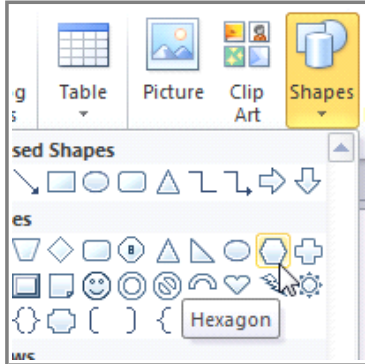




Introduction



In Publisher, the components of any publication are called **objects**. You've already worked with text boxes, which are one type of object. Publisher offers decorative objects as well, including **shapes** and **Building Blocks**. Using these objects is an easy way add graphic design elements to your publication.

In this lesson, you'll learn how to create and modify **shapes** and **Building Blocks**. You'll also learn how to **align**, **group**, and **arrange** objects of all types.

Working with Shapes

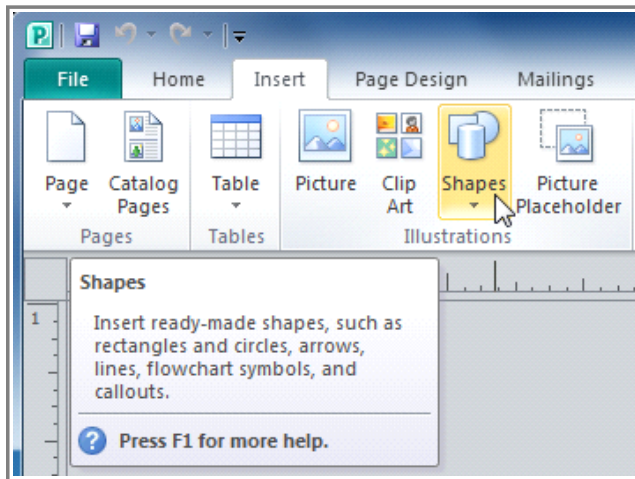
▶▶▶ Watch the video to learn about adding and modifying shapes and Building Blocks.



Watch the video (2:45). [Need help?](#)

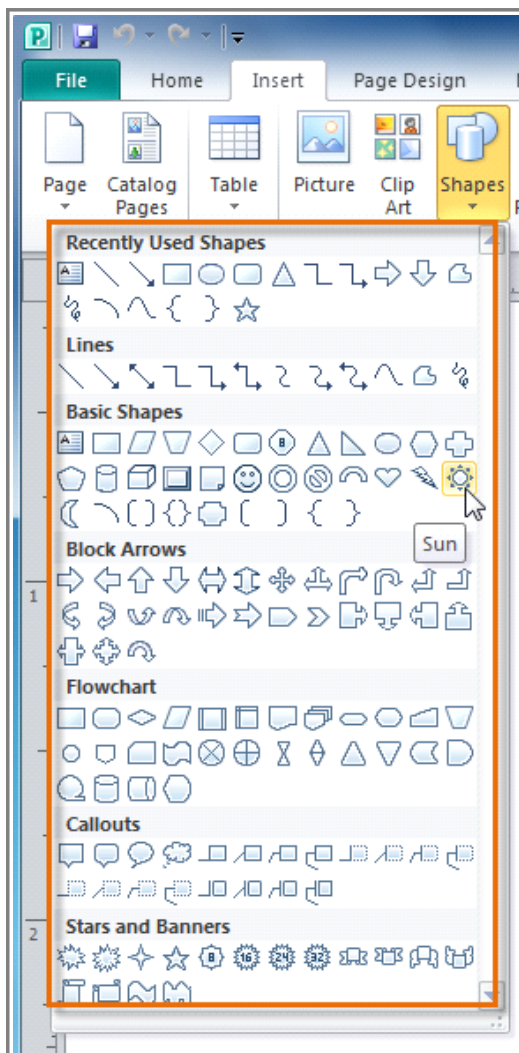
To Insert a Shape:

1. Select the **Insert** tab and locate the **Illustrations** group.
2. Click the **Shapes** drop-down command.



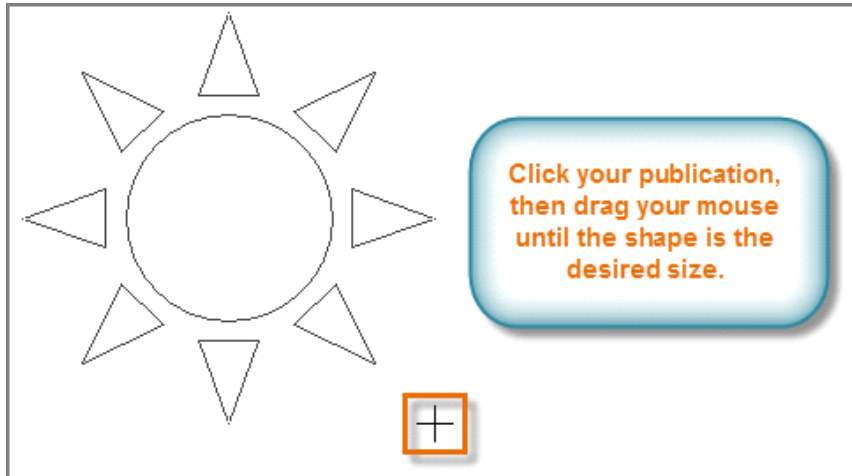
The Shapes drop-down command

3. Select a shape from the drop-down menu.



Selecting a shape

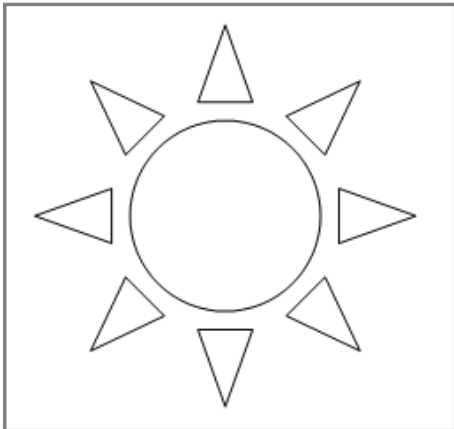
4. Click and drag the mouse until the shape is the desired size.



Click your publication,
then drag your mouse
until the shape is the
desired size.

Clicking and dragging to create a shape

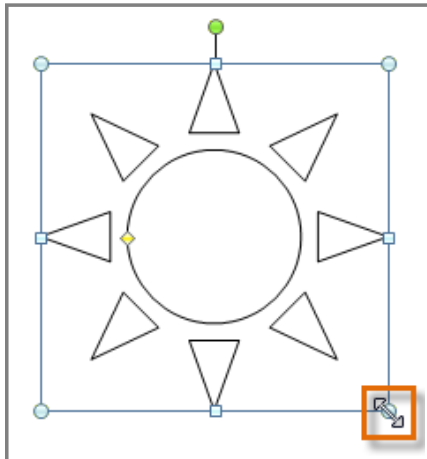
5. Release the mouse button. The shape will be added to your publication.



The added shape

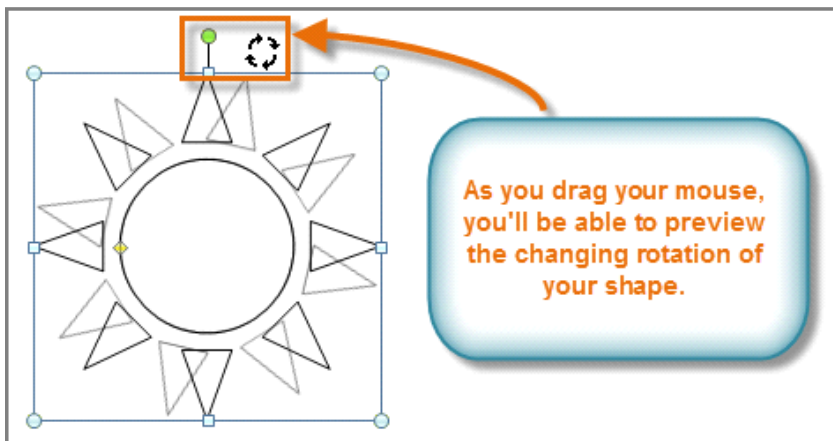
To Resize a Shape:

1. Select the shape.
2. Click and drag one of the **sizing handles** on the corners and sides of the text box until it is the desired size.
You can:
 - Drag the top or bottom sizing handles to modify shape **height**.
 - Drag the side handles to modify shape **width**.
 - Drag the **corner handles** to modify **height** and **width** at the same time.



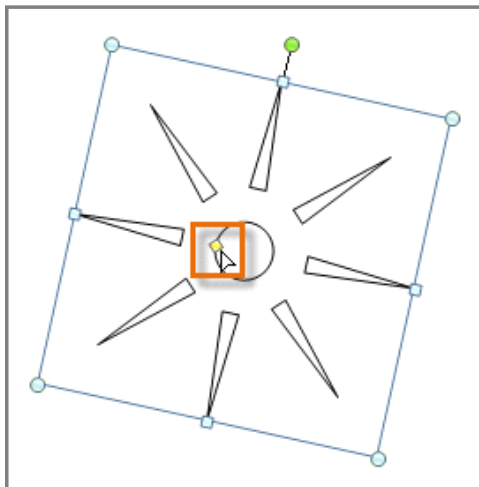
Resizing a shape

3. To rotate the shape, click and drag the **green handle**.



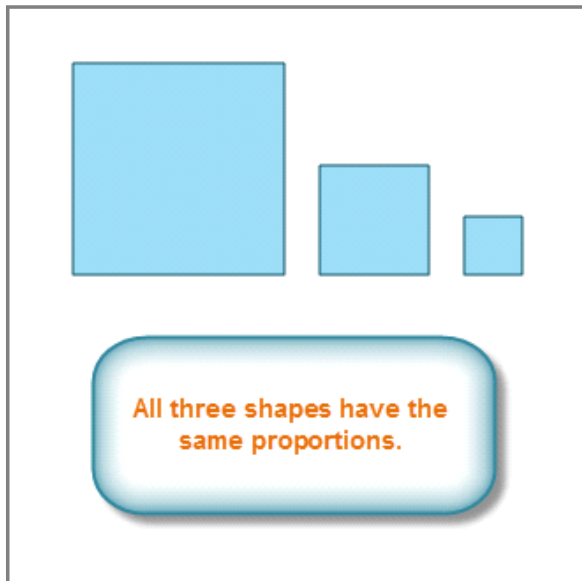
Rotating a shape

4. Some shapes also have one or more **yellow handles** that can be used to modify the shape. For example, with this sun shape, you can adjust the diameter of the center circle and the length of the points.



