Aside from making the cell borders match the format of a typical OT tableau, I’ve formatted this table in the following additional ways:

1. The text in all columns but the first is centered. (This is also typical OT tableau format.)
2. The text in the constraint name cells is formatted to be in small capitals. (Also typical.)
3. The text in all cells is “cushioned” with 2 points above and below the text. (You can see this and/or adjust it by selecting any text in the tableau, going to the Format menu at the top of the screen, and selecting the Paragraph… option.)
4. In the first column (but not in the topmost cell), there are two tab stops in each cell, one at .25 inches and one at .5 inches. The first tab stop is for the pointing hand; having the tab stop in all of the candidate cells makes it easy to move the hand to whichever cell you wish the optimal candidate to be in. The second tab stop is for each candidate, so that they are all left-aligned with each other.
5. In principle, the columns should automatically adjust in their width to accommodate longer constraint names or candidates (or new columns). This sometimes works beautifully, but more often does not. I recommend keeping tableaux small and constraint names and candidates short in any case, but there are other ways that I’ll have to show you in person for adjusting column widths manually.

It’s easy to add a new row for an additional candidate; just put the cursor (by clicking the mouse button) inside the bottom right-hand cell of the table and press the tab key. The tab key can also be used to navigate within the table; pressing it moves you ahead one cell, pressing it together with the shift key moves you back. The problem with this scheme is that you can’t use the tab key by itself to move to the next tab stop within a cell. To do that, you have to press the tab key together with the control (“ctrl”) key. This definitely takes some getting used to.

It’s relatively easy to delete rows or columns, too: just select the entire row or column and press the backspace/delete key. However, selecting the “entire row” means not just selecting every cell in that row but also an invisible paragraph marker at the end of the row; if you fail to do this, it will think you may want to delete just some cells in the row and it will ask you what you want to do with the result. One of the options, fortunately, is “Delete entire row”. (I don’t recommend trying to delete just some cells within a row/column; the resulting table becomes very unwieldy.)

Adding a new column is a little more complicated: you have to put the cursor in any cell of a column that you want to be adjacent to the new column (e.g., the last column if you want to add a new column to the far right-hand side of the table), then go to the Table menu at the top of the screen, then move the mouse over the Insert option. You’ll see a variety of choices, including “Columns to the Left” and “Columns to the Right”. If you want to insert a new column at the right-hand side of the table, then you should have the cursor somewhere in the last column and
you should choose “Columns to the Right”. (Never mind the plural “Columns”, it’ll just insert one.) Note that you can use this same procedure to insert new rows above or below a given row.

There’s plenty more that can be done to format and adjust tables, as you will see from all the choices in the Table menu. The best way to learn how to do these things is to just fool around with it (preferably in a separate document, using a “test table” rather than one you’re seriously working on, to cut down on the frustration factor). The most important thing that you can’t do from the Table menu is adjusting borders and shading; this is under the Format menu, because borders and shading are things you can apply to text independent of its being in a table. Borders are also the most complicated part about messing with tables in Word, as I can show you in person, and this is one of the main reasons I copy-and-paste my tableaux. And shading is hopefully going the way of the dodo anyway, as a posting to the Optimal List by John McCarthy calls for.

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**From:** "John J. McCarthy" <jmccarthy@linguist.umass.edu>  
**Date:** Wed Jul 16, 2003 1:52:23 PM US/Pacific  
**To:** optimal@ucsd.edu  
**Subject:** <OT> Shading in tableaux

Dear OT-listers,

I am in discussions with a journal about the need for shading in tableaux in a paper of mine. I would like to dispense with shading for several reasons, and I'm soliciting comments pro and con, at the suggestion of the journal's editor.

My reasons wanting to eliminate shading are these:

1. It is unnecessary. Shading adds no information that isn't already sufficiently conveyed by the exclamation point (!) that marks fatal violations.
2. It often reproduces badly, either fading to invisibility or darkening so much that it obscures the *'s.
3. It is frequently erroneous. Mistakes in shading are pretty common and can certainly confuse readers.
4. If constraints A and B are unrankable because they are non-conflicting, it's not clear how or whether to shade B if A is fatally violated.
5. Shading often seems to highlight rather than obscure, so it has the opposite of the intended visual effect.

Readers of this list with opinions on this matter may wish to direct them to me rather than the list as a whole. I will summarize them if there is sufficient interest.

John McCarthy

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Happy tableaux-ing,

— Eric