



QuickGuide

Microsoft Office 2007 Training: What's New with Office 2007?

What is the new Fluent User Interface

Introduction:

With the introduction of Microsoft Office 2007, there are significant changes in the look and feel of the Office suite of programs including Access, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Word. The overall look and feel of Access, Excel and Word is radically different with the new technology introduced. Outlook now uses the Word to create or edit items. Microsoft has eliminated the rather complicated system of menus with dialog boxes and toolbars. It is now “browse, pick and click” as you can see changes in what is called “Live Preview”. There is a new graphical user interface called the “*Fluent User Interface*”.

Features of the new Fluent User Interface

1. The Ribbon
2. Microsoft Office Button
3. Quick Access Toolbar
4. Tabs with Groups
5. Contextual Tabs
6. Mini Toolbar
7. Galleries
8. Live Preview

The menus and toolbars have been replaced with a new graphical user interface called the “*Ribbon*”. It is a redesign based on user testing that makes it easier to find and use application capabilities. The *Ribbon* is a panel at the top of the application that organizes the command buttons and icons in a series of *Tabs*, each further subdivided into *Groups*. The *Tabs* are organized in way that mimics the work flow in creating a Word, PowerPoint or Excel document. The most used commands are located on the *Home Tab*. The *Ribbon* is designed to speed document creation and editing by eliminating mouse clicks. The keyboard short cuts from Office 2003 still work, but are now undocumented. A feature called *Key Tips* where you hit the Alt key to expose a key combination replaces the shortcuts.

The *Microsoft Office Button* replaces the “File” menu found in Office 2003. You will find common functionality across all applications for opening, saving, printing and setting program options.

The “*Quick Access Toolbar*” is next to the *Office Button* and integrates graphically at the top of the *Ribbon*. It comes automatically with three buttons, save, undo and

repeat. It becomes a location for most used functions as it is customizable. Any command available in the entire Office 2007 programs can be placed on this toolbar.

“*Contextual Tabs*” only function when certain objects such as pictures are selected. A specific *Contextual Tab* appears after you insert or click on an object. The tab is only exposed when there is functionality specific to a particular object. For example when you insert a picture, a *Pictures* tab with groups appears. When you click out

There is a new “*Mini Toolbar*” that provides easy access to the most frequently used formatting commands and it replaces the mouse right click in Office 2003. It is context sensitive meaning it only appears when you highlight text. Because it is automatically displayed, it remains semi-transparent until the mouse pointer is placed on it. Once you mouse over you gain control and can make formatting choices. It will also appear if you highlight text and right click.

Built into some tabs are “*Galleries*” which are used for formatting. A “*Gallery*” presents visual options for changing a document or object. You can mouse-over to see the choices at once; there is no need to go back and forth with dialog boxes as you did in Word 2003. *Galleries* are most often used with tables, charts or diagrams.

Office 2007 also introduces a new useful feature called “*Live Preview*” which applies formatting to a highlighted text when you mouse over a command button. The formatting is temporary and only appears as you move over the option. You can preview before you choose. It makes life easier by looking only once at all the options, in Word 2003 you made a choice, then if you did not like it you had to go back and try again until you got it the way you wanted.

Office 2007 uses a new file format, called Office Open XML as the default file format. The Excel, PowerPoint and Word programs rolled out with Office 2007 will automatically use a file format that is compatible with the old Excel, PowerPoint and Word formats. The old file extension .doc becomes .docs in Word 2007. There is a Microsoft add on that allows older Office 2003 programs to open Office 2007 files.

Office 2007 is a radical departure from Office 2003 in look and feel. It has been designed to help you create professional documents faster. It may take some taking used to, but the pain can be worth it.