



Writer 6.0 Guide

Chapter 10
Working with Templates

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Feedback

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Note for macOS users

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

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Introduction

A template is a document model that you use to create other documents. For example, you can create a template for business reports that has your company's logo on the first page. New documents created from this template will all have your company's logo on the first page.

Templates can contain anything that regular documents can contain, such as text, graphics, a set of styles, and user-specific setup information such as measurement units, language, the default printer, and toolbar and menu customization.

All documents in LibreOffice are based on templates. If you do not specify a template when you start a new Writer document, then the document is based on the default template for text documents. If you have not specified a default template, Writer uses the blank template for text documents that is installed with LibreOffice. See "Setting a default template" on page 8.

LibreOffice supplies only a few user-selectable templates. You can add templates from other sources (see page 7) as well as creating your own templates (see page 5).

Using a template to create a document

Creating a document from the Templates dialog

To use a template to create a document:

- 1) From the Menu bar, choose **File > New > Templates**, or click the small arrow next to the **New** icon on the Standard toolbar and select **Templates**.

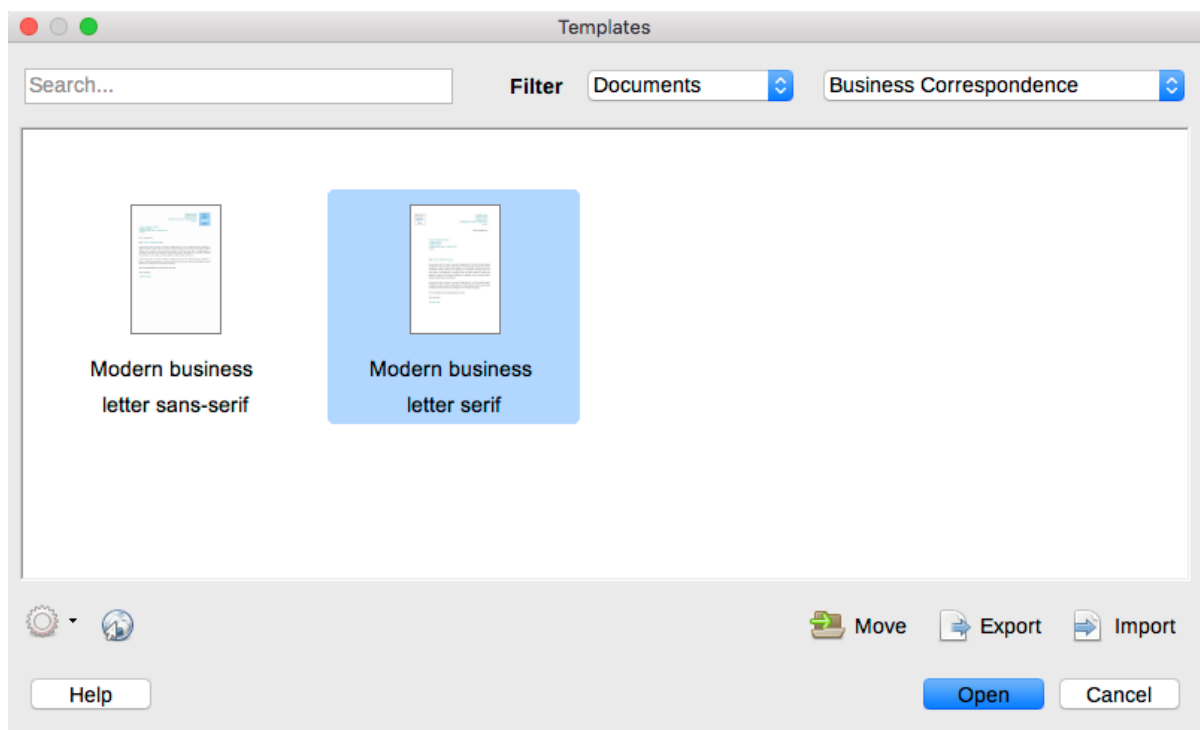


Figure 1: Templates dialog

- 2) From the Filters list at the top of the Templates dialog, optionally select a category.
- 3) Find and double-click the required template. A new document based on the selected template opens in Writer. You can then edit and save the new document just as you would any other document.

The template the document is based upon is listed in **File > Properties > General**.



Note

The connection between a template and a document remains until the template is modified and, the next time that the document is opened, you choose not to update it to match the template.

If you copy or move the document to a different computer, which does not have a copy of that template installed, the connection is broken, even though it continues to be listed in the document's properties. See "Associating a document with a different template" on page 9 for a way to reconnect a template to a document, if required.

