

Charts Introduction

A **chart** is a tool you can use in Excel to **communicate your data graphically**. Charts allow your audience to see the meaning **behind the numbers**, and they make showing **comparisons** and **trends** a lot easier. In this lesson, you will learn how to **insert** charts and **modify** them so that they communicate information effectively.

Excel workbooks can contain **a lot of data**, and that data can often be difficult to interpret. For example, where are the highest and lowest values? Are the numbers increasing or decreasing?

The answers to questions like these can become much clearer when the data is represented as a **chart**. Excel has many different types of charts, so you can choose one that most effectively represents the data.

Types of Charts

The chart or graph type will depend on the data for which you are going to plot the chart. The most commonly used types include Column Chart, Line Graphs, Pie Chart, Bar Graph, Area Chart, Scatter Graphs, Stock Chart, and Surface Chart, among many others. Lets discuss these chart types, and the situations in which a specific chart type is used.

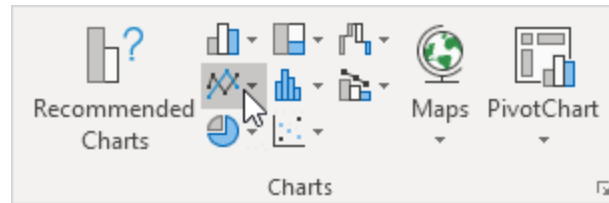
Create a Chart

To create a line chart, execute the following steps.

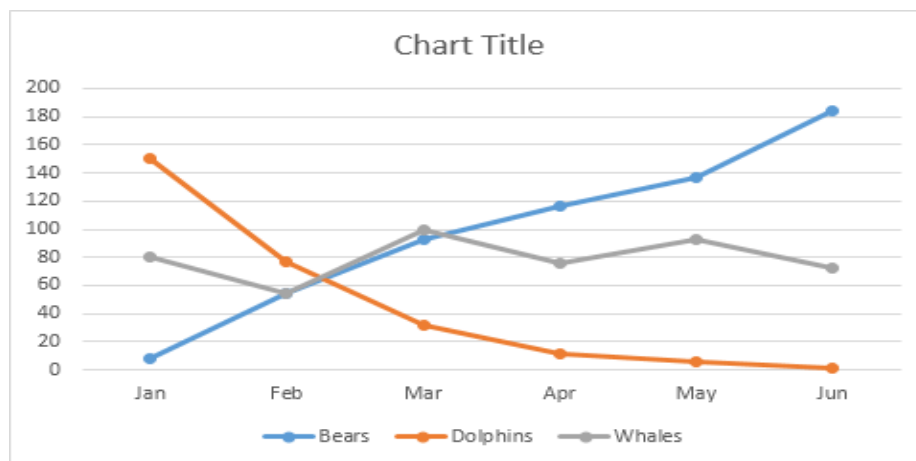
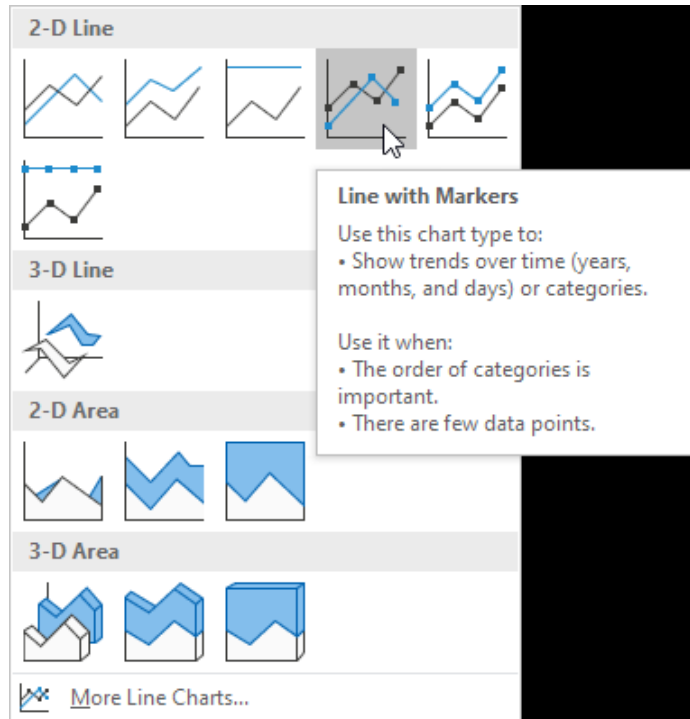
1. Select the range A1:D7.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Month	Bears	Dolphins	Whales	
2	Jan	8	150	80	
3	Feb	54	77	54	
4	Mar	93	32	100	
5	Apr	116	11	76	
6	May	137	6	93	
7	Jun	184	1	72	
8					

