

Quick Start Guide

Microsoft Visio 2013 looks different from previous versions, so we created this guide to help you minimize the learning curve.

Updated templates

Templates help you start the drawing type that you want. Find them on the **File** tab. The most popular templates are color-coded by category, and you can search if you don't see the one you want.

Customize the look and design

Give your drawing a coordinated look with themes and matched colors. Find them on the **Design** tab.

Add comments

Add comments to a shape, or reply to others' comments. Click a comment indicator on the drawing, or use the **Review** tab.

Quick Access Toolbar

Commands here are always visible. Right-click a ribbon command to add it here.

Shapes search

Can't find a shape? Click **Search** in the **Shapes** window.

Specialized shapes

Templates come with stencils, which are collections of specialized shapes. You can add more stencils for more shape options.

Show or hide the ribbon

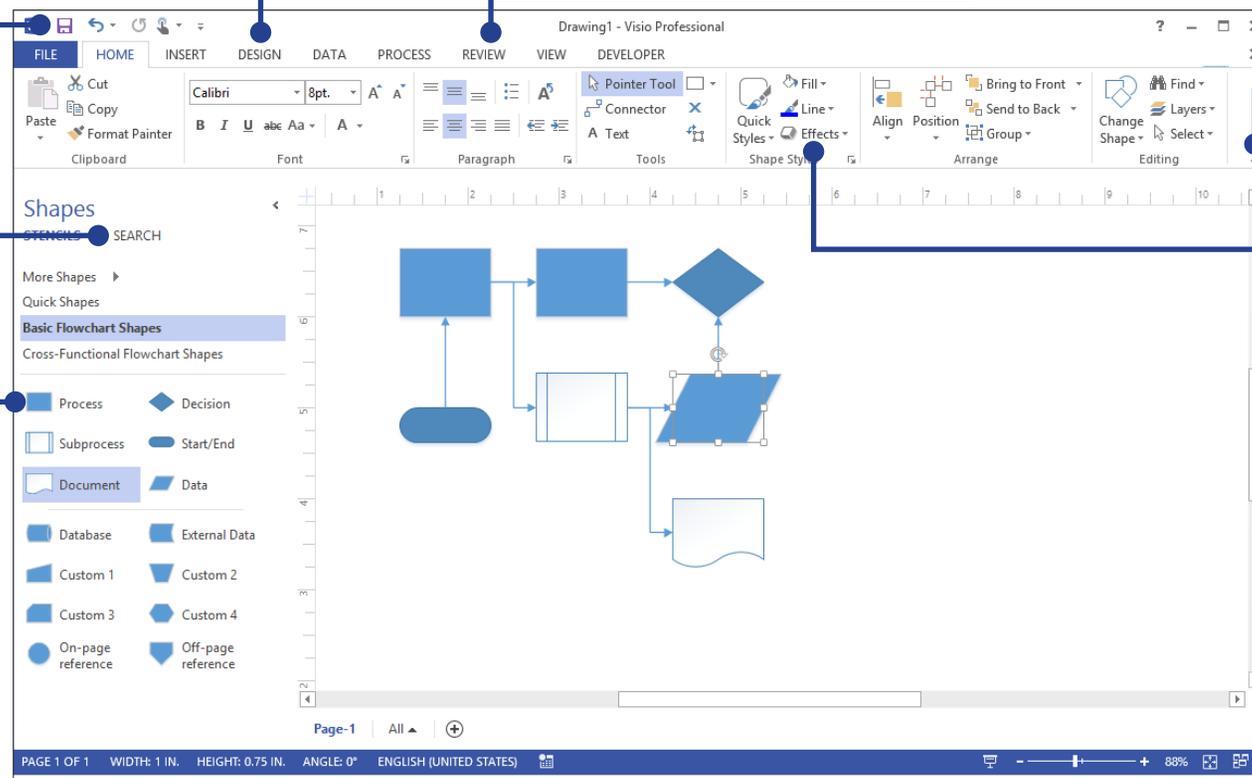
Click a tab to open the ribbon, or pin it so it's always visible.

