Office 365

TIPS IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO UPGRADE MICROSOFT OFFICE TO OFFICE 365 OR OFFICE 2013

AN **INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT** FROM
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CLANCYS OFFICE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
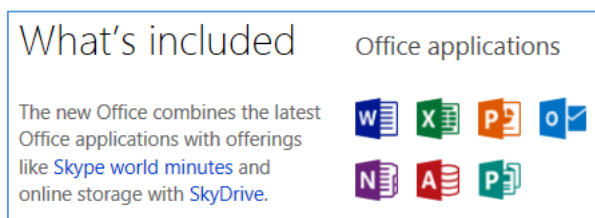CONSULTING/TRAINING
GOLD COAST

THE AUTHOR IS A GREAT SUPPORTER OF MICROSOFT OFFICE AND HAS USED IT EXTENSIVELY SINCE 1990

OFFICE 365 WAS INSTALLED ON A DELL XPS LAPTOP AND 4 DELL INSPIRON TOWERS RUNNING WINDOWS 7 AND OFFICE 2010

DATE: SEPTEMBER 2013

Contents

Buying

<<< Price covers up to FIVE computers!! (have now done 4)
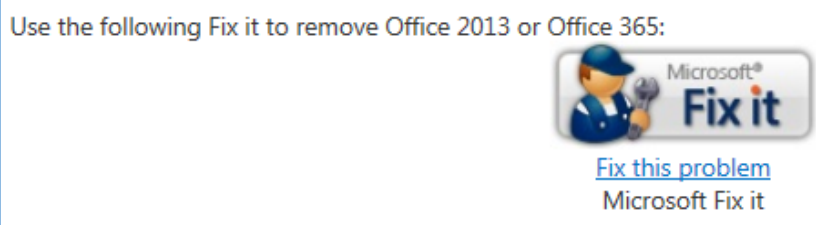
<<< NOTE: __NOT__ XP or VISTA

I paid $119 inc GST via PayPal at Microsoft Aus: http://office.microsoft.com/en-au/home-premium/

Installation process

- You'll need a Hotmail.com or Outlook.com login account (free to register if you don't already have one) to manage your licenses/downloads
- The 1st download to my main workhorse machine started but failed several times with the infuriating plain-box "Sorry, Something went wrong" message. It took me an HOUR to resolve. Literally thousands of similar complaints from all over the net. Even though the Programs/Features Control Panel showed nothing was installed I eventually twigged there must be some leftovers from my Office 2013 trial several months before. It required a Microsoft Fix It program download to clear up (2866KB file called O15CTRRemove.diagcab). Only use it if you have the same issue:

  http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2827031?wa=wsignin1.0%2cwsignin1.0

  The FIX IT again had an appalling interface that said, once started, "Removing Office" ! No Office version given, so was it uninstalling my Office 2010 setup? Took substantial time but it finished, didn't uninstall 2010, and allowed the next attempt to download 365 to progress.
- Office 365 Download gives no indication of file size, and no status bar to indicate % progress. I suggest you first open Task Manager/Network tab to watch the network stats to get a feel for download progress (my ADSL download speed peak is around 3Mbps … 300KBytes/sec).
- I measured the actual download size at approx. 800MB. The file is streamed, so you can't download once and install on 5 machines! (I quickly skipped all the 'info' screens, and was told "*You can use Office . We're wrapping things up-please stay online as we make some finishing touches*" … but only 20MB has been downloaded at that point !)
- As per previous versions (although this is contested around the net) don't expect to be able to use Outlook 2010 if this continuity is important for you. I couldn't fire up my Outlook 2010 after 2013 had been installed. While the other apps in the suite can coexist, Outlook always seems to stop previous versions from working.
- You have no control and no options during the download/install. You get everything. Once the installation has completed successfully you will have a **Microsoft Office 2013** folder in your usual ALL PROGRAMS location, showing the complete suite as per this list to the right.

Data Continuity from previous versions

- I have not experienced any problems reading files from previous versions
- "Recently used files" lists remain intact
- Outlook picked up all old messages in all folders (I use several email addresses)
- Outlook connected to my Hotmail/Gmail accounts without any intervention or reconfiguration.

