Creating Forms

One of the nice things about Microsoft Access 2010 is that it makes it easy for you to view existing table data and even add new data using forms. A form is a database object that lets you enter and view table data without viewing the table in datasheet mode. Instead, you can create a form that spaces the data out on the page, limit the number of table fields displayed so that only the most important or relevant data is shown, and modify the form once you've created it to make the form easier to use.

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Creating a Simple Form

Access makes it possible for you to create powerful and complex forms, but there will be plenty of occasions where a simple form that contains all the fields from a table will meet your needs. Creating a simple form is a straightforward process: You select the table from which you want to create your form, tell Access you want to create a simple form based on that table, and you're done. The whole process takes a maximum of four mouse clicks from start to finish.

Create a Simple Form

1. In the Navigation Pane, click a table.
2. Click the Create tab.
3. Click Form.
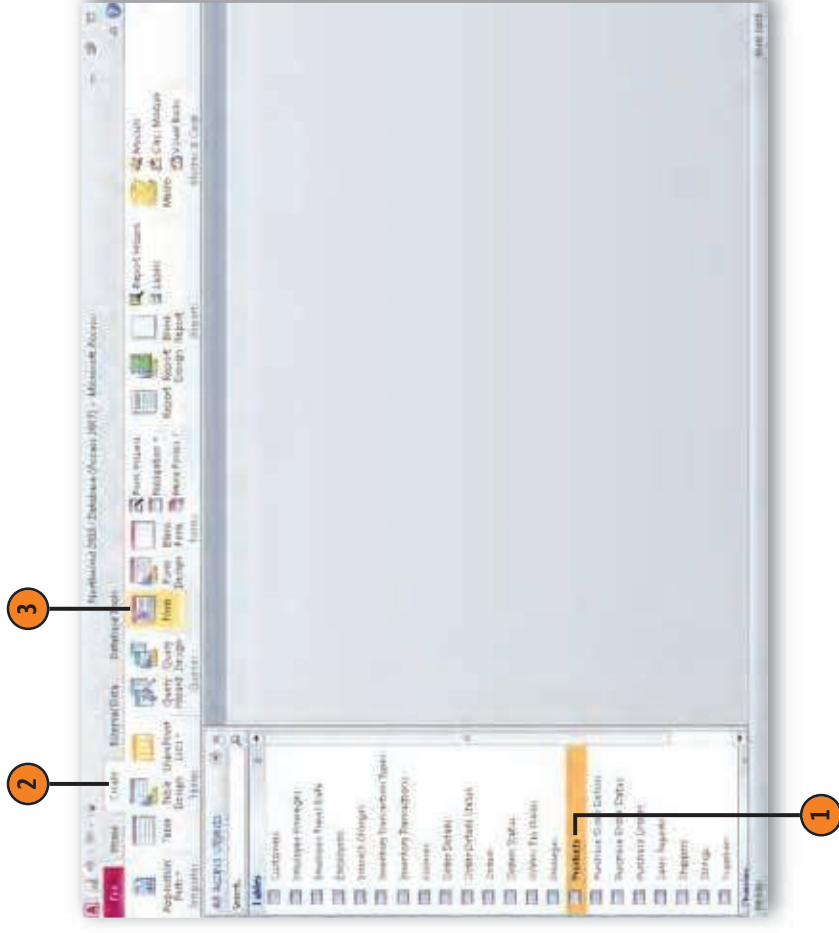
Creating a Form Using the Form Wizard

Access makes it easy for you to create forms based on the tables in your database. By using the Form Wizard, you can choose the data source, the type of form, and the form's

appearance. The Form Wizard also includes a wide variety of form themes from which to choose, enabling you to create great-looking forms without doing any design work yourself.


Step Through the Form Wizard

① Click the Create tab.

② Click Form Wizard.

③ Click the Tables/Queries down arrow.

④ Click the table to provide the values and structure for the form.

⑤ Click a field in the Available Fields box and then click either of the following:

• Click Add to add the selected field.

• Click Add All to add all fields to the form.

⑥ Click Next.

⑦ Select the layout for the form.

⑧ Click Next.

⑨ Type a name for the form.

⑩ Click Finish.

Tip

You can remove a field from the Selected Fields box by clicking the field and then clicking Remove. Clicking Remove All clears the Selected Fields box.

