Printed Output Using Adobe RoboHelp 9 or 10

What's covered?

This page explains printed documentation produced from Adobe RoboHelp 9 or 10. There are no differences between the two versions.

These are the main sections.

- Producing a Document
  - The Wizard - Page 1 - General
  - The Wizard - Page 2 - Content
  - The Wizard - Page 3 - Section Layout
  - The Wizard - Page 4 - Appearance
- The Standard Output and Changing It
- Creating More than One Layout
- Template Hierarchy
- Print Issues
- Feedback

Producing a Document

Access the Single Source Layouts pod by clicking View > Pods > Single Source Layouts.
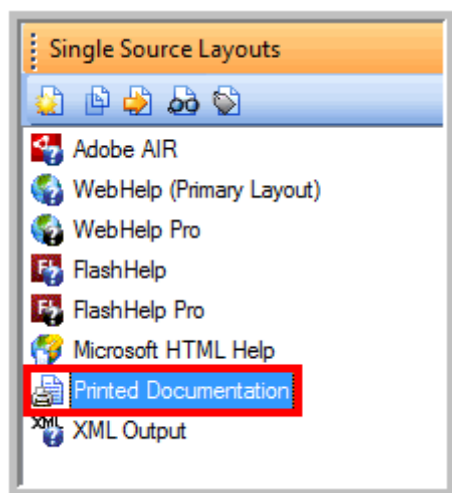
If you will only be producing one document, you can leave the default name.

If you will be producing multiple documents, I suggest you right click the folder and rename it to something meaningful for the first document you will create. For illustration, I have set up multiple layouts with clear names.
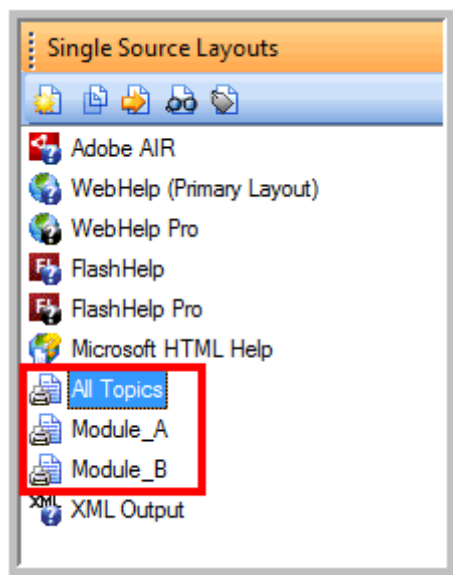
Producing a Document

The Wizard – Page 1 – General

Double click the required print layout and the wizard will open as below.

The buttons have changed in RoboHelp 9. Previously if you accessed the layout by double clicking it in the SSL pod, you had to generate to save any changes you made, whilst if you accessed it by selecting Properties, you could save the changes but you could not proceed and generate. Now it doesn't matter which way you access the dialogs, both options are available.

Let's take a look at each field.

Field / Button	About
Output Format	 You can generate just a PDF, just a Word document, or both. Personally I always generate to Word only as it is unlikely the page breaks will all occur just where you want them in the printed document. • The purpose of the PDF button is self explanatory. • The Word button allows you to choose between the older doc format and the newer docx format.
Printed Documentation	 **Name** This defaults from the name given to the layout and will appear on the cover of the document. You can change it to whatever you want, I

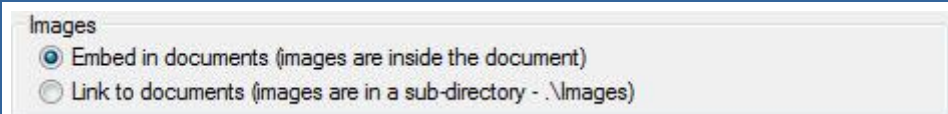| | have changed it from Printed Documentation to All Topics. Look for underscores in the default name, you will probably not want those on your cover. |
	Location
	By default, RH will create a different folder for each layout you create using the name of the layout as the folder name. Note that each folder can only contain one printed output so don't generate more than one document to any one folder. When you generate the printed document RoboHelp will delete any document it finds in that folder. Many a good document has been lost through that.
Conditional Build Expression	**Conditional Build Expression** [(None) ▼] [Define...]
	I am assuming that by the time you get to generating printed documentation, you already know how to use build tags to filter out content.
	The list of topics you get later in the wizard will only include those not excluded by the selected build expression.
	You can tick the Show All Topics check box that you will see in the next page of the wizard to see the topics that have been excluded if you are trying to find something.
Content	**Content** Table of Contents: [<Default Table Of Contents> ▼] Index: [<Default Index> ▼] Glossary: [<Default Glossary> ▼] Variables: [<Default Variable Set> ▼]
	Multiple TOCs, Indexes and Glossaries were introduced in Adobe RoboHelp 7 and Variables were introduced in Adobe RoboHelp 6.
	Choose the required options here.
	This TOC will show as the default layout in the next page of the wizard but there is a very important point to note here. Later changes to the TOC will not change the topics in the print layout. More about that when we get to Page Two of the wizard.
Images	**Images** ◉ Embed in documents (images are inside the document) ○ Link to documents (images are in a sub-directory - .\Images)
	Select your required option. Personally I always embed the images so that everything is in the document but you may have different needs.
Settings	**Settings** ○ Generate individual documents ☑ Create master document ◉ Generate a single document ☑ Retain hyperlinks ☐ Start each topic on a new page [Advanced...]
	Generate individual documents / Create master document
	Select this option to generate one document per chapter. If selected, the Create Master Document option is enabled. This creates a Word master document. Go to any Word forum to learn more about Master documents, most warn against using them.
	Generate a single document
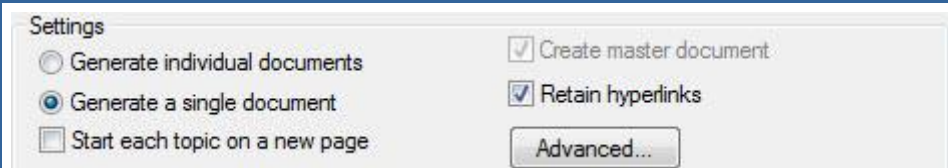
Select to create one document with all the topics selected in the next page of the wizard. This is the most common option and what I will be covering here.

