Basic Excel Data Analyst Interview Questions

1. What are the common data formats in Microsoft Excel?

Excel can accommodate a number of basic and advanced data formats. Some of the most common ones are numbers, percentages, dates, and text.

2. How are data formats used in Excel?

There are many ways in which one can use data formats in Excel. For example, numbers can be used as decimals or rounded figures, percentages can be used to show part of a whole (the whole being 100%), dates can be changed depending on the region and location that Excel is connected to, and text can be used to analyze data and reports imported from other spreadsheets. These formats are often used in conjunction with one another when doing more advanced coding and manipulation, which we will cover further in the article (for example, multiplying a number by a percentage).

3. What is a spreadsheet and what are its fundamental components?

A spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel is made up of cells organized into rows and columns. Information is inputted into the cells in order to organize, display and manipulate data. For example, a spreadsheet can contain the names of a list of products, the price per unit, and the number of units sold. This enables the viewer to read and search through this list and make calculations for what data needs to be analyzed.

4. In how many formats can Microsoft Excel export data?

There are a total of six formats in which data can be exported. They are:

1. Excel workbook: .xlsx

2. Excel macro-enabled workbook: .xlsm

3. Excel binary workbook: .xlsb

4. Template: .xltx

5. Template (code): .xltm

6. XML data: .xml

Choosing which format to export it may be dependent on the team that needs the file or constraints on how large a file can be for its end destination.

5. How can you wrap the text within a cell?

Wrapping text is useful for data presentation and keeping your sheet clean. You must select the text you want to wrap, click wrap text from the home tab, and you will see the text wrap within a cell.

6. What is a Ribbon in Excel?

A Ribbon refers to the topmost area of the application that contains menu items and toolbars available in MS Excel. Ribbons can be shown/hidden using CTRL+F1. The ribbon runs on the top of the application and acts as a replacement for the toolbars and menu dropdowns that can be hard to navigate without lots of muscle memory. The ribbons have various tabs on the top, and upon clicking on it you can see a group of commands which you can use without having to re-navigate to the tab header. Additionally, hovering over ribbon commands will show you the hotkey combination to perform that function, so that you can memorize some of the functions you use most often.

7. What order of operations do you use when evaluating formulas in Excel? In other words, in what order will Excel formulas process the inputted code?

The same as you use in mathematics which is defined by the term "PEMDAS" or "BEDMAS". This stands for:

- Parentheses or Brackets

- Exponent

- Multiplication

- Division

- Addition

- Subtraction

8. What are cells In Excel?

Each worksheet on Microsoft Excel is comprised of multiple rows and columns. The points where the rows and columns intersect form a rectangle, which is also known as a cell.

9. What is a cell address and how is it denoted in Excel?

The cell address is a unique identification value given to every cell on an Excel sheet to make it easier to find data present on the document. The cell address is denoted by the respective column letter and corresponding row number for the cell. The notation is simple, A1 is the left uppermost cell in a spreadsheet, and other cells count outwards from there.

10. How do you delete unwanted sheets in your Excel workbook?

Right click on the bottom sheet tab of the sheet that you wish to delete. The right click will bring up a menu of options, one of which is delete. Selecting delete will activate a prompt that asks if you are ready to permanently delete the sheet; make sure you have a saved version or really are positive you will no longer need the information contained within.

11. Can you add annotations to a cell in your Excel workbook? If yes, how?

You can annotate a cell in excel using multiple techniques like utilizing colors, callouts, and cell comments.

12. What are cell references?

Cell references are used to refer to data located in the same Excel spreadsheet but to data in a different cell. This becomes useful when building custom formulas that rely on data from different locations within the same sheet or from a different sheet.

13. How do you insert a comment into an Excel spreadsheet?

To add a comment to a sheet, right click on the sheet you want to add the comment to and choose insert comment from the menu. Type your comment in the comment area provided. Cell comments are directly linked to specific cells and are indicated by a red triangle in the corner of a cell. To see the comment, simply hover over the cell with your mouse.

