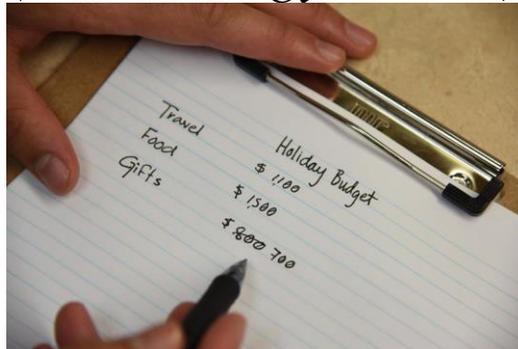


Student Achievement Workshop (*Technology Series*)



Using Spreadsheets:

Making the most of

Microsoft Excel and Other Spreadsheet Programs

Student Achievement Workshop Series
Academic Support and Achievement Center
Mt. San Antonio College
6-101

Overview:

Make keeping track of large amounts of numerical and non-numerical information efficient and professional looking by using MS Excel and other popular spreadsheet software programs. Receive tips to increase your efficiency. Learn about on- and off-campus resources to address your spreadsheet needs.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Learn the basics of using spreadsheet
- Discover a few formatting features in MS Excel and other spreadsheet programs
- Identify options students have for using MS Excel
- Find resources to help them become proficient with MS Excel

What is Microsoft Excel?

Microsoft Excel is simply the most common and well-known word spreadsheet software that allows you to create professional spreadsheets and keep track of a lot of information, particularly numerical information. It is a powerful tool and has many features that allow you to do a lot with that information. It is one of several programs offered in the Microsoft Office suite of programs. https://support.office.com/en-us/article/create-a-workbook-in-excel-94b00f50-5896-479c-b0c5-ff74603b35a3?wt.mc_id=fsn_excel_quick_start

Spreadsheet Basics

To understand how to use spreadsheets, it is important to start with basic spreadsheet vocabulary. Each user can organize their information however it works best for them. The image below shows what a simplistic spreadsheet looks like, and it contains the following elements:

Workbook: A workbook is the actual file that you will save and retrieve information. There may likely be multiple files, based on things such as each new year, new department, product, topic (household, vs. school budgets, etc.). A workbook can have several spreadsheets within one workbook file, which can track information on multiple, related topics. For example, a small business owner can have a workbook for each year, with different spreadsheets to track income, expenses, mileage, etc.)

Spreadsheet: A spreadsheet contains almost limitless capacity for columns and rows. Depending on what kind of information that is being tracked, list one type of information in columns and another in rows. For example, in the budget spreadsheet image below, the spreadsheet used rows to track different expense items, and columns for each month of the year.

Columns: List information vertically which can be helpful to list series of information.

Rows: List information horizontally to list a series of information.

Cells: Are where the column and row intersect. In the image below, Cell “C3” (highlighted) is where Column “C”, Row “3” is represents the budget expense amount for “Insurance for the Month of February”. Cells can also be used to list totals, which can be formatted to calculate and update automatically. (See Row 5 in image below.)

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Expense	Jan	Feb	Mar	
2	Phone	\$45.65	\$56.83	\$42.58	
3	Insurance	\$75.80	\$75.80	\$75.80	
4	Rent	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00	
5	Totals	\$871.45	\$882.63	\$868.38	
6					

Figure 1: Image of a sample spreadsheet for budget

Essential Formatting Tools:

The following are just a small number of formatting options available to you. These are presented because they will likely be the most needed for students to help them become efficient in formatting their spreadsheets. For help with additional formatting topics, refer below to “Getting More Help”.

These formatting tips can help you be efficient in tracking large amounts of numerical information. The longer the workbook, the more challenging it is to manage and to make it look professional. Using these formatting tools will make your documents look and behave the way you want them to.

These tools listed are from Microsoft Excel. However, you may be using another spreadsheet program, such as Google Sheets. The good news is that it is not hard to translate this information to another software program because learning a second software program is like learning to drive

a new car: The hard part actually learning to drive. Learning a new car just means learning how to find and work things like the lights, blinkers, and wiper blades, etc. Different software titles that do the same thing, are like that. If you understand what the tool does and how to use it, finding it on another software program is usually fairly easy.

Number Formats:

Number formatting can allow the user to format their numerical information automatically, thus saving time. For example, numbers can be formatted to display as dates, dollar amounts, percentages, and can be automatically aligned left, right, or by decimal. By simply entering “69” in the cell, it will automatically format as “\$69.00”, “69%”, or “0.69” based on how it is formatted. There are many more formatting options, that go beyond the scope of the workshop. See below to learn where you can get more help.

Formulas

Information tracked in spreadsheets can be used to generate results automatically. For example, a very simple formula to use is the “AutoSum” button (on the menu bar), which can automatically add up a column or row of highlighted numbers. In the image above, Cell B5 (January Total) can be set up to calculate and update automatically by simply placing the cursor in that cell, then clicking on the “AutoSum” button, then telling it what column to add up by highlighting Cells B2, B3, and B4. There are many other automated formatting formulas available, but the discussion of those topics goes beyond the scope of this workshop. See below to learn where you can get more help.

Sorting

Another great feature in Excel is the opportunity to sort your information by rows or columns. You can sort alphabetically, or numerically, from the highest to the lowest value, or the opposite. You can create custom sorts as well based on how you need to use your information. See below to learn where you can get more help.

Get More Help

If you need help in setting up, revising, editing, or formatting your spreadsheet, there are several in person and online resources that can help you.

