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Easily Add a Ribbon into a WinForms Application (C#)

**Member 231420, toATwork, adriancs, Michael Spradlin**, 23 Nov 2013[MS-PL](#)

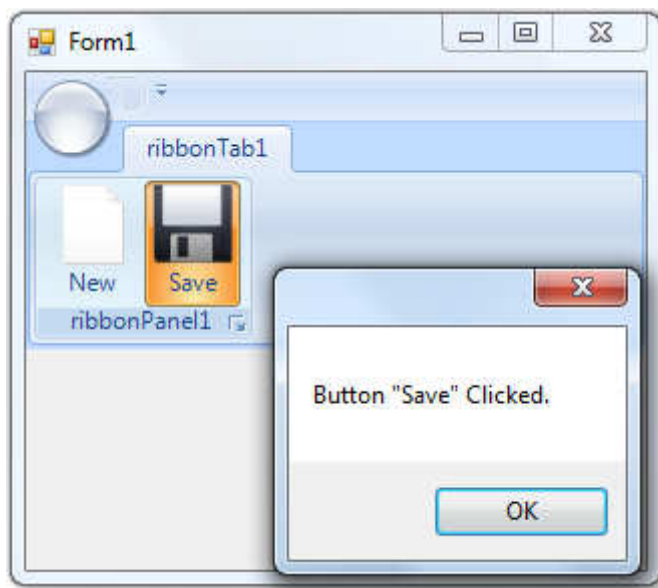
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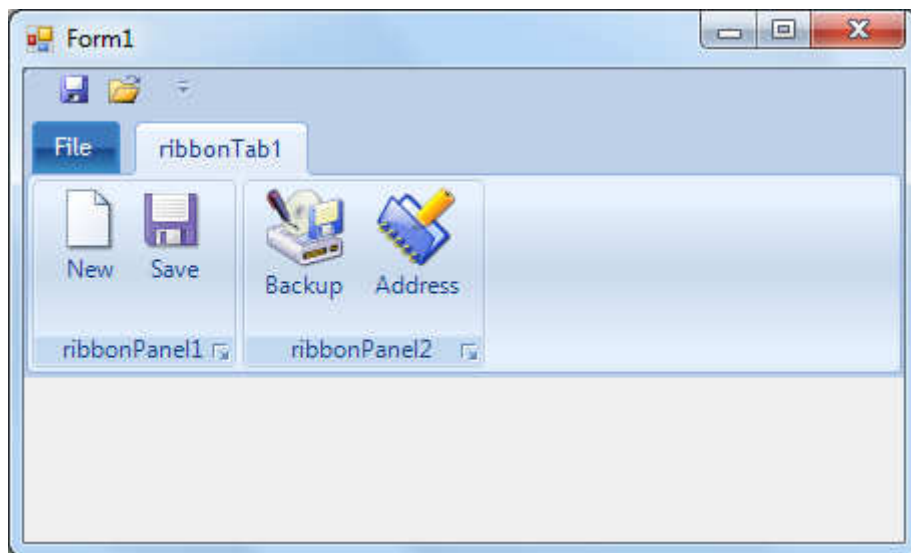
Easily add ribbon to WinForm Application for .NET Framework 2.0, 3.5, 4.0 & 4.5

[Download Ribbon \(07.Oct.2013\)](#)

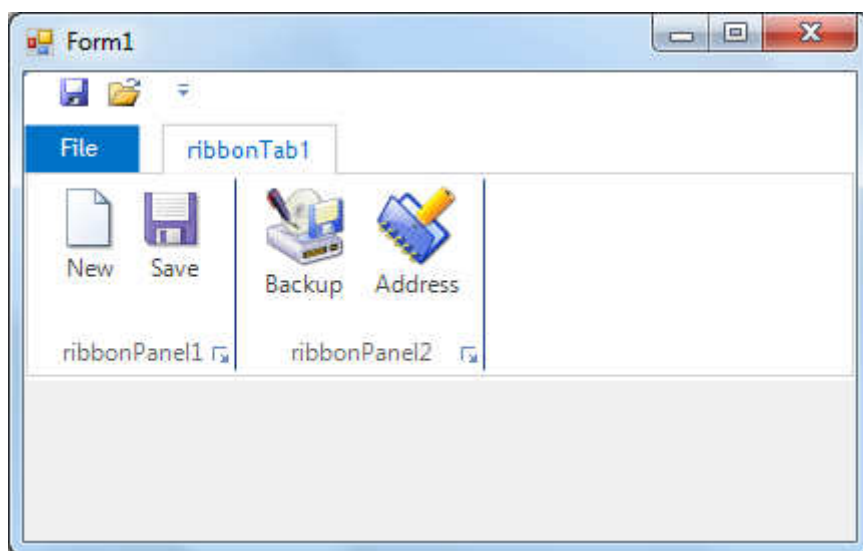
Style 2007



Style 2010



Style 2013



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- [Part 6: How to Make a New Theme, Skin for this Ribbon Programmatically](#)
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Part 1: Background

The ribbon that is going to be used in this article is an open source project created by **Jose Menendez Poo**. However, the original author of the ribbon has stopped support of it. A group of fans of this ribbon re-host and continue to develop/enhance and support the ribbon.

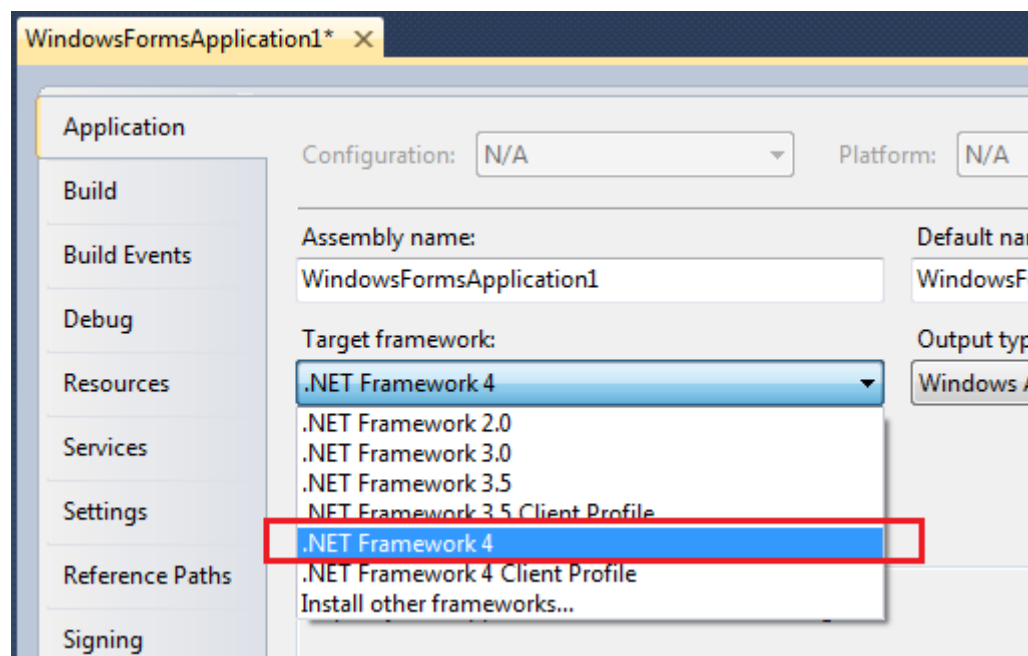
The original ribbon creator has posted an article explaining what this ribbon is all about at here: [\[A Professional Ribbon You Will Use \(Now with orb!\)\]](#). However, that article doesn't describe how to use it in your project. Therefore, this article will show how to use it.

Old Site: <http://ribbon.codeplex.com> (By original author, but has stopped support)

New Site: <http://officeribbon.codeplex.com> (Re-host by fans of the ribbon)

Part 2: How to Use this Ribbon Control

Reminder: Please note that this ribbon does not work on **.Net 3.5 Client Profile** and **.NET 4.0 Client Profile**. You have to switch the target framework to **.NET 3.5** or **.NET 4.0**. When you first create a project, Visual Studio might initially set the target framework to **Client Profile**.