Start each topic on a new page

Initially like many others I thought this option worked inconsistently. Finally though I think I have understood the programming logic behind it.

- No matter what the setting here, **all chapters** will start on a new page. You cannot change that until the printed document is produced in Word where you can set it up how you want it.

- No matter what the setting here, **all topics not within a chapter** will start on a new page and again that can only be changed within Word.

- What this check box refers to is topics within a chapter. For these topics, changing the setting does affect the output.

Now you may just want the topics and no chapter but not want them all starting on different pages. Clear the check box here and in the next page of the wizard put all the topics in one chapter. Produce the printed document and then just remove the chapter name in Word. Make sure you tick the Maintain HTML Heading Levels checkbox in the next page of the wizard. Also see Step 4 in Page 2 of the wizard for information about printing topics without chapters.

Retain hyperlinks

If you want your online hyperlinks to remain as active links in your Word document, select this option.

Advanced

Click the button and define the settings you want.
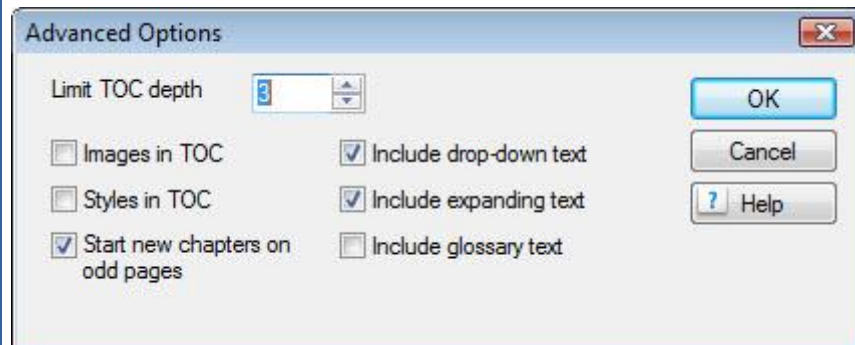
Images in TOC - If your headings include images, the images will not be in the document unless you tick this field. Note the images will then also appear in the document TOC.

Styles in TOC - If you apply inline formatting to a heading, the inline style will not be in the document unless you tick this field. Note the inline style will then also appear in the document TOC.

The rest are self-explanatory.

When you have finished setting up this page of the wizard, click the Next button.

The Wizard – Page 2 – Content
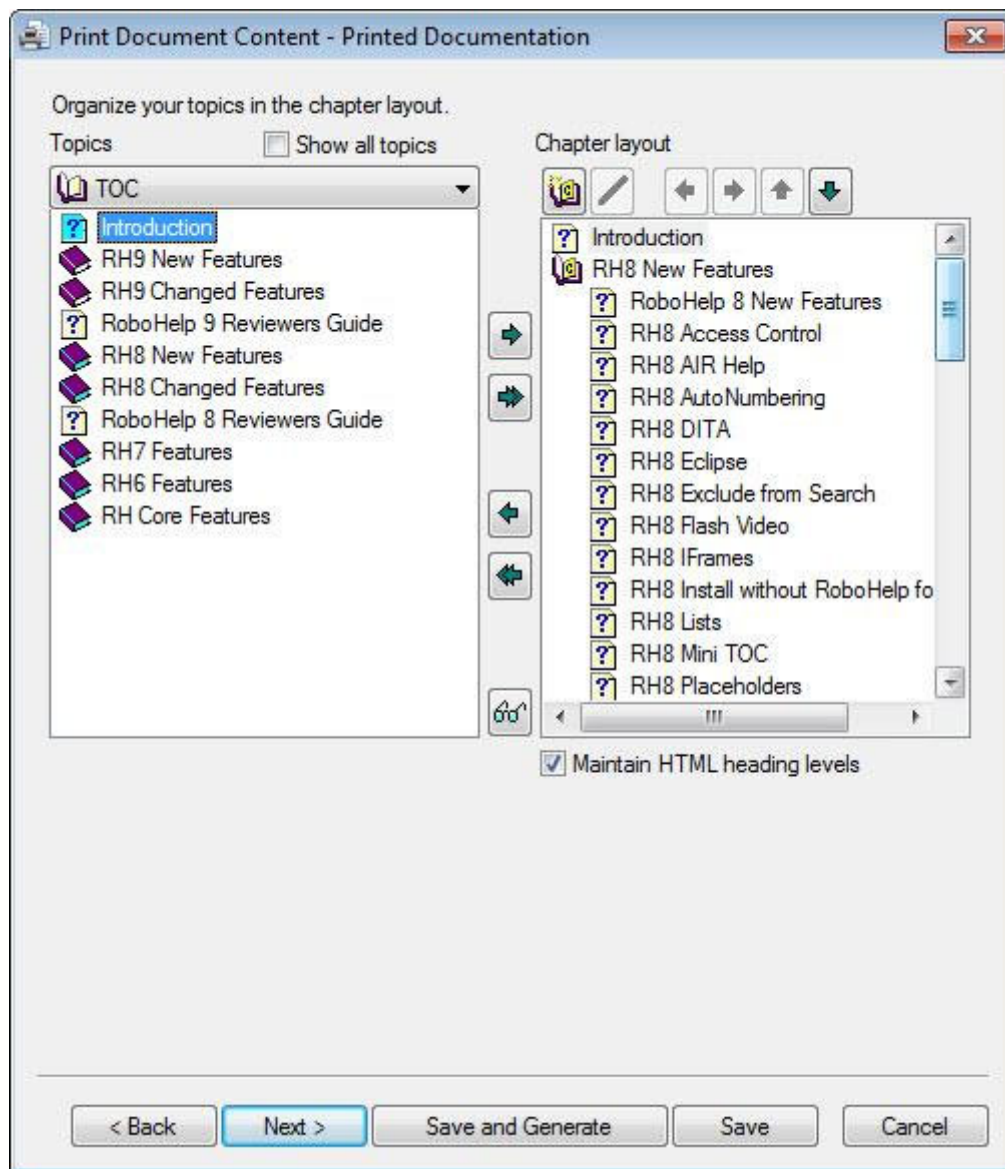
A common misconception

