# Master Excel for Finance and FP&A By Christian Martinez

## Welcome to Day 1: Setting Up Excel for Success

If you are an aspiring FP&A analyst, this course will equip you with the essential Excel tools to master financial reporting, analysis, and modeling. Over the next 30 days, you will learn Power Query, Python in Excel, Conditional Formatting, Pivot Tables, and much more.

Today, we begin with the fundamentals: setting up Excel for optimal performance, enabling key settings, and customizing workflows for efficiency.

Key Excel Setup and Optimization

1. Removing Gridlines for Cleaner Financial Models

Gridlines can make financial models look cluttered. Here's how to toggle them on and off:

- Navigate to View tab
- Uncheck Gridlines to remove them
- Check Gridlines to restore them

2. Customizing the Quick Access Toolbar

The Quick Access Toolbar (QAT) allows you to streamline repetitive tasks. Follow these steps:

1. Right-click on the Quick Access Toolbar
2. Select Customize Quick Access Toolbar
3. In the left panel, select All Commands
4. Add frequently used commands by clicking Add
5. Adjust order as needed
6. Click OK to save settings

Recommended Commands for Financial Modeling:

- Format Painter
- Increase/Decrease Decimal
- Format as Table
- Gradient Fill

- Highlight Cells

- Focus Mode

Use ALT + Number Keys to quickly access these commands (e.g., ALT+1 for Format Painter).

## 3. Formatting Data for Readability and Efficiency

Proper formatting helps distinguish between inputs, calculations, and results. Follow these steps:

- Number Formatting: Use commas for thousands and brackets for negatives (e.g., 10,000 and (5,000)).

- Consistent Decimal Places: Adjust using Increase/Decrease Decimal buttons.

- Formatting as Table: Select data, press ALT+4 to quickly format as a table.

- Highlighting Key Data: Use ALT+6 for color highlights and ALT+7 for focus mode.

## 4. Efficient Data Navigation and Selection

- Selecting Large Ranges: Use Shift + Ctrl + Down/Right to select data quickly.

- Navigating Worksheets: Use Ctrl + Page Up/Page Down to switch tabs.

- Jump to Cell A1: Use Ctrl + Home.

- Adjust Column Width: Use ALT+H+O+W, then set width to 12 for clarity.

## 5. Custom Number Formatting for Financial Models

To create custom formats:

- Go to Format Cells (Ctrl+1) → Number → Custom

- Use predefined formats such as:

  - #,##0;(#,##0) for negatives in brackets

  - #,##0.00_ ;[Red](#,##0.00) for red negative numbers

- Copy custom formats across workbooks using More Number Formats.

Homework: Formatting Exercise

Your task before tomorrow:

- Apply the recommended number and text formatting to all tables in today's Excel file.

- Remove gridlines for a cleaner presentation.

- Customize the Quick Access Toolbar as instructed.

- Format headers and text notes according to the sample in the Formats tab.

This practice will solidify your understanding and prepare you for Day 2. Are you ready?

Perfect! See you tomorrow for the next lesson.

**Reminder: Don't forget to subscribe to stay updated with this 30-day FP&A Excel Mastery Course!**