Lesson 1-2: Check that your Excel version is up to date

Automatic Updates

Normally Excel will look after updates without you having to do anything. By default, automatic updates are enabled. This means that updates are downloaded from the Internet and installed automatically.

It is possible that automatic updates have been switched off on your computer. In this case there is a danger that you may have an old, buggy, unsupported and out of date version of Excel installed.

This lesson will show you how to make sure that you are using the latest (most complete, and most reliable) version of Excel.

1   Start Excel and open a new blank workbook (if you have not already done this).

You learned how to do this in: *Lesson 1-1: Start Excel and open a new blank workbook.*

2   Make sure that automatic updates are enabled.

1. Click the *File* button [File] at the top-left of the screen.

This takes you to *Backstage View*. Backstage View allows you to complete an enormous range of common tasks from a single window.
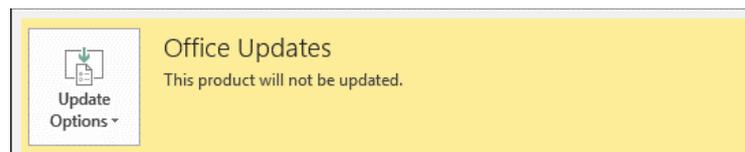
2. Click: *Account* [Account] in the left-hand list.

Your account details are displayed on screen. Notice the *Office Updates* button displayed in the right-hand pane.

If all is well, and automatic updates are switched on, you will see a button similar to this:
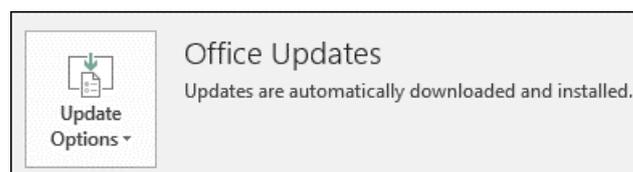
If *automatic updates* have been switched off, you will see a similar button to this.

In this case you will need to switch *automatic updates* on (see next step).

3   Switch on *automatic updates* if necessary.

Click: Update Options→Enable Updates.

note

Version number and Build

A new Excel version is usually released to the monthly update channel every month.

Each new version may add new features to Excel 365.

If bugs or security issues are found in a new version, Microsoft will fix them and publish a new *build* of the same version.

It is quite normal for there to be several new builds of each new version during the month that it is released.
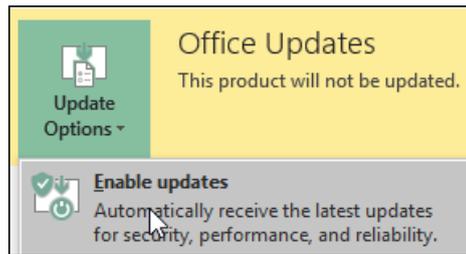
4 If there are updates waiting to install, apply them.

Sometimes Excel will download updates but will not install them automatically.

In this case you will see an update button similar to the following:

If you see this type of button you should apply the update.

Click: Update Options→Apply Updates.

You may be asked to confirm that you want to apply the update, and to close any open programs in order to apply the update.

5 Notice your version number and update channel.

note

Perpetual license versions have different features

Perpetual license holders still receive monthly updates but these only include security updates and bug fixes (not new features).

A perpetual license holder running Version 1706 will thus see different features than a subscription license holder running the same Excel version.

You will see a product information section displayed. If you see the number *365* or the words *Subscription Product*, you will know that you are using the subscription version of Excel 2016 (this is the case for products B and C above). Otherwise you are using the *perpetual license* version (this is the case for product A above). In this book, the perpetual license version will be referred to as *Excel 2016* and the subscription version as *Excel 365*.

Notice also the *update channel* and *version numbers* (see sidebars).

6 Click the *Back Button* to leave *Backstage View* and return to the worksheet.

7 Click the *Close Button* in the top-right corner of the Excel screen to close Excel.