1. An **app** in Salesforce is a set of objects, fields, and other functionality that supports a business process. You can see which app you’re using and switch between apps using the App Launcher ( App Launcher icon).
2. **Objects** are tables in the Salesforce database that store a particular kind of information. There are **standard objects** like Accounts and Contacts and **custom objects** like the Property object you see in the graphic.
3. **Records** are rows in object database tables. Records are the actual data associated with an object. Here, the 211 Charles Street property is a record.
4. **Fields** are columns in object database tables. Both standard and custom objects have fields. On our Property object, we have fields like Address and Price.

Salesforce Architecture

There’s a lot to unpack here, but let’s focus on the most important points.

* Salesforce is a cloud company. Everything we offer resides in the trusted, multitenant cloud.
* The Salesforce platform is the foundation of our services. It’s powered by metadata and made up of different parts, like data services, artificial intelligence, and robust APIs for development.
* All our apps sit on top of the platform. Our prebuilt offerings like Sales Cloud and Marketing Cloud, along with apps you build using the platform, have consistent, powerful functionality.
* Everything is integrated. Our platform technologies like Einstein predictive intelligence and the Lightning framework for development are built into everything we offer and everything you build.

There are three main categories in the Setup menu: Administration, Platform Tools, and Settings. Let’s take a look at what’s available.

* **Administration:** The Administration category is where you manage your users and data. You can do things like add users, change permissions, import and export data, and create email templates.
* **Platform Tools:** You do most of your customization in Platform Tools. You can view and manage your data model, create apps, modify the user interface, and deploy new features to your users. If you decide to try your hand at programmatic development, Platform Tools is where you manage your code as well.
* **Settings:** Finally, Settings is where you manage your company information and org security. You can do things like add business hours, change your locale, and view your org’s history.

Follow these steps to develop a good AppExchange strategy.

1. Identify departments that use or plan to use Salesforce. These are your primary stakeholders.
2. Research what’s available on AppExchange that best meets your stakeholder requirements. Discuss business cases with department heads to determine exact needs. Here are some good questions to ask:
   1. What business problem are you trying to solve?
   2. What are your main pain points right now?
   3. How many users need this app?
   4. What’s your budget?
   5. What’s your timeline?

These questions help you identify apps that are the best fit for each department or business case.

1. When you find an app that you think meets your needs, download the app in a test environment (like a free Developer Edition or sandbox). Ensure that the app you’re installing doesn’t interfere with any other apps you’ve installed or customizations you’ve made. Sandboxes are copies of your organization in a separate environment. They’re used for development and testing. See [Sandbox Overview](https://help.salesforce.com/articleView?id=create_test_instance.htm&language=en_US).
2. If you’re choosing between multiple apps, take some time to evaluate what you’ve tested. Determine whether there are feature gaps or unwanted functionality. If necessary, invite your stakeholders to demo the apps and provide feedback.
3. You’re ready to go! You’ll install and deploy your app in your production environment. Make sure you keep your users in the loop about what’s changing, and provide training and documentation as necessary.