Tips for Figure and Table Placement in a Word Document

(Prepared by: Nitya Tiwari, SPI Lab, EE Dept., IIT Bombay, 19th May, 2015)

It is often desirable that a figure (or table) be anchored to a position in the document, such that the text being edited flows around it. This can be done using "Text Box" or "Drawing Canvas". The later permits a higher flexibility in the placement of multiple figures (and/or tables) and corresponding captions. In the description below, it is assumed that the anchored matter is centered with respect to the column width and is placed at the top. It is further assumed that the text may exist before the figure and after it, but not its sides. The method can be easily adapted for other positioning with respect to the column by selecting the Position option and with respect to the text by selecting the Layout option.

**Adding figure using "Text Box"**

1. Click on "Insert" tab. Click on "Text Box" option and select "Draw Text Box". Draw a text box manually starting at the line where the figure is to be placed. Draw it with a height sufficient to accommodate figure and its caption. The text box may overlap with the text below it as the height is increased. It will get fixed later.
2. Right click on the text box and select "Format Text Box" option. In the "Format Text Box" pop-up, select the "Layout" tab and click on "Advanced" layout option.
3. In the "Advanced Layout" pop-up, select "Text Wrapping" tab and then select "Top and bottom". Still in the "Advanced Layout" pop-up, select "Picture Position" tab. For the "Horizontal" position, check the "Alignment" button and select horizontal alignment as "Centered" relative to "Column". For the "Vertical" position, check the "Alignment" button and select vertical alignment as "Top" relative to "Margin". Uncheck all the other options in the "Options" section and click "OK".
4. Apply the changes by clicking "OK" on the "Format Text Box" window. The text box drawn will no longer overlap the text below it and will be anchored to the top of the page.
5. Click inside the text box and press "Enter" to create a line for placing the figure above the figure caption. Add the figure caption by typing the caption in the text box and align it by selecting the Left, Centre, Right, or Justify option from "Home" tab.
6. Select and copy the figure from its available location or another file and paste it at the empty line above the caption.
7. To remove the "Text Box" outline, right click on it and select "Format Text Box" option. In the "Format Text Box" pop-up, click on the "Colors and Lines" tab. In the "Line" section, select "No Color" option.
8. Space below the caption can be increased by increasing the text box height. Additional "Enter" may be used to increase spacing between the caption and the figure. This may require increasing the text box height.
9. Tables can also be added in a similar way. Instead of a figure, select, copy, and paste the desired table in the text box appropriately formatted as described above. Generally we place the caption above the table. Enter the caption in the upper line and paste the table in the lower empty line.



Figure 1. Text box example: figure and caption.

**Adding figure using "Drawing Canvas"**

1. Click on the line where the figure is to be drawn. Click on "Insert" tab. Click on "Shapes" and select "New Drawing Canvas". A drawing canvas will appear. Adjust its height as required to accommodate all the figures, tables, and captions.
2. Right click on the drawing canvas and select "Format Drawing Canvas". In the "Format Drawing Canvas" pop-up, select the "Layout" tab and click on "Advanced" layout option. In the pop-up, select "Text Wrapping" tab and select "Top and bottom".
3. Next, still in "Advanced Layout" pop-up, select "Picture Position" tab. For the "Horizontal" position, check the "Alignment" button and select horizontal alignment as "Centered" relative to "Column". For the "Vertical" position, check the "Alignment" button and select vertical alignment as "Top" relative to "Margin". Uncheck all the other options in the "Options" section and click "OK".
4. Apply the changes by clicking "OK" on the "Format Drawing Canvas" window. The drawing canvas will be anchored to the top of the page.
5. Select and copy the figure from its available location or another file and paste it inside the drawing canvas.
6. Add the figure caption by inserting a text box inside the drawing canvas and typing the caption in the text box. The caption inside text box may be aligned by selecting the Left, Centre, Right, or Justify option from "Home" tab. To remove the "Text Box" outline, right click on it and select "Format Text Box" option. In the resulting pop-up, click on the "Colors and Lines" tab and select "No Color" option.

Figure 2. Drawing canvas example: figures with captions and a table.

Figure 2.1. Block diagram

**20**

**40**

**60**

**80**

**100**

 **0**

 **0**

 **80**

 **160**

 **240**

 **320**

**A(%)**

**B (sec)**

|  |
| --- |
| Table 1. Table pasted inside a text box  |
| Value A |  | Condition |
|  |  | Value B |  | Value C |
| AA |  | BA |  | CA |
| AB |  | BB |  | CB |
| AC |  | BC |  | CC |
| AD |  | BD |  | CD |
| AE |  | BE |  | CE |
| AF |  | BF |  | CF |
| AG |  | BG |  | CG |

Figure 2.2. Graph showing relation between A and B.

1. The text box and figure inside the drawing canvas can be repositioned by dragging them. The canvas height and width can be adjusted as required. To give extra space between the caption and the text below, the canvas height can be increased.
2. Pictures with .tiff, .jpg format can be pasted inside drawing canvas. Visio figures can also be pasted. Text box with a figure or table inside it can be pasted. Objects (equations, tables, etc) cannot be pasted directly. Paste the object inside a text box and then paste the text box inside the canvas. Alternatively, insert a text box in the canvas and then paste the object inside it.