Modifying a shape with the yellow handle

If you hold down the **shift** key while resizing a shape, the shape will keep its **proportions** instead of getting stretched out. For instance, if you hold down the shift key while you resize a **square**, the final shape will remain a perfect square with four equal sides.

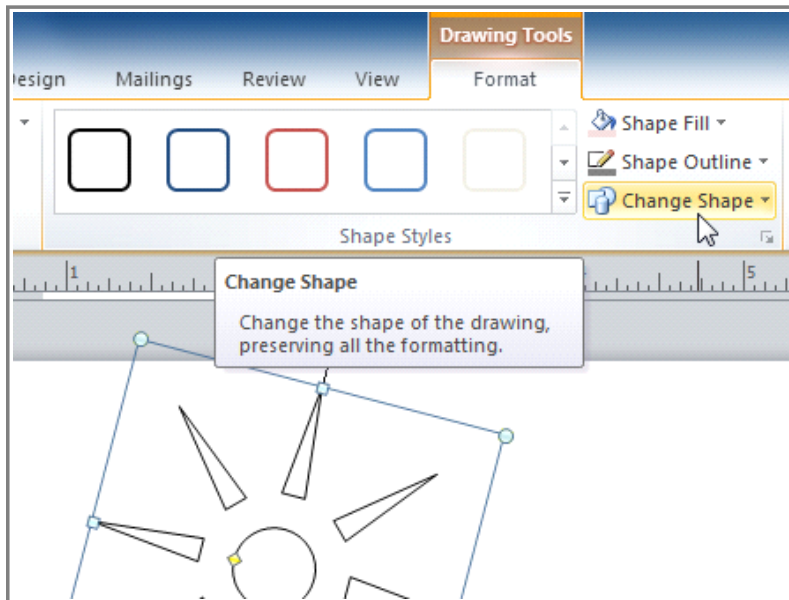


Shapes that have been resized with the shift key

Modifying Shapes

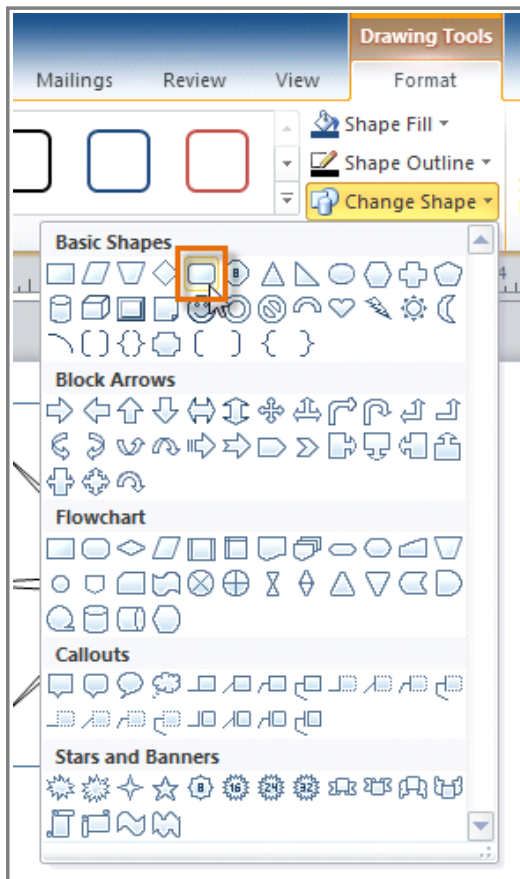
To Change to a Different Shape:

1. Select the shape, then click the **Format** tab and locate the **Shape Styles** group.
2. Click the **Change Shape** drop-down command.



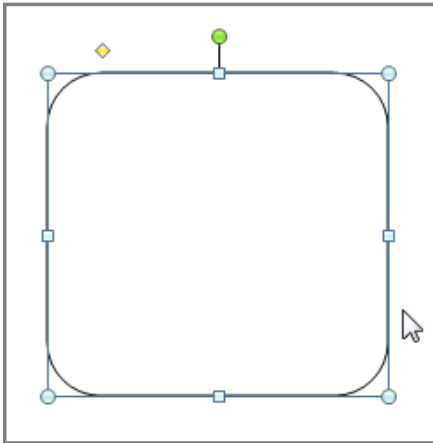
The Change Shape drop-down command

3. A drop-down list will appear. Select the desired shape.



Selecting a new shape

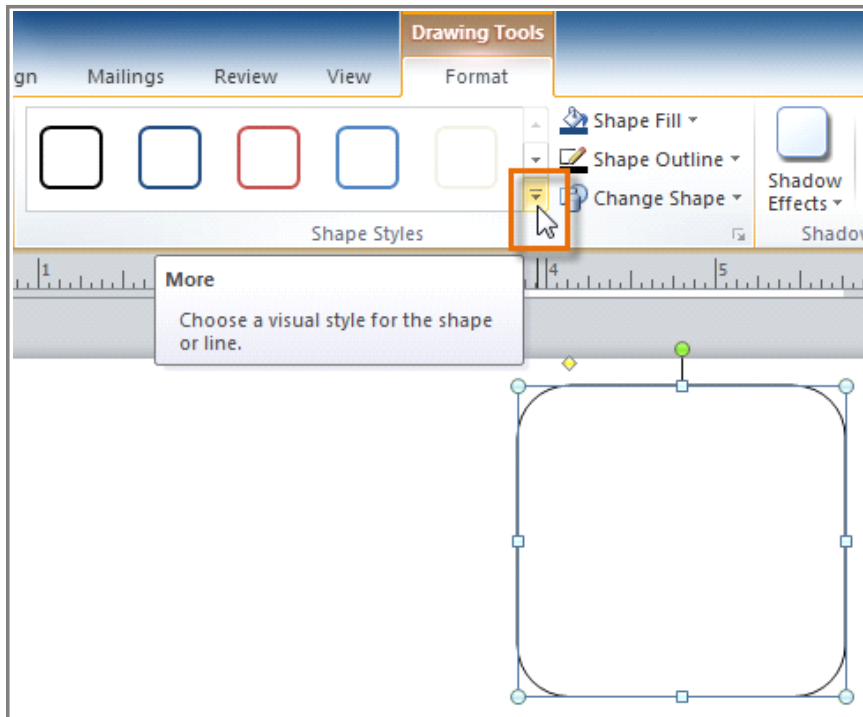
4. The shape will be changed.



The changed shape

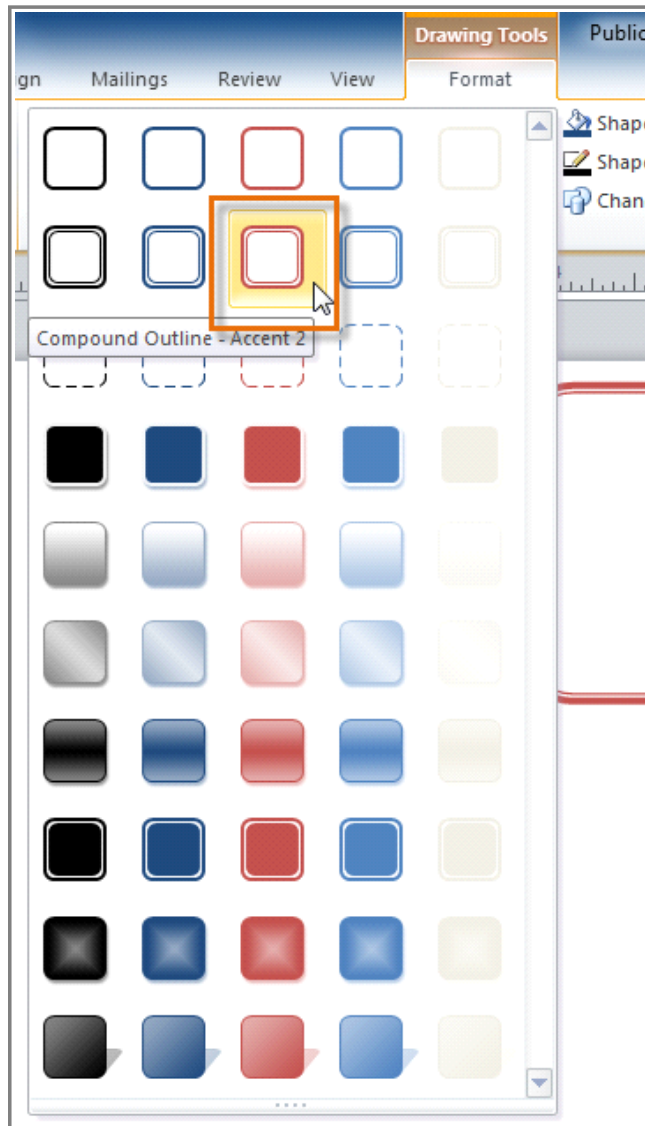
To Change Shape Style:

1. Select the shape, then click the **Format** tab and locate the **Shape Styles** group.
2. Click the **More Shape Styles** drop-down arrow.



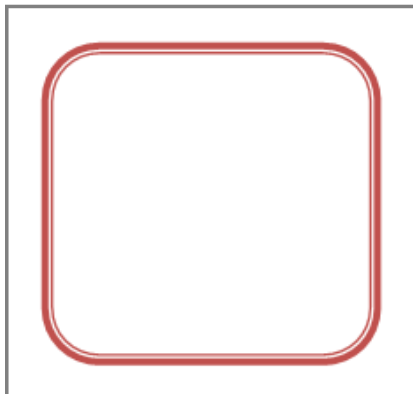
The More Shape Styles drop-down arrow

3. A drop-down list of styles will appear. Move your cursor over the styles to see a live **preview** of the style in your publication, then select the desired style.



Selecting and previewing a shape style

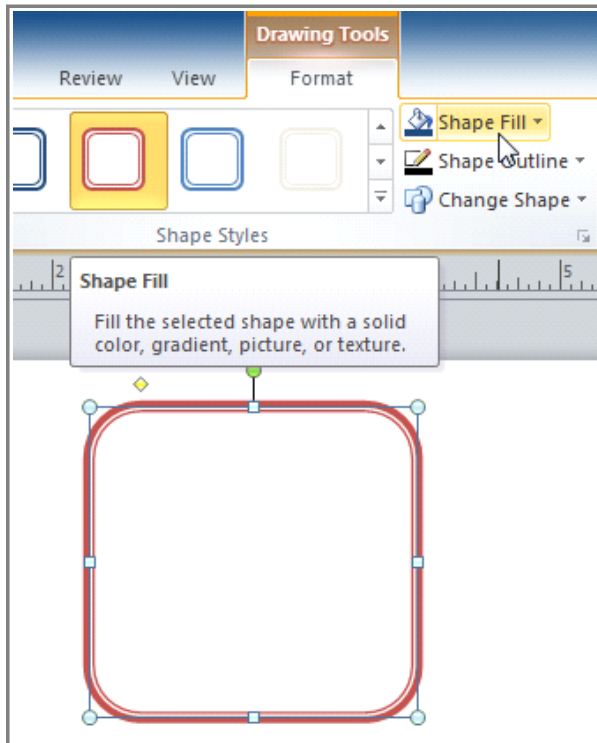
4. The style will be applied to the shape.