I mentioned earlier that the TOC you select in the previous page of the wizard provides the default here when you first set up the wizard.

> If you later change the TOC, when you come back here to generate an updated document, those changes will not show in the Chapter Layout, which is what gets printed.

This is not a bug. Many authors will create a TOC for online help and want most but not all of the same content for their printed document(s). If they just want to exclude topics, then they would use conditional build tags but sometimes the difference is the order. In that scenario the author will use a TOC as the default for the layout and then change things here. What they would not want after spending time setting that up is to have that revert to the TOC layout next time they generate. If you have changed the TOC and you do want that to reflect in your document, the answer is simple - click the double left arrow to remove the existing layout and then click the double right arrow to add the current version of the TOC.

Selecting your topics

Whilst we will be staying with the default topics for now, let's look at the options.

1. If you do not want anything that relates to Module B. Simply highlight that book and click the single left facing arrow. Module B will no longer appear in the list but note what has happened in the topics pane.
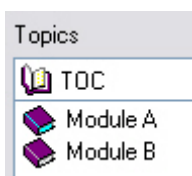
The turquoise tint in the book for Module A is an indicator that all the topics in that book are in the printed output. If any or all the topics under that book in the TOC are not in the printed output, then the tint will be cream as shown for Module B.

2. Note that books under Chapter Layout equal chapters in your document. The book icon under Chapter Layout enables you to create chapters in your document that do not match books in your TOC. This can be useful where you need a different structure in the printed output. You can change the title of the chapters but it is a bit tricky. Click here for instructions.

3. Your TOC may not include topics that you want in the printed output. Click the Topics dropdown and select the folder that contains the topic or select All Folders.
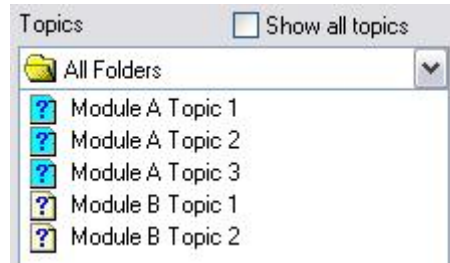
Again, thanks to the highlighting, note how easy it is to see what is already in the print layout and what is not. Simply add the required additional topics to your layout in the position required. Either drag and drop or use the various arrows.

It is important to understand that the content of your document is restricted to what is available after applying the build expression. You can tick the Show All field so that all topics are shown and you can add excluded topics to the layout, they will be shown under Chapter Layout with grey shading.

