3. Initial Tasks

The initial tasks deal with starting a new presentation, customising the slide format to the way the presentation will be applied, and choosing an appropriate colour theme.

These are tasks that it is good to get done right away, because it saves you having to adapt later. Especially the slide format is important to have in place, otherwise you run the risk that the size does not match the content if you change the slide format at a later time.

When PowerPoint starts up, the program is already ready with a new, blank presentation that you can begin working in. The presentation is completely empty, completely white and completely boring. There is only one slide, where you can write a title and a subtitle.
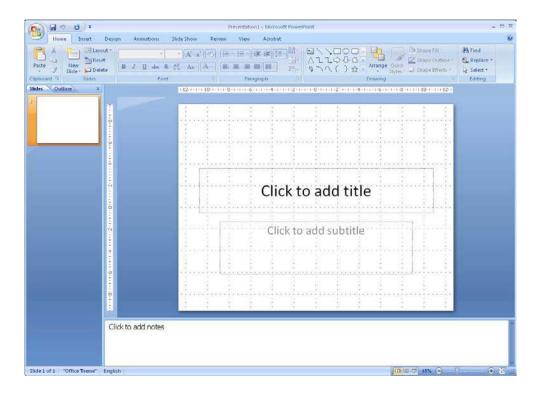
Figure 7: PowerPoint with a new blank presentation.

It is a fine starting point when you want to make a new presentation, but you will also learn how to make use of the many predefined templates.

3.1 Start a new, blank presentation

You can have as many presentations open as you like, or as your computer's memory allows. In most cases, this means more than you'll ever need. You are not to only have one presentation open at a time.

In the following we will see learn to create a new, blank presentation based on a completely blank template. That means a blank presentation similar to that which appears when PowerPoint starts up. Later we shall have a look at the many beautiful templates you can use.

First, we need to change the blank slides a little, otherwise PowerPoint just deletes it when you create a new, blank presentation.

1. Click on the text "Click To Add Title" on the slide that is shown in PowerPoint. Write something like "My First Front Page".

Now we can make our new empty presentation.

2. Click on the <u>Office Button</u> in the top left corner of the screen.
3. Click on <u>New</u>. (The exercise continues)

Now you get to choose which template you want to use. The templates are organised into categories on the left side. The categories are divided into two groups. At the top is the group with pre-installed templates, and beneath that the group "Microsoft Office Online." In order to use the templates in the last group you must have Internet access. There are many templates in this group and they would take up quite some space on your hard drive if they were stored locally on your computer.

Using templates from Microsoft Office Online is also completely transparent. If your Internet connection is open, it loads the list automatically and they are ready for immediate use. You do not have to first enter a site and download templates.

When later in the book you have to do an exercise, and I ask that you start with a blank presentation, select the category, Blank and Recent, and then the template Blank Presentation.
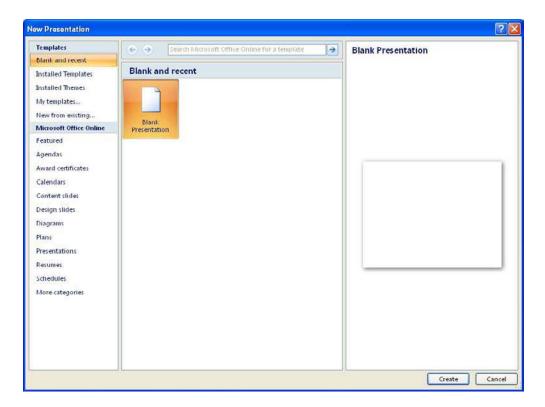

Figure 8: The window ”New Presentation”.

Let us begin with a new empty document (exercise continued):

4. Ensure that the group Empty and Latest has been chosen and that the template Empty Presentation is selected.
5. You create your presentation by either double-clicking on the template, or by clicking the Create button at the bottom right.

You have now created an extra presentation so that you have two presentations open at once.

You can switch between them via the Windows taskbar at the bottom, which will now have a button for each presentation.

Figure 9: The Windows taskbar where you can switch between the presentations.

Both presentations are rather dull. They have no colour and they contain nothing exciting. It is such a presentation we will be working with in the book, where we transform it into an exciting and colourful presentation that can sell sand in the Sahara!

Before the fun begins, we must try to use one of the many beautiful predefined templates

3.2 Begin a New Presentation Using a Template

Templates are completely or partially pre-filled presentations that suit various tasks. They are an easy way to quickly create a nice presentation. All you have to do is change the text to include your message, and possibly add or delete individual slides.

I trust that you installed the included templates when you installed the program on your computer. In this exercise I do not use a template from "Microsoft Office Online", but the process is exactly the same. However, it might take a moment to download the template to your computer, depending on how fast your Internet connection is.

In this exercise we open a new template that can be used as a photo album.

1. Click on the <u>Office Button</u> in the top right corner of the screen.
2. Click on <u>New</u>.
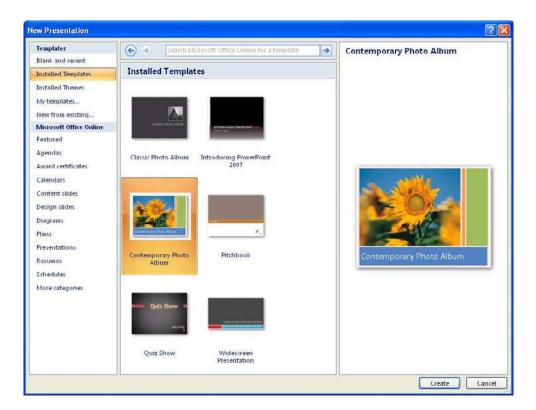3. In the left side, select <u>Installed Templates</u>.

Figure 10: Installed Templates.