Creating a document from a template in the Start Center

You can create a document from the template view of the Start Center, which is visible when no other document is open.

To open the Templates dialog from the Start Center, click the **Templates** icon in the left pane. The icon is also a drop-down list to select the templates of a given type of document. The Manage Templates option on the list opens the Templates dialog.

Creating a template

You can create templates in two ways: by saving a document as a template or by using a wizard.

Creating a template from a document

In addition to formatting, any settings that can be added to or modified in a document can be saved within a template. For example:

- Printer settings.
- General behaviors set from **Tools > Options**, such as Paths.
- Menu and toolbar customizations; see Chapter 21.

Templates can also contain predefined text, saving you from having to type it every time you create a new document. For example, a letter template may contain your name, address, and salutation.



Tip

You can save a template from the usual Save dialog, but it won't be listed with other templates. You might want to do this to share a template easily with others.

To create a template from a document and save it to My Templates:

- 1) Open a new or existing document of the type you want to make into a template (text document, spreadsheet, drawing, or presentation).
- 2) Add any content that you want to appear in any document you create from the new template, for example company logo, copyright statement, and so on.
- 3) Create or modify any styles or other formatting, such as Autotext, that you want to use in the new template.
- 4) From the Menu bar, choose **File > Templates > Save as Template**. The Save as Template dialog (Figure 2) displays the existing categories and a textbox to enter a name for the new template.
- 5) Select the required category and click **Save**.

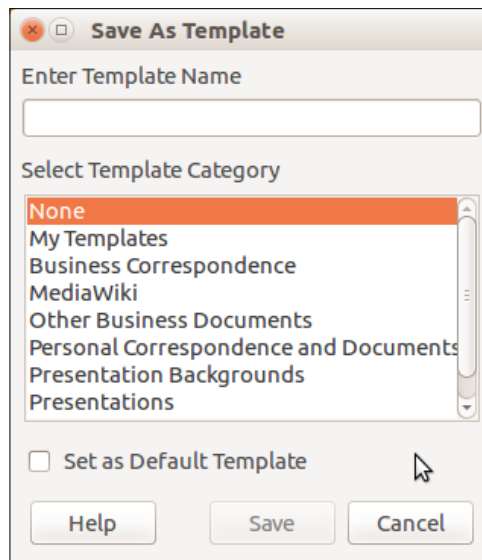


Figure 2: Save as Template dialog

Creating a template using a wizard

You can use wizards to create templates for letters, faxes, and agendas, and to create presentations and Web pages.

For example, the Fax Wizard guides you through the following choices:

- Type of fax (business or personal).
- Document elements like the date, subject line (business fax), salutation, and complimentary close.
- Options for sender and recipient information (business fax).
- Text to include in the footer (business fax).

To create a template using a wizard:

- 1) From the Menu bar, choose **File > Wizards > [type of template required]**.
- 2) Follow the instructions on the pages of the wizard. This process is slightly different for each type of template, but the format is similar.
- 3) In the last section of the wizard, you can specify the template name that will show in the Templates dialog, and also the name and location for saving the template. The two names can be different but this may later cause confusion. The default location is your user templates folder, but you can choose a different location.
- 4) To set the file name or change the folder, select the **Path** icon (the three dots to the right of the location). On the Save As dialog, make your selections and click **Save**.
- 5) Finally, you can choose whether to create a new document from the template immediately, or manually change the template, and then click Finish to save the template. For future documents, you can re-use the template created by the wizard, just like any other template.

Editing a template

You can edit a template's styles and content, and then, if you wish, you can reapply the template's styles to documents that were created from that template. You cannot reapply content.

To edit a template:

- 1) From the Menu bar, choose **File > Templates > Manage Templates** or press *Ctrl+Shift+N*. The Templates dialog opens. You can also open the Templates dialog from the Start Center.
- 2) Navigate to the template that you want to edit. Click once on it to activate the file handling controls. Right-click to open the context menu and click **Edit**. The template opens in LibreOffice.
- 3) Edit the template as you would edit any other document. To save your changes, choose **File > Save** from the Menu bar.

Updating a document from a changed template

If you make any changes to a template and its styles, the next time you open a document that was created from the template before the changes, a confirmation message is displayed.

To update the document:

- 1) Select **Update Styles** to apply the changed styles in the template to the document.
- 2) Select **Keep Old Styles** if you do not want to apply the changed styles in the template to the document (but see the Caution notice below).



