

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Beginner: Excel Self Study Guide

Purpose

This self-study guide has been produced by the Lothian Buses HR team to support colleagues who wish to develop or refresh their Microsoft Excel skills.

Excel is used across Lothian Buses in a wide range of roles, including operational, administrative, and support functions. Having a basic working knowledge of Excel can help improve efficiency, accuracy, and confidence when working with information and data.

This document brings together a selection of free, trusted online learning resources and presents them in a clear, structured format to support independent learning. The guide is available on the Lothian Buses intranet and is intended to complement on-the-job learning and development.

This guide is aimed at: - Colleagues with little or no previous experience of Excel - Employees who use Excel occasionally and would benefit from a refresher - New starters at Lothian Buses who are expected to use Excel as part of their role

How to Use This Guide

This document is intended to support self-directed learning.

The guide is structured into sections that build progressively, starting with an introduction to Excel and moving on to basic tasks and simple formulas. Colleagues are encouraged to work through the sections in order, using the links provided to access the learning materials.

You do not need to complete the guide in one sitting. You can dip in and out of sections depending on your current knowledge or work requirements, and revisit topics at any time to reinforce learning.

Getting Started with Excel

This section introduces Excel, what it is used for, and how to navigate the interface. It is important to understand the layout of Excel before working with data.

Recommended resources: - Free Excel Tutorial at GCFGlobal
<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/excel/>

Excel Tutorial for Beginners | How to Use Excel
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI0H-qTcIOg>

Basic Tasks in Excel

Once you are familiar with the layout of Excel, the next step is learning how to carry out basic tasks. This includes entering data, saving files, working with rows and columns, and making simple edits.

Recommended resources: - Basic tasks in Excel – Microsoft Support
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/excel>

Working with Data

This section focuses on understanding how data works in Excel. You will learn how to select cells, copy and paste information, and organise data effectively.

Recommended resources: - Learn Excel Online – Best Free Excel Tutorial & Resources | GoSkills
<https://www.goskills.com/Excel>

Formulas and Functions (Beginner Level)

Formulas and functions allow Excel to perform calculations automatically. This section introduces simple formulas such as addition, subtraction, averages, and totals.

Recommended resources: - Excel for Beginners Tutorial – Everything You Need to Know
<https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/excel-tutorial/excel-for-beginners>

Formatting and Presenting Information

Formatting helps make your spreadsheets easier to read and look more professional. This includes adjusting column widths, applying conditional formatting, and creating simple tables.

Recommended resources: - Free Excel Tutorial at GCFGlobal (Sections 7 & 8)
<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/excel/>

Next Steps

Once you are comfortable with the basics, you may wish to explore more advanced Excel features such as charts, sorting and filtering, or more complex formulas. These topics are covered in the later sections of the linked resources.

Regular practice is key. Try applying what you learn to real work tasks where possible, and revisit this guide whenever you need a refresher.

Finally

The HR team can provide support with learning and development, including advice on developing Excel skills and accessing additional training resources. For further guidance, please contact Learning@lothianbuses.co.uk.