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# 3.1 Excel Dashboard: Tables, Filters & Forecasting

## Excel dashboards

An **Excel dashboard** is a visual summary of key metrics displayed on a single screen. It combines tables, charts and filters to allow users to monitor trends and make decisions.

## Tables

* Use **Excel tables** to structure data with headers and automatic formatting. Tables make it easier to sort, filter and reference data.
* Formulas entered in one row automatically fill down the table, ensuring consistency.

## Filters

* Apply **filters** to focus on relevant subsets of data. Use the filter dropdowns in table headers to include or exclude specific values.
* **Slicers** (discussed in Unit 3.5) provide button‑based filters for dashboards.

## Forecasting

Excel offers forecasting tools such as the **FORECAST** function and the **Forecast Sheet** (Data > Forecast). These tools extrapolate future values based on historical data using linear regression. They can estimate future sales or resource needs.

## Example

A sales dashboard might display a table summarising monthly revenue by region, a line chart showing trends over time and filters for region and product category. A forecast sheet projects next quarter’s revenue based on past data.

## Summary

Dashboards in Excel integrate tables, filters and forecasting tools to provide at‑a‑glance insights and interactive exploration.

## Reflection questions

1. What advantages do Excel tables offer over regular ranges?
2. How can filtering improve the usefulness of a dashboard?
3. Describe a situation where forecasting would be valuable in a dashboard.

## References