The shape, with the style applied

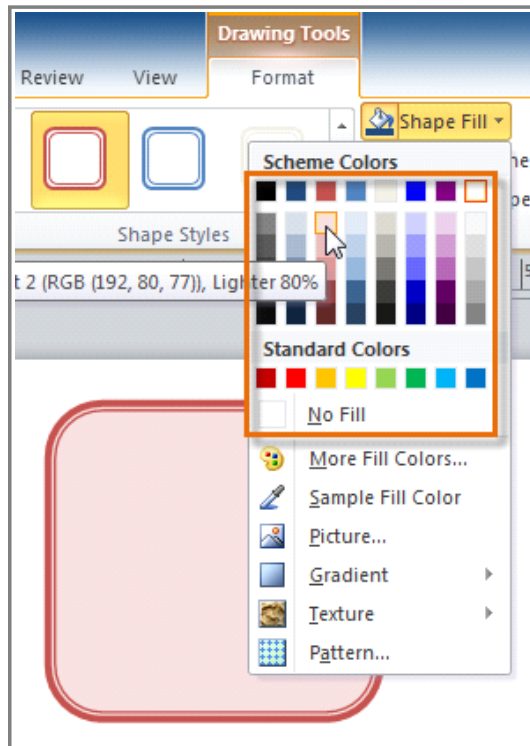
To Change the Shape Fill Color:

1. Select the shape, then click the **Format** tab and locate the **Shape Styles** group.
2. Click the **Shape Fill** drop-down command.



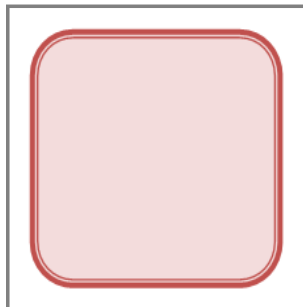
The Shape Fill drop-down command

3. A drop-down list of colors will appear. Select the desired fill color from the list. You can also choose **No Fill** to remove the fill from your shape or **More Fill Colors** to select a custom color.



Shape fill options

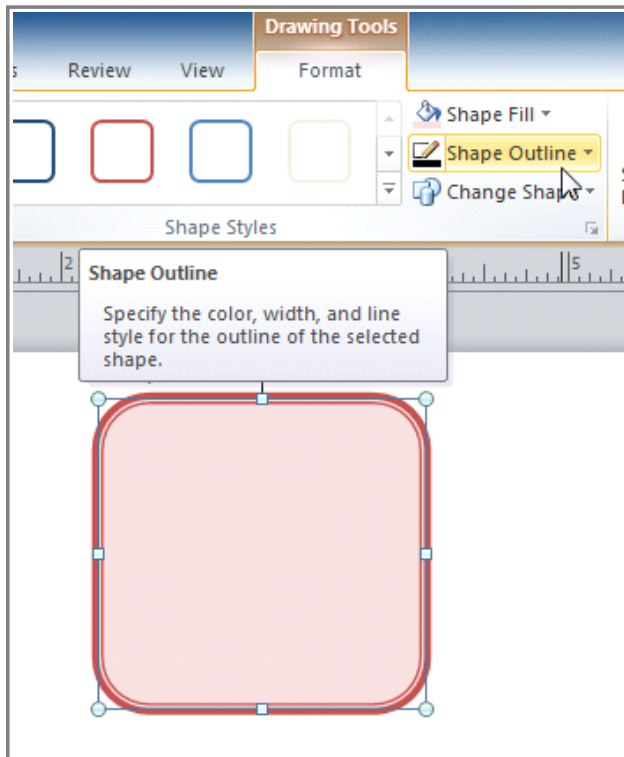
4. The new fill color will be applied.



The recolored shape

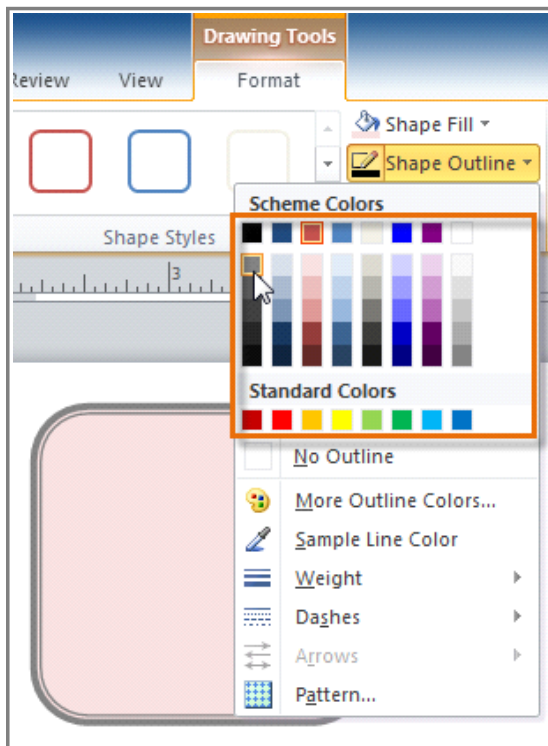
To Change the Shape Outline:

1. Select the shape, then click the **Format** tab and locate the **Shape Styles** group.
2. Click the **Shape Outline** drop-down command.



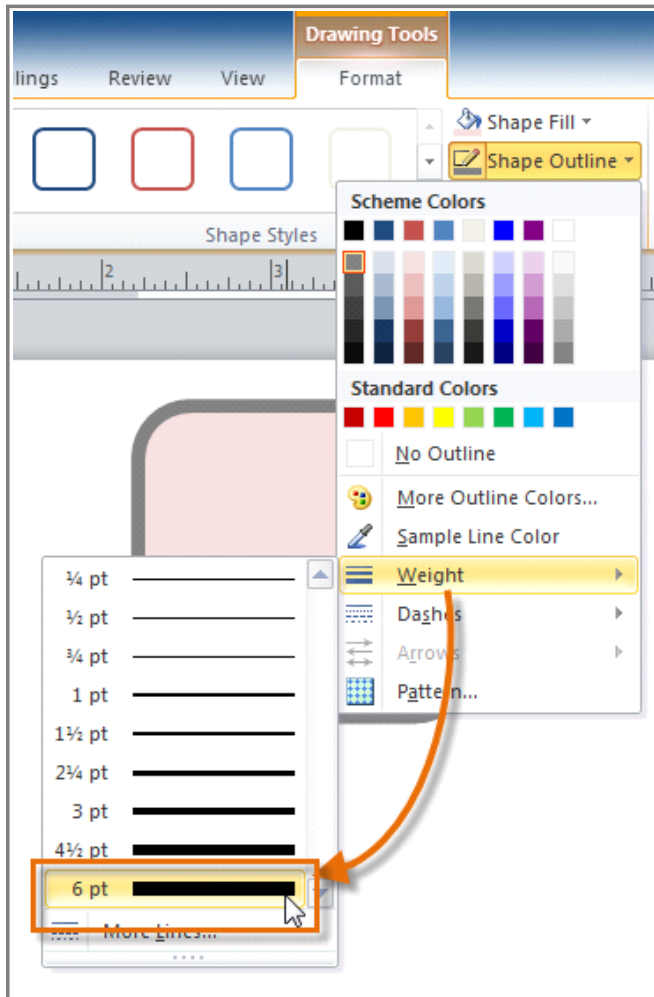
The Shape Outline drop-down command

3. A drop-down list of options will appear. Select the desired outline color from the list. You can also choose **No Outline** to remove the outline from your shape or **More Outline Colors** to select a custom color.



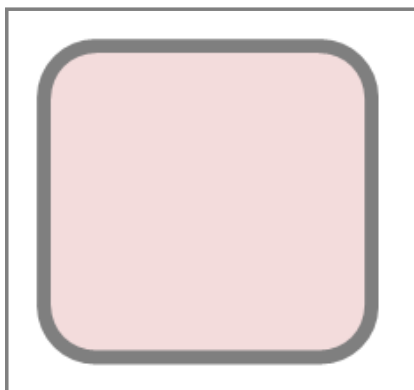
Selecting and previewing an outline color

4. If desired, further modify your shape outline by changing the outline's **weight** (thickness) and whether or not it is a **dashed** line.



Applying a thicker outline

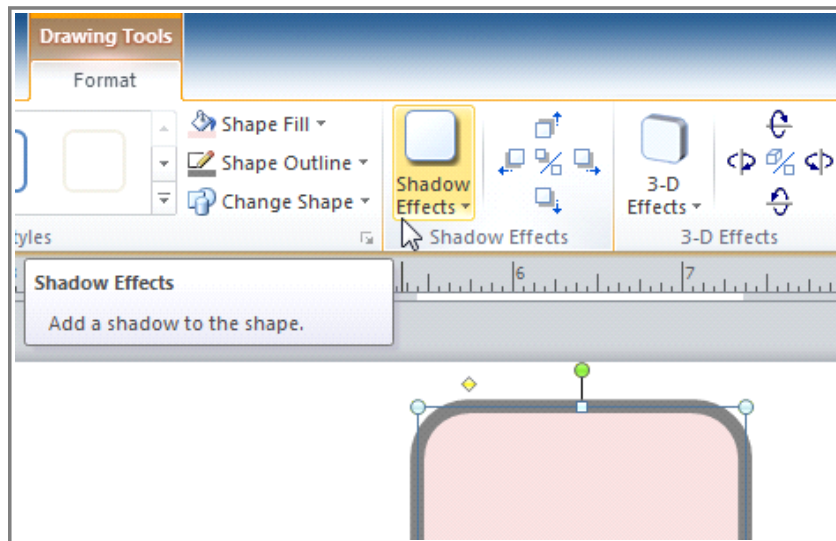
5. The shape outline will be modified.



