Tips for Upping Your Excel Game

Note: Depending on your version of Excel, tutorials may display tabs and tools in different locations.

Tip #1: Google It!
A good search engine is your best resource for finding new Excel tricks. Chances are someone has already made a YouTube video of the functionality you are dreaming of.

Keyboard Shortcuts
Save time and clicks. For example, use CTRL+RIGHT ARROW or CTRL+DOWN ARROW to select an entire row or column of data.

- How to Geek’s “All the Best Microsoft Excel Keyboard Shortcuts”

Maps
Excel doesn’t yet have strong mapping capabilities as a default. Depending on your Excel version, add-ins may exist for creating maps. Otherwise, here are some alternatives:

- Bubble Chart and Coordinates: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErEeyQmv1Rl

- Tableau Public
  Free version of a very powerful visualization software. Visualizations must be saved publically. For an introduction and training tutorials, visit: https://www.tableau.com/learn/training

Heatmaps
Visually communicate variation in data values.

- Brief video tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkHEdU7cfO

VLOOKUPS and HLOOKUPS
Find the data you need in a large array. Ensure data accuracy, and improve data automation.

- Basic introduction: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAnfNod8nTY
- 5 Ways to Use VLOOKUPS: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdVArH0_KlC
Dropdowns

Create interactive worksheets and dynamic visualizations using dropdown lists.

- Brief video tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGnvCKiOLM0

Slider Bars

Use slider bars to create dynamic visuals or analytical tools.

- Brief video tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBQswTfZBes

Automate Data Collection and Updates

Connect remote databases to import data into Excel. Build automated charts, reports, and graphics.

- St. Louis Federal Reserve’s FRED Add-In
  Automatically import economic data into Excel: https://fred.stlouisfed.org/fred-addin/

- Access data from your SQL Server
  Note: As a best practice, work with your IT staff to discuss possible data integrity and security issues: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKNnCOx6HDY

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