

How to Make a Checklist in Excel

Checklist Guide · Excel · Moderate · 10-20 minutes

Excel can hold a checklist with real, tickable checkboxes. How you add them depends on your version: recent Microsoft 365 builds have a one-click Checkbox button, while older versions need the Developer tab. This guide covers both methods, then shows a quicker route.

Read the live, full-length version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/guides/how-to-make-a-checklist-in-excel>

QUICK ANSWER

To make a checklist in Excel, type your tasks down a column. In Excel 365 (2024 or newer), select the cells beside them and click Insert then Checkbox. In older versions, enable the Developer tab, then use Insert then Form Controls then Checkbox.

METHOD 1: THE QUICK WAY (EXCEL 365, 2024 OR NEWER)

Best if your Excel has the modern Checkbox button on the Insert tab.

- 1 List your tasks**
Type one task per row down a column, for example column B.
- 2 Select the checkbox cells**
Highlight the cells in column A, next to your tasks.
- 3 Insert checkboxes**
On the Insert tab, click "Checkbox". A tickable box appears in every selected cell.
- 4 Tick them off**
Click a box to toggle it. The cell value switches between TRUE and FALSE behind the scenes.

WHERE EXCEL SLOWS YOU DOWN

- Older versions need the hidden Developer tab, and the checkboxes are form controls that float over cells, so they slip out of place when you sort or resize rows.
- Excel is built for numbers and grids, not task lists. Reordering an item means cut-and-paste work.
- There are no checklist templates aimed at everyday users.
- A spreadsheet is a heavy, cluttered format to print or hand to someone for a simple to-do list.

The verdict: Modern Excel has a one-click Checkbox button, but older versions still need the Developer tab and floating controls that drift when you edit rows.

EXCEL VS GENECHECKLIST

	Excel	GeneChecklist
Time to a usable checklist	10-20 minutes	Under a minute
Checkboxes	One click in Excel 365; Developer tab in older versions	Built in: tap to tick, with a live progress bar
Ready-made templates	None for everyday checklists	300+ professionally written checklists
Phone and desktop	Checkboxes can shift when rows are sorted or resized	Any browser, nothing to install
Print and PDF	Prints with gridlines and spreadsheet clutter	One-click, print-ready PDF
Cost	Needs Microsoft 365 or Excel	Free to build, print and download as PDF

THE FASTER WAY: GENECHECKLIST

- 1 Open the free builder**
 Go to the checklist builder. There is no download, no sign-up and no hidden menu to switch on. It loads as a blank checklist, ready for you to type.
- 2 Add your items, or start from a template**
 Type a task and press Enter for the next line. In a hurry? Pick one of 300+ ready-made checklists — moving, wedding, camping, onboarding, and on — and edit it to fit your situation.
- 3 Organise, then save, print or share**
 Drag items to reorder them, group them into sections, and tick them off against a live progress bar. Download a clean PDF, print it, or send a share link, all from the same screen.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I insert a checkbox in Excel?

In Excel 365 (2024 or newer), select your cells and click Insert then Checkbox. In older versions, turn on the Developer tab, then use Insert then Form Controls then Checkbox.

Why can I not find the Checkbox button in Excel?

The one-click Checkbox button only exists in recent Microsoft 365 builds. On older versions you must enable the Developer tab and use a form control instead.

How do I make a checklist box in Excel cross out when checked?

Link each checkbox to its cell, then add a conditional formatting rule that applies strikethrough when the cell value is TRUE.

Is Excel good for a simple checklist?

It works, but it is overkill. Excel is built for calculations and grids. For a plain task list, a checklist builder is faster and prints far cleaner.