



Chapter 4 WORKING WITH THE FORM

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4.1 Working with the Form Designer

The Delphi Form Designer is a powerful visual programming tool. It enables you to place, select, move, resize, and align components and much more.





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

- ❑ The Form Designer also enables you to size and position the form itself, add menus, and create specialized dialog boxes--everything you need to create the user interface to a typical Windows program.





The Form Designer's Context Menu

- When you first start Delphi or when you create a new project, you are presented with a blank form in the Form Designer.

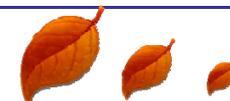




The Form Designer's Context Menu

The Form Designer's Context Menu Items

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|----------------------------|---|
| Align to Grid | Aligns selected components to the Form Designer grid. |
| Bring to Front | Brings selected components to the front of all other components. |
| Send to Back | Sends selected components behind all other components. |
| Revert to Inherited | Causes the selected control to revert to its original state when you are working with a form that you have inherited from the Object Repository. (Inheriting forms from the Object Repository is covered on Day 8, "Creating Applications in Delphi.") |
| Align | Displays the Alignment dialog box. |
| Size | Displays the Size dialog box. |
| Scale | Displays the Scale dialog box. |
| Tab Order | Displays the Edit Tab Order dialog box. |
| Creation Order | Displays the Creation Order dialog box. |
| Flip Children | For non-English versions of Windows, this command changes the reading order of a component. Disabled for English versions of Windows. |
| Add to Repository | Adds this form to the Object Repository. Custom forms can be saved to be used later. (The Object Repository is discussed on Day 8.) |
| View as Text | Shows the form description as text in the Code Editor. You can edit the form's text version if you like. Choose View as Form from the Code Editor context menu to go back to the form. You can also use Alt+F12 to switch from the View as Text and View as Form options. |





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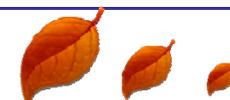
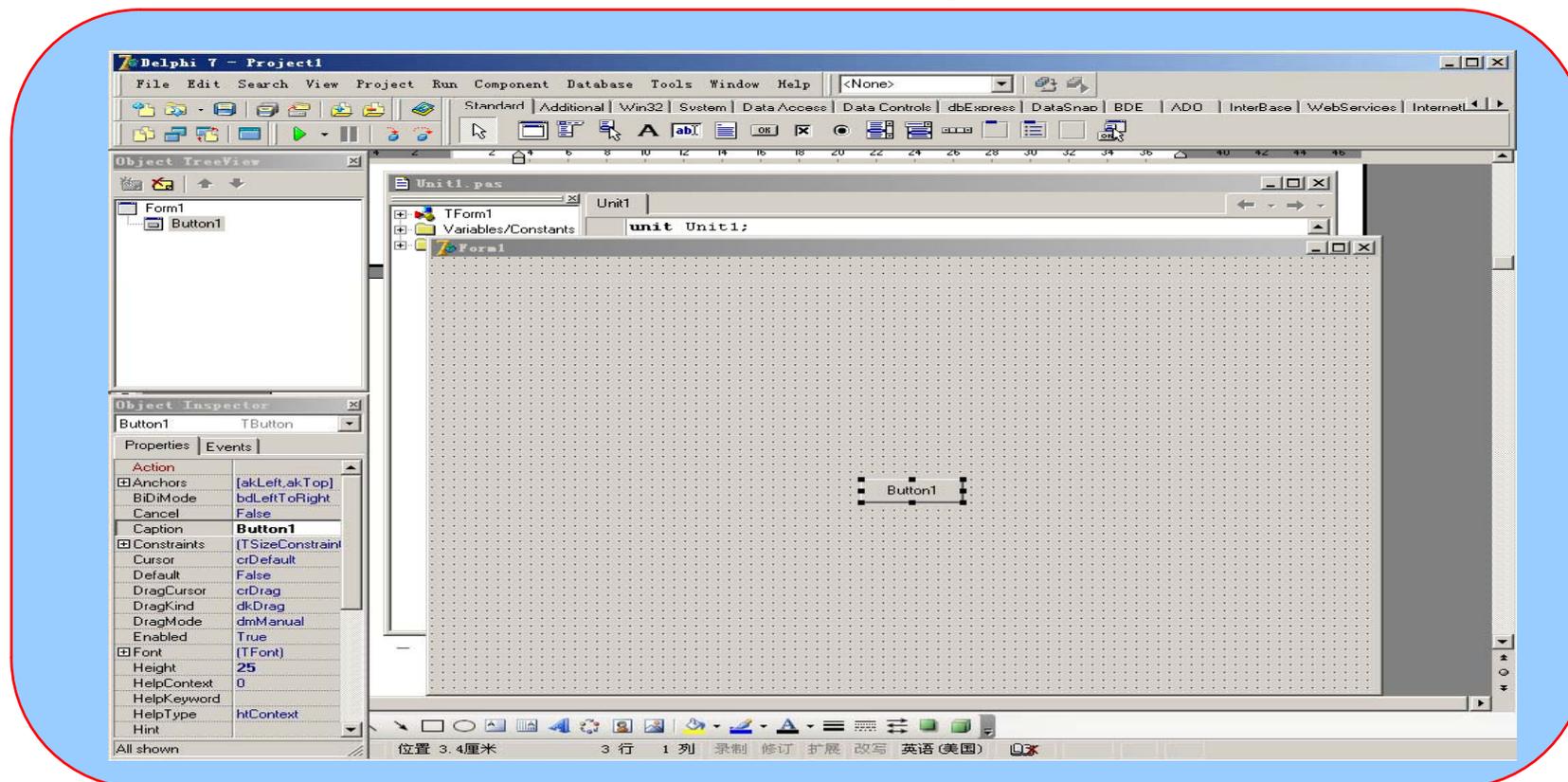
- ❑ **Placing Components**
- ❑ **The Form Designer Grid**
- ❑ **Selecting Components**
- ❑ **Selecting Individual Components**