The updated shape

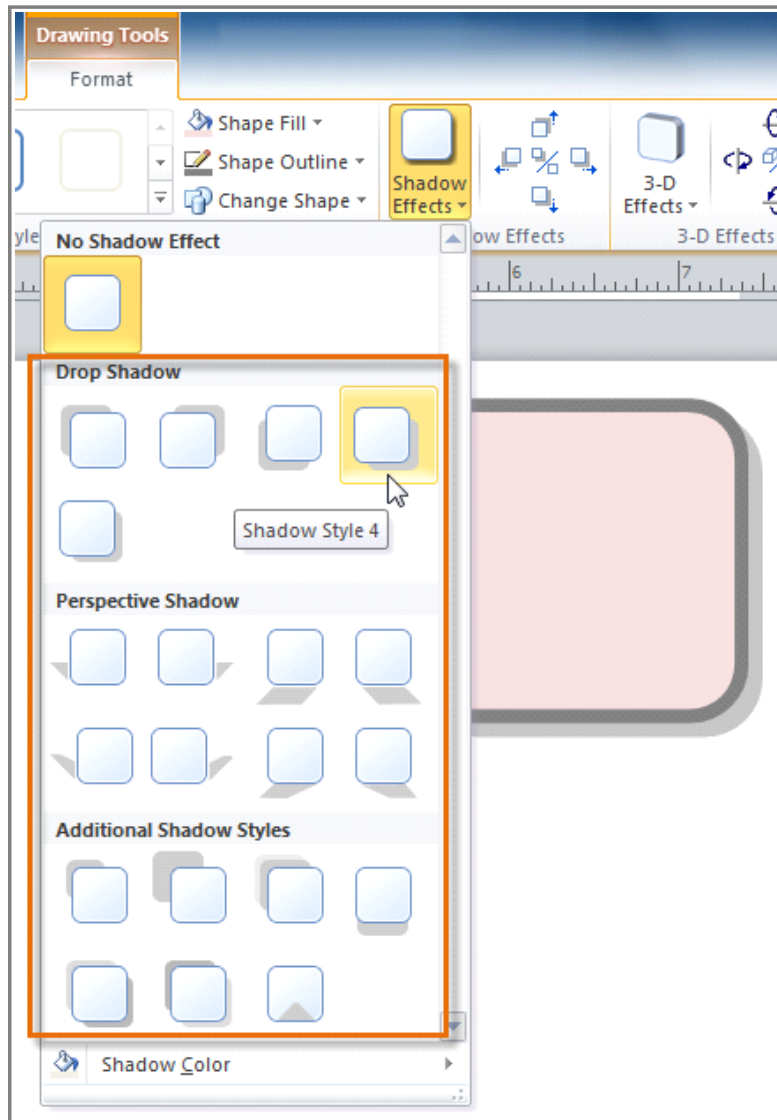
To Add a Shadow:

1. Select the shape, then click the **Format** tab and locate the **Shadow Effects** group.
2. Click the **Shadow Effects** drop-down command.



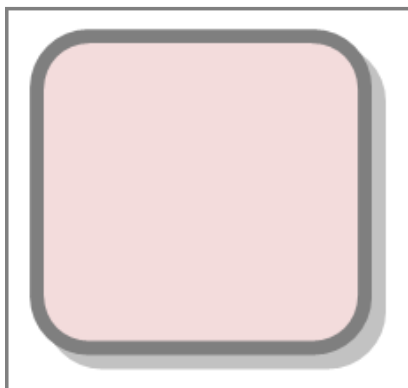
The Shadow Effects drop-down command

3. A drop-down menu with a list of shadow choices will appear. Move your mouse over a shadow effect to see a live preview of it in your publication.



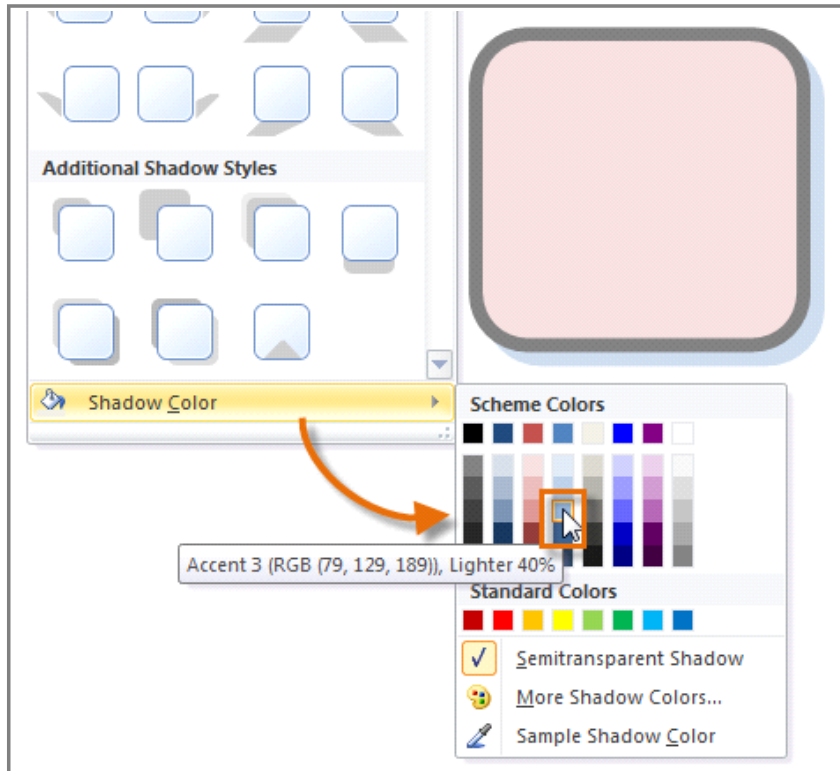
Selecting and previewing a shadow effect

4. Click the desired shadow effect to apply it to your shape.



The shape, now with a shadow

You can select **Shadow Options** from the drop-down menu and click the **Color** button to select a different shadow color for your shape.



Applying a different shadow color

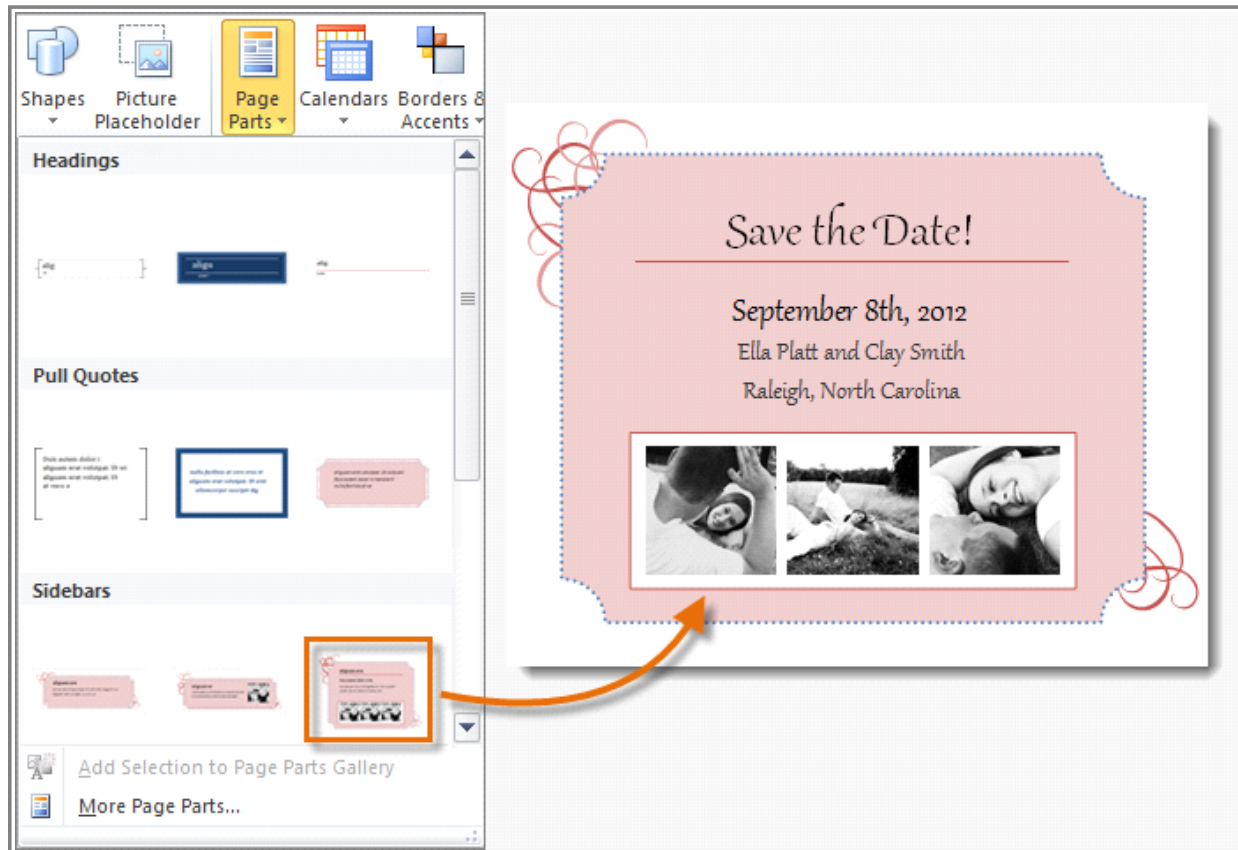
Working with Building Blocks

Building Blocks are another type of object in Publisher. They usually contain some combination of **text**, **shapes**, and **images**, and are meant to enhance the appearance of your publication. Once you insert a Building Block, you can modify it to suit your needs.