Tip

You should create a sample form of each of the four main types (Columnar, Tabular, Justified, and Datasheet) to see which type will best meet your needs in a particular situation.
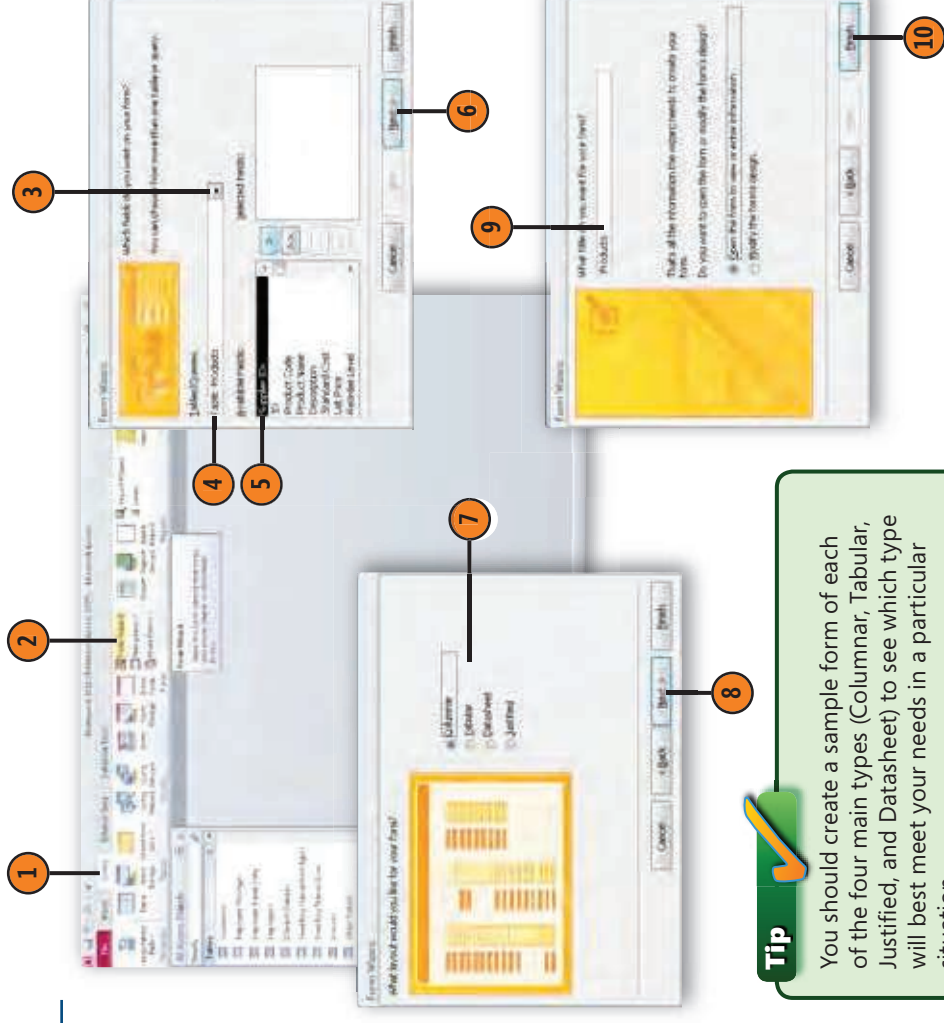
Creating a Form in Design View

If you'd rather not use the Form Wizard to create a form, you can open a blank form and manually add controls. If you want to add fields from a table to your form, you can display fields from existing tables by displaying the Field List task pane and dragging the desired fields to the body of the form.

Create a Form in Design View

1. Click the Create tab.

2. Click Form Design.

3. If necessary, click the Design contextual tab.

4. If necessary, click Property Sheet.

5. Click Data.

6. Click Record Source.

7. Click the down arrow.

8. Click the table from which you want to draw your values.
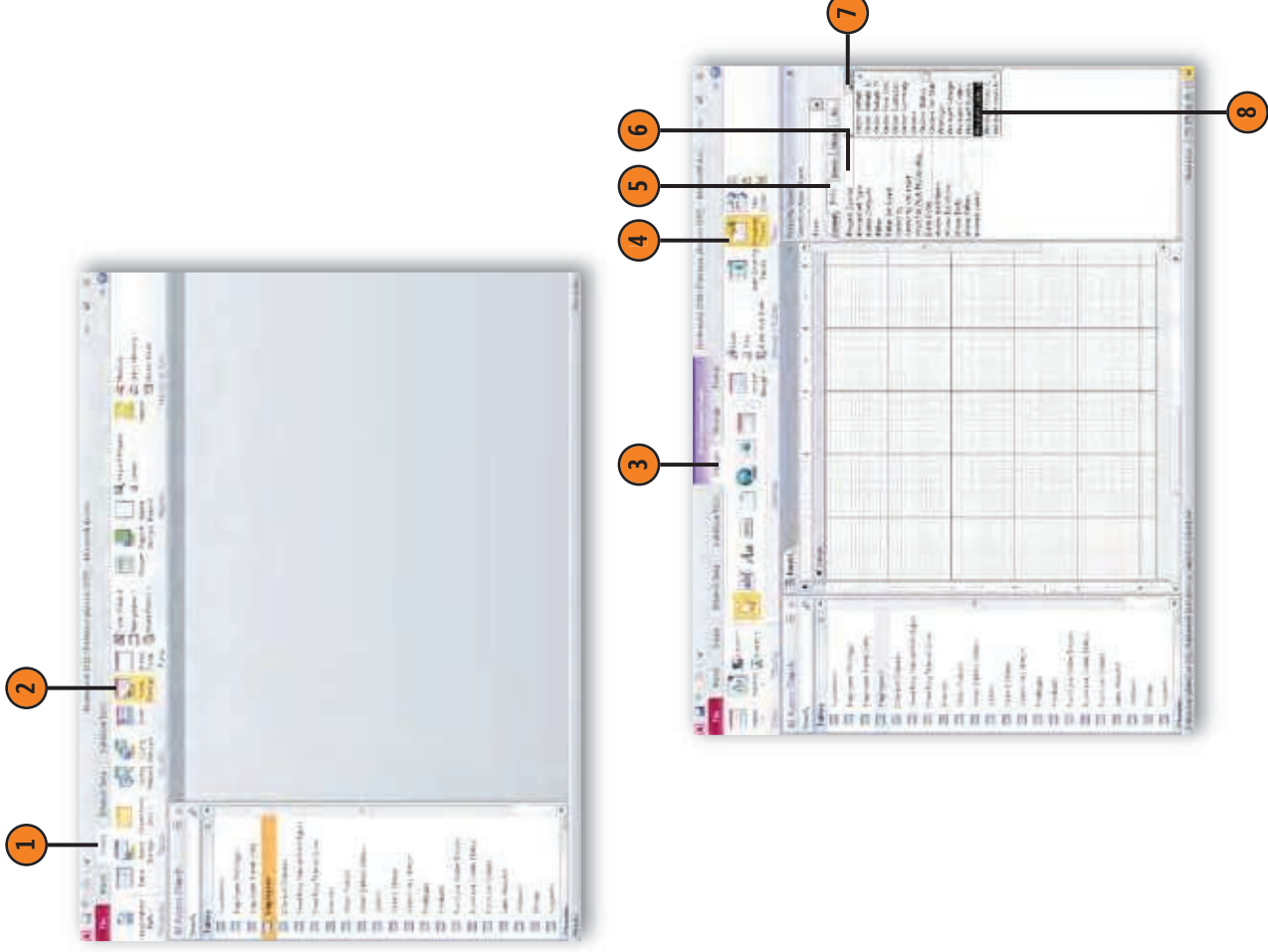
9 Click Add Existing Fields.

