



LibreOffice

The Document Foundation

Getting Started Guide

Appendix B
Open Source,
Open Standards,
OpenDocument

Copyright

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Contributors

Ron Faile Jr.
Jean Hollis Weber

Feedback

Please direct any comments or suggestions about this document to:
documentation@global.libreoffice.org

Acknowledgments

This appendix is based on Appendix B of *Getting Started with OpenOffice.org 3.3*. The contributors to that appendix are:

Rick Barnes
Jean Hollis Weber
Agnes Belzunce

Publication date and software version

Published 27 July 2012. Based on LibreOffice 3.5.

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Introduction

LibreOffice is a productivity suite that is compatible with other major office suites and available on a variety of platforms. It is open source software and therefore free to download, use, and distribute. If you are new to LibreOffice, this appendix will provide some information regarding its history, its community and some of its technical specifications.

A short history of LibreOffice

The OpenOffice.org project began when Sun Microsystems released the source code (“blueprints”) for its StarOffice® software to the open source community on October 13, 2000. OpenOffice.org 1.0, the product, was released on April 30, 2002. Major updates to OpenOffice.org included version 2.0 in October 2005 and version 3.0 in October 2008. On January 26, 2010, Oracle Corporation acquired Sun Microsystems.

On September 28, 2010, the community of volunteers who develop and promote OpenOffice.org announce a major change in the project's structure. After ten years' successful growth with Sun Microsystems as founding and principle sponsor, the project launched an independent foundation called The Document Foundation, to fulfil the promise of independence written in the original charter. This foundation is the cornerstone of a new ecosystem where individuals and organizations can contribute to and benefit from the availability of a truly free office suite.

Unable to acquire the trademarked OpenOffice.org name from Oracle Corporation, The Document Foundation named its product LibreOffice. Continuing the version numbers from OpenOffice.org, LibreOffice 3.3 was released in January 2011.

In February 2012, The Document Foundation was incorporated in Berlin as a German Stiftung. You can read more about The Document Foundation at: <http://www.documentfoundation.org/>

The LibreOffice community

The Document Foundation's mission is:

“...to facilitate the evolution of the OpenOffice.org Community into a new open, independent, and meritocratic organizational structure within the next few months. An independent Foundation is a better match to the values of our contributors, users, and supporters, and will enable a more effective, efficient, transparent, and inclusive Community. We will protect past investments by building on the solid achievements of our first decade, encourage wide participation in the Community, and co-ordinate activity across the Community.”

Some of our corporate supporters include Canonical, The GNOME Foundation, Google, Novell and Red Hat. Additionally, over 450,000 people from nearly every part of the globe have joined this project with the idea of creating the best possible office suite that all can use. This is the essence of an “open source” community!

With its open source software licence, LibreOffice is key in the drive to provide an office suite that is available to anyone, anywhere, for commercial or personal use. The software has been translated into many languages and runs on all major operating systems. New functionality can be added in the form of extensions.

The LibreOffice community invites contributors in all areas, including translators, software developers, graphic artists, technical writers, editors, donors and end-user support. Whatever you do best, you can make a difference in LibreOffice. The Community operates internationally in all time zones and in many languages, linked through the internet at www.libreoffice.org and www.documentfoundation.org.

How is LibreOffice licensed?

LibreOffice is distributed under the Open Source Initiative (OSI) approved Lesser General Public License (LGPL).

The LGPL license is available from the LibreOffice website:

<http://www.libreoffice.org/download/license/>

What is “open source”?

The four essential rights of open-source software are embodied within the Free Software Foundation's *General Public License* (GPL):

- The right to use the software for any purpose.
- Freedom to redistribute the software for free or for a fee.
- Access to the complete source code of the program (that is, the “blueprints”).
- The right to modify any part of the source, or use portions of it in other programs.

The basic idea behind open source is very simple: When programmers can read, redistribute, and modify the source code for a piece of software, the software evolves. People improve it, people adapt it, people fix bugs.

For more information on Free and Open Source software, visit these websites:

Open Source Initiative (OSI): <http://www.opensource.org>

Free Software Foundation (FSF): <http://www.gnu.org>

What are “open standards”?

An open standard provides a means of doing something that is independent of manufacturer or vendor, thus enabling competing software programs to freely use the same file formats. HTML, XML, and ODF are examples of open standards for documents.

An open standard meets the following requirements:

- It is well documented with the complete specification publically available, either free or at a nominal charge.
- It can be freely copied, distributed and used. The intellectual property of the standard is made irrevocably available on a royalty-free basis.
- It is standardized and maintained in an independent, open forum (also called "standards organization") using an open process.

What is OpenDocument?

OpenDocument (ODF) is an XML-based file format for office documents (text documents, spreadsheets, drawings, presentations and more), developed at OASIS (<http://www.oasis-open.org/who/>), an independent, international standards group.

