14.1.5

Overview of Tableau

> **You've** been meaning to dig into Tableau for a few months now: Kate's been talking about how much her coworkers love it, and you've seen it referenced in a lot of job posts lately. You know it's a powerful, complex tool, and you're excited to start playing around. Of course, you're a seasoned data professional, so you know a little bit of work up front to understand the tool itself can pay off in a lot of saved time down the road.

Tableau is a complex tool with a lot of helpful features. But with all of these features, the bigger picture of how it all works can become somewhat confusing. So let's get an overview of the major components.

Tableau Public

You are currently using Tableau Public, but it's important to understand how it fits into the bigger picture. Tableau Public allows you to create visualizations that are easy to read and understand. Everything you do with Tableau Public occurs on your computer.
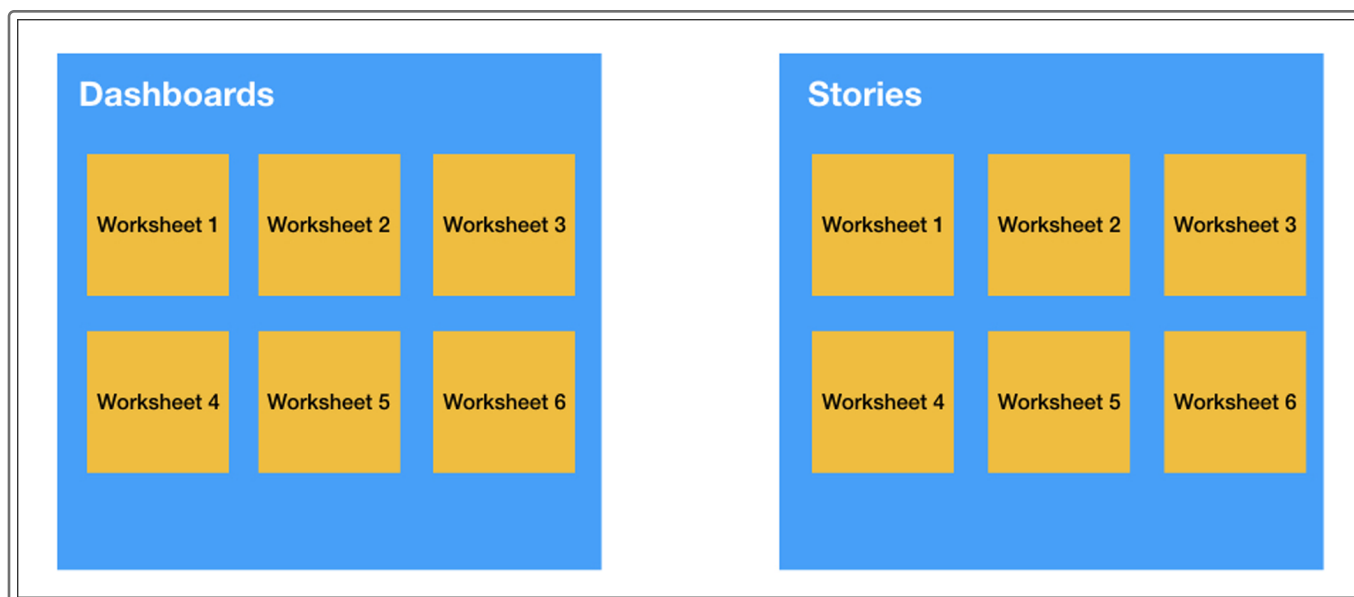
Tableau Server

Tableau Server allows you to privately share your visualizations with others. You can create your visualizations locally in Tableau Public and then you can upload your visualizations to Tableau Server.

Sheets, Dashboards, and Stories

In Tableau, there are three primary formats you need to be familiar with: worksheets, dashboards, and stories.

Worksheets are essentially the building block of the visualizations you will create. Worksheets are made from a variety of plots and graphs. Typically, worksheets will have just one plot or graph each. Dashboards and stories are made up of the worksheets you create. Here's what this looks like at a high level:

Let's go a little deeper into each of these components.

Worksheets are the building blocks of our visualizations from which we are able to create dashboards and stories. A worksheet is made up of a single graph or plot, which we will learn how to create later on. Worksheets are customizable, but require almost no actual code.

You may have seen a visualization dashboard before, whether in Tableau, PowerBI, or a number of other popular tools. In Tableau, **dashboards** are a collection of worksheets formatted to present data in a way that is easy to read. There are many things you can do with Tableau dashboards, which we'll discuss later.

Tableau **stories** are simply Tableau dashboards that include narration of what is occurring with the data. We'll dive deeper into stories later, but for now you should know that they are extremely helpful for identifying important analytic points.

NOTE

As you work on your project in Tableau, you should be aware of the resources available to you. The **Tableau support website** **(https://www.tableau.com/support)** contains many helpful articles, FAQs, and documentation. If you can't find answers to your questions, read their **search tips (https://www.tableau.com/support/site-search-tips)**. You can also consult Stack Overflow or do a simple Google search to get the answers you're looking for.