



**LibreOffice**  
Community



## Getting Started Guide 7.4

### *Preface*

## Copyright

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### Note

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## Publication date and software version

Published November 2022. Based on LibreOffice 7.4 Community. Other versions of LibreOffice may differ in appearance and functionality.

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## Who is this book for?

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Anyone who wants to get up to speed quickly with LibreOffice will find this *Getting Started Guide* valuable. You may be new to office software, or you may be familiar with another office suite.

## What's in this book?

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This book introduces the main components of LibreOffice:

- Writer (word processing)
- Calc (spreadsheets)
- Impress (presentations)
- Draw (vector graphics)
- Base (database)
- Math (equation editor)

It also covers some of the features common to all components, including setup and customization, styles and templates, macro recording, and printing. For more detail, see the user guides for the individual components.

## What is LibreOffice?

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LibreOffice is a freely available, fully-featured, open source office productivity suite that is compatible with other major office suites and is available on a variety of platforms. Its native file format is Open Document Format (ODF), and it can also open and save documents in many other formats, including those used by several versions of Microsoft Office. For more information, see Appendix B, Open Source, Open Standards, OpenDocument.

LibreOffice includes the following components.

### Writer (word processor)

Writer is a feature-rich tool for creating letters, books, reports, newsletters, brochures, and other documents. You can insert graphics and objects from other components into Writer documents. Writer can export files to HTML, XHTML, XML, Portable Document Format (PDF), and EPUB; and it can save files in many formats, including several versions of Microsoft Word files. It also connects to your email client.

### Calc (spreadsheet)

Calc has all of the advanced analysis, charting, and decision making features expected from a high-end spreadsheet. It includes over 500 functions for financial, statistical, and mathematical operations, among others. The Scenario Manager provides “what if” analysis. Calc generates 2D and 3D charts, which can be integrated into other LibreOffice documents. You can also open and work with Microsoft Excel workbooks and save them in Excel format. Calc can also export spreadsheets in several formats, including for example Comma Separated Value (CSV), Adobe PDF and HTML formats.

## Impress (presentations)

Impress provides all the common multimedia presentation tools, such as special effects, animation, and drawing tools. It is integrated with the advanced graphics capabilities of LibreOffice Draw and Math components. Slideshows can be further enhanced using Fontwork special effects text, as well as sound and video clips. Impress can open, edit, and save Microsoft PowerPoint presentations and can also save your work in numerous graphics formats.

## Draw (vector graphics)

Draw is a vector drawing tool that can produce everything from simple diagrams or flowcharts to 3D artwork. Its Smart Connectors feature allows you to define your own connection points. You can use Draw to create drawings for use in any of the LibreOffice components, and you can create your own clip art and then add it to the Gallery. Draw can import graphics from many common formats and save them in many formats, including PNG, GIF, JPEG, BMP, TIFF, SVG, HTML and PDF.

## Base (database)

Base provides tools for day-to-day database work within a simple interface. It can create and edit forms, reports, queries, tables, views, and relations, so that managing a relational database is much the same as in other popular database applications. Base provides many new features, such as the ability to analyze and edit relationships from a diagram view. Base incorporates two relational database engines, HSQLDB and Firebird. It can also use PostgreSQL, dBASE, Microsoft Access, MySQL, Oracle, or any ODBC compliant or JDBC compliant database. Base also provides support for a subset of ANSI-92 SQL.

## Math (formula editor)

Math is a formula or equation editor. You can use it to create complex equations that include symbols or characters not available in standard font sets. While it is most commonly used to create formulas in other documents, such as Writer and Impress files, Math can also work as a standalone tool. You can save formulas in the standard Mathematical Markup Language (MathML) format for inclusion in web pages and other documents not created by LibreOffice.

## Advantages of LibreOffice

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Here are some of the advantages of LibreOffice over other office suites:

- **No licensing fees.** LibreOffice is free for anyone to use and distribute at no cost. Many features that are available as extra cost add-ins in other office suites (like PDF export) are free with LibreOffice. There are no hidden charges now or in the future.
- **Open source.** You can distribute, copy, and modify the software as much as you wish, in accordance with the LibreOffice Open Source licenses.
- **Cross-platform.** LibreOffice runs on several hardware architectures and under multiple operating systems, such as Microsoft Windows, macOS, and Linux.
- **Extensive language support.** The LibreOffice user interface, including spelling, hyphenation, and thesaurus dictionaries, is available in over 100 languages and dialects. LibreOffice also provides support for both Complex Text Layout (CTL) and Right to Left (RTL) layout languages (such as Urdu, Hebrew, and Arabic).
- **Consistent user interface.** All the components have a similar “look and feel”, making them easy to use and master.
- **Integration.** The components of LibreOffice are well integrated with one another.

