

Describing Charts and Graphs

The Vocabulary of Graphs and Charts

There are a number of different types of graphs and charts including:

- Line Charts and Graphs
- Bar Charts and Graphs
- Pie Charts
- Exploded Pie Charts

Line charts and bar charts have a vertical axis and a horizontal axis. Each axis is labeled to indicate what type of information it contains. Typical information included on vertical and horizontal axis include:

- age - how old
- weight - how heavy
- height - how tall
- date - which day, month, year, etc.
- time - how much time is required
- length - how long
- width - how wide
- degrees - how hot or cold
- percentage - a portion of 100%
- number - number
- duration - the length of time required

The following list the verb and noun used to speak about positive and negative movements, as well as predictions. Example sentences are found after each section.

Positive

- to climb - a climb
- to ascend - an ascent
- to rise - a rise
- to improve - an improvement
- to recover - a recover
- to increase - an increase

- Sales have climbed over the past two quarters.
- We've experienced a rise in consumer demand.
- Consumer confidence recovered in the second quarter.
- There has been an increase of 23% since June.
- Have you seen any improvement in customer satisfaction?

Negative

- to fall - a fall
- to decline - a decline
- to plunge - a plunge
- to decrease - a decrease
- to worsen - a slip
- to deteriorate - a dip

- Research and development spending has fallen by 30% since January.
- Unfortunately, we've seen a decline over the past three months.
- As you can see, sales have plunged in the northwest region.
- Government spending has decreased by 10% over the past two years.
- There's been a slip in profits this past quarter.
- Comedy book sales have deteriorated for three quarters.

Predicting Future Movement

- to project - a projection
- to forecast - a forecast
- to predict - a prediction

- We project improved sales in the coming months.
- As you can see from the chart, we forecast increased research and development spending next year.
- We predict improving sales through June.

This list provides adjectives and adverbs used to describe how quickly, slowly, extremely, etc. something moves. Each adjective/adverb pair includes a definition and an example sentence.

- slight - slightly = insignificant

- There's been a slight decline in sales.
- Sales have declined slightly over the past two months.

- sharp - sharply = quick, large movement

- Investment rose sharply during the first quarter.
- We made a sharp increase in investment.

- abrupt - abruptly = sudden change

- Sales dropped abruptly in March.
- There was an abrupt drop in sales in March.

- rapid - rapidly = quick, very fast

- We expanded rapidly throughout Canada.
- The company made a rapid expansion throughout Canada.

- sudden - suddenly = without warning

- Unfortunately, consumer interest suddenly decreased.
- There was a sudden decrease in consumer interest in January.

- dramatic - dramatically = extreme, very big

- We've dramatically improved customer satisfaction over the past six months.
- As you can see from the chart, the dramatic growth has come after we invested in a new product line.

- calm - calmly = evenly, without much change

- The markets have reacted calmly to recent developments.
- As you can see from the graph, consumers have been calm over the past few months.

- flat = without change

- Profit has been flat over the past two years.

- steady - steadily = no change

- There has been a steady improvement over the past three months.
- Sales have improved steadily since March.