Spreadsheets with MS-Excel (2)

Step 1: File formats

File formats is a critical topic in computing, especially when sharing files and collaborating with others. Imagine that you produce content in one format, and the people that you need to share your work with cannot read data in that format. This happened a lot only a few years ago—and still does in some areas, for example, computer-aided design (CAD) software. Luckily, this is no longer a problem for most office productivity software since a few file formats have become de facto standards and can be imported into most programs.

Explore the different file formats your word processing and spreadsheet software allow you to save your data in. A few file formats you should become familiar with are doc, docx, xls, xlsx, csv, tsv, and html. A particularly important file format for programmers is csv. Due to its simplicity, it has become very popular as an intermediate data format, and reading and writing csv files is usually straightforward in most programming languages.

Step 2: Learn about formulas and functions

Go through the GCF tutorials on spreadsheet formulas and functions (13-16).
Recover the data you collected for the previous lab and add a few columns of summary data. Also add more complex formulas, based on what you just learned.

Step 3: Learn about formatting tables and creating charts

Go through the GCF tutorials on spreadsheet tables and charts (22-23). Format the table(s) you created in the previous step with styles to facilitate reading and provide filtering and sorting capabilities. Create charts to aid the interpretation of the data in your table(s).

Step 4: Descriptive text

Tables and charts are useful ways of presenting numeric data visually, and they should contain a caption and be understandable without the need for long text descriptions. However, any report containing such images, tables, and charts, should always be accompanied by a short text that explains their content and meaning and points out preliminary conclusions.
Prepare a short text explaining the table you created is previous steps. Make sure you save the result of your work since it will be a component of the Excel assignment.

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