

# Bonus Chapter 1

## Fine Tuning Your Preferences

### *In This Chapter*

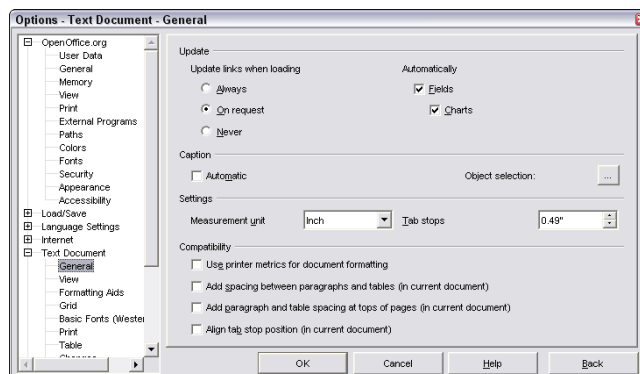
- ▶ Setting options
- ▶ Specifying preferences for toolbars and the keyboard
- ▶ Creating macros

To feel really comfortable with OpenOffice.org, you should set its options to suit your preferences or set your preferences with the options that you want — or something like that. In other words, make OpenOffice.org fit you, rather than molding yourself to fit OpenOffice.org. Besides setting options, you can configure the keyboard, toolbars, and status bar. Finally, you can create macros to speed up your work.

### *Choosing Your Options*

The Options dialog box contains numerous settings that relate to OpenOffice.org as a whole as well as to each application within OpenOffice.org. To access this dialog box, shown in Figure 1, choose Tools⇨Options.

**Figure 1:**  
You can find lots of options in the Options dialog box.



The left portion of the Options dialog box contains a hierarchical list of major sections. Click any section's plus sign to display its subsections. Click a subsection to reveal its contents on the right side of the dialog box. Note that many of these settings take effect only after you close and reopen OpenOffice.org.

## *The OpenOffice.org section*

The OpenOffice.org section contains settings that are general to the entire suite of applications. Each subsection covers a different topic, as follows:

- ✔ **User Data:** Contains your name, address, and other personal information. OpenOffice.org uses this data for templates (for example, to suggest a heading for a letter) and in the Properties dialog box (choose File⇨Properties to see for yourself).
- ✔ **General:** This is a miscellaneous catchall. Here you can find settings for how the Help system works, how to interpret two-digit years, and whether to use Open and Save dialog boxes from your operating system (the default) or from OpenOffice.org.
- ✔ **Memory:** Contains settings that you can use to maximize the efficient use of the memory of your computer.
- ✔ **View:** Enables you to change how OpenOffice.org looks and how the mouse functions. For example, you can change the size and look of toolbar buttons.
- ✔ **Print:** Offers options for printing draft output (lower quality) and for printing in grayscale.
- ✔ **External Programs:** Specifies your e-mail program.
- ✔ **Paths:** Specifies where OpenOffice.org stores certain files that you may want to access directly, such as dictionaries and backups.
- ✔ **Colors:** Lets you add colors to the list of available colors.
- ✔ **Fonts:** Enables you to create a table that replaces certain fonts with other fonts that you choose.
- ✔ **Security:** Specifies how macros, hyperlinks, and Java code function to ensure that you don't get any viruses.
- ✔ **Appearance:** Here's where you dress up OpenOffice.org in your favorite colors.
- ✔ **Accessibility:** Contains miscellaneous settings that affect the appearance of certain OpenOffice.org elements that may be helpful to people with disabilities.

## The Load/Save section

The Load/Save section is an important one, so be sure to give it a visit. In this section you set options for opening (loading) and saving documents. This section has four subsections, as follows:

- ✓ **General:** Set options for saving backups, determine how often you want OpenOffice.org to automatically save, and set the standard file format for each type of OpenOffice.org application. For example, if you need to always save your documents in Microsoft Word's .doc format, you do it here.
- ✓ **VBA Properties:** Specifies whether to retain the original VBA code when you open Office documents in OpenOffice.org. VBA is the macro language for Microsoft Office documents.
- ✓ **Microsoft Office:** The settings here only apply when you need to import or export objects from Microsoft Office and you don't have any application on your computer to interpret these objects.
- ✓ **HTML Compatibility:** Defines font sizes (in points) for HTML font size tags and sets your default browser so that you can optimize the HTML code for that browser if you save a Writer document in HTML format.

## The Language Settings section

Use the Language Settings section to define which language you want to work in and to determine how spell-checking and the thesaurus work, as follows:

- ✓ **Languages:** Sets the default language and currency.
- ✓ **Writing Aids:** Specifies dictionaries and how Spellcheck and the thesaurus function.

