



Introduction



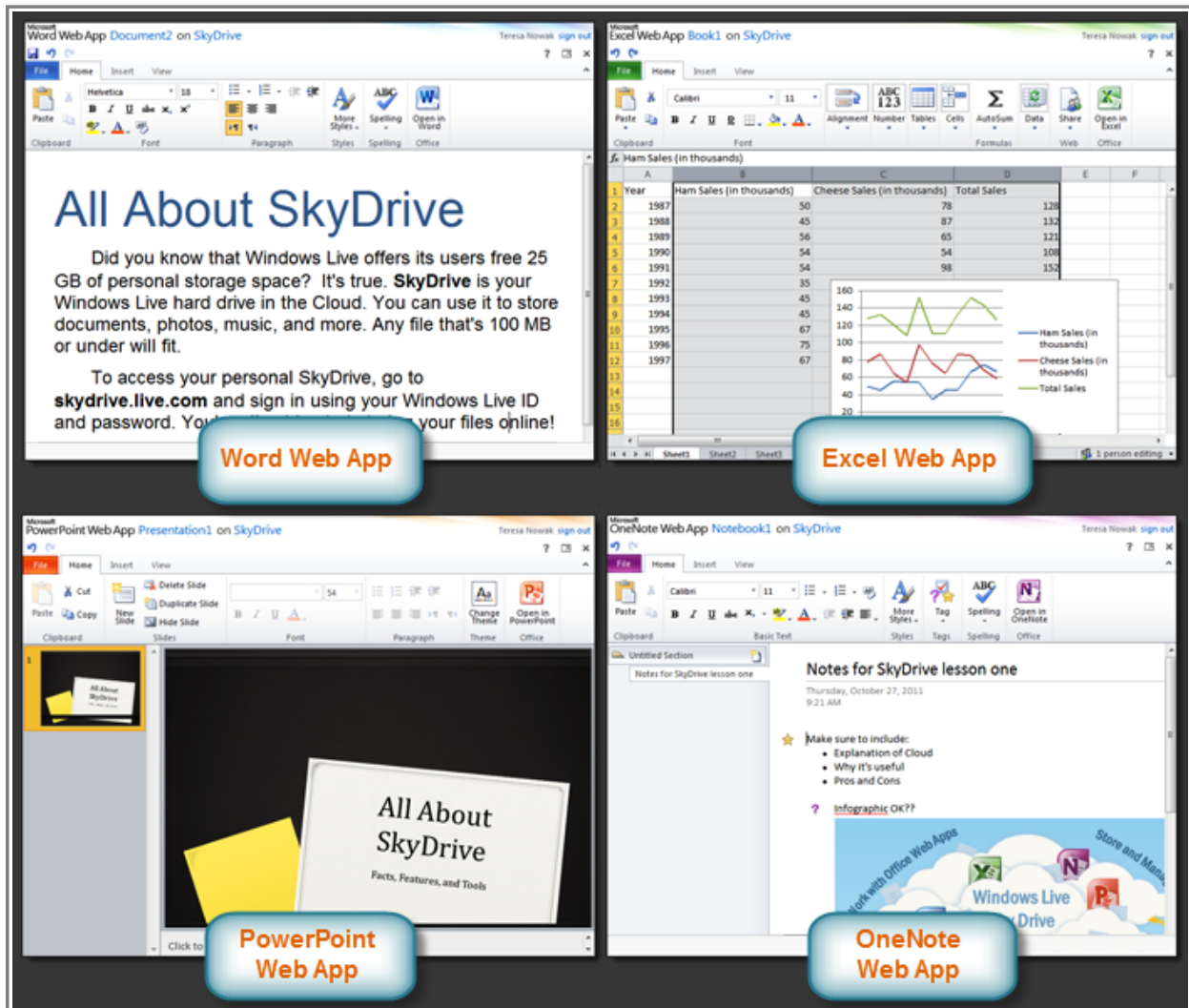
The **Microsoft Office Web Apps** are a suite of online applications that let you create Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and more. You can store the documents you create— plus any other files you want— on **Windows Live SkyDrive**, an online file storage service. Both of these tools are accessible from anywhere with an internet connection, and both are absolutely **free**.

In this lesson, you'll **learn more** about Web Apps and SkyDrive. You'll also get an idea of what to expect from the rest of this tutorial.

