

Which Graph Should You Choose?

Data visualizations are powerful tools to convey data graphically. Below, we categorize some of the commonly used types, used among varying communication purposes, according to their primary functions.

Correlation	Concepts	Deviation	Distribution	Flow
Shows relationships (not causation) between 2+ variables.	Methods that help explain and show ideas or concepts.	Variations (+ or -) based on a fixed point.	Depicts how often a value occurs and how uniform the data is.	Shows sequence of events, movement or intensity.
Scatterplots	Concept Maps	Diverging Bar Graphs	Histograms	Sankey Graphs
				
Bubble Charts	Illustration Diagrams	Diverging Column Graphs	Boxplots	Flowcharts
				
XY Heatmaps	Venn Diagrams	Deficit/Surplus Area Graphs	Violin Plots	Flow Maps
				
Magnitude	Part-to-whole	Ranking	Spatial	Time
Compares sizes (whole or relative).	Breaks down a single entity into components.	Presents entities in order of importance.	Presents patterns in location-based data.	Depicts changing trends and events overtime.
Radar Graphs	Stacked Bars/Columns	Ordered Columns/Bars	Choropleth Maps	Area Charts
				
Ordered Columns/Bars	Waffle Charts	Bump Charts	Equalized Cartograms	Line Charts
				
Pictograms	Pie/Donut Charts	Lollipop Charts	Point Maps	Timelines
				

Adapted from:  ft.com/vocabulary

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