Before we begin

The Dia tool box is shown in Figure 1, below. Follow the steps below to ensure the preferences are set to keep the tool box on top of the diagram window.

Go to the File menu on the tool box and select Preferences (see Figure 2, below).

In User Interface tick Keep tool box on top of diagram windows (see Figure 3).
Create a flowchart

A flowchart is an effective tool for communicating how a process works. For this example, we will create a flowchart which details the steps to be followed in making a simple decision about a holiday activity. The ‘finished product’ is shown in Figure 4, below.

![Flowchart Diagram]

START

Check weather forecast

Rain predicted?

Yes

Read a book

No

Play golf

STOP

Figure 4: The finished product
Let’s get started

1. Select Flowchart from the object category menu (See Figure 5, below.)

2. Click on the Modify object(s) icon

3. Click on the Terminal interrupt shape from the palette of objects and then click on the desired position on the canvas. The object can be resized by clicking and dragging one of the object’s green handles (See Figure 6, below.)

4. Click on the centre of the object and then type the appropriate text (See Figure 7, below.)
5. Using the **Process operation** icon and the **Decision** icon, repeat steps (2) to (4) for each of the other objects in the flowchart. Arrange the objects on the canvas by clicking on each object and then dragging it with the mouse. (See Figure 8, below.)

![Figure 8: Arrange the objects on the canvas](image)

6. Objects can be connected using lines. By clicking on the **Arrow style at beginning of new line** icon and the **Arrow style at end of new line** icon select the combination shown in Figure 9, below.

![Figure 9: Select the arrow-head options](image)

7. Click on the **Line** icon and then drag from the centre connection point (small blue “x”) on the ‘START’ object to the centre connection point on the adjacent ‘Check weather forecast’ object. (See Figure 10, below.)

![Figure 10: Join the objects at the connection points (circled)](image)
8. Repeat step (7) for the objects shown in Figure 11, below.

![Diagram](image1.png)

**Figure 11: Make the remaining Line connections**

9. Click on the *Zigzagline* icon and then join the ‘Read a book’ object to the ‘Play golf’ object in the manner described in step (7). (See Figure 12.)

![Diagram](image2.png)

**Figure 12: Add text to the canvas**

10. Text can be added to your diagram by first clicking on the *Text* icon, clicking on the desired location on the canvas and then typing the text. Enter ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ in the appropriate positions on the flowchart. (See Figure 12, below.)
11. Edit the appearance of any object by first double clicking on it. The Properties: Flowchart is shown in Figure 13, below. Here, among other things, you can change the fill colour and the text colour. Colour your flowchart as in Figure 4.

![Select the fill colour](image1.png)

![Select the text colour](image2.png)

**Figure 13: Edit the object properties**

12. Diagrams created with Dia can be saved in a range of different file formats, including PNG, PDF, SVG, BMP, WMF and JPG. Many of these can be pasted into other applications including Word, PowerPoint and Excel. Go to the File drop-down menu and select Export. The dialogue box shown in Figure 14 will appear. Give your diagram a name, select the destination where the diagram will be saved and then select the file type.

![Select the fill colour](image3.png)

![Select the text colour](image4.png)

**Figure 14: Edit the object properties**