1.2.1   Get Situated in the Big Picture

> **We** have Excel up and running, have set up our project folders, and downloaded the data file. But before we can dive in and analyze the data for Louise, we need to familiarize ourselves with the software.

We'll be performing data analysis on several thousand crowdfunding projects to uncover any hidden trends. To do this, we'll need to get acquainted with Excel a bit more. Specifically, we need to know how to view and read data in an Excel file. Let's discuss some of the visual features of Excel.

Resize the Data

When you open the data file, one thing you'll probably notice right away is the small text size. Because there are so many columns, Excel automatically resizes the sheet to fit everything on one screen, but that often makes the text too small to read. Let's adjust the zoom to make the text legible.
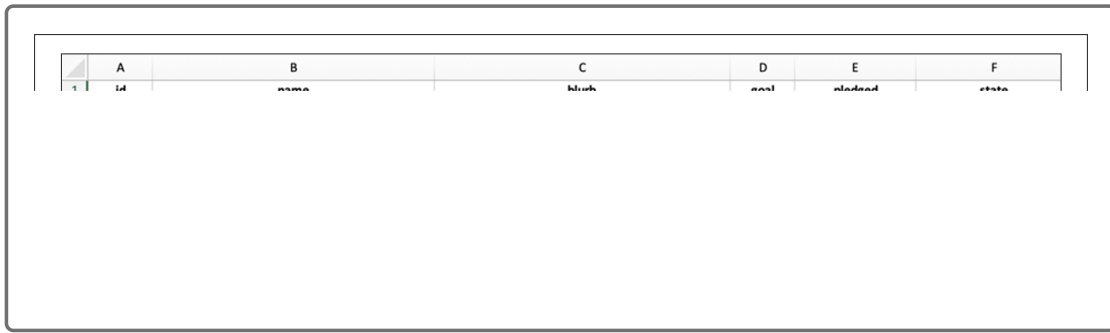
To do this, look at the bottom right of the screen, where you'll see a bar with a slider—a negative (minus) sign on the left and a positive (plus) sign on the right. To the right of the plus sign is a percentage.
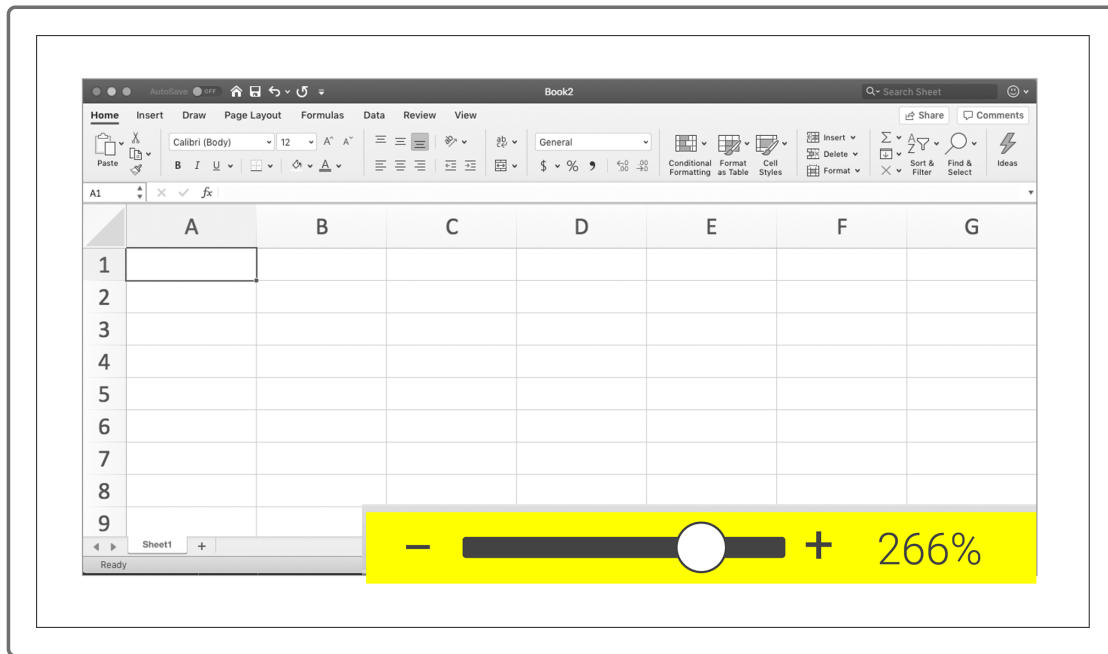
This percentage indicates the magnification of the text. The text can be enlarged by dragging the small white circle to the right, or by clicking the "+" sign until the text is a comfortable size (in some versions of Excel, this may appear as a gray vertical bar instead).

