Placing Text in Columns

When entering a page of text it is sometimes advantageous to place that text in columns. This can make the passage easier to read and make more efficient use of the space available on a page. Microsoft Word allows you to split the page into up to 11 columns, each having its own margins, indents, justifications and widths. Normally, however, 2 or 3 columns are used.

Loading a Prepared Article

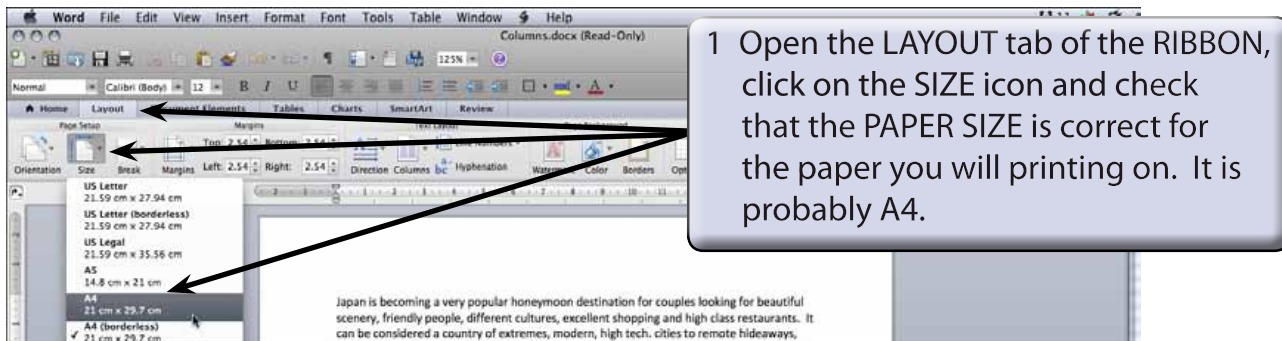An article about Japan has been entered for you. It will need to be converted into columns.

1   Load Microsoft Word and CANCEL the WORD DOCUMENT GALLERY dialogue box, or close any open documents, then display the FILE menu and select OPEN.

2   Access the WORD 2011 SUPPORT FILES.

3   Double click on the CHAPTER 9 folder to open that folder, then double click on the COLUMNS file to load the file, selecting YES to the READ ONLY message.
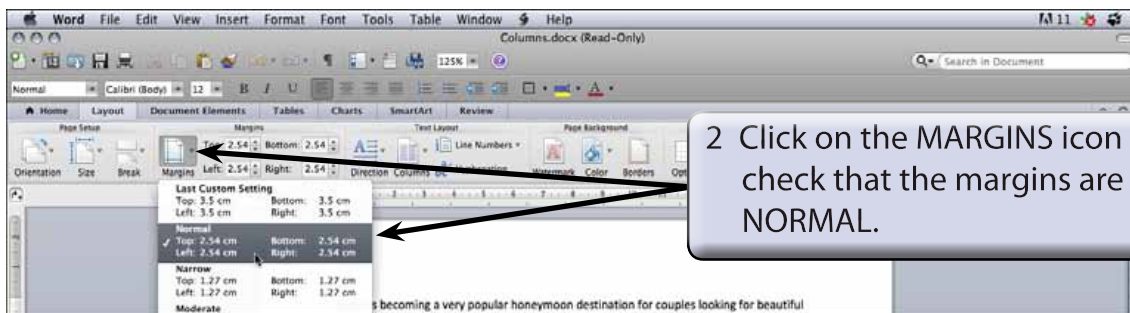
Setting Text into Two Columns

