

**note**

**Themes and Backgrounds affect every Office application on all of your devices**

When you set a theme or background in Excel you are actually changing the theme and background for the entire Office suite.

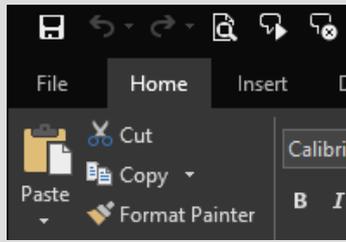
This means that you will have a consistent experience when using other Office applications such as *Word* and *PowerPoint*.

**note**

**The new Excel 365 Black theme**

The new *Black* theme was introduced as part of the *Feb 2016 version 1601* Excel update.

The *Black* theme provides even higher contrast than the *Dark Gray* theme.



# Lesson 1-3: Change the Office Theme

Excel allows you to change the colors of screen elements (such as the menu bar and ribbon) by selecting a *theme*. Excel 2016 users have three themes available: *White*, *Dark Gray* and *Colorful*, while Excel 365 users have an additional *Black* theme also available (see sidebar).

## Colorful

Rank	Country	GDP - per capita (PPP)	Date of information
1	Qatar	\$137,200	2014 est.
2	Luxembourg	\$97,600	2014 est.
3	Liechtenstein	\$89,400	2009 est.
4	Macau	\$88,700	2013 est.

Excel 2016 uses the *Colorful* theme as the default. The previous version of Excel (Excel 2013) used the *White* theme as the default. The colorful theme makes it clear which of the Office applications you are using as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and other Office applications each have their own unique color.

## White

Rank	Country	GDP - per capita (PPP)	Date of information
1	Qatar	\$137,200	2014 est.
2	Luxembourg	\$97,600	2014 est.
3	Liechtenstein	\$89,400	2009 est.
4	Macau	\$88,700	2013 est.

The *White* theme has very low contrast and shading. Some designers feel that this gives Excel a modern and “minimalist” appearance but it was widely criticized by some users of Excel 2013 for causing eye strain and being difficult to work with.

## note

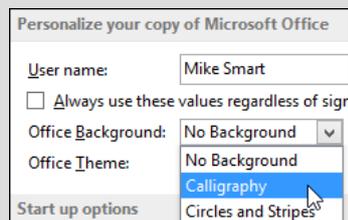
### You can also personalize Excel by changing the background

Background customization can only be done if you are connected to the Internet and logged into a Microsoft Account.

I personally find the *Background* feature a little frivolous for a serious business application. For this reason, I always leave it set to *No Background*.

Perhaps you feel differently and would like to stamp your own identity onto your copy of Office.

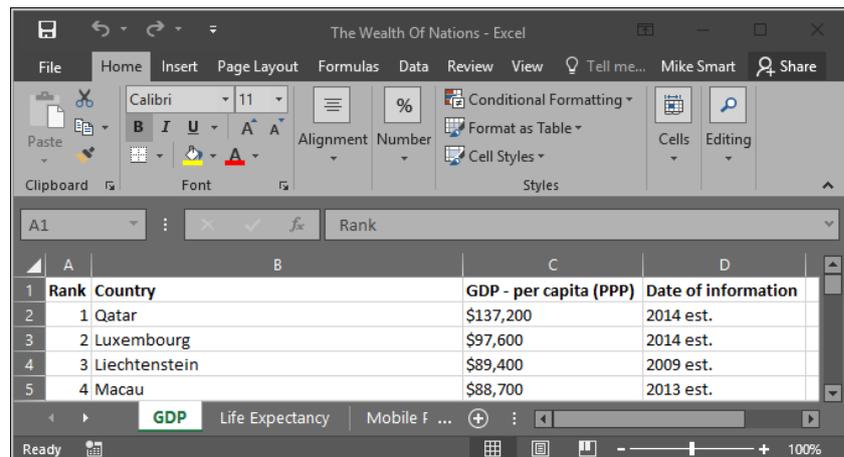
If you are logged into your Microsoft Account, you will see another drop-down list (above the *Office Theme* setting) that enables backgrounds to be set:



When you choose a background a “tattoo” is added to the area above the Ribbon with your chosen design:



## Dark Gray



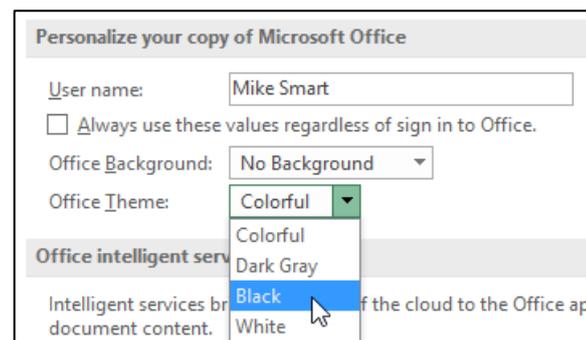
The *Dark Gray* theme provides high contrast between different screen elements. It has been suggested that this theme would be particularly useful for users with impaired vision.

- 1 Open Excel and open a new blank Excel workbook.
- 2 Change the *Office Theme*.

1. Click the *File* button  at the top-left of the screen.
2. Click the *Options* button  near the bottom of the left-hand menu bar.

The *Excel Options* dialog box appears.

In the *Personalize your copy of Microsoft Office* section, you'll see an *Office Theme* drop-down list. Click the drop-down arrow to see the different themes available.



3. Click the *Dark Gray* theme.
4. Click *OK* to return to the Excel screen.

Experiment with each theme until you discover the one you prefer. All of the screen grabs in this book were done using the *Colorful* theme. If you choose a different theme the screen grabs in the book may look slightly different to what you see on your computer screen.

- 3 Close Excel.