2. On the Insert tab, in the **Charts** group, click the Line symbol.



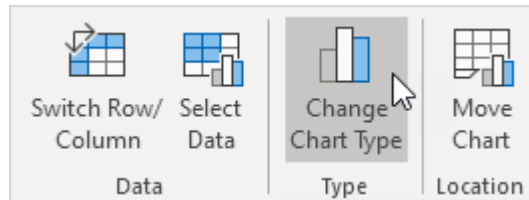
3. Click Line with Markers.



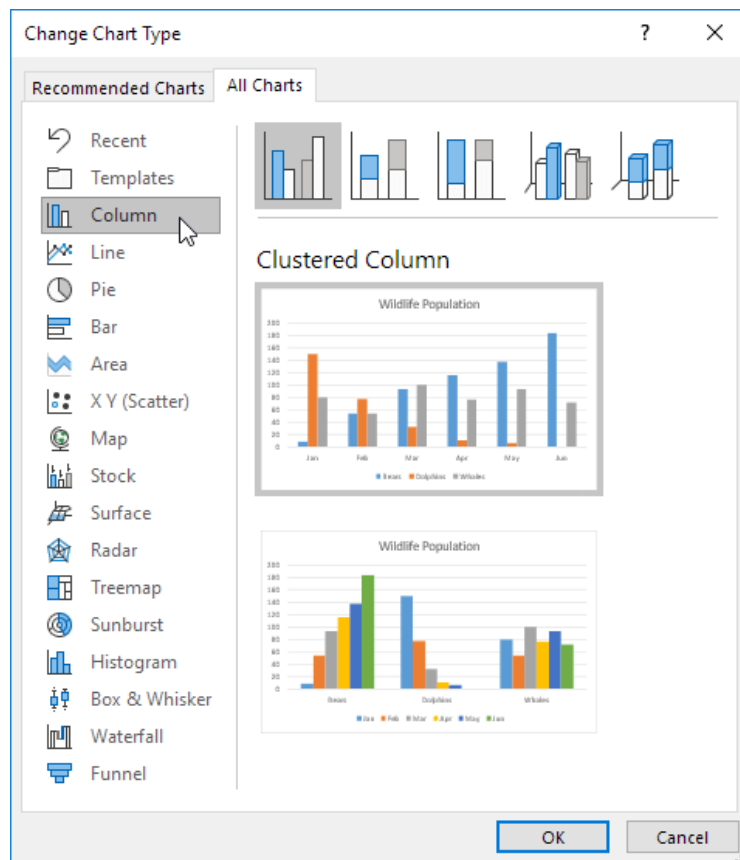
Change Chart Type

You can easily change to a different type of chart at any time.

