



## The 20 Minute Guide to Using MS Access 2007

This is a quick start guide to get you up and running with MS Access 2007. It takes you through some of the new features of the product as well as how to create a database from scratch.

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**6/15/2009**

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## What is a database?

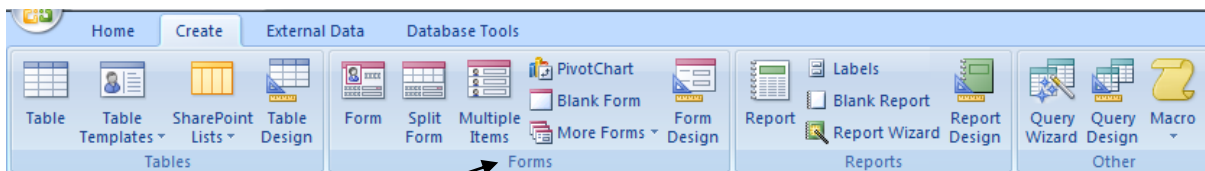
A database can best be described as a way of storing large amounts of information. The data can be retrieved and we can even ask questions of the data and get answers. For example I may want to know how many customers sold widgets in the city of London for the month of July. Access is a PC desktop database and it is possible to create some powerful systems.

## Access 2007

Access 2007 is a major overhaul in terms of the interface. The menus are now replaced by the Ribbon. At first it takes some getting used to if you have come from a previous version of MS Access.

### Introducing the Ribbon

The Ribbon contains the essential commands necessary for creating and manipulating your database.



The Ribbon is divided into groups and each group contains a series of commands. For example the forms group contains form related commands. The Ribbon changes the view and commands depending on the object you are using. If you are in open table mode the Ribbon will display a set of commands related to this mode.

