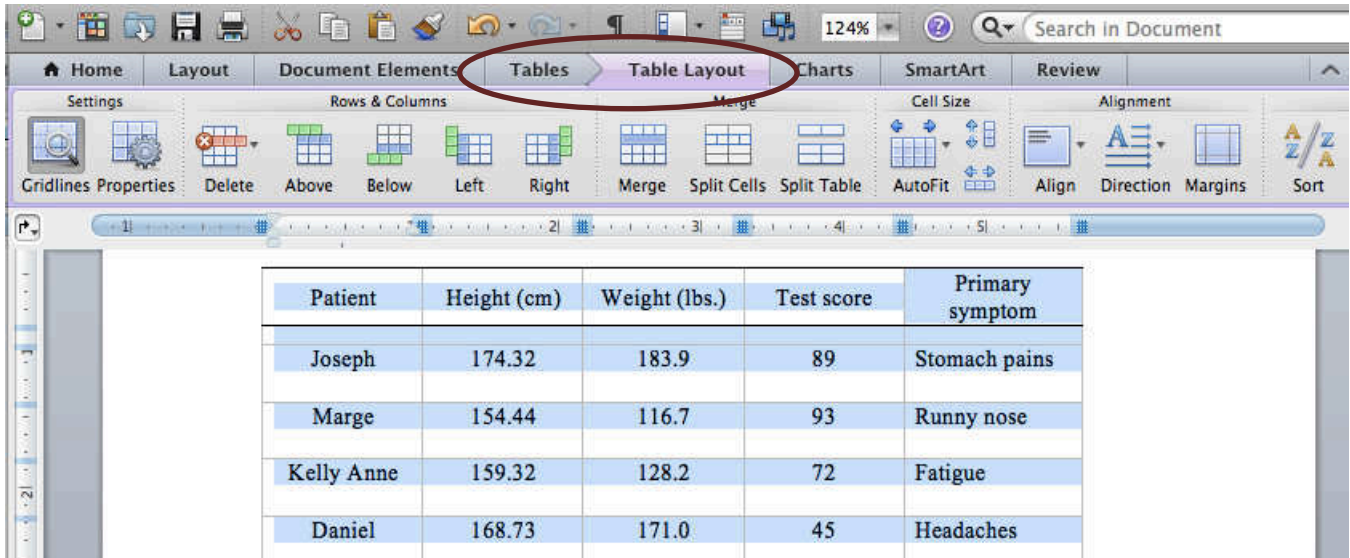


Your table should now be lined up with the page margins, like this:

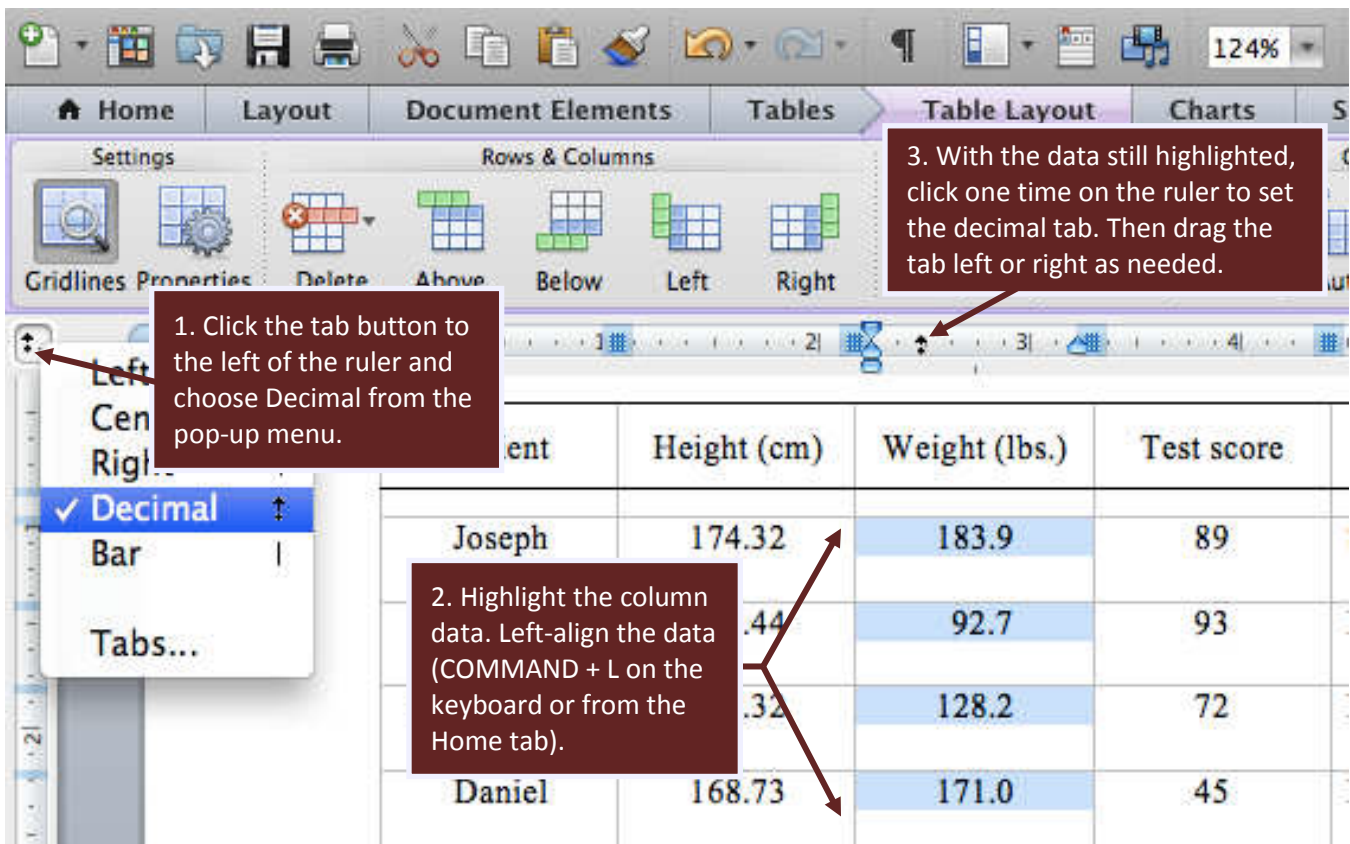


Now, you will probably want to turn off the page gridlines (but leave the Table gridlines) to avoid having so many crisscrossing lines on the screen while you work.

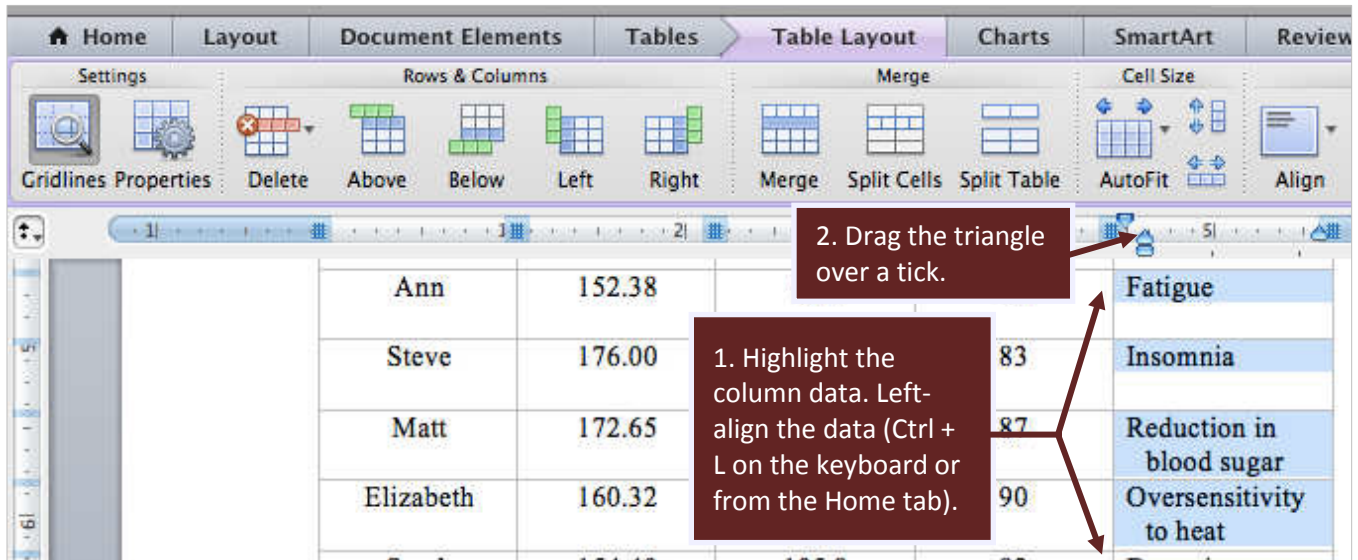
STEP 9. Now you are ready to enter your data into the table. Whenever you have the cursor inside of a table, you can access a variety of table formatting options in the Table Layout and Tables tabs.



STEP 10 (if needed). If you have decimal data in your columns, both Turabian and APA require that you align the cells vertically on the decimal point:



STEP 11 (if needed). If you have word data that extends beyond one line in a cell, it often improves readability to indent the second and following lines:



STEP 12. There are several other intricacies to properly formatting tables, such as aligning numerical and text data, proper capitalization of headers and cells, abbreviations, table spanners, different types of table notes, etc. For these issues and more, consult your discipline's preferred style guide.

Formatting Table Notes

A Table Note style is included in the styles menu in the Home tab at the top of your screen.

First, add your notes according to your discipline's preferred style guide (both Turabian and APA use very similar styles for general table notes, specific notes, and probability notes, and Turabian includes additional information on source notes).

Once you have followed your style guide's rules, you can highlight the table note(s) and apply the Table Note Style from the Styles menu in the Home tab to reduce the font size to 10 pt. If you decide to make changes to the table-note font size or line spacing, you can do that to all table notes at once by modifying the style as explained in the Customizing Your Headings section of the Heading Styles Instruction Guide.

An example of general, specific, and probability notes in both APA and Turabian style is as follows, with the exception that APA uses a period instead of a colon after the word *Note* in the general note.

Table 1. Table Title

Column heading	Column heading	Column heading	Column heading
Row heading	An example of word content.	0.73	11
Row heading	Example text	1.25	2,073
Row heading	Example text	13.22	459

Note: This is for general notes that apply to the whole table, statements that the table was adapted or reproduced from another source (in that case include full citation), and sample sizes. Other notes appear in order as follows.

^a Superscripted letters are used for specific notes, which apply only to a column, row, or cell.

^b If you have more than one specific note, just keep going down the alphabet.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$ (example of traditional format for significance note but modify as needed).