Is it worth the effort to upgrade?

- NO (in my opinion)
- Stick with 2010 unless you HAVE to change (I changed only because a major client upgraded and I'm expected to support them)

Four Special benefits (perhaps a reason to change for you)

1. You can now edit PDFs (e.g. in Word). NOTE: this never works the way people expect because a PDF is actually generated like a paste-board of objects purely for accuracy of printing … you may not like the way these independent pieces are presented back to you.

Initial Word file with graphics:
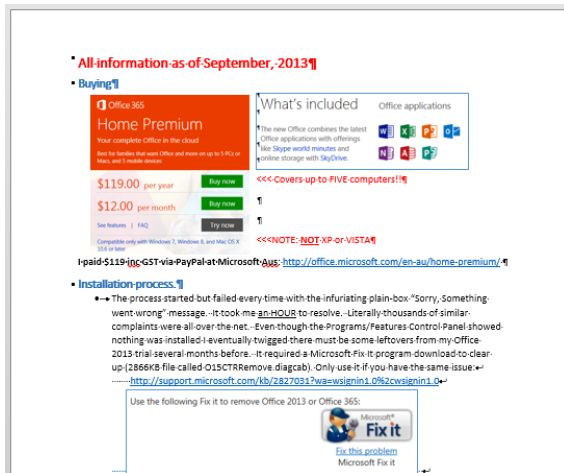

Resultant PDF produced using SAVE AS:
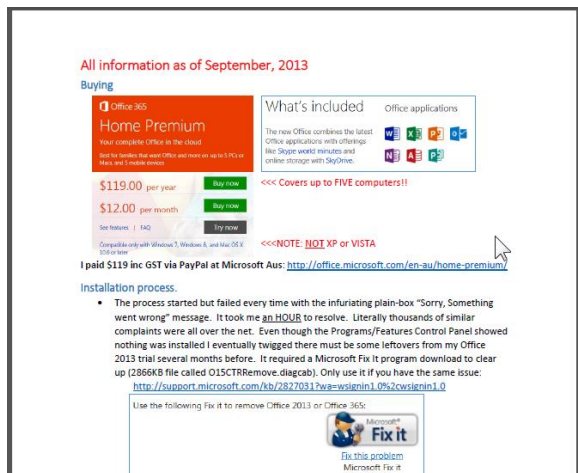
The above right PDF 'converted' back into Word.

Without ¶ (show/hide marks) selected, it looks the same, but when ¶ is selected you can see how the structure has been sliced, diced & stuck back together (the multiple ¶ paragraph marks indicate multiple text boxes). While hopefully the content is all there, if the original document was complex (e.g. with many graphics,) editing efficiently in Word is not a simple issue.

The conversion works fine for blocks of simple text.

All PDF converters face this structural 'problem'.