As it is at the moment, the text is a little boring to read. Placing it in two columns can make it much more interesting.
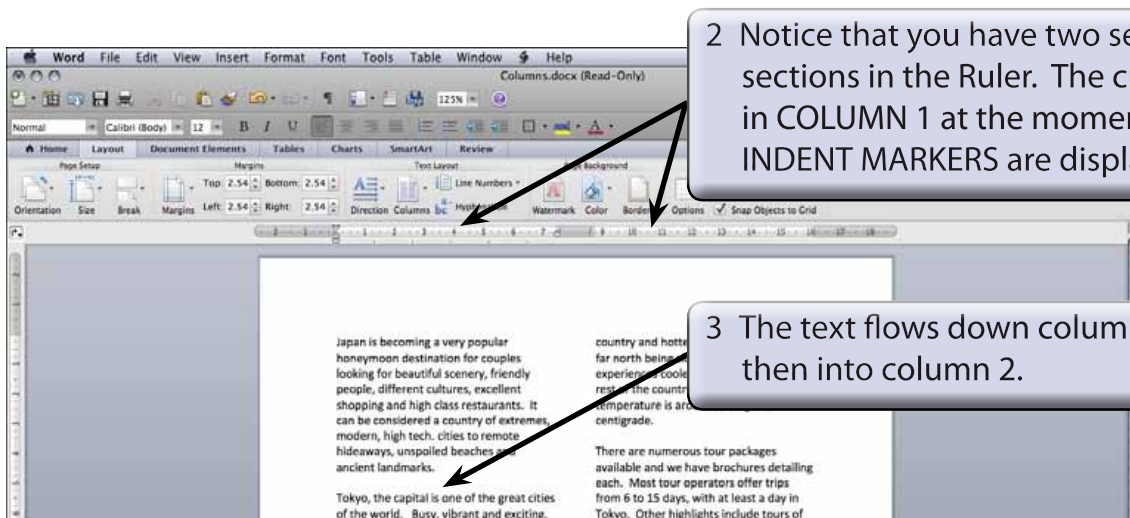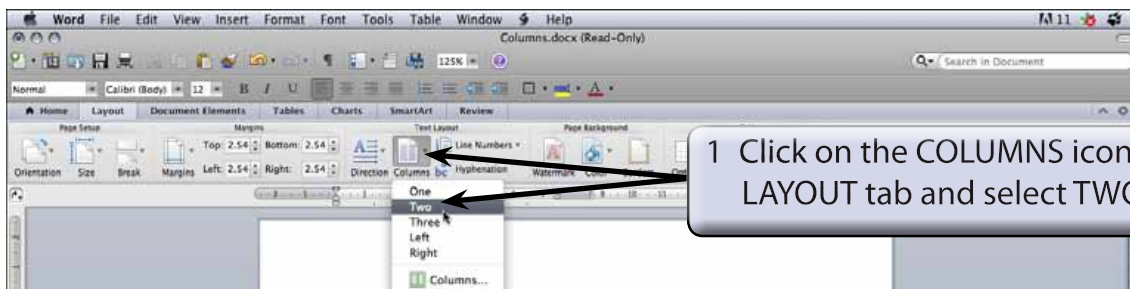
A   Preliminary Settings

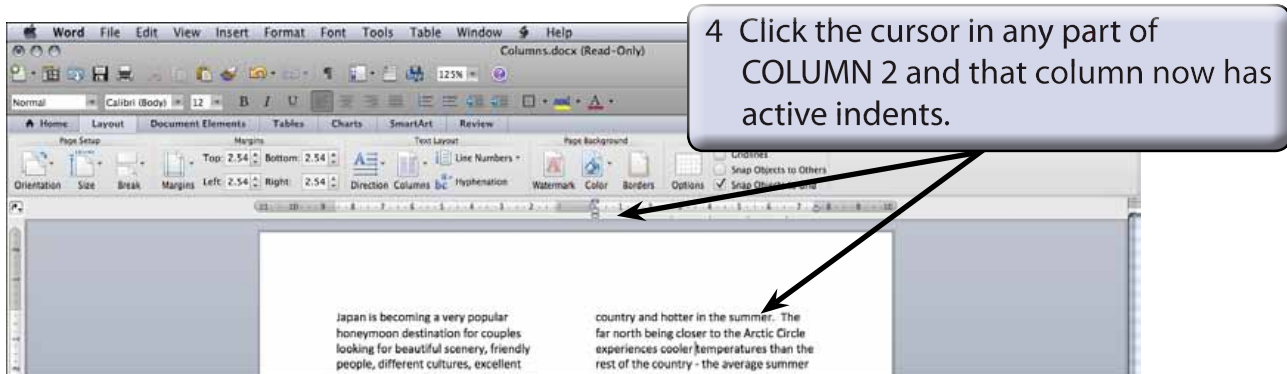Before placing text in columns you should check that the PAGE SETUP is correct for your system.

