Glossary

All the terms you need you know to master OpenOffice.org and make yourself sound very clever at the water cooler…

AutoCorrect A technology that automatically spots basic errors or formatting problems in your text, and changes them for you. For example, typing "teh" will automatically be corrected to "the". AutoFormat, which makes up part of the AutoCorrect feature, is responsible for changing letter sequences such as (c) to ©, and changing standard quotes into curly quotes, ". You can set AutoFormat to run when you tell it to, or to run as you type (the default).

Autonumber When an integer field is set to "autonumber" in a table, its value will automatically be filled in for you by *Base* using incrementing numbers starting at 1. That is, the first row will have the number 1, the second will have 2, and so on.

AutoText This is a saved piece of text that can be inserted automatically for you. For example, you could create a page footer as some AutoText, then easily insert that footer into documents by going to Edit > AutoText or pressing Ctrl+F3. AutoText entries can include styling and pictures, and so are very flexible.

Base The name of the *OpenOffice. org* database management program. Base is very similar to *Microsoft Access*, allowing you to design tables, insert and edit data, then create attractive user interfaces to make them easier to use. See p60.

Calc *OpenOffice.org*'s spreadsheet tool, design for juggling lots of numbers, creating charts, solving formulas and other mathematical complexity. Calc is very similar to Microsoft Excel, and can read and write Excel files freely. See p34 to get started with *Calc*.

Cell One individual area of data in a *Calc* spreadsheet. Cells are usually referenced by providing their row letter and column number, *eg* C5 is the fifth column in the third row (C). Cells can contain text or formulas that refer to other cells.

Chart A dynamically generated graph inserted into a *Calc* sheet. Charts are drawn based on input from cells in your tables, which means that they update if you change the cell data after they were created. You can also change the style of your charts after they were created, such as changing from a pie chart to a bar chart.

Combo Box A *Base* form user interface element that allows users to select an option from a drop-down list, or to enter their own. This is particularly useful for showing previously inserted data (such as the names of people in a table), while also allowing people to create their own entries if needed.

Compare Document This examines one document and compares it against another, reporting back on all the differences. If you have two copies of a Writer document, for example, and want to know what changed between the two, then you need to use Compare Document – it will point out all the differences for you.

Conditional Formatting A *Calc* feature that can show cells in different styles depending on the content of the cells: *eg* you might have a large profit/loss spreadsheet with a final figure at the end showing how much you will make or lose this month – conditional formatting can make *Calc* show that figure be formatted in large, red text if it's negative.

Custom Animation Animations of text and pictures in *Impress* are called custom animations, and you can choose from a wide variety of effects and speeds so that your slides come to life. Custom animations can also include pre-defined movements and "emphasis" effects that occur after text arrives on the slide.

Data Sources Any databases you create using *Base* is automatically registered as a data source, which means it can be used in any of the other *OpenOffice.org* apps; *eg* you can press the F4 key in *Writer* to bring up the Data Sources pane, then drag tables or individual fields into your document to have it insert database information into your document.

Database A collection of tables, queries, forms and reports that make up a single *OpenOffice.org Base* file. Outside of *Base*, a database usually just contains tables.