- All the components share a common spelling checker and other tools, which are used consistently across the suite. For example, the drawing tools available in Writer are also found in Calc, with similar but enhanced versions in Impress and Draw.
- You do not need to know which application was used to create a particular file. For example, you can open a Draw file from Writer; it will open automatically in Draw.
- **Granularity.** Usually, if you change an option, it affects all components. However, LibreOffice options can be set at a component level or even at document level.
- **File compatibility.** In addition to its native OpenDocument formats, LibreOffice includes support for opening and saving files in many common formats including Microsoft Office, HTML, XML, WordPerfect, Lotus 1-2-3, and PDF. See Appendix B for a list.
- **No vendor lock-in.** LibreOffice uses OpenDocument, an XML (eXtensible Markup Language) file format developed as an industry standard by OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards). These files can easily be unzipped and read by any text editor, and their framework is open and published.
- **You have a voice.** Enhancements, software fixes, and release dates are community-driven. You can join the community and affect the course of the product you use.

You can read more about LibreOffice and The Document Foundation on their websites at <https://www.libreoffice.org/> and <https://www.documentfoundation.org/>.

## Minimum requirements

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LibreOffice 7.4 requires one of the following operating systems:

- Microsoft Windows: Windows 7 SP1, Windows 8, Windows Server 2012, or Windows 10/11. Administrator rights are needed for the installation process.
- GNU/Linux: Kernel version 3.10 or higher and glibc2 v2.17 or higher.
- macOS 10.12 (Sierra) or higher.

For a detailed list of hardware and software requirements, see the LibreOffice website, <https://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/system-requirements/>.



### Note regarding Java

Some LibreOffice features (wizards and the HSQLDB database engine) require that the Java Runtime Environment (JRE) or, for macOS, the Java Development Kit (JDK) is installed on your computer. If you do not want to use Java, you can still use nearly all of the LibreOffice features.

Java is available at no cost. More information and download links to the appropriate edition for your operating system can be found at: <https://java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>.

For macOS, you need to install Oracle's Java Development Kit (JDK), not just the Java Runtime Environment (JRE). Download links can be found at: <https://www.oracle.com/java/technologies/downloads/>.

If you want to use LibreOffice features that require Java, it is important that the correct 32-bit or 64-bit edition matches the installed version of LibreOffice. See the Advanced Options in Chapter 12, Configuring LibreOffice.

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## How to get the software

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Versions of LibreOffice Community for Windows, Linux, and macOS can be downloaded free from <https://www.libreoffice.org/download>. You can also download the software by using a Peer-to-Peer client, such as BitTorrent, at the same address.

Linux users will also find LibreOffice included in many of the latest Linux distributions; Ubuntu is just one example. Portable and other versions of LibreOffice are listed on the download page.

Linux, Enterprise, Online, and other versions may differ in appearance and functionality from the descriptions in this book.

## How to install the software

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Information on installing LibreOffice on the various supported operating systems is given here: <https://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/install-howto/>. After installation, you can change the default settings (options) in LibreOffice to suit your preferences; see Chapter 12, Configuring LibreOffice.

## Extensions and add-ons

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You can add functionality to LibreOffice with extensions and add-ons. Several extensions are installed with the program and you can get others from the official extensions repository, <https://extensions.libreoffice.org/> and from other sources. See Chapter 13, Customizing LibreOffice, for more information on installing extensions and add-ons.

## Where to get more help

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This book, the other LibreOffice user guides, the Help system, and user support systems assume that you are familiar with your computer and basic functions such as starting a program, opening and saving files.

### Help system

LibreOffice comes with an extensive online Help system. This is your first line of support. Windows and Linux users can choose to download and install the offline Help for use when not connected to the Internet; the offline Help is installed with the program on macOS.

To display the Help system, press *F1* or select **Help > LibreOffice Help** on the Menu bar. If you do not have the offline help installed on your computer and you are connected to the Internet, your default browser will open the online Help pages on the LibreOffice website.

The Help menu also includes links to other LibreOffice information and support resources. The options marked by a ‡ sign in the list below are only accessible if your computer is connected to the Internet.