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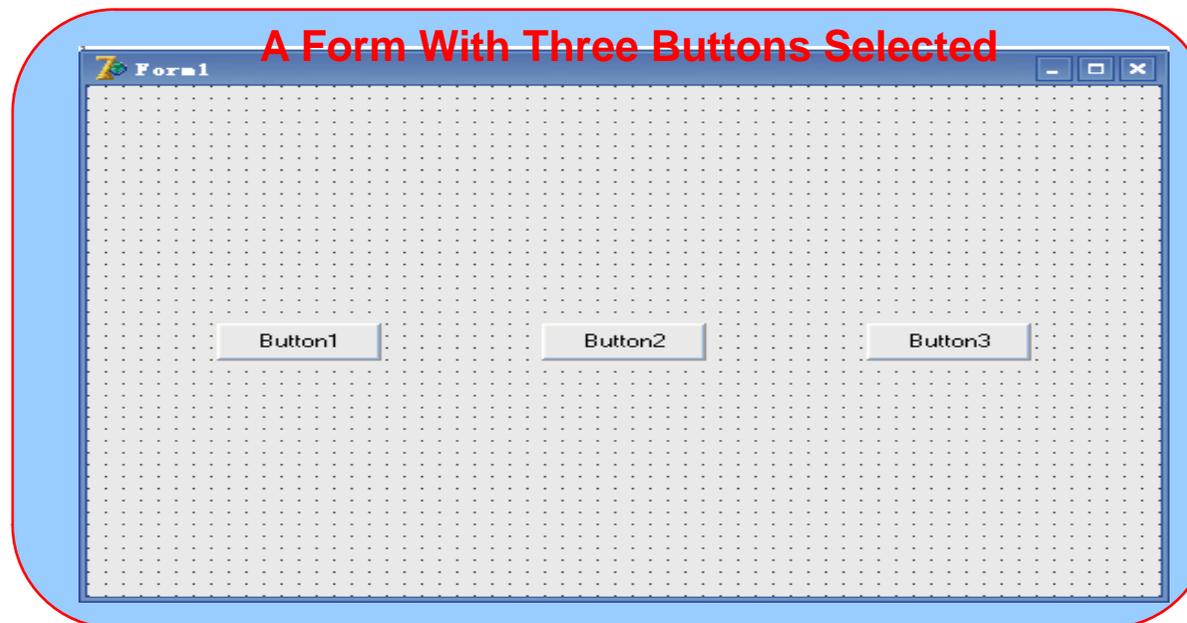
A Form With A Button Component Selected





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

- ❑ Selecting a Group of Components
- ❑ Selecting Components with **Shift+Click**

