

Making Graphs in Excel

Karin Knisely
Bucknell University

Abstract

Most biology majors are expected to write lab reports that include graphs of their experimental data. With the availability of computer plotting software, it is no longer necessary to make these graphs by hand. The data can be entered into the plotting program in a prescribed manner, and the computer will plot the graph according to the desired specifications.

The purpose of this mini-workshop is to provide participants with step-by-step instructions on how to make graphs in Excel 97 (updated for Excel 2000). I chose Excel 97 for my students at Bucknell University because it is readily available, is supported by on-campus computer services, and because it is relatively simple to use.

Workshop participants will be given raw data from actual biology experiments, will enter the data into the Excel spreadsheet, and use ChartWizard to make different kinds of xy-graphs. In particular, we will practice plotting smooth trend curves, linear standard curves, and multiple data sets (lines) on one set of axes. The emphasis will be on formatting the figures in accordance with CBE conventions.

Reprinted From: Knisely, K. 2002. Making graphs in Excel. Page 379, in Tested studies for laboratory teaching, Volume 23 (M. A. O'Donnell, Editor). Proceedings of the 23rd Workshop/Conference of the Association for Biology Laboratory Education (ABLE), 392 pages.

- Copyright policy: <http://www.zoo.utoronto.ca/able/volumes/copyright.htm>

Although the laboratory exercises in ABLE proceedings volumes have been tested and due consideration has been given to safety, individuals performing these exercises must assume all responsibility for risk. The Association for Biology Laboratory Education (ABLE) disclaims any liability with regards to safety in connection with the use of the exercises in its proceedings volumes.

© 2002 Karin Knisely