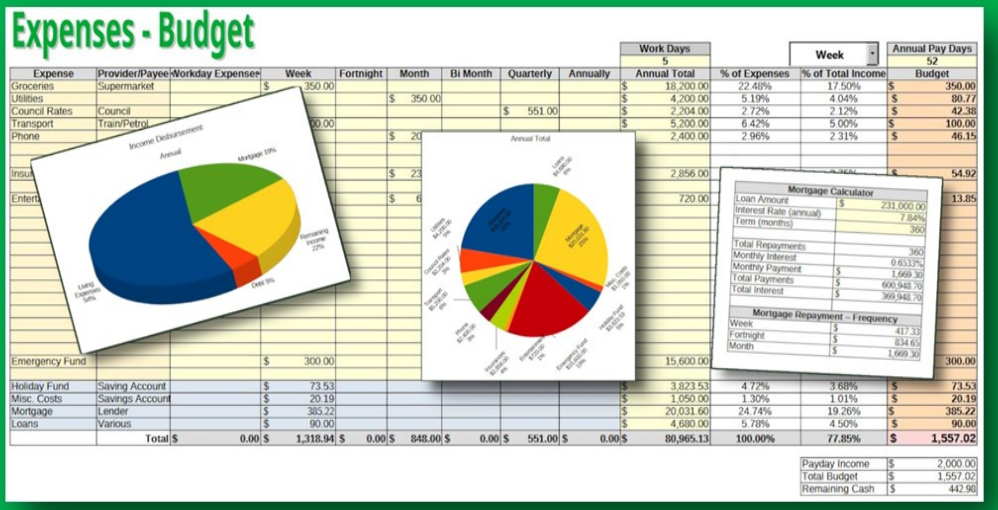
Mastering Excel for Home Budgeting

PDF Companion Edition

A practical guide to create a home budget with Microsoft Excel using formulas, VBA, and advanced techniques.

It's all about the budget



Works with Excel & LibreOffice

Thomas W. Pettit

Mastering Excel
for Home Budgeting

PDF Companion Edition

A practical guide to create a home budget
with Microsoft Excel and LibreOffice Calc,
using formulas, VBA, and advanced techniques.

It's all about the budget

Thomas W. Pettit

PetiteKat
Press

GitHub

Accessing the Support Files (GitHub)

Throughout this book, you will be guided to create your own budgeting workbook step-by-step.
However, if you prefer, you can also download ready-to-use files, templates, and macros to support your learning.

The companion files for this book are available on GitHub, a secure online repository.
Even if you have never used GitHub before, don't worry — simple links and QR codes are provided to take you directly to the files you need.

The GitHub repository contains:

- Sample completed budget workbooks (Excel and LibreOffice versions).
- Pre-written macros (Excel VBA and LibreOffice BASIC).
- Templates to help you get started faster.
- Additional resources and updates if corrections are ever needed.

Note:
You do not need a GitHub account to access or download the files.
All downloads are publicly available for your convenience.

In the following section, and throughout the book, you will find QR Codes that can be scanned to access additional resources and content for both the eBook and paperback versions of this book. Use a QR Code scanner on your smartphone or tablet to quickly navigate to the relevant online materials or click on them if you are using an electronic version.

About This Book

Mastering Excel for Home Budgeting is designed to take you from beginner to confident Excel user by guiding you through the creation of a real-world home budgeting system.

Each chapter builds your skills step-by-step, using clear examples, practical exercises, and real-world scenarios. You'll not only learn how to use Microsoft Excel but also how to apply your knowledge to manage your personal finances more effectively.

Wherever possible, this book also provides guidance for LibreOffice Calc users, ensuring that both Excel and open-source spreadsheet users can benefit from the lessons and techniques taught throughout.

Whether you're completely new to spreadsheets or looking to sharpen your existing skills, this book provides an approachable, hands-on learning experience.

At the end of each chapter, you'll find a quiz, answer section, and a self-assessment to help reinforce your understanding and measure your progress.

Get ready to open Excel or LibreOffice, build your budget, and take control of your financial future!

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Mastering Excel for Home Budgeting

Software Needed

To follow along with this book, you will need access to a spreadsheet program that supports macros.

- **Microsoft Excel** installed on your computer (preferably Excel 2016 or later. Excel 365 is ideal, but older versions should still work—though menus may differ slightly).

