

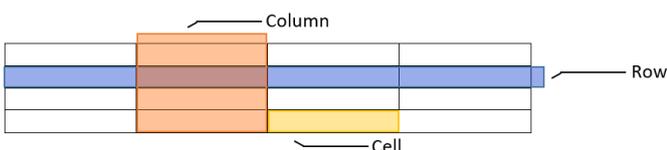
VISUALISING DATA: TABLES

What is a table?

Tables can be used in assignments to display data. Tables can be used to display multiple variables, specific values, and compare categories. Always ensure your tables are presented in a neat and logical manner.

Common features of tables.

- **Titles:** include a descriptive title which is numbered for easy referencing.
- **Columns:** (vertical) neatly aligned, labelled columns with no gridlines.
- **Rows:** (horizontal) each row in a table represents a set of related data, and every row in the table should have the same structure.



- **Units:** units of measurement should be defined in headings.
- **Footnotes:** use footnotes to explain parameters or statistical significance, if required.

Table 1. Ecological footprint of energy resources Numbered title

Energy	Total consumption (t)	Consumption per capita (GJ cap ⁻¹)	Global average (GJ hm ⁻²)
Coal	0.250	0.010	55
Petrol	2.050	0.169	93
Diesel	9.230	0.753	93
Electricity	0.002	12.000	1000

Footnote: The conversion of electricity referenced the related standard of energy conversion. 1 wh = 3,600 J Footnote to explain table contents

Column headings including units

Making good tables.

Features of a good table:

- Each column should have a heading
- Include the units in the heading
- Do not separate columns with vertical lines
- In a column of numbers, make sure the decimal points are vertically aligned
- Do not use lots of horizontal lines (only top and bottom of the table, and to separate the heading)

Table 1. Ecological footprint of energy resources ✓

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Electricity	0.002	12.000	1000

Footnote: The conversion of electricity referenced the related standard of energy conversion. 1 wh = 3,600 J

Example of a poor table:

- Poor formatting or overcrowding can make tables hard to read
- Vague titles
- Missing information

Measurements Vague title ✗

Energy	Total consumption (t)	Consumption per capita	Global average (GJ hm ⁻²)
Coal	0.25	0.010 GJ cap ⁻¹	55
Petrol	2.05	0.169 GJ cap ⁻¹	93
Diesel	9.23	0.753 GJ cap ⁻¹	93
Electricity	0.002	12 GJ cap ⁻¹	1000

Overall poor formatting and spacing

Too many lines

Decimal points do not align

Units repeated in each cell

TIP

State the units (including %) in the column or row heading to remove unnecessary repetition in the table.

Using decimal places

- Avoid using too many numbers in your table by rounding your data appropriately.
- Excessive precision can make the table look crowded and confuse the reader.
- Use a consistent number of decimal places to align the data in your columns.
- See the example below. Column 1 has eight decimal places compared to Column 2 with two decimal places.

0.44985231	0.45
0.68412114	0.68
0.16421313	0.16
0.65465416	0.65

TIP

If a table is not your original creation, you must cite its source.

Tables in Microsoft Word.

- Use Ribbon > Insert > Table > Insert Table.
- The quickest way to start a table is 'Quick tables'.
- You can save your own templates using 'Quick tables' > Save Selection if you need multiple tables in your assignment.

How to include tables in your work.

Follow these tips for including tables in your assignment:

- Tell the reader when to look at a table (reference should appear in the text before the table).
- Number your tables for easy referencing within the text and to help the reader easily find the table.
- Introduce or explain the contents of the table.
- Point out any key features or trends.
- Draw a conclusion from the table.

Example: Table 1 shows the total consumption and consumption per capita of different energy sources. Diesel has the highest total consumption, however, electricity has the highest total consumption per capita.

Four ways to refer to your tables in text.

1. As shown in Table. X / As can be seen in Table. X / As indicated in Table. X...
2. The data in Table. X show that...
3. The seed counts for experiment X are given in Table. X
4. As hypothesised, ... (see Table. X)

TIP

Make your tables as independent of the main text as much as you can without making them too wordy.

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