10 Drag fields from the Field List task pane to the body of the form.

11 Click Save.

**12** Type a name for the form.

13 Click OK.

Caution

If the Property Sheet task pane is currently displayed, clicking the Property Sheet ribbon button will hide it.

Try This!

Open the Northwind sample database, display the Navigation Pane, and then click the Products table. On the Create tab, in the Forms group, click Form Design. After the form appears, on the Design contextual tab, in the Tools group, click Property Sheet. In the Property Sheet task pane, click the Record Source property name, click the down arrow that appears, and then click Products. On the Design contextual tab, in the Tools group, click Add Existing Fields. Drag the ID and Product Name fields to the body of the form. Click the Save button on the Quick Access Toolbar, type ProductSample in the dialog box that appears, and then click OK.
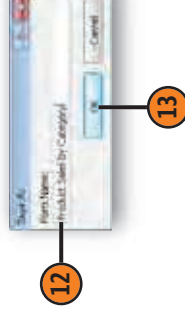
Creating a Multiple Items Form

In general, you use forms for data entry and for viewing table or query records. For those tasks, many users prefer to view one record at a time. Typing a new record into an otherwise blank form limits the distractions caused by other data. The same can be said of viewing a table or query; if you want to see more than one record at a time, you could view the table or query in Datasheet view.

The problem with Datasheet view is that it presents a basic grid that, although it has gridlines, doesn't make it very easy to distinguish one record from another. If you want to present or enter your data while still viewing other records in the table or query, you can create a Multiple Items Form. This type of form displays your data in a grid layout, but you have much more control over the grid and the data's appearance.

Create a Multiple Items Form

① Click the table or query from which you want to create the form.

② Click the Create tab.

③ Click More Forms.

④ Click Multiple Items.
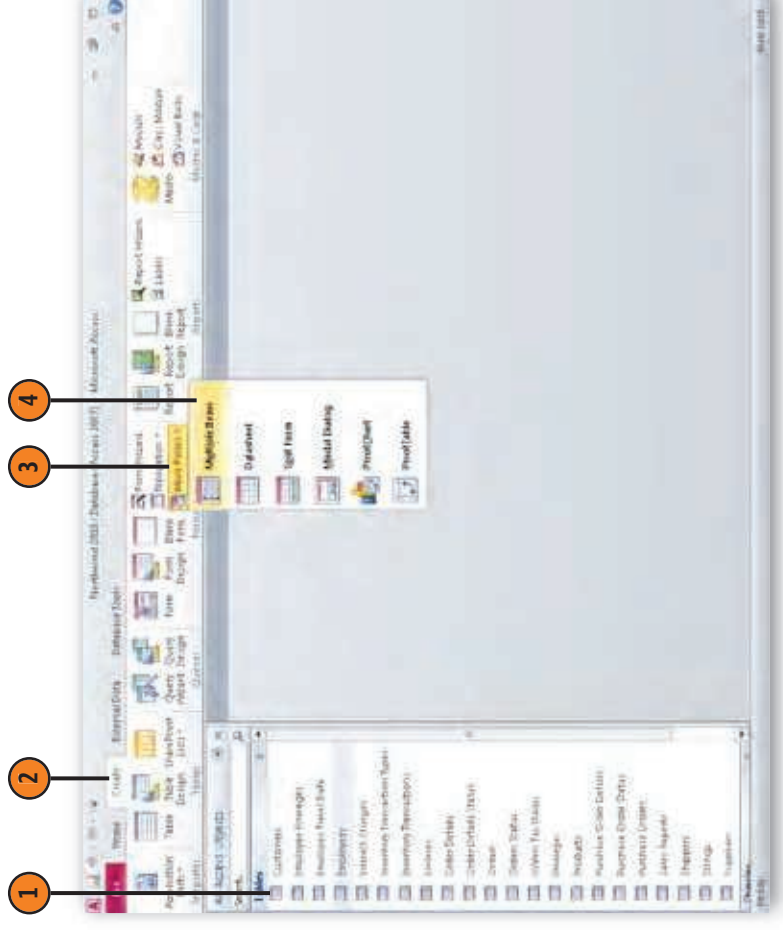
Modifying an Existing Form