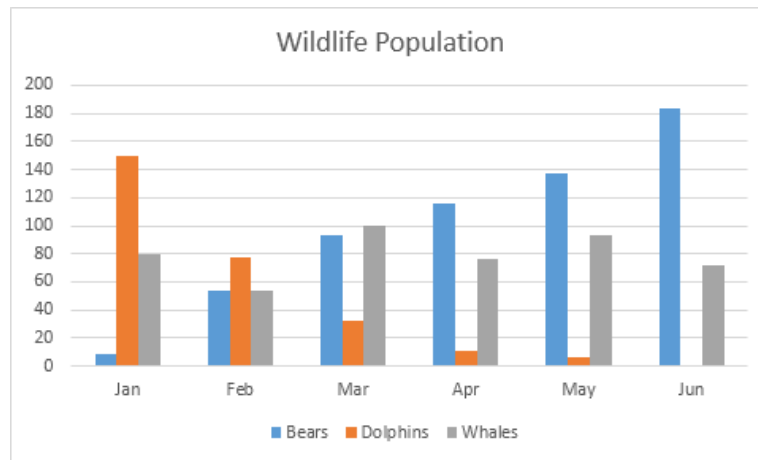
1. Select the chart.
2. On the Chart Design tab, in the Type group, click Change Chart Type.



3. On the left side, click Column.



4. Click OK.

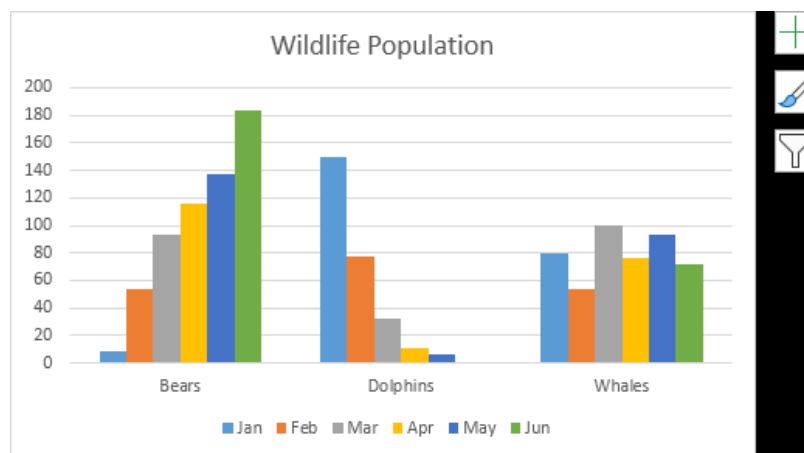
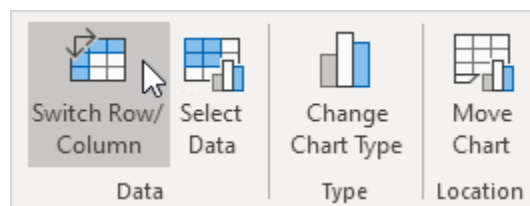


Switch Row/Column

If you want to display the animals (instead of the months) on the horizontal axis, execute the following steps.

1. Select the chart.

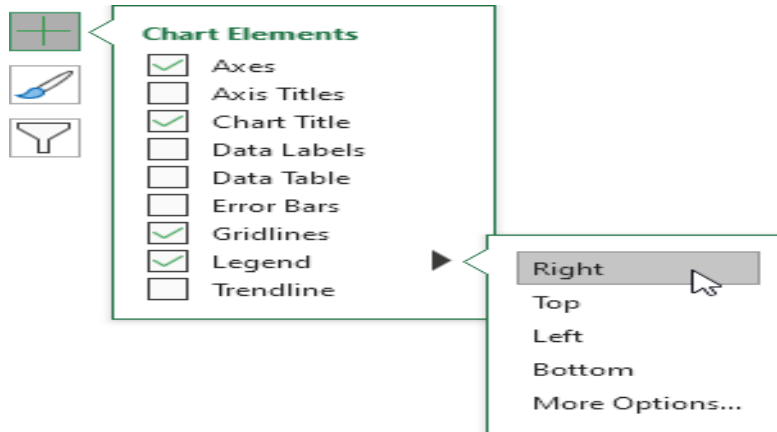
2. On the Chart Design tab, in the Data group, click Switch Row/Column.



Legend Position

To move the legend to the right side of the chart, execute the following steps.

