

Excel Table as Source Data

One of the great things about tables in Excel is that you can use a table as source data for a [chart](#), [pivot table](#), etc.

To see why this is useful, let's create a simple chart.

1. Select a cell in the source data.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Month	Bears	Dolphins	Whales	
2	Jan	8	150	80	
3	Feb	54	77	54	
4	Mar	93	32	100	
5	Apr	116	11	76	
6	May	137	6	93	
7	Jun	184	1	72	
8					

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2. Press Ctrl + T to quickly insert a table.

Create Table

?

×

Where is the data for your table?

SAS1:SD\$7

⬆

☒ My table has headers

OK

Cancel

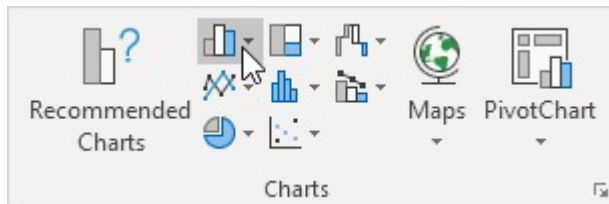
3. Press Enter.

Result so far:

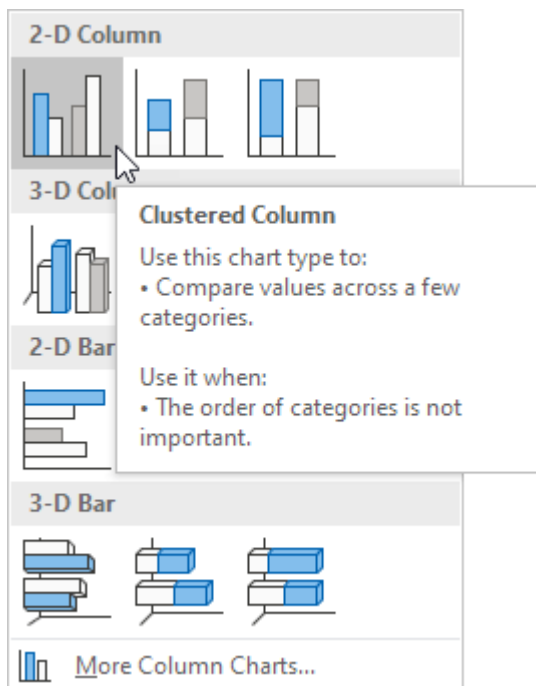
	A	B	C	D	E
1	Month	Bears	Dolphins	Whales	
2	Jan	8	150	80	
3	Feb	54	77	54	
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5	Apr	116	11	76
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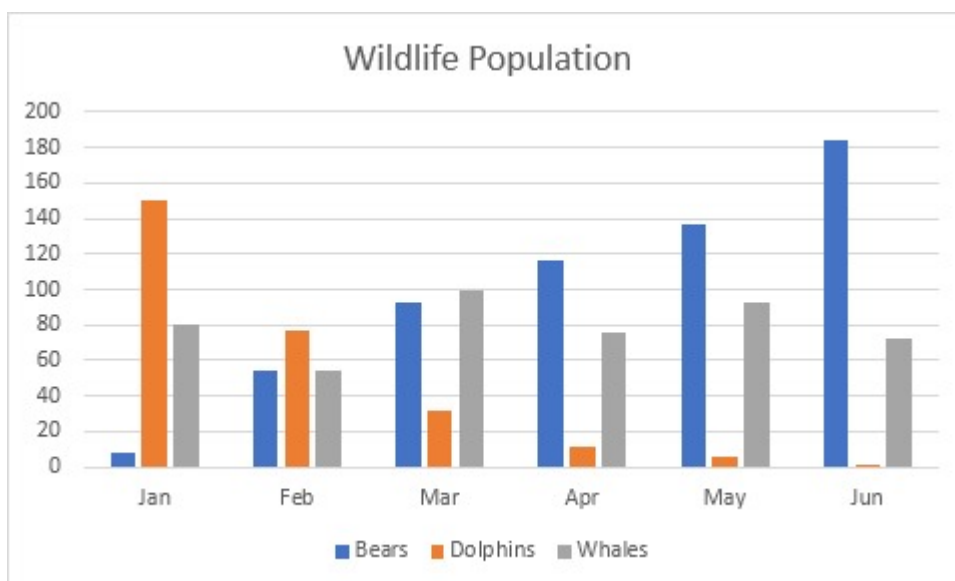
4. On the Insert tab, in the Charts group, click the Column symbol.



5. Click Clustered Column.



Result:



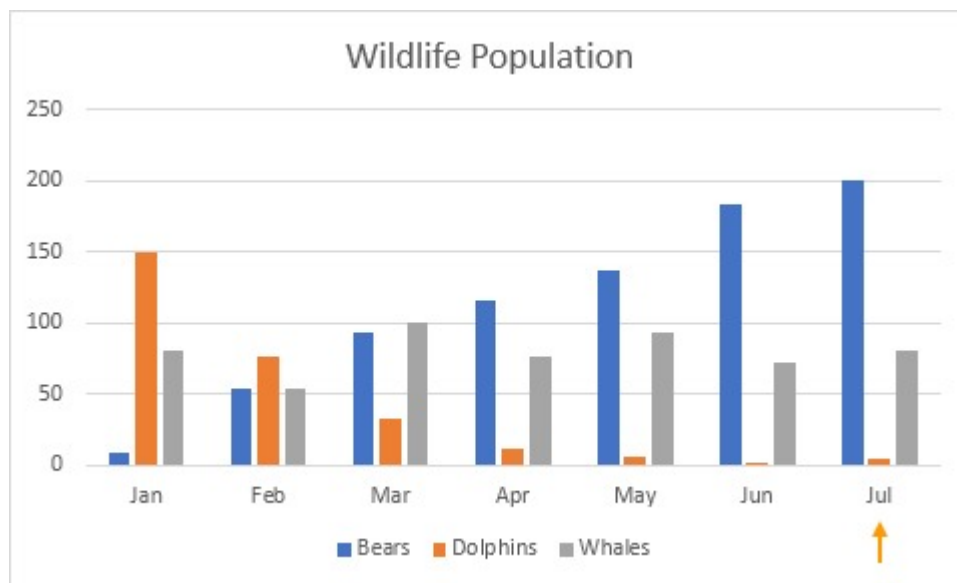
Now comes the most important part. New rows or columns added to the table will automatically be included in the chart.

6. Select cell A8 and type Jul (Excel automatically formats this new row for you).

7. Enter the data for this month.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Month ▾	Bears ▾	Dolphins ▾	Whales ▾	
2	Jan	8	150	80	
3	Feb	54	77	54	
4	Mar	93	32	100	
5	Apr	116	11	76	
6	May	137	6	93	
7	Jun	184	1	72	
8	Jul	201	5	80	
9					

Excel automatically updates this dynamic chart. That's pretty awesome.



Note: as mentioned earlier, you can also use a table to create a dynamic pivot table, or even better, use a table and the new UNIQUE function in Excel 365/2021 to create a [magic drop-down list](#).

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