At first that may seem illogical but it is in fact quite useful. The idea is that you have the ability to define one layout and then choose to run it with or without the build expression. With the build expression applied you get the short version, without it you get the full version.
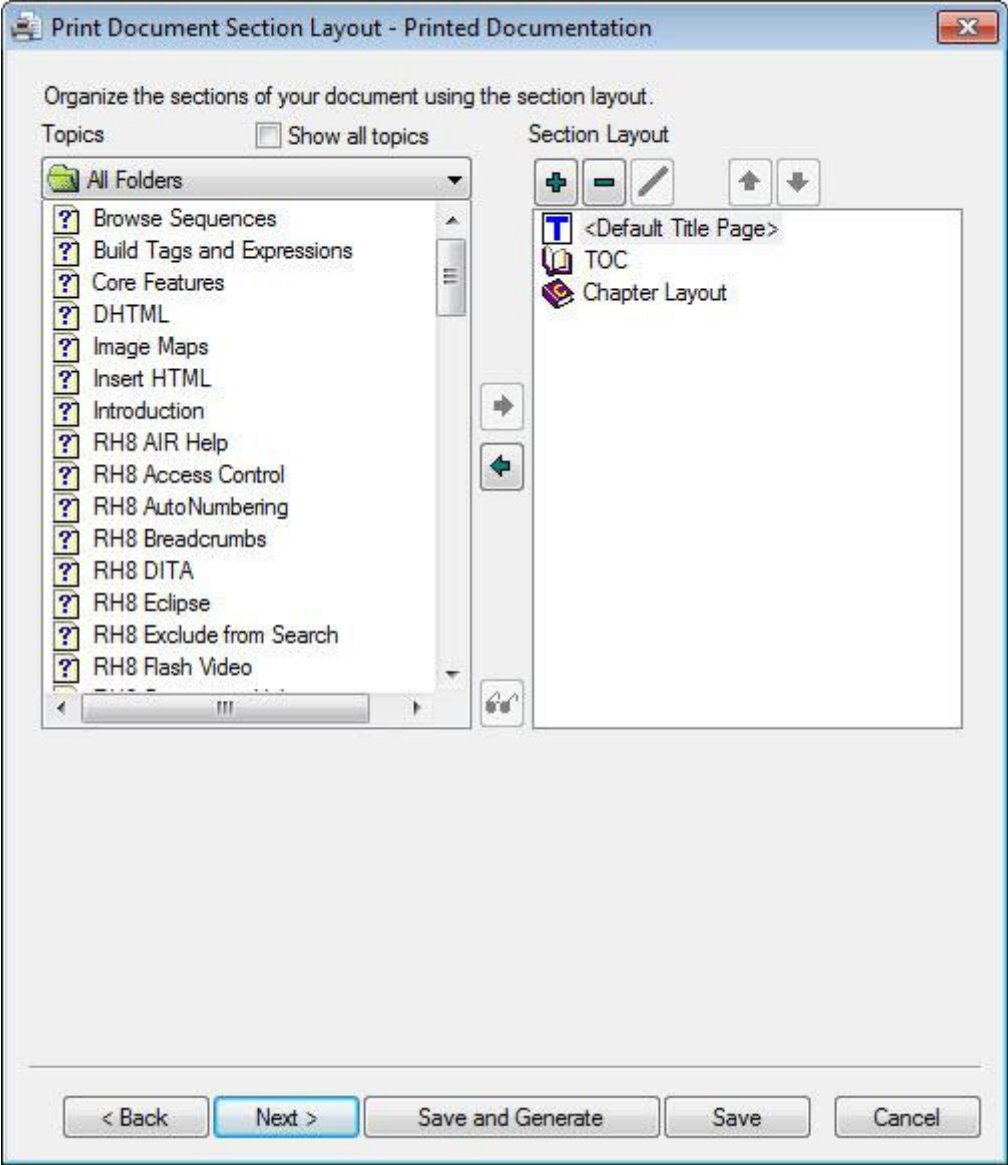
4. You may not want chapters in your document, simply a series of topics. If you click on a book and hit Delete or use the left arrow, not only will the book be deleted from the layout, so will the topics under it. You can move them up first and then delete or delete and add them back in. A lot will depend on the complexity of what you are doing and you will soon figure out the optimum method. Also bear in mind that without books, each topic in the printed output will be a Word section in the printed output. Whether or not that is an issue depends on what you want to do with the document. I simply make the point so that you are aware of it.

5. If your Table of Contents has books with links, then if the book is in your print layout, the topic will print automatically. Many people do not realise that, add the topic itself and then wonder why it prints twice.

We will accept the default layout, which just leaves the Maintain HTML heading levels field to be set. The chapter (book) will be assigned Heading 1 in your printed output so if the topic also starts with Heading 1, that will get bumped down to Heading 2. That may give you a different output to what you want so if you want the topic to retain its Heading 1, tick this check box as I will in creating this output.

When you have finished setting up this page of the wizard, click the Next button.

Tip: Use the TOC Editor rather than this page. I often create a copy of my online TOC and name it Print TOC. I edit that as it editing a TOC is easier than editing in this page of the wizard. When I get to this page of the wizard I just click the double left arrow to remove the existing layout and click the double right arrow to update the content to the current version of the Print TOC. Much easier.

The Wizard – Page 3 - Section Layout

Field / Button	About
	The right window shows the order of the default sections. You can: • Delete any that you do not require, except Content! • Insert pre-existing Word documents after any of the sections. • Add topics after any of the sections.
	This icon allows you to add new sections to your document. First highlight the section after which the new section is to appear. If you click this button with all the default sections shown, a browse window will open allowing you to navigate to any Word document. Its file name will become the name of that section and the content of the Word document will appear in the finished document produced from this layout. This can be used to insert a disclaimer or copyright notice. If you want the document to appear after more than one section, click the Add icon again to display the Sections dialog box. Select the document from the dropdown list. To add further documents, click to standard Windows folder icon on the Sections dialog box. If you delete any of the default sections, they will also appear in the dropdown enabling you to add them back in.

➖	Highlight any section and click this icon to delete the section.
	TIP: Delete the default Title page, click the Add icon and navigate to your own cover page.
✏️	This icon will be enabled if you have added a Word document to the sections. Click the icon to edit the document in Word.
⬆️	Highlight any section to move it up in the list.
⬇️	Highlight any section to move it down in the list.

When you have finished setting up this page of the wizard, click the Next button.

