Troubleshooting problems in Excel 2007

As your TAs continue to work with the new Excel 2007 spreadsheet software, we continue to encounter new unexpected problems. There are a few new features in the program that are very different from previous versions of the program. To make matters even more complicated, there are also multiple glitches where the program performs abnormally. Unfortunately, this is the only version of the software we have available to us in the libraries and the Labs to work with. That’s OK though because this document will help you to troubleshoot some of the common problems we have had to deal with so far to get our Excel spreadsheets to look perfect.
The Case of the Disappearing Menu Tab

Excel 2007 uses a new kind of tabbed menu system where menus appear and disappear based on what the program thinks you are trying to do.

I want to change my axis labels. Where is my layout tab???

OH! When I click on my bar graph, the menu tabs reappear and I can format my chart again!
Vanishing Charts

Because Excel 2007 is a new program, it still has a few bugs. If something disappears randomly, try highlighting that region by dragging your mouse. It may reappear.

Huh? I just tried to move my bar graph and the whole thing just disappeared. What just happened?

OK. It's back. I guess I just had to highlight the cells around the area where my chart was. That was weird.
Missing Features

Some of the features on Excel occasionally go missing. The “Data Analysis Toolpak” that you need to create histograms is one of those. If you don’t see it on your home computer, it may be because it was never installed.

The Data Analysis Toolpak is an add-in piece of software. If you ran a standard install in on your computer, then it was not installed. If you want to install it, go to the “Tools” menu and select “Add Ins…” then follow directions to add in the Data Analysis Toolpak.

The Data Analysis Toolpak HAS been installed on the university computers though! If it doesn’t show up when you are using a computer in section, this is one of those annoying glitches. Try saving, closing, and then reopening your document. For some reason, this will often make the data analysis option reappear.
A Ghost Mystery

For some reason, when some objects or graphics are moved around in Excel, they leave a “ghost” or trace of the image of the graphic behind. This happens very often with the histogram. This is another glitch in the program. To get your image to look correct again, try resizing it once or twice and it should erase the ghost image and correct the problem.

I try to move my histogram and this happens?!! Grr! Anger!

Apparently if I drag the corners of my histogram to resize it, the graph looks ok again. I don't get it, but it works. Whatevah.