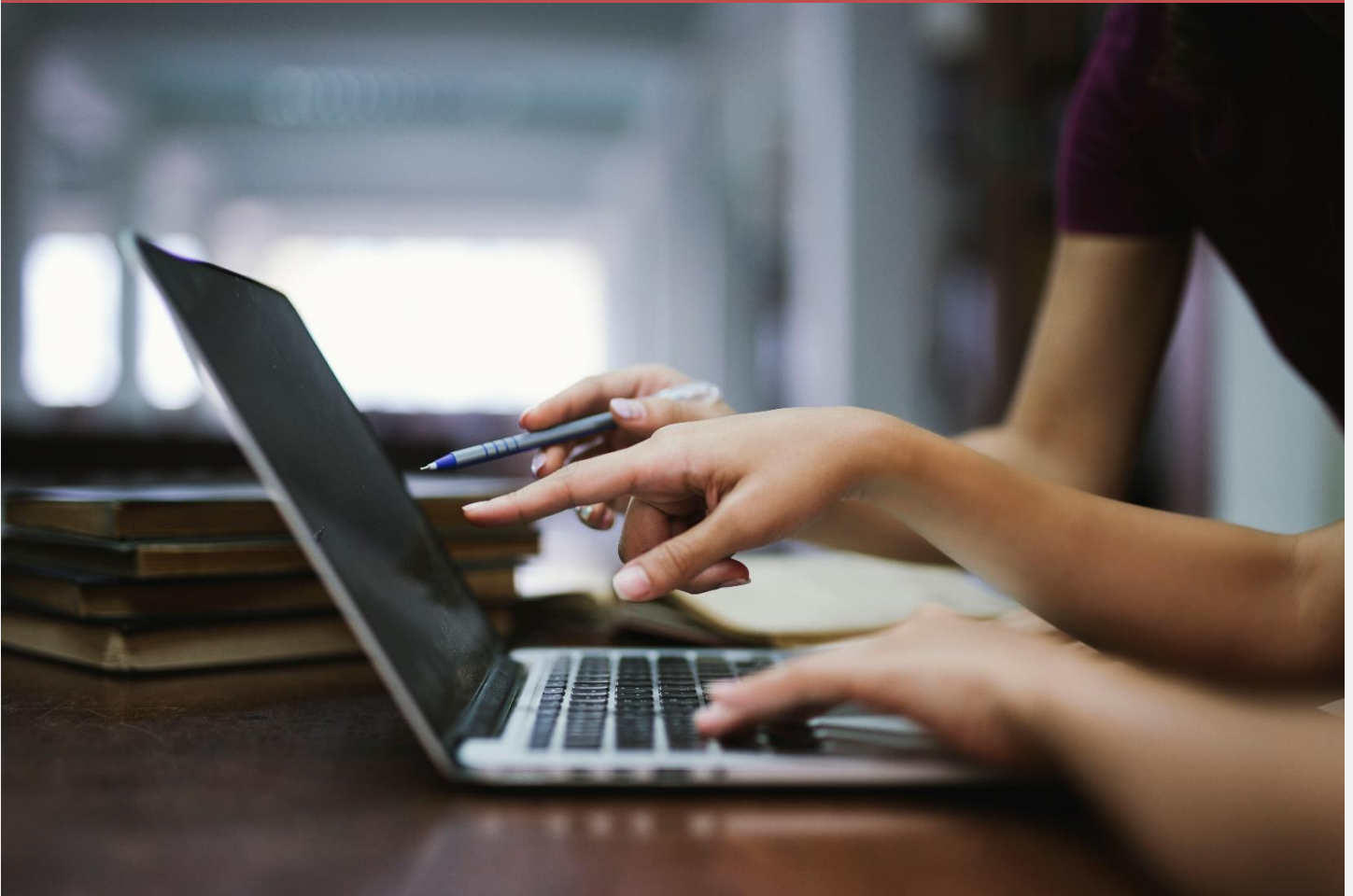# TOP 5 EXCEL SKILLS
FOR DATA PEOPLE

Step by step guide by

Chandoo.org
BECOME AWESOME IN EXCEL

Top 5 Skills

Excel has many features & options that it can be overwhelming to decide which ones to learn once you know the basics. For this year, my recommendation is below 5 areas. Once you master these, you can expand to other areas of Excel as needed.

1. Power Query
2. Dynamic Array Functions
3. Storytelling with Charts
4. Multi-table Pivots & Power Pivot
5. Data Types

POWER QUERY

1

Good data leads to great analysis. Unfortunately, in most business situations, the data quality is not great. You can use Excel's Power Query to connect to any data source, clean up or transform the data and load necessary details to the workbook for analysis.
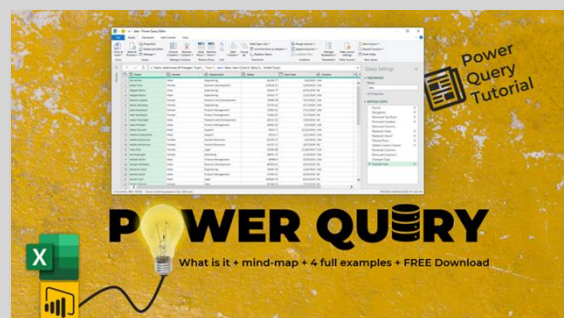
Power Query is used for:

- o **Connecting to different data sources and fetching data automatically**
- o **Filtering or removing unwanted data**
- o **Cleaning up data thru automations**
- o **Reshaping data (rows to columns, unpivot, splitting columns etc.)**
- o **Combining two or more datasets**

Power Query Resources

- o **How to use Power Query** – A detailed article**.** In this clear and complete article, learn all about Power Query and how to apply it in Excel. Article & Video
- o **Power Query introduction – Video.** In this *masterclass* style video, I explain how to get started and use Power Query. ~90 minutes long.
- o **Power Query Examples Playlist –** Here is my YouTube playlist on Power Query. It has many videos, both simple and complex to help you understand Power Query and its applications.