Types of Building Blocks:

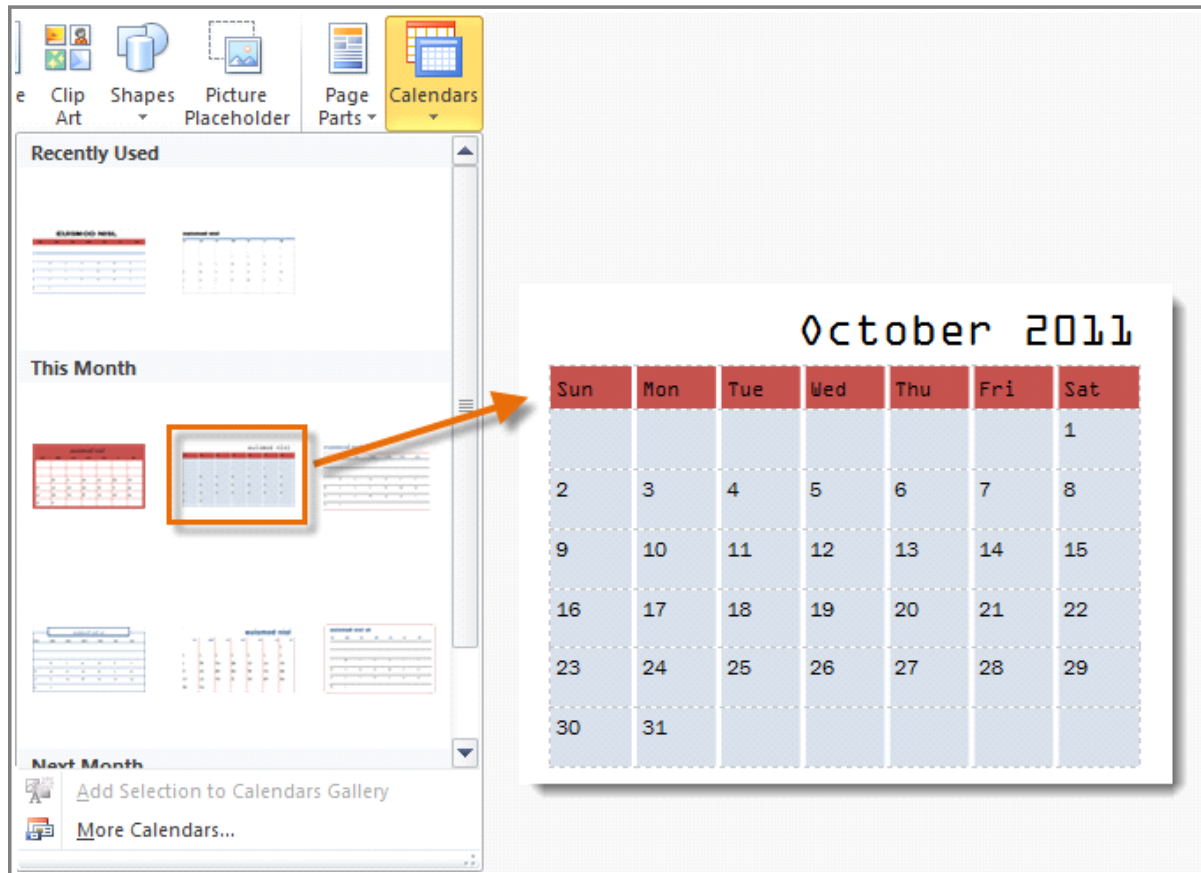
There are four types of Building Blocks:

- 1. **Page parts**, which are stylized placeholders for your images and text.



