

Microsoft Excel – Essentials

These are the topics that you will find useful if you are getting started with Excel. You may already know the questions that you want to ask about Excel but if you are not sure what Excel can do then this lists some of the essential features of the application.

If you mainly use Excel to manage lists of data and can do the basics of entering and editing data on a worksheet then the topics from the 'Database Features' section will be of more interest.

If you use lots of calculations on your worksheets then once you can use functions and formulae at the basic level listed below the topics from the 'Functions and Formulae' section will extend your range of options.

- Introduction to Excel – what Excel can do – the Excel screen.
- Workbook basics – New, Open, Close, Save, Save As.
- Entering text, dates and numbers – editing – deleting.
- Selecting individual cells and cell ranges – selecting non-adjacent cells.
- Moving and copying data using the mouse and the clipboard.
- Using the Fill and AutoFill options to populate cells automatically if the data follows a pattern such as month names, weekday dates, the date of every Friday in the year – fill series of data across sheets in a workbook – create custom lists to use with the AutoFill option.
- Setting up basic calculations based on cell references – using the arithmetic operators – checking the answers – **Good Practice**.
- Copying calculations – understanding how cell references change when a calculated expression is copied – work with relative and absolute cell references.
- Formatting a worksheet – removing formats from cells.
- An introduction to the use of functions in Excel to extend the scope of calculations.
- Basic Excel functions: SUM, COUNT, COUNTA, MAX, MIN, AVERAGE.
- More advanced Excel functions including IF (to set a condition that affects the result of a calculation) and the logical operators AND and OR to allow multiple conditions to be tested before a result is calculated.
- Explore the range of functions available and use the Insert Function dialogue and associated 'Help'.
- Manage the sheets in a workbook by inserting, deleting, moving, copying and renaming worksheets.
- Set up a workbook with calculations across the sheets – set up links between the data in different workbooks.
- Printing worksheet data – determining what to print – set a print area to save the area to be printed.
- Use the page setup options to customise printing by altering the orientation, the scale and other presentational aspects such as including headers and footers (with information such as page numbers and print date), including, or not, the gridlines and whether to show the Row/Column labels.
- Create charts in Excel – choose a suitable chart type – select the correct range of cells – edit the completed chart – combination charts – understanding time data options.