DataPilot The *OpenOffice.org* term for a Pivot Table. These are special combinations of spreadsheets that bring together lots of information in one place – great if you have to analyse lots of data at the same time, but confusing if you're just getting started!
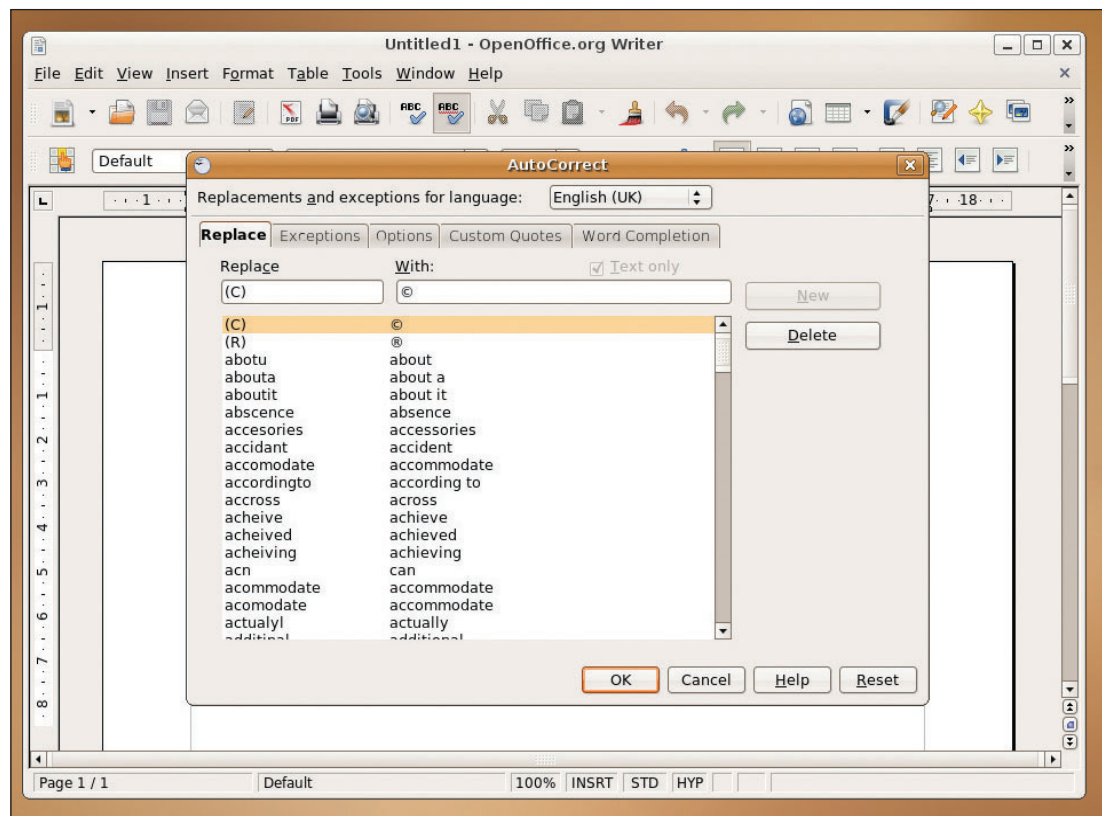
› *OOo*'s AutoCorrect system has lots of options, but the defaults are good enough for most people. If there's something you don't like, just delete the rule.
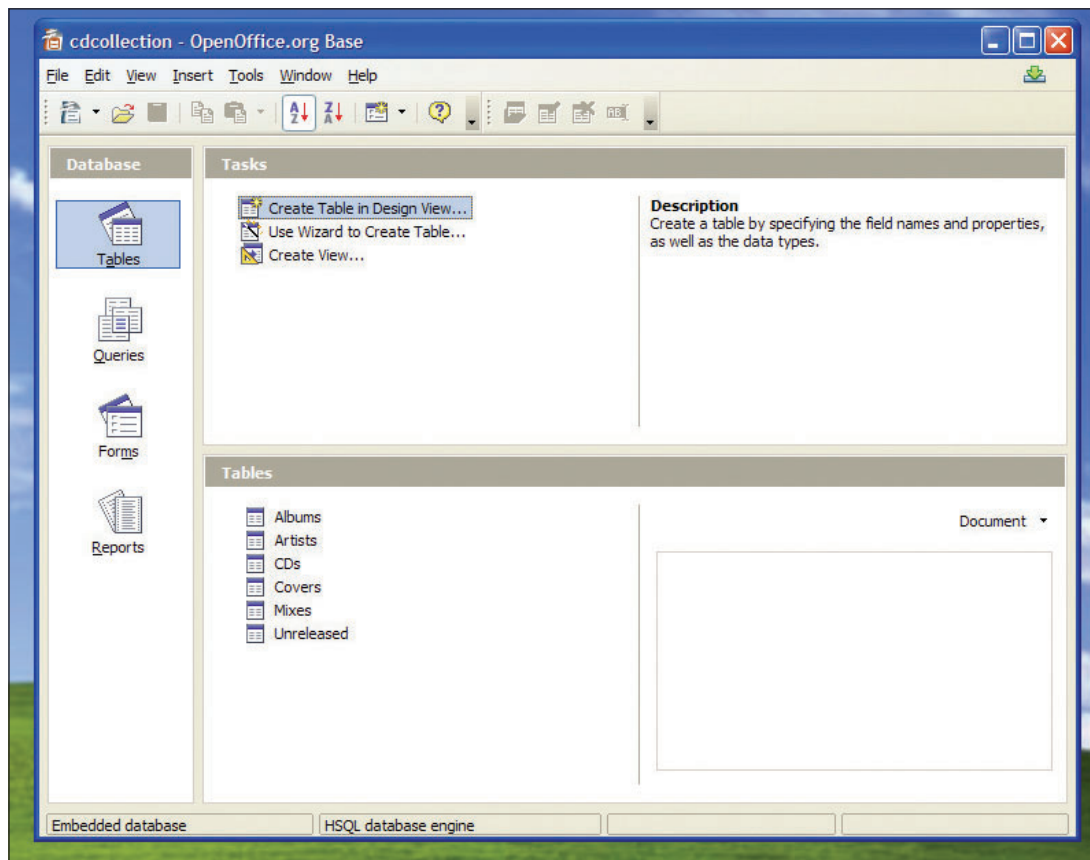
❯ **A database in *Base* stores more than just rows and fields – you also store forms, queries, reports and macros, all in the one file.**

