

## Lesson 3-6: Connecting Shapes

**Figure 3-12**

The steps involved in connecting shapes using a point-to-point connection.

**Figure 3-13**

If you are working with an Organization Chart template, the Connecting Shapes dialog box will appear to help you connect the shapes in the diagram.

**Figure 3-14**

The updated diagram.

**Figure 3-12**

1. Position the Connector tool over the connection point in the middle of the shape.
2. Click and drag the connector to the shape or point you want to connect to.
3. Release the mouse button.

**Figure 3-13**

To connect shapes in an Organization Chart, simply drop a shape onto its superior shape.

**Figure 3-14**

Shape-to-shape connections are indicated by large red squares.



**Connector Tool button**

A *connector* is a line that runs from one shape to another. Diagrams such as flowcharts, organization charts, and network diagrams include connectors to help represent the flow of information and ideas as well as employee relationships and hierarchies.

There are two types of connections in Microsoft Visio: shape-to-shape connections and point-to-point connections. Shape-to-shape connections connect shapes at their two closest points, and point-to-point connections connect shapes at specific connection points. This lesson will show you how to use both.

1. Click the **Connector Tool button** on the Standard toolbar.

The pointer changes to a Connector tool (↔), indicating that you're ready to connect shapes.

2. Position the Connector tool over the upper-most PC shape's **connection point** (the tiny blue x).

A small, red box surrounds the connection point, indicating that you can draw a connector starting from that connection point.

3. Click and drag to the right, as shown in Figure 3-12, until you reach the vertical connector line. Release the mouse button.

A point-to-point connection appears between the PC shape and the vertical connector line, connecting the PC shape to the rest of the diagram.

4. Using the procedure you just learned, connect the remaining PC shape to the rest of the diagram.

Compare your diagram to the one shown in Figure 3-14.

Deleting a connector is easy—simply select it and press <Delete>.

5. Click the **connector** between the Print Server and Printer shapes and press the <Delete> key.

The connector disappears.

Let's reconnect these two shapes using a shape-to-shape connection.

6. Select both the **Print Server** shape and the **Printer** shape and select **Shape → Connect Shapes** from the menu.

The endpoints of the connector appear as large, red boxes, indicating that the two shapes are connected using a shape-to-shape connection.

You can change the appearance of a connector using its shortcut menu. To display a connector's shortcut menu, right-click the connector.

7. Right-click the **connector** between the Print Server and Printer shapes.

A shortcut menu appears, listing several commands that are unique to connectors. To select a command, click it.

We don't want to select anything right now, so...

8. Click anywhere outside the shortcut menu without selecting any options.

Compare your diagram to the one shown in Figure 3-14.

9. Save your work.



Connection point

A point-to-point connection is indicated by dark-red endpoints.

A shape-to-shape connection is indicated by large red squares.

### Quick Reference

To Connect Shapes Using a Point-to-Point Connection:

1. Click the **Connector Tool button** on the Standard toolbar.
2. Position the Connector tool over the connection point of the first shape you want to connect.
3. Click and drag until you reach the connection point of the second shape.
4. Release the mouse button.

To Connect Shapes Using a Shape-to-Shape Connection:

1. Select the shapes you want to connect.
2. Select **Shape → Connect Shapes** from the menu.

To Modify a Connector:

- Right-click the connector and select an option from the shortcut menu.