

16 Most Common Causes of Slow Excel Files



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1. Too Much Data

Use **Power Query** to filter out unnecessary data before loading it.



2. Duplicated Data

PivotTables cause data to be stored in the file twice. Use **Power Query** to load the data directly to the Pivot Cache. Select **PivotTable Report** in the **Import Data** dialog box.



3. Excel Tables Excel 2013 only

Tables >500k rows x 10 columns can slow down the file. Consider using the **Power Pivot data model**, which has an advanced compression algorithm.



4. Array Formulas

Single cell array formulas can be processed several times, depending on the number of cells referenced in the formula.



5. Nested Formulas

Nested formulas involve multiple levels of functions or calculations that require more processing power and memory.



6. Volatile Functions

Volatile functions recalculate every time anything changes in the workbook, even if the change has no direct impact on the function's output.



7. Lookup Formulas

Searching through large data sets, can be time consuming and resource intensive.



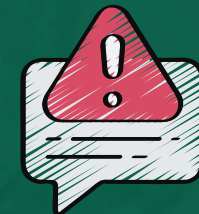
8. Conditional Functions

Testing each cell in a range against a set of criteria can be time consuming and resource intensive.



9. Defined Names

Defined names are recalculated every time a formula that refers to the name is recalculated, even if the calculation does not change the value of a cell.



10. Handling Errors

The old **IF(ISNA(VLOOKUP(...),0,VLOOKUP(...))** requires Excel to do double the work i.e. two lookups. **IFERROR** avoids this duplication.



11. External Links

Use **Power Query** to bring the data into the current file.



12. Excessive Cell Formatting

Apply formatting to the whole column/row.



13. Redundant Formatting (used range)

Formatting can sometimes linger in cells that appear empty, but Excel is still storing information about those cells.



14. Passwords

Files with Password Protected Workbook structures are slower to open and close.



15. User Defined Functions (UDFs)

Consider using the built in functions or write a custom function using the **LAMBDA** function.



16. Outdated Software

Update Excel and use the 64-bit version. The 32-bit version only has 2GBs of virtual memory.



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