Open Office Calc
(Spreadsheet)

Tutorial

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Introduction

OpenOffice is an open source Office Suite package originally designed by Sun Microsystems. OpenOffice is much like Microsoft Office but free to use. The software can be freely downloaded and used.

OpenOffice Calc is much like using Microsoft Excel.

What is a Spreadsheet?

A spreadsheet is the computer equivalent of a paper ledger sheet. It consists of a grid made from columns and rows. It is an environment that can make number manipulation easy and somewhat painless.

The math that goes on behind the scenes on the paper ledger can be overwhelming. If you change the loan amount, you will have to start the math all over again (from scratch). The nice thing about using a computer and spreadsheet is that you can experiment with numbers without having to redo all the calculations. **Let the COMPUTER do the calculations for you!** Once you have the formulas set up, you can change the variables that are called from the formula and watch the answers change. Spreadsheets are instantly updated if one of the entries is changed. NO erasers! NO new formulas! NO calculators!

Spreadsheets are made up of columns, rows, and cells (intersection of a column and row. A cell can contain data including text (strings or labels), numeric data, and formulas (mathematical equations).
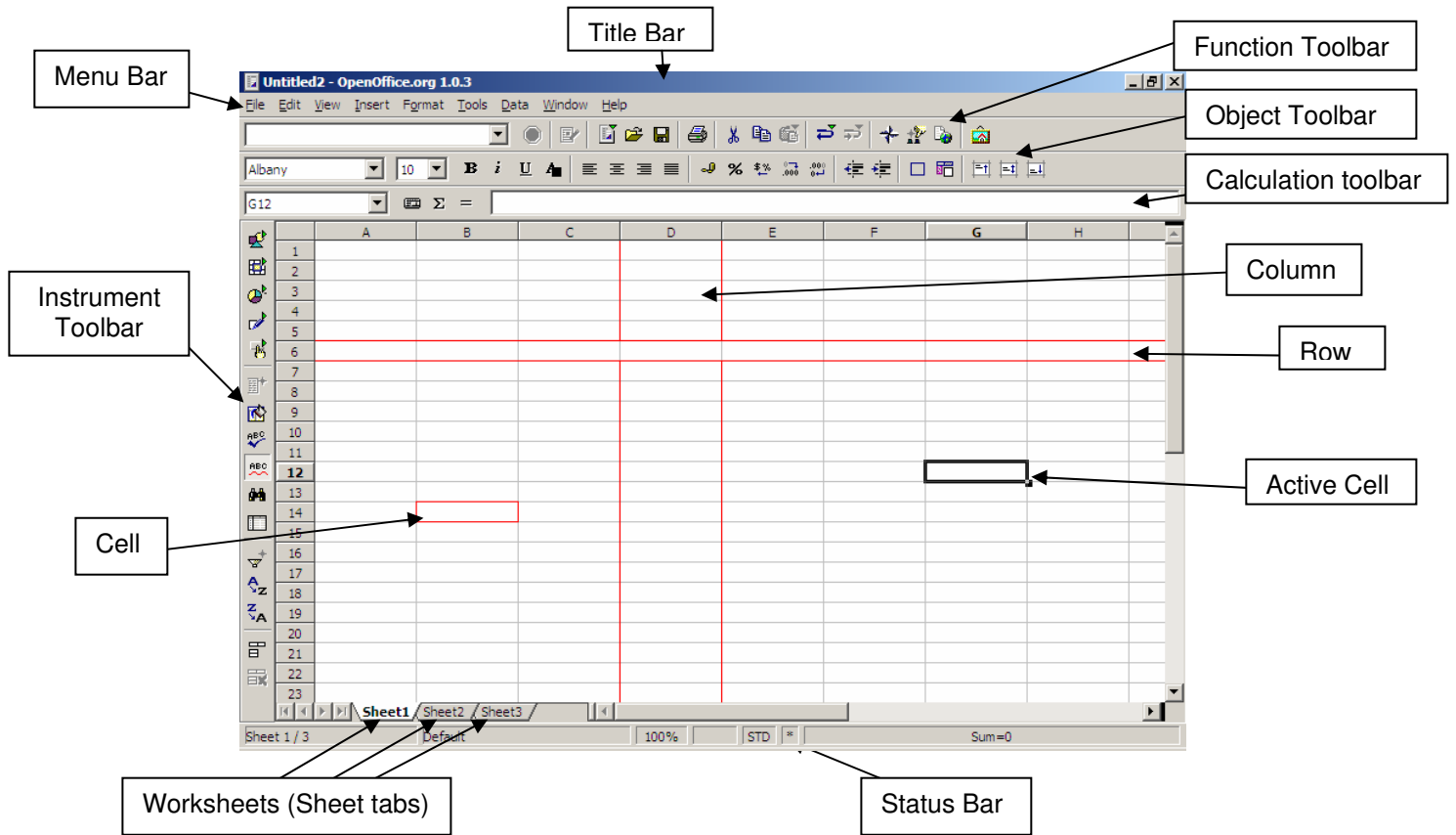
Starting OpenOffice Calc