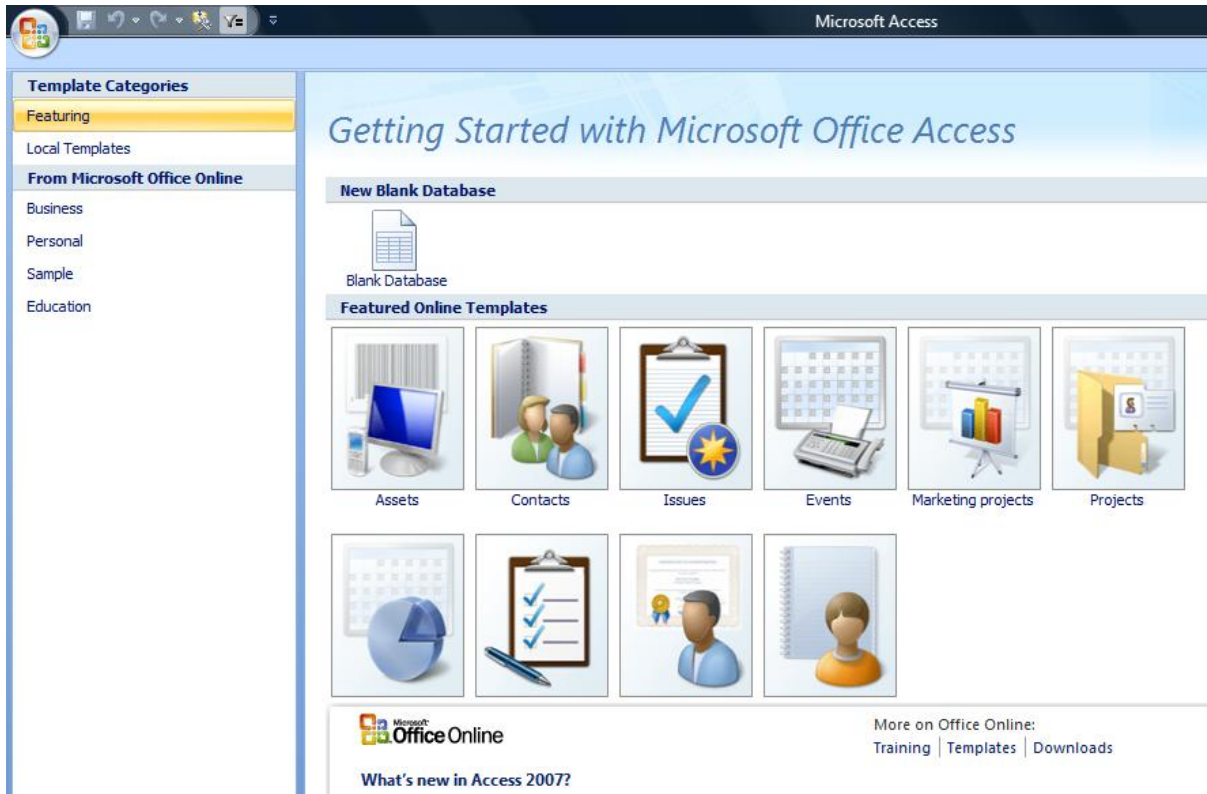
### The Quick Access Toolbar

This is another new feature and is a small bar that contains commands you use often such as save, undo and redo.

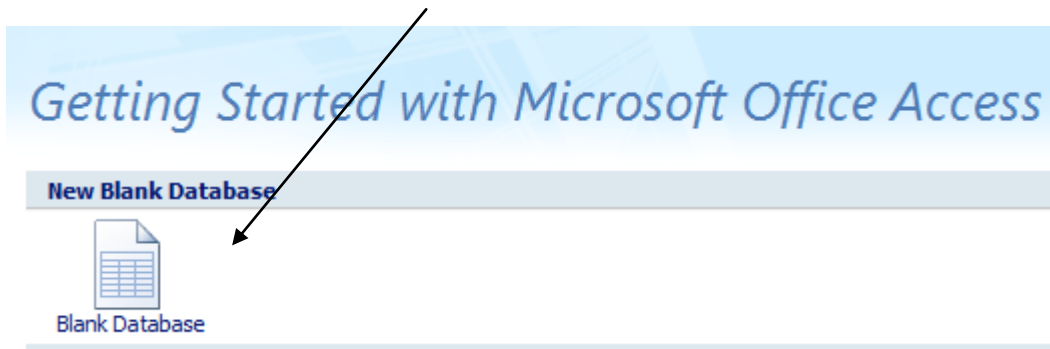


## Create a brand new database

Load up MS Access 2007 and the opening screen will appear.



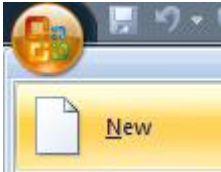
Click the option 'New Blank Database'



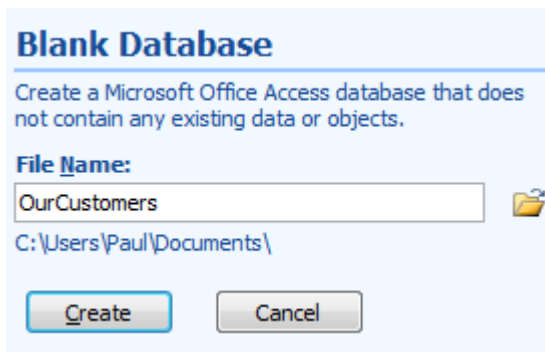
You can also click the MS Office button at the top left.



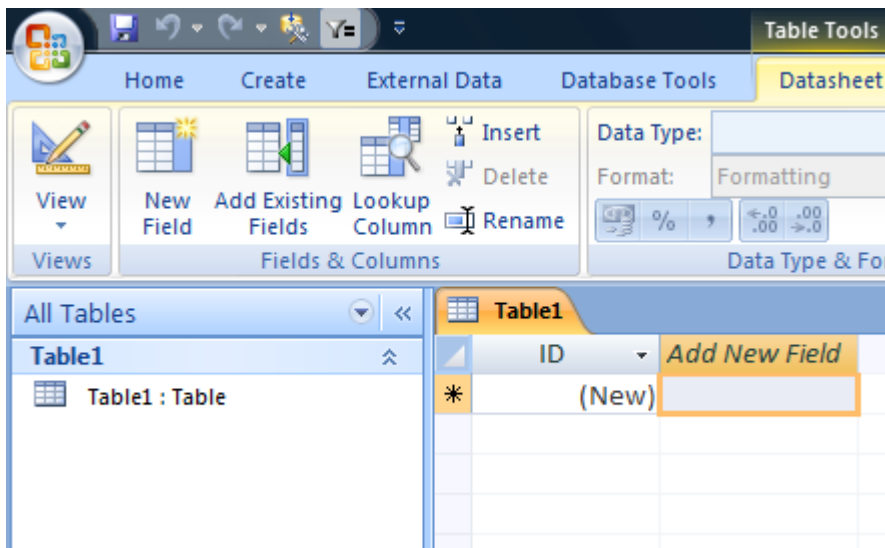
Then select the option called 'New'.



