Excel cheat sheet

**Percentage change** -- The new number minus the old number, divided by the old number  
example: =(b2-a2)/a2

**Percent of total** – This is when you want to calculate the percentage that each piece makes up of the greater whole. Requires that you have a grand total calculated somewhere on your worksheet. Formula is the cell that contains the “piece” divided by the grand total. Be sure to “anchor” your grand total with dollar signs.  
example: = b2/$b$50

**Adding together** – If you have a big column or row of numbers you want to add together (like to get a grand total), it’s best to use the SUM function. If you’re just adding a couple cells – for example two or three cells in each of your rows – then you can put a plus sign between each cell address.  
examples: =SUM(b2:b50) or =b2+d2+e2

**Subtracting cells** – Similar to adding two or more cells together  
example: =b2-c2

**Average and median** – Excel has built-in functions for calculating the average or the median of a row or column of numbers. Rule of thumb: calculate both and if they are vastly different from each other, it’s better to use the median.  
examples: =AVERAGE(b2:b50) =MEDIAN(b2:b50)

**Sorting –** Make sure your cursor is somewhere inside your data (but don’t highlight anything). Go to the Data ribbon/menu and choose the big “Sort” button (for a custom sort). In the dialog box that pops up, choose which column you want to sort by and whether you want largest to smallest, smallest to largest, etc. If you get an error message asking you “do you want to expand your selection?”, say yes.

**Summarizing** – The SUM function noted above is best for adding together a row or column of numbers. But if you want to “group” your data into buckets and then find out how many items or how much money or some other number are within EACH of your groups, then you need to summarize your data using a PivotTable. Example: You have campaign finance donations and you want to see which candidate received the most money. The field listing the candidate name would be your bucket (or “row”) and the field with the dollar value of the donations would be your “value”.

**Copy-Paste Special-Values** – Use this to remove formulas from a column or row of data so that only the “answer” remains. First highlight and copy the data that has the formulas. Right-mouse click where you want to paste the data (can be over the top of existing data)and choose “Paste Special”. In the dialog box that comes up choose “Values” and hit ok.