

Office 2007 - Review of New Features

New Interface

The major difference in the 2007 version is toolbars, drop-down menus, and Task Panes have been replaced by a Ribbon stretching across the top. **The Ribbon category feature changes based on what you are doing.** This is supposed to make it easier to find tools.

Because the ribbon takes up so much space, you can minimizing the ribbon so that it resembles the old drop-down menu bar and frees up space by right-clicking on it.

There is no way to restore the old interface. There is a single customizable toolbar that's locked to the top of the window and a customizable status bar that appears at the bottom.

For Outlook, the new interface only appears when you open or edit a message.

Publisher still uses the old interface.

Themes & Live Preview

A collection of colors, fonts, fill effects, and other visual properties, i.e. **Themes**, are shared with other Office applications. Themes are reflected in tables, charts, shapes, SmartArt diagrams, and PivotTables. A chart you create in Excel and paste into Word will have the same visual properties as other images in Word.

Live Preview allows you to see the results of a given action in real-time, such as changing the font. *Nice feature, but not everything works with Live Preview.*

Word

Document Themes, a collection of font, color and layout choices, can be applied to a document instantly. You can open up the Theme browser and the Live Preview features allows you to see the results of applying a theme to the whole document by simply hovering the mouse over your choice.

The new .DOCX document format treats each document as a .ZIP file. You can unpack it manually by renaming the file extension to .ZIP and using any ZIP-compatible archiving tool.

Blogging functions are now native and have been refined. Most popular blogging services are directly supported.

External add-ons from Microsoft let you **save directly to PDF** or the new XPS (XML Paper Specification) portable-document formats.

Excel

Now supports 1,048,576 rows and 16,384 columns, an unlimited number of format types in a single workbook, and a formula can refer to as many cells as your system's memory

can accommodate. Memory management has been doubled to 2GB to help increase computational speed for larger worksheets.

You can sort by up to 64 levels and sorts can be performed based on cell color, font color, or icon, in addition to the traditional cell contents.

AutoFilter displays more than 1,000 items in its drop-down list and you can select multiple items to filter just by clicking on them.

If you have duplicate rows, a new **Remove Duplicates** feature lets you remove rows containing duplicates based on the column(s) you specify.

You can use **conditional formatting** to apply a special kind of style that defines cell backgrounds and icons. *This is a technique to indicate a cell's value with an icon, color, or bar.*

You can quickly create, format, and expand a table to organize the data. As you scroll through a table, the column headings are replaced with the headings from the header row.

With **calculated columns** you can add a table, choose a cell in a column, and enter a formula, and the formula is automatically copied to all



Seasons Greetings From Our Team

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Outlook

Migrating mail files from older versions is slightly easier.

The **To-Do** pane displays a condensed view of the current month's appointments and outstanding tasks. To-Do and Mail panes are selectively collapsible.

Folders with many mail items has been sped up enormously. If you open a folder with a few thousand messages in it, the rest of Outlook doesn't lock up while it renders the list.

Outlook's search function has been sped up. Searches that used to take minutes now take only a fraction of a second.

You can **categorize items by color**.

You can also create **custom search folders** for items flagged with specific categories, so they don't get buried under everything else.



cells in the same column.

Formatting is maintained when you update a table. Add, remove, or move rows, including filtering or hiding rows or columns, and the alternate coloring is preserved.

For **charts**, you can quickly change colors or apply a theme, add 3D effects, insert a legend, and superimpose a trend line. *Some tasks still remain difficult, such as adding a secondary vertical axis.* You can save the modified chart as a chart template and apply it to other charts.

PivotTables lets you check boxes in addition to dragging and dropping fields within the task pane. You can add computations, sort data, and filter entries more directly.

PowerPoint

The **Master Slide** consists of a **variety of Master Layouts**: a picture slide layout, a chart slide layout and more. You can add, remove, and position elements on each layout master and changes to the Master Slide ripple through all layouts.

Themes can be set for fonts and size (a set for headings and the body of a slide) to set background images and colors of graphic elements. When you add a slide, the theme is used in the thumbnail previews. You can take a predefined theme and change it (or create one from scratch), then save it and easily apply to it other slides or entire presentations from the Themes gallery.

You now have the **power of Excel for charting**. PowerPoint opens Excel and fills in a table with dummy column headings, row headings, and data -- *giving you visual clues as to what you should fill.* The **SmartArt** feature helps you by using dynamic graphics, from hierarchy diagrams to process charts. You can turn a bullet list into a SmartArt illustration with just a couple of mouse clicks.

Shapes can have shadows, flows, softer edges, and more polished 3D effects. You can add effects to the edge of photos and control shadow effects. You can have strikethrough and ALL CAPS font properties just as with Word, and kerning control has been added if you need precise text control. You can select which fill and outline colors you want for outline text without resorting to WordArt.

Backgrounds are easier to control thanks to an improved dialog box of options, from gradient fills to tiling. Using the Animations tab you can apply slide transitions and preview them automatically.

If you are connected to a SharePoint server, you can share your slides with others using a **Slide Library**. It's easy to incorporate a shared slide into your own presentation where you have the choice of using your own theme or the theme stored with the shared slide. If you use SharePoint, you can be notified whenever the shared slide you're using has changed in any way.