Design Mode One of two modes in *OpenOffice.org Base*'s forms. This one is used when you want to modify the design of a form rather than use it to browse data, because it lets you create new controls, add data sources and move things around until you are happy.

Detective A *Calc* function that can help you solve problems with your spreadsheet construction and navigation. Using a formula in a cell, it finds cells that depend on it ("dependents"), or cells that provide it with data ("precedents").

Dictionaries By default, *OpenOffice. org* ships with a selection of dictionaries for the most common languages, but many more are available – follow our tutorial on p96 to install a new dictionary or localise the whole *OpenOffice.org* interface to a language other than English.

DMG A Mac OS X installation image, usually indicated by a **.dmg** extension at the end of a filename. If you're using OS X and have downloaded a new DMG file of *NeoOffice*, turn to p10 to follow our guide to a trouble-free installation.

Draw The *OpenOffice.org* vector drawing application. *Draw* and *Impress* have a lot in common, which means your skills can easily be transferred between the two of them.

Extensions Add-ons to *OpenOffice. org* that can add more functionality, special configuration (such as new toolbar or menu options) or libraries for macros. You can add, remove, enable or disable packages using the Package Manager dialog under the Tools menu. See p98 for a couple of examples, and download lots more.

Field In *Base*, "field" is the name of a piece of data, such as First Name, Age or ID. In *Writer*, a field is any pre-written information that updates itself depending on your current document. For example, the current time is a field, as is the current page number, as both of these can change. *Writer* automatically keeps fields up to date for you.

Fill A *Calc* function that can copy and adapt formulas across cells. For example, if cell A3 sums the values of A1 and A2, you can use Fill Down to make B3 add B1 and B2, C3 add C1 and C2, *etc*.

Filter A data selection type that only shows matching fields. *Eg* you can set a filter where fields should be shown only if they have a value greater than 5. Filters usually leave the underlying data intact, which means that once the filter is removed, you can see all your original data again.

Flash Adobe Flash is a vector-based animation format that is very popular on the web. Because they store most of their information as simple mathematical data, Flash files are usually very small in comparison to the amount of content they can deliver. *Impress* can output its presentations to *Flash*, which means that you can upload them to the internet and everyone can watch them through their web browser.

