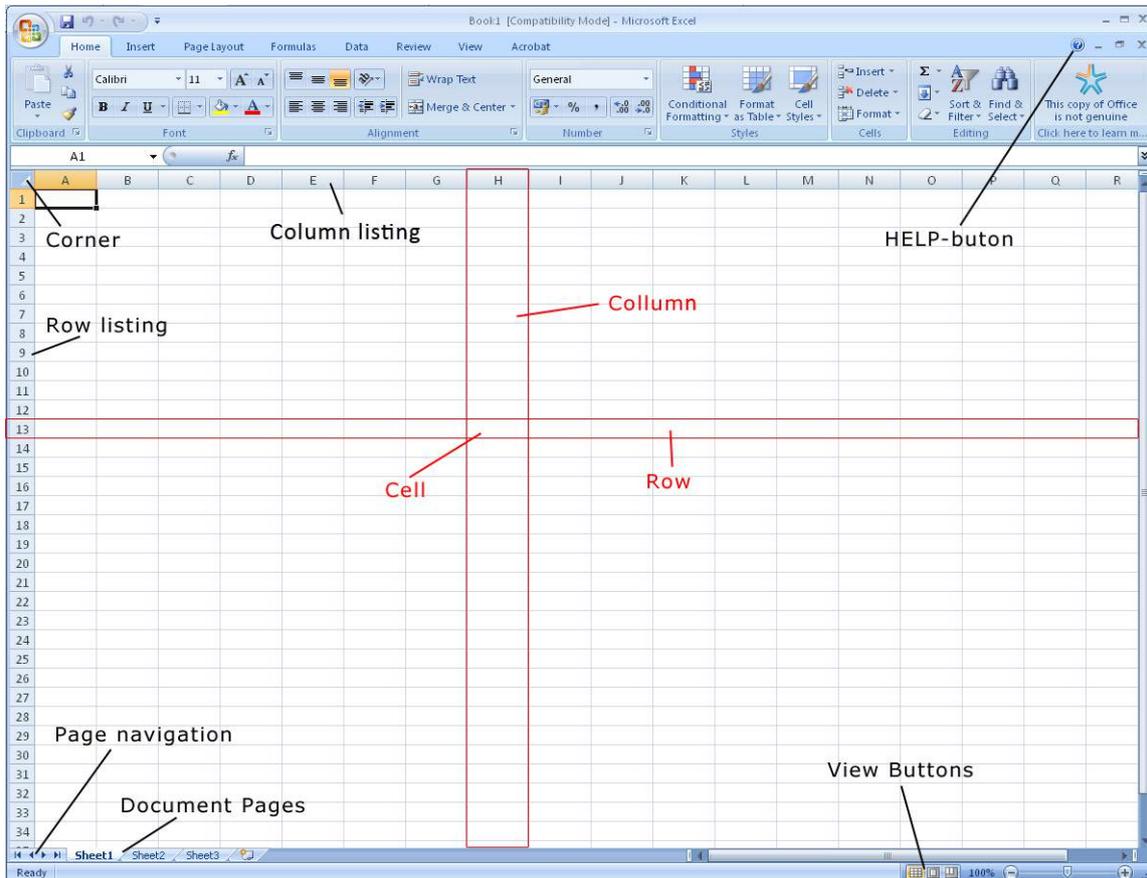


## 2 First Look at Excel

In this section we will review the basic structure of Excel 2007. You start the program by clicking the Windows Start button at the bottom left, then click Programs.

In the programs menu you will find a folder called Microsoft Office, which is where Excel is located.



**Figure 1:** Excel's structure. Currently, cell A1 has been selected. I have highlighted column H and row 13. The cell where column H and row 13 meet is called H13.

### 2.1 The Screen and its Elements

When you start Excel, you will automatically start in a new, blank workbook.

Excel basically looks and works the same way it has in the last 4–5 versions. If you already know Excel, you can use it exactly as you have always done. Nevertheless, there have been some changes and improvements different places, and they are not just cosmetic.

### 2.1.1 Workbooks and Spreadsheets

An ordinary Excel file is called a “Workbook” and can contain different things. The most important thing is that it can contain worksheets, but it may also contain chart sheets and small programs that you can do yourself. The most important thing is to be aware that an Excel file is not necessarily just a spreadsheet but a workbook that can contain many spreadsheets and charts.

