

M3T7 – The Principles of Chart Design

Quick Guide: Identifying the right chart

Take a look at the following charts. Here you will some guidance on choosing the appropriate chart type, depending on what information you are trying to communicate.

1. Bar or Column Chart

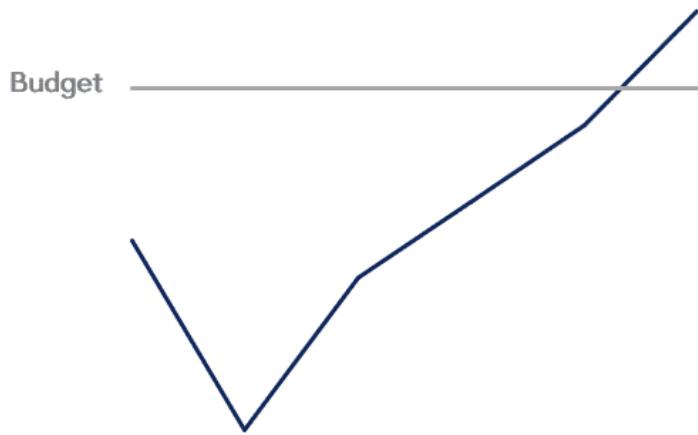
For comparisons between quantities (static), you can use a bar/column chart as shown below. When precise values are more important than immediate visual comparisons, you could use a sorted table instead.

Which product achieved the highest YoY growth?



2. Line Graph

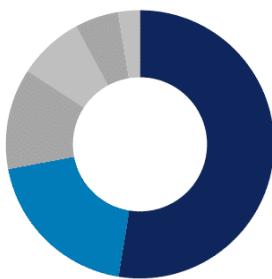
You can use a line graph to compare quantities (over time). Stacked bar charts or area charts can be used when we are interested in how quantities contribute to a total.



3. Doughnut Chart

When we want to show a composition of a whole, we can use a doughnut chart. Stacked bar charts are another great option, especially when we want to display multiple compositions simultaneously.

How dependent are we on our best product?



4. Scatterplot

When we want to show the relationship between two variables, we can use a scatterplot. We can use a bubble chart (next tab) if we need to show a third dimension, such as sample size.

Do frequent app users tend to spend more?



5. Bubble Chart

This is the same as a scatterplot chart but allows you to include a third variable that is represented by the size of the marker. You can also have negative values by inverting or changing the colours.

How has revenue and profit changed by year?

