Power Automate Desktop

Sample manual - first two chapters



Manual 1235 - 159 pages -

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CHAPTER 1 - GETTING STARTED

1.1 What is Power Automate Desktop (PAD)?

Power Automate Desktop (henceforth abbreviated to *PAD* in this manual) is an example of *Robotic Process Automation* (*RPA*) software.



Two three-letter acronyms in the first paragraph of the manual! We thought it was best to get them all out of the way at the start ...

You can use PAD to create flows like this (the three main parts of the PAD screen are shown):

A flow consists of a large number of different *actions* that you can add (a big part of learning *PAD* is to learn what actions are available, and how you might use and combine them).

Each *flow* consists of a sequence of instructions. These can include conditions or (as here) loops, so a flow isn't necessarily just executed once from start to end before finishing.



You can use *variables* to hold information that you later want to get back, such as the name of an Excel workbook, a file path or a value you've read in from a file, website or some other source.



Note that – perhaps surprisingly – PAD doesn't have a dark mode (if you don't like white backgrounds you may want to turn your screen brightness down).



1.2 Requirements for Using PAD

Here are the main requirements for installing and using *PAD* (there are many others listed on the Microsoft website, such as the need to have a keyboard attached!):

Requirement	Notes
Windows 10 or higher	For Windows 10 you'll need to download <i>PAD</i> from the Microsoft Store to install it; for Windows 11 it comes included in your operating system.
Administrator account	You will need to be logged on with an administrator account on Windows to install <i>PAD</i> .
Microsoft account	You will need to be logged on with a Microsoft account to use PAD.
Edge or Chrome	You'll need to be using Edge (version 80 or above) or Chrome as a browser.
Internet connection	You will need to be connected to the Internet.



The flows that you create may run on your own computer, but they are stored in the cloud – hence some of the requirements above.



CHAPTER 2 - FLOWS

2.1 Creating Flows

This page will show how to create just about the simplest flow you can – a single step to display a pop-up message:





2.2 Working with Flows

Running Flows

There are two ways to run a flow, depending on whether you currently have it open for editing or not:



File Edit Debug Tools	View Help		
Actions	🔚 Save 🕨 Ru 🔈 🗌 Stop 🕨 Run next ac		
Search actions	₀⁄ ^a Subfle Run Main		
> Variables	1 Display message Display message This with the Welsons to		
> Conditionals	with the welcome to		
or if you already have a flow open, either click on this icon to run it or press $\boxed{\mbox{F5}}$.			

Stopping a Flow

If you want to interrupt a flow which is currently running, again there are two ways:





You can also press Ctrl + Shift + Alt + T to stop a flow which is running (you can change this keyboard short-cut by clicking on the **Settings** button at the top of the list of Power Automate flows.



2.3 Editing, Copying, Renaming or Deleting Flows

This section shows how to edit, copy, rename and delete flows.

	/	To eo just d	dit a flow, louble-clic	either click on the pen k anywhere on the flo	cil icon next to its n w.	ame or
My flows		To co choos	opy, renan se one of	ne or delete a flow clic the options below:	k on these three do	ots, then
۵/ ^۵	Name		0	Run		
 Image: Image: Ima	Show a simple D			Stop		
₽	Send instruction emails			🖉 Edit	Enter	
				🛋 Rename	F2	
				Create a copy		
				Delete	Del	

If you're copying, renaming or deleting you can then proceed as follows:

Action	Dialog box	Notes
Rename	 ✓^a Name ✓ Simple flow renamed ✓ C V V V V 	Type in a new name for your flow, then press D.
Create a copy	Create a copy × A copy of this flow will be created and added under 'My flows' Flow name Simple flow renamed - Copy Save Cancel	Type in a name for your new flow (which will be a copy of the original) then press .
Delete	Power Automate × Are you sure you want to delete "Simple flow renamed - Copy" flow? Yes No	Click on the Yes button to confirm that you want to delete this flow.































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