Microsoft Project Made Simple

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Overall Screen Layout

Task Area

Chart Area

Task Wizard
Step #1: Set the Start Date

Project → Project Information lets you set the Start date. Task durations will be referenced from this date.
Step #2: Enter the Tasks and Durations

List the tasks using unique descriptive task names.

Don't enter any Start or Finish dates. The Start date will default to the one you set a moment ago. The Finish date will be set to that date plus the duration.

In the Duration column, enter the time required to complete each task, as a number followed by 'hours', 'days' or 'months'.

Pretty boring Gantt chart so far. Don't worry about it …

Any task with a 0-length duration will be made into a “Milestone”.
A Task Name can be selected. You can then edit it just like an Excel cell.

Once Entered, Tasks Can Be Edited

If you click a Duration, you can edit it with up/down buttons, or you can then edit it just like an Excel cell.
Once Entered, Tasks Can Be Edited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>Predecessors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Wed 10/11/06</td>
<td>Wed 10/11/06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Wed 10/11/06</td>
<td>Wed 10/11/06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>Wed 10/11/06</td>
<td>Wed 10/11/06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can click on entire row. Press Edit→Delete Task to delete that task.

Click here and drag up or down to re-order the tasks. Note that the up-down order has nothing to do with the time order the tasks need to occur in, although it is a good idea to sort of keep it that way.
Step #3: Get the Chart Area Time-Scaled Properly

Double-click on the date header

These are good settings
Step #4: Create the Task Dependencies

Left-drag from one task’s bar …
… to its successor’s bar

This will create (by default) a *Finish-to-Start* dependency link. It will also adjust the successor’s Start and Finish dates, and the Predecessors column.
Reading the Gantt Chart

Thin lines indicate “slack”

Thick bar all the way to the end indicates no slack
You can link multiple tasks to the same successor task
You Can Change the Nature of the Task Dependencies

Double-click on a link to change its dependency type, change its lag, or to delete it.

- **Finish-to-Start dependency**
- **Start-to-Start dependency**
Step #5: Explicitly Set Fixed Milestones

Double-click here to explicitly set a Milestone’s date.

Examples could include presentations dates, the date of the Expo, etc.

Note: the 2007-2008 Engineering Expo is Friday, May 9, 2008.
Step #6: Experiment with Different Charts

Click on View → Tracking Gantt to see the critical path in red. The Critical Path is the sequence of tasks that have no slack in them. Pay close attention to these tasks!

Click on View → Gantt Chart to get back to where you were.
Click on File → Page Setup. Be sure that Fit timescale to end of page is clicked.

Slide this bar left and right to expose or hide the data columns. What you see is what you’ll print.
Copying and Pasting into a Word Document or PowerPoint Slide

1. Click on Edit → Copy Picture

2. Set GIF filename

3. Set range of dates

Your GIF image will look like this. It can be inserted into Word or PowerPoint by choosing Insert→Picture→From File while running those programs. Once there, you can expand, shrink, or crop this image, depending on what you are trying to show.