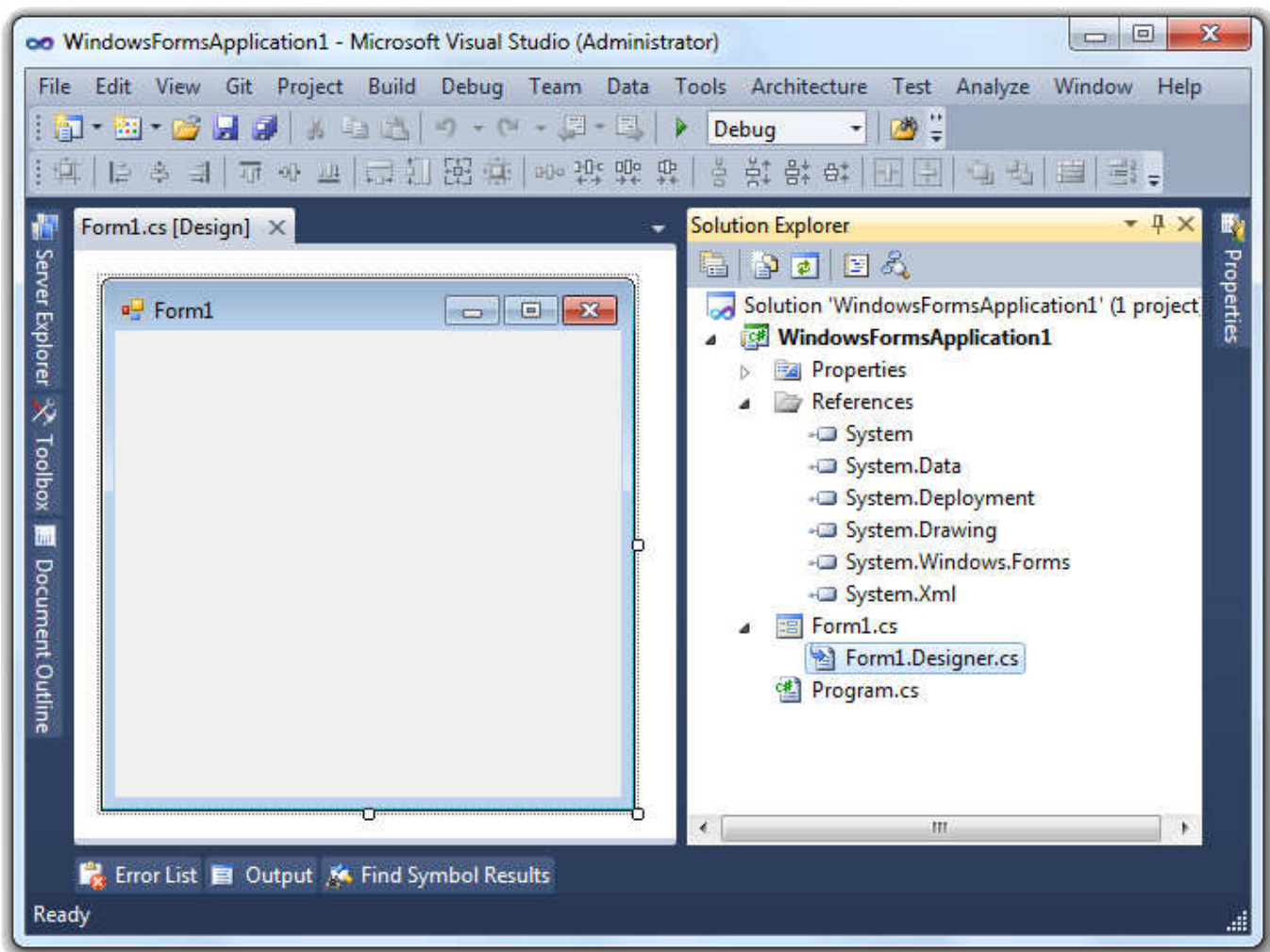


If the project is using **Client Profile**, you might receive this error while you are trying to build the solution:

[Hide](#) [Copy Code](#)

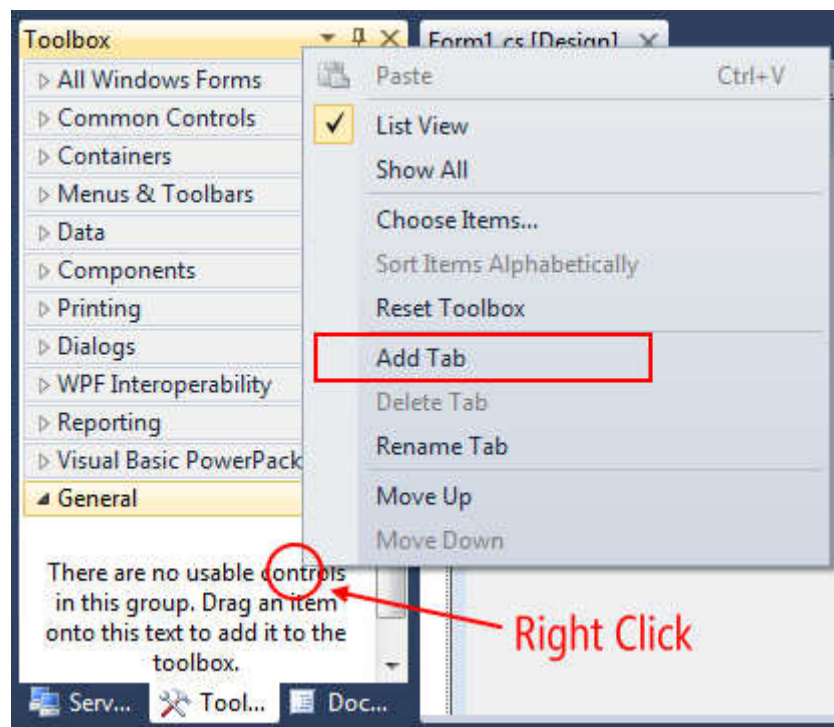
```
Error 3 The type or namespace name 'Ribbon' does not exist in the namespace 'System.Windows.Forms'
(are you missing an assembly reference?)
```

1. Get **System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon35.dll** from download.
2. Create a blank WinForms project.

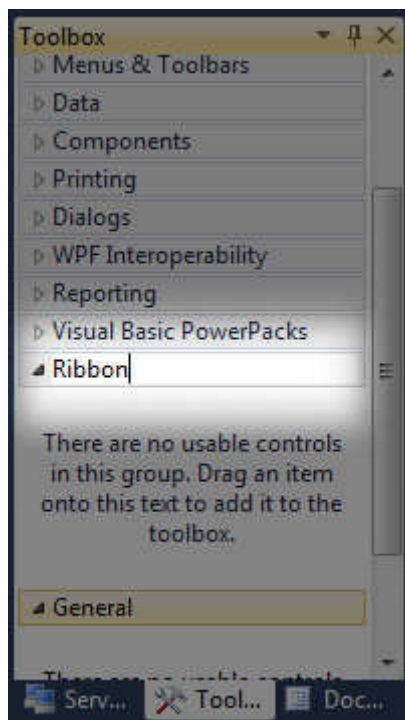


3. Add Ribbon into Visual Studio Toolbox.

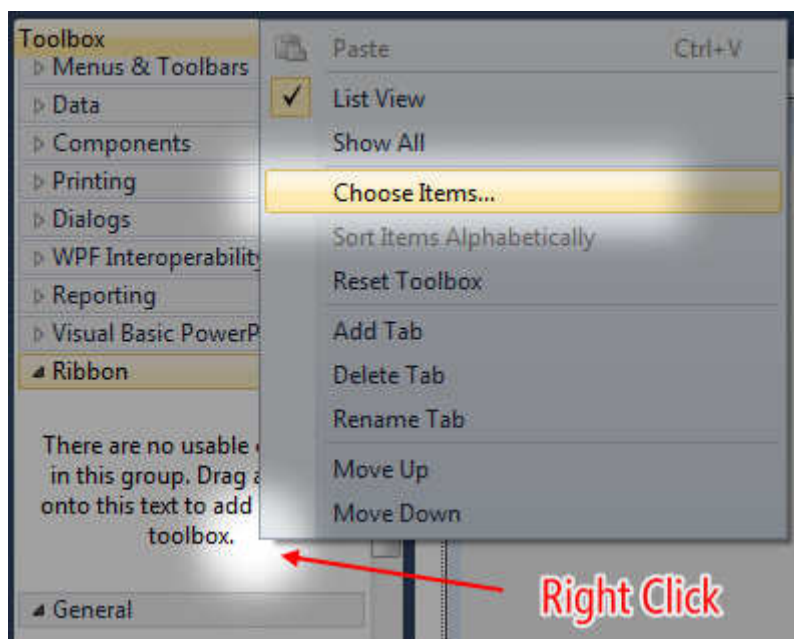
Right Click on Toolbox > Add Tab.



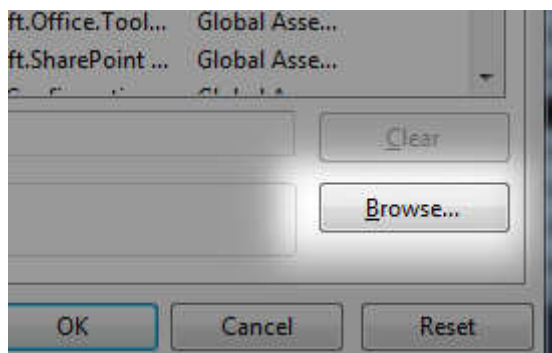
Give the new tab a name "Ribbon".



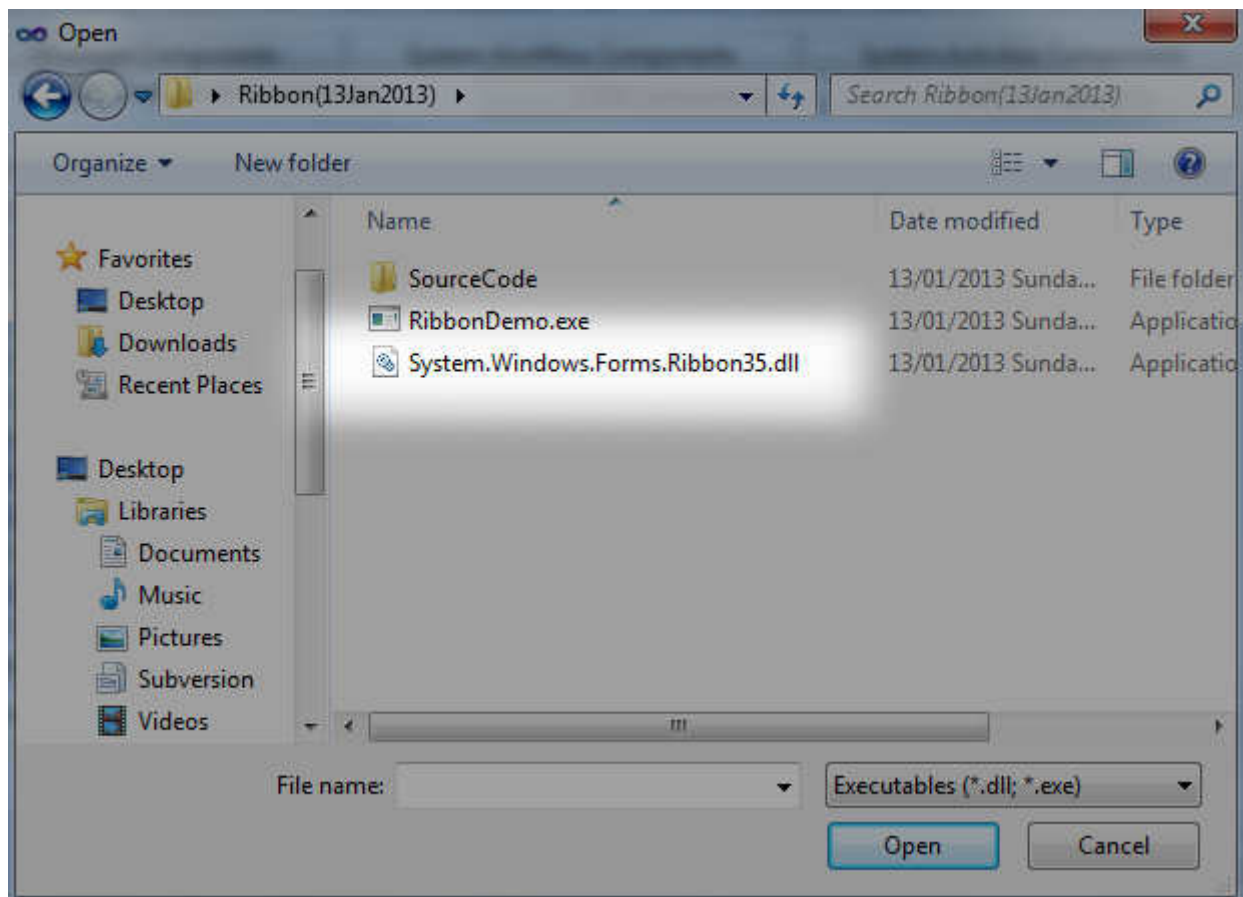
Right Click on the New Tab [Ribbon] > Choose Items...