4. Highlight the template <u>Standard Photo Album</u>.
5. Double-click the template, or click the <u>Create</u> button.

This opens a new presentation. Everything is set up and you just need to insert images and text in the various placeholders.
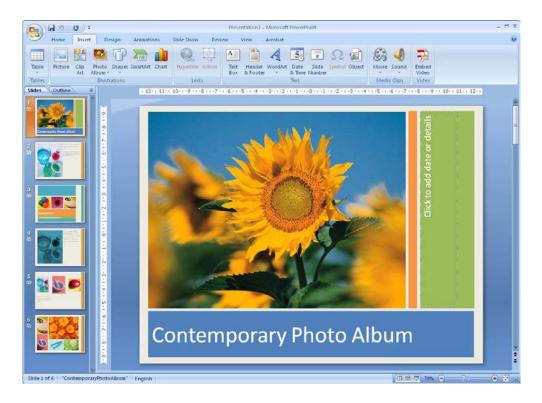

Figure 11: PowerPoint is ready for you to insert your own pictures and text.

Templates are a really smart way to create presentations. If you work with PowerPoint in a business, the company might have created its own templates. Some companies even require that you use these templates as part of its "branding". Ask your IT department whether it is the case with your company.

Under Installed templates there is a special template called Introduction to PowerPoint 2007. I recommend that you open and browse it. It contains useful information about the program.

Take also a look at the other templates, those that are already installed as well as those that are online. They give a good overview of the many options you have.

Now you can close the presentation down. In the following, we will work from a new, blank presentation.

3.3 Customising the Slide Format

Depending on what your presentation will be used for, you can choose between different slide formats. You can choose plain A4 if you print your presentation on transparencies, or you can choose a format to fit your computer screen, which will also fit a projector connected to a computer.

1. Start with a new, blank presentation. This is the presentation we are going to work with from now on.

2. Choose the <u>Design</u> Tab in the Ribbon and click on the <u>Page setup</u> button furthest to the left.
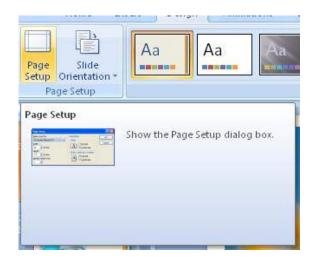

Figure 12: The button <u>Page setup</u>.

This opens a small window where you can change the settings of the slide format.
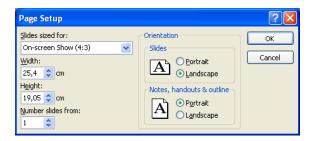

Figure 13: The Page Setup window

3. We will make a presentation that is shown on the screen. It is called an "on-screen show". Make sure that the settings are as shown in Figure 13 and click OK.

3.4 Choosing a Colour Theme

If you have started a new blank presentation and set page setup to "on-screen show" in landscape format, you should have something that looks like this:
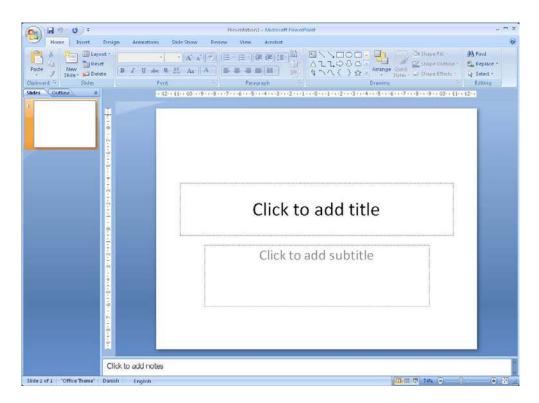

Figure 14: The new, blank presentation which we must add colours to.

Let us add some colours right now. PowerPoint contains many beautiful colour themes that you can use. A colour theme is a complete collection of settings for background graphics, fonts, font colours, etc., which ensures that everything matches.

If later you insert an Excel or SmartArt chart, the colours in these charts also automatically harmonise with the colour theme you have chosen for your presentation.

You can always change the colour theme if you regret the one you chose at first.

1. Select the Design Tab in the Ribbon.

Figure 15: The buttons where you can choose the colour theme.

Now you can choose between many different colour themes (Figure 15). When you point to a theme with the mouse, your slides change colours, so you can see how it looks.

To the right of the colour themes, there are three small buttons with some arrows on. It is not all colour themes that you can see directly. When you click the arrow pointing downwards, you will find several themes. If you click the bottom button, you will see a complete list of themes.

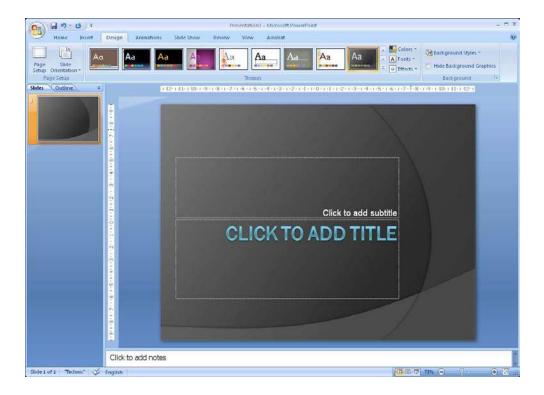2. Find and click on the theme I have used (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: Slide with colour theme.

3.4.1 Customise the Colour Theme

You can adjust the selected colour theme ad infinitum. If you do not think that the fonts are correct, or if you are not so fond of the blue-green title, you can easily change it to something you like better.

In the Design Tab in the Ribbon you will find buttons to change colours, fonts, effects and background graphics.

Figure 17: Buttons for adjusting the colour theme.

You can explore the possibilities yourself. In this book's examples we will not modify the chosen colour theme, but you can freely choose whether you want to change some things. .