## The Internet section

The Internet section helps you configure OpenOffice.org for the Internet. This section has only two subsections, as follows:

- ✓ **Proxy:** Specifies a proxy server and other proxy settings. (A *proxy* stores Internet data for faster access.)
- ✓ **Search:** Specifies exact settings for your favorite search engines. You use this feature when you click the Search button on the Hyperlink Bar. (Choose View⇨Toolbars⇨Hyperlink Bar to display the Hyperlink Bar.)

## *The Text Document section*

This section contains all the settings that are specific to documents that you create in Writer. You should certainly take a look here and see whether you can fix that quirk that's been bothering you for days. The subsections are as follows:

- ✓ **General:** Specifies some miscellaneous settings, including how links are handled and how measurement units work.
- ✓ **View:** Controls the display for rulers and defines which types of objects OpenOffice.org displays.
- ✓ **Formatting Aids:** Controls the display of the cursor and other text features.
- ✓ **Grid:** Displays and formats the grid.
- ✓ **Basic Fonts (Western):** Defines the fonts for default styles.
- ✓ **Print:** Specifies what kinds of objects print and sets some printer options.
- ✓ **Table:** Sets defaults and functioning of tables.
- ✓ **Changes:** Defines how OpenOffice.org marks changes if you decide to record them. (See Chapter 6 for instructions on recording changes.)

When you finish setting your options, click OK.

## *Configuring Preferences*

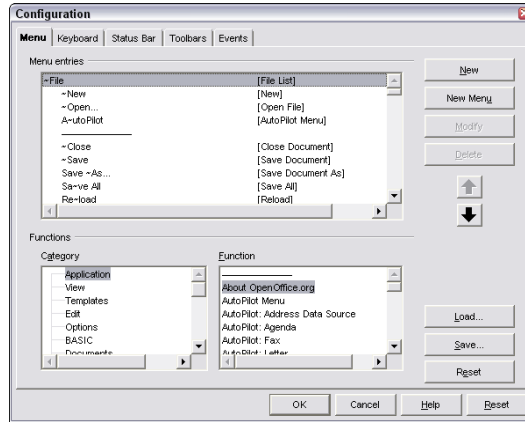
The Configuration dialog box, shown in Figure 2, enables you to customize menus, toolbars, keyboard shortcuts, and macros. Use this dialog box to make OpenOffice.org work just the way you want. To open the Configuration dialog box, choose Tools⇨Configure.

### *Customizing menus*

Use the Menu tab to change the order of existing menu items, create new menus, and save menus. To change the order of existing menu items, select the menu item and click the up or down arrows. To create a new menu item, follow these steps:

1. Click the menu item after which you want to add a menu item.
2. Choose the item that you want to add from the list of functions.
3. Click the New button.

**Figure 2:**  
The Configuration dialog box helps you customize OpenOffice.org.



You can create an entirely new menu. Choose the main menu name after which you want to add the menu, and click the New Menu button. You can also choose a menu item and click the New Menu button to add a submenu to an existing menu.

If you create a menu that you like, you can save it so that you can load it and use it again. Click the Save button, and name the menu file. Later, open the Configuration dialog box and click the Load button to load the menu. To go back to OpenOffice.org's original menu, click the Reset button.

## Creating keyboard shortcuts

If you like to use keyboard shortcuts instead of menus or toolbars, you can create shortcuts for all your favorite commands. To add a shortcut, follow these steps:

1. **Open the Configuration dialog box (choose Tools⇧Configuration), and click the Keyboard tab.**
2. **From the Category and Function lists at the bottom of the dialog box, select the command that you want to use.**
3. **From the Shortcut Keys list at the top of the dialog box list, select an unused shortcut or choose one that you don't use.**
4. **Click the Modify button.**  
The command appears next to the shortcut key.
5. **Click OK to close the dialog box.**

You can now use your new shortcut.