Foreign Key The name of a primary key that is referenced in another table. For example, if you have a Managers table that has "ID" for its primary key, then when that ID number appears in the Employees table it is known as a foreign key. Some databases use foreign keys to perform cascade updates – when a Manager is deleted, all employees with that manager have their value changed automatically.
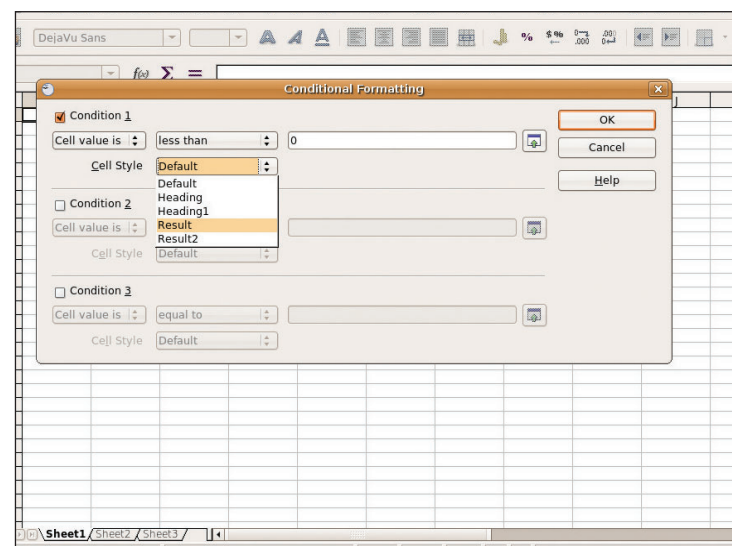
Form A user interface designed in *Base* designed to show the values from a table and also allow editing and new data to be inserted.

Formula A simple mathematical algorithm that reads the values from cells and manipulates them to calculate the value of another cell. *Calc* includes many formula functions as standard, of which the most popular is **SUM()**, which adds up the contents of cells.
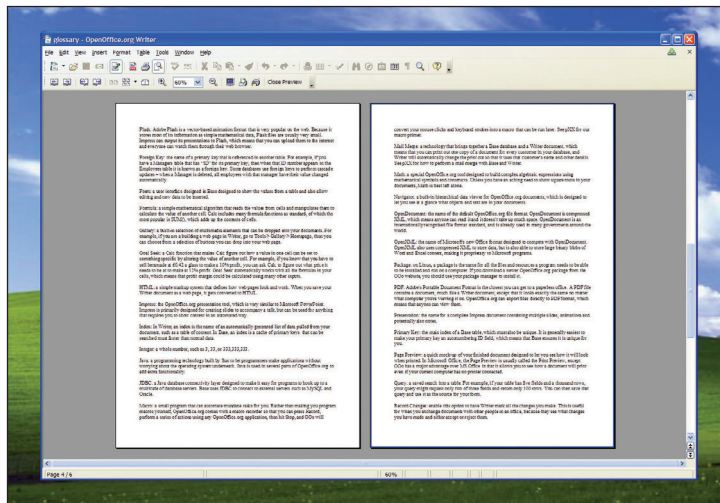
Gallery A built-in selection of multimedia elements that can be dropped into your documents. For example, if you are a building a web page in Writer, go to Tools > Gallery > Homepage, then you can choose »

❯ **Specify a few conditions, and *Calc*'s conditional formatting can automatically style up the cell depending on its value.**

Glossary

› **Think before you print! Or at least take a good look at the page before you turn it into a hard copy, and that's where Page Preview is your friend.**

from a selection of buttons you can drop into your web page.

Goal Seek A *Calc* function that makes *Calc* figure out how a value in one cell can be set to something specific by altering the value of another cell. For instance, if you know that you have to sell lemonade at £0.42 a glass to make a 10% profit, you can ask *Calc* to figure out exactly what the price needs to be set to in order to make at 12% profit. Goal Seek automatically works with all the formulas in your cells, which means that your profit margin could be calculated using many other inputs.

HTML A simple markup system that defines how web pages look and work. When you save your *Writer* document as a web page, it gets converted to HTML.

Impress The *OpenOffice.org* presentation tool, which is very similar to *Microsoft PowerPoint*. *Impress* is primarily designed for creating slides to accompany a talk, but can be used for anything that requires you to show content in an automated way. See p50 to get started with slideshows for both fun and business.