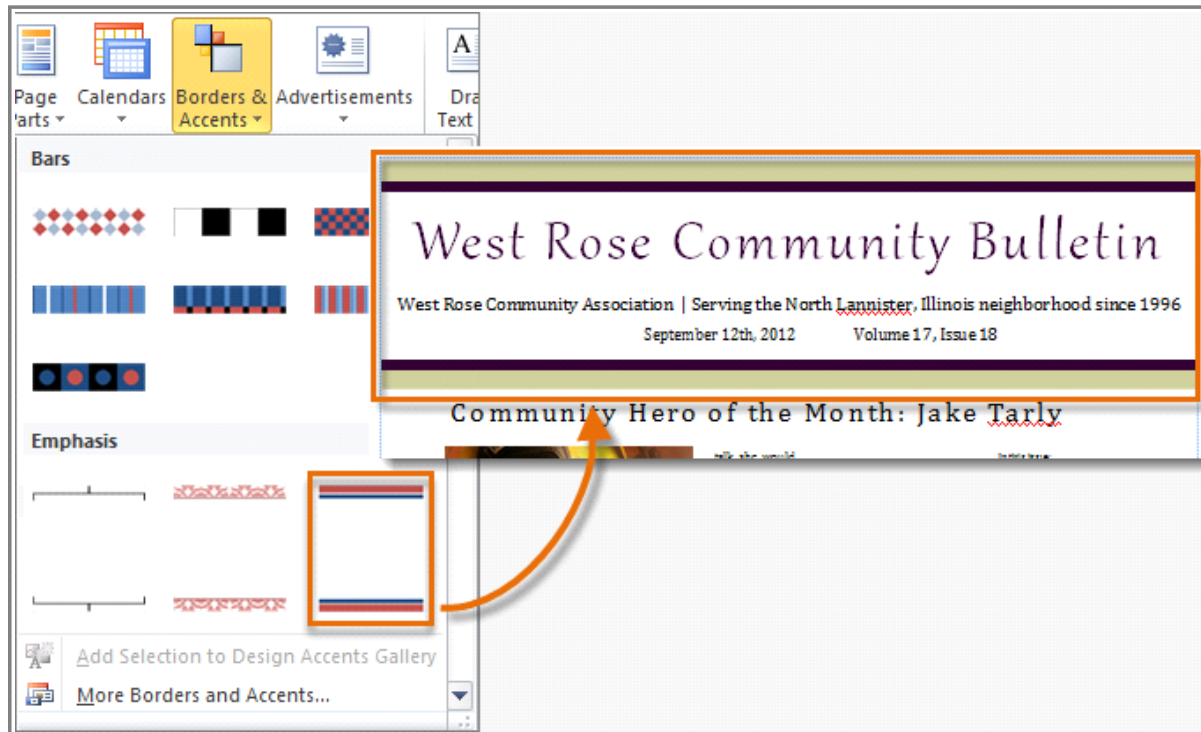
Page parts

Calendars



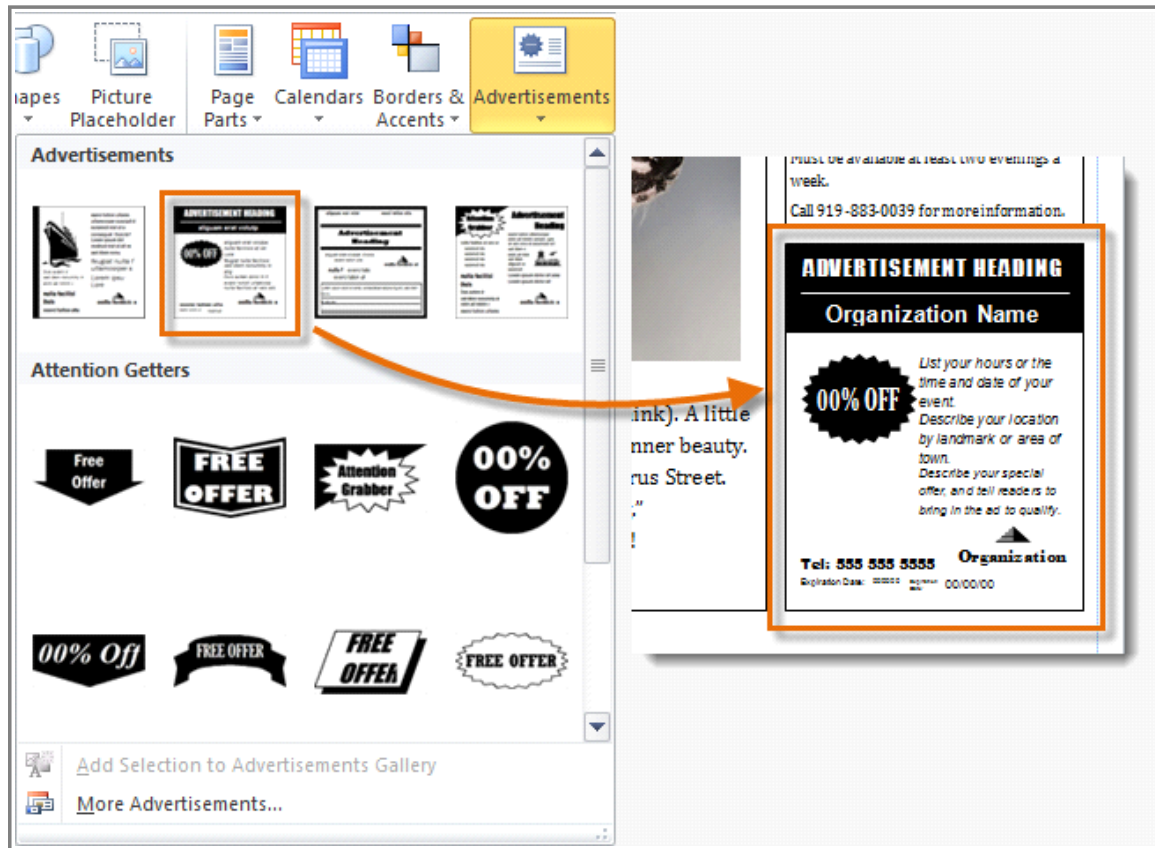
Calendars

Borders & Accents



Borders & Accents

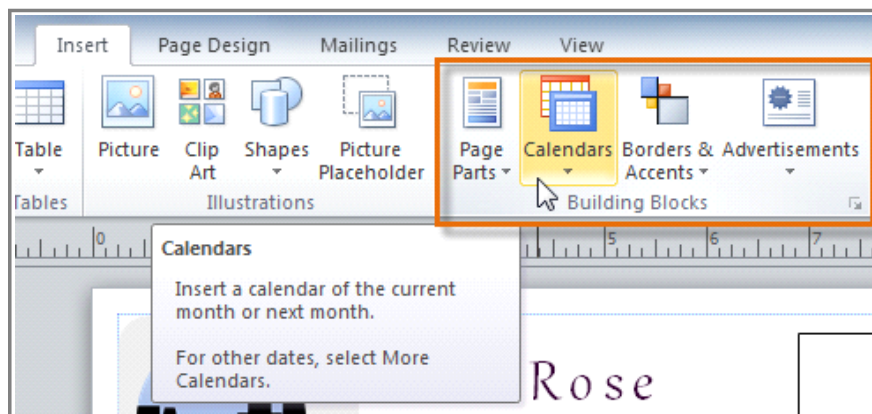
Advertisements



Advertisements

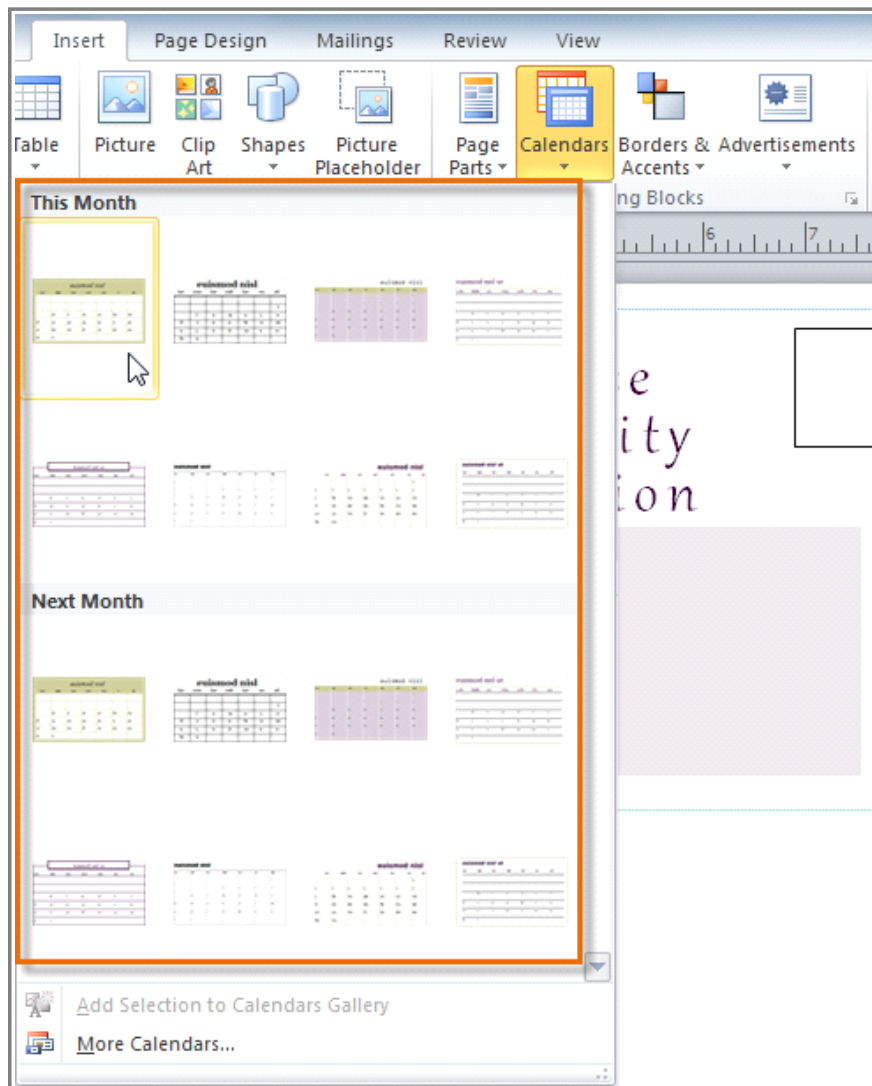
To Insert a Building Block:

1. Select the **Insert** tab and locate the **Building Blocks** group.
2. Click one of the four **Building Block drop-down commands**.



The Building Blocks group of commands

3. A drop-down menu will appear with Building Block styles and options. Select the desired Building Block.



Building Blocks options

4. The Building Block will be inserted.



The inserted Building Block

5. If desired, modify the Building Block's text and formatting until you are satisfied with its appearance.

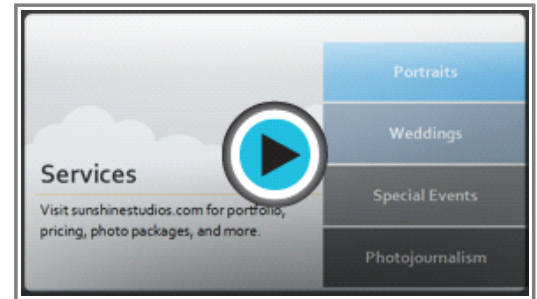


The modified building block

Arranging Objects

Publisher offers a number of tools to help you **arrange** and **order** your objects. These tools work for any object, and can help you lay out your pages quickly and precisely.

▶▶▶ Watch the video to learn more about arranging shapes and other objects in Publisher.



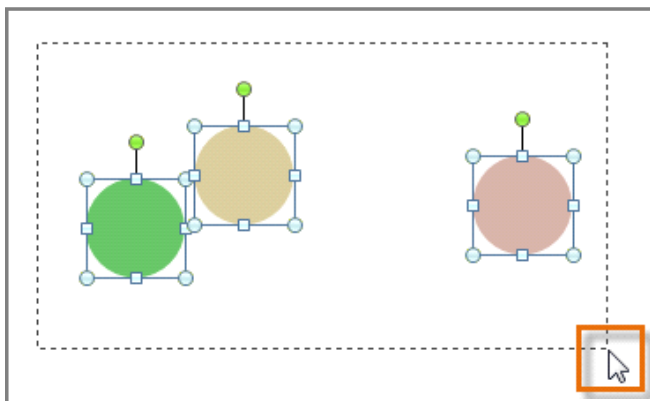
Watch the video (3:07). [Need help?](#)

Aligning

You can **click** and **drag objects** to align them manually, but this can be difficult and time-consuming. Publisher includes several commands that allow you to align your objects quickly and precisely. Objects can be aligned to **each other** or to the **page**.

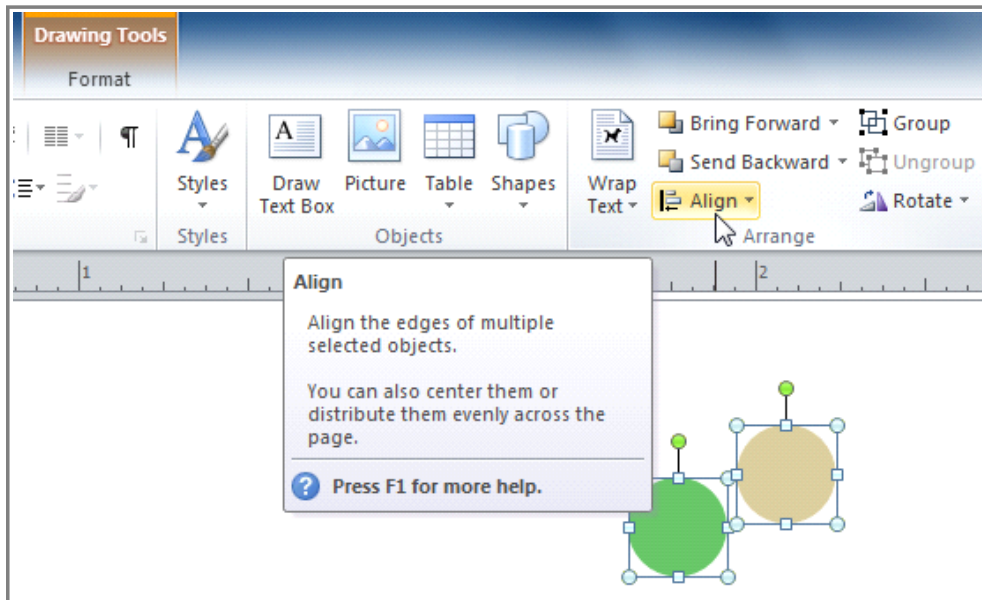
To Align Two or More Objects:

1. Click and drag your mouse to form a **selection box** around the objects you want to align. All of the objects will now have **sizing handles** to show that they are selected.



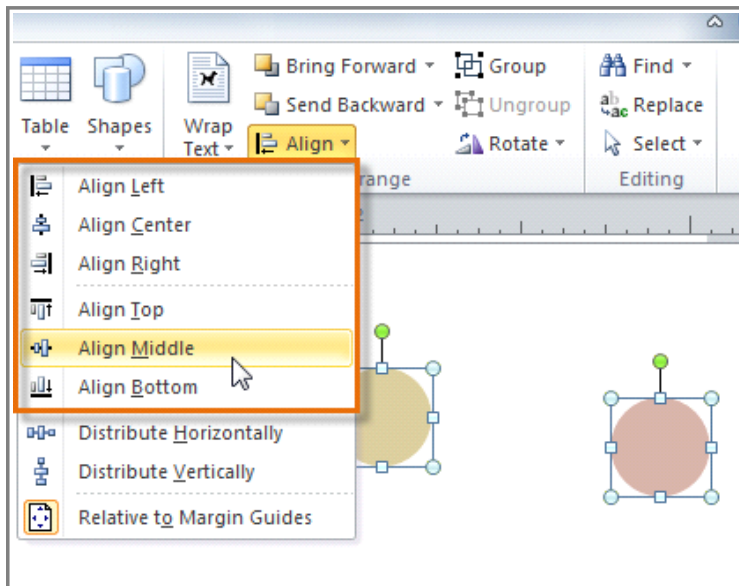
Selecting multiple objects

2. Click the **Format** tab and locate the **Arrange** group.
3. Click the **Align** drop-down command.



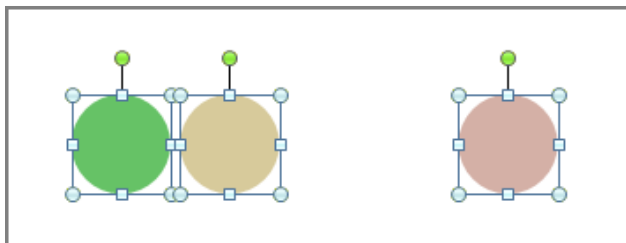
The Align drop-down command

4. Select one of the six **alignment options**.



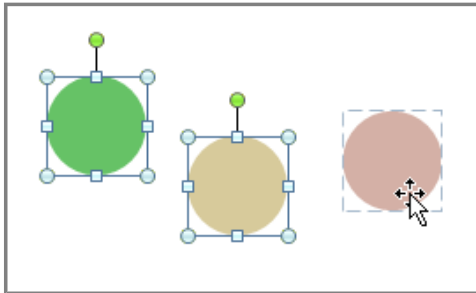
Alignment options

5. The objects will align to each other based on the option that you have selected.



The objects are now aligned

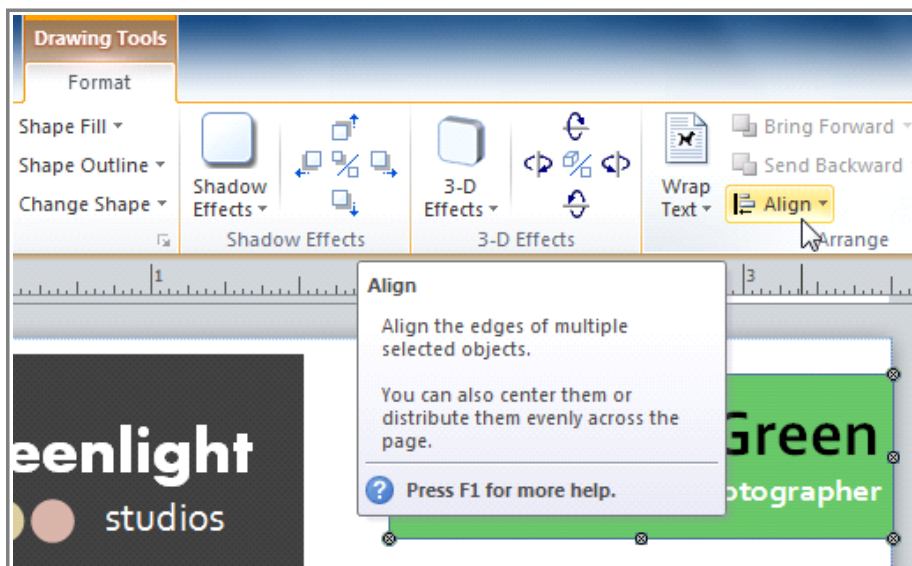
Another way to select multiple objects at once is to simply hold down the **shift** key and click each object you wish to select.



