

# Power Automate cheat sheet

Everything you often look up while building a flow, on one page. Handy next to your screen or on paper.

## The building blocks

**Trigger** the starting signal. Every flow has exactly one.

**Action** does something: save, email, post a message.

**Condition** a yes/no question. The actions then run in the True or False box.

**Dynamic content:** data from earlier steps, such as the name of an attachment.

**Loop** (Apply to each): repeats the actions inside it for every item in a list.

## Common triggers

**When a new email arrives (V3)**, Outlook

**Manually trigger a flow**, for testing or with a button

**Recurrence**, at a fixed time, for example every Monday at 8:00

**When a file is created**, OneDrive or SharePoint

**When a new response is submitted**, Microsoft Forms

## Common actions

**Send an email (V2)**, Outlook

**Create file**, OneDrive or SharePoint

**Post message in a chat or channel**, Teams

**Start and wait for an approval**, Approvals

**List rows present in a table**, Excel

**Add a row into a table**, Excel

**Initialize variable**, store a value temporarily

## Comparisons in a condition

**is equal to**

**contains**

**begins with** and **ends with**

**is greater than** and **is less than**

Note: with **is equal to**, upper and lower case matter. Use `toLower()` to make text comparable.

## Handy expressions

|                                                                                      |                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <code>utcNow()</code>                                                                | The current date and time (UTC)                            |
| <code>convertTimeZone(utcNow(), 'UTC', 'Eastern Standard Time', 'MM-dd-yyyy')</code> | Today's date in your own time zone                         |
| <code>formatDateTime(utcNow(), 'yyyy-MM-dd')</code>                                  | A date in a specific format                                |
| <code>addDays(utcNow(), 7)</code>                                                    | The date 7 days from now                                   |
| <code>concat('Invoice_', 'April')</code>                                             | Join pieces of text together                               |
| <code>toLower(text) / toUpper(text)</code>                                           | Lower case or upper case                                   |
| <code>trim(text)</code>                                                              | Remove spaces before and after the text                    |
| <code>replace(text, 'old', 'new')</code>                                             | Replace a piece of text                                    |
| <code>substring(text, 0, 4)</code>                                                   | The first 4 characters of a text                           |
| <code>length(text)</code>                                                            | The number of characters, or the number of items in a list |
| <code>empty(text)</code>                                                             | True if the text is empty                                  |
| <code>if(equals(a, b), 'yes', 'no')</code>                                           | A choice inside a single step                              |
| <code>coalesce(a, b)</code>                                                          | The first value that is not empty                          |

Click in a field and choose the **fx** button on the right for an expression, or the lightning bolt for dynamic content. Function names are always in English.

### Date format

**yyyy** year, for example 2026

**MM** month, for example 10

**dd** day, for example 04

**HH** hour (24-hour) and **mm** minutes

Note: **MM** is the month and **mm** is the minutes. Example: **yyyy-MM-dd HH:mm** gives 2026-10-04 14:30.

### When it goes wrong

**Where to look?** My flows, open the flow, choose Run history (the last 28 days) and open the step with the red exclamation mark.

**401 or 403:** connection expired or no permission. Sign in again under Data, Connections.

**404:** folder, file or table not found or renamed.

**400:** a required field is empty or has a wrong value.

**Flow does not start:** is it turned on in My flows?

### Tips

**Build small:** start with one trigger and one action and expand step by step.

**Test often:** use the manual trigger or a test email before the flow really goes live.

**Give steps a clear name,** so you can see at a glance later what the flow does.

**Make a copy** of a working flow before you experiment.

**Use test files** instead of real company data.

Microsoft changes the Power Automate interface regularly. Names of menus and buttons may therefore differ slightly. The English names are used here.

Cheat sheet from [flowwijzer.nl/en/](https://flowwijzer.nl/en/) · You can find more lessons and explanations on the site.

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