2. Each Excel file/workbook now opens in a separate window (removing the need for horizontal/vertical/tiling splits which caused so much hassle for so many people).
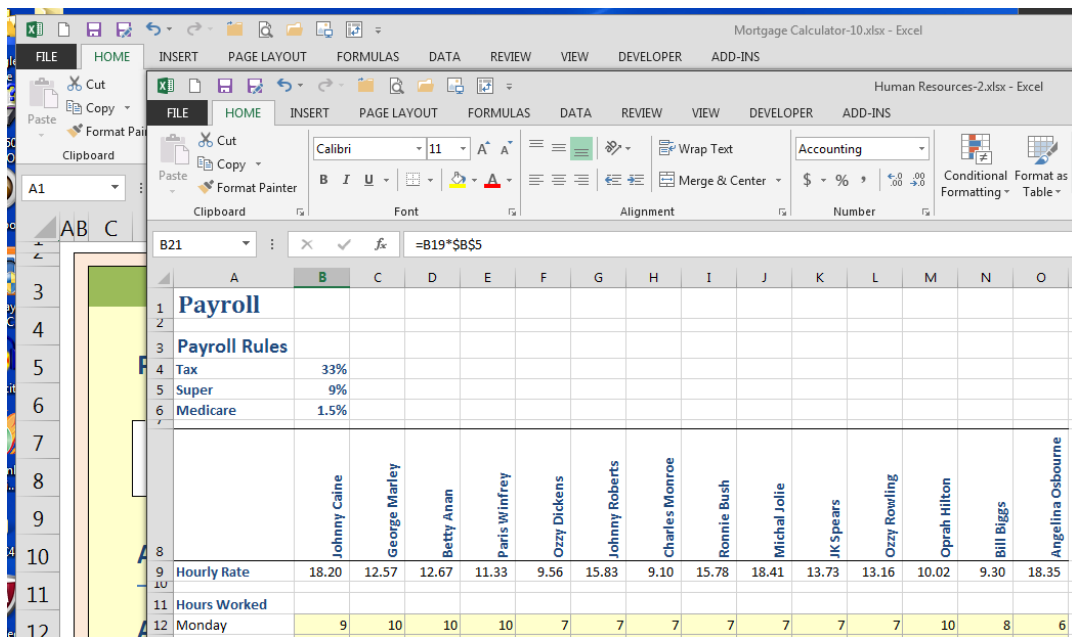
3. Outlook -1. you can now show multiple lines of messages in your Inbox, reducing the need to view every message in the viewing pane.
