



Charts, Graphs and Images Guidelines for Excel

Charts and Graphs

Charts and graphs are graphical representation of data. Examples include pie, bar, or line charts. In Excel, charts are difficult to navigate to for most people who use screen readers because they are inserted on a separate layer from text in a cell. People who use a screen reader will get their information from the table or text description the chart or graph is based on.

When using a chart or a graph:

- Place it on the same worksheet that data is on, either below or to the right of the table.
- Give it simple descriptive alt text.
This supports people with advanced screen reader skills.
- Use clear and descriptive language for the chart elements, including the chart title, axis titles, and data labels.
- Use a [readable font size](#) and [good color contrast](#).
- Make sure all text is horizontal. There should not be any vertical or slanted text.
- Don't use color alone for line and bar charts. Add a pattern.

Images

Images float on top of the spreadsheet which makes it difficult to get to with a screen reader.

BOTTOM LINE: Images should not be used in Excel.

This guideline is specific to HHS.