Scheduling Tasks

As a default Microsoft Project starts each task on the project start date. To use Microsoft Project to develop a useful schedule, you must determine any *dependencies* one task may have on another. For example, in most cases one task can not begin until the previous task is completed; however, tasks can start or finish at the same time. A *successor task* is a task whose start or finish depends on the start or finish of another task. A *predecessor task* is a task that a successor task depends on. For example, you must build walls (predecessor task) before you can paint them (successor task). You specify the logical connection or dependency between tasks by linking them together.

Identifying Task Dependencies

Microsoft Project provides four dependency rules, as described in **Table 2-1**. You use dependencies to create a flexible schedule that shows when each task should start or finish relative to the start or finish date of another task. By defining these task dependencies, Microsoft Project can determine how long the project will take to complete. The Finish-to-start dependency rule is the default.

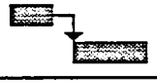
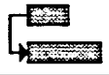
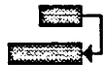
Dependencies	Description	Chart Pane Display
Finish-to-start (FS)	Task starts after its predecessor is completed.	
Start-to-start (SS)	Task starts at the same time as its predecessor starts.	
Finish-to-finish (FF)	Task is completed at the same time as its predecessor is completed.	
Start-to-finish (SF)	Task is completed after its predecessor starts.	

Table 2-1: Task Dependency Rules