

# COMPUTER GURU

By Don Benjamin

## Office Applications and Suites

The October 2018 edition of Computer Guru covered applications for writers. I use Microsoft Office, which comprises a “suite” of applications, including Word, Excel (spreadsheets), PowerPoint (graphics and presentations), Access (database), OneNote (an electronic notebook), and Outlook (email). But there’s a plethora of capable alternatives—some of which are free—that you may want to consider. These office suites are, for the most part, compatible with Microsoft Office, which is important if you are sharing your files with other folks.

The following table gives you a “30,000-foot” view of those alternatives.

Suite	Made By	Applications	Runs On	Cost Options	Notes
<b>MS Office</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word</li> <li>• Excel</li> <li>• PowerPoint</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• OneNote</li> <li>• Outlook</li> </ul>	Microsoft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word processor</li> <li>• Spreadsheets</li> <li>• Presentations and graphics</li> <li>• Database</li> <li>• Notebook</li> <li>• Email</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windows</li> <li>• MacOS</li> <li>• iOS (iPhone, iPad)</li> <li>• Android</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subscription \$70/\$100 annually</li> <li>• Online version is free</li> <li>• Can purchase individual applications</li> </ul>	Robust and universally compatible. Free online version may satisfy your needs.
<b>iWorks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pages</li> <li>• Numbers</li> <li>• Keynote</li> </ul>	Apple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word processor</li> <li>• Spreadsheets</li> <li>• Presentations and graphics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MacOS</li> <li>• iOS</li> </ul>	Included with Apple products	Capable but less intuitive than MS Office.
<b>WordPerfect Office</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WordPerfect</li> <li>• Quattro</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>	Corel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word processor</li> <li>• Spreadsheets</li> <li>• Presentations and graphics</li> <li>• Photo editor</li> <li>• Notebook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windows</li> </ul>	\$250	Robust. Uses older style menus. “Reveal codes” feature shows formatting “markups.”
<b>Google Docs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Docs</li> <li>• Sheets</li> <li>• Slides</li> </ul>	Google	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word processor</li> <li>• Spreadsheets</li> <li>• Presentations and graphics</li> </ul>	Most all devices	Free	Browser-based online application. Files stored in Google Drive.
<b>OpenOffice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writer</li> <li>• Calc</li> <li>• Impress</li> <li>• Others</li> </ul>	Apache Software Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word processor</li> <li>• Spreadsheets</li> <li>• Presentations and graphics</li> <li>• Database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windows</li> <li>• MacOS</li> <li>• Linux</li> </ul>	Free	Complete. Uses older style menus. Somewhat limited font selection.
<b>LibreOffice (Same applications as Open Office)</b>	The Document Foundation (Based on Open Office)				

If you need help selecting, installing, or using an office suite, drop by the Technology Lab on Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. or Fridays from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. We’re also planning a class on this topic on Monday, March 25 at 1:00 p.m. Registration required, no fee.