  Important: The free **Excel Online** version does not support VBA macros. If you're using Excel through a web browser (e.g., Office.com), many of the features in this book, especially automation tasks, will not work.

- **OR** you can use **LibreOffice Calc** (latest version), which is free and open-source. While it uses a different macro language (LibreOffice Basic instead of VBA), most of the budgeting techniques covered in this book can still be followed manually, and we include fallback instructions where possible.

Download and installation instructions for LibreOffice appear in a later section.

Note for LibreOffice Calc Users
While this book primarily teaches Microsoft Excel, all major features and steps are also available in LibreOffice Calc, a free and powerful alternative to Excel.

Where necessary, notes and guidance are provided to help LibreOffice users adapt the instructions smoothly.

Is this course for you?

The course is intended for individuals with no prior experience with Excel or other spreadsheet applications who want to learn how to create a useful tool for managing their personal finances.

The course will guide the reader through the process of creating the spreadsheet and provide the skills to modify and continue using it after completing the training course.

You'll be working hands-on from the very beginning, building your own personalized home budgeting workbook — one step at a time!

What You'll Learn

This training course covers the following, plus more.

- Creating, opening, and saving spreadsheets
- Formula
- Cell referencing on same worksheet and other worksheets.
- Named Ranges, Graphs and Charts
- Security, i.e., Protecting and locking cells, worksheets, workbook.

> ***Note:***
> Although this course uses Microsoft Excel, LibreOffice Calc users can follow along successfully with minor adjustments. Full details are provided where needed.

Course Structure

This training course is designed to provide targeted exercises and activities that will teach you the necessary skills for creating spreadsheet applications. The course is structured into several

chapters, each focusing on different aspects of Excel and personal budgeting. Here's a detailed breakdown of what each chapter covers:

1. Introduction to Microsoft Excel
Overview of Excel and its interface, Basic navigation and functionalities

2. Creating Workbooks and Worksheets
Have you ever wondered how to keep your Excel workbooks organized right from the start?

3. Basic Formulas and Functions
Introduction to formulas, Basic arithmetic operations and common functions

4. Advanced Formulas and Data Analysis
Advanced functions like SUM, AVERAGE, VLOOKUP, Absolute and relative references and also Nested Formulas

5. Creating and Organizing the Home Budget Workbook
Setting up the income and expenses worksheets, Planning and organizing data

6. Worksheet Tutorials
Detailed tutorials on creating and formatting various budget-related worksheets (Income, Expenses, Loans, etc.)

7. VBA Macros
Introduction to VBA, Creating and using macros for automation

8. Modifying and Enhancing Worksheets
Dynamic worksheet modifications, Inserting, moving, copying, and deleting data

9. Security and Protection
Protecting workbooks and worksheets, Managing user input cells

By the end of the course, you will have gained the skills and confidence to create your own spreadsheet applications for personal and professional use. Each chapter includes practical exercises and real-life examples to help you apply what you've learned.

Maximize Your Learning

To fully benefit from this course, it is recommended that the learner has the following:

- Basic computer skills, including starting the computer, finding and starting applications, opening and saving files, and using a mouse or touchpad/touchscreen and keyboard.
- Microsoft Office with Microsoft Excel installed.
- The use of a second monitor is highly recommended, ideally a large format monitor, as it can enhance the learning experience. However, the course can be completed using a laptop, tablet or single monitor desktop computer.

Get Your Sample Files Here

All sample files, sample code, exercises and future updates to the public files will be put in here.

How To Use This Book

Reader Note: Print vs. Online Features
This book is designed so you can work through it either from a printed copy or on screen — whichever you prefer. Everything you need is included in the book itself, but online readers may also see some extra features like pop-up tips or interactive examples. If you're reading the print version, don't worry — wherever an online feature is mentioned, I've made sure there's also a printed example or note you can follow. You won't miss out on any key information, whichever way you choose to learn.

There are several conventions used throughout this training course.

Tips, tricks, and important notes
Will appear in a box like this.

Italics

Indicates code words in text, database table names, folder names, filenames, file extensions, pathnames, URLs, user input, and Twitter handles.
Here is an example: "We used *WHERE* to filter out the rows we were interested in."

