

# Pivot tables: What are your options and how do they compare?

Pivot tables are interactive tables that automatically extract, organize, and summarize data. They are most often used to analyze data, make comparisons, and discover trends. Companies in need of pivot tables currently have 3 options: Google Docs, MS Excel, and database-driven web pivot tables. The biggest question: How do these options compare? The chart below lets you quickly compare how each option stacks up in 5 key areas. It's color-coded for convenience (Red=Bad, Yellow=Moderate, Green=Good). For a more detailed comparison, check out this article: <http://www.mrc-productivity.com/blog/2011/06/pivot-tables-in-google-docs-how-do-they-compare/>

	Google Docs Pivot Table	MS Excel Pivot Table	Database-driven Web Pivot Table
<b>Accessibility</b> <i>How easily is the pivot table accessed or shared?</i>	Accessible via the web with a Google account.	Usually shared via email. Only accessible if stored on local device.	Accessible via any web-enabled device.
<b>Data Volume</b> <i>How much data can the pivot table handle?</i>	<b>Data limits:</b> 400,000 cells <b>Other limits:</b> Calculations are handled by the device on which the pivot table is being run. Slow devices create additional data limits.	<b>Data limits:</b> 1,048,576 rows <b>Other limits:</b> Calculations are handled by the device on which the pivot table is being run. Slow devices create additional data limits.	<b>Data limits:</b> Varies by database, but can usually handle millions of rows. <b>Other limits:</b> Limited by database server capabilities
<b>Device Support</b> <i>How many devices can the pivot table run on?</i>	Google pivot tables aren't yet available on smartphones/tablets.	Pivot tables are viewable (but not editable) on mobile devices with the right apps.	Works on any web-enabled device
<b>Data Storage</b> <i>Where is the pivot table data located?</i>	Stored on Google's servers.	Data stored in spreadsheets, often in multiple locations, depending on how widely it was distributed.	Stored in your database
<b>Access Control</b> <i>How does the pivot table control which users see what data?</i>	If different users are supposed to see different data, multiple spreadsheets for varying user levels is the only solution.	If different users are supposed to see different data, multiple spreadsheets for varying user levels is the only solution.	Record-level security ensures that different users can access the same pivot table, but only see the data that applies to them.