Getting to Know Web Apps and SkyDrive

Office Web Apps are free, basic versions of the most popular programs in the Microsoft Office suite. They let you create Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and more without having to buy or install any programs. There are four Web Apps:

- **Word** - for creating text documents
- **Excel** - for working with spreadsheets
- **PowerPoint** - for creating presentations
- **OneNote** - for taking and organizing notes



The Office Web Apps

You don't need to install anything on your computer to use the Office Web Apps. Instead, you work with them **online**, using a service called **Windows Live SkyDrive**.

SkyDrive is a free, online storage space that you can use as **your own personal online hard drive**. When you create a document with one of the Web Apps, it will be saved to your SkyDrive. You can store other files there, too. Some people refer to this type of online storage as the **Cloud**. Since Web Apps and SkyDrive are based in the Cloud, you can access them from **any device with an internet connection, at any time**.

Once you've used Web Apps and SkyDrive to store files in the Cloud, you can edit and share them without ever having to download them to your computer. You can also **upload** files from your computer, including photos and music. You can even **sync** your computer and SkyDrive so that any changes you make to your files are automatically copied between the Cloud and your hard drive. As you can see below, working with the Cloud makes all of these things possible.



Cloud computing with Windows Live SkyDrive

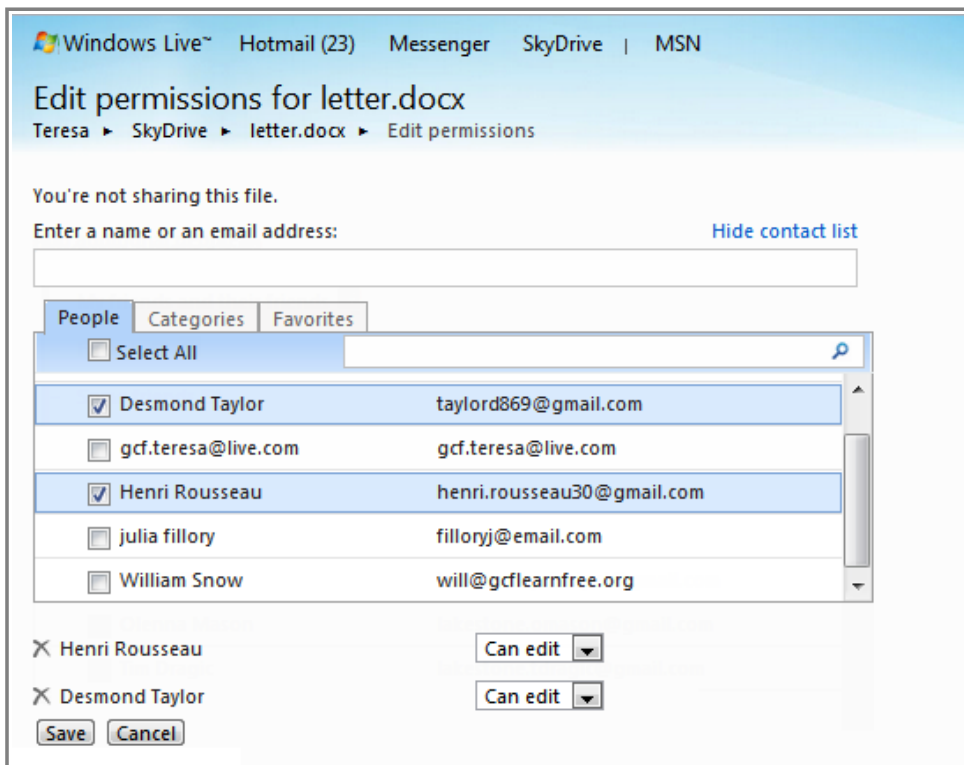
Web Apps and SkyDrive are part of a suite of tools called **Windows Live**. To use them, you'll need a Windows Live account. Getting a Windows Live account will also give you access to features like **email** and **instant messaging**. In Lesson 2, you'll learn how to **sign up** with Windows Live.

➤➤➤ Visit our [Windows Live Account tutorial](#) to learn more about its features.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Web Apps and SkyDrive

There are several reasons why you might find Web Apps and SkyDrive useful. As you learned on the last page, Office Web Apps and SkyDrive are completely **free**. They're also **convenient**. Since they're stored in the Cloud, you can access them from anywhere with an internet connection. This lets you work on the same files at home, at work, or wherever else you might be.