Bold

In a standard text block or paragraph Indicates something new, an important word, or words that you will see onscreen. For instance, words on menus or dialog boxes will appear in bold.
Here is an example: "**Dbl-Click** in cell I**8** and type **=G8*H8**"

Chapter 1: Introduction to Microsoft Excel

Overview of Excel and its interface, Basic navigation and functionalities

Background Concepts

Getting to know Microsoft Excel

Excel is a powerful tool for creating and managing spreadsheets. It offers a wide range of features, including the ability to perform calculations and data analysis, create charts and graphs, and automate tasks through the use of macros. Excel is widely used in businesses, finances, and other industries for tasks such as budgeting, data analysis, and record-keeping. This course will guide you in learning how to use Excel to create a Home Budget Spreadsheet and also help you to gain skills to create and modify other spreadsheets as well.

What is a spreadsheet?

Understanding the history of spreadsheets provides insight into their evolution and why Excel remains a powerful and versatile tool today.

A quick history of spreadsheets

The first electronic spreadsheet, **VisiCalc**, was released in 1979 for the Apple II computer.
It was developed by **Dan Bricklin and Bob Frankston**, and its popularity helped establish personal computers as essential business tools.

In the early 1980s, **Lotus 1-2-3** became the industry standard for spreadsheets, especially during the rise of IBM PCs.

Then in 1985, **Microsoft Excel** was launched for Macintosh, and later in 1987 for Windows — eventually becoming the most widely used spreadsheet software today.

Over time, spreadsheets evolved with new features like charting, data analysis, and macro programming, making them an essential tool in almost every industry today.

Unique Capabilities of Spreadsheets

Spreadsheets are unique among applications in that data can be placed in cells, and the application can use this data to perform calculations with formulas and place the results in other cells. More importantly, users can program these cells as they see fit and create bespoke applications. For example, businesses can create bespoke invoice systems or project trackers using spreadsheet functionalities.. These abilities have made spreadsheets a powerful tool for business and personal use alike. Having skills in programming spreadsheets can put you at the forefront for prospective employers.

Key Points:

1. **VisiCalc**: First electronic spreadsheet, released in 1979, developed by Dan Bricklin and Bob Frankston.
2. **Lotus 1-2-3**: Released in 1983, became the industry standard in the 1980s.
3. **Microsoft Excel**: Released in 1985 for Macintosh and in 1987 for Windows, eventually becoming the dominant spreadsheet application.
4. **Modern Features**: Sophistication increased in the 1990s and 2000s with graphing, data analysis, and macro programming.
5. **Versatility**: Unique capability to place data in cells, perform calculations, and create bespoke applications.

Layout of the spreadsheet page

The layout of a spreadsheet page consists of rows and columns.

- At the top of the Excel window, you will find the **menu bar** and the **ribbon**. The **menu bar** contains tabs like **File**,

Home, **Insert**, and others. When you select one of these tabs, the ribbon below it displays a set of related buttons and commands. The **ribbon** is the primary interface for accessing the tools and features used to perform various tasks in Excel, such as formatting, data manipulation, inserting charts, and applying formulas.

Exercise: Take a few minutes to explore each tab in the menu bar and identify the commands in each tab. Hovering your mouse pointer over the commands will display the help text identifying what each command does.

- In Excel, rows are represented by numbers, and columns are represented by letters. Column headings run horizontally across the top, while row headings run vertically on the left.
    - Regardless of whether you are using the **32-bit** or **64-bit** version of Excel, both versions allow access to the same maximum number of rows and columns.
        - **Rows**: 1,048,576 rows per worksheet.
        - **Columns**: 16,384 columns per worksheet, labeled from **A** to **XFD**.

  While the number of rows and columns is identical in both the 32-bit and 64-bit versions, the **64-bit version** is designed to handle larger datasets more efficiently. The 64-bit version can work with more memory (RAM) and is better suited for handling large, complex spreadsheets with heavy calculations, whereas the **32-bit version** has limitations in handling large files or memory-intensive operations.
- The cells are organized in a grid-like structure

Chapter 2: Creating Workbooks and Worksheets

Keeping your Excel workbooks organized right from the start?

Creating a workbook and worksheet

Here we will learn how to create and name a workbook and worksheet in Microsoft Excel.

You will.

- Start by opening Excel and creating a new workbook.
- Learn how to name the workbook and save it to our computer.
- Create new worksheets within the workbook and give them meaningful names.
- Learn how to navigate and switch between worksheets within a workbook.

By the end of this chapter, you will have the skills to create and organize your own Excel workbooks and worksheets.

Let's get started.