Index In *Writer*, an index is the name of an automatically generated list of data pulled from your document, such as a table of content. In *Base*, an index is a cache of primary keys that can be searched much faster than normal data.

Integer A whole number, such as 3, 33, or 333,333,333.

Java A programming technology built by Sun Microsystems to let programmers make applications without worrying about the operating system underneath. Java is used in several parts of *OpenOffice.org* to add extra functionality.

JDBC A Java database connectivity layer designed to make it easy for programs to hook up to a multitude of database servers. *Base* uses JDBC to connect to external servers such as *MySQL* and *Oracle*.

Macro A small program that can automate mundane tasks for you. Rather than making you program macros yourself, *OpenOffice.org* comes with a macro recorder so that you can press Record, perform a series of actions using any *OpenOffice.org* application, then hit Stop, and *OOo* will convert your mouse clicks and keyboard strokes into a macro that can be run later. See p76 for our macro primer.

Mail Merge A technology that brings together a *Base* database and a *Writer* document, which means that you can print out one copy of a document for every customer in your database, and *Writer* will automatically change the print out so that it uses that customer's name and other details. See p64 for our tutorial on how to perform a mail merge with *Base* and *Writer*.

Math A special *OpenOffice.org* tool designed to build complex algebraic expressions using mathematical symbols and constructs. Unless you have an aching need to show square roots or complex formulas in your documents, *Math* is best left alone.

Navigator A built-in hierarchical data viewer for *OpenOffice.org* documents, which is designed to let you see at a glance what objects and text are in your documents.

OpenDocument The name of the default *OpenOffice.org* file format. OpenDocument is compressed XML, which means anyone can read it and it doesn't take up much space. OpenDocument is an internationally recognised file format standard, and is already used in many governments.

OpenXML The name of Microsoft's new *Office* format designed to compete with OpenDocument. OpenXML also uses compressed XML to store data, but is also able to store large binary blobs of *Word* and *Excel* content, making it proprietary to Microsoft programs.

Package On Linux, a package is the name for all the files and resources a program needs to be able to be installed and run on a computer. If you download a newer *OpenOffice. org* package from the *OOo* website, you should use your package manager to install it.

PDF Adobe's Portable Document Format is the closest you can get to a paperless office. A PDF file contains a document, much like a *Writer* document, except that it looks exactly the same no matter what computer you're viewing it on. *OpenOffice.org* can export files directly to PDF format, which means that anyone can view them. Turn to page 94 to get started with creating PDFs with *OOo*.

Presentation The name for a complete *Impress* document containing multiple slides with text and images, animations and potentially also presenter's notes.

Primary Key The main index of a *Base* table, which must also be unique. It is generally easiest to make your primary key an autonumbering ID field, which means that Base ensures it is unique for you.

Page Preview A quick mock-up of your finished document designed to let you see how it will look when printed. In *Microsoft Office*, the Page Preview is usually called the Print Preview, except *OOo* has a major advantage over *MS Office* in that it allows you to see how a document will print even if your current computer has no printer connected.

