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COURSE

Excel for Work — Beginner to Confident

A 7-module practical course with a practice workbook — formulas, lookups, tables, PivotTables and charts

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For job seekers, workers & business owners

Excel for Work — Beginner to Confident

A 7-module practical course with a practice workbook — formulas, lookups, tables, PivotTables and charts

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How to take this course

Excel (and its free cousin, Google Sheets) is one of the most requested skills in Nigerian job adverts — in banking, sales, admin, HR, logistics, NGOs, procurement and accounting. Business owners use it to track sales, stock and money.

This course is **practical**: every lesson is followed by exercises in the practice workbook.

Module	You will learn to…	Time
1	Find your way around, enter and format data	1.5 hours
2	Write formulas and use SUM, AVERAGE, COUNT and absolute references	2 hours
3	Make decisions with IF, and clean text and dates	2 hours
4	Look up values and summarise with SUMIFS and COUNTIFS	2.5 hours
5	Use tables, sort, filter, drop-downs and conditional formatting	2 hours
6	Summarise data with PivotTables and charts	2.5 hours
7	Print, share, protect — and work faster with shortcuts	1 hour

What's in your download

- **Course workbook** (this PDF)
- **Practice workbook** (Excel file) — a sales dataset from an imaginary Nigerian distributor, exercise sheets for every module, and an **Answers** sheet with the working formulas

Which Excel do I need?

Anything recent works: Excel 365, Excel 2019/2021, Excel on the web (free with a Microsoft account), the Excel mobile app, or Google Sheets. A few newer functions (like **XLOOKUP**) need Excel 2021/365 or Google Sheets; we always show an older alternative.

> 💡 **TIP**
>
> Type the formulas yourself instead of copying them. Your fingers learn faster than your eyes. Practise 30 minutes a day and you'll be confident in two weeks.

MODULE 1

Find your way around

The basics

- A **workbook** is the file. It contains **worksheets** (tabs at the bottom).
- Columns have letters (A, B, C...), rows have numbers (1, 2, 3...). A **cell** is where they meet — for example **B4**.
- A **range** is a block of cells, written with a colon: **A2:A50** means A2 down to A50.
- The **formula bar** above the grid shows what's really in the selected cell.

Enter data the right way

- One **header row** at the top (Date, Customer, Product, Qty, Price...).
- One record per row — one sale, one employee, one product.
- One type of information per column. Don't mix "₦5,000 (paid)" in one cell — use one column for the amount and another for the status.
- No blank rows or columns inside your data.

Format numbers

Select the cells → **Home → Number format**:

- **Currency / Accounting** for money. For naira, choose the ₦ symbol in *More number formats*, or use a custom format such as `"₦"#,##0`.
- **Percentage** for rates (0.25 shows as 25%).
- **Date** — type dates as `15/03/2027` (if your computer uses day/month/year) and check they align to the right; text aligns left.

Time-savers

- **AutoFill:** type *Jan* in a cell, drag the small square at the bottom-right corner — Excel fills Feb, Mar... It also continues numbers and copies formulas.
- **Freeze panes:** *View → Freeze Panes → Freeze Top Row* keeps headers visible while you scroll.
- **Column width:** double-click the line between two column letters to auto-fit.

✍️ **YOUR TASK**

Open the practice workbook, sheet **Sales**. Freeze the top row, auto-fit the columns, and format the Price and Amount columns as naira with no decimals.

✅ **QUICK CHECK**

1. What does the range B2:D10 include?
2. Why should you avoid typing "₦5,000 paid" in one cell?

MODULE 2

Formulas and basic functions

Your first formulas

Every formula starts with **=**.

Formula	Meaning
`=B2+C2`	add
`=B2-C2`	subtract
`=B2*C2`	multiply
`=B2/C2`	divide
`=(B2+C2)*D2`	brackets first, like in maths

In the Sales sheet, the amount of each sale is quantity × price: in the Amount column type `=E2*F2` and fill it down.

The essential functions

Function	What it does	Example
SUM	Adds a range	`=SUM(G2:G201)`

Function	What it does	Example
AVERAGE	Average value	`=AVERAGE(G2:G201)`
MIN / MAX	Smallest / largest	`=MAX(G2:G201)`
COUNT	Counts cells with numbers	`=COUNT(G2:G201)`
COUNTA	Counts cells that are not empty	`=COUNTA(B2:B201)`
ROUND	Rounds a number	`=ROUND(G2*0.075,0)`

💡 **TIP**

Select a range and look at the **status bar** at the bottom of the window — Excel shows the sum, average and count instantly without a formula.

Relative and absolute references

When you copy `=E2*F2` down one row, it becomes `=E3*F3`. This is a **relative** reference — it moves.

Sometimes one cell must **not** move, for example a VAT rate in cell **K1**. Add dollar signs: `=G2*$K$1`. Now every copied formula still points to K1. Press **F4** after typing a reference to add the dollar signs quickly.

📘 **EXAMPLE**

Commission: sales reps earn 3% stored in cell K2. In the Commission column, type `=G2*$K$2` and fill down. Change K2 to 4% and every commission updates.

✍️ **YOUR TASK**

In the sheet **Ex2**, calculate total sales, average sale, the largest and smallest sale, the number of sales, and VAT at 7.5% for each row using an absolute reference.

✅ **QUICK CHECK**

3. You copy `=A2*$B$1` from row 2 to row 5. What does it become?
4. What's the difference between COUNT and COUNTA?

End of the free sample

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