- **What's This?** For quick tips when a toolbar is visible, place the mouse pointer over any of the icons to see a small box (“tooltip”) with a brief explanation of the icon’s function. For a more detailed explanation, select **Help > What's This?** and hold the pointer over the icon. In addition, you can choose whether to activate Extended Tips using **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > General**.
- **User Guides** ‡ Opens your default browser at the Documentation page of the LibreOffice website, <https://documentation.libreoffice.org/en/english-documentation/>. There you will find copies of user guides and other useful information.
- **Show Tip of the Day** Opens a small window with a random tip on how to use LibreOffice.

- **Search Commands** Opens a window where you can type a few letters or the name of a Menu bar command, to quickly find where the command is located. Clicking on a command in the resulting list may open a relevant dialog or have other effects.
- **Get Help Online** † Opens your default browser at the Ask LibreOffice forum of questions and answers from the LibreOffice community, <https://ask.libreoffice.org/en/questions/>.
- **Send Feedback** † Opens your default browser at the Feedback page of the LibreOffice website, <https://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/feedback/>. From there you can report bugs, suggest new features and communicate with others in the LibreOffice community.
- **Restart in Safe Mode** Opens a dialog where you can restart LibreOffice and reset the software to its default settings.
- **Get Involved** † Opens your default browser at the Get Involved page of the LibreOffice website, <https://www.libreoffice.org/community/get-involved/>. There you can choose a topic of interest to help improve the program.
- **Donate to LibreOffice** † Opens your default browser at the Donation page of the LibreOffice website, <https://donate.libreoffice.org/>. There you can choose to make a donation to support LibreOffice.
- **License Information** Outlines the licenses under which LibreOffice is made available. More license information can be found at <https://www.libreoffice.org/about-us/licenses>.
- **Check for Updates** † Opens a dialog and checks the LibreOffice website for updates to your version of the software.
- **About LibreOffice** Opens a dialog and displays information about the version of LibreOffice and the operating system you are using. This information will often be requested if you ask the community for help or assistance with the software. (On macOS, this item is under **LibreOffice** on the Menu bar.)

## Other free online support

The LibreOffice community not only develops software, but provides free, volunteer-based support. In addition to the Help menu links above, there are other online community support options available, see the table below.

<b>Free LibreOffice support</b>	
FAQs	Answers to frequently asked questions <a href="https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Faq">https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Faq</a>
Mailing lists	Free community support is provided by a network of experienced users <a href="https://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/mailling-lists/">https://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/mailling-lists/</a>
Questions & Answers and Knowledge Base	Free community assistance is provided in a Question & Answer format. Search similar topics or ask a new question in <a href="https://ask.libreoffice.org/en/questions">https://ask.libreoffice.org/en/questions</a> The service is available in several other languages; just replace /en/ with de, es, fr, ja, ko, nl, pt, tr, and many others in the web address above.
Native language support	The LibreOffice website in various languages <a href="https://www.libreoffice.org/community/nlc/">https://www.libreoffice.org/community/nlc/</a> Mailing lists for native languages <a href="https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Local_Mailing_Lists">https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Local_Mailing_Lists</a> Information about social networking <a href="https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Website/Web_Sites_services">https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Website/Web_Sites_services</a>



## Paid support and training

You can also pay for support through service contracts from a vendor or consulting firm specializing in LibreOffice. For information about certified professional support, see The Document Foundation's website: <https://www.documentfoundation.org/gethelp/support/>

For schools, educational and research institutions, and large organizations, see <https://www.libreoffice.org/download/libreoffice-in-business/>.

## What you see may be different

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### Illustrations

LibreOffice runs on Windows, Linux, and macOS operating systems, each of which has several versions and can be customized by users (fonts, colors, themes, window managers). The illustrations in this guide were taken from a variety of computers and operating systems. Therefore, some illustrations will not look exactly like what you see on your computer display.

Also, some of the dialogs may be different because of the settings selected in LibreOffice. In some cases (mainly Open, Save, and Print dialogs), you can choose to use dialogs from your computer's operating system or from LibreOffice. To change which dialogs are used, go to **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > General** and select or deselect the option **Use LibreOffice dialogs**.

### Icons

The LibreOffice community has created icons for several icon sets: Breeze, Colibre, Elementary, Karasa Jaga, Sifr, and Sakapura; some are also available in a dark version. As a user, you can select your own preferred set. The icons in this guide have been taken from a variety of LibreOffice installations that use different sets of icons. The icons for some of the many tools available in LibreOffice may differ from the ones used in this guide.

