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Automatically add new data to an Excel chart

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Once you go through all the work of creating and formatting a chart, you don't want to have to start over again when new data comes in. Fortunately, you don't have to with Excel. You can simply copy and paste the new data to your chart.

For example, you create a chart from data that includes income totals for January, February, and March in columns A, B, and C. After entering the totals for April into column D, you want to update your chart with this data. Follow these steps:

- Select the new data in column D, including the name of the month.
- Press [Ctrl]C.
- Click on the chart.
- Press [Ctrl]V.

With Excel 2003 and earlier versions, dragging and dropping the selected data to the chart will also update the chart. Excel 2007 does not support the drag-and-drop feature, but it does let you convert your spreadsheets into tables so Excel will update the chart without you having to manually copy and paste the new data. Follow these steps to convert your Excel 2007 data into a table:

- Select a cell in the source data.
- Press [Ctrl]T.

Now when you add a column of data for April to the table, Excel 2007 automatically extends both the table and the chart.

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