

Introduction

PowerPoint is the program that helps you sell your message. PowerPoint is a presentation program that can create beautiful slideshows with text, images, audio and video, and it is also the program that is used if you have to make transparencies for the overhead projector.

PowerPoint is the program in Office 2007 that is easiest to learn. You can instantly create nice-looking material for your sales pitch, your lecture or the screen in your shop window. PowerPoint can do much of the work for you, so you can concentrate on formulating your messages properly.

PowerPoint does not make great demands on your computer. Your results will therefore depend more on thinking about how you want to present your message.

What Can You Learn?

This book is not a point-for-point review of all PowerPoint's functions. Instead I opted to make it more task-oriented, so you will be able to perform the tasks for which PowerPoint is normally used.

Basically, PowerPoint cannot do anything apart from making presentations, so the book will be about how you put up your slides, and how to add text, graphics, charts, pictures and video clips.

We will also have a little fun with animations, so the presentations can become more lively

To ensure that your message does not drown in colours and effects, you will also receive some good advice on presentation skills along the way. A good presentation does not only depend on making an impressive PowerPoint presentation.

A Small Reader Guide

If you have not worked with PowerPoint before, I recommend that you read the entire book from one end to another. You can then use it as a reference, since I have tried to arrange the book in a logical manner, so you can quickly find a chapter that deals with a problem similar to the one you must solve.

If you already have a lot of experience with PowerPoint, you can probably skip some of the first sections if you want to get to the more advanced features.

In this book we will be working on a presentation that we continually put different things into, but that does not mean that you cannot skip some of the exercises if you have already mastered the topic. Each exercise starts with a new slide in the presentation exercise.

When I ask you to "click" on something, I mean a click with the left mouse button. A double-click is two quick clicks with the left mouse button. If I want you to click with the right mouse button, I call it a "right-click".

Buttons and menus that you can/need to click are always written with underlined font. This means that when you see underlined text, you should be able to find something similar on the screen that you can click on.

Now we are ready to start the program and look at the all the exiting stuff!

New Features in PowerPoint 2007

Ribbons and Tabs

Like other applications in the Office package, PowerPoint has gotten a new and smarter look. The first thing that jumps out is that the traditional menu bars and toolbars have been replaced by the new "Ribbon". The Ribbon contains Tabs, and each Tab contains buttons for the functions that previously were found in the menus and toolbars. The Ribbon is far more visual and task-oriented and adapts constantly to the activity you are doing.

If you have been accustomed to working with menus and toolbars for many years, the Ribbon requires some getting used to, but after some time you get used to it and even become fond of it. Previously, many features required that you click your way deep into the menus and dialog boxes. In the Ribbon, many settings and features have been pulled out so they are more directly accessible.

Where do I Find the Old Buttons?

Those who have used PowerPoint for some time and have just switched to version 2007, will probably have some initial problems with finding the functions they normally use. The main reason is that many functions are modified in connection with implementation of the "Ribbon". I list here the main features, so you can quickly get used to the new interface.

New, Open, Save and Save As are located in the Office Button. The quick Save function is located in the "Quick Access" toolbar next to the Office Button.

Cut, Copy, Paste and Paste Special are located far left in the Ribbon. If you click at the bottom of the large Paste button it corresponds to Paste Special.

Preview and Print, are located in the Office Button as sub-items to the Print menu item. I recommend that you put them in the "Quick Access" toolbar, so they are easier to reach.

Slide Master does not exist anymore. Instead, you can choose the colour and layout themes and customise them infinitely.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts are combinations of keystrokes on the keyboard that provide access to most of the features that you would otherwise choose with the mouse.

If you are fond of using keyboard shortcuts instead of the mouse, you should know that they work a bit differently in all of Office 2007 compared to previous versions.

PowerPoint is probably not the program where you are most inclined to use shortcut keys, but I recommend using them anyway. Instead of using the mouse constantly, you can often activate many different functions much faster by using shortcut keys.

I highly recommend that you practice the shortcuts to the functions you use most, especially if you are using the 10-finger system. Firstly, you can work much faster, and secondly, you reduce the risk of getting a "mouse-arm" because you can sit in a good relaxed posture with both hands resting on the keyboard.

By simply pressing the ALT key on your keyboard small squares with numbers or letters appear above the Office Button, the Quick Access Toolbar and each Tab in the Ribbon. The numbers and letters that appear correspond to the key you must press to select the function. Here you no longer need to press the ALT key at the same time. For example, if you press "N" the Insert Tab appears, and the features in this Tab will be automatically marked with shortcuts. Again, you just type what is in the small squares, without pressing the ALT key.

Some shortcuts contain more characters to be typed on the keyboard. These include the Shapes feature under the Insert Tab. It uses the shortcut "SH". In that case you just type S and H.



Figure 1: Viewing shortcuts.

This arrangement makes sense when you use the 10-finger system. Once you have incorporated the new shortcuts you can work even more comfortably with shortcut keys, because you do not have to twist your hands to reach the CTRL or ALT key plus one more key anymore.

Thankfully, the old shortcuts also seem to still work, so if you have stubborn habits regarding some functions, like cut, copy and paste, you can also still use the shortcuts you have always used. I have not had any difficulties myself.