Lesson 5-24: Create a combination chart containing different chart types

Excel allows you to allocate a different chart type to each data series. This opens up many interesting possibilities such as superimposing a Clustered Column chart on top of an Area chart.

In this lesson we’ll chart the Hawaii climate as a combination Clustered Column/Area chart with clustered columns for high/low temperature and an area chart for rainfall.

1. Open Hawaii Climate-1 from your sample files folder.

   This workbook documents the temperature range and rainfall in Hawaii for each month of the year.

2. Create a combination chart showing temperature as a clustered column chart type and rainfall as an area chart type.

   1. Click in any cell within the range.

      Because we want to chart the entire data range, there’s no need to select the range of cells.

   2. Click: Insert ➔ Charts ➔ Insert Combo Chart ➔ Create Custom Combo Chart…

      The Insert Chart dialog appears with the Combo chart type chosen in the left-hand menu bar.

   3. Set the chart types to Clustered Column for both Temperature series and to Area for the Avg Rainfall (mm) series.

   4. Click the OK button.

The combination chart is created:
The chart isn’t bad but it could be improved. Because there is only one axis, the rainfall’s Area chart type dominates the chart.

Adding a second vertical axis will solve this problem.

3 Add a secondary axis for rainfall.

You could do this using the technique learned in: Lesson 5-23: Create a chart with two vertical axes.

Instead we’ll use a different technique by recalling the Insert Chart dialog (this time it will be called Change Chart Type).

1. Right click anywhere on the chart and click: Change Chart Type… from the shortcut menu.

The Change Chart Type dialog appears.

2. Click the Secondary Axis check box next to Avg Rainfall (mm).

3. Click OK.

The chart now looks a lot better with two axes (one for temperature and one for rainfall).

4 Add Axis Title elements and give them (along with the Chart Title element) appropriate names.

You learned how to do this in: Lesson 5-9: Move, re-size, add, position and delete chart elements and Lesson 5-5: Add and remove chart elements using Quick Layout.

The chart now looks professional:

5 Save your work as Hawaii Climate-2.