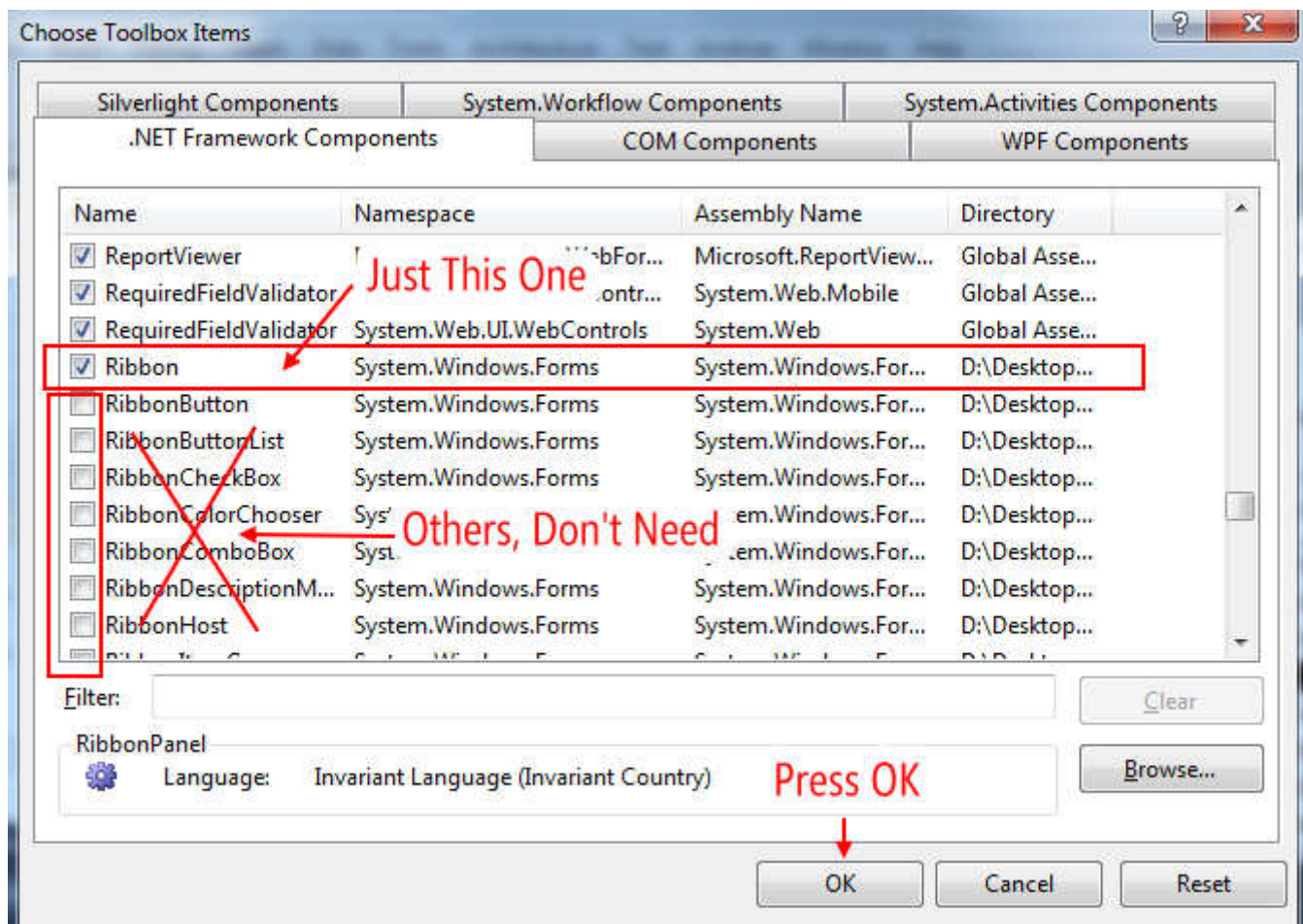
[Browse...] Where are you? System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon35.dll?



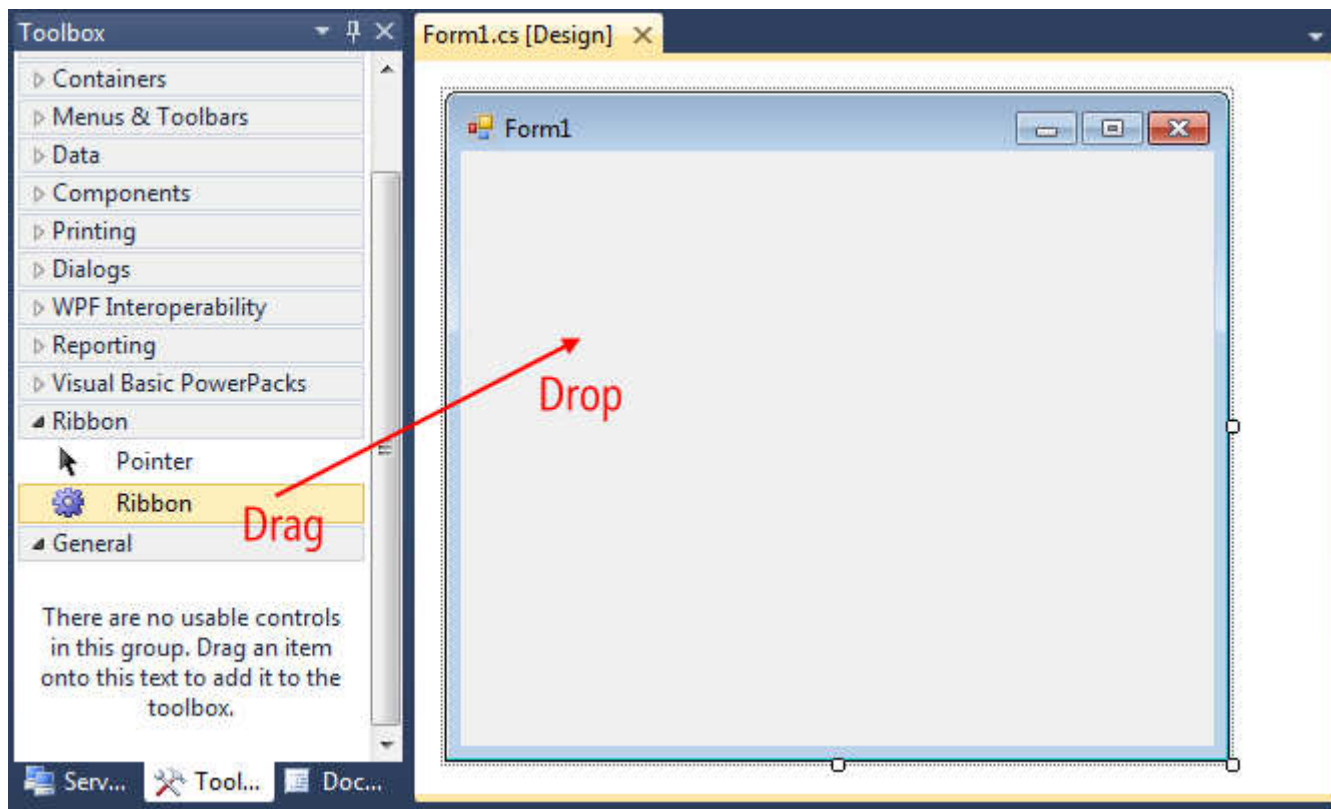
There you are... Gotcha... Select it...



Only [Ribbon] can be dragged into Form. Others, as the picture below said, they are not needed to exist in toolbox. However, its not going to harm your computer or project if you select all the items belongs to ribbon (by default). Its up to you.



And finally, what you're going to do is just...



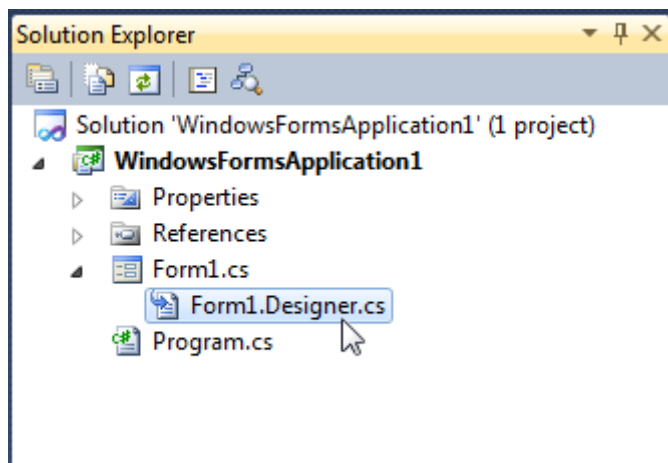
Another Way

Manually code it behind.

You can add the ribbon into WinForm too with code behind.

Add a reference of *System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon35.dll* into your project. Build the the solution.

Open the designer of Main Form. In this example, *Form1.Designer.cs*.