Want a quick win? Watch this…

POWER QUERY
What is it + mind-map + 4 full examples + FREE Download

DYNAMIC ARRAY FUNCTIONS

With Excel 365, your formulas can now return **more than one value** 😮**.** This opens doors for many powerful solutions in business situations. The new functionality added in Excel 365 around Dynamic Arrays is…

- o Spill behavior: Formulas that return more than one value are automatically spilled on the spreadsheet
- o # Operator: is used to refer to a spill range
- o New functions: FILTER, SORT, SORTBY, UNIQUE, SEQUENCE and RANDARRAY are the first 6 functions to be added. More will be added in future versions of Excel.

Dynamic Array Functions - Resources:

- o **Introduction and Examples of the DA functions:** In this detailed article, learn all about the Dynamic Array functionality of Excel along with clear examples of the new formulas like FILTER & UNIQUE etc.
- o **Dynamic Arrays in Excel – Masterclass Video:** Watch the replay of my getting started with DA live stream and pick up many techniques and tips. Set aside two hours for this.
- o **XLOOKUP – Better than VLOOKUP**: Although not a DA function, the new XLOOKUP adds many twists to the familiar lookup problem we face in business every day.

Want a quick win? Watch this…

CHARTS & STORYTELLING

A great data analyst is expected to produce convincing charts & data stories. Excel offers many features & charting options to make your job simple.

When designing a chart, ask yourself:

○ Who is this chart for and why do they need it?

○ What is the key takeaway from the chart? Can I spell it out on the title or caption?

○ Am I showing too much data in the chart? If so, can I add an interactive element (slicer / data validation) to show just what is needed?

○ Are the colors and font-choices right for the situation?

Charting & Storytelling Resources:

Effective storytelling depends as much on you as it does on the technical tools. Here I have provided resources to make you a great communicator & storyteller.

○ **Communication & Storytelling skills:**
  ○ Get inspiration from popular TED talks
  ○ Storytelling with Data – book by Cole N Knaflic
  ○ Laws of UX: Using psychology to design better products – book by Jon Yablonski

○ **Excel skills:**
  ○ How to pick right charts for your situation
  ○ Storytelling example #1 – Beautiful Budget vs. Actual Chart
  ○ Example #2 – 6 Must know line charts for data analysis & video
  ○ Example #3 – Animated charts with Power Point

Want a quick win? Watch this…

Interactive Chart Slider Thingy

* The book links use my Amazon affiliate code.

POWER PIVOT

4

Power Pivot allows us to create powerful & data rich pivot tables from multiple tables of data. This feature is available in most modern versions of Excel (2013 or above) and very easy to use once you know how.

Use Power Pivot to:

- Create and manage table relationships
- Introduce DAX measures so that you can see beyond SUM / AVERAGE in pivot tables
- Connect to an external data model such as Power BI or SQL Server Analysis Cube
- Perform powerful calculations using rich library of DAX functions

Power Pivot Resources:

- **Getting started with DAX & Power Pivot**: In this masterclass style video, I explain Power Pivot, DAX with 15 real world examples. Set aside two hours for this.
- **Power Pivot vs. Power Query and how they relate to Power BI?** Too much Power confusing you? In this easy article, learn the differences between Power Query and Power Pivot.
- Recommended book – Supercharge Power BI with DAX by Matt Allington. In this short yet practical book, Matt explains how to get started and use DAX to solve real world problems.

* The book link uses my Amazon affiliate code.

Want a quick win? Watch this…

The truth about POWER BI
and how to learn it properly

DATA TYPES

5

Data types are the new *revolutionary* feature added to Excel. With them, we can now have rich data in Excel.

We can use datatypes to:

- Mark data to one of the predefined types such as stocks, geography, or food.
- Create your own data types with Power Query or JavaScript API
- Get organizational data types from internal datasets or data models
- Ask questions about data and get answers on screen or in cells

Data Types Resources:

- [Introduction to the Datatypes feature](#) – Microsoft Article: In this introductory article, Microsoft explains what & how of the datatypes feature with Stocks & Geography examples.
- [Data types, a complete guide](#) – John MacDougall explains how to get started and use Datatypes in Excel in this detailed and complete article.
- [How to create a custom datatype with Power Query & Excel](#) – a help tutorial from Microsoft with detailed instructions on how to make custom data types from your datasets.

Want to be a BETTER Analyst?

Do you spend hours when the task could be done in minutes? Are

you not sure if there is a better, smarter way of doing things in Excel?

You don't know how to create a dashboard from scratch?

Then my Excel School program is for you.

In this step-by-step online course, I will teach you how to use Excel

better and faster so that you can get your work done in snap.

Click here to know more about Excel School