

- » Discovering PowerPoint
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Chapter **1**

Welcome to PowerPoint

This chapter is a grand and gala welcoming ceremony for PowerPoint, Microsoft's popular slide-presentation program.

This chapter is sort of like the opening ceremony of the Olympics, in which all the athletes parade around the stadium and people make speeches in French. In much the same way, this chapter marches PowerPoint around the stadium so you can get a bird's-eye view of what the program is and what you can do with it. I make a few speeches but not in French (unless, of course, you're reading the French edition of this book).

What in the Sam Hill Is PowerPoint?

PowerPoint is a program that comes with Microsoft 365, which includes Word, Excel, and Outlook, too.

You know what Word is — it's the world's most-loved and most-hated word-processing program, and it's perfect for concocting letters, term papers, and great

American novels. I'm thinking of writing one as soon as I finish this book. Excel is a spreadsheet program used by bean counters the world over. Outlook is that program you use to read your email. But what the heck is PowerPoint? Does anybody know or care? (And as long as I'm asking questions, who in Sam Hill was Sam Hill? If you really want to know, check out the sidebar "Who in the Sam Hill was Sam Hill?"")

PowerPoint is a presentation program, and it's one of the coolest programs I know. It's designed to work with a big-screen TV or a projector to display presentations that will bedazzle your audience members and instantly sway them to your point of view, even if you're selling real estate on Mars, season tickets for the Las Vegas Raiders, or a new tax increase in an election year. If you've ever flipped a flip chart, you're going to love PowerPoint.

Here are some of the many uses of PowerPoint:

- » **Business presentations:** PowerPoint is a great timesaver for anyone who makes business presentations, whether you've been asked to speak in front of hundreds of people at a shareholders' convention, a group of sales reps at a sales conference, or your own staff or coworkers at a business meeting.
- » **Sales presentations:** If you're an insurance salesperson, you can use PowerPoint to create a presentation about the perils of not owning life insurance and then use your laptop or tablet computer to show it to hapless clients at your local Cheesecake Factory.
- » **Lectures:** PowerPoint is useful for teachers or conference speakers who want to reinforce the key points in their lectures with slides.
- » **Homework:** PowerPoint is a great program to use for certain types of homework projects, like those big history reports that count for half your grade.
- » **Church:** People use PowerPoint in churches to display song lyrics on big screens so everyone can sing along or to display sermon outlines so everyone can take notes. If your church still uses hymnals or prints the outline in the bulletin, tell the minister to join the 21st century.
- » **Information stations:** You can use PowerPoint to set up a computerized information kiosk that people can walk up to and use. For example, you can create a museum exhibit about the history of your town or set up a trade-show presentation to provide information about your company and products.
- » **Online presentations:** PowerPoint can even help you set up a presentation that you can share in an online meeting or videoconference so people can join in on the fun without having to leave the comfort of their own homes or offices.

WHO IN THE SAM HILL WAS SAM HILL?

Copilot can easily help you with research and answer questions for you, including questions like “Who in the Sam Hill was Sam Hill?”

I’ve always loved the term *Sam Hill* because it seems so quaint. But I’ve never understood the origins of the phrase. So, I decided to ask Copilot. Specifically, I put in the question “Who in the Sam Hill was Sam Hill?” and here’s how Copilot replied:

1. **Sam Hill** is an American English slang phrase that serves as a euphemism or minced oath for “the devil” or “hell” personified. You might hear it used in expressions like, “What in the Sam Hill is that?” The exact origin of this phrase is a bit mysterious, but here are some possibilities:
2. **Euphemism for the Devil:** Some believe it comes from Samiel, the name of the Devil in *Der Freischütz*, an opera by Carl Maria von Weber performed in New York City in 1825.
3. **Store Owner in Arizona:** There was a mercantile store owner named Sam Hill in Arizona. People used the phrase to describe odd or unusual things, much like the diverse inventory found in his store. The original Sam Hill Mercantile building still stands in Prescott, Arizona.
4. **Politician in Connecticut:** An article from 1889 mentioned a Mr. Sam Hill who represented Guilford, Connecticut, in the legislature. This might be the source of the popular Connecticut adjuration to “Give ‘em Sam Hill.”
5. **Surveyor in Michigan:** Samuel W. Hill, a surveyor associated with the Keweenaw Peninsula area, could be another origin. His foul language led to his name becoming a euphemism for swear words.

So, in summary, Sam Hill remains a colorful and enigmatic figure in linguistic history!

Now you know who Sam Hill was or at least might have been!

For more information about using Copilot to help you craft your PowerPoint presentations, turn to Chapter 8.

Getting PowerPoint

There are several ways you can gain access to PowerPoint:

- » **Subscribe to Microsoft 365.** Microsoft 365 is a cloud-based subscription service that lets you use various products that are part of the Microsoft 365

suite. The main advantages of subscribing to Microsoft 365 are that you pay a low monthly or yearly fee (as low as \$6.99 per month), you always get the latest updates for free, and you can install the software on all your devices and sign in to Microsoft 365 on as many as five of them at the same time.

- » **Buy a copy of Office 2024.** You can buy Office 2024 for about twice the price of an annual subscription. The advantage is that you own the software outright; the disadvantage is that you don't get free updates.
- » **Use the free online version of PowerPoint.** The free online version of PowerPoint has limited features. I don't recommend this option because a subscription to PowerPoint isn't very expensive. But if you want to check it out, go to www.microsoft.com/en-us/Microsoft-365/free-office-online-for-the-web.