The Wizard – Page 4 - Appearance

Using Styles from Stylesheet
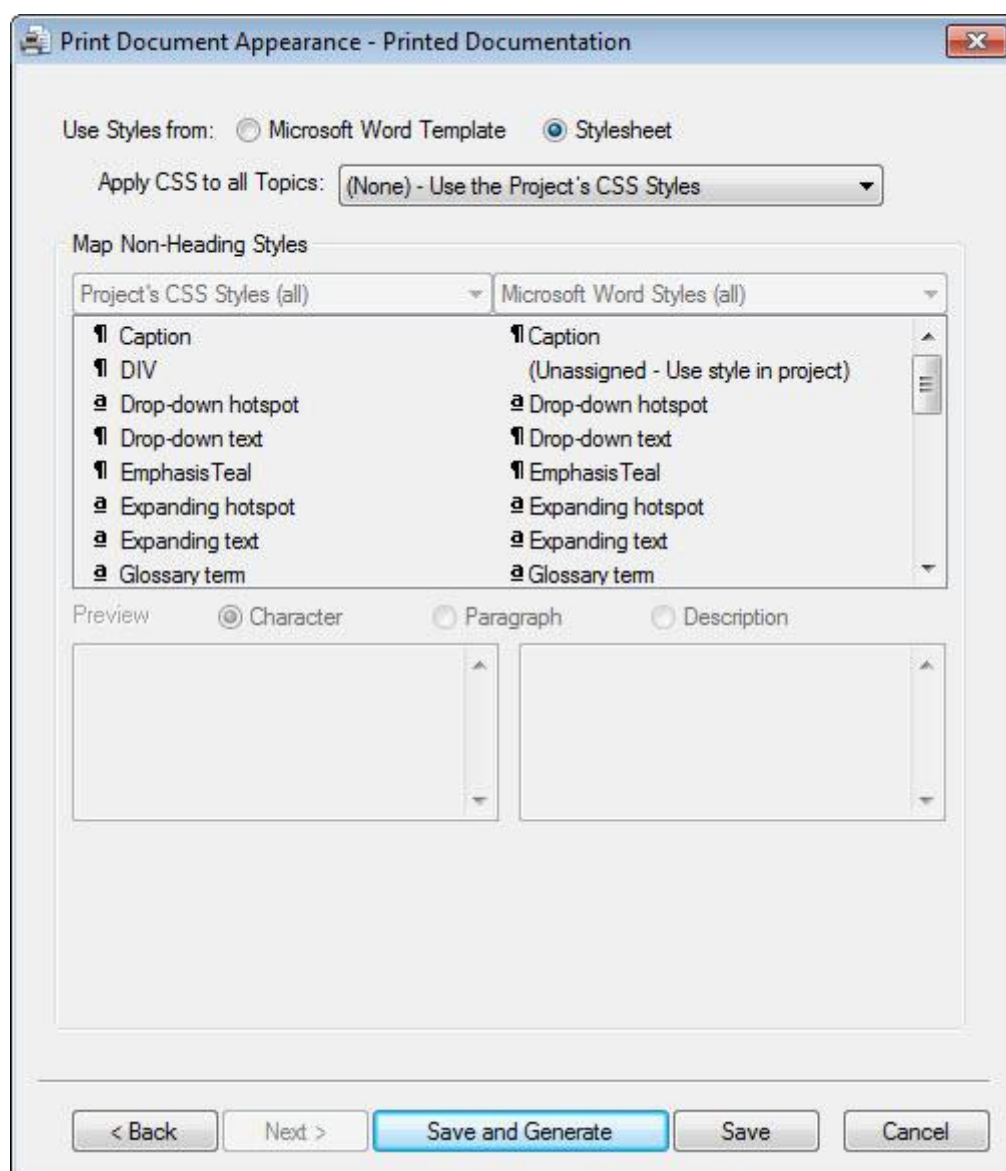
If you click the Stylesheet radio button, the field below will allow you to select which CSS to apply.

- If you select "None - Use the Project's CSS Styles" your printed output will print with the same fonts, font sizes, colours and so on as in the online help. Whether or not that looks good will depend on the CSS file(s) used.

- You can select an alternative CSS and it can be one that is not used in any topic. This is useful if you want different fonts and so on in your printed documentation. Note though this will apply to all topics so consider that option carefully if you have used multiple CSS files for your topics.

Another consideration is how your document will be used after it has been produced.

- If your content contains lists but you simply want a document that can be printed or sent to PDF, the CSS option may keep your lists looking more like the online content.

- If your content contains lists and you want a document that others can work on later, the lists will not be true lists in Word. If, for example, Training will be using the documents to work on they will not be able to add new items and have Word renumber the list items or add bullets. Where post production work is required, you may be better off mapping to a Word document. There the lists will work correctly but you may need to do some work to get the appearance as you wish!

Using Styles from Microsoft Word Template
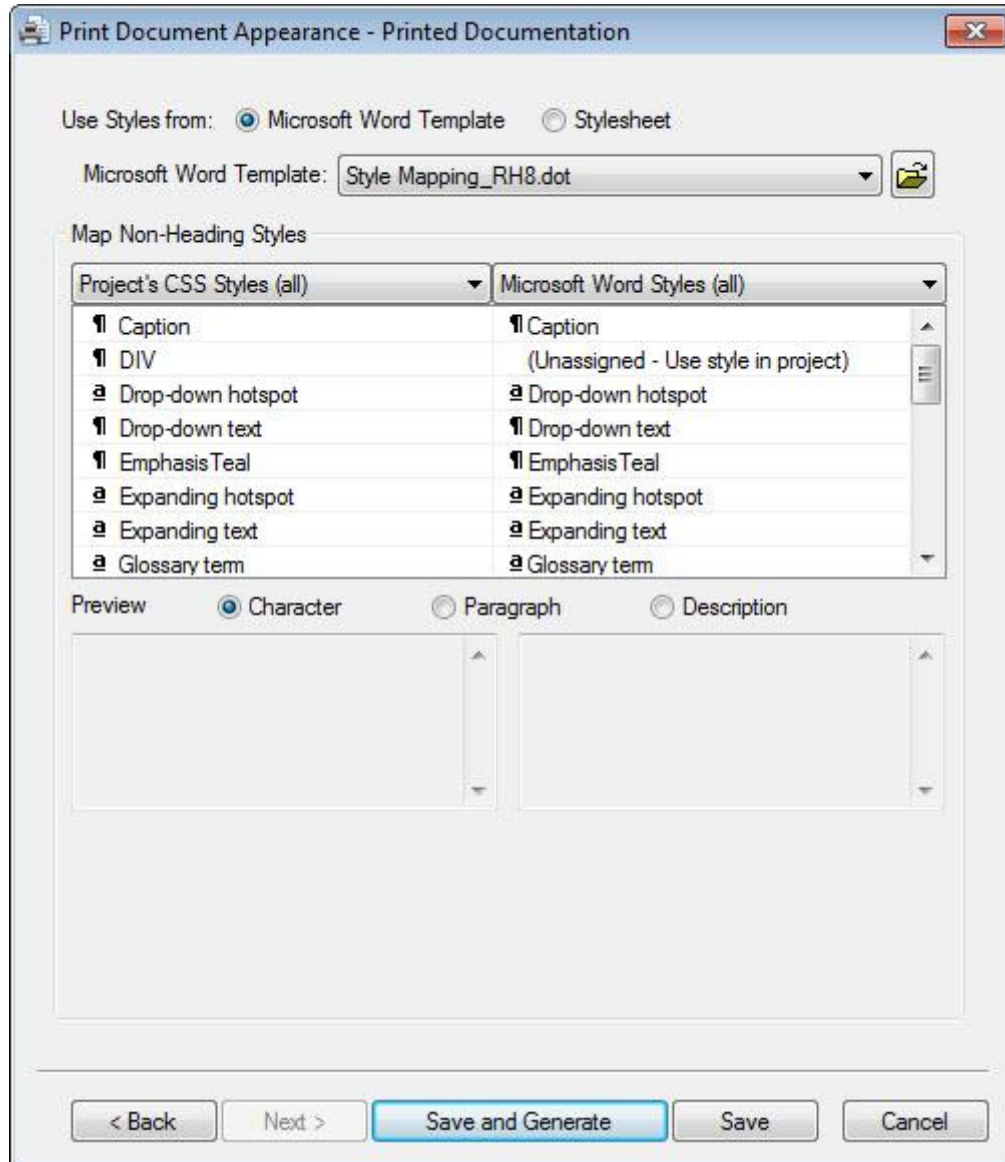
This is my preferred method. Whilst it takes some time to get the template set up, thereafter I find my results are more consistent and how I want them. I use the Style Mapping template during the draft stages and then transfer the content to another template for production.