1 Open the LAYOUT tab of the RIBBON, click on the SIZE icon and check that the PAPER SIZE is correct for the paper you will printing on. It is probably A4.

2 Click on the MARGINS icon and check that the margins are set to NORMAL.

B   Setting the Columns

1 Click on the COLUMNS icon in the LAYOUT tab and select TWO.

2 Notice that you have two separate sections in the Ruler. The cursor is in COLUMN 1 at the moment so its INDENT MARKERS are displayed.

3 The text flows down column 1 first then into column 2.

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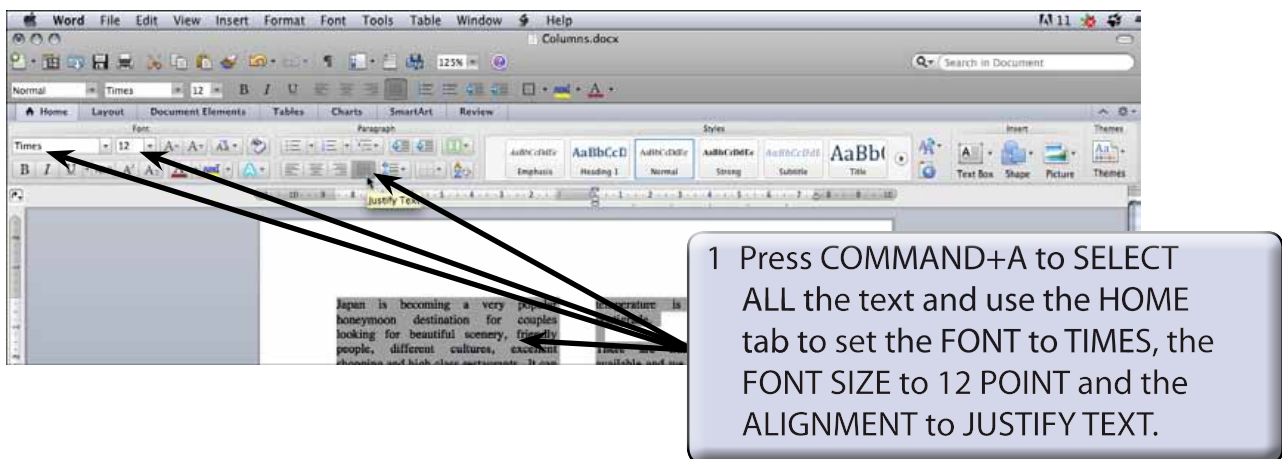4 Click the cursor in any part of COLUMN 2 and that column now has active indents.