Just as you can create a form from scratch, you can also open a form in Design view to add or delete controls, change a form's appearance, or add and delete fields. Form controls, such as check boxes, text boxes, and labels, enable you to provide

instructions for your colleagues and allow them to enter data as efficiently as possible. For example, if a field has two possible choices, such as true and false, you can create a check box that reflects those values by being either checked or unchecked.

Open a Form for Editing in Design View

1 Display the forms in your database in the Navigation Pane.
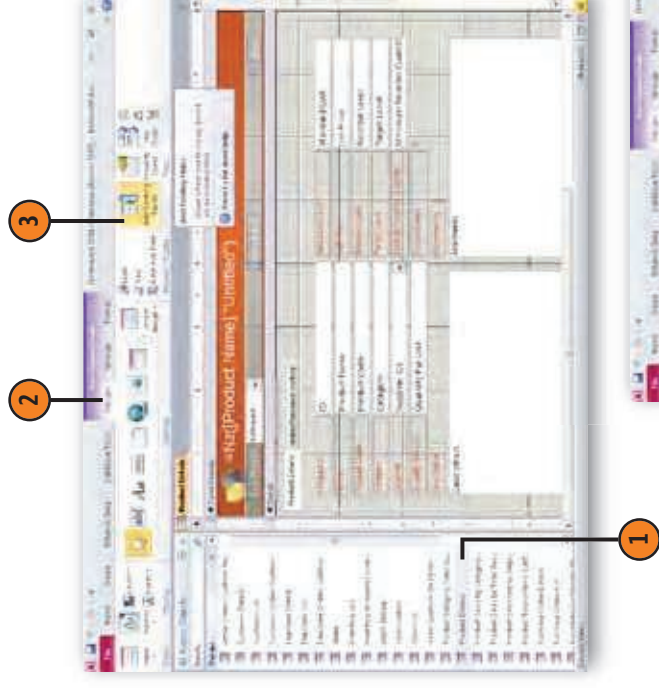
2 Right-click a form.

3 Click Design View.

See Also

For more information about modifying forms, see "Beautifying Forms and Reports" on page 145.
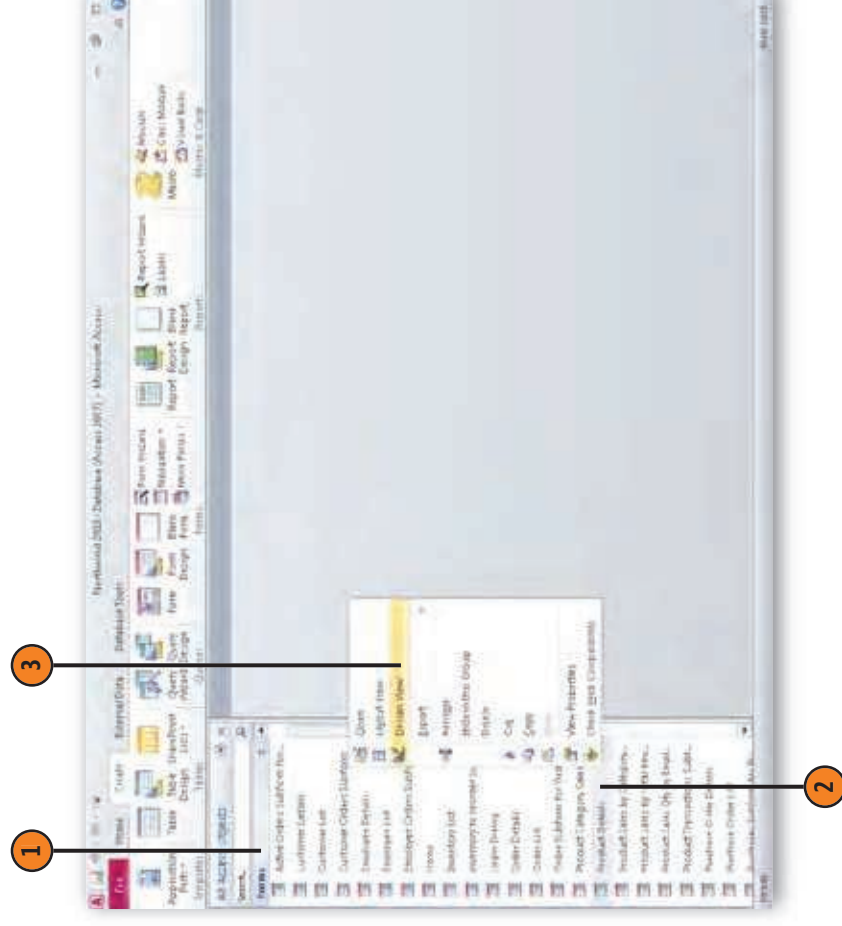
Display the Field List

