

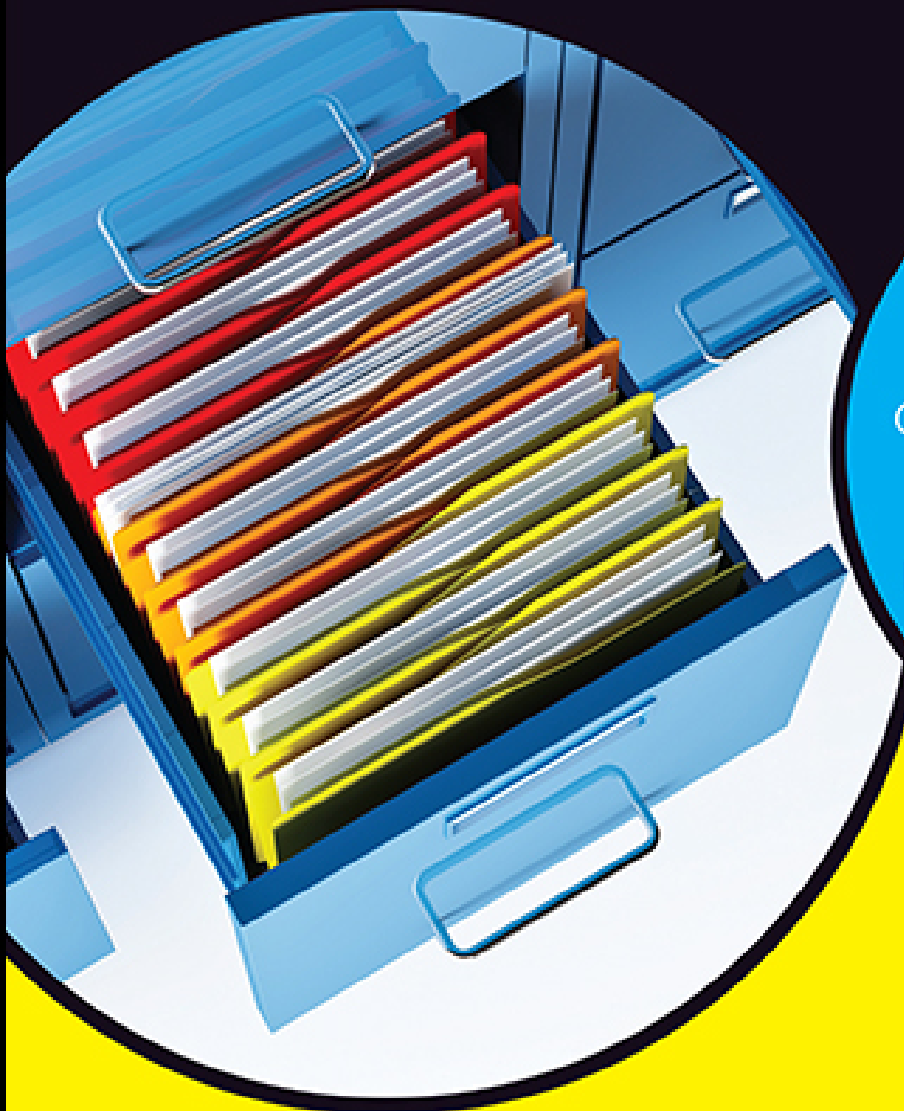
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# Microsoft® Access®

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Build a database  
from the ground up

Get familiar with tricks to get  
answers from data

Build and format reports to  
tell your data story

**Laurie Ann Ulrich**  
**Ken Cook**



# Access<sup>®</sup>

by Laurie Ann Ulrich and Ken Cook

<sup>for</sup>  
**dummies**  
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## **Access® For Dummies®**

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# Access® For Dummies®

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# Introduction

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Welcome! Thank you for selecting this book. We assume you've done so because you're hoping it will explain how to use Microsoft Access, and of course, as the authors, we believe this was a wise decision. We, the authors, base this belief on the fact that both of us have been teaching and using Access for a very long time, and we know how to share what we know with our students.

