

# Introduction to MS Office

**Microsoft Office** (or simply **Office**) is a family of server software, and services developed by Microsoft. It was first announced by Bill Gates on August 1, 1988, in Las Vegas. The first version of Office contained Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint. Over the years, Office applications have grown substantially closer with shared features such as a common spell checker, data integration etc. Office is produced in several versions targeted towards different end-users and computing environments. The original, and most widely used version, is the desktop version, available for PCs running the Windows, Linux and Mac OS operating systems. Office Online is a version of the software that runs within a web browser, while Microsoft also maintains Office apps for Android and iOS.

Microsoft Office is a suite of desktop productivity applications that is designed specifically to be used for office or business use. It is a proprietary product of Microsoft Corporation and was first released in 1990. Microsoft Office is available in 35 different languages and is supported by Windows, Mac and most Linux variants. It mainly consists of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, OneNote, Outlook and Publisher applications. Microsoft Office was primarily created to automate the manual office work with a collection of purpose-built applications.

Each of the applications in Microsoft Office serves as specific knowledge or office domain such as:

1. Microsoft Word: Helps users in creating text documents.
2. Microsoft Excel: Creates simple to complex data/numerical spreadsheets.
3. Microsoft PowerPoint: Stand-alone application for creating professional multimedia presentations.
4. Microsoft Access: Database management application.
5. Microsoft Publisher: Introductory application for creating and publishing marketing materials.
6. Microsoft OneNote: Alternate to a paper notebook, it enables an user to neatly organize their notes.

Besides desktop applications, Microsoft Office is available to use online or from cloud under a lighter (Office Web Apps) and full (Office 365) version. As of 2016, Microsoft Office 2016 is the latest version, available in 4 different variants including Office Home Student 2016, Office Home Business 2016 and Office Professional 2 and the online/cloud Office 365 Home Premium.

## MS Office Applications and its Functions

Currently, MS Office 2016 version is being used across the world and all its applications are widely used for personal and professional purposes.

Discussed below are the applications of Microsoft Office along with each of their functions.

### 1. MS Word

- First released on October 25, 1983
- Extension for Doc files is “.doc”

- It is useful in creating text documents
- Templates can be created for Professional use with the help of MS Word
- Work Art, colours, images, animations can be added along with the text in the same file which is downloadable in the form of a document
- Authors can use for writing/ editing their work

To read in detail about Microsoft Word, its features, uses and to get some sample questions based on this program of Office suite, visit the linked article.

## 2. MS Excel

- Majorly used for making spreadsheets
- A spreadsheet consists of grids in the form of rows and columns which is easy to manage and can be used as a replacement for paper
- It is a data processing application
- Large data can easily be managed and saved in tabular format using MS Excel
- Calculations can be done based on the large amount of data entered into the cells of a spreadsheet within seconds
- File extension, when saved in the computer, is “.xls”

Also, visit the Microsoft Excel page to get more information regarding this spreadsheet software and its components.

## 3. MS PowerPoint

- It was released on April 20, 1987
- Used to create audiovisual presentations
- Each presentation is made up of various slides displaying data/ information
- Each slide may contain audio, video, graphics, text, bullet numbering, tables etc.
- The extension for PowerPoint presentations is “.ppt”
- Used majorly for professional usage
- Using PowerPoint, presentations can be made more interactive

In terms of Graphical user interface, using MS PowerPoint, interesting and appealing presentation and documents can be created. To read more about its features and usage, candidates can visit the linked article.

## 4. MS Access

- It was released on November 13, 1992
- It is Database Management Software (DBMS)
- Table, queries, forms and reports can be created on MS Access
- Import and export of data into other formats can be done
- The file extension is “.accdb”

## 5. MS Outlook

- It was released on January 16, 1997

- It is a personal information management system
- It can be used both as a single-user application or multi-user software
- Its functions also include task managing, calendaring, contact managing, journal logging and web browsing
- It is the email client of the Office Suite
- The file extension for an Outlook file is “.pst”

## 6. MS OneNote

- It was released on November 19, 2003
- It is a note-taking application
- When introduced, it was a part of the Office suite only. Later, the developers made it free, standalone and easily available at play store for android devices
- The notes may include images, text, tables, etc.
- The extension for OneNote files is “.one”
- It can be used both online and offline and is a multi-user application