My preferred method, and the one Microsoft recommends, is to subscribe to Microsoft 365. If you opt to go the subscription route, you'll find that there are several plans to choose from:

- » **Home:** Intended for home or personal use. This is the option usually chosen by families or students. There are two Home subscription options:
 - **Personal:** Can be used by just one user
 - **Family:** Can be used by up to six users
- » **Business:** Intended for small businesses. Technically, you can support up to 300 users with a Business subscription, but most businesses with more than 50 employees should use an Enterprise subscription instead. There are three Business subscription options:
 - **Basic:** The Basic edition does not include the desktop version of PowerPoint or the other Microsoft 365 applications. It only includes an online version that provides most, but not all, of the features of the desktop version.
 - **Standard:** The Standard edition provides both the online and desktop versions of PowerPoint and the other Microsoft 365 applications.
 - **Premium:** The Premium edition provides advanced security features.
- » **Enterprise:** Designed for businesses of any size. The two most popular Enterprise subscription plans that include PowerPoint are
 - **E3:** Includes both online and desktop versions of Microsoft 365 applications (including PowerPoint, of course), as well as email hosting.
 - **E5:** Includes more security features than E3.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

You may find yourself confused about the name *Microsoft 365*. For decades, PowerPoint has been part of a suite called *Microsoft Office*. When Office became part of a cloud suite, the name became *Office 365*. Office 365 still exists and is part of Microsoft 365. But the official new name of the entire suite is *Microsoft 365*, sometimes abbreviated to just *M365*. Throughout this book, I use the newer name, Microsoft 365, but you can call it Office 365 if you want. That's what I still call it when Microsoft isn't listening.

Introducing PowerPoint Presentations

PowerPoint is similar to a word-processing program such as Word, except that it's geared toward creating presentations rather than documents. A presentation is kind of like those Kodak Carousel slide projector trays that your grandpa filled with 35mm slides from the time he took the family to the Grand Canyon. The main difference is that, with PowerPoint, you don't have to worry about dumping all the slides out of the tray and figuring out how to get them back into the right order.



TIP

If you have no idea what a Kodak Carousel slide projector is, look it up. It was one of the coolest inventions of the 1960s. Just about everyone's dad had one or wanted one.

Word documents consist of one or more pages; PowerPoint presentations consist of one or more *slides*. Each slide can contain text, graphics, animations, videos, and other information. You can easily rearrange the slides in a presentation, delete slides that you don't need, add new slides, or modify the contents of existing slides.

Unlike in Word, content on a slide in PowerPoint does not flow from one slide to the next. Each slide is self-contained. If you put too much text on a slide, PowerPoint doesn't spill the text onto the next slide. Instead, it automatically makes the text small so that it will fit on the slide.

You can use PowerPoint both to create your presentations and to actually present them.

You can use several different types of media to actually show your presentations:

- » **Computer screen:** Your computer screen is a suitable way to display your presentation when you're showing it to just one or two other people.
- » **Big-screen TV:** If you have a big-screen TV that can accommodate computer input, it's ideal for showing presentations to medium-size audiences — say, 10 to 12 people in a small conference room.

- » **Computer projector:** A computer projector projects an image of your computer monitor onto a screen so that large audiences can view it.
- » **Online meeting screen share:** You can easily show your presentation by using the screen-sharing feature of your favorite videoconferencing platform. That way, all of your audience doesn't have to be in the same place at the same time.
- » **Printed or PDF pages:** You can distribute a printed copy of your entire presentation to each member of your audience. Or, you can save the slides as a single PDF file and distribute the PDF file to your audience. (When you print your presentation, you can print one slide per page, or you can print several slides per page to save paper.)

Understanding Presentation Files

A presentation is to PowerPoint what a document is to Word or a workbook is to Excel. In other words, a presentation is a file that you create with PowerPoint. Each presentation that you create is saved on your computer's hard drive as a separate file.

PowerPoint presentations have the special extension `.pptx` added to the ends of their filenames. For example, `Sales Conference.pptx` and `History Day.pptx` are both valid PowerPoint filenames. When you type the filename for a new PowerPoint file, you don't have to type the `.pptx` extension — PowerPoint automatically adds the extension for you. Windows may hide the `.pptx` extension, in which case a presentation file named `Conference.pptx` often appears as just `Conference`.



TECHNICAL
STUFF

Versions of PowerPoint prior to 2007 saved presentations with the extension `.ppt` instead of `.pptx`. The `x` at the end of the newer file extension denotes that the new file format is based on an Office Open XML standard data format that makes it easier to exchange files among different programs. Although you can still save files in the old `.ppt` format, I don't recommend it — you'll lose many of the newer capabilities of PowerPoint if you do.

PowerPoint is set up initially to save your presentation files in the `Documents` folder, but you can store PowerPoint files in any folder on your OneDrive or any local or network-accessible disk location.

What's in a Slide?

