

Creating an Online Form: General Information

A form is a combination of fixed text and blank spaces for text that another person supplies. A form is used to collect specific information in a consistent format from more than one source. It is possible to use Word to create printed or online forms. An online form is filled out by the computer user. An online form can be displayed and filled out using a browser or by using Word. A form is a document that contains fill-in blanks, or form fields. For example, an online registration form can be created in Microsoft Word that uses drop-down lists from which users can select entries.

Several tasks need to be completed to create forms for users to view and complete in Microsoft Word. Before creating the form in Word, it is a good idea to sketch out how the form is going to be formatted.

It also might be a good idea to create a template for the form. A template is a file or files that contain the structure and tools for shaping such elements as the style and page layout of finished files. For example, a Word template can shape a single document and a FrontPage template can shape an entire Web site. To create a template:

- ❖ Start a new document, or open the document or template that the new template is to be based on.
- ❖ Click **File** on the **Menu Bar**.
- ❖ Click **Save As** from the list that appears.
- ❖ Click the **Save as type** list arrow.
- ❖ Click the **Document Template** option in the list.
- ❖ In the **File name** box, type a name for the new template.
- ❖ Click **Save**.
- ❖ The new template will appear on the **General** tab.

In the form, form fields and form controls are used. Controls are used to display data or choices, perform an action, or make the user interface easier to read. (form field: A form field is a location in a form where a particular type of data, such as a name or address, is stored. A form control is a graphical user interface object, such as a text box, check box, scroll bar, or command button, that lets users control the program. Tables are used in a form to display numbers and other items for quick reference and analysis. Items in a table are organized into rows and columns. It is also possible to insert a nested table into the form. A nested table is a table that is inserted with another table cell. Text boxes are used in a form to position several blocks of text on a page or to give text a different orientation than other text in the document.

To create a form, the Forms Toolbar needs to be displayed. To do this:

- ❖ Click **View** on the **Menu Bar**.
- ❖ Point to **Toolbars** in the list of options.
- ❖ Click **Forms** from the list of toolbars.