Procedure

1. Click **Start**, **Programs**, **OpenOffice.org 1.0.3**, **OpenOffice Calc**.
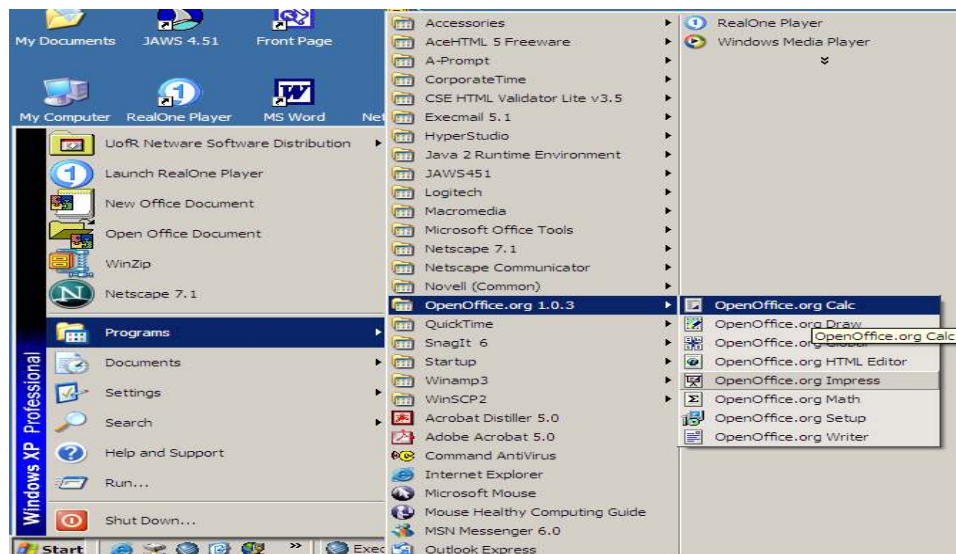
OpenOffice Calc (Spreadsheet) Basics

The picture below shows the Calc screen.

Title Bar

Function Toolbar

Menu Bar

Object Toolbar

Calculation toolbar

Column

Instrument Toolbar

Row

Active Cell

Cell

Worksheets (Sheet tabs)

Status Bar

The **Menu toolbar** contains the main menus of the Calc module. The **Function toolbar** provides user access to function icons such as **Open, Save, Copy, Cut, Paste** and other common tasks in Open Office. The **Object toolbar** consists of a set of tools that are specific to calculation and cell formatting (number format, text alignment, borders). Finally, the **Calculation toolbar** is intended for the entry of formulae necessary for your calculations, and also shows you the position of the cursor within the spreadsheet.

On the left of the screen, you will notice the **Instrument toolbar** (shown here on the right). This toolbar provides the tools that you will need to work with your spreadsheet. The basic functions of the toolbar are explained in this `How-to'. At the bottom of the screen, you will notice the **Status Bar**. This bar provides essential information such as the sheet that you're currently working on, the page style, and in normal mode, the sum of the cell in which the cursor is situated.

You will also notice that the folder you have just opened contains three worksheets by default, indicated by the presence of three small tabs above the Status Bar and bearing the names: Sheet1, Sheet2, Sheet3.

The spreadsheet is represented as a grid comprising cells, with each cell bearing a unique reference. A cell is referenced by its column (vertical reference), given here as a letter (e.g. A...Z etc.), and its line (horizontal reference), given here as a number (e.g. 1...65000 etc.). These references appear as grey column and line headers on the spreadsheet. Thus, the first cell in the first line (the one at the uppermost left hand corner) bears the reference A1.

Creating a New Document

Procedures

1. Type **CTRL+N** on your keyboard (hold down the CTRL key and type N).
2. Select **File, New, Spreadsheet** from the Menu Bar   **OR**
3. Click on the **New Document Icon** on the Function Bar and select Spreadsheet.

Entering Data

Procedures

To enter text, values or a formula:
1. Click on the cell you wish to enter information.
2. Type the information.
3. Press the **ENTER** key on the keyboard or press one of the arrow keys.