Shape effects

Give shapes effects like shadows, gradients, or 3-D rotations.

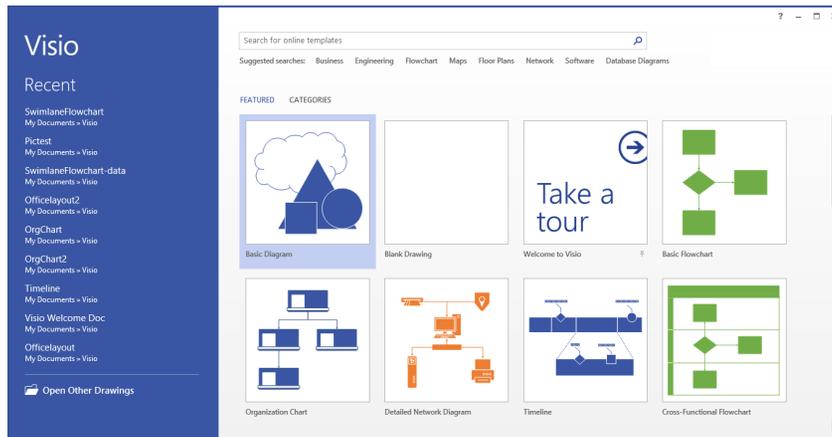
Use touch controls

If you have a touch device like a tablet, you can review and edit your drawing with touch gestures. Add and move shapes, use pinch and zoom, add comments and text.



Get a jumpstart on your work

Visio comes with dozens of templates to start you quickly on almost any type of drawing, from organization charts to network diagrams to floor plans to wiring diagrams to workflows and more.



Each template includes shapes related to the type of drawing, in specialized collections called stencils. The **Shapes** window, at the side of the drawing, holds the most popular stencils and shapes for the diagram type you're making.

To begin, drag shapes from the **Shapes** window onto your drawing.

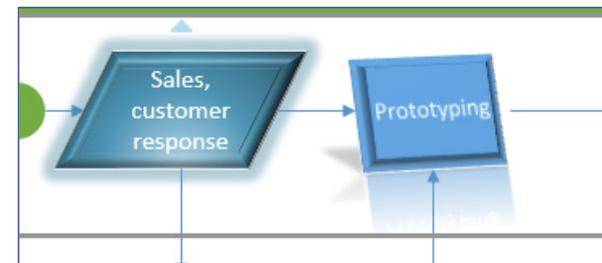
Make your drawing look professional

Just a few clicks can give your drawing a professional and engaging look. Use a theme to apply a coordinated set of colors, or customize it with one of the color variants. Find galleries for both on the **Design** tab.

Roll the pointer over each gallery option to get a live preview of what your drawing would look like.



You can also add more visual impact to shapes. Visio now lets you give shapes the same effects — such as fill colors, gradients, shadows or 3D effects — that you can add to art in the other Office programs. Use the **Shape Styles** group on the **Home** tab.



Things you might be looking for

Use the list below to find some of the more common tools and commands in Visio.

To...	Click...	And then look in the...
Create or open a drawing, save, print or share, refine how Visio works	File	New, Open, Save, Save As, Print, Share, Export, and Options groups.
Add or edit text, give a style to a shape, align and arrange shapes	Home	Font, Paragraph, Shape Styles, and Arrange groups.
Add a picture, CAD drawing, text box, container or connector	Insert	Illustrations, Diagram Parts, and Text groups.
Apply a professional color scheme to a drawing, add a background	Design	Themes, Variants, and Backgrounds groups.
Check spelling, add or reply to comments	Review	Proofing and Comments groups.
Turn on gridlines and guides, turn on the Shape Data window	View	Show and Visual Aids groups.

