

Create and use a switchboard

Providing switchboards in your application can help users to locate the necessary tasks. This article describes how to create and delete switchboards in Microsoft Office Access 2007, and shows how to add and modify the items in a switchboard.

If you created a switchboard in an earlier version of Access, that switchboard will appear and run as usual in Access 2007, except for commands that are no longer available such as, displaying the Database window. Access 2007 provides a new feature known as the Navigation Pane that replaces the Database window. You can use the Navigation Pane instead of switchboards.

Create a switchboard

Before you create a switchboard, consider how you want users to locate the various forms and reports in the database and plan your navigation design accordingly. Should your needs change after you create a switchboard, you will be able to modify the design of your switchboard at any time.

When you create a switchboard using the Switchboard Manager tool, Access creates a Switchboard Items table that describes what the buttons on the form display and what actions they perform. If you change your switchboard manually, the application may no longer work.

Since the Switchboard Manager only allows a maximum of eight command buttons on a switchboard, you might need additional switchboards that the user can navigate to from the Main Switchboard.

1. On the **Database Tools** tab, in the **Database Tools** group, click **Switchboard Manager**.
Microsoft Access asks if you'd like to create a switchboard, click **Yes**. This creates a **Main Switchboard**. You can either add all your switchboard commands to the Main Switchboard or create secondary switchboards.
2. To create secondary switchboards, click **New**.
NOTE If you create secondary switchboards, make sure that each switchboard has a command to go back to the Main Switchboard.
The **Create New** dialog box appears.
3. Type the name of the new switchboard and click **OK**.
Microsoft Access adds the switchboard to the list in the **Switchboard Pages** box.
You can add secondary switchboard names at this point.
4. Repeat steps 2 through 3 for each secondary switchboard you want to create, and then click **Close**.

Add items to a switchboard

After you create your switchboard, you will have to add items or menu commands that perform various tasks such as opening forms and reports in the database. The items that you add to the switchboard appear as command buttons.

1. From the **Switchboard Manager** dialog box, select the switchboard, and then click **Edit**.
The **Edit Switchboard Page** dialog box appears.
2. Click **New**.
The **Edit Switchboard Item** dialog box appears.
3. Type the name of your command item in the **Text** box, and select a suitable command from the **Command** list.
For example, if the item is **Customer Data**, select **Open Form In Add Mode**.
NOTE To create a switchboard that branches to other switchboards, click the **Go To Switchboard** command in the **Command** box, and then either select a switchboard from the list or enter the name of the other switchboard.
4. Click **OK**.
5. Repeat steps 1 through 4 until you have added all the required commands to the switchboard.

COMMAND	ACTION PERFORMED
Go to Switchboard	Opens a secondary switchboard.
Open Form in Add Mode	Opens a form in a mode that only allows new records to be added.
Open form in Edit Mode	Opens a form in a mode that allows any record to be added or edited.
Open Report	Opens a report in Print Preview.
Design Application	Opens the Switchboard Manager.
Exit Application	Closes the current database.
Run Macro	Runs a macro.
Run Code	Runs a Visual Basic function.

You can add buttons and embedded macros to start your database components, and then set the form to appear at startup

Access your switchboard

Here is how you can access your newly created switchboard to test the accuracy of the commands, and the design elements.

- In the Navigation Pane, double-click the form named **Switchboard**.
If you don't like the title that Access has given to your switchboard, you can change the title.

Edit items in a switchboard

You might have to edit items in a switchboard for several reasons such as, to change a command label or change how a command performs.

1. On the **Database Tools** tab, in the **Database Tools** group, click **Switchboard Manager**.
2. In the **Switchboard Manager** dialog box, select the switchboard you want to edit, and then click **Edit**.
3. Click the item on the switchboard you want to change, and then do one of the following:
 - To change the text of the item, the command performed by the item, or the object that is opened or run when you click the item, click **Edit**.
 - To delete an item, click **Delete**.
 - To move the order in which an item appears, click **Move Up** or **Move Down**.
4. When you finish editing your switchboard items, click **Close**.

Delete a switchboard or switchboard item

You can delete an unwanted switchboard or a switchboard item with the Switchboard Manager. However, when you delete a switchboard, you will also be deleting all the items assigned to that switchboard.

1. On the **Database Tools** tab, in the **Database Tools** group, click **Switchboard Manager**.
2. In the **Switchboard Manager** dialog box, select the switchboard you want to delete, or that contains the item you want to delete.
3. To delete the switchboard, go to step 6.
4. To delete an item click **Edit**.

The **Edit Switchboard Page** dialog box appears

5. Select the items you want to delete.
6. Click **Delete**.
7. Click **Close**.

Display the main switchboard on startup

You can change the Access settings to make the main switchboard appear automatically when someone opens your database.

1. Click the **Microsoft Office Button**
2. Click **Access Options**.
3. Click **Current Database**.
4. Select **Switchboard** from the **Display Form** drop-down list.
5. Click **OK**.
6. Close the database and reopen it.

The switchboard opens automatically.