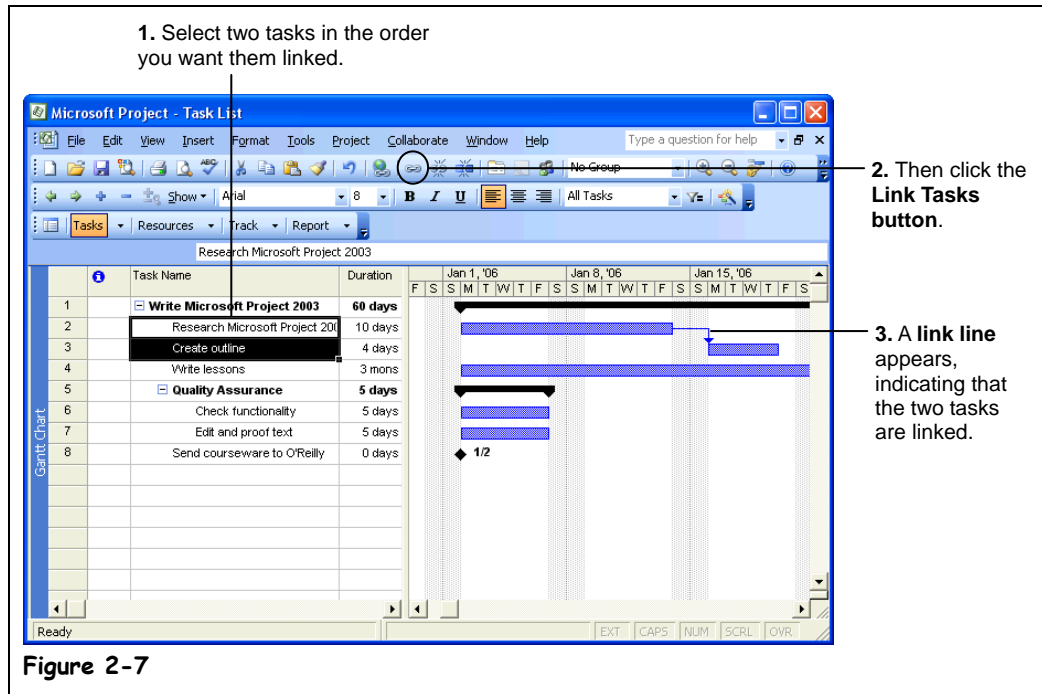


## Lesson 2-6: Linking Tasks

**Figure 2-7**

The process for linking tasks.



To select nonadjacent tasks, hold down the <Ctrl> key and click the task name. To select adjacent tasks, hold down the <Shift> key and click the first and last task you want to link.



### Link Tasks button

Other Ways to Link Tasks:

- Select **Edit** → **Link Tasks** from the menu.
- Press <Ctrl> + <F2>.
- Click and drag the predecessor task bar to the successor task bar in the Gantt chart.

Scheduling tasks is another very important part of the project. It's impossible to predict the start or finish date for every task in the project, but it is possible to know how the schedules of tasks are related. For instance, you can't write a book about anything until you have researched it. Likewise, you can't send a book to a publisher until you've finished writing it. By linking these tasks, Project knows that a task relationship has been created and their schedules are dependent upon one another.

A task dependency is the relationship between two tasks, in which the start or finish date of one task depends on the start or finish date of another task. The task whose start or finish date depends on another task is called the *successor*. The task that the successor is dependent upon is the *predecessor*. The most common task dependency is a finish-to-start dependency. In a finish-to-start relationship, the second task in the relationship starts when the first task is finished. For example, when the "Create outline" task is finished, the "Write lessons" task can start. Let's try it...

1. **Select the **Research Microsoft Project 2003** task.**  
You must select tasks in the order that you want them linked. This task will be the predecessor in the task relationship.
2. **Press and hold the <Shift> key and select the **Create outline** task.**  
The two selected tasks are ready to be linked.
3. **Click the **Link Tasks** button on the Standard toolbar.**  
The two tasks are now linked by a link line, as shown in Figure 2-7. Notice that the bar for the "Create outline" task moves to the end of the "Research Microsoft Project 2003" task. This indicates that the "Create outline" task will start when the "Research Microsoft Project 2003" task is finished.  
You can also click and drag to select adjacent tasks.

4. Click the **Create outline** task and drag to select the **Write lessons** task. Click the **Link Tasks button** on the Standard toolbar.

Another task relationship is created.

You should always try to link tasks of the same type, even if they are subtasks of different summary tasks. For example, you shouldn't link a subtask to a summary task. To link nonadjacent tasks, use the <Ctrl> key.

5. Select the **Write lessons** task. Press and hold the <Ctrl> key and select the **Check functionality** task.

Since the summary task's schedule depends on its subtasks, the schedule for the Quality Assurance task will change with the schedule of the Check functionality task.

6. Click the **Link Tasks button** on the Standard toolbar.

The selected tasks are linked.

If you want to create the same type of relationship between a number of tasks, you can link several tasks at once.

7. Select the **Check functionality** task. Press and hold the <Shift> key and select the **Send courseware to O'Reilly** task. Click the **Link Tasks button** on the Standard toolbar.

The selected tasks are all linked to one another.

The project is too long to see how all the tasks are linked at once in the Gantt chart, but you can navigate to view a selected task.

8. Select the **Check functionality** task and click the **Go To Selected Task button** on the Standard toolbar.

Project jumps to the selected task in the Gantt chart and shows how the tasks are linked in the project.



**Go To Selected Task button**

### Quick Reference

To Link Tasks:

1. Press <Shift> to select adjacent tasks.

Or...

Press <Ctrl> to select non-adjacent tasks.

(Note: Select tasks in the order by which you want them to be dependent.)

2. Click the **Link Tasks button** on the Standard toolbar.