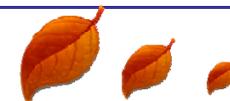
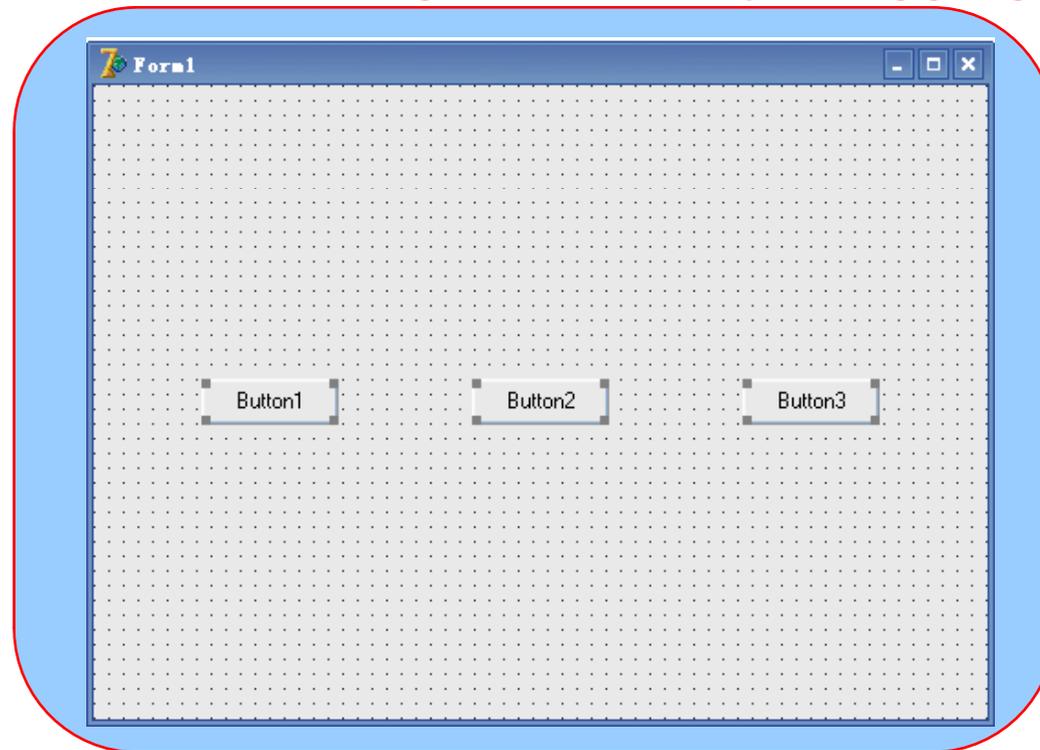




