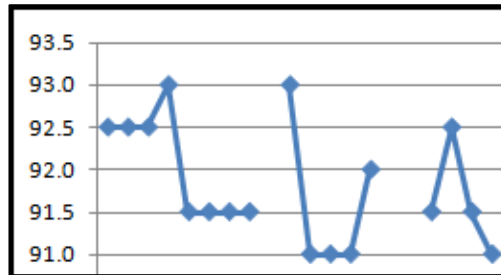


Lesson 5-17: Deal with empty data points

Sometimes you'll only have partial data for a series.

In the worksheet used for this lesson I'll share a secret with you. I weigh myself every day and keep a chart on my bathroom wall to make sure that I'm staying at a healthy weight.

Sometimes I'm away travelling and can't weigh in as usual. When I get back I need to fill in the gaps.



I use a line chart for my weight, so the best solution is to simply draw a line connecting the last data point recorded before I went away with the first recorded upon my return.

For a column chart, the best solution would be to show no columns for the missing days. In other words, there would be gaps for each date when there was a missing bar.

1 Open *Weight 2008* from your sample files folder.

This is a simple worksheet showing my weight in kilograms for each date in July 2008. Notice that there are missing days when I was away from home.

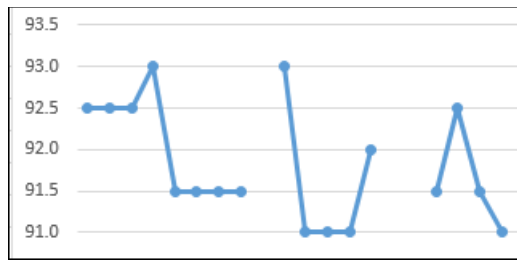
2 Display the range as a *Line with Markers* chart.

1. Click on any of the date values within the range.
2. Click: Insert→Charts→Insert Line Chart→Line with Markers.



The chart displays, but there are gaps for the missing entries.

Weight 2008

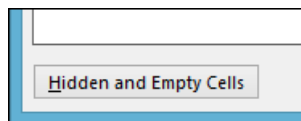


3 Tell Excel to connect the gaps in the chart with a line.

1. Right-click just inside the plot area of the chart and click *Select Data* from the shortcut menu.

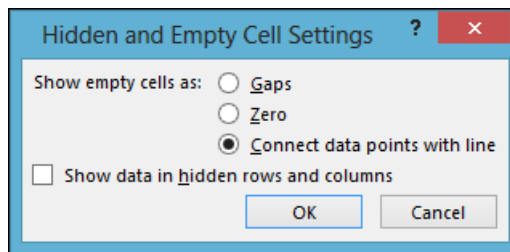
The *Select Data Source* dialog is displayed.

2. Click the *Hidden and Empty Cells* button at the bottom left corner of the dialog.



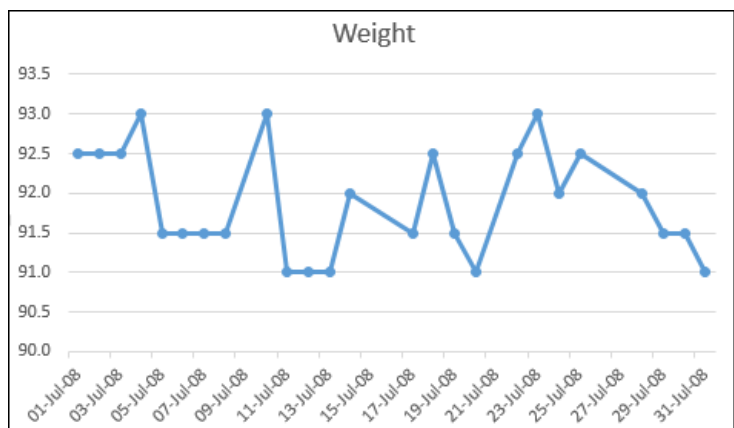
The *Hidden and Empty Cells* dialog appears.

3. Click the *Connect data points with line* option button.



4. Click the OK button and OK again to dismiss both dialogs

All data points are now connected with a line.



4 Save your work as *Weight 2008-1*.

note

The Hidden and Empty Cell Settings dialog can also be used with Sparklines

If you select a Sparkline group and click:

Sparkline Tools→Design→Sparkline→Edit Data→Hidden & Empty Cells

... you will see the same *Hidden and Empty Cell Settings* dialog that is used in this lesson to deal with empty data points in charts.

You can use it in exactly the same way to deal with empty data points in Sparklines.

You learned to create Sparkline groups in: *Lesson 4-19: Insert a Sparkline into a range of cells.*