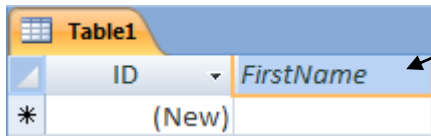
At the bottom right of the screen enter a name for the new database and then click the create button.



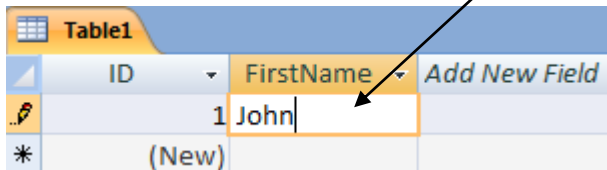
MS Access will now open at a screen for you to enter some data.



You could at this point double click the 'Add New Field' heading and then type in a column name.

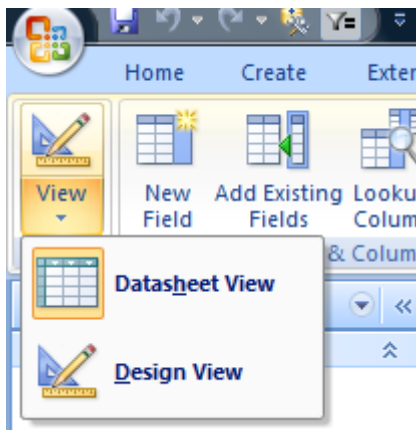


Then click in the actual cell and type in some data.



Alternatively you can go into table design view and gain more control over the table creation.

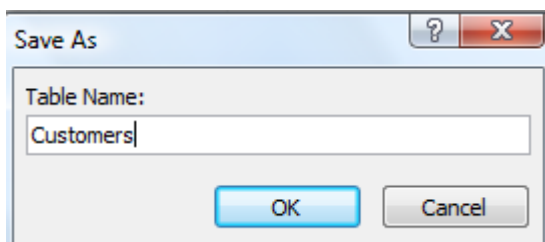
At the top left click the 'View' button and select the 'Design View' option.



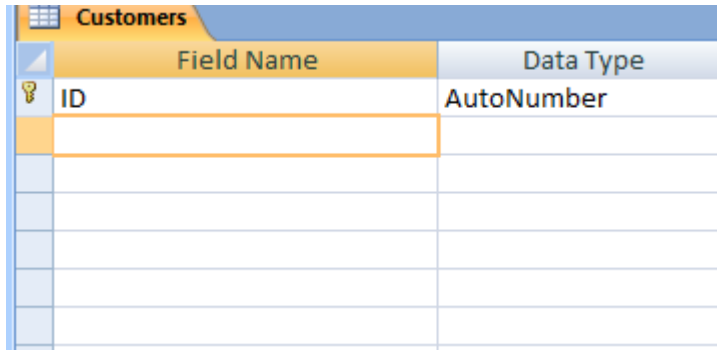
This will take you into design view of the table.

*Access uses what are known as tables to store the data. No, this has nothing to do with a dining table – a table in Access is a container with columns such as name, address etc. Tables are the most important object in MS Access and are a useful starting point for any new database.*

Access will ask you to save the table and to enter a name for it. Enter a name and click the ok button.



Now you are in table design view. The two columns to be concerned with are 'Field Name' and also 'Data Type'. Access has already created a column called 'ID'. This is fine and should be left here.