Mt. SAC

If you need help with your homework assignments, Mt. SAC has several resources to help.

Academic Support Center (formerly Learning Assistance Center)

Students can get help with their technology-based homework challenges if they are having difficulty working with spreadsheet activities, the computer lab in the ASAC has technology tutors available to help. (See below: “Computer Lab Tutor”)

Academic Help for Other Subjects

The ASAC offers one-on-one tutoring on multiple subjects and workshops to help students address specific academic questions they may have.

<http://www.mtsac.edu/lac/docs/StudentAchievementWorkshopCalendar.pdf>

The Tutoring Center

Mt. SAC's Tutoring Center offers tutoring in all subjects, including help with writing assignments. http://www.mtsac.edu/lac/types_of_tutoring.html#writingtutoring

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is another campus resource that is devoted to helping students with their writing assignments. <http://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/tutoring.html>

Where to Access MS Excel

As a student at Mt. SAC, you have several ways to access the various MS Office programs. You can access it through the portal, go to a campus computer lab, you can install the software on your device, or you can subscribe to it online.

Mt. SAC Portal

Faculty, students and staff can access a free online version of MS Office (including Excel) through the Mt. SAC Portal. The link is in the upper right-hand corner of the main page once you log in. It is the first link, "Office 365".

The portal also offers access to Google Sheets as well. To access the Google Suite of software packages, open the "Mountie Mail" link which will take you to Gmail. Once you are in Gmail, there is a grid-icon in the upper right corner of your screen. Click on that icon to access Google Apps. Google Sheets is one of the apps available. Click on the link to access it.

Campus Computer Labs

If you don't have a computer, or a specific software program to get your school work done, you can always go to one of the campus computer labs (see below) and use their software programs for free. Usually, you will only pay for any printing you do.

Buy Software to Install (or Download) on Your Computer

You can make a one-time purchase of the software to install onto your computer or device. Purchase prices can vary greatly, costing up to \$500 for the whole package. Fortunately, as a community college student, you have access to greatly discounted prices through CollegeBuys.org (see below). You can get a complete copy of Microsoft Office for about \$40.00. You can also buy the software at your local retail store, or directly from Microsoft Office website.

Subscribe to Cloud-based MS Office

Individuals can just pay a low monthly fee to use Microsoft Office and its programs such as Word. The following link gives information about your subscription options.

<https://products.office.com/en-us/compare-all-microsoft-office-products?tab=2>

If you want more information, about the difference between MS Office 2016 and MS Office 365 you can learn more. The following link has a great in-depth comparison between Office 2016 (installed) and Office 365 (subscription).

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/what-s-the-difference-between-office-365-and-office-2016-ed447ebf-6060-46f9-9e90-a239bd27eb96?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US>

Get the Apps

Microsoft Office does not have its own app, but each of the individual programs can be downloaded to your mobile device. If you want to download the individual apps then go to your app store on your phone and type in the name of the program. You should be able to find a link for those products.

Getting More Help

Do you still need more help?

Computer Lab Tutor

Still need help with Microsoft Excel? Come to the Learning Lab (computer lab room) in Building 6, Room 101 and ask a technology tutor for individualized help. Or ask someone at the front desk for help.

Campus Help Desk

If you still need more help, you can contact the Mt. SAC Help Desk at (909) 274-4357.

<http://www.mtsac.edu/it/>

Take a Class

If you want more detailed proficiency in Microsoft Office, consider taking a class here at Mt. SAC. Go to the campus catalog for more information.

<http://catalog.mtsac.edu/programs/coursesaz/cisb/>

Credit-based classes:

- CISB 21 Microsoft Excel
- CISB 15 Microcomputer Applications
- CISB 16 Macintosh Applications

Or you can take non-credit classes:

- VOC CPBC2 - Basic Computing - Level 2
- VOC CSB15 - Microcomputer Applications

Online Excel Help:

There are countless online resources to help people learn Excel – from beginning to advanced. Microsoft offers a help center for each program. The Excel page offers links for “Getting Started”, “Rows, Columns, Cells,” Formulas & Functions,” “Formatting, “Tables & Charts”, “Pivot Tables”, and links for training videos.

- Microsoft Learning Link: <https://support.office.com/en-us/excel>
- YouTube videos: There are countless tutorials on YouTube that demonstrate everything from beginning to advanced features. Just type in the search bar “Excel tutorial” then ‘beginning,’ ‘formatting’, or whatever you are looking for help with. Most topics should be able to be covered in videos that are 20 minutes or less in length. Many can be as short as 1-3 minutes for simple topics.

Other Resources:

Do you not have access to the hardware and/or software you need to get your homework done? Don't stress because there is support for your technology needs.

On Campus Computer Labs

Mt. SAC has several campus computer labs where you can use their computer equipment, software and print your documents. Most of these resources (except printing) are free for eligible students to use. Be sure to bring your student ID cards because most of these labs require it to use their equipment.

<http://www.mtsac.edu/computerlabs/>

Technology Purchase Discounts

Need to buy technology and/or software? CollegeBuys.org is a great resource for getting discounts on technology, software, and accessories.

<http://foundationccc.org/CollegeBuys>

Summary

Microsoft Excel is the most widely used word processing software which is usually part of is a suite of bundled software programs in Microsoft Office. This workshop will familiarize participants with a few formatting tools in Excel for working with spreadsheets, and how to access help with buying or using MS Excel, and where to go for help with spreadsheet assignments.

Reflection

What did you learn from this workshop?

How can you use this information this week?
