Required Excel Guidelines

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For full credit on any Excel assignment, your spreadsheet must meet the following criteria:

1. *Submission*: Each student (for individual assignments) or group (for group assignments) must turn in only *one* Excel spreadsheet and *no other files* (unless that is specifically required by the assignment). All homework must be submitted to D2L by the due date.
2. *Structure*
   a. If the spreadsheet is an independent project include an 'about' or 'welcome' sheet to document the spreadsheet.
   b. Each problem or section should be done on the separate worksheet.
   c. All calculations for a particular problem should be done on that worksheet–unless they have already been done on another worksheet.
   d. If the assignment specifies names for worksheets, do not change the names, their order, or add additional worksheets.
   e. If the problem requires a graph, place it on the worksheet for that problem. Do not create a new worksheet for the graph.

3. *Formatting*
   a. If the assignment requires answers to specific problems, and there are no labeled cells in which to put your answers, format your answer with **bold, blue font**. (The exact shade does not matter.) Do not use any other colors in formatting, except for negative numbers.
   b. Enclose negative numbers with parentheses and use a red font, e.g. ($115.66). (This is an option when you format a cell as 'Currency'.)

4. *Data and Calculations*
   a. **IMPORTANT: All calculations must be done in Excel, and you must put all your calculations in the spreadsheet**. You may not, for example, use a calculator and just put the answer in a cell. If you do not have the calculations in Excel, you may loss all credit for the problem.

b. You do not need to put a copy of the formula in a cell next to your calculation. I will check the cell contents if I need to see how you made a calculation.

c. **IMPORTANT: You must construct a *dynamic* spreadsheet**, so that if the data is changed, your results are automatically updated.[1] I will test this when I grade the assignment.

d. If all necessary data is in the assignment, do not add any additional data.

e. Separate inputs and calculations; The inputs to formulae and functions should normally be cell references, not constants.

f. Do not perform the same calculation in multiple places; do it once and refer to that result.,

g. If a calculation is at all complicated, you should document what is does with either a cell comment or a text box.

h. **IMPORTANT: All external data must only be in one place.** You may not retype data that is already in another cell or cut-and-paste it into a different cell; instead make a reference to the original number.

   i. For example, if A1 contains $300.00, and you want to put that value multiplied by 4 into another cell, that cell should contain the formula

   =A1 * 4

   You may not retype the number 300, i.e.,

   =300 * 4

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	$300.00	=300 * 4	Not Correct			
2		=A1 * 4	Correct			
3						
4						
5						

   ii. Use the '!' (exclamation point) to make references across worksheets. If you need to multiply a number in cell B1 by a number which is in cell A1 on another worksheet called "Data", you will put the following in the result cell:[2]

   =B1 * Data!A1

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[1] This automation cannot be easily done for some more complicated functions, such as linear regression; normally, these procedures must be run manually after the new data has been entered. If you use such procedures rerun the procedures if you change the data.

[2] This will not work if there is a space in the name of a worksheet. In that situation, you would need to put single quotation marks around the name of the worksheet. If, for example, you wanted to refer to cell A1 on a worksheet called "New Data", you would need to put the following in the cell: ='New Data'!A1

i. You may use either the built-in Excel functions or do the calculation in a cell. For example, you may use either of the following to find the present value of $100 received in two years with a discount rate of 8% (NOTE: In an actual spreadsheet, you would have cell references, rather than constants, in both formulae):

=100/(1.08)^2   or   =PV(0.08,2,,-100)

NOTE: Be careful if you use Excel functions–they may work in unusual ways and may not use the same inputs as your calculator.