

## How to Construct a Bar Graph

A bar graph is another way of showing relationships between variables. A bar graph also contains an X-axis and a Y-axis. But instead of points, a bar graph uses a series of columns to display data.

When plotting data on a graph, you must decide which variable to place along the X-axis and which variable to place along the Y-axis. Label the axes of your graph accordingly. Then you must decide on the scale of each axis; that is, "how much" each unit along the axis represents. Scales should be chosen to make the graph as large as possible within the limits of the paper and still include the largest item of data. If the scale unit is too large, your graph will be cramped into a small area and will be hard to read and interpret. If the scale is too small, the graph will run off the paper. Scale units should also be selected for ease of locating points on the graph. Multiples of 1, 2, 5, or 10 are easiest to work with.

**Data Table—Average Rainfall in Wilamette Valley**

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainfall (mL)	15	21	28	24	16	8	2	1	2	3	5	10

