



Microsoft® Excel 2000
Product Enhancements Guide



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Introduction

Microsoft® Excel 2000 is being introduced at a time when corporations are experiencing changes in the way they use data. For example, data warehousing is moving corporate information online and making it available to employees. IT departments are looking for ways to get out of the business of creating reports, and more people are using Excel as a front end to data of all kinds. These trends led Microsoft to develop Excel 2000 with three goals in mind:

- *Web-enabled collaboration and information sharing.* Excel 2000 offers a new Web productivity work style that integrates core productivity tools with the Web to streamline the process of sharing information and working with others. At the same time, this Web enabling simplifies access to data by making it available to anyone with a browser. Excel 2000 is the preferred tool for working with tabular data on the Internet. It excels at creating, publishing, viewing and analyzing this data on the Web.
- *Rich analysis tools for better decision-making.* Increasingly, corporations are using Excel as the preferred front end for their corporate reporting systems. Excel 2000 makes it easier to use an organization's intranet to access vital business information and provides innovative analysis tools that help users make better, more timely business decisions.
- *Software that is easy to use.* Excel 2000 delivers new levels of resiliency and intelligence, enabling users and organizations to get up and running quickly, stay working and achieve great results with fewer resources.

Overview of New Features

Excel 2000 offers a variety of new features designed to help users collaborate and share information via the Web and to perform more extensive analysis on their data. The new version of Excel is also easier to manage and use than ever before.

Web-Enabled Collaboration and Information Sharing

By elevating HTML to the same level as its own proprietary file format, Excel 2000 allows users to easily create and share rich Web documents with the same Office tools they use to create printed documents. The most important benefit of this greatly enhanced integration with the Web is that rich Excel content is universally viewable by anyone with a browser.

HTML Document Creation and Publishing

	Feature	Description
New	HTML as Companion File Format	Excel 2000 can save to and read from HTML files with high fidelity. HTML is elevated to the same level as the proprietary file format (.xls).
New	Load/Save HTML	Users can create documents in Excel 2000, save them as HTML, open them again in Excel, and still use the features provided in Excel.
Improved	Save to the Web	The process of publishing an entire Excel spreadsheet or a subset to the Web has been simplified. Excel 2000 also makes it possible to save spreadsheet data and charts as interactive Web pages.
New	Drag and Drop	Excel 2000 supports the drag and drop of table data from the browser directly into Excel.

Rich Analysis Tools for Better Decision-Making

As more corporations move to intranets for delivering corporate information, users need better ways to access that information. The new and improved tools in Excel 2000 make this job easier while helping to ensure better results.

Analysis Tools

	Feature	Description
Improved	PivotTable® Dynamic Views	A new interface lets users create and manipulate the fields of a PivotTable view directly in an Excel worksheet by dragging the fields they want directly onto a PivotTable.
New	PivotTable AutoFormat	Users can now save time by automatically formatting their data in PivotTables.
New	PivotChart™ Dynamic Views	Users can create refreshable charts tied directly to data in PivotTables.

	Feature	Description
Improved	Queries	Database queries in Excel 2000 have been improved, allowing columns to be inserted within a data table, formatting to be retained and formulas in adjacent columns to be filled down when a query is refreshed.
New	Enhanced Web Queries	A new dialog in Excel 2000 makes it easy for anyone to bring data from the Web directly into Excel for tracking or analysis.
Improved	Refreshable Text Import	Data from text files can now be brought into Excel in the same way that other database queries are made. Formatting and Formulas are retained when the text query is refreshed.

Connectivity to Enterprise Data

	Feature	Description
New	OLAP PivotTable Views	Excel 2000 enables users to create OLAP PivotTable views against any OLE DB for OLAP provider.
New	OLE DB and ADO Support	Support for OLE DB and ADO provide better performance against Microsoft SQL Server and other OLE DB providers.
New	Large Data Stores	Excel 2000 uses a client/server approach to provide fast access to large server-based data stores.

Office Web Components

Office Web Components give users the analysis features of Excel while in a browser. Excel 2000 makes it easy for any user to save a spreadsheet, chart or PivotTable as an Office Web Component (interactive Web page) for others to easily view and analyze.

	Feature	Description
New	Spreadsheet Component	This component moves Excel worksheet models to the browser, making it possible for users to analyze data and perform calculations within a browser.
New	Chart Component	This component provides the ability to perform basic interactive charting in a browser.
New	PivotTable Component	This component enables users to pivot, filter and summarize information in meaningful ways within a browser.

Software That Is Easy to Use

Excel 2000 enhances its reputation for ease of use with new functions and features that enable users to work faster and more effectively than ever.