Another reason for mapping to a Word template is that in RoboHelp 9 you can map tables and multi-level lists to table and multi-level list styles in Word. This means your tables can have a different appearance in print and your lists will print as you want them. Multi-level lists were previously difficult to set up so that the indents were correct in Word. You can see an example of printed documentation mapping to a table and multi-level list style in the Employee Care sample project that ships with RoboHelp 9. Click Open on the RoboHelp Starter page and then click Samples in the ribbon on the left.

Matthew Ellison is a respected writer who has given me permission to reproduce the following from his topic on Single Sourcing with RoboHelp X5.

"One way to create the Word document template is to generate a printed document from your project using the "[None] - Use the Project's CSS Styles" option. The resulting document will contain a set of named styles matching the styles used in your RoboHelp project. You can then

reformat each of the styles as you want them to be in your printed document output, delete the content of the document, and save it as a document template."

So how does this method work? You have two options in the dropdown.

Option	Description
Use a Word template	Select this option to use one of your own templates. You will be able to navigate to wherever this is located on your PC. When you have selected the required template, RoboHelp will ask if you want to copy the template to your project. If you want your printed output to rely on the original template and reflect future changes to it, select No. Otherwise select Yes (Recommended). One caution about using your own template. Many problems seen on the RoboHelp forums are fixed by changing to the supplied Style Mapping template. There is nothing apparently wrong with the templates that were used but for some reason they will not play nicely with RoboHelp.
Use RoboHelp's Style Mapping template	This is a template that RoboHelp supplies and it does a pretty good job but it is not without some features that do not suit everyone. There are some important things to understand about the template and making changes but we will cover those later. With this option, RoboHelp automatically copies the template to your project, no questions asked.

For now we will select the Style Mapping template so that you can see what it produces out of the box. You will see that the Map Non-Heading Styles frame is now enabled. RoboHelp will attempt to work out which styles in your project map to which styles in the template but you can override these choices and set any that RoboHelp cannot figure out.