Add these three lines of code

Hide Copy Code

```
private System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon ribbon1;  
ribbon1 = new System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon();  
this.Controls.Add(ribbon1);
```

into **Form1.Designer.cs**

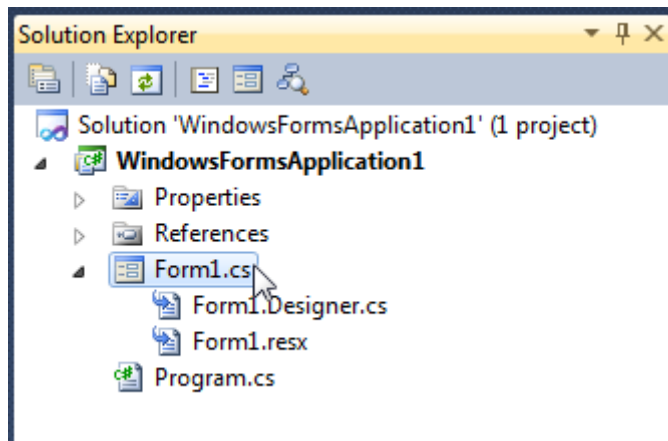
Hide Copy Code

```
private void InitializeComponent()  
{  
    ribbon1 = new System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon();
```

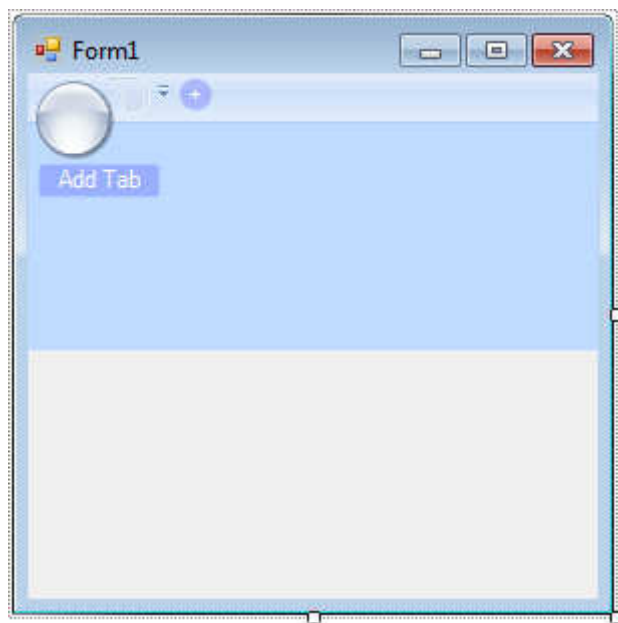
```
this.components = new System.ComponentModel.Container();  
this.AutoScaleMode = System.Windows.Forms.AutoScaleMode.Font;  
this.Text = "Form1";  
this.Controls.Add(ribbon1);  
}  
private System.Windows.Forms.Ribbon ribbon1;
```

Save and Close **Form1.Designer.cs**.

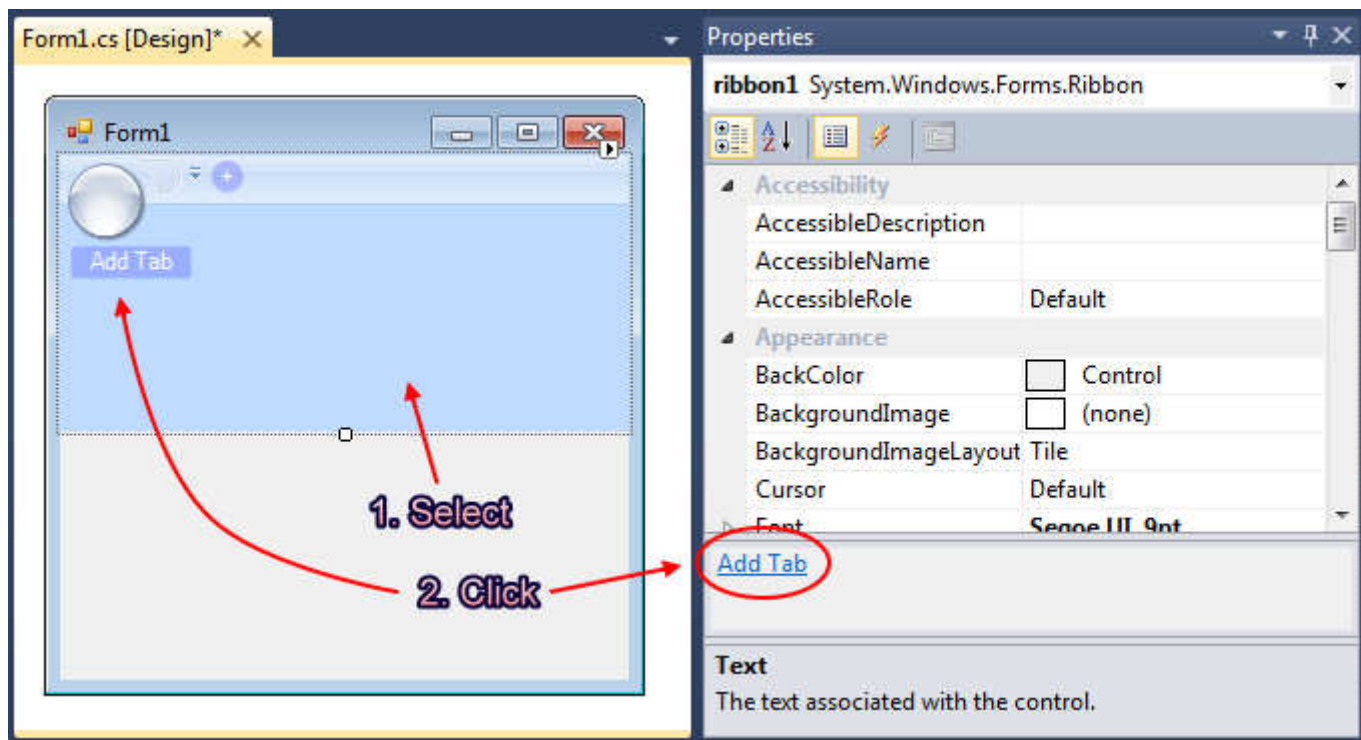
Double click and open **Form1.cs**, and now the Ribbon control is added into the main form.



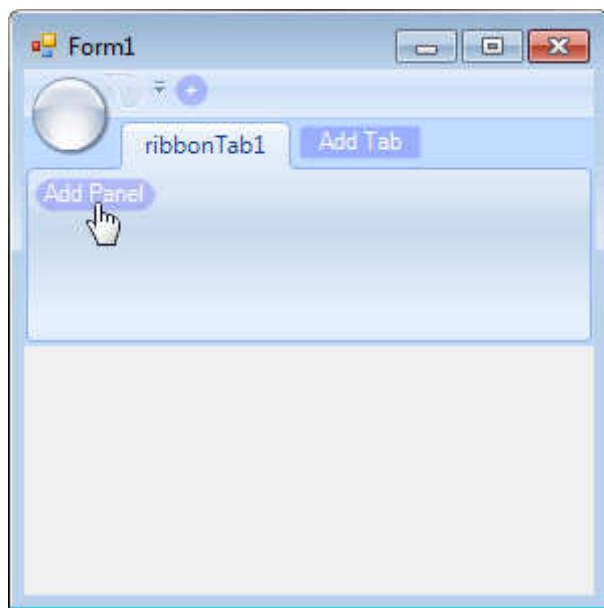
Lets continue...



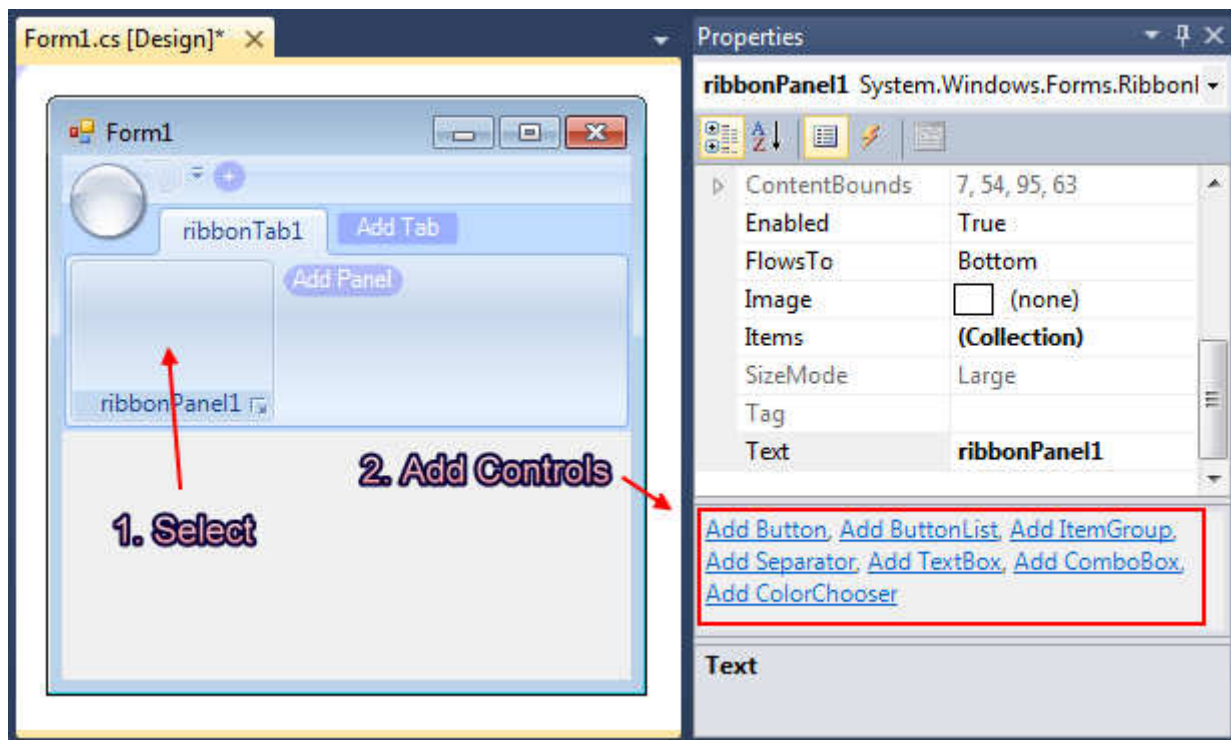
4. Click on the Ribbon and click Add Tab.



