



Excel Basics in 30 Minutes

Ian Lamont

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Do you want to learn how to use Microsoft Excel, for a career boost or to better handle numbers, lists, and other data? The revised and expanded second edition of Excel Basics In 30 Minutes will quickly get you up to speed with basic spreadsheet concepts, tips, and tricks! Excel Basics In 30 Minutes, 2nd Edition is written in plain English, with lots of step-by-step instructions, screenshots, and examples that demonstrate exactly what to do. Instructions apply to recent versions of Excel, including Excel 2013, Excel for Office 365, and Excel Online. For users who don't own Excel, the guide explains how to use a free online spreadsheets program called Google Sheets.

Topics include:

- * Screen layout, cells, and terminology
- * Formatting cells and text
- * AutoFill
- * Formulas and functions
- * Charts
- * Sorting and filtering
- * Printing
- * Exporting PDFs

The full table of contents follows:

Introduction - Excel: Not just for nerds!

Chapter 1 - The basics: cells, functions, and formulas

- * The different flavors of Excel (and Google Sheets)
- * Using this guide with Excel and Google Sheets
- * Firing up Excel and creating a new file
- * Spreadsheet terminology
- * Working with cells
- * Your first spreadsheet formula
- * Introducing functions with SUM
- * AutoSum and the one Greek letter you need to know
- * Quickly accessing other functions
- * Formatting cells and text

Excel Ninja Skill #1: AutoFill

- * AutoFill magic
- * Formulas and AutoFill
- * Dragging to extend functions

Chapter 2 - More basic Excel skills: percentages, pasting, and rows

- * Working with multiple worksheets
- * How to create a new worksheet

- * Copy, paste, and paste special
- * How to duplicate a worksheet
- * Adding rows
- * What happens to functions, formulas, and references
- * Using percentages
- * Parentheses and PEMDAS
- * Declining percentages
- * Static cell references
- * Spreadsheet division
- * Referencing other worksheets

Excel Ninja Skill #2: Charts

- * Chart wizards
- * Pie charts
- * Chart options and customizations
- * Editing charts in Excel
- * Editing charts in Google Sheets

Chapter 3 - Sorting and filtering

- * Sorting
- * Hiding rows and columns
- * Rearranging a list in alphabetical order
- * An alternate sorting scenario
- * Sorting with multiple criteria
- * Filtering

Chapter 4 - Printing, PDFs, and import/export features

- * Printing
- * Adjust column widths
- * Switch from portrait to landscape mode
- * How to set the print area
- * Printing cell outlines
- * Exporting PDFs
- * Importing and exporting
- * Importing data into Excel
- * Exporting data
- * Exporting charts

Excel Basics In 30 Minutes, 2nd Edition is authored by Ian Lamont, an award-winning technology writer and author of Google Drive & Docs In 30 Minutes.

Excel Basics in 30 Minutes Details

Date : Published January 8th 2015 by i30 Media (first published October 2012)

ISBN :

Author : Ian Lamont

Format : Paperback 102 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Computer Science, Software

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From Reader Review Excel Basics in 30 Minutes for online ebook

Jennifer says

I found this book (which I won in a GoodReads giveaway) to be very informative and easy to follow. It took me about an hour to get through it since I was making sample spreadsheets as I read. I have used Excel before but only in a limited fashion - this book taught me how to use formulas, make charts, and sort. I really liked the screenshots in the book because I could check to see if my sample spreadsheet matched the one in the book. I would definitely recommend this guide to a friend!

Diane says

Fast and easy this book is everything it claims to be. The material presented is very basic but it is also incredibly accessible with step by step screenshots and a friendly tone more like a friend or co-worker explaining how to use Excel than a technical manual.

Lauren White says

Nice guide to learning how to use Excel for most basic functions. As someone who only uses Excel occasionally, I found the tutorials to be easy to follow. Additionally the visual aids (images of what your screen should look like) were beneficial. It is an easy book to reference if you are having an issue with a particular Excel task.

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Robin says

I have been out of the office environment for several years and now starting to use Excel again. This has been a great refresher course. Thanks so much for the free books. I have read through and now it sits next to my computer as a reference manual. Thanks again.

Thomas says

I received a copy through the Goodreads "First-Reads" giveaway, so my thanks to Goodreads and the Author.

It's like a "Cliffnotes" book for Excel 101.