Caution

If you choose **Keep Old Styles**, the document is no longer connected to the template, even though the template is still listed under **File > Properties > General**. To reconnect the document to the template, you will have to copy it into an empty document based on the template, as described in “Associating a document with a different template” on page 9.

Adding templates obtained from other sources

LibreOffice refers to sources for templates as repositories. A repository can be local (a directory on your computer to which you have downloaded templates) or remote (a URL from which you can download templates).

You can get to the official template repository by using the **Browse online templates** icon in the lower left of the Templates dialog, as shown in Figure 3, or by visiting <https://extensions.libreoffice.org/templates>.

On other websites, you may find collections of templates that have been packaged into extension (.oxt) files. These are installed a little differently, as described below.

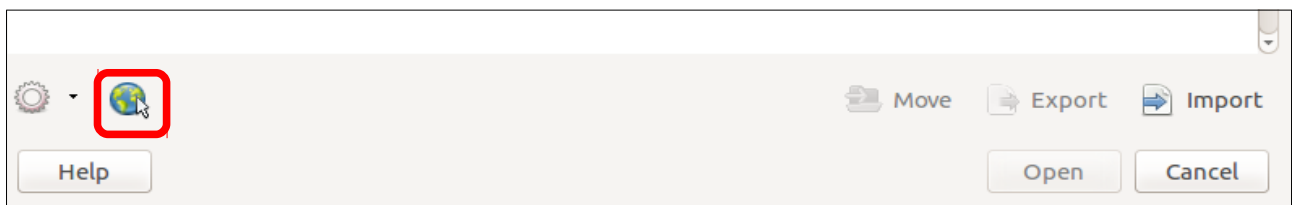


Figure 3: Getting more templates for LibreOffice

Installing individual templates

To install a template:

- 1) Download the template and save it anywhere on your computer.
- 2) Import the template into a template folder by following the instructions in “Importing a template” on page 11.



Tip

(For advanced users) You can manually copy new templates into the template folders. The location varies with your computer's operating system. To learn where the template folders are stored on your computer, go to **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > Paths**.

Installing collections of templates

The Extension Manager provides an easy way to install collections of templates that have been packaged as extensions. Follow these steps:

- 1) Download the extension package (.oxt or .zip file) and save it anywhere on your computer.
- 2) In LibreOffice, select **Tools > Extension Manager** from the Menu bar. In the Extension Manager dialog, click **Add** to open a file browser window.
- 3) Find and select the package of templates you want to install and click **Open**. The package begins installing. You may be asked to accept a license agreement.
- 4) When the package installation is complete, the templates are available for use through **File > Templates > Manage Templates** and **File > New > Templates** and the extension is listed in the Extension Manager.

See Chapter 21, Customizing Writer, for more about the Extension Manager.

Setting a default template

If you create a document by choosing **File > New > Text Document** from the Menu bar, Writer creates the document from the default template for text documents. You can, however, set a custom template to be the default. You can reset the default later, if you choose.



Note for Microsoft Word users

You may know that Microsoft Word employs a `normal.dot` or `normal.dotx` file for its default template and how to regenerate it.

LibreOffice does not have a similar default template file; the “factory defaults” are embedded within the software.

Setting a template as the default

Most default settings, such as page size and page margins, can be changed in **Tools > Options**, but those changes apply only to the document you are working on. To make those changes the default settings for that document type, you need to replace the default template with a new one.

You can set any template in the Templates dialog to be the default for that document type:

- 1) From the Menu bar, choose **File > Templates > Manage Templates**.
- 2) In the Templates dialog, open the category containing the template that you want to set as the default, then select the template.
- 3) Right-click the selected template and select **Set as default** from the context menu (see Figure 4).

The next time that you create a document of that type by choosing **File > New**, the document will be created from this template.