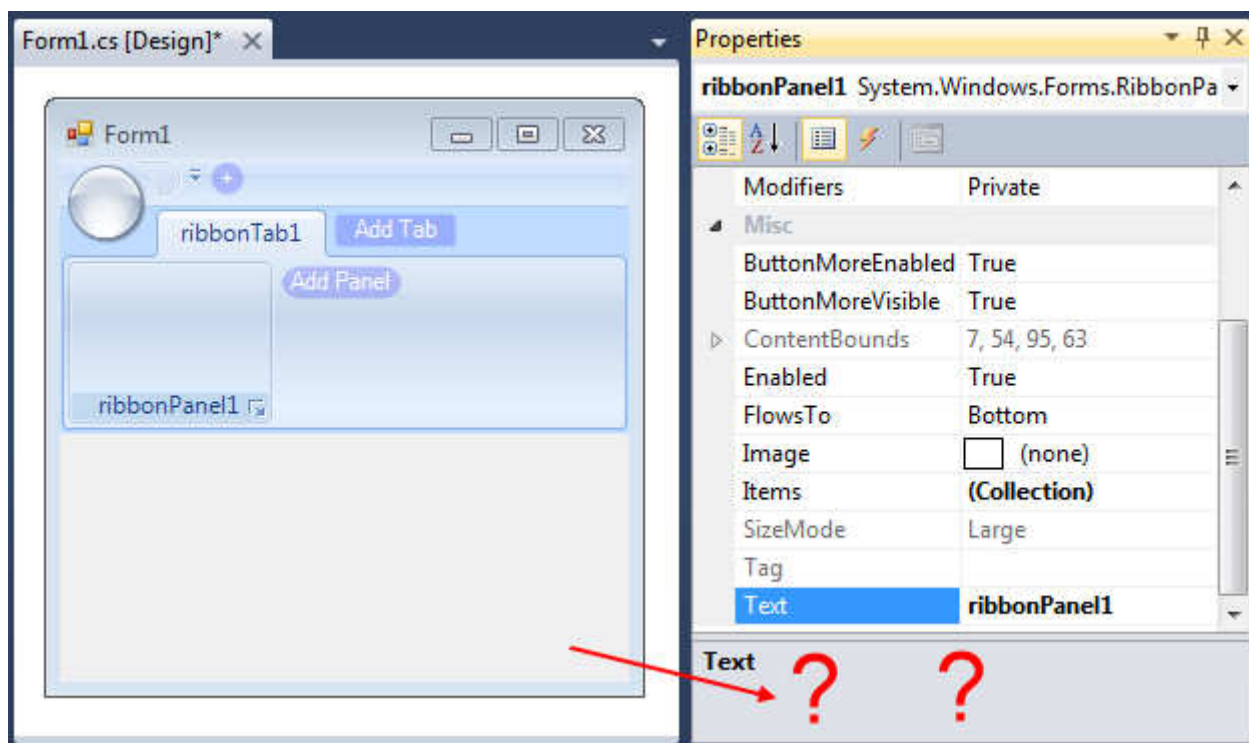
5. Click on the newly added **RibbonTab**, then click **Add Panel**.



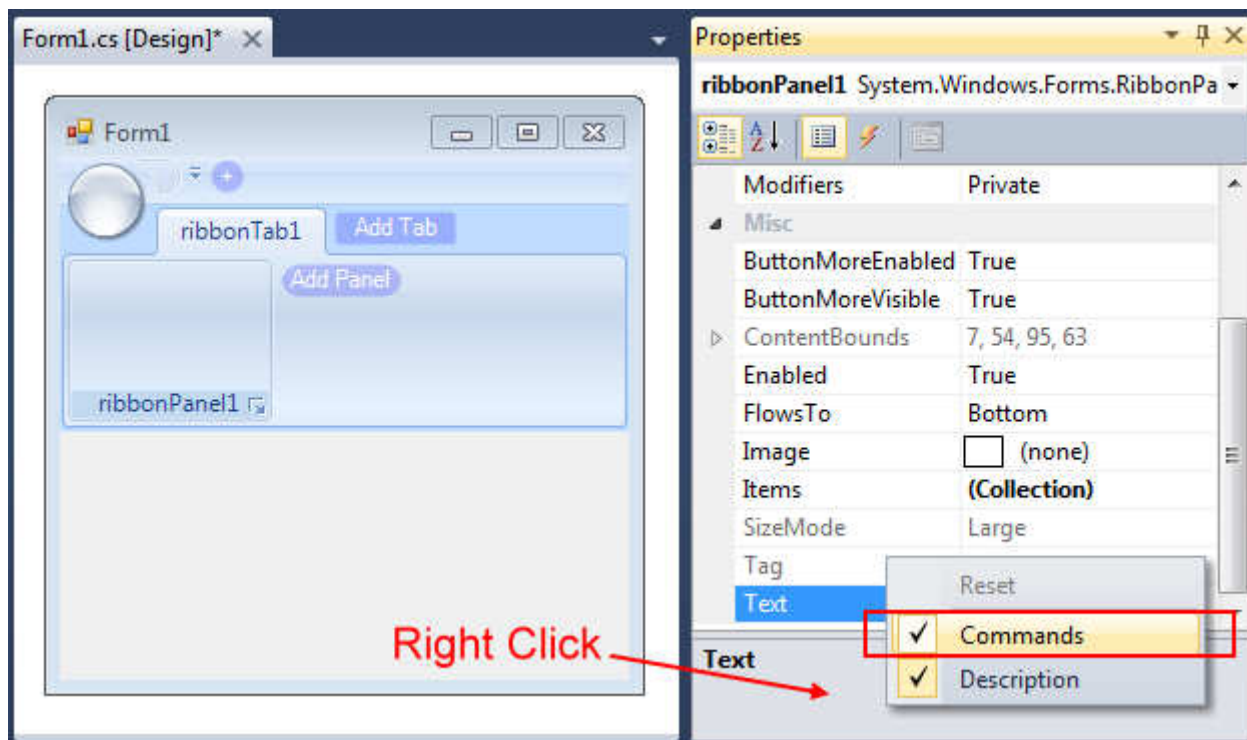
6. Click on the newly added **RibbonPanel**, go to **Properties**. You will see a set of available controls that can be added to the **RibbonPanel**.



You might not able to see the extra command links of "Add Button", "Add ButtonList", "Add ItemGroup"... etc at the Properties Explorer.



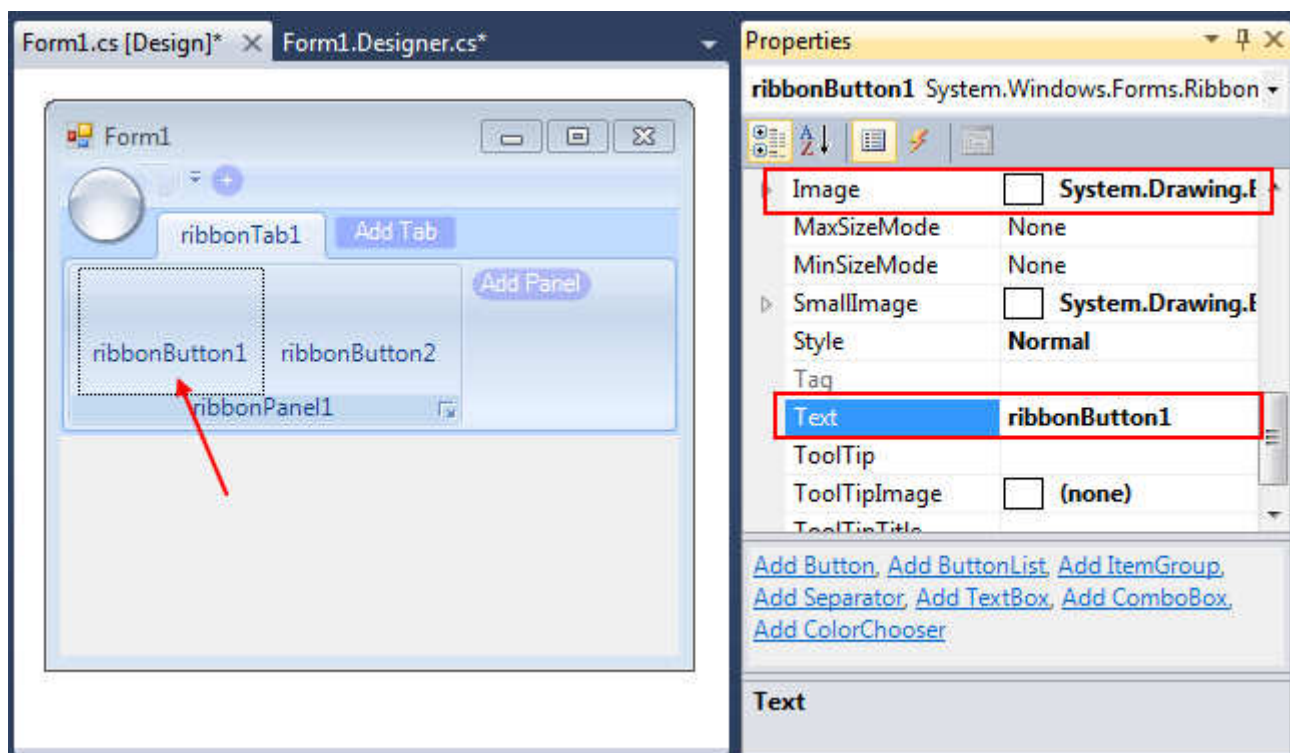
Right click at the Properties Explorer and Tick/Check the [Commands].



7. Try to add some buttons into the **RibbonPanel1**.

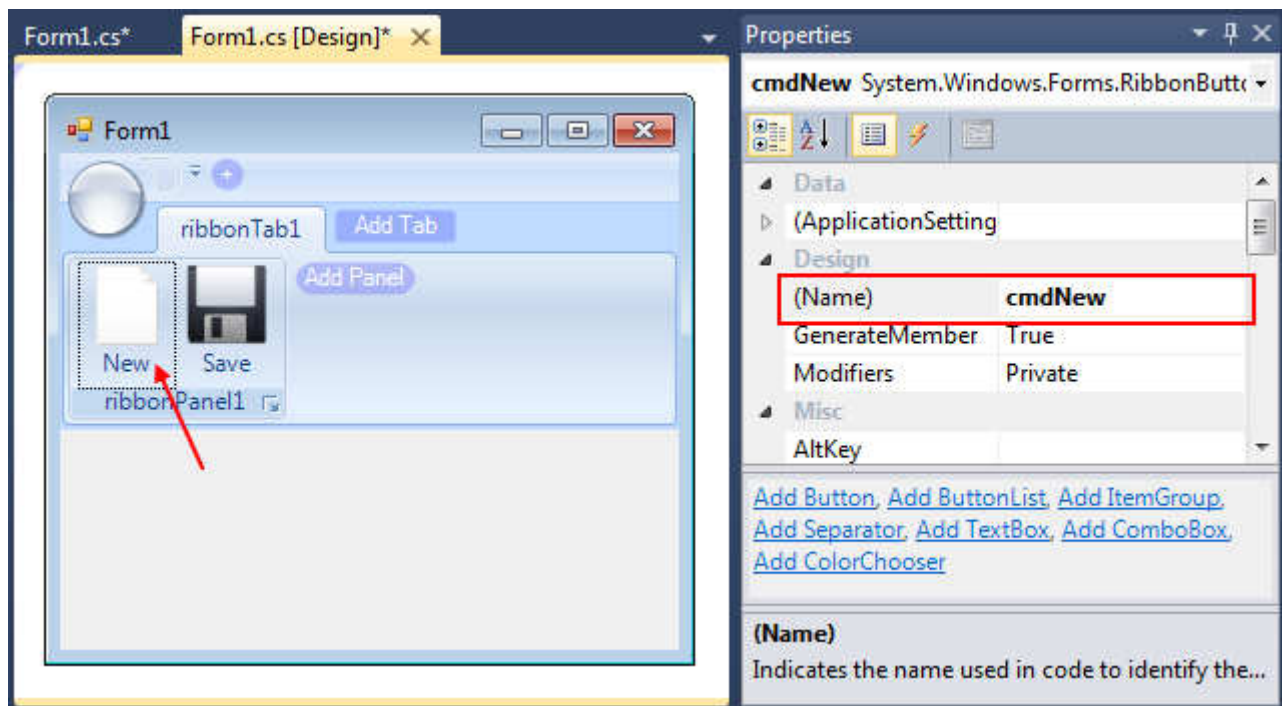
8. Click on the **RibbonButton**, go to **Properties**.