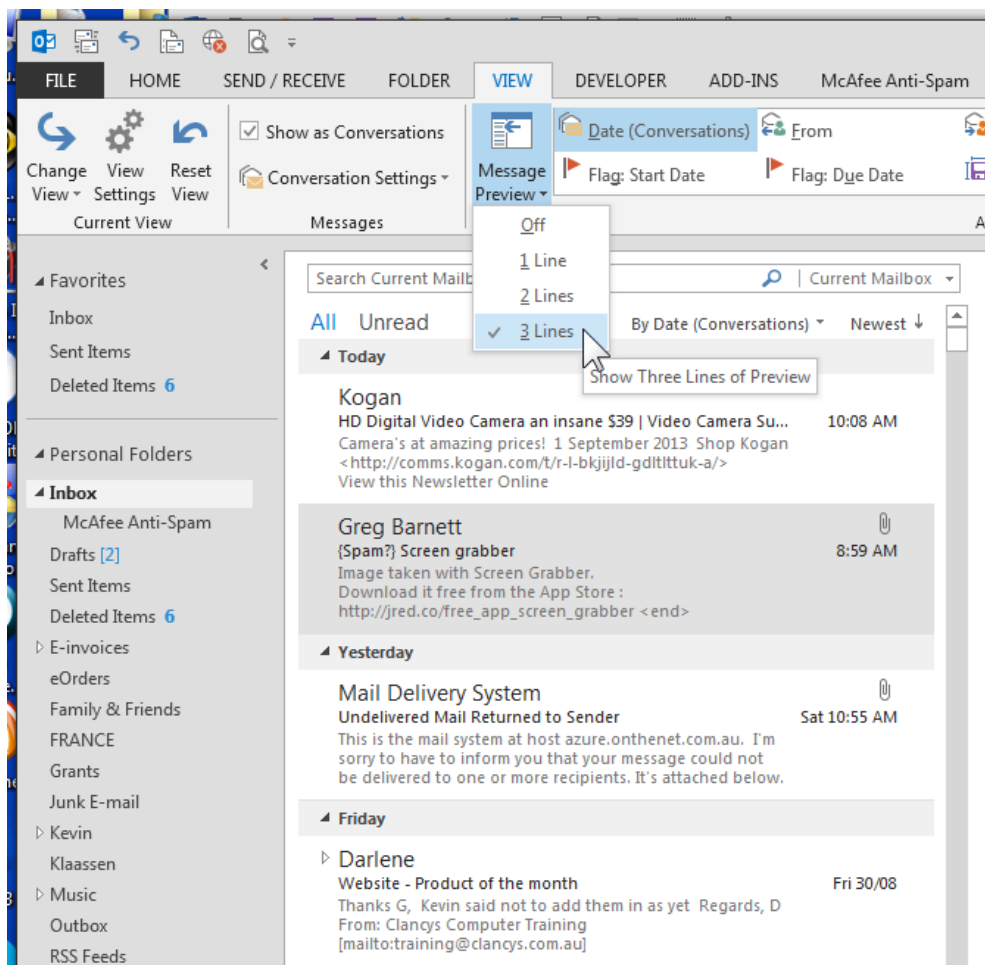
4. Outlook -2. You can now also reply direct in the viewing pane and, if the changes are not sent or discarded, the active 'Draft' is now shown in the Conversation group (rather than being separated in the Drafts folder as in 2010).
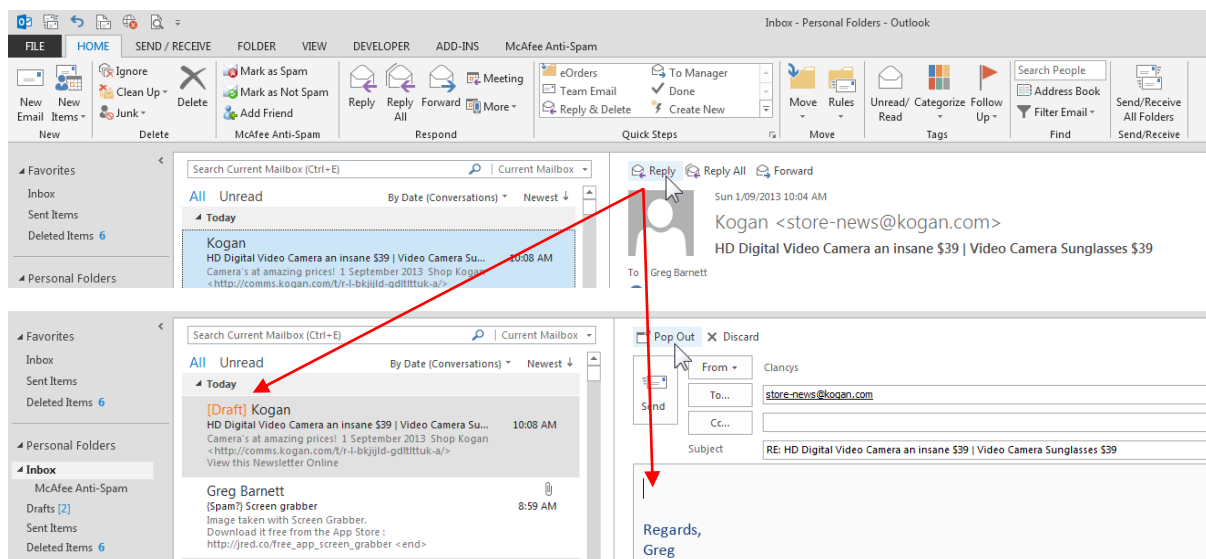

