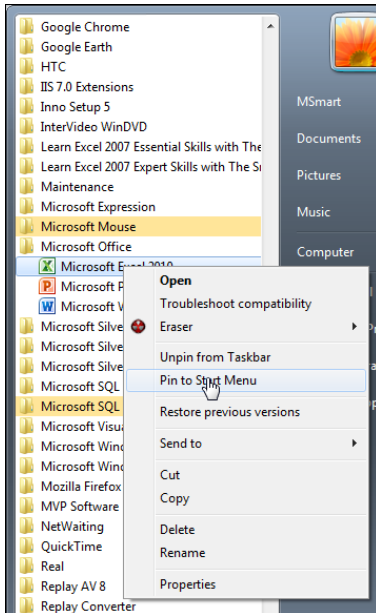



Lesson 1-1: Start Excel and open a new blank workbook

Startup in Windows 7



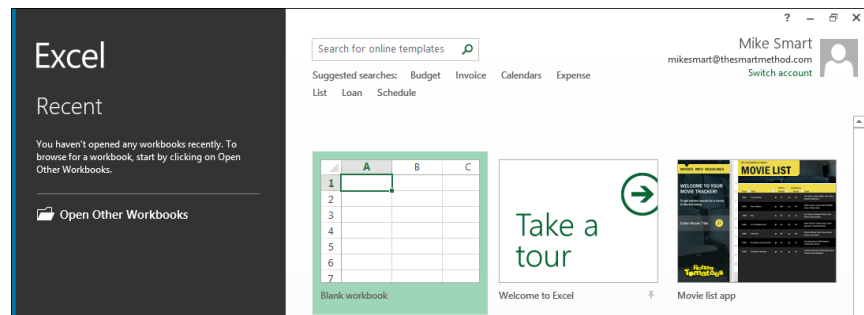
- 1 Click the *Windows Start Button*  at the bottom left of your screen.
- 2 Click the *All Programs* item at the bottom of the pop-up menu.
- 3 Scroll down the list and click on the *Microsoft Office 2013* item.
- 4 Pin *Microsoft Excel 2013* to the start menu.

You'll be using Excel a lot so it makes sense to pin it to the start menu. This will make it appear at the top of the list in future so you'll be able to start Excel with just two clicks.

To pin to the start menu, point to *Microsoft Excel 2013* in the list, right-click your mouse and then choose *Pin to Start Menu* from the shortcut menu.

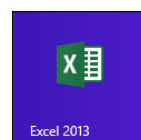
- 5 Left-click *Microsoft Excel 2013* to start Excel.

Excel starts and is displayed on the screen:



Startup in Windows 8

- 1 Locate the Excel icon on the Windows 8 start screen.



If you can't find the icon, see the facing page sidebar for instructions on how to create it.

- 2 Drag *Excel 2013* to the left hand side of the start screen.

You'll be using Excel a lot so it makes sense to locate the icon on the left-hand side of the Windows 8 start screen. You'll then be able to start Excel without having to search for the icon.

note

Can I make Excel start with a blank workbook, like it used to in earlier versions?

Whenever a new version of Excel arrives, many users' first instinct is to try to make it more like the older version it replaced.

The majority of people resist change of any sort (as any politician will tell you).

My opinion is that showing a start-up screen is more intuitive and logical than starting Excel with an open blank worksheet.

But if you long for the "good old days" here's how you can make Excel 2013 mimic Excel 2010 (and earlier versions) at start-up:

1. Start Excel.
2. Click the *Blank Workbook* template to open the main Excel screen.
3. Click:
File→Options→General
4. Uncheck the *Show the Start Screen when this application starts* checkbox at the bottom of the dialog.

note

Potential problems when using templates

Many of Microsoft's templates have been created using some very advanced Excel skills and techniques. If you make use of them there's a danger that you may depend upon a workbook you don't understand and are unable to maintain.

Templates you create yourself are far more useful. Creating your own custom templates is beyond the scope of this *Basic Skills* course but is covered in depth in the *Essential Skills* book in this series (in Lesson 3-15: *Create a Template*).

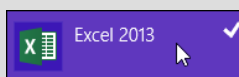
note

If you can't find the Excel 2013 icon in Windows 8

When you install Excel 2013 on a Windows 8 computer, icons are automatically added to the start screen. If you can't find the icon it is likely that it has been accidentally unpinned. In this case proceed as follows:

1. When the Windows 8 start screen is displayed, type: **excel** on the keyboard. You will see the excel 2013 application icon on the screen. If you don't, Excel is not installed on this computer.

2. Right-click the Excel 2013 application icon. A tick will appear next to it:



3. Click the *Pin to Taskbar* icon on the menu bar at the bottom of the screen.

You will now be able to locate the Excel 2013 icon on the start screen (though you may have to scroll to the right to find it).

1. Point to the Excel 2013 icon.
2. Click and hold down the left mouse button.
3. With the left button held down move your mouse towards the left hand side of the screen. The icon will move with the mouse cursor.
4. When you reach the left-hand side of the screen release the left mouse button.

The Excel 2013 icon is now permanently positioned on the left-hand side of the Windows 8 start screen.

5. Left-click the Excel 2013 icon to start Excel.

After you've started Excel 2013...

Now that Excel 2013 has started, Excel needs to know whether you want to create a new workbook, or whether you want to open a workbook that was created earlier.

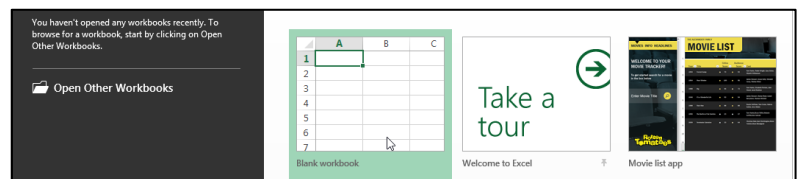
When creating a new workbook, Excel also offers to give you a "flying start" by using a template. Templates are sample workbooks that you can adapt and modify for your own needs. The idea is very good but, in reality, templates are not usually a good choice as it can take longer to adapt them to your true needs than to design from scratch (see sidebar).

In this lesson we'll create a blank workbook.

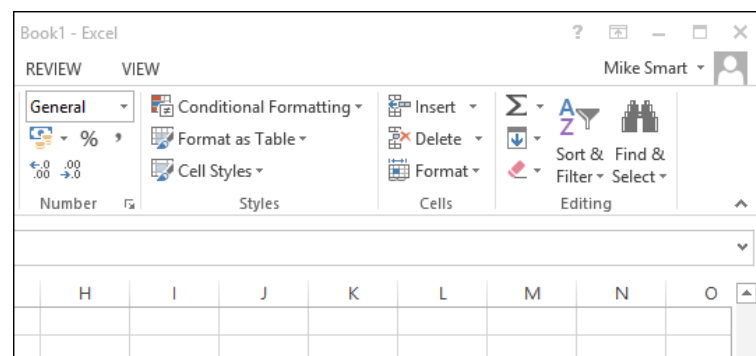
- 1 Create a new blank workbook.

Left-click the mouse button on the *Blank Workbook* template.

Note that, from now onwards, I will simply use the term "click" when I mean left-click (the mouse button you will use most of the time) and "right-click" only when you need to click the (less-used) right mouse button.



The Excel 2013 screen is displayed showing a blank workbook:



- 2 Leave the workbook open for the next lesson.