Microsoft Excel

Starting Excel

There are several ways to start Excel, depending on your specific setup. Throughout this course we will use the ***Windows Icon*** on the ***toolbar.***

Quiz

1. Which tab do you select to create a new workbook?
    - a) Insert
    - b) File
    - c) Home
    - d) Data
2. What is the shortcut for saving your workbook in Excel?
    - a) Ctrl + A
    - b) Ctrl + N
    - c) Ctrl + S
    - d) Ctrl + Z
3. Why is it important to name your worksheets in Excel?
    - a) To help locate specific sheets quickly
    - b) To make the workbook look professional
    - c) To prevent breaking references in formulas or VBA code
    - d) All of the above
4. Which feature saves your workbook automatically if stored on a cloud service like OneDrive?
    - a) AutoRecover
    - b) AutoSave
    - c) Quick Access Save
    - d) Instant Save

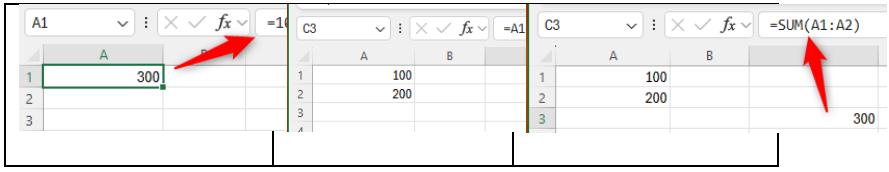
Chapter 3: Basic Formulas and Functions

Introduction to formulas, Basic arithmetic operations and common functions

Before diving into creating our workbooks, we will first explore both basic and advanced formulas. This foundational knowledge will ensure you understand how formulas work and can confidently use them when needed. We will cover simple arithmetic operations to more complex functions like VLOOKUP, nested formulas and IF statements. This will prepare you to handle the calculation requirements as you build your budgeting application.

What is a formula?

A formula in Excel is an expression used to perform calculations, manipulate data, and return values. It typically starts with an equal sign (=) which tells Excel this is a formula and can include numbers, cell references, arithmetic operators, and functions to compute results dynamically within a worksheet. A formula is placed in a cell and the results are displayed in the same cell. If a cell has a formula, it will be displayed in the formula bar when the cell is selected. Below are some samples.



In this chapter, we will learn how to use some basic formulas and functions to perform calculations in Excel.

Tip for LibreOffice Users
Most formulas and function names work the same way in LibreOffice Calc as they do in Excel.
If you encounter small differences, check Appendix A for tips on adjusting formulas if needed.

Understanding formula in Excel

Formulas are the backbone of Excel's functionality, enabling it to perform a wide range of calculations. These calculations are essential for analyzing data, making projections, and automating tasks within your spreadsheet.

Basic Formula Components

- **Operators**: Most basic formulas use arithmetic operators such as addition (+), subtraction (-), multiplication (*), and division (/). These operators help perform calculations on data values retrieved from other cells.
- **Cell References**: Formulas typically operate on data contained in other cells. For example, if you want to sum the values in cells A1 and A2, your formula in cell A3 would be =A1 + A2.
- **Result Display**: The outcome of a formula is displayed in the cell where the formula is entered

Entering formula

Before we start practicing entering formulas, here is a quick overview of what you need to know about them.

Some basic formula information

- Formula in Excel always begins with an equal sign (=), this tells Excel that what follows is a formula. If you actually need the equal sign as the first character in a text value, precede it with a space (=) and Excel will treat it as text.
- Excel, like most computer programs, uses specific characters to represent mathematical operators. Throughout this course, we will only use the symbols

Chapter 4: Advanced Formulas and Data Analysis

Advanced functions like SUM, AVERAGE, VLOOKUP, Absolute and relative references and also Nested Formulas

Advanced Formulas

As we progress through the training, we will explore more complex formulas that involve additional functionalities like:

- **Functions**: Built-in functions like SUM(), AVERAGE(), and VLOOKUP(), which provide more advanced calculation capabilities.
- **Conditional Logic**: Formulas that use conditions, such as IF statements, to perform different calculations based on certain criteria.

Each of these basic and advanced formulas will be explained in detail as they are introduced in the course. Understanding and utilizing both basic and complex formulas will enhance your ability to manage and analyze data effectively in Excel. For now, this is a brief introduction.

SUM Function

Formula: =SUM(A1:A10)

Explanation: The SUM function adds all the numbers in a specified range. In this case, it sums all the values from cell A1 to A10.