› **Want more clip art? Sun's own version of *OpenOffice.org*, called *StarOffice* is available for a minimal charge, and has a few extra features.**
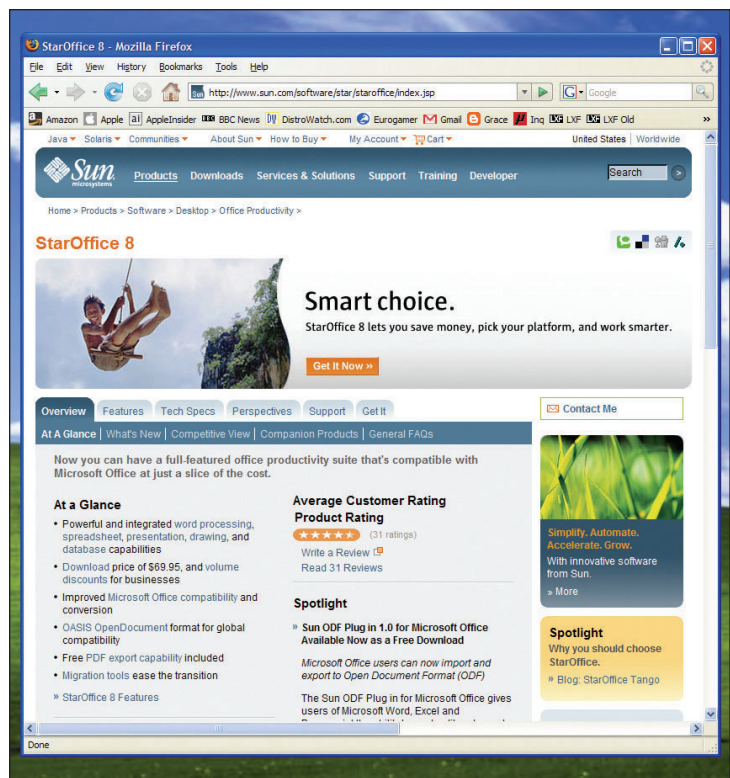
Query A saved search into a table. For example, if your table has five fields and a thousand rows, your query might request only two of those fields and return only 100 rows. You can then save that query and use it as the source for your form.

Record Changes Enable this option to have *Writer* mark all the changes you make. This is useful for when you exchange documents with other people in an office, because they see what changes you have made and either accept or reject them.

Rehearse Timings A special option in *Impress* that plays your presentation normally, except it adds a timer in the corner so that you can check the overall length of your presentation and make sure you fit into a specific time slot.

Report A neatly formatted, printable copy of a table of query that can have a header or footer across pages when printed. Reports can vary from simple spreadsheet-like tables to advanced, full-colour print outs with pictures, logos and other embedded media.

Row A single entry in your database table. For example, if you have a table "employees" with fields ID, FirstName, LastName and Age, a row in that table would be: 1, Paul, Hudson, 27.

Scenarios An automated way of manipulating multiple cell values with one click. Spreadsheets are a very easy way to calculate "what if"

scenarios, because you can just change one or two cells and have all the others with formulas automatically update. A scenario lets you save these changes and switch between them easily. For example, your spreadsheet might show you how fast you can pay off your mortgage at 6% interest with no overpayments, but you might have a scenario created that changes the interest rate to 8% and has you paying £50 a month in overpayments. Both are saved, and you can switch between them easily and see how the scenarios affect the rest of the sheet.

Sheet A single page in your spreadsheet. One *Calc* spreadsheet file can have many sheets.

Slide A single slide in your presentation. One *Impress* presentation can have many slides.

Slideshow The name for a finished *Impress* presentation when it is ready to be shown. You can advance through a slideshow yourself, or by setting timings in Impress.

SQL Structured Query Language is the core language that *Base* uses to read and write from its tables. Because few people are interested in learning a programming language just to save and manipulate their data, *Base* works as a simplified user interface over *SQL* that automates much of the drudgery.

StarOffice The name for Sun's own version of *OpenOffice.org*. StarOffice
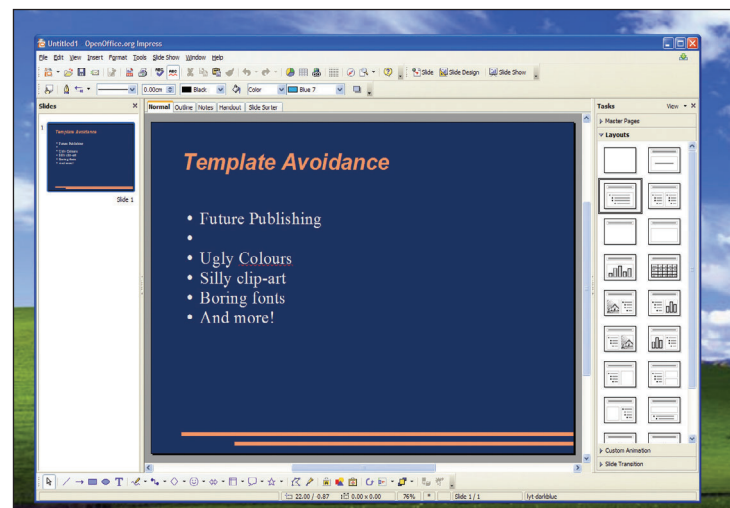
> **The templates in *OOo* look awful no matter what you do: avoid them if you can, or at very least, make your own extensive customisations first!**

is mostly the same; a big difference is the bundled clip-art collection.

