

LibreOffice
The Document Foundation

Getting Started Guide

Preface

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Who is this book for?

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?

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.

Where to get more help

This book, the other LibreOffice user guides, the built-in 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 Help system. This is your first line of support for using LibreOffice.

To display the full Help system, press *F1* or select **LibreOffice Help** from the Help menu. In addition, you can choose whether to activate Tips, Extended tips, and the Help Agent (using **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > General**).

If Tips are enabled, 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.

Free online support

The LibreOffice community not only develops software, but provides free, volunteer-based support. See Table 1 and this web page: <http://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/>

You can get comprehensive online support from the community through mailing lists and the Ask LibreOffice website. Other websites run by users also offer free tips and tutorials. This forum provides community support for LibreOffice: <http://en.libreofficeforum.org/>

This site provides support for LibreOffice, among other programs:
<http://forum.openoffice.org/en/forum/>

Table 1: Free support for LibreOffice users

Free LibreOffice support	
Ask LibreOffice	Questions and answers from the LibreOffice community http://ask.libreoffice.org/en/questions/
Documentation	User guides, how-tos, and other documentation. http://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/documentation/ https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Documentation/Publications
FAQs	Answers to frequently asked questions http://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Faq
Mailing lists	Free community support is provided by a network of experienced users http://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/mailling-lists/
International support	The LibreOffice website in your language. http://www.libreoffice.org/international-sites/ International mailing lists http://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Local_Mailing_Lists
Accessibility options	Information about available accessibility options. http://www.libreoffice.org/get-help/accessibility/

Paid support and training

Alternatively, you can pay for support services. Service contracts can be purchased from a vendor or consulting firm specializing in LibreOffice.

What you see may be different

Illustrations

LibreOffice runs on Windows, Linux, and Mac OS X 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 differ because of the settings selected in LibreOffice. You can either use dialogs from your computer system (default) or dialogs provided by LibreOffice. To change to using LibreOffice dialogs:

- 1) On Linux and Windows operating systems, go to **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > General** on the main menu bar to open the dialog for general options.
- 2) On a Mac operating system, go to **LibreOffice > Preferences > General** on the main menu bar to open the dialog for general options.
- 3) Select *Use LibreOffice dialogs* in *Open/Save dialogs* and, in Linux and Mac OS X operating systems only, *Print dialogs* to display the LibreOffice dialogs on your computer display.
- 4) Click **OK** to save your settings and close the dialog.

Icons

The icons used to illustrate some of the many tools available in LibreOffice may differ from the ones used in this guide. The icons in this guide have been taken from a LibreOffice installation that has been set to display the Galaxy set of icons.

If you wish, you can change your LibreOffice software package to display Galaxy icons as follows:

- 1) On Linux and Windows operating systems, go to **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > View** on the main menu bar to open the dialog for view options.
- 2) On a Mac operating system, go to **LibreOffice > Preferences > View** on the main menu bar to open the dialog for view options.
- 3) In *User interface > Icon size and style* select *Galaxy* from the options available in the drop-down list.
- 4) Click **OK** to save your settings and close the dialog.

Note

Some Linux operating systems, for example Ubuntu, include LibreOffice as part of the installation and may not include the Galaxy set of icons. You should be able to download the Galaxy icon set from the software repository for your Linux operating system.

Using LibreOffice on a Mac

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

<i>Windows or Linux</i>	<i>Mac equivalent</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Tools > Options menu selection	LibreOffice > Preferences	Access setup options
<i>Right-click</i>	<i>Control+click</i> and/or <i>right-click</i> depending on computer setup	Open a context menu
<i>Ctrl (Control)</i>	⌘ (<i>Command</i>)	Used with other keys
<i>F5</i>	<i>Shift+⌘+F5</i>	Open the Navigator
<i>F11</i>	⌘+T	Open the Styles and Formatting window

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. It provides controls for you to use to specify how to carry out an action. The technical names for common controls are shown in Figure 1. In most cases we do not use the technical terms in this book, but it is useful to know them because the Help and other sources of information often use them.

- 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 text box next to it, or type in the text box).
- 5) Thumbnail or preview.
- 6) Drop-down list from which to select an item.
- 7) Push buttons.

