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## Really, what is OneNote?

*OneNote is a digital note-taking application designed to keep you organized.*

OneNote is one of those programs that Microsoft bundles with the Office Suite, and for a long time, I never even opened it, let alone thought about using it. Once I gave it a serious try I've found it's one more thing I don't want to be without. OneNote is a list-maker's dream, but it goes way beyond that. It's a place to keep links, bookmarks, notes, lists, articles, pictures, videos, and audio files. You can gather all your ideas into one place, make them accessible on all your devices, and they are always up to date. Organizing and sharing the information is a breeze with OneNote too.



OneNote 2013 can be used with your PC and also on your phone, tablet, and/or laptop. Microsoft tells us that OneNote 2013 works best with Windows 8, but that's only because it includes (for the first time) a button to switch between the mouse and touch mode.

### **Getting started with OneNote**

When you first start OneNote, there is a default notebook created for you. (Just like the default workbook in Excel or document in Word). You can use this default notebook and add your own pages or you can create a blank notebook if you prefer. You're not limited to just one notebook, either. You can create multiple notebooks (one for history, math, science, etc.) I have one that I call 'My Notebook' another one that is called 'Work Stuff', and a third called 'Projects'.

As soon as you have one or more notebooks created, you can start adding pages and/or sections. If you're familiar with three ring notebooks, you'll recognize the sections as those blank pages with colored tabs that stick out. The sections allow you to group your pages by topic or however you want to organize yourself. Adding pages can be done on the fly, usually by clicking one button. (Or if you're using OneNote on a tablet, by tapping one button). A further organizational feature enables you to create sub-pages. So OneNote presents a fairly simple organizational scheme: Notebook, section, page, sub-page, etc.

### **Finding things in OneNote**

If you don't use your notes in that sort of hierarchy arrangement, you also have the ability to tag notes. OneNote supplies different built in tags, or you can create your own custom tags. Once you've tagged something you need only click on the Find Tags and you will get a list of available tags that you can sort by name, text, date, section, or page title. (Much easier than finding which one of the sticky notes you need or paging through all your paper files.)

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In addition to the built-in (or customized) tags, you can also tag items for Outlook tasks. If you tag something with one of the Outlook flags, it is automatically placed in your Outlook task list. You can set those to send you reminders in your email. The link between OneNote and Outlooks works the other direction too. You can select messages to send to OneNote (instead of creating 5000 folders in Outlook or saving all of your email for 5 years!) Send them to OneNote and they're saved in your notebook system and tag-able. Another way to use OneNote is to put your meetings into OneNote, you can take notes about the meeting right in the calendar entry.

### **Creating notes from various sources**

When you're out on the Internet and you find a page you want to read, but maybe you don't have time right now, you can use the 'Send to OneNote' feature and put the whole page (images and all) right into a notebook! You can also put screen clippings into OneNote or use the New Quick Note button to type comments about a page as you're reading it.

Not only can you save typed text notes and web pages, you can also save pictures, videos, sounds, and handwritten notes in OneNote. You can also draw, use math formulas, put tables in, scan documents in or use OneNote page templates. OneNote is as flexible as you need it to be, while still allowing you to be in control (and find things).

### **Collaborating with OneNote**

Sharing a notebook is a simple matter of inviting other people by sending an email or a link so they can access your 'group' notebook. Makes collaborating on a project a little simpler than exchanging emails or playing phone tag.

Sharing a notebook means that several people can take notes (say of a meeting) at the same time. Create a shared notebook before the meeting and share the link with everyone in the meeting invite (from Outlook). At the end of the meeting, there's no need to send out the minutes, everyone has the link to the notebook that contains the minutes.

One cool feature with OneNote regarding meeting notes-if you record the meeting, you can actually bookmark the audio file by taking written notes in places. When you take a written note, OneNote will put a bookmark in the audio. When you listen to the playback, you just need to click on the written note and OneNote will forward you to that portion of the audio. You don't have to waste time rewinding or fast forwarding to find the information you want.

*OneNote is a digital note-taking application designed to keep you organized. True. OneNote wins.*



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