Tabular Data

When you open the data file in Excel, what you're looking at is a **worksheet**, also referred to as a sheet. At a glance, we can see that the data is arranged in rows and columns. Data in this format is called **tabular data**.

IMPORTANT

> **Tabular data** is data that is displayed in a column and row format. This format isn't limited to Excel spreadsheets; any data displayed as a table is considered to be tabular. This includes digital tables on a website and printed tables in a textbook.

Anatomy of a Worksheet

You have a worksheet of tabular data that you have resized to make it readable. Now let's break down the worksheet a bit more to understand what it's comprised of.

Headers and Indexes

The letters along the top of the columns represent the **column headers,** and the numbers to the left of the rows are the **row indexes**. The headers and indexes help us identify where each data point is located.
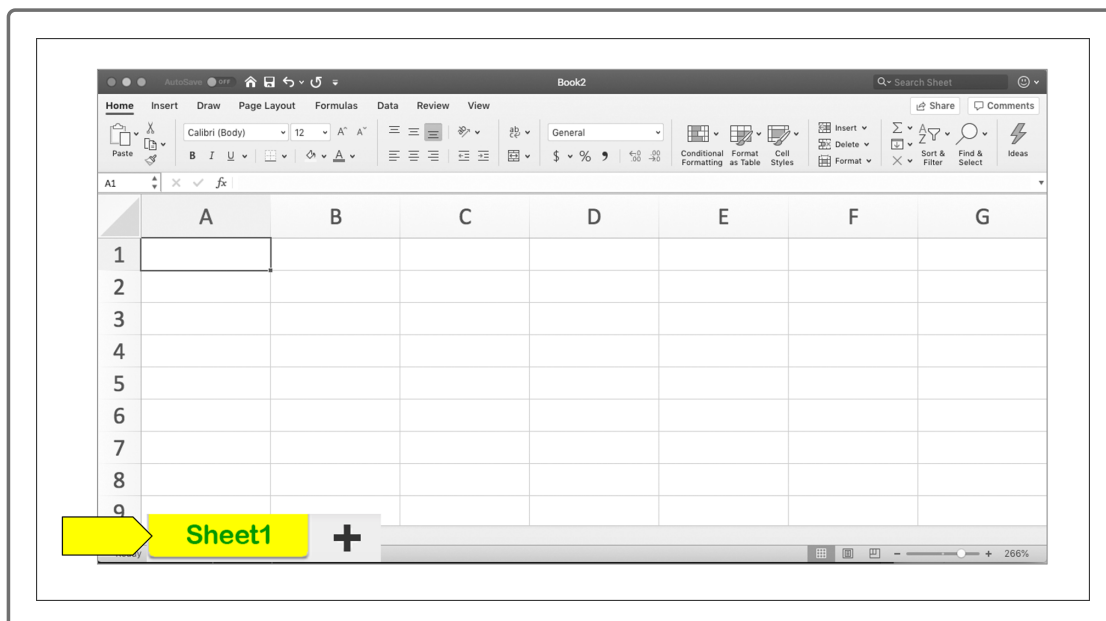
In the following image, the cell is located at the intersection of column A, row 5, so we refer to it as A5.
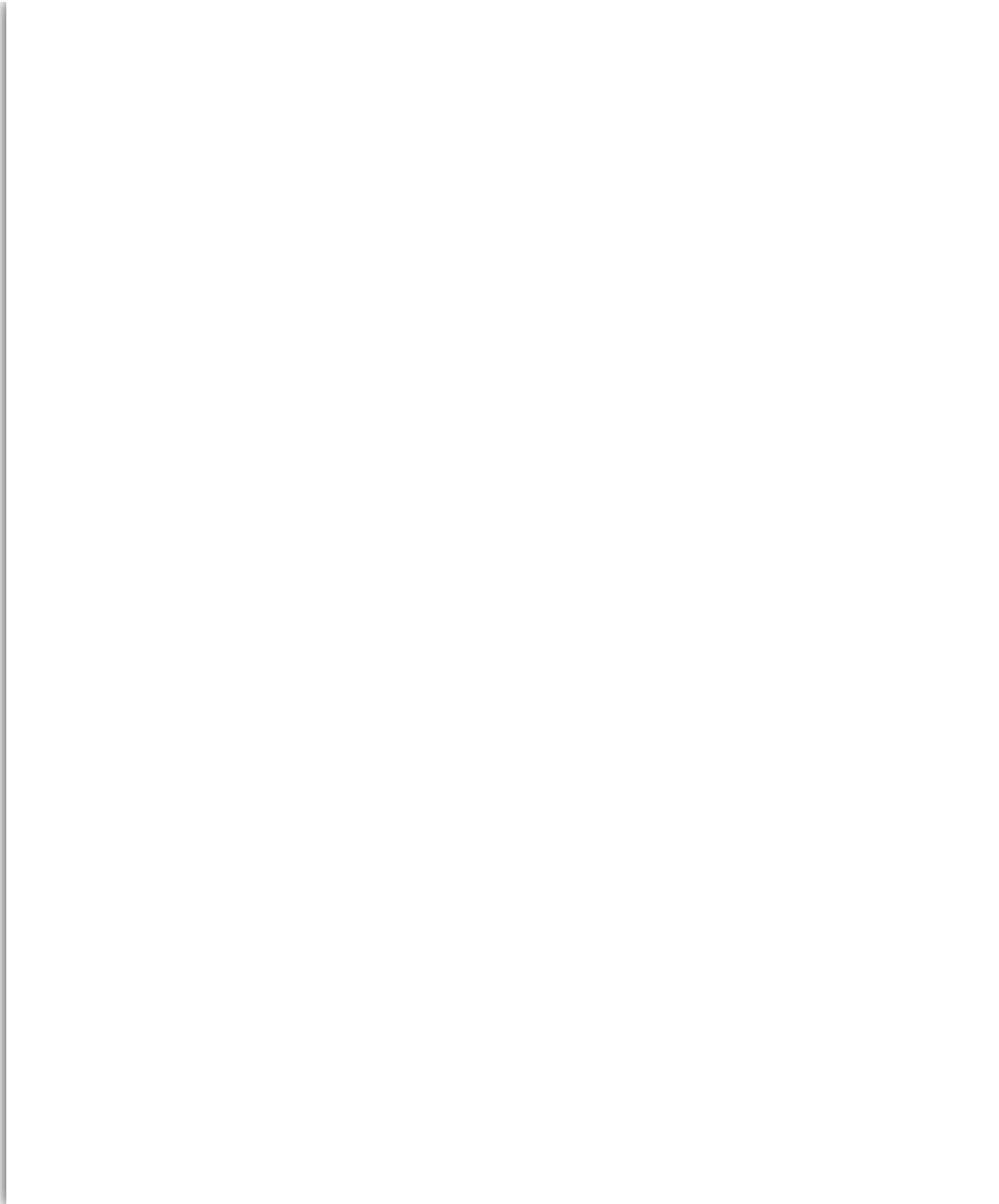
Worksheet Names

At the bottom of the sheet is a tab labeled "Sheet1." This is our current, or active, worksheet.

To create a new worksheet, click the plus sign (+). When multiple sheets are being used, the left and right arrows allow us to navigate between them. To help us more easily identify our data, let's rename "Sheet1" to "Kickstarter" by following these steps:

1. Right-click the sheet name (currently Sheet1).

2. Select Rename from the pop-up menu.

3. With the current name highlighted, type the new name and press Enter.