1. Display a form in Design view.
2. Click the Design contextual tab.
3. If necessary, click Add Existing Fields.

Hide the Field List

- While the Field List task pane is displayed, click the Add Existing Fields button to hide it.

Add a Field to a Form

1. Drag the field from the Field List task pane to the desired spot on the form.

Tip

To display fields from other tables, display the Field List task pane and then click the Show All Tables link.

Adding and Deleting Form Controls

After you open a form in Design view, you can add or remove text boxes, option buttons, and images to and from the form. You can also modify a control's properties to change the control's appearance or to define where the control gets its data. Deleting unnecessary fields makes more room for the remaining

fields and helps to control unwanted data entry. For example, if you find that your tables contain a field that some of your co-workers aren't supposed to fill in, such as a customer's credit limit, you can create a form that includes every table field and then delete the credit limit field.

Add a Control Using a Wizard

1 Open a form in Design view.

2 If necessary, click the Design contextual tab.

3 Click the Controls gallery's More button.

4 If the Use Control Wizards button is not highlighted, click it.

5 In the Controls gallery, click the control you want to add.

6 Drag the mouse pointer on the form to define the control's area.

7 Follow the steps in the wizard (if applicable) to define the contents of the control.
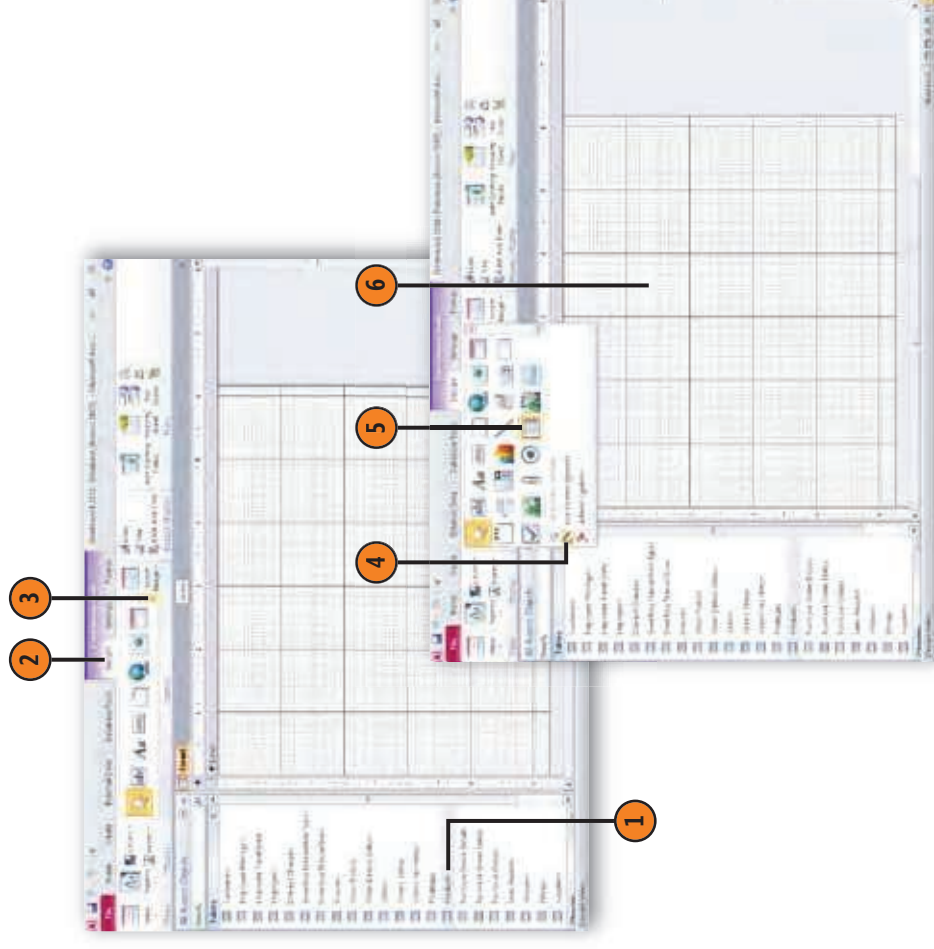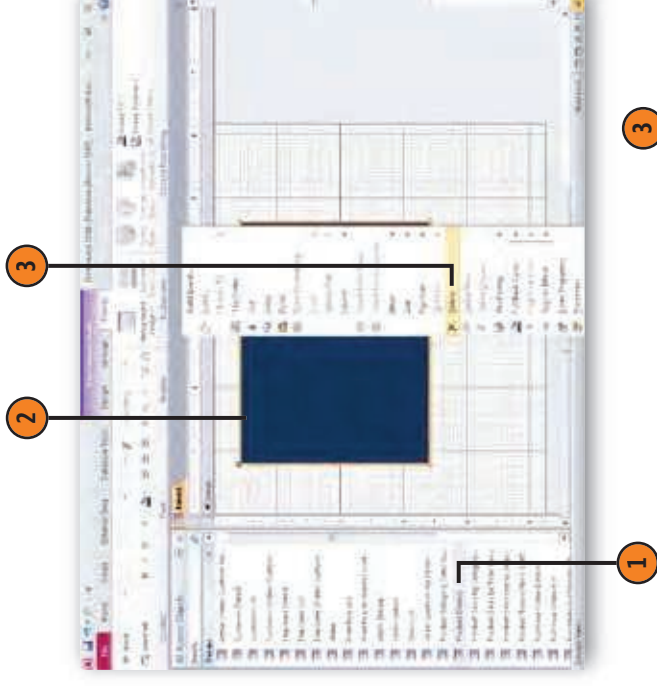
Delete a Control