So what was it that made you seek out a book on Access? It might be that you've been asked to use it at work, or perhaps you run your own business or are managing a nonprofit organization. If any of these is the case — or if you're just a regular human with a lot of personal contacts and irons in the fire, you need Access to organize your data. You need it so you can find a name or a transaction in seconds after a few keystrokes, not after minutes spent scanning your spreadsheets or swiping apps this way and that on your smartphone. You need it so you can produce reports that make you look like the genius you are. You need it so you can create cool forms that will help your staff enter all the data you've got stacked on their desks — and in a way that lets you know the data was entered properly so that it's accurate and useful. You need Access so you can find little bits of data out of the huge pool of information you need to store. So that's it. You just need it.

## *About This Book*

With all the power that Access has (and that it therefore gives *you*), there comes a small price: complexity. Access isn't one of those applications where you can just sit down and use “right out of the box.” It's not scarily



difficult or anything, but there's a lot going on — and you need some guidance, some help, and some direction to really use it and make it bend to your will. And that's where this book — a “reference for the rest of us” — comes in.

So you've picked up this book. Hang on to it. Clutch it to your chest and run gleefully from the store or click the Add to Shopping Cart button and sit back with an expression of satisfaction and accomplishment on your face, because you've done a smart thing (if we don't say so ourselves). When you get home, or when the book arrives in person (or when you download it to your handheld device), start reading — whether you begin with [Chapter 1](#) or whether you dive in and start with a particular feature or area of interest that's been giving you fits. Just read, and then go put Access to work for you.

## ***Foolish Assumptions***

You need to know only a few things about your computer and Windows to get the most out of *Access For Dummies*. In the following pages, we presume that you:

- » Know the basics of Windows 10 — how to open programs, save your files, create folders, find your files after you've saved them, print, and do basic stuff like that.
- » Have some goals that Access will help you reach. You
  - want to build your own databases and/or
  - want to work with databases that other people have created

- » Want to use and create queries, reports, and an occasional form
- » Have Windows 10



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

If your computer uses a version of Windows prior to Windows 10, you can't run recent versions of Access.

## *Icons Used in This Book*

When something in this book is particularly valuable, we go out of our way to make sure that it stands out. We use these cool icons to mark text that (for one reason or another) *really* needs your attention. Here's a quick preview of the ones waiting for you in this book and what they mean.



TIP

Tips are incredibly helpful words of wisdom that promise to save you time, energy, and the embarrassment of being caught swearing out loud while you think you're alone. Whenever you see a Tip, take a second to check it out.



REMEMBER

Some things are too important to forget, so the Remember icon points them out. These items are critical steps in a process — points that you don't want to miss.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

Sometimes we give in to the techno-geek lurking inside us and slip some technical babble into the book. The Technical Stuff icon protects you from obscure details by making them easy to avoid. On the other hand, you may find them interesting. (Your inner techno-geek will rejoice.)



WARNING

The Warning icon says it all: *Skipping this information may be hazardous to your data's health.* Pay attention to these icons and follow their instructions to keep your databases happy and intact.

In addition to the content in this book, you'll find some extra content available by visiting [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and typing **Access** into the search box, including

- » The Cheat Sheet for this book
- » Updates to this book, if any

## ***Where to Go from Here***

Now nothing's left to hold you back from the thrills, chills, and power of Access. Not sure where to start? See if you spot yourself in these scenarios:

- » If you're brand new to the program and don't know which way to turn, start with the general overview in [Chapter 1](#).
- » If you're about to design a database, we salute you — and recommend flipping through [Chapter 4](#) for some

helpful design and development tips.

- » Looking for something specific? Try the Table of Contents or the index.

# **Part 1**

## **Basic Training**

## IN THIS PART ...

Discover what Access is and does and what's new in the current version of Access.

Learn about the objects that make up an effective database, and get started building your first table.

Master database lingo so you can speak the language and understand the terminology.