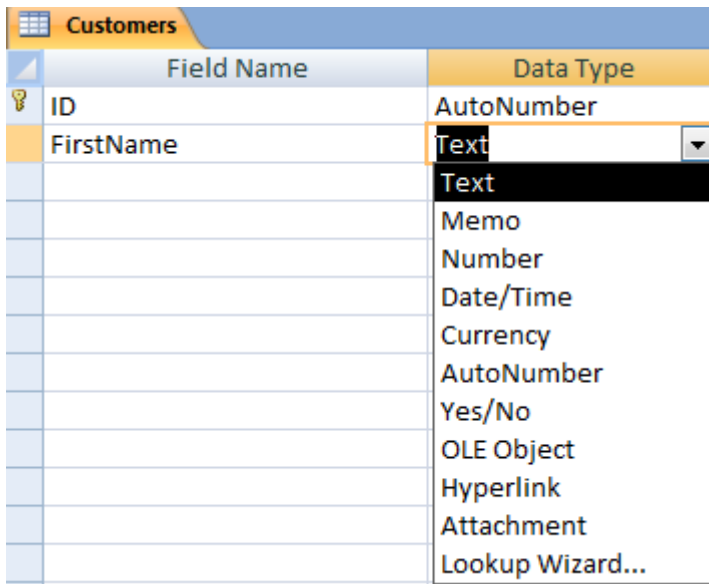


Field Name	Data Type
ID	AutoNumber

Click on the second line and enter a column name. I will be entering 'FirstName'. You can add a space between the words, but there are good reasons not to.

Tab along to the 'Data Type' column and click the down arrow.

You will then see a list of possible data types to use for the 'FirstName' column.

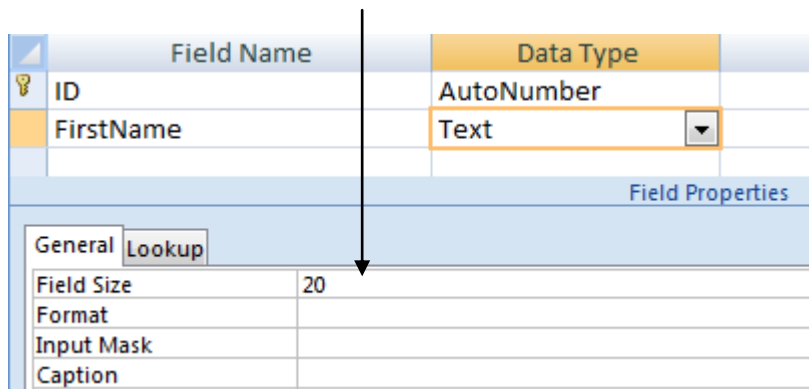


Field Name	Data Type
ID	AutoNumber
FirstName	Text

- Text
- Memo
- Number
- Date/Time
- Currency
- AutoNumber
- Yes/No
- OLE Object
- Hyperlink
- Attachment
- Lookup Wizard...

Can you guess which one to use? Well, I am not entering a price so I don't want to use a numeric or number data type. In this case for a 'FirstName' the most suitable data type would be 'Text'.

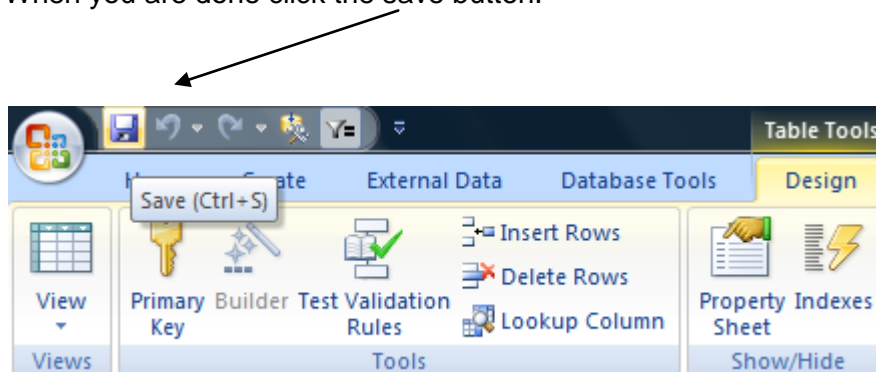
At the bottom of the screen you can set how many characters should be entered for this 'FirstName' column. I set it to 20.



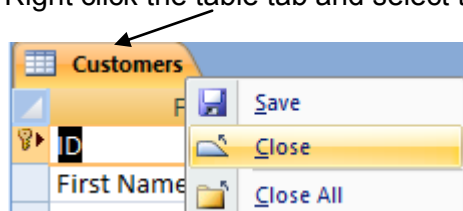
Enter some more columns and choose the appropriate data type and column size.

Field Name	Data Type
ID	AutoNumber
First Name	Text
Last Name	Text
Address	Text
City	Text
State/Province	Text
ZIP/Postal Code	Text
Home Phone	Text
E-mail Address	Text

When you are done click the save button.



