

# Getting Started with Google Sheets

These instructions will get you ready to use Google Sheets, which is Google's free spreadsheet program similar to Microsoft Excel. You will need to use an online version of this document so you can follow the links included in it. Google Sheets is used in the course modules *Data Analysis using Spreadsheets*, *Data Visualization Using Spreadsheets*, and *Machine Learning - Regression*.

The instructions in this document should be sufficient to get you started, but here are some links to more information and tutorials for the tools you will be using:

- [Google Drive Help Center](#)
- [Google Sheets getting started guide](#)
- [Google Sheets Beginner's Guide](#)
- [Google Spreadsheet Tutorial](#)

## Step 1. Create a Google account

If you already have a Google/Gmail account, proceed to Step 2. Otherwise:

1. Go to the [Google Accounts website](#)
2. Click on the "Create account" link near the bottom of the page
3. Fill in your information on the form on the right side of the page and complete the other required steps. Congratulations, you now have a Google account!

## Step 2. Copy data files into your Google Drive file-space

Every Google account owner is entitled to use Google Drive, a file storage service on the cloud, and Google Apps, similar to the Microsoft Office software suite. You will use Google Sheets software on files stored in your Google Drive file-space. This step copies the data files needed for your course module(s) into your file-space.

1. Make sure you're logged into your Google account. If you're not sure whether you are logged in, go to the [Google Accounts page](#). If there is a large sign-in box then you need to log in. If there is a Welcome message then you are already logged in and can move to the next step.
2. Follow one of the following three links to go to the public folder containing the data files for the course module you are doing:
  - [Data Analysis Using Spreadsheets](#)
  - [Data Visualization Using Spreadsheets](#)
  - [Machine Learning - Regression](#)
3. Select all of the files by pressing command+a on a Mac or control+a on Windows. Right-click (or control-click) on one of the files to get a drop-down menu and select "Make a copy".

4. Go to “My Drive” in the upper-left below the “NEW” button. You should now be in your own filespace, where you should see the set of files you copied with names starting with “Copy of...”. To rename a file, right-click (or control-click) to get a drop-down menu that includes “Rename...”.
5. If you will be participating in more than one course module, it is recommended that you create a separate folder for each one: use the “NEW” button in the upper-left to create a folder; files can be moved by simply dragging them onto the folder.

### **Step 3. Open files using Google Sheets**

1. As in Step 2, make sure you’re logged into your Google account, and go to your Google Drive page. If needed, navigate to the folder containing the files you will be working with.
2. To open one of the CSV files you copied for the course in Google Sheets, simply double-click on the file.
3. If you upload another CSV file to your Google Drive filespace, the first time you open it you will need to right-click (or control-click) on the file and select Open With > Google Sheets. Google Drive will create a second copy of the file suitable for working with in Google Sheets -- you can Remove the original file if you wish.

### **Step 4. Working offline**

It’s possible to use Google Sheets even when you are disconnected from the internet, with a little bit of preparation while you’re still online. We recommend offline use whenever the internet may be congested or intermittent -- offline works just as well as online. Follow these steps:

1. You must be using the [Chrome browser](#).
2. When you are in Google Drive, go to Settings (the wheel in the upper-right), find the Offline option, and click the check-box.
3. Open each file you are interested in working on offline in a new tab in your browser, making sure the file loads completely. Congratulations, you can now access all of these files offline! Make sure not to delete the tabs, as a file in a deleted tab will not be accessible until you go back online.