PowerPoint presentations comprise one or more slides. Each slide can contain text, graphics, and other elements. A number of PowerPoint features work together to help you easily format attractive slides:

- » **Slide layouts:** Every slide has a slide layout that controls how information is arranged on the slide. A slide layout is simply a collection of one or more placeholders, which set aside an area of the slide to hold information. Depending on the layout that you choose for a slide, the placeholders can hold text, graphics, clip art, sound or video files, tables, charts, graphs, diagrams, or other types of content.
- » **Background:** Every slide has a background, which provides a backdrop for the slide's content. The background can be a solid color; a blend of two colors; a subtle texture, such as marble or parchment; a pattern, such as diagonal lines, bricks, or tiles; or an image. Each slide can have a different background, but you usually want to use the same background for every slide in your presentation in order to provide a consistent look.
- » **Transitions:** Transitions control the visual effect that is employed when moving from one slide to the next. The norm is to have the next slide instantly replace the previous slide with no splashy effects. But if you want, you can have one slide dissolve into the next, or new slides can push slides out of the way, or you can make it look like the wind has blown away the old slide to reveal the next slide. In all, there are nearly 50 transition effects you can choose from.
- » **Themes:** Themes are combinations of design elements, such as color schemes and fonts, that make it easy to create attractive slides that don't look ridiculous. You can stray from the themes if you want, but you should do so only if you have a better eye than the design gurus who work for Microsoft.
- » **Slide masters:** Slide masters are special slides that control the basic design and formatting options for slides in your presentation. Slide masters are closely related to layouts — in fact, each layout has its own slide master that determines the position and size of basic title and text placeholders; the background and color scheme used for the presentation; and font settings, such as typefaces, colors, and sizes. In addition, slide masters can contain graphic and text objects that you want to appear on every slide. You can edit the slide masters to change the appearance of all the slides in your presentation at once. This helps to ensure that the slides have a consistent appearance.

All the features described in the preceding list work together to control the appearance of your slides in much the same way that style sheets and templates control

the appearance of Word documents. You can customize the appearance of individual slides by adding any of the following elements:

- » **Title and body text:** Most slide layouts include placeholders for title and body text. You can type any text that you want into these placeholders. By default, PowerPoint formats the text according to the slide master, but you can easily override this formatting to use any font, size, style (like bold or italic), or text color that you want.
- » **Text boxes:** You can add text anywhere on a slide by drawing a text box and then typing text. Text boxes enable you to add text that doesn't fit conveniently in the title or body text placeholders.
- » **Shapes:** You can use PowerPoint's drawing tools to add a variety of shapes to your slides. You can use predefined AutoShapes, such as rectangles, circles, stars, arrows, and flowchart symbols. Alternatively, you can create your own shapes by using basic line, polygon, and freehand drawing tools.
- » **Illustrations:** You can illustrate your slides by inserting clip art, photographs, and other graphic elements. PowerPoint comes with a large collection of clip art pictures you can use, and Microsoft provides an even larger collection of clip art images online. And, of course, you can insert photographs from your own picture library.
- » **Charts and diagrams:** PowerPoint includes a slick diagramming feature called *SmartArt* that enables you to create several common types of diagrams, including organization charts, cycle diagrams, and others. In addition, you can insert pie charts, line charts, bar charts, and many other chart types.
- » **Video and sound:** You can add sound clips or videos to your slides. You can also add background music or a custom narration.
- » **Animations:** Animations put the various elements on an individual slide into motion. One common use of animation is to make text appear on the slide with movement to capture your audience's attention. But you can apply animation to any element on a slide.

Starting PowerPoint

Here's the procedure for starting PowerPoint:

1. Get ready.

Light some votive candles. Take two Tylenol. Put on a pot of coffee. Play *The Tortured Poets Department* on low in the background.

2. Press the Windows key on your keyboard.

The Windows key is the one that has the fancy Windows flag printed on it. On most keyboards, it's located between the Alt and Tab keys. When you press this button, the Start page appears; here, you see a list of your commonly used applications in large tiles.

3. Click the PowerPoint tile (shown in the margin).

That's all there is to it — PowerPoint starts up in a flash.



If you hate clicking through menus but don't mind typing, another way to start PowerPoint is to press your keyboard's Windows key (usually found between the Ctrl and Alt keys), type the word **PowerPoint**, and press Enter.

Creating a Blank Presentation

When you start PowerPoint, it greets you with the screen shown in Figure 1-1. This screen lets you create a blank presentation, create a presentation based on one of several templates supplied by PowerPoint, or open an existing presentation.

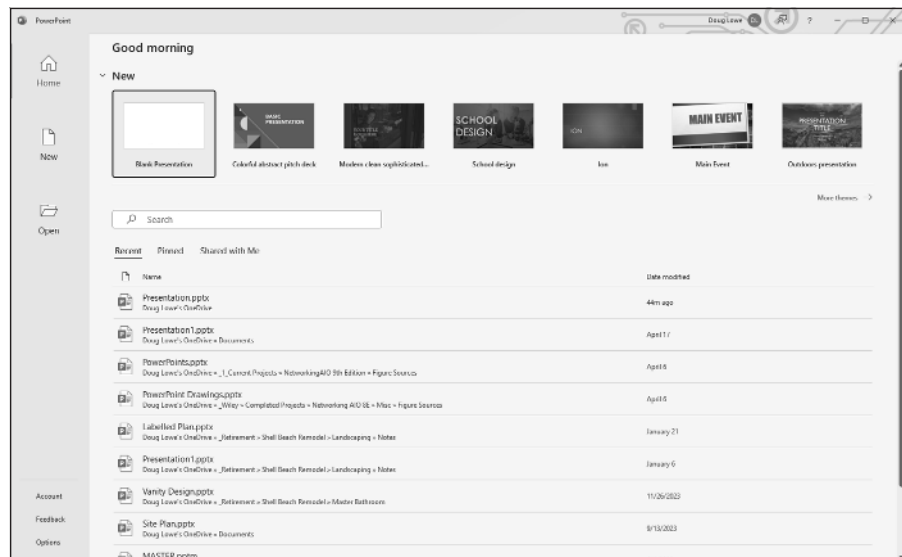


FIGURE 1-1:
PowerPoint's
opening screen.