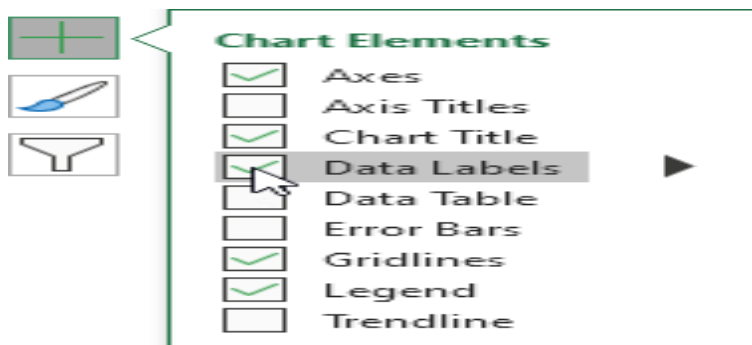
1. Select the chart.
2. Click the + button on the right side of the chart, click the arrow next to Legend and click Right.



Data Labels

You can use data labels to focus your readers' attention on a single data series or data point.

1. Select the chart.
2. Click a green bar to select the Jun data series.
3. Hold down CTRL and use your arrow keys to select the population of Dolphins in June (tiny green bar).
4. Click the + button on the right side of the chart and click the check box next to Data Labels.

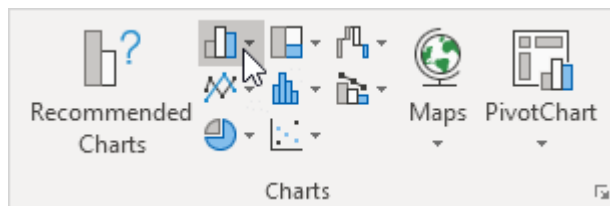


Column Chart

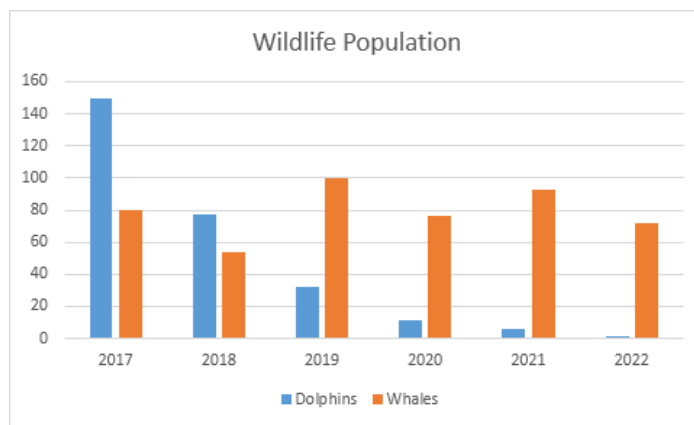
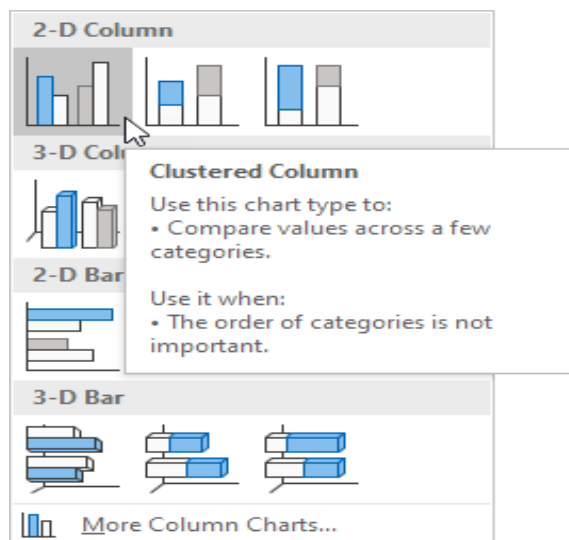
Column charts are used to compare values across categories by using vertical bars.

To create a **column chart**, execute the following steps.

1. Select the range A1:A7, hold down CTRL, and select the range C1:D7.
2. On the Insert tab, in the Charts group, click the Column symbol.



3. Click Clustered Column.



Pie Chart

Pie charts are used to display the contribution of each value (slice) to a total (pie). Pie charts always use one data series.

