

PLUG Introduction to LibreOffice/OpenOffice “Draw”

Summary of main topics introduced during the session.

Page Pane	The area that shows page thumbnails (by default to the left edge). Switch on an off with View → Page Pane
Toolbars	Switch on an off with View → Toolbars → <i>toolbar</i> Toolbars can be dragged to any window edge or can be floating
Ruler	Switch on an off with View → Ruler Right-click to change ruler units
Status Bar	Switch on an off with View → Status Bar Zoom control: Vertical bars give full page view and 100% view Double-click %value to set using dialog box. Object size and position display: Double-click to edit selected drawing object using dialog box.

Setting drawing page size, scale and grid settings.

It is highly advisable to set these before starting any new drawing, and then leave unchanged.

Page size	Format → Page → Page format (Use A4 for drawings where scale is not applicable.)
Set drawing units	Tools → Options... → Draw → General → Unit of measurement (Use centimetres for drawings where scale is not applicable.)
Set drawing scale	Tools → Options... → Draw → General → Drawing Scale (Use 1:1 for drawings where scale is not applicable.)

Using the drawing toolbar

By default, this appears along bottom edge but it can be repositioned as required.

If hidden	View → Toolbars → Drawing
Single click	Select drawing tool or effect
Double click	Keep drawing tool selected (to draw multiple objects of the same type)

Using the drawing grid

Snap to grid must be enabled for grid to work, but the grid does not need to be visible to work.

Show grid	View → Grid → Display Grid or right-click background → Grid → Display Grid
Enable grid	View → Grid → Snap to Grid or right-click background → Grid → Snap to Grid
Set grid dimensions	Tools → Options... → Draw → Grid → Resolution Set grid resolution and subdivisions as required. Normally you'll want vertical and horizontal settings the same, so select Synchronise axes
Snap range	Tools → Options... → Draw → Grid → Snap range Adjusts how close the drawing object must be to a grid point or guide before it will snap to it.

Using drawing guides (*snap lines, snap points*)

Guides must be both visible and enabled to work.

The Snap range setting applies to drawing guides as well as to the grid.

Add guide line or point	Insert → Insert Snap Point/Line or right-click background → Insert Snap Point/Line or drag snap line in from ruler
Alter or delete guide	Drag guide to new position (not very accurate) Right-click guide to edit using dialog, or to delete

Note: It can be confusing if you enable snap to grid and snap to guides at the same time.

Drawing lines

Lines are drawn using the current default settings.

To change default settings, make sure no object is selected and then set line style, width and colour.

Detailed line settings	Format → Line... or click the Line button or right-click object → Line...
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Notes:

Line settings also apply to the lines which form the edges of other shapes.

Curves

Lines, and the edge lines of most regular drawing objects can be converted to bezier curves.

Convert to curves	right-click object → Convert → To Curve
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Note: There are also dedicated tools for drawing curves.

Drawing shapes

Notes on using some of the drawing tools.

Notice that several buttons on the Drawing toolbar have a drop-down menu to select the required shape

Drawing with the Curve tool	Mouse down (left button) at start of curve and hold Drag to mid-point of curve and release left button. Move mouse to end point of curve and double-click (left button)
To change the curve shape	Switch on Edit points to modify the shape of the curve (toolbar button, right-click menu or F8) Click end point of curve Drag the control point to alter the curve You can add more control points for complex curves using the Edit points toolbar
Free-form line tool	This tool creates a smoothed line as a sequence of bezier curves. Mouse down (left button) at start of curve and hold Drag to draw line Release mouse to finish drawing the curve
Polygon tool	Mouse down (left button) at start of line and hold Drag to next point on polygon and release left button. Move mouse and click for subsequent points Double-click to finish drawing the polygon (To create closed shape, double-click on the start point to finish drawing.)
Creating “regular” shapes	Holding down the shift key while drawing a shape enforces use of preset proportions. eg rectangle is drawn as a square; oval is drawn as a circle; etc
Resizing	Select object and drag edge or corner handles. Hold the shift key down while dragging to maintain proportions while resizing
Set colour or style	Select object then make settings in the Line/Filling toolbar or right-click object → Line... or right-click object → Area...

Drawing accurate sizes and positions

If exact sizes are important, draw the shape to roughly the right size and then right-click and choose Position and Size...

Arranging and grouping drawing objects

Selecting multiple objects	Draw imaginary rectangle around objects or Hold down Shift key and click objects Note: Shift-click switches the object alternately in and out of the selection
Changing position in drawing stack	Select object to move then right-click object → Arrange → <i>choice</i> or choose required movement using the Arrange button on the Line/Filling toolbar or use keyboard shortcuts: Ctrl + , Shift Ctrl + , Ctrl - and Shift Ctrl -
Selecting an object hidden under other objects	Draw imaginary rectangle to surround the hidden object or Press Tab key repeatedly until object is selected
Create group	Select objects then right-click → Group

Special actions on multiple objects

Merge	Select objects then right-click → Shapes → Merge
Subtract	(Removes from the lowest object any areas overlapped by objects higher in the stack) Select objects then right-click → Shapes → Subtract
Intersect	(Leave only the overlapping areas of the selected objects) Select objects then right-click → Shapes → Intersect

Aligning and spacing objects

Align	Select objects then right-click → Align → <i>choice</i> or choose required alignment using the Align button on the Line/Filling toolbar
Space evenly	Select objects then right-click → Distribution... → <i>choice</i>

Copying objects

Standard cut, copy and paste commands work as expected.

Multiple copies	Select object, then Edit → Duplicate → <i>choices</i>
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More effects

Rotating	Select object, then Modify → Rotate or Choose Rotate from the Effects button on the Line/Filling toolbar
Perspective	Select object, then choose either Set in circle or Set to Circle from the Effects button on the Line/Filling toolbar

Working with image files

Add image to drawing	Insert → Picture → From File... Note: Draw can import from most common graphics file formats, and many less common. Later versions have more extensive support.
Resize image	Use edge/corner handles to resize. Hold the shift key down while dragging to maintain proportions while resizing.
Cropping image	Select image then click the Crop button in the Picture toolbar. Drag edge or corner handles to crop image as required.

Working with text

All objects can have a text label. Double-click the object and type the label.

Use the text drawing tool to place text at any location on the drawing.

Text created with the text drawing tool can be converted to a curve for special effects.

Transparency

The area of any object can be assigned a level of transparency to allow underlying objects to show through.

Transparency can be applied evenly or as a gradient. Right-click object then choose Area... and set options on the Transparency tab.