

**The Joy of Data: Spreadsheet Names**  
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"The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right names."  
--Confucious (Kongzi) (551 B.C.E. – 479 B.C.E.)

**Introduction:**

Part of data literacy for business is learning many terms. That is part of college, part of learning, and part of growing as a person and as a professional. Sometimes, terms are confusing because terms can be used one way in everyday speech and a different way when analyzing data. Also, terms can be confusing because different terms can actually mean the same thing. Part of the reason for this is that different aspects of data and analysis technology develop at different times in history, and they develop in different “domains” (disciplines). Understanding where the terms spreadsheet are similar and where they are occasionally distinctive is part of data literacy.

The following are examples of different terms for spreadsheets in business analytics.

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Reason/Notes</b>
<i>Business Spreadsheet</i>	Worksheet	A collection of worksheets is called a workbook. It's the workbook that is stored as the .xlsx file.
<i>Database</i>	Relation	A relational database can contain many relations (“tables”). Tables are linked by “key” fields.
<i>Research Data</i>	Dataset	One collects datasets of “observations” (e.g., from personal interaction) and “responses” (e.g., from a survey)
<i>Computer Science</i>	File	Data can be stored and accessed in a variety of ways on a variety of media.
<i>Statistics/Machine Learning</i>	Dataframe	One organizes the row data by the column names.
<i>Math - Algebra</i>	Array	Or a Matrix.
<i>Math - Geometry</i>	Rectangle	Usually, the number of rows is larger than the number of columns.