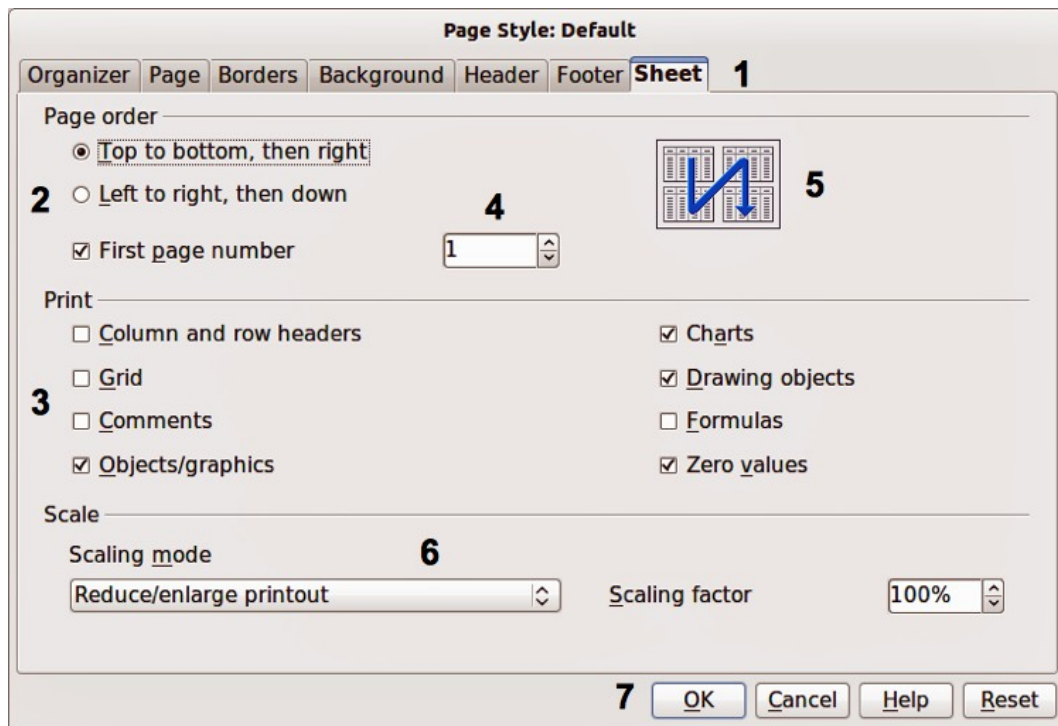


Figure 1: Dialog showing common controls

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 your document.

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

Who wrote this book?

This book was written by volunteers from the LibreOffice community. Profits from sales of the printed edition will be used to benefit the community.

Acknowledgements

This book is adapted from *Getting Started with OpenOffice.org 3.3*. The contributors to that book are:

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Frequently asked questions

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/>

May I distribute LibreOffice to anyone?

Yes.

How many computers may I install it on?

As many as you like.

May I sell it?

Yes.

May I use LibreOffice in my business?

Yes.

Is LibreOffice available in my language?

LibreOffice has been translated (localized) into over 40 languages, so your language probably is supported. Additionally, there are over 70 *spelling*, *hyphenation*, and *thesaurus* dictionaries 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.

How can you make it for free?

LibreOffice is developed and maintained by volunteers and has the backing of several organizations.

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

You may, within the parameters set in the LGPL. Read the license: <http://www.libreoffice.org/download/license/>

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.

Note: Java is available at no cost. If you do not want to use Java, you can still use nearly all of the features of LibreOffice.

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: <http://www.documentfoundation.org/contribution/>

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

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New features in LibreOffice 4

LibreOffice 4.0 offers a large number of new characteristics, which are listed on this page: <https://www.libreoffice.org/download/4-0-new-features-and-fixes>. Here are some highlights:

- Integration with several content and document management systems – including Alfresco, IBM FileNet P8, Microsoft Sharepoint 2010, Nuxeo, OpenText, SAP NetWeaver Cloud Service and others – through the CMIS standard.
- Better interoperability with DOCX and RTF documents, thanks to several new features and improvements like the possibility of importing annotations and attaching comments to text ranges.
- Possibility to import Microsoft Publisher documents, and further improvement of Visio import filters with the addition of 2013 version (just announced).
- Additional UI incremental improvements, including Unity integration and support of Firefox Themes (Personas) to give LibreOffice a personalized look.
- Different header and footer on the first page of a Writer document, without the need of a separate page style.
- Several performance improvements to Calc, plus new features such as export of charts as images (JPG and PNG) and new spreadsheet functions as defined in ODF OpenFormula.
- First release of Impress Remote Control App for Android, supported only on some Linux distributions. (The second release, coming soon, will be supported on all platforms: Windows, MacOS X, and all Linux distros and binaries.)
- Significant performance improvements when loading and saving many types of documents, with particular improvements for large ODS and XLSX spreadsheets and RTF files.
- Introduction of the widget layout technique for dialogs, which makes it easier to translate, resize and hide UI elements, reduces code complexity, and lays a foundation for a much improved user interface.
- Improved code contribution thanks to Gerrit: a web based code review system, facilitating the task for projects using Git version control system (although this is not specific of LibreOffice 4.0, it has entered the production stage just before the 4.0 branch).