

# POI-HSSF - Java API To Access Microsoft Excel Format Files

## Overview

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### 1. Overview

HSSF is the POI Project's pure Java implementation of the Excel '97(-2002) file format.

HSSF provides a way to read spreadsheets create, modify, read and write XLS spreadsheets. It provides:

- low level structures for those with special needs
- an eventmodel api for efficient read-only access
- a full usermodel api for creating, reading and modifying XLS files

An alternate way of generating a spreadsheet is via the [Cocoon](#) serializer (yet you'll still be using HSSF indirectly). With Cocoon you can serialize any XML datasource (which might be a ESQL page outputting in SQL for instance) by simply applying the stylesheet and designating the serializer.

If you're merely reading spreadsheet data, then use the eventmodel api in the `org.apache.poi.hssf.eventusermodel` package.

If you're modifying spreadsheet data then use the usermodel api. You can also generate spreadsheets this way.