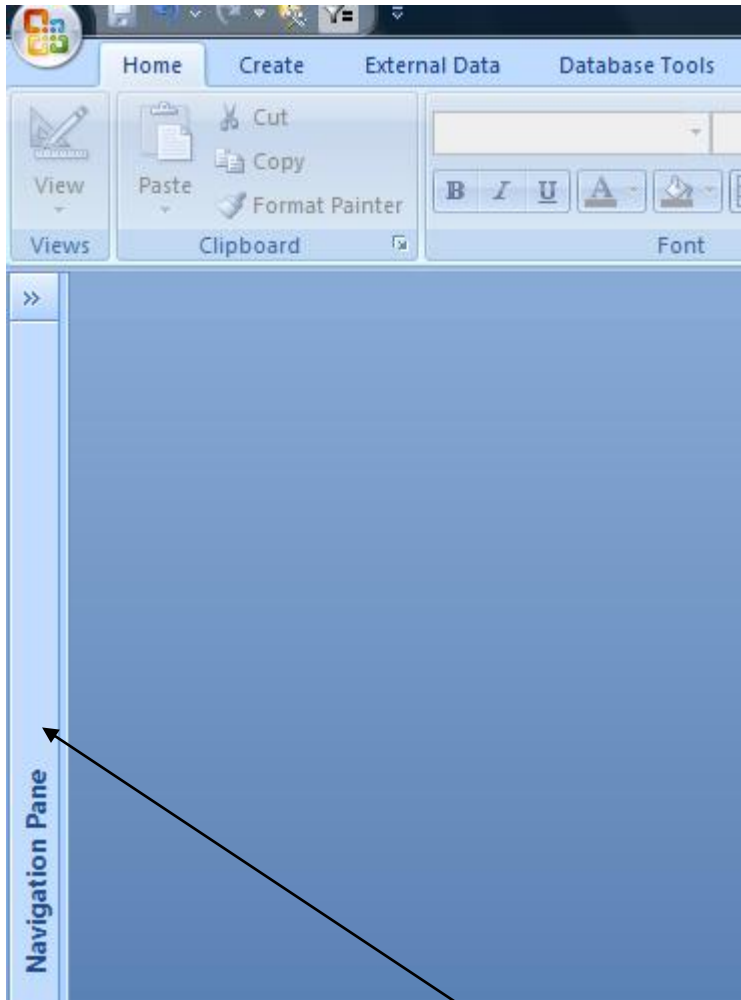
Right click the table tab and select the 'Close' option.





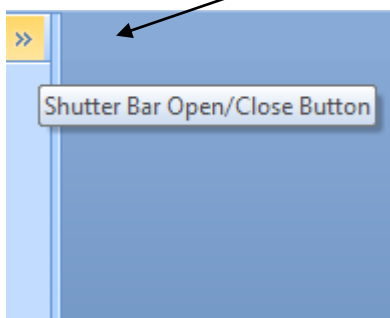
## The Navigation Pane

The navigation pane replaces the database window used in previous versions of MS Access. It holds all objects in the database such as tables, forms, queries, reports, macros and program code modules.

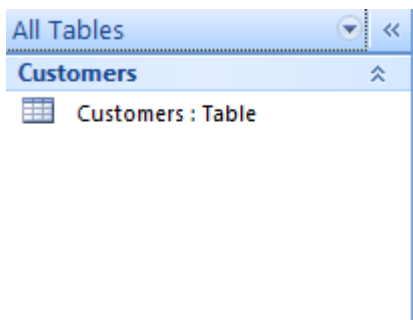


The navigation pane is tucked away at the left hand side.

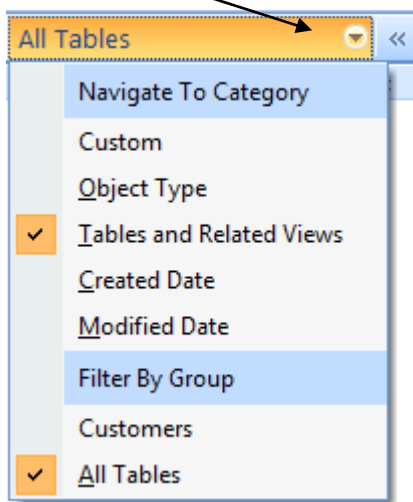
Click the double arrow, known as the 'Shutter bar open/close button' to expand or collapse the pane.



The table I just created is held there.



Click the small down arrow to select the object you wish to view.



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