Unlike other file formats, ODF is an open standard. It is publicly available, royalty-free, and without legal or other restrictions; therefore ODF files are not tied to a specific office suite and anybody can build a program that interprets these files. For this reason ODF is quickly becoming the preferred file format for government agencies, schools and other companies who prefer not to be too dependent on any one software supplier.

Since version 2.0, OpenOffice.org has supported the open standard OASIS OpenDocument as its default file format. LibreOffice saves documents in OpenDocument Format by default. LibreOffice 3 has adopted version 1.2 of the OpenDocument standard. LibreOffice can also open and save many other file formats; see “File formats LibreOffice can open” on this page, “File formats LibreOffice can save to” on page 8, and “Exporting to other formats” on page 9.

OpenDocument filename extensions

The most common filename extensions used for OpenDocument documents are:

- *.odt for word processing (text) documents
- *.ods for spreadsheets
- *.odp for presentations
- *.odb for databases
- *.odg for graphics (vector drawings)
- *.odf for formulas (mathematical equations)

File formats LibreOffice can open

LibreOffice can open a wide variety of file formats in addition to the OpenDocument formats, including Portable Document Format (PDF), if an ODF file is embedded in the PDF (see Chapter 10 for more information).

Opening text documents

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.odt, .ott, .oth, .odm, and .fodt), Writer 3 can open the formats used by OpenOffice.org 1.x (.sxw, .stw, and .sxd) and the following text document formats:

- Microsoft Word 6.0/95/97/2000/XP (.doc and .dot)
- Microsoft Word 2003 XML (.xml)
- Microsoft Word 2007/2010 XML (.docx, .docm, .dotx, .dotm)
- Microsoft WinWord 5 (.doc)
- WordPerfect Document (.wpd)
- Microsoft Works (.wps)
- Lotus WordPro (.lwp)
- Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- Text CSV (.csv and .txt)
- StarWriter formats (.sdw, .sgl, .vor)
- DocBook (.xml)
- Unified Office Format text (.uot, .uof)
- Ichitaro 8/9/10/11 (.jtd and .jtt)
- Hangul WP 97 (.hwp)
- T602 Document (.602, .txt)
- AportisDoc (Palm) (.pdb)
- Pocket Word (.psw)
- HTML Document (.htm, .html)

Most of these file types are automatically detected by LibreOffice, so they can be opened without explicitly selecting the document type in the file picker.

When opening .htm or .html files (used for web pages), LibreOffice customizes Writer for working with these files.

Opening spreadsheets

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.ods, .ots, and .fods), Calc 3 can open the formats used by OpenOffice.org 1.x (.sxc and .stc) and the following spreadsheet formats:

- Microsoft Excel 97/2000/XP (.xls, .xlw, and .xlt)
- Microsoft Excel 4.x–5.0/95 (.xls, .xlw, and .xlt)
- Microsoft Excel 2003 XML (.xml)
- Microsoft Excel 2007/2010 XML (.xlsx, .xlsm, .xlts, .xltn)
- Microsoft Excel 2007/2010 binary (.xlsb)
- Lotus 1-2-3 (.wk1, .wks, and .123)
- Data Interchange Format (.dif)
- Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- Text CSV (.csv and .txt)
- StarCalc formats (.sdc and .vor)
- dBASE (.dbf)
- SYLK (.slk)
- Unified Office Format spreadsheet (.uos, .uof)
- HTML Document (.htm and .html files, including Web page queries)
- Pocket Excel (.pxl)
- Quattro Pro 6.0 (.wb2)

Opening presentations

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.odp, .odg, .otp, and .fopd), Impress 3 can open the formats used by OpenOffice.org 1.x (.sxi and .sti) and the following presentation formats:

- Microsoft PowerPoint 97/2000/XP (.ppt and .pot)
- Microsoft PowerPoint 2007/2010 (.pptx, .pptm, .potx, .potm)
- StarDraw and StarImpress (.sda, .sdd, .sdp, and .vor)
- Unified Office Format presentation (.uop, .uof)
- CGM – Computer Graphics Metafile (.cgm)
- Portable Document Format (.pdf)

Opening graphic files

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.odg and .otg), Draw 3 can open the formats used by OpenOffice.org 1.x (.sxd and .std) and the following graphic formats:

BMP	JPEG, JPG	PCX	PSD	SGV	WMF
DXF	MET	PGM	RAS	SVM	XBM
EMF	PBM	PLT	SDA	TGA	XPM
EPS	PCD	PNG	SDD	TIF, TIFF	
GIF	PCT	PPM	SGF	VOR	

Opening formula files

In addition to OpenDocument Formula (.odf) files, Math 3 can open the format used by OpenOffice.org 1.x (.sxm), StarMath, (.smf), and MathML (.mml) files.