AVERAGE Function

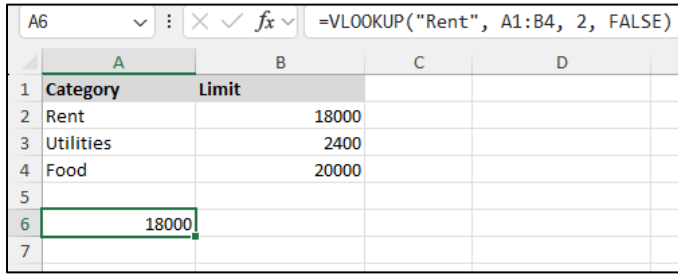
Formula: =AVERAGE(B1:B10)

Explanation: The AVERAGE function calculates the average of a range of numbers. Here, it computes the average values from cell B1 to B10.

VLOOKUP Function (Vertical Lookup)

- V stands for Vertical.
- Searches for a value in the first column of a range (top to bottom).
- Returns a value from a specified column in the same row.

Example:



=VLOOKUP("Rent", A1:B4, 2, FALSE)

Returns 18000

- "Rent" – The value to search for in the first column of the range.
- A1:B4 – The range of cells containing the lookup table.
- 2 – The column number in the range from which to return the value (in this case, column B).
- FALSE – Tells Excel to find an exact match for "Rent".

Appendix A: Using LibreOffice Calc with This Book

Welcome LibreOffice Users!

This book has been written primarily for Microsoft Excel users. However, many readers may prefer to use LibreOffice Calc — a free and powerful alternative to Excel.

The good news is that you can complete this budgeting system successfully using LibreOffice Calc, with only minor adjustments along the way.
This appendix provides a quick guide to help you adapt the instructions if you are using LibreOffice.

Key Differences Between Excel and LibreOffice Calc

Feature	Microsoft Excel	LibreOffice Calc
Saving Files	.xlsm (Macro-Enabled Workbook)	.ods (Open Document Spreadsheet) recommended for macro compatibility; .xlsx supported but may lose macro functionality
Named Ranges	Formulas → Name Manager	Sheet → Named Ranges and Expressions → Manage
Formula Separators	Comma (,) between arguments	Usually comma (,) between arguments; sometimes semicolon (;) depending on your regional settings

Appendix B: Creating an Accounting-Style Currency Format in LibreOffice Calc (with Locale Codes)

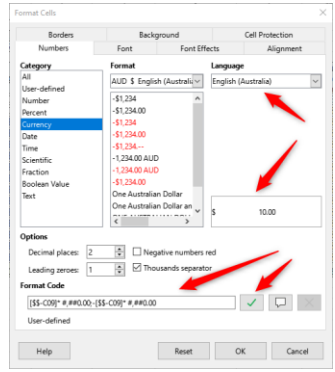
In Microsoft Excel, the **Accounting format** cleanly aligns currency symbols to the left of the cell and values to the right, adding extra padding for a professional, readable layout. LibreOffice Calc does not include this format by default, but you can **manually recreate it using a custom number format**.

Custom Format Code

To apply this layout:

1. Select your cell range (e.g., D7:D21)
2. Right-click → **Format Cells**
3. Go to the **Numbers** tab
4. Choose category: **Number**
5. In the **Format code** box, enter for Australia:

   [$$-C09]* #,##0.00;-[$$-C09]* #,##0.00



Final Words: Your Journey Ahead

Congratulations on completing Mastering Excel for Home Budgeting! By working through this book, you've not only developed essential Excel skills but also crafted a personalized budgeting tool that empowers you to manage your finances effectively.

Learning is a continuous process, and the skills you've gained here are just the beginning. With your newfound knowledge, you can customize and expand your budgeting workbook, explore more advanced Excel features, or even venture into automating tasks with VBA.

Remember, the true power of Excel lies in its adaptability. Your home budgeting application can evolve with your needs—whether you're planning a vacation, tracking investments, or preparing for significant life events.

I encourage you to continue experimenting, practicing, and refining your skills. If you encounter challenges or have feedback, don't hesitate to reach out through the resources provided in this book. Your input helps us improve and ensures that future learners benefit from your insights.

Thank you for embarking on this journey with me. Here's to a future of informed decisions, financial clarity, and the confidence to tackle any spreadsheet challenge that comes your way!

Tom

Appendix C: Completed Worksheets (Examples)

This appendix presents completed examples of the key worksheets from *Mastering Excel for Home Budgeting*. The worksheets are shown in the same order they are built and populated throughout the book.