4.1 Working with the Form Designer

❑ Selecting Multiple Components by Dragging

Controls Being Selected By Dragging

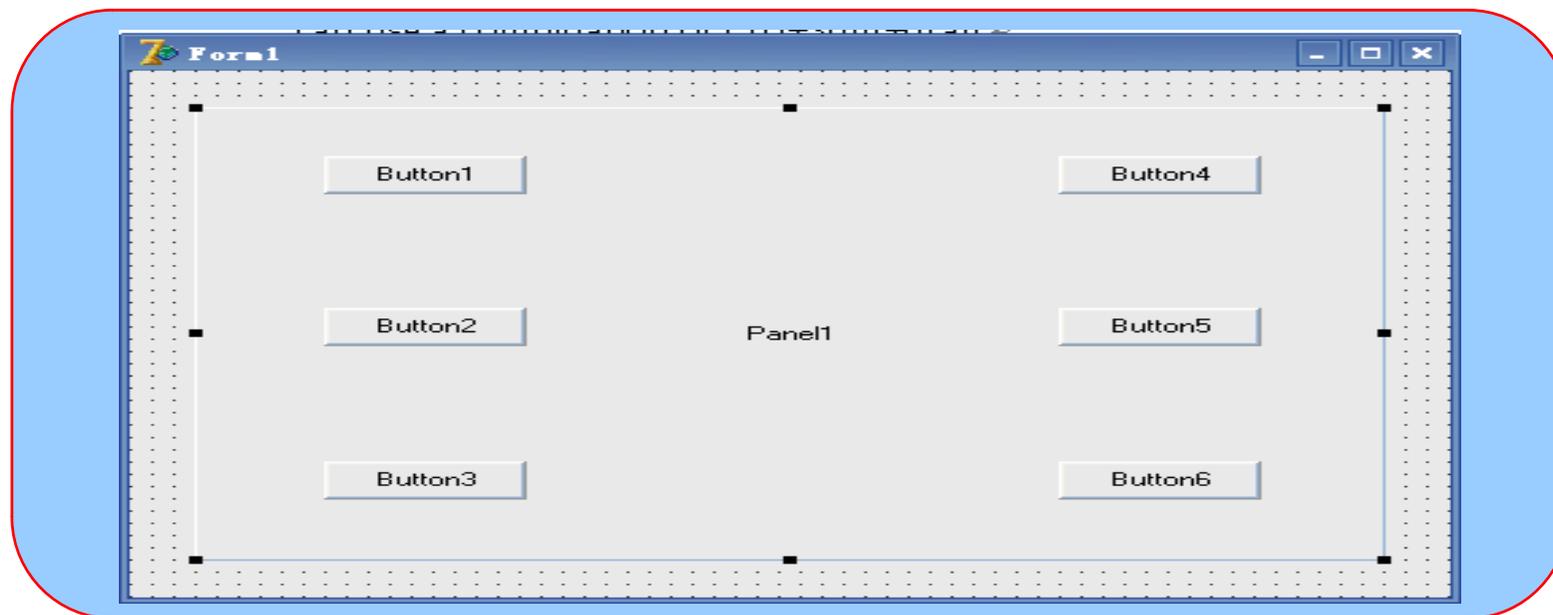




4.1 Working with the Form Designer

□ Selecting Multiple Items: Components within Components

The form with a panel and six buttons

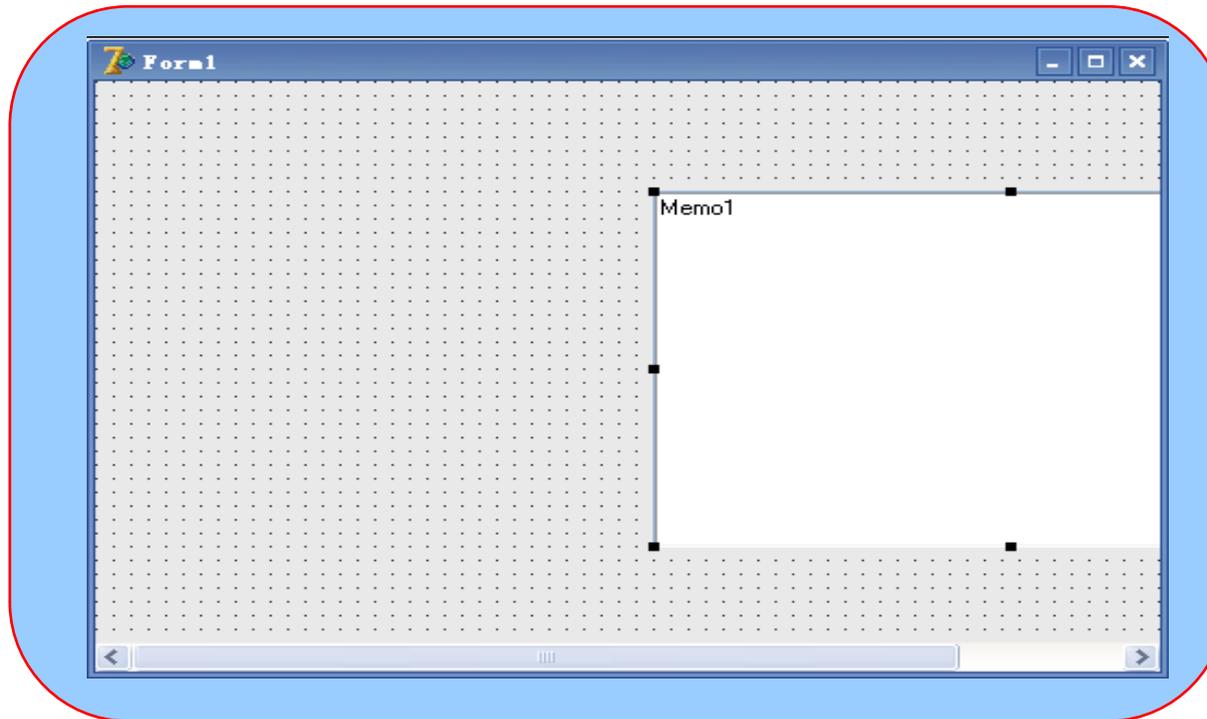




4.1 Working with the Form Designer

