Create a Flowchart in PowerPoint

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 PowerPoint document, forming a simple flowchart.

Starting Your PowerPoint Flowchart

When you open a new PowerPoint, it will default to a Title Slide. You will build your flowchart on a blank slide. From the Home tab, choose Layout in the ribbon and from the drop-down, choose Blank.
Locating Flow Chart Shapes

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

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

**Shortcut tip!** You can copy/paste a shape you are using multiple times.

Step 4: 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: single-arrow**. You can adjust and move the line in the same manner as any shape.

Here you chose an elbow: single arrow. You can use the handles to adjust the shape of the connector. You can hover over the shape and use the cross hairs to move the shape.

Adjusted elbow.
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: single 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.

You now have a flowchart drawing that you can move within your PowerPoint slide.

Copy a Flowchart to Another Slide

Step 1: Click and hold your mouse button down and highlight the area you want to copy. Click your right mouse button and choose copy.
Step 2: Place your cursor on the slide where you want to paste your flowchart, click your right mouse button, and choose paste.

You can add to any of the flowcharts.

Here you have added a process shape and another elbow: single arrow to your flowchart.
Pre-made Flowchart Graphics

Hint: Both PowerPoint and Word have pre-made graphics you can use for designing dynamic flowcharts. Under the Insert tab, choose SmartArt.

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