Some of the worksheets, such as the Home Dashboard, draw their data from other sheets and are shown here in their final, fully populated state for reference.

To assist readers of the printed version, full-color versions of all images are also available for download from the project's GitHub repository:

Note: Some images have been rotated 90° or split into sections to improve readability in the printed format. The original layout is preserved in the digital support materials.

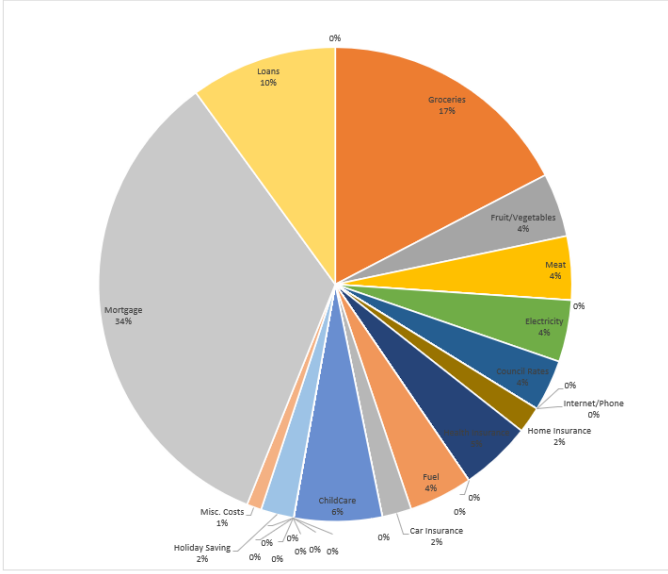
Expenses - Budget

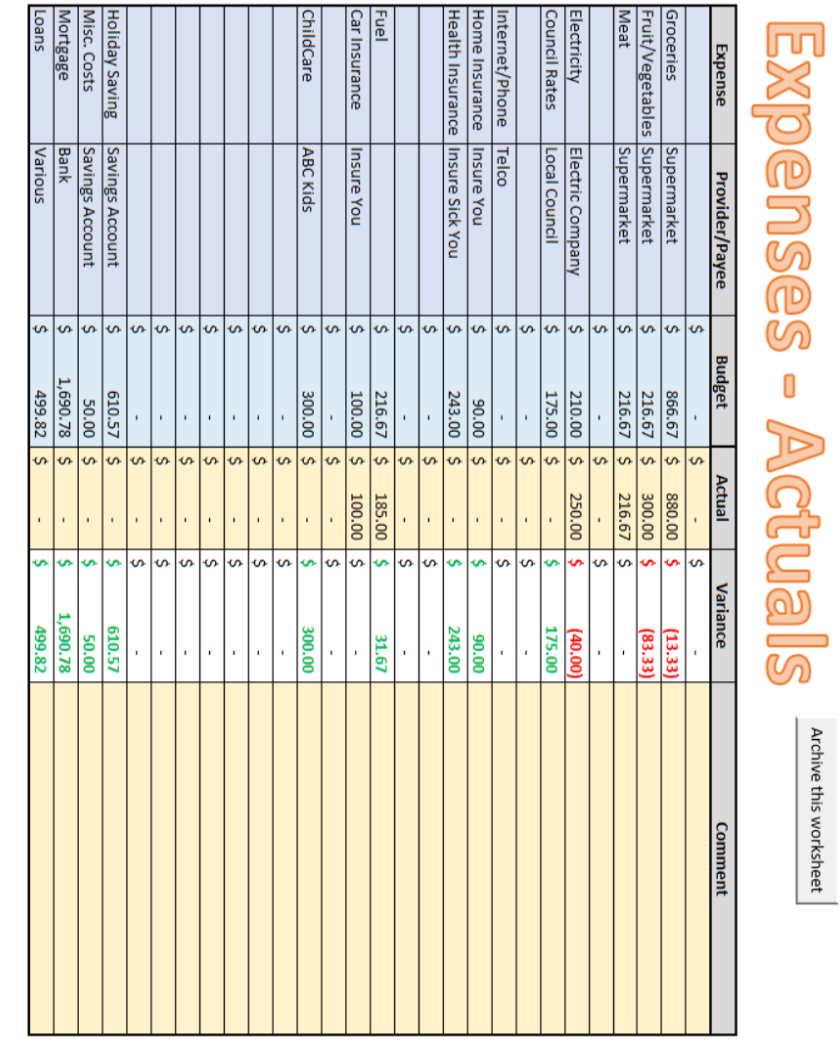
Work days
5

Set your pay period below	
Pay Period	Annual Payments
Month	12

Expense	Provider/Payee	Workday Expenses	Week	Fortnight	Month	Bi Month	Quarterly	Annually	Totals	% of Expenses	% of Total Income	Budget
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
Groceries	Supermarket		$ 200.00						$ 10,400.00	0.17	15.91	$ 866.67
Fruit/Vegetables	Supermarket		$ 50.00						$ 2,600.00	0.04	3.98	$ 216.67
Meat	Supermarket		$ 50.00						$ 2,600.00	0.04	3.98	$ 216.67
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
Electricity	Electric Company				$ 210.00				$ 2,520.00	0.04	3.85	$ 210.00
Council Rates	Local Council						$ 525.00		$ 2,100.00	0.04	3.21	$ 175.00
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
Internet/Phone	Telco								$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
Home Insurance	Insure You				$ 90.00				$ 1,080.00	0.02	1.65	$ 90.00
Health Insurance	Insure Sick You				$ 243.00				$ 2,916.00	0.05	4.46	$ 243.00
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
Fuel				$ 100.00					$ 2,600.00	0.04	3.98	$ 216.67
Car Insurance	Insure You				$ 100.00				$ 1,200.00	0.02	1.84	$ 100.00
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
ChildCare	ABC Kids				$ 300.00				$ 3,600.00	0.06	5.51	$ 300.00
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
									$ -	0.00	0.00	$ -
Holiday Saving	Savings Account		$ 140.90						$ 1,350.00	0.02	2.06	$ 610.57
Misc. Costs	Savings Account		$ 11.54						$ 600.00	0.01	0.92	$ 50.00
Mortgage	Bank		$ 390.18						$ 20,289.36	0.34	31.03	$ 1,690.78
Loans	Various		$ 115.34						$ 5,997.84	0.10	9.17	$ 499.82