Selecting multiple objects at once

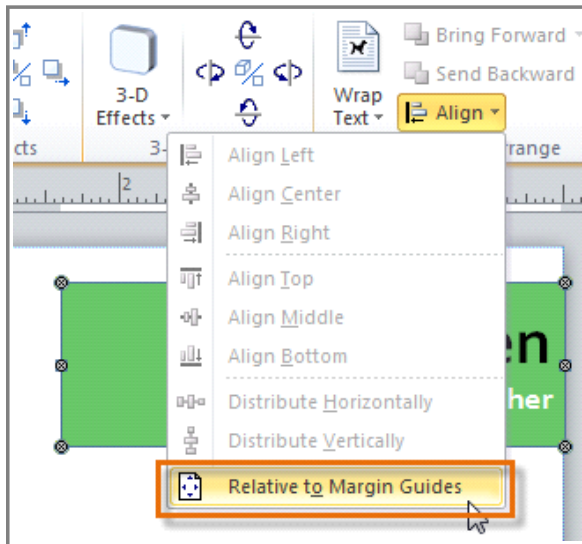
To Align Objects to the Page:

1. Select the object or objects you want to align.
2. Click the **Format** tab and locate the **Arrange** group.
3. Click the **Align** drop-down command.



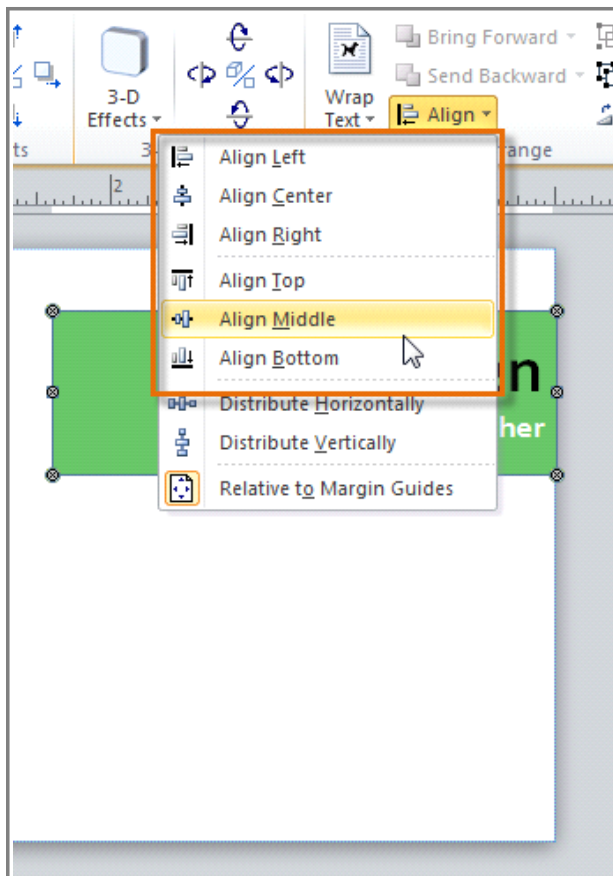
The Align drop-down command

4. From the drop-down list that appears, select **Relative to Margin Guides**.



Choosing to align to the page margins

5. Select one of the six **alignment options**.



Alignment options

6. The objects will align to the page based on the option that you have selected.



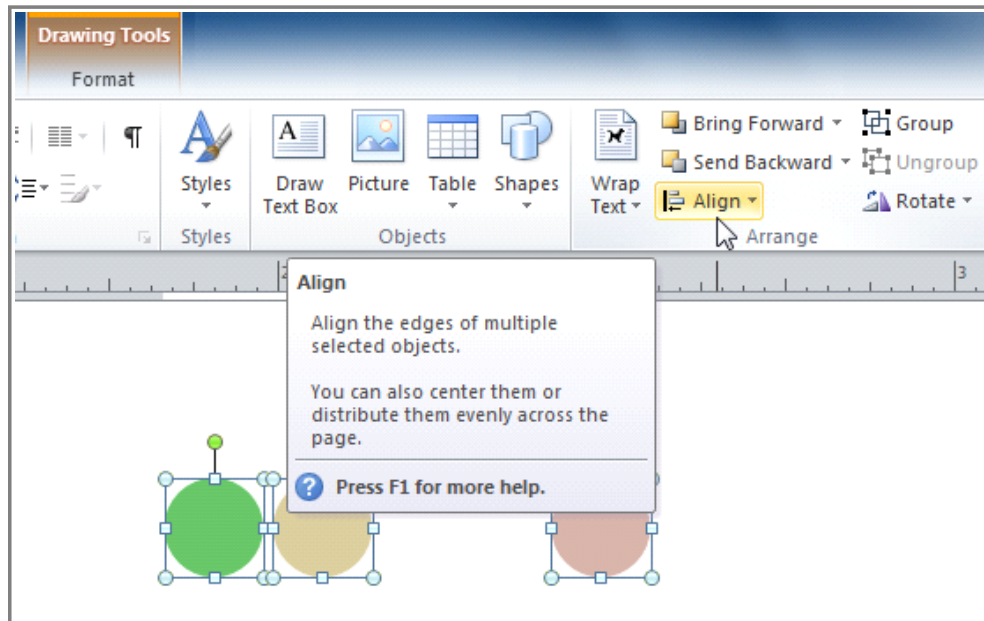
The object, now aligned to the middle of the page

Distributing Objects Evenly

If you have arranged objects in a row or column, you may want them to be an **equal distance** from one another for a neater appearance. You can do this by **distributing the objects** horizontally or vertically.

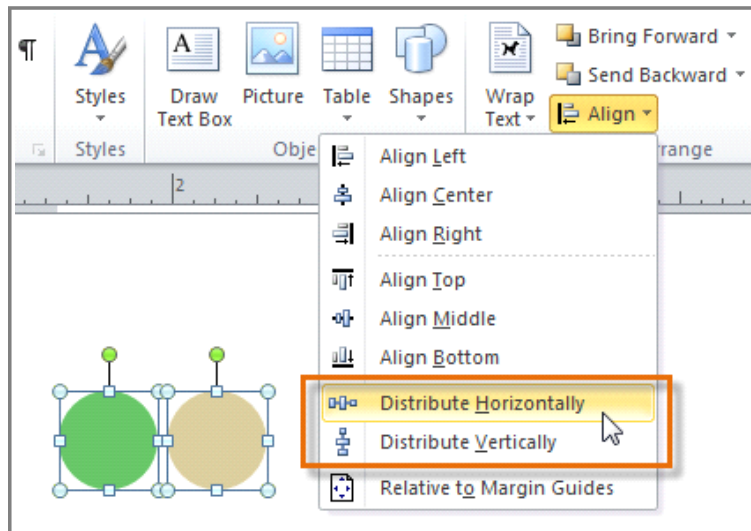
To Distribute Objects:

1. Select the objects you want to align.
2. Click the **Format** tab and locate the **Arrange** group.
3. Click the **Align** drop-down command.



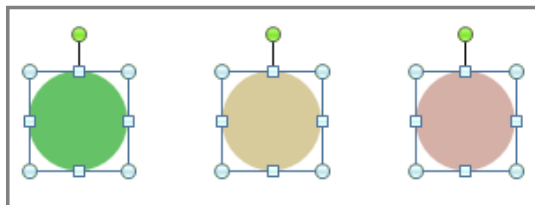
The Align drop-down command

4. From the drop-down menu that appears, select **Distribute Horizontally** or **Distribute Vertically**.



Distribution options

5. The objects will be distributed evenly.



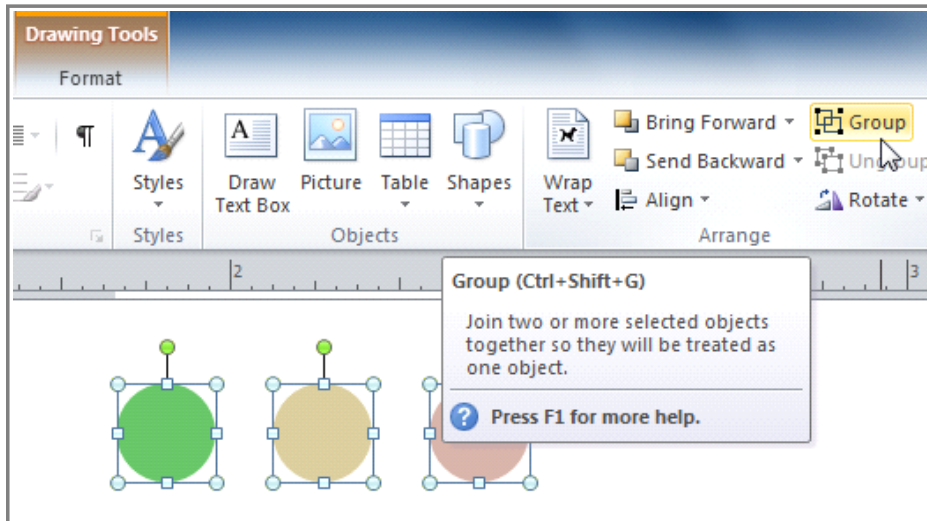
The objects, now distributed evenly

Grouping

At times you may want to **group** multiple objects into **one object** so that they will stay together if they are moved. This can be easier than selecting all of the objects every time you want to move them.

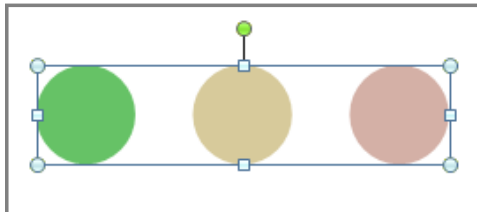
To Group Objects:

1. Select the objects you wish to group.
2. Click the **Format** tab and locate the **Arrange** group.
3. Click the **Group** command.