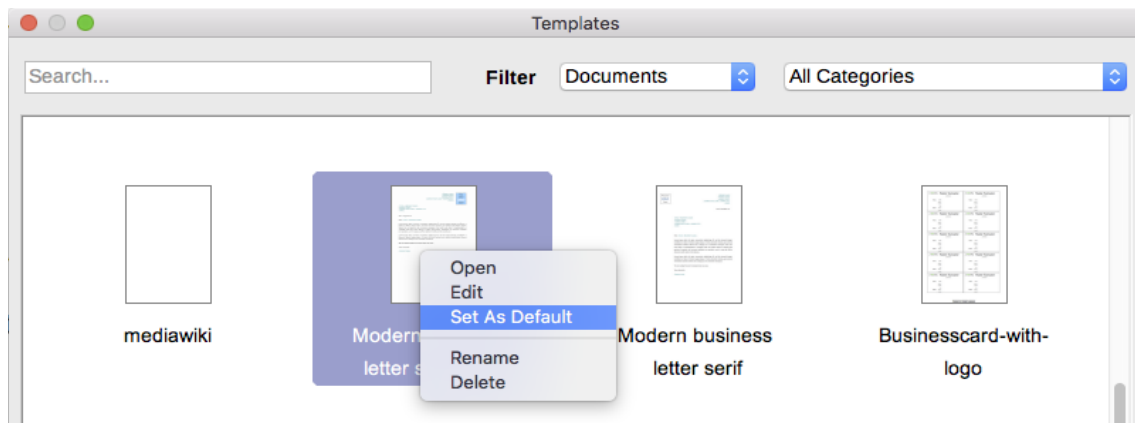


Figure 4: Setting a template as the default template for documents

Resetting Writer's default template as the default

To re-enable Writer's original default template as the default:

- 1) From the Menu bar, choose **File > Templates > Manage Templates**.
- 2) In the Templates dialog (Figure 5), click the **Settings** icon on the bottom left.
- 3) Point to **Reset Default Template** on the drop-down menu, and click **Text Document**.

This choice does not appear unless a custom template had been set as the default, as described in the previous section.

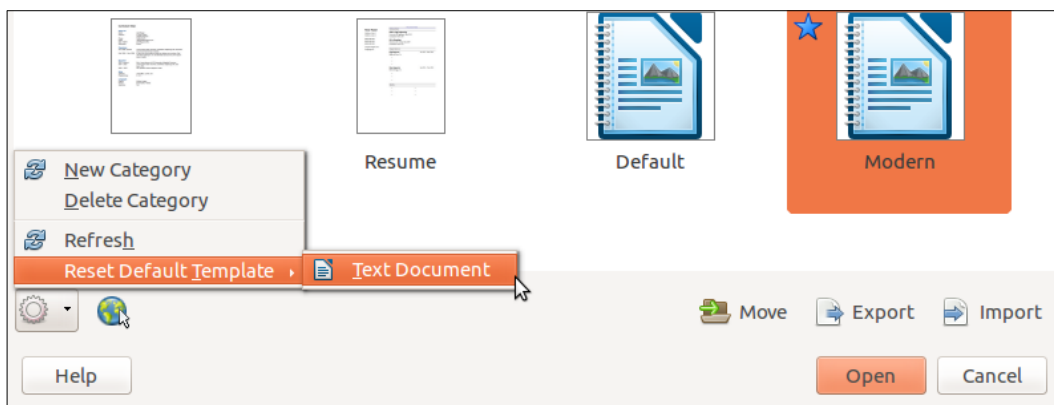


Figure 5: Resetting the default template for text documents

The next time that you create a document by choosing **File > New > Text Document**, the document will be created from Writer's default template.

Associating a document with a different template

At times you might want to associate a document with a different template, or perhaps you're working with a document that did not start from a template.

One of the major advantages of using templates is the ease of updating styles in more than one document, as described in Chapter 9, Working with Styles. If you update styles in a document by loading a new set of styles from a different template (as described in Chapter 9), the document has no association with the template from which the styles were loaded. Instead, you need to associate the document with the different template.

For best results, the names of styles should be the same in the existing document and the new template. If they are not, you need to use **Edit > Find & Replace** to replace old styles with new ones. See Chapter 2, Working with Text: Basics, for more about replacing styles.

- 1) Use **File > New > Templates**. In the Templates dialog, double-click the template you want to use. A new document opens, containing any text or graphics that were in the template.
- 2) Delete any unwanted text or graphics from this new document.
- 3) Open the document you want to change. (It opens in a new window.)
- 4) Use **Edit > Select All**, or press *Ctrl+A*, to select everything in the document.
- 5) Use **Edit > Copy**, or press *Ctrl+C*, to copy the contents of the document to the clipboard.
- 6) Click in the blank document created in step 1. Use **Edit > Paste**, or press *Ctrl+V*, to paste the contents from the old document into the new one.
- 7) Update the table of contents, if there is one. Close the old file without saving. Use **File > Save As** to save this new file with the name of the file from which content was taken. When asked, confirm you wish to overwrite the old file. Or, you may prefer to save the new file under a new name and preserve the old file under its original name.