### 2.1.2 The Ribbon

The Ribbon with its Tabs and buttons is located at the top. The Ribbon is the most obvious change in Excel compared to previous versions, and it replaces the old menus and toolbars. But the Ribbon does not replace only the menus and toolbars. Many functions which previously required that you filled out various dialog boxes have become more directly accessible in the Ribbon

In my case it took some time to get used to the Ribbon because I have been accustomed to the menu bar and toolbars for many years. The Ribbon is far more visual and task-oriented, and it looks very nice. Whether it is an improvement is perhaps a matter of taste. It was difficult for me to get used to it after so many years with the menu bar and toolbars.

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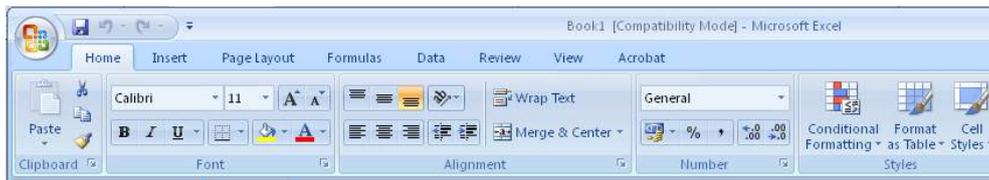
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But somehow, I have become quite fond of it. The old toolbar had a tendency to “mess around” at the top of the screen, whereas the Ribbon stays in place, so when you need a button, it will be in the same place as last time you used it.

There are also many exciting new features for formatting and graphics, and the old shortcut keys also still work.



**Figure 2:** A section of the Ribbon.

It is also a great improvement that small “tool tips” pop up when you point to a button that has been upgraded. They have nice graphics and more detailed explanations of what the button does. It is a great help when you want to know the program.

### 2.1.3 The Office Button



**Figure 3:** The Office Button

In the top left corner of the screen you will find the round **Office Button**. It corresponds by and large to the old “File” menu.

If you click on the Office button a menu pops up. This is the menu you must enter when you want to create a new blank spreadsheet, and when you need to save it.

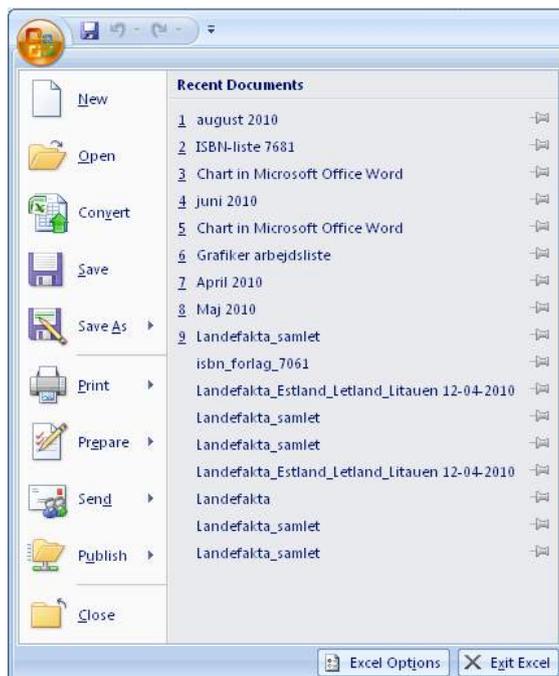


Figure 4: Clicking on the Office Button opens this menu.

It is also via the **Office Button** that you can find **Excel Options**, where you can change the settings for how Excel should work.

#### 2.1.4 Quick Access

The small discrete toolbar “Quick Access”, where with a single click you can save, undo, etc., is located just to the right of the **Office Button**. “Quick Access” can be customised so that you can choose the features that suit you best. You do this by right-clicking on a button and choosing **Customize Quick Access Toolbar**. Alternatively you can click the small arrow to the right of the toolbar, which enables you to quickly select and deselect various features.

#### 2.1.5 The Workspace

The workspace is located underneath the Ribbon, and this is where you have your spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is a huge table with “columns” and “rows”. The columns are named with letters in the “column headings”, and the rows are labelled with row numbers in the “row headings.” By clicking on a column heading, you can select the cells in the whole column, and the same is true if you click on a row heading.