9. Let's try to change the image and the label text of the button.

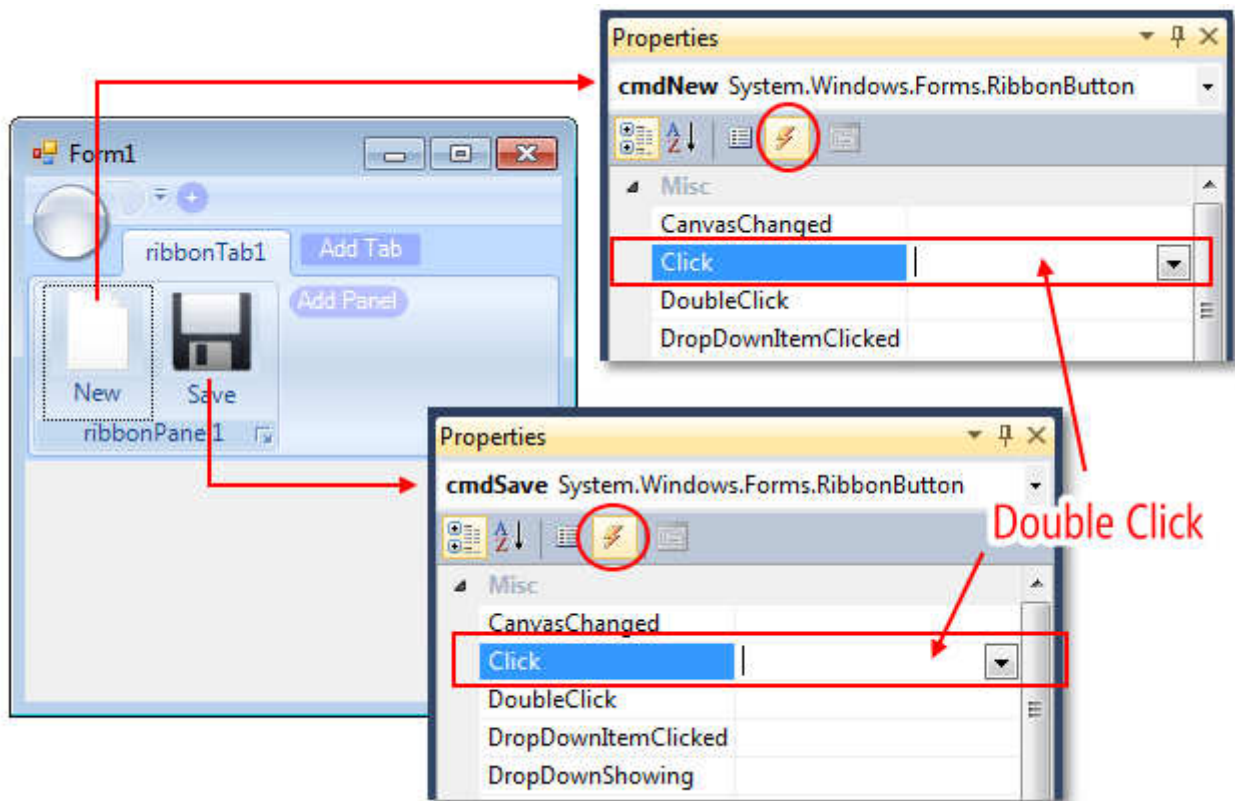


10. This is how your ribbon looks like now.

11. Now, create the click event for the buttons. Click on **RibbonButton**, go to **Properties**, modify the **Name** of the button.



12. Click on the RibbonButton, go to properties > Click on Events > Double Click on event of **Click**



13. Events created.

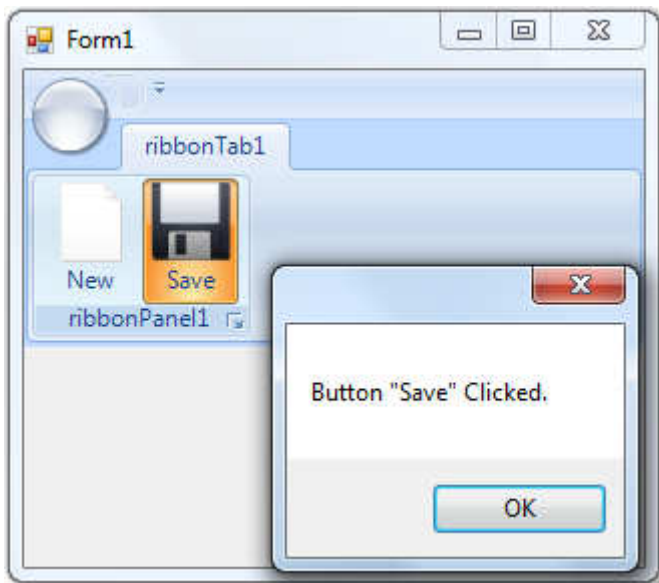
Hide Copy Code

```
public Form1()
{
    InitializeComponent();
}

void cmdNew_Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
{
    MessageBox.Show("Button \"New\" Clicked.");
}
```

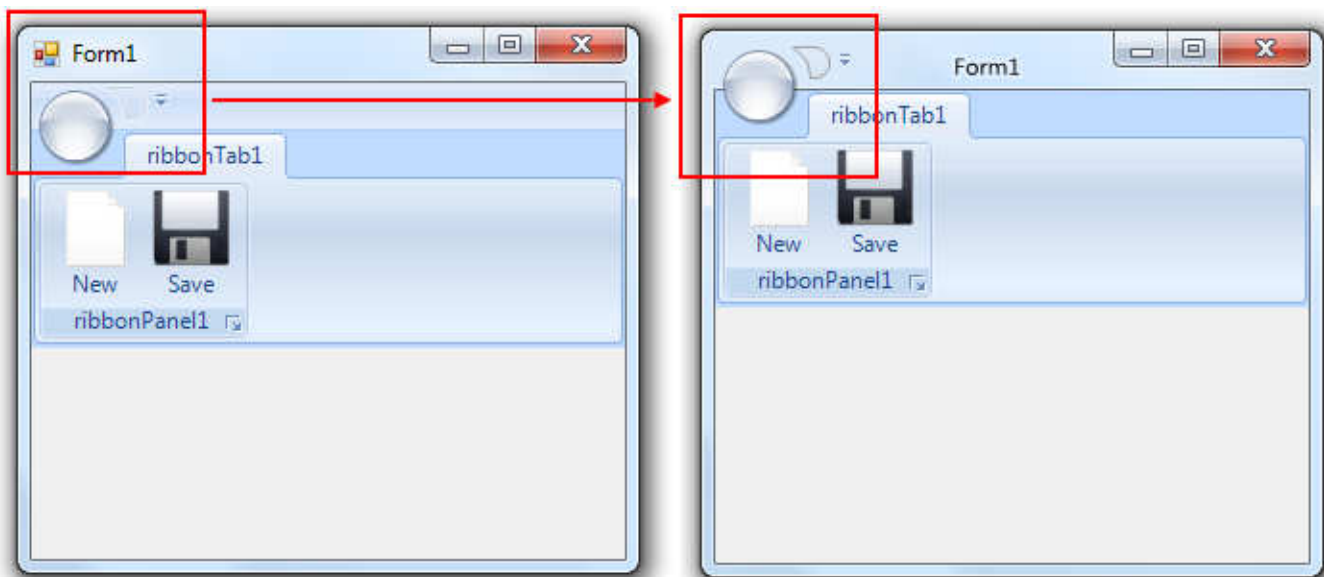
```
void cmdSave_Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
{
    MessageBox.Show("Button \"Save\" Clicked.");
}
```

14. Press F5 to run the application. Done.



15. You might want to inherit your Main Form into a **RibbonForm** to have extra features. Such as:

*Note: Inherit the Main Form to **RibbonForm** will have some compatibility problems with some of the **System.Windows.Forms** controls. (especially MDI Client Control). This problem is solved in released version **10 May 2013**.*



16. In the code for **Form1.cs**, change inheritance of Form this line:

Hide Copy Code

```
public partial class Form1 : Form
```

to **RibbonForm**

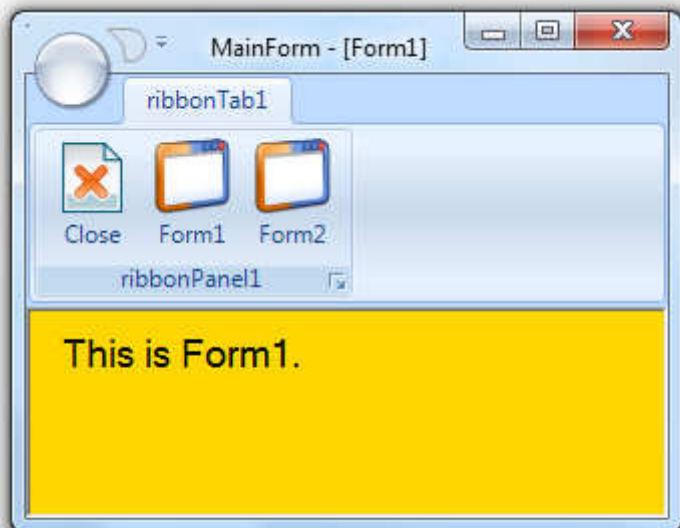
Hide Copy Code

```
public partial class Form1 : RibbonForm
```