	Total	$ -	$ 957.96	$ 100.00	$ 943.00	$ -	$ 525.00	$ -	$ 59,853.20	1.00	91.55	$ 5,485.83

Budget Income	$ 5,448.39
Budget Total	$ 5,485.83
Remaining Cash	-$ 37.45





Expense	Provider/Payee	Budget	Actual	Variance	Comment
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
Groceries	Supermarket	$ 866.67	$ 880.00	$ (13.33)	
Fruit/Vegetables	Supermarket	$ 216.67	$ 300.00	$ (83.33)	
Meat	Supermarket	$ 216.67	$ 216.67	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
Electricity	Electric Company	$ 210.00	$ 250.00	$ (40.00)	
Council Rates	Local Council	$ 175.00	$ -	$ 175.00	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
Internet/Phone	Telco	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Home Insurance	Insure You	$ 90.00	$ -	$ 90.00	
Health Insurance	Insure Sick You	$ 243.00	$ -	$ 243.00	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
Fuel		$ 216.67	$ 185.00	$ 31.67	
Car Insurance	Insure You	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
ChildCare	ABC Kids	$ 300.00	$ -	$ 300.00	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
		$ -	$ -	$ -	
Holiday Saving	Savings Account	$ 610.57	$ -	$ 610.57	
Misc. Costs	Savings Account	$ 50.00	$ -	$ 50.00	
Mortgage	Bank	$ 1,690.78	$ -	$ 1,690.78	
Loans	Various	$ 499.82	$ -	$ 499.82	

Figure C.4 — Completed WS 4 — Expenses — Actuals
(Completed Expenses — Actuals worksheet showing actual spending and variances.)

Mortgage

NOTE: This worksheet is for mortgages only, if you are renting, put the rent in 'Expenses - Budget' as an expense

Mortgage for	Original Loan Date	Original Term (Years)	Remaining Term	Week	Fortnight	Month	BiMonth	Quarterly	Annually	Totals
My House	2008-07-01	30	13.05	$ 390.18						$ 20,289.36
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
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			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
			0.00							$ -
Totals				$ 390.18	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 20,289.36

Divide your monthly payment by 2 for fortnightly payments or 4 for weekly, this will maintain the required monthly payment and result in an extra months payment per year for weekly and fortnightly payments