The “Corner” is located in the top left corner of the worksheet. By clicking on the corner you can select all the cells in the entire worksheet.

The cells are the basic elements of the worksheet; this is where we type in our data and formulas. Wherever a row and a column meet, we have a “cell”. Each cell in the worksheet has a unique name. For example, the cell located where column C and row 4 meet is called “C4”. A cell can contain numbers, words and formulas.

Formulas are a kind of commands that you type into a cell, which make the cell display the result of a calculation. You do not have to worry about that yet, I promise we will return to it in more detail.

### 2.1.6 Sheet Tabs

The “Sheet Tabs” are located just below the worksheet, on the left side. This is because you can work with multiple worksheets at once. An Excel file is therefore also called a “Workbook”, because it is similar to a folder containing a number of spreadsheets.



Figure 5: The Sheet Tabs.

The Sheet Tabs are by default named “Sheet1”, “Sheet2” etc., but you can give them more meaningful names yourself. You can also delete and add Sheet Tabs, and thus spreadsheets.

An advertisement for an English course. It features a woman with dark hair and sunglasses on her head, smiling. To her left, text reads: "I studied English for 16 years but... ...I finally learned to speak it in just six lessons" Jane, Chinese architect. To her right, a green speech bubble contains the text "ENGLISH OUT THERE". Below the speech bubble, text says: "Click to hear me talking before and after my unique course download". The background is a blurred image of a city street.

If you right-click on one of the Sheet Tabs, a menu pops up giving you the opportunity to do various different things. You can add, delete and copy Sheet Tabs, and thus the spreadsheets they represent. You can also change the order of the Tabs and give each Tab its own colour, which can facilitate the overview.

### 2.1.7 Display Buttons

You can use the display buttons to adjust the way you view the spreadsheet. When you start a new spreadsheet, it is displayed in “Normal View”, but you can also view it as a “Page Impression”, which is somewhat similar to the way it would look if you were to print the sheet.

“Show page breaks” is another option, where you can view and adjust the page breaks in the print-out.



**Figure 6:** The display buttons.

Finally, there is the zoom function, which allows you to enlarge or reduce the view of the sheet. The zoom function does not affect how the spreadsheet appears on a print-out.

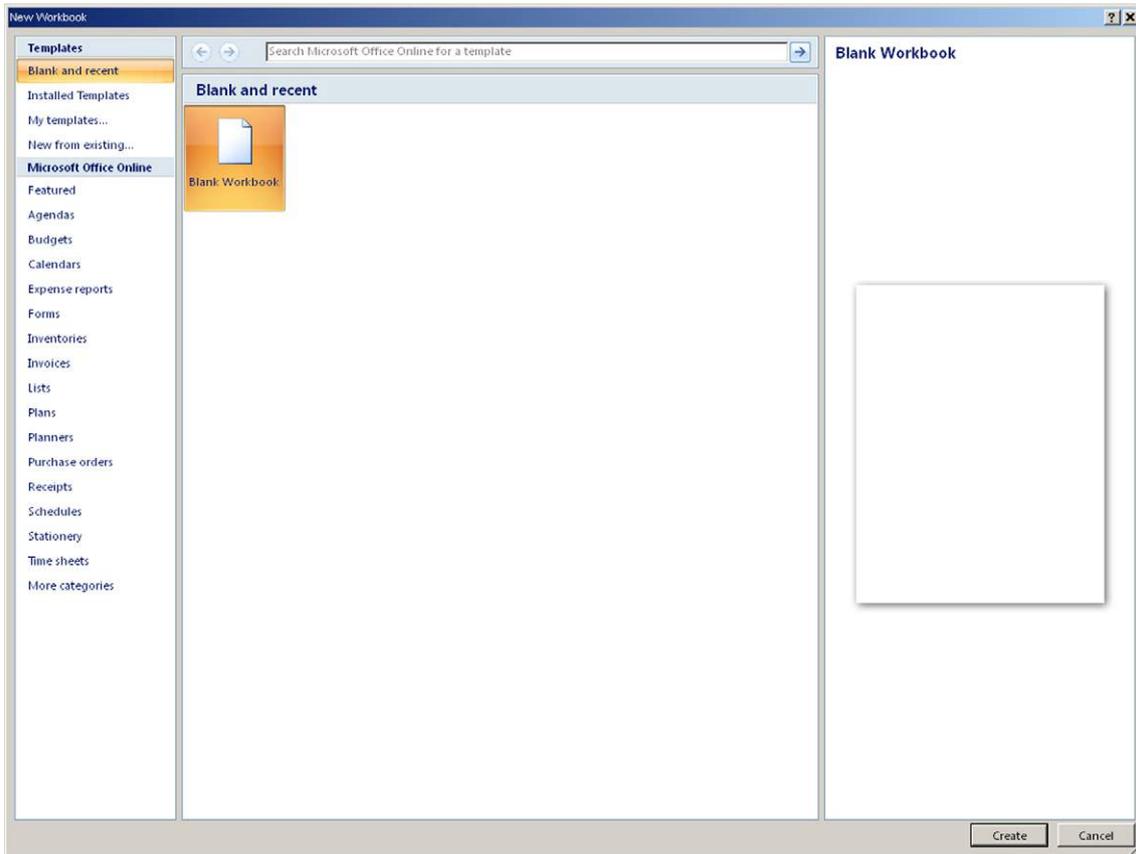
The zoom function is easy to use, but a better way in my opinion is to hold down the CTRL key on your keyboard while scrolling up and down with the scroll wheel on your mouse. Of course this requires that you have a mouse with a scroll wheel.