Personal Productivity

	Feature	Description
New	List AutoFill	Excel 2000 automatically extends formatting and formulas in lists, simplifying this common task and helping users work more efficiently.
New	See Through View	Instead of the inverse video selection that hides formatting and sometimes text, the See-Through Selection in Excel 2000 lightly shades selected cells so that users can make changes and see the results without unselecting the cells.
New	New Cursors	Several new cursors have been provided within certain contexts to provide visual cues for what actions are possible.
Improved	Charting	Charting improvements in Excel 2000 include improved formatting (data labels, multilevel category axis and time-scale labeling, and user-definable value axis units) and the ability to create PivotChart dynamic views.
Improved	Year 2000 Dates	A set of new date formats, custom date entry behavior and static date function behavior give users more options for working with dates.

International Support

	Feature	Description
New	Euro Currency Support	Excel 2000 supports the new Euro currency, both the symbol and the three-letter ISO code.

Feature Details

HTML Document Creation and Publishing

The HTML document format is at the heart of the Internet/intranet revolution. The unparalleled support for HTML in Excel 2000 allows people to continue to work with the tools they use every day to create content for the growing information network. Users choosing HTML as the Excel default file format will experience similar functionality to using Excel's .xls file format, with the added capability of viewing spreadsheet data in a Web browser.

HTML as Companion File Format

After converting files to HTML, users often want to make changes or edit the formatting of the document. Excel 2000 makes this easy because when converting a document to HTML, it preserves the rich features of the original spreadsheet. This allows users to “round-trip,” or reopen the HTML file in Excel and see the original edit state. For example, if a user creates a richly formatted chart in an Excel spreadsheet, saves the file to HTML and reopens the HTML file in Excel, the chart will look the same as the original chart in Excel. This ability to round-trip features and formatting provides a way to make HTML documents easily accessible through a browser while maintaining the original edit state of the documents.

Load and Save HTML

Excel 2000 can open and save HTML files directly, since HTML is now a companion file format. Users or administrators can also set the default file format to HTML if they'd like to save every Excel file in HTML format by default. Excel 2000 makes it as easy to save a file in HTML format, and directly to a Web server, as it is to save an Excel file to a local machine or network server today. Users don't have to understand the complexities of writing HTML or using HTTP, they simply use the familiar File Open/Save user interface and it's done automatically.

Save to the Web

Save to the Web helps users select all or part of a worksheet to be converted to HTML; it also lets users choose whether to make it static or interactive HTML and where to save the resulting page. It helps users work with worksheet data, charts, PivotTable views, query ranges, AutoFilter ranges, print ranges or entire worksheets. When users save from a workbook, the original document is kept intact in its Excel format. If changes are made to the document later, Excel remembers where it was saved before and with what settings, making it easy to republish as often as needed.

Drag and Drop

Tabular information can be copied from the browser and pasted or dragged and dropped into Excel with excellent results. It's the easiest, fastest way to transfer and manipulate Web-based table data.

Analysis Tools

Excel 2000 gives users the ability to receive, analyze and report on corporate data stored in IS-managed enterprise databases without costly IS involvement. Rich analysis tools, new Office Web Components and improved database connectivity in Excel 2000 enable users to access, analyze, track and respond to changing information.

PivotTable Views

Excel 2000 improves PivotTable views in a number of ways. Perhaps the most significant is an interface improvement that makes the power of PivotTable views more widely available. PivotTable views in general are much easier to create and

use in Excel 2000. Where users previously had to use a dialog box to make changes, they can now add and remove fields directly on the worksheet. Clear “drop zones” provide cues to help position the fields. A drop-down field allows users to easily choose which items to view or hide.

PivotTable AutoFormat

PivotTable AutoFormat makes it easy for users to create professional-looking database-style reports from their PivotTable views.

PivotChart Views

New PivotChart views give users the ability to create charts linked to data views in a PivotTable, providing them with a new visual tool for analyzing data. Users can directly expand to see more detail, pivot and remove fields on a chart the same as they do on a PivotTable. PivotChart and PivotTable views are linked, and refresh with data and update themselves in tandem as users move and manage fields.

Queries

Many users import data into Excel through database queries and analyze the data with formulas and formatting. In Excel 2000, users can insert columns within query tables and apply formulas and formatting; when the data is refreshed, the formatting and analysis is retained. This new functionality also applies to Web Queries.

Enhanced Web Queries

The new Web Query dialog makes it much easier to get data from the Web into Excel. This dialog walks users through the process of bringing data from a Web page into Excel, helping them create the query file as they choose the URL and parameters for how to import the data. Web Query pages can be refreshed automatically on a scheduled basis.

Refreshable Text Import

Through its research, Microsoft has found that people bring all kinds of data into Excel for analysis, and the most common way to do that is with a text file. People have data on mainframes, in terminal applications and other data sources, and they use many different methods to get the data into the lowest common denominator, which is text. Bringing text data into Excel is a repetitive task. People import the data, format it, and add formulas and other features to analyze and present the information. Excel 2000 now includes a refreshable text query feature that lets users easily update the data from a text source while retaining formatting, formulas and other features.