① Display a form in Design view.

② Right-click the control.

③ Choose Delete from the shortcut menu.

Tip

Be sure to click the control itself, not a label next to the control.

Modify Control Properties

① Display a form in Design view.

② Click the control.

③ Click the Design contextual tab.

④ Click Property Sheet.

⑤ Click the property to change.

⑥ Follow any of these steps:

• Type a new value in the text box next to the property name.

• Click the down arrow and select a new value from the list that appears.

• Click the Build button and use the dialog box that appears to select or construct a new value.
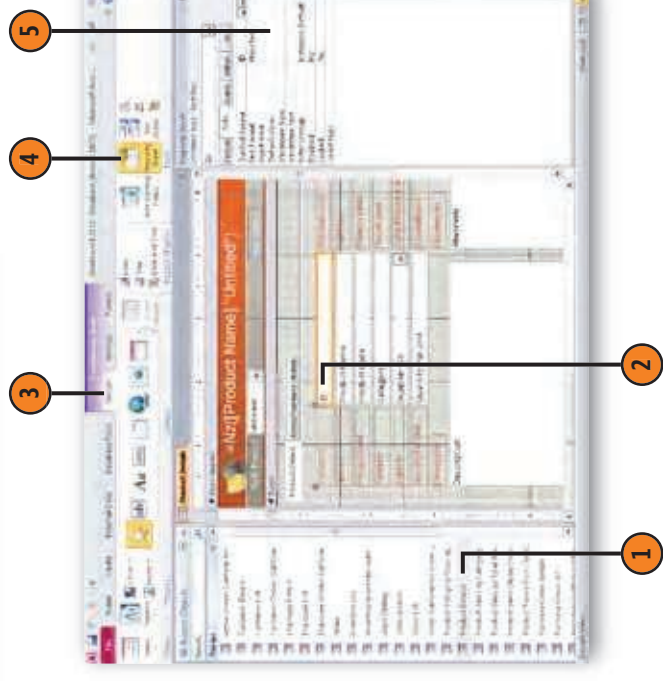
Available Control Types

Control	Description	Control	Description
Label	Text that is not tied to a field or other control.	Chart	A control that summarizes data visually using a chart or graph.
Text box	A control that holds the contents of an existing table or query field or that has been typed by a user.	Navigation control	A control that enables users to display, group, and interact with database objects without having to go through the Navigation Pane.
Toggle button	A button that can either be on or off, representing an independent value of on/off, true/false, or yes/no.	Unbound object frame	A control that holds a linked file.
Option button	An independent option that represents an independent value. When grouped, only one option button may be selected at a time.	Bound object frame	A control that holds an embedded file.
		Page break	A control that separates a form into two (or more) printed pages.
Check box	An independent option that can be selected or cleared. When two or more check boxes are included in the same Option Group control (mentioned elsewhere in this table), only one check box can be selected.	Tab page	A control with multiple pages, accessed by folder tabs at the top of the control.
		Attachment	A control that lets you attach a file to a form.
		Subform/ Subreport	A form or report that displays records from a form or report on the "many" side of a one-to-many relationship.
List box	A control that allows a user to pick a value from a list entered by the form's creator or that is derived from a table or query.	Line	A control that lets you draw a line on a form.
Combo box	A control that allows a user to enter a value or pick a value from a list entered by the form's creator or that is derived from a table or query.	Rectangle	A control that lets you draw a rectangle.
		Option Group	An outline you place around a group of controls such as check boxes or option buttons. Only one control in the group can be selected at a time.
Command button	A button that, when clicked, executes a macro or other set of instructions linked to the button.	Web Browser control	A control that lets you display information from a Web site in an Access form.
Image	A control that holds an image or graphic.		
Hyperlink	A control that provides a link to another object in the database, to a file on another computer, or to an Internet resource such as a Web page.		