### 2.1.8 Start a New Spreadsheet

When Excel starts up, the program will display a new, blank workbook. This is fine, but you do not always have to build everything up from scratch. Alternatively, you can start a new spreadsheet manually, using various templates.

1. Click on the Office Button in the top left corner of the screen.
2. Click on **New**.

You will now have the opportunity to choose which template you want to use. The templates are organised in categories on the left side, which you can click on. When later in the book you have to perform an exercise, and I ask that you start with a blank worksheet, select the **Empty and Latest** category, and then the template **Blank Spreadsheet**. Later, when you get more familiar with it, you can try different templates.



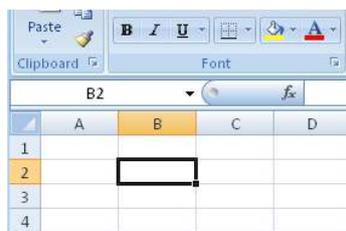
**Figure 7:** There are many possibilities when you want to start a new spreadsheet.

Templates for invoicing budgeting and even monitoring of blood pressure have already been installed.

If you do not think the preinstalled templates are enough, it is possible to download many more via the categories under “Microsoft Office Online”.

## 2.2 Navigating the spreadsheet

You can use both mouse and keyboard to navigate the worksheet, but I recommend that you practice using the keyboard. It is a faster and ergonomically better solution. You’ll need to move things around a lot in the spreadsheet, and if you always use the mouse you could easily develop a “mouse-arm”



**Figure 8:** Here B2 is the active cell.

Using the keyboard to move around has other advantages which I shall return to later.

There is always one, and only one, active cell in the spreadsheet. It is identified by a thick black border all around it called the “cell pointer”. You can choose a second active cell using the arrow keys or the mouse.

Try pressing lightly on the arrow keys on the keyboard to move the cursor.

## 2.2.1 Navigating Large Spreadsheets

When you navigate large spreadsheets, it becomes really difficult to use the mouse. You can move quickly to specific locations in a spreadsheet using the keyboard.

If you press down the CTRL key and press the HOME key on the keyboard, the cursor moves to cell A1.

If you hold down the CTRL key and use the arrow keys, you can skip to “where something is happening.” It could, for example, be the outer edge of a table. If you have a table with 1000 rows and 50 columns in your spreadsheet, pressing the down arrow while you press down the CTRL key will take you to the last row of the table. Similarly, the up arrow will take you to the top. The principle is the same for moving right and left.

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This can also be used for selection of cells. If, in addition to pressing down the CTRL key, press down the Shift key as well, the cells will be selected.

