

Eight quick reference guides —  
one great price!

Microsoft® Office  
**Access™ 2007**

ALL-IN-ONE DESK REFERENCE  
FOR

**DUMMIES®**

**8 BOOKS  
IN 1**

- Essential Concepts
- Tables
- Queries
- Forms
- Reports
- Macros
- Database Administration
- Programming in VBA

Alan Simpson  
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***Microsoft<sup>®</sup> Office Access<sup>™</sup>  
2007 All-in-One Desk  
Reference For Dummies<sup>®</sup>***

**by Alan Simpson,  
Margaret Levine  
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**Margaret Levine Young** has co-authored several dozen computer books about the Internet, UNIX, WordPerfect, Access, and (stab from the past) PC-File and Javelin, including *The Internet For Dummies* (Wiley) and *Windows XP Home Edition: The Complete Reference* (Osborne/McGraw-Hill). She met her future husband Jordan in the R.E.S.I.S.T.O.R.S., a high-school computer club before there were high-school computer clubs. Her other passions are her children, music, Unitarian Universalism ([www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)), reading, and anything to do with cooking or eating.

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# Dedication

To Susan, Ashley, and Alec, as always. (AS)

To Matt, Parker, Mason, and Evan. (AB)

To the three people who are always there for me, always support me, and never let me down — my family, Larry, Adam, and Amandya. (AW)

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# Introduction

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Whoa! What happened to menu bars, toolbars, and all that other stuff I used to have? Well, in case you haven't noticed yet, they're all gone. Of course, if you never used Access before in your life, then you're starting fresh, so never mind. Whether you never used any version of Microsoft Access, and aren't even sure what a "version" is, you've come to the right book.

The basic idea behind Microsoft Access is to allow individuals and small businesses to manage large amounts of information the way the big corporations do — with relational databases. The difference is that while the big boys spend millions on computer hardware, software, and staffs of nerdy database-administrator types, Access allows you to do it all yourself with a run-of-the-mill PC and a realistic software budget.

Microsoft Access 2007 is the latest-and-greatest version of a long line of Access versions, starting (not surprisingly) with Version 1. Not that this is the 2,007th version. Somewhere along the way Microsoft switched from using sequential numbers for versions to using years — an idea first pioneered by the automotive industry, which sells things like "2007 Ford Mustangs" as opposed to "Mustang Version 9.3's."

Without going into boring detail about what's new in Access 2007, you find the usual kind of stuff you find in

new versions these days — more power, more flexibility, more things you can do with it. And of course — along the lines of the Holy Grail of Everything Computerish these days — more taking advantage of everything the Internet has to offer. But the most noticeable change for the Access-experienced is a whole new look and feel — along with some new ways of doing things.

## **About Access 2007 All-in-One Desk Reference For Dummies**

If you ever have the misfortune of trying to read anything written by one of the aforementioned database-administrator types, you know all about being faced with a decision among the lesser of *three* evils:

(Option 1) Try to figure it out by guessing-and-poking until you break something.

(Option 2) Part with your hard-earned money to hire someone to do the work for you, only to have someone with poor taste in clothing look at you like you're an idiot every time you open your mouth.

(Option 3) Forget computers altogether and stick with index cards.

Option 1 is the one most people try first — until they get to the part where they start breaking things and it starts costing money to get them fixed. Option 2 is too odious

to warrant serious consideration. Option 3 just isn't very realistic nowadays unless you're dealing with a tiny amount of personal information. Which leaves a new Option 4 — this book.

The nerds who wrote this book are aware of the fact that *nobody* on the planet was *ever* born knowing what *any* technical term means. In fact, if at all possible, we avoid technical terms like a root canal. But because you are probably faced with technical terms outside this book, we do explain what they mean along the way.

As a rule, big fat computer books aren't such a great option. For that reason, this isn't really a big fat computer book. It's several *smaller* computer books combined into one. Each small book represents a single topic that you can pursue — or ignore — as your personal tastes and immediate needs dictate.

The idea here is definitely *not* to try to read the book cover to cover, unless you're desperately seeking a cure for insomnia. Rather, use the Table of Contents up front, or the Index out back, to look up information when trying to figure it out by guessing just isn't cutting it.

To prevent this book from topping 3,000 pages, we don't explain every possible way to do every possible thing in Access. Instead, we chose what we think are the most important database-management tasks, and we show you the best way to do each one.

# Conventions

Speaking of insomnia, this book, like most books, follows certain conventions to alert you to different kinds of stuff, as follows:

**Boldface:** Stuff you actually *do* while sitting at your computer is shown in boldface, to distinguish it from boring information you probably don't care about anyway.

*Italics:* When reality rears its ugly head and we're forced to use a technical term, we always show that term in italics the first time it's used. Then we define that term, right there on the spot. Of course, that doesn't mean you won't forget the definition two minutes later. But you can easily flip back a few pages and locate the definition amidst all the other words on the page.

**Monospace:** Monospace text (text in that typeface right back there) represents *code*, instructions that are written for computers, rather than people, to follow. Computers are so stupid, the term "stupid" is a compliment. Unconscious, non-thinking, non-beings (a.k.a. *machines*) is more like it. Anyway, when writing instructions for a computer, you *really* have to spell it out for them, right down to the blank spaces between words. Monospace text makes seeing where you have to put the blank spaces to avoid making Access say "Huh?" easier. (Actually, it can't even say "Huh?" More likely it says

something really stupid like “Syntax error in something or other .”)

## Foolish Assumptions

Despite the fact that the word “Dummies” is clearly emblazoned on this book’s cover and elsewhere, we don’t presume that you’re the junior partner in a ventriloquist act. (The machine you’re working with, yes. You, no.) We do assume that you already know how to do some things, such as turn on your computer and click and double-click things with your mouse. Maybe type with at least one finger.

We also assume you know what those *key+key* symbols, such as “Ctrl+Esc,” mean. But just in case you don’t, they always mean “Hold down the first key, tap the second key, and then release the first key.” Also, we always use the term “press” when referring to something you do with the keyboard. For example, the instruction “Press Ctrl+Esc” means “Hold down the Ctrl key on your keyboard, tap the Esc key, and then release the Ctrl key.” *Click*, on the other hand, is something you do with the mouse pointer on your computer screen and the buttons on your mouse.

We also assume (perhaps foolishly) that you know how to work menus. Not that there are many menus in Access. But when there is a menu-like sequence we use the word “Choose” followed by the commands to choose separated

by an  $\Rightarrow$  symbol. For example, when we say “Choose Start $\Rightarrow$ All Programs $\Rightarrow$ Microsoft Office $\Rightarrow$ Microsoft Access Office 2007” that’s short for “Click the Start button, click All Programs on the Start menu that appears, click Microsoft Office on the All Programs menu that appears, and then click Microsoft Office 2007 on the last menu that appears.”

Click, of course, means “rest the mouse pointer on the item, and then tap the left mouse button.” When we tell you to *drag* something, we mean for you to move your mouse pointer to the item, click, and then hold down the left mouse button while moving the mouse. To *drop* the item, just release the mouse button after dragging it.

We also show things like Web site URLs (addresses) — those `www. whatever .com` things you see all over the place. We may even throw in an occasional e-mail address (the `somebody @ somewhere .com` things) without explaining how to use them. Hopefully these assumptions on our part aren’t too foolish. But if we had to explain *all* that stuff here, there wouldn’t be much space left for talking about Microsoft Access 2007.

## What You Don’t Have to Read

Because reading the instructions is something we all do only as a last resort — after guessing and trying to get