□ Moving Components

A Form With Autoscroll In Action





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

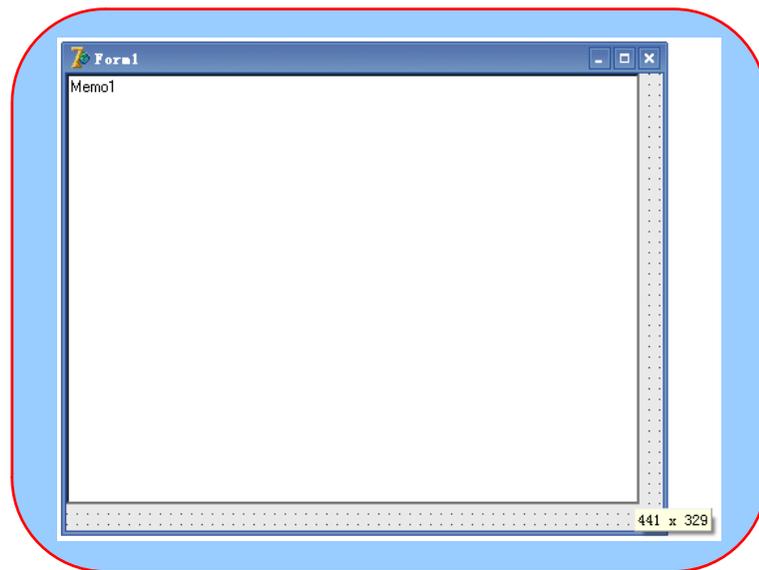
- ❑ Preventing Components from Being Moved or Sized
- ❑ Ordering, Cutting, Copying, and Pasting Components
- ❑ Sizing Components
- ❑ Sizing by Dragging



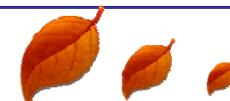
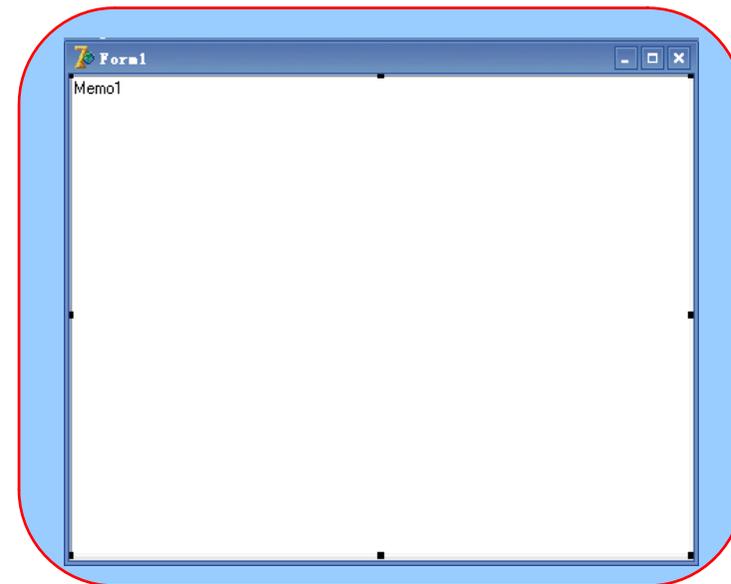