14. Can you protect your data in Excel? If so, how?

There are three ways in which you can do this, and they are: Setting passwords to open the workbook. Adding, removing or hiding sheets (make sure you have reviewed how to unhide the sheet for future reference). Protecting the sheet from the alteration of window sizes or positions.

15. How many cell formats are possible in Microsoft Excel?

Microsoft Excel 2003 can handle 4,000 different cell format combinations, and Excel 2007 and later can handle 64,000. Any unique combination of formats counts towards this number: for example, one cell formatted with Arial font and pink fill color, and another cell with Arial font and blue fill color, would count as two different combinations.

16. How do you change the formatting of a cell in Excel?

The default font of all cell content in a workbook is Calibri (in black). However, this can be changed by selecting any cell and clicking the Font drop-down menu on the Home tab. You can change the font, size and color and make your text bold, italic or underlined. Other options available to you include: - Cell Fill colors. - Cell Borders. - Cell styles. - Auto number formatting (adding currency symbols, percentage symbols, etc). - Alignment. - Auto text formatting (changing the appearance of dates and times etc).

17. What does the red triangle in the upper right corner of a cell denote?

A red triangle in the upper right corner of a cell indicates that a cell comment has been attached to this cell. If you hover over the cell with your cursor, the comment will be displayed. Check back to "How do you insert a comment" above to review that process.

18. What does an Absolute Cell Reference accomplish in Excel?

Absolute cell referencing is the exact opposite of relative cell referencing. By marking the row number and column letter with a $ symbol (e.g. A1), you can make a cell reference fixed (or "absolute"). This means that when you copy and paste it to another cell or use AutoFill, the cell references will not change.

19. What is the function of the dollar sign in Microsoft Excel?

When you insert the dollar sign, it tells a cell in Excel whether to change the location of the reference or not, if the formula for it is copied to other cells. You can also make only the row or column absolute ($A1, or A$1), in order to allow a portion of a reference to be updated when pasting or AutoFilling.

20. What is the shortcut to the Data Filter on Excel?

The shortcut to turn filters on or off is Ctrl+Shift+L. To display the filter drop-down menu, the shortcut is Alt+Down Arrow

21. What is the difference between a function and a formula in Excel?

Formulas are written instructions for a calculation in Excel. All calculations within a spreadsheet will be written as formulas (e.g. =C3+C4+C5+C7+C8). On the other hand, functions are prewritten formulas and a feature of Excel. Excel has over 500 built-in functions that allow users to achieve complicated calculations without having to create the formula themselves, or type it out in full.

22. How do you clear the cell formatting without removing text?

You need to go to the Home tab, click the Clear button and then select the option for Clear Formats. Any formatting done on the cell will be removed without affecting content.

23. How do you enter the current date and time on an Excel sheet?

=NOW() function will return the current date and time. If you just want to enter the current time, but not date, use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Shift+semicolon key, and for the current date without time, press Ctrl+Semicolon.

24. What is a Dashboard?

A dashboard is used to present important information through graphical representation. It is helpful in presenting huge data on a single computer screen so it can be reviewed with a glance, and useful insights can be inferred from it. Often a dashboard will utilize color coded gauges to show if metrics are within desired parameters or if a deeper dive is needed on a specific topic.

25. How do you split information in a column into two or more columns?

Text to column option in the Data tab could be used to split the original column into two or more columns. You can split by number of characters, or by delimiting (looking for a certain indicator). A common example is separating cell FirstLastName (Susan Crabapple) into a First Name (Susan) and Last Name (Crabapple). By delimiting based on the space, you could separate a whole range of names into their component parts.

26. How do you use the TEXT function in Excel, and what are some common scenarios where it might be helpful?

The TEXT function in Excel allows you to convert a value to text in a specific format. This function is particularly useful when you want to format numbers, dates, or times in a specific way within a text string.