Any Backward Steps? (as if you didn't guess)

Beyond the general look, there's the usual suspects … Microsoft (will they EVER learn that people just want to get on with their work?) has fiddled with things yet again that we've all just finished getting on top of previous tweaks. Rarely useful or logical, most are small, dumb and annoying. Below are some that I've already found … mostly in Word when creating this document):

- Excel: Cell selection now animated when moving between cells
- Word: Blurry/jittery zooming
- Word: inability to select end of Line Shapes to reposition
- Word: inability to quickly move from bullets to lists (or vice versa) without changing all prior occurrences. You must now un-bullet, reset indents, THEN number.
- Word: Show Ruler icon removed from above right scroll bar.
- Word: Some features removed/relocated from one Ribbon to another.
- Word: if you've named your computer as yourself or your business name, that name is treated automatically as an Author field, making editing around it very difficult.
- Outlook: important Calendar functions have been dropped (see last page how to re-instate if required).

Quick Tips to Improve the 2013/365 Experience

1. <u>Applies to each program</u>. The new visual design is a shocker (echoed by thousands around the world) … the whole screen is a uniform bright white, all tabs and buttons have become bleached, lines are thin AND grey. The application window edge is borderless. Nothing draws your eye. Supposedly 'Metro' style but just appalling! The only thing you can do for now is change the theme. My suggestion is **Dark Gray** … the darker of only 2 non-white options!

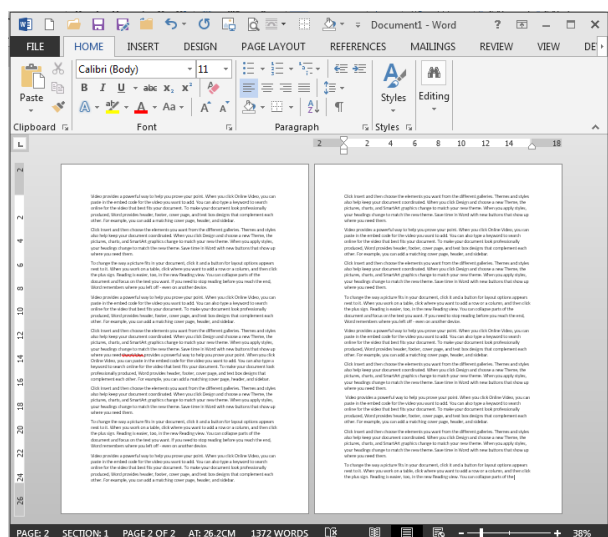   Go to FILE>Account>Office Theme
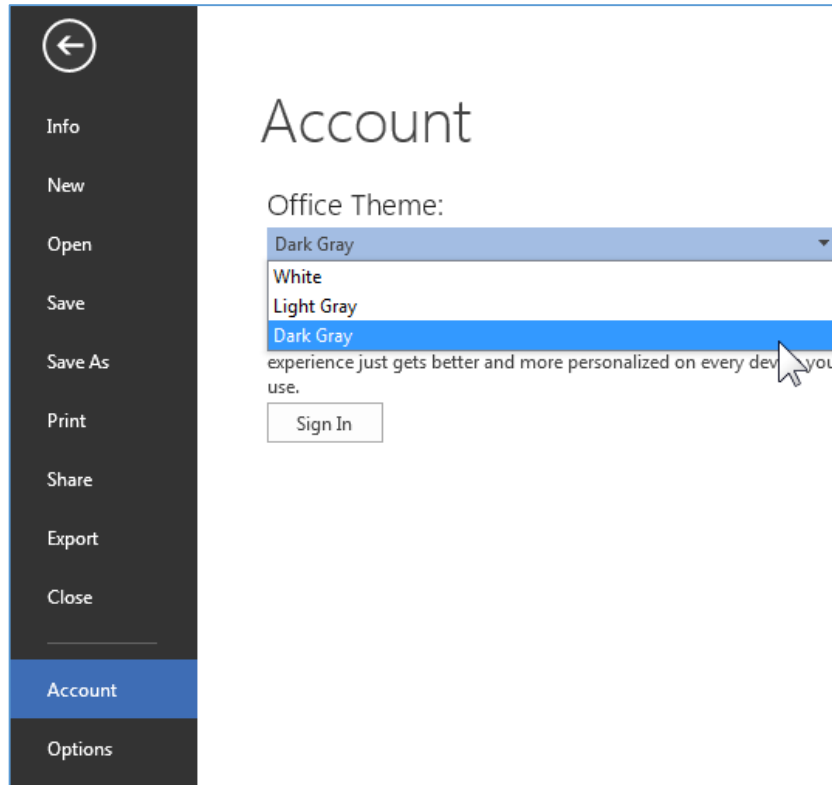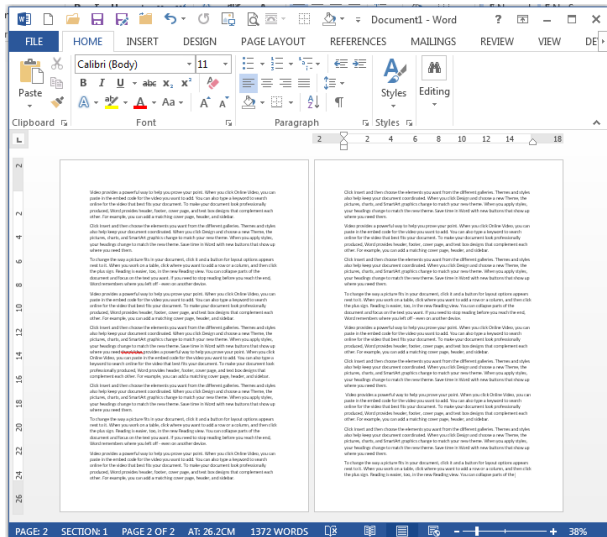
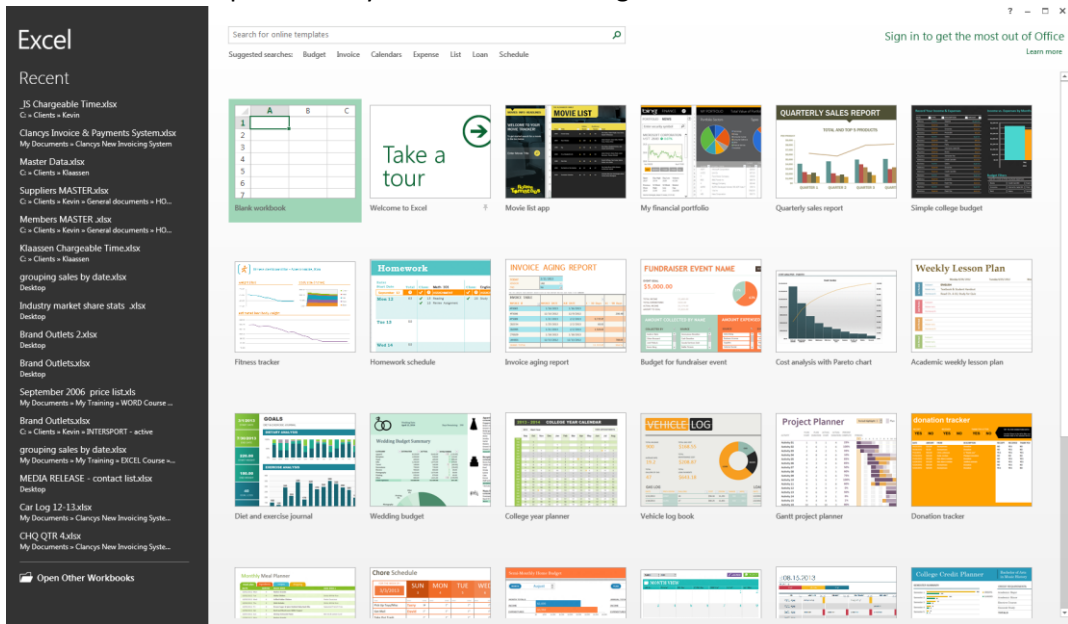*BEFORE:*   *AFTER:*