## Configuring the status bar

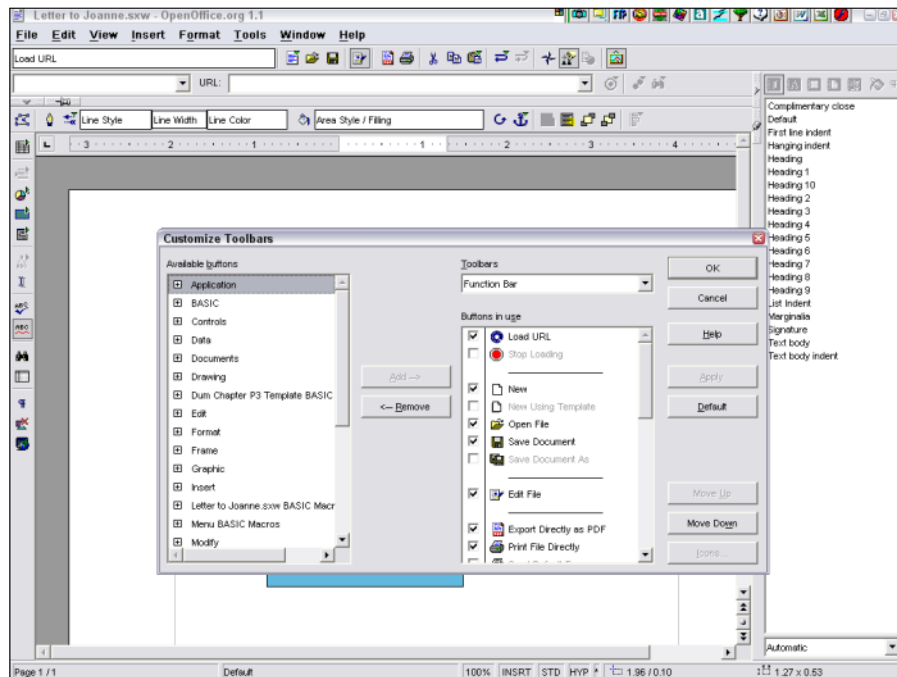
Use the Status Bar tab of the Configuration dialog box to specify which buttons appear on the status bar. You don't need to see buttons that you never use. Select the ones that you want, and deselect the ones that you don't need.

## Customizing toolbars

You can fully customize toolbars in the same way that you customize menus. To customize a toolbar, click the Toolbars tab of the Configure dialog box. Then click the Customize button to open the Customize Toolbars dialog box, as shown in Figure 3. When you open the Customize Toolbars dialog box, the Configuration dialog box closes.

The Available Buttons list contains all the buttons that you can add to a toolbar. Click a plus sign to expand a category and see its buttons. The Toolbars drop-down list contains all of OpenOffice.org's toolbars. The Buttons in Use list contains the buttons for the toolbar that appears in the Toolbars drop-down list.

**Figure 3:**  
The Customize Toolbars dialog box makes toolbars do whatever you want them to do.



To add a button to a toolbar, follow these steps:

1. **Choose the command that you want from the Available Buttons list.**
2. **Choose the toolbar that you want from the Toolbars drop-down list.**
3. **Click the Add button.**

To move the new command to a different location on the toolbar, click the command and click the Move Up or Move Down button until the command is in the desired location.

To remove a button from a toolbar, select the command from the Buttons in Use list and click the Remove button.

When you're done, click OK to return to your document.

## *Assigning macros to events*

You can assign a macro to an event, such as opening or closing a document. Follow these steps to assign a macro to an event:

1. **From the Macros list, choose a macro.**
2. **Choose an event from the Events list.**
3. **Click the Assign button.**

You can choose from OpenOffice.org macros that apply to all OpenOffice.org files or from document macros that apply only to a specific document.

4. **Click OK when you're done.**

## *Making Macros*

If you do the same steps repeatedly, stop! Record what you are doing, and then just play it back. Follow these steps to record a macro:

1. **To perform the macro on a selected object, first select that object.**

The macro will also work on other similar selected objects.

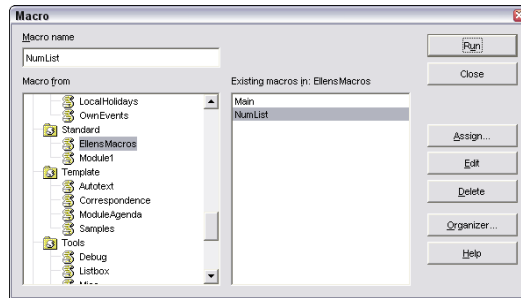
2. **Choose Tools⇨Macros⇨Record Macro.**

The Recording dialog box appears. Included in this dialog box is the Stop Recording button.

3. Perform the actions that you want to record.
4. Click the Stop Recording button in the Recording dialog box.

The Macro dialog box opens, as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4:**  
Name and  
save your  
macro in the  
Macro  
dialog box.



5. Enter a name for the macro in the Macro Name text box.
6. If you want, you can create your own location. Click New Library to create a new category. Click New Module to create a new subcategory inside one of the libraries (the main headings in the Save Macro In list box).
7. Choose the location for the macro from the Save Macro In list box.  
If you're not sure which location to choose, choose Standard⇨Module 1, which is a nice catchall location.
8. Click the Save button.

To run a macro, choose Tools⇨Macros⇨Macros. Find your macro, and click Run.



You can assign a macro to a keyboard shortcut. Display the Keyboard tab of the Configuration dialog box, as explained in the previous section of this chapter. At the bottom of the Category list are the macros. Choose the macro that you want, select a shortcut, and click the Modify button.