One thing to note is that when you click the dropdown on the right, it will not show all the styles in the Word template that you are using, RoboHelp will only display those that it regards as being appropriate to the style to which you are mapping.
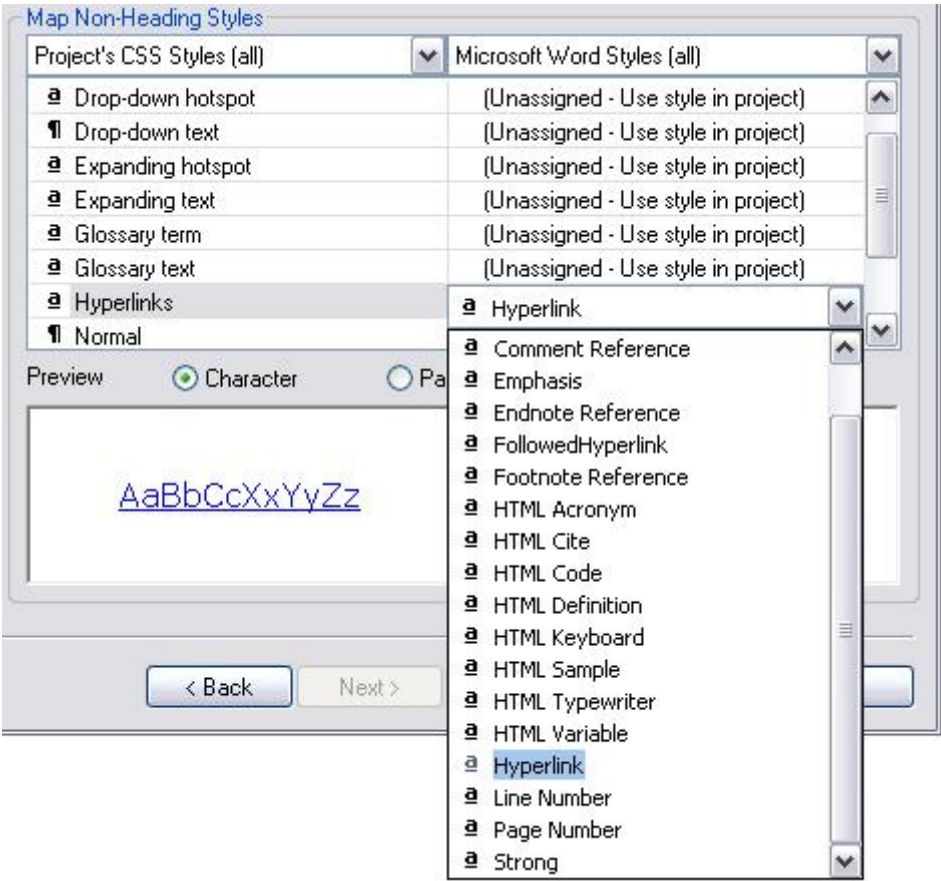
Click any one of the styles and you can then Preview the appearance of the characters, a whole paragraph or the style properties.
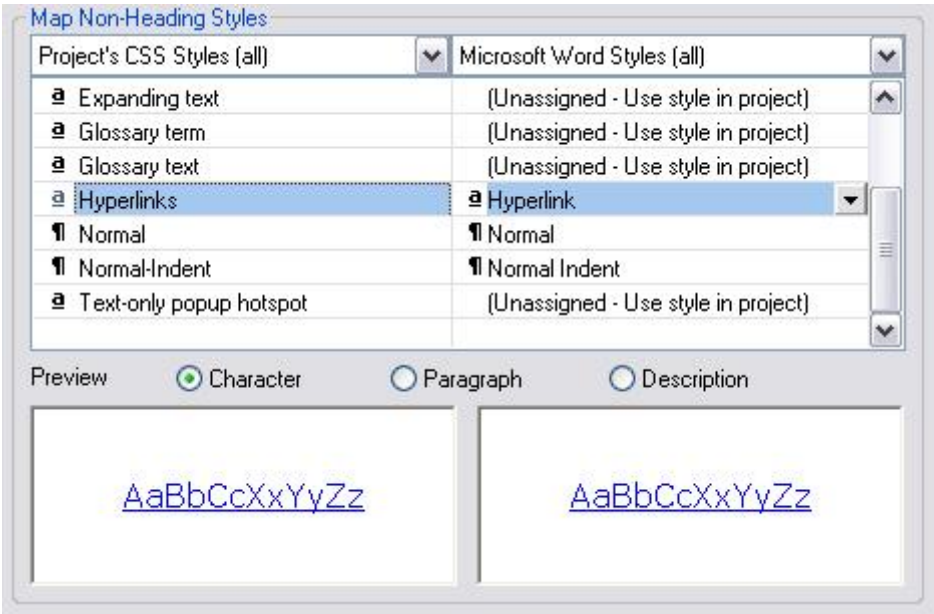
Now just click the Finish button and wait for RH to generate the document. When done, you will be able to select View Result or Done. That's it, you have your printed output so we can all go home. Oh, it's not quite what you want? OK let's look further.

The Standard Output and Changes

Item	Standard Output	Changing the Standard Output
Structure	In Word, select the Normal View so that you can see the section breaks that have been created. In the X3 version all section	As far as I can see, there is nothing you can do to stop RH creating the section

breaks were Odd Page Sections breaks. From X5 onwards, the Advanced button on Page 1 of the wizard lets you select ordinary section breaks. But section breaks there will be as that is programmed into RH.

They appear:

- After the cover page
- After the contents page
- After each chapter in your document.

breaks in Word. So what can you do if the section breaks give you a problem?

Probably the section breaks after the cover page and the contents page are not the ones that give you a problem. It's more likely that it's the ones after each chapter.

The first obvious answer is to avoid creating chapters by not having the books in page 2 of the wizard, just list the topics. However, that is not without its own issues as covered earlier.

If you do need the books then you can remove the section breaks and perhaps replace them with page breaks. You can do this using Word's Find and Replace clicking the More button and looking under Special making sure you set the Search to Down. This will most likely affect the page numbering and headers and footers. It may also change the preceding section type.

I came to the conclusion that it is more trouble than it is worth so this is what I do with the output.

1. Replace ALL the section breaks with page breaks.
2. Select the body of the document making sure I do not select the final paragraph marker. Avoiding that final paragraph mark is important as if you do not, the headers and footers will be carried into the new document.
3. Paste that all into a new document that is set up the way you want.

| Headings | The name of the first chapter will appear first on the first page of that chapter!

The name of the first topic will appear below it in the same heading level because we elected to maintain heading levels in page 2 of the wizard.

Module A

Module A Topic 1

Type topic text here.

Often authors give their TOC books the same name as the first topic. The printed document then shows the book (chapter) name and the topic title, which are the same and they then report RoboHelp is duplicating the topic title. No it isn't! | If there is a book in your list of topics, its name will precede the first topic and it will use Heading 1. What else happens depends on whether or not you choose to maintain Maintain HTML Heading Levels in page 2 of the wizard.

Maintain HTML Heading Levels Selected

Assuming your topics start with Heading 1 style, both the chapter and topic name will be in the same style. If their titles are both the same, then it can look odd as there is nothing to indicate their different roles. You either need to name your books in the TOC to avoid any confusion or rename the book in page 2 of the wizard, perhaps just adding the word Chapter after it. The rename icon is on the toolbar just above the list of topics.

