Excel Add-in Ribbon Disappears After Installation

A recent Microsoft Office security update has caused add-in Ribbon Menu Bars to disappear when Excel is opened. This article contains a few solutions to this issue.

Microsoft released an Office Update in July 2016 that is causing this issue with installed add-in Ribbons disappearing. The security update is blocking files that have been downloaded from the internet.

Files downloaded from the internet now have a Security property that is automatically set to Block. When you open regular Excel files (.xlsx or .xlsm), you will get a security prompt asking you if the file is safe. However, there is no security prompt for add-in files (.xla, .xlam). That means there is nothing to tell you why the add-in Ribbon disappeared.

Solution 1: Store the Add-in in a Trusted Location

The best solution to this problem is to store the add-in file in a Trusted Location. A Trusted Location is a folder on your hard drive or server that has been added to the Trusted Locations list in Excel.
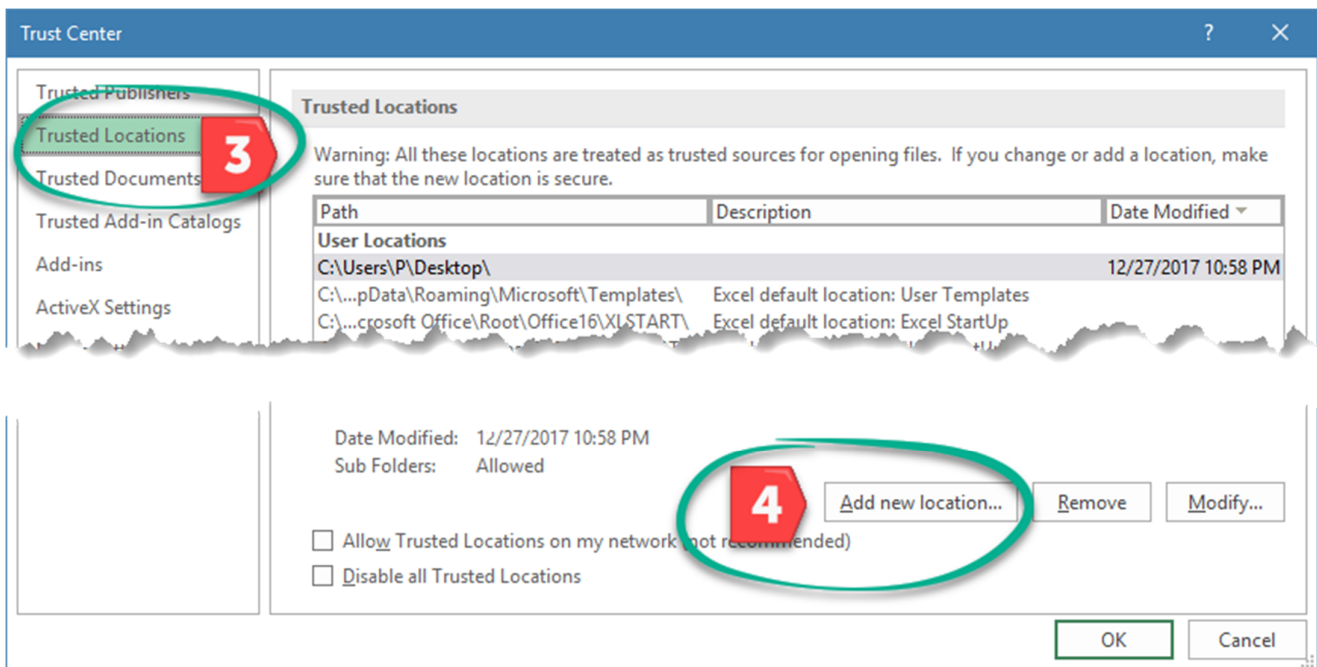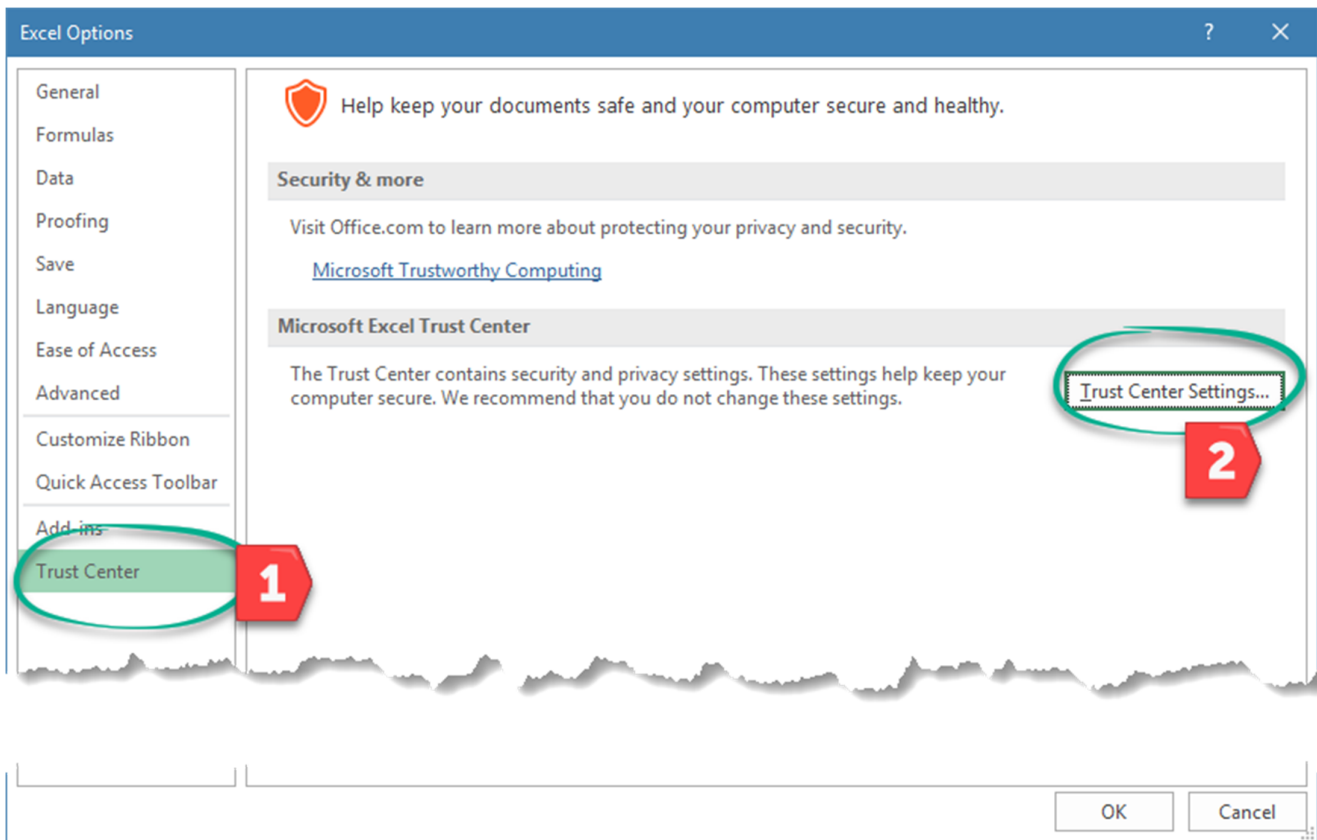
You can either move the add-in file to a trusted location or add the add-in file's location to the list of trusted locations. Here are the instructions for both options.

Add the Add-in File's Folder as a Trusted Location

If you have downloaded any UDT add-ins and followed my installation instructions, you probably have a UDT or Add-ins folder in your selected folder. You can add this folder to the trusted locations list.

Here are the instructions on how to add a folder to the Trusted Locations list in Excel:

1. Open the Trusted Locations menu. File>Options>Trust Center>Trust Center Settings>Trusted Locations

2. Click the Add new location button.
3. Click Browse
4. Navigate to the folder that contains your add-in files and press OK.
5. If your add-ins are organized in subfolders, then click the "Subfolders of this location are also trusted" checkbox.
6. Press OK, then press OK again on the Trust Center Window.
7. Close and re-open Excel.

The Default AddIns Folder Needs to be Trusted

The following path is the default location where add-ins are stored on the computer:

C:\Users**your_username**\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\AddIns

If you store add-ins in this default AddIns folder, you will need to add them to the Trusted Locations list. For most users, it is not trusted by default.

More information and detailed tutorials on Youtube:

How to Install an Excel add-in
https://youtu.be/mIpncmYhNGk

How to Re-enable an add-in that is Disabled or Missing
https://youtu.be/AaTkENoIh08

*(July 5, 2016, update for Office 2016 (KB3115275))