Repayment	Frequency	Total
$ 1,000.00	12	$ 12,000.00
$ 500.00	26	$ 13,000.00
$ 250.00	52	$ 13,000.00

Mortgage Calculator	
Loan Amount	$ 212,000.00
Interest Rate (annual)	6.34
Term (months)	240
Total Payments	240
Monthly Interest	0.5283%
Monthly Payment	$ 1,560.71
Total Payments	$ 374,570.14
Total Interest	$ 162,570.14

Mortgage Repayment - Frequency	
Week	$ 390.18
Fortnight	$ 780.35
Month	$ 1,560.71

What to enter when refinancing
Current balance of loan
New interest rate
Remainder of Original Term in months

Figure C.6 — Completed WS 6 — Mortgage

(Completed Mortgage worksheet tracking payments and remaining balance.)

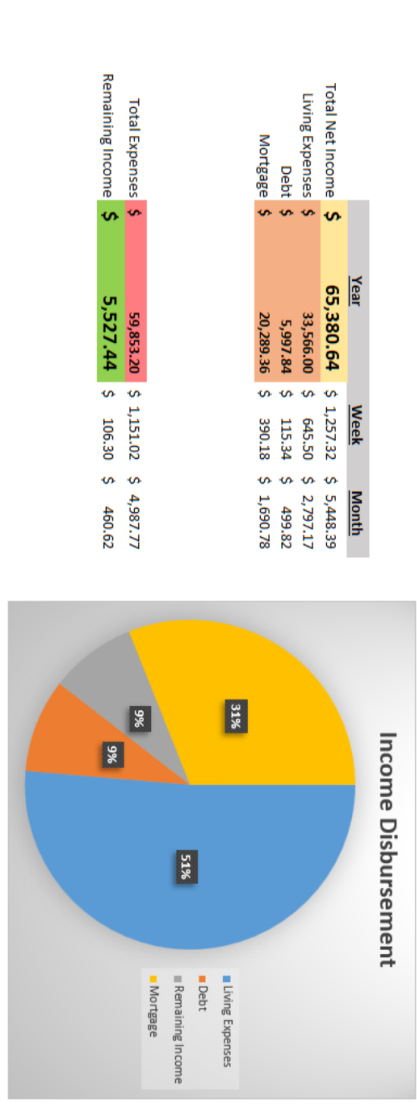

Figure C.9 — Completed WS 9 — Home Dashboard
(Completed Home Dashboard summarising income, expenses, debt, and available funds.)

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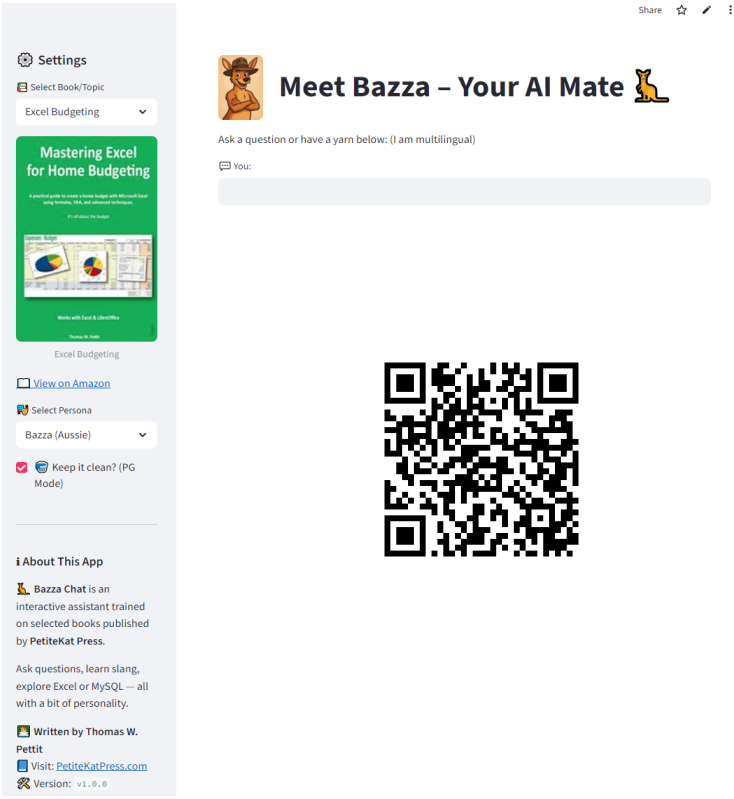
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