4.1 Working with the Form Designer

A Memo Component Being Sized



The Form After Sizing The Memo Component





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

□ Sizing with the Size Dialog Box

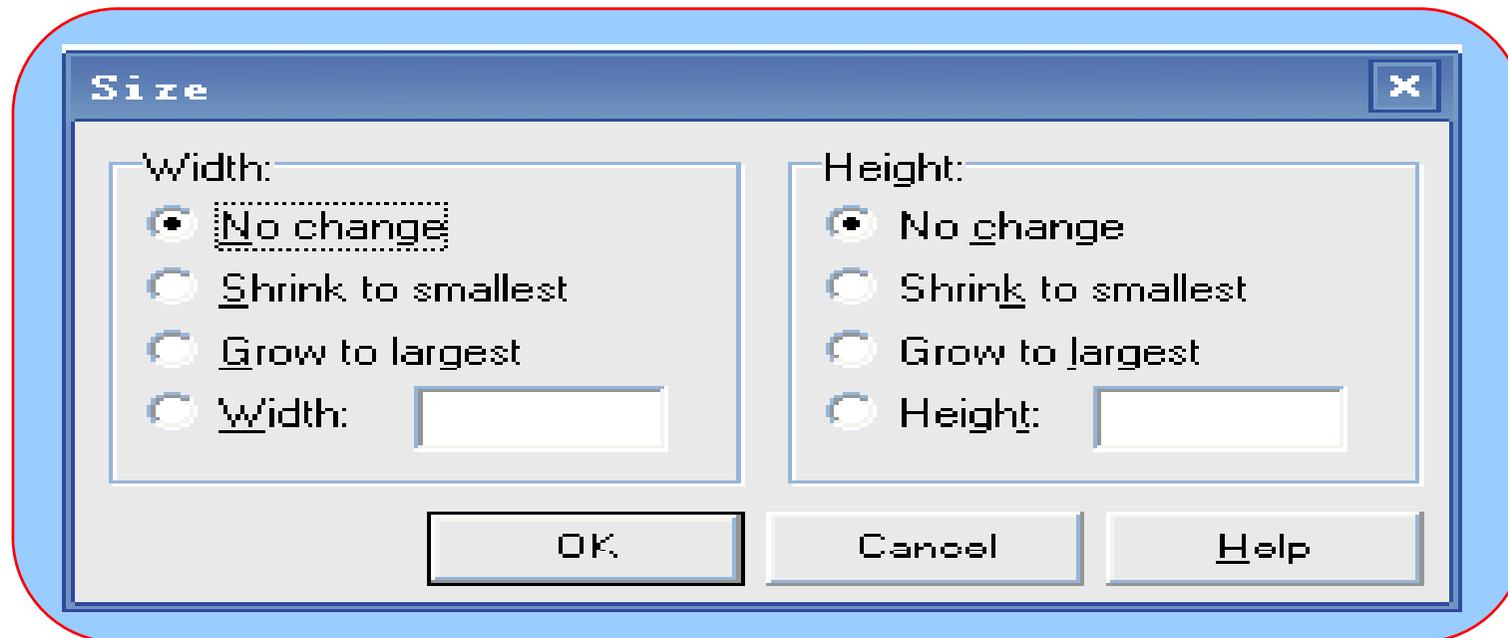


Figure 4.8. The Size Dialog Box.