It actually did take me 30 minutes to get through this - I may have had an edge because I use Excel at work so a complete newbie may need more time. But still, after 30 minutes you'll know a good amount. To be

efficient like that is a big plus to the author.

My Excel use at work is in a very general capacity and usually have to troubleshoot through things to learn them - my point being I immediately saw the benefit of having this book at my desk as amgo-to guide for when I need it (Ahhh how do I make this graph?!). Sometimes even the basic stuff gets lost if you don't do it for a long time. So if you are like me - you use Excel sometimes and aren't a total idiot with it but get mixed up from time to time - get the book!

As far as the nut's and bolts of writing go the reading is good, the author talks/teaches on your level. He mentions right out the bat that the book is for basics only, so if you are confident in the basics (and do not need a safety net in your desk like me) than this isn't for you. The book sets out and accomplishes everything it says it will.

However, the book was lacking 3 minor things for me. 1.)The end-of-chapter quiz's was a nice touch - but writing them more as "Practice Exercises" would have a better effect, written in a more "summarizing" way so I can go back and figure out something if I missed it.

2.) An appendix at the end that had quick guides would have been nice - something I could quickly look at to see a quick tip (with the page number next to it if I need to go further into it - like a TOC in the but with tiny summaries for each item. I feel like I've seen things like this in other quick-learn books.

3.) An appendix for further reading! I know the basics - what should I do now? What can I read? How can I learn more? What's your advice?

That said - the book does it job - it teaches you the basics of Excel. It's well-written, clear and efficient. I feel better knowing this book is in my desk drawer.

April says

I received Excel Basics free through Goodreads First Reads.

Chapter 1: The Basics; Took more than 30 min but was pretty easy and I answered all the quiz questions no problem.

Chapter 2: Percentages, Pasting, and Rows; Took over an hour. While I was able to replicate everything in the exercise I learned nothing! I hate math and the formulas were not explained well enough for me to understand how to ever apply them in real life. As for the quiz.... not flipping clue how to answer the questions.

Chapter 3: Sorting and Filtering; less confusing than ch.2 but will need to be reread a couple times before it sinks in.

Chapter 4: Printing, PDFs, and Importing/Exporting; started reading but didn't finish as I was burned out from earlier chapters and do not actually need to know how to do it at this time. If and when I ever do need to know I'll come back to it.

Paula says

I received this book as a goodreads gift and it is very much appreciated. I have used excel a lot in my job but mostly just basic stuff, nothing too flashy. I have been a SAHM for about three years so I thought this was a great refresher book for someone who hasn't used it in some time or a great intro to a new user. The screenshots were good and I loved that he also explained a lot of google docs examples as well. I thought this was well done and I would recommend it to others. Great job!

Jonathan says

I won this book in a First Reads contest.

It will take readers more than 30 minutes to complete this book, even if they are experienced in Excel or in Google Spreadsheets. It takes more than 30 minutes just to read the book, without following the tutorial.

This book teaches readers the basics on the use of spreadsheet programs. Unlike many other tutorial books, this book is applicable to more than one version of Excel, and is also applicable to Google Spreadsheets. The author uses a single example throughout the book in order to demonstrate spreadsheet concepts. The tutorial is clearly written, and there are many pictures to guide the reader.

Readers should be aware of a few things.

It is very hard to keep the paperback edition open while following the author's instructions.

As specified in the title, this book teaches the basics of Excel, so do not expect to become an instant expert. However, the basics are taught very clearly.

In a few places in the book, it is clear that the author edited the instructions, causing a mismatch between the instructions and the images that accompany them.

It seems that the author assumes some basic knowledge. For example, in one location, the instructions mention that the reader should save the spreadsheet, without showing the reader how this can be accomplished.

Despite these issues, the tutorials are clear and interesting, even though they involve more than 30 minutes of effort.

Mark Hiser says

This is a fast-and-dirty introduction to the basics of Excel and Google spreadsheets. Actually, it is a good first introduction. The reader will not be an expert, but the book will begin to demystify spreadsheets.

Judy says

This is a great book to keep by your desk. I am always forgetting how to work Excel when I need something. This book is for the person that doesn't use Excel all the time...and can't remember that next step. I'm going to keep my copy on the shelf next to my desk. Don't want to be without this book.

I won this book from GreatReads.