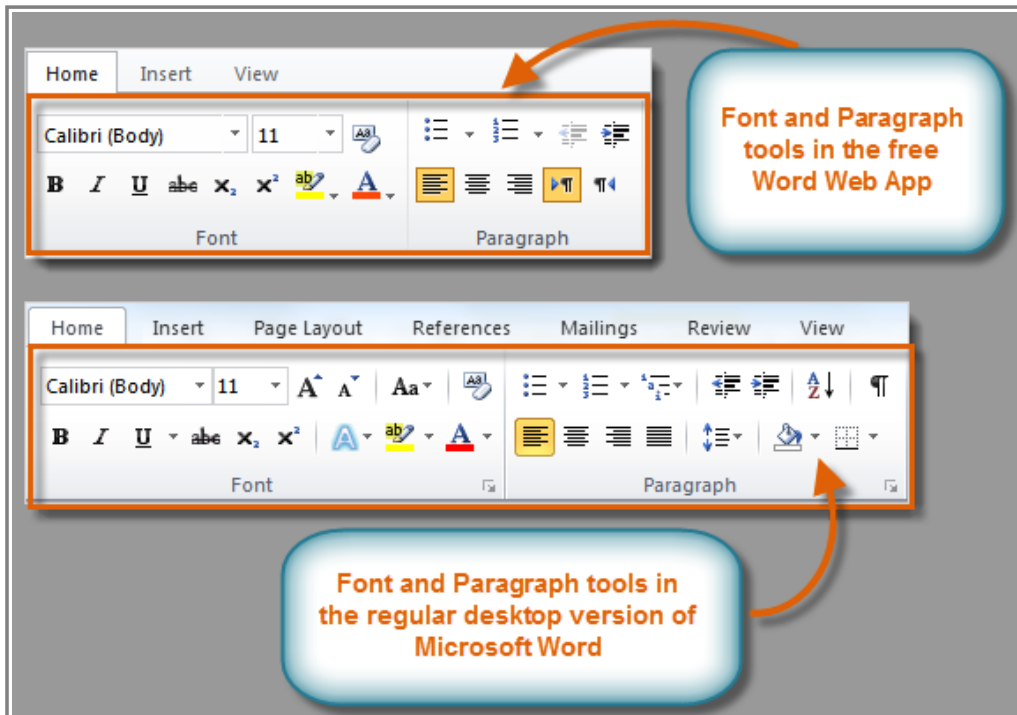
Web Apps and SkyDrive can also help you **collaborate** on documents and projects. Since Web Apps and SkyDrive are part of **Windows Live**, you can use them with other Windows Live tools, like your **contacts list**. This makes it easy to start sharing files with the people you know. With everything stored in the Cloud, there's no need to email different versions of a file back and forth. Instead, you and the people you're working with can collaborate on the same exact file.



Sharing a file with people from your contacts list

Drawbacks to Web Apps and SkyDrive

While Office Web Apps and SkyDrive are useful tools, they're not perfect. As you'll discover later in this course, managing your files in SkyDrive is a little trickier than organizing them on your computer. Also, the programs in Office Web Apps are missing some of the features you might know from the desktop version of Microsoft Office. You'll still be able to create documents, presentations, and more. However, they may not look as polished.



Reduced features in Web Apps.

Keep in mind that you do need to have access to the internet to use Web Apps and SkyDrive. If your internet connection is unreliable, you may want to keep copies of important files on your computer, as well.

Web Apps and SkyDrive vs. Other Cloud Based Services

Web Apps and SkyDrive aren't the only two services that let you create and store files in the Cloud. Google has its own document editing and storage application, **Google Docs**, and Apple gives its users online storage space with **iCloud**.

However, Web Apps has one major advantage over similar services: the Web Apps are **very similar** to the desktop versions of the Microsoft Office programs. If you already know how to use those programs, it will be very easy for you to start using the Web Apps. Plus, Web Apps and the regular Office programs use the same **file types**. This means that you can edit the same file in both the Web Apps and desktop programs.



Cloud services

About this Tutorial

In the following lessons, we'll explain how to **get started** with Web Apps and SkyDrive. You'll learn how to use SkyDrive to **organize, share, and collaborate on the files you create with Web Apps**. You'll also learn the basics of using the Web Apps.

This tutorial **will not** cover every single one of the Web Apps' various tools. Since the Web Apps are so similar to the programs in the regular Office suite, you can learn how to use them by reviewing the following tutorials:

- [Word 2010](#)
- [PowerPoint 2010](#)
- [Excel 2010](#)