For the purposes of this chapter, double-click Blank Presentation to get started with a new presentation, as shown in Figure 1-2.

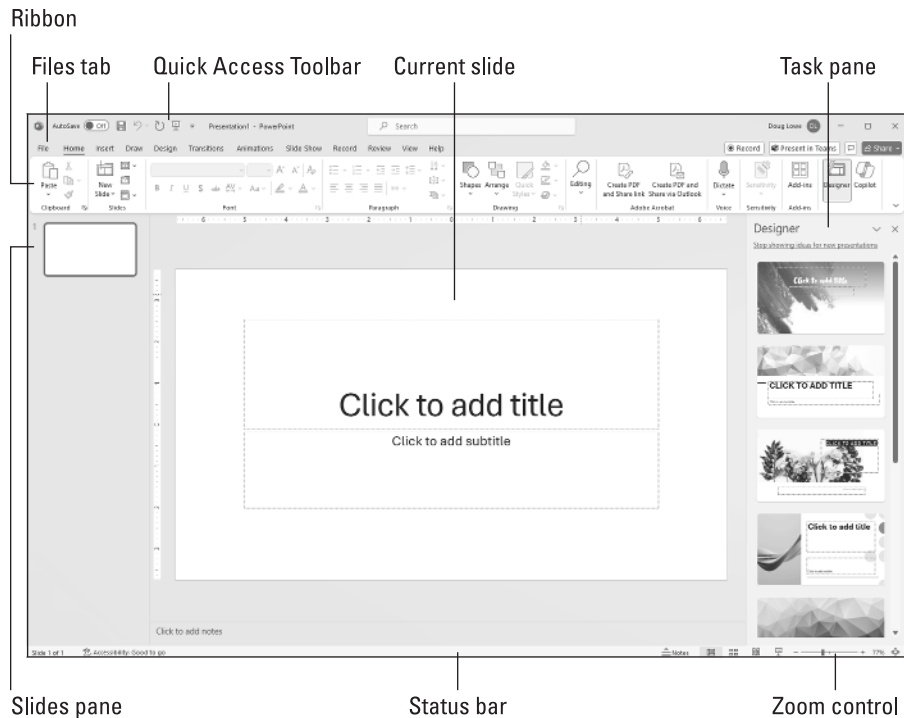


FIGURE 1-2: PowerPoint's main screen is a tad cluttered.



Throughout the rest of this chapter, I introduce you to some simple techniques for turning a blank presentation into an actual presentation with real content. I recommend following along with the numbered steps in later sections of this chapter so you can get a feel for how to create a simple presentation in PowerPoint.

Navigating the PowerPoint Interface

Refer to Figure 1-2 to see the basic PowerPoint screen in all its cluttered glory. The following list points out the more important parts of this screen:

» **Ribbon:** Across the top of the screen, just below the Microsoft PowerPoint title, is PowerPoint's main user-interface gadget, called the *Ribbon*. The deepest and darkest secrets of PowerPoint are hidden on the Ribbon. Wear a helmet when exploring it.



The exact appearance of the Ribbon varies a bit depending on the size of your monitor. On smaller monitors, PowerPoint may compress the Ribbon a bit by using smaller buttons and arranging them differently (for example, stacking them on top of one another instead of placing them side by side).

For more information about working with the Ribbon, see the section “Unraveling the Ribbon,” later in this chapter.

- » **File tab:** The first tab on the Ribbon is called the File tab, which switches PowerPoint into Backstage view where you can perform various functions such as opening and saving files, creating new presentations, printing, and other similar chores. For more information about using the File tab, turn to Chapter 2.
- » **Quick Access Toolbar:** Just above the Ribbon is the *Quick Access Toolbar*, or QAT for short. Its sole purpose is to provide a convenient resting place for the PowerPoint commands you use most often.

Initially, the QAT contains just three commands: Save, Undo, and Redo. However, you can add more commands if you want. To add any button to the QAT, right-click the command and choose Add to Quick Access Toolbar. You can also find a pull-down menu at the end of the QAT that lists several frequently used commands. You can use this menu to add these common commands to the QAT.

- » **Current slide:** Smack dab in the middle of the screen is where your current slide appears. (Note that on a tablet, the Title section of this slide may read “Tap to Add Title” rather than “Click to Add Title.”)
- » **Slides pane:** To the left of the slide is an area that shows thumbnail icons of your slides. You can use this area to easily navigate to other slides in your presentation.
- » **Task pane:** To the right of the slide is an area called the *task pane*. The task pane is designed to help you complete common tasks quickly. In Figure 1-2, the task pane contains the Design Ideas feature, which suggests some design possibilities for your blank presentation. The Design Ideas task pane always appears when you create a new presentation. For more information about using it, please refer to Chapter 12.
- » **Status bar:** At the very bottom of the screen is the *status bar*, which tells you the slide that’s currently displayed (for example, Slide 1 of 1). You’ll also find buttons that let you switch to different view modes. Figure 1-2 shows PowerPoint in its standard mode, which is called Normal.



TIP

You can configure the status bar by right-clicking anywhere on it; you see a list of options that you can select or deselect to determine which elements appear on the status bar.

- » **Zoom control:** PowerPoint automatically adjusts its zoom factor so that you can zoom in or out to see your slides in their entirety or close up. You can change the size of your slide by using the zoom control slider that appears at the lower right of the window.



