Create a Flowchart in Word

A flowchart is a diagram of steps, movements or actions involved in a system or activity. Flowcharts use conventional geometric symbols and arrows to define relationships and directions.

In this tutorial, you will learn where to find the **Flowchart Shapes** and how to place **Shapes** in a Word document, forming a simple flowchart.

### Locating Flow Chart Shapes

The **FLOWCHART SHAPES** area is on the **INSERT** tab on the ribbon under the **Shapes** section.
Identifying Flowchart Shapes

When building a flowchart, you define steps by choosing a geometric shape that defines the step in the process. The **Flowchart** area of the dropdown under **Shapes** will show you a brief description of the shape that will assist you in using the shapes.

Here are some typically used geometric shapes with their definitions:

![Flowchart Shapes](image)

**Components of a Block Diagram or Flow Chart**

Creative Commons Clipart – Flowchart Shape Definitions

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**Inserting a Flowchart Shape**

**Step 1:** From the **VIEW** tab on the ribbon, under **Show**, choose **Gridlines**. This will display a graph paper outline on your Word document.
Step 2: Create a **Drawing Canvas** on the grid by going to the **INSERT** tab on the ribbon under the **Shapes** section. Select New Drawing Canvas and place your cursor on the grid. You will see a cross hair symbol; click, keeping the left mouse button pressed, and drag the rectangle to the size of the document. You can adjust by clicking and dragging the **corner handles** to the size you desire.

Inserting the **Drawing Canvas** into your document will allow you to add shapes, change the shape size and add text and draw on the Word document, which you can now will refer to as the canvas.
**Step 3:** Go to the **INSERT** tab on the ribbon, choose **Shapes**. Select your first **Flowchart** shape. Click on the canvas (you will see a cross hair symbol appear, keep the left button pressed on the mouse, and drag the shape to the size you want. Here you have chosen the **Terminator** shape.

**Shortcut tip!** You can also double click on a shape in the selection and it will automatically add it to the canvas.

**Step 4:** To resize or move your shape, use the **handles**.

**Shortcut tip!** You can copy/paste a shape you are using multiple times.
Step 5: To place text inside the shape, double click and you will see the cursor blink inside the shape. Insert your text. Here you inserted the text “START”.

Inserting a Flowchart Arrows and Connectors

Step 1: Go to the INSERT tab on the ribbon, choose Shapes. Select your first connector by choosing a line that meets the needs of the connection you are making. Click on the canvas (you will see a cross hair symbol appear, keep the left button pressed on the mouse, and drag the line to the size you want.
Here you chose the line called **elbow: double-arrow**. You can adjust and move the line in the same manner as any shape.

**Step 2:** To connect to the line to the shape, drag one end of the line to the shaded connector you will see appear when you pass over the shape. Choose the handle where you want the line to connect to the shape and drop your line. You will know the connection is made when the handle turns green.
Make the connection on both ends of the line. Here you have connected the **elbow: double arrow** to the **terminator shapes** labeled START and END.

When the line is connected to the shapes, moving a shape to a new area keeps the line connected so you do not have to adjust the lines as you build your flowchart.
Step 3: When you have completed your flow chart, return to the View tab on the ribbon and uncheck Gridlines.

You now have a flowchart drawing that you can move within your Word document. You can also save the drawing as a picture and insert it in other documents.

Finish: By repeating the steps above, you can now build a flowchart in a Word document. You can use formatting to adjust the colors of the shapes and lines.