To change the icon set used, go to **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > View**. In the *Icon style* section, choose from the drop-down list.

### Notes

Some Linux distributions include LibreOffice as part of the installation and may not include all the icon sets mentioned above. You should be able to download other icon sets from the software repository for your Linux distribution if you wish to use them.

The Galaxy, Oxygen, and Tango icon sets are no longer included as part of the standard installation package. You can download and install them as extensions from <https://extensions.libreoffice.org/en/extensions/>.

Some of the previously included gallery sets are now available only as extensions; see <https://extensions.libreoffice.org/?Tags%5B%5D=49> or search for specific ones.

For example, the People Gallery is available from <https://extensions.libreoffice.org/en/extensions/show/people-gallery>

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## Using LibreOffice on macOS

Some keystrokes and menu items are different on macOS from those used in Windows and Linux. The table below gives some common substitutions for the instructions in this book. For a more detailed list, see the application Help.

<i>Windows or Linux</i>	<i>macOS equivalent</i>	<i>Effect</i>
<b>Tools &gt; Options</b>	<b>LibreOffice &gt; Preferences</b>	Access setup options
Right-click	Control+click and/or right-click depending on computer setup	Open a context menu
<i>Ctrl</i> (Control)	⌘ (Command)	Used with other keys
<i>Alt</i>	⌥ (Option) or Alt, depending on keyboard	Used with other keys
<i>F11</i>	⌘+T	Open Styles deck in Sidebar

## What are all these things called?

The terms used in LibreOffice for most parts of the user interface (the parts of the program you see and use, in contrast to the behind-the-scenes code that actually makes it work) are the same as for most other programs.

A dialog is a special type of window. Its purpose is to inform you of something, or request input from you, or both. The technical names for common controls are shown in Figure 1. In most cases the technical terms are not used in this book, but it is useful to know them because the Help and other sources of information often use them.

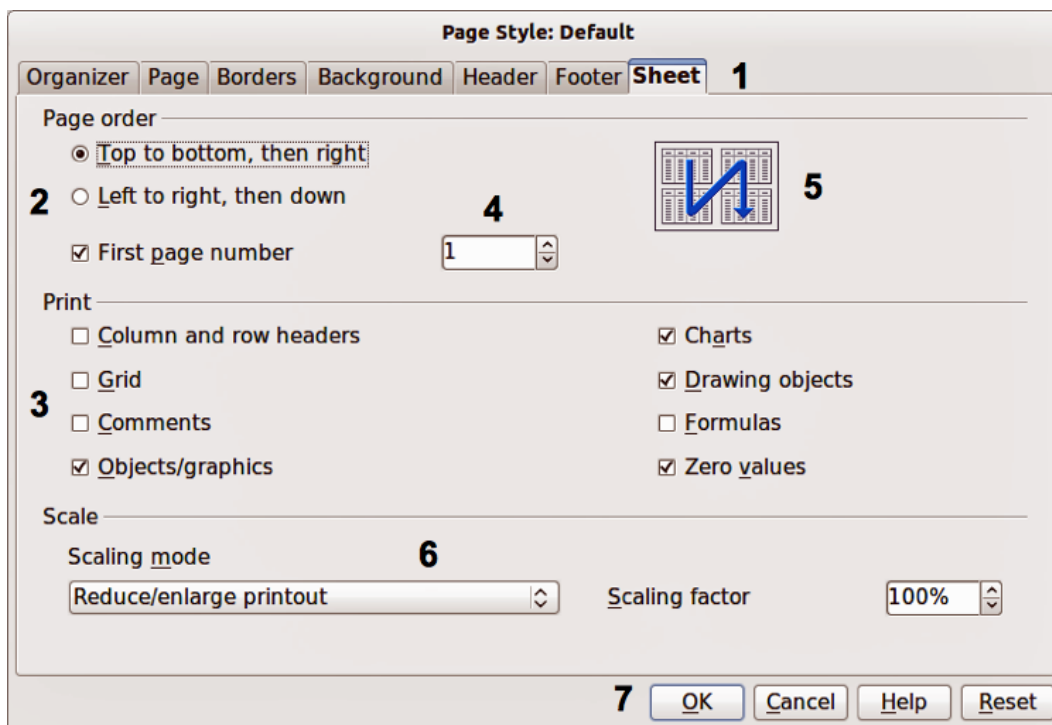


Figure 1: Dialog showing common controls

- 1) Tabbed page (not strictly speaking a control).
- 2) Radio buttons (only one can be selected at a time).
- 3) Checkbox (more than one can be selected at a time).

