

Creating a Graph in Excel

Excel hides the graphing tools by lumping them into the “charts” functions. Here’s how you get at them:

- 1) Enter your x data in column A and your y data in column B.
- 2) Highlight all the data and click on the Chart Wizard icon (it is a coloured bar graph)

In Chart Wizard:

- 1) Chose “xy scatter” with no line through the data (DO NOT choose “line”). Click “Next”.
- 2) The box that appears will show you what the graph is going to look like. Click “Next”.
- 3) Now you can enter the Title, and X & Y labels. Use the Tab key to move between fields. DO NOT press enter. Click “Next” when you are finished.
- 4) Choose “as new chart” and click “Finish”. Your completed chart will appear on the whole page.

To make your graph look nice:

- 1) The default for charts is a grey background. This is a big waste of toner. To delete the grey background, Right click anywhere in the chart. Choose “Format Plot Area” from the drop down menu. Under Area (on the right hand side of the box that appears), click “none”. The grey should go away.
- 2) You can change the font size and scale of the axes by double clicking on the item you want to change.
- 3) If you don’t want the Legend, click on the legend and press the Delete key.

To insert a best fit line (ie for Beer’s Law):

Right click on any data point. Choose “Add Trendline” from the drop down menu. The default should be “linear”. Click on the Options tab and highlight “display equation on chart” (you can do this later if you forget to choose it now – just right click on the line and choose “Format Trendline”)

Now your graph should be perfect. Double check that you have a descriptive title and proper units for the axes, then print!