

Plan a data visualization

Earlier, you learned that **data visualization** is the graphical representation of information. As a data analyst, you will want to create visualizations that make your data easy to understand and interesting to look at. Because of the importance of data visualization, most data analytics tools (such as spreadsheets and databases) have a built-in visualization component while others (such as Tableau) specialize in visualization as their primary value-add. In this reading, you will explore the steps involved in the data visualization process and a few of the most common data visualization tools available.



Steps to plan a data visualization

Let's go through an example of a real-life situation where a data analyst might need to create a data visualization to share with stakeholders. Imagine you're a data analyst for a clothing distributor. The company helps small clothing stores manage their inventory, and sales are booming. One day, you learn that your company is getting ready to make a major update to its website. To guide decisions for the website update, you're asked to analyze data from the existing website and sales records. Let's go through the steps you might follow.

Step 1: Explore the data for patterns

First, you ask your manager or the data owner for access to the current sales records and website analytics reports. This includes information about how customers behave on the company's existing