Adding a Date Picker Control

It seems like using dates in Access, and in every other program for that matter, should be simple, but that's not always the case. Many Web applications, such as flight reservation systems, require you to enter dates using a date picker control that displays a month at a time. You can scroll from month to month and make your choice by clicking the day you want to leave when you display the right month.

You can add a similar control to your Access forms by creating a date picker control. This control, which is based on the date picker controls found in Microsoft Outlook 2010, enables users to decide on the date they want without you having to worry about whether 2/12/2010 means February 12, 2010 (as in the United States) or December 2, 2010 (as in many European countries).

Add a Date Picker

1 Open a form in Design view.

2 Click a form control that is bound to a field that contains dates.

3 If necessary, click the Design contextual tab.

4 If necessary, click Property Sheet.

5 Click Format.

6 Click Show Date Picker.

7 Click the down arrow that appears.

8 Click For Dates.
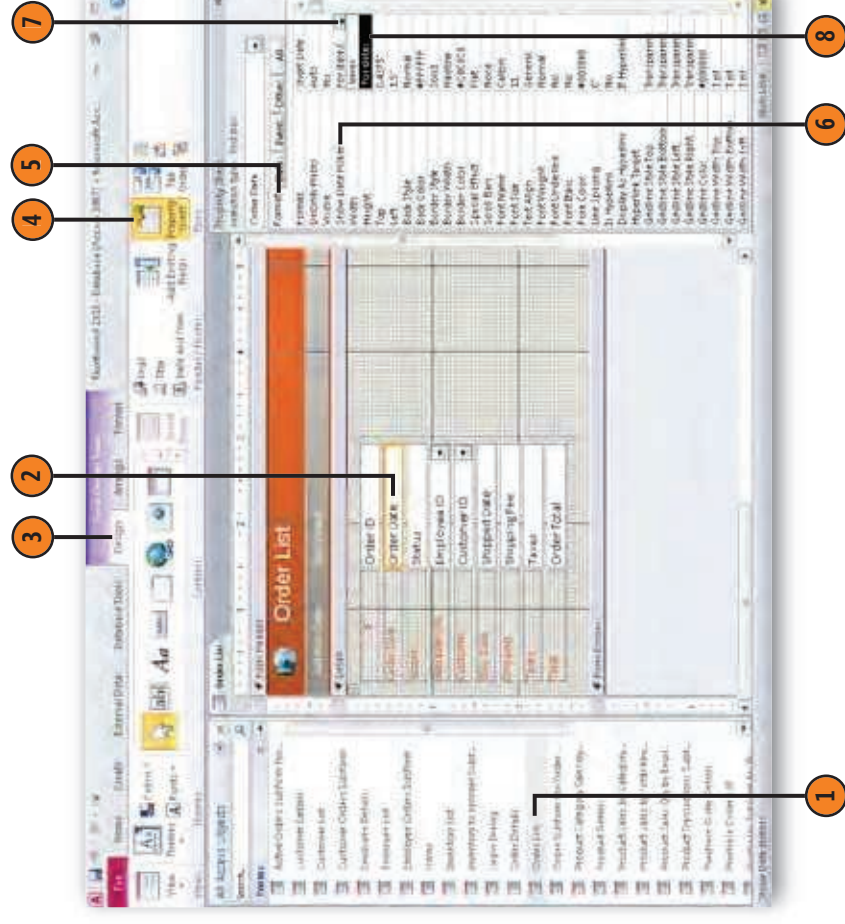
Creating a Subform

When you create a form that shows the records from a table on the "one" side of a one-to-many relationship, you can create a subform to display records from the table on the "many" side of the relationship. You can also change how the subform

displays its records. If you want to see the records as a datasheet, you can change the subform's view so that it displays the related records while making best use of the form's space.