### 2.2.2 Cell Pointer and Auto Fill



**Figur 9:** The cell pointer. Note the littel black box in the bottom right corner.

If you take a close look at the cell pointer, you'll notice a small black square in the lower right corner of the cursor. This is the location of a feature with the awkward name "Auto Fill". Auto Fill can be used via the mouse if you need to quickly copy some cells. When you point to the little black square with the mouse the mouse cursor changes to a small black cross. Keep the left mouse button down and move the mouse until you have marked some cells, then release the mouse button again.

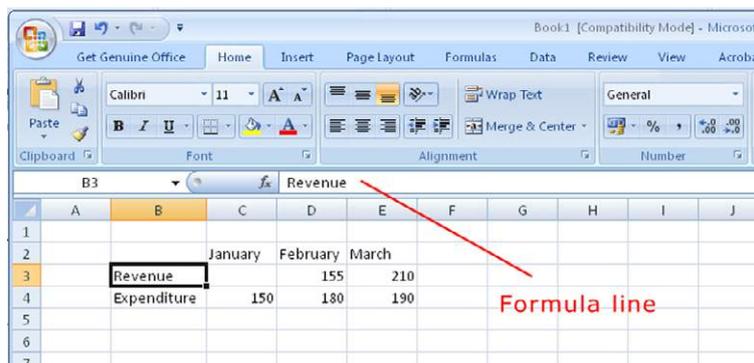
Several things can happen when you do this. Either a simple copying of content from the active cell will take place or a "series" will be introduced. If, for example, you typed "Monday" in the active cell and used Auto Fill to copy it, the subsequent cells will read "Tuesday", "Wednesday", etc. This is one kind of series. Excel has a number of predefined ranges for particular weekdays and months. You can also create your own series, and we will come back to that later in the book.

## 2.3 Writing in the Cells

Try typing some numbers and text in different cells. When you finish typing something into a cell, press the ENTER key on the keyboard. The cell below the cell you just typed in will become the active cell. Note also that if you write text in a cell, the text will be aligned to the left. If you type in numbers, the figure will be adjusted to the right.

If you want to change something in a cell, you can double-click on it, which enables you to change the content. If it is the active cell you want to change, you can also press F2 on your keyboard.

If you merely wish to add something new you just double-click on the active cell.



**Figure 10:** The Formula Bar displays the content of the cell.

Also note the “Formula Bar”, as shown in Figure 11. It is currently showing what you type into the cells, and may not seem especially important right now. But later, when you use formulas in some of the cells, the Formula Bar will show what kind of formula that is used in the active cell, while the active cell displays the result.

## 2.4 Adaptation of Cell Size

The cells are exactly the same from the start, but this can be changed. You can change the cell size by changing the row height and column width. Try moving your mouse over the column headers (A, B, C, etc.). You will notice that the mouse cursor changes when it approaches a new column. When it does, you can press the left mouse button down while moving the mouse to adjust column width. The same method can be used to change the row height.

Instead of clicking and dragging with your mouse, you can double-click it. This will adjust the column width so that it is just wide enough to show the largest cell in the column. You can experiment with this yourself. This method can also be used to adjust the row height.

## 2.5 Selecting Cells

To select a single cell, just move the cell pointer to it so that it becomes the active cell. If you want to select multiple cells, there are two ways to do it.

1. Point to a cell with the mouse, press the left mouse button down and drag the mouse, by which an area will be selected. Release the left mouse button when you have selected the area you wanted. The cell you clicked on first will be the active cell.
2. Move the cursor to the corner of the area you want to select. Hold down the Shift key on your keyboard and press the arrow keys. As long as you hold down the Shift the selection will be adjusted. Release the Shift key when you are done selecting.

### 2.5.1 Compound Selection

You can also select multiple independent fields at once. Here you will have to use both mouse and keyboard simultaneously.

You must hold down the CTRL key on your keyboard, then select the desired fields with the mouse. Experiment a little with it yourself.

### 2.5.2 Navigating Inside a Selection

If you have selected an area and then press one of the arrow keys on the keyboard, the selection will disappear. That is not always what we want, so instead, use the TAB key and ENTER key on your keyboard to move to the right and downward respectively. You can use the same keys to move left and upwards by pressing down the SHIFT key simultaneously.



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