



15 ANNOYING EXCEL DEFAULTS YOU SHOULD CHANGE



Download in hi-res & step-by-step Video: bit.ly/excel-defaults

#	WHAT?	HOW?	WHY?
1	Prevent Excel from Replacing Your Data	File → Options → Data → Automatic Data Conversion → Uncheck options for Removing leading zeros, Preserving long numbers, Convert to date, etc.	Preserve the desired data entry format, e.g., 12345678900654300 is not converted to 1.23E+15
2	Disable Error Warnings	File → Options → Error Checking Rules → Uncheck Rules You Don't Like Keyboard shortcut to open Excel Options: Alt → F → T	Tell Excel to stop flagging those error warnings you don't care about, e.g., Formula omitting adjacent cells
3	Change Default Font	File → Options → General → Under 'When creating new workbooks' → Set 'Use this as the default font' to the font of your choice.	Achieve consistency across workbooks or set the default to your company font.
4	Remove Gridlines	View tab → Uncheck Gridlines	When building dashboards or summary reports, gridlines can clutter your visuals
5	Use Cell Reference Formulas in Tables	File → Options → Formulas → Under 'Working with Formulas' → Uncheck 'Use table names in formulas'	Formulas in Excel tables appear as =SUM(L9:L30) instead of =SUM(Sales[Profit])
6	Turn Autosave Off	File → Options → Save → Uncheck 'AutoSave files stored in the Cloud by default in Excel' → Restart Excel	Prevents test edits from overwriting your actuals in finished reports.
7	Set Your Default PivotTable Layout	File → Options → Data → Edit Default Layout	No need to manually switch from Compact to Tabular layout and disable subtotals
8	Prevent PivotTable Column Resizing	Right-click inside the PivotTable → PivotTable Options → Layout & Format tab → Uncheck 'Autofit column widths on update'	Preserve your custom column width in PivotTables on refreshing them.
9	Ungroup PivotTables Dates	File → Options → Data → Data Options → 'Disable automatic grouping of date/time columns in PivotTables.'	Prevents date fields in PivotTables from automatically grouping into Months or Years
10	Use the Clipboard to Copy/Paste More	Home tab → Clipboard icons group → Click on Clipboard launcher icon in bottom right	Clipboard stores up to 24 items, so you don't need to copy text, images, or formulas again & again
11	Change Default Start Screen	File → Options → General → Under Start Up Options → Uncheck 'Show the Start screen when this application starts'	Ensure, Excel always opens a blank new spreadsheet on startup instead of the Start screen.
12	Stop Excel Files from Opening in Your Browser	• Open Edge browser → Go to Settings → Downloads • Toggle OFF "Open Office files in the browser"	Automatically make your Excel files download and open in the desktop app
13	Prevent Copilot from Autocompleting Formulas (M365 Only)	File → Options → Copilot Tab → Turn Off 'Show Copilot suggestions for completing formulae' and/or 'Show Copilot suggestions for formulas based on patterns in your content.'	Copilot will not distract you from writing your own formulas.
14	Resize the Search Box	File → Options → General → User Interface Options → Check 'Collapse the Microsoft Search Box by default'.	Ensures that the file name is completely visible as the search box size is reduced.
15	Show File Extensions	• This setting needs to be updated in File Explorer • Open File Explorer → Click on View in the Menu Bar → Show → Select File Name Extensions	Your file names appear with file extensions, e.g., instead of just sales_report_q1 you will see sales_report_q1.xlsx or sales_report_q1.csv