Part 3: Caution While Using With Visual Studio 2010

... deleted

Part 4: Using this Ribbon with an MDI Enabled WinForm

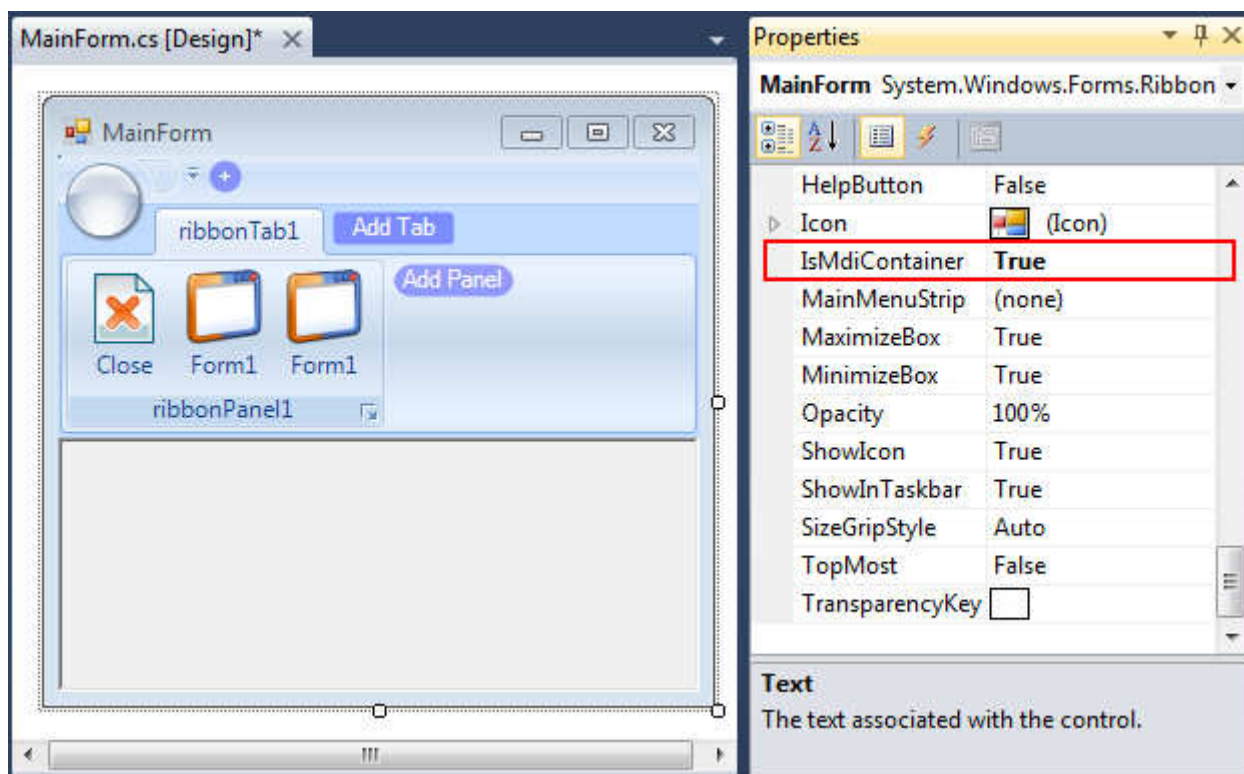


The following guide will show how to apply this ribbon with an MDI (Multi Document Interface) enabled WinForm.

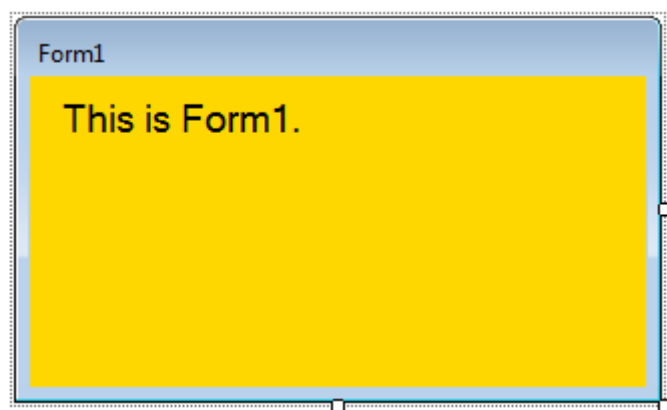
*Note: In previous version of Ribbon, inheritance of RibbonForm is not supported well with MDI Enabled WinForm. This problem is solved in released version of **10 May 2013**.*

Start

1. Lets design a ribbon winform something like this as example. In the properties window, set **IsMdiContainer** to **True**.



2. Create another simple another form that will be loaded into the MDI Container of **MainForm**.



3. At code behind of **Form1**, add in the below codes:

[Hide](#) [Copy Code](#)

```
public partial class Form1 : Form
{
    public Form1()
    {
        InitializeComponent();
    }

    protected override void OnLoad(EventArgs e)
    {
        base.OnLoad(e);
        this.ControlBox = false;
        this.WindowState = FormWindowState.Maximized;
        this.BringToFront();
    }
}
```

4. At code behind of **MainForm**, create the click events for **RibbonButton** at **MainForm**:

Note: In previous version of Ribbon, inheritance of RibbonForm is not supported well with MDI Enabled WinForm. This problem is solved in released version of 10 May 2013.

[Hide](#) [Copy Code](#)

```
public partial class MainForm : RibbonForm
{
    public MainForm()
    {
        InitializeComponent();
    }

    private void ribbonButton_Form1_Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
    {
        // Load Form1
    }

    private void ribbonButton_Close_Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
    {
        // Close ALL Forms
    }
}
```

5. Codes for loading Form1 into MDI:

[Hide](#) [Copy Code](#)

```
private void ribbonButton_Form1_Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
{
    foreach (Form f in this.MdiChildren)
    {

```

```
        if (f.GetType() == typeof(Form1))
        {
            f.Activate();
            return;
        }
    }
    Form form1 = new Form1();
    form1.MdiParent = this;
    form1.Show();
}
```

6. Codes for closing all opened form in MDI:

Hide Copy Code

```
private void ribbonButton_Close_Click(object sender, EventArgs e)
{
    while (this.ActiveMdiChild != null)
    {
        this.ActiveMdiChild.Close();
    }
}
```

7. That's it. Enjoy.

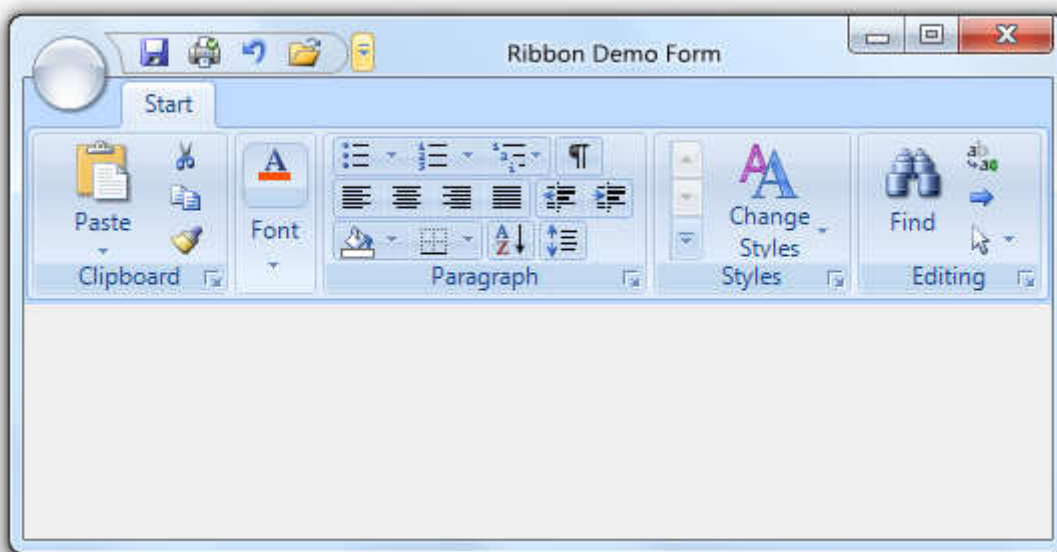
Part 5: Alternative Ribbon

You may also want to have a look at:

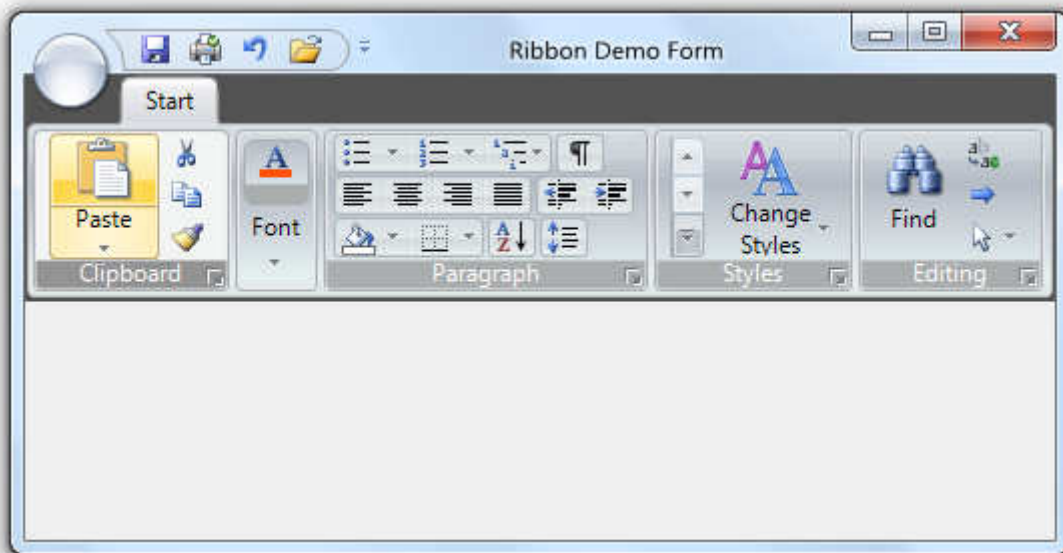
- [Windows Ribbon for WinForms](#)
- [QRibbon - developed by http://www.qiosdevsuite.com/](http://www.qiosdevsuite.com/)