5 Use SAVE AS from the FILE menu to save the file in your WORD DOCUMENTS folder under the file name:
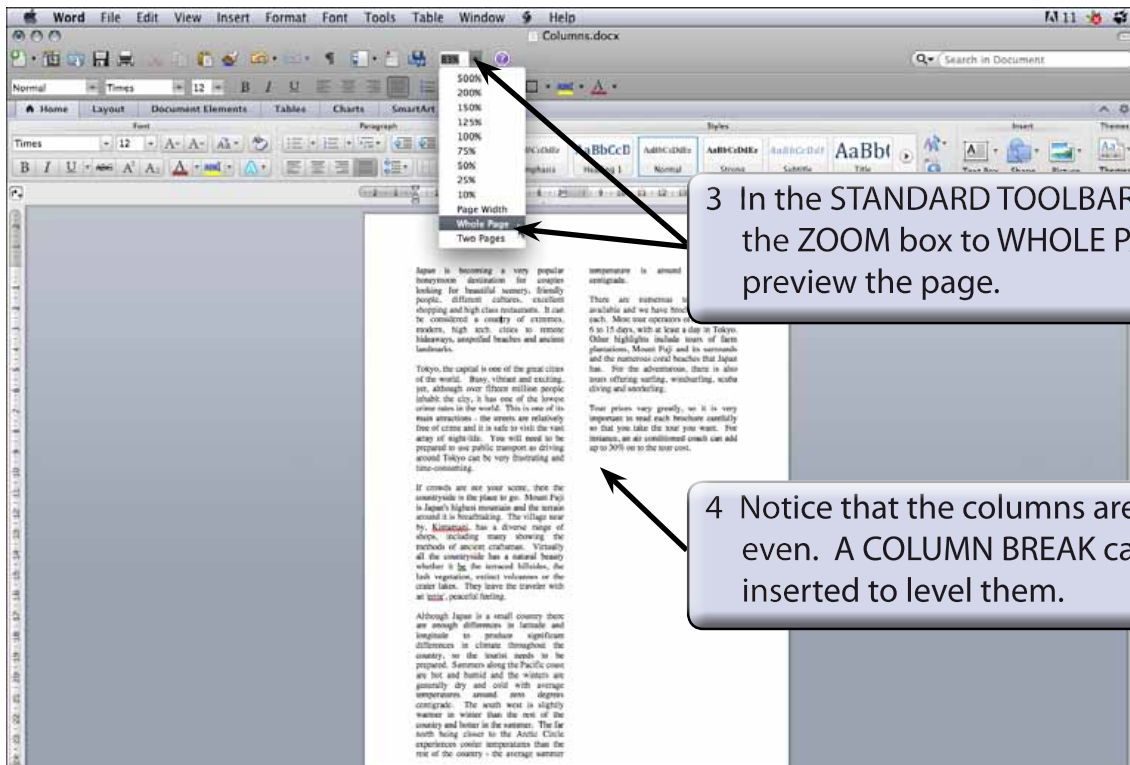
Columns

Remember to turn off READ ONLY RECOMMENDED.

C Justifying the Text

Text in columns usually looks better justified. That way all sides of the columns are straight.

1 Press COMMAND+A to SELECT ALL the text and use the HOME tab to set the FONT to TIMES, the FONT SIZE to 12 POINT and the ALIGNMENT to JUSTIFY TEXT.

2 Remove the highlight by clicking the mouse button with the I-BEAM over the text.
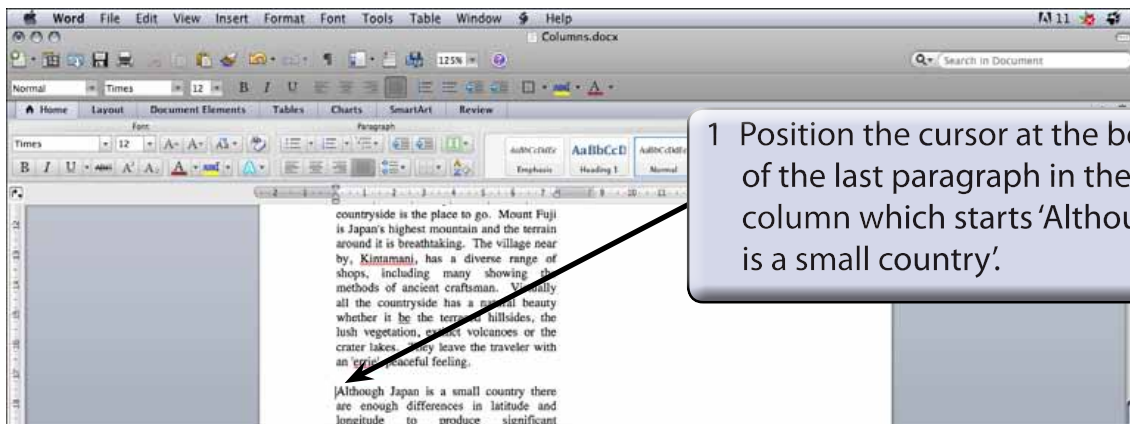
3 In the STANDARD TOOLBAR set the ZOOM box to WHOLE PAGE to preview the page.

4 Notice that the columns are not even. A COLUMN BREAK can be inserted to level them.

5   Return the ZOOM to 125%.

D   Inserting a Column Break

A COLUMN BREAK takes the text to the top of the next column. It is a similar to inserting a PAGE BREAK.

1 Position the cursor at the beginning of the last paragraph in the first column which starts 'Although Japan is a small country'.