Module 1: Introduction to Excel

Welcome to your Excel for Beginners Course

Before you begin the course, please read these important notes

Modules

The course is broken down into 36 modules. You are free to spend as long as you like on each module. Once you have finished the module, click the “Next” button at the bottom of the page to move to the next one.

Worksheets and Exercises for Completion

Worksheets: At the end of the modules you will find a Worksheet that will test your learning of the module.

Additional Exercises: Also available are additional exercises that you can use to practice the functions. Click on the link below to download the instructions and spreadsheets:

- Excel for Beginners Exercises - Student Instructions
- Excel for Beginners Exercises - Spreadsheets (Budget, Customers, Dates/Numbers, Inventory, Print, Sales, Suppliers, Training)

Please read the instructions carefully for these as you will need to save your spreadsheets upon completion of the exercises, for use throughout the course.

We also provide copies of the completed Excel exercises, in case you wish to refer to them for help/guidance:

- Results of Exercises

End of Course Test

At the end of the course, there is a 30-question test. Each question has multiple-choice answers and you will have 3 options to choose from, one of them is correct. In order to pass the test, you need to answer 70% (21/30) of the questions correctly. Don't panic if you don't pass the first time. You can take the test as many times as you need. If you do not pass on the first occasion, we recommend that you review the modules before taking the test again.

Completion of the Course

Once you have successfully completed the end-of-course test, you will be awarded your certification. You can download and print your certificate any time you want. If you would prefer us to send you a hard copy of your certificate by mail, we can do so for a small charge.

What you can do once you have completed the course

Once you have completed the course, you will have a great understanding of the basic concepts of Excel. You can then move on to some more complex functions with our Intermediate Excel Course.

Support

If you need any assistance, we are here to help you. Simply click on the support menu (located on the left of the page) and one of our support staff will get back to you as soon as possible. Please note, support hours are 9:00 - 17:30 Monday - Friday (we have limited support outside of these hours and your enquiry may take longer to respond to).

Let's Get Going

We hope you enjoy your course and wish you the best of luck with your future career. You can now begin your course.

1.1 Introduction

Microsoft Excel is one of the most widely used programs for visualizing, organizing and analyzing data.

Excel is used by a wide range of businesses and professionals, including accountants, financial analysts, data analysts, project managers, business analysts, and marketing professionals.

It can be used for budgeting, tracking expenses, data visualization, tracking hours, managing stock levels, analyzing customer data, project management, and innumerable other tasks.

It is also used by individuals to manage their own personal finances, plan meals, track their fitness, plan events, and so on.

Below are a few terms used in Excel and what they mean:

Cells

Cells are the basic building blocks of an Excel worksheet. Each cell has a unique address called a cell reference, which is a combination of the column letter and row number (e.g., A1, B2, C3, etc.). Cells can contain various types of data, including numbers, text, dates, and formulas.

Formulas

A formula is a set of instructions that performs a calculation on one or more values in Excel. Formulas always start with an equals sign (=) and can include mathematical operators (e.g., +, -, *, /), cell references, and functions (e.g., SUM, AVERAGE, MAX, MIN).

Functions

Functions are built-in formulas that perform specific calculations or tasks in Excel. Some common functions include SUM (adds a range of numbers), AVERAGE (calculates the average of a range of numbers), MAX (finds the maximum value in a range), and MIN (finds the minimum value in a range). Functions are typically used in formulas and can take arguments (i.e., inputs) in parentheses.

Relative and absolute cell references

When creating formulas in Excel, it is essential to understand the difference between relative and absolute cell references. Relative cell references adjust based on the location of the formula when copied or moved, whereas absolute cell references remain fixed. You can make a cell reference absolute by adding a dollar sign ($) before the column letter or row number (e.g., A1).

AutoFill

Excel's AutoFill feature is a quick and easy way to fill a series of cells with a pattern or sequence of values. For example, if you type "1" and "2" in two adjacent cells, you can use AutoFill to fill the remaining cells in the series with the numbers "3", "4", "5", etc.

Formatting

Excel offers many options for formatting cells to enhance their appearance and improve readability. You can change the font style and size, apply bold or italic formatting, adjust the alignment, add borders or shading, and much more. Formatting can also be applied to entire rows, columns, or worksheets.

These are just a few of the basic concepts in Excel. As you become more comfortable with the program, you can explore more advanced features and functions to create even more sophisticated spreadsheets.

The following is an overview of what you will learn in this course:

- Calculating sums, averages and totals
- Counting cells
- Learning formulas, such as IF, COUNTIF, SUMIF, VLOOKUP, HLOOKUP and AVERAGEIF
- Pivot tables
- Inserting, editing and deleting comments
- Creating borders
- Wrapping text
- Merging cells

- Pasting, sorting, and converting columns to rows
- Creating graphs and charts
- Using the dictionary
- Using hyperlinks