Connectivity to Enterprise Data

Corporations increasingly use Excel to access their enterprise data. Excel 2000 responds by adding new support for server-based data access.

OLAP PivotTable Views

This new functionality enables users to create PivotTable views against any OLE DB for OLAP provider, such as Microsoft SQL Server™ OLAP Services. The OLAP Cube Wizard in Microsoft Query can be used to create OLAP PivotTable views against any ODBC-compliant data source, for sites that have not installed an OLE DB for OLAP-compliant server.

OLE DB and ADO Support

Excel 2000 supports OLE DB and ADO for better performance against Microsoft SQL Server and other OLE DB providers, giving users a simpler interface to their corporate data stored in Microsoft SQL Server. Supporting ADO also means that developers have programmatic access to any OLE DB provider through Excel 2000.

Large Data Stores

A client/server approach enables Excel 2000 to deal more effectively with large databases on the server. It only brings to the client the aggregates of the data the user wants to see, not the entire data set. Excel 2000 also takes advantage of OLAP technology that represents data in a hierarchical fashion. This more intuitive representation can be viewed in a drop-down Treeview attached to data field buttons on the worksheet.

Office Web Components

The Microsoft Office Web Components in Excel 2000 give users analysis tools from Excel while working in a browser — Excel 2000 offers users a number of features designed to improve its function as a corporate reporting tool, using the Web as an easy interface for users.

Spreadsheet Component

This component makes it possible to deliver interactive spreadsheet functionality to a Web browser. Users can calculate data using Excel formulas, and the calculations can refer to other elements on the Web page. Data in the Spreadsheet component is editable in the browser and includes functionality for data analysis, such as sorting and filtering. It also includes features for presenting data, such as font and cell formats, resizable columns and rows, and frozen panes to keep headers visible while scrolling through data.

Chart Component

This COM charting control provides interactivity and live updating as the underlying data (such as data entered in the Spreadsheet component) changes.

PivotTable Component

This component provides a dynamic way to view and analyze database information. It lets users browse report data, dynamically sort and filter it, group it by rows or columns, create totals and focus on the details behind the totals. It also enables users to work efficiently with large or small amounts of data.

Office Web Components are COM components displayed in a browser and are best viewed in a browser that supports COM components (such as Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher). Users viewing Office Web Components in a browser that doesn't support COM components will still see the data, but cannot interact with it — it is displayed as static instead of interactive.

Personal Productivity

Getting more done in less time is the goal of every enterprise. Excel 2000 contains a number of improvements that make users more productive when performing common tasks.

List AutoFill

One of the most common tasks an Excel user performs is extending an existing list. The new List AutoFill automatically extends the list's formatting and formulas, saving the user steps and helping ensure greater accuracy. As data is added to a list, AutoFill looks at the preceding cells to determine what formatting and formulas should be extended.

See Through View

Previous versions of Excel used inverse video to indicate a selection, making it difficult to see formatting that's applied to a selection. Excel 2000 lightly shades selected cells, so users can make changes and see the results without repeatedly deselecting and reselecting the cells.

New Cursors

Several new cursors have been provided within certain contexts to help users better know what should be done. For example, when creating a formula that can accept cell references, the cursor changes to a light gray cell-like shape to encourage selection in the worksheet.

Charting

Charting improvements in Excel 2000 include improved formatting (data labels, multilevel category axis and time-scale labeling, and user-definable value axis units) and the ability to create PivotChart views (see PivotChart Views in the Analysis Tools section, above).

Year 2000 Dates

Excel 2000 has added additional date formats to make displaying four-digit years easier. Excel 2000 has two new administrator settings that make a year 2000 transition easier. The first setting allows users to set their own rules for what century a two-digit year falls under. The second setting ensures that if a user enters a date with a full four-digit year, the cell is formatted to show all four digits of the year. This setting is accessible through the System Policy Editor.

International Support

As the use of Office has spread across the globe, multinational companies require complete compatibility with the way they do business. Excel 2000 adds to the worldwide usage features found in Office 2000 by providing support for the new Euro currency.

Euro Currency

Excel 2000 supports the Euro as a new currency format. It can display both the Euro symbol and the three-letter ISO code (EUR). That enables a user in Europe or the United States who does business with a European company or government to exchange spreadsheets with the most up-to-date currency values.

Conclusion

Excel 2000 provides users with improved Web-enabled collaboration and information sharing, enhanced analysis tools, and software that is easier to manage and use. As a part of the Office 2000 application suite, it also shares a number of other features that open the new realm of functionality enabled by Office 2000.

For more information: <http://www.microsoft.com/office/>



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