LibreOffice 101

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What is LibreOffice?
It's a free and open source office suite, developed by The Document Foundation. The suite comprises programs to do word processing, spreadsheets, slideshows, diagrams and drawings, maintain databases, and compose math formulae.

Open Source means that the details and design of something (whether it's a program or an object) is made available to anyone who would like to use it, change it, or improve it, as long as you agree to share your changes and improvements with everyone else.

Why would I want to use LibreOffice?

- Open Source
- Compatibility (can read and edit MS Office files)
- It's free

Programs

Writer is the word processor component of LibreOffice. In addition to the usual features of a word processor, Writer provides important features like templates and styles, page layouts, drawing tools, and more. It is similar to MS Word.

Calc is the spreadsheet component of LibreOffice. You can enter data (usually numerical) in a spreadsheet and then manipulate this data to produce certain results. It is similar to MS Excel.

Impress is the presentation (slide show) program included in LibreOffice. You can create slides that contain many different elements, including text, bulleted and numbered lists, tables, charts, and a wide range of graphic objects such as clipart, drawings and photographs. It is similar to MS PowerPoint.

Draw is a vector graphics drawing program, although it can also perform some operations on raster graphics (pixels). Using Draw, you can quickly create a wide variety of graphical images. It is similar to MS Paint and Adobe Illustrator.

Base. A data source, or database, is a collection of pieces of information that can be accessed or managed by LibreOffice. For example, a list of names and addresses is a data source that could be used for producing a mail merge letter. A shop stock list could be a data source managed through LibreOffice. Base is similar to MS Access.

Math is LibreOffice's component for writing mathematical and chemical equations. It is most commonly used as an equation editor for text documents, but it can also be used with other types of documents or stand-alone. When used inside Writer, the equation is treated as an object inside the text document.

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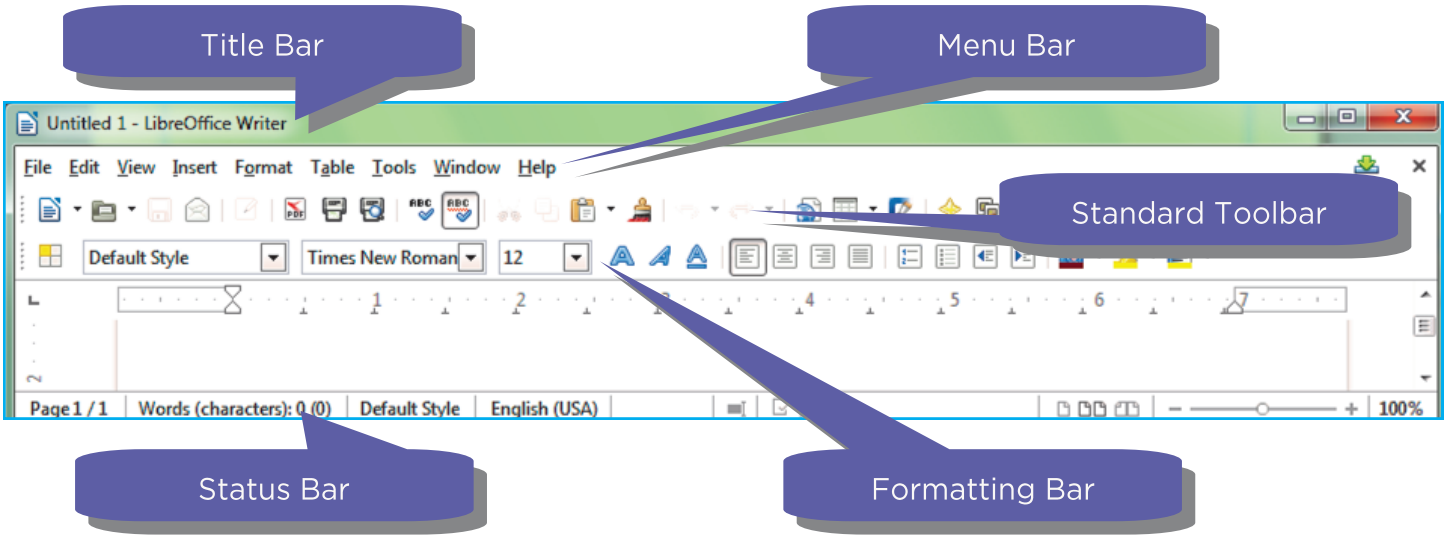
Writer

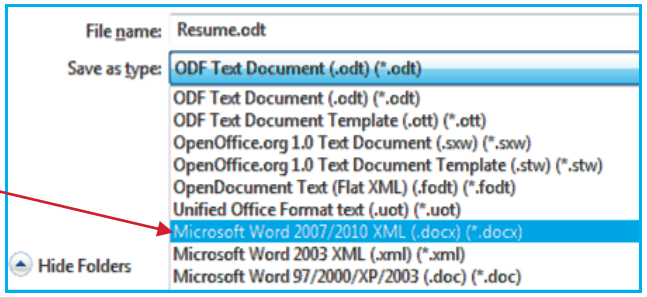
Writer can handle just about everything that MS Word can. Here's the Writer interface:



Saving & File Formats

LibreOffice programs can open a bunch of different file types, including most MS Office files. Unfortunately, it doesn't work the other way around—LibreOffice files cannot be opened nor edited in MS Office. For compatibility, it's best to save your files in a MS Office friendly file type, like .docx or .xlsx.

The default file extension in **Writer** is **.odt**. In order to make your LibreOffice document able to be viewed and edited in MS Word, you'll want to select **.docx**.



WHERE TO GET MORE HELP:

- **LibreOffice Wiki:** Find answers to your questions and other usage tips on the Wiki: https://help.libreoffice.org/
- **Getting started guide:** Download the LibreOffice manual here: https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/images/1/13/GS40-GettingStartedLO.pdf
- **Google Drive** and **Microsoft One Drive** each offer free cloud-based office suites. The CTC offers classes on both.
- **The CTC:** you can come to the desk and ask for help, schedule a 1-on-1 tutoring lesson, come to more classes on open-source computing, or attend one of our open labs to learn more. LibreOffice is installed on all CTC computers.

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