

Excel File Recovery Checklist: How to Safely Repair a Corrupted Spreadsheet

Use this checklist before and during the recovery process to maximize your chances of restoring a damaged Excel workbook.

1. Stop risky actions immediately

- Do not repeatedly open the corrupted Excel file.
- Avoid saving the file again or overwriting it.
- Make a copy of the damaged file before starting recovery.

2. Prepare your system

- Close Microsoft Excel and other Office apps.
- Close unnecessary programs to free up RAM.
- Ensure you have at least 4–8 GB of available memory.

3. Install a reliable repair tool

- Download the repair software from the official developer website.
- Install the tool on a different drive than the damaged file if possible.
- Avoid third-party download portals.

4. Start the repair process

- Launch the Excel repair tool.
- Locate and select the corrupted XLS or XLSX file.
- Start the deep scan / repair process.

5. Verify the recovered data

- Carefully review the preview window.
- Check if worksheets, formulas, and charts appear correctly.
- Confirm that all critical tabs are present.

6. Export the repaired file safely

- Save the recovered file to a new location.
- Do not overwrite the original corrupted file.
- Open the restored workbook in Excel and verify functionality.

7. Prevent future corruption

- Enable cloud autosave or backup syncing.
- Create incremental file versions regularly.
- Avoid saving large files directly to unstable network drives.