I'm sure Microsoft will backtrack on this, or provide better options, as many people will stick with Office 2010 purely to avoid eye strain!

2. Whenever you start a program, you are always presented with a START screen which is chockers with Templates that you will never use. E.g. in Excel …

To stop this behaviour, and simply start with a new document/sheet/slideshow …
Go to **FILE>Options** and uncheck the "Show the Start screen" box …
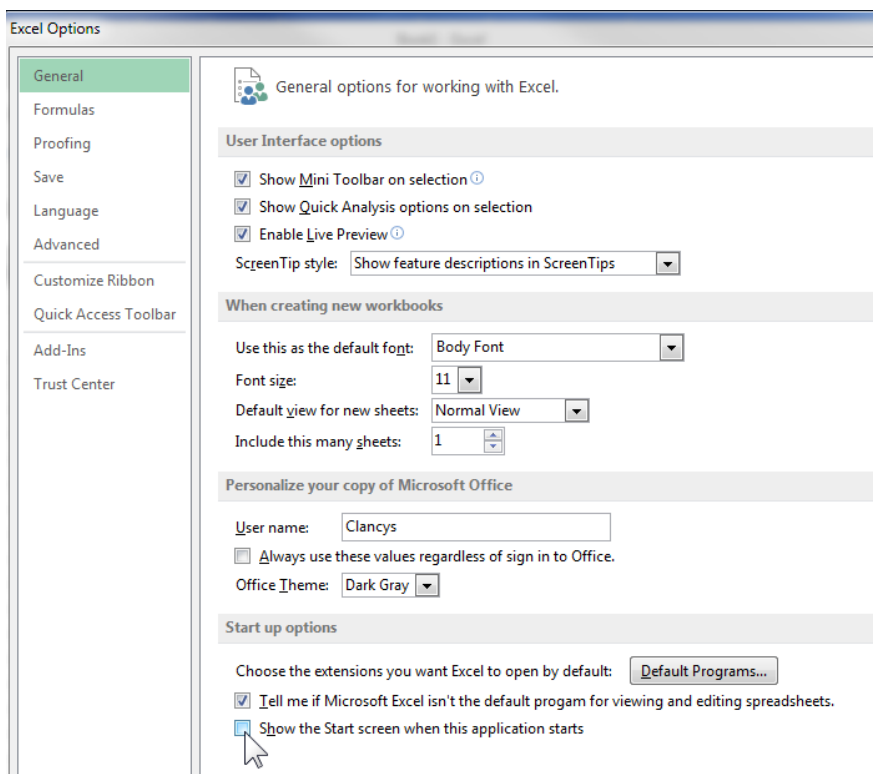
3. OUTLOOK. In 2010 (and I *think* in 2007), one could get a précis of upcoming calendar events under the calendar in the ToDo panel to the right of one's email screen. While the mini-Calendar can still be revealed there, it only shows you appointments for <u>TODAY</u>! (Wow. Brilliant idea, Microsoft!).

   I've found a great free (open source) Add-In which replaces the missing functionality. You will need to clear this with your IT people if you're in a 'controlled' environment. I have checked it and it works fine *<u>for me</u>*.

https://outlook2013addin.codeplex.com/ and choose the big DOWNLOAD button.
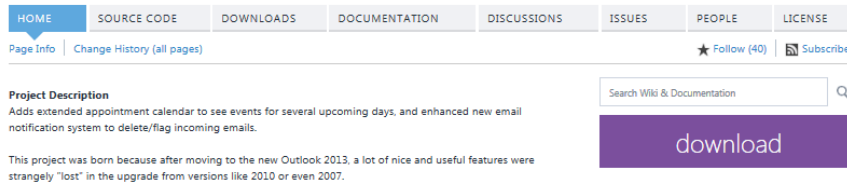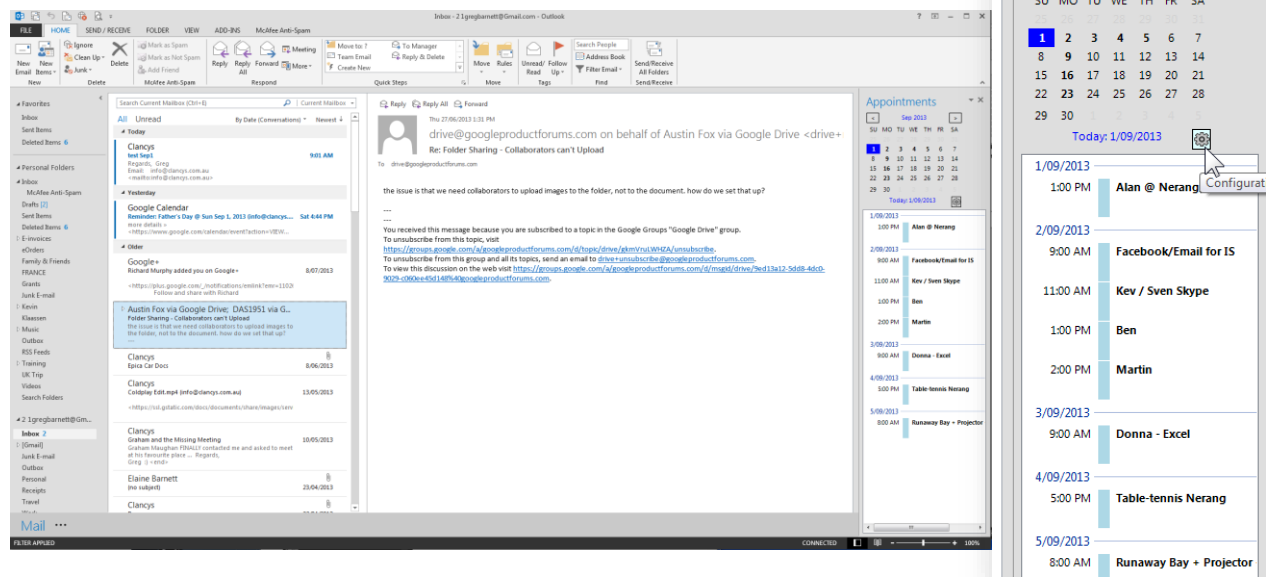