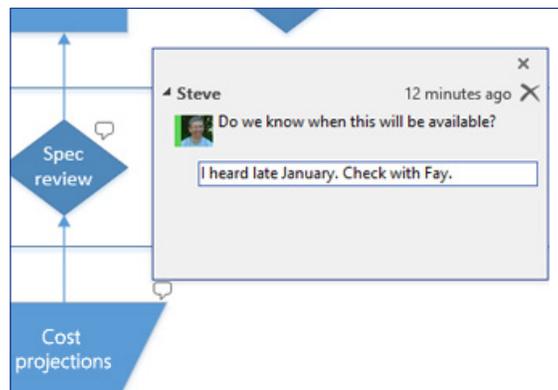
Work on a diagram as a team

If your drawing is saved to SharePoint, multiple team members can work on it at the same time. See who else is working on different parts of the diagram, and everyone gets notifications on what others have changed.

And if the drawing is shared on SharePoint or Office 365, others can view and comment on it through their Web browser, even if they don't have Visio installed.

Share input and feedback in comments

Visio now has improved commenting, letting you add and reply to comments in Visio or online using Visio Services.

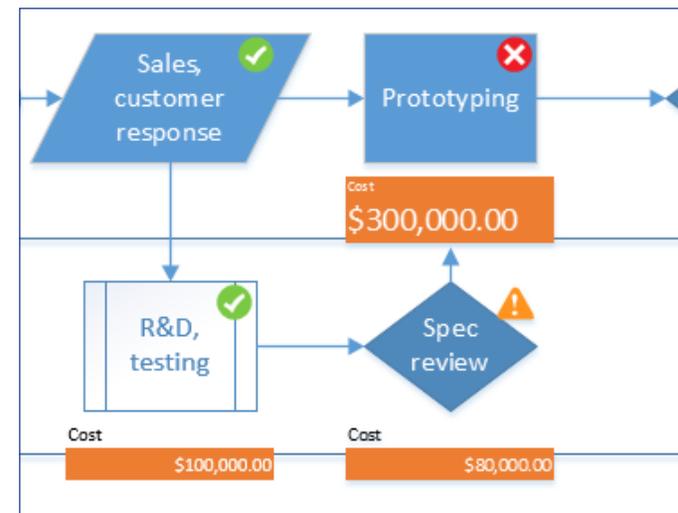


You can see when commenters are online and, if you have Lync 2013 installed, set up a messaging conversation with them in Visio.

Use Visio to visualize data

Connect any shapes in your diagram to real-time data to make complex data easier to scan and understand. You can link to common business data sources, such as Excel, Access, SQL Server, or SharePoint, and you can have the shape data update automatically whenever the source data changes.

You can then make the data instantly understandable with colors, icons, symbols, and graphs that are attached to the shape.



The graphics are also updated automatically whenever your data changes. This helps to identify patterns in the data at a glance.

How to work with people who don't have Visio 2013

Here are some of the things to keep in mind when sharing or exchanging files with people who are using an older version of Visio.

In Visio 2013	What happens?	What should I do?
You open a document that was created with Visio 2010.	The file opens in Compatibility Mode, which turns off features of Visio 2013 that would cause problems in earlier versions.	If you don't think the file will be viewed with older versions, save it as a Visio 2013 drawing. Or, you can convert it to the new format by clicking File > Info > Convert . If this command is not available, then you don't need to convert the file.
You save your document as a Visio 2013 file.	You will have no compatibility issues opening or saving the file. People with older versions of Visio will not be able to open the file, since the file format used in Visio 2013 is not compatible with Visio 2010 or earlier versions.	If people will be opening the drawing with an older version of Visio, save it as the earlier file type. Click File > Save As . Next, choose the location that you want to save to and then, in the Save as type list, choose Visio 2003-2010 Drawing .
You save your document as a Visio 2010 file.	When you save the drawing in an older format, the Compatibility Checker appears and shows a list of potential problems. This usually refers to Visio 2013 features in the drawing that aren't there or won't work in earlier versions.	The Compatibility Checker explains what changes will be made to the drawing when it's saved in the older file format. Cancel the "Save As" if you don't want to make those changes. Otherwise, Visio 2013 automatically makes the changes and you see the revised drawing when the save is complete.