When opening a Word document that contains an embedded equation editor object, if the option for it (MathType to LibreOffice Math or reverse) is checked in **Tools > Options > Load/Save > Microsoft Office**, the object will be automatically converted to an LibreOffice Math object.

File formats LibreOffice can save to

Saving in an OpenDocument format guarantees the correct rendering of the file when it is transferred to another person or when the file is re-opened with a later version of LibreOffice or with another program. It is strongly recommended that you use OpenDocument as the default file formats. However, you can save files in other formats, if you wish.

Tip

When sharing a document that you do not expect or want the recipient to modify, the safest option is to convert the document to PDF. LibreOffice provides a very straightforward way to convert documents to PDF. See Chapter 10, Printing, Exporting, and E-Mailing, in this book.

Saving text documents

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.odt, .ott, and .fodt), Writer 3 can save in these formats:

- OpenOffice.org 1.x Text Document (.sxw)
- OpenOffice.org 1.x Text Document Template (.stw)
- Microsoft Word 6.0, 95, and 97/2000/XP (.doc)
- Microsoft Word 2003 XML (.xml)
- Microsoft Word 2007/2010 XML (.docx)
- Office Open XML Text (.docx)
- Rich Text Format (.rtf)
- StarWriter 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0 (.sdw)
- StarWriter 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0 Template (.vor)
- Text (.txt)
- Text Encoded (.txt)
- Unified Office Format text (.uot, .uof)
- HTML Document (OpenOffice.org Writer) (.html and .htm)
- DocBook (.xml)
- AportisDoc (Palm) (.pdb)
- Pocket Word (.psw)

Encryption support within the Microsoft Word 97/2000/XP filter allows password protected Microsoft Word documents to be saved.

Note

The .rtf format is a common format for transferring text files between applications, but you are likely to experience loss of formatting and images. For this reason, other formats should be used.

Saving spreadsheet files

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.ods and .ots), Calc 3 can save in these formats:

- OpenOffice.org 1.x Spreadsheet (.sxc)
- OpenOffice.org 1.x Spreadsheet Template (.stc)
- Microsoft Excel 97/2000/XP (.xls and .xlw)
- Microsoft Excel 97/2000/XP Template (.xlt)
- Microsoft Excel 5.0 and 95 (.xls and .xlw)
- Microsoft Excel 2003 XML (.xml)
- Microsoft Excel 2007/2010 XML (.xlsx)
- Office Open XML Spreadsheet (.xlsx)
- Data Interchange Format (.dif)
- dBase (.dbf)

SYLK (.slk)
Text CSV (.csv and .txt)
StarCalc 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0 formats (.sdc and .vor)
Unified Office Format spreadsheet (.uos)
HTML Document (OpenOffice.org Calc) (.html and .htm)
Pocket Excel (.pxl)

Note

The Java Runtime Environment is required to use the mobile device filters for AportisDoc (Palm), Pocket Word, and Pocket Excel.

Saving presentations

In addition to OpenDocument formats (.odp, .otp, .fodp, and .odg), Impress 3 can save in these formats:

- OpenOffice.org 1.x Presentation (.sxi)
- OpenOffice.org 1.x Presentation Template (.sti)
- Microsoft PowerPoint 97/2000/XP (.ppt)
- Microsoft PowerPoint 97/2000/XP Template (.pot)
- Microsoft PowerPoint 2007/2010 XML (.pptx, .potm)
- Office Open XML Presentation (.pptx, .potm, .ppsx)
- StarDraw, StarImpress (.sda, .sdd, and .vor)
- Unified Office Format presentation (.uop)

Impress can also export to MacroMedia Flash (.swf) and any of the graphics formats listed for Draw.

Saving drawings

Draw 3 can only save in the OpenDocument Drawing formats (.odg and .otg), the OpenOffice.org 1.x formats (.sxd and .std) and StarDraw format (.sda, .sdd, and .vor).

However, Draw can also export to BMP, EMF, EPS, GIF, JPEG, MET, PBM, PCT, PGM, PNG, PPM, RAS, SVG, SVM, TIFF, WMF, and XPM.

Writer/Web can save in these formats

- HTML document (.html and .htm), as HTML 4.0 Transitional
- OpenOffice.org 1.0 HTML Template (.stw)
- OpenOffice.org 2.x HTML Template (.oth)
- StarWriter/Web 4.0 and 5.0 (.vor)
- Text (LibreOffice Writer/Web) (.txt)
- Text Encoded (LibreOffice Writer/Web) (.txt)

Exporting to other formats

LibreOffice uses the term “export” for some file operations involving a change of file type. If you cannot find the file type you are looking for under **Save As**, look under **Export** for additional types.

LibreOffice can export files to XHTML. In addition, Draw and Impress can export to Adobe Flash (.swf) and a range of image formats.

To export to one of these formats, choose **File > Export**. On the Export dialog, specify a file name for the exported document, then select the desired format in the *File format* list and click the **Export** button.