Maintain HTML Heading Levels Not Selected |

		If you have chapters defined, then they will appear in Heading 1 and every heading from RH will be moved down one level. Thus anything that is Heading 1 will get changed to Heading 2 and all other headings will get bumped down by one level.
		That should not be an issue unless you produce some documents with chapters and others without from the same project. Those that have chapters will convert all RH headings down one level whereas the others will leave the levels unchanged. As a result, one document will have topics with Heading 2 and another document will have topics with Heading 1.
		I suggest you would need two templates with the styles set up to address this.
Headers and Footers	Oh the fun these cause! What you get is this, there's not even a choice of take it or leave it, at this stage. **Headers** • There is no header on the first page of a chapter. • On left hand pages, you will then get the name of the document. • On right hand pages, you will then get the name of the chapter. **Footers** • The contents pages have Roman numerals. • The topic pages have Arabic numerals right and left aligned on odd and even pages. Good when you are printing double sided but not when you are printing single sided and want the numbers in one position.	By now you have probably reached the point where you have figured that no matter what template you use, you are going to get RH's headers and footers? Absolutely right. Even if you use a template that has your preferred headers and footers, RH will apply its own. If you have a document with lots of section breaks, setting up what you want can be tiresome. I suggest you follow the same procedure I described under Structure, click here to see it again. Note that when I say RoboHelp applies its own headers and footers, I am referring to the ones programmed in for printed output. Any headers and footers in your topics will not be included in the printed output.
Styles	Not much to say here. You will either like them or want to change them. You will notice a lot of styles in the dropdown list and some of them will look familiar. In addition to the styles RoboHelp supplies, any extra styles from your normal template will be added. If you really do not want them there, then you might like to visit www.tech-tav.com where you can download some free macros, one of which removes unused styles from a Word document.	Two rules. 1. Think about which template you are going to edit. • To change the current project only, change the copy of the template in the project. • To change all future projects, change the master copy. • To change both, change the master copy and copy that to the project unless the project copy has styles not in the master. Then you need to use Word's style organiser. See Template Hierarchy for more information.

		2. Open the Style Mapping template in Word but do not directly change anything you see there. • Make the style changes via Word's Format menu, selecting Styles and Formatting. How you make the changes will vary from one version of Word to another and I am going to assume you know how to do that. • Alternatively, you can use the Style Organiser to import the style from some other template.
Page Size and Dictionary	Before making any changes to the template, the page size will be Letter Size and the Dictionary used will be the US dictionary.	Where I come from "Grey is not my favourite colour" and I print on A4 paper. On the basis there are more people outside the USA than inside, I guess one could argue that is the same for most people! Now before you guys in the USA get all upset, I am just joking and gently chiding Adobe for not offering two templates. That's all. So just for the rest of the world, if you are using the Style Mapping template, here's what you do. Noting what I have said about the template hierarchy, change the master copy of Style Mapping so that it uses the dictionary you want and outputs to A4 or your preferred size. If you have read this after setting up various projects, you need to make the same change to the copy in the project.
Links	Links to popups will not appear or function as links.	This is a reported bug but please report it again if it affects you as that increases the chances of it being fixed.

Creating More than One Layout

You do not have to keep changing what you set up under Printed Documentation to get different outputs. Simply right click on Single Source Layouts and create as many as you want.
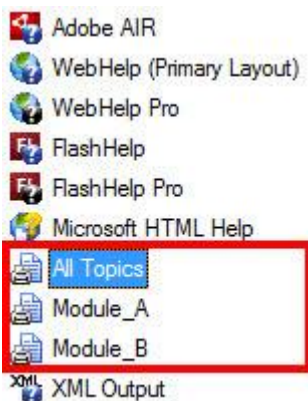
A few tips here to help you create additional layouts.

- If the layout is completely different to any existing layout, the simply right click and select New Layout.

- If it is similar to one you already have, right click and select Duplicate Layout. Then just make the changes. If the first layout was time consuming to set up, this method can save a lot of time.

- If you regularly map your RoboHelp styles to one Word template, or just a few, save yourself the trouble of setting up the mapping each time. This also ensures each document has the same mapping and their appearance is consistent. Right click a layout where you have already mapped the styles and select Export Preferences to export the style map to where it can be accessed in future. When you need that mapping again, just right click and import it into another layout.

Template Hierarchy

Before we look at making any changes, it is important that you understand the template hierarchy.

Style Mapping Template

The master copy, as I will call it, gets installed with RoboHelp and can be found in the folder \Program Files\YourInstallPath\RoboHTML\PrintDocExt.
If you select this template from the dropdown, RoboHelp will copy it to your project without telling you. Any changes you make in the document that you save to the template, will be saved to the project copy only, not the master. More than a few people have changed the master and wondered why they don't see the changes in their project.

If you want to make changes to the template, you need to ask yourself whether they just relate to the project you are working on or any project you will ever create. Then you can decide which template you change. For example, being UK based, I want my printed output to be A4 but I want different styles for different projects. The changes I want in all printed output I make to the master template, the changes for a specific project are then made in the copy.

Note: Before you make ANY change to the master template, save a copy of it to somewhere you can find it later.

- If you have problems you may want to revert to a clean version.

- If you contact Technical Support, it would not be unreasonable for them to ask you to test the problem on the template as supplied.

Print Issues

Problems with Word failing to generate an output or the content having missing or duplicated topics are covered here along with many other print problems.

Feedback

It is impossible to cover everything but I have tried to cover the main areas. Let me know if you find any errors or if I have missed something that is of general interest and I'll be happy to consider updating the topic.

Donations

If you find the information and tutorials on my site save you time figuring it out for yourself and help improve what you produce, please consider making a small donation.

Topic Revisions

Revisions