Styles A collection of default formatting for text and objects in your documents, such as headings, links, paragraphs and more. You can create your own styles if you want, or customise the existing set to more closely suit your needs.

Sun Microsystems American company that purchased *StarOffice* from a company in Germany called StarDivision. Sun subsequently released all of *StarOffice* under a free software licence, calling it *OpenOffice.org*. Cheers, Sun!

Table The name for a single information group in a table, containing many fields and many rows. Each table should contain one type of information, such as CDs, DVDs, employees, etc. If you want to store many different types of data in one database, just create more tables.

Templates *OpenOffice.org* ships with a number of templates for creating instant documents, such as *Impress* presentations. But, they invariably look ugly, and should be avoided or at least tweaked a bit before use!

Transition The name for the animated movement between slides. A common transition is to have the first slide fade into black, then the second slide fade from black.

Tuple The technical name for a row. If you want to sound clever around computer-knowledgeable friends, use this instead of "row".

Undo Most of the *OpenOffice.org* applications have multiple undo levels – you can press Undo multiple times and it will step backwards through your changes until you are at a point you like. Note that some operations in *Base* have *no* undo, so be careful what you do!

Varchar A variable-length field holding text information. Being variable length means that it takes up just as much space on your hard disk as it needs.

View A subset of a *Base* table, showing only fields you have selected.

Wizard An automatic tool to create basic documents or achieve basic results for you. For example, if you want to create an agenda, you can use the agenda wizard in *Writer* to give you a kick start.

Writer The wordprocessor that comes with *OpenOffice.org*. This is very similar to *Microsoft Word* in that it lets you type and edit text, add formatting, drop in pictures, then print out the result.

X11 Some versions of *OpenOffice.org* for Mac OS X require a graphical technology called X11. This is built into OS X, but you'll notice an application called *X* in your dock – it's nothing to worry about!

XML A simple markup language that lets developers read and write data in an open and human-readable way. OpenDocument and OpenXML both use XML, but it is compressed because XML in its raw form tends to take up a lot of space. **LXF**

50 Tips for
Better
Photos

by Paul Hudson
7ᵗʰ July

`00:00:11`
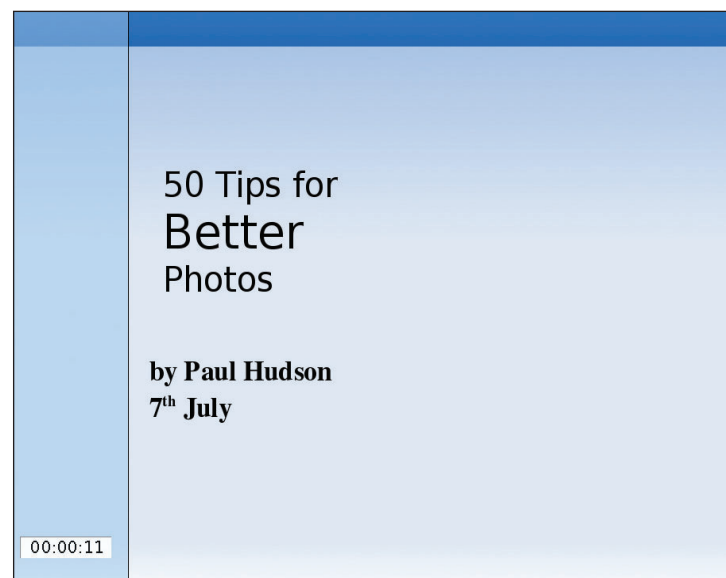
> **Test your timings with the *OOo Impress* Rehearse Timings option – look out for the timer in the corner that shows how fast you're going.**