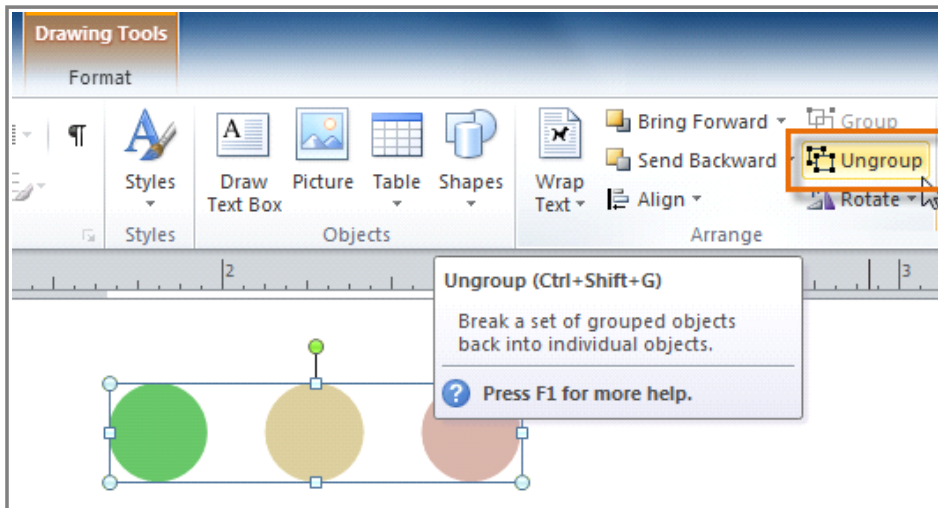
The Group command

4. The selected objects will now be grouped. There will be a **single box with sizing handles** around the entire group to show that they are one object.



Grouped shapes

You can **ungroup** grouped objects at any time. Simply select the group, then click the **Ungroup** command.



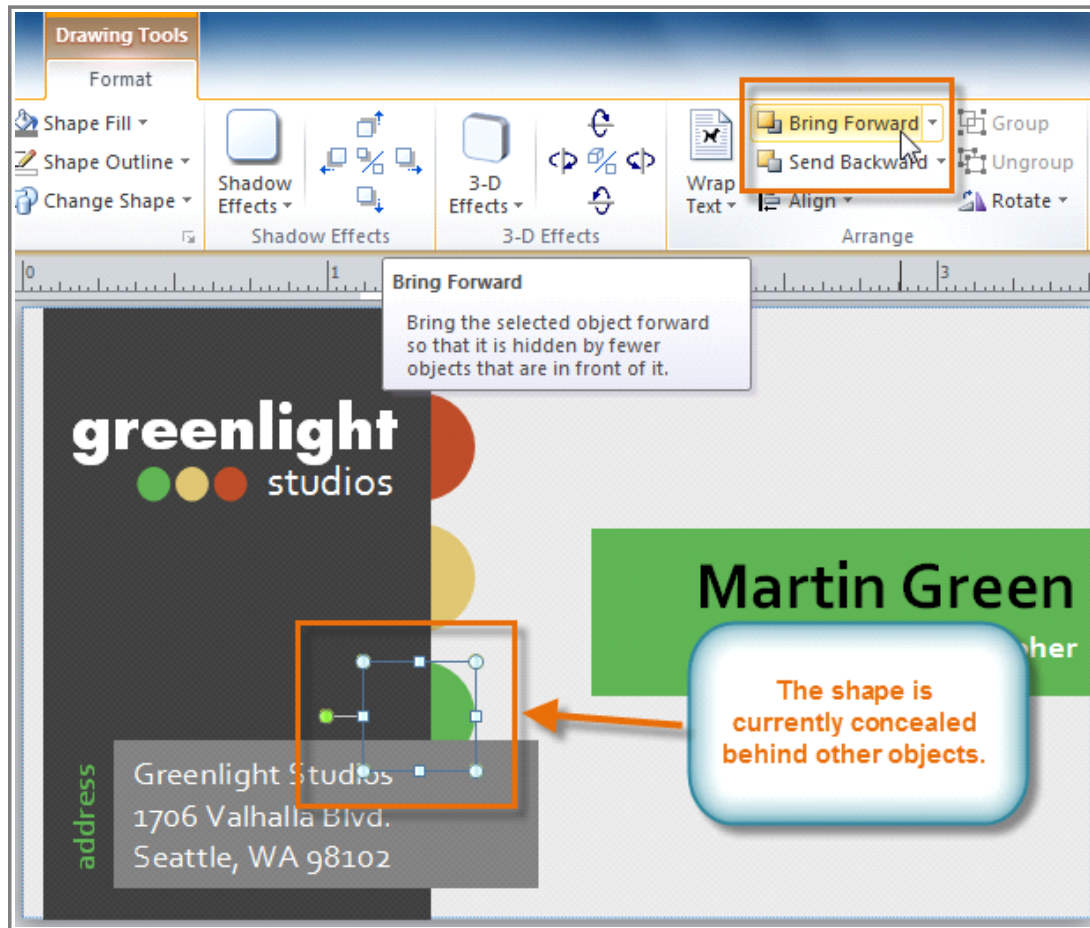
The Ungroup command

Moving Objects Backwards and Forwards

In addition to aligning and grouping objects, Publisher gives you the ability to **arrange objects** in a **specific order**. The ordering is very important when two or more objects **overlap**, as it will determine which objects are in the **front** or the **back**.

To Change the Ordering by One Level:

1. Select the object you wish to move.
2. Click the **Format** tab and locate the **Arrange** group.
3. Click the **Bring Forward** or **Send Backward** command to change the object's ordering by **one level**. If the object overlaps with more than one other object, you may need to click the command **several times** to achieve the desired ordering.



The Bring Forward and Send Backward commands

4. The objects will reorder themselves.

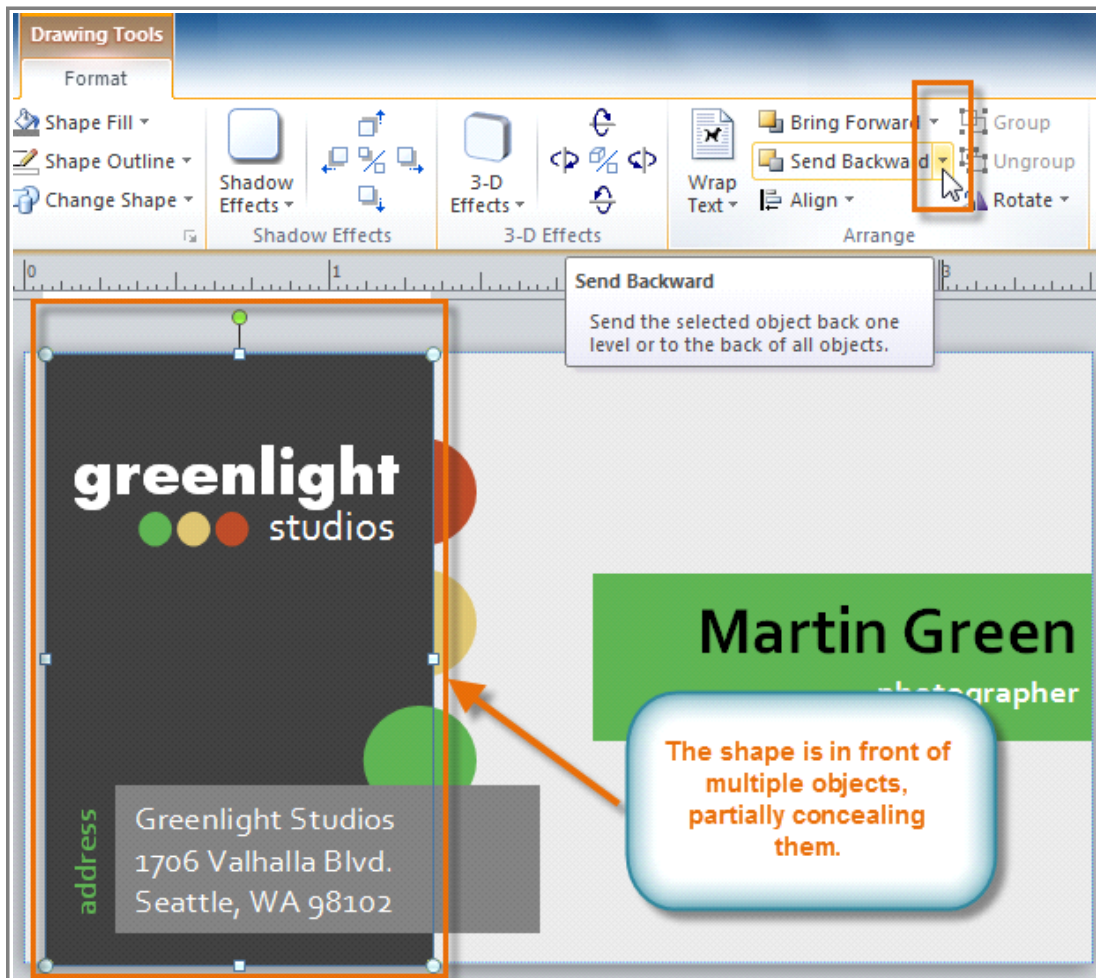


The shape has been moved forward one level

To Bring an Object to the Front or Back:

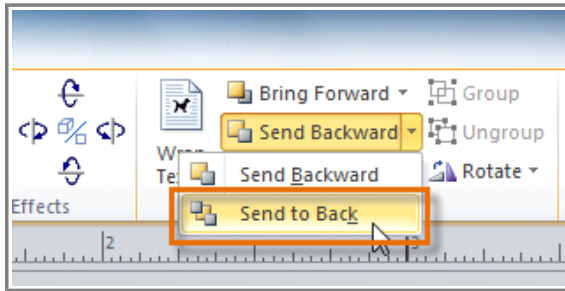
If you want to move an object behind or in front of several objects, it's usually faster to **bring it to front** or **send it to back** rather than clicking the ordering commands multiple times.

1. Select the object you wish to move.
2. Click the **Format** tab and locate the **Arrange** group.
3. Click the **Bring Forward** or **Send Backward** drop-down command



The Bring Forward and Send Backward drop-down commands

4. From the drop-down menu, select **Bring to Front** or **Send to Back**.



The Send to Back command

5. The objects will reorder themselves.



The shape has been moved to the back

Challenge!

1. Open a publication. If you want, you can use [this example](#).
2. **Insert** a shape, then **rotate** it. If you're using the example, rotate an existing



shape.

3. Insert another shape, then change the **fill** and **outline color** of the shape. If you're using the example, add an outline to the **green box** on the front of the card.
4. Change the **order** of the two shapes you inserted. If you're using the example, select the **dark gray rectangle** on the front of the card and **send it to the back**.
5. **Align** two shapes. If you're using the example, select the **green circle** and the **brackets Building Block** on the back of the card and align them to **middle**.
6. **Group** the shapes you just aligned, then align the group to the **center of the page**.