TIP

You'll never get anything done if you feel you have to understand every pixel of the PowerPoint screen before you can do anything. Don't worry about the stuff you don't understand. Just concentrate on what you need to know to get the job done, and worry about the bells and whistles later.

Unraveling the Ribbon

The Ribbon is Microsoft's primary user-interface gadget. Across the top of the Ribbon is a series of tabs. You can click one of these tabs to reveal a set of controls specific to that tab. For example, Figure 1-2 (earlier in this chapter) shows the Ribbon with the Home tab selected. Figure 1-3 shows the Ribbon with the Insert tab selected.

FIGURE 1-3:
The Ribbon with
the Insert
tab selected.



Initially, the Ribbon displays the tabs described in Table 1-1.

In addition to these basic tabs, additional tabs appear from time to time. For example, if you select a picture, a Picture Tools tab appears with commands that let you manipulate the picture.

The commands on a Ribbon tab are organized into groups. Within each group, most of the commands are simple buttons that are similar to toolbar buttons in earlier versions of PowerPoint.

TABLE 1-1 **The Basic Tabs on the Ribbon**

Tab	Actions You Can Perform
File	Open, close, print, and share presentations.
Home	Create and format slides.
Insert	Insert various types of objects on slides.
Draw	Doodle on your slides using various types of pens or markers.
Design	Tweak the layout of a slide.
Transitions	Change the transition effects that are applied when you switch from one slide to the next.

Tab	Actions You Can Perform
Animations	Add animation effects to your slides.
Slide Show	Present your slide show.
Record	Create a recording of a presentation.
Review	Proof and add comments to your presentation.
View	Change the view.
Help	Get help, training, and support information.

The View from Here Is Great

Near the right edge of the status bar is a series of four View buttons. These buttons enable you to switch among the various views, or ways of looking at your presentation. Table 1-2 summarizes what each View button does.

TABLE 1-2 **The View Buttons**

Button	What It Does
	Switches to Normal view, which shows your slide, outline, and notes all at once. This is the default view for PowerPoint.
	Switches to Slide Sorter view, which enables you to easily rearrange slides and add slide transitions and other special effects.
	Switches to Reading view, which displays your slide show within a window.
	Switches to Slide Show view, which displays your slides in full-screen mode. This is the view you use when you're actually giving your presentation.

Editing Text

In PowerPoint, slides are blank areas that you can adorn with various objects. The most common type of object is a *text placeholder*, a rectangular area that's specially designated for holding text. Other types of objects include shapes, such as circles or triangles; pictures imported from clip art files; and graphs.

Most slides contain two text objects: one for the slide's title and the other for its body text. However, you can add more text objects if you want, and you can remove the body text or title text object. You can even remove both to create a slide that contains no text.



TIP

Whenever you move the cursor over a text object, the cursor changes from an arrow to an *I-beam*, which you can use to support bridges or build aircraft carriers. Seriously, when the cursor changes to an I-beam, you can click the mouse and start typing text.

When you click a text object, a box appears around the text, and an insertion pointer appears at the spot where you clicked. PowerPoint then becomes like a word-processing program. Any characters that you type are inserted into the text at the insertion pointer location. You can press Delete or Backspace to demolish text, and you can use the arrow keys to move the insertion pointer around in the text object. If you press Enter, a new line of text begins within the text object.

When a text object contains no text, a placeholder message appears in the object. For example, a title text object displays the message *Click to add title*. Other placeholders display similar messages. The placeholder message magically vanishes when you click the object and begin typing text.



TIP

If you start typing without clicking anywhere, the text that you type is entered into the title text object — assuming that the title text object doesn't already have text of its own. If the title text object is not empty, any text that you type (with no text object selected) is simply ignored.

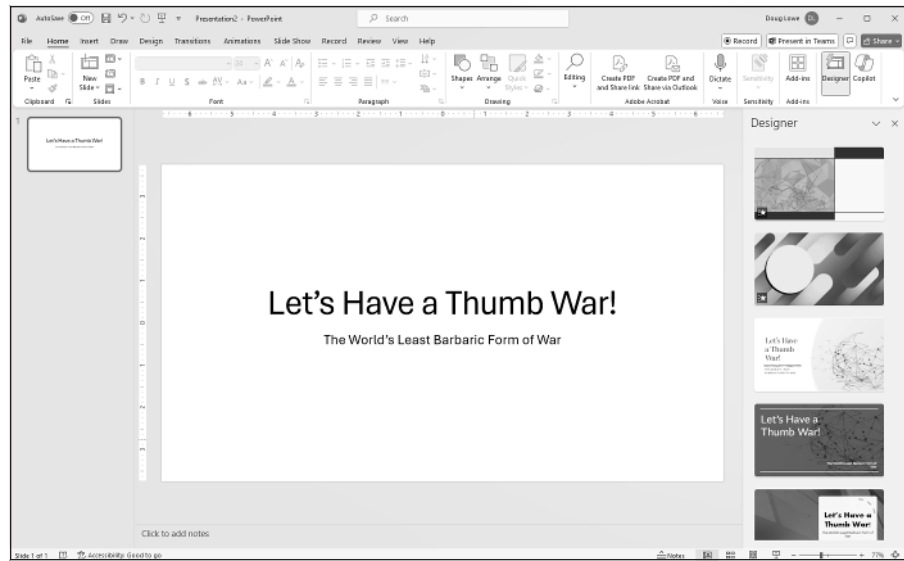
After you finish typing text, press Esc or click anywhere outside the text object.