Caution

Any changes recorded (tracked) in the document will be lost during this process. The resulting document will contain only the changed text.

Organizing templates

Writer can only lists templates that are in LibreOffice template categories. You can create new template categories and use them to organize your templates. For example, you might have one category for report templates and another for letter templates. You can also import and export templates.

To begin, choose **File > Templates > Manage Templates** to open the Templates dialog.

Creating a template category

To create a template category:

- 1) Click the **Settings** icon on the Templates dialog.
- 2) Click **New category** on the context menu (see Figure 6).
- 3) In the pop-up dialog, type a name for the new category and click **OK**.



Note

You cannot create a sub-category inside a template category in LibreOffice.

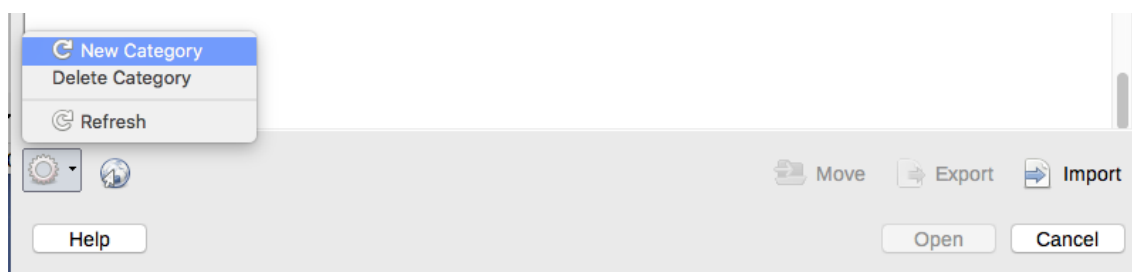


Figure 6: Creating a new category

Deleting a template category

To delete a category, click the Settings icon select the category from the pop-up Category list, and then click **OK**. When a message box appears asking you to confirm the deletion, click **Yes**.

Moving a template

To move a template from one template category to another, select it in the Templates dialog, and click the **Move** icon in the bottom center of the dialog (see Figure 7). In the popup dialog, select the required category and click **OK**.

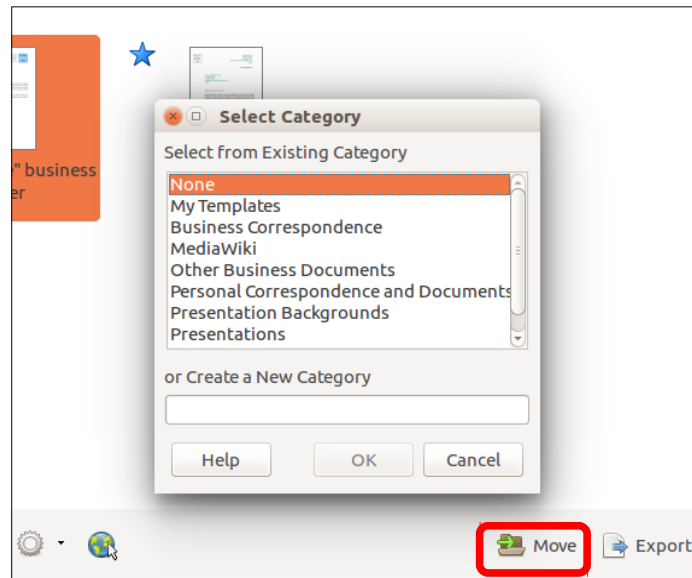


Figure 7: Moving templates to another category

Deleting a template

To delete a template:

- 1) In the Templates dialog, select the category that contains the template you want to delete.
- 2) Select the template to delete.
- 3) Right-click to open the context menu of the template and click **Delete**. A message box appears and asks you to confirm the deletion. Click **Yes**.

Importing a template

Before you can use a template in LibreOffice, it must be in one of the folders listed for the Template path in **Tools > Options > LibreOffice > Paths**:

- 1) In the Templates dialog, click the Import icon on the bottom right. The **Select Category** dialog appears.
- 2) Find and select the category where you want to import the template and click **OK**. A standard file browser window opens.
- 3) Find and select the template that you want to import and click **Open**. The file browser window closes and the template appears in the selected category.

Exporting a template

To export a template to another location in your computer or network:

- 1) In the Templates dialog, locate the category that contains the template to export.
- 2) Select the template that you want to export.
- 3) Click the **Export** icon in the bottom right of the dialog. The Save As window opens.
- 4) Find the folder into which you want to export the template and select **Save**.