Microsoft Office 2013 Access Forms
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Overview

Microsoft Office Access Forms is an instructor lead, hands-on, small group, interactive workshop. Templates, support material, and an opportunity to ‘See and Try’ is the guiding methodology of this workshop. Participant experiences will include:

- Creation of Access Forms
- Using a Form for Navigation

Participants will have knowledge and skills to create an Access Form, edit the form and populate the form with 100% success by the end of the workshop.

Quick Forms

A feature to make it easier to enter data is to add a form. To make a simple quick form, select the table that needs a form and go to the Create Tab. Select Form and magically a form appears. The form is connected to the Table as a means to enter data. Note that the form can be deleted without deleting data in the Table. The Table(s) is the main Object in the Database.

MS Access Forms

A form in Access is a softer, less intimidating object in Access. It has the purpose of collecting data or viewing data in a way that is user friendly and safe. An Access form can be modified and deleted without damaging or removing data from the collection Tables. The data collected will be fed into Tables that look and act much like an Excel Spreadsheet. You can create several forms, with various fields, all feeding into one database table. You can use forms to control user input to selected fields that might have confidential data. In this way the creator can provide input users or data collectors with a form that contains selected fields.

Form Creation Methods

(Prerequisite - What comes first the form or the table? The correct answer is a Table to collect the form data. Select the Create Tab. Select a Table in your database. Select the Form icon to create a simple form. If you have a table selected and select the Form Icon, a form will magically appear. Sometimes the fields are not positioned to your liking. If you want more control, select Form Design under the Create Tab/Forms Group.

You can create a Form by starting with Form Design. Under the Create Tab/Forms Group select Form Design. A Form in Design View will appear on the screen. It looks like the image below.
Go to the Forms Design Tools on the Ribbon and the Tools Group and select Add Existing Fields. The Field List displays all Tables and Fields. If you see a plus to the left of a Table name, select the plus to expand the list of Table Fields. Select a Field and drag it to the form.

After the fields are placed in the Design Form, align and space them. Start at the top of the form just above the first field and insert your cursor. Drag to surround all the fields or just the fields you want to align.
Release the mouse. If you were able to select all the fields, each field will display orange borders. Go to the Arrange Tab. In the Sizing & Ordering Group select Size/Space. Make all Fields the same size if desired.
Go to the Align Command. Select Fields or Field Names and the appropriate Button to align perfectly to the left or to the right.

If you want to control the form by inserting only the fields you want but allowing Access to align them, try the Form Wizard also found under the Create Tab/Form Group and select Form Wizard. A dialog box appears. Look for the drop down called Tables/Queries. Locate the Table to associate with the form. The bottom left column will be the available fields. Use the Greater-Than icons in the center to move fields from the left side to the right side. Follow the prompts until you come to Finish. Select Finish to see your form.
If you use the Blank Form Command a Blank White empty form appears. Fields can be added to the Blank Form from the 'Add Existing Fields' found on the Create Tab in the upper right corner. The Blank Form option behaves like the Design Form but may be less intimidating because Access attempts to align and group for you as you drag fields to the Blank Form. Notice the Controls that become available when using the Blank Form. You can also drag from the Controls Group to add Text Labels, Buttons, Links, Images and other Advanced Controls such as ComboBoxes and Pages. Use the Text Box (ab|) by selecting it and dragging a box on the form. Select the Text Box and type a title. In the Design Tab look for the Header / Footer Group. In the Header / Footer Group the Title Command is available. Other options are Logo, Title and Date and Time. Select a Command and double click or Click and Drag a Command while in Design View or while in Blank Form View. Try adding a Title from the Header/Footer Group. Double click the Title icon. Type inside the Text Box. Select the Logo Command to add a Logo by using an image on your computer. Add Page Numbers, Date and Time if desired.

Other Tools under the Arrange Tab
Under the Arrange Tab look for the Table Group. Select some Fields and Change the layout to Tabular. Watch the change in position/layout. Tabular changes the layout vertically.

Stacked produces the typical Horizontal look we generally think of on a form.

Under the Arrange Tab/Position Group look for Control Padding. This inserts more or less space between labels and fields.

Control Margins push the label and field against or away from the box holding the data and the Anchoring Command modifies the position of the Field and its associated label (name).
Test the New Form

I always test a new form but it is annoying to tab back and forth to make sure data is really being submitted to the table. Instead, go to the Forms Group and select More Forms and Split. Now you can see the form and the table in the same window. Add some data to the form and watch the table. DO NOT forget to Refresh or the data will not show. Test to make sure the form is really feeding to the table.

Add Form Fields to an Established Form First, you must add a new Field to a Table in your database (For steps on adding a new Field to a Table in your database, see the Microsoft Access Tables Workshop Guide). Now go to your Established Form. Open in Design View by going to the Create Tab/Forms Group and Design View. In the upper right of your screen, select Add Existing Fields. Existing available Fields will display. Select and drag a Field to your form. Test your form to be sure it is still working. Now that your form is functional and beautiful, we want this form to be the first thing that users see.

Displaying the Form

Go to the upper left corner of the screen. Select the File Tab (in 2010 & 13 - instead use the Office Button in 2007). Next, open Access Options.

Give your application a title. Find an icon and select the form you want folks to see when they first open this database.

Navigation Form


1. Go to the Create Tab
2. Go to the Forms group and select Navigation and Style
3. Go to View and change the View type to Layout
4. Add objects to the Navigation by dragging to the Add New Tab

Using a Form for Navigation

Once upon a time, we used something called a Switchboard to navigate through all the objects in an Access Database. Beginning in MS Access 2007 it was suggested that we use a Navigation Form. In MS Access 2013 it is suggested to use the Navigation Pane to navigate or create a Navigation Form.

Go to the Create Tab. In the Forms Group select Navigation Form. You have several template styles to pick from. Select Vertical Navigation. Drag a Form from the "All Access Objects" column on the far left side of the database window to the "Add New" button in the Navigation Form. This column shows objects in this database.
If you have several Forms or other objects, they can be added by dragging from the left side Navigation Column to the Navigation Form Add New Button.

We can modify the look of Buttons by going into Design Mode. In the Form Design Tool Tab, go to the Format option. You can change the Button to a picture, a Caption with a Picture or you can change the Shape, Shape Effects, or Position of the Button. In the Form Design Tools you can truly make the form unique. The Navigation Form behaves and are edited much like other Forms in the Database.

**In Summary**

We can make a simple table in Access, and create a snappy form with awesome navigation. Using the Navigation Form to show off your database is much easier than the old switchboard that we all loved to use but hated to create.