- 4) Spin box (click the up and down arrows to change the number shown in the adjacent text box, or type in the text box).
- 5) Thumbnail or preview.
- 6) Drop-down list from which to select an item.
- 7) Push buttons.

In most cases, you can interact only with the dialog (not the document itself) as long as the dialog remains open. When you close the dialog after use (usually, clicking **OK** or another button saves your changes and closes the dialog), then you can again work with the document.

Some dialogs can be left open as you work, so you can switch back and forth between the dialog and the document. An example of this type is the Find & Replace dialog.

## Frequently asked questions

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### **How is LibreOffice licensed?**

LibreOffice is distributed under the Open Source Initiative (OSI) approved Mozilla Public License (MPL). See <https://www.libreoffice.org/about-us/licenses/>

It is based on code from Apache OpenOffice made available under the Apache License 2.0 but also includes software that differs from version to version under a variety of other Open Source licenses. New code is available under LGPL 3.0 and MPL 2.0.

### **May I distribute LibreOffice to anyone? May I sell it? May I use it in my business?**

Yes.

### **How many computers may I install it on?**

As many as you like.

### **Is LibreOffice available in my language?**

LibreOffice has been translated (localized for more than 80%, both UI and Help) into over 46 languages, so your language probably is supported. Localization is well under way for another 30+ languages (50-80%) and for another 50+ languages help is more than welcome. In addition, over 70 spelling, hyphenation, and thesaurus dictionaries are available for languages and dialects that do not have a localized program interface. The dictionaries are available from the LibreOffice website at: [www.libreoffice.org](http://www.libreoffice.org).

### **How can you make it for free?**

LibreOffice is developed and maintained by volunteers and has the backing of several organizations. LibreOffice also relies upon donations from its users. If you'd like to donate you can do so here: <https://www.libreoffice.org/donate/>.

### **I am writing a software application. May I use programming code from LibreOffice in my program?**

You may, within the parameters set in the MPL and/or LGPL. Read the licenses: <https://www.mozilla.org/MPL/2.0/>.

### **Why do I need Java to run LibreOffice? Is it written in Java?**

LibreOffice is not written in Java; it is written in the C++ language. Java is one of several languages that can be used to extend the software. The Java JDK/JRE is only required for some features. The most notable one is the HSQLDB relational database engine. If you do not want to use Java, you can still use nearly all of the LibreOffice features. For more information, see "Minimum requirements" in Chapter 1, LibreOffice Basics.

### **How can I contribute to LibreOffice?**

You can help with the development and user support of LibreOffice in many ways, and you do not need to be a programmer. To start, check out this webpage: <https://www.libreoffice.org/community/get-involved/>

### **May I distribute the PDF of this book, or print and sell copies?**

Yes, as long as you meet the requirements of one of the licenses in the copyright statement at the beginning of this book. You do not have to request special permission. We request that you share with the project some of the profits you make from sales of books, in consideration of all the work we have put into producing them.

Donate to LibreOffice: <https://www.libreoffice.org/donate/>

## **What is new in LibreOffice 7.4 Community?**

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LibreOffice 7.4 Community includes many changes including:

### **GENERAL**

- Support for WebP images and EMZ/WMZ files
- Help pages for the ScriptForge scripting library
- Search field for the Extension Manager
- Performance and compatibility improvements

### **WRITER**

- Better change tracking in the footnote area
- Edited lists show original numbers in change tracking
- New typographic settings for hyphenation

### **CALC**

- Support for 16,384 columns in spreadsheets
- Extra functions in drop-down AutoSum widget
- New menu item to search for sheet names

### **IMPRESS**

- New support for document themes

A video summarizing the top new features in LibreOffice 7.4 Community is available on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PC8M4UzqpqE>

More information is in the announcement:

<https://blog.documentfoundation.org/blog/2022/08/18/libreoffice-7-4-community/> and in the Release Notes: <https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/ReleaseNotes/7.4>.

This user guide has been updated from *Getting Started Guide 7.3*. It covers some of the new features that are visible in the user interface, but not all; others are covered in the individual component guides. Portions of this guide have been rewritten for clarity, and some topics not in previous editions have been included.