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

□ Sizing with the Scale Dialog Box

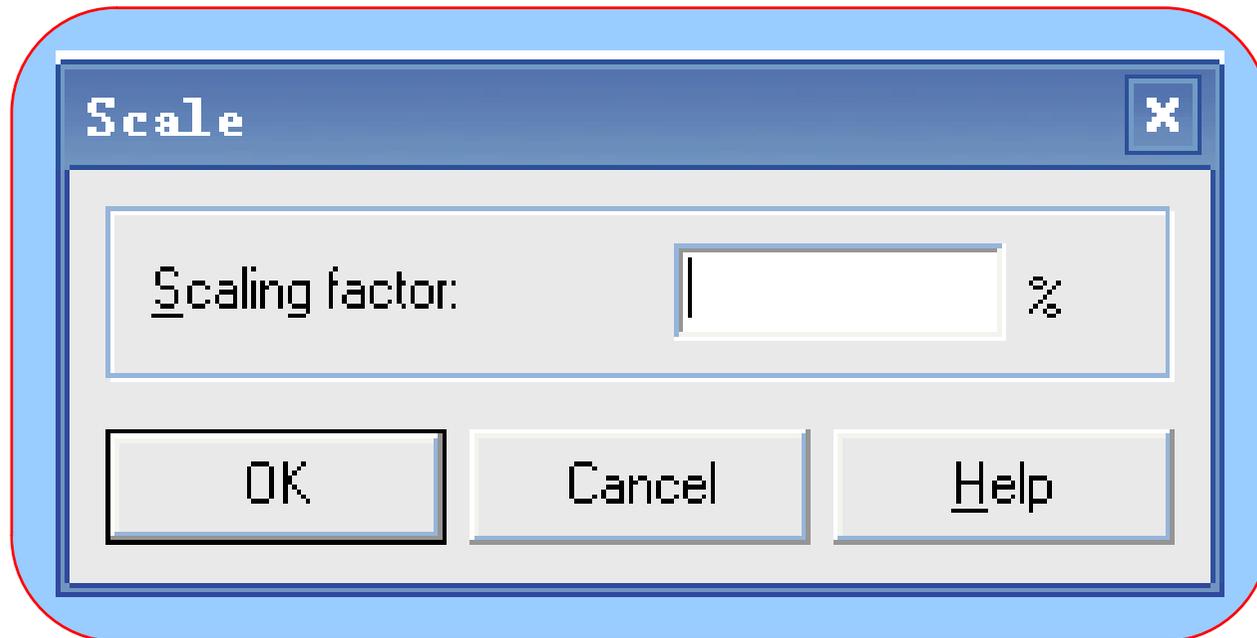


Figure 4.9. The Scale Dialog Box





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

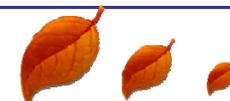
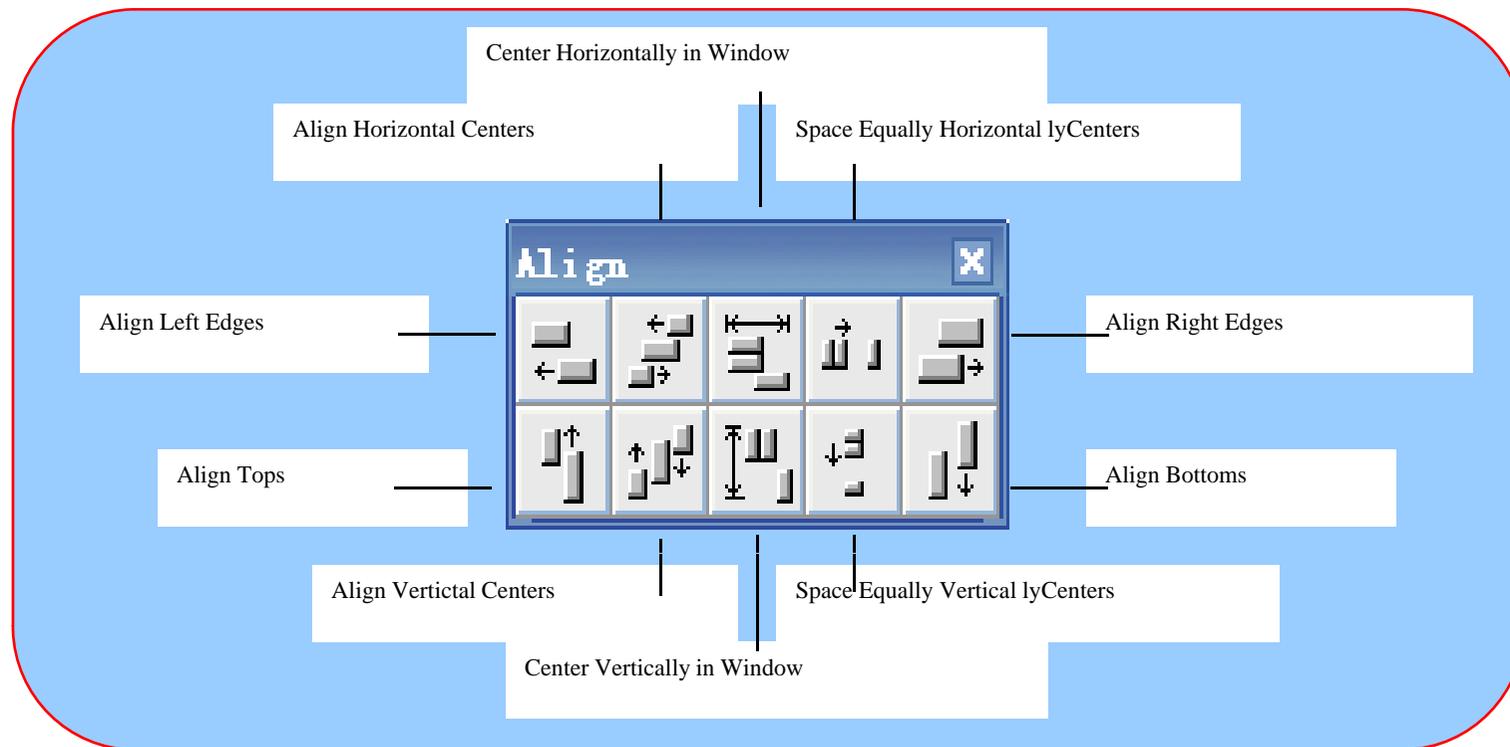
- ❑ **Aligning Components**
- ❑ **The Alignment Palette and the Alignment Dialog Box**