In Chapter 3, you find many details about playing with text objects. But let's get started developing a blank presentation. Follow these steps:

1. **Click anywhere in the Click to Add Title placeholder on the blank presentation's title slide.**
2. **Type the following text:** Let's Have a Thumb War!
That's right: In this chapter, you're going to create a simple PowerPoint presentation that explains the rules of the classic game of Thumb War.
3. **Click anywhere in the Click to Add Subtitle placeholder.**
4. **Type** The World's Least Barbaric Form of War.

You've now completed a simple title slide for your presentation, as shown in Figure 1-4.

FIGURE 1-4:
The completed
title slide for the
Thumb War
presentation.



Making It Pretty

In Parts 3 and 4 of this book, I show you many different ways to create great-looking slides. However, you don't have to wait until then to apply some basic style to your presentation. Earlier, I mention that the Designer task pane is always available to help you improve the look of your PowerPoint slides. The Ribbon also includes a Design tab that lets you select which of several design themes should apply to your presentation. You use these features to improve the look of the Thumb War presentation:

- 1. Select the Design tab on the Ribbon.**

You see a list of various PowerPoint themes, along with several variants for each theme. Each theme has a name, which you can see by hovering the mouse over the theme.

- 2. Select the Ion theme (the sixth theme from the left on the Design tab, assuming that you've maximized PowerPoint to fill the screen).**

The Ion theme applies various formatting elements to your presentation, including a nice teal background, white text, and a simple red graphic box near the upper right of each slide for a fancy look.

- 3. In the Variants section of the Design tab, click the purple variant (third from the left).**

This changes the colors for the Ion theme to a lovely collection of purple tones.

4. In the Designer task pane, select which slide design you'd like to apply.

The Designer task pane presents several alternate designs based on the Purple Ion theme you selected in the Design tab.

That's all there is to it! Figure 1-5 shows how the Thumb Wars presentation appears with the purple Ion theme applied.

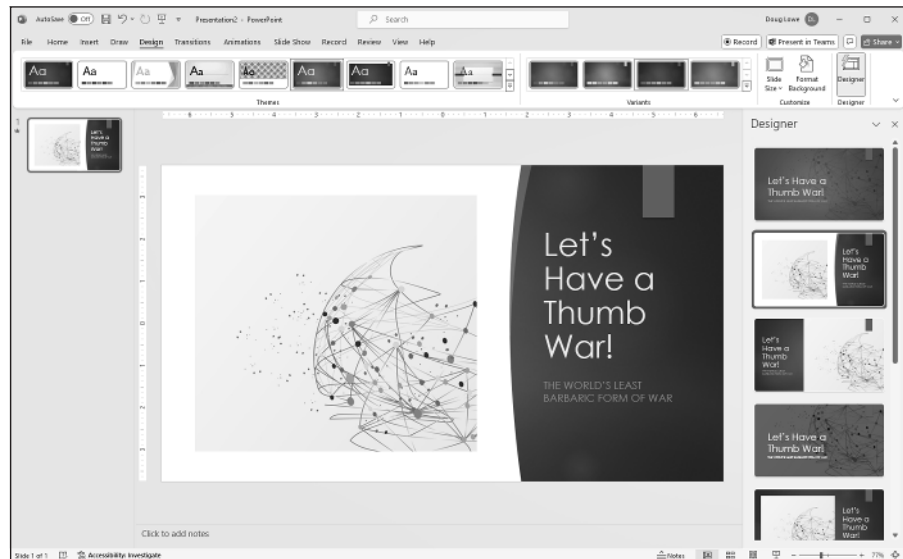


FIGURE 1-5:
The Thumb Wars
presentation with
the purple
Ion theme.

Adding a New Slide

A presentation with just one slide isn't much of a presentation. Fortunately, PowerPoint gives you numerous ways to add more slides to your presentation. You add a second slide to the Thumb War presentation by following these steps:

1. Press **Ctrl+M** to insert a new slide.



If you're allergic to keyboard shortcuts, you can click the New Slide button on the Home tab (shown in the margin).

Either way, a new slide appears, as shown in Figure 1-6. Notice that the new slide adopts the Purple Ion design theme that you chose in the preceding section.

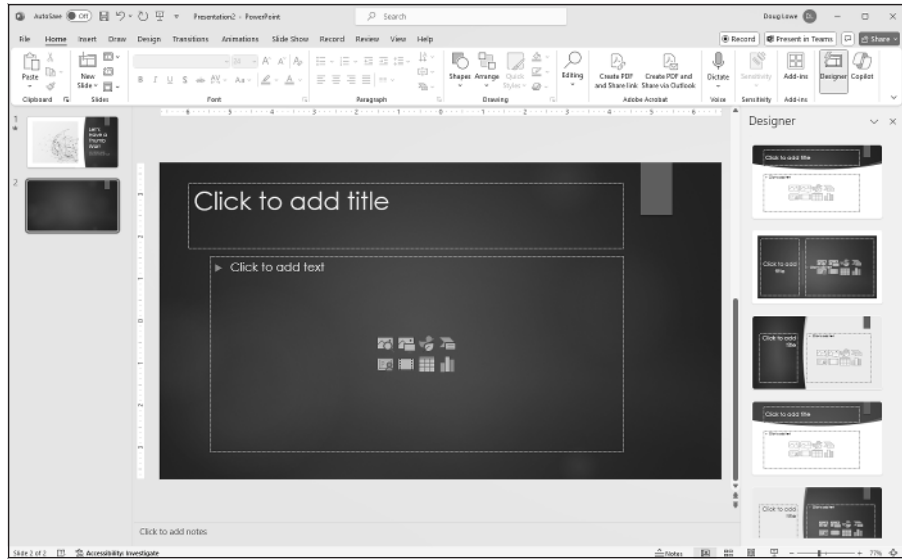


FIGURE 1-6:
A new slide.