The Download File **Outlook2013TodoAddIn.zip** (only 82KB) will need to be unzipped.

This creates the file **Outlook2013TodoAddIn.vsto** (which needs to be double-clicked to install) and a folder called '**Application Files**'.

The result is a movable/extendable panel for as many days ahead as you specify via the Configuration button.

Like to Share what <u>YOU</u> find?

This is an article specifically about experiences moving from Office 2010 to 2013/365.

If you come across problems/solutions related to upgrading, and would like to share them, please email a short clear description and relevant screen shots to me at info@clancys.com.au. Humour is always appreciated, as well as descriptions of frustration/annoyance, but your text must be readable by a wide audience and free of any nastiness. Please also advise whether you would like to be attributed or be anonymous.

I will double-check any issue reported before consolidating the feedback input into this document which is being made available free of charge to anyone interested.

ADDENDUM

Further discoveries after more time and use:

- Excel: animation of a lot of actions, copy/paste, cell selections, etc. INFURIATING and, together with the bland visual, ExTREMELY tiring after an hour's intense activity.
- Word: Mail-Merge. DDE linking no longer works! Previous OK complex documents no longer retain Excel formatting for dates, numbers and currencies. Your only option is to:
  a) Insert relevant MERGEFIELD format commands for every occurrence of dates, numbers and currencies. One of my documents, a complex invoice, had 30 lines each with 5 fields. Copy/paste of <<MERGEFIELD>> and <<field>> has never worked, and still doesn't, so this is laborious.
  b) If bulk merges are being done, then one can copy relevant records from Excel (with a first record which is the column headers, and PASTE SPECIAL as unformatted text into an intermediary Word file, and merge from that.

I cannot begin tell you how much this has angered me. What do they DO at Microsoft? Just tell the new graduate intake "give us some cool stuff". Old procedures MUST be allowed to carry through!!!

- Word/Excel. These both crash on me 2-3 times a day when being used intensively (2010 versions rarely crashed). Recovery still works well, but recovered files are invariably the full 5 minutes old (Sod's Law).
- Word: TOC, Footnotes/Endnotes, working very quickly (better than 2010)
- Word: Tracking. Irritating.
  a) If you accept all changes, turn tracking off and Show No Markup and SAVE, Markup is shown again next time you OPEN up.
  b) After (a), Saving As a PDF causes Word's tracking comment panel to be visible in the PDF (throwing the document out of whack). Must explicitly turn Tracking off again before PDF-ing.
- Word: Bullets/Numbered. You can now longer simply switch from one to the other. You must UN-bullet the paragraph before applying a Numbered List (otherwise ALL prior bullets will also change!)
- Word: Text Wrapping. Any image at the time of insertion (or on selection if existing) now shows an adjacent text-wrap icon at top-right of image for easy access. Once assimilated in one's thinking, a short cut that halves the previously necessary mouse clicks.
- Outlook is remarkably stable, more so that 2010. The following work well: Searching, Archiving, Inline conversations/Drafts