A **selection and visibility** panel lets you focus on individual items on a slide; click an item to temporarily hide it while you work on other elements, then click it again to make it reappear. It's easier to add action buttons add slide numbers, fill a graphic with an image, apply a gradient to a line (new in 2007), replace one shape with another, and handle a myriad of graphics chores.

Another new feature is the ability to **automatically collect data** from third parties by creating an HTML e-mail message and sending it to a list of recipients -- *either a list entered from Outlook or names from a database table. The returned e-mail needs to have its formatting preserved exactly, and the **data harvesting only works properly with Outlook 2007**, but the idea' makes for a great way to poll people for information without setting up a server.*

OneNote

It has been expanded to a **lightweight collaboration tool**. You can type notes into it (*or hand-write them, if you have a tablet PC*). You can paste text or embed whole documents. Screenshots are a good way to store content because it uses OCR to extract searchable text from images. It automatically includes the URL from where you cut-and-pasted from a Web site.

Multiple users can work simultaneously with the results being saved and synced to all the copies. Disconnected users can edit pages and their changes are automatically synced to other copies of the notebook when they reconnect to the network.

You can build to-do lists and then export events to your Outlook calendar and send e-mails to team members. You can use the Mobile application (*if you've got a Windows Mobile Smartphone or Pocket PC*) to display your to-dos and collect notes to sync back to your PC.

A **Send to OneNote 2007** function appears in the list of available printers. *This works great for things where the formatting is an essential part of the content's meaning, like math equations and complex desktop publishing projects.*

Publisher

The **Content Library** works as a publication-independent clipboard, allowing you to save bits and pieces of text, graphics and design and pull them into other publications rather than tediously opening and closing multiple publications to collect the parts you need. The Content Library lets professional graphics people build their own libraries of useful objects, which can be pre-loaded and handed to users to start them off with a toolkit of approved text and styles.

Some of the new features are intended to promote Publisher as a tool for e-mail and Web-based marketing. Connections to Excel or Access provide for doing mail merge, e-mail merge and Business Contact Manager for tracking campaign results.

Groove

Groove provides an **occasionally connected collaboration** model and support for real-time communications and ad hoc creation of managed shared workspaces.

It is an easy way for a group to work on a project asynchronously and securely across enterprise domains and firewalls. Its peer-to-peer architecture hasn't been changed, so an individual can still create a workspace and invite other participants to share files, make and propagate changes, monitor the presence of other team members in the workspace and conduct threaded discussions in an off-line/online use model.

InfoPath

InfoPath is a **forms creation and management application** used to deliver browser-based forms that connect to back-end data collection systems, either through the SharePoint Server or Office Forms Server 2007.

Other application-development tools let programmers create workflows that route these forms for approval or reporting. The most complex workflow applications can be created by developers using the new Workflow Foundation piece of .NET 3.0. For end users, SharePoint Designer supports workflow creation without writing code.

Bottom Line: There are handy new features and more that are not listed here. But be prepared for a major learning curve in using the new interface. If you are happy with your current version of Office and it does everything you need, stay with it.

Access

Data entry has been changed to be **closer to the way Excel behaves**.

You can start throwing data at it in a fairly free-form fashion and normalize it later. **Columns can be added on the fly**, and columns that are built on a value list can have list values edited interactively without having to switch to the Design view.

The types of data have been broadened. A generic attachment field lets you drop in a document of any kind as a column value.

Reports and forms can now be edited with live feedback.

It's also easier to create things like groupings and sorting in a report. There's a new drag-and-drop tool that resembles the group/sort controller for Outlook's views.

Excel tables, ODBC connectors, SQL Servers, and SharePoint Services sites can all be connected to and used as live data sources. A new function is the native ability to connect to and export an Access database to a SQL Server database. Exporting to PDF or XPS is also possible, *although you have to download a plug-in for those formats.*



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How to Keep a Healthy Level of Insanity in the Workplace



- Put a chair facing a printer, sit there all day and tell people you're waiting for your document.
- Send email to yourself engaging yourself in an intelligent debate about the direction of one of your company's products. Forward the mail to a co-worker and ask them to settle the disagreement.
- Find out where your boss shops and buy exactly the same outfits. Always wear them one day after your boss does. (This is especially effective if your boss is a different gender than you are.)
- Schedule meetings for 4:14 pm.
- Agree to organize the company Christmas party. Hold it at McDonald's Playland. Charge everyone \$15 each.
- No matter what anyone asks you, reply "Okay."
- Put your garbage can on your desk. Label it "IN."
- When in conversation, no matter where you are in the office, mutter, "I think my phone is ringing" and leave.
- Talk into your daytimer.
- "Hi-lite" your shoes. Tell people that you haven't lost your shoes since you did this.
- Organize a carpool. Go pick everyone up in a taxi.
- Hang mistletoe over your desk.
- Bring in dishes that you tried to cook but didn't turn out quite right as special treats for your co-workers.
- Decorate your office with pictures of Cindy Brady and Danny Partridge. Try to pass them off as your children.
- Send e-mail messages saying free pizza, free donuts etc. in the lunchroom, when people complain that there was none... Just lean back, pat your stomach, and say, "Oh you've got to be faster than that."
- Put decaf in the coffeemaker for 3 weeks. Once everyone has gotten over their caffeine addictions, switch to espresso.