2. **Click anywhere in the Click to Add Title placeholder and type the following text:** The Rules Are Simple.
3. **Click anywhere in the Click to Add Text placeholder and type the following text, pressing the Enter key between each item:**
 - Clasp each other's hands with four fingers.
 - Use your thumbs to tap each other's index fingers, alternating left to right while chanting, "1, 2, 3, 4, Let's Have a Thumb War!"
 - The war is on! Try to trap your opponent's thumb under yours.
 - Victory is yours when you trap your opponent's thumb long enough to say, "1, 2, 3, 4, I Won the Thumb War!"

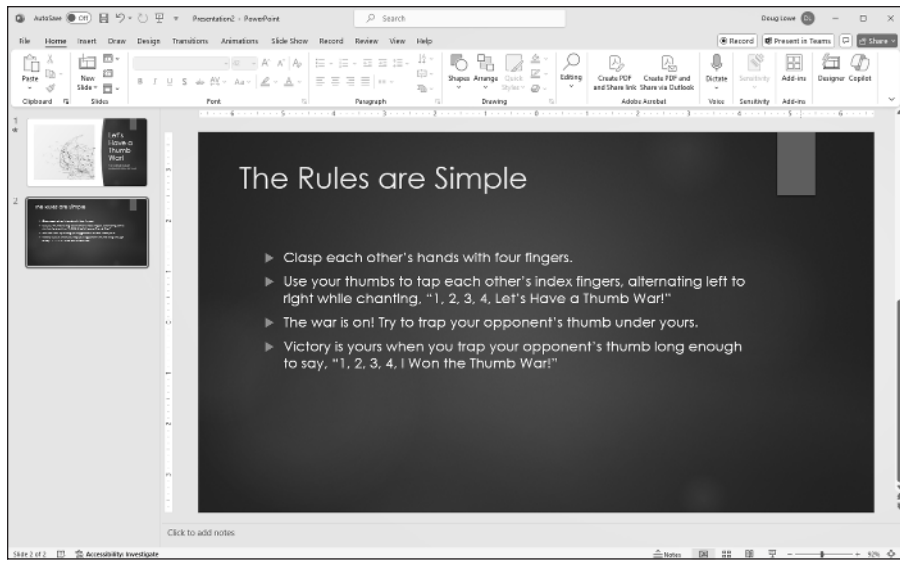


TIP

Note that you don't have to enter the bullet symbols — PowerPoint automatically adds a new bulleted paragraph when you press the Enter key.

Congratulations! You've successfully added a second slide to your presentation, as shown in Figure 1-7.

FIGURE 1-7:
The completed
second slide of
the Thumb War
presentation.



Moving from Slide to Slide

Now that your presentation has more than one slide, you need to know how to move forward and backward through your presentation. Here are some of the most popular methods:

- » **Click one of the double-headed arrows at the bottom of the vertical scroll bar.** Doing so moves you through the presentation one slide at a time.
- » **Press the Page Up or Page Down key.** Using these keys also moves one slide at a time.
- » **Use the scroll bar.** When you drag the box in the scroll bar, a tooltip appears to display the number and title of the current slide. Dragging the scroll bar is the quickest way to move directly to any slide in your presentation.
- » **In the list of slides on the left side of the window, click the thumbnail for the slide that you want to display.** If the thumbnails aren't visible, click the Slides tab above the outline.

Displaying Your Presentation

When your masterpiece is ready, you can show it on the screen. Just follow these steps:



1. **Select the Slide Show tab on the Ribbon and then, in the Start Slide Show group, click the From Beginning button (shown in the margin).**

There are several shortcuts to this command. You can also start the show by pressing F5 or by clicking the Slide Show button, located with the other view buttons in the lower-right corner of the screen.

The first slide fills the screen, as shown in Figure 1-8.



FIGURE 1-8:
When you start the slide show, the title slide fills the screen.

2. **Press Enter to advance to the next slide.**

You can keep pressing Enter to call up the next slide in the presentation. If you don't like using the Enter key, you can use the spacebar instead.

If you want to go back a slide, press Page Up.

3. **Press Esc when you're done.**

You don't have to wait until the last slide is shown. If you find a glaring mistake in a slide or you just get bored, you can press Esc at any time to return to Normal view.

For the complete lowdown on showing your presentation, turn to Chapter 7.

Saving Your Work

Saving a presentation in PowerPoint is the same as saving a file in any other Microsoft 365 program: You just use the Save command, found on the File menu or in the QAT. The first time you save a new file, you have to provide a filename. After that, saving your presentation updates the existing presentation with any changes you've made since the last time the file was saved.

Note that if your presentation is saved to OneDrive storage, the AutoSave feature is activated. When AutoSave is on, your presentations are automatically saved as you work.

You can find more information about various options for saving your presentation in Chapter 2.

Closing a Presentation

Having finished and saved your presentation, you've come to the time to close it. Closing a presentation is kind of like gathering your papers, putting them neatly in a file folder, and returning the folder to its proper file drawer. The presentation disappears from your computer screen. Don't worry: It's tucked away safely on your hard drive where you can get to it later if you need to.

To close a file, click the Close button at the upper right of the PowerPoint window. Alternatively, you can choose File ⇨ Close, or use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+W. But clicking the Close button is the easiest way to close a file.



