

# Excel File Recovery Checklist

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Before diving into the recovery methods, it may help to have a clear step-by-step process at hand

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- Stop editing the damaged file immediately**  
Opening and resaving a corrupted spreadsheet can overwrite recoverable data.
- Create a backup copy**  
Duplicate the original file and store the copy in a separate folder before attempting any repair.
- Identify possible corruption causes**  
Check whether the issue was caused by power failure, network interruption, or plugin conflicts.
- Try Excel's built-in "Open and Repair" feature**  
Use the built-in recovery option before trying external tools.
- Test an online Excel repair tool**  
Upload the duplicated file to a trusted recovery service.
- Preview recovered data before downloading**  
Ensure formulas, formatting, and key values remain intact.
- Download the repaired file under a new name**  
Never overwrite the original corrupted file.
- Verify formulas and cell references**  
Check random cells and key formulas to ensure calculations still work.
- Attempt alternative recovery methods if needed**  
Open the file in Google Sheets or OpenOffice to extract remaining data.
- Implement a backup strategy**  
Use the 3-2-1 backup rule to prevent future data loss