Add a Subform

1. Open a form based on a table on the "one" side of a one-to-many relationship in Design view.

2. Click the Design contextual tab.

3. Click the Controls gallery's More button.

4. Click the Subform/Subreport control.

5. On the form, drag to define the area where the subform should appear.

6. Select the Use An Existing Form option.

7. Click the form to supply the data for the subform.

8. Click Next.

9. Click Next to have the wizard draw the values from the form you selected.

10. Type Subform after the end of the form name.

11. Click Finish.
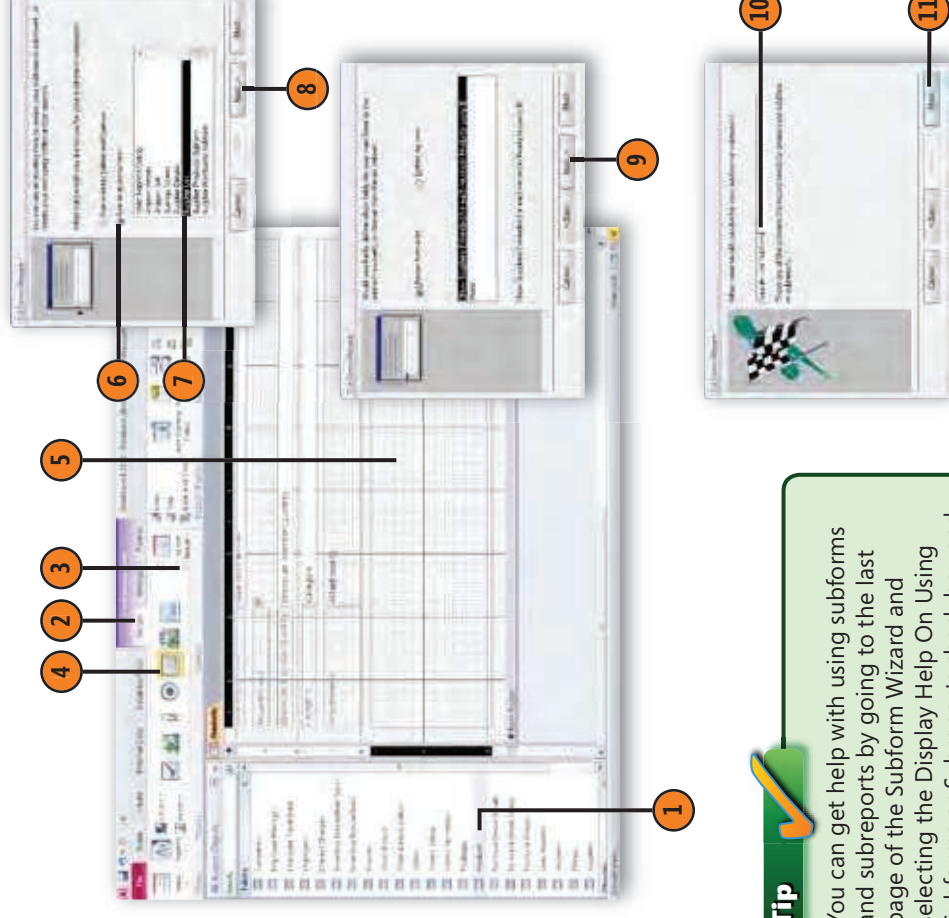
Tip

You can get help with using subforms and subreports by going to the last page of the Subform Wizard and selecting the Display Help On Using Subforms or Subreports check box and clicking Finish.

See Also

For more information about relationships, see "Creating Relationships between Tables" on page 44.
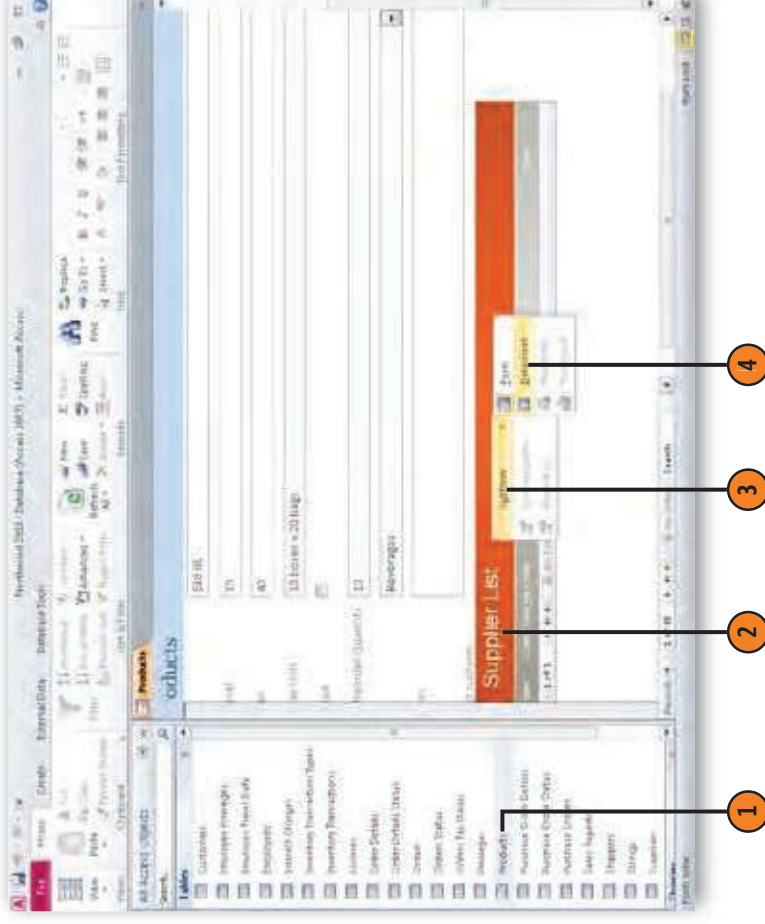
Change Subform Views

① Display the form that contains the subform in Form view.

② Right-click any spot on the body of the subform.

③ Click Subform.

④ Click the desired view from the short-cut menu.

Tip

To change the subform from Datasheet view back to Form view, click the Design View button and then click the Form View button.

Displaying a Form and Its Datasheet Simultaneously

Subforms enable you to display the data from two related tables or queries in a single form. What they don't enable you to do, however, is display the entire datasheet from which the form draws its data. If you create a subform that displays the same data as the main form, it displays only the current record, not the entire datasheet.

Create a Split Form

① Click the table to serve as the source of your form data.

② Click the Create tab.

③ Click More Forms.

④ Click Split Form.