TIP

You don't have to close a file before exiting PowerPoint. If you exit PowerPoint without closing a file, PowerPoint graciously closes the file for you. The only reason you may want to close a file is if you want to work on a different file and you don't want to keep both files open at the same time.

If you've made changes since the last time you saved the file, PowerPoint offers to save the changes for you. Click Save to save the file before closing, or click Don't Save to abandon any changes that you made to the file.

If you close all the open PowerPoint presentations, you may discover that most of the PowerPoint commands have been rendered useless. (They're grayed out on the menu.) Fear not. If you open a presentation or create a new one, the commands return to life.

Getting Help

The ideal way to use PowerPoint would be to have a PowerPoint expert sitting patiently by your side, answering your every question with a straightforward response, gently correcting you when you make silly mistakes, and otherwise minding their own business. All you'd have to do is occasionally toss the expert a Twinkie and let them outside once a day.

Short of that, the next best thing is to find out how to coax PowerPoint itself into giving you the answers you need. Fortunately, PowerPoint includes a nice built-in Help feature that can answer your questions. No matter how deeply you're lost in the PowerPoint jungle, help is never more than a few mouse clicks or key-strokes away.

As with everything else in Microsoft 365, more than one method is available for calling up help when you need it. The easiest thing to do would be to yell, "Skipper!" in your best Gilligan voice. Otherwise, you have the following options:

- » Press F1 or click the Help button, located at the left edge of the Help tab on the Ribbon. This activates PowerPoint's main Help system, as shown in Figure 1-9.
- » Whenever a dialog box is displayed, you can click the question mark button in the upper-right corner of the dialog box to summon help.
- » When you hover the mouse over an item in the Ribbon, a tooltip appears that explains what the item does. Many of these tooltips include the phrase "Press F1 for more help." In that case, you can press F1 to get help specific to that item.

The Help tab in Figure 1-9 offers several ways to access the help you need. Here are the various ways you can work your way through PowerPoint's Help feature:

- » **Help window links:** You can click any of the links that appear on the Help tab to display help on a particular topic. For example, if you click Pictures and Charts, you'll find a page of useful information about working with pictures and charts.
- » **Search:** If you can't find what you're looking for, try entering a word or phrase in the Search box and clicking the Search button. This displays a list of topics that pertain to the word or phrase you entered.

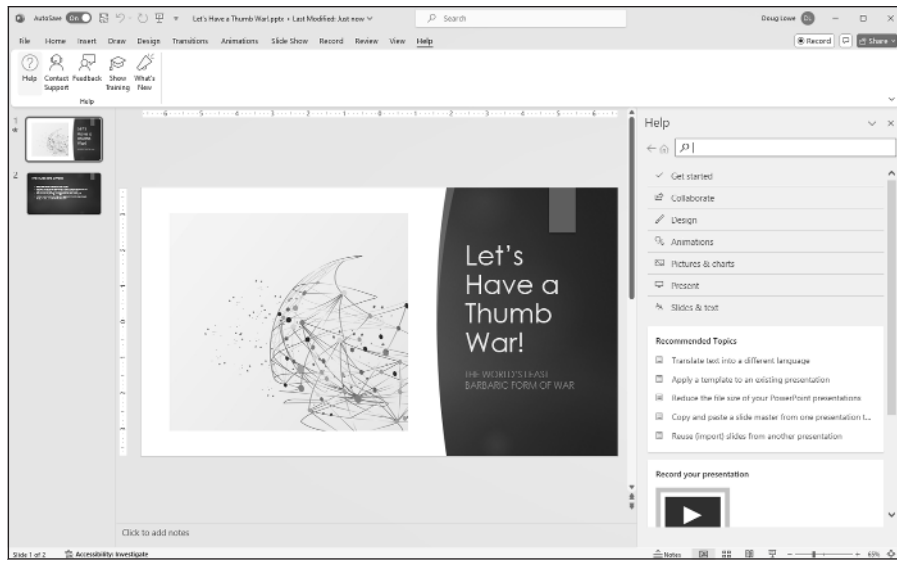


FIGURE 1-9:
Help!

- » **Back button:** You can retrace your steps by clicking the Help window's Back button. You can use the Back button over and over again, retracing all of your steps if necessary.
- » **Home button:** Takes you back to the Help home page.

Other icons on the Help tab on the Ribbon let you contact Microsoft Support, leave feedback on a feature of PowerPoint that you like or that frustrates you, view training opportunities to help you learn PowerPoint quickly, and view new features.



TIP

If you have access to Microsoft Copilot, it can also help you create slides or even entire presentations. For more information, refer to Part 2 of this book.

Exiting PowerPoint

Had enough excitement for one day? Use either of these techniques to shut down PowerPoint:

- » Click the X box at the upper-right corner of the PowerPoint window.
- » Press Alt+F4.

Bam! PowerPoint is history.

You should know a couple things about exiting PowerPoint (or any application):



TIP

- » **PowerPoint doesn't let you abandon ship without first considering whether you want to save your work.** If you've made changes to any presentation files and you haven't saved them, PowerPoint offers to save the files for you. Lean over and plant a big fat kiss right in the middle of your monitor — PowerPoint just saved you your job.
- » **Never, ever, never, ever turn off your computer while PowerPoint or any other program is running.** Although PowerPoint can often recover presentations that were damaged by an ungraceful shutdown, it's still a good idea to always exit PowerPoint and all other programs that are running *before* you turn off your computer.

