This article is based on legacy software.

The Microsoft Office Help (hereafter referred to as "Help") system provides concise, printable descriptions and procedures for virtually every possible Office topic. Every feature and view is explained, and the Help system offers suggestions regarding how to most effectively use the features in the program.

NOTE: The same Help system is available in all Office programs (Access, Excel, FrontPage, Outlook, PowerPoint, Publisher, and Word). This document uses PowerPoint as a guide; however, you can easily substitute PowerPoint for the Office program you are using.

About the Help Task Pane

The Help task pane gives you two basic ways of searching for your topic: the Search for text box and Table of Contents. Using the Help task pane also gives you navigation and print options. The Help task pane provides a toolbar with these useful options:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Button</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto Tile</td>
<td>Tiles the work area and the Help dialog box so they do not overlap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untile</td>
<td>Untiles the work area and the Help dialog box so they overlap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back</td>
<td>Navigates backward through the list of topic instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward</td>
<td>Navigates forward through the list of topic instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>Prints the instructions currently in view.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the Help Task Pane

Searching for a topic with the Help task pane means you will not have to go through the Office Assistant. You can access the Help task pane in a variety of ways. To learn how to use Help and the Office Assistant together, refer to Using Help with the Office Assistant below.
Using the Help Task Pane: Text Box Option

Using the Search for text box means you will be searching for keywords throughout the entire library of Help topics to find your topic. This approach is similar to using the Office Assistant, described later in this document.

1. Open the Help task pane.

2. In the Search for text box, type a question, word, or phrase that describes your topic.

3. Click Start Searching. ➡️
   The search results appear in the Help task pane.

4. Select the desired search result.
   The Microsoft Office Help dialog box appears.

5. Use the toolbar buttons to change views, navigate, and print information about your topic.

6. When finished, to close the Help dialog box, click the X in the top right corner.

Using the Help Task Pane: Table of Contents Option

The Table of Contents option is helpful if your topic is fairly broad or if you are unsure what exactly you are looking for.

1. Open the Help task pane.

2. Click Table of Contents. 📚
   The Table of Contents appears in the task pane.
Viewing Information about a Dialog Box

If you want to know more about an option within a dialog box without actually experimenting on your document, you can use the Help button in any dialog box. This Help function allows you to get information about elements within a dialog box since you cannot access outside menu commands while a dialog box is open.

1. In the upper right hand corner of any Office dialog box, click **Help**. The *Microsoft Office Help* task pane appears, containing information related to the selected dialog box.

   ![Microsoft Office Word Help](image)

   **Font**
   You can specify how you want text to appear by selecting options in the **Font** dialog box. The availability of some options depends on the languages that are installed and enabled for editing.
   - Font tab
   - Character Spacing tab
   - Text Effects tab

2. To find out more about the listed dialog box features, click the appropriate link(s). Information about your selection(s) appears in the *Microsoft Office Help* dialog box.

3. When finished, in the upper right corner of the *Microsoft Office Help* dialog box, click the **X**.

Using Help with the Office Assistant

The *Office Assistant* is a character that helps you find Help topics. Instead of going directly to the Help dialog box, you can ask the Office Assistant for help. In order to do this, the Office Assistant must first be turned on.

To turn on Office Assistant:
1. From the Help menu, select *Show the Office Assistant.*
   The Office Assistant appears.

**To open the Help dialog box using Office Assistant:**

1. Click the **Office Assistant**.
   The *What would you like to do?* dialog box appears.

2. In the text box, type a question, word, or phrase that describes your topic.

3. Click **Search**.
   The search results appear in the *Help* task pane.

4. Select the desired search result.
   The *Microsoft Office Help* dialog box appears.

5. Use the toolbar buttons to change views, navigate, and print information about your topic.

6. When finished, to close the *Help* dialog box, click the X in the top right corner.

**To turn off Office Assistant:**

1. From the Help menu, select *Hide the Office Assistant.*
   The *Office Assistant* disappears.
Changing the Office Assistant Character

The default Office Assistant character is Merlin the wizard, but you have many other character options from which to choose.

1. Turn on the Office Assistant.

2. Right click the Office Assistant » select Choose Assistant...
   The Office Assistant dialog box appears.

3. To scroll through the options, from the Gallery tab, click Next or Back.

4. When you have selected a character, click OK.
   The new Office Assistant appears.