Part 6: How to Make a New Theme, Skin for this Ribbon Programmatically

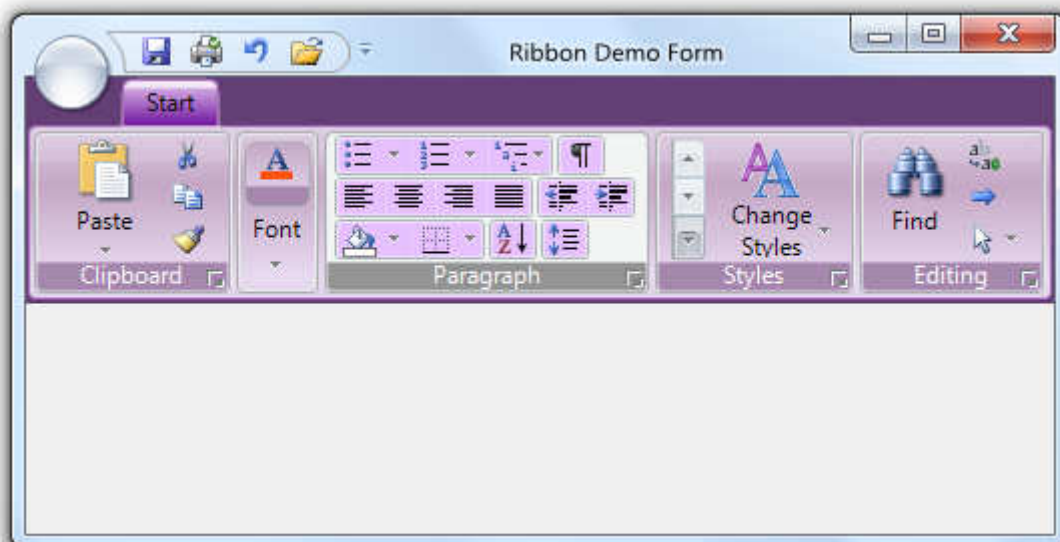
Default Theme



*Example color theme of **RibbonProfessionalRendererColorTableBlack.cs** (ready made by ribbon author).*



Another custom theme



Note: A Theme Builder is included in the Demo App, you can obtain it at Download. You can Build new Theme easily with Theme Builder. In new released, Ribbon (13 Jan 2013), Ribbon can write and read a theme file. Read more: [How to Create and Load Theme File](#).

1. To make your own color theme, create another **class** and **inherit** *RibbonProfesionalRendererColorTable*.
2. Change all the color objects into your desired colors.
3. Example: (the first five colors have been filled for your reference).

In this example, we'll name the new theme **MyCoolThemeSkin**.

Hide Shrink ▲ Copy Code

```
using System;
using System.Collections.Generic;
using System.Text;
using System.Drawing;

namespace System.Windows.Forms
{
    public class MyCoolThemeSkin
        : RibbonProfesionalRendererColorTable
    {
        public MyCoolThemeSkin()
```

```
{
    #region Fields

    OrbDropDownDarkBorder = Color.Yellow;
    OrbDropDownLightBorder = Color.FromKnownColor(KnownColor.WindowFrame);
    OrbDropDownBack = Color.FromName("Red");
    OrbDropDownNorthA = FromHex("#C2FF3D");
    OrbDropDownNorthB = Color.FromArgb(201, 100, 150);
    OrbDropDownNorthC =
    OrbDropDownNorthD =
    OrbDropDownSouthC =
    OrbDropDownSouthD =
    OrbDropDownContentbg =
    OrbDropDownContentbglight =
    OrbDropDownSeparatorlight =
    OrbDropDownSeparatordark =

    Caption1 =
    Caption2 =
    Caption3 =
    Caption4 =
    Caption5 =
    Caption6 =
    Caption7 =

    QuickAccessBorderDark =
    QuickAccessBorderLight =
    QuickAccessUpper =
    QuickAccessLower =

    OrbOptionBorder =
    OrbOptionBackground =
    OrbOptionShine =

    Arrow =
    ArrowLight =
    ArrowDisabled =
    Text =

    RibbonBackground =
    TabBorder =
    TabNorth =
    TabSouth =
    TabGlow =
    TabText =
    TabActiveText =
    TabContentNorth =
    TabContentSouth =
    TabSelectedGlow =
    PanelDarkBorder =
    PanelLightBorder =
    PanelTextBackground =
    PanelTextBackgroundSelected =
    PanelText =
    PanelBackgroundSelected =
    PanelOverflowBackground =
    PanelOverflowBackgroundPressed =
    PanelOverflowBackgroundSelectedNorth =
    PanelOverflowBackgroundSelectedSouth =

    ButtonBgOut =
    ButtonBgCenter =
    ButtonBorderOut =
    ButtonBorderIn =
    ButtonGlossyNorth =
    ButtonGlossySouth =

    ButtonDisabledBgOut =
    ButtonDisabledBgCenter =
```



```
        ButtonDisabledBorderOut =
        ButtonDisabledBorderIn =
        ButtonDisabledGlossyNorth =
        ButtonDisabledGlossySouth =

        ButtonSelectedBgOut =
        ButtonSelectedBgCenter =
        ButtonSelectedBorderOut =
        ButtonSelectedBorderIn =
        ButtonSelectedGlossyNorth =
        ButtonSelectedGlossySouth =

        ButtonPressedBgOut =
        ButtonPressedBgCenter =
        ButtonPressedBorderOut =
        ButtonPressedBorderIn =
        ButtonPressedGlossyNorth =
        ButtonPressedGlossySouth =

        ButtonCheckedBgOut =
        ButtonCheckedBgCenter =
        ButtonCheckedBorderOut =
        ButtonCheckedBorderIn =
        ButtonCheckedGlossyNorth =
        ButtonCheckedGlossySouth =

        ItemGroupOuterBorder =
        ItemGroupInnerBorder =
        ItemGroupSeparatorLight =
        ItemGroupSeparatorDark =
        ItemGroupBgNorth =
        ItemGroupBgSouth =
        ItemGroupBgGlossy =

        ButtonListBorder =
        ButtonListBg =
        ButtonListBgSelected =

        DropDownBg =
        DropDownImageBg =
        DropDownImageSeparator =
        DropDownBorder =
        DropDownGripNorth =
        DropDownGripSouth =
        DropDownGripBorder =
        DropDownGripDark =
        DropDownGripLight =

        SeparatorLight =
        SeparatorDark =
        SeparatorBg =
        SeparatorLine =

        TextBoxUnselectedBg =
        TextBoxBorder =

        #endregion
    }

    public Color FromHex(string hex)
    {
        if (hex.StartsWith("#"))
            hex = hex.Substring(1);

        if (hex.Length != 6) throw new Exception("Color not valid");

        return Color.FromArgb(
            int.Parse(hex.Substring(0, 2), system.Globalization.NumberStyles.HexNumber),
            int.Parse(hex.Substring(2, 2), System.Globalization.NumberStyles.HexNumber),
```

```
        int.Parse(hex.Substring(4, 2), System.Globalization.NumberStyles.HexNumber));  
    }  
}  
}
```

4. Then, in the **Load** event of *MainForm.cs*, add this line:

[Hide](#) [Copy Code](#)

```
namespace RibbonDemo  
{  
    public partial class MainForm : RibbonForm  
    {  
        public MainForm()  
        {  
            InitializeComponent();  
            ChangeTheme();  
        }  
  
        private void ChangeTheme()  
        {  
            Theme.ColorTable = new MyCoolThemeSkin();  
            ribbon.Refresh();  
            this.Refresh();  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Part 7: Known Issues

Are resolved.

Article Change Log:

- 12 Nov 2013** - Minor update on Part 6: Step 4: **private void ChangeTheme()**
- 09 Oct 2013** - Release of Version 07 Oct 2013 (new style 2013, several bug fixes)
- 11 May 2013** - Update guides for Using Ribbon with MDI Enabled WinForm (Part 4)
- 10 May 2013** - Release of Version 10 May 2013 (several bug fixes)
- 11 Mar 2013** - Preliminary solution for the RibbonForm DockStyle.Fill issue in Win 7
- 24 Feb 2013** - Release of Version 24 Feb 2013 (several bug fixes)
- 13 Jan 2013** - Release of Version 13 Jan 2013 (**Include a ThemeBuilder**)
- 02 Jan 2013** - Introduce new compiled version of ribbon, released on 10 Jan 2012.
- 11 Apr 2012** - Initial release.

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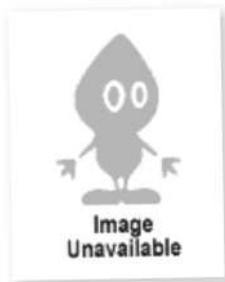
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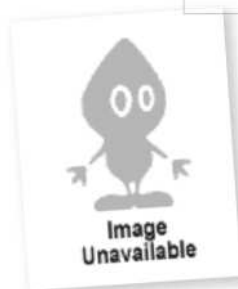
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**adriancs**

Software Developer

Malaysia 

Writing programs is an art.

**Michael Spradlin**

Software Developer (Senior)

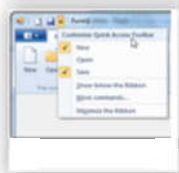
United States 

Lead Software Engineer on a paperless office / workflow system. I specialize in building custom user controls and components that are using in my everyday software. I've also worked with Neural Networks for character recognition on documents in my paperless office software.

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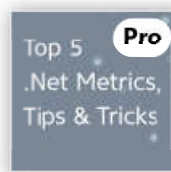
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



































































Per page





































50

Update

First Prev Next

Message Removed	Jan Netopil	4-Sep-16 3:25
Enable or disable tabs in case of MDI project	Member 12694461	30-Aug-16 0:37
how to call event button click from mdiParent	Member 12641978	18-Jul-16 20:28
UpDown	CNuke	13-May-16 2:13
Thank you	Mandeep8	30-Apr-16 3:02
Great facility	Member 12277896	30-Jan-16 6:39
refresh RecentItems	Member 9666698	15-Dec-15 3:49
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