How to create a basic chart in Excel 2010

Quick Reference Card

Create a chart

1. Select the data that you want to chart.
2. On the ribbon, click the **Insert** tab. In the **Charts** group, select the chart type for the chart you want to create, and then click the chart subtype.

Tip   To change the chart type, click inside the chart. On the **Design** tab, in the **Type** group, click **Change Chart Type**, and select another chart type.

Chart Tools

After your chart is inserted, The **Chart Tools** appear, with three tabs: **Design**, **Layout**, and **Format**. On these tabs you'll find the commands you need to work with charts. When you complete the chart, click outside the chart. The **Chart Tools** go away. To get them back, click inside the chart.

Change the chart view

After you create a chart, you can make your chart compare data in more than one way. Click in the chart. On the **Design** tab, in the **Data** group, click **Switch Row/Column**.

Change the chart layout

You can add chart and axis titles, add a data table, delete gridlines, or add data labels quickly by changing the chart layout. Click in the chart. Then on the **Design** tab, in the **Chart Layouts** group, click the **More** button ⬇️ to see all the layouts. Click the one you want. Another way to apply layouts is to click the **Layout** tab and make selections individually in the **Labels** and **Axes** groups.

Change the look of a chart

To change chart colors, click in the chart. Then on the **Design** tab, in the **Chart Styles** group, click the **More** button ⬇️ to see all available colors. Then click the ones you want

If you don't see colors you want, you can get other colors by clicking the **Page Layout** tab, and then clicking **Colors** in the **Themes** group. When you rest the pointer over a theme, the theme is shown in a temporary preview on the chart. You see the theme's effect before you apply, saving you the step of undoing it if you don't like it. Click the one you like to apply it to the chart.

Important   The colors from the theme will be applied to other elements you add to the worksheet, such as tables, or cell styles.

Format chart titles

There are a number of options if you want to add formatting to chart or axis titles

1. Select a title.
2. On the **Format** tab, in the **WordArt Styles** group, click the arrow beside **Text Fill** to add a color. You can also pick a gradient or a texture. Of you can click the arrow beside **Text Outline** or **Text Effects** in the **WordArt Styles** group to add visual styles to titles.

To make font changes, such as making the font larger or smaller, or to change the font, click the **Home** tab, and go to the **Font** group. Or you can make the same formatting changes by using the **Mini toolbar**. The toolbar appears in a faded fashion after you select text. If you point at the toolbar it becomes solid, and then you can select formatting options.

More formatting options

1. Select a data series (in a column chart, for example, that means that you would click one column to select all the columns for that person or region).

If you have any trouble selecting a series, click the **Format** tab, and go to the **Current Selection** group. Click the arrow in the box at the top of the group, look for the name of the series you want, and then select it in the list.

2. On the **Format** tab, in the **Shape Styles** group, you can for example, click the arrow on **Shape Effects**, point to **Shadow**, and then rest the pointer on the different shadow styles in the list. You can see a preview of the shadows as you rest the pointer on each style. When you see one you like, click it.

Other options in the **Shape Styles** group are **Shape Fill**, where you can add a **Gradient** or a **Texture** to the column and **Shape Outline**.