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

The Alignment Palette





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

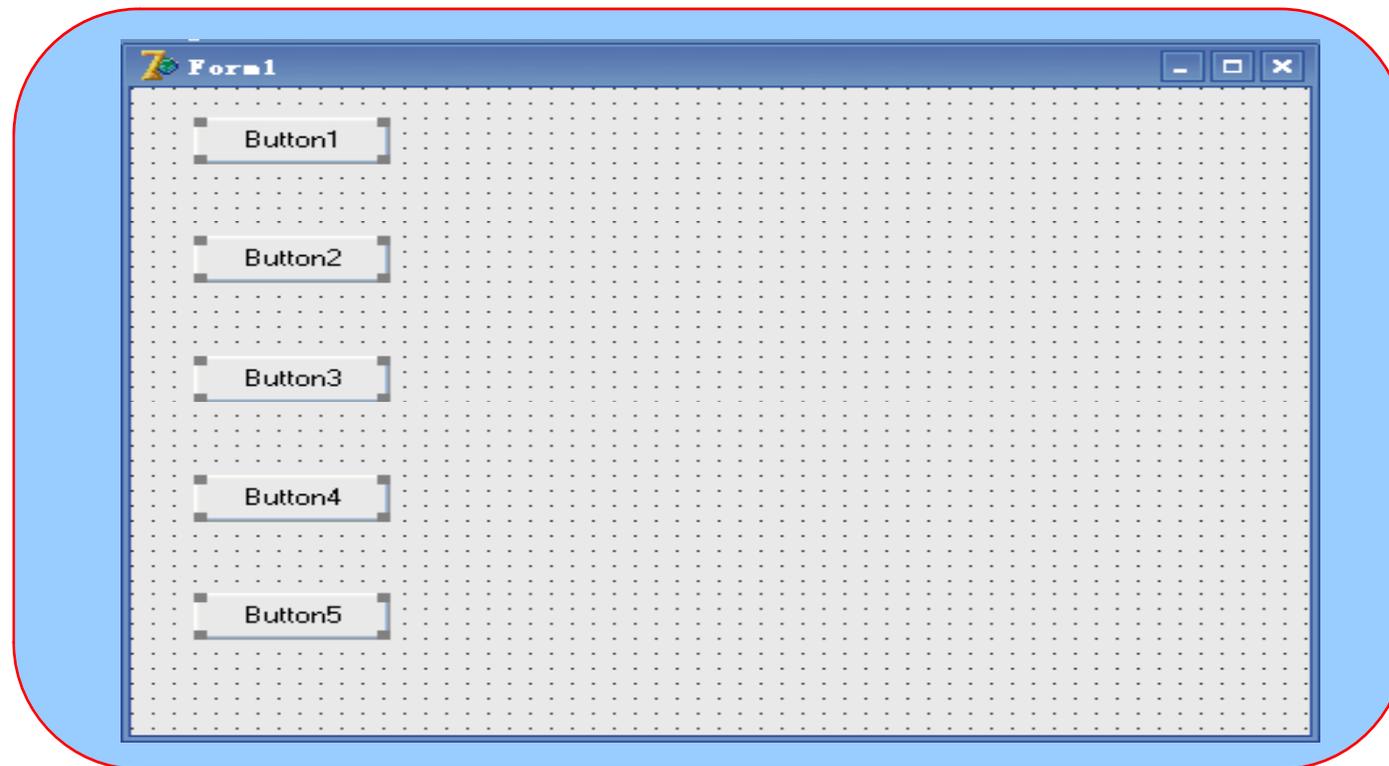
The Form With The Buttons Randomly Placed





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

The Form With The Buttons Aligned And Equally Spaced





4.1 Working with the Form Designer

The Alignment Palette's Context Menu Items

| <i>Menu Item</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|--------------------|--|
| Stay on Top | Forces the Alignment palette to always be on top. This is useful if you are frequently switching back and forth between the Form Designer and the Code Editor. Because the Alignment palette is a small window, it's easy to lose it. |
| Show Hints | Turns the hints (tooltips) for the Alignment palette buttons on and off. |
| Hide | Hides the Alignment palette. (You can also use the close box on the Alignment palette to hide it.) To show the Alignment palette again, you have to choose View Alignment Palette from |

